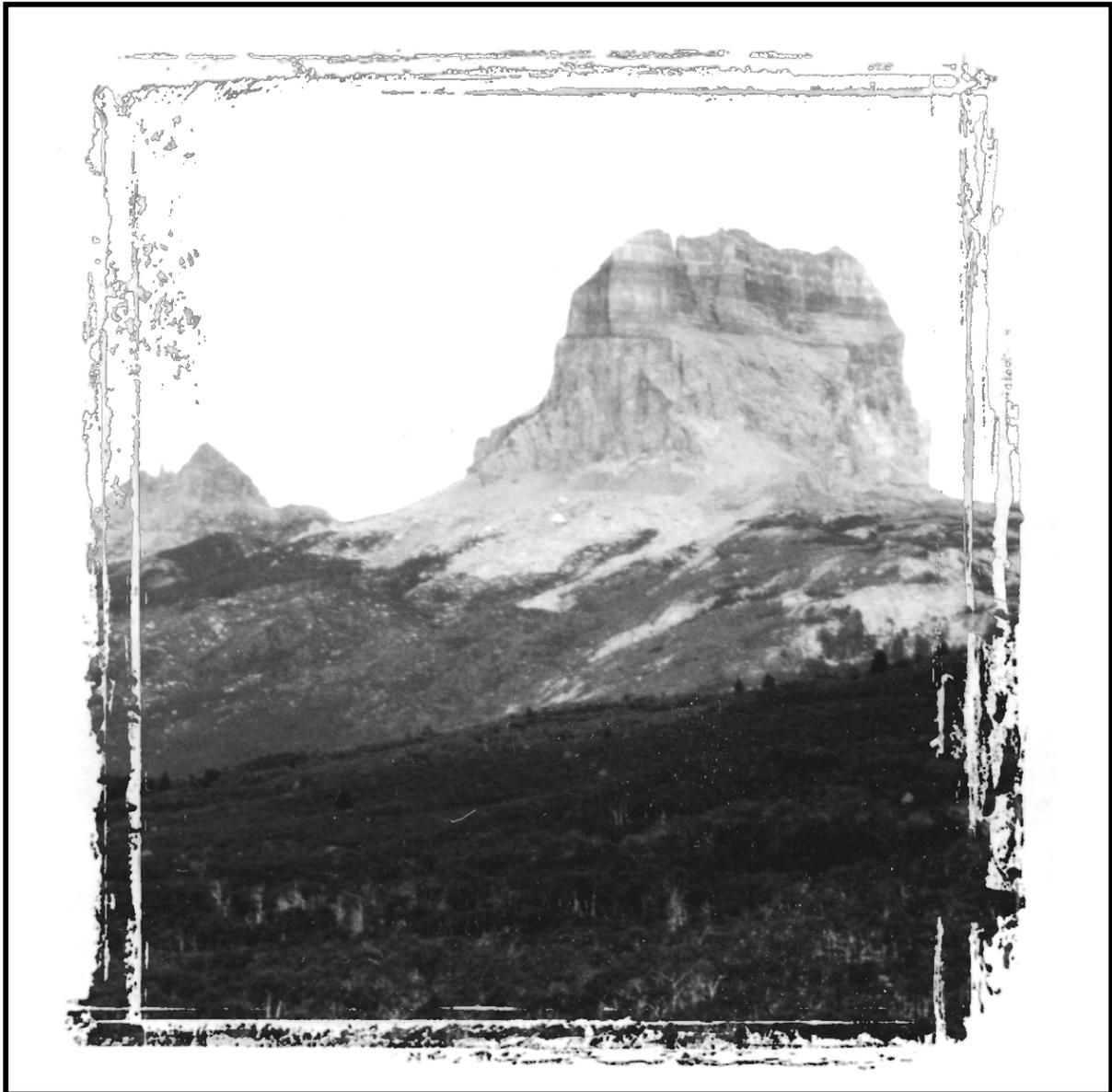


**"Our Mountains Are Our Pillows"**  
**An Ethnographic Overview of Glacier National Park**

By  
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Cover Photograph  
Ninaistakis (Chief Mountain)  
Photographer: Dr. Brian Reeves

## Foreward

The past few years have witnessed an increased public awareness of Indian cultures and religions. This public awareness is most notable reflected in the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-341), as well as in a more recent Executive Order issued by President Clinton which seeks to protect American Indian sacred sites on federal land (E.O. 13007). Along with this rising public awareness, there has also been an increased focus on traditional religious practices among American Indians themselves. Increasingly, American Indian peoples are requesting access to public lands and resources important to their traditional cultural or religious practices. Tribal peoples consistently point to the importance of these lands and resources in the exercise of their religions – both past and present.

National Park lands are set aside because they contain important aspects of the nation's heritage. These nationally valued assets are deemed significant enough to protect for the use and enjoyment of future generations. But they also often contain historic, cultural, or religious values for groups that have had a long and intimate connection to these areas long before the United States was born. As this report demonstrates, Glacier National Park is one of these important places for a number of Indian tribes.

This report was commissioned by the National Park Service in 1992 to document those values held by Indian peoples who consider the park and its resources important to their cultural traditions. The study is one of many undertaken to inventory the wide range of resources (natural, historic, archeological, ethnographic) that are found on park lands. Results of studies like these are fully considered in resource management plans, park interpretative or educational programs, and in the day-to-day operations of parks.

## **Mission Statement**

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally-owned public lands, and natural and cultural resources. This includes fostering wise use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environment, and the cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also promotes the goals of the Take Pride in America campaign by encouraging stewardship and citizen responsibility for the public lands and promoting participation in their care. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities, and for people who live in Island Territories under United States administration.

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost we would like to acknowledge, with greatest respect and thanks, the Piikáni elders and their active interest and participation in this study. It is only through them that we were able to come to understand how important Mistakis is to the Piikáni, and their interests in and concerns for this most sacred place. We hope our report meets with both their expectations and approval. We particularly want to thank elders George and Molly Kicking Woman, Joe and Josephine Crowshoe, Margaret Plain Eagle, and Buster Yellow Kidney for inviting us into their homes, for the many good conversations on many topics, and for providing physical, intellectual, and spiritual sustenance, as well as correcting our mistakes and informing us young people on many matters.

Many of our elder Piikáni interviews were carried out in the Blackfoot language. Margaret Plain Eagle, Buster Yellow Kidney, and Nelbert Little Mustache are also thanked for their active assistance in the translation and interpretation of the elders' conversations. Our good friend Curly Bear Wagner, former Cultural Coordinator of the Blackfoot Tribe, acted as liaison for our study, arranging interviews and providing transportation for the elders. Kurt Billadeaux, our young Blackfeet research assistant in 1993, provided valuable assistance with the interview logistics, as well as with our field trips. Kurt, as well, spent many hours going through George Bird Grinnell's correspondences on microfilm. He learned much from these and the elders about traditional Piikáni life -- topics that the schools hardly mention. It awakened Kurt's interest and pride in his Piikáni heritage.

Dave Ruppert, Rocky Mountain Ethnologist, ably coordinated our study, providing valuable interfacing with the Native American First Nations.

Glacier National Park personnel assisted us in many aspects of our study. Thanks particularly to Dierdre Shaw, curator of the park museum collections, for help with the ethnobotanical studies and with providing archival photographs. Bruce Fladmark's and Cindy Neilson's help and interest in our study are also much appreciated, as are the long-term loans of various documents, particularly the Grinnell Microfilms from the park library. Thanks also to Kim Walters of the Braun Library of the Southwest Museum for providing copies of Grinnell's materials, as well as to the Beinicke Library at Yale for assistance with McClintock's archives. Thanks to the Glenbow Archives -- our favorite user-friendly archives -- for their continuing assistance with our work, and for allowing us to use the "hard copy" of Schaeffer's papers.

Finally, we must posthumously thank Claude Schaeffer for the life-long interest he had in the Piikáni and the K'tunaxa, and the for wealth of information he compiled over 35 years, particularly on the K'tunaxa and their associations with the eastern slopes. His unpublished work has immeasurably enriched our study. We are sure he would approve.



## Executive Summary



The Glacier National Park region of the northern Rocky Mountains remains an area of profound importance to Native Americans, particularly the K'tunaxa and Piikáni, whose traditional associations with these lands extend back well over a thousand years (Table 1 and Figures 1-4 in Chapter 1; also see endnote 1). The K'tunaxa live west of the mountains in the Flathead and Kootenai River valleys. In traditional times they traveled eastward three times a year to hunt buffalo and other game. The Piikáni, one of the three tribes of the Nitsitapii (commonly referred to as the Blackfoot or Blackfeet), reside along the eastern slopes and adjacent plains. The mountains are their most sacred place.

This ethnohistorical and ethnological overview focuses on the K'tunaxa and Piikáni. Their traditional and continuing association with the land are described in considerable detail in the following report. Our study draws on documentary research and extensive consultation with Piikáni elders.

### The K'tunaxa

Three centuries ago, the Upper K'tunaxa consisted of seven bands, resident in the Kootenay and Columbia River valleys of the Rocky Mountain Trench. The three bands that traditionally associated with the Glacier National Park Region were the Gakawakamitutknik (Raven's Nest), Akanahonek (Tobacco Plains) and Akiyiniik (Jennings). The Raven's Nest's traditional lands were the Crowsnest Pass and the adjacent slopes of the Rocky Mountains. K'tunaxa elders remembered relatively little about this band when they were interviewed by anthropologists such as Claude Schaeffer in the 1930s, as they had essentially been destroyed by small pox in the 1730s.

Schaeffer recorded considerable information on the Akanahonek and Akiyiniik, particularly the Akanahonek's seasonal association and knowledge of eastern slopes of the Glacier National Park region. Schaeffer's work accumulated over a lifetime of working with the K'tunaxa. Although very little of it has been published, it is a substantive and highly significant body of anthropological data on the K'tunaxa, from which we have drawn substantially in this report.

The Akanahonek are considered in most K'tunaxa oral traditions to be the original K'tunaxa band. It was there, say the accounts, where the K'tunaxa were created. Linguistic and archaeological studies indicate they have been resident in their Rocky Mountain homeland for thousands of years. The Akanahonek traveled eastward over the passes to hunt buffalo three times during the year -- winter, spring, and fall.

The winter hunt was conducted on foot. Akanahonek families left the Tobacco Plains in January, traveling by snowshoe eastward over passes, such as the Buffalo (Cow) Trail (South Kootenay) in Waterton; an unnamed pass at the head of Logging Lake; Kootenay; Swiftcurrent; and "Packs-Pulled-

Up" (Logan) (see Table 3 and Figure 5 in Chapter 2). Akanahonek would hunt sheep and other game on the way, rejoin as a band on the eastern slopes, and then hunt buffalo, returning westward in late March with heavy packs of dried buffalo meat. Archaeological studies in the eastern slopes of Southern Alberta indicate the Akanahonek winter hunt is well over a thousand years old. The Akanahonek developed an ingenious winter pack system to bring the dried buffalo meat back to their winter camp at the Tobacco Plains.

The spring and fall hunts were carried out on horseback. The Akanahonek continued to hunt and trap on the eastern slopes of Glacier National Park into the late 1800s. Today, most descendants of the Akanahonek reside on reserves in British Columbia.

While the Akiyiniik may have joined the Akanahonek in the winter buffalo hunts in pre-horse days, as they did later, it was after they acquired the horse and moved their winter camps from the Kootenai River to the head of the Flathead Valley in the early 1800s that they began to go eastward in large numbers for the spring and fall hunts. The Akiyiniik used the Cutbank and Marias passes. The summit of the Marias was approached from the west side, not up the Middle Fork of the Flathead, but by a route up the South Fork (see Figure 5 in Chapter 2). The Akiyiniik continued hunting on the east side into the late 1800s. The Akiyiniik moved to the Flathead Reservation on the west side of Flathead Lake in the mid- to late 1800s. Other K'tunaxa people resident farther down the Kootenai River were later relocated by the U.S. Government to the Flathead Reservation.

Traditional K'tunaxa campsites on the eastern slopes were located in the Waterton, St. Mary, and Two Medicine (see Table 4 and Figure 6 in Chapter 2). Particularly important places for vision questing included Chief Mountain; Two Medicine; and a place called "Hand-Up-In-The-Mountain," thought to be located somewhere in the northwestern part of Glacier National Park. West-side places of significance include the "Place of Dancing," thought to be the foot of Lake McDonald. This is where the Akiyiniik carried out the Blacktail Deer Dance.

K'tunaxa place names exist for most of the major lakes, rivers, and streams along the eastern slopes (see Table 2 and Figure 6 in Chapter 2). Some were recorded by the Northwest Boundary Commission in 1860, and many others by Claude Schaeffer between 1933 and 1968. West-side place names include a large list compiled by James Willard Schultz in 1926, many of which are persons' names, commemorative and honorific in nature. These particular names were not recorded by Schaeffer when he worked with some of the same elder K'tunaxa consultants ten years later. Personal place naming is a Western European tradition rather than a Native American one. Most of Schultz's names are, in our opinion, not traditional K'tunaxa place names.

K'tunaxa ethnobotany was reviewed in detail through the examination of published and unpublished documents. Our study indicates that many of the plants that the K'tunaxa traditionally collected within various parts of their territory occur in the Glacier National Park region, and were no doubt collected by K'tunaxa parties while on their spring/summer and fall buffalo hunts to the east of the mountains. However, no specific information was found in our reviews relating to historic or contemporary K'tunaxa collecting activities in the Glacier National Park region. Oral historical studies would be required to determine whether or not such activities, as well as other traditional K'tunaxa activities, that historically took place in the park region, are continuing today.

## The Piikáni

### *Piikáni Ethnohistory*

The Piikáni, as noted earlier, are that tribe of the Nitsitapii whose traditional lands include the eastern slopes of the Glacier National Park region (see Figure 2 in Chapter 1). The Nitsitapii are comprised of three tribes: the Kainaa (Many Chiefs, often referred to as the Bloods) who have resided since 1883 on the Blood Reserve in southern Alberta; the Siksiká (Blackfoot) who reside on the Siksiká Nation east of Calgary; and the Piikáni (Peigan or Piegan). The Piikáni consist of two divisions: the North Piikáni who reside on the Peigan Nation in Southwestern Alberta, and the South Piikáni who reside on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana and officially refer to themselves as the Blackfeet (see Table 1 in Chapter 1).

Five hundred years ago, the Nitsitapii's traditional territory extended from the Big River on the North (North Saskatchewan) to the Big River on the South (Missouri), and eastward from the Rocky Mountains to the Forks of the Saskatchewan and east-central Saskatchewan. The Siksiká's traditional lands centered on the parklands and plains adjacent to the North Saskatchewan; the Kainaa ranged through the parklands of the Red Deer River and adjacent prairies eastward along the South Saskatchewan to beyond the Cypress Hills. The Piikáni's traditional range was along the eastern slopes and adjacent western plains from the Bow River southward to the Missouri, and eastward as far as the Bloodclot (Sweetgrass) Hills.

The Nitsitapii, like the K'tunaxa to the west, are the long-time traditional residents of these lands. Their oral traditions, sacred geography, archaeology, linguistics, and genetics suggest they have been resident here for thousands of years. Theirs is the most ancient of all the Algonkian languages (Goddard 1994). Nitsitapii traditions say that it was here that the three tribes were created in the long-ago time. Prior to becoming The People, tradition has it that they lived southwest of the mountains, which is where Algonkian speakers began to disperse from, possibly as long ago as 8,000 or more years.

The Nitsitapii, with their long-standing relationship with these lands and with the buffalo with which they were intimately associated materially, socially, and ideologically, developed the most complex culture of all the buffalo hunters of the northern plains. Their combined population in 1835 was estimated at around 15,000 people-- a figure that probably would also apply to the Nitsitapii before the smallpox epidemic of the 1730s raged across the plains. The Piikáni were the most numerous of the three tribes in the early censuses.

The Piikáni's traditional seasonal range followed the plains buffalo between their wintering grounds in the foothills and western edge of the plains and their summering grounds out toward the Bloodclot Hills and the Missouri. Traditionally, the Piikáni's mid-summer Okan (Medicine Lodge, miscalled the Sun Dance) was held in the vicinity of the hills. Favored wintering grounds were up toward the mountains, in the big wooded bottoms on the Bear (Marias), Oldman, and Bow. The South Piikáni generally wintered on the tributaries of the Missouri, and the North Piikáni on the tributaries of the Saskatchewan.

Not all of the 22 bands of the Piikáni followed the buffalo eastward each summer; some traditionally spent the summers on the eastern slopes and adjacent foothills, journeying eastward to join their friends

and relatives only for the Okan. Sometimes the Okan was held up against the mountains. Among the bands that remained in the eastern slopes were the Small Robes and Bloods. The Piikáni have strong traditional associations with the Glacier National Park region.

The Piikáni played a highly significant role in the fur trade on the Saskatchewan and Missouri (see Appendix B). The English traders considered the Piikáni to be the best beaver hunters, and far more proficient at it than were the Háninin or Kainaa. As early as the 1780s, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and Northwest Company sent men to overwinter with the Piikáni and encourage them to come to trade at the forts on the Saskatchewan. The HBC continued this practice into the late 1830s, in order to try to counter the American Fur Company, which had established a post--Fort Peigan--within traditional Blackfeet territory in 1832. In 1833, the Piikáni asked the English to establish a post farther south, at Chief Mountain, so that they would not have to travel such long distances to trade their beaver. The HBC never did. Fort McKenzie, built in 1833 at the location of Fort Peigan, which had burned that spring at the confluence of the Bear (Marias) and the Missouri, successfully attracted the bulk of the Blackfeet trade away from the Hudson's Bay Company.

American traders, in contrast to the English, collectively referred to all three tribes of the Nitsitapii and the Háninin as the "Blackfeet." The first encounter between the Americans and the Blackfeet was the Two Medicine Incident of 1806, in which a group of Indians (Piikáni, as it turned out 80 years later), whom Meriwether Lewis thought were Háninin, stole some horses. Within two years, the St. Louis press had identified the Indians of the Two Medicine Incident as "Blackfeet."

Collective stereotyping of the Blackfeet continued and conflated in the succeeding years, from 1808 to 1822, during the St. Louis traders' early and failed attempts to establish trade in the headwaters of the Upper Missouri, and later during the heyday of the American Rocky Mountain Fur Trade in the late 1820s and early 1830s. Many encounters occurred between the Blackfeet, the Americans and Iroquois-Québécois freemen, whom the Blackfeet particularly disliked.

The Blackfeet became known as the bedouins, the arabs, and the cossacks of the northern plains. Popular "historians," such as Washington Irving, added much fuel to the fire, and the Blackfeet gained a stereotypic reputation that carries down to this day in American history. Our close analysis of the primary fur trade documents, however -- particularly those of the Hudson's Bay Company -- indicates that most of the "interactions" between the Americans and the Blackfeet involved the Háninin, Kainaa, and Siksiká -- not the Piikáni. The Piikáni, in contrast, often tried to establish friendly relations with the Americans, lobbying them as early as 1822 to build a trading post in the headwaters of the Missouri. The Piikáni, as the Blackfeet of today's America, have acquired an ill-deserved reputation in histories of the American West.

The early 1800s saw a shift southward in the traditional territories of the Blackfeet. By 1814, the beaver had been hunted out of the Saskatchewan Drainage, and the Piikáni, Kainaa, and Háninin extended their hunts much farther south, discovering the rich, unexploited beaver resources of the Snake, Yellowstone, Green, and other rivers, which they exploited just as assiduously as did the Americans and the Hudson's Bay Company during the heyday of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade. The Piikáni remained the best beaver hunters throughout all of these and succeeding years. Although they hunted far to the south, they continued to prefer to winter in their traditional camps along the Bear (Marias) and Oldman. The beaver-rich valleys of the eastern slopes of the Glacier National Park region were important sources of

beaver during the fur trading years.

In the late 1830s, the fur trade gave way to the hide trade, conveying a decided advantage to the Americans in their trade with the Piikáni and other Blackfoot tribes, who continued to trade with the Americans rather than with the Hudson's Bay Company. The Siksiká and Kainaa wintered more frequently than in earlier years on the South Saskatchewan and in the northern tributaries of the Missouri. The Piikáni continued to winter in their traditional lands, as well as farther south. Smallpox raged through the camps in 1837, killing half the population.

The trade in hides accelerated greatly in the late 1840s, particularly after 1860, when steamboats could reach Fort Benton, the final successor to Fort McKenzie, which opened in 1849. At the same time as the Blackfoot and other Indian tribes were hunting the herds for hides, an increasing number of white and mixed-blood hunters were entering the hide trade. Increasing numbers of Americans were coming into the Blackfoot's traditional lands. Congress, having commissioned the Pacific Railway Expedition of the early 1850s, realized the need to make treaty with the Blackfoot and other tribes of the northwestern plains. The result was the Lane Bull Treaty of 1855, signed by both American and Canadian Nitsitapii, Háninin, and other tribes. This treaty set aside the lands north of the Missouri, east of the Continental Divide, for the Blackfoot (Piikáni), the Gros Ventre (Háninin), and the Assiniboine (see Figure 7 in Chapter 3). The 1840s and 1850s were a critical time in the histories of the tribes and the lands of the Upper Missouri and eastern slopes of the Rockies. This period has not been well-documented as yet through primary research into the documents relating to the American Fur Companies' activities and trade with the Blackfoot.

After the Civil War, an ever-increasing number of white prospectors, ranchers, settlers, and others, came into and settled in Montana Territory. Incidents between the "Blackfoot," who were still hunting the buffalo, and the whites, both in frontier "communities" such as Fort Benton and in more rural areas, increased, and resulted in the so-called "Blackfoot War" of the late 1860s, in which many whites and Blackfoot died. Many incidents involved the Kainaa, not the Piikáni. The end result of this so-called war was the "Massacre on the Marias" of January 1870, in which Colonel E. M. Baker, under orders from General Sheridan, attacked a winter camp of friendly Piikáni. The U.S. Army killed 173 or more Piikáni -- mostly women, children, and elders.

The Blackfoot were "pacified." At the same time, smallpox once again raged among the Piikáni, taking its toll. So did the depredations of the Whiskey Trade, which, during those years, was centered north of the international border in today's southern Alberta. In 1868, the Hudson's Bay Company sold the lands that were part of Rupert's Land -- their possession since 1670 -- to the government of Canada. At the same time, the U.S. Congress began to enforce the Indian Liquor Act of 1834. There was no Canadian presence in the West, and the American traders moved across the border.

In 1874, the Canadian government sent the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP) west to stop the Whiskey Trade and, more important perhaps, to collect taxes on goods exported from and imported into this newly acquired piece of Canadian real estate. The net result was that the larger American traders out of Fort Benton acquired lucrative contracts to provision the NWMP and stopped their trade in whiskey to the Indians; the smaller free traders moved back south of the international border into the St. Mary and other valleys along the eastern slopes. During the 1870s, the Whiskey Trade continued unabated among the Piikáni.

Traditional Piikáni life profoundly changed during the later 1800s, as their traditional means of subsistence, their lands, and many aspects of their traditional culture were forever changed. Buffalo -- the staff of life already in irrevocable decline -- languished in the late 1870s and early 1880s due to continued and accelerated overhunting by natives, Metis<sup>1</sup> and whites for meat and hides. Despite repeated warnings by concerned whites in both nations, neither the Canadian (the herds disappeared in 1878 in Canada) nor the American governments took any action. By 1883, there were no more buffalo to hunt on the Blackfeet Reservation.

The Piikáni began to starve, as bureaucratic bungling and incompetence, and contractor corruption resulted in the delay or non-delivery of rations guaranteed to the Piikáni under the Lame Bull Treaty. Over the years of 1883-1885, some 400 to 600 Piikáni -- one-quarter of the people resident on the Blackfeet Reservation -- died. They starved in the midst of plenty. Few of the many whitemen's cattle, numbers of which trespassed on the reservation, were killed by the Piikáni, nor did the Piikáni hunt and fish in the game-rich valleys of the St. Mary and Belly rivers. White Montanans did not care. They continued to believe that they would eventually acquire the lands of the Blackfeet. Subsequent events proved this to be almost true.

The Blackfeet Reservation shrank during these years (see Figure 7 in Chapter 3). In 1873, the southern boundary was moved to the Sun River by Executive Order. In 1874, the southern boundary was again moved, this time unilaterally by Congress, north to Birch Creek; and it opened up the southern lands to cattle ranchers, who had already occupied it with their herds in the 1860s, and who were lobbying with other Montanans to open up the Blackfeet Reservation. The Piikáni objected, but to no avail.

In 1888, after some years of negotiation, the Piikáni ceded all their lands east of Cutbank Creek and the Two Medicine (Figure 7). The Old People remember this, to this day, as the time when "we sold the Sweet Pine Hills." In compensation for this cession, the Blackfeet received \$150,000 yearly for ten years. Nine years later, they ceded the mountain portion of the reservation in return for the same amount over ten years, as in the 1888 cession. Under the agreement, the Blackfeet were guaranteed the right to hunt, fish, and cut timber as long as the lands known as the Ceded Strip remained public lands. White Calf -- Chief of all of the Piikáni -- expressed the concern of many Piikáni at that time:

"Chief Mountain is my head. Now my head is cut off. The mountains have been my last refuge."

The political pressures behind this cession related to the discovery of purported commercially developable deposits of silver and other metals in the region north of the Marias, which is today Glacier National Park. In 1898, the Ceded Strip became part of the Lewis and Clark National Forest. In 1910, these lands officially became Glacier National Park.

Land cessions were only one aspect of the multitude of changes occurring on the Blackfeet Reservation. In 1887, Congress passed the "Indian Allotment Act," designed to solve "the Indian Problem." This act, as it was applied after enabling legislation in 1907 on the Blackfeet Reservation, allotted each

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<sup>1</sup> A population classification in Canada consisting of people with mixed Indian and non-Indian ancestry.

individual Piikáni 320 acres. They, like other Americans, could sell their land if they wished. There was more land on the reservation than could be allotted, and surplus lands were to be disposed of by sale to Indians or whites. The net result was that by the late 1920s, 210,000 acres had passed to non-Blackfeet. By 1934, when the Dawes Act was repealed, 40% of the lands were in the hands of non-Blackfeet. The loss of these lands and the rights associated with them have had very negative economic and cultural implications, which carry down to this day.

The history of the reservation over the last 100 years continues to be one of repeated attempts to achieve individual and tribal economic self-sufficiency. Among the schemes forced on the Piikáni by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was an irrigation scheme, which only benefited a few on the reservation, and cost the tribe millions of dollars in trust monies. Cattle ranching and oil development had a similar history of failure during the earlier decades of this century. The intent of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 was to empower the tribes. Despite the fact that the Blackfeet were one of the first tribes to reorganize, little has changed over the last 60 years with respect to achieving economic self-sufficiency for the great majority of Blackfeet people resident on the reservation.

In 1898, the Ceded Strip became part of the Lewis and Clark Forest Reserve. Blackfeet tribal members continued to hunt, fish, collect plants, and cut timber and tipi poles in the valleys along the eastern slopes. Enabling legislation for Glacier National Park was passed in 1912 and 1914. The lands were no longer public lands in the view of the U.S. Government and, in their view, the Blackfeet lost or had their traditional rights severely curtailed.

In 1925, the Blackfeet, as part of a larger land claim against the United States, entered a claim dealing with the loss of traditional rights within that portion of the Ceded Strip that was by that time Glacier National Park. They claimed not that they still retained them, but rather that they had not been adequately compensated. The court's preliminary ruling, issued in 1930, was in favor of the government. In recent years, the Blackfeet further tested their traditional rights. Today many Blackfeet contend that they never gave up these rights.

The Blackfeet have played, and continue to play, a very important role in Glacier National Park's image. Their association with the park was markedly enhanced by the Great Northern Railway's (GNR) use of the Blackfeet image in the promotion and marketing of the park from its inception to the 1950s. Promotional pieces even renamed the Blackfeet and their reservation the "Glacier National Park Indians and reservation" (see Figures 8 and 9 in Chapter 3). The Blackfeet, according to the GNR, were real Indians. They greeted the arriving trains at East Glacier, lived in tipi villages, and entertained the visitors at the lodges, where Blackfeet pictographs decorated the walls. Blackfeet lore relating to the park was both described and invented in books by travel writers hired by the GNR to promote the park. Professional photographers staged Blackfeet camps and events for postcards, studio folios, promotional films, and movies (see Figures 13 and 14 in Chapter 4).

Although the Blackfeet image is no longer promoted by the Burlington-Northern or the Glacier National Park Company, it remains firmly fixed in the minds and memories of many visitors to the park today. And it should be, because Glacier National Park is the only Rocky Mountain national park in North America to have a very long-standing and ongoing native tradition associated with it. The Blackfeet continue to play an important ceremonial role at important events within the park. Piikáni elders view their presence and role in these ceremonial occasions as logical and continuing affirmations

of the Piikáni's long-time relationship with Mistakis (the Backbone, their name for the Rocky Mountains). To the Piikáni, Mistakis, as we will summarize below, is the Place where most sacred things began and continue to be sustained.

## **Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park**

The Piikáni's relationship with the Glacier National Park region is not only a long-standing one, stretching back well over a thousand years, but is also a fundamental part of their traditional religion and way of life. Mistakis is most sacred to the Piikáni elders. Mistakis is a place of great power, where many sacred "doings" happened in the past and continue to happen today (Table 5 in Chapter 2).

Mistakis is the place to vision quest -- the place where many sacred rituals and objects come from -- the place with which many traditional accounts and stories are associated and the place from which come sacred materials such as paints, animals, and plants. Documentary research supports the accounts shared with us by Piikáni elders concerning the sacred nature of Mistakis.

The Piikáni's sacred geography focuses on four areas of particular sacred significance within their traditional lands: the Bow River below Calgary, on and near today's Siksiká Nation; the Porcupine Hills of today's southwestern Alberta; the Blood Clot (Sweetgrass) Hills of northernmost Montana; and Mistakis (Figure 1 in Chapter 1). Many fundamental aspects of their traditional religion originated in, and continue to be, sustained by Mistakis.

Medicine Pipes are a fundamental aspect of Nitsitapii religion, both in the past and today. The Medicine Pipe openings are very important to the Piikáni. The first of the Medicine Pipes -- the Long-Time-Pipe held today by Elder George Kicking Woman -- came from Ninastakis (The Chief Mountain), where it is said that the most powerful of the Up-Above-People, including the Thunder Bird, live. Thunder Bird gave the pipe to the people in the long-ago time. All of the other Medicine Pipes in use today came from Mistakis.

The Beaver Bundle -- the great tribal bundle of the Piikáni and other Nitsitapii -- played many central roles in the past, as well as a continuing role in the sacred ceremonies associated with the Okan (Medicine Lodge). The Beaver Bundle was given to the first Piikáni by the Beaver People at the North Big Inside Lake (Waterton Lake). This event, we estimate, happened well over a thousand years ago. Later, at the foot of the South Big Inside Lake (Upper St. Mary), the Beaver People gave a Piikáni beaver bundle holder the tobacco seeds (*Nicotiana attenuata*) from which to grow their sacred tobacco. The seeds are traditionally kept in the Beaver Bundle. This event happened about a thousand years ago. Sacred tobacco gardens were sometimes planted in the St. Mary and Two Medicine valleys.

The sacred bundles contain a wide variety of plants, animals, and other sacred materials specifically associated with the bundle's origin and power. They play fundamental and essential roles during the opening of bundles. In many cases, the plants and animals in these bundles are intimately linked with Mistakis in origin and ongoing ritual.

Other sacred objects and ceremonies that came from the mountains include a number of sacred lodges, such as the Bear, Single Circle Otter (e.g. see Figure 11 in Chapter 4) and Blue Thunder lodges; drums;

other pipe bundles; and the Bear Spear. Sacred materials that were, and presently are gathered in Mistakis include red paint from a place on Cutbank Creek (one of three Piikáni collection locales still extant in the northern Rockies); pipestone from Cutbank and Divide Creek; and animal skins, parts and feathers. In older times, eagle catching was an important activity along the Front.

Many traditional Piikáni accounts focus on the mountains and their sacred animals: real bears (grizzlies), wolves, eagles, ravens, and others. An uncommonly rich body of oral accounts and written transcriptions exists, indicative of the importance of and the long-standing association between the Piikáni and Mistakis. Bear stories involving both "real" and "spirit" bears are most common, reflecting the importance of the bear and bear power in traditional Piikáni religion. Real bears have an important association with medicine pipe bundles.

Vision questing in the past took place, and today takes place at a number of locales within the eastern slopes, including not only mountain tops which continue to be visited today, but also, in the older days, other places such as lakes, rivers, streams, and waterfalls. These places are the abodes of the Under-Water-People, who often helped the Piikáni. According to one account, recorded by James Willard Schultz, the Under-Water-People resident in the South Big Inside Lake gave horses to the Piikáni.

Certain mountain peaks were and are favored places for vision questing; the most important, in earlier days, according to the elders and written accounts, were Two Medicine and Ninastakis (Chief Mountain) (see Figure 10 in Chapter 4). Ninastakis continues to be the ongoing focal place for Nitsitapii vision questing and other religious activities within Mistakis. North and South Piikáni, Kainaa, and Siksiká traditionalists come to this place, as do traditional people from other tribes, among which are Cree and Tsuu T'ina.

Ninastakis lies half in the Blackfoot Reservation and half in Glacier National Park. Increasing numbers of non-natives have been visiting the base, as well as the summit, of the mountain in recent years. Offerings have been taken, and ceremonies have been disturbed. The Blackfoot Tribal Business Council continues to log the forested north slopes. The recent slide in 1992 on the north face only temporarily halted these activities which, if allowed to continue, will ultimately result in the spiritual degradation of this most sacred of all sacred places.

Glacier National Park is characterized by many place names of Blackfoot linguistic derivation. Many of the names for mountains and lakes are commemorative in nature, and were assigned to these places by James Willard Schultz and George Bird Grinnell. Some are descriptive, and may be original names, such as Yellow or Rising Bull. Ninastakis is the only mountain within Glacier National Park that is, without a doubt, an original Nitsitapii name. In contrast, the Piikáni have names for most of the larger valley floor lakes, streams, and rivers (Table 2 in Chapter 2, and Figure 6 in Chapter 4), a number of which remain in use today, such as Mocowans (Belly River), Swiftcurrent, Cutbank, and Two Medicine.

Two Medicine commemorates the erection, on two separate occasions in the mid-1800s, of two Medicine Lodges at the traditional locale down the Two Medicine below the Holy Family Mission on the Blackfoot Reservation. Medicine Lodges were sometimes erected at the foot of Lower Two Medicine Lake; 1914 photography shows a Medicine Lodge and camp erected at the foot of Pray Lake. This appears to have been a movie set for a movie thought to have been shot of the "Scarface" story,

which concerns the origin of the Medicine Lodge.

In the last century, the Piikáni used three passes in the Waterton-Glacier area for traveling back and forth across the divide: "Where the K'tunaxa Go Up" (South Kootenay); Cutbank; and Medicine (Marias) (Figure 5 in Chapter 2). Well-defined trails connected these passes to the Old North Trail located just east of the park. The Old North Trail was very important to the Piikáni and other tribes for traveling north-south along the foot of the Rockies. Travois tracks are still easily seen at many places along its length in today's southern Alberta and Montana. The Old North Trail has been recommended by the Montana State Historic Preservation Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Piikáni occupied a series of traditional campsites in the eastern slope valleys, including camps at the feet of the North and South Inside lakes; the foot of Lower and Two Medicine lakes; up Cutbank Creek; and on Appikuni Flats (see Table 4 and Figure 6 in Chapter 2). The Piikáni traditionally hunted in the last century, as well as hunting into this century, in all the eastern slope valleys inside today's Glacier National Park. Trapping was and continues to be an important activity in certain places immediately adjacent to the park.

The Piikáni have a rich and extensive ethnobotanical knowledge. Our study, which included field trips and extensive work with Piikáni elder herbalists and medicine persons, identified over 80 species of plants that were or are still collected in and adjacent to the Park (see Tables 6-10 and Figures 18-22 in Chapter 4). The Piikáni believe that the plants in the park are bigger and have more power than those on the reservation outside. A number of very important species' east slope ranges coincide with the greater Waterton-Glacier ecosystem. They do not occur north of the Carbondale-Crowsnest Pass area in the Canadian Rockies or south of the area around Birch Creek/Teton River in the Montana Rockies. Particularly significant plant-collecting locales in Glacier National Park identified by the Piikáni elders include Two Medicine and Cutbank Creek (see Figure 10 in Chapter 4).

The Piikáni have a well-developed set of plant management techniques that ensure a continued supply of plants for food and medicinal and spiritual purposes. These continue to be culturally significant to the Piikáni, who retain considerable traditional ecological knowledge. While the elders recognize and appreciate the role that the park has played in protecting the plants, many are frustrated and concerned about having to "sneak in" to obtain plants.

## **Other Native American Tribes**

Other tribes also visited this region in the last three centuries. After they acquired the horse in the early 1700s, west-side tribes, particularly the Salish and Upper Kalispel (Pend d'Oreille) residing in the Flathead Valley, began to travel eastward to the plains across the Marias and Cutbank passes on seasonal buffalo hunts. There they, as well as the K'tunaxa, with whom they sometime traveled, often encountered the Piikáni and the other two Nitsitapii tribes, the Siksiká and Kainaa. The Salish and Pend d'Oreille resident today on the Flathead Reservation may have traditional associations with the Glacier National Park region, recalled in their oral histories. The Confederated Salish-Kutenai tribes of the Flathead Reservation were concerned about maintaining control of traditional knowledge. Consequently, they were unable to come to a mutually satisfactory agreement with the National Park

Service. The National Park Service remains receptive to working with the tribes on research issues in the future.

The west-side tribes often encountered the HÁninin (Atsina or Gros Ventre), who live on the plains east of the Piikáni. Their reservation, Fort Belknap in northeastern Montana, incorporates part of their traditional lands. The HÁninin, the northernmost of the five original tribes of the Arapaho, were sometimes allied with the Nitsitapii during these centuries, forming, along with the Tsuu T'ina, a group of Athabascan speakers – the so-called "Blackfoot Confederacy." The three Nitsitapii tribes, as well as the HÁninin, were generally all called "Blackfeet" by American traders. Horse-stealing parties of Blackfeet often traveled west over the passes to raid the west-side tribes, particularly the Salish and Pend d'Oreille, for horses and slaves.

In 1810 and 1812, two battles, documented in fur trade literature, occurred between the Blackfeet and the Salish-Pend d'Oreille. The locations of these battles have been attributed by some historians -- using anecdotal accounts of travel writers from 1916 to support their case -- to the Marias and Cutbank passes. However, our analysis of the fur trade accounts, Piikáni oral traditions, and the anecdotal accounts strongly suggests that these events have been wrongly attributed to the Glacier National Park region. They most probably occurred in the headwaters of the Missouri or Upper Yellowstone.

In the early-mid 1700s, some of the Absaroke (Mountain Crow) briefly resided on the eastern slopes in the Glacier National Park region. They had left their close relatives--the Hidatsa--on the Missouri some two centuries earlier, moving northwestward into traditional territories of the Nitsitapii, HÁninin, Nakota, and Cree, before drifting southward to the Upper Yellowstone. The Absaroke were driven out of the northern tribes' territories sometime in the early 1700s, shortly after the northern tribes acquired guns from the Hudson's Bay traders. James Willard Schultz recorded the accounts of elder Piikáni in which the Crow once camped in the St. Mary and Milk River valleys.

Plains Assiniboine and Nakota (Stoney Indians, or Assiniboine of the Saskatchewan) also entered the region. The Assiniboine people are distantly related linguistically and culturally to Dakota-speaking peoples then resident in today's southwestern Minnesota and adjacent South Dakota, from whom the Assiniboine split off some 800 years ago, gradually migrating west-northwest. The Plains Assiniboine, also known as the Assiniboine of the Missouri, reached their historic territory in the Missouri and adjacent plains of today's northeastern Montana and southernmost Saskatchewan some 500 to 600 years ago. Oral traditions indicate they were raiding camps of the Nitsitapii in the 1700s and 1800s along the eastern slopes. Today, the Plains Assiniboine reside on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeastern Montana.

The Plains Assiniboine and the Crow may be the people collectively referred to as "Snakes" in the fur trade and oral accounts of the 1700s from the Saskatchewan. "Snake" was the common word used by Algonkian-speaking peoples, such as the Nitsitapii, HÁninin, Cree, and others, to refer to the enemy. "Sioux" is in fact a corruption of the Ojibwa word "snake-person," which the Ojibwa used to refer to their enemies the Dakota.

The Nakota (Stoney Indians) moved westward up the North Saskatchewan into the forests and foothills of Central Alberta in the mid- to late 1700s. In the last century, they hunted southward along the Rocky Mountains into the Glacier National Park region, occupying old hunting territories that had once been

those of the Raven's Nest (Crow'snest) band of the K'tunaxa, who resided along the eastern slopes. The Raven's Nest band was decimated in the smallpox epidemic of the 1730s. The Nakota, who today live on the Stoney Indian Reserve west of Calgary, continued to hunt in the Glacier National Park region until the early part of this century, particularly in the northern regions of the park, in the Belly River and North Fork of the Flathead River.

Cree associations with the Glacier National Park region extend back into the 1700s, when Cree, who often traveled and wintered with the Piikáni, visited this region. The Cree's original homeland is north-central Manitoba. They began to expand outward a thousand years ago, reaching the Forks of the Saskatchewan by AD 1500. Groups along the southern edge of the forest, in contact with the Nitsitapii, Háninin, and Nakota, took up a plains way of life, eventually becoming the Plains Cree of the last century. Increasing conflict between the Nitsitapii and Cree and other tribes over the rapidly diminishing herds of plains bison brought some Plains Cree into the Glacier National Park region in the 1870s, during the days of the Whiskey Trade in northern Montana and southern Alberta. There they raided and made war on the Nitsitapii.

Later, Saskatchewan Cree, who had been part of western Canada's Riel Rebellion of the 1880s, fled south to Montana, many resided in the vicinity of St. Peter's Mission, north of today's town of Cascade. Around the turn of the century, they began to drift along the Rocky Mountain Front in search of food. They camped and hunted on both sides of the Continental Divide in the Glacier National Park region. These wandering, destitute and starving, reservationless Cree became the Rocky Boy Chippewa-Cree, who ended up camped in hovels on the outskirts of Helena, begging for food on the streets. In 1909, the U.S. Government forcibly relocated Rocky Boy's band to the Blackfeet Reservation, where they were given allotments. Most of these people moved to the Rocky Boy Reservation in 1916. Some remained; most reside today in the Babb area of the reservation.

## Conclusions

Our study documents that Native Americans -- particularly the K'tunaxa and Piikáni -- have a long-standing traditional association with the Glacier National Park region. A scant 150 years have passed since the great-grandparents of today's elders frequented this region, hunting and camping in its valleys; digging roots; picking berries; carrying out religious ceremonials; and communing with the Sacred -- an activity which continues to this day. One hundred and fifty years is but a moment in time of the thousands of years of the long-ago time in which their ancestors have lived with, not on, the land, respecting and honoring this special and unique place on Mother Earth:

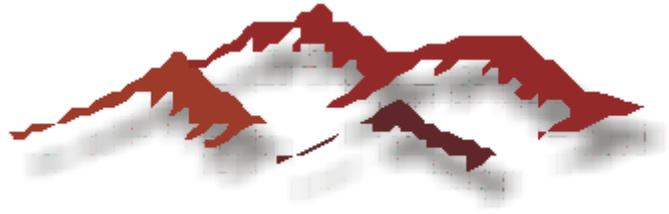
"We use the mountains quite a bit. Right now, old people. That old lady, they went up there that one time. She just sit there and smoke. She was really down-hearted. I tell her, 'We don't own the mountains.' She said, 'Why?' I said, 'White people took them, they claim them. The government claim them.' She said, 'Why?' She kept saying 'why' and she just had tears in her eyes. She said, 'We own them,' she said. 'Those are our lives, those are our pillows. We lay our heads on the mountains. Those are our pillows.' She said these things and I believe them. That was some old lady, a long time ago. She said 'Those are our pillows.' That's what she said. 'We lay our heads on that

rock, at the foot of those rocks.' And that old lady was still thinking we own them. And she's still got her head on that rock. That's why she started crying. She said, 'I don't know. I feel sorry. I didn't know they took them, and the reason why they took them. Nobody told me.'

"[The old ladies], they won't forget. I know I won't forget. Even if this is my last sacrament or something. I still won't forget the mountains. That's what I'm gonna put, I'm gonna make a word deal. If I ever go, I'm going to have somebody write when I go, 'The mountains are mine. I'll never forget. They're my own stone.' The old people just cried, they thought they still owned them. The old lady. The old lady next to her filled her little pipe, she offered them smoke. She said, 'They took it away from us.' She just nodded her head and said, 'We still own them.' I took the old lady's word. I never forget that. Even if they take me someplace and lock me up, I still will think that's home. (SL-2).

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION



#### Glacier National Park -- An Uninhabited Wilderness?

Glacier National Park, with its spectacular landscapes, abundant wildlife, and diverse plant life, is in many Americans' minds one of the last remnants of "primeval wilderness" in the United States Rocky Mountains. This image persists, despite the strong image of Native Americans, specifically the Blackfeet, associated with its initial promotion and interpretation.<sup>1</sup> Often Glacier National Park is depicted as a relic of this once-great American wilderness in which Native Americans played little or no role, or as an area not occupied by Indians until very recently, and then at best only peripherally (Bucholtz 1976; Newell et al 1980; Sheire 1970). This image prevails today, despite the fact that it has been well known among most archaeologists and anthropologists, for the last 30 or so years that Native Americans have seasonally frequented the Northern Rockies for the last 10,000 years.

To early explorers, the Glacier National Park region exemplified the concept of a pristine landscape. For example, Walter McClintock wrote in *The Old North Trail*

"Words fail to describe the magnificence of the glaciers and waterfalls, and the majesty and impressive beauty of the numerous high peaks and stupendous mountain ranges. Although this country is practically unknown, the difficult trails being frequented only by hunters, trappers and Indians, its scenic wonders are probably unsurpassed by any within the United States. The region should be reserved by the Government as a National Park and Game Preserve" (McClintock 1910:15).

McClintock's comments reflect the sentiments of conservation-minded citizens of the day who labored to protect the wilderness areas. Such views were made popular by influential conservationists such as John Muir, who argued that most land uses were incompatible with nature, and that it was necessary to protect such untouched, untrammelled territories from the march of European colonization and industrial expansion (Muir 1901; Anderson 1993). As Anderson (1993) correctly notes, this view led to a human/nature dichotomy, in that lands "used" by humans were to remain separate from "wilderness" areas. Wilderness areas, in turn, were to become the playgrounds of America. This viewpoint was expressed in an editorial that appeared in *Outlook* (New York) in April of 1910:

"The proposed [Glacier National] park would make a wonderful recreation ground for the American people. The summer and autumn climate is cold and bracing. The mountains and glaciers offer the only chance for mountaineering of real Alpine character (except that afforded by the Coast Range and Alaska) to be found within the limits of the United States. The trout of the cold St. Mary waters fight with a vigour that is seldom seen even in the famous streams of eastern Canada. And the mountains still shelter a sufficient number of our game animals (including our three most splendid

species, the mountain sheep and goat and the grizzly bear) to enable the tract to become in time an important animal refuge. If by the action of Congress the pending Bill becomes a law and the Glacier National Park is established we shall have added to our system of National parks one which in many features is unlike, and which in its beauty and opportunities for wholesome pleasure will fitly supplement those which we already have."

These statements also reflect another common perception--that much of North America -- or in this instance, Glacier National Park -- was unused, or "practically unknown," prior to the arrival of Europeans. This tradition is echoed in the famous 1963 "Leopold Report" to the National Park Service, which declared that each large national park should maintain or recreate a "vignette of primitive America," seeking to restore "conditions that prevailed when the area was first visited by the white man" (Anderson and Nabhan 1991).

Unfortunately, the "vignette" envisioned by the Leopold Report captures only a portion of the picture. It excludes the native peoples who utilized these "wilderness" areas for generations, and denies their role in creating and maintaining the diverse habitats that the Europeans originally observed. As Anderson (1993:9) notes, "By dismissing the Indians, their plight and their knowledge, Muir and other early conservationists set the foundation for an environmental movement that has systematically disregarded the role of Indians as environmental managers and has perpetuated a myth of native North America as a virgin, untouched wilderness."

Today, the myth of a "pristine wilderness" is waning with the growing realization that many habitats are not "natural," but resulted from and depend upon, human interaction (eg., Anderson 1993; Turner 1991; Lewis 1973). Concurrently, appreciation is increasing for the depth and scope of the traditional ecological knowledge retained by native peoples throughout North America. Perhaps more importantly, western science is beginning to understand that the oral traditions of native peoples contain much of value in managing natural resources and conserving biodiversity (eg., Blackburn and Anderson 1993; Gadgil et al. 1993; Hunn 1993; William and Baines 1993), particularly in national parks and other "wilderness" areas (eg., Anderson 1993; Anderson and Nabhan 1991; Lewis 1989). As Gadgil and colleagues note:

"Indigenous peoples with a historical continuity of resource-use practices often possess a broad knowledge base of the behaviour of complex ecological systems in their own localities. This knowledge has accumulated through a long series of observations transmitted from generation to generation. Such "diachronic" observations can be of great value and complement the "synchronic" observations on which western science is based." (Gadgil, et al., 1993:151)

## The Ethnographic Overview

Our study provides an overview of the traditional ethnohistorical association with, and ethnological knowledge of, the native peoples whose traditional territory included Glacier National Park. Specifically, our overview:

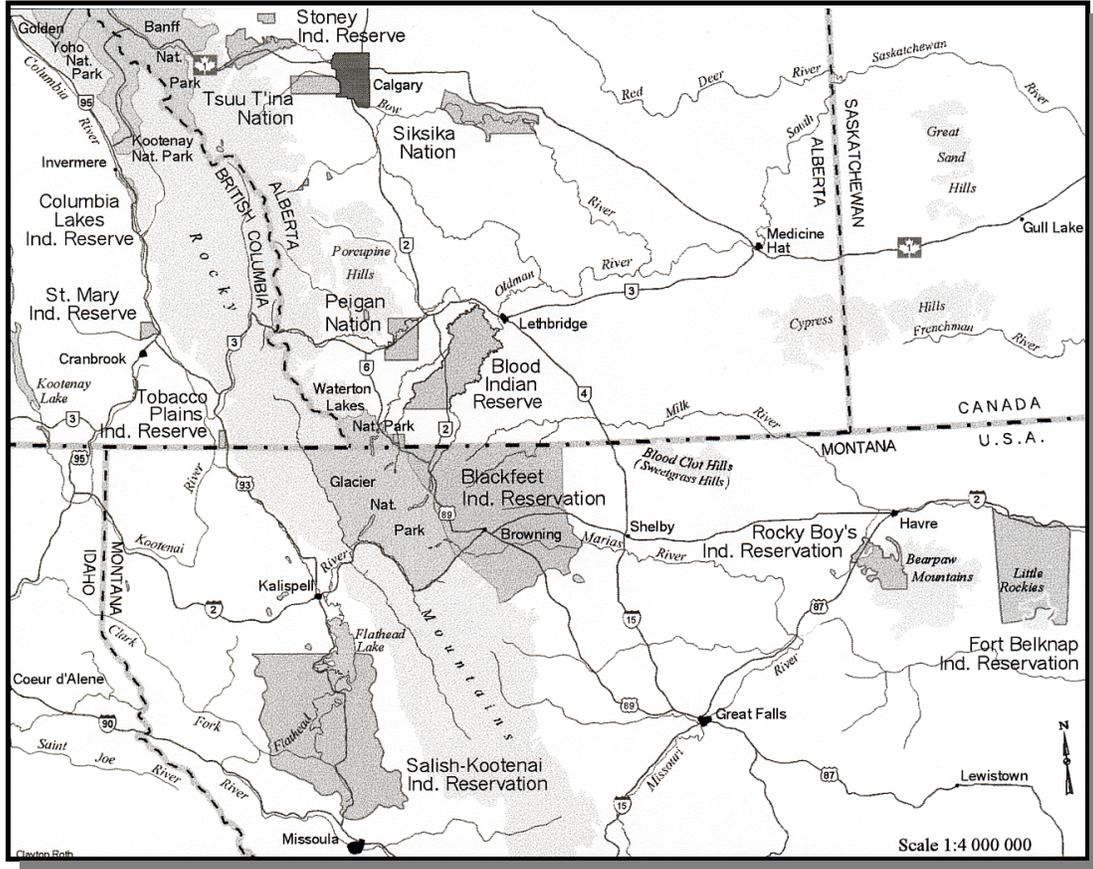
- Identifies traditional ethnohistorical and ethnological associations with the landscape, plants, and animals of Glacier National Park, which were, and sometimes continue to be, used by native peoples of the region (inventory);
- Analyzes traditional Native patterns of resource use, including specific collecting areas, particularly with reference to plants, within Glacier National Park; and
- Assesses the cultural significance of both the "secular" and "sacred" resources and ecosystems of Glacier National Park to native peoples today.

Numerous Native American peoples visited the mountains and valleys of what is today Glacier National Park; however, it was traditionally part of the territory of both the Piikáni and the K'tunaxa Indians.<sup>2</sup> The principal group of the Piikáni Nation -- one of the three tribes of the Nitsitapii (Kainaa, Piikáni, and Siksiká, collectively) generally, but incorrectly, referred to as the Blackfoot or Blackfeet -- who traditionally associate with the area today, are the South Piikáni. They officially refer to themselves as the Blackfeet, and reside on the Blackfeet Reservation, which once included the eastern slopes of what is now Glacier National Park.

The South Piikáni traditionally hunted, collected plants, camped, and conducted religious and ceremonial activities on the east side of the park. The North Piikáni, who live on the Peigan Indian Reserve in Alberta, also have strong ties to Glacier National Park. The Kainaa, resident today on the Blood Reserve in southern Alberta, have developed strong spiritual associations with Ninastakis (Chief Mountain) since their move to this reserve in 1883.

The west side of Glacier National Park -- and, seasonally, the east side -- was traditional K'tunaxa territory. The three K'tunaxa bands with the closest ties to Glacier National Park are the Akanahonek (generally referred to as the Tobacco Plains band); the Akiyiniik (the Jennings band who moved to the head of the Flathead Valley in the early 1800s) and the Gakawakamitutkinink (Raven's Nest band) a K'tunaxa band who lived on the eastern slopes most of the year. They were totally decimated by the smallpox epidemic around 1732. Like the Piikáni, the K'tunaxa utilized the plants and animals of the region. K'tunaxa bands also crossed the mountain passes, hunting buffalo and camping in the eastern valleys, until the early decades of this century.

Although other tribes such as the Salish, Upper Kalispel, Assiniboine, and Cree were in the region in the last century, their use of the park area itself appears to be more limited. For this reason, our study focuses on the K'tunaxa and Piikáni people.



Map 1: Waterton-Glacier Region and Native American Reserves and Reservations

## Report Methodology

Our study involved both documentary research and consultation with elders from the Blackfeet Reservation.

### *Documentary Research*

Documentary research focussed on a review of Piikáni and K'tunaxa ethnohistory and ethnology, available in both published literature and primary archival documents. Where appropriate, we emphasized the consultation of primary unpublished sources, including works of George Bird Grinnell and Claude Schaeffer.

We also consulted archival materials in the Glacier National Park library, and searched the *Choteau Acantha* from around 1890 to 1940 to examine the record in the popular press. A Blackfeet research assistant retained as part of our program, Kurt Biladeaux, researched Grinnell's correspondence from the Sterling Library at Yale University, which is available on microfilm, and loaned from the Glacier National Park library.

### *Elder Native Traditional Consultants*

Before fieldwork began, the National Park Service approached cultural representatives of the Blackfeet, Salish, and K'tunaxa to invite their participation in the project. While the Blackfeet approved the project, the K'tunaxa and Salish were concerned about retaining control of traditional knowledge. Consequently, they were unable to come to a mutual agreement with the Park Service. The Park Service remains receptive to working with them on research issues in the future.

Consequently, our report emphasizes traditional Piikáni ethnohistory and ethnology and synthesizes archival and published materials and field interviews with knowledgeable Piikáni elders conducted by Peacock and Reeves (of the present ethnographic study).

The fieldwork component of the study was conducted in June 1993 and May 1994, and involved interviewing Piikáni elders from the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana and the Peigan Reserve in Alberta. We interviewed the Piikáni elders in their homes, where we met with people individually or in small groups. We also made several field trips to Glacier National Park. In total, we interviewed 23 Piikáni elders (12 women and 11 men), ranging in age from the early 60's to the early 90's. To maintain confidentiality, elders are not identified. Instead, we use an alphanumeric code to identify the statements of Elder Men (EM-1, etc.), Elder Women (EW-1, etc.), and Spiritual Leaders (SL-1, etc). The fieldwork focussed on the ethnobotanical component of the study that Peacock directed. Due consideration was given to other areas of traditional Piikáni knowledge and concern with respect to the Rocky Mountains and Glacier National Park.

Interviews were unstructured, at least by western scientific standards. However, it is important to realize that traditional Piikáni discourse is not readily compatible with a rigid question-and-answer interview format. As Wissler (1910:52) notes,

"It is a breach to ask a leading question as to one's personal medicines or experiences. . . on the other hand . . . we found no reason to believe that a man felt any great reluctance to speak of such things at his own initiative or that he felt under special obligation not to do so: *it is the blunt asking for information that is offensive* [emphasis added]."

Accordingly, elders were invited to share, as they felt appropriate, their experiences, observations, and stories about such subjects as the plants, animals, places, and spiritual beings, of Glacier National Park and the surrounding region. We used plant specimens (freshly collected, when possible) to facilitate discussion. The flow of the conversation varied with each elder and the subject under discussion, reflecting the differing degrees of traditional knowledge, as well as the cultural importance of that specific area of traditional knowledge. Interviews were conducted in English and/or Blackfoot, with facilitators and interpreters as required. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. The Piikáni consultants were remunerated for their time and expertise.

## Report Format

Our report is divided into a series of sections, followed by the References and Appendices. Our Focus is on K'tunaxa and Piikáni ethnohistory and ethnology, which are discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 dealing with K'tunaxa ethnohistory and ethnology, Piikáni ethnohistory, and Piikáni ethnology. A discussion of other tribes associated with Glacier National Park precedes these sections.

Our discussion of K'tunaxa ethnohistory and ethnology focuses on the Waterton-Glacier National Park region. Our discussions, drawn largely from Claude Schaeffer's unpublished notes (excepting K'tunaxa ethnobotany), encompass K'tunaxa place names, trails and passes, traditional camp places, and other aspects of K'tunaxa association with the Glacier National Park region, including east-slope conflicts with the "Blackfeet" during the nineteenth century. We also include a discussion of K'tunaxa ethnobotany in general, derived from a number of sources.

Piikáni ethnohistory is a chronological summary of significant events and developments in Piikáni, fur trade, and settlement history over the last 250 years. We preface this discussion with a review of Piikáni origins. We end with a review of the relationships of the Piikáni (Blackfeet), the Great Northern Railroad, and Glacier National Park in the mid-twentieth century.

The section on Piikáni ethnology is a series of subsections dealing with major aspects of their traditional, and in certain cases ongoing, associations with the lands that are now the eastern slopes of Glacier National Park. We begin with a summary of traditional Piikáni religion, followed by a review of their traditional ethnogeography, ethnogeology, and ethnozoology, and we conclude with a detailed discussion of Piikáni ethnobotany and its relationship to the park. We present recommendations for further studies, interpretation, and management considerations, highlighting those related to continuing traditional Piikáni concerns about access to the ethnobotanical resources of the lands now within the park, and those related to co-management of the park's resources.

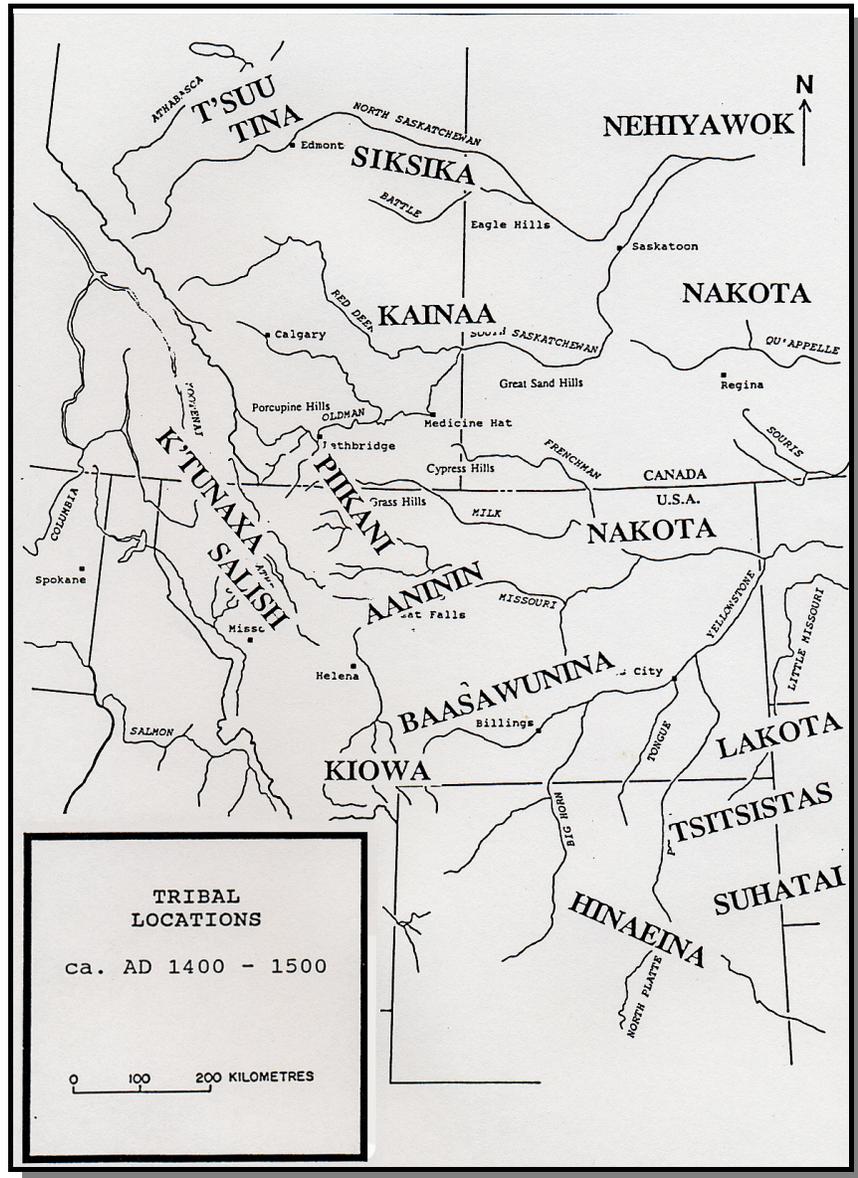
The Appendices of this report include: Appendix A, two K'tunaxa stories associated with Glacier National Park, recorded by Claude Schaeffer in the mid-1930s, from Chief Paul David, but never published; Appendix B, a time line of significant historic events for both the park and Native American groups affiliated with the park.

Illustrative materials in this report include general, regional maps of the principal native tribes, trails, and passes, as well as maps showing traditional native settlements, resources, sacred places within today's Glacier National Park.

### **Other Indian Tribes Associated With The Waterton-Glacier Area**

In addition to the K'tunaxa and Piikáni, who have a long-standing traditional association with the park, a number of other Native American groups frequented the Waterton-Glacier area during the last two centuries (see Table 1 and Maps 1-3). West-side tribes who crossed through the passes to hunt buffalo on the eastern slopes included the Salish and Upper Kalispel (Upper Pend'Oreille), then resident in the Flathead valley; and neighboring Interior Salish groups to the west -- Cour d'Alene, Lower Kalispel (Lower Pend'Oreille), Spokane and Colville. These people sometimes accompanied the Salish, Upper Kalispel and K'tunaxa on their summer and fall buffalo hunts, as did, on occasion, the Shahaptian-

speaking Nez Perce. The Bannock and other Northern Shoshone may also have occasionally come this far north in search of game during the last century (Schultz describes an encounter between the Piikáni and the Snakes on Upper St. Mary Lake -- see "St. Mary" section in the chapter entitled "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier national Park).



Map 2: Northern Plains and Rocky Mountain Tribal Distribution – A.D. 1500.

Eastern slope and plains tribes who frequented the Waterton-Glacier area at various times include the Crow, Stoney, Plains Assiniboine, Cree and Háninin (Atsina or Gros Ventre). Some of these groups are relatively recently arrived in the area such as the Stoney and some Cree whose presence dates to the mid

or late 1800s; others, like the HÁninin, have an much longer, but poorly known, association with eastern slopes of the Upper Missouri and South Saskatchewan.

### *Flathead Valley Salish Speakers*

The principal residents of the Flathead Valley, south of the Akiniyik, in the last century were the Salish (Flathead) and Upper Kalispel.

### *Salish*

The Salish are closely related linguistically to the Kalispel and Spokane, suggesting that the Salish separated, sometime in the last thousand years, from their close linguistic relatives to the west (Elmendorf 1965:76), and therefore that they relatively recently occupied the Flathead valley. The Salish are the easternmost tribe of the interior Salish speakers and part of the general eastward movement of these peoples across the Columbia and Fraser plateaus over the last few thousand years (*ibid.*:2).

The Salish most closely associate today with the Bitterroot Valley, which they consider their home. In their oral tradition, they migrated to this place from an older home, and found the area already occupied by the Foolish People-- "a small tribe of dirty, stupid indians" (Fahey 1974; Johnson 1969; Turney-High 1937:12). Other accounts say that the Bitterroot Valley was previously occupied by the Upper Kalispel, who took them in (Turney-High 1937:12).

Akiniyik, Salish, and Pend d'Oreille tradition recorded by Schaeffer (1935a) state that "long ago the Snake Indians occupied the Bitterroot Valley, while the Flathead were living near Kalispel and Polson, north of Flathead Lake, and the Pend d'Oreille to the west, near Sand Point, Idaho. After making peace with the Flathead, the Snake moved southward, and the Flathead, in turn, made their home in the Bitterroot Valley. Soon after, the Pend d'Oreille traveled eastward to occupy the country around Polson, while the Akiyiniik ... moved eastward to Kalispel and subsequently south to Elmo."

Some historical accounts and interpretations (e.g., Fahey 1974:7), largely attributable to James Teit (1930), tell of an initial eastward movement of the Salish across the Rockies onto the plains, where a Plains Salish or Salish Tunaxa people developed, who were then displaced, usually by the "Blackfeet," to west of the mountains. The Salish Tunaxa are said to have died off from smallpox. Ethnographers such as Turney-High (1937:12) and Claude Schaeffer could find no traditions of a Plains Salish among the elders they interviewed in the mid-1930s on the Flathead Reservation. When K'tunaxa elders were asked if they had ever heard of the Plains Salish, they also said that they had not. The Salish Tunaxa story is almost identical to the Kutenai story of the decimation of the "Plains Tunaxa" by smallpox, and clearly came from the K'tunaxa (Schaeffer 1982).<sup>3</sup>

As both ethnographers correctly point out, the Salish are a plateau people, with a very thin veneer of plains cultural traits acquired from contacts with Plains tribes such as the Crow after the Salish got the horse and began to travel across the mountains and hunt buffalo near the headwaters of the Missouri, Musselshell, and Yellowstone rivers, beginning in the mid-to late 1700s. Salish populations

**Table 1: Native American Tribes Associated with Waterton-Glacier**

*Tribes With Primary Association*

<b>General Tribal Name</b>	<b>Sub-Tribe or Band Name</b>	<b>Other Reference</b>	<b>Present Location</b>
<b>K'tunaxa</b>		<b>Kutenai</b>	
	Akanahonek	Tobacco Plains	Tobacco Plains Reservation, B.C.
	Akiyiniik	Jennings	Salish-Kooteni Reservation, MT
<b>Piikani</b>	<b>Peigan</b>		
	North Piikani	Peigan	Peigan Nation, AB
	South Piikani	Blackfeet	Blackfeet Reservation, MT

*Tribes with Secondary Associations (West Side)*

<b>Salish</b>		Flathead	Salish-Kooteni Reservation, MT
<b>Upper Kalispel</b>		Pend d'Oreille	Salish-Kooteni Reservation, MT

**Tribes with Secondary Associations (East Side)**

<b>Absaroke</b>		Crow	Crow Reservation, MT
<b>Assiniboine</b>		Plains Assiniboine	Fort Peck Reservation, MT
<b>Haaninin</b>		Atsina Gross Ventre	Fort Belknap Reservation, MT
<b>Kainaa</b>		Blood	Blood Reservation, AB
<b>Nakota</b>		Stoney	Stoney Reservation, AB
<b>Siksika</b>		Blackfoot	Siksika Nation, AB
<b>Tsuu T'inna</b>		Sarci	Tsuu T'inna Nation, AB

varied in size through the 1800s, reflecting the successive smallpox epidemics and other diseases that struck the plains and western tribes. Alexander Ross counted 306 Salish at the Flathead Rendezvous in 1824 (Chance 1981). In 1855 Stevens estimated that there were 450 Salish (Fahey 1974:94), a figure that he regarded as possibly low, because a number were away hunting buffalo. A 1865 census lists 239 Salish (Fahey 1974:122).

### *Upper Kalispel (Pend d'Oreille)*

The Kalispel derive their name from a Salishan place name, "Kailspelm," which means camas (Fahey 1986). A Kalispel legend says they came from the north, dwelled for a while at Priest Lake, and then moved into the Pend d'Oreille Valley after a party had seen a large lake from the top of Mount Spokane. The lake was actually a vast field of flowering blue camas.

The Kalispel (Pend d'Oreille) comprised two groups. The Lower Kalispel were known for their low-riding canoes, with distinctive snub prows designed to meet the buffeting winds of Lake Pend d'Oreille. They were sometime referred to as the Boat People, or Camas People, because of their proficiency in roasting camas (Ruby & Brown 1992). The Upper Kalispel were sometimes referred to as the People of the Confluence, or the River People, after the location of their winter village at the outlet of Lake Pend d'Oreille. In the last century, the Upper Kalispel lived to the east of the Lower Kalispels in the Flathead Valley, from Flathead Lake south to the vicinity of present-day Missoula on the Flathead River, and west down the Clark's Fork to Lake Pend d'Oreille.

In 1854, the St. Ignatius Mission was moved to the Flathead Reservation from its original location near today's Cusick, Washington. The Upper Kalispel living to the west of the Flathead Valley at that time followed the mission to the Flathead Valley; the Lower Kalispel refused to move (Fahey 1986). The Upper Kalispel on the Flathead Reservation refer to themselves as the Pend d'Oreille (Johnson 1969).

According to Akiniyik, Salish, and Upper Kalispel tradition, the Upper Kalispel moved east to the Flathead Valley after the Salish had moved south to the Bitterroot, sometime before the Akiniyik moved their winter camps from the Kootenai River Valley to the north end of Flathead Lake. Some Kalispel winter camps were located in the northern end of the valley, possibly as far north as the mouth of Bad Rock Canyon, as well as on the Camas Prairie, west of the lake (Johnson 1969:56).

Traditionally, the Salish and Upper Kalispel traveled to the plains to hunt buffalo by means of the passes into the headwaters of the Missouri and Sun rivers. As buffalo became increasingly scarce in the Missouri headwaters in the mid-nineteenth century, the focus of these groups shifted northward toward the still-rich buffalo plains between the South Saskatchewan and the Missouri. This brought them into increasingly frequent contact and conflict with the Nitsitapii and Hánínin. One set of "famous" early-nineteenth-century battles between the Blackfeet and Salish that are often attributed to the Marias and Cutbank passes, as we discuss in the following section, almost certainly did not happen there.

Pend d'Oreille populations in the Flathead Valley during the early 1800s ranged from 247 at Ross's 1824 Flathead Rendezvous (Chance 1981) to 600 at the signing of the Hell Gate Treaty in 1855 (Fahey 1974:94), an estimate that Stevens considered low. A census in 1865 counted 751 Pend d'Oreille (Fahey 1974:122).

## Salish-Blackfeet Encounters of 1810 and 1812 at the Marias and Cutbank Passes

Most histories of the Marias Pass (e.g., Murray 1929) and Glacier National Park (e.g., Bucholtz 1976:18-19) refer to two battles between the Salish and Blackfeet in 1810 and 1812 that took place in the Glacier National Park area. According to these historians, these are the two battles described in David Thompson's Narrative, first published in 1916 (Tyrell 1916). The 1810 battle is also described in Alexander Henry the Younger's journal, first published in 1897 (Coues 1897). Neither Henry nor Thompson provides details on the locations where the battles occurred.

How have historians arrived at these conclusions? According to their accounts, the first battle occurred at the Marias Pass, and the second at the Cutbank Pass -- interpretations based on both historical and anecdotal sources. The first is an interpretation of where the battles described by Thompson and Henry took place. The second are "local" anecdotal accounts of battles said to have taken place at the Cutbank and Marias, and first described in print by Holtz and Bemis in 1917. Genevieve Murray (1929) appears to have been the first historian to combine the two sources, in her paper on the history of the Marias Pass, first published as a series of articles in the *Great Falls Tribune* in the late 1920s.

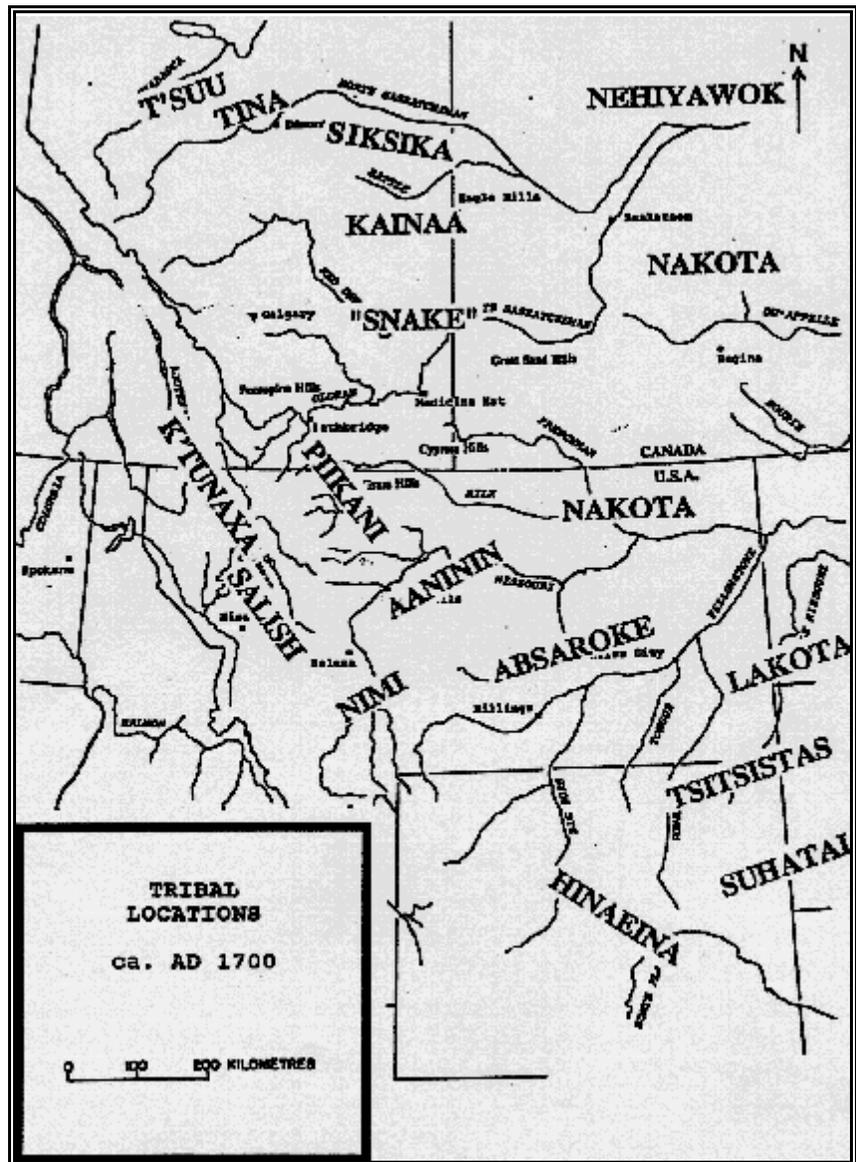
### *Thompson and Henry Accounts*

In 1807, David Thompson and his wife and family, and a group of men from the Northwest Company (NWCo) left Rocky Mountain House on the North Saskatchewan River, crossing over the mountains by means of the Howse Pass into the headwaters of the Columbia River, to establish fur posts west of the Rocky Mountains. Thompson was preceded by Le Gasse and Le Blanc, two freemen attached to the NWCo. They wintered with the K'tunaxa west of the mountains from 1800 to 1805 (Schaefer 1965). Le Gasse and Le Blanc were probably the first white men to cross eastward by means of the Waterton-Glacier passes to hunt buffalo on the edge of the plains.

