

Xuyh Roots

Told by Edna Deacon at the home of Alta Jerue, Anvik, AK, October 2002.

Told in Deg Xinag (Deg Hit'an, Ingalik Athabascan) and English.

Recorded by Alice Taff and Donna Miller MacAlpine.

Transcribed and translated by Donna Miller MacAlpine, Alta Jerue, Edna Deacon, and Alice Taff.

Recording	Translation	Begin Time - mm:ss.ms
Si'ezre' Edna.	My name is Edna.	00.450
{xedh xedh} Xidhitlandi Legg Jitno'.	The place where I was born (was) Shageluk.	06.502
Singonh vi'ezre' Anna Wilson.	My mother was called Anna Wilson.	13.164
Sito' vi'ezre' Peter Matthews.	My father was called Peter Matthews.	18.980
Soda vi'ezre' Isabelle.	My older sister was called Isabelle.	29.755
And sighaye, Edward, Riley, Morris,	And my older brothers, Edward, Riley, Morris,	35.213
and sichidlqay yi McMohan, John, and there were	and my younger brothers McMohan, John, and there were	45.805
other two, tr'ixineganh ye chilqay xun ezre' qul.	other two, babies, boys with no names.	59.819
And my half sister is Lucy.		01:15.367
(DM) Is there a word in deg xiq'i for half- sister?		01:21.725
Ngidiq,	Up there (pointing from Anvik towards Shageluk),	01:30.584
sixinitlyonh, singonh and sito'.	they raised me, my mother and my father.	01:35.265
Sito' getiy, a,	My father really,	01:42.181
dinanol di'ne tux,	when he tells us,	01:50.342
yuxudz nitr'iho'ol ts'i xiyan'.	everything we have to obey.	01:52.414
Dina ts'i viyi xitaldhiyh, dixo'in,	At us he gets mad, therefore,	01:55.784
vit'inaljit.	we are scared of him.	01:59.350
Nixsiyal xingo,	While I was growing up,	02:09.111
"Yuxudz ingit'anh," silne tux.	"You have things to do," he tells me.	02:11.372
"Yuxudz ist'anh ts'i xiyan'.	"Always be making something.	02:15.034

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

Digil’anh ilt’e,” silne.	Make something always,” he always tells me.	02:17.352
Idal digitatl’an’,	The first time I start making things,	02:20.232
xuyh xuxithdatl, singonh and sito’.	roots they’re going for, my mother and father.	02:25.980
Sidedig,	Me too,	02:33.622
gidenist’ith xuyh,	I cut down roots,	02:36.725
ghitseg gguy.	willow roots.	02:39.802
Sito’, “Gidil’anh,” silne {ngo xa} {xan xen}	My father, “Make something,” he tells me.	02:42.906
“Go dadz ingit’a iy,	“Do this way,	02:52.498
dingil’anh ts’i, ngo xiq’at,” silne.	work at it, is what I want,” he tells me.	02:55.606
“Xuyh tingil	“Root basket (like a pail with a handle and a lid)	03:03.366
ithe dingil’anh ts’i xixindli’anh ts’i a,” silne q’idughitux.	why don’t you learn to make it,” he says to me sometimes.	03:06.544
Ts’i yitots’i, xuyh,	So, roots,	03:15.331
gitr’ighil’an’.	we gathered some.	03:23.160
Dina yix xuttheh xildik niggontr’ididatl ts’i.	Our house, down the bank from it, we came there (landed).	03:28.095
Diq’on tr’idliyo.	Up the bank we carried them (the roots).	03:32.373
Yitdi venhdidi xildik,	Right then the next day,	03:35.450
singonh, “Viq’angitr’itilch’il,” yilne.	my mother, “We are going to start peeling,” she says.	03:43.318
Vits’e isne.	I’m helping her.	03:48.219
“Go dadz dingil’anh iy,” silne.	“Like this do it,” she tells me.	03:50.705
Tr’ixeneg ts’i,	Carefully,	03:56.380
niya’,” silne.	scrape it,” she says to me.	04:02.220
Yuxudz itl’anh.	All this I’m doing.	04:06.291
Ixildik,	Then,	04:08.598
“Srilt’ingilch’il iy,” silne.	“Split it in half,” he tells me. [Now her father is showing her.]	04:11.888
Gee, ndadz go {dil} digili’anh ts’in’?	Gee, how I’m going to do this?	04:16.136
“Go dadz iy?” vidisne.	“Like this?” I ask him.	04:21.652

