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Truman Michelson field notes from the Munsee in Kansas
and the Delaware in Oklahoma, 1912-1913
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1 Wehixamōkās =
copied.) we²ixamōkās

Delaware Sampson
says Long Bone
K'om, release of
ghosts)

Wehixamōkās when he was grown
was very onery. He was dirty, lay
down anywhere, + had no get up
to him. A bunch of Delawares went
out looking for enemies. So
he wanted to go along. They hardly
liked to take as they didn't think
he amounted to anything; didn't care
to be bothered with him. They took
him along and where they camped
he slept so long the next morning
they just left him there. So when
he woke up his men had all
left him. So he caught up with the
gang of men where they were
camped. when he got there he just
laid down by the fire and went
to sleep. Next morning they woke up.
He then breakfast + they left him
there again. Just let him sleep.
They said "just let him stay there".
He knew all about it before hand,
and was well satisfied. So then
when he caught up with them again,
he got up early. Then they went on
+ they struck a big prairie country.
While going along they hear

on to a big body of men whom
 it was impossible for them to
 whip. So the head man said
 "We'll now have to hide in the
 high grass so they'll pass us & we
 can go on." So W. just as he
 acted, squatted down as much
 as he could; every now & then
 he would stick his head out.
 "Look out the people will see
 you," he was told. So he couldn't
 stand it when they passed
 him a bit, he jumped up
 & beat his breast, crying out "Here
 we are, we're a big body of
 men." There only 30-40 in bunch,
 and 4-5 thousand enemies. So
 after he did that the others with
 him jumped up & told him he'd
 have to whip all the enemy as
 he had got them started. So then
 he said "all right" & threw his
 blanket away. He understood
 them to say "grab them, & throw
 them down but don't kill
 them". So he grabbed one &
 then and other & laid them

down. So the Chief told him "That
 is what I told you to do, ~~you~~ ^{you}"
 I told you to kill all them be-
 cause there going to kill all us -
 And W said "Why in the world
 didn't you say so in the 1st place."
 And he grabbed his little axe and
 went right after them till he
 killed everyone of them
 with his ax but one. So the
 one he left was told by him
 "Come here. Well I'm going
 cut your ears off." He took his
 knife & cut his ears off, just
 left little pieces hanging there,
 cut his nose off, & told him
 "The rules are among men,
 you don't want to look good,
 you want to look mean; that's
 why I cut your ears & nose off."
 So he said "Stick out your hands."
 He did so. W. split his fingers
 far up. "Look here, did you
 ever notice men have
 long fingers? You don't look
 a man. Your fingers are too
 short. That's why I split them."

So he told him to go back to
 his people & he^{W.} would wait for
 them to come too. After he had done this
 he and the others went on. They struck a
 timbered country. They were hungry & were
 without anything to eat. So the Chief
 made remarks to the crowd that
 they all ought to hunt bear so they
 would have something to eat. "Now
 we'll scatter out, and look for
 a nice ^{hole} that's liable to be a bear hole.
 If any of you find this, you must whoop,
 and we'll all go it. So they all
 started out. Directly they heard
 the W. hollering far off somewhere.
 So he discovered a hole on a cane.
 A bird had cut that hole & lived there.
 So when they got there, he said
 "Here's a hole. It looks as if someone
 were living in there." "My goodness,
 no bear can go in there." He told
 them, "Why you ought to have
 told me in the first place." They
 went on from there in the usual
 way. Somebody whooped again.
 So they went over there. It wasn't
 W. The Chief said: "It's a goat