Thompson, under instructions from the NWCo, opened a series of fur posts in the interior: Kootenai House at the exit of the Columbia Lakes in 1807, followed by Kullyspell House on Lake Pend d'Oreille and Salish House on the Clark Fork in the late fall/early winter of 1809. The K'tunaxa, Couer d'Alene, Pend d'Oreille (Kalispel), Salish (Flathead), and other western tribes were now able to enter directly into the fur trade. They acquired many more guns than they had before, and were consequently better able to resist the Nitsitapii and HÁninin horse and slaving raids. In the eyes of the Piikáni, these guns resulted in the loss of a battle to the Salish in the summer of 1810.

The Piikáni and the other tribes were very concerned about the arming of the Salish and other western tribes by Northwest Company traders operating to the west of the mountains. In 1810, they learned that the Hudson's Bay Company was about to follow suit and establish trade west of the mountains. The Piikáni voiced their displeasure to James Bird, factor at Fort Edmonton, in May 1811 after learning that the company had sent Mr. Howse west of the mountains in 1810. Piikáni chiefs told Bird in May of 1811:

"If they again meet with a white Man going to supply their Enemies, they would not only plunder & kill him, but that they would make dry Meat of his body. This threat they are sufficiently brutal to fulfil in its utmost extent ...."



Map 3: Northern Plains and Rocky Mountain Tribal Distribution – A. D. 1700.

### *The Battle of 1810*

In July 1810, the Salish went east from Salish House to hunt buffalo. Accompanying them were Finan McDonald, and two others -- Michel Bourdeaux and Baptiste Bouche -- both of whom may have been of mixed Iroquois-Québécois blood. Thompson then sent them to collect provisions of dried meat for the coming winter at Salish House. The group unexpectedly encountered a group of "Peegans," and a fight followed, in which a number of "Peegans" and some Salish were killed. Because of this defeat, the Piikáni established a watch on the North Saskatchewan up stream from Rocky Mountain House to

prevent more supplies from going west (*ibid*:644).<sup>4</sup> As a result, Thompson had to find a pass farther north along the Rockies. That winter, he explored the Athabasca Valley and crossed the Athabasca Pass to the Columbia, which became the main route of travel to and from the Columbia.

Alexander Henry (Coues 1897:713) recorded an account of this battle that was presumably given to him by David Thompson at Rocky Mountain House sometime during the fall of 1810. Thompson himself must have learned of the battle much later, after his departure from Kalispell House, because he had departed the House in May 1810 on his return eastward over the Howse Pass to Rocky Mountain House some weeks before the battle occurred.

"The first severe check the Peegans ever received from the nations on the waters of the Columbia was in the summer of 1810, when they met the Flat Heads and others marching to the plains in search of buffalo. The meeting was so sudden and unexpected that the Peegans could not avoid giving battle. They fought with great courage nearly all day, until the Peegans had expended their ammunition and been reduced to defending themselves with stones. A small rising ground which divided the two contending parties enabled them to come to close quarters. At last the Peegans were obliged to retreat, leaving sixteen of their warriors dead upon the field. This defeat exasperated the Peegans against us, for strengthening their enemies by supplying them with arms and ammunition. They fain would wreak their vengeance [sic] upon us, but dread the consequences, as it would deprive them in future of arms and ammunition, tobacco, and, above all, their favourite liquor, high wine, to which they are now nearly as much addicted as those miserable tribes eastward."

In Thompson's account, the battle involved some 150 Salish and 170 Peegans; five Salish were killed and nine wounded; and seven Peegans were killed and 13 wounded,. The Salish were aided by three of Thompson's men: Finan McDonald, Michel Bourdeaux, and Baptiste Bouche. "...no scalps were taken, which the Peegans accounted a disgrace to them; the Saleesh set no pride on taking scalps. This was the first time the Peegans were in a manner defeated and they determined to wreck their vengeance [sic] on the white men who crossed the mountains to the west side; and furnished arms and ammunition to their Enemies (*ibid*)."

This battle was also reported in a letter from Howes to Bird, and recorded in the Edmonton House journal entry for 31 October 1810 (PAM, HBCA. 60/a/9):

"Received Letter from Mr. Howes, dated Cootana River 20th Aug 1810, in which he says that, having been informed by some Cootanahas that a Battle had been fought between a party of Flatt Head Indians, with whom a Mr. McDonald clerk to the N.W. Coy. was in company; and a party of Muddy River Indians, in which the latter were defeated with the loss of 14 Men killed; and that the Muddy River Indians in consequence were laying in Ambush to intercept him, or any white Man, who might attempt to convey Goods to the Flatt Heads, he had determined on remaining some time at the place where this Letter was dated to gain further intelligence, after which, he should determine his future proceedings."

Where did this battle take place? In his narrative, Thompson states (Glover 1962:306) that the Salish: "crossed the Mountains by a wide defile of easy passage, eastward of Saleesh Lake, here they are

watched by the Peegans to prevent them hunting the Bison ..." In the Hopwood account (1971:265), the Salish were camped "upon what is called the war grounds, once possessed by the Salish and Snake Indians, but by the superiority of [Piikáni] arms [they were] driven to the west side of the mountains."

Salish House was located south of Flathead Lake, where the party departed for the buffalo plains. The traditional Salish routes from the south end of Flathead Lake to the plains were both eastwardly through Hell's Gate and over to the plains by means of today's Lewis and Clark Pass, crossed by Meriweather Lewis in June 1806, or southeasterly up the Clark's Fork into the Missouri Headwaters -- the route followed by William Clark that same month. Lewis noted that all the western tribes used the former route to get to the buffalo plains of the Missouri River (Moulton 1993:88).

The Marias Pass is neither east of the south end of Flathead Lake nor a "wide defile of easy passage," suggesting to us that the 1810 battle occurred somewhere to the south, perhaps in the Missouri headwaters. It was here that the American traders encountered Flathead buffalo-hunting parties and Blackfeet war parties during both of their initial attempts to establish trade in this area in the years 1809-1810, and later during the years of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade as did the English traders who also were sending fur brigades from the Columbia into the headwaters from 1819 on. Numerous accounts exist of conflicts between the Blackfeet and the Flathead in this region during these years (Reeves n.d.d).

The Blackfeet continued to raid the Salish and kill freemen after the battle of 1810. Thompson recorded a Siksiká raid on the Salish during the winter of 1810. While visiting Fort Vermilion in February of 1811 (Coues 1897:588), Alexander Henry noted that the young men of Painted Feather's band had left on a raid in the middle of January. They returned sometime in the spring, "victorious, having killed a number of Flat Heads, brought a good many scalps and about 200 horses."

The "Peegans," according to Thompson (Glover 1962:386), tried to prevent Thompson from returning to Salish House by sending a war party westward in the winter of 1812. They encountered a tent of Kutenai: "Thinking we must pass by the head of the River; they had come on a Tent of Kootanea Indians, and disregarding the Peace between them had put every one to death. It is important to note that Thompson rarely refers in his Narrative to the three tribes of the Nitsitapii by their individual names, but instead generally calls them all "Peegan." Therefore, without supporting evidence in other fur trade journals, it is by no means sure that "Peegans" of this incident or the "battle of 1812" were in fact all Piikáni. Indeed, in the case of the 1812, they probably were not.

Later in the early winter of 1811-1812, the "Peegans," according to Thompson, attempted to make peace with the Salish (Glover 1962:389-393). This attempt did not succeed, because the Salish felt well-armed and able to resist them when out hunting buffalo on the plains, which they claimed as their traditional right.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Battle of 1812*

In 1812, the Salish again journeyed east to hunt buffalo, accompanied by two of Thompson's men -- Michel Bourdeaux and Michel Kinville. They encountered the "Peegan" east of the mountains. Thompson describes the ensuing battle in considerable detail: "Several were slayed on each side, and three times as many wounded; and with difficulty the Peegans carried off their dead and wounded and they accounted themselves defeated ... both Michel Bourdeaux and Augustin Kinville were shot dead

... there were about 350 combatants on each side" (Glover 1962: 392-393; Hopwood 1971: 319-320).<sup>6</sup>

Thompson must have heard the description of the battle at some later time, because he had already gone east of the mountains by the time the battle occurred. Most probably he received his account of the 1812 battle sometime after his return to eastern Canada. Thompson left Spokane House on April 22, reaching Fort William sometime in July, and departing from there for Montreal on August 12.

The 1812 battle appears to have been reported to James Bird at Edmonton House. The Edmonton House journal notes on April 28, 1813:

"... The Blood Indians, and Blackfeet are determined to steal every Horse belonging to white Men, in Revenge for the death of their Relations, fifty of whom have been killed by the Flat Heads, since last Summer. White Men they say be supplying the Flat Heads with fire arms, are the principal cause of their great loss."

Where did the 1812 action take place? According to Thompson it occurred "... on the green plains, no Woods were near"(Glover 1962:392). Because the Salish party was traveling eastward from Salish House, it would be reasonable to assume that they, like the party of 1810, most probably crossed one of the central or southern Montana passes. Therefore, the conflict occurred on the plains well south of the Marias Pass.

The Piikáni do not report any battles with the Salish in 1812. They do, however, report killing some "Whitemen." The death of a freeman was reported to James Bird by a large band of Piikáni who arrived at Edmonton House on May 5, 1813. They "confided their having killed on the borders of the Rocky Mountains a free Canadian and two Iroquois and are determined to kill every white Man they may find, west of the Rocky Mountains or on his way thither."

The persons whom the Piikáni killed could well have included Michel Bourdeaux and Augustin Kinville. Other freemen were killed by the Blackfeet that winter. In the fall of 1812, Ramsey Crooks, one of the principals of the Astorian Overland Expedition, left two Canadians with a band of Nimi whom the expedition met in the Snake River Country. Robert Stuart noted in his journal (Spaulding 1953) that they and the Nimi with whom they were traveling were attacked in the winter of 1812-1813 by the Blackfeet in the headwaters of the Missouri. The two Canadians and a number of Shoshoni were killed.

Many French Canadian freemen were killed during these years. According to Thompson (Hopwood 1971:286), these men had gradually moved west from Illinois, across the Missouri toward and across the mountains. When he first met them west of the mountains in 1809, only 25 were left. Michel Bourdeaux and Augustin Kinville were "the last of these men, few of whom died a natural death" (*ibid*:287).

The Nitsitapii despised the mixed-blood Québécois freemen who frequented the foothills of the Rockies during these years, in large measure because they were trapping the beaver and consorting with the enemy, thereby depriving the Nitsitapii of beaver to trade with the English on the Saskatchewan. To the Nitsitapii, it was fair game to attack and kill white men -- and particularly the mixed-blood freemen -- and take their beaver pelts for trade.

## *Anecdotal Accounts*

Holtz and Bemis' 1917 book *Glacier National Park Its Trails and Treasures* is Genevieve Murray's source (1929:94) on battles at the Cutbank and Marias passes. According to Holtz and Bemis, who describe the Old North Trail and sites along it, a Blackfeet war lodge was located on the ridge between Cutbank and Two Medicine (1917:93-94):

"On this point is an old war lodge of the Blackfeet, cunningly hidden and cleverly placed. Scouts placed here were able to scan a thousand square miles of buffalo range to the eastward. Warning could thus be given to their people hours in advance should any warring Kootenais or Flatheads attempt a raid into the Blackfeet country from west of the main range, for such raiding bands would have to travel many hours in sight of the watchers before coming within striking distance of the Blackfeet. This war lookout in touch with three river routes by the way of the Two Medicine, Cut Bank and Milk Rivers, all swinging into or near the old travois (Old North Trail), was a strategic point and enabled the Blackfeet to gather their forces long in advance and rush out to meet the enemy. On the Cut Bank is a great pile covering the bones of a big Indian party, either Kootenais or Flatheads, that were thus caught by the Blackfeet and all killed except one old woman and two children who escaped and finally reached their people in the west. The Flatheads later erected the pile of stones as a monument to mark the spot where the invaders were met and fell.

"Farther south on Bear Creek is an old battlefield of ten acres filled with Indian bones half buried under the mould. The older Blackfeet tell of a red-handed struggle between their people who went out to meet the invading Flatheads. So today the bones of both tribes are lying side by side in this field at the head of Bear Creek. This spot can be seen from every Great Northern train crossing the Divide for it lies only five or six hundred yards southeast of the site of old McCarthysville, in the flat just west of Skyland."

Murray paraphrases Holtz and Bemis's account of the cairn at Cutbank Creek, deleting the speculation that they might be Kutenai: "the bones of a party of Selish Indians who met defeat at the hands of the Piegiens there so many years ago that legend does not remember when." The Salish seem to have been preferred in the writers' account, because a 1918 *Dillon Examiner* article on the Old North Trail, using Holtz and Bemis as the obvious but unquoted source, describes the Cutbank event:

"On the Cut Bank is a great stone pile which covers the bones of a war party of the Flatheads who were caught in this manner by the Blackfeet, and all killed with the exception of three, who escaped and returned to their people. The Flatheads later erected the monument of stones over the bodies of their fallen comrades."

The 1918 *Dillon Examiner* article elaborates on the Bear Creek Battle:

"Further south on Bear Creek, is an old battlefield covering nearly ten acres, which is thickly sprinkled with bones, half-buried under the sod of Blackfeet and Flatheads who fell in a terrific battle between hordes of warriors of the two tribes. The older Blackfeet know the story of the battle, which was an epochal event in tribal history, neither side claiming a complete victory. The Flatheads were stopped, although at a terrible loss to

the Blackfeet ... it lies only a few hundred yards southeast of the site of old McCarthysville, in a flat just west of Skyland."

Presumably Holtz and Bemis got their account from the Blackfeet. Or did they make it up, as they or someone else did some of the other stories in their book (as discussed later in this report)? If their accounts came from the Blackfeet, then other writers likely would have recorded them. If these battles were so significant in Blackfeet history, accounts of these great battles should be in the materials collected by McClintock or Schultz. We have found no such accounts.

As we note elsewhere, [see the "Two Medicine (Backbone) Pass (Marias)" section in the "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park" chapter ]] McClintock crossed the Cutbank Pass in 1896 in the company of Billy Jackson, a Piikáni, who was the grandson of Rising Wolf (Hugh Monroe). Jackson told McClintock about two earlier battles Mad Wolf and his band had on the same trip: the first one with a group of K'tunaxa, the later one with a Háninin war party. Had the battle of 1812 happened at the Cutbank Pass, one might expect Billy Jackson to have related it to McClintock.

James Willard Schultz made his livelihood writing semi-fictionalized accounts of Piikáni life and adventures, most of which were based on true accounts and historical events that were told to him by his Piikáni friends and elders. Had Schultz been told of these two battles, he certainly would have recounted them in books such as *Signposts of Adventure*, under his accounts of events that occurred in the Marias and Cutbank Passes, discussed elsewhere in this study, or in *Blackfoot Tales of Glacier National Park*. Old Piikáni warriors, whom Schultz knew so well, would remember both battles. Schultz does not mention these battles, suggesting that the anecdotal accounts are in large measure some writer's conflation of the more general Piikáni oral accounts about Piikáni-Salish conflicts at entrances to passes on this side of the Rockies.

Piikáni memory of past events such as these battles has changed considerably in recent years. In some measure it appears to have been influenced by spurious written accounts and geographic associations. Some elders and young people say the battle occurred up at the site where the Old Cutbank Chalets once stood. Some say it was between the Blackfoot and the Cree (SL-1, EM-7), or Flatheads (SL-1, EM-4), or somewhere else (SL-1). However, no one has ever heard of or seen the supposed rock piles (EM-4).

### *Interpretations*

The Cutbank Pass and Marias Pass were the main war trail for the Piikáni into the top end of the Flathead Valley. No doubt a number of clashes occurred at the eastern entrance to these passes. However, we contend that the battles of 1810 and 1812 occurred farther south.

The most probable locations for the 1810 and 1812 Blackfeet-Salish battles are some distance south of the Marias Pass. They could have been in the Sun River country, east of the Lewis and Clark Pass, or farther south in the Musselshell, Upper Yellowstone, or Missouri headwaters. The continuing conflicts in earlier and later years between the Blackfoot and the Salish in the headwaters of the Missouri and the oral accounts Schaeffer recorded (1933) from the Salish attesting to buffalo hunting there and in the Musselshell suggest to us that these battles occurred in there, not in the Marias and Cutbank passes.

## East Side Tribes

### *Absaroke (Crow)*

Historically, the Absaroke consist of two major divisions: the River Crow, and the Mountain Crow. Linguistically, they are closely related to the Hidatsa – village farmers on the Middle Missouri. Crow oral traditions are quite clear about the concept that they were formerly one tribe and that the River and Mountain Crow split from the Hidatsa. Linguistic considerations suggest that their divergence began about 500 years ago (see Hanson 1979, Wood 1980, Wood and Downer 1977).

The Mountain Crow went northward, and wandered for some time in the Saskatchewan Basin before moving south to the Yellowstone. They have an oral tradition telling of their having once lived on the Upper South Saskatchewan (Morgan 1871:185-86):

"... The Crows changed their mode of life from the village to the camp, and from an agricultural basis of subsistence, to the products of the chase. They advanced northward by routes now unknown, until a part of them reached the south branch of the Siskatchewan River, more than fifteen hundred miles north of the present Minnitaree [Hidatsa] area. Their range was between the Siskatchewan and the Missouri."

Piikáni traditions recorded by Wissler (1912:286) and Ewers (1960:47) state this country was once occupied by the Crow or Snake. They were driven from this country by the Piikáni and Cree who had obtained guns from the traders (See "Alternative Interpretations of Piikáni Culture History" section in "Piikáni Ethnohistory" chapter). In his books, Schultz specifically refers to Crow camps that were once situated in the Glacier National Park region in the St. Mary and Milk River valleys (See "St. Mary" and "Milk River" sections in "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park" chapter ).

### *Háninin (Atsina or Gros Ventre)*

The Háninin (translates as "blue mud people") are the northernmost of the original five tribes of the Kanaavich (Arapaho) (Kroeber 1902; Trenholm 1970). The tribes to the south of the Háninin were, from north to south, the Basawaunina (Wood Lodge or Big Lodge People); the Hinanaenina (Arapaho proper); the Hananaxawuunenea (Rock People); and the Nawacinahaana (South People). The Basawaunina and Hananaxawuunenea tribes were no longer in existence by the late 1700s. They most probably died of smallpox some decades earlier.

The Háninin were also known to the Saskatchewan traders as the Fall River Indians. This name came from the Great Falls of the Missouri, not the "falls" of the Saskatchewan, as has generally been interpreted (Russell 1991). Their hand sign is the motion of going over a falls, which was jokingly also interpreted by the Nitsitapii and other tribes as "gut people," and therefore by the French as "Gros Ventre." The Háninin reside on the Fort Belknap Reservation in northeastern Montana.

The Arapaho language is among the oldest of the Algonkian languages, suggesting they have been resident in the northern Plains for a considerable period of time. Historians have generally assumed that they are relatively recent migrants onto the plains, but oral traditions do not substantiate this interpretation. Their antecedent archaeological culture has yet to be identified.

Piikáni oral traditions suggest that the Háninin's original homelands were to the south and east of the

Nitsitapii, centering around the Missouri-Yellowstone. Perhaps they were displaced from these traditional lands by the Assiniboine and Crow as those tribes expanded westward in the 1500s. Smallpox and the entry of the fur trade onto the Saskatchewan in the mid-to late 1700s no doubt further displaced the Háninin from their original lands.

The Háninin were part of the "Blackfoot Confederacy." In the 1700s and the first part of the 1800s, they often camped, traveled and made war on their common enemies (Crow, Shoshone, Bannock, Salish, Pend d'Oreille) with the Nitsitapii and Tsuu T'ina. The Háninin were responsible for most of the Blackfeet raids, attacks, and killings of whites, mixed bloods, Shoshone, Bannock, and Crow, recorded by the traders during the years of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade (around 1809-1840). The Háninin, not the Nitsitapii, were largely responsible for the highly negative reputation the Blackfeet gained among eastern Americans in the first half of the last century.

Relationships between the Háninin and Piikáni began to deteriorate in the 1860s. In 1861, a Pend d'Oreille raiding party stole some Háninin horses. To throw their pursuers off, they abandoned some of the animals in the vicinity of a Piikáni camp on the Marias. When the Háninin found the horses, they attacked the Piikáni camp (Ewers 1958:242).

The Piikáni began to raid Háninin camps, stealing horses and killing a few Háninin. In the meantime, the Háninin had made peace with the River Crow. Late in the summer of 1866, the Háninin and Crow attacked a Piikáni camp in the Cypress Hills. The leader, Many Chiefs, and his wife were out of the camp at the time, and were killed by the enemy. The enraged Piikáni attacked the enemy, in the end killing more than 300, and taking women and children prisoners. It was the worst defeat in the memory of the Háninin and Crow.

In earlier times, Háninin no doubt camped with Piikáni along the eastern slopes. Later, after relations deteriorated, they raided Piikáni camps. Billy Jackson described one such raid on Mad Wolf's camp in Cutbank Creek to McClintock in which the Háninin war chief had grizzly bear power (see Contemporary Traditional Religious Practice" section in "Piikáni Ethnohistory" chapter).

### *Plains Assiniboine*

The Assiniboine, or Nakota, have a tradition of having separated from the Yankton Dakota some time in the past. Archaeological and linguistic evidence (summarized in Walde 1994) indicates this separation occurred some 800 years ago. From their homeland in the tall-grass prairies northeast of the Missouri River, the ancestors of the historic Assiniboine spread rapidly north westward across the plains north of the Missouri arriving in today's central Saskatchewan and northeastern Montana by around 1450 to 1500.

Two groups of Assiniboine are distinguishable in the archaeological, ethnological, and historic records: the Assiniboine of the Saskatchewan, resident in the parklands and adjacent plains along the Saskatchewan River, and the Assiniboine of the Missouri, resident in the plains, and along the Missouri to the south. In the 1700s, the Assiniboine of the Saskatchewan often wintered with Cree, Nitsitapii, Tsuu T'ina, and Háninin in the parklands along the Saskatchewan in today's provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Like the Cree, the Assiniboine's movement westward through the parklands well preceded and was unrelated to the fur trade (Russell 1991).

The Assiniboine of the Missouri, or Plains Assiniboine (descendants of whom live on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeastern Montana), were often referred to as cutthroats by the other natives and the white traders, because it was their custom to sever the heads of their enemy warriors and often impale them on sticks facing the Assiniboine's homeland. They were considered very fierce and dangerous warriors by both Indians and whites.

The Assiniboine of the Missouri raided the northern groups, including the Assiniboine of the Saskatchewan. They were one of the traditional enemies of the groups resident in the Saskatchewan plains, who often joined together in the 1700s to raid and make war on the "Plains Assiniboine." They were one of the groups sometimes referred to as "Snakes" by the Algonkian-speaking Cree, Háninin, and Nitsitapii in the last two centuries.

War parties of Plains Assiniboine groups did visit the eastern slopes of Waterton-Glacier National Park and raid the Piikáni. Hugh Monroe experienced Plains Assiniboine raids at his camp on Lower St. Mary's in the mid-1800s (see "St. Mary" section in "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park" chapter).

### *The Nakota (Stoney Indians)*

The Nakota (Stoney Indians), also of Assiniboine ancestry, live today on the Stoney Indian Reserve in the Bow Valley west of Calgary. There are three bands: the Good Stoney, the Chiniki, and the Bears paw. The Good Stoney are part of the Assiniboine of the Saskatchewan, who arrived in Alberta parklands in the 1500s, moving southwestward into the foothills and mountains of the central Alberta Rockies. They hunted south along the Rockies towards the Waterton-Glacier area. Chiniki and Bears paw oral traditions, while less clear than those of the Good Stoney, indicate that they came west to the Rockies from the Plains Assiniboine people in today's northeastern Montana sometime in the last century.

Ahern met a group of Assiniboines hunting in the Belly River in 1890 (Holterman 1985:10). According to Hugh Monroe (Schultz 1927:44-46), Stoney Indians had been in the area for some time. Hugh Monroe and Red Crow killed a Stoney in the St. Mary valley, who was attempting to ambush them. The Many Glacier area was a favorite hunting area of the Stoney. Red Crow told Hugh Monroe:

"All the men of that tribe have big leg muscles, because they are mountain men and hunt on foot, instead of on horseback as we of the plains do our hunting. It is said that their legs are so tireless that they can climb from the foot of a mountain to its summit without once stopping for to rest."

Hugh Monroe, Schultz's narrator, describes the Stoney's history:

"So it was that I saw for the first time a member of the Sak-sis O-ki-tu-ki tribe of mountain Indians, or, as our company had named them, the Stony, or Stonies. They were really Assiniboine Sioux who, a hundred and more years back, after a quarrel about a woman, had separated from the main body of the tribe, passed safely through the wide buffalo plains of the Blackfoot tribes, and taken refuge in the remote vastness of the Rocky Mountains, roaming up and down both sides of the range between the headwaters of the Saskatchewan and those of the Missouri, over trails that had long

since been worked out by the Koo-te-nai, with whom they soon became friendly. They were very successful trappers of beavers, marten, fishers, and wolverines, and traded their catches to us at Mountain Fort [Rocky Mountain House] whenever the Blackfeet tribes were not anywhere in its vicinity. At other times, the Nor'westers, on the west side of the mountains, got their furs."

The Stoney, as a group, appear to have had little traditional knowledge of the park. Schultz met a group of Stoney in Fort MacLeod as part of his research for *Signposts of Adventure* (1926a:179) "... to my great surprise learned that they could not give me the Stonie name of a single topographic feature of Glacier National Park." If Schultz met members of the Good Stoney band, a lack of knowledge on their part should not be surprising because it was principally the Bearspaw and Chiniki bands who hunted south along the Rockies at the turn of the century. In Waterton, local residents recall that the Stoney once used the Akamina Pass as a route into the Flathead at the turn of the century (Reeves interviews with Ada Kemmis 1960s, and Andy Russell 1980s).

Stoney parties were seen in the North Fork of the Flathead in the late 1800s (Vaught n.d.:381). In early December 1889, the Kalispell *Daily Interlake* noted that a large band of Stoney were camped near Demersville: "A week later it [Interlake] said that four lodges of Saskatchewan Indians were snowed into the east end of Big Fork." Vaught also saw tipi poles on the Camas Prairie in late 1898. He was also of the opinion, based on what he learned from the locals, that neither the K'tunaxa nor the Flatheads (Upper Kalispel) hunted or trapped in the North Fork (*ibid.*:382).

### *Cree and Chippewa*

The Cree People's original homelands were in the forests and lake lands of north-central Manitoba. Archaeological studies in this area trace them back some 800 years (Meyer & Hamilton 1993). The Cree gradually spread eastward, southward, and westward into the surrounding forests, lake lands, and park lands over the following centuries. Their westward movement up the Saskatchewan is dated archaeologically, to around AD 1450 (*ibid.*), arriving in today's parklands and forests of central and northern Alberta by AD 1700 or earlier (Russell 1991). Two groups of Cree resided in the west: the Woodlands Cree in the Boreal Forest; and the Parkland (Plains) Cree, in the Saskatchewan parklands and plains. The Rocky Boy Cree descended from the Parkland Cree of northeastern Montana.

The Cree, like the Saskatchewan Assiniboine, often wintered with the Nitsitapii, Tsuu T'ina, and Háninin. Some were respected war chiefs and medicine people among the Piikáni in the 1700s. In the 1800s, increasing intertribal competition for furs, horses, and buffalo precipitated the deterioration of friendly relationships between the Cree and Assiniboine and the "Blackfoot Confederacy" (Piikáni, Siksiká, Kainaa, Tsuu T'ina, and Háninin) (Milloy 1988).

The Cree were familiar with the Waterton-Glacier area by the late 1700s. In 1792, Peter Fidler traveled with an aged Cree war chief of the Piikáni, probably Saukomapi. Fidler said the Cree called Chief Mountain "the Governor" (Fidler 1793:46).

The Cree may well have been hunting and traveling through the region in the early 1700s. Claude Schaefer recorded a story of the Gakawakamitutknik (Raven's Nest Band) in which a camp of Cree are involved. The events described in the story happened before the people had horses.

Later Cree presence in Glacier National Park relates to the settlement of Cree people on the Blackfeet Reservation, particularly around Babb. Some Cree settlement here probably dates back to the whiskey trade days of the 1870s. Holterman (1975) notes that Cree place names are found mostly in the northeast corner of the park: "No one seems to know who applied these names, nor when nor how nor why they were given. But since the Cree have for several generations settled around Babb and Waterton, the connection is easy to guess."

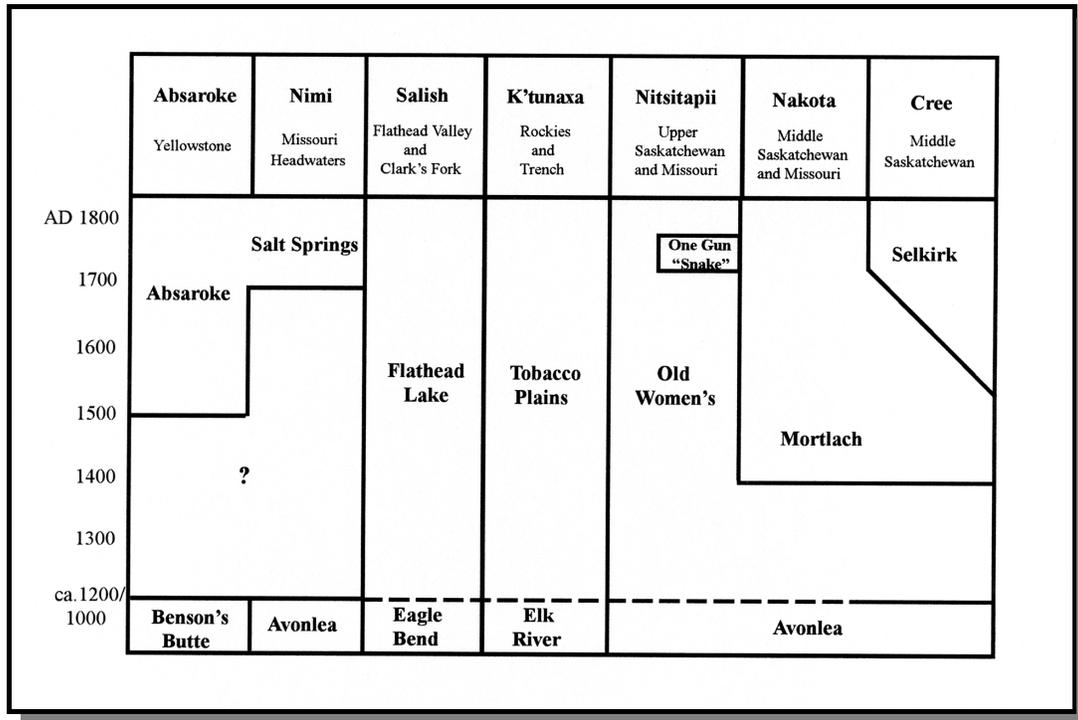


Figure 1: Late Pre-Contact Native American Archaeological Phases: Northern Plains and Rocky Mountain Tribal Sequence – A.D. 1000-1700.

In 1876, Hugh Monroe, while camped at St. Mary with his son Frank, was attacked by a war party of 85 Assiniboine and Cree, who captured their horses, and burned and destroyed their camp. The Monroes killed two of the war party.

Later Cree and Chippewa who came into the area included displaced followers of Louis Riel and refugees from the Riel Rebellion. They began to frequent the mountains in the late 1800s, taking refuge along the Front in the Sun, Teton, and Birch Creek area. In November 1899, according to the *Dwyer Acantha* (Nov. 30 edition), a camp of 100 Cree and Chippewa on Birch Creek near the mountains were building houses and cutting timber. Forestry policy was to keep them out of the forest to minimize the danger of fires.

In the summer of 1901 (*ibid.* August 15) a group of Cree were found camping at Two Medicine. The ranger, who had been on their trail for some time, caused them to move across the Continental Divide. He reported that there was not an ounce of food in their camp.

The Cree were also on the west side of the Continental Divide in earlier years. In the summer of 1891, a Cree-Chippewa camp of some 50 people was seen in Badrock Canyon (Holterman 1990). Around the turn of the century, a camp of a dozen Cree tipis was encountered on Kintla Creek by forest rangers, who told them that they must leave the country or they would kill their dogs (*ibid.*).

Ten years later, in 1909, Rocky Boy's band of Chippewa Cree were forcibly relocated by box car from Helena to Browning, where they camped. Between 100 and 150 of these people were given 80-acre allotments without the Blackfeet's consent. Neither the Blackfeet nor the Chippewa or Cree were pleased with this arrangement. In 1912, it was suggested that the recently abandoned Fort Assiniboine military reservation be made available to these Indians. Some of these people moved to the Rocky Boy Reservation in 1916. Others remained, particularly around Babb, still known to this day by some Blackfeet as "Cree Town." Some of the Cree lived in tents, cutting wood and ice for the Glacier National Park Company (*ibid.*).

## Endnotes to Chapter 1

1. In our report, we use, whenever possible, the original tribal names of the different Indian nations of the Upper Missouri and Saskatchewan. These are the names that they called themselves in the past and are taking back for themselves today. Many First Nations, particularly in Canada, are taking back their names. The three tribes of the "Blackfoot" resident in Canada prefer to be known as the Piikáni Nation (Peigan Reserve), Siksiká Nation (Blackfoot Reserve) and Kainaa (Blood Reserve), rather than Blackfoot. The three tribes today will use the terms Blackfoot or Blackfoot Confederacy when referring to themselves as a collectivity. A small but growing number are now referring to themselves as the Nitsitapii, which is their old name for themselves as a collectivity.

How did the Nitsitapii become known collectively as the Blackfeet or Blackfoot? This collective designation for them originally came from the Americans, not the English traders and trappers. Generally, the English referred to the tribes by their individual names. When referring to the three tribes as a collectivity, which they sometimes did, the English called them the "Slaves" which was a corruption of the Cree's name for them, "Archithinue" (Stranger). The tribes were also referred to as the "Meadow" or "Plains" Indians. By 1840, the English generally followed the American practice and referred to them as the Blackfeet, or Blackfoot (See Dempsey 1990).

This change in usage by Hudson's Bay Company traders in the late 1830s came about as a result of their direct participation in the central Rocky Mountain fur trade, through their trapping expeditions into the Snake River and adjacent areas; contact with American trappers and traders; visits to, and participation in, the annual rendezvous during the 1830s; and opening of posts in the Snake River country. The Americans referred to all three of the Nitsitapii, as well as the Tsuu T'ina (Sarci) and Hánínin (Atsina or Gros Ventre), as the Blackfeet or Blackfoot -- a usage that dates back to before the Lewis and Clark Expedition (see "Early Accounts from St. Louis" section in "Piikáni Ethnohistory" chapter).

What American explorers, traders, and writers began, scholars perpetuated. Jedidiah Morse (1822), in the first report on the Indians of the Western Interior, referred to them collectively as the Blackfoot (*ibid.*:252), as did Albert Gallatin in 1836. Gallatin (1836:132-133) obtained his information from Kenneth Mackenzie at Fort Union. George Catlin met some Kainaa, Siksiká, and Piikáni at Fort Union in 1831 (Catlin 1841: Vol.1:52). Although he

referred to them collectively as Blackfoot, he noted each of the tribes. Prince Maximilian visited Fort MacKenzie in 1832. While he described each tribe separately, he also referred to them collectively as the Blackfeet (Thwaites 1903:95). Neither Catlin or Maximilian included the Háninin in this collective designation.

Ever since then, the term "Blackfeet or Blackfoot," has enjoyed common usage among scholars, writers, and, more recently, the Nitsitapii themselves. It is the title of popular and scholarly works such as George Grinnell's "Blackfoot Lodge Tales" of 1892; James Willard Schultz's innumerable writings such as his 1916 book "Blackfeet Tales of Glacier National Park"; and recent works such as John Ewer's "The Blackfeet: Raiders of the Northern Plains," published by the University of Oklahoma in 1958. All of these works are primarily about the South Piikáni. Other ethnographers, such as Clark Wissler maintained correct usage.

The reservation, which was set aside for the Nitsitapii and Háninin at the Lama Bull Treaty in 1855, was and still is known as the Blackfeet Reservation. The Government of the United States followed the common usage of the time, continuing to refer to the Piikáni as Blackfeet, as did the every growing number of whites coming into Montana, and the popular press. While the Piikáni continued to refer to themselves by their own name well into this century -- as many, particularly older, residents of the Blackfeet Reservation do today -- the majority now call themselves Blackfeet, particularly after the name was officially adopted by the tribal business council under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934.

The so called "Blackfoot Confederacy," a Whiteman's invention, consisted of the three Blackfoot-speaking tribes, the Tsuu T'ina and the Háninin, who, during the late 1700's, if not before, and the first half of the last century, sometimes joined together to make war on their common enemies, particularly the Crow. This so called "confederacy" was never much more, most of the time, than a series of temporary "alliances" between various bands of one or more of the three Nitsitapii tribes, the Tsuu T'ina, and bands of the Háninin.

The Tsuu T'ina (Sarc Reserve) are a Dene' speaking people, and the fourth member of the so-called "Blackfoot Confederacy." The Tsuu T'ina are closely related linguistically, and were at one time culturally with the Beaver People of the forests of Northern Alberta and adjacent British Columbia, from whom they separated some 400 to 500 or so years ago, taking up a more plains-oriented way of life with the Nitsitapii, and acquiring a variety of Nitsitapii cultural traits, including, for example the Okan (Sun Dance), Medicine Pipes, and Painted Tipis (Jenness 1938).

The Tsuu T'ina bands generally traveled with Kainaa and Siksiká bands. After the signing of Treaty 7 in 1877, they lived with the Siksiká and Kainaa on a common Blackfoot Reserve down stream from Calgary. They wanted their own reserve closer to the mountains. In 1883 they moved to their present reserve, located on the southwest edge of Calgary.

The Háninin (Blue Mud People) were the fourth member tribe of the so-called "Blackfoot Confederacy." They were known to the fur traders as the Gros Ventre (Big Belly), or Fall River Indians. The latter name relates to the Great Falls of the Missouri, part of their traditional lands, rather than the "falls" (rapids) of the Saskatchewan, which the fur traders assumed (see Russell 1991). Their tribal hand-sign signifies waterfall, which jokingly was interpreted by the Nitsitapii as Atsina (gut people). Atsina is a name for the Háninin commonly found in the anthropological literature.

The Háninin were the northernmost of the five tribes of linguistically and culturally related people, the two remaining southern groups of which have come to be known collectively as the Arapaho (Kroeber 1902; Trenholm 1970). Today the Háninin refer to themselves as the Gros Ventre, or Gros Ventres. They reside on the Fort Belknap Reservation in Northeastern Montana. Published ethnographical and ethnohistorical studies of the Gros Ventre include Kroeber's 1907 and 1908 ethnological studies; Curtis (1909); Flannery's two-volume study published in the 1950s; (Flannery 1953, 1958); and Fowler's (1987) contemporary study.

2. See Table 1, Maps 1-3, and Figure 1 in this chapter.

3. There is no archeological evidence for the presence of the Salish on the plains in pre-contact times in the Upper Missouri, Mussellshell, and Upper Yellowstone areas. In contrast, there is archeological evidence for the Shoshone around AD 1700 for all three areas, as well as for the Crow in the Yellowstone and Powder River country around

AD 1550. (see "Archeological Evidence for Nimi and Piikáni occupation in Northern Montana and Southern Alberta" section in "Piikáni Ethnohistory" chapter).

"The archaeology of Western Montana has been, and to a large degree still is *terra incognita*" (Turney-High 1937:17). This statement still holds true today for the Flathead and Clarks Fork Valleys (Reeves 2000: Appendix F). There is no direct radiocarbon-dated archeological information on either the nature or time of initial Salish settlement of the Flathead Valley. All one can say is that it probably occurred sometime around 3000 years ago.

4. The better known account of this battle is given by David Thompson in his narrative (Glover 1962:305-306). Thompson also wrote a more detailed account of this battle, presumably for separate publication (Hopwood 1971:265-269). The latter, which Thompson set in 1809 rather than 1810, seems to have been considerably embellished over his earlier version, that appears to be somewhat conflated from that given by him to Henry. In drafting these two accounts for his narrative, composed some years after he had left the fur trade in the west, Thompson appears to have drawn from his memory, or now lost notes, rather than his diaries, because the relevant existing diaries for this period make no mention of the 1810 Battle (Beleya 1994).

5. Thompson's elaborate account of this meeting and subsequent Salish discussions in his Narrative appear to have been freely drawn from his memory; his journals for those months at Salish House in that winter make only the briefest reference to this council (White 1950: 208-209).

6. Ross Cox also gives an account of a battle between the "Peigan" and Salish in 1812 (Cox 1831:67-168), which he obtained from several Indians. His account involves Finan McDonald. MacDonald was not present at the 1812 battle. Ross's account is remarkably similar to Thompson's account of the 1810 battle at which McDonald was present (See also White 1950:211).

## CHAPTER 2

# K'TUNAXA ETHNOHISTORY AND ETHNOLOGY



### The K'tunaxa in Traditional Days

The K'tunaxa consist of two major linguistic and cultural divisions--the Upper K'tunaxa; and the Lower K'tunaxa, or Lake Indians. The Lower K'tunaxa bands occupied the lower reaches of the Kootenai River, below Kootenai Falls, as well as the Kootenai Lakes. The Upper K'tunaxa bands occupied the upper reaches of the Kootenai, the headwaters of the Columbia River, the Columbia Lakes region, and the Rocky Mountain valleys to the east.

At one time, some of the Upper K'tunaxa bands wintered on the eastern slopes. However, when the bands of the Upper K'tunaxa were first met by European explorers such as David Thompson and Peter Fidler in the closing decades of the eighteenth century along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, they no longer over-wintered east of the divide. The Upper K'tunaxa bands resided west of the Continental Divide -- some the year round -- while others seasonally crossed eastward to hunt buffalo in the foothills and plains. Traditional Upper K'tunaxa territory, as recorded by David Thompson, Peter Fidler, Alexander Henry the Younger, DeSmet, and others included the eastern slopes of the Rockies from the valley of the North Saskatchewan River south to the Waterton-Glacier region.

Aside from some minor dialectical differences, the major differences between the Upper and Lower K'tunaxa were reflected in their subsistence base. The Lower K'tunaxa were more sedentary and more strongly oriented toward the use of the river and lakes for transportation by canoe. They placed a greater emphasis on deer, duck-hunting, and fishing. They had few horses, and lived in long tule-covered lodges. They appear to have had a more complex leadership structure.

The Upper K'tunaxa had a number of other culture traits considered to have been derived from plains cultures, such as a "diluted" form of the Sun Dance. One should note, however, that some of these supposedly recently borrowed "plains traits" that relate to K'tunaxa religious belief and practice only superficially resemble plains ritual systems. They are, in fact, very ancient K'tunaxa ritual systems, specifically reflective of and integrated into their cosmotheistic religious system centering on the Rocky Mountains.

### *K'tunaxa Bands*

Each of the two K'tunaxa divisions encompassed a number of bands, which were essentially politically independent, occupying particularly favorable homelands in the Kootenai and Upper Columbia valleys. While the number of bands and the territory that they controlled is not precisely clear, Smith (1984) considers Claude Schaeffer's (1940) listing to be the most accurate. Schaeffer lists seven bands.

The Akiskenekkikik were the northernmost band. They are generally referred to as the Columbia Lakes or Windemere band, because their traditional area centered on the Columbia Lakes. The Akaminik were

the next band to the south. They are generally referred to as the Fort Steele or St. Mary band, and their homeland was located on the Kootenai River, in the vicinity of Fort Steele. Members of this band did seasonally travel across the Crowsnest and North Kootenai passes to hunt buffalo.

The Gakawakamitutknik, commonly referred to as the Michel Prairie or Fernie band, but more properly as the Raven's Nest, lived in the Crowsnest Pass. They seasonally moved back and forth across the Continental Divide, spending much of the year hunting bison along the eastern foothills between the Oldman River and Waterton-Glacier. They were all but destroyed by small pox around 1731. Some members escaped westward to join the Tobacco Plains and other bands. We discuss these people further on in our section dealing with the "Plains K'tunaxa."

South of the Akaminik on the Kootenai River were the Akanahonek, or Tobacco Plains band, whose traditional wintering village sites were at the Tobacco Plains east of the Kootenai River in the vicinity of the international boundary. The Akanahonek traditionally traveled to the eastern slopes three times a year to hunt buffalo, principally by way of the South Kootenai Pass. They considered the Waterton-Glacier area to be part of their traditional hunting territory. Relevant aspects of Akanahonek traditional culture and knowledge of the region, as recorded by Claude Schaeffer (n.d.) are discussed in some detail elsewhere in this report.

The Akukuatsukinik were a small band located in the Kootenai River valley between Tweed and Warland. This group became extinct at an early time. The Akiyiniik lived on the Kootenai River in the vicinity of Jennings. Sometime before 1850, they moved to the Kalispell area, after which seasonal bison hunting on the eastern slopes became a more important aspect of their economy. They generally used the Marias Pass and routes to the south, often hunting with the Salish and Upper Kalispel. Sometime after the Hell Gate Treaty, they moved to Elmo on the Flathead Reservation, and were joined by many Lower K'tunaxa. Relevant aspects of traditional Akiyiniik culture and knowledge of the region, recorded by Claude Schaeffer, are also discussed in this report.

On the Kootenai below the Akiyiniik were the Aksuekkinik, who lived near Libby. Most of their members moved to Fort Steele and Windermere in the late 1800s.

Upper K'tunaxa band populations changed through the years. In 1811, Henry (Coues 1897(2):707) estimated 50 families. Ross counted 212 K'tunaxa at the Flathead Rendezvous in 1824. John Work census of 1830 lists 349 (*ibid.*: ). In 1845, according to Warre and Vavasour, there were 235 (Chance 1981:84ff). The smallpox epidemic of the late 1830s had taken its toll. By 1860 the population had risen to some 400-450 persons (DeSmet 1863:113; Wilson 1866:304).

### *The Gakawakamitukinik and K'tunaxa Origins*

K'tunaxa tradition, as recorded and interpreted by Turney-High, Carling Malouf, and others, referred to a band (or bands) generally called the Tunaxa or Plains K'tunaxa by these writers; their homeland as late as the early eighteenth century was the eastern slopes of the Rockies, where they resided year round. Claude Schaeffer (1982), through his field studies, identified the so-called Plains K'tunaxa with a pre-existing band of the Upper K'tunaxa -- the Gakawakamitukinik -- whose immediate territory comprised the Crowsnest Pass, with wider areas of use in and beyond the foothills on both slopes of the Rocky Mountains (*ibid.*:4).

Oral traditions among the Akaminik and the Akiyiniik, and particularly the Akanahonek, recall that this band contracted smallpox at about the same time that the K'tunaxa acquired horses. Schaeffer concluded that the smallpox epidemic of the 1730s decimated the band, which is said to have gotten both smallpox and horses from the Snake. A few people survived the epidemic and went west to join other bands. Information that survived in the oral histories collected by Schaeffer related to a few details on their way of life and place names. To Schaeffer, it was the Gakawakamitukinik, as well as other bands of the K'tunaxa – the Akaminik, Akanahonek, and Akiyiniik-- who, when seen hunting on the eastern slopes and adjacent foothills and plains, became identified by European traders and explorers as the "Plains K'tunaxa."

Over the last century, several writers have speculated on a plains origin for the K'tunaxa (Smith 1984:27). Some writers, such as Chamberlain (1893) and Hale (1891) state that the K'tunaxa originally lived east of the mountains, and were driven west by the Nitsitapii, while other writers such as Curtis (1911), Ray (1939), and Turney-High (1941), suggest that they originated west of the mountains and expanded eastward. Swadesh (1949) suggests that the K'tunaxa were a plains tribe who had acquired a veneer of plateau traits because of their recent dislocation from the plains. The K'tunaxa's own oral traditions, however, state that they originated around the headwaters of the Columbia and the Tobacco Plains.

Claude Schaeffer, during his 40 years of work with the K'tunaxa, gave considerable thought to this matter. He concluded:

"There is no evidence whatever for believing that all or most of the Kutenai resided east of the Rocky Mountains permanently at this early period. The basic pattern of Plateau culture is so well established for the Kutenai, and particularly for the Lower Kutenai, as to give no basis for assuming their Plains cultural identity in modern times. Kutenai traditions suggest that the Tobacco Plains Kutenai were already well established in their historic habitat on the Kootenai River near the Montana-British Columbia border. Both they and their downstream kinsmen, the *Akiyiniik*, have traditions of once following an economy entirely Plateau in character but giving way later to seasonal buffalo hunting along the western margin of the Plains. Further, the most Plains-like of all the Kutenai, the Michel Prairie (Gakawaskamitukinik) band, seem never to have completely abandoned their connections with the Plateau in order to take up conclusively a Plains type of life" (Schaeffer 1982:9).

The matter of whether or not the K'tunaxa were plains or plateau is largely one of semantics and the pronounced tendency of ethnographers and ethnohistorians to pigeonhole people into ethnographic culture areas. The traditional culture area concept has no category for "mountain" traits. Traits must be either plains, plateau, or Great Basin. The K'tunaxa are, and have been for millennia, a distinctive mountain culture, long resident in the area, and adapted to a seasonal east slope/west slope transhumance pattern of settlement and subsistence.

### **The Akanahonek (Tobacco Plains) <sup>1</sup>**

The Akanahonek, generally referred to as the Tobacco Plains band, take their name from "akanoho,"

"the current" -- a mile-long length of current at the mouth of a small creek running into Graves Creek. The Akanahonek, tradition has it, were the first of the K'tunaxa people, from whom all other groups came. It was here that the K'tunaxa were created.

The Akanahonek's territory west of the mountains "was bounded by the White River on the north, the summit of the Purcells, across the Kootenai, on the west and south to about Rexford, Montana, and main ranges of the Rockies on the east. They frequently hunted for moose and elk with the Columbia Lakes Kutenai along the Columbia and Spillamacheen as far as Golden. They often joined within to fish for salmon" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.10).

East of the Rockies, their winter bison-hunting range extended from the benches east of the Marias Pass northward through the foothills and mountain valleys of the St. Mary, Belly, and Waterton, toward the Crowsnest Pass. Sometimes they hunted as far north as the Oldman River and the north side of the Porcupine Hills. The latter areas were part of the traditional winter bison hunting range of the Akaminik.

#### *Yearly Round*

The different Akanahonek families came together at the Tobacco Plains for the winter; there was abundant firewood there. The yearly round began in January, when younger and able-bodied men and women departed eastward on foot for the winter bison hunt. The older people and small children remained behind to fish through the ice. Some other families would remain to hunt elk in late winter.

The Akanahonek's yearly round changed considerably after they acquired the horse, which facilitated travel to the plains and the return of buffalo meat during the spring and fall. Prior to that time, the Akanahonek, in Schaeffer's opinion, only went east to hunt buffalo in mid-winter.<sup>2</sup>

#### *The Winter Bison Hunt*

The following textual excerpts are taken from a manuscript prepared by Claude Schaeffer.<sup>3</sup>

"In January the Kutenai snow-shoed east of the Rockies for bison. On the way they hunted other game such as sheep, goat, etc. The bison were fat(?) at this time of year.

"The size of winter bison hunting party varied from two or three families to as many as ten or twelve families (10-150). Some preferred to take one route or go to one area, while other people differed. Dry meat and a small quantity of bitterroot were taken eastward for food by hunting party. Camas was too heavy to be packed. If dry meat [was] lacking, [the] party attempted to live on birds on route.

"When the Kutenai travelled eastward on foot, they camped in the thick timber. Then [the] camp circle was not used. The snow was deep and there was slight danger.

"The party travelling eastward sent out scouts ahead to look for bison. If bison were seen at a great distance and none near at hand a magical device (fat from small stomach) [was] thrown into fire to bring snow and cold weather, and thus bring bison into the

shelter of the foothills.

"Some Akanahonek were able to call or drive bison to a place where they were easily killed, merely by directing their movements with a blanket. No supernatural power was said to be involved. A fast runner would move along the side of a herd and direct them to go towards a certain place.

"The Kutenai resident west of the mountains did not seem to have used the drive over a cliff or into a corral. It was used by the Tunaxa [Ravens Nest] and called akulala "buffalo pen".

"Infrequently, Paul said bison, if situation permitted, were driven by dogs onto lake ice and while slipping on the ice, were easy to kill.

"The Akanahonek never travelled far into the plains, as the distance was too great to pack the meat back; they also lacked horses and were too few in numbers to withstand Blackfoot attack. The Blackfoot did not dare approach too closely to Continental Divide because of deep snows. Their snowshoes were poor and they were not as skilled as Kutenai in their use. Hence they were only used occasionally in crossing Rockies to attack Kutenai.

"Mrs. Paul crossed with bison party eastward to present Glacier National Park Hotel. They ascended a high butte to look around. Only four in family. They saw bison which Piegan had been chasing. A man in the party then used magical preparation to bring bison closer.

"The bench section of eastern foothills where snow drifts were deep, was safest place for Kutenai from enemies, and they seldom moved far from this type of country on winter hunts. At times there would be no bison on east bench, so that hunters would have to go north as far as Crows Nest Pass.

"When the Akanahonek moved to Waterton Park, they hunted bison within the park rather than to move out into the plains.

"After party had crossed Continental Divide and saw bison tracks in region, they knew hunting would be good and many bison about. These had been driven into shelter of foothills by Blackfoot hunting or by severe storms.

"Bison used to travel west into mountains, following the grassland, as far north as Crow's Nest Pass, when they had been disturbed by hunters on the plains.

"Some of Akanahonek used to hunt as far north as Crow's Nest Pass on eastern side of Rockies. When hunting party was ready to return westward, they would pray for snow to be crusted before starting. Paul said that he made and used only one type of snowshoe regardless of snow conditions."

### *K'tunaxa Winter Packing*

The Kutenai had developed a winter relay pack system that they continued to use after they got the horse for packing the buffalo meat back across the mountains:

"Men packed from 30-40 lbs and only one could pack 50 lbs. A married woman could pack 18 lbs and a younger girl (15-18) 8 lbs. In breaking camp the five or six leaders who broke the trail, would not carry packs because they broke the trail through the snow. This was on the bison range. One would break trail for a quarter mile or more and would then step aside; another would then act as trail breaker, and the rest would alternate in turn. Each would step into the rear place during his rest walking. The leaders wore snowshoes and were the largest, strongest men. This was on the way to the range" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.14).

Ambrose Gravelle (*ibid.*) provided further details to Schaeffer in 1965 on the Akaminik's use of the pack system:

On returning with the supply of dried bison meat, some individuals would pack two parfleches of meat. The weaker women would carry one pack. The longest distance between two campsites was about ten miles and most sites were not this far from one another. A bundle of dried meat or parfleche would weigh about 19 lbs.

"Bison or elk hides were tanned hair side out and spread on the ground. Three bundles of dried meat were placed on the hide, folded over and securely tied. The pack was then about 8 feet long and 3 or more feet wide. The packs could then be eased down a long snow slide over two miles long. The people would descend to the bottom of declivity by a less-steep, roundabout way to the bundles of dried meat. This method was used on the Buffalo Pass (North Kootenay).

"The children and old women would wear snowshoes and the latter would carry a small pack, not very wide, and older girls would pack small babies in hide bags. The small bags carried the cooking equipment, such as pots, etc.

"The heavy packs were usually supported by two back straps, one horizontally across the breast and shoulders and the second passing horizontally across the forehead. These were made of goat, elk or bison hide. They were about 3" wide at the center tapering down to 1" towards the ends. They were from 6-7 feet long."

### *West-side Spring and Fall Activities*

From the winter hunt, the Kutenai (Akanahonek) would return sometime in April (they left the bison range in mid-March). They would arrive in time to gather bitterroot in the last of April or the first of May. A feast would then be held for the first bitterroot gathered.

In May, they planted tobacco at a prairie on the east bank of the Kootenai River north of the mouth of the Tobacco River. Near the end of May, camas came on. In earlier times, they gathered small-sized

camas along the Wigwam River; in later times, they dug it with the Akiyiniik at Pleasant Valley.

Deer were driven in late spring. Moose, caribou, and bighorn sheep were hunted. July and early August comprised the major berrying season for those at the lower elevations, particularly saskatoons. Toward the close of summer, berries of the upper elevations were collected, as well as huckleberries and elderberries.

"Some of the families who stayed behind in the spring/summer buffalo hunt would journey south to meet the Akiyiniik at Libby to trade for more camas. During the summer those upper Kutenai bands who did not move east for bison, would all move down to Bonners Ferry for duck hunting and to avoid Blackfoot raids. They would return in time to gather tobacco in September, at the same time bison hunters would return. They would move south on Kootenai River in canoes ... others crossed the mountains to the west of the Kootenai River, to Yahk River and travelled down this river (Schaeffer n.d.:f.14)."

Some hunters remained west of the Continental Divide during the fall bison hunt, hunting deer and elk in the Spillamacheen with the Columbia Lakes band. Bark and hide canoes were then used in coming and going to the northern country. They were loaded with meat and salmon upon their return down river.

### *Fishing*

A kind of sucker was taken by three-pronged spear at the mouth of Gold Creek, along Kootenai River, west of Flagstone, in May. Traps were also set in Gold Creek.

"Fish trap set in Sophies(?) Lakes to intercept movement of suckers and squaw fish. This was done in spring and summer. The Akanahonek did not fish nearly as much as the Akiyiniik. The fish trap was used in September and part of October, when streams were falling and fish were returning to deeper water (*ibid.*)."

The Akanahonek seldom dried fish for winter in contrast to the other groups.

"The best fishing was said to be east of the Divide and they did considerable there."<sup>4</sup>

As summer ended, some Akanahonek would move north to the upper Columbia for the salmon season. Fish runs began in August, continuing into September and October. Usually families stayed for several weeks.

### *Spring/ Summer Bison Hunt* (Schaeffer n.d.:f.14)

"In the spring hunt the Akanahonek would leave in a group, and all the band would go together at the end of May when the bitterroot was no longer good. They would seldom kill any game on the way east.

"The Kutenai did not travel eastward for bison during the summer before horses were

introduced: they only went in winter when snow was deep. There was also danger in fording the mountain streams, during spring run-off period. Travel was easier on snowshoes in winter than travel in summer. This meant that they did not obtain summer hides for lodge covers and hence, their lodges were made of brush and bark, and other products made from heavy winter hides.

"In latter part of May or first of June the Akanahonek would watch a certain spot in the mountains to the east where there was a snowfield. If the snow had melted here, it was signal that it was time to set out on the summer hunt.

"Just before setting out on the summer hunt, the Akanahonek would be joined by people from other Upper Kutenai bands, Cour d'Alene, Pend d'Oreille and other Indian peoples to the west (Spokane, Nez Perce, occasionally Colville, etc.) at 69 Ranch. All would be using horses for the trip. This was true of the period around 1871 when Joe David was around six years old. The group would hunt for about a month. On their way east the wild strawberries would ripen. On their return in late June or early July, service berries would be ripening.

"The Akanahonek were few in numbers and did not own many horses, so that even during the summer hunt, they seldom ventured far out on the plains. However, after joining with other western tribes, they moved eastward in large numbers, for bison hunting and the Akanahonek and more particularly the Akiyiniik did not need to fear attack from the plains tribes. They moved out upon the Plains as far as the Sweet-Grass Hills (known to the Kutenai as Three Buttes).

"En route to bison chase, the party would stop, dismount and an old man would offer a prayer. All mounted and continued. They would approach as near to bison as possible (600 yards) before herd came together and started running. The Kutenai, if alone, did not shout, which was Flathead practice, but lead man would cry, 'Ready.' Then all would ride close to herd and begin shooting.

"After bison were butchered, one of the hunters would return to camp for the pack horses. He would invite someone to accompany him to share in the meat. Sometimes a hunter would take his wife to help in loading meat.

"Bison meat was never packed on a running horse, not even blood, as it was believed that doing so would destroy the animal's wind and endurance.

"A horse was able to pack the meat of one bison but this was a heavy load. If camp was far off, the flesh of one bison was shared between two pack horses.

"During the hunt the head chief remained in camp but hired someone to kill and bring in his meat. There apparently were no police to guard camp at this time and no regulation against individual hunting then or during travel at this time [in contrast to the Piikáni]. Sometimes a relative went out to get meat for head chief but it was someone who could recognize fat cows. Sometimes he was paid a horse for acting during

hunting season: other times not. The same person also took care of chief's horses. Usually a poor person, who owned no horses, was selected for this task. He would then live in chief's lodge. Women never hunted buffalo.

"The Kutenai camped in a circle. At night if scouts brought word of danger of enemies, the camp announcer would warn the young warriors. They would ride around outside the camp circle all night, strung out at 15-20 foot intervals, singing songs. If danger was imminent they would ride in groups of four at intervals. In this way it was immediately evident if an enemy attempted to join them in darkness. Each would also tie a half hitch in tail of his horse as additional identification. Anyone detected on foot at night was immediately suspected as an enemy. All the horses were driven inside the camp circle and kept there all night.

"If anything suspicious was seen inside camp circle, word was quietly passed to rear and armed guard circle until it reached the originator. The guards would stop singing at once. They would then fire at suspicious object but enemy would usually be gone by this time, warned by the halt in the singing. Sometimes the moon shining on his gun barrel would give him away. The modern Kutenai claim that they never lost horses to enemy raiders."

#### *Fall Bison Hunt* (Schaeffer n.d.:f.14)

"Bison move northwestward during autumn. They thus came up to the Crows Nest Region. Sometimes the Akanahonek hunted here. During a severe winter the bison move westward into the shelter of the mountains. They move from a place called 'Twisting, bush whiskers.' In mid summer they remain in their principal range.

"In autumn after elk hunting was over, preparations were made for another trip eastward for bison. Elk were hunted in August and early September. After the rutting season, elk become poor and then band would set out for the bison range. Those families which needed hides for a lodge would hunt [bison] longer.

"The band moved out for elk hunting at the time chokecherries were fully ripe, in September, and return early in November, when elk were rutting.

"In September the people would leave in small groups for the fall [bison] hunt and everybody hunted on the way. A meeting place was decided upon east of the Rockies, where everyone would meet.

"They would reach the bison range by the end of September or first of October.

"Mrs. Pascal said Akanahonek would move eastward hunting deer and elk in September and arrive on east bench to catch the first bison, which started to move into forested area to escape cold weather of October.

"The Akanahonek would wait for each other on the last bench of the Rockies,

meanwhile hunting goat, sheep and elk, until all the parties had arrived. The last were larger families which hunted mountain game.

"Large char were speared in north fork of Flathead River and at junction of Wigwam and Lodgepole Rivers. This was done on the north fork en route for fall hunt on the Plains. Only time when Akanahonek stopped to fish. Used a goat horn spear for char. Char taken on their downstream movement in fall to Flathead Lake. Usually not more than a day devoted to this activity.

"The Akanahonek moved to Waterton Lakes and then south to St. Mary's Lake, where they hunted elk, deer, moose, sheep and goat. They travelled with horses and sometimes they would go far out on the plains. This was after peace made with Blackfoot (1850[?]).

"In middle of November the Akanahonek returned from the fall bison hunt. Usually their stores of supplies of dried meat were sufficient at this time to require little or no hunting. A few families travelled south into Akiyiniik territory to hunt whitetail deer."

### **Eastern Slope Akanahonek/Blackfeet Conflicts**

According to Akanahonek tradition, the Piikáni began to occupy the east bench of the Rockies shortly after "Bad Trail" came to the Flathead Indians. Before that, the Tunaxa Gakawakamitukinik were the only Indians on the east bench (Schaeffer n.d.: f.18). They never had trouble with the Piikáni. It was believed that the Piikáni moved into the Tunaxa territory after they were killed off by smallpox (around 1732). Prior to that time, the Piikáni lived to the southeast of their present territory, and then, shortly after the smallpox epidemic began, they moved northwestward.

Archaeological sites dating to the early 1700s and earlier along the eastern slopes of the ancestral Piikáni (Old Women's Phase) and K'tunaxa (Tobacco Plains Phase) (Reeves 1990) in part support Akanahonek oral traditions. They indicate that the enclosed northern valleys, such as the Crowsnest, were Akanahonek K'tunaxa territory, while the more open front, such as the Waterton Valley, contain both Tobacco Plains and Old Women's Phase winter occupations i.e., Piikáni, and Gakawakamitukinik -- indicating that the two groups sometimes resided, although not necessarily in the same winters, at the foot of the Waterton Lakes.

The Tunaxa also encountered the Cree east of the mountains in the early 1700s. Paul David recounts a story passed down of why the Cree and K'tunaxa never fought. The story begins in the vicinity of Waterton (see Appendix A).

Piikáni/K'tunaxa relationships began to deteriorate shortly after the development of the Salish and K'tunaxa horse herds. These presented a great temptation for the Piikáni. By 1770, the K'tunaxa are among those listed by Matthew Cocking as the "enemies" of the Nitsitapii, Cree and Háninin tribes (PAM HBCA B.239/a/69):

"Kanapick Athinneewock or Snake Indian

Wahtee or vault Indians [possibly Hidatsa]  
Kuttunnayewuck  
Nah-puck Ushquanuck, or flat Head Indians"

Relationships between the two tribes no doubt fluctuated during the latter part of the eighteenth century. When Peter Fidler, who was traveling with the Piikáni, met the K'tanaxa (most likely Akaminik) in the Gap of the Oldman River in the winter of 1792, to encourage them to come to trade at the forts on the North Saskatchewan, relationships between the two groups seemed to be relatively amicable. By 1800, the time of K'tunaxa visits to Rocky Mountain House, the Piikáni, according to David Thompson's Narrative, were putting considerable pressure on the K'tunaxa (Glover 1962).

Intertribal relationships seriously deteriorated with the establishment of the Northwest Company (NWC) trade west of the mountains in the first decade of the 1800s, and, the provision of muskets and ammunition to the Salish and K'tunaxa, combined with an ever-growing need for horses by the Nitsitapii, as their populations, like those of the western tribes, continued to recover from the smallpox epidemic of 1782. Raids westward and southwestward of the mountains for horses, slaves, and furs increased, particularly after the fur resources of the eastern slopes of the traditional territory of the Nitsitapii were depleted by the mid-1810s.

While the Nitsitapii and their "allies" the Háninin collectively far outnumbered the west-side people in warriors, horses, and arms, the westward raids were generally carried out by small groups of warriors from a few bands of the four tribes rather than large tribal collectives, like those that went against the Crow, the traditional enemies of the Nitsitapii and Háninin. The Akaminik and Akanahonek K'tunaxa were not the principal object of Nitsitapii horse raids, because they had considerably fewer horses than the Salish to the south in the Flathead Valley.

The Akanahonek in particular, as well as the Akaminik, and later the Akiyiniik, developed a seasonal subsistence pattern that relied on buffalo hunting, and the return westward of dried meat as a principal source of animal protein for the bands during the winter months. They had to return eastward to the plains for the buffalo hunts. Therefore, despite the increased hostility from the Nitsitapii, they continued to travel eastward over the Continental Divide for the spring and fall horse-mounted buffalo hunts out on the plains. Conflict with the Nitsitapii increased on the eastern slopes and out on the plains.

As the number of buffalo began to decline in the 1850s, some 20 years before it was generally recognized by the white traders, competition increased among the east-side tribes -- the Nitsitapii, Háninin, Assiniboine and Cree -- for a diminishing resource base. This same resource base was also being actively hunted for robes by traders and mixed-bloods, and for pemmican by the Metis out of Red River, to supply the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) fur trade in the north. The HBC, through their agents the Metis, was ultimately responsible for the destruction of the bison herds in the Saskatchewan basin.

There are many accounts of K'tunaxa Blackfoot encounters during the first eight decades of the last century. The following are accounts drawn primarily from Schaefer's research of Akanahonek/Blackfoot encounters.

### *Paul David's Father's Encounters -- 1840s*

Paul David's father's first encounter with the Blackfeet was as a young man in the early 1800s, when he journeyed east with the Flathead from the St. Ignatius Mission area to the Deer Lodge country. The Blackfeet attacked their camp, and David killed the Blackfeet chief. Nearly all were killed off in a short time.

Later on, David met the Blackfeet on the plains and started fighting. Two of the Blackfeet were killed, and both sides stopped fighting. Sometime later, he and two K'tunaxa had an encounter with a Atsina party in which the K'tunaxa took the day.

Another time, the Akanahonek crossed by the Buffalo Trail and met some Blackfeet. David captured a gun from the Blackfeet, and they started to retreat. No one was killed.

Once the K'tunaxa were moving down the "Stone River" (Carbondale River west of Pincher Creek; at the rapids there they caught a lot of char), when they met a party of Blackfeet. The Blackfeet shot at David many times but never hit him. He fought with nothing but an axe in his battles. He had received supernatural power to use his axe.

### *The Red Rock Canyon and Copper Mountain Battles*

Two major battles occurred between the west-side people and the Blackfeet and their allies in the Waterton Park area. One appears to have taken place around 1824 and the other around 1850. The two battles involved both Not-A-Grizzly, who was Chief, and his son Edward, or "Back Coming In Sight." In the first battle, Edward's performance was unremarkable, in contrast to the second, in which he earned his name.

Intermixed accounts of these two battles were related to Schaeffer by his elder informants in the 1930s and later years. Because the same principals and locations were involved, the elders had mixed together some of the other personages and events. The conflicting and somewhat contradictory accounts apparently led Schaeffer (from his notes) to believe at one time that there had been only one battle and at another time two battles. He did not resolve the issue.

His accounts refer to at least two battles. The first battle is referred to in Reverend Rundle's Journal of 1847 as having happened 20 to 30 years before Rundle's visit. Schaeffer's genealogical research placed one of the battles at about 1850. The narratives are unclear and, for purposes of this report, we refer to the first battle as Red Rock Canyon, as some elders called it, even though it occurred to the east; and we refer to the second as Copper Mountain, the name for the last big battle between the K'tunaxa and east-side tribes.

### *Red Rock Canyon Battle -- Around 1824*

In the spring and summer of 1847, Reverend Robert Rundle traveled far south from the Methodists' Pigeon Lake Mission in central Alberta to Piikáni country. He went down the backside of the Porcupine Hills along the Old North Trail. South of the Highwood River, he arrived at Bull's Pound River (Creek),

a tributary of the Highwood, on May 31, travelling on to Pheasant Pound River, which he reached in two days, and on to Sly Shooting River, where Monroe (Hugh) was pitched at its head, which he reached the next day.<sup>5</sup> At Monroe's camp, Rundle enters this into his diary:

"About 50 or 60 years since, Battle was fought just here between Peagans, Blood Indians, Blackfeet & Crees, Suscees (also two or 3 Ass. Strongwood). Other side there were Kootenies, Flat heads, Nez Perces, Snakes, Crow Indians, at least 500 men on each side (by accounts). The latter party lost about 100 men. Only a Peagan Chief killed of the former party who was killed slyly early in the morning by a sly attack - hence the name of the river. The battle commenced here and Kootanies were chased about 40 or 50 miles to the south of this. The Peagans had guns (but the Kootanies, only 2 guns)."

This locale was a favorite one for battles between the west-side people and the Blackfeet. Rundle continues to discuss a battle that had occurred the year before (1846):

"Also in June 16, 1846, Battle fought between Ponderaes & Kootenies (2 or 3) and 28 young men of Peagans, about 6 or 8 miles from this place, in which 2 Flat Heads were killed (by account). The Peagans gained the Battle. No Peagans killed nor wounded. Next day the Peagans came about break of day rejoicing, Singing war songs. Mr. B.(Bird) went with 20 in number to the place of battle and the Flat Heads were lying ambush and fired unawares but none killed or wounded. Battle afterwards took place and continued about 6 hours. Peagan chief killed (one called Mikistuki) another warrior (Sak-pu) Sinew Piece & 2 other young married men. By last account 4 Flat Heads were killed ... Flat Heads gained the victory. The Peagans were killed when retreating. In last battle (June 17) Several Kootanies & H Breed joined the Ponderaes..." (Dempsey 1977:264-265).

### *Copper Mountain Battle -- Around 1850*

The Akanahonek and the Piikáni engaged in a great battle around 1850, known as the Copper Mountain Battle. It occurred on the east side of the Waterton River below Crooked Creek, within the present bounds of the park. The following account was given to Schaeffer by Paul David (Schaeffer n.d.:f.80)<sup>6</sup>:

"This was last big battle between the Kutenai and the Blackfeet and their allies ... Peace between the tribes was made a few years later. Wolf Coming Up, a respected warrior then in his 70's was killed in this battle. Sings For Herself was 15 years old at the this time.

"Klitkan 'Nobody' (well known and powerful conjurer) took sick and lost consciousness. Upon his recovery, he started to make the sign of the cross by nodding his head in the appropriate manner. The Kutenai conjurors learned in the Shaking Tent rite of the battle and wrestled with him and that Klitkam would be the person first to discharge his rifle to signal the start of the battle. Two Peigans attempted to disarm him but he made the sign of the cross with his head and fired his gun into the air. This signalled the start of the battle.

"The Kutenai claimed to have killed six enemy head chiefs and thirty warriors and wounded sixty. Only three Kutenai were wounded.

"There were about 250 Kutenai ranged against about 1000 of the Blackfeet and their allies. The battle lasted all days.

"Not-A-Grizzly was head chief of the Kutenai at this time. He was father of Chief Edward, or 'Back Showing.' He [Edward] obtained his name in this battle, as his back showed above the temporary breastworks but the enemy failed to hit him.

"Not-A-Grizzly watched his people trade for powder and ball on the east side. He himself gave two horses for the traders last keg of powder before they encountered the enemy.

"To save their powder, the Kutenai used their bows and arrows."

### *The Battles of the 1860s and the 1870s*

Andrew Bear Hat related a story told to him by his brother Pierre Ellis about Klitkam's predictive powers. At this time, the Akanahonek and Akiyiniik were camped at the exit of the Buffalo Trail. Klitkam came in their tent, and, as he drew his pipe, he said, "my eyebrow is pointing to some event." He threw the rattles to the right. He took another puff and said the same word and threw the rattles to the left. They asked, "What's taking place?" He replied, "There is a person needing help." When asked about the second event, he said, "There are some raiders there." "You will find out that it's going to happen anyway." He quickly left the lodge.

"The next day the smaller camp [Akiyiniik] had taken the buffalo trail but larger party [Akanahonek] had taken the Rocky Trail. The next day they sent two scouts down the St. Mary's River, who found a lone Kutenai camp. One Kutenai there had broken his leg. The wounded man was taken along to search for the other group, who were found in the Porcupine Hills. Five Blackfeet raiders were come upon and Chief Edward wanted to smoke a pipe with them. Big Horn spoiled the party and the Kutenai came into possessing the Blackfeet pipe. Peace with the Kootenais" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.13).<sup>7</sup>

### *Peace with the Kootenais* (Dempsey 1994:59ff)

In 1862, a group of K'tunaxa led by Bear Necklace wished to spend the winter in peace on the plains. They met with the Kaina at the junction of the Waterton and Belly rivers; the Kaina agreed to share their winter hunting grounds with the K'tunaxa. The K'tunaxa went into winter camp on the St. Mary a short distance above its junction with the Oldman. The Kaina were camped on the Belly River west of the Belly River Buttes, and the Piikáni were camped on the Oldman River at Crowlodge Creek.

The people of the two tribes became quite friendly. "The only curse on the camp was gambling" (*ibid*:62). By spring, most of the K'tunaxa's young men had lost almost everything to the Kaina. Bear Necklace was upset. The young men grew restless, and Bear Necklace wanted to get back across the mountains before trouble broke out.

The K'tunaxa had a racehorse that was faster than those of any of the Blood. It was admired by a young Blood, the younger brother of Many Spotted Horses, the leader of the Many Fat Horses band. He and some of his young friends decided to steal the horse, which they succeeded in doing one night. They headed toward the Piikáni camp on Crowlodge Creek. The loss was discovered by the K'tunaxa, and in the ensuing chase, the K'tunaxa killed Many Spotted Horses' brother. Many Spotted Horses grieved for the loss of his only remaining brother and decided to visit the K'tunaxa camp with two companions. He sang his war song as he departed.

The previous day, a young K'tunaxa by the name of White Horse, who lacked a horse for hunting and was refused the use of one by his uncle, stole one from the Piikáni. He had hid it overnight on the Belly River, and was on the way back to the K'tunaxa camp. White Horse met up with Many Spotted Horses' party. They recognized the stolen horse. Eventually, Many Spotted Horses shot White Horse.