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

“E,” silne.	“Yes,” he tells me.	04:24.582
“Gil ngenatl’el yuxudz gidelax,” vidisne.	“I’ll watch you while you’re doing it,” I tell him.	04:28.757
Yitots’i giliggi {sril tiy, a sril}	And so one (root)	04:33.700
sriltr’iyaghilch’il.	he split it in half.	04:44.929
“Dadz in a,” silne.	“Like this,” he says to me (holding the 2 split pieces).	04:50.192
Sidedig yuxudz digitatluq.	Me too I start to copy him.	04:52.133
Uxiyil,	Suddenly,	04:56.926
siye’,	mine,	05:01.513
yiggiy sriltixinedr xiyil,	that one, right at the middle,	05:04.934
“Xuyh, srilts’ingilch’il iy,” silne.	“The root, you split it in half,” he says to me.	05:19.540
Yuxudz ditatl’andi	When I start to copy him,	05:24.060
siye’ yuxudz xiq’ay xits’i,	mine not even half way,	05:29.891
It just didn’t split all the way, so		05:43.646
vits’i siye xidolningh,	I got so mad at mine,	05:51.074
itlyil ts’i yuxudz ngiyixi ngin nighitldatl.	I just grabbed it and threw it on the floor.	05:53.813
Viq’idz yigitlik.	On it I jump up and down.	05:58.990
“Dodo dadz ingit’a ditl’anh ts’i,” disne.	“No more I work at this kind,” I tell him.	06:01.900
Ngi’egh yitots’i tinigitsit ts’in’.	Outdoors I stormed.	06:08.244
Yi xo’ot, ngi’egh getiy nedhodz ghisdo’.	Outside there, a long time I sat.	06:13.238
Xidigal xidonisiyo.	Finally I walk back inside.	06:17.487
“Xiday iy ngigixuyh?” silne a sito’.	“Where are your roots?” he asked me my father.	06:20.738
Yixoyix dhidlo. Dred ni’itlcheth.	Right there they are. Slowly I pick them up.	06:27.148
“Gogidet iy,” vidisne.	“Here they are,” I tell him.	06:30.875
“Dadz an a dili’anh,” silne, “tr’ixeneg ts’in’.”	“This is the way to do it,” he tells me, “carefully.”	06:34.098
{dr} “Dadz an a xiyitilch’il,” silne. {yi}	“This is the way they split it,” he tells me.	06:45.805
“Dalts’in’, getiy	“One side, (if it gets) too	06:50.448
xi’ughitux gits’an tr’idilay,” yilne.	thin, you turn it around,” he says.	06:53.635