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big tree; there's sure a bear in
there. Well is there anyone
who can go up & make the bear
come out of the tree?" [At that
time there was always somebody
who could over & knock on ~~the~~ a tree
& say 'come out' & the bear will always
come.] The Chief thought some ^{one} would
do it in the usual way. But W.
said "Why I can do that." So he was
told "all right". He climbed the tree &
crawled into the bighole. He went
down after the bear & told the bear
"get out of here". So directly they
saw the bear come out. W. was
pushing him to make him go.
So they killed the bear. They went to
a place where there was plenty
of wood & camped. They skinned the
bear there & barbecued it by getting a
sharp stick & putting it fairly close to the
fire. One of the fellows made a
pan of bark, & he had a bucket.
He ran the bear grease into the bark
pan & bucket. It was poured in the bark
pan to cool. They camped there
several days. So then one of

the old man said "Tomorrow we'll
 hunt a turkey and dip him in this
 grease." So the next morning they
 all started to hunt those turkeys. So
 W. started out with them. He blundered
 up with a bunch of turkeys. So he
 did as he understood, that he would
 have to catch the turkey alive. So he
 got after one of those turkeys & caught
 one alive. He took it back home
 to the camp. When he got there, there
 wasn't a soul there. He was just
 by himself. The way the men
 spoke was to dip the turkey in
 grease, so he thought he would
 proceed with the work. So then
 after he got through dipping
 the turkey in the grease, he let
 him go, & after a bit would catch
 him again & dip him again.
 So he kept it up a long time as
 the hunters didn't return for a
 long time. So the turkey was
 grease all over. So directly
 he saw one of his partners coming,
 he was just through ducking
 the turkey in the grease, & the

Turkey was pretty nearly drowned.
 So he told him, "Well I've got a
 turkey. I've done what you said;
 I'm pretty tired as I've been
 ducking this turkey a long time.
 I expect you'd better help me."
 So that man said "My goodness
 you've wasted that grease, and it
 was sure good grease." The turkey
 by kicking had scattered
 grease every place. "That ain't
 what we mean by dipping
~~the~~ turkey in grease. You
 always clean ~~this~~ turkey up
 good & cook it. Then after it's
 cooked you dip the meat
 into the grease & eat it." So W
 "Why didn't you say so in
 the first place? I'd have had
 it cooked long ago." & when
 the others came back the turkey
 was cooked & the man told what
 this W. had done. The old man
 said "I am going to tell you. Hereafter
 you mustn't joke, you must talk plainly
 or he might play some trick on
 you." So then after that they left that

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camp & went off in another place to camp.
The leader said "We ought to hunt
some deer & take some deer home."
So this W. hunted for several days &
killed nothing. Finally he killed a
big deer. So he had heard them say
they would take the deer home. But
they didn't mean that when each
man killed a deer he was to go home;
it was intended that when many
were killed they'd all go home
in a bunch. So when he killed his
deer he skinned the deer legs up
half way or he could tie the
legs together with deer skin. He
crawled under & the deer was fastened
on him. He went on & on. Some
body whooped. He looked around
& said "Goodness! There's a big
bunch of Indians." He never
stopped. Kept on going. Those
Indians surrounded him &
they said "Well we've got you
now." And he said "Yes, you've
got me now, I guess." So he saw
in front of him a steep cliff of
rocks, probably a thousand feet

to the bottom. So he commenced to
 go where the cliffs were. They began
 to crowd about him, about to push
 him off. So he said "you people
 must be very anxious to go down
 there. So I'll put you there." He
 took the deer off his back & laid
 it down. Right then they discovered
 he was a man with power. They
 tried to get away ~~with~~ but they couldn't.
 They got plumb weak & they'd run
 & he'd whoop & they'd fall down.
 They tried to crawl on their
 hands & knees but couldn't. So
 then he began to grab them &
 throw them down that steep hill.
 These men would stick on the
 limbs of trees below. So finally
 he got every one save one whom
 he left to tell the tale. He called
 him & split his ears, split his
 fingers, split his' fingers. "I'm
 begin'g to make you look like"
 a man, some thing man.
 In the meantime afterwards he
 was going towards the camp. He
 threw the deer down & told his

friend & skin him. They cut the deer
 up & camped there a few
 days longer. They camped 3 different
 times going back home. So the
~~old~~ old chief told them all the time
 "you want to be careful. This man
 can't take a joke. The very thing
 you tell him, he'll go & do. He
 may hurt us some day." Some
 said: "We'll go on a hunt & kill
 everything alive that we see
 and take it home with us."
 So W. said "all right". While he
 was hunting he saw one of his
 companions ahead. He thought
 "Well his alive I believe I'll get
 him." So he killed him. He cut
 holes in his legs so he could
 carry him on his back. When he
 went on further he saw another
 one of the his companions. So
 he did the same to him, strung
 him up, went on home looking
 for anything that was alive.
 When he got home, he threw the
 two men down in front
 of the people. "Well this is all