A battle between the K'tunaxa and Kaina ensued. The K'tunaxa attacked the Kaina camp for most of the day. In the meantime, Bear Necklace ordered his camp struck, and ordered the women and children to head toward the mountains. At nightfall, the K'tunaxa men followed.

#### *Paul David Accounts*

Later battles between the Akanahonek and the Blackfeet were related by Paul David to Schaefer. When Paul was 15 years old (in 1868), he crossed over the Buffalo Trail to Waterton and south along the foothills to the Milk River. They were three camps eastward from the foothills when they had encountered a group of Blackfeet. The Blackfeet wounded two K'tunaxa; they killed one Blackfeet. The Blackfeet lacked powder and started to retreat. The K'tunaxa held a scalp dance in celebration.

Another battle happened in 1879, in which Paul also took part in it. The Akiyink, Akanahonek, and Akaminik went eastward over the Buffalo Pass. The St. Ignatius Flathead joined them. They traveled east of the Three Mountains (Sweet Pine Hills) until they reached a low-lying ridge of timber. While buffalo hunting, they encountered a Blackfeet butchering buffalo. They attacked each other. The attack went on into the afternoon. More than 100 Blackfeet and four Kutenai were killed (Schaeffer n.d.:fol.52).

#### *After the Northwest Mounted Police Arrive*

In 1874, a large group of K'tunaxa, including Akaminik, Akanahonek, and Akiyink, and possibly other Western tribes, traveled east over the mountains on their regular buffalo hunt. They camped near a trading post operated by American traders in the vicinity of the present-day Fort MacLeod (Schaeffer n.d.:f.88; see also Graham 1945:169-174).

"A grass fire was started, possibly by a old Coeur d' Alene woman, and before the Kutenai could extinguish it the white trader forced them to surrender their weapons and horses, and to fight the fire under supervision of an armed guard. The whites became convinced, that the Indians had deliberately set fire to the grass and in the attendant confusion shot and killed two of the Kutenai. Chief Moses of the Columbia Lakes band, succeeded in calming his people and prevented further bloodshed. The whites

and their Blackfeet allies, slipped away under cover of darkness. The next day they found that a Cour d'Alene and two Piegans had been killed.

"The following summer, upon the return of the Kutenai they were promptly arrested by Colonel MacLeod of the Mounted Police, and held for trial. All were released for lack of evidence. The Kootenai continued on hunting bison and returned west without incident. MacLeod put an end to the killing. He said if anyone killed somebody he would be hanged at once if it were proven that he did it. Then there was no more trouble from then on (Interview with Chief Eustace July 27, 1950; Schaefer n.d.:f.88).

Incidents between the Blackfeet and the K'tunaxa ceased in the early 1880s. The last instance occurred after the last buffalo were gone (around 1883) (*ibid.*). The K'tunaxa went east across the mountains. They went shopping at Fort MacLeod. A K'tunaxa named Simon forgot his bullets, and the trader put them away for him; the next day Simon went back and got them. On his way to the K'tunaxa camp in the mountains, he ran into a group of Piikáni; they traded, and one of the young Piikáni -- Spupe -- killed him in revenge. Simon's father had killed his father some years before. The Piikáni returned to their camp, and word spread about the killing. The Mounties came to check if the Piikáni had got liquor. One of them who understood Piikáni heard the Piikáni talking about the killing. They arrested Spupe. That was the last time the Piikáni killed someone.

## **The Akiyini<sup>8</sup>**

### *Akiyini History*

The original home territory of the Akiyini (Thigh Bone People), who later became identified as the Flathead Reservation K'tunaxa, was the Kootenai River Valley from present-day Troy, Montana, to the town of Jennings. Traditionally they wintered in the Jennings area (known as "thigh bone," from which they derived their name). In summer they came together for trading and games at the present Libby, Montana, with other K'tunaxa from up and down river. Before they had the horse, they did not go to the plains to hunt buffalo. Theirs was a typical plateau way of life, centering around seasonal movement, collecting fish, digging roots, collecting berries, and hunting blacktail deer; they also hunted moose, whitetail, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. Fish were a major source of animal protein.

According to native tradition, the Akiyini had their origin long ago in the separation from the Lower K'tunaxa of an extended family known as "enclosed in a thicket." They maintained their ties for many years by returning in summer to the Lower K'tunaxa to take part in fish trap activities.

Prior to the mid 1700s, relations between the Akiyini and their Salish neighbors to the south were unfriendly, and at times actually hostile. It is said that permanent peace was established between the two tribes by Bad Road, survivor of the smallpox-decimated band of Gakawakamitukinik (epidemic of 1732). Bad Road led some of the survivors over the Lewis and Clark Pass into the Bitterroot Valley, where they, excepting Bad Road, intermarried with the Salish.

Sometime later, Bad Road led a horse-raiding party of 30 K'tunaxa against the Salish. They were surprised near Narada, west of Flathead Lake, where they made a rock barricade on top of a butte. All

the K'tunaxa except Bad Road were killed. He was spared because of his reputation for bravery, and his former association with the Salish of the Bitterroot Valley. At this time, a band of Salish was living around Flathead Lake. The Cabinet Range marked the southern boundary of Akiyiniik territory.

After the peace, the Akiyiniik began to extend their territory to the east, and south to the head of Flathead lake. At the same time, the Salish, who formerly lived around Kalispel and Polson, were shifting their territory farther south into the Bitterroot Valley, which had previously been occupied by the Snake. They had made peace with the Snake, who moved southward. The Kalispel then moved eastward to Polson. Paul David, however, had never heard of a fight between the Snake and Salish. He thought that the movement of the Salish southward was to find better game and grazing country.

The Akiyiniik began to winter on the Flathead near today's Kalispell, returning seasonally to Jennings to hunt and to attend the summer gathering at Libby. At the same time they began to cross the Rockies through the passes to the east of them to hunt bison -- both by themselves, and sometimes in the company of the Akanahonek, who crossed to the north by the Buffalo Trail. This pattern dated back to the earlier decades after they had acquired the horse, when some Akiyiniik families who wintered at Jennings would travel over the Buffalo Trail with the Akanahonek, who had established this pattern long before the coming of the horse. Also, the Akiyiniik now joined the Salish and Upper Kalispel on buffalo hunts to the east, generally by passes farther to the south.

About 1840, because the Akiyiniik's leader, Red Sky, had been killed by the Blackfeet, some Akiyiniik joined the Akanahonek under Not-A-Grizzly. He was succeeded by Michelle Shot in the Head (so named from a wound incurred in a battle with the Blackfeet around 1824). Michelle signed the Hell Gate Treaty in 1855. Parts of both bands accompanied him to the council, while others crossed into Canada, where they took up permanent residence (the Tobacco Plains Reserve was established in 1887). In 1857, Michelle was succeeded by Baptiste (Rose Hips or Tomato), who joined the K'tunaxa in Canada.

In accordance with the treaty terms, the Akiyiniik and Akanahonek remaining in the 1870s and 1880s moved south from the north end of the Flathead Lake to the reservation, most of them settling around Dayton on the west side of the lake. Rapid settlement of the head of the valley in the 1880s forced the few remaining families out. Over the years, the number of "Flathead Kutenai" increased by the addition of individuals and families from both the Akanahonek and the Lower K'tunaxa. Lower K'tunaxa were also relocated here by the U.S. Government. They constitute the great majority of the present-day membership.

### *Seasonal Round*

The Akiyiniik's winter buffalo hunt began in January after the New Year's ceremonials, with the departure on foot of the party toward the plains. About half the group might join the Akanahonek. The Akiyiniik drove the buffalo into snowdrifts in the foothills of the eastern slopes. Both parties would return in April. The next Akiyiniik buffalo hunt occurred on horseback in June, with the party returning in July, followed by a fall hunt, which departed on horseback and returned at the end of November. It took about 10 days to reach the plains.

The South Fork of the Flathead-Marias Pass was the main route for their hunts. Sometimes they used a route farther up the South Fork that came out around Dupuyer. Sometimes they crossed to the Upper Missouri, using the passes that the Salish used to travel to the vicinity of today's Helena to dig red paint. Often they traveled as far south as Bozeman, but they knew nothing of the country south or east of there.

In the Flathead Valley, the bitterroot was dug in May (the area west of Elmo had the largest bitterroots). In June, the camas was dug. Then the band would break up into small family groups to pick berries from mid-July through August, coming together for part of the time at the Libby gathering at the end of July or the first of August. Factors that influenced their selection of camas digging grounds and camps included freedom from mosquitoes, a plentiful supply of deer, lots of wood to pit-roast the camas, and a supply of tree moss to accompany the camas roasting. Dried camas and bitterroot were cached on a tree platform to lighten their load on the way to Libby. The Akanahonek and Akiskenekkikik would gather bitterroot at Eureka on their way south to Libby, where they would trade for more camas in return for furs and other goods.

Elk hunting began in September, in small family groups up the South Fork as far as Spotted Bear, where they had a tobacco garden. Elk was their principal mammal food source. Bighorn sheep and mountain goats were hunted during their trips across the Rockies.

Rarely did they move more than one day's travel past Swan Lake. The Kalispel traveled northward along Swan River, past Swan Lake, and around the north end of Flathead Lake, and then southward. The northeast portion of Flathead Lake was traditional Akiyini hunting territory. Often the band would winter around Woody Bay; women and old men would fish through the ice, while men hunted elk and deer. They also wintered many times between Ashley Creek and Kalispell along the banks of the Flathead River.

### **K'tunaxa Ethnogeography**

The K'tunaxa, particularly the Akanahonek, include the Waterton-Glacier area within their traditional ethnogeography. K'tunaxa place names exist for various mountains, lakes, rivers and streams and places within the area; in addition, knowledge exists about the traditional trails and passes that the K'tunaxa used to cross the Rockies to hunt buffalo on the eastern slopes. A number of traditional K'tunaxa camps were located on the eastern slopes.

#### ***K'tunaxa Place Names***

Although K'tunaxa place names are associated with a number of topographic features in Waterton-Glacier, very few of these remain in use today in either their anglicized or translated versions. The three best known names in use are: Kintla Lake, and Akamina and Kishinina Creeks. These are original K'tunaxa place names for these features, described by the International Boundary Commission in 1860. The sources of other K'tunaxa place names not in use today derive primarily from the boundary survey; James Willard Schultz's *Sign Posts to Adventure*; Claude Schaefer's unpublished place name research; and Jack Holterman's (1975 and 1985) studies. (see Table 2 and Figure 6).

## International Boundary Commission -- 1860

The first list of K'tunaxa names for this region was compiled by George Gibbs during the course of the 1856-1860 International Boundary Survey (U.S. National Archives: Record Group 76 E223). Gibbs lists eight names for this particular region, four of which remain in use today: Kintla, Kishenehn, Kishnenihna, and Akamina. The others on Gibbs' list are Akinisuhtl (North Fork Flathead River); Akwotekatlnam (Upper Waterton); Kitlatlaanook (Sofa Creek?); and Kinnooklehtnana (Boundary or Olson Creek) (see also Holterman 1985:98)).

### Signposts to Adventure (Schultz 1926)

James Willard Schultz compiled a list of 153 K'tunaxa names for features on the west side of Glacier National Park in his book *Signposts of Adventure*. He obtained these names from members of the Tobacco Plains band, particularly John Star (*ibid.*:204-205), whose mother was a Piikáni (*ibid.*:7), born in 1883 (Schaeffer n.d.:f.52).

Schultz also queried the K'tunaxa residents on the Confederated Salish-Kutenai Reservation. They were unable to assist:

"... We found, to our great surprise, that they could not aid us in this work, for the reason that neither they nor their fathers for several generations back, had camped and hunted north of the Two Medicine Lodges River Pass (Marias Pass). In common with the various tribes of the Salish stock, they had obtained their livelihood in the mountains from the pass south to the Yellowstone (Schultz 1926:204)."

Schultz obtained his place names from the Tobacco Plains people through a week-long visit with a group of Tobacco who were then at Fort MacLeod (*ibid.*:7-8). Star acted as both informant and interpreter:

"... during daily sessions of a week, they named them one by one, and with utmost care and accuracy, until we had them all, from the International Boundary south to the southern line of the Park. I was more than pleased with the descriptive quality of some of the Kutenai names."

Although there are descriptive names in Schultz's list of 153 names (*ibid.*:204-225), the majority, as Schultz himself notes (*ibid.*:204), are "simply the names of men of the tribe who were successful hunters, or 'magicians'." These commemorative names, as well as some of the K'tunaxa descriptive names (as is the case of the great majority of Piikáni place names on the east side of the park) are probably not original K'tunaxa names for these geographic features and places (see section on "Place Names" in the "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park" chapter).

Schultz lists descriptive names for mountains, lakes, rivers, streams, and glaciers. Some of these may well be traditional K'tunaxa names; others most probably are not. The latter probably include most of the descriptive names given to the mountains, for Schaeffer has very few K'tunaxa mountain place names in his list.

**Table 2: Traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni Place Names in the Waterton-Glacier Region**

Place Name	K'tunaxa	Piikáni
<b>1. East Side Mountains</b>		
<i>Chief Mountain</i>	<i>Nabsukin</i>	<i>Ninastakis</i>
	Hand-Up-In-The-Mountain*	
Going-To-The-Sun		Lone High
Goat (Glacier)		Goat(?)
Heart Butte		Heart
Rising Wolf		Red
Sofa		Sheep
Sinopah		Rising Bull
Wall behind Grinnell Glacier		Big Ice
Yellow		Yellow(?)
<b>2. East Side Lakes, River and Streams</b>		
Belly River	Akatsimuk	Belly
Bullhead Lake		Moose Lake
Boundry Creek	Kinnooklehtnana	
Carthew Creek (?)**	Red Mud Creek	
Cutbank	Cutbank	Cutbank
Duck Lake		Lake of Drumming
Lee Creek	Standing Lodgepole	Banks-Roped-Together
Marias	Red Paint	Bear
Milk	Little Root	Little
Red Eagle Creek		Many Moose
Sofa Creek	Kitlatlaanook	

**Table 2: Traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni Place Names in the Waterton-Glacier Region**

Place Name	K'tunaxa	Piikáni
St. Mary Lakes and River Lower Lake Upper Lake River	Island Lake Island Lake Roped-Across	South Big Inside Lakes and River  Banks Damming the River Blue Banks Many Chiefs Gathered or Dead or Buried Here
Swiftcurrent Creek Swiftcurrent Lake	Jealous Woman Beaver Woman	Swiftcurrent Jealous Woman Beaver Woman
Two Medicine Lake and River Lake River	Medicine Medicine	Two Medicine Two Medicine
Waterton Lake and River Upper Lake  Middle Lake	Long Lake Lake Cut In Two “Smooth Even Sized Pebble Beach”	North Big Inside Lakes and River
Waterton River	Darkened Eyebrows	Where We Killed The K'tunaxa
<b>3. West Side K'tunaxa Names ***</b>		
Bear Creek	Big Salmon	
Bowman Lake	Rotten Lake	
Flathead River Middle Fork North Fork	Aqnisal Wolf Trail	
Camas Creek	Camas Creek	
Foot of Lake McDonald	Place-of-Dancing	
Kintla	Kintla	
Kishenehn Creek	Kishenehn	
Kishenihna Creek	Kishenihna	

<b>Table 2: Traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni Place Names in the Waterton-Glacier Region</b>		
<b>Place Name</b>	<b>K'tunaxa</b>	<b>Piikáni</b>
McDonald Creek	Barrier Creek (Upper Portion) Avalanche Creek (Lower Portion)	
Starvation Creek	Dead Man Creek	
Wold Tail Mountain	Little Bear Mountain	
<p>* <i>The Location of this place is thought to be somewhere in the Northwestern part of Glacier.</i></p> <p>** <i>The creek in question is more probably Blackiston Brook.</i></p> <p>*** <i>Schultz's (1926) place names are not included unless independently verified.</i></p>		

### **Claude Schaeffer's K'tunaxa Place Names**

Claude Schaeffer's unpublished K'tunaxa place name research serves to place the Schultz work in perspective. Schaefer was very interested in place names. In his early research in the mid-1930s, he compiled names for the passes, traditional campsites, and other places, for a number of the K'tunaxa bands -- particularly the Akanahonek and Akiyiniik -- names that he obtained from his elder informants, particularly Chief Paul David (82 years of age when interviewed in 1935) of the Tobacco Plains Band at Roosville, B.C.; and A. Bullrobe (60 years of age) of Elmo, Montana. John Star, Schultz's chief informant, was Schaeffer's interpreter for his interviews with the Tobacco Plains people. In the 1950s and 1960s, Schaefer acquired additional names through interviews with other elders of the Tobacco Plains and St. Mary reserves in B.C. He also took field trips with some of them through the Crowsnest Pass to Waterton and Glacier.

Schaeffer was particularly interested in the K'tunaxa names for geographic features -- especially for lakes, rivers, and streams on the eastern slopes. He compiled these, as well as a number of K'tunaxa place names for the west side (few of which apply to Waterton-Glacier), alphabetically on a series of 5 x 8 sheets (part of file 80). He appears to have updated this list over the years, because data acquired in 1968 from a visit to Waterton with a K'tunaxa elder is included in the list. The east-slope K'tunaxa names were all obtained from Tobacco Plains elder informants because the Waterton-Glacier area was part of their traditional range in both pre- and post-horse times.

Schaefer experienced the same difficulty as Schultz in obtaining place names for the Waterton-Glacier area from Akiyiniik elders. He noted (Schaeffer n.d.:f.79 "Akiyiniik Camp Sites") that his informant Bull Robe was not familiar with the camping places, with the exception of "the dancing place," used by the Akiyiniik when crossing the mountains to the buffalo range in these latitudes. This hunting pattern

developed after the band acquired the horse, particularly after they had moved their winter village to the Kalispel area from Jennings in the early- to mid-1800s.

Schaefer provides the following Tobacco Plains K'tunaxa place names for Waterton-Glacier.

### *Mountains*

#### *"Chief Mountain" or "Hand-Standing-In-The-Middle of the Mountains"*

"This is apparently [a] peak [in] Glacier Waterton Park. A novice used to travel across this area to seek power, if he found himself on top of each of the peaks of the hand, he had secured the greatest power possible. A youth named A'kinu [?] is believed to have obtained his power on the Hand Peak. He had a lot of power and survived several snow slides. This is the place of most power, and ? near Montana-B.C. boundary (Schaeffer n.d.:f.80).

Ambrose Gravelle (Schaeffer n.d.: f.14) said this place was where the Kutenai climbed hand over hand. It "was east of Kintla between the headwaters of Waterton and Flathead drainages. There were five peaks called 'hands of the mountains' and the Kutenai travelled on snowshoes between the 'thumb' and 'forefinger' of this natural feature but on horseback they travelled entirely 'around the hand'."

Schaeffer was unable to learn the location of this place. The description best fits, in our opinion, the Boulder Pass-Hole-In-The-Wall-Brown Pass area of northwestern Glacier.

### *East Side Lakes and Rivers*

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#### *Waterton Lake and River*

Upper Waterton Lake, or " Long Lake." After international boundary was established became known as "Lake Cut In Two."

Middle Waterton Lake, "smooth even sized pebble beach." Named after the beach below Parks Canada Headquarters.

Lower Lake did not have a name.

Waterton River, "Darkened Eyebrows River." The lower reaches were also known as "Tunaxa River" to the junction with the Belly River.

#### *Carthew Creek, or "Red Mud Creek":*

This appears to be a misnomer on Schaeffer's part. The name should apply to the Blackston Creek as Paul David (9/4/35) is referring to a pass they took in winter on snowshoes that got very muddy for the horses in summer. This pass was the Akamina Pass that was approached via Blackston Creek, Crandell Lake, and Cameron Creek.

*Belly River, or "Akatsimuk":*

The word was untranslatable. Schaefer thought it possibly had something to do with strong belly of a mountain goat.

Lee Creek, or "Standing Lodgepole [of a sundance] River."

*St. Mary Lake and River:*

Lower St. Mary Lake, or "Island Lake": So named because of the presence of Thunderbird Island. Schaeffer thought this name might also apply to Upper St. Mary which also has an island-Wild Goose Island.

St. Mary River, or "where rawhide was stretched across the river [to pull tipi cover bundles across]."

*Two Medicine Lake and River:*

Two Medicine Lake, or "Medicine Lake": According to Paul David, K'tunaxa youths would go there to search for power.

*Two Medicine River "Medicine River"*

*Missouri River, or "Red Paint River":*

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So named according to Paul David because the Tobacco Plains people used to obtain red paint from near the source of the Marias. Bullrobe, however, said they [the Akiyini] got it from the Missouri near Helena (Schaeffer n.d.:f.4). Paul David could be referring to either the Cutbank Creek or Birch Creek sources which the Piikáni traditionally use (see "Paint" section in "Piikáni Ethnohistory and Glacier National Park" chapter).

## ***West-Side Names***

***Kintla, or "Empty Gunny Sack"***

***McDonald Creek:***

Two place names given to him by Chief Paul David who was quite familiar with this place, having traveled through there as a young man (see below and Appendix A).

"Barrier Creek"-- that section of the creek above where it turns to the southwest; i.e., the headwater reaches above the junction of Logan Creek.

"Avalanche Creek"-- that section of the creek from there to Lake McDonald. Literally translates from the K'tunaxa word as "where person is brought back to where he started

by an avalanche" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.52, interview with Paul David, August 5, 1935).

### *Place of Dancing*

Schaeffer recorded a "place of dancing." It was the only Akiyiniik place name he recorded for the region. Bullrobe said that it was a traditional Akiyiniik campsite located a few miles from Belton (West Glacier) on the trail across the Rockies. According to Bullrobe, the hunting parties reached this place on the seventh day out of Kalispel. The Akiyiniik frequently held the Blacktail Deer Dance there. They were the only band of the Upper Kutenai to hold this dance.

Lake McDonald, according to Schultz's list, was traditionally known to the K'tunaxa as Sacred Dancing Lake (1926a:215): "It was so named in the long-ago because every summer the tribes gathered there to have their annual religious ceremonies." McDonald is also referred to by this name in his book "Red Crow's Brother" (Schultz 1927:73,164), in which he makes mention of a group of Kalispel camped at the foot of the lake who were attacked by a war party of Siksiká. This place name is thought to be associated with the general area at the foot of the lake (Holterman 1985:87). Thain White (n.d.) refers to it as "a good place to dance" in that general area.

### **Holterman's Place Names**

Holterman (1985) lists five additional K'tunaxa place names for Glacier.

Flathead-Middle Fork	Aqnisal ( <i>ibid.</i> :50)
Flathead-North Fork	Wolf Tail ( <i>ibid.</i> :144)
Bear Creek	Big Salmon ( <i>ibid.</i> :18 citing Murray 1929)
Napi's Rock	Natanik (sun. <i>ibid.</i> :94)
Starvation Creek	Dead Man Creek ( <i>ibid.</i> :125)

### **Evaluation of Schultz's Place Names**

Which K'tunaxa names in Schultz's list for the west side are original K'tunaxa names? Claude Schaeffer's place name research, discussed above, which began just 10 years after Schultz's work, found that very few K'tunaxa (Tobacco Plains) names were known for the Waterton-Glacier area by his informants. Chief Paul David, Schaeffer's principal Tobacco Plains informant in the 1930s, traveled through the region in the 1860s and 1870s, yet he was unable to provide Schaeffer with a detailed list of names for lakes, rivers, streams, and mountains. It is also of some importance to note that Schaeffer's interpreter in his interviews with Paul David was John Star, who was one of Schultz's chief informants 10 years earlier. Star did not, however, volunteer or later provide Schaeffer with any of the place names he gave Schultz earlier when Schaeffer was interviewing Paul David. In view of the interest that Schultz attributes to Star's earlier participation in naming places, one would have thought he would have also assisted Schaeffer.

The K'tunaxa names for Upper McDonald Creek shed some light on this issue. Paul David gave Schaeffer a different set of names for Upper MacDonald Creek than did Schultz. Schultz named the creek Sacred Dancing Creek; Chief Paul David, as noted above, called the upper part of the creek Barrier Creek, and the lower part Avalanche Creek -- the same name applied for well over a hundred years to Avalanche Creek. This name, we might presume, comes from the original K'tunaxa place name.

In contrast, Schultz calls Avalanche Creek Lake and Basin "Beaver Head" (1926a:216). This is presumably a commemorative name. Paul David's account of a trip across this area he made in the 1860s (Appendix A) as part of party of Akanahonek and Akiyiniik people, in winter, in which they hunted goats up today's Avalanche Creek, and experienced some avalanches, makes no reference to Schultz's place names for this valley.

The difference between Paul David's and Schultz's accounts suggests to us that most of Schultz's descriptive names, like the commemorative names, were nontraditional K'tunaxa names for the features on the west side.

### **K'tunaxa Trails and Passes**

In traveling west of the mountains, the K'tunaxa used canoes on the Kootenai River and Lakes, Columbia Lakes, and headwaters of the Columbia River, as well as a trail network that ran along the north-south trending-valleys of the Rocky Mountain Trench and Flathead Valley. These valley trails intersected at various points along their routes with east-west-oriented trails associated with the passes across the Rocky Mountains (see Table 3, and Figure 5).

Badrock Canyon was the major point of entry for K'tunaxa trails into the Glacier National Park region from the southwest. A trail ran from the mouth of Ashley creek to the vicinity of Martin City, where it forked, with one branch extending up the North Fork of the Flathead, and another up the South Fork toward Spotted Bear, with branches to the Marias Pass by means of Logan Creek, and to Badger Creek by means of Badger Pass. A third trail went up the Middle Fork, branching at Belton, with a north trail up McDonald Creek to Kootenai, Swiftcurrent, and Packs-Pulled-Up (Logan) passes; another branch up Nyack to Cutbank and Dawson passes; and a third branch up the Middle Fork to the Marias Pass (Holterman 1985).

Another trail into the Middle and North forks led around Tea Kettle Mountain (Vaught n.d.:195, citing Van Orsdale's 1883 journey). The North Fork trail ran all the way to the Crowsnest Pass. It appears that it was seldom used for north-south travel, but rather to access the various trails and passes over the Rocky Mountains, that crossed it at various locales along the route.

The Upper K'tunaxa bands used a number of different passes through the Rocky Mountains to the buffalo plains from the Kootenai and Flathead river valleys. The most northerly of the major passes, sometimes used by the Akanahonek, was the Crowsnest Pass. This pass was most often used by the Akaminik.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 3: Traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni Passes in the Waterton-Glacier Region**

<i>Place Name</i>	<i>K'tunaxa Name</i>	<i>Piikáni Name</i>
Akamina	Akamina	
Browns	Unknown	
Cutbank	Cutbank	Cutbank
Gunsight	Unknown	
Jefferson	Unknown	
Kootenai	Unknown	
Logan	Packs Pulled Up	
Marias	Unknown	Medicine
Red Eagle	Unknown	
South	Buffalo (Cow)	Where-The-K'tunaxa-
Swiftcurrent	Unknown	
Logging Lake	Unknown	

### ***"Rocky Trail"***

The North Kootenay Pass, known as the "Rocky Trail" (Nokwe) (Schaeffer n.d.:f.13, f.80) by the Akanahonek, who crossed over from the Kootenai River Valley by means of a trail up the Elk and Wigwam rivers, Lodgepole Creek over the Flathead Range to the headwaters of the North Fork of the Flathead, down the river and up an unnamed stream flowing off the west side of the North Kootenai Pass, across the summit and down the Carbondale River, and over Castle River to the Oldman River. The trail got its name from a tall rock that stands (it is possibly now destroyed) in the open summit of the pass. There is a K'tunaxa legend involving Coyote and this rock.

The pass was difficult for horses and snowshoe parties. The Akanahonek used the pass sometimes in summer, but preferred to use the Buffalo Trail (South Kootenay Pass), particularly in winter. It took 10 days to cross the Rocky Trail (Paul David:*ibid.*). The Akaminik (Fort Steele) often used this pass, and referred to it as the Buffalo Trail (*ibid.*).

### ***"Buffalo (Cow) Trail" (South Kootenay and Akamina Passes)***

The "Buffalo Trail" was not a steep pass. It was always open, with only a few windfalls and little snow. It was the best route for mounted parties at any season. The "Buffalo Trail" was the main trail of the Akanahonek. It took nine days to cross the pass. The trail ran up Grave Creek from the Tobacco

Plains, then across a divide to Yakinakak Creek, up that creek and across another divide to Trail Creek. From there it ran down and across the North Fork of the Flathead, up Kishinena Creek and over the summit (Kistna), and down Blackiston Brook to the Waterton Valley. At the junction of Akamina Creek and the Kishinena the trail forked, with a branch leading up Akamina and across the Akamina (Low Ravine) Pass.

The Akamina was less steep, and was used by parties on snowshoes. However, it was very muddy in summer, and parties on horseback seldom, or never, used it. (Paul David: *ibid.*). In 1874, the International Boundary Commission found an "old and very blind trail" over the Akamina (Vaught n.d.:185). Local residents of Waterton recalled that Stoney hunters used this pass as a route down into the Flathead at the turn of the century (Reeves interviews with Ada Kemmis, 1960s; with Andy Russell, 1980s).

Excavations in archaeological sites in the Blackiston Valley indicate that the Buffalo Trail was used for more than 8000 years (Reeves 1972).

### ***Brown and Jefferson Passes***

Brown and Jefferson passes were the next passes to the south that were utilized by the K'tunaxa, providing access between the North Fork and the headwaters of the Waterton Valley. Paul David told Schaeffer that: "Another trail led up Bowman Creek and along Bowman Lake but Paul never had travelled on this trail. He had heard that it had been used by some Akiyiniik and Akanahonek."

Jefferson Pass, according to Schultz (1926a:187), was known to the Piikáni as "the place where the Stonies fled across the mountains under attack by the Gros Ventre." Presumably, horses could cross this pass in summer. A K'tunaxa elder interviewed by Claude Schaeffer in 1968 in Waterton Park recalled his grandfather telling him about a pass they used and high areas they used to hunt in between Bowman and Waterton lakes behind the Citadel Peaks. This would be Jefferson Pass.

Brown Pass, according to Holterman (1985:24-25), following Schultz (1926a:188), was called by the Piikáni "Kutenai White Man Pass," or, according to Holterman "where Kootenay Brown went up and over," in memory of Kootenai Brown. He is said to have used this pass, as well as the South Kootenay in his various trips between Waterton and the Flathead (Holterman *ibid.*).

Archaeological sites found in Jefferson Brown's Hole-In-The-Wall and Boulder passes indicate that these areas were visited in the summer in pre-contact times (Reeves 2000).

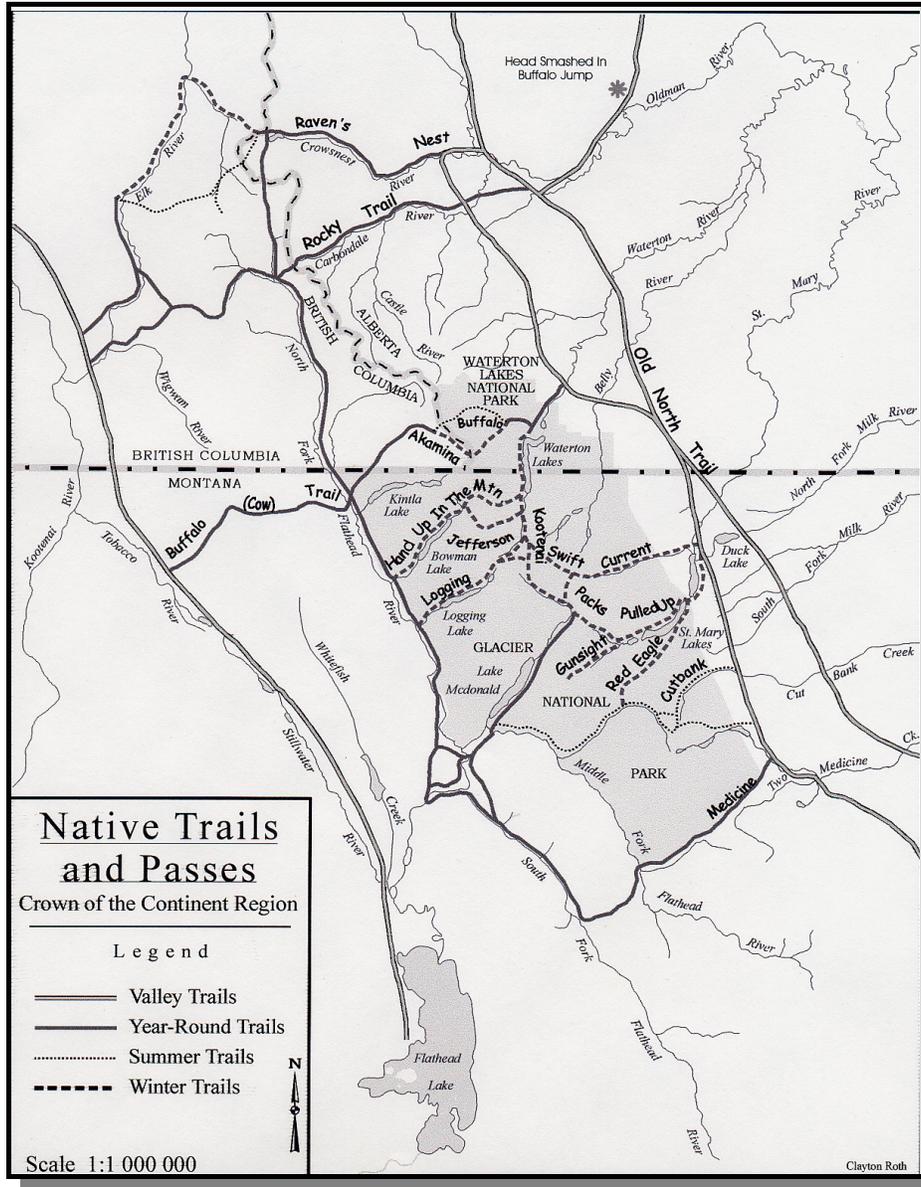
### ***Quartz Creek***

There was no pass over the head of Quartz Creek. According to Paul David, "Another trail led up Quartz Creek to lower and upper Quartz Lakes but this trail was too steep and rough to be used in crossing the Rockies. Parties would move up this trail for deer and elk."

### ***Logging Creek Pass***

"The K'tunaxa sometimes crossed the divide via the headwaters of Logging Creek:

"One trail led up Logging Creek. There was a small prairie (Kutenai called it Camas Prairie) and parties camped here and at another farther up near Logging Lake. The trail led along the north side of Logging Lake; there was another campsite on the upper end of this lake. The next campsite was at west side of the Divide. They crossed the Divide



Map 4: Traditional Native Trails and Passes in the Crown of the Continent.

and then forded the northwest part of McDonald Creek to camp and then moved up along the plateau of Flattop Mountain, for a considerable distance, and then moved northwest along a creek leading to Waterton River [Kootenai Pass] and on up this river to the lake. Sheep and goat were hunted along many of the side streams leading off

from this trail. This was not used very frequently.

"These different trails were used by small parties of Kutenai in moving eastward to the plains and the band or bands would split up and the smaller groups take separate trails eastward, so as to have access to more game on the journey" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.13).<sup>10</sup>

### *Kootenay Pass*

Lying between the head of the Waterton River and McDonald Creek in Glacier National Park is the Kootenay Pass (on Canadian maps it is called the Flathead Pass). According to Blackiston (Spry 1968:581), "It is used by the Flathead Indians when crossing to the Saskatchewan Plains for the purpose of obtaining buffalo meat." It would be a long route for the Salish and Upper Kalispel to use for travel on horseback to the buffalo plains, in contrast to the Cutbank and Marias to the south, which were their favored passes. The K'tunaxa used the Kootenai Pass in the winter. Archeological evidence relating to the use of this pass in pre-contact times has not yet been found (Reeves 2000).

### *Swiftcurrent Pass*

Swiftcurrent is a high alpine pass connecting the head of Swiftcurrent Valley to the McDonald Creek valley by means of Granite Park. The pass was used by early prospectors to access the Continental Divide from Granite Park north to East Flattop (Reeves 1993b), suggesting that they were following an earlier native trail. K'tunaxa tradition indicates that it was used as a winter route to the buffalo plains. Archaeological sites have been found in the pass indicating that it was used in pre-contact times (Reeves and Shortt 1995).

In 1891, Grinnell (1901a:669) followed a "well worn Indian trail" up Swiftcurrent Creek, camping on Apekunny flats "... where Indian hunting-parties make their permanent camps. Once these mountains abounded in sheep and goats, and everywhere about this park may be seen the sites of old Indian camps, with rotting lodge poles, old fireplaces and piles of bone and hair, showing where game has been cup up and hides dressed [Grinnell is referring to Kainaa camps]. Above this park the trail forks, the right-hand branch following up the north arm of the river toward Mount Wilbur, and the other, which is blind and not easy to follow."

### *"Packs-Pulled-Up Trail" (literally "where packs were pulled up in a line") (Logan Pass)*

According to Paul David, who crossed this trail in the 1860s, this trail was used mostly by snowshoe parties of the Akiyiniq for travel eastward; they used another pass to the south for travel westward with buffalo meat secured in the winter hunt (see Appendix A: Schaffer n.d.:f.80).

"Immediately below the summit of Logan Pass there is a rock formation up which it was necessary for people to climb hand-over-hand to the summit and where the packs were pulled by lines. There was danger of avalanches on the west side. The party crossed Logan on the east side to Reynolds and packs were slid down the snow slopes to the bottom."<sup>11</sup>

Then they traveled down on the frozen surface of the lake to its exit and beyond(*ibid.*). The trail ran up the west side of the valley until it reached the rock formation.

According to Schultz (1926a:117), the Logan Pass was known as "Ancient Road" to the west- side tribes. "Legend has it that this pass was traversed from earliest times by the West-Side tribes; first by the Snakes, and later by the Salish, and the Kutenai tribes."

There does not appear to have been a regular horse trail up towards the Packs-Pulled-Up Pass. Schultz, in his book *White Beaver*, published in 1930 (Schultz 1930:105), states that there was no trail above the head of the lake because it was impenetrable by horses.

In one of Hugh Monroe's first trips to the Upper Inside Lake, as described by Red Crow's Brother (Schultz 1927:72-74), he observed a well-worn trail ascending up the west side of the Upper Inside Lake.

"Red Crow said the trail ran to the head of the long valley, and then down the west side of the range to a large lake that the Koo-te-nai Indians called Sacred Dancing Lake; at the lower end of it was a small prairie, where the different bands of that tribe gathered every summer to have their religious ceremonies. That tribe and the Salish tribes -- the Flatheads, Pend d'Oriettes and Okanagaons -- sometimes used the trail on their way to and from our buffalo plains."

Grinnell and Schultz came across the K'tunaxa trail in 1885 while they were hunting up the west side of the lake (Schultz 1885:363):

" ... We came to an old Kootenai trail, which we were told reached across the range into Missoula. This we followed through dense quaking asp groves, thickets of pine, and down timber, and after about two hours' ride came to a long park pretty well up on the side of the mountain [Rising Sun area] ... Riding through this park we came to an immense limestone ledge which reached from the mountain to the water's edge, terminating in a cut bluff [Golden Stairs]. Running up the nearly perpendicular side of this ledge is an old elk trail, and we could see that the Indians had gone over it with their horses, but we thought it too risky a place for our animals."

In 1891, Grinnell (1901a:664-669) took a pack train into the Upper St. Mary along the "trail" above the Golden Stairs. Progress became increasingly difficult along the "trail" as they proceeded westward along the slopes of Goat Mountain. Two days later, they reached the head of the lake, where they camped, and Grinnell noted that the valley was untraveled (*ibid.*:665). They proceeded up the "south branch" (St. Mary River), breaking a trail, and then camped for some time to climb and hunt. Later, on their way out, Grinnell noted (*ibid.*:668):

"For two or three miles above the head of the upper lake there are signs of travel in this valley. Old Indian blazes are seen on the trees, and occasional choppings. But beyond this we could detect no indications that man had ever been over the ground, and it added something to our satisfaction to find that there were no camp-fires, no choppings, no signs of horses. The region seemed unvisited."

Several archaeological sites found on the summit (Reeves 2000) indicate that this area was visited in pre-contact times by native peoples in the summer.

### *Gunsight Pass*

Gunsight Pass, according to Schultz, was also used by the K'tunaxa. Schultz accompanied Grinnell on his trip into the Upper St. Mary in 1891 (Schultz erroneously gives the date as 1888 in an article "More Mountain Trails," published in 1936 in the *Great Falls Tribune* (Schultz 1962: 91-109).

According to Schultz, the stumps they found in the Upper St. Mary, which Grinnell described in his article (see above), were 10 feet in height, and were cut by the K'tunaxa when they crossed this pass in the winter. As Schultz and Grinnell hiked up to the pass two days later, they found further evidence of the Indians: "... approaching the notch [Gunsight Pass], we found an old trail and along it the old cuttings of the stunted trees that led us directly and easily to it."

Archaeological sites found at Gunsight Lake and at the summit indicate that this area was also visited in summer in pre-contact times (Reeves 2000).

### *Red Eagle Pass*

The K'tunaxa supposedly used Red Eagle Pass as a route of travel between the St. Mary and Middle Fork valleys. William T. Hamilton (1900) crossed the pass in the company of a group of K'tunaxa in 1858. Earlier, Hamilton had had a bad encounter with a group of Kaina and killed several of them. He left the Kaina camp and joined a group of K'tunaxa who were camped on St. Mary Lake:

"Knowing that the Blackfeet would soon find them, the chiefs called a council with reference to which route they should travel over the divide to their own lands. The Kootenais usually crossed by paths much farther north, but it was decided to use a more southern trail, leading across Red Eagle pass a few miles north of Cut Bank and dropping down on to the Marias pass trail at the mouth of Nyack Creek. The Kaina attacked twice before they reached the divide." (Murray 1929:35)

Schultz also says that the K'tunaxa used Red Eagle. In 1891, Schultz and Grinnell, after hunting in the Upper St. Mary, and exploring Gunsight Pass, later rode up to Red Eagle Lake. They decided to explore the head of Red Eagle Valley, and found an old trail running up the valley. "My Kutenai friend who had introduced me to Kutenai Lick had told me of it and said it was another one of his tribe's across-the-mountains trails, but that it had not been used for a very long time. We had but little trouble following it, only occasionally detouring fallen trees.... About five miles above the lake we began climbing steeply, and so came to the foot of a glacier and, picketing our horses, climbed up onto it [Red Eagle Glacier]" (Schultz 1962:108-109).<sup>12</sup>

The summit of Red Eagle Pass and its western approaches have yet to be fully inventoried (Reeves 2000).

## *Cutbank Pass*

According to Paul David, the K'tunaxa rarely used Cutbank Pass. Paul David said it was a favorite pass of the Piikáni to travel over for raiding the west-side people. In May 1854, Hugh Monroe and James Doty traveled north along the Old North Trail, searching for a railroad pass to the Pacific, and Monroe told him that the trail was used a lot by west-side people. Doty (1855:548) noted (entry for May 27th): "A broad lodge trail leads up the valley, indicating the pass is considerably used -- probably by the Pend d'Oreilles and Kootenais, who come through to hunt buffalo."

Schultz and Grinnell passed by the entrance to the pass in late November 1885. Schultz (1885:363) noted: "There is a good trail which reaches over the mountains into Missoula and is much travelled by the several tribes of Mountain Indians." Later he wrote (1926a:69), "This pass was much used by the Salish and Kutenai tribes in their journeys to and fro across the great range."

Lieutenant Tinkham, also of the Stevens Expedition, crossed eastward over the Cutbank, or Dawson Pass, with a Flathead guide in the fall of 1853. It took him nearly a week to travel the 78 miles between Flathead Lake and the summit, but only another day and a half to reach the plains once the summit was crossed (Murray 1929:31). Tinkham thought he was crossing the Marias Pass.

Lieutenants Woodruff and Van Orsdale crossed Cutbank, or Dawson, in 1873. Accompanying Pumpelli 10 years later, they crossed over the pass in early June 1883. The party had considerable difficulty struggling through the drifts on the west side of the summit. They also noted that the trail had been little used in the past 10 years and that parts had become obscured by talus.

Walter McClintock and James Willard Schultz both describe K'tunaxa and other west-side parties who had traveled eastward over the pass and been attacked by the Piikáni. These accounts, told from the Piikáni perspective, are summarized in the "Two Medicine (Backbone) Pass (Marias) section in the "K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology" chapter.

## *Marias Pass* <sup>13</sup>

The Marias Pass was the most important pass to the Akiyiniik for traveling by horses to hunt buffalo during the spring and fall buffalo hunts, as well as for returning on foot from the winter hunt in the eastern foothills. The route K'tunaxa elders described to Claude Schaefer that they preferred to use went up the South Fork and into the summit of the Marias Pass, rather than up the Middle Fork:

"There was another trail leading up to the South Fork of the Flathead River. It was used by the Akiyiniik, Spokane, Cour d'Alene, Colville and other Salishan tribes. The Akanahonek used it infrequently. It ran into Marias Pass around summit and then continued as Marias Pass to the plains. The trail went up the South Fork to Logan Creek, following this stream up and across the divide down Dirtyface Creek to the Middle Fork then up Bear Creek to the summit of the Marias Pass. This trail was travelled by horses in summer" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.80).

According to Paul David and other elders:

"Marias Pass, because of its great length, was scarcely ever used by the Indians .... The Middle Fork route to the Marias Pass was suitable for horses only in summer .... The trail leading from Belton to Java could not be used by mounted parties even in summer."

James Doty, the first white man to record the eastern approach to the pass, traveled up the eastern approach with Hugh Monroe in May 1854. From the summit, Doty gazed downward into the Bear Creek drainage. "The trail which I followed continues up the valley, and a deserted encampment of last summer indicates that this pass is occasionally frequented by the Flatheads or the Kootenaies, for the purpose of hunting elk and deer, which are numerous here" (*Ibid.*).

The Marias Pass was taken into consideration in the negotiations for the Lame Bull Treaty. Article 5 of the treaty provided that the western Indians agree not to enter either the common hunting ground or any part of the Blackfeet Reservation, or return home by any pass to the north of Hell Gate or Medicine Rock passes (Murray 1929:34). One of the Pend'd'Oreille chiefs, Alexander, objected to this article (*ibid.*:34-35):

"A long time ago this country belonged to our ancestors and the Blackfeet lived far north. We Indians were all well pleased when we came here in friendship. Now you point us out a little piece of land to hunt our game in. When we were enemies I always crossed over there [Marias & Cutbank passes] and why should I not now, that we are friends? Now I have two hearts about it. What is the reason? Which of the these chiefs [pointing to the Blackfeet] says we are not to go there? Which is the one?"

"Little Dog, the Piegan chief, answered: 'It is I, and not because we have anything against you. We are friendly, but the north Blackfeet might make a quarrel if you hunted near them. Do not put yourself in their way.' On Alexander's insisting, he added, 'Since he speaks so much of it we will give him the liberty to come out in the north'."

In 1865, the legislative assembly of the Territory of Montana passed an act enabling the construction of a toll road between Fort Benton and the Kootenai gold fields. This road was never constructed, in part because 10 whites were killed the following winter in a lumber camp 10 miles upstream on the Marias from Fort Benton, by a group of 180 Kaina under Calf Shirt, as a result of a quarrel between the Indians and whites at Fort Benton. This incident and later altercations between the Blackfeet and whites on the eastern slopes resulted in few prospectors attempting to cross west over the pass in the ensuing years. In 1867, three white prospectors were killed by Kootenai on Libby Creek, further discouraging eastern travel by prospectors in this region (Murray 1929:42).

The Akiyiniik still occasionally traveled over the Marias Pass. In the late 1860s, Aeneas, chief of the Akiyiniik, and his people crossed the Continental Divide one winter on snowshoes to hunt buffalo. Apparently, the western approach was in very bad condition. Aeneas cleared part it, but it was very rough and only open at low water. The Salish and Pend d'Oreille then called it Eneas Pass (*ibid.*:42, citing an interview with Duncan MacDonald, who, in the 1860s, was factor at the Hudson Bay Post Fort. Connah south of Flathead lake).

According to Duncan MacDonald, after Aeneas had fixed it up, Indians and prospecting parties in search of gold occasionally began to travel over it. The 1870 "Massacre on the Marias" (see "The Massacre on the Marias, January 1870" section in "Piikáni Ethnohistory" chapter) "calmed" the Piikáni, encouraging whites to move more freely through the Blackfeet Reservation. In 1873 seven Pend d'Oreille Indians and Duncan MacDonald tried to cross the pass in winter but had to turn back because of deep snow at the summit (*ibid.*).

In the fall of 1873, Lieutenants Woodruff and Van Orsdale were on a reconnaissance from Fort Shaw to Fort Colville that included gathering information, by way of the Marias Pass, but were told by a band of Indians whom they met at the head of Flathead Lake that the Marias was impracticable because of much fallen timber. On the advice of the Indians, the lieutenants crossed by way of Cutbank Pass, which a group of K'tunaxa had used two weeks earlier that fall (Vaught n.d.:178).

In 1887, a Flathead by the name of Coonsah – a renegade living with the Piikáni – guided John Frank Stevens from the Old Blackfeet Agency toward the summit. Coonsah was, however, of little use to Stevens, because, according to Duncan MacDonald, he had never been up the pass. Stevens took him along because he could get no one else (Murray 1929:46).

West-side Akiyiniik-Piikáni Encounters: The Akiyiniik were often intercepted on the common western approaches to the Marias and Cutbank by the Piikáni and other "Blackfeet." Andrew Gravelle related two such stories to Schaeffer (n.d.:f.19):

#### Death of Kaluwa (Chief Baptiste) 1876

"The Kutenai were coming out of the elk country. The trail lay along the south fork of the Flathead River and the party awaited at the junction of the north and south fork of the Flathead.

"The conjuror warned the Kutenai to go across the Rockies to avoid the enemy but Tomato (Kaluwa) did not want to take this route. He was warned again by the conjuror to go ahead and get to the junction of the trail and not to leave any track. To await at the junction until they sighted something and then to kill it. Then to turn back and travel across the Rockies. The junction apparently was at the present Hungry Horse Dam on the Flathead River.

"The Piegan came running down as two scouts. He knelt to drink from the river and his fellow saw him shot by the Kutenai. The latter waded across the Flathead river and got what they wanted. Chief Baptiste said that enemy were either waiting to fight us or else they have retreated. So he went ahead with the rest of his party following behind. Baptiste was on foot, and ran into an ambush, and was killed by Piegan fire. Another woman was shot through jaw. One old woman was unhurt and the enemy accompanied her to Baptiste's body and explained that they had killed the Kutenai leader. They gave her food and the blanket, which covered Baptiste, in gladness over his death. The Kutenai blamed Baptiste for not following instructions of nupika in seance."

## Eagle Head and Nula

"Eagle Head was returning from the east side at the junction of north and south forks of Flathead River.

"Nula 'Old Man,' was Susanne Bullrobe's paternal grandfather. He told his companions that he would go ahead and scare the enemy away. He was mounted at the same place that Kaluwa had been ambushed, he tried to ambush Nula. He was well known to Blackfeet as Eagle Head. The enemy talked among themselves about killing him. Two of them fired, missed him but killed his horse. His foot was caught beneath the horse. He released himself and took after the enemy. They were scared of Nula. He was a warrior and conjurer and one of the Kutenai known to have great supernatural power."

## **Traditional K'tunaxa Camps on the Eastern Slopes (See Table 4 and Figure 6)**

### *Waterton Lakes*

The Long Lake was a favorite place for the Tobacco Plains people to camp after crossing the Buffalo Pass. Paul David told Schaeffer: "The Kutenai used to stop at 'pebble beach of Long Lake' [Waterton Lake] as this was hunting country for elk and sheep, but never stopped long at the lower Waterton Lake."

Ambrose Gravelle described a campsite on Upper Waterton Lake that was visited by his father-in-law, Joe Dennis, around 1900, on what was probably one of the last Akanahonek visits in a traditional manner to this region of the eastern slopes:

"He camped there after coming over the buffalo trail on a visit to the North Piegan Indians. He then decided to do some hunting of elk or sheep to take as a present to the Blackfoot friends. Little Joe Dennis took his two hunting dogs on a stroll along the base of Mt. Crandell and saw some sheep on higher slopes. He set his two dogs on them and they managed to drive one down. Joe killed it with his bow and arrow. This was the first [last?] game animal killed by this weapon" (Schaeffer n.d.:f.80).

A highly significant complex of archaeological sites with a record of over 8,000 years of native occupation are located at the foot of the Upper Waterton Lake, Middle Lake, and the Waterton River exit (Reeves 2000).

### *St. Mary Lakes*

The feet of the Upper and Lower St. Mary Lakes were favorite K'tunaxa campsites. James Doty mentioned the remains of a K'tunaxa camp at the inlet of Lower St. Mary Lake while he was camped there from May 29 to June 5, 1853 (Doty 1855: Entry for May 29th):

"Several lodges and numerous signs of Indians were seen in this vicinity, and I presume they were made by the Kootenaies who come here stealthily to hunt. It was at first

supposed that there must be a good pass in this vicinity, but a close examination satisfied men that such is not the case."

The Akanahonek also camped at and below the exit of the Lower Lake. In 1885, when Grinnell and Schultz were hunting in the St. Mary Valley with Old Yellowtail, there was a hunting/trapping party of K'tunaxa led by Back-Coming-In-Sight camped down the St. Mary river (Grinnell 1885). Their camp of eight lodges was located on the west side of the river, at the junction of Swiftcurrent Creek. When Grinnell arrived, Back-Coming-In-Sight had been camped there for 50 days, hunting and trapping in St. Mary, Red Eagle, and Swiftcurrent valleys. Grinnell (*ibid.*:442-443) describes the camp.

Grinnell and Schultz were camped at the foot of the lower lake. After returning from the K'tunaxa camp, four K'tunaxa, who had been hunting up the Red Eagle Valley, came into Schultz and Grinnell's camp. Grinnell writes (*ibid.*:443):

They had about 100 head of horses, and had their lodges erected in a small grove of cottonwoods. "Staked out on the ground were a number of sheep skins, and one that had covered a small black bear, while a large grizzly skin and an dressed moose hide hung from two of the trees whose branches were festooned with bundles of dried sheep meat." The Kootenais were not only hunting but also trapping beaver, averaging 10 a day.

"They had been hunting up on a mountain to the east of the upper lake, and had killed four sheep, the meat of which now hung from their saddles. The news of their success filled me with rage and envy. It was natural enough that the Kootenais should be successful, for they know these mountains well, and are familiar with the best localities for game; moreover, they are true mountain Indians, and are as much at home on foot among the rocks as in the saddle on the plains."

Grinnell asked the K'tunaxa if they would let them hunt with them the next day. The K'tunaxa agreed.

Grinnell and Yellowfish's hunting foray the next day with the K'tunaxa is described in detail in Grinnell's next installment (1886a) of *To the Inside Lakes*, entitled "Hunting with the Kootenays."<sup>14</sup> Yellowfish and Grinnell had an adventurous but unsuccessful hunt up Red Eagle as the weather socked in. Grinnell attributes his "wretched bad luck" to the weather, while Yellowfish suggests that if he makes a vow to the Sun to sponsor an opening of the Bear Medicine Pipe after their return to the Old Agency that he would get lucky. Grinnell vowed to do so.

Grinnell did get lucky. The following day (Grinnell 1886b:482-483), he went out hunting with two K'tunaxa, this time on the west side of the lake; they crossed at the exit, planning to climb the nearby mountain (Singleshot). At the crossing, the K'tunaxa prayed to the Sun, asking for good luck. The party rode and climbed up the slopes. Grinnell was successful. Schultz named the mountain Singleshot, "in memory of your single shot." After their return to the Badger Creek Agency later that fall, Grinnell sponsored the opening of the Bear Medicine Pipe.

The K'tunaxa appear to have been frequent visitors to the St. Mary Valley in the 1880s. In 1887, Grinnell (1888:362) returned to hunt in the fall, and saw "evidence of the Kootenai passage this summer."

**Table 4: Traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni Campsites, Hunting and Plant Collecting Locales**

Place	Camping		Hunting		Plants
	K'tunax	Piikáni	K'tunax	Piikáni	Piikáni
Belly River		xxk	x	xxk	xxk
Cutbank Creek	x		x	x	x
Ranger St		x,xx		xx	xx
Atlantic Falls		xx		xx	xx
Chief/Slide Lake				xx	
Boulder Creek				xx	
Kennedy Creek				xx	
Many Glacier		xxk	x	x	
Apikuni Falls	x	xx		xx,xxk	
Apikuni Basin				xx	
Marias Pass	x	xx	x	xx	
Midvale Creek				xx	
Milk River				x	
St. Mary			x	x	x
Foot Lower	x	x			
Lake	x	x			
Foot Upper			x	xx,xxk	
Lake			x		
Divide Creek				x	
Red Eagle					
Wild Creek					
Two Medicine			x	x,xx	x,xx
Foot Lower	x	x,xx	x	x	x
Lake	x	x,xx	x	x	x
Waterton					
Foot Upper	x	xx	xx	xx	
Lake	x	xx	xx	xx	
Middle Lake	x	xx			xx
River Exit					

(x): Documentary source: 1800's and early 1900's.

(xx): Piik'ani elder interviews - early-mid 1900's.

(xxk): Kainaa based on Piikáni elder interviews or documentary source late 1800's and early-mid 1900's.

Paul David recalled that the K'tunaxa used to camp and hunt in St. Mary in the winter after crossing the "Packs-Pulled-Up" Pass:

"The Kutenai used to send their trained dogs up the slope of Red Eagle Mountain on the winter hunt to drive sheep down to the frozen surface of the St. Mary's Lake and on to Wild Goose Island, where they would kill them. Scattered buffalo were encountered along upper St. Mary's Lake on the grassy slopes of the trail." (Schaeffer n.d. "Packs Pulled Up" notes)

A large unrecorded archaeological site is located at the foot of Lower St. Mary Lake. Located at the foot of the Upper Lake on the west side of the river exit is one of the largest and most important archaeological sites within Glacier National Park, with a record extending back at least 5,000 years (Reeves 2000).

### *Two Medicine*

The K'tunaxa camped at the exits of both Lower Two Medicine and Two Medicine lakes. In the mid 1800s, Billy Jackson, while camped at Two Medicine (Schultz 1926:29-31), met some lodges of K'tunaxa led by Back-Coming-In-Sight. They had come over the Cutbank Pass and taken the Dry Fork cutoff. Back-Coming-In-Sight traveled on to camp at the foot of the lower lake.

A large campsite is located at the foot of Lower Two Medicine Lake. A campsite is also located in the Prey Lake campground at the foot of Two Medicine Lake (Reeves 2000).

## **K'tunaxa Ethnobotany**

### *K'tunaxa Ethnobotanical Sources*

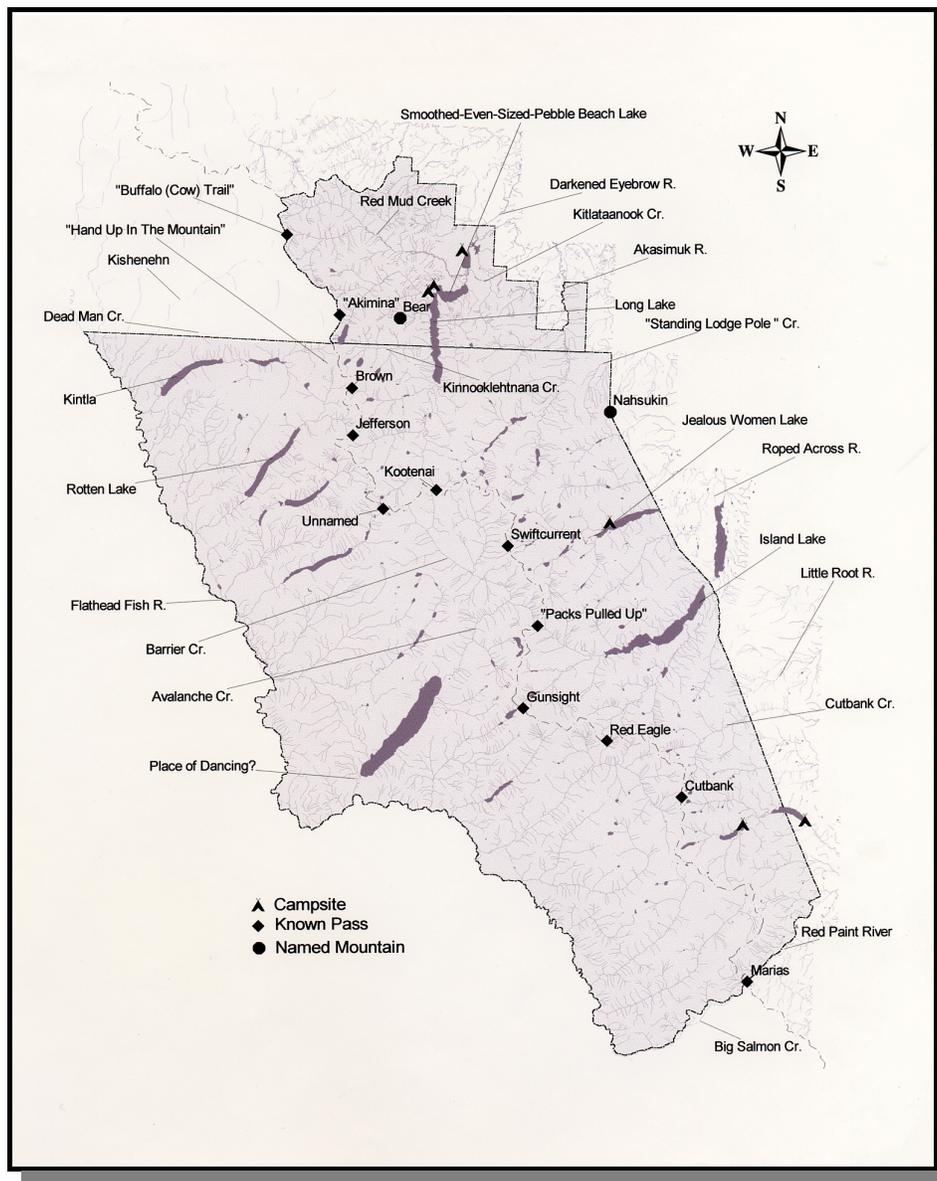
K'tunaxa lifeways are not well documented, particularly with regards to traditional plant use. Scattered ethnobotanical references occur in published ethnographic sources, including Turney-High (1941), Chamberlain (1892), Boas (1918), and Schaeffer (1940).

The most important source on traditional K'tunaxa plant use is the unpublished *Ethnobotany of the Kootenai Indians of Western North America*, by Hart, Turner and Morgan (n.d.). This work incorporates information from interviews conducted in 1973 and 1974 with 20 elderly K'tunaxa people from the Flathead Reservation in Montana, as well as the Bonners Ferry Reservation in Idaho. Elders were also interviewed from K'tunaxa bands at Tobacco Plains, St. Mary's, Lower Kootenai, and Columbia Lake Reserves in British Columbia. This reference also incorporates ethnographic information from the sources listed above, as well as unpublished materials (i.e., Schaeffer 1935). Of particular interest is the introduction to this report, which states (Hart, Turner, and Morgan n.d.):

"Little research has been done on the ethnobotany of the Kootenai Indian peoples of western Montana, northern Idaho and south-eastern British Columbia. As only a very few of the elderly members of this group are still familiar with the traditional names and uses of wild plants, time is running out if this valuable information is to be recorded."

The ethnobotany of the Kootenai Indians includes information on more than 100 plants that the

K'tunaxa utilized for foods, medicines, and materials, and for spiritual purposes. Details on the collecting and processing of these plants are given, when possible, as are the K'tunaxa names. There are no specific references to plant collecting within the area now included in Glacier National Park.



Map 5: Traditional K'tunaxa Place Names and Campsites in Waterton-Glacier.

### *The Role of Plants in K'tunaxa Culture*

The results of the K'tunaxa ethnobotanical study reveal that more than 90 plants traditionally utilized by the K'tunaxa people occur within the boundaries of Glacier National Park (based on lists provided by Lesica 1985 and Lesica and Ahlenslager 1993). Of these, 48 species were consumed as food, 43 prepared as medicines, 16 utilized for spiritual purposes and 45 employed as materials for various purposes. These plants are listed alphabetically by scientific name in the table below.

This list synthesizes information obtained from previously published ethnographies (Boas 1918; Chamberlain 1892; Schaeffer 1940; Turney-High 1941) and unpublished sources (Hart, Turner, and Morgan n.d.), because we were unable to interview K'tunaxa elders directly. Consequently, the ethnobotanical data lack the detail provided in the discussion of Piikáni ethnobotany, and is limited to the information provided in the table below and the following summaries. It is important to note that this table includes any culturally significant plants that the K'tunaxa may have collected within the Park boundaries. The K'tunaxa and other native peoples essentially lost access to the resources of this portion of their traditional territory about 100 years ago; thus, much of the ethnographic information pertains to the former use of the region by the ancestors of today's elders.

The following sections briefly discuss the role of plants in traditional K'tunaxa culture and are drawn from *Ethnobotany of the Kootenai Indians of Western North America* (Hart, Turner, and Morgan, n.d.).

Table 5 : Plants Traditionally Utilized by the K'tunaxa that Occur in Glacier National Park					
Scientific Name	Common Name	F*	M	S	O
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine fir		x	x	x
<i>Acer glabrum</i>	Rocky Mountain		x		x
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common yarrow		x		x
<i>Allium cernuum</i>	Nodding onion	x			
<i>Alnus incana</i>	Thin-leaved alder		x		x
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon	x		x	x
<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	Indian hemp				x
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Common bearberry	x	x	x	x
<i>Artemisia dracunculus</i>	Dragon sagewort			x	x
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Pasture sagewort		x		x
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie sagewort		x		
<i>Artemisia michauxiana</i>	Michaux's sage		x		
<i>Atabyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady-fern				x
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Balsamroot	x	x		
<i>Berberis repens</i>	Oregon grape	x	x		x
<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	Paper birch		x		x
<i>Bryoria fremontii</i>	Black tree lichen	x			
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	Blue camas	x		x	

Table 5 : Plants Traditionally Utilized by the K'tunaxa that Occur in Glacier National Park

Scientific Name	Common Name	F*	M	S	O
<i>Castilleja spp.</i>	Indian paint-brush	x			
<i>Ceanothus sanguineus</i>	Red-stem ceanothus	x	x		
<i>Ceanothus velutinus</i>	Mountain balm		x		x
<i>Chimaphila umbellata</i>	Prince's pine		x	x	x
<i>Cicuta douglasii</i>	Western water-		x		
<i>Cirsium spp.</i>	Thistles	x			
<i>Claytonia lanceolata</i>	Western spring	x			
<i>Clematis columbiana</i>	Blue clematis				x
<i>Camandra umbellata</i>	Bastard toadflax	x			
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red osier dogwood	x	x	x	x
<i>Crataegus douglasii</i>	Black hawthorn	x			
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf willow				x
<i>Elymus cinereus</i>	Giant wild-rye				x
<i>Equisetum spp.</i>	Common horsetail				x
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild strawberry	x			
<i>Fritillaria pudica</i>	Yellow-bell	x			
<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	Blanket-flower		x		
<i>Geranium viscosissimum</i>	Sticky geranium	x			
<i>Goodyera oblongifolia</i>	Rattlesnake plantain		x		
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i>	Cow parsnip	x	x		
<i>Heuchera cylindrica</i>	Alum-root		x		x
<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	Ocean-spray				x
<i>Juncus spp.</i>	Rush				x
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common juniper	x	x	x	x
<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>	Rocky Mountain	x	x	x	x
<i>Larix occidentalis</i>	Western larch	x	x	x	x
<i>Ledum groenlandicum</i>	Common labrador	x			
<i>Letharia vulpina</i>	Wolf lichen				x

Table 5 : Plants Traditionally Utilized by the K'tunaxa that Occur in Glacier National Park

Scientific Name	Common Name	F*	M	S	O
<i>Lewisia rediviva</i>	Bitter-root	x	x	x	
<i>Linnaea borealis</i>	Twinflower	x			
<i>Lithospermum ruderale</i>	Yellow puccoon		x		
<i>Lonicera involucrata</i>	Bracted honeysuckle	x			
<i>Maticaria maticarioides</i>	Pineapple-week		x	x	x
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Wild mint	x	x		
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild bergamot	x	x	x	
<i>Nuphar polysepalum</i>	Indian pond lily		x		
<i>Oplopanax horridum</i>	Devil's club		x		
<i>Osmarhiza occidentalis</i>	Sweet cicely		x		x
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Wild caraway	x			
<i>Philadelphus lewislii</i>	Syringa				x
<i>Picea engelmannii</i>	Englemann spruce		x		x
<i>Pinus albicaulis</i>	Whitebark pine	x			
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole pine	x	x		
<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	Ponderosa pine	x	x	x	
<i>Plantago major</i>	Broad-leaved		x		
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Choke cherry	x	x		x
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Douglas-fir	x	x		x
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken fern				x
<i>Ribes cereum</i>	Wax currant	x			
<i>Ribes lacustre</i>	Swamp gooseberry	x			
<i>Rosa spp.</i>	Rose	x	x	x	x
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Wild red raspberry	x			
<i>Rubus leucodermis</i>	Black raspberry	x			
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Thimbleberry	x			
<i>Rumex spp.</i>	Dock		x		
<i>Salix spp.</i>	Willow				x

Table 5 : Plants Traditionally Utilized by the K'tunaxa that Occur in Glacier National Park

Scientific Name	Common Name	F*	M	S	O
<i>Sagittaria cuneata</i>	Wapato	x			
<i>Scitpus acutus</i>	Hardstem bulrush				x
<i>Shepherdia canadensis</i>	Canadian buffalo-	x	x		
<i>Sium suave</i>	Water parsnip	x			x
<i>Smilacina racemosa</i>	False solomon's seal	x			
<i>Sorbus spp.</i>	Mountain ashes		x		
<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	Common snowberry			x	x
<i>Taxus brevifolia</i>	Western yew				x
<i>Thuja plicata</i>	Cedar				x
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Cat-tail				x
<i>Vaccinium globulare</i>	Globe huckleberry	x			
<i>Vaccinium membranaceum</i>	Black mountain	x	x		
<i>Vaccinium myrtilloides</i>	Myrtle-leaved	x			
<i>Vaccinium scoparium</i>	Grouseberry	x			
<i>Veratrum eschscholtzii</i>	False hellebore		x		x
<i>Viburnum edule</i>	Highbush cranberry	x			x
<i>Xerophyllum tenax</i>	Bear grass		x		x
<i>Zigadenus venenosus</i>	Death camas				x

\* F = Food Use; M = Medicinal Use; S = Spiritual Use; O = Other Use

### Plants as Food

As hunter-gatherers, the K'tunaxa relied extensively on plant foods to supplement wild game in their traditional diet. In fact, the K'tunaxa collected and consumed at least 50 plant species, including fruits and berries, edible roots, greens, pine seeds, tree cambium, and tree lichen. Of particular importance were those roots and berries that occurred in sufficient quantity to be dried and stored for the winter months, including bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*), blue camas (*Camassia quamash*), service berry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), choke cherry (*Prunus virginiana*), and black tree lichen (*Bryoria fremontii*).

Plant resources are restricted both in temporal and spatial availability. Thus, the collection of plant foods was deliberately planned and seasonally patterned. Collecting began in early spring, around late

May or early June, with the harvest of edible roots and spring greens, and continued throughout the summer and into the fall.

Bitterroot was the most important root crop in traditional Flathead Valley K'tunaxa culture. Prior to the collection of bitterroot, the K'tunaxa held a "first roots" ceremony -- a two-day event of ceremonial gathering and feasting. The "first roots" ceremony marked the beginning of the root digging and berry picking season, and the K'tunaxa believed there would be a scarcity of roots if bitterroot was collected or consumed before this occasion. Following the ceremonies, families dispersed to the various gathering grounds. In early June, the K'tunaxa collected and processed camas, pit-cooking the bulbs in large quantities. Other root foods consumed by the K'tunaxa include nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*), Douglas' onion (*Allium douglasii*), spring beauty (*Claytonia lanceolata*), yellow-bells (*Fritillaria pudica*), and yampah (*Periderida gairdneri*).

Fresh greens and succulent shoots were an important and welcome addition to the spring diet. These included the flowering stems of balsamorhiza (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*), thistle stems (*Cirsium spp.*), and the young, peeled stalks of cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*). Other early spring foods included the sweet inner bark (*cambium*) of larch (*Larix occidentalis*), whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), and black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa*).

The berry-picking season began in July after families returned from the annual buffalo hunt on the plains to the east. The first berries to ripen were the sarvis, or saskatoon, berries, collected on the valley bottoms and lower slopes. These were followed by huckleberries (*Vaccinium globulare*) at higher elevations, and then choke cherries, which ripened in September. Other fruits the K'tunaxa enjoyed include kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), Oregon-grape (*Berberis repens*), red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*), strawberries (*Fragaria spp.*), currants (*Ribes spp.*), wild rose hips (*Rosa spp.*), raspberries and thimbleberries (*Rubus spp.*), elderberries (*Sambucus cerulea*), soapberries (*Shepherdia canadensis*), huckleberries and whortleberries (*Vaccinium spp.*), and highbush cranberries (*Viburnum edule*).

Black tree lichen (*Bryoria fremontii*) was formerly one of the most important plant foods of the K'tunaxa. It could be gathered throughout the year from the branches of larch and pine trees, and thus was a valuable food source in times of scarcity. In its fresh state, the tree lichen is inedible. However, the K'tunaxa prepared it by cleaning it, soaking it in water, and baking it in underground pits for up to two days, often with wild onion or camas as flavoring. After cooking, it was eaten fresh or dried and stored for winter use.

Throughout the year, the K'tunaxa prepared beverages from the leaves of buckbrush (*Ceanothus spp.*), Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), mint (*Mentha arvensis*), wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) and twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*).

### ***Plants as Medicine***

The K'tunaxa believed that all curative herbs possessed supernatural powers, and that each plant thus had some medicinal value (Turney-High 1941). The K'tunaxa used the leaves, bark, roots and pitch of a wide variety of plants in treating an assortment of ailments.

As with other native peoples, the K'tunaxa practiced two types of medicine: Minor disorders were treated with herbal remedies available to all members of the community. Alternatively, herbal specialists were consulted. These specialists were usually women who had gained status within the community as

a result of their herbal knowledge, which was often given to them in dreams or visions. According to Turney-High (1941:101):

"The specialists are very gentle but firm in their refusal to divulge their knowledge to anyone, white or Indian. This part of the culture is no archaeological curio but a functioning part of their life, a sure means of acquiring a superior role among their people and nothing to be thrown away lightly. The only reward these wise women receive is their prestige."

Medicine men, or shamans, were consulted for more serious illnesses. The K'tunaxa believed that sickness was caused by evil spirits, so it was the responsibility of the shaman to drive out these spirits through elaborate curing rituals. Such a ceremony is described in Chamberlain (1901:26):

"The patient usually is stretched on his back in the centre of a large lodge, and his friends sit around in a circle beating drums. The (shaman), grotesquely painted, enters the ring, chanting a song, and proceeds to force the evil spirit from the sick person by pressing both clenched fists with all his might in the pit of his stomach, kneading and pounding and also other parts of the body, blowing occasionally through his fingers, and sucking blood from the part supposed to be affected."

The largest category of healing plants were those used to treat cuts, bruises, skin sores, and infections. Typically, these were boiled and applied to the affected area as a poultice. Plants used for this purpose include subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), prairie sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*), buckbrush (*Ceanothus spp.*), rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*), Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), Western larch (*Larix occidentalis*), pineapple weed (*Matricaria matricarioides*), mint (*Mentha arvensis*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), and snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).

Colds, coughs, and sore throats were treated with teas made from Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), buckbrush (*Ceanothus velutinus*), mint (*Mentha arvensis*), wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), and Western sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza occidentalis*). Roots of Western sweet cicely were also chewed for more direct relief.

Respiratory ailments were also treated with medicinal teas, including those prepared from pasture wormwood (*Artemisia frigida*), buckbrush (*Ceanothus spp.*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), alumroot (*Heuchera cylindrica*), western larch (*Larix occidentalis*), stoneseed (*Lithospermum ruderalè*), mint (*Mentha arvensis*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), and mountain ash (*Sorbus spp.*).

Eye medicines, prepared by boiling plants, included washes made from kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), Oregon-grape (*Berberis spp.*), paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*), pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbellata*), water hemlock (*Cicuta douglasii*), red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), and soapberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*).

### ***Plants and Traditional Beliefs***

The role of plants in traditional K'tunaxa beliefs is not well-documented in the existing literature. Plant foods were regarded with reverence, as evidenced by the K'tunaxa "first roots" and "first fruits"

ceremonies held at the beginning of the gathering season to acknowledge the significance of dietary staples such as bitterroot and service berries in the lives of the K'tunaxa. In addition, women would "pray" to the sun prior to digging to ensure a bountiful harvest.