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

{Tse} “Che {varne} varzne nditux,” silne’.	Try it again,” he tells me.	07:01.794
Yuxudz itluq yitots’i.	So I did that.	07:05.940
Ixildik sriltth’ighitlch’il tr’ixeneg ts’in’.	So then I start splitting it carefully.	07:08.420
“Che yuxudz dengilax iy ngo getiy	Do that way again (if it is getting) too	07:15.910
diyiq iy,” silne.	wide,” he tells me.	07:23.270
Yuxudz itl’anh ts’i xidigal,	I’m doing all these little things to it (and)	07:25.681
digitatl’an’.	finally,	
	I start doing it.	07:31.133
I was about 3 years old when I started that.		07:38.710
Sit’o taught me when I was about 3 years old.		07:46.058
How to split roots.		07:51.875
And a lot of those old people tell me,		08:04.770
I learn fast from my father cause my father		08:12.270
was an expert.		
I didn’t know it that time.		08:25.025
Because he had to split his own roots for fish		08:30.910
traps, too.		
And I never stopped since.		08:40.313
I make baskets, he show me how to start it.		08:43.483
But I get so mad with it. I just stomp on the		08:49.133
floor. I grab my poor little basket where I		
started,		
try to make the round one on the middle, and		08:58.901
I,		
that inside roots just come right off and I’ll		09:04.205
just drop it to the floor and just stomp on it.		
I’m not gonna, gonna make no basket I say.		09:10.934
But as the days go by I’ll go and pick it up		09:19.245
again and my father would tell me, “I’ll help		
you.”		
So he would help me and I watch him,		09:31.465
in how to cut the roots down. He’ll show me.		09:35.485
He’ll hold my little hands with... “I’ll hold		09:40.498
the knife he said. You put your roots right,		
right here on your hand like this and...”		

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

He'll cut it a little bit, yeah. " You gotta hold just right so you don't cut your thumb," he tell me.

09:51.987

That's how I learned. But it took lots of patience.

10:02.014

But I had hard time.

10:15.695

I get mad at it and I'll throw it on the floor and stomp all over it and I wouldn't, I'd say I wouldn't try to make baskets.

10:18.978

But I did learn.

10:32.672

(DM) Maybe you could tell us now, like now how you go and get the roots and everything.

10:42.807

When and how and where and the what!

10:47.813

Deg xiq'i.

The local language.

10:52.428

(ED) Deg xiq'i?

(In our) local language?

10:53.698

Go idal xuyh xitr'ididal tux,

Right now, roots, when we are going for them,

11:00.327

yi q'i yeg ne q'idz,

around there on the islands,

11:04.972

ne q'idz niq'itr'idil.

on the island we land.

11:09.221

"Go deg an a xuyh dil'anh," xividisne.

"Around here roots are collected," I say to them.

11:13.388

Sraqaye dinayil dixit'anh,

The children (who) with us come along,

11:19.960

"Ndagh a xuyh dili'anh ts'i. Ngo xuyh qul a ts'i," xi'ne.

"Where are the roots? Here (there are) no roots," they say.

11:24.810

Yiggiy yeg yuxudz q'ugixinditoyh.

Those things (roots) they're looking all around for them.

11:31.318

"Ndagh a xuyh? Ngo xuyh qul a," sixi'ne.

Where are the roots? There's no roots", they tell me.

11:34.937

"On," xividisne. Come and

"Come," I tell them.

11:39.289

Xivinotthi yitots'i.

I'm leading them.

11:42.842

Tritl tux isoyh.

Among the willows I walk.

11:45.034

"Deg 'n at xuyh ditl'anh," xividisne.

"Right around here the roots I get," I tell them.

11:47.232

"Ngo xuyh qul a," sixi'ne yitongo.

"Well, (there are) no roots," they tell me meanwhile.