I could find alive". The instructions
 were to kill anything alive. So the
 old man said: "Now the things
 happened just as I told you
 he'd do. So now he's played
 this trick on us, he's killed 2
 men - I always told you that
 you should explain everything
 fully to him so he would
 understand it right. So the
 chiefs notified their bands that
~~they~~ had discovered that W
 had such power he could
 do anything. The chiefs told the
 bands he ought to be very care-
 ful in talking to him, that when
 they tell him anything, they
 must explain it fully and
 kindly so he would under-
 stand it right. At that time W
 became a very powerful man. So
 he kind of left the tribe, and went
 way off, built him a bark house
 for himself. One day a bunch of
 men came and surrounded
 him. They told him "We've got you,
 we've got you now!" or

He said: "Yes you've got me.
 Come in." He raised the flap.
 They all came in. Pallets were
 spread down around the
 fire at the center of the house.
 "Will sit down men. I'll cook
 dinner before we go." So he
 went to work & started dinner &
 put some big kettles on the
 fire. Puts lots of venison in them
 & water so as to make plenty
 of soup. So when he got the
 cooking done, there was lots of
 boiling soup. So he asked
 the men "Where's your i-la
 (brave)." They thought he was
 going to feed him first. So they
 pointed him out to him. So he
 grabbed one kettle full of soup
 & threw the boiling soup right
 square on the i-la's face.
 So he had a big wooden
 spoon in his hand, so he
 dipped it in the kettle & com-
 menced to hurl the hot
 soup in the others. So they
 all started to run out of the

house when he did that. So
 he kept on throwing on hot coals
 on them & they ran out of the house
 as fast as they could. After they
 were all out, he grabbed his
 little ax & he whooped at them
 & they all could run no
 further, they fell on the ground.
 So he killed them all with
 his ax excepting one. He ~~told this~~
 cut his ears off, split his ^{the split his hands} fingers,
 & cut off his nose, & told him
 to go back and tell the people,
 and to come back again
 with some people with him.
 "I'm going to live here all the
 time. So one time he went back
 to hunt the tribe & kind of visit them.
 So he came to a bark house & saw
 no one. So he went right in. He
 thought some body might be inside.
 So when he went he saw a little boy
 sitting at the fire place. He was about
 5-6 years old. So when W stopped him
 he saw the boy parching corn &
 eating it. So W just looked at the
 boy & said "By crabs you live

a hard life - I'll just kill you +
 get you out of misery." So he
 pulled out his ax + just as he struck
 at him, as he got half to the boy's
 head, the boy disappeared +
 there was a big flint rock there.
 W. stopped his ax - "By Cakes I
 came near splitting my
 ax hitting that rock!" When W.
 got out of the notion, + drew back
 his ax, that boy sat there again -
 so ~~he~~ said "W. u. e. l. (excl. of surprise)
 You must be kind of powerful
 yourself." So W. ~~not~~ asked the
 boy why his friends were that
 made him so great. "The thunder
 birds were his friends. So W.
 told him "If the Thunder birds are
 your friends tell him to shoot that
 tree out there all to pieces!"
 So the little boy ran out, whopped
 and told the Thunderbirds to
 strike the tree with the light-
 ning. So in a very short time
 it commenced thundering
 and lightning, + the lightning
 struck that tree + tore it all

to pieces. So the splinters scattered
around + pretty nearly hit
W. + scared him badly. So
he told him: "You must be kind
of a bully fellow yourself. So
you'll be my friend hereafter."
He said to the little boy - & he picked
him up + walked off with him.

Finally he raised him to be a man.

So then they would go still further,
by themselves, they were not afraid as
W. & Xamokias had a partner. So
one day W. said one day "Let's
go clean around this earth." So they
started and went E. then N.,
then W.; ~~the~~ they got NW in the
cold country. They ran on to
some big giants, & those
giants would follow them.
A giant would whop at them.