Like other indigenous peoples, the K'tunaxa employed plants as incense and for purification, suggesting that these plants served a mediating role between the people and spirit world. Juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*) was used by the shaman for purification prior to curing. It was also used for purification in the Sun Dance and other religious ceremonies.

The most significant spiritual plant was tobacco (*Nicotiana attenuata*), which was cultivated by the K'tunaxa for ceremonial purposes. According to Hart, et al. (n.d.), "tobacco helped foster a helpful symbiosis between man and spirit; the spirits needed the tobacco which man gave to them in ceremonies and in turn the spirits looked after the K'tunaxa people."

Elaborate ceremonies were once associated with tobacco, but they are no longer practiced. A portion of this ceremony is described by Turney-High (1941:171):

"The supernaturals told the people to take a certain part of a game animal, cure it, and kept it in the chief's lodge. No one could identify this part of the animal. At the proper time of the year this meat was cooked and the whole band assembled at the chief's lodge to eat the meat. When this was done, the people scattered to plant tobacco. This was done by a man and his wife individually and not as a group. During tobacco planting season, it was tabu for any planter to scratch his head with his finger nail, lest the germinating seed be killed. Those with itching scalps has to give themselves relief with a twig until the seed was safely germinated."

The K'tunaxa also mixed a variety of other plants with tobacco for smoking, including kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*); prince's pine, or pipewassa (*Chimaphila umbellata*); and the bark of red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*).

K'tunaxa oral traditions also make mention of plants, especially the stories involving Coyote, the cultural hero of the K'tunaxa. Plants associated with Coyote and his travels include serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), the source of arrow-wood; and juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), the source of bow-wood and snowberries (*Symphoricarpos albus*). The branchless horsetail (*Equisetum hyemale*) was said to have saved Coyote from drowning. According to one K'tunaxa elder (Hart, Turner and Morgan n.d.):

"A long time ago, this plant used to be green. There were no stripes. Coyote went along and somehow he pulled one of his stunts, and as a result, he fell in the river. He just kept swimming back and forth. And the first thing he saw next to the bank was this plant. Coyote just stood there and held on to it. He knew that he'd just pull once and the root would come out. Coyote said to wasa, 'Please will you be strong and stay and pull me up. I'll use you to brace myself and get out of the water. When I do get out, I'll give you a beautiful colour. Besides, now you're nothing but green.' So the plant did. It held Coyote until he got on top of the bank. And Coyote kept his promise and he took clay and he went over it -- one stripe, two stripes, three stripes, all along. That's how it has stripes. Otherwise, it would be all green."

## *Plants and Technology*

The K'tunaxa utilized plants in all aspects of technology--to manufacture implements, containers, transportation (canoes), and houses. In addition, plants were sources of fibers and dyes, and used as fuel for warmth, cooking, and smoking.

Implements and containers were constructed from wood and various plant fibers. For example, cedar roots (*Thuja plicata*) were split and peeled and used to manufacture coiled baskets. Birch bark (*Betula papyifera*) and the bark of Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) were used to make bucket-like containers for gathering berries. Bowls were chiseled out of cedar or cottonwood. Ropes were made from the bark of silverberry (*Elaeagnus commutata*), and fishing lines and twine were produced by thigh-twining the stem fiber of Indian hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*).

Chokecherry wood (*Prunus virginiana*) was the preferred material for bows, because it was strong and relatively abundant. Alternatively, Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) or Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*) was used. Arrows were usually constructed from Western red cedar or ocean spray (*Holodiscus discolor*), as well as from serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), hawthorn (*Crateagus spp.*), and Rocky Mountain juniper.

The K'tunaxa relied extensively on plants in the construction of their houses, especially before the dominance of hide-covered dwellings. Frames for long-houses were constructed of lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), and covered with mats of tule (*Scirpus acutus*). The stalks of Indian hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*) were used for mats on summer lodges.

Travel through K'tunaxa territory was facilitated by the use of bark-covered canoes. The frame of Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) was tied with strips of Indian hemp, and the entire canoe was covered with the bark of Western white pine (*Pinus monticola*). Apparently, spruce-bark and birch-bark canoes were also used, as were dugouts.

Plants also played important roles in crafts manufacture. The K'tunaxa extracted various dyes from plants, including orange or tawny red from alder bark (*Alnus spp.*), yellow from wolf lichen (*Letharia vulpina*), and red from bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*).

## **Endnotes to Chapter 2**

1. After Schaeffer n.d.:f9,10.
2. The archeological record for the eastern slopes (Reeves 2000) suggests that this seasonal transhumance pattern of the K'tunaxa is of considerable antiquity, extending back at least two thousand or more years.
3. Claude Schaeffer was preparing a manuscript on Akanahonek bison hunting. It is included in File 10. He compiled an extensive set of notes, from which I have taken these discussions of bison hunting more or less verbatim, reordering it somewhat from the manner in which Schaeffer had organized it. Schaeffer's information was primarily obtained from Paul David

4. Schaeffer's informants had little specific information as to the location of the eastern slope fisheries, suggesting that east slope fishing, in contrast to hunting, had largely been abandoned by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They mention fishing in the Racetrack River (Racehorse Creek, a tributary of the Oldman); the Oldman, where they caught pike(?) (described as a duck billed variety that frequently severed the line with its teeth); and at the rapids on the Carbondale River, where they caught char.

5. It is impossible to positively identify the rivers south of Bull Pound Creek that Rundle is referring to in his journal. Rundle reached the Pheasant Pond (Pound?) River on June 2, after two days of travel, from the Bull Pound, traveling on to Monroe's place on the Sly Shooting River on June 3, where he stayed until June 8<sup>th</sup>; and then traveling to Eye Brow Hammock "long pitching for indians" (*ibid.*) and the next day, June 9, onto Woman's Pond (Pound) River. The next day, they pitched off, and camped at another part of the Old Woman's Pond River. There he saw the Old Woman's Pond (Pound) with James Bird; there he "took away part of old bone" (the first recorded instance of vandalism to archaeological sites in the region). Buffalo were not far off. On Friday, June 11, they pitched to Poor River; then on Saturday to One Standing Stick River, which had very little, and poor-running water. They left there on June 15<sup>th</sup>, and pitched to a spring, the next day onto another salt water spring, and on June 17<sup>th</sup>, they encamped at a lake. The following day they reached the Highwood River.

The Pheasant Pond (Pound) could be the Crow's Nest River. The Sly Shooting River could be the Waterton, one of the Piikáni names of which is "Where we killed the Kutenai river" in reference to the battle(s) that occurred there. It could also be the St. Mary, where battles between the west- and east-side tribes also occurred. It was here at the foot of the lower lake where Hugh Monroe generally camped (See section entitled "Swiftcurrent/Many Glacier" in "Piikáni Ethnohistory and Glacier National Park" chapter). One of the Blackfoot place names for this river is "Many Chiefs Killed Here". Old Woman's Pond (Pound) could be the Oldman River, as there is a traditional Piikáni Buffalo Jump near Brocket known as the Old Women's (McClintock 1910; Reeves personal observations), as well as the better known Old Woman's Buffalo Jump north of Nanton along the Porcupine Hills (Forbis 1962). One Standing Stick is most probably the Little Bow River.

6. Schaeffer's date of around 1850 is based on genealogical considerations. Not-A-Grizzly-Bear, said in some accounts collected by Schaeffer to have been killed in the battle, was the chief. Not-A-Grizzly had great power, and was a good conjurer. It was very difficult for the Peigans to kill him. They tied him up and roasted him to death. His son Edward, also in the battle, was a grown married man at the time, with a married son. Working backwards from Edward's death in 1902 at an estimated age of 108, and the date of the baptism of Edward's son. Schaeffer concluded: "Edward born in 1796(?), reached maturity at 1825 (?), and son reached maturity & married at 1850(?)= battle (?). Not-A-Grizzly born 1776(?), Edward Born 1796(?), Edward mature 1825(?), Edward's son baptized 1842(?), Edward's son mature & married 1850(?)." This would make Not-A-Grizzly-Bear 70 and Edward 50 at the time of battle (f.18). Edward attended the 1855 Lame Bull Treaty.

Elsewhere, Schaeffer (f.19 "Tobacco Plains Chiefs"), in a biographical note of Edward "Back Throwing" (Kakawitskayulal) noted that he acted as the yakasin (leader) for all the Kutenai on the buffalo hunt. He was a leading man of the Kutenai. He died of old age (estimated at 108) in 1904. He was under 20 years of age at the time of Red Rock Canyon Battle. He did not distinguish himself in this engagement. (Grinnell & Schultz met Edward and his band camped in the St. Mary valley in 1885. See "Bundles" section in "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park" chapter).

Schaeffer also obtained an account of this battle from Ambrose Gravelle (f.80) His father was Abel Gravelle, or Chief Two Feathers, who lived at Kalispel.

"Ambrose believed that Kutenai had big battle with Blackfeet east of Red Rock Canyon in Waterton Park. The Kutenai used to travel up the Flathead, Camas Creek, or Kintla, and go over South Kootenay Pass and come out near big hotel at Waterton Lake. He thought there were 30 Blackfeet killed but no Kutenai lost their lives and only four wounded. It was during Not-A-Grizzly's period. He left Tobacco Plains, met the Kutenai and Flathead from the south, and went up South Kootenay Pass. They met the Blackfeet and started to trade. Soon the Blackfeet started to take objects belonging to the Kutenai. The Kutenai had been told by a conjuror earlier not to discharge their guns until a certain old man had fired. The old man raised his gun in the air, while the Blackfeet took his blanket and cartridge belt away. He said, 'You fools! Don't you think I can pull the trigger!' He fired and thereby started the battle. The Kutenai had camped

by the river and then forted up there. The Blackfeet were short of ammunition, as the traders had failed to stop and supply them. The traders at Tobacco Plains had heard of the plans to ambush the Kutenai and therefore supplied them with everything needed. Not-A-Grizzly bought the last keg of powder, for which he gave a few buckskins and a horse. When the firing started, Not-A-Grizzly could understand Blackfoot and he interpreted their commands so that Kutenai could anticipate their tactics.

"A Blackfoot woman, who had adopted Not-A-Grizzly was seated on her horse on a nearby hill. 'Is that you my son?', She inquired, 'Yes', he replied. 'Then make sure that you are strong enough. They plan to wipe you out.' Not-A-Grizzly replied, 'I am! I have enough ammunition for a month. Let them come ahead.' She turned, rode down the hill, and started talking with the Blackfeet warriors. Soon they began to cluster in a group and to mourn for their dead relatives. The old woman said that 31 Blackfeet had been killed.

"A man approached on foot and told the Kutenai that he was a Cree Indian and pointed to his people on top of a nearby hill. He stated that if the Kutenai were getting the worst of it, he and his people would help them. The chief presented the Cree with a horse and blanket and sent him back with word that only 4 Kutenai had been wounded. Six chief Blackfeet warriors and balance ordinary warriors had been killed. Not-A-Grizzly was said to have been killed long after this."

Another battle that Ambrose Gravelle mentioned between the Kutenai and Blackfoot (f.80) started during a buffalo hunt. Abel, who later became a subchief, was hunting, and fired a shot that started it. Moses came to the top of the hill and looked down. A Kutenai Indian, Wolf Head, was shot off a horse. The Blackfoot scalped him, and he recovered and returned home. The Peigan thereafter called him a "ghost" and were frightened of him. Abel later became a chief of the Columbia Lakes Kutenai.

7. "Peace with the Kootenays" (Dempsey 1994) is based on an account Dempsey that received from Ambrose Gravelle in 1969 and an undated manuscript written by Jim White Bull (Kaina).

8. After Schaefer (f.3,4,9,20).

9. This section is largely from Schaeffer's notes, which he had compiled in manuscript form within files 13 and 80, for eventual publication on the trails and passes of the Upper K'tunaxa bands.

10. Paul David, who supplied Schaefer with most of the information on the passes, was also aware of their use of the Swiftcurrent Pass (See Appendix A).

11. There was more than one place where the K'tunaxa climbed over the mountains in the Winter. In 1965, Ambrose Gravelle (f.14) said the place where the K'tunaxa climbed hand over hand "was east of Kintla between the headwaters of Waterton and Flathead drainages. There were five peaks called 'hands of the mountains' and the Kutenai travelled on snowshoes between the 'thumb; and 'forefinger' of this natural feature but on horseback they travelled entirely 'around the hand.'"

12. If Red Eagle was used as a regular route of travel by the K'tunaxa into the St. Mary, it is curious that Paul David was not aware of it and did not tell Schaefer about it, because the battle that Hamilton describes took place in 1858, only some ten years before Paul David himself crossed over Packs-Pulled-Up in the winter. Perhaps Red Eagle was only used by the Akiyiniik as a summer horse trail.

13. Schaefer did not record a K'tunaxa name for the pass. According to Genevieve Murray, the Marias was known to the western Indians (probably Pend d'Oreille and other Salish people, as well as Kutenai) as the Big Gap or Low Gap (Murray 1929 n.d.:44). Western Indians, according to Murray, called Bear Creek (tributary to the Middle Fork of the Flathead), which flows off the western side of the pass, "Big Salmon Creek."

14. According to Grinnell, Schultz decided not to go hunting, but rather decided to stay in camp. Schultz (1916), however, says he went hunting with the K'tunaxa, and that is how Kootenai Mountain got named.

## CHAPTER 3

### PIIKÁNI ETHNOHISTORY



#### The Piikáni in Traditional Days

The Piikáni (Peigan), the Kainaa (Blood) and the Siksiká (Blackfeet) are the member tribes of the Nitsitapii (Real People). All share a common culture and language. Only minor dialectical and cultural differences set them apart. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the three tribes' territories encompassed much of the Upper Saskatchewan and Missouri basins. The Piikáni are traditionally associated with the foothills and western plains from the Red Deer River on the north to the Missouri River on the south.<sup>1</sup>

To the south of the Piikáni were the River and Mountain Absaroka (Crow) on the Yellowstone and its southern tributaries; north of the Absaroka were the Háninin (Atsina or Gros Ventre). Their traditional area appears to have centered on the plains of the Upper Missouri River and its tributaries. The Kainaa resided north of the Háninin, generally occupying the plains to the east along the South Saskatchewan, while the Siksiká ranged north of the Kainaa along the plains and parklands of the North Saskatchewan.

The Piikáni consist of two "divisions"-- the Aamsskaapiikáni (South Peigan), who live on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana, and refer to themselves officially as the Blackfeet; and the Aapatohsipiikáni (North Peigan), who live on the Peigan Nation in Southern Alberta. The origin of these divisions appears to relate to the traditional wintering areas of different Piikáni bands in either the northern tributaries of the Missouri or those of the South Saskatchewan. Some bands preferred to winter on one versus the other.

The Piikáni "divisions" may go back to at least the 1700s. In 1972, Peter Fidler, who was traveling with the Piikáni, often referred in his journal to the group of the Piikáni who wintered to the south in the Missouri country as the "Muddy River Indians." This is another traditional name for the South Piikáni.

The Piikáni are the "oldest" of the three Nitsitapii tribes in the Waterton-Glacier region. They are the "keepers of the culture," in the sense of having retained the greatest knowledge of tribal history and tradition relating to this region.

The Kainaa and Siksiká, while they did not reside in the Waterton-Glacier region to any extent in the 1700s, became increasingly familiar with it during the 1800s, particularly after the establishment of the fur trade on the Missouri in the 1830s. This resulted in a southward shift of their traditional wintering areas toward the Missouri.

Piikáni traditions relating to their lands and their culture recorded by Grinnell, McClintock, Wissler, Schaeffer, and Ewers speak to a long and intimate association with the land, even though some of these same scholars interpret the oral traditions of the Piikáni and other Nitsitapii relating to their origins as recording a relatively recent arrival of the Piikáni on the plains, from a homeland in the northeastern forests, only a few centuries before the coming of the horse in the mid-eighteenth century.

The Nitsitapii were the most socially and culturally complex, as well as the most numerous, of all the nomadic tribes of the northern plains bison hunters. Their culture revolved around the bison, which were their very being. Would such a complex society develop in a few hundred years from a small group of simply organized hunters and fishers of the boreal forest? On theoretical grounds alone, it is highly unlikely. When fur traders first met the Nitsitapii on the Saskatchewan in the 1770s, they noted that they, unlike the Cree and Assiniboine, abhorred fish and knew nothing of canoes. This is a remarkable loss of essential cultural elements on the part of Nitsitapii if they, as some historians contend, had only a few years before been living in the forest.

The long continuity evidenced in the use of focal bison jumps within Piikáni territory, such as Head-Smashed-In (Reeves 1978) and Old Women's (Forbis 1962) from the far distant past into the nineteenth century, combined with oral traditions relating to such sites and their focal significance in religious tradition, as well as other ideological and archaeological elements, indicate that the Piikáni have been resident within the plains of the Upper Saskatchewan and Upper Missouri for thousands of years (Reeves 2000).

The archaeological evidence of the Piikáni's long occupancy of the region (see also Byrne 1973) is supported by the Piikáni's oral history and accounts of their origins, as well as by genetic and linguistic evidence which, combined with re-analysis of the fur trade documents, indicates that the Nitsitapii people have been resident in this region of the northwestern plains for thousands of years (see "Alternative Interpretations of Piikáni Culture History" section).

The Piikáni consisted of a some 22 bands within a larger tribal grouping. Their traditional settlement and subsistence round, as well as other aspects of their culture, changed with the coming of the horse in the mid-eighteenth century. During these and earlier traditional days, their winter settlement focused on the areas where good supplies of wood were available: the river and stream valleys of the foothills; the major wooded river valleys in the plains to the east; the parklands to the north; and the wooded prairie mountains, such as the Cypress Hills.

Different bands tended to have their own preferred wintering grounds. For example, bands such as the Grease Melters and Buffalo Chips -- two of the bands of the North Piikáni now resident on the Piikáni Nation (Peigan Reserve) in Alberta -- favored wintering grounds in the Porcupine Hills and Oldman River Valley, generally known as "Real Old Man Country" because the area is associated with many sacred events in Piikáni religion. Piskuns (bison jumps and corrals) were also associated with the bands which, in the case of the Grease Melters and Buffalo Chip bands, appear to have included Head-Smashed-In and other piskuns in the Oldman River basin.

Bison were hunted throughout the winter in these areas, by communal hunting using jumps and corrals, as well as by driving bison into snowdrifts, and individual stalking. In particularly bad winters, the Piikáni would go "up against the mountains," where other game animals--deer, elk, and bighorn sheep--were also abundant, and could be hunted along with bison. In other winters, when the bison remained far out on the plains, the bands would camp far out along the wooded bottoms of the Bow, Oldman, Bear (Marias), Teton, and Sun rivers, as well as on the mainstream of the Missouri River. Winter camps varied in size and duration, reflecting the comings and goings of families for many different reasons. Large camps of some 500 or more people were not unusual. Winter settlement was more focused than dispersed. Piikáni oral tradition recalls winter camps in the Waterton, St. Mary, and Two Medicine valleys.

Spring (late April/May) was a time when major bison drives were held in the calving grounds. Meat was dried, and pemmican was prepared for use during the spring and summer. In spring, roots such as prairie turnip and camas were dug by the women in the foothills and mountain valleys. From favored lodgepole stands, tipi poles were cut, barked and left to cure over summer. Tobacco was planted at the traditional sacred tobacco gardens, which, at some times, included sites within the near vicinity of Glacier National Park (see "Traditional Piikáni Camps" section in "Piikáni Ethnology and Glacier National Park" chapter).

As spring passed into summer, preparations were made for the Okan (Sundance), traditionally held when the saskatoons (serviceberries) were coming on at the end of July or early August – also the time when the bison were in rut. Bison bulls were hunted to collect the tongues needed for sacred ceremonies, and the bands began to come together in the circle camp at the sites selected for the tribal Sun Dances, which, according to Piikáni tradition, were located in the vicinity of the Sweet Grass Hills. After the religious and related activities were complete in one to two weeks and camp was broken, bands dispersed to hunt and collect saskatoons at favored locales far out on the plains, such as Many Berrys; along the river valleys; and in the hills, foothills, and mountain valleys, and upland areas along the eastern slopes. Later, the chokecherries would be collected and prepared. Some bands, including the Blood and Small Robes bands (Ewers 1946), rather than following the buffalo eastward in the summer, stayed along the mountain front. Piikáni tradition recalls summer camps in the Waterton, Belly, St. Mary, Cutbank, and Two Medicine valleys.

With summer passing into fall, the rains and snows of mid- to late September probably triggered the movement of the buffalo herds back from the short-grass plains toward their western and northern over-wintering grounds. Those bands that had been summering out on the plains would come together for the fall bison drives -- a time of major bison drives at sites such as Two-Medicine -- to lay in stores of dried meat and pemmican for winter. It is said that you could ignore the first snow, because Indian Summer would come; but if you ignored the second snow, and stayed on, you could be caught on the plains in winter. After the fall drives were completed, the bands would move toward their winter camps.

In addition to the seasonal round of activities in the days before the coming of metal artifacts to replace stone tools, the Piikáni obtained much of their prized stone from quarries in the central and southern Montana Rockies. These quarries are generally at high elevations, and are inaccessible, due to snow cover and/or frozen ground in the winter. They would have been visited during the summer or fall.

Mistakis (The Backbone) plays a very significant role in the Piikáni's sacred geography and traditional religion. Many sacred events happened here in centuries past that are elements that are fundamental to their traditional beliefs. The most significant of these include the visioning of the Long-Time Pipe, the first of the medicine pipes at Ninastakis (Chief Mountain), which is considered to be the home of the Thunderbird and the visioning of the Beaver Bundle at the North Big Inside Lake (Waterton Lake). The Beaver Bundle is the most important tribal bundle of the Nitsitapii peoples, and was given to ApPiikáni, the first Piikáni, by the Beaver People at this place over 1,000 years ago (Reeves ndb). Other medicine pipes, as well as sacred tipis, were visioned in the Backbone (see "Sacred Rituals and Objects" section in the next chapter).

## *Alternative Interpretations of Piikáni Culture History*

The Nitsitapii in most histories of Glacier National Park (e.g., Bucholtz 1976) and Montana (e.g., Malouf 1957, Malone, Roeder and Lang 1991), as well as popular ethnographic and ethnohistoric accounts (e.g., Ewers 1958), are said to have been only recently resident in this region. According to these historians they moved into this area during the last 200 years displacing the Snakes (interpreted as the Nimi (Shoshoni) and other tribes such as the purported Plains Salish and Plains K'tunaxa from the eastern slopes and adjacent high plains of northern Montana).

The original homeland of the invaders, according to the aforementioned historical interpretations, was either the parklands to the north, in the region of the North Saskatchewan River (e.g., Ewers 1958) or in the eastern prairies of today's Manitoba (e.g., Malone et al., 1991). In these historians' interpretations, the Piikáni expanded, because they acquired guns from the Cree and/or were driven westward/southward by the Cree and Assiniboine, who, in turn, armed with guns which they had acquired from the traders at Hudson Bay, were expanding west from their homelands, said to have been in the vicinity of Lake Superior (e.g., Mandelbaum 1979). These interpretations of Nitsitapii history appear to be erroneous, as discussed below, in summarizing the historical, oral tradition, archaeological, linguistic, and genetic evidence that points to the Piikáni's very long occupation of this region.

An important first point to consider in evaluating the traditional historical interpretations of Nitsitapii history is the identity of the Snake. Who were the Snake People? What did the word mean to the Nitsitapii?

The term "Snake Person/People" was commonly used by many Algonquian language family speaking peoples, including the Arapaho, Cheyene, Háninin, Cree, Ojibwa, and Nitsitapi, to refer to enemy. The word "Sioux," for example, is a corruption of the French translation of Ojibwa for "snake person," used to refer to the Nakota, Dakota, and Lakota (McGhee 1897). Therefore, the use of this word by the fur traders in their journals, when referring to the Nitsitapii's enemies, does not in itself necessarily have any particular tribal identity.

The Snakes were the enemy but were they the Nimi? In considering this question, one should first note that while the fur trade records of the 1770s and 80s identify both the K'tunaxa and Salish, who are said to reside in the Rocky Mountains, they do not identify either the Absaroke or Nimi by name (e.g., Umphreville 1954). Some Snakes are said to reside west of the Rockies; they are the ones from whom the Nitsitapii and Háninin steal horses, as well as women and children, whom they sell to traders (*ibid.*). These Snakes are most probably the small Nimi subsistence groups commonly referred to in the ethnological literature as the Northern or--Lemhi Shoshoni-- whom Lewis and Clark met at the headwaters of the Missouri in 1805. The Lemhi told Lewis and Clark that they lived in constant fear of being raided by the plains tribes for slaves (Moulton 1987).

The Snake also resided east of the mountains in the Upper Missouri Yellowstone, and are said to have been very fierce warriors. These Snake probably included Nakota (Plains Assiniboine), Crow, and Nimi. The Nakota groups are those who resided on and north of the Missouri in today's eastern Montana. (Recent archaeological studies in the Bearsaw Mountains indicate that Nakota groups have resided there since at least AD 1400 and 1500 (Walde 1994).

A map compiled by Peter Pond in 1785 shows Snake living east of the Sweetgrass Hills and north of the Missouri River in the headwaters of the Souris, south of the South Saskatchewan. The Sioux are

shown living to the east, and the Blackfeet to the west (Wagner 1955: Map 2). On a third map prepared in 1787 (Wagner 1955), the Assiniboine are shown in this location (their traditional location as shown on later maps, and known from the historic documents), and the Snake are shown on the Upper Yellowstone (Pond does not show the Crow on any of his three maps). Pond's map, as well as the fur trade accounts in the 1760s and 1770s of Snake who lived between the South Saskatchewan and Missouri, and were in mutual conflict with the Nitsitapii, HÁninin, Cree, and Nakota of the Saskatchewan, suggest that these Snake were the Assiniboine of the Missouri.

Absaroke and Nimi were resident in the headwaters of the Yellowstone in the 1700s. Crow pottery dates back to the 1550s in that area. Crow ware and Intermountain ware (presumed to be Nimi) pottery have been identified at a number of archaeological campsites in the Upper Yellowstone and Powder River (Frison 1976,1991) that date to around AD 1700, suggesting that the association of Absaroke and Nimi extends back into pre-contact times.

Peter Fidler wintered with the Piikáni in the Porcupine Hills of Southern Alberta in 1792 (Fidler 1793). He mentions a number of raids by the Piikáni and Kainaa on the Crow Mountain and Snake Indians in the winter of 1792, as well as in the winters of 1801-1803, while he was at Chesterfield House (Johnson 1967). Fidler is the first of the fur traders of the Saskatchewan to refer to the Crow by name. It is highly probable that the Crow were also referred to as the Snake in the late 1700s fur trade records from the Saskatchewan.

The Mountain Crow, as discussed earlier in this report, have a well-remembered oral tradition that indicates that when they and the River Crow separated from their close relatives the Hidatsa on the Missouri, sometime around AD 1500, according to the linguistic divergence of the two languages, they wandered north of the Missouri into the Saskatchewan before drifting south to rejoin the River Crow in the Upper Yellowstone around AD 1800.

A map drawn in 1801 by Red Feathers -- a Siksiká chief -- for Peter Fidler at Chesterfield House (located at the junction of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan) (PAM HBCA E.3.2 fos. 106d-107) shows a group of "Seysews" living with the Mountain Crow on the Yellowstone. This group was also mentioned by LaRoque in his journal of 1805 (Wood and Theissen 1985). Red Feather's map shows the locations of various Nimi subsistence groups (salmon-eaters, rabbit-eaters, root-diggers) located west of the mountains. One of the western groups is also identified as "Seysews," which Fidler translates on the map as Snake.

Why were the Nimi commonly called the Snake? While Lewis and Clark always referred to the Shoshone by that name in their journals, later American traders generally used the word Snake rather than Shoshone to apply to all of the Nimi subsistence groups they met in the headwaters region of today's Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. The reasons for this substitution are unclear. It may be due in part to confusion in interpreting the tribal hand signs, because the sign for the Nimi, which meant Brush Lodge People, is very similar to the sign for Snake People, and could be easily confused by British and American traders or their mixed-blood interpreters (Clark 1885:353; Hodge 1907:588; Trenholm and Carley 1964:304). Nimi (The People) is their name for themselves.

### *Were the Nitsitapii Driven West and/or South by the Cree and Assiniboine?*

The Cree and Assiniboine, according to historians' interpretations noted earlier, were not present on the plains of the North Saskatchewan before the arrival of the fur trade. However, archaeological

evidence from Saskatchewan (Meyer & Epp 1990; Walde 1994) indicates that the Assiniboine were present in central Saskatchewan by at least AD 1400, and that the Cree were at the Forks of the Saskatchewan by AD 1600, many years before the fur trade was established on Hudson Bay.

Re-analysis of the primary fur trade documents (Russell 1991) substantiates the archaeological evidence. The historical records, in fact, document these tribes' presence in the west in pre-contact times; both Cree and Assiniboine were probably present in what is today's Central Alberta by, if not before, AD 1700. The primary documents further indicate that rather than being at war with the western plains tribes (the Kainaa, Piikáni, Siksiká, and Háninin), the Cree and the Assiniboine of the Saskatchewan (as opposed to the Assiniboine of the Missouri, who were the enemy) were at "peace," often wintering together, and joining together to wage war on their common enemies, the "Snake People," who lived to the south.

If the Cree and Nakota, as well as the Piikáni, were already resident in the plains before the fur traders arrived, where did the idea come from in the historical literature that the Piikáni once resided in the forests to the north or the grasslands to the east? The idea that the Piikáni and the other Nitsitapii tribes originally lived north of the territory they traditionally occupied in northern Montana and southern Alberta was first proposed by George Bird Grinnell in 1892. Grinnell discounted the Piikáni's own oral traditions that indicated that the three tribes have always lived in these lands, as well as their traditional account that before they became the three tribes, they had lived west of the mountains. Grinnell preferred to accept the opinions of some Kainaa, as well as those of fur traders and other circumstantial evidence that the Nitsitapii had originally lived in the northern forests near Lesser Slave Lake.

A principal line of evidence that Grinnell cited as proof for this homeland was the Cree name for the Blackfeet "Archithinue," translated as "Slave" by Alexander MacKenzie. However, the Cree also referred to other tribes as "Archithinue," including the Dene -- the original residents of the northern forests of today's Alberta, with whom the Cree were at war, and from whom they were taking slaves, to trade to the fur traders. (The correct translation for "Archithinue" is "stranger" [Russell 199:189]). The Cree differentiated between friendly and enemy Archithinue (PAM HBCA B.239/9/69). The Piikáni, Kainaa, Siksiká, and Háninin were friendly; the K'tunaxa, Salish, Vault (Hidatsa?), and Snake were enemies.

Drawing on several lines of evidence, including the oral tradition of the Piikáni, Wissler (1910) effectively refuted Grinnell's argument. Wissler was of the opinion that these lands, while their traditional homelands, had at one time been occupied by the enemies of the Piikáni -- the Snake People from whom elder Piikáni told Wissler they acquired both the horse and smallpox. Wissler's later books on the Plains Indians (1941), first published in the 1920s, generally followed his earlier ideas on the origins and antiquity of the Nitsitapii in their traditional homelands.

The proposal that the Nitsitapii originally lived in the prairie to the east and were forced west by the Cree was first set in popular print by John McLean in his book, *Canadian Savage Folk*, published in 1896. (McLean was a Methodist minister who for a few years missionized among the Kainaa. He wrote two popular books on the Native people of Canada. McLean (quoted in Hale 1885:5), like Grinnell, discounted the Nitsitapii oral traditions relating to their original migration before they became the three tribes from west of the mountains, as well as to the tradition in which it was here that the three tribes were created. In contrast, Father Lacombe, who had spent his entire life with the Siksiká and Cree, and was very knowledgeable about their history, accepted Nitsitapii accounts and remarked (*ibid.*) that he had never heard any story of their having migrated west from the eastern woodlands and prairie edge. When

asked the same question, Chief Crowfoot very emphatically stated that the ancestors of his people did not migrate from the east, but had always lived here (Hale 1888).

McLean's opinion appears to have been based on a version of the folk story of the origin of the name Blackfeet. It is said to have come about because their moccasins became black by walking through the deep black soil of the parklands along the North Saskatchewan or the Red River Country. Another popular version states that moccasins blackened because they walked through prairie fires.

The oral tradition relating to the origin of the three tribes first published by Grinnell (1896), but also known to McLean, Father Lacombe, and others at that time is a much more probable accounting of how the three tribes came to be named. In this account, it is said the ancestors of the Nitsitapii originally lived west of the mountains. The people were starving. Their leader had a dream. In his dream, the dream person told him to travel east over the mountains, where they would find food. They did. When they got to this land, they did not know how to hunt buffalo. The Old Man had three sons who founded the three tribes. He painted the eldest son's moccasins black so that he would be successful in hunting the buffalo. The first son traveled to the northeast, and returned with the power to hunt the buffalo. He became Siksiká. Black is one of the most sacred and powerful colors of the Nitsitapii. This is probably the correct accounting of the origin of the name Siksiká. The second son went to the east; he came back with many chiefs' scalps; and he became Kainaa (Many Chiefs). The youngest son went to the south; he came back wearing a strange robe. The Old Man called him Piikáni.

McLean also appears to have been heavily influenced by Horatio Hale, a philologist who had earlier published material on the relationship of the Blackfeet language to other Algonquian languages, in which he demonstrated a relationship between Blackfeet and Cree (Hale 1883). Hale proposed that this linguistic relationship was evidence that the Nitsitapii originally lived to the east because that is where the majority of Algonquian-speaking tribes live, and that they had been forced west by the Cree during the fur trade. Hale cites Alexander MacKenzie's Journal (Lambe 1970) as the source for this forced westward movement. A closer reading of MacKenzie's journal, however, indicates that he never made any statement that the Cree movement west was in any way related to the fur trade (Russell 1991). What MacKenzie did note were linguistic similarities between Cree and tribes that spoke similar languages to the east. Because of this linguistic similarity, MacKenzie suggested that the Cree probably originated in the east and migrated west. MacKenzie's direction of migration paralleled that of the expansion of the fur trade and European settlement in North America, and is probably why he proposed it (Russell 1991).

MacKenzie's Journal, first published in 1801, became the ethnographic source for knowledge of the tribes of the western interior during the 1800s. Later writers took considerable interpretive liberties with MacKenzie's information (e.g., Franklin and Richardson 1829, King 1836). By the time William Butler published his book *The Great Lone Land* in 1872 (Butler, W.F. 1883), MacKenzie's original narrative had been transformed to the account of Cree expansion during the fur trade armed with guns, Blackfeet resistance, and their expansion, in turn, westward. This grossly incorrect interpretation of MacKenzie has in later writings become historical "fact." It has been perpetuated in the historical and anthropological literature of this century (e.g., Jenness 1932) and various writings on the Indians of Montana (e.g., Malouf 1957).

The concept of a northern homeland for the Nitsitapii was revived in the 1940s by Oscar Lewis in his dissertation, published in 1942, and at the same time by John Ewers (1944) (see also Ewers 1958, 1974). The principal historical source on which they pinned their arguments was an account in David

Thompson's Narrative, written in the 1840s and first published in 1916 (Tyrrell 1916), of a series of battles between the Piikáni and the Snake which took place in the 1700s. Known as the Saukamapii Account, these stories were told to David Thompson in the winter of 1787 by an aged Cree War Chief of the Piikáni -- Saukamapii. David Thompson, then only 17 years of age, with one winter's experience in the western interior, was sent by the factor of Manchester House, a Hudson's Bay Post on the North Saskatchewan, to live with the Piikáni and learn their language. Thompson spoke only Cree at the time. Some 60 years later, Thompson, by then a destitute, embittered, and partially blind old man, wrote his Narrative with his wife's help. He drew on his memory, and on his personal diaries, which he had kept while with the Northwest Company.

There are no surviving diaries from Thompson's years with the Hudson's Bay Company, and it is doubtful if he ever kept any (Tyrrell 1916). Thompson apparently wrote from memory, for there are significant discrepancies between the accounts and dates in the Narrative and the factor's diaries from Manchester House for those winters. A comparison of Thompson's diaries and the Narrative for later years also shows that Thompson was prone to both embellishing and exaggerating historical accounts. Therefore, while Saukamapii's overall account has historical validity, because Piikáni oral history recalls the conflict between the Piikáni and the Snake people, the details of this account must not be used uncritically, as ethnohistorians have been prone to do in the past.

Thompson's Narrative describes three battles with the Snake People. The first occurred when Saukamapii is a young boy, before they had the horse, and happened on the river considered by historians to be the North Saskatchewan (Russell 1991). Piikáni and Cree were camped on the north side. They had a few guns. The Snake were on the south side. The Piikáni and the Cree crossed and fought with the Snake. The results were inconclusive. The next incident occurred after Saukamapii had grown to be a man. The Piikáni and Cree had more guns, but now the Snake had horses. The Snake raided the Piikáni on horseback and killed some of their best warriors. This skirmish precipitated a major battle, which was fought on foot, as the Snake held their horses back. The Piikáni, Cree, and Assiniboine had more firearms, and carried the day. This was the last general battle, after which there were only raids. Thompson does not give any location for the battles.<sup>2</sup>

Sometime after the last battle, the Piikáni entered an abandoned Snake camp on the Stag River (assumed to be the Red Deer) (Tyrrell 1916) where they found dead Snake people, and from whom they contracted smallpox. This smallpox epidemic is the one that occurred in the 1730s and was reported by LaVerendry (Forbis 1977). Háninin, K'tunaxa, and Salish oral history also tells of a smallpox epidemic at the time the tribes first acquired horses -- best estimated to be around AD 1730 (Ewers 1958). Lewis, Ewers, and other writers, however, have incorrectly assumed this epidemic was the well-documented smallpox epidemic of 1782, which they and other historians suggested was the first epidemic to strike the western tribes.

Who were the Snake of the Saukamapii account? Thompson never identifies them by another tribal name. It is reasonable to assume that most probably they were the Assiniboine of the Missouri, Dakota, or Mountain Crow, and the band of Nimi who were noted as being still resident with the Absaroke in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The Saukamapii account, and the identification of the Snake in this account as Nimi, continue to provide the principal basis for the historical interpretation that the Nitsitopii originated in the north, and expanded south into Northern Montana, driving the Nimi out of their former territory, which, according to these interpretations, once extended north of the Missouri into Southern Alberta (e.g., Brink 1986;

Dempsey 1986; Ewers 1958; Malouf 1957). As we have seen in the preceding discussion, however, the primary historical documents do not support the assumption that the Cree drove the Nitsitapii west, or that the enemy people -- the Snake, whom the Nitsitapii drove out of Southern Alberta -- were the Nimi.

The written and oral historical records in fact support the archaeological, linguistic, and genetic data that point to a considerable antiquity for Nitsitapii residency in their traditional homelands between the Missouri and the North Saskatchewan Rivers, along the eastern front of the Rockies and the adjacent western plains.

### *Archaeological Evidence for Nimi and Piikáni Occupation in Northern Montana and Southern Alberta*

The archaeological evidence from northern Montana and southern Alberta does not provide support for a Nimi occupation north of the Missouri. Distinctive Nimi pottery and arrow-points have not been found north of the Missouri or in southern Alberta -- an area where a considerable number of late period campsites and buffalo jumps have been dug in the last 30 years (Vickers 1986; Reeves n.d.). However, Nimi artifacts do occur in the Great Falls region around Lewiston (Brumley n.d.), to the south into the Mussellshell, the headwaters of the Missouri, and in the Upper Yellowstone. There, Crow archaeological sites have also been identified (see Davis & Zeir 1978; Frison 1976, 1991). None of the Nimi sites in this area predate around AD 1700, suggesting they represent a very recent expansion north-eastward of the continental divide. This late date for Nimi occupation of the Yellowstone and Missouri headwaters is consistent with archaeological data from Idaho and the Great Basin, which supports the linguistic evidence indicating that the Nimi expanded northeastward across the Great Basin, reaching the Idaho and Wyoming area around AD 1500 (Butler 1981, 1982, 1986; Bettinger & Baumhoff 1982; Lamb 1958; Madsen 1975; Miller 1986).

If the Nimi had been the original occupants of the lands north of the Missouri and were displaced by the Nitsitapii, we would expect to find abundant evidence. We do not. The ceramics, arrow-points, and other material culture found in late pre-contact and early contact sites in this region of northern Montana and southern Alberta are quite dissimilar to Nimi materials. They are considered to be those of the pre-contact Nitsitapii (Old Woman's Phase), which exhibits a continuity of occupation extending back at least 1000 years (Reeves 1969, 1980, 1990; Byrne 1973; Vickers 1986, 1994; Brumley & Dau 1988). Further to the east in this region are found the ceramics and other artifacts characteristic of the pre-contact Nakota (Mortlach Aggregate) (Meyer and Epp 1990; Walde 1994). Mortlach materials occasionally appear in sites in southern Alberta, sometimes in association with Old Woman's ceramics (Dale Walde, personal communication, 1993). The Háninin have yet to be identified in the archaeological record.

Further substantiation of a long Piikáni occupancy of this region derives from the study and dating of the Iniskim visioning (Buffalo Stone) (Reeves 1993a). The Nitsitapii were known as the People of the Buffalo Stone. The Iniskims were a central feature of their religious beliefs and practices in the last century, in contrast to that of other plains tribes who rarely used the Iniskim in their rituals. The Piikáni have an oral tradition about the visioning of the Iniskim, which they say happened at a specific place on the Bow River, below today's Siksiká Nation (100 miles downstream from Calgary). Combining geological and archaeological evidence and the oral tradition, Reeves has been able to date this event to around 1,000 years ago. The Piikáni have oral traditions that tell how the Iniskim was introduced into

older bundles, such as the Beaver Bundle, that was visioned at Waterton Lake. Therefore, their occupancy of this region began before 1,000 years ago.

The Piikáni were not alone in southern Alberta in the 1700s. An intrusive cultural complex, possibly related to Mortlach, appears in Southern Alberta in the early 1700s. Known as the Cluny Complex (Byrne 1973), it is named after the Cluny Fortified Village site located on the Bow River on the Siksiká Nation (Forbis 1977). The site consists of a fortification trench, palisade with bastions and pits, and an open interior camp area. It was occupied for a very brief period of time. The site resembles in form an Assiniboine fortified site visited in 1738 by LaVerendre in today's North Dakota. When asked about the site at the turn of the century, Siksiká elders said it was occupied by the Crow or Snake, who had invaded their country and were driven from it (*ibid.*). The Cluny pottery is definitely not Nitsitapii or Nimi. In design elements, it is closer to Mortlach than the purported Crow pottery of the Upper Yellowstone (Dale Walde, personal communication, 1993). There is a remarkable historical concurrence between the events represented by the Cluny Site and the Saukamapii account (Byrne 1973; Reeves n.d.c). It is highly likely that Cluny was occupied by the Snake people of the Saukamapii account.

Certain northern plains rock art motifs, particularly the Shield Bearing Warrior, have been ascribed to the Nimi (Keyser 1975), as has much of the rock art at Writing-On-Stone (Keyser 1977). Neither is correct. Shield Bearing Warriors from southern Montana have been dated as being 1,000 years old, predating by some 700 years the Nimi expansion northeastward across the Great Basin (Loendorf 1990). Therefore, they cannot be Nimi. A multivariate statistical analysis of the rock art at Writing-On-Stone by Magne and Klassen (1991) has satisfactorily demonstrated that Keyser's (1977) classification of the rock art and ascription of much of it to the Nimi is in error. In fact, Magne and Klassen conclude that most of it was probably executed by the Nitsitapii.

In summary then, the archaeological evidence briefly outlined above suggests that while it is highly unlikely that the Nimi occupied the region in the 1700s, another intrusive culture did – possibly Nakota and/or Crow. These are probably the Snake from whom the Nitsitapii, Háninin, and Cree acquired both horses and smallpox.

### **Algonquian Linguistics**

Linguistic considerations have played a principal role in the interpretation of Nitsitapii history. Early philologists were always puzzled about the linguistic relationships of the Blackfoot language and its proper classification (e.g, Gallatin 1848). By the late nineteenth century, sufficient data had been collected to recognize that the Blackfoot belonged to the Algonquian language family (Hale 1883, 1885). However, because the majority of Algonquian-speaking tribes lived in eastern North America, Hale and other writers, including McLean, concluded that the Nitsitapii had recently migrated from the east. In contrast, Kroeber (1902, 1916) the first to undertake a detailed historical linguistic analysis of Blackfoot as well as Arapaho, reached the conclusion that these languages, particularly Blackfoot, were very far distant from other Algonquian languages. Therefore, they had been separated for a great deal of time from the other Algonquian-speakers. In Kroeber's opinion, the Nitsitapii were very ancient occupants of the western plains.

In the first detailed classification of Algonquian languages and their historical relationships, Truman Michelson (1911a) came to the same general conclusion as Kroeber. He placed the Algonquian languages in four major “geographic” divisions: Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Eastern-Central. He considered the three plains groups as distinct from one another as they were from the eastern group,

which he broke down into eastern and central subgroups. Linguists still follow Michelson's basic groupings today. However, the great majority of linguists over the last 80 years have held the view that the western groups at some time in the distant past originated in the east. According to some of these linguists, the Nitsitapii were the first to move west, possibly 2,000 to 3,000 years ago (e.g., Goddard 1967; Siebert 1967; Teiter 1967).

Western origins for the Algonquian language family have also been proposed. Writing first in 1913, Edward Sapir demonstrated the relationship between the Yurok and Wiyot languages of California and Algonquian. Sapir came to the conclusion that the migration of Algonquian-speakers was originally from the west to the east, and that the Nitsitapii probably entered their traditional territory during this original migration from the west (1916:83). In recent years, Sapir's views have received increasing support from a number of linguistics examining the genetic relationships between these languages, as well as with Kutenai, Salishan, and other language families in the west (e.g., Denny 1989, 1991; Fiedel 1987). Dates on the order of around 8000 to 5000 years have been suggested for the beginning of this eastern movement of ancient Algonquian speakers.

Recently, Ives Goddard, the "dean" of Algonquian linguistics, has revised his opinion on the western movement of Algonquian-speakers. He has come to the conclusion -- which Sapir did 60 years earlier -- that the Algonquian-speakers could only have come from the west, and that the most ancient of the languages is Blackfoot (Goddard 1994).

### **Algonquian Population Genetics**

Supporting the linguistic evidence for an ancient occupancy in the west by the Nitsitapii is a population genetics study of a sample of Canadian Algonquian-speaking groups (Szathmary and Auger 1983). Kainaa and Siksiká were included, along with Cree and various eastern groups. This study concluded that genetically the two Nitsitapii tribes (which were essentially genetically identical) were much more distant from the Cree (their closest Algonquian-speaking neighbors) and the groups to the east than the Cree were from the eastern tribes. They concluded that this evidence indicates that the Nitsitapii tribes had been resident in their traditional territory and genetically isolated from the other groups for a long time.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the historical interpretations of Nitsitapii history that propose they are only recent residents in this area of southern Alberta/northern Montana must be reevaluated in light of the re-analysis of the etymological, historic fur trade documents, oral history, archaeological, linguistic, and genetic evidence briefly summarized above. In contrast to the standard interpretation, these lines of evidence indicate that the Nitsitapii have been resident in this region for a long period of time -- at least 1,000 years. The accounts of the Piikáni and the Snake people are most economically interpreted as relating to a temporary intrusion by the Snake into traditional Nitsitapii territory in the late 1600s and the temporary displacement of the Nitsitapii from parts of their traditional lands in the upper Saskatchewan grasslands. The intruders may well have been a group of Nakota, Dakota, or Crow. Warfare, as well as smallpox, resulted in the displacement of the Snake people from these lands in the mid-1700s.

As a final note, it is relevant to the above discussion that one of the first maps to show the upper

reaches of the Missouri, published by the French cartographer Guillaume Delisle in 1700, labels the upper reaches as the "R. de Pekistanoni" (Wheat 1957:57-59), or Pikitanoui as it is shown on some later maps. The Pikitanoui were in all likelihood the Southern Piikáni, who were also known as the Muddy River Indians (Fidler 1793) because of their traditional association with the Muddy (Missouri) River. The Muddy River is considered by the Piikáni to be the southern boundary of their traditional territory (*ibid.*). It appears to have been so in AD 1700 when, according to the standard historical interpretation, the Piikáni were supposedly all living north of the North Saskatchewan.

### **The Piikáni and the Fur Trade 1750-1850**

The Piikáni and the other Nitsitapii, as well as the Háninin, played focal roles in the British and American fur trade in the Upper Saskatchewan and Missouri. The history of these years becomes increasingly complex and detailed as the fur trade progresses in British and American territories after the turn of the century, and the years of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade during the 1820s and 1830s. Fur trade histories have generally dealt with the trade from either a British or an American perspective.

The following is a brief summary of the historical course of the trade in both nations, with emphasis on the Piikáni and Blackfeet roles during the years prior to the development of the hide trade, the establishment of Fort Benton in the late 1840s, and the events that followed (see Appendix B).<sup>3</sup>

#### ***The Hudson's Bay Company on the Saskatchewan 1750-1810***

The Hudson's Bay Company's practice prior to its establishment of trading posts on the Saskatchewan in the 1780s was to send men into the interior to encourage the Indians to come to trade at the HBC. Anthony Henday was the first of these men to overwinter and encounter the Nitsitapii and other tribes of the Upper Saskatchewan. He referred to them by the Cree name "Archithinue" (Stranger).

In June 1854, Henday was sent inland by Governor Isham of the HBC. Reaching the interior of today's central Saskatchewan, he traveled overland with a Cree guide westward, reaching a camp of the Archithinue somewhere in the vicinity of today's city of Red Deer in central Alberta sometime that fall (Wilson 1974:286). Henday traveled and wintered with these Archithinue, as well as with the Cree and Assiniboine, leaving the country in the spring.

The first inland winterer to describe the tribes referred to as the Archithinue by the Cree was Matthew Cocking, who wintered in today's west-central Saskatchewan in 1772-1773 (PAM HBCA B.2. 39/a/69):

"These Natives [I have met with] are called Powestick Athinnewock or Water-fall Indians. The [Cree] People I am with inform me there are four Nations more which go under the name of Yeachithinnee Indians with whom they are in friendship Viz. Mithico Athnineewock or Blood Indians, Koskiketow Wathussituck or black foot Indians; Pigionew Athinnewock or muddy Water Indians and Sussewock or woody country Indians. Their enemies go under the general name of Yeachithinnee Indians, four nations. Kanapick Athinnewock or Snake Indian: Wahtee or vault Indians [possibly Hidatsa (Russell 1991:211) Kuttunnayewuck: and Nah-puck Ushquanuck or flat Head Indians so called they tell me from their foreheads being very flat."

The complete domination that the Hudson's Bay Company enjoyed over the trade on the Saskatchewan

began to unravel in the late 1760s with the appearance of French traders supported by British or American businessmen out of Montreal, Quebec, and Michlimackinac (Rich 1967:130). In 1768, the peddlers, as the HBC called them, built a post below the Forks of the Saskatchewan. Others soon followed. The HBC responded by establishing inland posts on the Saskatchewan. The first, Cumberland House, located on the delta of the Saskatchewan upstream of Lake Winnipegosis, opened in 1774, followed by Hudson House, near the Forks, in the winter of 1778. The Siksiká, Piikáni, Kainaa and Háninin were among the tribes who came to trade at Hudson House. In 1782, smallpox again broke out among the Indians on the Saskatchewan, once again devastating the Indians. Some bands never recovered.

The HBC, as well as their rivals, the peddlers, many of whom were now part of the Northwest Company, and other traders, continued to send men to overwinter with the tribes to encourage them to come to trade at their rather than the competition's post the next spring. The first record of a visit to the Piikáni's traditional lands is by James Gady, who wintered with them in 1785 - 1786. William Tomlinson, the factor at Hudson House, entered in his journal (B.49/a/8) upon the return of Gady that spring:

"James Gady informs me where has been is a very Plentyfull of all sorts of animals common in the country ... he also says that the Peekinnow Indian tribe is much the largest of any he has seen being 250 tents in number, these with the Blood and Blackfeet tribes go constantly at war against the Snake indian tribe and many is killed on both sides, at times the former take numbers of horses and mules from the latter which is the reason of their going to war he says they travelled about 150 miles along the Rocky Mountains but saw no end to it ...."

Over the next 10 years, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company continued to build a series of posts opposite each other ever farther up the Saskatchewan, culminating, in 1795, with the opening of Fort Augustus (NWC) and Edmonton House (HBC). Edmonton House became the focus of the fur trade in the Saskatchewan District in the following years, and in 1799, the posts farthest up the Saskatchewan within sight of the Rockies, Rocky Mountain (NWC), and Acton (HBC) houses. The companies continued to send young men to winter with the Piikáni. Among them were David Thompson and Peter Fidler. In 1788 - 1789 Thompson was sent to winter with the Piikáni, and set down an account some 50 years later in his Narrative (Glover 1962; see also Dempsey 1964). Thompson wintered in the vicinity of the Bow River and today's city of Calgary.

Four years later, in the fall of 1792, Peter Fidler was sent from Buckingham House on the Saskatchewan to winter with the Piikáni and meet with the K'tunaxa to encourage them to come to trade at the posts on the Saskatchewan. Fidler traveled with the Piikáni to the Porcupine Hills of southwestern Alberta, where he spent the months of December and January with the Piikáni in camps along the Highwood and its tributaries above today's community of High River. In late December, he traveled south behind the Porcupine Hills to the Oldman River, where he met the K'tunaxa west of the Gap. It was during this trip that he saw Chief Mountain (see "Mountians" section in "Piikáni Ethnography" Chapter) (Fidler 1793).

In 1800-1801, the two companies attempted to reestablish the trade on the South Saskatchewan, building new establishments at South Branch House, located near today's settlement of Batoche, and Chesterfield House, at the forks of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan rivers. South Branch House had opened in 1786, and was burned by the Háninin in 1794. A year earlier, they had burned

Manchester House on the North Saskatchewan. Chesterfield House was abandoned due to Siksiká and Háninin hostility in 1803 (Johnson 1967). South Branch House also closed.

The two houses at today's Rocky Mountain House remained the southernmost posts on the edge of Nitsitapii and Háninin territory. The tribes, particularly the Piikáni, were always pressing the traders to construct a post farther south. They complained of the long distance they had to come to trade their furs, which increasingly became the case, and by 1814, it was reported that all the furs in the Saskatchewan District and adjacent northern headwaters of the Missouri had been trapped out.

In 1821, the two companies merged. Edmonton House became the center of operations for the Saskatchewan and Athabasca Districts. The HBC was reluctant to open posts farther south than Rocky Mountain House, which they often closed and reopened due to Piikáni protest (Aima n.d.). Two posts -- a new Chesterfield House known as Bow Fort and Peigan Post -- were briefly opened farther south in the 1820s and 1830s.

### **The Blackfeet and First Contacts with the Americans<sup>4</sup>**

#### ***Early Accounts from St. Louis***

The earliest mention of the "Blackfeet" in documents compiled at St. Louis is in Jean Batiste Truteau's 1796 accounting of the Indian tribes of the Missouri, based on information he obtained during a two-year voyage up the Missouri from St. Louis. Among the tribes listed are the "Black-foot" (Nasatir 1952:383).

The next mention of the "Blackfeet" is in Pierre-Antoine Tabeau's description of the nations of the upper Missouri, compiled from information he received while wintering there. The Pied Noirs are listed as one of the tribes of that region (Abel 1939:161).

Tabeau wintered with the Arikaras in 1804-1805, and met Lewis and Clark in October of 1804 as they were ascending the Missouri. After constructing their winter quarters up stream at the Mandans, they talked with him on occasion over the winter (*ibid.*:41). No doubt some of the information that William Clark used in compiling his "Estimate of Eastern Indians" that winter while at Fort Mandan came from Tabeau.

#### ***William Clark's Estimates of Eastern Indians – 1804 - 1805***

During the winter of 1804-1805, Clark, while at Fort Mandan, following Jefferson's instructions, compiled a variety of data on the Indians, which was obtained from traders and Indians in St. Louis and up the Missouri. He sent this back, along with other information, to President Jefferson in the spring of 1805. Jefferson prepared *A Statistical View of the Indian Nations Inhabiting the Territory of Louisiana and the Countries Adjacent to its Northern and Western Boundaries* based on Clark's report and other journal materials (Moulton 1983b: 334, 386). This *Statistical View* was presented to Congress and published in 1806.

The "Black-foot" Indians are No.51 on Clark's list (*ibid.*: 444). They "rove near the Rock mountains on the East Side on the waters of the Missouries but little known. Those nations being little known the

information is from the Menerres [Mandans]." The best place to construct a post to trade with them is "about the falls of the Missouri."

The Fall Indians also are listed by Clark (No.41), and are said to comprise 260 lodges, 660 warriors, and a total of 2,500 persons. They "rove between the Missouries and askaw or Bad [Bow] river a fork of the Saskashwawan.... they rove as far as the rock mountains" (*ibid.*:434). The best place to trade is "about the falls of the Missouri."

### ***Pre-expeditionary Maps of the Western Interior***

Although Clark's Statistical Description lists only the Blackfeet, the maps available to Clark, and some editions of his pre-expeditionary map, do show other tribes. The first of these is the 1802 edition of Arron Arrowsmith's map entitled "A Map Exhibiting all the New Discoveries in the Interior Parts of North America" (PAM G.3/672/ part 2).

Included in this map are the results of Peter Fidler's Journey from Buckingham House on the North Saskatchewan to the headwaters of the Oldman River in the winter of 1792 - 1793, first published by Arrowsmith in his 1796 edition. Also incorporated in the 1802 edition are the results from maps that a Siksiká elder sketched for him while at Chesterfield House during the winter of 1800 - 1801 (Johnson 1967).

The Blood and Blackfeet on these two editions are shown as being located along the south side of the North Saskatchewan between Edmonton House and Manchester House. The Fall Indians are shown centered on the Red Deer River in the vicinity of today's city of Drumheller. The Piikáni are not shown on these editions, even though Fidler was well acquainted with them, having spent the winter of 1792 - 1793 in their company.

Lewis and Clark had Arrowsmith's 1802 map in their possession during the expedition (Allen 1975). Alexander MacKenzie also used Arrowsmith's information (from his edition of 1796) for his map published with his Journals in 1801 (Lambe 1970). Lewis and Clark may have had MacKenzie's Journal with them (Jackson 1959).

Clark used the Arrowsmith map and Nicholas King's map of 1803, which also drew from Arrowsmith, in drafting his map during the winter of 1805 while at Fort Mandan. The State Department copy (Mouton 1983a: Map No.32a) shows the Blackfeet Indians on the Marias and Milk east of Chief Mountain; another group of Blackfeet Indians on the North Saskatchewan; and the "Peceneaus or Blood Indians" north of the second group of Blackfeet on the north side of the North Saskatchewan. The War Department and the Hague copies show only the two northern groups (*ibid.* No.32b, 32c).

Clark was therefore aware of at least one other group of "Peceneaus or Blood." He might have obtained this information from other maps, for at least one earlier map from Louisiana shows the Peigans. An anonymous Spanish Louisiana map dated around 1797 (Wheat 1957: No.243) shows the "piegan" in the headwaters of the South Saskatchewan; the "sasus" to the north; and the "peidnoire" north of the Tsuu T'ina, south of the North Saskatchewan.

Apparently, Clark was aware that there were three related groups of Blackfeet. His map suggests that he attempted to reconcile his knowledge of groups he heard of that were known as the Peigan and Blackfeet with that on the Arrowsmith map, combining the Peigan and Blood. Clark's confusion also

suggests that he had not read Mackenzie's journals at the time. Had he read them, he would have known that there were three tribes.

### *Meriweather Lewis and the Two Medicine Incident*

The Lewis and Clark expedition departed Fort Mandan in the spring of 1805 with little knowledge of the three tribes of the Nitsitapii or the Háninin. When they met the Lemhi band of Nimi in the headwaters of the Missouri in late August 1805, they learned that the Lemhi perceived themselves to be under the constant threat of attack by the Minitares (Hidatsa) or the Minitares of the Fort de Prairie (Háninin). The Lemhi also called the Háninin the Pahkees.<sup>5</sup>

The Lemhi told Lewis and Clark that in the spring of that year that they had been attacked by the Minitares of Fort De Prairie, "and about 20 of them killed and taken prisoner" (Mouton 1988: 83). To assuage their fears, Lewis told them "that the Minnetares Mandans & Recares of the Missouri had promised us to desist from making war on them & that we would endeavour to find the means of making the Minnetares of fort d Prairie or as they call them Pahkees desist from making war against them also" (*ibid.*:91).

The Hidatsa and Atsina were raiding the Lemhi for slaves, and for horses, because they had an abundant supply of horses. Lewis notes (*ibid.*:121) "notwithstanding the late loss of horses which this people sustained by the Minnetares the stock of the band may be very safely estimated at seven hundred of which they are perhaps about 40 colts and half that number of mules." The theft by the Minitares had occurred that spring. Their "war road" to the Lemhi from the Hidatsa Villages is shown on Clark's map of 1805. Six years earlier, the Lemhi had suffered a major defeat on the Beaverhead at the hands of the Minitares (*ibid.*:168).

The attacks by the Minitares and the other tribes on the Nimi and Salish in the headwaters of the Missouri or west of the continental divide appear to have occurred in the spring of the year, while attacks on the western tribes in the buffalo country farther east occurred when the western tribes ventured eastward to hunt buffalo in the fall and winter. During the return trip, Lewis noted on June 30, while camped with the Nez Perce in the vicinity of Missoula, as well as while traveling east along the Blackfoot River, signs of the Pahkees and the bearfoot (presumably the Blackfoot) Indians recently having been in the area (Mouton 1993:66).

While Lewis observed signs of Indians along the eastern slopes as he traveled north in hopes of reaching the edge of British Territory, it was not until July 26, during his return from Camp Disappointment on Cutbank Creek to the Missouri, that Lewis actually encountered a group of Indians while he was camped in the Two Medicine River Valley, a few miles east of today's Highway 89. Some Indians came into the camp. Lewis visually identified them as the Minitares du Fort de Prairie (Mouton 1993:129) (on what basis, we do not know). Later, Lewis asked them through sign if they were the Minitares of the North. They signed yes. The Indians camped with Lewis's party.

In the ensuing "Two Medicine Incident" the next morning, which arose from the Indian's theft of Lewis's horses and guns, one of the Indians who was about to attack Lewis was shot by Lewis, who presumed he had killed him, and another was knifed and killed by Reuben Field.

Although Lewis still identified them as Minitares on his return to St. Louis that fall (Lewis letter of October 14, 1806, to an unknown correspondent; Johnson 1978:342), by 1809 or earlier the Indians had

become identified as the Blackfeet in popular accounts of this incident. The Indians remained Blackfeet through retellings and later editions of Biddle's Narrative of the Expedition (e.g., Coues 1893).

As it turned out, the Indians were in fact a Piikáni war party. Their tribal identity came to light in the late 1800s, when George Bird Grinnell was told of this incident by his old Piikáni friend Wolf Calf. Wolf Calf was one of the young warriors present at the incident (Wheeler 1904:311-312; see also Bradley 1917 and Rhonda 1984).<sup>6</sup>

### ***Post-expeditionary Maps of the Western Interior***

Lewis and Clarke's Post-Expeditionary Map of 1806 (Mouton 1983a:123), like the 1805 map, shows a group of Blackfeet in the headwaters of the Marias and Milk, and a second group between the Red Deer and North Saskatchewan. Fall Indians are shown in the headwaters of the Bow. The 1814 Lewis and Clark map (*ibid.*: 126), which excludes the British territory, shows the Blackfeet north of the Marias and south of the continental divide between the Missouri and Saskatchewan. This was the first published map of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and it was included with Biddle's History.

Arrowsmith incorporated Lewis' and Clark's information for the Missouri, including their location of the Blackfeet, into his edition of 1814 (PAM G.3/134 part 2). The location of the Blackfeet, Blood, and Fall in the Saskatchewan are the same as in his 1802 edition. Arrowsmith's next edition, published in 1819 (PAM G.4/29), is the first to show the Piikáni. They are located along the edge of the western plains between the Red Deer and the divide between the Saskatchewan and Missouri.

In summary, Clark's *Statistical Description*, published by Congress in 1806, would lead American readers, at that time, as well as later, in 1814, when Biddle's Narrative and Lewis and Clark's map were published, that the only tribe of Indians in the northern headwaters of the Missouri were the Blackfoot or Blackfeet. The assumption that the Indians of the Two Medicine Incident were Blackfeet no doubt contributed significantly to the Blackfeet reputation among American traders in years immediately following the return of Lewis and Clark.

### **Early Descriptions of the Piikáni and Other Tribes, and Their Roles in the Fur Trade**

As the American fur trade expanded up the Missouri and into the Rocky Mountains, Americans encountered groups of Indians -- often hostile -- whom they collectively labeled as the Blackfeet. Rarely did they ever contact the "Blackfeet" in friendly trading situations, or describe or differentiate the tribes. Often these encounters with the "Blackfeet" resulted in the deaths of American or mixed-blood (Iroquois-Québécois) trappers. The "Blackfeet" acquired a reputation among the traders, trappers, journalists, writers, and the American public as the most bloodthirsty, warlike, and white-hating Indians of the northwestern plains and Rocky Mountains.

While "Blackfeet" attitudes and behavior towards the Americans during this time are perceived as collectively negative, their relationships with the English on the Saskatchewan to whom they traded their furs were more amicable. A number of British traders commented on the various tribes and their characteristics during the early decades of the last century. Alexander Henry's accounts compiled between 1809-1812 and the observations of Maximilian's during his visit to Fort MacKenzie in 1832 are the most detailed.<sup>7</sup>

### *Nitsitapii, Tsuu T'ina and Háninin Territory*

In 1810, the five tribes' collective and individual territories, according to Alexander Henry (Coes 1897:524), were:

"The Missouri on the S., the Rocky mountains on the W., and the North Branch of the Saskatchewan on the N., seem to be the boundaries of the foregoing numerous tribes, beyond which all are considered as enemies (*ibid.*:532).

"The tract of land which they call their own at present begins on a line due S. From Fort Vermilion to the South Branch of the Saskatchewan and up that stream to the foot of the Rocky mountains; then goes N. along the mountains until it strikes the N. Branch of the Saskatchewan and down that stream to the Vermilion river. Painted Feather's band of Blackfeet are the most eastern; next to them are the Cold band of Blackfeet; near these again are the Bloods; and the Peigans or Picaneaux dwell along the foot of the mountains.

"The country which the Piegans call their own, and which they have been known to inhabit since their first intercourse with traders on the Saskatchewan is, as I have already observed, along the foot of the Rocky mountains, on Bow river and even as far S. as the Missouri (*ibid.*:723).

"The Big Bellies, or Rapid Indians, are now stationed S. of the Slaves, between the South Branch and the Missouri. Formerly they inhabited the point of land between the North and South branches of the Saskatchewan to the junction of those two streams; from which circumstances, it is supposed they derived the name of Rapid Indians." (*ibid.*:530; their name, however, refers to the Great Falls of the Missouri).

James Bird, factor at Edmonton House, in his 1815 report provides a brief summary of the location of Tsuu T'ina, Kainaa, Háninin, and Piikáni (PAM HBCA B.60/e/1 fol.1-7):

"The Sussew Indians inhabit the country laying between the red Deer and Battle Rivers, from the Rocky Mountain to the Beaver Lake ....

"The Blood Indians reside principally between the Red Deer River and the Bad River from within one hundred miles of the Rocky Mountain to within about the same distance of the conjunction of the Red Deer with the Bad River.

"The Fall indians live principally on the line of the Bad River and to the South of it from within one hundred miles of the Rocky Mountain to the conjunction of the Red Deer River and the Bad River.

"The Muddy River Indians inhabit the Country bordering the Rocky Mountains from the Red Deer River to the Missouri ...."

There was little change in tribal territories over the next few years. In his report on the Bow River Expedition, Francis Heron commented on the tribal territories in 1822 (PAM HBCA B.34/a/4 fol.3):

"The Blackfeet claim as their territories, the country lying between the North and South Branches of the Saskatchewan, next the Stone Indians - The Blood Indians lay claim to the Country Westward of the Blackfeet, between the Bow and Fighting [Battle] Rivers; and the Muddy River, and Fall Inds. in general possess all that extensive country which lies between the Bow River and the Northern Branches of the Missouri."

A significant shift occurred in tribal territories in the next 20 years. Writing in 1855, Alexander Culbertson stated that the Piikáni usually summered around the Three Forks, and wintered about the Sun, frequenting the country in between, particularly the Prickly Pear Valley. The Kaina, Siksiká, and Tsuu T'ina, who were associated with the Siksiká, summered on the Saskatchewan and wintered on the Belly River. The Háninin summered between the Missouri and the Arrow rivers, wintering on the lower Teton and Marias (Bradley 1917:153-154; see also Ewers [1946] for a discussion of the Small Robes band of the Piikáni territory in central and southern Montana in the mid-1800s).

### *Nitsitapii and Háninin Tribal Characteristics*

Henry provides us with some details about the similarities and differences among the Piikáni, Kainaa, Siksiká, and Háninin. In comparing the three tribes, he noted:

"[Of the Siksiká] Painted Feather's band are the most civilized, and well disposed towards us. The Cold band are notoriously a set of audacious villains. The Bloods are still worse, always inclined to mischief and murder. The Piegans are the most numerous and best disposed towards us of all the Indians in the plains. They also kill beaver. The other tribes stand in awe of them, and they have frequently offered their services to quell disturbances made by other tribes."(Coues 1897:530)<sup>8</sup>

### *Piikáni*

The Piikáni were the most important tribe to the traders. Henry elaborates on their characteristics:

"The Piegans, though the same people as the Blackfeet and Bloods, imagine themselves to be a superior race, braver and more virtuous than their own countrymen, whom they always seem to despise for their vicious habits and treacherous conduct. They are proud and haughty, and studiously avoid the company of their allies further than is necessary for their own safety in guarding against their common enemies .... About 20 years ago the Piegans amounted to only 150 tents, so much had smallpox reduced that once numerous tribe; but their numbers are now increasing fast. They have always had the reputation of being more brave and virtuous than any of their neighbours; indeed they are obliged to do so, surrounded as they are by enemies with whom they are always at war.... They are arrogant beggars, whose haughty souls cannot brook the idea of refusal. Aside from this, they resent our supplying the Columbia Indians with arms and ammunition, and have thus become fully as troublesome and turbulent at our houses as any other tribe. Still, they boast of never having murdered one of us, or stolen any of our horses. Whether they will have such forbearance to brag about much longer is doubtful, as they seem likely to commit as many degradations as their neighbours (*ibid.*:722-723). ...They are not so much given to thieving at our houses as the Blackfeet and Bloods (*ibid.*:731).

The Piikáni also have the most horses. "... some of the Blackfeet own 40 or 50 horses. But the Piegans have by far the greatest numbers; I heard of one man who had 300. Those animals are got from their enemies southward, where they are perpetually at war with the Snakes, Flat Heads, and other nations, who have vast herds, and who appear to be a defenceless race: having no firearms, they easily fall a prey to the Slaves, who are tolerably well provided with arms and ammunition" (*ibid.*:526).

James Bird remarks agree with Henry's on the importance of the Piikáni. He noted in his 1815 report (*op.cit.*): " they are reckoned to be the most powerful of all the tribes I have mentioned, they possess many more Horses than their Neighbours."

Henry also noted that the Piikáni killed beaver, in contrast to the other tribes. They were the best beaver hunters. James Bird and Francis Heron concurred. James Bird noted in his 1815 District Report, "their country is richer both in Buffalo and Beaver. The Indians of this tribe bring annually on an average about eight hundred Beaver Skins...." (PAM HBCA B.60/e/1 Edmonton House, Report on District 1815, fol. 1-7). Francis Herron, in his 1818 report stated: "Upon the whole we obtain three fifths of all the Beaver Killed by these numerous tribes, on account of us Commonly having the greatest share of the Muddy River Indians, which tribe bring more Beaver than all the Rest of the Slave tribes inclusively, and about one half of their other furs and provisions" (PAM HBCA B.60/e/3, Edmonton House, Report on District, 1819-1820 fol. 6).

### *Kainaa*

According to Henry: "The Bloods in general bear fully a bad a reputation as the Fall Indians; they are equally vicious, bloodthirsty, and turbulent, but I believe, not so brave. At our forts they are very troublesome, beggarly, difficult to trade with, and always inclined to mischief. They are notorious thieves ...."(Coues 1897:736).

### *Siksiká*

Henry's opinion was that, next to the Piikáni, the Siksiká were the most friendly to the whites. In 1810, they appear not to have hunted many beaver. Henry notes, "the country they inhabit abounds with animals of various kinds; beaver are numerous, but they will not hunt them with any spirit, so that their principal produce is dried provisions.... Smallpox has destroyed great numbers; however, they are still very numerous and increasing fast" (*ibid.*:529-530). "They kill scarcely any good furs; a beaver of their own hunt is seldom found among them; their principle trade is wolves ...."(*ibid.*:541).

### *Háninin*

Henry described the Háninin in some detail:

"The Big Bellies, or Rapid Indians, are now stationed S. of the Slaves, between the South Branch and the Missouri .... Formerly they were very numerous, and much dreaded by the neighbouring nations. But since the smallpox their numbers have diminished very much .... They are a more industrious people, and commonly bring us a good trade in dried provisions, beaver skins, and grizzly bear and buffalo robes .... They are an audacious, turbulent race, and have repeatedly attempted to massacre us (*ibid.*:530-531).

"The Fall Indians ... always had the reputation of a brave and warlike nation-indeed, their turbulent disposition was the principle cause of their abandoning their former lands. They were then very numerous, but the smallpox carried off most of them. They are now augmenting in number very fast, and more so, I believe than any other tribe. I have always observed a greater proportion of young men than among their neighbours. I have not been able to ascertain the exact number, but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents.

"... The Fall Indians are notorious for their vicious and bloodthirsty disposition toward their foes. They are the only nation of Slaves who have actually attacked our establishments on the Saskatchewan... 'the Háninin burned both Manchester and South Branch houses in 1794.' Since then they have thrown off the mask and committed depredations, pillage, and murder wherever opportunity offered. Their cruelty to a party of Iroquois and whites, whom they murdered on Bow river a few years ago, was horrid - cutting the bodies open, tearing out the still quivering hearts, and devouring them with the ferocity of tigers in the presence of our people, whose fate it was to winter in that quarter .... Yet the Fall Indians at our forts, when they perceive we are on our guard, are the most peaceable of any in the country and the easiest people to trade with, nowise troublesome or beggarly .... This principle trade consists of buffalo robes, in dressing which they have a particular method of their own, far superior to that of the other meadow (plains) tribes .... They are more industrious than the Piegans .... (*ibid.*:733-734)."

In summary, it is apparent that of the four tribes, the Piikáni were, during the first decades of nineteenth century, the most friendly tribe to the English; they had more horses, and were better statesmen, less inclined to violence, more reliable, and better beaver hunters.

While varying in response to disease, the populations of these four tribes and their allies, the Tsuu T'ina, were substantial, ranging from 820 tents and some 5,600 people in 1810; to 2,200 tents and 15,400 people in 1821; and some 3,500 tents and over 20,000 people in 1835. The smallpox epidemic of 1837 had reduced the population to 1,250 tents and some 8,800 people in 1840. In contrast to this large body of the Blackfeet are the estimated numbers of their traditional northwestern plains enemies, the Absaroka, who, in 1835, combining both the River and Mountain Crow, amounted to 720 tents, or some 5,000 people.

These population estimates, as well as the cultural characteristics of the four tribes that have been lumped together as the Blackfeet by the Americans, provide us with a perspective for reviewing the Blackfeet and the English and American fur trade in the Upper Missouri during the first three decades of the nineteenth century.

### **The Blackfeet and the Missouri River Traders Initial Encounters -- 1808-1810**

The first fur trading post built on the Yellowstone was Fort Raymond, constructed by Manuel Lisa in the fall of 1807 at the junction of the Big Horn River and the Yellowstone (Oglesby 1963). A party of Blackfeet visited the post while it was under construction (Oglesby 1963:54). These same Blackfeet, on their return to Edmonton House for the winter trade, told James Bird of their visit to the Americans (PAM HBCA B.60/a/7 Entry for Jan. 22 1808):<sup>9</sup>

"These Indians [Twelve Men Fall and Blood Indians who had arrived the day before and traded and left this day] inform us that a party of their young Men who went on a War Expedition last Autumn discovered an American Settlement on the Banks of the Missouri. The Americans they say received them in a very friendly manner, made them presents, and invited them to a general meeting next spring with all the Tribes they have here further to warred with, in order to settle a Peace with them, and for the Purposes of Trade. They tell us that, the Americans promise to sell them a Gun for five Beavers & other Articles in proportion, that they value Buffalo Robes and but add that the Americans have no Spirits the Article first in theirs esteem, and that they delight too much in War to deprive themselves of Enemies by making the Peace proposed."<sup>10</sup>

While the Indians may have given Bird this impression, the presence of American traders in the country of their traditional enemies -- the Crow -- who were trading guns to the Crow in exchange for beaver, in which the country abounded, was no doubt a great irritant to the Nitsitapii and their traditional allies, the Háninin and Tsuu T'ina.