11:50.780

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

Deg xiq'i yitots'i xivixo xinisayh,	In my language then I'm talking about them,	12:00.477
"Sraqay tlagg ye," xividisne.	"No-good kids," I'm saying about them.	12:03.700
Sixidhiltth'onh qul.	They don't understand me.	12:07.681
"Xantr'ixuxuneg.	"You don't know a thing.	12:11.557
Dughiyix xuyh xelanh dan go," xividisne.	Down here there's roots right here," I say.	12:13.971
Sixinil'anh.	They're looking at me.	12:19.318
Ghisol xingo dadz disneyh.	While I'm walking, I bend down.	12:22.793
Dadz disneyh ts'i.	Like this I bend down.	12:26.119
"Gogidet iy.	"Here they are.	12:27.730
Gon yiltuxneyh," xividisne.	This one (root) pull on it," I tell them.	12:28.680
Sixinitlggadz!	They're looking at me hard!	12:31.205
Tr'ixighonitldix itl'e.	I guess I surprise them.	12:36.200
"Go deg, a,	"Around here,	12:45.824
{xenon didligho} xinondidliyoy, gho xiyil xuyh xelanh," xividisne.	the willows that stand up, attached to them there are roots," I tell them.	12:48.410
"Axa xinuxl'anh," xividisne.	"Look around there," I tell them.	12:54.053
"Vizro dadz ingit'a	It looks like this (showing them roots before I pull them).	12:57.300
tritl ghun'," xughi disne.	willows, near them," about it I tell them.	12:59.533
"Ty dinuxlqoyh ts'i.	"Chop it off.	13:02.646
Yadz tuxla," xividisne,	Pull it out," I told them.	13:07.774
"viyil uxliggok angthe ts'i lats q'idz."	"with it run out there on top of the mud. [The kids are pulling up the long roots and following them down towards the river.]	13:09.870
Yadz ingdizrusr uxixitux.	So (the roots) are pulled up that way. [The roots are so shallow that they pull up with no struggle.]	13:17.951
Ne q'idz getiy, a, q'idughitux xezrenh.	On the islands really, ah, sometimes they (the roots) are (really) good.	13:27.683
Xezrenh tux xeledz lats viq'idz qul.	When it's good, it's nice (because) there's no mud on top.	13:33.645
Ixitux ghizro vixidughit'an'.	When it's like that you could easily see them.	13:37.740

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

Vith togh xiyil, {and a}	Under the bank,	13:51.738
xuyh ditr'il'anh, giyanditelay,	roots we get, inside roots, [Warp roots that the split weft roots are woven over.]	13:54.810
xuyh tth'oq xonet, xuyh tingil {yo}.	(for) root trays, root baskets.	13:59.473
Xonet giyanditel ditr'ilt'anh,	Inside roots we gather,	14:02.810
xuyh a, with t'ogh xit'o inathchit iy.	roots under the bank that are hanging down.	14:06.200
<i>Oh, the roots what I get is from on the sandbar. We get it even in the spring, summer or fall.</i>		14:19.810
<i>And you just can see it on the sandbar. One time I brought school kids out on the sandbar. And I tell them, "Come, there's roots back there."</i>		14:35.292
<i>"Where? There's no roots here," they told me. I tell them, "Sure. There's roots right here." I dug in the mud like this and I tell them, "Here. Pull this." And it just start coming off, long roots. And it just was to the one tree over there.</i>		14:55.118
<i>Gee, they were so surprised. That's how I got roots from the sandbar. Some years the gravel on the sandbar is just ah maybe about 2 or 3 inches. That's very good to get, to find that kind of place so you wouldn't have to work hard to pull roots out.</i>		15:14.878
<i>But this last few years it was so lots of water we had to shovel and shovel. We had to take shovel along. We get big bundles, big round bundles and they're just long. I'll, I'll take about maybe 3 bundles home and then when I get home I start cutting them in pieces. I separate them, from the fat and the skinny ones. I pile it up and then I put it up in my cache.</i>		15:40.308
<i>And from there I start cleaning them. I start scraping them, and splitting it and cutting it down into shape for ah, making, ah, trays and baskets with lids.</i>		16:19.116
<i>And the skinny ones I {y} save it for weaving, for birch bark baskets, edges.</i>		16:38.090

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]

But it's lots of work. 16:49.040

*I take my grandchildren out and show them
how to get roots but I never show them how to
split it yet.* 16:52.920

*I show, I teach 3 of my grand boys how to
make birch bark basket.* 17:02.306

*And they make it. They sell it for, you know,
their own, to buy clothes for their own self.* 17:11.733

(words added for clarification), {false start}, [note]