W. then was kind of hoodooed;
these people had more
power than he. Everything they would
holler W. then got weaker, even his
bones ached. So this friend of
his, this boy had more
power than W. had.

So he helped W. He horsewhipped W because he was scared and was getting overpowered - so by his assistance W^{the} managed to escape from those giants. So this friend boy told W. "Let's go back from here. We can't go around the earth. I see those giants will kill you." W then had a grudge against his friend the boy because the latter had more power than he had. So then W decided he would kill his young friend. So then one day W cooked a dinner + this young man lay down beside the fire and went to sleep. W got dinner ready. he looked at his friend. "By God, he's asleep." He took out his axe. "I believe I'll kill him right now." So he struck at his head with his axe. The boy jumped ^{up} and whooped. The axe stuck in the ground. W. told him "I just wanted to wake you. Dinner's ready." This young fellow's

turn come to cook dinner one day. So when the young man cooked dinner W was asleep. So this young fellow thought of what W did to him one time when he was asleep. So he looked at W. W was sound asleep. "I could do this same to him, but he couldn't escape!" So he picked up his ax. He decided to do him the same way, but not kill him. So W was lying there with his long hair spread out. He had a head gear of deer hair + turkey's beard. This boy thought he would chop that off, + not hit his head. He chopped that right off. W whooped quite a piece off yonder. The young man said "I only wanted to wake you my friend, dinner's ready." So W had kind of a grudge against this boy because the latter had more power than he had. W was always planning to kill him. He was in earnest when he struck at him but the boy was only playing.

So finally W + the boy thought
 they'd go off to find people to kill,
 kind of on the war path. In
 the meanwhile during the battles
 with other Indians, W wouldn't
 fight in earnest with the other
 people; he was looking for a
 chance to kill his friend. So one
 day while they were fighting
 with other Indians, W then got
 a chance to hit him from behind
 with his ax + split his head
 wide open. That boy grabbed
 his head + put it back together
 the way it was before it was
 hit. This boy told W "Will I
 guess you've got me. You
 slipped up on me. And I
 didn't think you'd do me
 this way." So the boy told him
 "I can kill you right now
 if I want to, but I'm not
 going to kill you. I'm going
 to let you live by yourself."
 So this young man quit W then
 and went home. So W went
 back to where the Delawares

were so they both went back to the same tribe but did not hang around with each other any more. So this young man lived one year. Then he died. His head came apart where W split it open - After his friend died W never went anywhere by himself, + stayed with the tribe. He finally married. He had a sister in law living. She went off down to the creek and started to chop down a tree. At the time it was ready to fall, W walked up just where it was going to fall. So this woman saw him just as he got even with the tree. She said "W, you are so powerful + can do anything; let me see you catch this tree as it falls!" He said "Oh yes I can catch it," + he threw his hands up. So she chopped the tree so it fell right on him. He held the tree up, but he sank into the earth clear up to his knees but kept the tree from the ground. He kept on sinking till he sank

into the ground till he sunk to his neck. So the last word he told his sister in law "So I guess I will have to leave you all. I will be back when the big general war on this earth comes off". He spoke that whenever a little girl had a baby with the little finger cut off at the joint, that boy would be him & there would be a general war. When he finished talking he sank into the ground. But he was still alive. It was as if some one were going some place.

by Siles: When we saw old people walking slowly with bent backs, he would say "I'm going to put you up off your misery, & take out his arse. Then the prison would little fort & try to get away. "Gee" said W "You can go pretty far when you want to."

By Elkhan. W was kind of a doctor too. He'd heal people when they were sick. But he had to be told plainly. If you said "Tate

Father, take pity on my child" he would take his ax + put it out of misery. But if you said "take pity and Cure him, he would do it.

By Silas : Similarly with lazy or sleeping persons: they would be put out of 'misery'.

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2776

MICHELSON, TRUMAN

MUNSEE

&

Delaware

Ethnological and linguistic field notes from the Munsee in
Kansas and the Delaware in Oklahoma. [1912]. 170 pp.
185

This field work is referred to in 34th Ann. Rept.,
B. A. E. (Washington, 1922), p. 16.



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