Any chances for peaceful relationships between the "Blackfeet" and the American traders rapidly deteriorated. In the spring of the following year, Lisa sent John Coulter to contact the Indians and bring them to trade (Oglesby 1963:55). While traveling in the company of a party of Crow and Salish in the Upper Yellowstone, they were attacked by the Blackfeet. The Blackfeet were defeated (James 1916).

Later, in the fall of 1808, Coulter and his trapping partner Potts encountered the Blackfeet while in a canoe at the Three Forks of the Missouri. Potts shot an Indian, and was killed in return. Colter was stripped naked and made to run for his life. He successfully escaped, and his description has become one of the legendary mountain man stories (Oglesby 1963: 88).

Entries in the Edmonton House Journals for that winter indicate that the Kaina, Sarci, and Háninin had attacked American houses or parties on the Missouri that fall, killed some Americans, and taken many beaver skins, which they brought to trade with the English.

These initial negative encounters with the Blackfeet did little to dampen the St. Louis traders' enthusiasm and interest in the Missouri headwaters, because it was reported to be exceedingly rich in furs. The Americans returned to the Three Forks in the spring of 1810 under Pierre Menard, and guided by Colter; here they proceeded to both construct a fort and send out trapping parties. Two of these parties were attacked by the Blackfeet, and a number of American and mixed-blood trappers were killed and their bodies mutilated. Colter decided that his luck had run out, and he left the mountains. Menard and most of the party returned eastward later that spring. Reuben Lewis (Meriweather's brother) was a member of Menard's party. He was convinced that the English had put the "Blackfeet" up to making the attacks. Neither Lewis nor any other surviving member of the party had in fact seen or met any Blackfeet.<sup>11</sup>

The last encounter with the "Blackfeet" during 1810 occurred in the fall, just before Andrew Henry, who, with a party of men, had remained behind after Menard's party had left for the east. The plan was that they would leave the fort in the fall to winter with the Nimi and Salish, with the purpose of encouraging the Indians to make war on the Blackfeet. A party of trappers was attacked by some 200 Blackfeet outside the fort. They were repulsed. Twenty Indians and one trapper were killed. After this incident, Henry abandoned the fort and went to winter in the upper Snake River country near today's Henry's Lake.

Accounts of these raids were carried back to the English traders that winter. These accounts indicate that the Blackfeet attacks in the spring were carried out by the Kaina and Háninin, and the attack in the fall by the Piikáni.<sup>12</sup>

As a consequence of these and other events that were transpiring on the Missouri, the Missouri Fur Company did not attempt to reestablish a post at the Three Forks the following year. In the fall of 1812, Lisa opened a post at the Mandan villages. Trapping parties were dispatched to the west. They did not fair well. Some were killed by Crow, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet (Luttig 1964). Vague accounts of such incidents were passed on by the Indians to James Bird at Edmonton House that winter.

Bird was worried about the extent of the American trade in the Upper Missouri. In May 1812, he sent a James Whitway to live with the Piikáni and "acquire certain Intelligence of the Americans on the Missouri River, and across the mountains that we may be able to form some Idea of the effect they may produce on the Trade of this River" (PAM HBCA B.60/a/10). Whitway returned in December, having acquired no information of consequence.

### **The Aftermath of War -- 1813-1821: Fur depletion in the Saskatchewan and the Beginnings of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade**

By the middle of the decade, the beaver had largely been hunted out along the Rockies in the Saskatchewan and northern Missouri drainages. Some Indian bands traveling long distances south to raid discovered a unknown country exceedingly rich in furs. On February 7, 1814, a Kainaa band returned to Edmonton House. Bird reports (PAM HBCA B.60/a/13):

"A band of Blood Indians, thirty men, arrived, they had slept 24 nights on theirs way to the House and now are absolutely in a state of starvation, and seem to have brought nothing of consequence whatever with them. It is astonishing that these Fellows can take the trouble to come such great Distance for the trifles they can receive from us and at the expense of their horses for most of these will inevitably perish before they reach their Tents and yet that they will not make use of the least exertion to kill a few skins. Theirs to render their Journey here beneficial to them. These people in their war excursions last Autumn went to a great Distance south along the Mountain than usual. They found and destroyed a few scattered Tents of a tribe of Indians, that they seem to have had very little previous Knowledge of, who had a few Beavers in their Tents and whose coverings were principally of Beaver. In this country they say the Beaver are as numerous as it is possible to conceive them to be, and this Account is cooborated by Information we have often previously received and the truth of which has long been deemed evident. It is the Beaver which are known to be numerous near the different sources of the Missoure River and to the southwest of them, on which the NWCo place their principal Hopes of Success in their Adventure to the Columbia for it is well known that from this River near to the first large Branch of the Missouri [on both sides the Mountain] very few Beaver now remain and if they succeed in a plan the have formed to bring about a peace between the Indians living along the east and the west borders of the mountains and induce the latter to hunt Beaver, they cannot fail to obtain very great and profitable returns. This however is an object which they cannot hope to speedily to accomplish but in the meantime they will attempt to establish a strong Fort in the mountains and by arming and assisting the Flathead and other tribes endeavour

to curb the incursions of the Indians of the quarter as to admit of the free Canadians & the Flatheads working Beaver at certain seasons."

Sarcis had accompanied the Blood on their war excursion south along the mountains. On April 27, 1814, two young men arrived who:

"... confirm the accounts given by the latter of the abundance of Beaver, and the nature of the clothing of the Indians they killed, and add that they saw many Beaver from the Bears River to the Extent of their Excursions which they say terminated at the third large River south of the Bears River, or nineteen Days Journey each Day perhaps about thirty Miles from the last mentioned River. This is the first Winter that the Susews have past so far to the south, but they now say that Buffalo are so numerous there, and the Beaver so abundant that they may probably hereafter make that their country."

Bird's 1815 Saskatchewan District Report confirms his suspicions (PAM HBCA B.60/e/1 fol.1-7). The Saskatchewan District (which included the headwaters of the Missouri), formerly one of the richest districts, was now "an exhausted country." However, the "beaver are still numerous along the borders of the Rocky Mountain near the southern extremity of the District; but the insolence and ferocity of the Natives who inhabit those parts, together with the state of Warfare in which they always live with the Tribes which inhabit the country south of the Missouri, prevent our procuring any considerable number of them."

The Indians continued to trap far southward during the remaining years of the decade, bringing in beaver to trade at Edmonton House. They had reached the Snake River country and were trapping and raiding the Nimi. In 1819, Donald McKenzie led a brigade of NWC trappers into the Snake from the Columbia and encountered the Blackfeet (in this case Háninin) raiding the Nimi.

Disease also took its toll during these years. In 1819-1820, the Edmonton House journal records that measles had carried away one-third of the Nitsitapii and Háninin who were trading at the fort.

### *Northwest Company Expansion Inland from the Columbia -- 1812-1820*

As one of the consequences of the American loss of the War of 1812, ownership of the American Fur Company's Fort Astoria passed to the Northwest Company. The Northwest Company now had complete control of the Columbia. They planned to expand eastward, establish posts in the Piikáni's territory, and take over their trade from the Hudson's Bay Company. The HBC was concerned. James Bird discusses these developments in his journal in mid-December 1813 (PAM HBCA B.60/a/13):

"In the course of conversation with my Neighbour today he said that in two years the NW Co. would form Establishments in the Muddy River Indian Country by way of the Columbia and effectually cut off that part of the Trade of this River--We must, said he, do something of this kind that we may be enabled to get some of those Beaver of the Missouri so long denied. A plan of this Nature can however be frustrated by forming a settlement near the Mou[n]tain in the South Branch River."

The Northwest Company's plans for their Snake River enterprise progressed slowly. In 1818, Donald Mackenzie built Fort Nez Percés at the junction of the Walla Walla River and the Columbia, as the

company center for developing the interior of the Columbia District. In 1819, he began a post at Reid's River in the upper Snake River Country. It was burned shortly after by the Indians.

The Hudson's Bay Company was well aware of the NWC activities. To counter them, they reopened Acton House, which had been closed since 1813, in the fall of 1819. The Piikáni had continued to complain after its closure that it was a longer journey and a great inconvenience to them to go to Edmonton House to trade.

In 1820, Francis Heron noted that the reestablishment of Acton House "now becomes a necessary measure for the securing of the valuable Beaver trade which is annually procured from the Muddy River Indians, and of which the North West Company have lately made and attempt to deprive us by forming an establishment [Salish House] beyond the Rocky Mountains from the Columbia, within a few days walk of the Muddy River Indian Country for that purpose. But the reestablishing of Acton House will defeat their designs, as that is the Post of all others, at which those Indians as well as the Fall Indians have the strongest inclination to trade" (PAM HBCA B.60/e/3, Edmonton House, Report on District 1819-1820, fol.6).

### *The Americans Return to the Missouri Headwaters -- 1822-1823*

In the early 1820s, two American enterprises attempted to reestablish the trade in Nitsitapii and Háninin territory on the Missouri Headwaters. Both met with failure.

#### *The Jones / Immell Massacre*

The Missouri River Fur Company's initial attempt to establish itself on the Upper Missouri ended in 1812, with the abandonment of Fort Manuel at the Mandan Villages. In 1819, Manuel Lisa reorganized the Missouri River Fur Company. He brought in new partners, and once again planned a venture in the rich fur country of the upper Yellowstone and Missouri headwaters. Lisa died in 1820, before he could bring his plans to fruition. Joshua Pilcher, one of Lisa's new partners, took charge (Sunder 1968).

In 1821, Pilcher with a large group of trappers, established a new post, which he named Fort Benton at the junction of the Big Horn and the Yellowstone. By 1822, 300 men were trapping in the area; \$25,000-worth of furs were sent to market in the fall of 1822. During the winter, 13 men deserted Fort Benton heading north to winter on the Musselshell. There, four men were killed by the "Blackfeet." The rest lost their outfit (Morgan 1952:63, 382, footnote 9).

In the spring of 1823, a group of 30 men led by Robert Jones and Michael Immel, who had wintered at Fort Benton, went west to the Three Forks under the instructions of Pilcher "to obtain a friendly interview with the Blackfeet Indians ... and to impress them with the friendly disposition of American citizens towards them" (cited in Sunder 1968:40). On their way down from hunting up the Jefferson River, they met a party of 38 Blackfeet, led by a chief carrying a letter from the British attesting to his good character. The Indians seemed receptive to the establishment of a post at this location. They camped together for the night.

Jones and Immell were suspicious of the Blackfeet and moved east, away from the Indians with all possible expedition. On May 31, near the Pryor's Fork of the Yellowstone, a large "Blackfeet" war party

ambushed them. Seven of the party, including Jones and Immel, died. Four others were wounded, and their traps, pack horses, and pelts, valued between \$15,000 and \$16,000 were taken. The survivors fled across the Yellowstone to a Crow village.

The traders at Fort Edmonton were told of the events surrounding the James and Imell massacre by the Piikáni. In November 1823, Iron Shirt, a well-known and respected leader of a band of the Piikáni friendly to the English, reported:

"He states, that last spring, he started with a party of 33 Peigans, in order to make War upon some of the nations of the borders of the Rocky Mountains, that on their way thither, they fell in with 30 tents of Americans, in some of which lodged 2, and in others 3 men per tent. That they were tenting on the banks of a River, that discharges itself into the Missouri, that on the first appearance of the Piegans, the Americans shewed some signs of hostilities towards them, but the Iron Shirt himself, presenting to them a note he had some time before received from Mr. Rowand was with his party, well received by them, and after giving him some small presents, and the note we have inserted in the opposite page [32] as a kind of recommendation to the rest of these Traders, in case he Should happen to see them; departed with his party from thence, and returned to his camp, without meeting or falling in with any person on their way homewards. - Shortly after, a war party of Blood Indians starts off, towards the same direction, and fell in with the same party of Americans, and no doubt, from the peaceable behaviour of the Peigans they had met not long before seen, made them more unguarded with the Blood Indians, that they should have been. - As the Blood Indians, approached the American Camp, a stout & corpulent person, - whom they considered to be the chief - came forth from thence, bearing a flag in his hand to meet them, which plainly shewed his pacific intention, and which is generally considered as an emblem of peace by all the Savage tribes, with whom we have any dealings - But the quantity and quality of the booty that presented itself to their view, laid their virtue on the present occasion asleep, & tempted them barbarously to murder, without any provocation being offered them; therefore, as soon as he was within Shot they fired and killed him, a general Slaughter ensued, where thirteen Americans had fallen, the rest took to flight, leaving the greatest part of their baggage, and horses behind, which the Blood Indians seized & carried off to their Camp - They have taken 50 horses 28 mules & a considerable number of Beavers" (cited in Nasatir 1939:101-102).

William Gordon, one of the survivors, blamed the Blackfeet attack on "the British traders, who have most probably instigated them to commit this outrage," demanding that something be done about British posts on American soil. Pilcher also blamed the British (*ibid.*:41). Pilcher abandoned his attempt to establish a trade in the headwaters, which, based on information he had received from the survivors, was almost trapped out of beaver. In 1830, the Missouri Fur Company folded.

The furs, with marked fur bales, also showed up at Fort Edmonton that fall. They were brought in by a band of Kaina to trade. They claimed that they had found them abandoned. The English traders, while suspicious, purchased the bales. An international incident almost erupted over the bales and the Jones and Immel massacre (Nasatir 1939). Pilcher claimed compensation for his loss from the HBC, but he never received it.

### *Andrew Henry and William Ashley's Outfit*

Andrew Henry also tried his hand again at trade on the Upper Missouri. In 1822, he joined William H. Ashley to assemble an outfit in St. Louis (later to be known as the Rocky Mountain Fur Company). They hoped to establish a post at either the Three Forks or the Great Falls for trading with the Blackfeet -- a goal that they hoped to achieve by the fall of 1822.

Henry's objective was thwarted on the way up river in the summer of 1822, when the party encountered 300 Assiniboine some 100 miles above the Mandan villages, who stole 24 horses and equipment. The loss of the horses made it impossible for Henry to make it to the Three Forks in time for the fall hunt, and Henry decided to overwinter at the mouth of the Yellowstone, where he built Fort Henry (White and Gowans 1993).

Henry organized two major trapping parties for that winter. He led one party of 21 men up stream in canoes and a keelboat to the mouth of the Milk River. The other party went up the Yellowstone in canoes towards the Powder River. Henry returned to Fort Henry with eight men after the fall hunt. The trappers overwintered on the Musselshell.

In the early spring, Henry ascended the Missouri to take charge of the overwintering party. On April 5, the day after the ice went out on the Missouri, they were visited by a party of Indians. The next day, they left in canoes for the Judith River. Henry and his party of 11 men continued up river past the Great Falls. Sometime in April, four of his horses were stolen by Indians, and on May 4, he was attacked by Blackfeet 10 to 15 miles above the mouth of the Smith River. Four men were killed. Henry retreated, burying 172 traps, which he hoped to recover later, and abandoning 30 more traps in the river. The "Blackfeet" took four rifles with pouches and ammunition.

Henry returned to Fort Henry to await the arrival of Ashley, who had set out from St. Louis with another 100 men in two keelboats. Ashley's party ran into trouble with the Arikara, and was unable to proceed further up river. Henry left 20 men at Fort Henry, and with some 50 men went down stream in canoes to meet Ashley. Because the Three Forks was not as rich in furs as they had expected, they revised their plans for the coming year, and sent out two trapping expeditions, one to the tributaries of the Yellowstone and another across the mountains to the headwaters of the Columbia (*ibid.*:60).

Later that year, Henry returned overland to close Fort Henry. He closed the fort and ascended the Yellowstone, where he constructed a fort to trade with the Crow at the mouth of the Bighorn. Sometime after Henry had abandoned Fort Henry, it was visited by a Blackfeet war party, which found and dug up the graves of Carpenter and Fink -- trappers who had wintered on the Musselshell. Fink had murdered Carpenter, and was in turn later murdered by Talbot, a friend of Carpenter's (Morgan 1952:48-49). The "Blackfeet" planned to strip the bodies of clothing, but found them in such a putrid state that they left them.

In 1823, Henry overwintered at Fort Henry, sending various trapping parties up the tributaries of the Yellowstone. Henry joined the parties in the mountains for the spring hunt, which was highly successful. Ashley and Henry decided to refocus their operations on the fur-rich mountain reaches drained by the Green, Snake, Wind, and Bear rivers. Rather than relying on fixed posts and trading with the Indians, they would use free trappers who would sell their furs at an annual trading fair or rendezvous. Here, the Americans again ran into the Blackfeet who had already been hunting beaver there for some 10 years. General Ashley's outfit and other parties continued to have violent encounters

with the Blackfeet in the years that followed of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade.<sup>13</sup>

The Indians that Henry met up with on the Missouri the previous year included both the Piikáni and Háninin. In his report to Edmonton House, Iron Shirt also mentioned another group of Americans, which the Piikáni met that year.

"The Iron Shirt further states, - That another party of Americans, since this affair had taken place between them and the Blood Indians, was discovered by a few Peigans, going with loaded horses along the banks of the Missouri, for the purpose as he imagines of trading with the Crow Mountain Indians, that one of the principal men of the Peigans, who had fallen in with this party, was by them clothed, giving him and his companions, small presents, such as Tobacco & ammunition; at the same time making them understand, should any of their Tribe go thither with their Beavers, they would well be paid and rewarded for their trouble" (Nasatir 1939:101-102).

The attack on Henry's party on the Smith River appears to have been perpetrated by the Háninin. The 1824-1825 Saskatchewan District Report notes that a Kaina and Atsina war party went south in the summer of 1824 hoping to repeat their successes of the preceding summer when they attacked the American trappers. They did not find any Americans. However, they encountered a large Mountain Crow party, and killed a 170 of them (PAM HBCA B.60/e/8 Report on District 1824-1825, fol.1). Because it was the Kaina who attacked Jones and Immel, presumably it was a Háninin war party that attacked Henry's party.

### **The Piikáni, Hudson's Bay Company and American Fur Company – 1823-1832**

Hudson's Bay Company Plans and Expeditions to the Missouri -- 1822/23: At the same time as the St.Louis traders were attempting to establish posts on the Upper Missouri, the Hudson's Bay Company, now amalgamated with the Northwest Company decided to establish posts farther south in Nitsitapii territory, not to counter the Americans as is generally supposed, for there is no mention of this in the documents, but rather to exploit the beaver.<sup>14</sup>

The company had received reports, later proved to be false, of rich beaver grounds in the headwaters of the South Saskatchewan and northern tributaries of the Missouri. In 1822, they conceived a plan to switch the chain of posts from the North to the South Saskatchewan. To this end, they sent a large expedition of men, under the direction of Donald McKenzie, to establish a post known as "Bow Fort" at the old site of Chesterfield House at the junction of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan, as well as to explore the country to the south and west. The post was very popular with the Indians, particularly the Siksiká and Háninin. The Company abandoned the new post the next spring, officially due to "poor" returns, even though some 1,100 beaver, 400 bags of pemmican, and an unspecified number of buffalo robes were obtained in trade.

The company planned an expedition from Bow Fort, under Donald McKenzie, to the Missouri River country to evaluate its beaver resources. McKenzie brought together an assembly of 400 chiefs and warriors to explain the purpose of his expedition and to assure them that he was not going to assist their Indian and American enemies (PAM HBCA B.34/a/4, 15 October 1822), a rumour which had been circulating in the Indian encampment. A few days later, McKenzie left for the Missouri. He was turned back by a hostile group of 800 Háninin a few days out of Bow Fort.

Two more expeditions were sent out. One in October explored the upper reaches of the Bow and Oldman. A third party later that winter traveled over to the Sweetgrass Hills and up the Marias. In contrast to the reports the HBC had received, both parties reported seeing little or no beaver during their trips -- an understandable situation, because it had been only eight years since James Bird reported that the country was trapped out.

### *The Piikáni and the Re-opening of Rocky Mountain House*

Rocky Mountain House had once again been closed by the HBC in the spring of 1823, and it would not reopen until 1825. The Piikáni again had to travel to Edmonton House. The Piikáni complained to the traders that they had to travel far, and that the company should have a house for them. Many of the Piikáni, rather than travelling to Edmonton House as the traders expected them to, took their furs to trade at Salish House. Some even sold their furs to the Americans of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade outfits then wintering in the Flathead Valley.

To placate the Piikáni, the company sent three men, including Hugh Monroe, to winter with them in 1823, and induce them to come to trade, as well as to acquire information on the Rocky Mountain country far to the south, where they and the Americans were trapping. The party traveled with the Small Robes band led by Lone Walker, said to have been chief of all the Piikáni. They were unsuccessful in convincing the Piikáni, most of whom were wintering on the Marias, to come north the next spring.

In 1825, John Rowand, chief trader at Edmonton House, sent another party of 10 freemen to winter with the Piikáni, who were trapping at that time in the headwaters of the Missouri and Snake. Late in June 1825, Peter Skene Ogden met some 150 Piikáni in 40 lodges accompanied by two of the freemen on their way to trade their catch at Salish House (Rich 1950). Ogden prevailed on them to return to Edmonton House to trade their furs. Some did; others traded with Ogden. The freemen who returned said the beaver were not as plentiful as they had been led to believe. They also noted that they were continually harassed by Kaina on their return trip.

To counter the Piikáni trade with Salish House and American parties who were wintering in the Flathead Valley (Sunder 1959), Rocky Mountain House was reopened in the fall of 1825. Over the following three years, it enjoyed a relatively brisk trade, primarily with the Piikáni. However, by the fall of 1829 the trade with the Piikáni was once again falling off.

In 1829, all 400 lodges of the Háninin, along with 30 Kaina, 30 Siksiká, and 20 Piikáni lodges, left the Saskatchewan country to visit the Arapaho and engage in the ceremonial transfer of the Arapaho's and Háninin's most sacred medicine pipe. This pipe was alternately kept by the Háninin and the Arapaho for a specified number of years and then transferred to the other tribe. While returning from their visit with their Arapaho kin, some members of this party were killed by the American traders and trappers in the Battle of Pierre Hole in the summer of 1832 (Todd 1961; Gowan 1985).

### *The American Fur Company and Fort Peigan -- 1832*

In the late 1820s, the Americans once again began to move into the Missouri headwaters. In 1828, the American Fur Company was formed out of the consolidation of several independent and rival firms. The American Fur Company (AFC), utilizing steamboats for transportation on the Missouri,

approached the trade with the Blackfeet along the lines established many years earlier in the fur trade on the Saskatchewan.

The AFC was staffed largely with former Northwest and Hudson's Bay Company men, some of whom had considerable experience with the Blackfeet in the Saskatchewan. Rather than sending trappers into Blackfeet territory to compete with the Blackfeet in taking Beaver, like the Hudson's Bay Company, the American Fur Company encouraged the Blackfeet to trap beaver and bring them to trade at the company's posts on the Missouri, which, with their transportation advantage, could offer them a better rate than the Hudson's Bay Company could on the Saskatchewan. The American Fur Company was therefore able to avoid the continuing conflicts that the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and the HBC Snake River Expeditions had with the "Blackfeet" during the late 1820s and 1830s in the headwaters of the Missouri and Snake.

The American advance up the Missouri into Blackfeet territory began with the establishment of a post at the mouth of the Yellowstone in 1828 called Fort Floyd, and renamed Fort Union two years later. Beginning in 1829, they sent parties to the Missouri headwaters and Snake country to supply the free trappers of their company who were operating there. Clashes occurred with the Blackfeet. In 1830, Kenneth MacKenzie sent Jacques Berger, a freeman released by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1822 and well-acquainted with the Blackfeet, to negotiate with them (Bradley 1900; Larpenteur 1989).

Berger had been in Blackfeet Country with the Americans in earlier years. In 1827, Berger and another freeman, Brunals, were seen by Siksiká, accompanied by Americans interceding on the Americans' behalf with the Piikáni near the Rockies. Three Siksiká later reported to Rowand at Edmonton House:

"... last summer near the R. Mountains they saw a Party of American Trappers and that two freemen Berger and Brunals have joined them and used their endeavours to entice the Piegiens who were then there to follow their example by representing the favourable offers which were advanced and by telling them that the Americans had made Peace with all the Indians except them, and were desirous of likewise becoming their friends and trade with them that they would never have cause to regret the change but on the contrary lament their not having done so sooner (PAM HBCA B.60/a/25 17 September 1827)."

In the fall of 1830, Berger ascended the Missouri, the Marias, and Badger Creek to near the creek's headwaters in the Rockies. There he met the Piikáni (according to Schultz (1918) this was a mixed camp of Piikáni, Kainaa, and Siksiká). He traveled to a winter encampment of the three tribes on the Sun River and wintered with them. In the spring of 1831, he persuaded some of the principal men to accompany him to Fort Union, where they were received with great hospitality. Some were painted by George Catlin (1841), who was there at the time.

Kenneth McKenzie convinced the Piikáni that a post in their lands would be of great advantage to them. In the fall of 1831, McKenzie sent James Kipp with 75 men and a keelboat up river to the mouth of the Marias, where they built a fort they called Fort Peigan. Fort Peigan was burned the following spring by the Blackfeet after Kipp had abandoned it. It was rebuilt by the following fall and named Fort McKenzie.

The establishment of Fort Peigan ended the need for the Nitsitapii and the Háninin (most of whom were still at that time south visiting the Arapaho) to travel to Rocky Mountain House to trade.

According to Schultz, the Piikáni were overjoyed:

"What a great thing it was for us, we all said, that a white trader had settled right in the middle of our hunting-ground for the purpose of supplying all our needs (1918:121)."

### *Hudson's Bay Company Response, and the Peigan Post on the Bow River – 1832*

The Piikáni immediately shifted most of their trade to Fort Peigan, severely impacting the trade at Rocky Mountain House, which was once the post with the best returns on the Saskatchewan. In the first 10 days of operation in the fall of 1831, Fort Peigan traded 2,400 beaver skins, mostly from the Piikáni (Chittleden 1902: Vol.1:335).

To counter the Americans' establishment of Fort Peigan, the Hudson's Bay Company built a post on the Bow River. John Rowand, factor at Edmonton House, set out in the spring of 1832 on an expedition to Piikáni country:

"... for the purpose of ascertaining the cause of the Piegans having left off trading with us as usual, and in order to get them back to their old station, from which, it is supposed, they have been drawn away by the persuasions of James Bird, Jr. who has deserted the service ...." (PAM HBCA B.60/a/27 4 April 1832) (Bird had joined the American Fur Company).

Rowand returned in August, leaving Henry Fisher with nine men to build "Peigan Post" on the upper reaches of the Bow River, just a few kilometers east of the Rocky Mountain front.

Peigan Post was designed to draw in the Piikáni. It could not, however, compete against Fort McKenzie in location or prices. Only 40 Piikáni lodges visited the post in the fall of 1832. They brought 80 beavers. They had not previously traded at Fort Peigan (PAM HBCA A D.5/4 fol.34, George Simpson, Correspondence Inward 1832-33, Letter 6, January 1833; James E. Harriot, Peigan Post, to Governor, Chief Factors and Chief Traders. Peigan Post closed for the winter, reopening the following August, 1833.

The HBC continued to pursue Piikáni trade. In the spring of 1833, Hugh Monroe, married by then into the Small Robes band, along with five company men, went to summer with the Piikáni. According to Colin Fraser, the head of the company men, the Piikáni camp kept hunting buffalo instead of trapping beaver. A war party had crossed the Rockies and killed 44 Salish and two whites, returning with many horses ( PAM HBCA D.4/1 fol.61, George Simpson, Correspondence Book Inward 1833-34; Letter, 10 January 1834, John Rowand, Edmonton, to Governor, Chief Factors and Chief Traders, fol. 61).

The journals from Peigan Post and Edmonton House for the summer and late fall of 1833 indicate that most of the Nitsitapii trade had been drawn to the Missouri (Arima, n.d.:243). Edmonton House reported that all the Siksiká were traveling to the Missouri. At Peigan Post, James Bird, Jr., who had rejoined the company, arrived with four Piikáni on September 19 with 20 beaver skins. According to Bird, they had already traded their summer catch to the Americans before he had reached them in mid-August.

Bird left the post on September 23 with four company men to seek out the Piikáni and their beaver, and

bring them back to trade. The men returned in mid-October, because they turned back at the first Piikáni camp due to disturbances to south as a result of the killing by the Kainaa, of Doucette, the leader of the American Fur Company's Kootenai expedition.<sup>15</sup> Bird continued on with two natives, a Piikáni and a Ojibwa. He met the Piikáni, and had them under way to Peigan Post, only to have the Americans intercept them with gifts. They also ran into trouble on the Bear (Marias) River, where Bird's men were killed, and most of the trade goods were taken.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the nearby presence of Fort Peigan, the Piikáni continued to lobby the Hudson's Bay Company for a post closer to their preferred wintering grounds. Perhaps they recalled the days before the monopoly, of competition between the HBC and NWC, when prices were better. The Piikáni asked Bird for a post to be built at Chief Mountain. Bird commented on his return to Edmonton:

"There are poor hopes of getting Peagans as yet, and they have nothing for one thing. All their call is for a fort at the Chief Mountain; if the H.Bay Company would built at the Chief Mountain, the next year we should get the greatest part of the Peagans they are afraid of the Bloods and of the Crees and they think the Journey too far to Bow River; their horses being very poor; they say that they don't like to go because they have no beaver (PAM HBCA B.60/a/28 10 Oct. 1833)."

John Rowand considered a post at this location to be impractical, because it would not pay expenses incurred due to the large number of men required for safety, and the high transportation costs overland (Letter, 10 January 1834, John Rowand, Edmonton House, to Governor, Chief Factors and Chief traders). Had the company built and maintained a post at Chief Mountain, the subsequent course of history for the Piikáni and the region would have changed significantly.

The trade at Piegan Post that fall and winter was relatively light. Various groups of the Kainaa, Siksiká, and Piikáni visited the post. No Háninin did, presumably because they were still far to the south, returning from their visit to the Arapaho. Few beaver were traded. In the early part of December, a Piikáni band of 70 men led by Old Head arrived, trading 21 beaver, 80 buffalo robes, 260 wolves, 150 kit foxes, five red foxes, and six bears (PAM HBCA B.2 1/a/1 8-11 December 1833).

Piegan Post closed in January 1834, never to reopen. Chief trader Harriot returned to Rocky Mountain House. The decline in Piikáni trade is reflected in the Edmonton House entry for April 24, 1834:

"... the returns from that quarter [Rocky Mountain House] and the Peagan post are the worst that have ever been made the number of Beaver from the Peagans does not exceed one hundred (PAM HBCA B.60/9/28)."

### *The Rise of the Robe Trade on the Upper Missouri -- 1833-1850*

Not only were the Piikáni switching their trade to Fort Peigan, but the beaver were most definitely on the decline in the Rocky Mountains. At Fort McKenzie, the trade during the 1833-1834 season was only fair. Only 20 packs of beaver and 200 packs of buffalo robes were taken down river in the spring.

In 1834, James Bird, Jr., reported at Fort Edmonton that the Piikáni had killed very few beaver that summer and the country was very poor. Bird accused the American trappers from the Rockies of destroying the beaver [Letter, 7 January 1835, John Rowand, Edmonton to Governor Simpson, Chief Factors and Chief Traders (PAM HBCA)].

The trappers in the headwaters of the Missouri and Snake also noted this decline (Ferris 1940:287), as did the American Fur Company. Choteau and McKenzie saw that the robe trade would be the mainstay of the Missouri trade with the Blackfeet in the future. They knew that the Hudson's Bay Company could not compete, and took steps to further secure the Blackfeet trade.

Fort McKenzie was the single most productive trading site on the Upper Missouri. In the mid-1830s, the Blackfeet traded upward of a 1,000 packs of robes, and many small skins, furs, and animal byproducts each year. Any attempt by the Americans to trap in "Blackfeet" territory was violently opposed. In 1833, Jacob Astor advised Choteau to suspend the company's trapping operations in the Missouri Headwaters (Wishart 1979:62). However, Choteau was committed, and continued to support the trappers. Trapping continued, and the robe trade continued to expand at Fort McKenzie. By 1841, the post was shipping 21,000 robes annually down river.

The beaver were saved from total extinction in the Upper Missouri only because the demand for pelts in Europe drastically decreased after 1833. The bottom fell out of the market as European fashions shifted toward silk rather than felted beaver hats.

In the late 1830s, smallpox once again came among the Indian People of the Upper Missouri and Saskatchewan. Brought up-stream in 1837 on trade goods carried by the American Fur Company steamboat, the *St. Peters*, the disease quickly spread among the tribes. Alexander Culbertson, who had replaced McKenzie as the chief trader at Fort Union, tried in vain to prevent the Piikáni and Kaina from handling the goods when they arrived at Fort McKenzie that summer. They insisted on obtaining the weapons he had promised them, which they needed for their raids against the Crow, Salish, and Pend d'Oreille. Smallpox raged among them all that fall. The Piikáni and Kaina also contracted it from Kaina who had been trading at Edmonton House, where the disease had also erupted. Over half of the people died. Some Piikáni believed that the epidemic had been sent to them as retribution for their hostility toward the Americans (*ibid.*:68).

The commercial success of Fort McKenzie was sharply curtailed in the early 1840s when Francis A. Chardon took over command of the post in 1843. Chardon, a highly capable trader, was a hot-headed, hard-drinking Frenchman, who left a trail of tension behind him as he moved from post to post (Sunder 1965:61). He did not understand the Indians, and when one of his men was killed by a Blackfeet in January 1844, he planned revenge, with another company employee, Alexander Harvey, on the next party of Blackfeet who would come to the fort. A party of Piikáni arrived in February. Chardon and Harvey opened fire on them with guns and cannon from the fort. At least six Piikáni were killed and a number wounded. The survivors fled, leaving behind many horses, robes, and arms. According to the story, Chardon and Harvey scalped some of the Piikáni. They held a drunken scalp dance that night in the fort.

The Piikáni did not return to Fort McKenzie. Chardon selected a new site for a post at the mouth of the Judith, where he built a rush stockade, and he burned Fort McKenzie in the spring and moved its inventory to the new post, which he christened Fort Chardon. The Blackfeet did not come to trade. They harassed all the white traders they encountered entering their territory that year. The company was anxious to regain the Blackfeet's trade, and replaced Chardon with Culbertson who was highly respected by the Blackfeet and had a Piikáni wife. Culbertson, arrived in the summer of 1845, and he dispatched Chardon down stream, and proceeded to build a new post, which he called the Fort of the Blackfeet (also known as Fort Lewis), on the south bank of the Missouri above old Fort McKenzie. Culbertson had moved in by the spring of 1846, burning Fort Chardon behind him.

Fort Lewis was not in a good location. There was no timber in the vicinity, and it was on the wrong side of the river for the Blackfeet. Culbertson chose a new location on the north bank a few miles down stream; dismantled Fort Lewis in the spring of 1847; floated the materials down stream; and built the old fort on a new site. The new fort was first known as Fort Lewis or Fort Clay, but within a year the company settled on Fort Benton, which it was officially christened on Christmas of 1850.

## **The Piikáni and the Blackfeet Reservation -- The Last 150 Years <sup>17</sup>**

### *The Early Years -- 1855-1874*

With the establishment of Fort Benton in 1847, the Americans came to dominate the trade with the "Blackfeet" in the Upper Missouri and Saskatchewan. The Hudson's Bay Company could no longer afford to compete with the better prices offered by the American traders for the few remaining Piikáni furs. Buffalo robes were of even less interest to the Hudson's Bay because of the necessary high costs of transporting these bulky items down stream from the Upper Saskatchewan. Besides, the Metis hide and meat hunters out of the Red River Settlement were keeping the company very well supplied. Robes were the focus of the American trade. Their significance and value continued to increase in the late 1840s. Between 80,000 and 100,000 buffalo robes and hides were shipped down river from Fort Benton in each year.

### *The Lame Bull Treaty of 1855*

It was not until 1855 - 52 years after the Louisiana Purchase - that the government of the United States made a formal treaty of peace with the Nitsitapii and other tribes of the region. Known as the Lame Bull Treaty, it was preceded by the Treaty of Fort Laramie of 1851, which neither the Nitsitapii nor the Háninin were party to.

Eastern Americans were agitating for a railroad to the Pacific. In 1853, Congress appropriated \$150,000 for field surveys and explorations. The northern route would pass through "Blackfeet" country. Exploration of this route was led by Isaac I. Stevens, then the newly appointed Governor of Washington Territory and ex officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs. In the fall of 1853, Stevens met and addressed some 30 leaders of the three tribes at Fort Benton, stressing that a council should be held the next summer and they should make peace with their enemies.

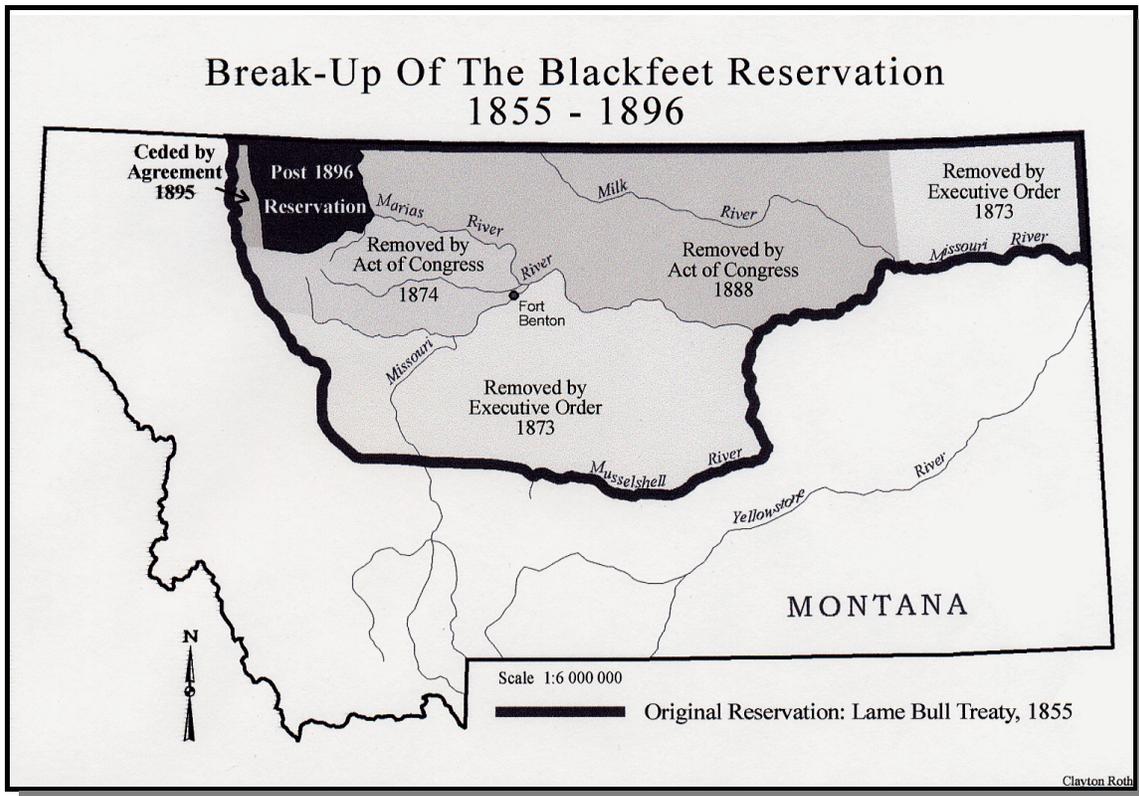
Stevens pressed the necessity of making treaties with the "Blackfeet" and other tribes with the Indian Department. He left James Doty behind to collect information on the "Blackfeet" and their country and impress on them the need for a council and making peace. Stevens' and Doty's words had little influence, and "Blackfeet" raids on the Crows, Flathead, and Shoshoni to the south and west continued throughout that winter.

The 1854 summer council was postponed because of Stevens' duties west of the Rockies. On his way east to the council in 1855, Stevens negotiated the Hell Gate Treaty with the Salish and the Pend d'Oreille. At the Fort Benton council were not only representatives of the Piikáni, Siksiká, Kainaa, and

Háninin, but also delegations from the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, and Nez Perce tribes. Among the

articles of the treaty were the definition of the exclusive territory of the "Blackfeet" north of the Musselshell and Missouri (Map 6) and "common hunting grounds" for the tribes to the south.

The first Indian agent, a Major Hatch, established an agency at Fort Benton. He payed out the first annuities to the tribes in fall of 1856. Hatch was replaced by Major Vaughn in 1857; he established an Indian farm, which was guaranteed under treaty, on the Sun River in 1858. The Indians showed no interest.



Map 6: The break-up of the Blackfeet Reservation 1855-1896.

### *The "Blackfeet War" of the Late 1860s*

In 1860, the first steamboat reached Fort Benton, ushering in a new era for the Upper Missouri. Major changes began in the traditional Piikáni lands and hunting territories in the Upper Missouri. Whites became increasingly common in Montana Territory, with the influx of gold-miners beginning in 1862 at Bannock, the construction of the Mullen Road from Fort Benton to Walla-Walla in 1863, and the organization of Montana as a territory in 1864. White settlement was a disturbing fact of life for the Indians.

The 1860s were a time of escalating unrest for the Blackfeet. With the ever-increasing numbers of white men and activity in their traditional territories, encounters were inevitable. In April 1865, a group of

Kaina stole some 40 horses from whites at Fort Benton. A month later a group of whites attacked a party of Kaina at Fort Benton, killing three Indians. Two days later, a Kaina war party led by Calf Shirt discovered 10 woodcutters 10 miles above Benton, and killed them all. The Governor of Montana Territory -- Edgerton -- was prepared to call out the troops (volunteers) to seek retribution. However, the Kainaa returned north of the international boundary. Edgerton expressed the opinion, shared with most if not all Montanans, that the all-Indian title within the territory should be extinguished at an early date (Ewers 1958:239).

Montanans continued to press the United States Government to open up areas of the Blackfeet Reservation for settlement. In 1865, then-agent Upson returned west, with instructions to negotiate a treaty with the Piikáni and Háninin to cede the lands south of the Teton, which he did. The treaty was submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington but was never ratified, because war parties of Piikáni and Kainaa had killed several miners and traders in the interim.

In the following winter, a reported gold discovery in the Sun River country brought a flood of miners. Many starved, and were helped by friendly Piikáni. A settler on the Sun -- John Morgan -- who hated Indians, assisted by some prospectors, killed four friendly Piikáni who had come to visit him. This event was reported to the Piikáni. In April of the following year, a large revenge party of Piikáni attacked the Sun River farm, burning the buildings and killing one of the two attendants. They also attacked a Jesuit Mission on the Sun, which had given shelter to Morgan, killing the cattle herder and several cattle. The Jesuits retired west of the Rockies from the so called "Blackfeet War."

White settlers' repeated requests for protection from Indian raids resulted in the establishment of Camp Cooke in the fall of 1866 at the mouth of the Judith by a battalion of the Thirteenth Infantry. This did not prevent raids on whites by small war parties. In April 1867, John Bozeman was killed. Several other ranchers died the following winter. The presence of Camp Cook on their territory, as well as the failure of the annuities to arrive in these years, increased Blackfeet resentment against whites.

There was considerable confusion among whites and Indians over the status of the lands ceded in the 1865 treaty and the annuities that had failed to arrive. To remedy this situation, the government sent William J. Cullen to make another treaty with the Piikáni in September 1868. This treaty was much the same as the earlier treaty. It, too, was never ratified. The Háninin were treated separately in this treaty.

In 1869, the Blackfeet Agency moved from Fort Benton to the Teton River just outside of today's community of Choteau -- a location where it was hoped the agent would have more control over affairs than he did at Fort Benton, where a number of Blackfeet had been killed by whites in the streets and bars. In the summer of 1869, two Piikáni were shot down in broad daylight on the street in revenge for the killing of two cattle herders by Indians a few days earlier. The Piikáni were enraged. Small war parties attacked freighters and descended on ranches, running off horses and killing whites. Prominent among the raiders were young men from the Piikáni band led by Mountain Chief. A smallpox epidemic struck in the fall of 1869, and many Piikáni died.

### *The Massacre on the Marias -- January 1870*

The incident that led directly to the Massacre on the Marias of January 23, 1870, happened on August 17, 1869, at Malcolm Clark's Ranch, at the mouth of Prickly Pear Canyon, 25 miles from Helena. Malcolm Clark was a former trader with the American Fur Company who had married a Piikáni, Cutting Off Head Woman, in 1847. She was a member of the Many Chiefs band led by Mountain Chief. Clark

later retired and moved to Prickly Pear Canyon. He became a prominent member of the territory.

In 1867, some of Cutting Off Head Woman's relatives came to visit. Among them was her cousin Owl Child, a hotheaded, white-hating young warrior, shunned by most of the Piikáni. Owl Child sometimes lived with Mountain Chief's band. While visiting Clark, Owl Child's horses were stolen. He blamed Clark, and shortly after stole some of Clark's horses. Clark and his son Horace trailed the stolen horses, finding them in Mountain Chief's camp. Horace struck Owl Child, calling him a dog. Clark called him an Old Woman. Owl Child was insulted and his honor attacked. Piikáni code required that he seek revenge (Welch 1994).

In the summer of 1869, Clark was visited by a party of some 25 young Piikáni led by Owl Child. Clark was shot and killed, and Horace was severely wounded. Stock were stolen. Montana citizens urged fast and effective action against the Piikáni. Other Blackfeet depredations continued into the fall. In October, U.S. Marshal William F. Wheeler appeared before a grand jury. He listed 56 whites killed and over a thousand horses stolen by the Blackfeet in 1869. The jury issued warrants for the arrests of Clark's killers. These were given to General Sully, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the U.S. Army.

General Sheridan, then in charge of the Military Division of the Missouri, formulated a plan calling for a party of troops to strike the offending Indians in their winter camp. General de Trobriand, in command of Fort Shaw, kept a cool head, knowing that the offenders were near the border and would cross as soon as troops started after them. General Sully met with the peaceful Piikáni leaders on New Year's Day 1870, demanding that Clark's murderers be turned over. The chiefs agreed. A two-week period was granted to bring the murderers and the stolen stock in. However, Sully had little faith that this would happen.

De Trobriand learned that Mountain Chief's band of Piikáni, with whom the murderers were traveling, had moved into winter camp on the Marias. A surprise attack was proposed. Colonel E. M. Baker was ordered by Sheridan on January 15 to "strike them hard." Baker departed Fort Shaw on January 19 with his four cavalry companies, an additional 55 mounted infantrymen, and a company of infantry. Joe Kipp was one of the scouts. Kipp had recently been in the winter camps on the Big Bend of the Marias, and he could distinguish Mountain Chief's people from those of friendly Piikáni who were also camped there.

Baker arrived on January 22 at the mouth of the Dry Fork of the Marias, proceeding down the Marias that night, preparing to attack at first light a winter camp of some 37 lodges on the Big Bend, which he believed to be Mountain Chief's. Kipp, once he saw the camp through the dwindling darkness, realized that it was Heavy Runner's camp, a friendly Piikáni, and not Mountain Chief's. Kipp told Baker of the mistake. Baker was drunk at the time. One Indian camp was as good as another to Baker, and he ordered Kipp shot if he tried to interfere, and then attacked the camp; 173 Indians were killed in and about their lodges. Very few escaped. One hundred forty women and children were captured, along with more than 300 horses. Most of the dead were women, children, and the elderly. Only some 15 were warriors. Most warriors were away from the camp. Many of the people in Heavy Runner's camp had smallpox. In fear of contracting the disease, the troops burned the lodges and camp equipment, turning the captives loose in the snow and 20-below temperatures.

The Massacre of the Marias raised a storm of protest in the east concerning the Army's treatment of the Indians. A Bill before Congress to transfer the Indian Bureau to the War Department did not proceed, and the practice of appointing Army officers as Indian agents was discontinued. Montanans generally

approved of the Army actions. One Montana pioneer declared that it was "the best thing that ever happened to northern Montana" (Foley 1974:37). Sheridan supported Baker, even though it was the wrong village. Sheridan stated, in support of Baker: "If a village is attacked, and women and children killed, the responsibility is not with the soldier, but with the people whose crimes necessitate the attack" (*ibid.*:252).

The Army's attack, combined with the raging smallpox epidemic, and the ongoing depredations of the whiskey trade which had been going full steam since 1868 (Kennedy 1991), had an immediate "calming" effect on the Piikáni. When the Piikáni chiefs met in council, not long after, only a few wanted revenge. The majority knew that if they went to war against the Army they, like other Indian tribes on the Plains, would lose. White people could now travel through Blackfeet Country with comparative safety. In later years the few whites killed by the "Blackfeet" were whiskey traders or others of ill repute.

### ***The Whiskey Trade Years in Canada's Northwest Territories and the Coming of the Northwest Mounted Police -- 1869-1875***

North of the border, in today's southern Alberta, significant events were also transpiring that had a deleterious effect on the Nitsitapii. In 1869, the Hudson's Bay Company transferred Rupert's Land, which had been given to them by Great Britain in 1673, to the new Dominion of Canada, established in 1867. Whiskey traders began crossing the line in the same year, as U.S. Agents attempted to enforce the law of 1834, which prohibited the sale of liquor to Indians. The agents began to restrict the trade with the Blackfeet and arrest independent traders.

There was no military or police force in western Canada to control the trade. The infamous years and depredations of the whiskey trade on the Nitsitapii followed (Kennedy 1991). These were finally put to an end with the formation of the Northwest Mounted Police, their march west in 1874 from the Red River Country, and the establishment of Fort MacLeod in the fall of that year. Many whiskey traders simply moved back south of the border to take up the trade along the Marias. Some established themselves on the St. Mary, in the vicinity of today's community of Babb. Nitsitapii continued to die on and adjacent to the Blackfeet Reservation as a result of drunken quarrels and fights. Over the winter of 1874-1875, for example, 15 to 20 Indians, including five chiefs, were killed near the Teton Agency.

### **Early Years on the Blackfeet Reservation -- 1874-1887**

#### ***New Reservation Boundaries -- 1874 (See Map 6)***

Montanans continued to pressure the U.S. Government for the cession of additional lands from the Blackfeet Reservation. The treaties of 1865 and 1868 had never been ratified. In the meantime, these "ceded" lands had been occupied by ranches, farms, mining camps, and growing towns. To legalize this settlement, on July 5, 1873, President Grant issued an executive order establishing a common reservation for the Blackfeet, Gros Ventre, Assiniboine, and River Crow Indians. It included all of the land in Montana east of the Continental Divide and north of the Missouri and Sun Rivers.

Thousands of cattle were being run in the Sun River by Montanan ranchers. They pressured their

territorial delegate, Martin Maginnis, to have the line moved farther north. In 1874, the Indian Department agreed to a line along the Marias and Birch Creek. The Piikáni chiefs, on learning of this planned change, objected, as did their agent May. They wanted the boundary at the Teton. Their wishes did not prevail, and on April 15, 1874, Congress passed an act setting the south boundary on the Birch Creek-Marias. Agent May refused to move the agency from the Teton. He was replaced by John Wood in January 1875. The agency was relocated to Badger Creek in 1876. This agency, known as the Running Crane Agency, was relocated a few miles down stream in 1878. It became known as the "Old Agency."

John Wood began to reorganize the Piikáni. He got the scattered bands to come in to the Teton Agency, and urged them to organize themselves, elect head chiefs, and adopt laws of tribal government, warning them that unless they changed, they would soon become extinct. In April, the new code was signed into law by the elected chiefs (*ibid.*:274). Whites were already occupying the lands of the Teton. Wood successfully persuaded the Piikáni to move north to the new reservation, where buffalo were still plentiful.

North of the Medicine Line, white settlers were also entering onto traditional Nitsitapii territory in the mid-1870s; as the rural communities surrounding Fort MacLeod and Calgary grew, ranching took hold, and new communities established themselves. In 1877, Treaty No. 7 was signed with the Kainaa, Siksiká, North Piikáni, Tsuu T'ina, and Stoney for the surrender of their traditional territory. Separate reserves were set aside for the North Piikáni and Stoney at their present locations, and a common reserve was established for the other three tribes between the Bow and Red Deer rivers east of Calgary. The Tsuu T'ina and Kainaa were dissatisfied with this arrangement, and in 1883 they moved to their own reserves, which had been established the previous year at Calgary (Sarci Reserve) and south of Fort MacLeod (Blood Reserve).

Large areas of the common hunting grounds of the Nitsitapii, which had been theirs for countless generations, were ceded on both sides of the Medicine Line. The enforced confinement of the people to reserves and reservations divided the Nitsitapii into two groups: the Siksiká, North Piikáni and Kainaa on the north; and the South Piikáni or Blackfeet south of the border.

### ***The Last Buffalo -- 1883***

At the same time as the above events were unfolding, the last buffalo herds, already in steep and probably irreversible decline from overhunting for robes and hides, were rapidly disappearing from the range. NWMP diaries from the early years at Fort MacLeod document the decline both in numbers and mature animals taken for food during the early 1870s. Despite declining numbers, the returns from the hide hunts were still profitable; in 1876, I.G. Baker shipped 75,000 buffalo robes from Fort Benton; and in 1877, shipped 30,000 from Fort MacLeod.

The governments were slow to move, because they received conflicting reports on the sizes and conditions of the herds. In 1877, the Canadian government moved to control the hunt, but was too late. In 1878, the remaining herds moved south of the boundary line, forced out by prairie fires that burned across the range west of the Cypress Hills. Indians began to die of starvation. In the summer of 1879, a number of Siksiká died; others were eating dogs, horses, or anything else that would keep them alive. The Canadian government began to buy and kill cattle to feed the destitute Siksiká, Piikáni, and Kainaa. That fall, more than 3,000 destitute Indians gathered at Fort MacLeod, begging for help. Buffalo were still present on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana. Indian Commissioner Dewdney

advised them to cross the Medicine Line. Dewdney later commented that he had saved the Canadian government at least \$100,000 by this action.

The movement south of the "Canadian" Nitsitapii, as well as other starving Indians (Cree, Assiniboine, and Ojibwa) from north of the border, plus the ongoing hide hunting out of Fort Benton, accelerated the slaughter of the remaining buffalo in Montana Territory.

In the late 1870s, conditions were deteriorating on the Blackfeet Reservation. John Young, who replaced Wood as agent in 1876, reported that hunts in the first years, while not always successful, managed to provide sufficient meat and skins for the lodges. However, by the spring of 1878, the Piikáni were having less success. They realized that the time remaining for the buffalo was limited: "One of the men told John Young, "The time is close when the tail of the last buffalo will be seen disappearing from the prairie" (*ibid.*:280).

After the signing of Treaty 7, only 11 bands of Blackfeet, all Piikáni, remained in the United States. However, 7,500 Indians were said to be resident on the Blackfeet Reservation in 1878. If this figure is correct, it must have included most of the Canadian Indians, because there were only 3,000 Piikáni on the reservation in 1882.

The Piikáni, like their relatives north of the boundary line, still preferred to live in their lodges rather than "settle down" in log cabins. Over the winter of 1878, 10 Indian cabins were built on Birch and Badger creeks, among which were members of Running Crane's band, beginning the characteristic familial/band settlement pattern on the reservation. By the summer of 1881, there were 80 Indian cabins, including 10 built by Three Sun's Band on the Two Medicine -- the first permanent settlement north of the Badger Creek Agency. Horse raids by Cree on the Three Suns settlement in the following years forced the latter to abandon their homes and return to the vicinity of the agency for protection in the spring of 1883. By then, the numbers of cabins had increased to 200.

At the same time as some Indians were beginning to "settle down," Young, a Methodist, started a Sunday school. A few years later, in 1881, the Jesuits, who had officially been denied access to the Piikáni because they were in designated Methodist territory, established a small chapel under Father Prando on the south side of Birch Creek. Jesuit influence, previously established by the priests who went among and traveled with the Nitsitapii, continued to grow in the years that followed (Harrod 1971).

Buffalo were becoming increasingly scarce during these years. In the winter of 1879-1880, the Piikáni (including the North Piikáni) traveled to the Judith Basin in search of buffalo. There they met many of the Siksiká who had taken Dewdney's advice and gone south. White settlers there were disturbed by the Indians' incursions, claiming they were killing cattle. However, Agent Young learned that while some were indeed killed, it was only a few animals, not the 3,000 the whites claimed.

In June 1880, 500 cattle that were to form the nucleus of the Blackfeet cattle herd arrived at the agency. The herd had increased to 600 by the summer of 1881. The winter hunt of 1881-1882 was unsuccessful, but the following winter of 1882-1883 they found considerable numbers between the Sweetgrass Hills and Bear Paw Mountains. Fewer Piikáni left the agency to go on the winter hunts. Only a few of the 3,000 Piikáni at the agency left for the 1882-1883 hunt. Demands for rations increased, and hunger broke out, because Young had insufficient stores. Starvation was inevitable.

## *The Starvation Winters -- 1883-1885*

In the summer of 1883, two Piikáni bands went east to look for buffalo. They killed only six buffalo and a few antelope near the Sweetgrass Hills. Some Piikáni at the agency wanted to leave and go to Canada for the Canadian government's annual distribution. Young forbade it, and began to kill cattle from the agency herd. The Piikáni's potato crops failed that summer due to a combination of early and late frosts and drought. By September, conditions were desperate.

The agency's appropriation was exhausted. Young resigned in protest, but was required to stay on through the "Starvation Winter" until a replacement could arrive in the spring. While some supplies arrived, the cattle herd was reduced to 117 by mid-February. An epidemic of erysipelas struck. Father Prando reported that Indians were dying at a rate of up to four a day. Despite much uproar in the newspapers about the deplorable conditions among the Indians, no help came.

Rueben Allen replaced Young as agent in April 1884. He found some 2,500 Indians in near-starving condition. However, Allen brought no supplies with him. By May 3, his meat supply was gone, and he was forced to break open a supply of condemned bacon (which had arrived in December), from which he salvaged 2,111 pounds. The seed potatoes he gave out for planting were mostly eaten before or shortly after planting. The Indians stripped cottonwood bark and scoured the valleys and mountains for berries and small game throughout the summer of 1884. Starvation continued that fall. All of the agency's remaining annual allotment was spent by the fall. Finally, on January 8, 1885, Congress passed a special appropriation for the final three months of that fiscal year. It was too late for many Piikáni. In all, 400 to 600 or more Piikáni -- up to one-quarter of the population -- died during those years.

The starvation years of 1883 and 1884 were the direct result of the failure of the Indian Bureau to realize the seriousness and rapidity of the decline of the remaining buffalo herds, despite the example provided by the Canadian "Blackfeet" four years earlier. The government regulated neither Indian nor white meat or hide hunting. When there were no more buffalo, there was no way they could respond to the emergency, because their appropriations were fixed a year in advance.

The crop failure of 1883 and the rancid bacon that arrived that December were also contributing causes, as was the flagrant corruption evident in the supply contracts for provisioning the agency. Cattle and shipments of food were constantly delayed, and often inedible (Foley 1974). While these were significant factors, it was the Subcommittee on Indian Appropriations' refusal to release funds for rations that was the real cause. They claimed that since the Blackfeet had already received \$100,000 for irrigation, they should be able to feed themselves (Samek 1986:72-73). The Blackfeet, of course, had never received any of this money directly; it had gone to finance initial irrigation works that they never wanted in the first place.

The Piikáni and other tribes also hit by the failure of government policy -- notably the Háninin and Assiniboine -- starved to death in the midst of plenty. South of the reservation were vast herds of cattle, yet the Indians never took matters into their own hands to take the food they needed. Many white ranchers' cattle trespassed on the reservation. Few were ever killed. Perhaps, as Ewers notes (1958:296): "The memory of the Massacre on the Marias was still too fresh in their minds. The suffering Peigans remained remarkably orderly."

The underlying reasons are, however, more complex. Acute starvation of the kind that the Piikáni suffered during those years saps a people's individual and collective ability to cope and mobilize

themselves. Thirty miles north of the starving Piikáni were the reservation valleys of the St. Mary, Swiftcurrent, and Belly River, which were teeming with game both in 1883 when James Willard Schultz first visited them and in 1885 when he returned accompanied by George Bird Grinnell. Except for a few families who continued to reside seasonally in the St. Mary, these valleys do not appear to have been visited by the starving Piikáni.

Montanans displayed their characteristic indifference to the condition of the Indians. No well-fed and prosperous Montanans came to the Piikáni's aid. Perhaps they saw it as the "final solution." Certainly there was little concern among the body politic. Then-Governor John Schuyler Crosby did not protest their condition until the Piikáni and the other tribes had been starving for a full year. On August 29, 1884, he wrote the Secretary of the Interior: "As Governor of Montana, in the name of the people I protest against keeping the nation's wards within the limits of this Territory in such pitiable, starving condition. Humanity and justice demand their immediate relief" (Foley 1974:296). Crosby, of course, probably would have liked to have seen them relocated, preferably out of the Territory, and the lands thrown open for settlement.

### **Blackfeet Reservation Land Cessions and Developments of the 1880s and 1890s (See Map 6 earlier in this chapter)**

#### ***Cession of the Sweet Pine Hills - 1888***

Once the buffalo were gone, the Blackfeet, Gros Ventre, and Assiniboine had more land than they perceived they needed. Piikáni leaders perceived no more need for the eastern part of their reservation, for there were no more buffalo around the Sweetgrass Hills. The leaders had no concept of the potential value of the gold that prospectors were finding in the hills in the early 1880s.

Although the Indians were willing to exchange land for other things as early as September 1883, and expressed their wish to Territorial Representative Maginnis at that time, it was not until 1888 that these lands were ceded. Earlier, in 1884, Maginnis had introduced a bill into the House of Representatives for the reduction of the reservation and the opening of the ceded lands for settlement. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs objected, on the grounds that a land cession must be negotiated with the Indians.

In May 1886, Congress authorized the Northwest Commission to negotiate with the Sioux, Assiniboine, Gros Ventre, and Blackfeet for the cession of lands that they did not require in order for them to obtain the means to become self-supporting, "as a pastoral and agricultural people, and to educate their children in the paths of civilization" (Ewers 1958:304). Negotiations with the Blackfeet began at the agency on February 8, 1887. When the commissioners arrived, they found that the Piikáni, according to the commissioners, had been listening to "designing" white men. The Piikáni wanted \$3 million for the surplus land. In the end, the Piikáni agreed to accept \$150,000 a year for 10 years in payment. An agreement was signed February 11, 1887. The eastern boundary of the Blackfeet Reservation was set on a line at the junctions of Cutbank, Two Medicine, and Birch creeks, following Cutbank north about 20 miles, then on a line due north to the boundary. Congress approved the agreement on May 1, 1888. The annual \$150,000 would be spent for the improvement of the tribe, to purchase livestock, agricultural equipment, goods, clothing, and food, and provide education for children and medical care, erect new buildings, and so forth.

In the interim years, the Piikáni who survived the Starvation Winters had been eking out a meager existence in their little band-oriented settlements on Badger and Birch Creek. A few potatoes were grown in plots totaling some 12 acres. There was an agency herd of some 500 cattle. In 1888, some bands, encouraged by the terms of the cession, moved north to the Two Medicine and Cutbank, breaking some 220 acres land to plant oats, potatoes, and barley. The old residential pattern of band settlements began to give way to the rural white pattern of individual residences.

In 1890, the Blackfeet Tribe got into the cattle business. Some 1,000 heifers and 25 bulls were acquired and distributed to interested individuals. Additional distributions occurred in following years. The Great Northern Railway crossed the reservation in 1895, providing an outlet to market for the Indians' cattle. Most of the cattle destined for the full-bloods ended up in mixed-bloods' or whites' hands. The program was a failure, due to a combination of gency mismanagement, a succession of corrupt agents, interference by white ranchers, and continued trespass by their cattle (Foley 1974).

Many other changes occurred on the reservation during the late 1880s and 1890s. In 1890, the opportunity for schooling improved with the opening of the Holy Family Mission on Two Medicine in September of that year. In 1892, the government opened an Indian industrial school at Fort Shaw on the Sun River. A new boarding school was opened west of Browning at Willow Creek. By 1894, three-quarters of school-age children were nominally enrolled. Five years earlier, less than 10 percent had been enrolled. The schools now became the agents for the forced acculturation of the Piikáni. Nitsitapii language and culture were forcibly suppressed. The living and hygiene conditions in the government-run schools were worse than deplorable (*ibid.*).

Attempts at suppressing the Okan (Sun Dance) began in 1887, when Agent Baldwin actively discouraged participation in the ceremony. As a result, no Sun Dance was held the following year. It started up again as soon as Baldwin was replaced. Six years later, Agent Captain Cook ordered old lodges that had been used the two previous years, torn down and recycled as corral logs. He asked the merchants not to stock face paint, and sentenced Indians who cut their fingers off in mourning or built sweat lodges up to 30 days in jail. He threatened women who did beadwork with going to jail.

Repressive agents were replaced, and the Okan continued, but was moved forward two weeks to coincide with July 4. For a few brief years, until the mid 1900s the summer encampment flourished as it had not for many years. The Siksiká, Kainaa, and North Piikáni joined the South Piikáni in the annual celebration, along with former friends and enemy tribes from Montana, Assiniboine, Háninin, Absaroka, Salish, and K'tunaxa. The Okan was again forcibly suppressed in 1906. It was not revived for some years among the South Piikáni.

Piikáni settlement continued to disperse northward along the valleys of the Blackfeet Reservation, particularly after the coming of the railroad. The old agency on Badger Creek became increasingly distant and inconvenient for the Piikáni to travel to for their weekly rations and other business. In 1894, a new site was selected on Willow Creek, near the railroad. A new agency opened in 1895, becoming the nucleus of the town of Browning. Settlement in the valleys to the north continued to increase. In 1895, one observer aptly described Browning:

"A more dreary, bleak, desolate spot would be hard to find. The buildings stand in the prairie, in a valley, where the wind sweeps with great power to and from the mountains about 9 days in the week. There is no grass, no shade, no nothing" (cited in Foley 1974:205).

## *The Ceded Strip -- 1896*

The gold rushes of the 1860s in Last Chance Gulch and the Kootenais resulted in an increasing number of prospectors coming into the Rocky Mountains on and adjacent to the Blackfeet Reservation. Mineral shows found west of the Continental Divide increased pressure on Washington to open the Blackfeet lands to prospecting and mining. To the agents (some of whom had an interest) and government officials, these mountain lands, while containing some timber, were of little value to the Piikáni for either grazing or farming.

In 1893, J. J. Hill, never a friend of the Piikáni, was interested in throwing the reservation open to mineral development. E. C. Garrett, Agent Steel's Chief Clerk, discussed with Hill the possibility of Hill supporting a bill through Congress to throw open the mineral belt. Hill responded with rather a simple plan. Move the Blackfeet to North Dakota (Foley 1974:141). For a number of reasons, Garrett did not think this possible. However, as he explained to Hill in a letter dated later that year (cited in Foley 1974:142):

"What we shall want, when the time is ripe, is the opening of the mountain country west of the north and south line drawn say through Midvale to the British boundary. Of course they will make a strong kick against giving up the mountain country, but I do not think it will be such a difficult matter if the right commissioners are selected to treat with them. We will depend on your aid and will probably write you further."

In 1893, Agent Steel recommended that they be sold, and the moneys put toward the future support and maintenance of the Blackfeet. In September 1895, three commissioners, among whom was George Bird Grinnell, met with Blackfeet leaders. Initially, the Piikáni only wanted to sell the lands from the Cutbank Valley north. Their asking price, as it had been nine years earlier, when they sold the Sweetgrass Hills, was \$3 million for the lands north of the railway.

The Piikáni's asking price was dictated as much by past abuses as the Indian's future needs. Little Dog told the commissioners (cited in Foley 1974:190):

"There are many things in which the Great Father has cheated us. Therefore we ask Three Million Dollars.... Those Mountains will never disappear. We will see them as long as we live; our children will see them all their lives, and when we are all dead they will still be there. This money will not last forever.... You must not forget that we have wives and children; it is for them that we ask this money. Those mountains will last forever; the money will not."

The Piikáni were aware of the minerals in the mountains and their values. The loss of the Sweetgrass Hills and their gold was remembered. The commissioners wanted all the land all the way to Birch Creek. They offered \$1.25 million: \$1 million for the lands north of the railway and \$2.5 million for the lands south to Birch Creek. In the end, the Piikáni got \$1.5 million, to be paid out over 10 years, and the right to hunt, fish, and cut timber on the lands as long as they remained public lands of the United States.

## Twentieth Century Developments

Old White Calf died in 1903. He was one of the last chiefs from the Buffalo Days, and the last tribal spokesman acknowledged as Head Chief by the Piikáni. In the years that followed, agents – generally less corrupt than in the preceding decade -- came and went, and the economic problems that characterized the earlier years continued. Smallpox again broke out in 1901. Health conditions were so deplorable in the school that Agent Monteath in a 1902 interview with the *Washington Post* said (quoted in Foley 1974: 302):

"The Blackfeet will soon disappear. At one time the reservation contained 7,000 Indians. Now there are only 2,100 Indians there. The Indians ... have intermarried for so many years that many of them are weaklings ...."

### *The Dawes Act or Allotment Act of 1887*

A number of significant developments occurred on the Blackfeet Reservation in the earlier years of this century. The first and most important, whose legacy remains with the people today, was the passage by the United States Congress of the Dawes Severalty Act, or the Allotment Act of 1887 (Samek 1986:27). This act was considered by policy-makers and legislators, as well as many concerned members of the American public, to be the solution to the "Indian Problem." The Dawes Act allowed individuals to take private title to the land. Communalism was thought to be the cause of the Indians' lack of interest in bettering themselves. Proponents of the act were convinced that if the Indians were allowed to own their own land, they would become "more intelligently selfish."

In 1906, the Burke Act was passed, giving the Secretary of the Interior the authority to issue fee patents, as well as to sell surplus lands. The Blackfeet Allotment Bill was passed in 1807. Montanans expected that the surplus lands would be thrown open to white settlement. The process of individual allotment began on the Blackfeet Reservation in 1907, when Congress ordered the reservation to be surveyed and the lands allotted. It was completed in 1912. Each of the 2,623 Blackfeet (which include mixed-bloods who had married into the tribe) had received 320 acres, 40 of which could be irrigable land and 280 grazing -- or all 320 grazing; 800,000 acres were left as surplus lands. Some Blackfeet -- mostly mixed-bloods -- wanted them sold. Others, mostly full-bloods, were against it. Those in favor argued that the sale would provide funds that would aid the Blackfeet in becoming self-sufficient. In the end, the lands were put up for sale to individual Blackfeet.

In the years that followed, many Blackfeet -- like other Indian nations in America -- leased their land or sold their individual titles to whites. Some white ranchers and farmers developed very large inholdings, combining patented and long-term leased lands. By the end of the 1920s some 210,000 acres had passed out of Blackfeet ownership. By the time the Indian Reorganization Act reversed the policy in 1934, some 40% of the Blackfeet Reservation, including most of the best agricultural and irrigable lands, had passed into non-Blackfeet hands. The damage done to the tribe under the Dawes Act was irreparable, causing an economic disaster whose economic and social effects continue to reverberate to this day.

### *Blackfeet Irrigation*

Government policy was to turn the Piikáni into farmers. Because the Blackfeet Reservation was arid

lands, irrigation development on the reservation was seen in the first decade of the century as a solution to the problem of agricultural development. Extensive irrigation works were launched in 1908 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) planners, despite the fact that the Piikáni had shown a distinct disinterest in making their living by growing crops.

Attempts at irrigation had begun in the early 1880s. In the late 1890s, Agent Steele began to construct an irrigation ditch. While useless for farming, the construction provided virtually the only source of employment for Blackfeet men. These “make work” programs were continued by later agents. The Blackfeet preferred to work on construction, for which they received instant cash rather than face the uncertainties of farming.

Conflicts also developed between white settlers and the locations of the ditches, which often times ended up in the best locations to serve *them* rather than potentially irrigable lands on the reservation. The issues became further clouded when, with the passage of the Blackfeet Allotment Bill in 1907, anyone could use the canals supposedly constructed for the benefit of the Blackfeet, who were saddled with paying the cost for their construction. Despite a Senate committee inquiry into the matter, to ascertain why the government had spent \$1 million dollars on a project that the Indians did not want, the bureau continued to pour money in. The Blackfeet still refused to take up the irrigable lands. It was a boondoggle of epic proportions.

### ***Blackfeet Ranching, and the Five Year Plan***

While some Blackfeet continued to prosper as ranchers, most of the cattle on the reservation continued to belong to nearby white ranchers, who had obtained extensive grazing permits. The agricultural enterprises that the BIA started had failed, and by the mid-teens, BIA planners concluded that the Blackfeet were better adapted to raising cattle than crops. In 1914, to encourage the Blackfeet to raise cattle, the government purchased 1,800 head for a tribal herd. It had increased to 4,300 by 1917. The majority of Blackfeet cattlemen, however, showed little interest, because they believed cattle to be an individual's, not a tribe's possession. At the same time the BIA was continuing to encourage the individual Blackfeet to take up allotments, which were too small to support a commercially viable cattle operation. The experiment was a failure.

During a brief period during World War I, cattle prices were high, and reservation cattlemen prospered. In 1918, 3% of the population, almost without exception mixed-bloods, owned the estimated 40,000 head of cattle on the reservation. Overgrazing became a very serious problem because summer drought at the end of the decade, followed by one of the severest winters on record, decimated the cattle and horse herds. Many Blackfeet were wiped out. By 1920, rations again had to be issued. During the following winter, two-thirds of the population depended on government rations. Most Blackfeet had nothing left but their land, which continued to pass to the white man.

A new superintendent, Frank C. Campbell, arrived in 1921, with a 5-year economic plan to restore Blackfeet pride and their economy. The Piikáni were encouraged to plant vegetable gardens and small grain fields; a farming and livestock association was organized; and district community houses were built. An annual fair was instituted; a flour mill built; and agricultural equipment and livestock were acquired. In Campbell's mind, the month-long tribal Okan encampment took up too much of the Indians' time, so they worked out a compromise in which three smaller district Sun Dances of a week's duration would be held instead.

The program for subsistence self-sufficiency achieved modest success among full-bloods, but not among mixed-bloods, who wanted operations that would give them economic self-sufficiency. In the late 1920s, the program foundered.

### *The Tribal Reorganization Act -- 1934, and the Aftermath*

The Blackfeet became one of the first tribes to reorganize themselves under the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act. A new constitution declared that all persons of Indian blood, regardless of the amount, whose names were on the official census roll of January 1, 1935, were members of the tribe, as were offspring of any blood member of the tribe maintaining legal residence on the reservation at that time. A 13-member tribal council and electoral system were established. The council's performance was for many years plagued by conflict, dissent, and dubious business deals, particularly with oil leases.

Conditions on the reservation worsened during the Great Depression. In 1934, only 134 families were classified as self-supporting. Some 747 families were receiving federal assistance. During World War II, many Blackfeet served in the armed forces, as well as working in the industries supporting the war effort on the West Coast. Those who remained on the West Coast after the end of the war have generally prospered. For those who came back to the reservation, there was no work and little chance for economic betterment.

While the post-war years continued to see many changes on the Blackfeet Reservation (McFee 1972), economic problems persist. Few tribal economic development projects have succeeded in the past 50 years. The Blackfeet membership, increasingly better educated, on and off the reserve, continues to grow as the people receive the health care they are entitled to. The reservation, although blessed with some of the most visually impressive grasslands in the American West, holds little promise for economic self-sufficiency. Had they retained their land base as of 1874 – which included the very significant oil reserves of the Kevin-Sunburst and Cutbank fields -- the situation today would probably be much different for the Blackfeet Nation.

"Neither the Indian Reorganization Act nor tribal oil revenues solved the basic social and economic problems confronting the Blackfeet. Some of the policies of the Tribal Council, though well intended, proved to be as ineffective as those of the government in earlier decades. Similarly, a few individual Council members demonstrated a venality typical of government agents of an earlier era. Dealings between the Council and the Indian Bureau were frequently hostile, and the government proved surprisingly inert in its protection and supervision of tribal funds and resources. Despite the rhetoric of tribal leaders and the implied threats of Bureau officials, the fundamental problem remained unsolved--could the Blackfeet harness the manpower and resources of their Reservation so as to provide sustained, uniform economic growth for the community at large?" (Foley 1974:566)

Those words, written some 25 years ago, equally apply today. The problem is hardly unique to the Blackfeet Nation. They, like most Indian nations in America, continue to remain places of deculturation, chronic underemployment, social and personal dysfunction, and familial and personal despair for many of their members, reflecting the misguided attitudes, policies, and actions of the majority of the American society and their governments toward America's first nations over the past 150 years.

### *The Blackfeet, the Park, and the Railway -- 1896*

"Chief Mountain is my head. Now my head is cut off. The mountains have been my last refuge." (White Calf, Proceedings of the Commissioners to the Blackfeet Indian, September 25, 1895).

Although, like White Calf, some of the leaders of the Blackfeet Tribe understood and expressed their concerns over the cession of 1896, few Blackfeet could visualize what the implications would be 30 years later and more, after the establishment of Glacier National Park, and after the post-World War I tourism boom brought ever-increasing numbers of Americans and other visitors to this once-remote area of northern Montana.

### *The Forest Reserve -- 1896-1912*

The agreement was signed in 1896, but prospective miners and land speculators were not permitted entry onto the ceded strip until the spring of 1898. In the interim of three years, as it was before the cession, parties awaiting the opening of the strip continued to trespass across the reservation, causing considerable problems to then-Indian Agent Thomas Fuller. Fuller, like earlier agents, asked for military assistance to keep them off the lands.

On April 15, the lands were declared open, and a "rush" took place. Some 500 people entered the area. In Fuller's report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1898, Fuller's opinion was that little in the way of precious minerals would be found, and he predicted that the prospecting boom would be over by November. He was right. By 1900, most of the prospectors had left for other strikes. By 1903, most of the mining activity, including the town of Altyn, had died. A brief oil "boom" in Swiftcurrent Valley followed the discovery of traces of oil in 1901; in all, some 10 wells were drilled. By 1907 it, too, was finished.

Under the agreement, the Blackfeet had the right to hunt and fish as long as the lands remained public lands. These rights were to be in accordance with State of Montana fish and game laws. The Blackfeet also reserved for themselves the right to enter the lands to cut and remove wood for agency, school, domestic, and private purposes.

Blackfeet families continued to seasonally occupy the eastern slope valleys during these years for traditional purposes: to camp, dig roots, pick berries, cut lodgepoles, hunt, and carry out religious activities. These traditional activities, particularly hunting, may have been somewhat influenced by the cession of the lands, the establishment of the Forest Reserve, and the "enforcement" of fish and game regulations. Although some white parties continued to come into the region to hunt, the Piikáni, whose total population at the time was around 2,000-2,300 people, probably had the eastern slopes much to themselves.

On February 22, 1897, the Lewis and Clark Forest Reserve was established. It included all of the ceded strip, as well as what are now the Kootenai, Flathead, and Lewis and Clark National Forests. This proclamation, as well as subsequent ones that changed the names and boundaries of the various forest reserves, contained clauses stating that the Blackfeet rights as outlined in the Agreement of 1895 would be protected.

Significant changes occurred in traditional Blackfeet rights associated with the ceded strip when Glacier National Park was established in 1914, and the Park was subsequently developed for tourism by the Great Northern Railway (GNR). On the one hand, the Blackfeet lost their rights to hunt fish and cut timber, because the lands, in the government's legal opinion, were no longer public lands. On the other hand, the GNR was capitalizing on the Blackfeet's romantic image and traditional association with these lands in promoting the park and entertaining visiting tourists.

### *The Park*

The enabling bills establishing Glacier National Park that were introduced and finally passed by the Senate and Congress, and accompanying reports, "made no mention of the effect, if any, the creation of Glacier National Park would have on the right of the Blackfeet as outlined in the Agreement of 1895" (Ashby 1985:37). On May 11, 1910 -- the final bill S.B.2777 -- was signed into law by President Taft.<sup>18</sup>

Over the next few years, several cession bills dealing with the cession of jurisdiction by the State of Montana were introduced into the House and Senate. They were rejected for one reason or another. Reports accompanying two of the bills did express some concern over any Indian land claims that might be affected. In the opinion of the Interior Department (*ibid.*:41):

"The lands referred to were withdrawn from all forms of entry or other disposition by the act of May 11, 1910, establishing the park, except that under the act bona fide homestead entries, mineral entries, etc. are to be respected, and consequently on the date of approval of the act the said lands ceded to be public lands of the United States, and their right to remove timber, fish in the streams and lakes and hunt upon the lands, the only rights reserved to them, ceased, and therefore they have not now, and have not had since May 11, 1910, any right of any character within the park superior to that to any citizen of the United States."

On August 22, 1914, a bill was approved by both the House and Senate. The bill -- Public Law 177 -- gave to the United States exclusive jurisdiction over Glacier National Park. Section 4 of this law prohibited the hunting or killing of wild animals, except in the case of dangerous animals to prevent injury; the taking of fish only as proscribed by such seasons, times, and manners by the Secretary of the Interior; timber removal; and so forth.

Blackfeet rights reserved to them under the Agreement of 1895 were either terminated or severely curtailed. Early administrative problems appear to have had little to do with Blackfeet rights (*ibid.*:44). The Annual Superintendent's Report for 1917 is the first to mention Blackfeet killing game in the Glacier National Park area under the protection of the agreement. The report (*ibid.*) is unclear about whether it was inside or outside the park.

The years from 1871 to 1928 are known in government/Indian relations as the Era of Allotments and Assimilation. Several major laws were passed designed to solve the "Indian Problem," including the General Allotment Act (1887) and the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. Congress also passed several bills allowing the Indians the right to bring suit against the government in the Court of Claims. In 1924, an act was passed that gave the Blackfeet and several other tribes permission to sue the government. The suits were limited to claims for land or hunting rights alleged to have been taken from them by the government. A petition had to be filed within two years.

In compliance, the Blackfeet and other tribes filed suit against the United States on July 25, 1925. One claim involved the Blackfeet, the 1895 Agreement, and Glacier National Park (*ibid.*:49). The Blackfeet claimed that they had not been compensated for the loss of their rights, not that they still possessed ownership of the agreement rights.

The entire suit was very complicated, and took 10 years to move through the court system. "James Willard Schultz, George Pablo, George Ground and Frances X. Guardipee testified for the Blackfeet. They stated that approximately 200 Blackfeet used the involved land between the years 1895-1910 .... The Government ... defense was based on two points .... The land in question ceased to be public land when Glacier National Park was established. Thus, the rights granted the Blackfeet under the Agreement of 1895 were terminated. [Secondly] The Blackfeet had failed to establish the extent to which they used the reserved privileges during 1895-1910, and they had also failed to establish the value, if any, to them of these privileges" (*ibid.*:50).

The court's preliminary ruling, issued in 1930, was in favor of the government. The final ruling was on April 8, 1935. The Blackfeet did not appeal this part of their suit to the Supreme Court.

The lack of adequate winter range on the park's east side continued to concern park officials in the 1930s. By then, illegal hunting had become a problem on the east side within the park. Superintendent E. T. Scoyen was concerned over what legal rights the park had to prevent the Indians from hunting, fishing, and cutting timber. In May 1932, he wrote the Director of the National Park Service on this matter, including a copy of correspondence received from Peter Oscar Little Chief of the Blackfeet Reservation concerning these rights. These materials were passed to the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, who gave them to the Department's Solicitor for a legal opinion. He replied in late June. It supported the National Park Service's and government's position.

In October of 1932, four Blackfeet Indians were arrested by park rangers for possessing firearms within the park and trespassing on a closed area without permission of the superintendent. The rangers confiscated their weapons and horses, and all their riding and camping gear. The Blackfeet claimed to be exercising their hunting rights as guaranteed by the Agreement of 1895. They appeared before the U.S. Commissioner on November 14, 1932; were found guilty; and were fined a total of \$100. They appealed to the District Court in Great Falls, and the case was heard in the spring of 1933. They pleaded guilty. According to an article in the *Great Falls Tribune*, Superintendent Scoyen was very pleased with decision. It meant that the park had the authority to keep the Blackfeet from hunting in the park.

The park won poaching cases that arose in subsequent years. At the same time, the park was interested in extending its eastern boundary to incorporate elk winter range within the Blackfeet Reservation. In early April 1935, Scoyen met J. H. Brott, Acting Superintendent of the Blackfeet Reservation, and Joseph W. Brown, President of the Tribal Business Council. The negative reaction he received was sufficient for him to inform the Director of the National Park Service in a letter dated April 23, 1935:

"I again want to emphasize that it is useless for the NPS to initiate any action or to support any project which has for its objectives the gaining of control over lands in the so-called Blackfeet Strip" (*ibid.*:56).

In the 1930s, Congress began efforts to establish a review board for Indian claims, resulting in the passing of the Indians Claim Commission Act of 1946. The Blackfeet filed numerous claims with the



Figure 2: "Indian Children, Glacier National Park." St. Paul Minnesota News, March 6, 1927

commission. The issue of compensation for the loss of lands within the ceded strip was brought forward by the Blackfeet in a petition filed with the U.S. Court of Claims on May 16, 1957. The petition stated that the government had erroneously located the western boundary of the reservation so that 45,000 additional acres were included in the ceded strip. The claim did not mention any other rights lost by the Blackfeet in the Agreement of 1895 and Glacier National Park. The court ruled against the Blackfeet, and on appeal their decision was affirmed by the Court of Claims.

At the same time, the Blackfeet obtained an opinion from a Washington law firm concerning the agreement; rights of hunting, fishing, and cutting timber; and entry into Glacier National Park. Arthur Lazarus, Jr.'s opinion was that while their hunting rights had been extinguished, their fishing rights had not been totally diminished, and they still had rights to cut timber and to enter the park without payment of a fee.

In late 1964, the Blackfeet again decided to pursue their claim on the western boundary of the reservation at the urging of the tribe's few remaining full-bloods, who claimed the boundary had been moved from where it was originally located. A recent re-survey indicated, however, that the boundary had not moved and that the tribe would have little to gain in pressing this claim. Many Blackfeet elders today still continue to believe that the boundary has been moved.

Some of these issues, particularly the right of free entry, were raised again and tested in the 1970s (*ibid.*:61-78). Subsequent court decisions may have resolved some of the issues relating to the Agreement of 1895 and Blackfeet rights, and so forth, in Glacier National Park. Other outstanding and perennial issues related to the ceded strip will never be legally resolved to the satisfaction of all the Piikáni.

In some cases, the opportunity to deal with these issues within the hearing of earlier suits and claims was not taken, because, in Ashby's opinion, there was insufficient legal research: "Many of the problems exist even today because the participants [both government and Blackfeet] did not do sufficient [legal] research at critical times."

### *The Great Northern Railway*

The Great Northern Railway and its agent, the Glacier National Park Company (GPC), actively promoted the traditional association of the Blackfeet with Glacier National Park. Louis B. Hill used the Indians and their romantic appeal along with the wilderness in selling the park to Americans. The railroad wanted to promote the park with "some good type Indians .... and, of course, it is necessary that they be agreeable among themselves ... some of those who do not have too large families for us to care of ... who have good costumes and are able to put on a good show and live in peace and harmony" (Reagan 1986:2-3, citing various GNR correspondence).<sup>19</sup>

The Blackfeet were real Indians, as the GNR promotional materials reveal: dignified, full-blooded, sober, horse-riding, tipi-dwelling buffalo hunters. Noble savages gave the visitor the thrill of a lifetime in meeting, photographing, and observing real Indians dressed up in costume enacting traditional activities. The GNR's public relations campaign not only encompassed news releases, pamphlets, brochures, photographs, and movie shorts, but also tours to eastern cities by Blackfeet groups promoting the park. Artists such as Winhold Reiss were hired as artists in residence in the summer to paint the Indians and scenery of Glacier National Park, as travel writers were hired to write both fact and fiction about the Blackfeet and the park.

The GNR<sup>20</sup> spent heavily in the years between 1913 and 1915 to introduce the park to Americans. Delegations of "Glacier National Park Indians" were sent to eastern travel and book shows, festivals, and other events, such as the national conference of the "Nobles of the Mystic Shrine." During these and later years, the Blackfeet and their reservation were promoted as the "Glacier National Park Indians" and the "Glacier National Park Indian Reservation," not as the Blackfeet Indians and the Blackfeet Reservation (see figures 2 and 3).

The Glacier Park Company had a supervisor of Indian entertainment who arranged the various goings-on at the hotels and chalets. Indian decor was incorporated in the facilities. Many of the large hotels and chalets had hand-drawn Indian pictograph wall paper and hanging lanterns.

At Glacier Park Lodge, the tourists were greeted at the railroad station by a "chief," who brought them to the hotel. An "Indian" door girl in costume greeted visitors to many of the dining rooms.<sup>21</sup> A tipi village was erected at a number of the establishments, where visitors could view traditional Blackfeet camp life. Indian dances were held nightly. Between 1914 and 1919, visitors could even stay in Indian tipi villages.

The Blackfeet tipi encampment at the lodge lasted until the end of the 1940s. The Blackfeet received food, and were allowed to pass the "tom-tom" among the guests. At first, the dances and entertainments were held within the hotel lobby (which, however, disturbed the guests), and then later moved outside. In addition to singing and dancing, sign language and arts and crafts demonstrations were given. Adoption ceremonies were sometimes held for visiting VIPs. For example, Queen Marie of Romania was made a Blackfeet Chief in 1924.

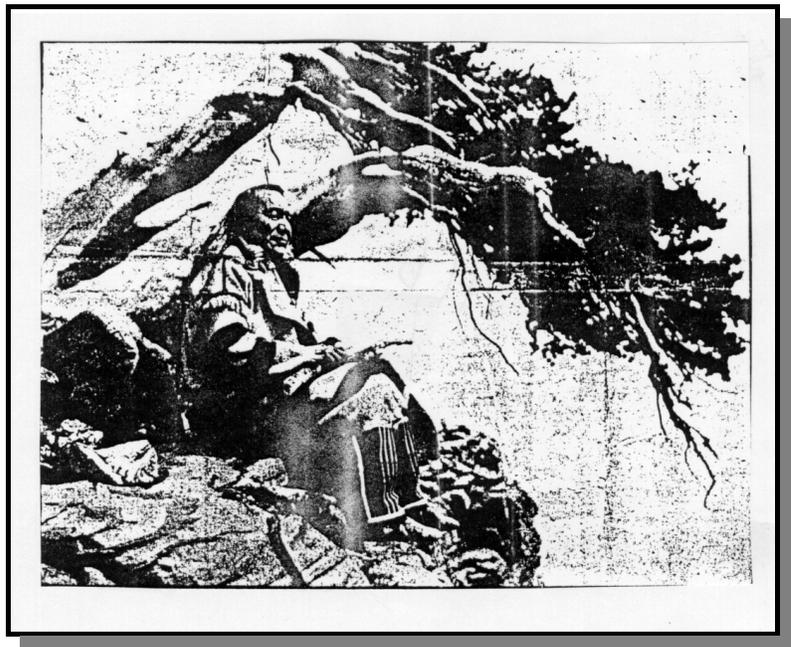


Figure 3: "Monarchs of the Past." Boston Herald, May 1, 1927.

The Blackfeet performers at the lodge were obliged to share with their relatives, many of whom moved

into the encampment. The GPC responded negatively to these camp followers: "Firm measures should be taken to prevent relatives from the reservation moving in on the Indians we employ. Every summer there is a considerable crowd of these hangers-on who subsist on the rations we supply and who also cause discontent and trouble" (*ibid.*:6).

The Blackfeet Indian agents were never enthusiastic about the GNR's use of the Indians, because it promoted cultural retention and contradicted their policy and efforts toward assimilation and agriculturalization of the Blackfeet. In response to a request in 1915 for an entertainment troupe, an agent remarked (*ibid.*:8):

"It is desired to have the Indians settle on their allotments and become active in the improvement of their economic conditions and especially in the care and development of their agricultural pursuits and the live stock industry. Their employment for exhibition by circuses, wild west shows, and the like, tends to influence them to continue their nomadic habits and neglect their home interests. Consequently, the employment of Indians for such purposes is strongly discouraged and is permitted only in cases where their home conditions make it imperative that work be obtained."

Romantic images of the "Vanishing Indians" began to lose their appeal to the American public in the 1930s. The GNR and GPC began to rethink the image they were projecting of the Indians and the park. By the early 1940s, the show at the lodge appeared to be wearing thin. One official commented: "The tendency has been to accept the Indians along with the mountains and let them work out their own problems."

"The show was thought be hokey, monotonous and the costumes more or less worn out" (*ibid.*:7). Also, the company was finding it increasingly difficult to hire "real" Blackfeet who matched their romantic image. Older Blackfeet were dying off, and younger people had little interest in or knowledge of the old ways.

Blackfeet participation waned in latter years. In 1950, GPC officials decided to let the Blackfeet approach them, presuming that the Indians would be more cooperative and the company would get a better deal. The Blackfeet stayed away. In 1952, a company official wrote (*ibid.*:12):

"We have definitely got to get the Indians back to Glacier National Park. We have been two years without them now and while I realize it is something of a problem to handle them, on the other hand, guest after guest inquire as to where are the Indians and why don't we have them. People even detouring for a few minutes at Glacier National Park inquire as to why they are not down on the platform .... We spend a considerable sum on our Indian calendars each year and the Indians are considered part of Glacier National Park. I went along on the idea of getting along without them, but I am convinced now that it was a mistake .... We might as well decide on it now, we definitely have to have the Indians back at the Entrance Hotel."

The Blackfeet did not return. The promotional image of Indian and Glacier National Park developed and promoted by the GNR for some 40 years was abandoned. In 1960 and 1961 the GPC was sold by the GNR. The GNR had already themed each hotel. The Prince of Wales became Edwardian, the Many Glacier became Swiss, and Glacier Park Lodge became Western. The old Blackfeet Indian pictograph wallpapers, irreplaceable historic records, excepting those in the lodge, were papered over,

and the lanterns were removed. It is only in recent years that the current owners of the GPC have begun to incorporate the Blackfeet within their hotel educational and entertainment programs. Blackfeet arts and crafts have yet to appear in their gift shops.

### *The Blackfeet "Presence" and Glacier National Park*

The Blackfeet are synonymous with Glacier National Park. So they should be, because the Piikáni have resided here for thousands of years. Blackfeet place names and imagery remain. Although the role that the Blackfeet played for the GNR and the GPC in promoting the park and entertaining tourists has changed considerably over the past 80 years -- as have their relationships with the park, vis-a-vis the ceded strip rights, etc. -- the Blackfeet and other tribes, where appropriate, have played, and always will play, a very critical "ceremonial presence" at Glacier.

Blackfeet "presence" is very much associated with official "goings-on" in the park, whether it be the visits of American presidents, Secretaries of the Interior, foreign royalty, or dedications of private and public facilities. The Blackfeet were part of the opening ceremonies when Glacier National Park was officially dedicated. They were there for the opening of J. J. Hill's first tourist establishment, Glacier Park Lodge, in 1913. No doubt a Blackfeet delegation greeted the official trains related to these events.

The opening ceremonies in 1933 for the Going-To-The-Sun Highway on top of Logan Pass included the Blackfeet and other tribes (the first time natives had camped in summer on top of the Packs-Pulled-Up Pass in summer for some thousand years). Both American and Canadian "Blackfeet" took part in the dedication of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in 1936. They were there when the Peace Park Pavilion in Waterton was dedicated 50 years later. The Nitsitapii continue to participate in celebrations and dedications within the Peace Park.

Some cynics, both Indian and white, view the Indian presence at such ceremonies as only a token gesture. Other people, including many traditional Piikáni elders whom the authors have come to know in the course of their work, see these ceremonials quite differently. To the traditional Piikáni, these events and their participation in them is a logical and continuing affirmation of the Piikáni's long-time relationship with Mistakis -- the place where most things began -- and continue to be sustained. The place where beings, human and other than human beings, share this unique place upon Mother Earth, aspects of which will be discussed in the next section on the Piikáni and their ethnological associations with Glacier National Park.

## Endnotes to Chapter 3

1. The following is largely taken from Reeves (1992), which is based on a manuscript in preparation dealing with the issues of Nitsitapii/Snake history and identity in the Upper Saskatchewan and Missouri basins (Reeves n.d.d.).

2. The Háninin have a story that is very similar to the Saukom api account (Curtis 1909:103 fol.). In their account, the first battle with the Snake happened at a rocky butte south of the Milk but north of the Bearpaw Mountains (a local place name for a butte south of Malta; Montana north of the Bearspaw is Snake Butte). The Snake outnumbered the Háninin. They were on the verge of defeat when a Háninin who had a gun -- the only one the

tribe had -- rushed out and fired. The Snake fled in terror. This battle happened before the Háninin had horses. The next was a generation later, after the Háninin had a few horses. This battle occurred between the Marias and the site of the later Fort Benton. The Háninin greatly outnumbered the Snake and almost annihilated them. The Snake fled to the south abandoning for ever this region as their home. The last battle happened at the mouth of the Yellowstone, when a party of Piikáni and Háninin led by White Owl found the Sioux at the mouth of the Yellowstone. They charged, but were driven back, and built a fort of logs to protect themselves; here they held the Sioux off for 10 days. They escaped at night; few made it home.

3. This section is largely taken from work in progress on the Nitsitapii and the fur trade in the Northern Plains/Rocky Mountains (Reeves n.d, d and e), which is largely based on a primary documentary analysis of published and unpublished materials, particularly those resident in the Hudson's Bay Company's Archives at the Manitoba Provincial Archives in Winnipeg. An important research report relating to this is E. Arima's undated "The Piikáni and Rocky Mountain House," prepared for Parks Canada in the 1980s. Selective published sources have been cited as appropriate for the trade on the Missouri, among which are David Wishart's "The Fur Trade of the American West, 1807-1840: A Geographical Synthesis," first published in 1979; and John Sunder's 1965 classic work, "The Fur Trade on the Upper Missouri, 1840-1865." Wishart's study is particularly valuable; he sets the trade in the environmental-economic context of the time.

There remains a great deal of primary research still to be done on the detailed history of the trade by the American Fur Company and later establishments with the Indians of the uppermost Missouri, particularly the "Blackfeet," in the decades that followed the establishment of Fort Peigan in 1832. The 1840s and 1850s are critical decades.

There is a voluminous and continually growing body of literature on the characters, events, and history of the Central Rocky Mountain fur trade associated with the Rocky Mountain Rendezvous' of the late 1820s and 1830s in which the "Blackfeet" were the principal villains. Much of the writing has been biographical in nature, focusing on the "Mountain Men." Some of these characters have achieved mythic proportions. Wishart gives a good accounting of the rise and decline of this trade, as does Gowans in his 1985 work, "Rocky Mountain Rendezvous." I have discussed some aspects of this trade where appropriate to our understanding of the "Blackfeet" and the trade in the Missouri and the Saskatchewan.

4. Although American fur trade historians are well aware that four different tribes are lumped under the general rubric "Blackfeet" in historical accountings of the Fur Trade in the West (see, for example, Washington Irving's "Astoria" and "Captain Bonneyville, U.S.A."), few historians or ethnohistorians make these distinctions in their writings on the trade.

A. P. Nasater was one of the first American fur trade historians to point this distinction out, in his 1939 article on the Jones and Immell massacre. In this article, Nasater used primary Hudson's Bay Company documents to demonstrate that the massacre attributed to the "Blackfeet" was in fact committed by the Kainaa. However, Nasater and later historians -- for example Dale Morgan (1964) and John Sunder (1968), who both discuss this incident and cite Nasater's article -- simply refer to the Indians as "Blackfeet."

Earlier, as well as later, writers writing about this and other incidents are equally guilty in assuming that the "Blackfeet" were a single tribe, with the same "warlike, aggressive characteristics" and uniform hatred of the Americans. Hiram Chittleden in his classic work on the Fur Trade (1902, Vol.1:148-149), and recent histories on Montana such as Malone, Roeder and Lang's 1976 "Montana: A History of Two Centuries" (p.49), state that it was the same group of "Blackfeet" who met Jones and Immell at the Three Forks and later attacked and massacred them near Billings. This, as Nasater, pointed out, and we discuss in our report, was not the case at all. Jones and Immell met the Piikáni at Three Forks. They were later massacred by a party of Kainaa.

Historians and ethnohistorians, while recognizing that different tribes were involved, have simply considered them as "Blackfeet," thereby ignoring the differences in behavior and attitudes between the four tribes observed and commented on by observers such as Alexander Henry the Younger in 1810 (Coues 1897) and Maximillian (Thwaites 1906). Henry noted, for example, that the Piikáni were known as peacemakers. They dealt well with the traders, while the Kainaa were noted for their aggressive and belligerent behavior toward the other tribes and the traders. The Háninin were considered the most difficult of all four tribes to deal with.

Historians and ethnohistorians, by collapsing the different tribes into one generic group, the "Blackfeet," and not pointing out the differences, have done a great disservice, in our opinion, to both the understanding and historical and contemporary perception of these different tribes, particularly the Piikáni.

5. When Lewis first met the Shoshone on August 12th, he noted (Moulton 1988:80): "I afterwards understood that the Indians we had first seen this morning had returned and alarmed the camp; these men had come out armed for action expecting to meet with their enemies the Minnetare of Fort de Prairie whom they call Pah'-kees."

Although the journals clearly identify the Pahkee as Minnetare of the Fort de Prairie, whom the Nimi and Nez Perce clearly separated from the Blackfoot, some later scholars have questioned whether these were Háninin or Nitsitapii.

What did the Nimi word "Pah'kee" mean? Linguists and historians appear to disagree. It may be the Nimi word for "the place where the water falls," i.e. the Great Falls of the Missouri and the Fall River Indians, the hand sign for and one of the tribal names for the Háninin. Alternatively, it could be the Nimi word for the rawhide armor that these and other plains tribes wore.

Gary Moulton discusses alternate interpretations (1988:86): "Here as earlier the Atsinas. Rees (1958) interprets the Shoshone name as Pahkeeks, meaning 'the place where the water falls,' an allusion to the Great Falls of the Missouri, from whence they were known as 'Fall Indians.' Sven Liljeblad, in a personal communication, believes the term is pakih'i, "stiff, hardened blanket," referring to rawhide armor that the Shoshone called "rawhide blankets," which were carried into battle by their enemies to the north-Blackfeet, Arapahoes, Atsinas, and Assiniboinés. The term was used historically to designate all of these tribes, but in modern times it has come to be applied exclusively to the Piegan Blackfeet."

John Ewers has promoted this particularistic interpretation in his work (Ewers 1958,1974). Ewers also relies on Biddle's History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition for supporting evidence of this identification. On August 26th, according to Biddle, the explorers wrote (Allen 1814:418-419; Coues 1893:554-555):

"The Shoshonees are a small tribe of the nation called Snake Indians, a vague denomination which embraces at once the inhabitants of the southern parts of the Rocky Mountains and of the plains on each side. The Shoshonees with whom we now are amount to about 100 warriors, and three times that number of women and children. Within their own recollection they formerly lived in the plains, but they have been driven into the mountains by the Pawkees or the roving Indians of the Saskatchewan, and are now obliged to visit, occasionally and by stealth, the country of their ancestors."

Ewers considers the Pawkees to be the Blackfoot. He writes in his book "The Blackfeet: Raiders of the Northern Plains":

"The Shoshonies must have suffered terrible losses in their losing fight with the Blackfeet. ....But the greater number of Shoshonies retreated westward, crossing the Rockies to avoid the relentless attacks of their old enemies "(Ewers 1958:30) [These were the Lemhi Shoshoni that Lewis and Clark met in 1806, who they estimate amounted to 100 warriors].

Did Lewis and Clark state in their journals that the Shoshone told them on August 26<sup>th</sup> that they had been driven west of the Rockies by the Pawkees? They did not. Perusal of the journal entries for both Lewis and Clark (Moulton 1988) finds no such entry for that date, or anywhere else in the journals. The statement is an editorial comment of Biddle's, which he embedded in the text. Biddle's text for August 26th is in fact part of an extensive discourse on the ethnography of the Shoshone, which he compiled from various separate entries in the journals.

Where, then, did Biddle obtain his information that the Shoshone were driven west of the mountains by their enemies? It appears to have been from William Clark, with whom he consulted during his preparation of the History. Jackson (1976) published various correspondences between Biddle and Clark, as well as notes taken by Biddle when he stayed with Clark in 1810. At that time, Biddle asked Clark about Indian migrations. Biddle notes (*ibid.*:528):

"No particular facts as to Indian emigration. Our Indian woman [Sacagewa] said and it is generally known that the Shoshonees, Liatans and other Snakes of the Mountains formerly lived in the plains on this side & by war were obliged to take refuge in mounts. The Ootlashoots [Salish-Flatheads] too say that they once were in the plains & were forced to retire."

The Nimi were no doubt driven out of the Missouri headwaters and west of the mountains by the Pahkiks, who most probably were the Háninin, whose traditional territory was in and around the Missouri Headwaters that the Nimi briefly occupied in the early 1700s.

6. Although some writers are careful to differentiate the Piikáni from the "Blackfeet" in the retelling of the Two Medicine incident (e.g., Ewers 1958), others continue to perpetuate the "Blackfeet" myth (e.g., Malone, Roeder and Lang's "Montana: A History of Two Centuries").

The hostility toward the American trappers and traders by the Blackfeet has been attributed by some historians to the Two Medicine Incident. David Thompson also used it as a reason for his being able to cross the Rocky Mountains from Rocky Mountain House in 1807. Thompson wrote in his Narrative:

"The murder of two Peagan Indians by Captain Lewis of the United States, drew the Peagans to the Mississourie to revenge their deaths, and thus gave me an opportunity to cross the Mountains..." (Glover 1962).

Thompson got his information on this incident from some published account of the incident, which assumed that two Indians had been killed, because there is no mention of this incident in his journals for any of the years in the West. Therefore, we must assume that Thompson never learned of it first hand from the Indians or traders, but rather obtained it from another source.

Washington Irving, in "Astoria," published in 1836, wrote one of the first widely read works to claim that this incident was responsible for the Blackfeet's hostility towards the Americans. He wrote (Irving 1893:147): "[The Blackfeet had] conceived an implacable hostility to whitemen, in consequence of one of their warriors having been killed by Captain Lewis, while attempting to steal horses." This claim was repeated by David H. Coyner in the "Lost Trappers," published in 1847. Coyner added, "The act created an implacable hatred for the whites from that day till this" (cited in Rhonda 1984:243).

Other observers had a different view of the significance of this event. For example, Major Thomas Biddle, writing to Colonel Henry Atkinson from Camp Missouri, 29 October 1819 (American State Papers 6, Indian Affairs II:201), concerning Blackfeet/American relationships, was of the opinion that this incident had nothing to do with the Blackfeet hostility, which in his view was the result of Colter's incidents with the "Blackfeet" in 1809. Major Biddle wrote:

"It is an act of justice due to the memory of the late Captain Lewis, to state that the Blackfeet Indians [in whose vicinity Lisa now lives] were so convinced of the propriety of his conduct in the encounter between him and party of their people, in which two of them were killed, that they did not consider it a cause of war or hostility on their part; this is proved, in as much as the first party of Lisa's men that were met by the Blackfeet were treated civilly. This circumstance induced Lisa to dispatch one of his men [Colter] to the forks of the Missouri to endeavour to find the Blackfeet nation, and bring them to his establishment to trade. The messenger unfortunately fell in with a party of the Crow nation, with whom he stayed several days. While with them they were attacked by their enemies the Blackfeet. Colter, in self defence, took part with the Crows. He distinguished himself very much in the combat; and the Blackfeet were defeated, having plainly observed a white man fighting in the ranks of their enemy. Colter returned to the trading house. In traversing the same country a short time after, in company with another man a party of the Blackfeet attempted to stop them, without, however, evidencing any hostile intentions; a re-encounter ensued, in which the companion of Colter and two Indians were killed, and Colter made his

escape. The next time whites were met by the Blackfeet the latter attacked without parley."

7. Maximillian, during his visit to Fort McKenzie in the late summer of 1832, compiled a relatively detailed ethnographic account of the Kaina, Siksiká, and Piikáni, whom he referred to collectively as "Blackfoot," and the Háninin, whom he referred to as "Gros Ventre." Maximillian's opinion was much the same as Henry's on the aggressive nature of the Kaina as compared to the Piikáni. Maximillian wrote (Thwaites 1906:95-96):

"They [Kainaa] have always manifested a more sanguinary and predatory character than the others, of whom the Piikann have always been remarked as the most moderate and humane of their nation.... The Piikanns, in particular, behave well and amicably to the Whites, whereas the Blood Indians and the Siksiká can never be trusted."

Maximillian also had a similar opinion on the Háninin, as did Henry.

8. Alexander Henry the Younger was one of the principal leaders of the Northwest Company in the early decades of the 1800s. His journal spans fifteen years of travel and trade between Lake Superior and the Pacific (Coues 1897). After his retirement in Montreal from active involvement in the western trade, Henry began to prepare his material for publication. A copy penned by George Coventry in the year 1824, dated February 20th, is all that remains of Henry's Journals. Coventry probably reworked the original journals to some extent into a more literary form. Henry's ethnographic descriptions are far more exact and significant than those of MacKenzie's (Lambe 1970). The latter, first published in 1801, became the standard reference on the territories, origins, customs, and habits of the Indians of the Saskatchewan, including the Nitsitappi and Háninin, tribes whom MacKenzie never met; he got his information second and third hand from other Northwest Company traders.

9. The first mention of Americans in the Edmonton House journals dates to the preceding year. In a letter of James Bird's, dated December 23, 1806, he notes:

"A party of Americans were seen last summer where the Missouri enters the rocky Mountains & it is reported by the Muddy or Missouri River Indians that four of them set off with an intention to come here but that they killed one and the rest returned" (PAM HBCA B.60/a/6).

Bird's reference is either a muddled account of the Two Medicine incident or an account of another incident between the Piikáni and white trappers. Other American groups were rumored to be trapping in the Upper Missouri at the time of the expedition's return (Olgesby 1963). Proof of their existence has yet to be found in the primary records.

10. David Thompson's journal entry for September 25, 1807, notes that a party of Siksiká, Kainaa, and Háninin had gone to war against the Crow in the summer of 1807. It was probably the same group.

"About 2 or 3 months ago the brother of Old White Swan, a Blackfoot [Chief] had with his band, a party of Blood Indians, and a few Fall Indians, pillaged Fort Augustus and left the men without even clothing on their backs, but whether they murdered the men or not they do not know, any more than whether they pillaged both forts or only one, but that they were possessed of many guns, much ammunition and tobacco, with various other articles, and finding themselves thus rich, they were gone to war on the Crow Indians" (White 1950).

11. The *Louisiana Gazette*, reporting on Menard's return in July from the Three Forks, was of the opinion that the reason the Blackfeet opposed the Missouri traders was that the traders were trading guns and ammunition with the Blackfeet enemy, the Crow.

12. Conflicts between the "Blackfeet" and the American trappers, and to a lesser extent the British trappers, marked the ten or so years that the "Rocky Mountain Fur Trade flourished in the mountains and valleys of today's southern Montana, western Wyoming, adjacent areas of Utah and Idaho" (Reeves n.d. e). The "Blackfeet" directly competed with other Indian groups, Iroquois-Québécois freeman and American and British trappers for the rapidly depleting beaver of this previously untrapped region. The Háninin and Kainaa in particular were not adverse to "liberating" the furs trapped by other tribes, mixed bloods, or whites. The Indians also had a long-standing hatred of the Iroquois-Québécois freemen, and often killed them on sight.

The death of over forty white men (most actually mixed-blood freemen trappers) over the years was attributed by General Ashley to the "Blackfeet" (Morgan 1964). Peaceful encounters with the "Blackfeet" were rare. Only occasionally are the "Blackfeet" identified by tribe by the Americans in the documents of this time. William Ferris's diaries (Ferris 1940) are an exception to this general rule. They are a very important and little-used source of ethnographic and historic information for this time.

Our analysis of the primary documents from this time suggests that most of the "Blackfeet" depredations on the white trappers, as well as the occasional "battles," including that of Pierre's Hole, mostly involved the Háninin, and to a lesser extent the Kainaa. Sometimes the Siksiká were involved; rarely were the Piikáni. The latter, under the leadership of Iron Shirt, on more than one occasion attempted to make "peace" with the Americans and lobby them to build a post at the Three Forks.

13. The native people were not happy with the creation of this monopoly. It was to their disadvantage. James Sutherland wrote to Governor William Williams from Edmonton House, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1822:

"The Coalition has displeased the Fur Hunters, of this Department, on hearing of it they anticipated worse treatment and said they would kill no more skins, and hitherto no inducement of ours can avail in encouraging them to exert themselves, as yet we have not got a skin from any of the Cree Indians since fall. The Slave Tribes are also displeased that they have not two houses, yet they make provisions, and kill a few furs, at the same time grumbling and threatening to exterminate us" (D.4.116 George Simpson, Correspondence Book Inward, 1821-1822, Letter, 1 February 1822 James Sutherland, Edmonton House, to Governor Williams, fol. 28d-29)

Despite native resentment, the returns for that winter were estimated at 900 skins at Edmonton House. A thousand skins were collected that winter at Rocky Mountain House, primarily from the Piikáni.

The Indians were probably more upset over the stopping, by the Hudson's Bay Company, of the trade in liquor with them. Liquor was the main competitive trade item between the two companies. With the amalgamation, the company decided that they no longer needed to trade liquor to the Indians in the Saskatchewan District. The trade, however, resumed a short ten years later to counter the American Fur Company's trade in liquor out of Fort Union and Fort McKenzie.

14. McKenzie's earlier fur trade activities west of the mountains with the NWC in the Snake River country had come back to haunt him. The reason the Háninin were hostile was that they recognized him as one of a party of NWC trappers who were involved in a skirmish with them in the Snake River country three years earlier. The Háninin asserted "that they had seen Mr. McKenzie across the mountain assisting their enemies [Nimi], and that he now was en route to join them" (PAM HBCA B.34/1/424, October 1822). McKenzie's party had been trading arms and ammunition to the Nimi in return for beaver.

15. Doucette was sent out from Fort McKenzie at the end of August 1833 by Kenneth McKenzie with five men and two K'tunaxa to trade with the K'tunaxa. They were to ride up the Teton for two days, then strike north to the mountains, where they would reach the K'tunaxa in 12 days if they were at their usual place. The expedition failed when Doucette was shot by a Kainaa a few days out of the fort.

16. It is not clear from the account of this event whether the Ojibwa killed the Piikáni, and was killed in turn by the Piikáni accompanying them north, or if both of Bird's men were killed by the accompanying Piikáni.

17. The principal sources utilized for this section are Ewer's historical summary in "The Blackfeet Raiders of the Northern Plains," supplemented by Michael Foley's 1974 exhaustive work "An Historical Analysis of the Administration of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation by the United States." Another useful source for the contemporary Blackfeet is Malcolm McFee's "Modern Blackfeet: Montanans on a Reservation." James Welch's "Killing Custer" is highly recommended for his sensitive treatment of the "Massacre on the Marias."

18. This section is largely based on Christopher Ashby's 1985 Master's Thesis, "The Blackfeet Agreement of 1895 and Glacier National Park: A Case History." Other references to the Ceded Strip include relevant sections within Foley (1974).

19. A paper read by Ann Regan, of the Minnesota Historical Society Press at the Western History Conference, Billings, Montana, in 1986 entitled "The Blackfeet, the Bureaucrats, and Glacier National Park, 1910-1940," is the primary source for the discussion of the Blackfeet and the Great Northern Railroad/Glacier Park Company.

20. In 1910, the GNR acquired a right-of-way for a wagon road from the hotel to the park entrance. Interior waved compensation for the Blackfeet. Congress also allowed the GNR to take lands from the Blackfeet for the erection of the hotel. The GNR paid a nominal price of \$430.00 per acre. Some years later, the Indian Office transferred several acres of lake-front land to the Bureau of Reclamation, who then leased it to the Park Saddle Company, a GNR subsidiary, who wanted to keep the Indians from establishing businesses there (Foley 1974).

21. Mary Ann Reeves, wife of the author, was an Indian Greeting Girl at the Prince of Wales Dining Room in the mid-late 1950s. Brian Reeves was a busboy. She wore buckskin, and the author wore a scotch kilt!

## CHAPTER 4

### PIIKÁNI ETHNOLOGY AND GLACIER NATIONAL PARK



#### Traditional Piikáni Belief

##### *Sacred Beings and Sacred Power*

Traditional Piikáni religion, like that of most hunter-gatherers the world over, is cosmotheistic in nature. Sacred power pervades the universe and all the "beings" that inhabit it. The theological essence of cosmotheism is a moral principle. It is the fundamental article of faith:

"People, animals, plants, and other forces of nature-sun, earth, wind, and rock-are animated by spirit. As such they share with humankind, intelligence and will, and thus have moral rights and obligations as PERSONS" (Hunn 1990:230).

In cosmotheistic religions, human morality extends to include the entire local ecosystem (Feit 1970). Cosmotheism involves a different view of the world of nature and humans' place within it. Central to this is the concept of sacred power:

"... the Blackfeet theory is that there functions in the universe a force (natoji=sunpower) most manifest in the sun but pervading the entire world, a power (natoji) that may communicate with individuals making itself manifest through any object, usually animate" (Wissler 1912b:103).

Sacred power reveals itself to humans through speech (*ibid.*). "The being who speaks may be an object, such as a rock, or an animal form; or the being who speaks may take first the form of an animal and then become transmuted into a person; or the process may begin with a person who is transmuted into an animal." Speech also includes song. It is when the being speaks or sings that the being becomes a source of sacred power (Harrod 1987:23-24).

Visionary experience is fundamental to Piikáni religious belief and practice. Sacred beings are experienced in both dream-vision and waking-visions. Dream-visions are more common than waking-visions. The most important and powerful form of dream-vision is that received during a vision quest. Waking visions, while rare, are very powerful. Sometimes they are experienced simultaneously by more than one person.

Humans share in the power which the transcendent being possesses through the transfer of power during the immediate visionary experience. Transfer is a matter of establishing a particular kinship relationship between humans and the sacred sources of power (*ibid.*:29). Relationships and obligations are established between the human and the transcendent being who is often referred to as "father" or "mother" while the human's self-understanding is as "son" or "daughter."

The ability to transfer sacred power is a fundamental and characteristic feature of Piikáni religion. It is much more complex in development than that in other plains Indian religions. Among the Piikáni, power that has initially been received by another person can be transferred to another person through a process of mediation, in which the original relationship and obligations established in the original vision experience are transferred to another person, not necessarily, and most often not, a close relative.

When the ritual and songs are transferred, along with the sacred object(s), which are generally enclosed within a bundle, the power inherent in the original vision becomes active in the experience of the receiving person (Wissler 1912b:103; Harrod 1987:30). Successive transfers occur through social time within traditional Piikáni society. It is an ever on-going process. Transfer is non-hereditary in form.

Among the Piikáni, the faithful reproduction of the ritual acts is not conceived of as a historical re-enactment, but as an actual recapitulation of the original visionary experience. Experiences of sacred power are therefore continually renewed. The individual occupies the same relationship to the sacred being as that of previous persons, including the original person who experienced the sacred.

The ritual transfer of power has significant implications for the social status of both individuals and families. Honor accrues to those individuals who have a long history of ownership of various kinds of sacred power (Wissler 1912b:276-278; Harrod 1987:30-31). Experiences of transcendence are highly valued. Those individuals who have such experiences, either directly or through transfer, continue to be honored today among traditional Piikáni believers.

### *Other Than Human Beings*

The Piikáni classify "beings" into Human and Naahks--"Other Than Human Beings." The latter include a wide variety of natural and supernatural beings. These are grouped according to where they reside: Above Persons, Ground Persons, and Under Water Persons (Grinnell 1892a:259). Among the supernaturals, Thunder or Thunderbird is one of the most important and powerful of the Above Persons. Thunder gave the medicine pipes to the people. Thunder brings rain. Thunder resides in the Backbone, particularly at Chief Mountain.

Under Water People look like human beings, live in lodges, and carry on a style of life similar to the Piikáni. They live in all the deep lakes and rivers, but not in shallow lakes, streams or ponds with muddy bottoms, because they are unable to set up their lodges. The Piikáni are afraid of the Under Water People because they have taken many of the Piikáni into rivers and lakes. Fish is the Under Water People's food, and if the Piikáni eat it, they will be seized by the Under Water People and dragged below the surface.

Under Water Persons include Wind Maker, who resides under the water at the heads of the South and North Big Inside Lakes (Upper St. Mary and Waterton). When Wind Maker wants to make the wind blow, he makes the waves roll, and that causes the wind to blow. Ground Man is another below person.

Cold Maker brings the cold and snow. "He is a man, white in colour, with white hair, and clad in white apparel, who rides on a white horse. He brings the storm with him." Cold Maker made the ice in the mountains. No Runner explains how this happened (Schultz 1930: 186-188):

"He and Sun are always fighting. He comes down from the Far North, bringing with him his snowstorms and terrible cold winds, and day by day drives Sun away to the South. He does the best that he can, but always he loses strength; his storms become more and more feeble, his power for cold-making weakens, and then Sun turns and slowly but steadily drives him back whence he came, melting his snows, warming the earth, and causing the grass to grow again. But in the very first of their battling, Cold-Maker made strong medicine. Here and there along these mountains, along this Back-Bone-of-the-World, he deposited great thicknesses of ice, and when he had made them he said to Sun: 'Just at this time you are stronger; you drive me back; but I leave these thick ice places along my trail as a sign that I shall come again. Unless you can turn them into water and make them disappear, you can never conquer me.'

"Ha! If that is all I have to do then you shall soon be no more!" Sun cried, and sent his heat down upon the ice places with all his strength. Water began to stream from them; rivers of water poured from them. Sun laughed: "This is easy. I shall soon melt them," he said. But he failed to do it, and when he had used up all his heat, and had melted only a small part of them, back came Cold Maker and drove him South, and made fresh ice in place of that that had been melted. And so it has gone on, this battle between the two, and so it will go on ....

"... Wind Maker is Cold-Maker's helper. He is a very large animal, something like a moose, and has enormous ears. He works his ears and thus causes the wind to blow, very softly, or very hard, just as he pleases. Well, when Cold-Maker is driven North by Sun, he leaves Wind-Maker here in these mountains, to do all that he can against Sun during the summer. He too, is tired and weak, but now and then, even when Sun is strongest, he manages to ear-fan a terrible wind, so cold that for the time it prevents the ice melting. Thus he is of great help to Cold-Maker."

Under Water Persons reside in many places within Mistakis--lakes such as Upper Two Medicine, the South and North Big Inside Lakes, and in lakes and streams in the Cutbank Valley. Once, an Indian who was camped in this valley saw "Wind Maker rise from the waters of a lake. He was like a monster bull elk. When he flapped his ears, the wind blew hard; and when he sank again beneath the water, the wind went down" (McClintock 1923:16). The Piikáni refer to the Chinook as the Black Wind, because when the Chinook blows there are usually black clouds over the mountains (Schultz 1916).

Billy Jackson told McClintock (*ibid.*:17) that last summer (1895) an Under Water Spirit took a child of a friend of his, Bear Paw who lives on Cutbank Creek:

"One day Bear Paw went into the mountains to cut lodgepoles. He camped at the edge of the forest, near a bend in the river, where a big rock stood and the water was deep. His wife went there for water and saw the rock move; and that night she had a strange dream. The Rock stood over her and said: 'Give me your child.' The woman was so frightened she went to the river and sacrificed some of her ornaments; she threw them into the water close to the Rock. Soon after that one of her children died. Now they believe it was taken from them by the Spirit of the Rock."

Sacred power may come from natural or supernatural beings in any of these three categories. Sometimes people will have a dream in which they are instructed to return or offer up the sacred objects, rituals, and songs they have received either directly or through transfer. If it came from an Above Person, the sacred object is placed on a high place or in a tree; if from the Under Water People, the object would be put into a river or lake; and if from the Ground People it would either be buried in the ground or placed underneath a pile of rocks. When they wear out, painted tipi covers are also treated the same way. If, for example, it is an otter or beaver tipi, the old cover will be weighted down and put in a lake or river. If it is a raven lodge, the cover will be put up in a tree.

Above People can be reached in these valleys. Schultz (1916:49-58) recounts a story told to him about Mountain Chief, leader of the Blood band of the Piikáni, who had lost his two fastest buffalo runners while camped on Cutbank Creek. A K'tunaxa medicine man who was staying in camp told him he could help him find them. The K'tunaxa sang a sacred song, built a tent within Mountain Chief's lodge, and sought help within it -- first from a pine tree, then from other spirits, a rock, and Old Man of the Winds. None could help. Old Man of the Winds, who lives on the west side of the mountains, said that Red Top Plume, who lives in the clouds, could help. The K'tunaxa told Mountain Chief to watch for a cloud forming in the sunset with a red top. Mountain Chief did; and the K'tunaxa brought Red Top Plume down, who told them, somewhat annoyed to be disturbed for such a menial purpose, where Mountain Chief's horses were.

### *Cosmology*

Napi, Old Man, is the Creator of this world, culture hero, and trickster -- the last a role usually reserved for Coyote in many western American native traditions. Napi is a specific physical expression of the sacred power at the heart of the Universe, or the creative principle "Apistotoki." This power is also expressed through Natoji (Sun Power), which to the Piikáni is the symbolic representation of the universal sacred power. Solar imagery and symbolism are the most fundamental aspects of Piikáni religious life.

Napi "re-creates" the Piikáni world. In one version (Wissler and Duvall 1908:19), Napi and the animals are sitting on a high mountain (Chief Mountain) surrounded by water. In other versions, they are floating on a raft. The re-creation takes place through the help of animals, appearing in the form of the "earth diver" motif -- a common theme in Native North American cosmologies (Hultkrantz 1981:31).

Old Man sends four water creatures to search for earth, to make the world. These are Otter, Beaver, Muskrat, and Duck. Three fail, and in some versions three or all four are drowned. The fourth-- Muskrat or Duck, depending on the version--brings back some dirt. Old Man takes the dirt, makes three feigning movements towards the water, then drops the dirt on the fourth. The earth spreads, the Above People send rain, and everything begins to grow. The animals sacrifice themselves for the sake of the earth and humans (Harrod 1987:42).

Napi, in a further elaboration of the re-creation unique to Piikáni cosmology, begins traveling north, making plants and animals and placing each in its proper habitat, and creating rivers, red paint, hills, and the Backbone. Napi creates a woman and child out of clay, and life and death (Grinnell 1892a:138, fol.; Clark 1966:253-257). In another version (Wissler and Duvall 1908:21-22), Old Man and Old Woman pre-exist and create humans together.

At first, humans were poor and naked and did not know how to feed themselves. Napi taught them the roots and the berries to eat, the animals to eat, and how to gather and hunt them – particularly the buffalo. He showed which herbs were good for sickness. He taught them how to make weapons and pots. He gave the people culture.

Most important, Napi taught the people how to get spirit power. Napi told the people:

"Go away by yourself and go to sleep. Something will come to you in your dream that will help you. It may be some animal. Whatever this animal tells you in your sleep, you must do. Obey it. Be guided by it. If later you want to help, if you are travelling alone and cry aloud for help, your prayer will be answered. It may be by an eagle, perhaps by a buffalo, perhaps by a bear. Whatever animal hears your prayer, you must listen to it" (Clark 1966:255-256).

Among the animals that are especially respected and thought to have great power are the buffalo, bear, raven, wolf, beaver, kit-fox, and goose (Grinnell 1892a:260).

Old Man continued to travel north, teaching people how to drive buffalo over a cliff at Piskun (Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump), creating more animals, plants, places, and people, as far north as the Red Deer River. Finally he was finished: "The world has been made, culture created, basic relationships established and fundamental values ordered" (Harrod 1987:45).

Napi then left the Blackfeet world. Chewing Black Bones recounted (Clark 1966:257):

"Old Man can never die. Long ago he left the Blackfeet and went away toward the west, disappearing in the mountains. Before he started, he said to the people, 'I will always take care of you, and some day I will return.'

"Even today some people think that he spoke the truth and that when he comes back he will bring with him the buffalo, which they believe the white men have hidden. Others remember that before he left them he said that when he returned he would find them a different people. They would be living in a different world, he said, from that which he had created for them and had taught them to live in."

### *Contemporary Traditional Religious Practice*

A number of significant elements of Piikáni traditional religion continue to be practiced today by both individuals and groups within the larger native community.

Individual, family, and small group religious activities include meditation and prayer at home or work, or at a certain place. Sweats, pipe ceremonies, and bundle openings are frequently held for specific purposes, in association with specific events or as part of regular religious observances at special places.

More regularized and seasonally structured religious activities include vision questing and other ceremonies held at special places at certain times of the year, as well as men's and women's society "dances."

In the Piikáni religious calendar, group and community religious practices known and open to the larger public focus today on the openings of the medicine pipe bundles on successive weekends in May and June on the Blackfeet, Kainaa, Peigan, and Siksiká nations. A North or South Piikáni Okan is no longer held on an annual basis; only the Kainaa continue to hold an Okan each summer. Traditional Piikáni assist in the Kainaa Okan. Some are members of the Horn and Matoki societies that play an integral role in the Okan ceremonies.

### **"Mistakis" and Piikáni Religious Belief and Practice**

The Backbone plays a fundamental role in traditional Piikáni religion. The mountains are strongly linked to many of the sacred religious visionary experiences, activities, objects, and ceremonies, historically, as well as in contemporary practice. A variety of sacred materials also come from the mountains, and are discussed in this report under the ethnobotany, ethnozoology, and ethnogeology sections. This section addresses Piikáni fundamentals and Mistakis.

#### *Mistakis as a Sacred Place*

The Piikáni's traditional sacred geography (Reeves n.d. b) focuses on four areas of particular sacred and visionary significance within their traditional territory: the Bow River in the vicinity of today's Siksiká Nation, where many sacred events occurred, including the visioning of the Iniskim; the Porcupine Hills, particularly the vicinity of Piskun (Head-Smashed-In); the Blood Clot Hills, where the sweat lodge and Okan were brought to the people; and Mistakis.

Mistakis is most sacred to the Piikáni. An elder Piikáni man (EM-1) tells us:

"Along the mountains. I go up alone, I go sleep any place .... But somebody says 'You can't sleep up the mountains anymore'.... It's clean up there. The water's clean, everything .... The whole mountains is a sacred thing ....

"The old people still go up. They can camp any place along the rivers or the hills, foothills. They stay there sometimes. I know Old Turtle, Frank Shultz ... these are all the people that used to sleep up there, in the hills .... A lot of them old people--Eagle Head--and Red? Chief, he slept ... up there."

Another Piikáni elder man (EM-2) says:

"... there's a lot of things in Glacier National Park. What we'd like to keep for ourselves, for religious .... Buster, he goes up there quite often. I go up there, my kids. We exercise something that rightfully belongs to the Indian people and often that we have told the Forestry that we are really doing ceremonies .... And I understand that they have made an agreement to protect all of this, to utilize at some later date. We began to show, like sometimes I take my kids up here in the mountains. I show them different leaves. Long time ago, what we used for everything. See we have all sorts of roots, medicines" (EW-1).

**Table 5: Piikáni Sacred Events and Activities in Waterton-Glacier**

<i>Place</i>	<i>Sacred Visionary Event</i>	<i>Past and/or Current Activities</i>
<b>Cut Bank</b> Mountains Creek Valley	Medicine Grizzlies	Vision Quests Vision Quests Digging Paint Collecting Plants
<b>Ninastakis</b>	Many Long-Time-Pipe Bear Chiefs War Shirt Bring-Down-The-Sun's Drum	Cave Burial Vision Quests Ongoing Vision Question by Piikáni, Kainaa, Siksika, Cree, Tsuu T'ina Kaina Horn Society and Sun Dancers Ceremonies Cree and Tsuu T'ina Shaking Tent and Sweat Plant Collecting
<b>Upper St. Mary</b> Lake Exit Lake Mountains Valley Divide Creek	Tobacco Seeds in Beaver B.	Vision Quests Vision Quests Plant Collecting Plant Collecting
<b>Lower St. Mary</b> Lake Exit Hudson Bay Ridge		Tobacco Garden Eagle Trapping
<b>Two Medicine</b> Mountains Ridge Lake Running Eagle Falls Valley  Foot Lower Lake	Red Eagle's Thunder Pipe	Vision Quests Eagle Trapping Vision Quests Vision Quests Plant Collecting Tobacco Garden Medicine Lodge

**Table 5: Piikáni Sacred Events and Activities in Waterton-Glacier**

<i>Place</i>	<i>Sacred Visionary Event</i>	<i>Past and/or Current Activities</i>
<b>Waterton</b> Upper Lake River Exit  Valley Crandell Mountain Sofa Mountain	Visioning Beaver Bundle Visioning River X Pipe Single Circle Otter Lodge	Vision Quests  Plant Collecting Vision Quests Kainaa Vision Questing
Unspecified Locations	Bear Lodge, Spear and Knife Blue Thnder Lodge Medicine Pipes	

An aged holy woman and her nephew (SL-1), a respected medicine man, who interprets for her, inform us:

"... she said these mountains have a lot of history, in a spiritual way. And she said in the past, and she says, all these mountains, once they start bothering them, she said the spirits, they just withdraw, you don't see those things any more. That's why you don't see those things anymore. They're there, they just withdraw, you know" (EW-1).

"I think that, myself, personally, a person's got to change their way, try to live a good life and then go seek it at certain places. You know, bring that one back alive. Just like the life? Then they will be active again. And, it is my personal experiences, going up in the mountains and fasting and stuff like that, it takes a while. Pretty soon they'll come to you, but they don't trust you because they have seen so many other men destroy things. And this is what they don't trust. And they just kind of overall think that we're all going to destroy things" (SL-1).

"Everything (water, rocks, trees) has a different spirit. Every plant and every animal" (EW-1).

A Medicine Pipe Bundle holder, who is also a spiritual leader (SL-2) talks about the mountains and Two Medicine:

"They use the mountains quite a bit. And right now, some of the old ladies, they still

say we own it. They say 'we never gave them the mountains.' They said, 'right at the foot of the mountains, this way is ours. That's theirs right on top.' They still can't believe it. Myself, I think we still own it. We still got the right. We never gave them that. We never signed a treaty on it. Everybody owns the mountain. We have to sign. New generation now. Some of the leaders have to re-sign. But I ain't gonna sign, myself. Because I still own them. Why would I want to sign now? We is here they just came. They just claiming this and that. They didn't know. But I know how they survived, because my old grandma and them, they tell us. Pretty small. That's how I learned all that stuff. I listened to the old people when they talked in the circle and smoke and they talk about these mountains and how they've been used. They even have ceremonies next to the mountains a long time ago. Because there were people sick on the reservation. And they had sacred doings, I think it's right there, going to past the Park, down that way [referring to Badger-Two Medicine].

"Animals that were around there, people were around there. That's the first thing they saw. They get up there and look around and 'Oh. We run into this mountain, lets stay here for a while.' And they stay in that nice place. Nobody at the lakes. They don't fish or anything. And they go up that way. No ownership or sign of anything in them days. They just go up, that's theirs. It's always been theirs. See, they look in them lakes. They see some, they look like people there at that time. Sitting on the Upper Two Medicine Lake. And they see these old people peek down, all the way in the water. And they said, those are little people. They're black, like. They never said they're mermaids. I don't know what they are. They're spirits. So the people scared. The Upper Lake, there's somebody there, those kind of people."

Today, as in the old days, the people prayed to certain mountains (Grinnell 1901:667). In 1887, Grinnell (1887) recorded Schultz's account of a prayer made to Chief Mountain by Eagle Head, an old blind warrior of the Small Robes band:

"... Last winter I saw him sitting outside of his lodge one warm pleasant day, looking toward Chief Mountain, which, as you know, the Piegans regard as one of their minor gods. After a little while he began to pray and the prayer seemed to me so forcible and pathetic that I wrote it out. This is what he said:

'Hear now, you Chief of Mountains, you who stand foremost: listen, I say, to the mourning of the people. Now are the days truly become evil and are not as they were in ancient times. But you know. You have seen the days. Under your fallen garments the years are buried. Then were the days full of joy, for the buffalo covered the prairie, and the people were content. Warm dwellings had they then, soft robes for coverings, and feasting was without end.

'Hear now, you Mountain Chief. Listen, I say, to the mourning of the people. Their dwellings and their raiment now are made of strange thin stuff, and the long days come and go without feast, for our buffalo are gone. Useless, indeed, the drum, for who would sing and dance while hunger gnawed within him.

'Like an old blind man your people feel their way along, falling over unseen things, for the gods are angry. In vain the usual offering to the Sun. Where now the hundred tongues, the snow white robes which always were his share? And because we cannot find them he turns away his eyes, making our medicine useless. So then we fall and die, even as an old blind man who cannot see the way.

'Hear, now, you who stand among the clouds. Pity, I say, your starving people. Give back those happy days. Cover once more the prairies with our real food that your children may live again. Hear, I say, the prayer of your unhappy people. Bring back those ancient days. Then will our medicine again be strong, then will you be happy and the aged die content.'"

### *The Vision Quest: Ni-pap-o-kan, "My dream or my vision" (Schultz 1916:201)*

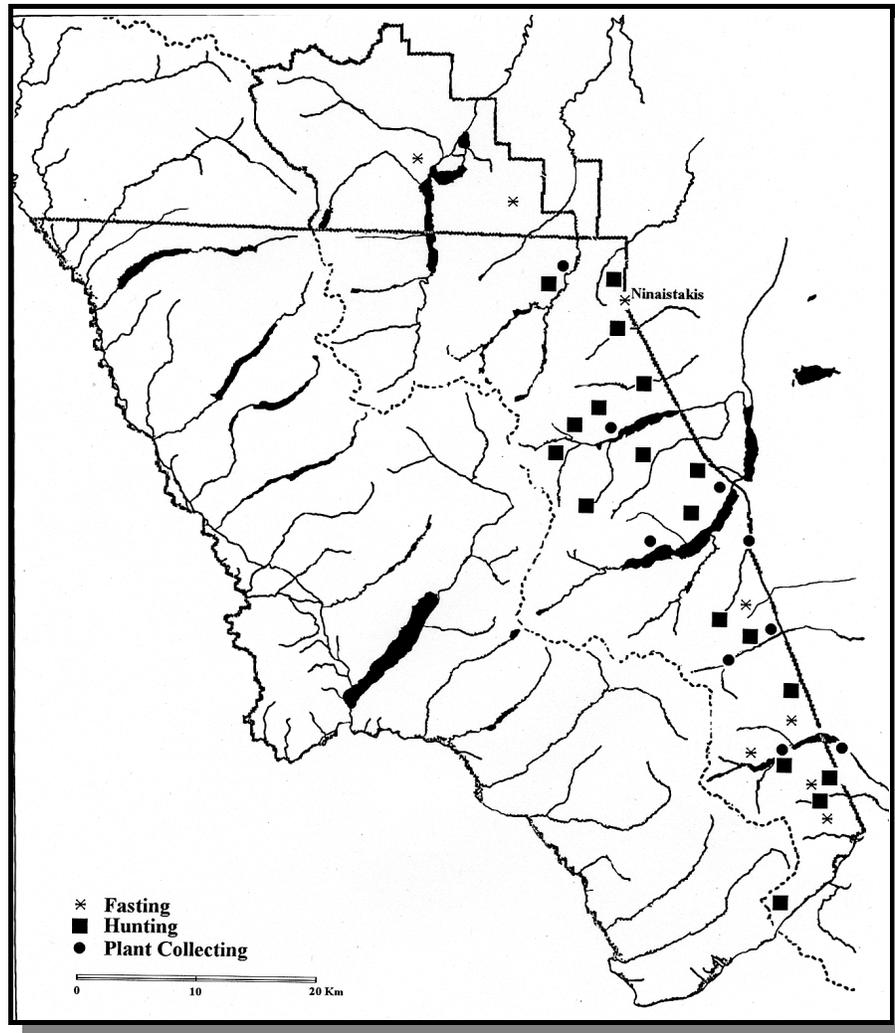
Vision questing (Dormarr and Reeves 1992; Harrod 1987; Wissler 1912b) is a fundamental religious activity among Piikáni traditionalists. It is primarily a man's activity. As in the old days, some go only once, while others after their initial vision quest go only when in need of help or to give thanks. Some men go each summer. Vision questing today focuses on the "high places" in the Blood Clot (Sweetgrass) Hills, Porcupine Hills, Mistakis, and certain isolated buttes and hills.

In the last century, before the Nitsitapii were confined to the reserves and reservations and the lands were settled by white people, vision quests were also carried out at certain isolated places along some of the mountain lakes, on islands, next to waterfalls, in caves and rock shelters, and at other special places in Mistakis, in the adjacent foothills and prairie highlands, and at certain places along the rivers--Writing-On-Stone and the Milk River Badlands, for example.

Today, preparation for vision quests includes a sweat conducted by a medicine person, with appropriate instruction to the seeker immediately prior to the quest. The seeker then may be taken from the sweat (depending on where it is carried out) to the general location of the site. Alone, carrying a blanket, sweetgrass, and tobacco offerings, and sometimes a pipe, he will climb up to the vision quest site. This site is usually a traditional Piikáni site with a stone structure(s) present (*ibid.*). There he will fast and pray for four days and nights, awaiting his vision which will come on the last night. Next morning, the quester will return and participate in another sweat. Sometimes a medicine person or helper will go up and bring him down.

A variety of Other Than Human Beings may appear to the vision quester, including spirit animals--such as the buffalo, otter, bear, eagle, raven--and supernatural beings in human or other forms. These beings will give the person certain medicines in the vision that the person will later use in life to create his/her personal medicine bundles, and the songs and rituals to accompany their use. For example, an aged Piikáni warrior, Skunikaps (Strong), told McClintock that he had been given an eagle feather by Sun Above while sleeping in the mountains. He always took it to war. It was his talisman and kept him safe (McClintock 1930a:29).

Vision quests are undertaken at a number of places in the Backbone. The Badger/Two Medicine area of today's Lewis and Clark National Forest is traditionally used by a number of Piikáni men. George



Map 7: Traditional Piikáni Hunting, Plant-collecting, and Fasting Locales in Waterton-Glacier.

Kicking Woman has his first vision there as a young man (Kicking Woman 1993). Waterton-Glacier is also a focal area for vision questing. Over 100 structures relating to these activities have now been recorded within the two parks (Reeves 2000). There are a number of historic and contemporary accounts of vision quests.

### *Two Medicine*

The Two Medicine area within the park was a particularly important area for vision questing. Mountains that Piikáni elders remember being used include Rising Wolf (SL-1), Mount Henry (SL-1), and Spot Mountain (SL-1). Some of the old-timers who used this area included Yellow Kidney, Mud Head, and Old Jappy (SL-1). Ancient vision quest structures have been found on all three peaks (Reeves 2000).

"Yeah, my grandpa and Mud Head and old Jappy. O Top, they talk about going up

there. They didn't say. Them old people, they wont tell you, they'll just tell you I've been up there (SL-1).

"Amos Heavy Breast, he went back in there somewhere, he never did say. But people know that he went back in there, Heavy Breast. To fast in that area there. In Two Medicine area. I don't know, he never did disclose where he went but people knew that he went back there. See, the way these old people were is they didn't tell nobody where they were going. They just left, and that's the way I do things" (SL-1).

Old Sun, a respected Piikáni medicine man and eagle catcher of the last century, received his first vision in the Two Medicine (Schultz 1922:46 ff.). Two Medicine, with its abundance of red rock, was a particularly favored area for Sun Power. After being prepared for his fast, Old Sun went up on Red Mountain (Rising Wolf) where he found a cave. A grizzly bear appeared and tried to kill him, then something threw rocks down from the top. Then a friendly wolf appeared. Finally, Ancient Raven came to be his helper. He appears transformed into a man. Ancient Raven is especially favored of the Sun.

### *Two Medicine Lake*

Two Medicine Lake was another place for vision quests. Clark Wissler obtained an account from a Piikáni medicine person of a vision he had here (Wissler 1912b:80):

"Now below this place [Two Medicine] is a long lake and a place where the land sticks out into the water. On this place are some high rocks. It is a dangerous looking place and I picked it out as a place to sleep. Other people when trying to sleep at this place were always frightened away. I stayed there five days and nights, and at last when I was asleep I dreamed that I was going out in one direction when a man called to me from another direction inviting me to enter his tipi. When I went into the tipi, I found that there were six children in the family. Among them was a girl. The man said, 'I give you all my children, my clothes, and my tipi. Now, shut your eyes' While this was going on, the woman in the tipi confided to me that I was to get a puzzle [a kind of mystery].

"Now, when my eyes were shut I found something in my throat. It felt as if something slippery was passing down. The man said to me, 'Do you feel anything going into you?' 'Yes,' I replied. 'Well,' said the man, 'I gave you that. After this, you will drink much water, you must never chew anything like gum or lake grass, the onion kind never put into your mouth.' One time after this I made a mistake, there was a movement in my stomach and up toward my throat as if something was trying to get out, but I worked it back. Since that time I drink a great deal of water, because this thing which he gave me requires much water. Every day I must take a swim, as I do not feel right unless I do."

### *Running Eagle Falls*

The cave at Running Eagle Falls is the centerpiece of Schultz's book *The Dreadful River Cave*, published in 1920. It is an account of Chief Black Elk's younger life. The falls is a place where the Under Water People live. In the book, Black Elk and his companions spend some time watching the cave, trying to

get a glimpse of the Under Water People. They think they see a human-like figure appearing on occasion, and in the end discover only a Snake Indian who was hiding in the cave.

They ask Old Sun, the elder Piikáni Medicine Man, and Eagle Catcher, who is camping with them at the tobacco gardens that Black Elk's father Bear Eagle has planted, about how the cave came to be (*ibid.*:24 ff.):

"... It is well known that that hole in the cliff from which the river gushed is inhabited by Under-Water-People. From our first fathers the tale has come down to us that, in the beginning, no cliff was there. When Old Man made the world, he made a straight, smooth, deep valley there, beginning it at the summit of the mountains and extending it out across the plains. He had, of course, first made the mountains. But he was sometimes careless in his work. Just here, to the right of the valley, he had made a high, slender mountain and failed to set it straight up; it leaned to the south; and after he had made the valley it toppled over, forming this rock wall across it. Above, among the big loose rocks that filled the valley, the river sank out of sight, only to reappear gushing from the dark hole in the wall. When Old Man returned to this place and saw what had happened he blamed himself. Said he, 'I should have been more careful. If I had set that mountain straight up like the others it would not have fallen. In my haste I only made more work for myself. I have now to clear the valley of this great mass of rock that fills it.'

"But just then he saw that the fallen mountain had not stopped the flow of the river; saw its waters gushing from the strange, dark hole in the wall rock. 'Ha! It is best that I leave this falling just as it is,' he said. 'That hole in there, and the deep pool below, will be a good home for some of my Under-Water People.' And with that he turned about and went off to other of his world-making work.

"Old Man, remember, had already made Under-Water People, and given them the water for their country, and the life that is in it for their food. He did not make our ancestors until he had completed his world-making. Nor did he intend, I feel sure, that the Under-Water People and we should not be enemies. But enemies we are -- oh, how many of us they have seized and drawn down to death in the deep water of the rivers -- and so, my children, you must keep away from that river cave."

Running Eagle, the Piikáni Woman Warrior, had her vision in the cave at Running Eagle Falls (Schultz 1917:229-248). She took with her a skull of a Pend d' Oreille, who had been killed many years ago in the Two Medicine, to keep her safe from harm by the Under Water People who lived in the cave. Running Eagle was gone seven days. In the cave she met an old Under Water man and woman wearing beautiful clothes and sitting on tanned beaver and otter skins. They had heard her prayers. They had prayed to the sun for help. Sun's message was that she would be of great good to the Piikáni, but that children would stop this work. Therefore, she must never marry.

### *Cutbank Creek*

The mountains surrounding Cutbank Creek and the headwaters of the Milk were also places for vision questing. Mountains remembered by the elders include Mad Wolf (EM-2), White Calf (EM-2), and Divide (EM-2,SL-2).

Not all visions occurred on the peaks. Schultz (1916: 59-84) recounts one that was associated with a beaver dam in his story "White Fur (a beaver chief) and His Beaver Clan." In the account, a young man has gone to a beaver dam in the Cutbank Creek/South Fork of the Milk to seek his vision. The beaver people gave him otter medicine, which gave him the power to heal, be successful in war, and so forth. The man lived to a very old age.

### *St. Mary Lake*

No doubt the mountains surrounding the South Big Inside Lake were also used by Piikáni for vision quests, as evidenced by structures on peaks such as East Flatop (Reeves 2000). The lake itself was an important source of power from the Under Water People.

### *The Story of the First Horses*

Schultz (1916:158-181) recorded a story that recounts the Under Water People giving the first horses to the Piikáni. Duvall recorded a similar story (Wissler 1912b:285-286). (See Clark 1966:299-303 for an account in which Thunder gave horses to the people.)

At the time, the Piikáni were living far to the north. A man by the name of Spotted Bear traveled seven days and nights to the south in search of strong medicine along the mountains. He met a man at a small lake who told him to go on three more nights farther south. Spotted Bear arrived at a long lake running back into the mountains. A man appeared from the deep waters. He gave Spotted Bear his elk dog medicine robe, and Spotted Bear returned home.

A young man in the camp, Long Arrow, wanted to go where Spotted Bear went; Chief Heavy Runner gave permission, and Long Arrow traveled south, taking the same trip as Spotted Bear. When he arrived at the lake, a beautiful child appeared on the shore, and invited him to his father's lodge under the water. Long Arrow entered the lodge, which was painted with elk dogs. The man gave him elk dog medicine and some of his elk dog herd, which Long Arrow took back to his people. Chief Heavy Runner decided to move south to the lakes to get more elk dogs. The Piikáni arrived but could not find the Under Water People or any elk dogs. They discovered a second lake hemmed in by higher mountains, and named the two the Inside Lakes (*ibid.*:182).

### *No Runner's Vision*

No Runner had a vision on a raft on the Upper Inside Lake (Schultz 1930:202-207). No Runner floated around the lake for four days. Under Water Persons came around his raft each night. On his fourth night, the Water Bull, an Under Water Person, came to him. The Water Bull told him he would be his helper. He told No Runner: "When you pray to the Sun, call upon me, too, for help, and I will help you, always help you so long as you lead a good life" (*ibid.*:260).

## *Wild Goose Island*

Wild Goose Island was another place for vision quests. An elder holy woman's grandfather fasted on Wild Goose Island (SL-1, freely translating):

"That Goose Island up there. I mean, this old man. I mean, she remembers him how, that was that old grandfather of mine, old Home Gun. He's the one that fasted there. And she's trying to remember what the gift was he received there and it was concerning water, concerning water ... he was known for that. I mean, you couldn't take like sometimes, I mean them days, you'd have a bucket of water and a basin and you was up and go outside and spill it. And somebody accidentally hit him with part of that and right of way, it just come pouring rain and it was clear sky. You see. And some of the gifts, he was the gift of water from ... it was specific, it was named, I just don't remember it.

"I guess he put logs together, tied them together and then pushed out with a long pole and he went out onto the island and then he tied his raft along the shore and he done a fast there. I guess it was really, really a fast. He was telling stories about it later, way later. So that you know, there is a record right there .... See these old people were very close. Why did he say that he did it? Everybody knew he went there. Now I know why. He wanted people to know in future generations that he did go there. There was going to be a question of this, sometime. I mean, these old people were wise, they seen the future. So, he went to fast there and he got this gift and I do know at that time, I mean, I happened to be there again, and somebody accidentally spilled this water, whether it was wash water or what it was, he just made a funny sound and then they had to do something, give him a gift and then he sang a song. But there was water all over, in the camp. So those things were clearly real, you know. But I was there when it happened, witnessed the rain and everything."

## *Waterton Lake*

The mountains surrounding the lake, as well as the lake itself, were important locales for vision questing.

Weasel Tail, a Kainaa who was 72 years of age in 1929, had a vision on top of Crandell Mountain (Grizzly Bear Mountain) when he was 18 years of age (Schultz and Donaldson 1930:170-171): "On the fourth night of my fast, my prayers were answered. Appeared to me, to my shadow, as, it seemed, I was wandering along a river, a water animal an otter, and told me that it would be my sacred and powerful helper, and advised me all that I must do always to retain its favor."

Visions also occurred on Waterton Lake. North Piikáni elders shared a story passed down from sometime in the last century of a North Piikáni who had continued bad luck, and was advised by a medicine man to go seek help from the Under Water People in this lake. He built a raft and floated out on the lake for four days and nights. An Under Water Person came to him on the fourth night. After that, he had good luck (interview, August 1994).

### *Ninastakis (Chief Mountain)*

Ninastakis is the most powerful place to fast (partially after Reeves 1994a). Elders consider the person of this place to be the most powerful of the Up Above Persons that reside in the Backbone. Piikáni oral tradition as told today by the elders, as well as recorded by whites at the turn of the century, speak of Ninaistakis as a place of great power where particularly powerful and significant visions could be obtained through fasting and prayer (vision questing) -- a traditional activity that continues today.

Often, the faster took a buffalo skull up onto the mountain with him; remains have been found by climbers over the years. When the mountain was climbed by Henry L. Stimson and William H. Steward III in 1895, Stimson (1895) wrote of their discovery of a buffalo skull on the top. Their guide, "Billy," or Paiota Satsiko ("Comes-With-Rattles"), told them it had been carried up onto the mountain top for use as a pillow by a man coming to fast and pray for visions. On their return from the climb to the St. Mary's Lake, Stimson and Steward told James Willard Schultz, who had a cabin there, of their discovery. Schultz was intrigued with this report, and curious as to the origin of the skull (there were apparently three). In the following winter, Schultz asked his close friend, and notable Piikáni historian, Ahko Pitsu ("Returns-With-Plenty"), about the origins of the three skulls, two of which were so old that the black sheaths of the horns had worn away, and the sheaths of the other horns had turned from black to yellowish white (Schultz 1963: 320-337).<sup>1</sup>

Ahko Pitsu related to Schultz that an elder Piikáni friend of his, Miah, had told him many years ago about the skulls on Chief Mountain. Miah had gone on a vision quest to Chief Mountain many years ago, and when he arrived there carrying a buffalo skull for a pillow, he found two skulls on top. "One of them he said, had been the fasting pillow of that powerful, long-ago warrior, Eagle Head; but none knew who had carried the other skull up there. He had been, of course, some very, very long-ago warrior of our people" (*ibid.*:322). Miah's particular vision quest, according to Schultz's accounting, was to correct his continued string of bad luck in hunting and warfare, which was the result of once not following instructions given to him by his guardian animal, received in his vision quest as a youth. Ahko Pitsu recounts Miah's spirit experiences:

"So on the next morning we mounted our horses and set out for the mountain, Talks-with-the-Buffalo, my two women, and I. Upon our way to it, I took up the whitened, dry head of a buffalo bull that had been killed in the run of a herd that our hunters had made three summers back. Arrived at the mountain, we rode up the west slope of it as far as our horses could carry us and then, leaving them, climbed up to the summit, arriving there a little after Sun had passed the center of the blue. In a small, level place on the very top of the mountain, we found the buffalo head that Eagle Head had used for a pillow and another head brought up there by some far-back sacred faster of our people.

"My women had brought along my bedding, two buffalo robes and a blanket. They went back down the slope, got some pine branches and made a good bed for me, placing the buffalo head at the west end of it so that I could see Sun as he came every morning to travel across the blue. Then Talks-with-the-Buffalo again prayed for me, and, crying, my women joined him in singing some sacred songs. And then they left me.

For a little I stood, looking off at our great plain, at our Pine Needles Buttes [Sweetgrass Hills], at our Bear Paw Mountains, much farther to the east. Would I ever camp and hunt among them again? Earnestly I prayed Sun for help, for a good vision, and stretched out upon my couch.

"I slept continuously, had no vision on that night. Awoke hungry and thirsty, became more so as the day wore on. For two more nights I lay there, sleeping at times, becoming weak from want of food and water, often praying the Above Ones for help. At last they took pity on me. On my fourth night they gave me a very sacred vision. Came to me a certain animal that frequents the water, all but live in it, and said that he would help me in all of my undertakings and that in return for his help I should do certain things for him in the way of prayers and sacrifices. Oh, how pleased I was. Although so weak that I could hardly stand, still I felt that I had power to do great deeds.

"As they had agreed to do, next morning came Talks-with-the-Buffalo and my women to learn how I was getting along, and pleased they were when I told them that, at last, on my fourth night, I had obtained a powerful vision, that a certain water animal was to be my helper.

"Then my sits-beside-me-wife asked: 'Tell us, was it one of the long-bodied, short-legged fish eaters, or was it one of the smaller fluffy-furred kind that eats both fish and birds?'

"Oh, you woman, Talks-with-the-Buffalo yelled at her, 'Are you crazy that you would have him name his vision animal and so break the power that it has given him?' And he went on scolding her until she cried.

"Well, they half carried me down to the horse that they had brought for me to ride, and, oh, how I did drink of the water of the first spring that we came to. And then, in my lodge, how good it was to rest upon my soft couch and eat good meat, and smoke with the many friends who came in to visit with me. I told them about the powerful vision that the Above Ones had given me, there on top of sacred Chief Mountain ...." (*ibid.*:334-335).

Miah became a very successful war leader: "Eleven enemies I have killed and more than one hundred enemy horses taken, all because of my vision on top of Chief Mountain" (*ibid.*:337).

Brings-Down-The-Sun visioned on top of Chief Mountain (SL-3), where he received a special drum. When his father Iron Shirt was a young man, he also went up there for his vision (McCintock 1910:424 ff.). Hugh Monroe placed two buffalo skulls on a bench at the back of the mountain (Frank Monroe "My Father's Trapping," MSU Archives, Schultz Box 5, folio 8)

Other Piikáni who went to Ninastakis for visions in the last century include Old Sun (Schultz 1923:280), who, according to Heavy Eyes, a Piikáni elder, took a buffalo skull up to the top of the mountain, and Leans-Over-Butchering, a North Piikáni (Schultz and Donaldson 1930:193-194), who according to his

own account went up in his seventeenth year. A feather-legged hawk came to him in his vision: "... and promised that it would pity me, help me in all of my undertakings. So surely and powerfully did it help me, strengthen my prayers to the Sun that more than once I escaped from attacks of the enemy that seemed impossible for me to survive."

Bear Chief visioned his war shirt on top of Chief Mountain when he was a young man of 20 winters in the mid-1800s. Schultz (1974:1-11) gives a detailed account in his book *Bear Chiefs War Shirt* about the theft of the war shirt by the Assiniboine and its recovery. At the time of Bear Chief's vision, the Piikáni were in camp at the lower end of the Lower Inside Lake. He was prepared by the medicine man, Spotted Bear, and then taken up by his father, who showed him a buffalo skull and told him to take it and his buffalo robe up the mountain. His father left him at the edge of the great cliff. Praying to Sun, he waited for his vision, which came on the fourth night. In his vision, he was walking in the timbered valley of the Marias River asking all the animals for help. They all turned away from him. Far below him on a sandy shore was a water animal who did not swim away. The animal said:

"'Young Man, ... I do pity you. I will help you. That war shirt, look at it carefully, very carefully' Ha! as he said that, there close by stood an old man wearing a strange war shirt ...."

The animal instructed him to make one like it, saying that it would give great power so that he would live to be a very old age. Much later after he had recovered his war shirt, Bear Chief had another vision in which his helper instructed him to build an Okan and offer it up to the Sun. It was by the power of the Sun that the shirt protected him (*ibid.*:97-98).

Piikáni men went to Chief Mountain not only to obtain visions for success in war but also for success in hunting. In 1953, Ella Clark (1966:270-273) transcribed a story of Percy Creighton, a Kainaa elder, about the Two Medicine Lodges on Two Medicine River. Part of the story relates to the husband of the Holy Woman who sponsored the Medicine Lodges, receiving instructions in a dream to go to Chief Mountain to fast and pray, as the buffalo had all left, and there was not enough to eat. There the Dream Person came to him and showed him where the buffalo were, far to the east, and where and in what manner the hunters would meet them. The subsequent hunt was successful. According to Creighton, the people "knew there was a person up on Chief Mountain. They call it Chief Mountain because it is an outstanding mountain and because the Dream Person lives up there. That is where the big man of their tribe prayed and fasted" (*ibid.*:272; see Holtz and Bemis 1917:197-199 for a similar but numerically inflated account).

Archaeological studies of Ninaistakis and the surrounding peaks (Dormarr and Reeves 1992; Reeves 2000) have found the remains of five ancient structures on Chief, and over 50 on the nearby and distant mountain tops. The structures are consistently associated with and constructed of particular rock types: black basalts and diorites, red and white quartzites, red argillites, and reddish-brown quartzites. The same rocks are the only ones that are used in sweats. While these rock formations are quite common in the mountains, the structures are found only on formations in locations from which Ninaistákis or another sacred peak--Blood Clot is visible. Structures oriented to Ninaistákis have been found on mountain tops up to 75 kilometers to the north and south, and 45 kilometers to the west at elevations of up to 3,000 meters on the Continental Divide. Some structures are very heavily encrusted with lichens, suggesting they were constructed thousands of years ago. Others, on both Ninaistákis and

surrounding mountains, continue to be used and built today. Vision questing on and around Ninaistákis is therefore a very ancient pattern.<sup>2</sup>

The use of Chief Mountain for vision questing continues to this day. In the early years of this century, a Blackfeet Elder (EM-3), life-long resident of Babb, recalls that his grandfather, Chief Red Crow of the Kainaa, went up there:

"They had trails going up there, before there were roads up there. They'd go up there and they'd camp up there, maybe about a week. Singing and dancing all night. My grandfather, Red Crow, was one of them.

"They went up Kennedy Creek and also up Lee's Creek as well as the Belly River. There were good trails. They would camp in the Belly River in the spring [summer?] 'when the game was all down and the berries were getting ripe.'"

Men from other tribes also came to Chief Mountain. EM-3 recalls Piikáni from Canada going up Chief to fast during the first half of this century. Jack Holterman taught school at Babb in the 1940s. He remembers talk about Indians going up there to fast. In later years, he occasionally met Kainaa returning from or going up to Chief for a fast.

### *A Contemporary Elder's Account*

A Piikáni Elder (EM-2) told us of his first time. He was first taken up to Chief by his grandfather in the early 1930s.

"Chief Mountain. I was only 11 years old when I went fasting up there. Ten days, one pack horse. And I asked my mother, I says, 'Where's my grandpa going?' 'Oh, to the mountains.' He told me, 'I'm going to that mountain to spend days and nights up there' I told him 'Grandpa, could I go with you?' He looked at me and said no. The third time, he said 'Okay, don't get scared, you can come.' Rode the horse was down about six or seven miles, Chief Mountain has that thick timber down in there. There's no roads, just game trails down there. By a little creek. 'Here, we're gonna walk!' Got up there, he put me in a certain area and he told me, he says 'Now, you stay right there. Don't be scared.' Anyway, he (went through?) a ceremony. The second night, over on the north side in the thick timber, I could hear people talking, kids making all noises, drums, singing .... Stayed there another day, another night. And I did come out of there, I was good and hungry! And I learned something. And the old man didn't say nothing. Didn't ask if I dreamed about some being. I told him, 'The only thing I heard was all this noise over here' and I looked way up to the top of Chief Mountain. And then I got to walk all the way back down, with nothing to eat or drink. Come back down the same trail. Four times we prayed, all the time. Got down and my Dad and mother was there, build four sweats. The old man, that's the first time I ever sweated. He said, 'Don't eat, don't drink nothing.' See that's the sacred mountain, Chief Mountain ... there's a lot of things the old man told me about that mountain."

Many years later, he returned to the summit and found that the fasting shelter he had used had been destroyed:

"Up here, I went up there again, for this fasting shelter they call it, up here at the summit. I went up there, what happened? They took it apart already. Who did, I didn't do it? You did, you did. What are you doing, trying to destroy something that rightfully belongs to the Indian people?"

"Chief Mountain, there was four buffalo skulls up there. What happened? They're gone. And that's how come.

Some Blackfeet elders believe that Chief Mountain was set aside for religious use. EM-2 explains:

"Look at Chief Mountain. According to our treaty, Chief Mountain was supposed to have been reserved for religious use. People fast, do their medicine. But what happened? Last time I was up there, I would say that was about 20 years ago. Today, most of all that timber is cut. And what do I see, a bunch of bureaucrats, people come in, destroy something. But according to our treaty, that's supposed to have been sacred ground for our Indian people."

### **Ninastakis Today**

Vision questing and other native religious activities continue at Ninastakis. Older structures are used, and new structures are sometimes built up on the top. A variety of offerings are left. Other religious activities take place at Chief Mountain. The first mention of these was by Captain John Palliser in October 1858. He had observed Chief Mountain that summer from just north of the boundary line, and noted in his October report, "... in full view of which the Indians meet in the autumn, and perform some characteristic dances" (Government of Great Britain 1859:32).

With the revival of traditional native religion in recent years, coupled with the passage of the Native American Freedom of Religion Act in 1978, and easy vehicle access to the base of the mountain by means of an abandoned well site road constructed in the late 1960s, traditional religious activity has markedly increased at Ninaistákis . Today, Ninaistákis serves as a focus not only for traditional vision quests, spiritual renewal, and other religious observances by individual Piikáni and Kainaa, but also by members of the Horn Society (Kainaa) and Sun Dancers (Kainaa). Ninaistákis is also part of the native drug and alcohol abuse rehabilitation programs operated by the Kainaa.

In addition to these Nitsitapii activities, Cree and other people from Canada and the U.S. come together at the old well site annually between mid-June and mid-July to hold group religious activities, involving sweats, the shaking tent ritual, and individual vision questing in the nearby forests. They had been coming there for some six years and were encamped at the well site when a landslide occurred on July 2, 1992.

Ribbon and offering sites occur in the forests surrounding the well pad, along and adjacent to a trail from the well pad to the base of Ninaistakis; in the forest at the base of the boulder field; out on the

boulder field; along the ridges; and at the base of the talus on the backside of Ninaistakis. On the peak itself, offerings are found in the ancient and modern vision quest structures, and climbers' shelters, as well as at other locales.

The ribbon sites typically consist of a series of cloth strips (generally the five sacred colors--red, yellow, green, blue and white -- although red and black, orange, and purple also appear) tied to trees, or placed on a boulder and held down by rocks. Sweetgrass and tobacco offerings (plugs, cigarettes, ties, pouches) are associated; sometimes freshwater clam shells or sea shells, mirrors, bells, marbles, painted feathers, hair ties, and ribbon shirts are also associated. Blankets and moccasins may also be offered up. Earth altars and smudges may also be present, as may the pentagonal Piikáni cross with or without associated offerings. Contemporary ribbon and vision quest sites associated with Ninaistakis are also located on the Blood Indian Timber Limit and adjacent slopes of Sofa Mountain in Waterton Lakes National Park.

There has been no obvious evidence of vandalism at offering sites until recently. In the years, between 1990 and 1991, offerings were vandalized by visitors to the Mountain who did not realize, or chose to ignore, the importance of the sites and place to native people.

Until recently, traditional ribbon and offering sites have always been very clean, with the only signs other than the offerings being the occasional cigarette butt. This changed around 1990. A group of sites appeared out in the boulder field that had, in addition to the traditional ribbon and tobacco tie trees, earth altars with offerings of meat and drink and caches of cut saskatoon branches placed at the base of trees. Scattered nearby were litter, plastic garbage bags, cardboard cartons, food and beverage containers, Kleenex, and soiled toilet paper. These sites were all destroyed in the landslide of July 2, 1992.

### **Traditional Burial Practices**

The Piikáni buried their dead in different locations that were often specified by the deceased before they died. Sometimes they requested that their bodies be left in favorite places where they were accustomed to go for dreams and meditation. The dead were also placed in death lodges hidden away in groves of trees (McClintock 1941:86). They might also be placed on top of a scaffold on top of a hill or in a tree. The Piikáni believed that the spirits of the dead went eastward to the Sand Hills, a barren place inhabited by the ghosts of spirits and animals (see also Grinnell 1892a:193).

The mountains were a place where the Piikáni buried their dead by placing them in a tree or cave. "There was a lot of burials in the mountains " (SL-1). He found a cave up Cutbank Creek with a burial in it when he was a young boy:

"It's right up on Cutbank Creek, right up underneath the mountain, there's a big hole and I was walking around up there, fooling around. And I come across it ... we started riding around and here was a cave. So we jumped off .... There was a human skull there, and bones and stuff you know ... it's right on Cutbank Creek, that mountain that comes back, you know, comes this way, it's around in there, there's a basin in there. Somewhere in that area, because see, we rode horseback up there and then we got up there so far and then we tied our horses and walked."

## Sacred Rituals and Objects

The Nitsitapii are known both for the large numbers of bundles and the complexity of bundles. Theirs are more complex than any other tribe of native North Americans, rivaling in some aspects those of the Aztecs, who had the most complex system in the Americas. The Backbone plays a critical role in the origin of most of the major fundamental Piikáni religious ceremonies and associated sacred objects, most important of which are the medicine pipe and the beaver bundle ceremonies and objects, as well as a variety of other sacred objects, tipis, lances, drums, and other items.

### *Medicine Pipe Bundles*

Medicine Pipe Bundles are a focal aspect of traditional Piikáni religion today, and were also in the past (Harrod 1987; Wissler 1912b). The stories associated with their specific origins are known to the owners, who pass them to the new owners when the pipes are transferred. These stories are private rather than public knowledge. Almost all of the Medicine Pipes came from the Rocky Mountains (SL-1, SL-2).

### *Long-Time-Pipe*

The Medicine Pipe Bundles are gifts of Thunder, who lives in the Backbone. One of Thunder's chief homes is a cave in Chief Mountain. The first medicine pipe, known as the Long-Time-Pipe, is currently "owned" by Elder George Kicking Woman. This pipe is so old that no one had any recollection of who made it in 1908, when its origin story was published by Wissler and Duvall (1908:89-90). They noted: "This pipe must be the real one handed down by Thunder, for all medicine pipes come from Thunder" (*ibid.*:89). Thunder resides up in the high mountains, and it was here in his lodge where the pipe was given to the people. While a specific locale for this event is not identified in this or other general origin accounts, Thunder, Piikáni elders state, resides in a cave near the summit of Ninaistakis -- a Piikáni belief first recorded by Walter McClintock from Brings-Down-The-Sun in 1905 (1912:424-426 and 520).

Brings-Down-The-Sun was the elder spiritual leader of the North Piikáni at the turn of the century. His father, Iron Shirt, a Piikáni Chief also known as Running Wolf, became the owner of the Medicine Pipe bundle some time in the mid-nineteenth century. It was transferred to him from Wolf Child.

Brings-Down-The-Sun related to McClintock an account of a vision his father had as a young man on Chief Mountain. This vision relates to the origin of the medicine pipe, and in the telling of this vision, Brings-Down-The-Sun transcends Running Wolf's particular vision, recounting the originating vision of the Long-Time medicine pipe in the long-ago time. (When giving sacred accounts, Piikáni religious elders speak in the first person and it is impossible to discern whether or not the narrator himself had the initial experience (Wissler 1912b:103; Harrod 1987:30):

"I was once camped with my grandfather and father on the Green Banks [St. Mary's River], close to the Rocky Mountains. They were digging out beavers, which were very plentiful. My father went off for a hunt to supply our camp with meat. He followed the trail of some elk up the side of a steep mountain, until he came to timber-line, where he saw a herd of mountain sheep. He followed them towards Nin-ais-tukku [Chief Mountain]. When he drew near the summit, he discovered a dense, foul-smelling smoke

rising from a deep pit. He pushed a huge boulder into it to hear it fall. There came back no sound, but a cloud of smoke and gas arose so dense and suffocating that he turned to flee, but it was only to meet a black cloud coming up the mountain side. He was frightened and tried to escape, but suddenly there came a terrible crash, and my father fell to the ground. He beheld a woman standing over him. Her face was painted black and red zig zag streaks like lightning were below her eyes. Behind the woman stood a man holding a large weapon. My father heard the man exclaim impatiently, 'I told you to kill him at once, but you stand there pitying him,' he heard the woman chant, 'When it rains the noise of the Thunder is my medicine.' The man also sang and fired his big weapon. The report was like a deafening crash of thunder, and my father beheld lightning coming from the big hole on the mountain top. He knew nothing more, until he found himself lying inside a great cavern. He had no power to speak, neither could he raise his head, but, when he heard a voice saying, 'This is the person who threw the stone down into your fireplace,' he realized that he was in the lodge of the Thunder Maker. He heard the beating of a drum and, after the fourth beating, was able to sit up and look around. He was the Thunder Chief, in the form of a huge bird, with his wife and many children around him. All of the children had drums, painted with the green talons of the Thunder-bird and with Thunder-bird beaks, from which issued zig-zag streaks of yellow lightning.

"We call the thunder Isis-a-kummi [Thunder-bird]. We believe that it is a supernatural person. When he leaves his lodge to go through the heavens with the storm-clouds, he takes the form of a great bird with many colours, like the rainbow, and with long green claws. The lightning is the trail of the Thunder-bird.

"Whenever the Thunder Maker smoked his pipe, he blew two whiffs upwards toward the sky, and then two whiffs towards the earth. After each whiff the thunder crashes. Finally the Thunder-bird spoke to my father, saying, 'I am the Thunder Maker and my name is Many Drums [expressive of the sound of rolling thunder]. You have witnessed my great power and can now go in safety. When you return to your people, make a pipe just like the one you saw me smoking, and add it to your bundle. Whenever you hear the first thunder rolling in the spring-time, you will know that I have come from my cavern, and that it is time to take out my pipe. If you should ever be caught in the midst of a heavy thunder-storm and feel afraid, pray to me, saying, Many Drums! pity me, for the sake of your youngest child and no harm will come to you (this prayer is often used by the Blackfeet during a dangerous storm).' As soon as my father returned, he added to his Medicine bundle a Pipe similar to the one shown to him by the Thunder-bird."

### *Red Eagle's Thunder Medicine Pipe*

Two Guns told Schultz (Schultz 1916:23-42) the origin account of a medicine pipe that once belonged to Red Eagle, and was then owned in 1916 by Old Person -- which was one of the most ancient and powerful pipes. It was visioned at Two Medicine in the long-ago dog days. People had gone up to the foot of Lower Two Medicine Lake to hunt bighorns for tanning into soft leather for clothing. The men would drive game up the mountain, with the dogs helping, and then shoot them with bows and arrows on the summit.

Three young unmarried women were out gathering wood one day when a thunderstorm came up. One of them (Mink Woman) promised herself to Thunder if he would not strike them. The storm passed by. They went out another day, one ahead of another through deep woods; Mink Woman was last. A fine-looking, beautifully dressed man stepped out of the bush, telling her that he had come for her. Thunder took her up to the land of the Above People. The other women soon missed her and looked for her. They returned to camp. Everyone went out to look all night.

Mink Woman's father Lame Bull was distressed. He made medicine and called in Crow Man "a god who sometimes lived with the people." Crow Man, with the aid of Magpie, located exactly where she had disappeared, and using Magpie's tail as a mirror, saw where Mink Woman was. He told Lame Bull, who wept. Mink Woman was happy but Thunder was uneasy and told his people to watch her. One day, she was given some mas and wanted to dig it herself. Reluctantly the people gave her a digging stick, cautioning her not to dig the very big one, as it was the mother of all others. Eventually she found the mother mas (wild turnip), and, finally giving into temptation, pulled it out. She could see her own country, and begged to go home. Thunder did not want her to go, but eventually gave in because she was so unhappy. He made a basket of buffalo bull hide and willow sticks, and a long rope of buffalo hide. He lowered her down to her people.

Not long after her return, Thunder Man came to her camp and entered Lame Bull's lodge, where he was made welcome. Thunder Man gave his sacred Thunder Pipe to Lame Bull to make amends for taking his daughter without permission. Thunder Man taught Lame Bull the ceremonies. He stayed for a while, but heard his people calling, and abruptly left. Lame Bull retained the pipe. Its medicine was very strong. (This account is similar to the "Feather woman" or "Woman Who Married a Star" stories, which account for the origin of the digging stick and the mas in the Holy Woman's Natoas headdress. See, for example, Wissler and Duvall 1910:58-61.)

### *Grizzly Bears and Medicine Pipes*

The grizzly bear is also connected with some of the pipes (SL-1). According to McClintock (1910: 253), the Medicine Pipe owned at the turn of the century by Lone Chief had been given to the Piikáni long ago:

"... when the Thunder struck down a man. While he lay on the ground, the Thunder Chief appeared in a vision showing him a pipe, and saying: 'I have chosen you that I might give you this Pipe. Make another just like it. Gather together also a medicine bundle, containing the skins of the many animals and birds, which go with it. Whenever any of your people are sick, or dying, a vow must be made and a ceremonial given with a feast. The sick will then be restored to health.' The Grizzly Bear afterwards appeared to the same man, and said to him, 'I give you my skin to wrap around the sacred bundle, because it is larger than the skins of other animals. Whenever you transfer the Pipe to anyone, steal quietly upon him just before daybreak, the time I am on the move, and take him by surprise, just as I do chanting my song, and making the sound of a bear charging. When you catch a man and offer him the Pipe, he will not dare to refuse, but must accept it and smoke it. It is sure death to refuse, because no one may dare to turn away from a grizzly bear.'"

When Lone Chief's medicine pipe was transferred (*ibid.*:262-270), a Grizzly Bear dance was performed by Lone Chief, as the drummers kept time and sang Bear songs. The new owners received a variety of instructions, including the prohibition: "The word 'bear' must never be named before the Pipe, lest it cause bad dreams and bring sickness upon your family -- the word 'badger' should always be used in stead" (*ibid.*:268).

On the basis of this passage, Jay Vest (1989) concluded that Badger Creek was originally Bear Creek, and that the origin of the Medicine Pipe was related to the Badger/Two Medicine area. However, McClintock's other written accounts of this transfer (1923:290 ff., 1948:10) do not mention the requirement for this word substitution, only that sweet pine must be burned. He does, however, mention this substitution in the account of the transfer of the Long-Time-Pipe from Wolf Child to Iron Shirt, told to him by Brings-Down-The-Sun as written in his 1910 book (page 423), but not in his 1923 rewrite (page 213).

Iron Shirt was a Bear Man with powerful Bear Medicine that he had received from the Grizzly Bear. "His medicine, which was a bear skin, always hung from the lodge poles over his bed .... The word 'bear' was believed to exert an evil power over the Pipe, and should never be spoken in its presence. They feared to offer the Pipe to my father, with the bear skin so near, lest it bring misfortune upon all of the society" (McClintock 1910:423). Wolf Child said that he believed that the Pipe could be transferred if the Badger were substituted for the Bear and at the same time they would "burn sweet pine as incense, which will avert the evil power" (*ibid.*:424). The 1923 rewrite simply states that the evil can be avoided by burning the sweet pine as incense.

The primacy of the mountains in the ordering of the sacred directions to the Piikáni is well-evidenced in the Medicine Pipe transfer ceremony of Lone Chief to Wolf Plume, recorded by McClintock at the turn of the century. "At sunset, Lone Chief and his wife led the new Pipe owners from the lodge. They faced in turn the four directions and chanted" (McClintock 1948:9):

"[Towards the west]  
'Over there are the mountains.  
May you gaze upon them as long as you live.  
From them you get your sweet-pine as incense.'

[North]  
'Over there is the star-that-never-moves [Pole Star]  
From the north will come your strength:  
May you see the star for many years.'

[East]  
'Over there is old age.  
From that direction comes the light of the sun.'

[South]  
'May warm winds from the south bring you plenty of food.'

## *The Beaver Bundle*

The Beaver Bundle is the most ancient, sacred, and most significant of the Piikáni's religious bundles. It is the largest of all Native American religious bundles, and until recent years it played a very focal role in tribal religious activities. Among the Beaver Bundle's roles were calling the buffalo, planting and harvesting the sacred tobacco, and use in the Okan ceremonies.

Each tribe of the Nitsitapii had a big Beaver Bundle, which was owned by a member of that tribe. Smaller Beaver Bundles were also present. These all derived from the first bundle, which was visioned by Appikani, the first Piikáni, who received it from the Beaver People. (There are many variations of this story. In some accounts a woman receives it.)

Most origin accounts of the Beaver Bundle visioning (e.g., Grinnell 1892a:117-124; McClintock 1910:104-112; Wissler and Duvall 1908:74-77) indicate that it occurred in association with a lake in the mountains, but they do not specify a place; one account, recorded by Duvall, says it occurred around St. Mary Lake.

Waterton Lakes appears to be the origin place. A detailed and elaborated account by Percy Bullchild (Bullchild 1985) specifically refers to the vision occurring at Waterton, as do unpublished accounts recorded from Siksiká elders in the 1930s (White Head Calf, Old Bull and Many Guns; Hanks Papers. GARG 377/6). The oral tradition of a North Piikáni Beaver Man (SL-3,SL-4) state that the vision occurred in Waterton Lake or Waterton River. Other North Piikáni elders confirm this association (EW-2, EW-3)

The Beaver Bundle has a complex history. There are different accounts of its origin within, as well as among the three tribes, which in part reflect tribal-specific accounts for the origins of each tribal Beaver Bundle, as well as later events in the history of the tribal bundles. After Appikani created the original bundle at the North Big Inside Lake, other sacred objects were added to it.

One of the first was the Natoas (Holy Woman's Headdress), which was visioned by Elk Woman on the Red Deer's River (de Hong 1914). Elk Woman, like Scarface (see below), went on a traveling vision quest, which began in the south end of the Porcupine Hills. She was the wife of the third owner of the original Beaver Bundle. Much later, the Natoas began its own bundle.

Sometime later, the Iniskims were placed in the Beaver Bundle by Chief Speaking, the husband of Weasel Face, who some 1,000 years ago visioned the Iniskim at the Falling-Off-Without-Excuse on the Bow River below today's Siksiká Nation (Reeves 1993a). Around that time, Indian tobacco and the pipe came to the people. The stories about the origin of these items are complex, but it is evident that the Beaver Bundle became the repository for the sacred tobacco seed, and that it and the Beaver Men played critical roles in the Tobacco Planting Ceremony.

Different accounts place the originating visions relating to the origin of tobacco at different locations within traditional Nitsitapii territory. In one account recorded by Schultz in *Blackfeet Tales of Glacier National Park*, the place where tobacco, which was already in the possession of a few medicine men who refuse to share it, is again given to the Piikáni at the South Big Inside Lake by the Beaver People (Schultz 1916:216-224; see also Schultz 1927:75-85; see also Wissler and Duvall 1909:74-80, accounts

of the origin of the Beaver Medicine and the tobacco; one of the Piikáni accounts they recorded is also set in the vicinity of St. Mary lake).

In Schultz's account, a young man named Lone Bull was very anxious to become a member of the medicine society, which comprised four brothers who had first learned of the use of tobacco. They were very stingy with the tobacco. The peoples' camp was close to Chief Mountain. Lone Bull moved with his women and dogs to the river running out of the Upper Inside Lake, where he intended to collect the medicines that would enable him to grow tobacco. His wife heard singing, and located it (the tobacco) right under the lodge on the river bank, where the beavers had set up a home. She could hear them through the floor of their lodge. She cut a hole for her husband, and he could see them singing and dancing. He asked them to teach them their medicine. They transformed themselves into men and came into Lone Bull's lodge, asking him how they could help him.

Lame Bull said he wanted to obtain tobacco and grow it for the people. The beaver informed them that it was a water medicine that they had, and that in order for the man to acquire it, he had much to do. He had to gather skins of all the animals and birds that are of the water, and learn the songs, prayers, and dances. Lone Bull did all this, and the Chief Beaver gave him some stalks of Na-Wad-O-Sis, telling him how to plant and harvest it. Lone Bull moved to the foot of the Lower Inside Lake and planted the seeds. People came and saw him, and told the four medicine men, but they did not believe them. A hailstorm came and destroyed all their plants. They went to Lone Bull who gave them only a little for their own use. The rest he gave to the people. The people will always have all they need. Lone Bull became a great man and he lived to a great age. He had the beaver-water medicine power.

### **Sacred Lodges**

The Nitsitapii have by far the largest number and greatest variety of painted lodges of any native people. They are a characteristic feature of their culture. Over 100 designs have been documented. Many of the lodge cover designs, associated bundles, and accompanying rituals are obtained through visions and dreams. These sacred lodges and the stories of their origins are transferred and passed down through the generations. This knowledge may be privileged and known only to the owners. Rights and obligations go with ownership. Today, certain lodges are used for bundle openings, and other ceremonies, and during the Okan. Most others are erected only for domestic purposes, many of them during Pow-wows.

Lodges were visioned in a number of different places within the traditional Nitsitapii territory: Blood Clot Hills, Bow River below Calgary, Porcupine Hills, Oldman River, and the Backbone. Lodges that were visioned here include the Thunder tipi, the Single Circle Otter Lodge, and the Bear Lodge (Ewers 1976). The Piikáni consider the Bear Lodge to be among the oldest of the Piikáni Lodges, because it and the Snake Lodge appear in the story of the mythological culture hero, Blood Clot (*ibid.*:8).

### ***Blue Thunder Lodge***

The Blue Thunder Lodge, last owned by Willy Running Crane, was traditionally erected in spring, at the first thunder. This lodge came from the Backbone (EM-1, SL-1). "Old Iron Shirt got the Thunder tipi up there." At the turn of the century, this tipi belonged to No Coat, the

son of Running Crane (Willy's Grandfather) (McClintock 1936:9). "It was known as a fair weather lodge. The ritual was given as a protection from storms and had power to clear the sky; also it was given when the first thunder was heard in the spring."

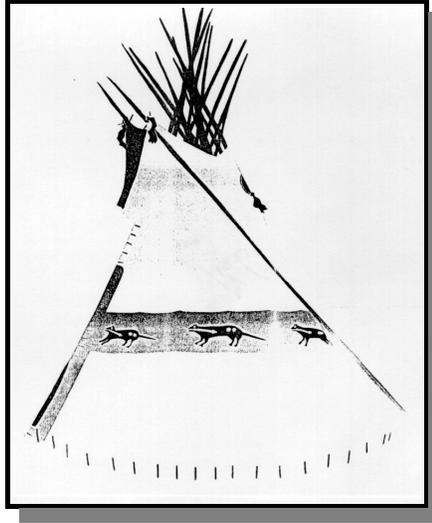


Figure 4: Single Circle Otter Lodge (Ewers 1976).

### *Single Circle Otter Lodge (See Figure 4)*

The Single Circle Otter Tipi was a gift of Beaver. It happened in the Dog Days. A man and his two wives were camped at the Big North Inside Lake (Ewers 1976: unnumbered):

"One day the younger wife went for water and did not return. All that day and part of the next her husband and his older wife searched for the lost one until they found her tracks on the shore leading into the lake. The man told his wife, 'Last night we heard drumming and singing in the water. That person must have taken my wife.'

"... Next spring the man and wife moved back to Waterton Lake. They camped beside the lake and walked along the shore crying for the lost woman. When the beaver who lived in the lake heard them, he took pity upon them. That evening the couple heard someone coughing outside their tipi. Then they heard a voice saying, 'Arrange your lodge very neatly inside. Get some juniper boughs and make a smudge of them. Then you will see your wife again.'

"All night the Indian couple tidied up their lodge. Early next morning they heard people approaching their lodge singing. The husband invited them in. In they came-four of them. First came the beaver man's son wearing moccasins, a breech-clout, robe, and a single feather in his hair. Next came the

beaver man bearing a pack on his back, then the younger wife of the lodge owner came carrying a baby beaver in her arms. The son told the man not to touch his wife for four days. When the lodge owner asked if he might take the beaver child, the son instructed him to make a smudge and cleanse his hands before he did so.

"The son then explained that his father had requested him to help these Indians. He said, 'I am going to help you. I shall give you my lodge.' Finally the beaver man spoke. 'I brought your wife back to you. I shall also give you the beaver bundle I am carrying on my back.' He then performed the beaver bundle ritual in which he presented a pelt from every living kind of animal and bird. On the fifth day after his wife's return the husband made a sweatlodge and all of the songs of the beaver bundle and of the painted lodge of the son were transferred. Then the beaver man told the Indians to return to their people.

"After they reached camp the husband invited all the men to his lodge and told them of the gifts he received from the beaver man and his son. The men gave him buffalo hides, the women dressed them, cut and fitted them, and sewed them together to make the lodge cover. During her long absence the younger wife had learned the details of the design on the son's lodge. The cover was painted in that design -- which included otters that belonged in the beaver bundle -- four on each side. The owners took good care of their new lodge. Their family increased, and their children grew and prospered."

### **Other Sacred Objects**

Other sacred objects that were received in visions in the Backbone include a sacred drum that belonged to Brings-Down-The-Sun, from Chief Mountain; and a pipe bundle associated with crossing rivers, from the exit of Lower Waterton Lake (SL-3).

#### ***Bear Spear, Bear Knife, and Bear Lodge (see figure 5)***

The Bear Spear, a sacred spear of great power in warfare, was given to a Piikáni by the Medicine Grizzly in the Rocky Mountains (McClintock 1910:357-361). The Piikáni also had a bear knife of great power, received from the Bear People (Wissler 1912a:131-134; Wissler and Duvall 1908:96-98). According to Ewers (1955a:7), the bear knife was a distinct ceremonial bundle, and a number of these were in existence among the three tribes in the last century. Their owners carried them to war.

The person who visioned the Bear Knife was of mixed Piikáni/Tsuu T'ina blood. He also received the Bear's Lodge (Ewers 1955:8 and 1976: unpaginated):

"Long ago a young Piegan determined to obtain secret power which would bring him success in war. While travelling through heavy timber searching for a fasting place he came upon a cave. He entered it. When his eyes became

accustomed to the darkness he saw that the cave was occupied by a mother bear and her cubs. When he pleaded with the bear mother not to harm him, she quieted down and let him fondle her cubs. For four days he stayed in the bear's den without food or water. Meanwhile he prayed to the bear to give him some of her power.

"On the fourth night he fell asleep. In his dream a male and female bear appeared. They took pity on him. The female bear gave him her home, a handsome lodge with three bears painted on each side and red circles on the front and back representing the bear's den. The doorway was covered with a bearskin. She also gave him incense to be burned in the lodge day and night, a black stone pipe bowl carved in the shape of a bear, and a song, 'Underneath there is a bear which is very powerful. With her protection I shall always be spared in battle.'

"The male bear spoke, 'My son, I give you my lodge too.' Two black bears standing on their hind legs were painted on this lodge, one at each side of the doorway. The father bear also gave him a pipe and a drum.

"Then the mother bear gave him a knife with a bear-jaw handle. She threw the knife at him, and he caught it before it could harm him. The bears gave him a song to go with it, 'A knife is just like dirt thrown against me.'

"The bears then painted their faces red and made long, vertical stripes on their faces by scratching off some of the paint with their claws. They told the young man, 'This is how you should paint yourself for battle. This painting will protect you.'

"When enemies of the bears came through the brush and attacked them the male bear charged and killed the attackers. Then he told the boy, 'See. This is the way. Always charge in battle just as I did.'

"The next day the young man left the bears' den. Soon afterward he joined a war party. In battle he carried the bear's knife, painted himself, and charged as the bears had taught him. He took several scalps, and was himself unharmed. After he returned home, he made the two bear painted lodges just as the bears had shown them to him in his dream."

While the Piikáni did not have a Bear Cult like the Plains Assiniboine (Ewers 1955a:8), "some of the paraphernalia and functions of the Bear Cult were associated with ceremonies of three of the Piegan's men's societies." Two to four members of the Pigeons, Braves, and All-Brave Dogs wore bear costumes during the ceremonies of the societies, when they would drive the other dancers back four times, "an action suggestive of the ceremonial bear hunt. They were also the first to partake of the ceremonial feast" (see also Wissler 1913:371-375 and 377-388; McClintock 1910:461 and 1923:220).

Bear Power was at one time also important in curing rites among the Piikáni. In 1832, George Catlin

(1841: Vol.1, 38-40) observed a Piikáni medicine man attempting to aid a dying man through his powers derived from the grizzly bear. The doctor wore a "grizzly bear skin over his head and upper body in addition to bear bracelets and anklets. His bedside manner was featured by 'grunts and snarls, and growls of the grizzly bear'"(Ewers *ibid*:8).

### *Scarface: The Sweat Lodge and Okan*

The Piikáni story (Wissler and Duval 1908; Bullchild 1985) that accounts for the origin of the sweat lodge and Okan is a story of a young Piikáni with a disfiguring scar who is in love with a young woman who rejects him because of his disfigurement. He journeys to the Sun, and saves the Sun's son, Morning Star, and the Sun's people. In gratitude, Scarface is healed by the Sun, who gives him his lodge as a gift for the people. In some accounts recorded by Wissler and Duvall, the Sun's Lodge is the sweat lodge. The Okan is built to commemorate this gift under the instruction of Scarface. In other accounts, the Sun's Lodge is the Okan (translates as dream lodge).

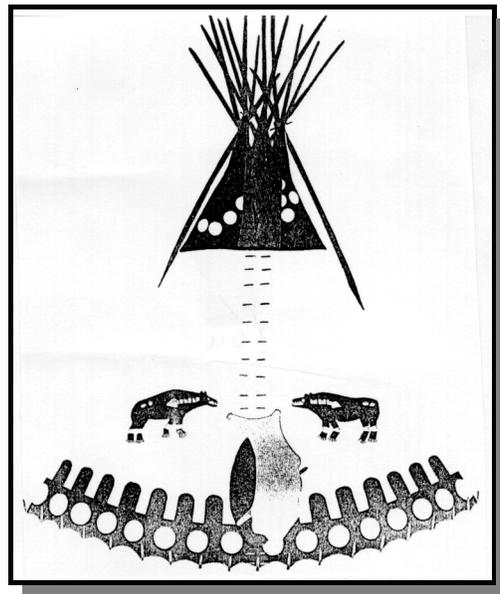


Figure 5: Bear Lodge (Ewers 1976).

The Scarface story recounts a particularly powerful traveling vision in which the seeker undertakes visions and receives instructions at a series of sacred places during his journey. One of the places where he receives instruction is Chief Mountain.

The Piikáni are camped at the Blood Clot Hills. Scarface seeks the assistance of a medicine person, who advises him to seek the help of a dream person on the East Butte. The person on the East Butte cannot help him, and refers him to the person of the West Butte, who, in turn, refers him to the person of the first mountain directly to the west. This is Chief Mountain. That person cannot help him either, and sends him west to the highest mountain (Mt. Rainier?) and the person of that place sends him to the

edge of the ocean. From there, Scarface is taken up to the Sun's Lodge. After a series of adventures, he returns, cured, to the Blood Clot Hills.

In Grinnell's (1892a) rendition of this account, Scarface's medicine helpers on his journey westward towards the Sun's home are a series of animals who help guide him on his journey. As Scarface travels westward, he first encounters a wolf, who sends him to a bear – who, in turn, sends him to a badger – who then sends him to a wolverine. The wolverine shows him the trail to the edge of the big water.

### **Traditional Okan Locations and the Two Medicine Lake**

Traditionally, the Piikáni held their annual Okan out toward the Blood Clot Hills, in locales along the rivers, such as the Milk and Marias, where they could obtain the cottonwood poles and branches necessary for constructing the Okan. By the 1880s, the Piikáni were restricted to holding their Okans on the Blackfeet Reservation -- first on the Two Medicine, and later, after the coming of the railroad and the movement of the agency, at Browning (Okan were held there as early as 1895).

In earlier days, the Piikáni sometimes held Okans closer up toward and at the base of the mountains. Elder North Piikáni recall an Okan they call the Pine Okan, which was held one summer close to the mountains somewhere up the Oldman. This Okan happened sometime before the Peigan Reserve was established in 1878. An elder South Piikáni interviewed by Claude Schaefer in 1950 recalled an Okan held on Birch Creek, where the Swift Reservoir dam is now located. According to Hugh Monroe (Schultz 1927), the Piikáni held an Okan at the north end of the Lower Two Medicine Lake, which most probably occurred sometime in the 1830s.

Traditionalists today say that an Okan was once held up at the Upper Two Medicine Lake. An elder (SL-2) was there as a very young boy:

" ... they had a Sundance up here at up at Two Medicine Lake. I believe it was 1914 or 1915/16. I got a picture, we was there. My grandpa was in the wagon. We went up there, just a few tipis. We had a Sundance at the upper Two Medicine Lake.

"The old timers, they hang around with big shots, Park officials and they kinda would give you so much and that. 'You put up a lodge here' So one of the old .... He asked one of them, 'do you want to do that?'[put up a lodge at the lake] 'I'll do that' and so they [the Park] paid him.

"Yeah [they put it up because of the Park], right up there at Upper Two Medicine Lake. On the top, on the east side, there's kind of a park. I've got a picture, that's where they had it. Right here is Mr. Rising Wolf where that Lake is down there. Right at Mr. Rising Wolf. My uncle and them, they went up there too and they walked up there [up Rising Wolf]."

A medicine lodge and circle camp for ceremonies were indeed constructed at what is today the Pray Lake campground in 1914 and 1915. Still photography of this event by freelance photographer Ted Marble strongly suggests this Okan was set up as part of a movie (see figures 6 and 7). Presumably the

"park" people referred to by the elder as the sponsors were the producers of this film. Whether the ceremonies were staged or actually carried out is a moot point.

Still photographs of this Okan have been used to illustrate popular works such as Adolf Hungry Wolf's *Good Medicine* (Hungry Wolf 1971:9) and *Indians of the Rockies* (Hungry Wolf 1989:28). They have been used by some Blackfeet traditionalists as evidence for their claims over the Badger/Two Medicine (Ron West video presentation at Montana Archaeological Society annual meeting, Billings 1991).

### **Traditional Piikáni Stories, Legends, and Myths**

The Backbone, and the animals that dwell within it, are the focus of significant features of many Piikáni stories, legends, and myths recorded in such works as those by Bullchild (1985); Grinnell (1892a, 1926); McClintock (1910, 1923); Wissler and Duvall (1908); Wissler (1912a); Schultz (1916, 1923, 1926a); Clark (1966); and Hungry Wolf (1971).

The oral accounts upon which these stories are based often differ in details of the same story, which is typical of oral recountings. They have, however, a common core. Writers have often elaborated, altered, and embellished original Piikáni accounts, as well as passing off fictitious accounts as the "genuine" article; for example, popular works such as *Glacier National Park: Its Trails and Treasures* by M. E. Holtz and Katherine I. Bemis, published in 1917; and Agnes Laut's 1926 work, supported by the Glacier National Park Company's

*Enchanted Trails of Glacier National Park.*

The following is a sample of some of the more significant accounts that involve bears, wolves, and events that happened in the Backbone. A large number of other stories center around ravens, eagles

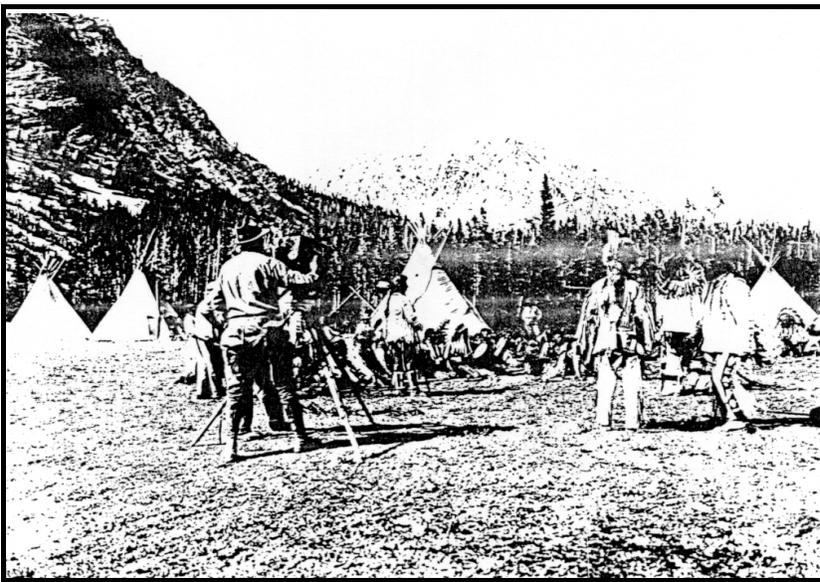


Figure 6: Motion-picture Filming at "Sundance Camp." Ted Marble Photographs. Glacier Park Archives HPF1791.

(e.g., Grinnell's "The Blindness of Pi-wap-ok," concerning the acquisition of the power of sight by an old man with failing vision from the Bald Headed Eagle (Grinnell 1982)) and other animals that also inhabit the Backbone.

#### ***Bears: Napi Stories and Mythic Accounts***

Bears figure in a number of Nitsitapii stories and myths. These include real bears, water bears, ghost bears, and transformers. The story of Heavy Collar and the Ghost

Woman, set in the vicinity of today's Blood Reserve in southern Alberta, involves a ghost woman who transforms herself into a ghost bear and back again (Grinnell 1892a:75). The following are summaries of some of the accounts recorded by Grinnell, McClintock, and others dealing with "real" (grizzly) bears.

### *The Bear Who Stole the Chinook*

Frances Fraser (1990:7-9) recorded a delightful story from the Siksiká entitled "The Bear Who Stole the Chinook."

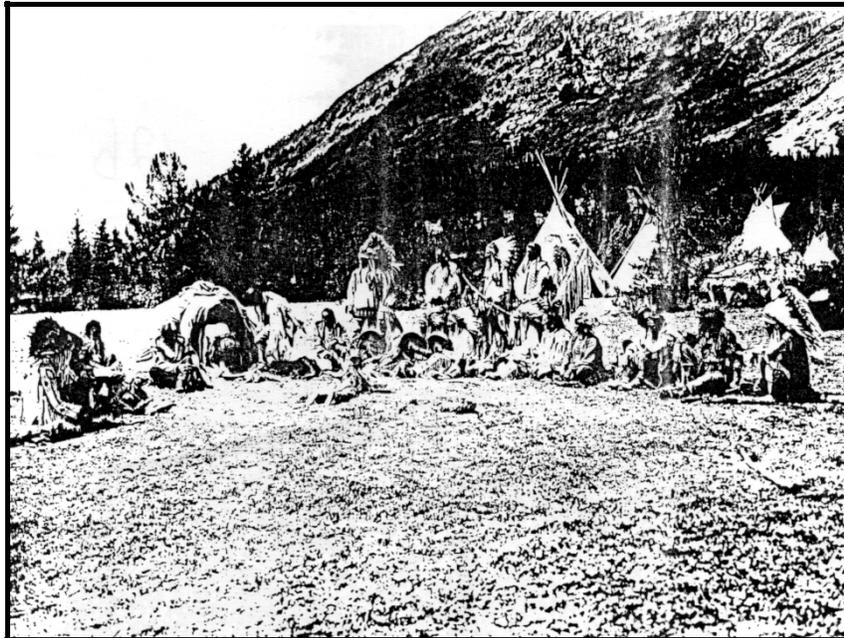


Figure 7: Sweat Lodge Ceremonial at "Sundance Camp." Ted Marble Photographs. Glacier Park Archives HPF1669.

"The People were starving. It was a bad winter in which the chinooks never came and all the food was gone. A poor orphan boy living alone in a lodge calls for help from his animal friends -- the coyote, owl, magpie and weasel -- to find the Chinook. Magpie flies off to his relatives in the mountains, returning and telling the boy 'that there is a great bear living far back in the mountains. He has stolen the Chinook, and he is keeping it fastened up in his lodge, so that he may be warm all winter.'" (*ibid.*:8)

The boy and his animal friends decided to go to the mountains to free the chinook. The owl and weasel inspected the bear's den. The boy made a medicine smoke to blow into the bear's den to make him sleepy. Coyote grabbed the bag, but they could not open it. A prairie chicken came along and picked the stitches out, releasing the chinook.

The bear woke up, and came roaring out of his lodge, and the friends fled. But the bear could never recapture the chinook, and, ever since then, bears have slept all winter. And that is why, when they wake up in the spring, they are dreadfully cross. And ever since then, the snow can be deep, and the cold bitter, but, in a short while, the chinook will come blowing over the mountains, and everyone will be happy.

### *Nothing Child (Grinnell 1982:167-185)*

A young man did not like company. He had a wife and one young brother who lived with them, and a tame bear. They left the village, and went up toward the mountains and camped in the timber, where they hunted and stayed for a long time. The young brother, an arrow-maker, grew up very handsome, and the woman fell in love with him. She tried to seduce him, but he would have nothing of it. She took revenge by scratching and bruising her face and tearing her hair, and then telling her husband that his brother had beaten her up. The man was very angry, and burned all his brother's arrows. The boy left. The bear had been lying at the door, and heard all the lies the woman told. He was angry, and left to join the boy.

They traveled for three days. The boy saw a white bird sitting in a tree top. He shot it, and had to climb the tree to get the bird and his arrow back. The bear told him not to do it, because something bad might happen. The boy ignored the bear's advice and began to climb the tree, but the arrow kept moving upwards, and the boy disappeared from sight. The bear waited. The boy's clothes came tumbling down around sundown. The bear never saw the boy.

The older brother, fearing that something bad had happened went in search of his younger brother. He found the bear at the bottom of the tree; the bear told him what had happened to his brother, and how his wife had lied. They went back to camp. The man was angry and shot his wife. The man told the bear to leave, because he was going to stay there and starve to death.

One night the man dreamed of the bear, who told him to go help his people, who were at the piskun and had little to eat. The bear instructed the man to eat his (the man's) lodge and all that was in it. The man did so and traveled to the piskun. He had nothing to eat, and became smaller and smaller, transforming himself into a child. The people arrived; an old woman found him, took him to camp, and looked after him. They called him *Kis tap i pokau* (Nothing Child). Nothing Child had a series of adventures, eventually married, found the buffalo for the people, and turned ravens, which were originally white, into black.

### **Napi Stories**

Bears appear in a number of Napi stories [see also Michelson's (1911b) account -- "The Woman Who Turned Into a Bear"]. "Napi and the Wolves" first recorded by Grinnell (1892a:149-152; see also Schultz 1916:112, ff.) is in part an accounting of how animals got fat. In the story, Napi is traveling about with Chief Wolf.

Napi has a dream, and tells Chief Wolf he must never jump over water when chasing game. One day Chief Wolf was chasing a moose, and it ran onto an island. The wolf jumped onto the

island and was caught and killed by the Chief Bear, whose home it was for him and his two brothers (in Schultz's version it is a female water bear who has two cubs).

Old Man finds out from a kingfisher that his friend has been killed. He turns himself into a rotten tree, where the bears play. The bears come to claw the tree, thinking it only a tree. They play, Napi shoots arrows into them, and they run back onto an island. A frog tells Napi that the bears are not dead, but that he can easily kill them because the arrows are so near their hearts. The frog is going after medicine to cure them. Napi kills the frog, puts on his skin and swims over to the island.

Napi kills the bears, builds a big fire, skins the bears, and takes the fat out and pours it into a hole in the ground. He calls to the animals to come and roll in it, so they get fat. "The bears--real bears, the grizzly and the black--came first, and rolled in the oil and ever since that time have been the fattest of all animals " (*ibid.*:126).

In another Napi story, "Bear and Bullberries," recorded by Grinnell (1926:167; see Wissler and Duvall 1908:32 for a different version), the bear is the agent responsible for creating the deep trenches worn by buffalo around the large glacial erratics that they used for rubbing rocks.

Napi was playing tricks on a bear digging roots. He was chased by the bear; Napi's arrows were no good, and the bear was just about to catch him when a large rock loomed up. Napi begins to run around and around the rock chased by the bear wearing a deep trail. Napi was almost out of breath when he saw a bull's horn lying on the ground, which he grabbed, and held to his forehead, turned around, and bellowed loudly. The bear was frightened and ran away. Napi said to the rock: "This is the way you rocks shall always be after this, with a big hole all around you."

### **Kutoyis Myth**

The Kutoyis (Blood Clot) myth concerns the creation and mythic adventures of a young Piikáni culture hero who, armed with magical power, went about destroying monsters and others who treated the Indians cruelly (Grinnell 1892a; Wissler and Duvall 1908; Bullchild 1986). In Grinnell's version the myth begins at the junction of the Two Medicine and Badger creeks.

One Kutoyis adventure has to do with saving the people from a bear who was holding them in thrall. After becoming a man, Kutoyis journeyed up the Two Medicine to where the piskun was being held.

There were many lodges of the people, and a bear lodge was in the center of the camp (Grinnell 1926:21-22), occupied by a big bear, his wives, and his children. The bear was chief of this place. He was hoarding all the best food, leaving nothing for the people. Kutoyis tricked the chief bear, and killed him and all his family, except for a little she-bear that Kutoyis let go to breed more bears.

## Medicine Grizzlies

Bear Power is regarded as a very special and potentially dangerous power if acquired through dreaming in the mountains. Some traditional Piikáni, in the past and today, consider the mountains very dangerous, and refuse to go in them because of the power of the bear.

The grizzly is one of the most powerful, "other than human beings." James Willard Schultz (1924:66-67) describes a grizzly bear encounter that Raven Calling, a medicine pipe holder, and his companions experienced sometime early in the last century:

The group was traveling south on a journey to the Always-Summer-Land (southwest). They encountered a real bear's kill on the edge of a river. Raven Calling offered the following prayer:

"Haiyu! Sun! All you Above-People! All you creatures of the air, the earth, and the deep waters! All of you, we ask that you pity us; aid us to survive all dangers that we may meet, help us to find that which we seek in the Far Southland. Now we smoke to you, accept our offering, pity us, help us!"

Raven Calling's companion Painted Wings also prayed:

"Even as real-bear made this kill out there, help us surely to obtain that which we need, a medicine more powerful than any owned by our enemies!"

Just as they finished, a real bear of great size emerged from the timber on the opposite shore of the river. Painted Wings whispered to his companions, "Ha! See that. We pray to him and he comes out from his resting place: a sure sign that the gods accept our smoke and are with us."

Medicine grizzly bears can be both helpful and harmful to people. The Friendly Medicine Grizzly Bear story (Grinnell 1892a:67-69 and 1926:126-127; McClintock 1910:468-473; see also Fraser 1990:81-86 for another account) relates how a Piikáni warrior (Red Old Man in Grinnell version, and Calf Robe in McClintock's version), had been severely wounded in a raid far to the south against the Snake, was saved and cured by a grizzly bear. The bear carried him northward along the Backbone, back to the Piikáni camp situated, in McClintock's account, on the Marias. Calf Robe, in gratitude, invited the bear to live with him, but the bear refused, saying it was time for him to find a den in the mountains. He asked a favor in return -- that Calf Robe would never kill a bear in winter. As a result, the Piikáni will never kill a hibernating bear.

An unfriendly Medicine Grizzly lived up Cutbank Creek. Billy Jackson related to McClintock (1910:53-55) Mad Wolf's encounter with this being in their camp on Cutbank Creek, which was attacked by a party of Gros Ventre (Hungry Wolf's version, 1971:4-5, is based on McClintock's). The Gros Ventre chief has bear power.

" ... [The] Gros Ventre chief fought savagely with his knife, roaring all the time like a grizzly bear at bay and calling to the Blackfeet 'Come on, I am not afraid. My name is a-koch-kit-ope and my medicine is powerful.' When day broke, our people were uneasy, thinking the Gros Ventre chief might have supernatural power. They told him he was free to go, but they would scalp the others. A-koch-kit-ope replied, 'No, they are my brothers and I will not leave them.'

"When our people finally killed him, they discovered that the grizzly bear was his medicine. He had a grizzly bear claw tied in his front hair. The Blackfeet were so afraid that some of his power might escape, that they built a fire and burned a-koch-kit-ope's body. If a spark or coal flew out, they carefully threw it back into the fire, to prevent the possible escape of any of his power.

"When the fire had burned out, the Blackfeet hurriedly moved camp. But in spite of their precautions, a-koch-kit-ope transformed himself into an enormous grizzly bear and followed them. He came upon the Blackfeet when they were pitching camp, killing some, while the rest escaped by flight.

"The next spring when our people went up the canyon to cut lodge poles, they camped again near the big fir tree in the same park. Early in the night, while the horses were still picketed close to the lodges, an enormous grizzly bear came into camp. The horses were frightened and stampeded, just as ours have done. The dogs attacked him, and he killed some of them and put the others to flight. The people were afraid to shoot, because they recognised the bear as a-koch-kit-ope. He appeared beside the fir tree, where the year before the Gros Ventre medicine man had hung his war bonnet. The grizzly boldly went through camp eating all the food he found and tearing to pieces hides and parfleches. Whenever our people camp near the fir tree in the canyon they see the medicine grizzly, whom they have named a-koch-kit-ope. He comes only at night and disappears before daybreak. The Blackfeet know his medicine is strong and are afraid to shoot at him. When we made peace with the Gros Ventre, we told them about this medicine grizzly and they said that he was a-koch-kit-ope, their great medicine man. They declared he could not have been killed, if all of his followers had not been slain first. A-koch-kit-ope had predicted to them that he would be killed, if he should ever be left alone in battle with no one to make a 'medicine smoke.' As this happened many years ago, a-koch-kit-ope, the medicine grizzly, must now be very old."

McClintock (1923:17-18) gives an account of an encounter between a grizzly and Heavy Breast, a friend of Billy Jackson, who lived in the Cutbank Valley. One of his children had died in the fall of 1895(?). Heavy Breast was depressed, and went to the forests on the mountain. He had Bear Medicine and was not afraid of the grizzly. He had cured many people with his Bear Medicine. He came to a cave during a rainy night and decided to stay there. In the morning he heard a sound. It was a huge grizzly bear. He "remembered an old medicine man saying that a bear never harms a person who does not move and talks to him in a friendly voice." Heavy Breast talked and prayed to the bear. The bear was no longer angry, and turned and walked away.

## Wolf Stories

Wolves play a very important role in Piikáni culture (Vest 1988). They are considered a medicine animal possessing sacred powers. Wolves appear in a number of roles in Piikáni cosmology, such as in the Scarface story, in which a wolf is one of the animal powers that Scarface asks about the location of the Sun's Lodge.

Wolf medicine was particularly effective in scouting, hunting, warfare, and getting horses. Wolves could predict storms and were considered very wise, having received their power from Napi. McClintock records a number of accounts concerning wolves, among which is the "Legend of the Friendly Medicine Wolf" (McClintock 1910) which tells of a young woman, Sits-By-The-Door, who was captured by the Crow and taken to the Yellowstone. She escaped the camp with the help of a Crow woman. Exhausted and out of food on the way home, she was approached by a wolf. Sits-By-The-Door asked for help, and the wolf helped her to walk home.

Other stories in which wolves play a central role include "When Men and Animals Were Friendly" recorded by Grinnell (1926), Schultz (1974), Schultz and Donaldson (1930); and the Napi story "Old Man Becomes a Wolf" (Schultz 1916) set on the edge of the mountains along Cutbank Creek, which involves the incident previously mentioned with the bears. Others include "Old Man and the Wolves on the Ice" (de Hong 1914) and the "Weird Adventures of Some Young Men" (*ibid.*) which involves the acquisition of medicine powers from the wolf.

McClintock (1930:22 ff.) also relates the ancient legend of "The Wolf Man," which was sometimes told by old men as a reminder that they should transfer their power to younger men before it is too late. The story is set in the mountains.

A warrior traveled across the plains, through the foothills into a grassy mountain valley. Evening was coming. He climbed the ridge at the far end, which was still bathed in sunlight. There he saw an old wolf facing the setting sun and singing a song. The wolf was very old, with most of his hair fallen off. He invited the man to come close. He told him that he would be dead before morning. The man lay down by the wolf. During the night, the wolf's power was transferred to him. The spirit of the wolf appeared to him in a dream, instructing him to wear wolf skin moccasins, which would give him great speed, and protect him from harm in war. He also gave him a song to sing in time of danger, and the spirit that would inspire him with cunning.

As soon as the sun rose, the old wolf faced the sun, sang his song, and died. The Wolf Man returned to his tribe and became very famous because of his wolf power. He lived to be an old man. "One day when he knew his time to die had come, he lay down in his lodge and waited through the night for the sun to rise. When its first rays shone through the open door and fell upon the old man, he slowly raised himself. He sang the famous 'Wolf Song.' He uttered the wolf howl and died, just as his father the wolf had died."

## Origin Stories

### *The Wise Man and The Origins of Decorated Clothing*

Schultz (1916:235 ff) tells a story of how decorated clothing came about at the Inside Lakes.

The people were camped below Chief Mountain. In those days, they wore plain clothes, plain moccasins and no decorated head dresses. A man by the name of Wise Man thought about this. He went off with his wife to the Inside Lakes. One day he went up on the ridge between the lakes and the Milk River and dug a eagle-catching pit. He caught many eagles, and brought the feathers home to his wife. They perfumed them with sweetgrass and sage. In winter he trapped a lot of weasels and made a headdress of eagle feathers with weasel trim. He also put weasel skins on his shirt and leggings. He hunted elk, and took out their teeth and sewed them on the bodice of his wife's dress. He then collected porcupine quills, and learned how to dye them. His wife sewed them on the clothes and moccasins.

Wise Man and his wife returned to the peoples' camp below Chief Mountain, and taught them how to decorate clothing and moccasins. "Wise Man of course became a great man in his tribe for to him was due the discovery of the way to make things beautiful."

### **Piikáni Ethnogeography of Waterton-Glacier**

The Piikáni's traditional ethnogeography of the Waterton-Glacier area is reflected in the Piikáni place names, trails, passes, and traditional camping areas. This region was also a focal part of their sacred geography, aspects of which have been discussed earlier in this report.

### *Place Names*

Glacier National Park is well-known for the very large number of Indian place names for its mountains, lakes, streams, and rivers. Many of these names derive from Blackfoot; a number are from Kutenai, as previously discussed; a few are from Cree; and some from Siouan languages (Holterman 1975 and 1985). The vast majority of these Indian names were assigned to these places by non-Indians, among whom were George Bird Grinnell and James Willard Schultz. They are responsible for most of the place names on the park's east side before 1900 (*ibid.*, e.g., Schultz 1916:151 ff.). Many of their names became replaced by other names. In 1938, George C. Ruhle was directed by park Superintendent Scoyen to inventory the names and restore many of them back to their Indian origins. Ruhle is responsible for recording many of the names in use today (*ibid.*) (See Table 2 in Chapter 2, and Map 8 below).

In the mid 1920s, Schultz, with the help of his old Piikáni comrades, undertook a listing of Indian place names for the park (Schultz 1926a). It was the intent of his committee to systematically work north from the southeast corner of the park, assigning Blackfoot names to features beginning with the names of the Blackfeet tribesmen painted by George Catlin in 1832 at Fort Union, followed by those mentioned by Prince Maximillian at Fort MacKenzie in 1833, and on down through the years, ending with those of recent prominence (*ibid.*:5). Schultz often disregarded names already assigned. Others disregarded his. Ruhle revived some of Schultz's forgotten names but assigned them to other features (*ibid.*).

Most visitors to the park, as well as many Blackfeet, are not aware of Glacier's toponomic history. They assume that the Indian place names were the original names assigned by the Blackfeet people to these places, not only in commemoration of more recent historic personages, but also some of them in the long-ago time. A new folk lore is developing. Popular books on the park, such as Holtz and Bemmis (1917: Chapter 12: Some Blackfoot Legends and Indian Names) and Laut (1926:24-25), promoted these names as being original Blackfeet names for the peaks, furthering the development and perpetuation of this myth among visitors and residents. In reality, very few of the features in Glacier National Park had any names at all.

Today, many Piikáni Elders believe that the Piikáni were responsible for the names on the peaks. One elder, for example, believes that Divide Mountain is originally an Indian Name. He says it is called Divide Mountain, because: "... the old people said that when you get up there, all the rivers go the same way--this way, that way. It's the highest. You stand here, the Atlantic Ocean is way down that way. You're climbing, and when you get to the Divide Mountain, you're on top of the world, and you look around. All the rivers flowing down" (SL-2).

Schultz (1916:153-154) named the mountain in 1883 when he was camped up at St. Mary Lake with some K'tunaxa. In contrast, Holtz and Bemmis (1917:204) say that Divide is an original Indian name translated into English.

The place names that derive from the Blackfoot language within Glacier National Park include commemorative names of historic Piikáni, Kaina and Siksika personages such as the mountains named White Calf, Red Eagle and Rising Wolf; and mythical personages, such as Poia Lake and Beaver Chief. Other Blackfoot names are descriptive of the color, such as Red Mountain -- or shape, such as Bear Mountain -- or some particular biological association, such as Goat Mountain.

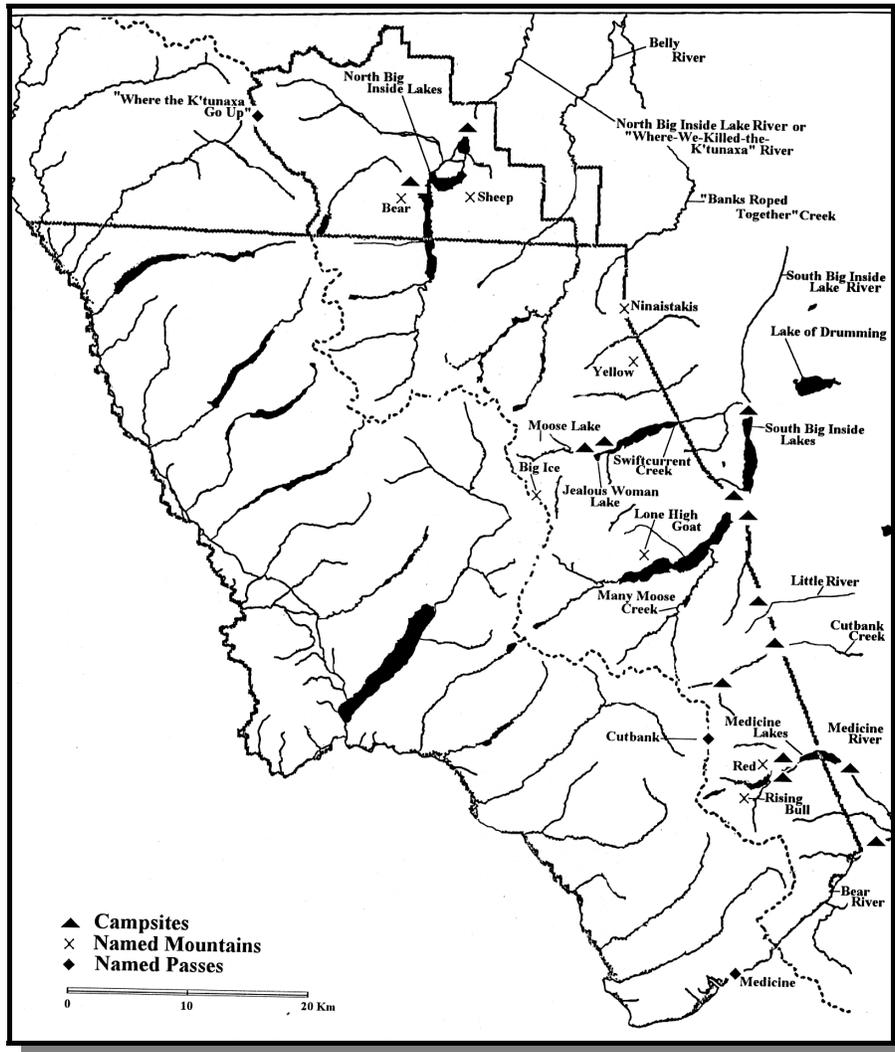
### *Ninastakis and Other Mountains*

Few of the mountains appear to have traditional Piikáni names associated with them. In 1883, on his first trip traveling north along the Old North Trail to the St. Mary Lakes, Schultz (1962:63) had his first close view of the Rocky Mountains. He asked his Indian friend with whom he was traveling if they had names. "No, only that farther one in sight ahead, standing out as though in the lead of the others ...." His friend was referring to Chief Mountain. The only other mountain was Heart Butte.

These two names are shown on the first map of this region of the Upper Missouri and adjacent reaches of the Saskatchewan that was drawn for Peter Fidler, a trader with the Hudson's Bay Company at its Chesterfield House (located at the junction of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan) in 1802, by Ak Ko Mock Ki (Feathers), a Siksiká chief (PAM HBCA E.3/2 fol.104). The only two mountains shown in this region of the Rockies are the "Heart" (Heart Butte) and the "King" (Chief Mountain). The next to the south is the "Pap" (Haystack Butte, located southwest of Augusta), and to the north the Devils Thumb (located on the Ghost River, northwest of Calgary).

Fidler's copies of Ak Ko Mock Ki's map were used by Aaron Arrowsmith in his 1802 edition map of the Interior of North America. Arrowsmith's was used in the Nicholas King map of 1803; in the preparation of William Clark's map of 1805; and in the Lewis and Clark expeditionary map of 1814. Chief Mountain is shown on this and later maps that encompass these latitudes of the Rockies.

No other named peaks are shown in later maps, such as those of the Pacific Railway Expedition of 1855, which incorporated the results of James Doty's 1854 northward exploration along the Front for the Marias Pass; that of the Northwest Boundary Commission Survey of 1858, published in 1866; and that of the Corps of Engineers Map of 1876 of the Dakota Territory.



Map 8: Traditional Piikáni Place Names and Campsites in Waterton-Glacier.

Joseph Kipp's 1896 map of the ceded strip is one of the first published maps to provide detailed topography of the entire region. Indian place names, aside from Chief, shown on Kipp's map from southeast to northwest, are Wolf Calf (today's Mt. Henry), Rising Wolf, Wolf Tail (today's Kupunkamint), White Calf, Red Eagle, Little Chief, Almost A Dog, Going To The Sun, Yellow Fish (Otokomi), and Mt. Siyeh. The majority of these names are commemorative, and were assigned by Grinnell and Schultz to the peaks in the 1880s (see Schultz's article "We Name Some Mountains" 1962:91-110 for Grinnell's account of their naming of mountains in 1885-1887).

Going-To-The-Sun is a name with considerable controversy surrounding it, because many writers have assumed that it is an original Piikáni place name. Schultz named Going-To-The-Sun (1923:273-276 and 1926a:118; Holterman 1985:56). He also noted later (letter June 25, 1928, to J. R. Eakin, Superintendent) that the "Indians have no story about it." Schultz (1926) said the original Blackfeet name for the mountain was Lone High Mountain. More than one story attributed to the Blackfeet of how the mountain got its name had become imbedded in the park lore by that time (Holtz and Bemis 1917:192-194; Laut 1926a:80; Schultz 1923: 273-276). Schultz, in his 1923 book, *Friends of My Life as an Indian*, devotes part of Chapter 14, "We Kill Some Newborn Legends," to setting the record straight and debunking some of the local legends that had developed about Going-To-The-Sun and Chief Mountain.

Other than Chief Mountain (discussed below), it would appear there were few other mountains originally known by name to the Piikáni prior to the arrival of Schultz and Grinnell in the 1880s. Certainly, names that are commemorative in nature associate with the European's toponomic preoccupation with the commemorative naming of places.

Some of the early descriptive English names for certain mountain peaks may have had an Indian derivation, such as Goat (known for its goats), Yellow (for its color), and Bear (for its grizzly bears). According to Schultz (1927:179), Rising Bull was the original name for Sinopah (Fox Woman), because it looks like a buffalo bull rising. This name was changed to the Bison. Schultz renamed it Fox Woman, in honor of Rising Wolf's wife. Rising Wolf's original name was Red Mountain (*ibid.*). The original Piikáni name for the massif behind Grinnell Glacier was Big Ice Mountain (Schultz 1927:55).

In Waterton, original descriptive Indian place names include Sheep (Sofa Mountain/ Vimy Ridge) (Dawson, G. M. photographic notes, 1883, McGill University Archives) and Grizzly Bear (Crandell Mountain) (Northwest Boundary Commission field sketches, 1860, on file U.S. National Archives).

### *Ninastakis (after Reeves 1994)*

Ninastakis literally translates as "The Chief Mountain," which the elders say is the reason it is called this. Ninastakis has every appearance of being the leader of a procession of mountain peaks proceeding outward onto the plains. A chief should always be taller and more conspicuous than his followers (see Schultz 1916:233; 1923:279 and 1926a:181).

The first white man to observe the peak was Peter Fidler, an explorer and fur trader for the Hudson's Bay Company. In the winter of 1792-1793, Fidler traveled from a Hudson's Bay Company fur post on the North Saskatchewan ("Buckingham House," located 140 kilometers down river from today's city of Edmonton, Alberta) to the foothills of southwestern Alberta, where he wintered with the Piikáni 60 kilometers south of the Bow River and present-day Calgary. In December of that year, he traveled with Piikáni guides south along the Old North Trail west of the Porcupine Hills to meet a band of K'tunaxa on the Old Man River. Fidler first saw Chief Mountain on December 31, 1792:

"... set [sighted] a high cliff on the Eastern edge of the Rocky Mountain, S43E, about 25 miles off, called by these Indians (Piikáni) Nin nase tok que or the King & by the Southern Indians (Cree) the Governor of the Mountain, being the highest known place they know off [sic], it Inclines to the East, having a

lean that way towards the top its elevation above the level of its base I suppose is not less than 4000 feet. This I estimate, with the comparison of a place I afterwards measured, which does not appear near so high as the King (Fidler 1793:37) (Fidler was off, Ninastakis is 9080 feet in height).

Information that Fidler collected was used in maps drawn by Aaron Arrowsmith, a British cartographer, and issued in 1795-1796. These maps, the first reasonably accurate maps of the western interior of northern North America, show Chief Mountain as the principal peak south of the Bow River.

The next white man (excepting mixed-blood freemen) who possibly observed Ninastákis was Meriweather Lewis of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, who may have seen it from his "Camp Disappointment" on Cutbank Creek on July 22, 1806, during his return journey from the Pacific. Lewis, however, does not mention the peak, only noting "the course of the mountains still continues from S.E. to N.W. The front rang(e) appears to terminate abruptly about 35 m. to the N.W. of us" (Mouton 1993:123). The terminal mountain on the range is Ninastákis.

Ninastakis is quite visible from Camp Disappointment. Lewis probably did not mention the peak in his journal, because when he was there the weather was very bad and the mountains were "socked in." Lewis was well aware of the presence of the mountain, because the Expedition had both Arrowsmith's and Nicholas King's maps (Allen 1975; Moulton 1983a).

In 1854, James Doty, a surveyor for the U.S. Pacific Railway Expedition, traveled north along the front ranges searching for a railroad pass to the Pacific. On May 28, Doty entered the St. Mary's River Valley:

" ... we obtained a view of the Chief or King mountain, which is a bare rocky peak of a square form standing at a distance of five or six miles from the main chain, ... so called in honour of Mr. Roan, a gentleman who has been many years in charge of Edmonton House, a Hudson's Bay Company's post on the north fork of the Saskatchewan River" (Doty 1855: 549).

Members of the British North American Palliser Expedition of 1856-1858, who explored the Western Canadian Interior Plains and Rocky Mountains, examining the area's suitability for settlement and potential railroad passes to the Pacific, also observed Ninaistákis. On August 7, 1858, Captain John Palliser traveled south from his camp on the Bow River to determine the position of the international boundary. His observation post was on a hill a few miles northeast of Ninaistákis. He observed a glorious sunset behind the mountain (Spry 1968:263). A month later, Lieutenant Thomas Blackiston, returning from the exploration of the South Kootenai Pass, located due west of Ninaistákis in today's Waterton Lakes National Park, camped at Waterton Lake, and made a special trip to observe Ninaistákis and the International Boundary line:

"The Chief's Mountain was not visible from the camp, but I obtained a good view of it from a knoll on the prairie about four miles distant,

which with my previous bearings enabled me to lay it down, and curious enough, the boundary line passes just over this peculiar shaped mountain, which stands out in the plain like a landmark" (*ibid.*:579).

The name Chief Mountain is also said to refer to a Nitsitapii legend, in which a young chief who was very fond of his wife and baby, and reluctant to leave them, left for war and was killed. His body was returned to camp, and his wife, crazed with grief, climbed the mountain and threw her baby and herself off. "... from that time the towers above the graves was known as Minnow Stahkoo 'the Mountain of the Chief'... If you look closely, even today, you can see on the face of the mountain the figure of a woman with a baby in her arms, the wife and child of the Chief" (Clark 1963:294).

While it is not uncommon for more than one story to account for the name of a place, this particular accounting for Chief Mountain's name is questionable (see also Holterman 1985:32), because it is not reported in the first detailed accounts of Chief Mountain recorded by Stimson (1895), who states that it has always been "The Chief Mountain" (*ibid.*:220), nor by Schultz (1916:233) who states "... It can be plainly seen, grim, majestic, a vertibale chief of Mountains, and for that reason the Blackfeet so named it in the long ago." Schultz does not mention the Chief's wife story in his detailed accounting of vision questing on Chief (Schultz 1962), nor do Grinnell (1892a) or McClintock (1910). Nor is it in Wissler and Duvall's (1908) monograph on Piikáni mythology.

This account appears to be solely a travel writer's invention. The story first appears in print in Mathilde Holtz and Katharine Bemis's *Glacier National Park, Its Trails and Treasures* (1917:194-196). It is also included in Ella Clark's 1966 book as an authentic Blackfeet legend. A number of Piikáni and Kainaa believe it to be the true account.

In Schultz's book, *Friends of My Life as an Indian*, in the chapter "We Kill Some Newborn Legends," a variant on this tale is told to Schultz and his elder Piikáni friends in 1922 by a lady tourist who got it from a "writer man" at Glacier Park Lodge. In this account, the mountain was so named to commemorate a great chief of the Piikáni who saved his people from starving. He killed a white buffalo, and cut off its head, took it to the top of the mountain, and gave it to the Great Spirit, praying to him to save the people. His prayer was granted. Schultz and his friends were much amused by this account: "Raven Chief said that it was well known that Chief Mountain had been so named by the ancient ones for its outstanding position."

### Streams and Lakes

While the mountains appear to have generally lacked Piikáni names, a well-known set of names was in use among the Piikáni for the principal streams and lakes within the eastern slopes. Today, some of these names, in their English translation, still apply.

Piikáni place names for streams and rivers within the area include: Two Medicine; Cutbank; Little (today's Milk); Swiftcurrent; Banks-Roped-Together (Lee's Creek) ; and Mocowans (Belly River). According to Schultz (1927:165), Many Moose Creek was the original Piikáni name for Red Eagle

Creek. Duck Lake's original Blackfeet name, according to Schultz, from information he received from Bear Head, was "Lake of the Drumming," "because at evening some mysterious water spirit comes out on the shore and drums"(Grinnell 1885).

### *Waterton River and Lakes*

"Where-We-Killed-The-Kutenais" was a common Nitsitapii name for the Waterton River. On early maps of the late last century, the Waterton is called the Kootenai River. The latter was a mistranslation of the Nitsitapii name (Schultz 1926a:145; see also Topographical Survey of Part of the Blackfeet Country Northwest Territory, sketch accompanying Report of Progress during the winter 1878-9, RCMP Archives, Regina). A K'tunaxa place name for this river's lower reaches was K'tunaxa, suggesting an alternate explanation for its name (see Claude Schaefer's "K'tunaxa Place Names" in "K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology" chapter). According to Schultz, the battle which the Blackfeet won happened around 1810. Schultz may be referring to the Red Rock Canyon or Copper Mountain battles described earlier in this report (see "The Red Rock Canyon and Copper Mountain Battles" section in "K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology" chapter).

The Waterton River was also called the "Big North Lake River," to differentiate it from the Big South Lake River (St. Mary).

Waterton Lake is also known as the Inside Lake (Holterman 1985:141). North Piikáni elders differentiate between the two lakes by referring to Waterton as the North Inside Big Water, and to St. Mary as the South Inside Big Water (Joe Crowshoe, personal communication; also Dawson 1884). Waterton was also referred to by the Piikáni as the Kutenai Lake (Holterman, *op.cit.*; Schultz 1926a:184).

### *Chief Mountain Lake*

This was a name sometimes used to refer to Waterton or St. Mary. Although Lieutenant Blackiston had named the lakes in 1858 after Sir Charles Waterton, a British naturalist, the official maps of the Palliser Expedition, published in 1863, refer to the Waterton Lakes as the Chief Mountain Lakes.

Chief Mountain Lake also referred to Lower St. Mary. In 1854, when James Doty entered the St. Mary Valley during his exploration for a railroad pass, he referred to the lower lake by that name, which, according to Doty, was a name by which it was well-known (see also Grinnell 1892c:85). Doty turned north at this point. He never reached the Belly or Waterton valleys, and was not aware of another large lake north of Chief Mountain. As a consequence, the Pacific Railway expeditionary maps show the St. Mary as Chief Mountain.

Palliser's map did not show the St. Mary River or lakes on it, and subsequent U.S. map makers, not realizing that there were two sets of lakes, assigned the name Chief Mountain to Waterton. Their maps did not show any lakes at the head of the St. Mary (e.g., Northwest Boundary Commission Survey Map 1866; 1876 Corps of Engineers Map). This error persisted in some U.S. maps until the 1880s and 1890s.

## *Belly or Mocowans River*

The name Mocowans, according to White Grass, an aged Piikáni, quoted by Schultz (1923:277), derives from:

"Just south of its big bend is a very large rock that has exactly the shape of the belly of an animal, of a buffalo, for instance, when it has been killed and turned upon its back, so as to be easily skinned. Our fathers named the river after that belly-shaped rock."

The Belly River was the original name of not only today's Belly River in Southern Alberta but also of the main stem of the Oldman from below the junction of the Belly River down stream to the junction of the Bow. This section of the river's name was changed to the Oldman in the early part of this century, because the good citizens of the city of Lethbridge objected to having a Belly River flowing past their new and thriving city.

The exact location of the rock White Grass refers to is not known. The "big bend" White Grass refers to could be the big bend in the river between the junction of the Oldman and the St. Mary, or the big bend further downstream north of today's Taber, Alberta.

## *Swiftcurrent / Many Glacier Area*

The Piikáni name for the Sherburne Lakes (which are now inundated by the Sherburne Reservoir) was Fighting Bears (Schultz 1927:50-51), so named because the Piikáni once saw two grizzly bears fighting there.

Brings-Down-The-Sun told McClintock (1910:439) that there was a lake at the head of Swift Current Creek with falls at its outlet, which was known as Moose Lake. "When some of our people were once hunting there, a moose dived into the lake and escaped." This may be today's Bullhead Lake.

The Indian names for Swiftcurrent Lake are said to be Jealous Woman's, a Kutenai name (Schultz 1916:227-232), or Beaver Woman's (Hungry Wolf's 1971:22-23 account). The K'tunaxa used to come here and hunt with the Piikáni. A young K'tunaxa, Big Knife, had twin sisters for wives, Beaver and Weasel. Weasel was jealous of Beaver. One day Big Knife found two otters in Swiftcurrent Creek. He tried to shoot them both, but got only one, which he gave to Beaver, promising Weasel she would get hers the next day. Weasel challenged Beaver to swim the lake until one of them died. Weasel lost. Beaver and Big Knife wept bitterly (Holterman 1985:129). Schultz does not mention its K'tunaxa derivation in telling the story, either in *Signposts of Adventure* (1926a:140) or *Red Crow's Brother* (1927: 54-55).

## *St. Mary River and Lakes*

Today's St. Mary River also appears to have had several different names. Brings-Down-The-Sun called it the "Green Banks" (McClintock:1910). McClintock may have mistranslated the name,

and it may be "blue banks" (Holterman 1985:114), which would be an appropriate name for the lower reaches of the river up stream from Lethbridge, as it flows through a very steep-walled valley of the dark blue/black Bearspaw shale. Henry Kennerly, who first came into this country in the 1850s, said the name was "Ats-ski-kix" (manuscript on file Glacier National Park Library).

Schultz called the St. Mary "Many Chiefs Gathered" (1962:72), or "Many Chiefs Dead" (Holterman *ibid.*), in reference to the smallpox epidemic of 1837-1838, or "Many Chiefs Buried" (Schultz 1923:281), in reference to a battle with the Crow in which they were defeated and many of their chiefs were lost. Their bodies were put up in scaffolds that their widows built in a cluster of trees. A local explanation of this name is that it refers to a battle between the Kainaa and Flathead, which occurred on the river just up stream from today's siphon. The Kainaa lost (Paisley, personal communication 1992). This place name may also refer to the "Red Rock Canyon Battle" of around 1820, in which many Blackfeet chiefs were killed (see "The Red Rock Canyon and Copper Mountain Battles" in "K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology" chapter).

Another Kainaa name was "Banks Damming The River" (Dawson 1883:167; see also Holterman 1985:114, in which he gives the name as pa-toxiapiskun which, may, as Holterman indicates, refer to a place where the "bluffs form a buffalo jump").

"Lakes Inside River" (Schultz 1962:375) and "Big South Lake River" are other Piikáni names for St. Mary (Dawson 1883; Ako-mapi-miki map of 1802 PAM H.B.C. E.3.2 fol. 104). On another Siksiká map by Ak-ko-wee-ak (PAM H.B.C. E.3.2 fol. 103d) the river is referred to as the Bullpound River. Doty mistakenly called the river Mokowans.

The St. Mary Lakes are known to the Piikáni as the Inside Big Water (Holterman 1985:114); Inside Lake(s) (McClintock 1910:439); Lakes Inside (Schultz 1962:375); or Walled In Lakes (Grinnell 1885). The Pend d'Oreille called them White Haired Woman (Schultz 1927:160). Holtz and Bemis (1917:202) call the lakes and the river the Good-Spirit-Woman.

### *Two-Medicine Lakes and River*

Two Medicine Lodges, from which the Two Medicine River takes its name, refers to the construction on two separate occasions of two medicine lodges (Clark 1966:290-273). According to Clark, on the first occasion two lodges were erected by members of the three tribes who had all come together for the Okan. On the second occasion, which occurred some years after, the first was erected by the Piikáni and the second by the Kainaa. Both events, according to Clark, took place at the foot of the Lower Lake.

Schultz's accounts are somewhat different. He says (1916:21) that the origin of the name relates to the building of medicine lodges in two successive years by the Piikáni on the river below the Piskun at the Mission. Sometime later, two lodges were built--one by the Piikáni and another by the Kaaina (Schultz 1964:18). These also were built down by the Holy Family Mission.<sup>3</sup>

The location may be even farther down stream on the Two Medicine. Holterman says (1985:135): "... another traditional site is reported down the Two Medicine River in the southeastern part of the reservation. The railroad station, once called Sun Dance and situated

north of this down-stream site at present Seville, was probably named for this traditional locale."

Mary Little Bull, a holy woman who sponsored the last Okan held in Browning in the 1950s, recalls that the place of the Two Medicine Lodges was down the lower part of Two Medicine, and that it occurred in her grandmother's time:

"... She (grandmother) was Yellow Wolf at that time. And she's the one, she was just a little girl, she was thirteen or fourteen, she was married to old Yellow Wolf and her husband was beating her up. And they were camped way down some place. Then she run away. Then she come all the way up there. It was at night when she got there. I mean, the medicine lodges weren't going, but the two were there and she crawled under the brush there and slept. And during that time, the spirit came to her, the owl spirit came to her and helped her. And told her that she was going to be an old lady, not to worry."

Mary Little Bull's account suggests that the two lodges were erected sometime in the late 1850s-1860s. It would appear that the two medicine lodges were erected sometime after Doty's explorations of 1854, because he does not refer to the forks of the Two Medicine by this name. He calls them the north and south forks of the Marias River (they are so shown on the expedition's maps). Presumably, had they been known by the name "Two Medicine" at that time, his guide Hugh Monroe would have told Doty the correct name. The Two Medicine place name does not appear on maps until the 1870s, suggesting that the events from which the river takes its name probably happened in the 1860s-1870s. The earliest map that we are aware of that names the tributary the Two Medicine is the General Land Office map of Montana Territory of 1872.

The Two Medicine River and the Marias, of which Two Medicine is the principal tributary, original Piikáni name was the Bear River. Meriweather Lewis named it the Marias in 1805 in honor of his cousin and perhaps fiancée, Maria Wood.

### **Trails and Passes**

The Backbone is characterized by an interlocking system of trails and passes that link the east and west slopes for travel in an east-west direction over the Continental Divide, with north-south running trails flanking the front on the east and the Flathead Valley on the west. These western trails and passes (discussed in the "K'tunaxa Trails and Passes" section of the "K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology" chapter) were used by the K'tunaxa in traveling back and forth across the Backbone to hunt buffalo in the last 150 or so years both in winter, spring/summer and late fall.

The Piikáni interest in traveling west over the passes was in raiding the western tribes for horses or slaves, or seeking retribution for raids carried out on them. While aware of the many passes used by the K'tunaxa, their preferred routes focused on three passes in these latitudes of the Rockies, which provided good and fast passage for horses to the west of the mountains -- the South Kootenay, Cutbank, and Marias. To the east of these lay the Old North Trail.

## *The Old North Trail*

Immediately to the east of Glacier National Park lies the Old North Trail (Reeves 1992 a,b). It consists of an inner and outer network of trails passing along the mountain front and foothills, traceable today from at least as far south as Helena to north of Calgary. The Inner Trail more or less parallels Highway 89 north from East Glacier, then crosses the St. Mary River near and down stream from Babb, and then exits the U.S. at Pike/Police Lake, as well as at the present-day port of Carway/Peigan. A branch turns westward to cross the Waterton River just north of Waterton's boundary.

The name, the Old North Trail, was first given to this ancient trail by Walter McClintock in his book by the same title. Brings-Down-The-Sun told him about the use of the trail by the Piikáni in the old days (McClintock 1910:434-440). McClintock does not give the Blackfeet equivalent. According to Holterman (1975:41) it literally translates as "North Road."<sup>14</sup>

James Doty traveled north along the trail in 1854, guided by Hugh Monroe. Doty did not give it any particular name; he simply referred to it as the Indian trail. In 1883, Schultz traveled along this trail to the St. Mary's from the Old Agency on Badger Creek. He called it the Foot-of-the-Rockies Indian Trail (Schultz 1962:91). An article on the trail in the *Dillon Examiner* of September 22, 1919, said the Blackfeet name for it translated as "The old trail that passes close to the mountains."<sup>15</sup>

The Old North Trail was the principal route of travel for the Piikáni and other tribes along the Front in the dog and horse days. The use of portions of it continued into this century by Piikáni, Kainaa and Siksiká who traveled on horseback and by wagon and buggy between the Canadian reserves and the Blackfeet Reservation to visit friends and relatives, and to trade and take part in social events, dances, and religious ceremonies. As new non-native communities grew up along the trail, the old wagon roads changed: Gravel roads replaced wagon roads; trucks and cars replaced horse-drawn vehicles; and those portions of the old trail that did not become parts of the modern highway system were abandoned, and replaced by the present system of interconnecting highways, which parallel the old system. These highways are today's Old North Trail.

### *"Where The K'tunaxa Go Up"*

The northernmost pass in the Waterton-Glacier area that the Piikáni used for travel west was the South Kootenay Pass. Their traditional name for this pass is "Where the Kuteanis go up."<sup>16</sup>

The Piikáni also referred to this pass as "Bad Luck Fat Pass." Brings-Down-The-Sun said it was so named after a war party was caught in so severe a storm while passing over it that they were forced to camp there (McClintock 1910:440): "They killed so many elk and moose, that it was very difficult to pack out the fat, meat and hides, so they called the pass, 'Bad Luck Fat!'"

### *Cutbank and Dawson Passes*

These passes lie at the heads of Cutbank and Two Medicine. The western approach to these,

as well as to Red Eagle, is by means of Nyack Creek from the Middle Fork of the Flathead. The western ascent of today's trail to the summit of Cutbank is steep and precipitous. In contrast, the trail (now abandoned) to Dawson Pass rose relatively gently through the timber, and may have been the preferred route in earlier times.

The first white man to visit this pass was, according to Schultz (1919:88) in his book *Rising Wolf*, Hugh Monroe. He visited it on his first year with the Piikáni. According to Monroe, the Piikáni, while camped during the summer at the foot of St. Mary, were attacked by a group of River People (Upper Kalsipel). They followed them to the Cutbank Pass trail, catching up with them in the rocks near the top of the pass. The Piikáni killed seven River People. One Piikáni was killed by the River People.

Sometime later, according to Schultz (1927:119), Hugh Monroe crossed this pass with Red Crow, westward in search of the K'tunaxa, to encourage them to come to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company east of the mountains. On the west side of the pass, they ran into a group of Lower Kalispel who advised them to return by Triple Divide Pass.

The Cutbank Pass had a cutoff by way of the Dry Fork of the Two Medicine into the Two Medicine Valley. Chief Black Elk's story, as related by Schultz in his book *The Dreadful River Cave*, published in 1920, describes (pp.146-147) the summer adventures of a young Black Elk and his companions in the Two Medicine, while a group of the Piikáni were camped farther down the valley toward the Lower Two Medicine to plant the sacred tobacco.

While exploring around Two Medicine Lake, the youthful adventurers saw a group of Kalispel who had used this trail, which ends up at the Two Medicine Lake, to access the upper valley to hunt goat. Sometime later in the same summer, a party of west-side people crossed by means of this cutoff from the Cutbank into the Two Medicine (*ibid.*:159). Black Elk came upon their camp down the Two Medicine, counting a coup by killing the west-side people's Medicine Man in his tipi.

Black Elk and his companions followed the Kalispels' trail over the mountains, meeting a Piikáni war party on the west side on their way to raid the Kalispels. The Piikáni, thanks in part to Black Elk's help, were successful. They return by means of Cutbank and the Dry Fork to the Piikáni camp at the foot of the Lower Two Medicine.<sup>7</sup>

In the early summer of 1896, Walter McClintock traveled eastward over the Cutbank Pass in the company of William Jackson. McClintock noted (1910:17):

"The travelling on the eastern side ... was much easier and in marked contrast with our difficult ascent of the western side. We now followed a trail, worn deep by generations of Blackfeet and other Indian tribes, when they crossed and recrossed the Rocky Mountains on their war and hunting expeditions."

Later that fall, McClintock went hunting up Cutbank Creek following "... the old Blackfeet war-trail, used by them in the early days, when they crossed the Rockies on war expeditions against

the Pend d'Oreille, Kutenai, and Flathead tribes" (*ibid.*:39).

Some years earlier, according to a story Billy Jackson told McClintock (*ibid.*:51-54), Mad Wolf and a war party of Piikáni, on their return over the Cutbank from an early summer raid on the Flathead, encountered a group of K'tunaxa who were returning from an expedition into Blackfoot Country. A fierce battle ensued, and all the K'tunaxa except one old woman were killed.

Farther down stream, Mad Wolf's party came upon a group of Piikáni camped in an open meadow near a big fir tree, which the Piikáni used to identify this traditional camping ground. Mad Wolf's party camped with them. The Piikáni were there to cut lodge poles and dig camas root. At night they were attacked by a small party of Háninin. The Piikáni killed all except their leader. He had the grizzly bear power (see section entitled "Bears" in this chapter).<sup>8</sup>

Schultz (1916:44) records an incident with the K'tunaxa at a time when the Small Robes were camped there. A party of young men under Bear Chief went west to raid for horses. They returned two weeks later with 60 to 70 horses captured from the K'tunaxa. The K'tunaxa had followed them back, but the Piikáni discovered them and drove them back across the mountains.

Another time, the Never Laughs Band led by Running Crane were camped up there hunting elk and sheep. They were attacked by a lone Háninin and killed him (*ibid.*:47-48).

In another story, Schultz's "The Story of the Bad Wife" (*ibid.*:85-97), the people were also camped up Cutbank Creek in the summer to cut poles and pick huckleberries. The story centered around Otter Woman, the wife of Falling Bear, who accompanied him on a war party west of the mountains. She fell in love with a Nez Perce who lurked in the woods. They conspired to kill Falling Bear, who found out and killed the Nez Perce. The party returned to the camp on Cutbank, where she was shamed and killed by her father.

Another incident up the Cutbank between the Piikáni and K'tunaxa happened in the late 1850s or early 1860s (Schultz 1926:141-149). The Piikáni were camped at the junction of the North and South Forks of the Cutbank. Heavy Shield, a noted warrior, went elk hunting up the Cutbank with two companions, Running Wolf and Little Otter. They were attacked by a party of K'tunaxa. Running Wolf was instantly killed, and Heavy Shield was severely wounded and left for dead. Little Otter escaped back to camp. When the Piikáni returned to avenge their comrade's death, they found Heavy Shield still alive, with a bad scalp wound and many of his fingers cut off. The following summer, they made peace with the K'tunaxa. The Piikáni learned that a K'tunaxa renegade and outcast, Cut Nose, had been responsible for the attack. Heavy Shield made a vow to Sun that from now on all his raids would be in search of Cut Nose. Eventually Heavy Shields found and killed him near the Cypress Hills.

### *Two Medicine (Backbone) Pass (Marias)*

The Marias Pass is known to contemporary Blackfeet as the Backbone Pass. It was used by the Piikáni to raid west of the mountains. According to Schultz, the Marias was also called the Two

Medicine and Running Eagle's Trail (Schultz 1926a:20-21). Newspaper and other reports of the 1880s and later also refer to this pass as the Two Medicine (Vaught n.d.:318-319). Schultz says that this trail was Running Eagle's "favourite trail to the country of the west-side tribes .... For a last time she led a large war party through it, and was killed when attacking a camp of Kailispels on Flathead Lake."

According to Schultz, the Piikáni at the time of this battle were camped at the foot of Lower Two Medicine Lake, when Flatheads (Upper Kalispel) attacked a party of 10 Piikáni hunters out in the hills, killing them all, and carrying off four women and three young girls who had gone to help butcher and bring the meat back to camp. One Flathead was dead. They decided to seek retribution. Fifteen days later, Running Eagle led a war party of 450 Piikáni across the Pass. They found a Flathead camp of about 100 lodges in the valley above Flathead Lake. The Piikáni attacked at dawn, and a fierce battle ensued. Most of the Flathead warriors were killed. Among the Piikáni dead was Running Eagle (Schultz 1917:305-311).<sup>9</sup>

Hugh Monroe was the first known white man to ascend the Pass (Schultz 1927:182 ff.). Sometime in the 1830s, Monroe traveled up the eastern approach to the summit with Red Crow. After leaving the Piikáni's camp at the foot of the Lower Two Medicine Lake, and crossing the Two Medicine River several times, they entered the eastern approach to the Pass:

"Red Crow pointed to a high, sharp-peaked mountain on the north side of the gap, and distant about ten or twelve miles: 'We call that one Ma-ki-kin-si Is-tu-ki (Backbone Mountain),' he said. 'It rests upon the middle of this break in the great backbone. The melting snows on its far side run to the west, and on the near side, into the creek coming down the wide gap. It is the south fork of our Two Medicine Lodges River.'

"'There must be a trail running through the gap,' I [Hugh Monroe] said.

"'Yes. a good one; not a dangerous place in its whole length across to the Big Lake of the Kal-i-spels. It is much used by all of the West-Side tribes, sneaking across to kill our buffalo when they are sure that we are encamped far out on the plains. Yes, and our war parties often follow it when they go upon West-Side raids.'

"We got back into the saddle, and, riding southwest from the hill, soon struck the trail running up through the pass; a trail of three or four deep-worn, parallel paths. There were tracks in them of many of the various kinds of animals of mountain and plain, and fresher tracks of our hunter's horses, some of them of the previous day. As we rode on up the trail, my thoughts were of the vast numbers of buffalo and elk, moose and deer, that had followed it, through how many thousands of years! And for how long a time had it been travelled by people-by how many tribes! On foot, their beasts of burden, brothers to the wolves; only recently the horses of the white men!

"And then Red Crow and I had a like thought, for he suddenly said to me: 'Rising Wolf, almost-brother, you are the very first whiteskin ever to travel upon this Two-Medicine-Lodges-River-Across-the-Backbone-Trail.'"<sup>10</sup>

Monroe and Red Crow met a group of "Earth Lodge" people (Mandans) in the pass, who were on the way westward to raid the west-side people (*ibid.*:189). They persuaded the Mandans, always friendly to the Piikáni, to attend the Okan held at the foot of Lower Two Medicine Lake.

The Mandans arrived at the Okan. Before their arrival, the Piikáni discovered that there is a war party of the Assiniboine down the Two Medicine. The Piikáni attacked the "Cutthroats" and killed many of them. The Okan was about to begin. A Pend d'Oreille band (Lower Kalsipel), who were at peace with the Piikáni at that time, and whom Monroe and Red Eagle had met earlier west of the Continental Divide on the Cutbank Pass and invited to the Okan, arrived.

By the mid-1850s, the Marias Pass does not appear to have been used much by the Blackfeet. James Doty, guided by Hugh Monroe, was the first white man to officially observe and record the eastern approaches to the pass. When he first passed by in May 1854, and later ascended the pass in June, he described what was once a very well-defined trail leading west (June 10): "Following the old lodge trail, now no more than a narrow foot-path although the decayed stumps and trunks of trees clearly indicated that a broad road had once been cleared." Doty was told (presumably by Hugh Monroe) that the eastern approach to the pass was once a favored Piikáni camping and hunting ground, but it was now seldom visited – perhaps only a dozen lodges a year for hunting elk or moose. The pass itself was now seldom or never used by the Piikáni.

Doty's description fitted that given later in 1855 by Little Dog, a prominent Piikáni chief, to Stevens during the Lame Bull Treaty council at Fort Benton. Little Dog told him that formerly it was once the main route over the mountains but had not been used for many years. "It is a broad wide, open valley, with scarcely a hill or obstruction on the road, excepting here and there some fallen timber" (United States House of Representatives 1855, Vol. 12:105-116).

### **Minor Passes**

Trails and passes other than those discussed in the preceding sections on K'tunaxa and Piikáni traditional passes interconnect the east and western slopes through summer alpine hunting areas. To what extent they were used in the last century by the K'tunaxa, Piikáni, and other tribes is not well known, because there are few or no written records or oral histories relating to their use by the native people in the last century.

#### ***Firebrand Pass***

Firebrand Pass, located north of Marias Pass, according to Schultz (1926a:21), was known to the Piikáni as "Bad Pass" or "Bad Road" (Holterman 1985:49). According to Holterman, the

name derived "probably because of the dangers in crossing between two mutually hostile tribal territories."

Perhaps the Blackfeet name, if it was a traditional name, and not one conceived by Schultz's committee, is indicative of the nature of the route on the west side. The route is a very indirect route to the west side, compared to both the Marias and Cutbank passes. The trail passes through some narrow defiles as it descends Ole Creek to the Middle Fork. It would be a "bad road." No archeological sites are recorded for this route (Reeves 2000).

### *Triple Divide Pass*

According to Schultz (1927:164-167), Triple Divide Pass, located between Cutbank and Red Eagle Creeks, was crossed by Hugh Monroe and Red Crow on horses on their return from west of the mountains. The story goes that a friendly Pend d' Oreille Chief (Canoe People or Lower Kalispel) whom they met on the west side below the junction of the Cutbank Pass trail with the Middle Fork, while on the way west to find the K'tunaxa, told them to return using this route to avoid meeting a war party of Kalispel (Upper) who were out looking for the Blackfeet because of a raid the Siksiká had made on a camp of Kalispel at the foot of Sacred-Dancing-Waters earlier that summer. Many Kalsipel were killed.

### *Ahern Pass*

Ahern is a high and difficult pass at the head of the Belly River. It is one of the most dangerous passes in Glacier National Park (Holterman 1985:10). According to Schultz, it was called by the Kainaa "War Parties Pass," or, according to Holterman, "the warriors where they go up (or west)." Schultz states that "its members frequently used it when going upon raids upon the west side tribes" (Schultz 1926:155). Schultz's account must be taken with a grain of salt, because Ahern is not only exceedingly dangerous, but also very remote. War parties would use the much more easily crossed passes to the south and north.

Although it is unlikely that Ahern was used by war parties, it appears that the Stoney used it for hunting along the Continental Divide. In 1890 Lieutenant Ahern was told by a Stoney Chief whom he met in the Belly River Valley that he had crossed by that route (Vaught, n.d.:369).

### *Stoney Indian Pass*

Stoney Indian Pass provides access between the headwaters of the Mokowanis Valley and Waterton Lake. Indian Pass is the first place name on the maps. It was changed to Stoney Indian in 1939, following Schultz (1926a:178). Stoney Indians frequented the area before the turn of the century (Holterman 1985:10). Perhaps the name commemorates their recent association with this area. Holterman (*ibid.*:126-127), following Schultz, says the name was probably originally assigned by Kootenai Brown to the pass, lakes, and peaks.

## **Traditional Piikáni Camps**

(See Table 4 in Chapter 2, and Figure 8)

The Piikáni had a number of preferred campsites in the Waterton-Glacier area where they camped at various seasons in traditional times before, and in some cases after, the establishment of the reservations and reserves in the 1870s and the forest reserve in 1896.

### ***Waterton Lakes***

Traditional Piikáni camps in Waterton were located at the foot of the Upper Inside Lake (Emerald Bay and Cameron Creek Fan); the beach at Lake Linnet; and the exit of the Waterton River in the vicinity of today's Registration Office and Maskinonge picnic site. Waterton was a "real good" place to get saskatoons. In the 1870s and 1880s, North Piikáni families used to come up in the summer, pick berries, and trade with Kootenai Brown at his trading post at the exit of the Waterton River (North Piikáni Elders Interviews, August 1994).

### ***Belly River***

After the establishment of the Blood Indian Reserve and the Timber Limit in 1883, the Kainaa used to camp in the Belly River valley, particularly where the Belly River Ranger Station is located today (EM-3).

### ***Swiftcurrent/Many Glacier***

The Piikáni used to hunt up the Swiftcurrent Valley, and camp at Jealous Woman (Swiftcurrent Lake) (Schultz 1927). Babb elders recall camping up on Appikuni Flats during the early years of this century (EM-3).

In the late 1880s, the Kainaa also hunted in this valley. In 1885, Grinnell and Schultz went hunting up Swiftcurrent Creek valley (Grinnell 1886d). They camped below the fifth (Redrock?) lake. They found the remains of "an old Blood camp of three lodges which had been deserted about six weeks ago. The bones about the camp showed that they had killed some sheep and goats, and not far off was a spot where, from the great quantities of hair scattered about, we saw that they had been tanning sheep hides."

A few days later, after coming back from hunting, they found that three to four Blood Indians had arrived in their camp (Grinnell 1886e), where they made themselves "very much at home." The next day, Back-In-Sight and a half dozen of his people who were camped on the St. Mary River, visited their camp (See "St. Mary Lakes" section in "K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology" chapter).

### ***St. Mary***

The foot of both the upper and lower lakes was favored for Piikáni camps. Piikáni camps at these locations are described in a number of Schultz's books, as well as in other accounts. The earliest account Schultz gives of a camp at this location is when the country is still controlled

by the Crow, placing it in the early to mid-1700s (Schultz 1916:182-198).<sup>11</sup>

One Horn, a very rich Piikáni chief, whose camp is on the Big River to the North, decided to go south to make peace with the Crow. He arrived with his women at the foot of the lower lake, where there was a big camp of Mountain Crow. One Horn was a Bear Medicine Man, and owned a Bear Tipi. He became friendly with the Mountain Crow chief. The River Crow were camped on the Milk River. Bad things happened with the Crow because of the River Crow; One Horn returned to the Piikáni camp, vowing from then on to make war on the Crow. So it has been ever since.

Schultz's next accounts of camps at the lakes are those found in his two books on Hugh Monroe, *Rising Wolf* and *Red Crow's Brother*, published in 1919 and 1927.<sup>12</sup> In *Rising Wolf*, Hugh Monroe, sent to winter with the Piikáni and persuade them to come to trade at Hudson's Bay Company forts, travels south from Fort Edmonton with the Piikáni, camping with them in a large camp at the foot of lower St. Mary Lake (Schultz 1919: 65 ff.) While camped there, they are attacked by the River People (Upper Kalispel). They chase them back across the Cutbank Pass (see section on "Cutbank and Dawson Passes" earlier in this chapter).

In *Red Crow's Brother*, a very large group of Piikáni (the Small Robes band) led by Lone Walker is again camped in a very large summer camp at the foot of Lower St. Mary Lake, where the Sun priests have decided to plant a tobacco garden. (Schultz 1927: 23 ff.). After harvesting the tobacco, they plan to move on to the foot of Lower Two Medicine for the Medicine Lodge where Sun priest Three Bears has decided it will be held. The Piikáni remained at the St. Mary camp for some weeks, cutting new lodge poles, making new lodge covers, hunting, and collecting plants.

Hugh Monroe and Red Crow had many adventures while camped there and hunting in the Upper St. Mary and Swiftcurrent valleys. While on the Upper St. Mary, Red Crow pointed out the site at the lake's exit where Lone Bull got the beaver medicine and the tobacco seeds, recounting the story to Hugh Monroe (*ibid.*:74-85). Later, while hunting sheep on the cliffs above today's Rising Sun, they saw a Snake war party; they reported back to the camp to raise a war party, and attacked the Snakes. The Piikáni killed seven Snake; one Piikáni was killed. After moving south to the Two Medicine for the Okan, the Piikáni returned to camp on the St. Mary for the winter (*ibid.*:209):

"When the four day's ceremony ended, we, the Piikáni, moved back to the Lakes-Inside, to care for and in due time harvest our crop of na-ho-wa-to-sain, and there we remained the rest of the summer and the following winter, the Koo-te-nais camping and hunting along the Two Medicine Lodges River and the Canoe People on Cutbank River. In the spring the two tribes joined us and we all went north to trade."<sup>13</sup>

In later years, St. Mary became the traditional camp location for Hugh Monroe and his family, who camped at both the foot of the lower and upper lake. Monroe used to hunt a lot of moose in the valley, as well as trap wolves. He also trapped a lot of fur-bearers at St. Mary Lake. He took beaver, otters, weasels, and eagles. He had an eagle trapping pit on the ridge east of the

lake (see section later in this chapter).

The Monroes had fights with raiding parties of Crow, Assiniboine and Yanktonai (Lakota?) during the years they lived there (Schultz 1916:149). Hugh's grandson, Billy Jackson, camped with him there during the early 1860s, and described a raid by the Assiniboine (Schultz 1926a:32 ff.) as does Frank Monroe (unpublished manuscript in Schultz papers, Montana State University). One time, the Kainaa fired on Rising-Wolf's camp, because some Stoney Indians against whom they held a grudge camped with them (Frank Monroe, unpublished manuscript). The Kainaa killed the two tents of Stoney.

In Schultz's book *White Beaver*, published in 1930, and set in the 1860s, a very large group of Piikáni was camped at the foot of the Lower Lake on the meadow on the west side of the exit. Game abounded in the valley--buffalo, elk, deer, moose, bear and bighorn sheep. Later, part of the party went to camp at the foot of the Upper Lake. During the course of the summer, while the Piikáni were camped at the foot of the Upper Lake, a war party returned with 17 scalps from a raid on the Pend d'Oreille.

The Piikáni continued to camp at the foot of the lower and upper lakes. William Veach recalls seeing an Indian camp at the foot of the upper lake on the west side of the ford in 1876: "The inhabitants included only old bucks, squaws, and children, as the young braves had gone to the Little Big Horn" (*Glacier Drift* 3(2):11).

In early November 1885, Schultz (1885:362) notes that Yellow Fish, a North Piikáni chief, and his people were camped at the site at the exit of the upper lake:

"The Indians told us that sheep were very plenty, and the numerous goat and sheep hides pegged out around the camp bore witness that for once they told the truth .... They say that they are starved out at their agency at Fort McLeod, Northwest Territory, and are here a f t e r game. This is an unlucky thing for us, not on account of what they will kill, but because they will scare everything out of the country. An Indian is insatiable. When he sees a band of game he is not satisfied with making one killing, but will keep following it and shooting as long as possible. This gives the game a tremendous scare, and they get out of the country as soon as possible."

During the early part of this century, the foot of the Upper St. Mary Lake had always been a very popular camping spot to the Piikáni. Babb elders (EM-3) recall that people used to camp at the north end of the lake, both where the chalet was, and on the other side of the river where the campground is today.

### *Milk River*

The Piikáni also camped in the headwaters of the South Fork of the Milk River in or just outside of today's park boundary. This was a favorite place for White Calf to camp and hunt in the summer (EM-2).

The Crow also camped here. According to Schultz (1916:129-145), when this country was still in the temporary control of the Crow some 300 years ago, the Crow had a big summer medicine lodge camp on the Milk, east of the park. The Piikáni at this time were camped on the Big River to the north (Saskatchewan). A poor young man by the name of New Robe left the camp, heading south to look for a young boy whom Lone Star believed to have been stolen by the Crow. He found him tied to the center pole of the medicine lodge as a sacrifice. Eventually, he rescued Lone Star, escaped the Crow camp, and returned to the Piikáni, then marrying Lone Star's sister.

### *Cutbank Creek*

Cutbank Creek was one of the favored places to camp. The people would travel there every year in early summer to collect lodge poles and dig camas (McClintock 1910:52-53), and later, in summer, to collect huckleberries. Both McClintock and Schultz (see "Cutbank and Dawson Passes" section earlier in this chapter) refer to several Piikáni camps located at various times during the warm season in this valley.

Elders recall that it was a good place to hunt in the fall. In the old days, White Calf camped up in the Cutbank headwaters, where he hunted (EM-2, EM-4). Families camped way up Cutbank Creek near Atlantic Creek Falls to pick huckleberries (EM-2, EM-4).

### *Lower Two Medicine Lake*

Another favorite Piikáni camping spot was at the north end of the Lower Two Medicine Lake on today's Blackfeet Reservation. McClintock (1910:325) camped there in 1905, and photographed (p.326) the lake from the camp. This site remained a popular campground in later years. Grinnell (1972) photographed it in 1917 (p.149), and Schultz camped here with his Piikáni friends in 1922 (Schultz 1923: photograph, p.272).

The campsite is located on the fan of Forty Mile Creek, in the immediate vicinity of the dam at the foot of the Lower Two Medicine Reservoir. Portions of the campsite are under water; others lie within the campground. A very large archaeological site is located here, from which large numbers of artifacts have been collected by local residents of Browning and East Glacier (Reeves 2000).

This campsite area at the foot of Two Medicine is mentioned in many of Schultz's books as a highly favored spot for the Piikáni. It is on the Old North Trail. Piikáni bands would come up here from the piskuns at the Mission to camp, hunt, collect plants, and cut lodge poles. In Schultz's book *Seizer of Eagles*, set in the early 1800s, this was the site of the large Piikáni camp from which Old Sun left to go on his vision quest up at Red Mountain (Rising Wolf) (Schultz 1922: 46 ff.). Black Elk's family also camped at the foot of the lake on their way to plant a tobacco garden farther up the valley. According to Schultz, Black Elk's account dates to around 1834 (Old Sun in Black Elk's story is now a respected Medicine Man of the Piikáni).

Hugh Monroe camped here with the Piikáni in the 1820s, and later. The site is also a location where medicine lodges were occasionally put up, according to Hugh Monroe in *Red Crow's*

*Brother* (Schultz 1927). This book includes a description of a medicine lodge held there, which Hugh Monroe attended with Red Crow, accompanied by a group of Mandan they had met in the Marias Pass (ibid.:208).

William Jackson, Hugh Monroe's grandson in Schultz's 1926 book *William Jackson Indian Scout* tells of camping at the foot of the lake around 1863 with his grandfather when he was a boy, to hunt moose, buffalo, and other animals as well as to trap beaver. Above the inlet was a series of very large and productive beaver dams (also described by Black Elk in *The Dreadful River Cave*, Schultz 1920).

Another traditional camp was located above the Lower Two Medicine, somewhere below Running Eagle Falls (McClintock 1938:2). McClintock also camped there in 1905, noting: "It was their custom to go to the forest on the mountains to cut new lodge-poles for summer camps, and to gather roots and herbs for eating and healing." This camp location may be above the head of the present reservoir.

In Schultz book *The Dreadful River Cave*, Black Elk's people camped there. Led by his father Bear Eagle, a powerful beaver medicine man, they camped somewhere above the head of the lower lake to plant a tobacco garden on the slopes. According to Schultz, they had been using the white man's tobacco instead of their own in their medicine ceremonies, which resulted in bad luck. Bear Eagle decided to plant a tobacco garden in the Upper Two Medicine, so they will have their old tobacco to use again. They will spend the summer there looking after it (Schultz 1920:6 ff.).

### *Pray Lake*

The Pray Lake area at Two Medicine Lake was also a traditional campsite, and one often mentioned in Schultz's books. Hugh Monroe camped there with Red Crow (Schultz 1927), as did Billy Jackson many years later (Schultz 1926:29-31). According to Jackson, Schultz's narrator, there was lots of game; beaver, buffalo, elk, deer, and grizzly. Schultz (1923:13) describes setting up a camp in 1922 at Upper Two Medicine. Contemporary Blackfeet elders recall camps at Pray Lake early in this century dating before and after World War I at Upper Two Medicine Lake (SL-1, SL-2).

## **Post-park Piikáni Camping Patterns**

Camping is a traditional Piikáni activity within the eastern slopes of today's Glacier National Park. In earlier years, groups who were related usually would camp for some days at their favorite spots. Today this overnight pattern has in part been replaced by more day use activities in those areas that are vehicle-accessible, particularly by adults, elders, and young children.

Two Medicine, Cutbank, St. Mary, and Many Glacier are the favored areas. In the old days when only horses and wagons were used, the families who lived in the adjacent valleys on the Blackfeet Reservation were the ones who most often camped farther up the valley, inside the former forest reserve and today's park.

Traditional camping in the early years of this century was primarily for economic and religious purposes rather than for recreation. When the park was established, the pattern began to change. Staged tipi camps were erected for the sole purpose of still photography, much of which was done for illustrative purposes for postcards, calendars, books, pamphlets, and promotional materials. A number of freelance professional photographers and studios also photographed the Indians in the park; their prints and folios were later sold both to the Great Northern, Glacier Park Company, the park, collectors, tourists and others.

Camps were also set up for promotional, documentary, and fictional pictures, a number of which were shot in the years prior to World War II, both before and after the park's establishment. A motion picture dealing with the Sun Dance (thought to be called Scarface) was shot at Two Medicine around

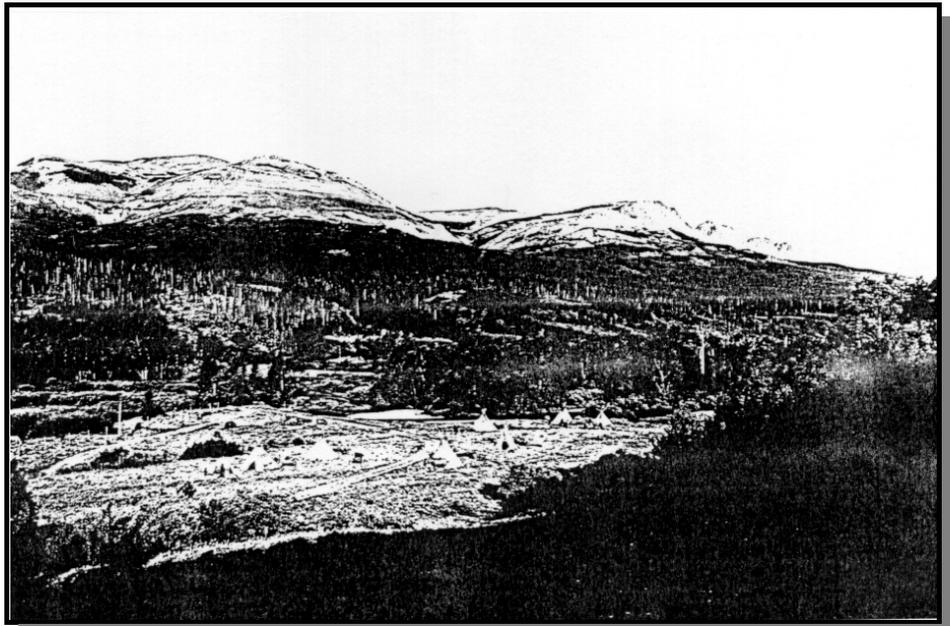


Figure 8: Blackfoot Camp, Lower Two Medicine. View Southwest towards the Bison and Scenic Points. Ted Marble Photographs. Glacier Park Archives HPF1665.

1914. A Sun Dance encampment was created. Later, in 1945 or 1946, part of a western starring Tom (Tim?) McCoy was shot at Two Medicine; it involved a village of 16 to 20 tipis, as did the set of "The River of No Return," shot on the North Fork of the Flathead in the 1950s.

Tipi camps were also set up to entertain tourists at the various Glacier National Park Company lodges and chalets. In addition to Glacier Park Lodge, which is the best known and remembered by Blackfoot elders today, these camps included, at one time or another, tipi camps at Two Medicine, St. Mary, Going-To-The-Sun, and Many Glacier.

The Indian image and Glacier National Park, primarily as a result of the promotion by the Great Northern Railway, became identified together in many Americans' minds during the years before World War II. The legacy of these images and tipi camps has colored non-native and Blackfoot images, and

memories of the Blackfeet and the park. "Traditional" campsites, for example, are recalled to have been located on the exposed windward shores at Two Medicine and St. Mary, locales which are not the least bit favorable for the traditional campsites of the last century, and from which there is no archaeological evidence of occupation in post- or pre-contact times (Reeves 2000).

### **Piikáni Ethnogeology**

Contemporary Piikáni ethnogeology focuses on the use and role of certain rocks and minerals as sacred materials and objects in religious activities. Two centuries ago, geological resources played a wider role in traditional Piikáni culture, before metal, ceramic and glass artifacts were substituted for those manufactured of clay and stone.<sup>14</sup>

Geologically, the rock formations and glacial deposits of today's eastern slopes of Glacier National Park consist of three chronologically distinct geological groupings of consolidated and unconsolidated sediments. The first of these is the Proterozoic rock formations found above the Lewis Overthrust, which make up the vast majority of primary geological exposures expressed in the mountain ranges and peaks and the secondary accumulations of talus and rock fall resulting from their erosion within the park.

Of Proterozoic age, these formations, known as the Belt Series (see Ross 1959), consist primarily of sedimentary rocks, originally deposited as clay and lime-rich muds and sands in Protozoic mud flats and seas. Today, they are represented by a variety of red and green argillites, white to brown quartzites, limestones, and dolomites, sometimes interbedded within the same formation. Igneous rocks also occur in this sequence. They consist of a series of submarine volcanic basaltic flows known as the Purcell Basalts and intrusive diorite feeder dikes and sills.

Underlying the Lewis Thrust are rock formations of Upper Cretaceous age. These are locally exposed in stream valleys and at some locales along the front where erosion has cut down below the thrust. The most common of these formations are incompetent bentonitic rich marine shales of the Bears paw Formation, which, when water-saturated, often slump and cause massive landslides and rock falls from overlying Precambrian cliffs along the Front. One very active locale is Chief Mountain (Reeves 1994). Local outcrops of overlying non-marine mud and clay stones and sandstones of Late Cretaceous and earliest Palaeocene age sometimes also occur. Some of these clays are enriched in iron oxides (magnetite, hematite, and limonite).

Glacial deposits in the park, aside from those associated with recent (Little Ice Age) advances of the early 1700s, are primarily of Pleistocene age. The latter include a variety of glacial tills, mass wasting, and lacustrine and alluvial deposits. Most, because of the source rock types involved, are enriched with clay and iron oxide. Subsequent in situ weathering has further enriched certain glacial deposits and secondary post-glacial deposits resulting from their erosion.

Ethnogeological resources of continuing significance to the Piikáni today within Mistakis include both the collection and use of certain raw materials for the manufacture of paints and pipes, the use of certain kinds of rocks used in the sweats, and the collection of certain kinds of rocks and fossils that are later transformed into sacred objects through appropriate religious ritual.

## Paint

The Piikáni recognize and use a variety of colored paints.<sup>15</sup> Those in use today include three kinds of red paint (the most important and widely used color), as well as yellow, black, and white. Blue and green<sup>16</sup> are rare and not used very extensively. Sources are limited for most of the paints, particularly the reds and yellow. Many of these are located in and adjacent to the mountains.

The authority to dig and make paint is a transferred right held in the past and still held today by a number of traditional Piikáni. These people, who also have the right to use paint, can trade their paint to others, who do not have the right to collect and make paint.

### *Red Paint*<sup>17</sup>

Three varieties of red paint are recognized today:

"There is a dark, kind of metallic red, kind of shines. And that's hard to get that stuff. And there's another one that's kind of like, really bright red. And there's kind of in between. This metallic one, looks like metallic, it kind of shines, must have some mica in it. I don't know. This one is kind'a dark. And this other "komino"[sic] is really light, really almost florescent red. And there's one in between "asan" in between, red. I do a lot of stuff in that ...a lot of things. I cook some of it in the oven, in the ceramic ovens and how it changes colour. It goes through a stage, about four stages it goes through. Some of it you don't have to cook. Like that "komino" you don't have to cook that at all. It's really red...

"Some of it you have to cook to get the colour out. Some of it is kind of brown looking, kind of reddish-brown looking. And you take it and cook it and it changes into say, that in between red .... that's different, that's that shiny one (SL-1)."

Red paint is collected at a certain locales by individuals who have the transferred right to collect paint. Some paint locales are personal; and others are shared. Red paint collecting locales include the Blood Clot Hills (SL-1), Birch Creek (EW-1, EW-4, EM-1), Badger Creek (EM-4), and Cutbank Creek (SL-1, SL-2, McClintock 1912:216).

Birch Creek is an important source for certain of the red paints. A Piikáni elder (EM-1) went there with his grandma when he was a kid:

"I used to go with them, bunch of them old people, ride with them on horseback and that Swift Dam (located on Birch Creek) over there. They leave us (kids) on the hill. And they go down to Phillips? Creek. They go down there and get that paint. Nobody makes a noise. They go down and pray that they don't make noise or you cant find it. That's why they don't allow us kids to go down.

"They got two different kinds. There is dark brown and a kind'a reddish colour." Women and men got the paint. Pretty soon they come back with the little sack. And

one of those paints, you have to put them in the oven, and cook them. You just take them and crush them, they just go to pieces."

### *Yellow Paint*

Yellow paint is used alone or converted through cooking into red paint (different varieties of ochre may be involved). McClintock (1910:215) noted, "The yellow clay was first worked into a dough-like mass, and then roasted on a hot fire of coals, when it became a red powder."

### *Cutbank Creek Locale*

An important source for yellow paint is on Cutbank Creek (SL-1, SL-2). It is located inside Glacier National Park. Only the general location for this source, not a specific locale, can be known, because it is a sacred and secret place. The precise location can only be revealed to those who have obtained transferred rights to collect the paint at this place. SL-1 relates:

"The thing about that, you know, is they'll [referring to elders] just give you a general description, general vicinity. You can't say 'This is where it's at.' You can't. Because them old people, I mean, that was sacred to them, that was sacred. And only the women could dig it."

SL-1 (interview June, 1994) visited the general location as a boy with the elders including his grandmother.

"They'd go out .... they'd leave me behind with strict instructions to keep quiet. An I would sit there, watch the lunch. They would pray a long time and then they would go. They'd be gone a couple of hours. They would come back and they would all each have a sack. Not a great big bunch, just have a little bit. And then they would come back and make fire, make smudge and pray and then they would eat and then we would come home. Right in that area there, that's were they used to get the paint .... We used to go up on the wagon. East of the cabin [Cutbank Creek Ranger Station] in that place there. There we would take the team and they would picket them, the men would. And the men would go up into the timber. I would stay in the wagon, I would always stay close to the wagon cause I was just a kid. And the women went west, how far I don't know. And they always came back with paint. Yellow and red both.

"Well, they [women] went straight up west, along the creek west. How far I don't know. But the men always went this other way and they always came back with, you know, medicines and stuff like this. Sweet pine or whatever, you know. But they always went that way, they always separated.

"... Those old ladies used to go up and they'd walk. And they'd be a

long time coming back. Maybe three hours, just guessing, maybe more. They would come back. But they wouldn't only have paint. They'd have other things .... They get it out and the dirt's a certain colour. It's not red, its kind of off color. And then cook it and it just comes out (SL-1)."

Other sources for yellow paint include the valley of the Upper Two Medicine (EW-1, EM-4) toward the park; a source near today's Shelby, Montana (which is the Blackfeet name for the place)( EM-2); and on the Marias and the Yellowstone. McClintock (1910:216) noted: "Most of the yellow came from a place on the Yellowstone River near some warm springs ...."

Two important Piikáni paint sources are farther north, in the Canadian Rockies. One is located in the vicinity of the junctions of the Castle and Carbondale rivers (tributaries to the Oldman), west of Pincher Creek. This locale continues to be used today by the North Piikáni as their principal source for red paint.

Another traditionally important source for yellow and red paints for the Piikáni were the "Paint Pots" at the head of the Vermilion River, located in the Central Rockies in today's Kootenay National Park. This source was destroyed by ochre mining at the turn of the century. The former importance of it as a paint source is still known to some North Piikáni elders.

### ***White Paint***

White paint is collected from river beds and banks. It is used both for body painting, particularly during the Okan, as well as treating buckskin.

"... My grandmother used to gather a lot of it. She used to do a lot of cleaning of buckskin and she used that. She'd put some on, just like she's washing it. Scrub it, scrub it on really good and look at it and dust it off, see if it's clean. It just gets snow white. And that's the way they cleaned them .... She'd put water in it and she'd shape it, like a bar. The she'd let them dry and she'd use that, just like a chalk to clean the hard stains. She'd work it right into the buckskin. It makes your buckskin nappier too, seems like, makes it soft" (SL-1).

White paint appears to have been collected from a number of different places, including the Two Medicine and Two Medicine ridge and the South Fork of Cutbank Creek up toward the park (EW-1). It was also collected near Helena (EM-2).

### ***Blue Paint***

Blue paint is the Thunder Bird paint. A source for this paint is in or near the mountains (SL-1, EM-1). This is where Thunder Bird's tipi came from.

## Pipestone

The traditional source of stone used by the Piikáni for the manufacture of their smoking and ceremonial pipes for the last 1,000 years is a marine clay/mudstone found as thin beds in the Bearspaw Shale formation of Upper Cretaceous age. The soft gray claystone is collected at the base or dug out of eroding banks; shaped into the appropriate form through a combination of sawing, drilling, and grinding; and then fired through baking in the hot ashes of a red willow fire. A dull gray/black pipe results. The pipe is given its characteristic lustrous black appearance, for which Nitsitapii pipes are well-known, through use of the red willow ashes (Reeves, personal observations, 1987, of traditional Kainaa pipe manufacture by elder Peter Weasel Moccasin). Pipe manufacture is a transferred right, and only a few men have these rights in the nation.

The Bearspaw (or its stratigraphic equivalent) outcrops over a broad area of northern Montana and southern Alberta. While there are traditional locales for collecting the pipestone in southern Alberta and northern Montana, there does not appear to have been any special place equivalent to the catlinite quarry of the Dakota people. Some South Piikáni pipemakers obtain their pipestone today from along the Two Medicine River in the vicinity of East Glacier, Montana (SL-1).

Old Yellow Kidney was a pipemaker. According to his grandson (SL-1), Yellow Kidney and other pipemakers used to get pipestone "way back in" on Cutbank Creek, and also up Divide Creek out of St. Mary. Other pipemakers who probably used these and other sources were Chewing Black Bone, Time No Runner, Running Owl, Mud Head, and Home Gun (SL-1, EW-1): "... there was other spots too that they got them all. But a lot of the real good stone came from the mountains, the real easy to blacken stones and all that" (Waterton was another source).

## Sweat Rocks

Sweating is an integral feature of Piikáni religious practice. Sweat lodges have been used for thousands of years within traditional Piikáni territory. The size and shape of the sweat pits and the number of sweat rocks vary according to the type of sweat being carried out.

The number and the type of rocks utilized in a sweat are ritually fixed (Reeves, personal observations from participation in Piikáni sweats and observation of contemporary Piikáni and Kainaa sweat pits). Elder Piikáni traditionalists will only utilize certain kinds and colors of rocks; only these have "spiritual power."

The cobbles they utilize include black "lava" rocks (Purcell Basalts and Belt Series Diorites) and white and red quartzites (primarily derived from the Apekunny and Grinnell Formations). These rocks, in the form of glacial and water-worn cobbles, are obtained by traditionalists today from both glacial and post-glacial gravel deposits along the Front.

Metamorphic and igneous rocks of glacial origin from the Canadian Shield found in gravels along the western plains are not used in the sweats. Elder traditionalist Joe Crowshoe says that they have no power. Archaeological observations of excavated sweat pits in Waterton and southwest Alberta suggest to us that this particular tradition of specific rock selection for sweats extends back well over 2,000 years.

Piikáni traditionalists collect their rocks from locally available sources on the Blackfeet Reservation. The rock types are quite common in local gravels outside of the Front. There is no preference, to our knowledge, for collecting the sweat rocks within the mountain front.

## **Fossils & Rocks**

### ***Iniskims***

Iniskims (Buffalo Stones) were a characteristic and fundamental feature of old-time Piikáni religious tradition (Reeves 1993a). They were visioned on the Bow River east of Calgary some 1,000 years ago. They became a fundamental intermediary in accessing sacred power for both the community and the individual. Iniskims continue in use today for personal and familial reasons.

Geologically, iniskims are the fragmentary remains of fossil baculites and ammonites, the major geological source of which are specific fossiliferous horizons within the Bearspaw Shale. On the Blackfeet Reservation, Buffalo Stone Lake was a traditional collecting locale (*ibid.*) for the coiled ammonites (male iniskims). Baculites (female iniskims) were collected from locales such as Mission Ridge. These fossils may occur in the limited outcrops of Bearspaw Shale within the park. No collection locales have been identified in the park.

### ***Thunderstones***

Thunderstones, the results of lightning strikes on either soft or hard ground, are also a very powerful intermediary to sacred power (Reeves 1993a). The Piikáni originally collected thunderstones from lightning strikes on hills and other high places. The mountain tops and ridge crests along the Front -- particularly those capped by iron-rich basalts and diorites -- act as natural lightening rods. Lightning blast pits are common. Vision quest sites also associate with these locales. Thunderstones may have been collected from such locales. No oral or historical accounts were obtained on such activities specifically with reference to the mountains of Waterton-Glacier.

## **Piikáni Ethnozoology**

The Piikáni's traditional territory encompassed several ecosystems, ranging from the shortgrass plains surrounding the Bloodclot Hills--itself a prairie mountain ecosystem--through the fescue grasslands of the Rocky Mountain foothills and adjacent aspen parklands, to the Backbone's very complex and biologically diverse mountain ecosystem. Piikáni traditional ethnozoology, like their traditional ethnobotany, reflects the wide variety of animals found within their original territory and the Piikáni's intimate knowledge of them (see, for example, Schaefer's 1950 study of Blackfeet ornithology).

With the loss of their traditional lands and nomadic way of life, Piikáni ethnozoology, as it relates to the "wild," has not only been considerably diminished and changed, but has become more focused in both its secular and sacred dimensions on the communities of "wild" animals within the Backbone on lands that are, or formerly were, part of the Blackfeet Reservation. Many Piikáni remain of the opinion that they have continuing traditional rights to hunt, trap, and collect sacred materials in the lands that are now Glacier National Park.

## *Hunting – Twentieth Century*

Hunting patterns and knowledge related to hunting patterns in the recent past on the Blackfeet Reservation, like plant-collecting patterns, appear to be valley-specific in relationship to the Backbone's eastern slopes. This reflects, as discussed in the section on "Piikáni Ethnobotany," several pages ahead, the history of settlement on the reservation. Hunters are familiar with and have knowledge of the game and their seasonal movements within the valley where their families have always resided. They are less knowledgeable about other valleys.

Blackfeet hunting in and adjacent to the western edge of the reservation was and is a subsistence, not recreational activity. Wild game was and is a very important source of food for many Blackfeet families, particularly during the bad times earlier in this century. Teddy Burns, lifelong resident of Babb until his death last winter, relied on game to feed his family, particularly during the Great Depression: "There was no unemployment, no relief, no nothing out there. We used to eat elk, the kids were raised on elk."

The hunting patterns of the past 100 years vary along the eastern slopes. Often it has been simply a matter of local residents hunting the local elk and deer who cohabit both the reservation and the adjacent park lands. In other instances, particularly where bighorn sheep were targeted, organized hunts were made some distance back into the mountains.<sup>18</sup>

### *Belly River*

The Belly River, before it became part of the park, was traditionally hunted, at and after the turn of the century, by the Kainaa from the Blood Reserve, as well as by Mormons from Cardston and District. Summer elk hunting was particularly good in the Mokowanis Valley (Frank Goble, long-time Cardston District resident, personal communication). According to elder residents in Babb, people from Babb used to go up and hunt in the Belly River. The Chippewa Cree from Babb also went up there. The North Fork of the Belly River was also considered good hunting.

### *Chief Mountain/Slide Lake*

Babb elders say that Chief Mountain was a first-rate hunting area, particularly for elk. The mountain itself was good for sheep and goats (?). A very big lick on north side of the mountain inside of the park attracts animals. It was a good place to hunt (EM-5). The Chief Mountain area was a fine wintering and hunting area for deer, elk, and bighorn at higher elevations (Schultz 1916:235). Once a Piikáni who was hunting elk up there accidentally drove part of a herd over a cliff on the north side.

Slide Lake Valley was also good hunting for the people from Babb. To the north, the Blood used to come into Boundary Creek, where they had a big camp and would hunt for winter meat on the slopes to the south; they made dry meat there (EM-3, EM-5).

### *Kennedy Creek*

The hunting of sheep, deer, and elk hunting was once good in Kennedy Creek. Grizzlies were killed up Kennedy, and hunters took really big bears there (EM-5).

### *Many Glacier*

Many Glacier was a very good place to hunt sheep before the park was established. The best sheep hunting was up on the winter range on Mt. Altyn. People from Babb also hunted sheep in Appikuni Basin and at Cracker Lake (EM-3, EM-5).

### *East Flattop and Boulder Creek*

The big cliffs above Wild Creek Basin were exceptional for hunting sheep. Deer and elk were hunted in the forests below, around the north end of East Flattop. Boulder Creek was also a good place to hunt elk. Sheep could also be found in the headwaters of Boulder Creek (EM-3,EM-5)

### *Divide Creek Basin*

The headwater cirques of Divide Creek Basin provided very good sheep hunting, with excellent licks and a good system of ridge trails into the basin. Local Blackfeet hunted there, as well as Kainaa from the Blood Reserve. They would pack in, camp, and hunt, and then pack out (EM-3). Schultz's Piikáni companions took a ram there in 1916 (Schultz 1916:106).

### *Red Eagle*

Red Eagle Valley was sometimes hunted, and was good for elk. The K'tunaxa (Schultz 1916:153-154) with whom Schultz was camped in 1883 on St. Mary Lake hunted up at a salt lick at the base of Kootenai Peak. Schultz named this peak in their honor. It was an excellent place to hunt.

### *Cutbank Creek*

White Calf and his family had a summer camp up in the headwaters of the South Fork of the Milk. He used to hunt elk, deer, and sheep there, as well as up Cutbank Creek. Lake Creek was good for both sheep and elk. At one time there were many elk around Mad Wolf (EM-1, EM-2).

On the west side of the pass in Nyack Creek valley, about 3 to 4 miles below Pumpelly Glacier, is a large lick, frequented by bighorns, goats, and elk; and it was a good place to hunt (Schultz 1916:106). Schultz once killed a grizzly bear there.

### *Two Medicine*

Moose were sometimes hunted up the Two Medicine. There was not much hunting up at the lakes. Elk and deer were also hunted up the Dry Fork of the Two Medicine (SL-1,SL-2).

### *Midvale Creek*

Midvale Creek basin on the north side of Squaw has some big licks, and was a good place to hunt. People would pack in by horse up the trail from East Glacier, then cut across into the basin; hunt and they would then pack the meat right out (SL-1).

## *Marias Pass*

The Marias Pass was a good place to hunt elk, especially on the north side, just west of the summit. A number of families from the Browning area hunted there (SL-1).

### **Trapping – Twentieth Century**

Trapping appears to have been an important source of cash income for some Blackfeet who trapped both outside and inside the park. Trapping in the park was of some importance to them, because certain species, such as martins, could only be found within the park. Other species, such as lynx and wolverine, were more common in the park than outside. The North Fork of the Belly River, the Belly River, Slide Lake, Many Glacier, and the Boulder and Cutbank valleys are mentioned as places where people trapped.

### **Sacred Materials**

Sacred materials from the animal world play a vital role in traditional Piikáni religion. These materials range from the feathers--particularly those of the golden eagle -- to a variety of bird and mammal skins, pelts, and parts that play significant roles in their sacred bundles.

In some cases, such as that of eagle feathers, the sacred material is widely used in many different religious and ceremonial contexts. In other instances, a species is associated only with a specific bundle; for example, the only medicine pipe bundle with a bear skin covering today is the Long-Time-Medicine Pipe bundle. All the other pipe bundles have elk skin covers (SL-2).

### **Eagle Trapping**

Trapping was the traditional way to obtain eagle feathers. The power to trap eagles was received through visionary experience. Eagle trapping most often took place during the golden eagles' migrations. The trapper dug a pit on a high hill or constructed a blind on a mountain ridge; he hid beneath some brush, and tethered a piece of meat or some other bait to his wrist by a leather thong, and placed it on the brush. When the eagle took the bait, the trapper grabbed the bird, pulled him down, and killed him. Some trappers were very successful, taking many eagles in one session during their migrations (Grinnell 1892:236-241. See also McClintock 1910:428-429). The Backbone is on the migration corridor, providing an excellent location for eagle traps.

## *Old Sun*

Schultz's book, *Seizer of Eagles*, published in 1922, is an account of Old Sun, a highly respected Medicine Man and Eagle Catcher of the Piikáni. Set in the 1820s when he was a young man, the book centers around his acquisition of power and authority to catch eagles. Old Sun's vision, as described earlier in this report, occurred on Red Mountain (Rising Wolf). The Piikáni were in a camp at the foot of the Lower Two Medicine. Prior to his vision quest, Old Sun climbed a nearby butte and encountered an eagle trapping pit (*ibid.*:58-60):

"In the very top of the butte I found an old pit of a seizer of eagles and got down from my horse and examined it, clearing out the slender willow sticks and rotted grass in the bottom, with which it had once been covered, and under the rubbish finding a human skull. When I saw that, I was up out of the pit with one quick spring. Skulls of men were things not to be touched [it was a common practice for eagle catchers to take a human skull along to ward off bad luck] ...."

"...Longer than a man it was quite narrow and about shoulder-deep. Around it was no sign of the earth that had been taken from it; all of that had been carried to a distance and scattered to the winds. I pictured the seizer of eagles, his pit completed, carefully covering it with the light sticks, grass on top of them, and then upon the light roof laying his stuffed wolf skin, with fresh liver protruding from a slit in it's side. That done, he slid into the pit, covering over the place of his entrance, and, lying down, awaited the coming of an eagle."

Much later in Old Sun's narrative, he traps his first eagle in a trap that Red Wings (his mentor) built on a butte in the Sun/Missouri River country (probably Square or Crown Butte).

### *Hugh Monroe's Eagle Trap*

Hugh Monroe trapped eagles in the St. Mary Valley. Frank Monroe (MSU Archives Scultz papers, Box 5 folio 8) described his father's trap:

"He knew where the eagles were the most plentiful. The eagles generally hang around a high butte and his mother [Frank's] had a coyote pelt and sewed it up and filled it with meat such as lungs and opened the side of the coyote and then sprinkled blood around the coyote head. My father would dig a pit that would be about five and one-half feet deep. They laid sticks on top and drove the ends in on top and put the coyote on top as if it were asleep. Before daylight my father would go into the pit and sit in there. While he was under there the different birds would come to feed such as crows, magpies and he would take a stick and poke them off. Sometimes a lot of these birds would be very close and all at once they would scatter and that was when an eagle was above and coming down. You can hear the eagle when he is coming down and he would light within a few yards of the coyote and walk toward it. Finally the eagle would come up to the coyote and my father would see it and he would gradually push him aside. While the eagle is feeding he is very busy and my father would push the eagle farther but the eagle did not notice it because he is busy eating. Then when he gets the feet together he gets a firm grip and he pulls the eagle in and when he gets him on the inside and finally gets him on his side he crushes the chest in. He got many eagles like that and traded them to the Indians and they would make war bonnets."

The Piikáni and other tribes discontinued eagle trapping as a source of eagle feathers long ago.

## Bundles

The Piikáni bundles contain various birds and mammal skins from many of the foothills and mountains. The specific associations of animals with certain bundles reflect both the role that particular animal had in relationship to the bundle's origin, as well as the particular set of rituals associated with its opening.

Bundle opening and transfer ceremonies continue to be a focal aspect of Piikáni traditional religion. Today, their religion, like that of many other Native Americans, is being revitalized. Sacred materials are required to replace worn-out objects within bundles; for creating new bundles, particularly those associated with personal medicine; and also for duplicating bundles. Many of the sacred objects in the bundles, as well as the bundles themselves, come from the mountains.

The Backbone is therefore very important to the bundle-holders. George Kicking Woman, owner of the Long Time Pipe, which was given to the People by Thunder at Chief Mountain, explains, in response to a question about the origin of sacred animals in the pipe bundles:

"Well, some of them. The birds are in there, the squirrels, chipmunk and the big crows--what do they call them--raven, crow and all them are in the bundle. Deerskin, the little fawn skin, they got songs.

"Yeah, they're from the mountains. We got the swans, we got otters. Most of these pipes, the only one of seen the otter is this pipe here ....

"Long-Time-Pipe. And it's from way back. Some of the birds can't be recognized now. No head. Some of them one leg. Some them have two legs but they are hanging on. They're just barely together. You have to be careful. Don't let them drop, that's bad luck.

"Yeah, all the birds [have a song]. Like the mountain birds and swans, they got songs of their own. And otter, has a song of its own. Raven, it goes with the birds. We use the mountains quite a bit ...."

Wissler (1912b:136) describes a medicine pipe bundle whose origin was in the mountains:

"The outer wrapping for these bundles should be the hairy skin of a black bear and next to this a scraped elk hide. Around the middle of the bundle is a broad strip of elkskin. The contents are made up into two bundles .... The former is a long slender poke made of red flannel .... It contained the decorated stem, or pipe proper, and a head band of white buffalo skin, with the hair, and an eagle feather .... The secondary bundle contains a smaller pipestem, an owl, two loons, two white swans, two cranes, a muskrat skin, an otterskin, a rattle, a skin of a fawn, a whistle and sometimes the skin of a prairie dog."

Beaver bundles are the most complex of the Piikáni bundles. The original Beaver Bundle, as noted earlier, came from Waterton Lake. According to Wissler (*ibid.*:169), beaver bundles must contain several entire beaver skins, and skins of muskrat, weasel, white gopher, badger, prairie dog, antelope kid, deer kid, mountain goat kid, mountain sheep kid, lynx, or wildcat tails; skins of loon, yellow-necked

blackbird, raven, blackbird, woodpecker, sparrow, crow, and duck; two buffalo ribs; a buffalo tail; and buffalo hoof. Wrapping could be buffalo skin, but elk is preferred, and the strings should be of elk skin. Other beaver bundles that Wissler examined contained otter, mink, white prairie chicken, mud hen, hawk, snowbird, mouse, black tailed deerskin, grouse, magpie, packrat, mountain squirrel, and night hawk skins.

## Piikáni Ethnobotany

### *Previous Research*

Although this is the first ethnobotanical study specific to Glacier National Park, the traditional use of plants by the Piikáni has been discussed by various researchers. Unfortunately, most of these are accounts of early ethnographers, who tend to discuss traditional territories in a rather general sense. Consequently, little mention is made of specific plant resource use locations. Further, because most references were penned prior to the establishment of Glacier National Park in 1910, even fewer references are specific to the park itself.

There is a dearth of detailed information concerning traditional plant knowledge and utilization. For example, of the 1,186 entries in Johnson's 1988 annotated bibliography of the Blackfeet, only seven deal specifically with the topic of plants, and five of these are by the same author. When compared to the number of works devoted to discussions of buffalo hunting, the imbalance becomes apparent.

Although the reasons for this imbalance are not obvious, they may reflect the fact the male ethnographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries dealt primarily with male informants. As a result, these observers were more frequently exposed to men's activities, such as hunting or warfare; consequently, these more dramatic aspects of Piikáni life were recorded. This androcentric perspective, although perhaps unintentional, is exemplified by Grinnell's (1892:xv) statement that "I have learned to know well all their principal men ... and have devoted much time and effort to the work of accumulating from their old men and best warriors the facts bearing on the history, customs, and oral literature of the tribe, which are presented in this volume."

Nonetheless, such studies represent the only historic information available, and modern researchers must glean as much as possible from their pages (while being aware of the inherent biases!). The ethnographic works of Grinnell (1892), Wissler (1910, 1911, 1913, 1918), McClintock (1910), and Ewers (1955, 1958) are considered required reading for students of the Blackfeet. While these are only a sample of the ethnographic literature available, they may be considered a representative sample with respect to the quantity and quality of plant data they present.

*Blackfeet Lodge Tales*, by George Bird Grinnell (1892), is one of the earliest accounts of traditional Blackfeet life. Grinnell spent more than a decade recording the oral traditions and daily activities that Piikáni elders described to him. In discussing the Blackfeet diet, Grinnell (1892:203-204) notes that it is "more varied than one would think," and offers a brief description of the various plant foods utilized, with some discussion of collecting and processing techniques. Included in the list of plant foods are: "sarvis berries," "choke-cherries," "bull berries," "white berry of the red willow," "camas root," "bitter-root," and "a certain root called mats." In contrast, Grinnell (1892:226-241) devotes an entire chapter to hunting.

Clark Wissler, an ethnographer from the American Museum of Natural History, conducted extensive field work, primarily among the Piikáni in Montana, at the beginning of this century (Wissler 1910:5; Thomas 1986:vii). His volume, *Material Culture of the Blackfeet*, contains a lengthy discussion of Piikáni food habits (1910:20-52). Although the bulk of this chapter pertains to the pursuit, capture, and processing of bison and other game, Wissler devotes several paragraphs to plant collection and preparation (1910: 20-22, 24-25 and 43). He also includes the list of the plants previously identified by Grinnell (1892), as well as a list of food plants published by McClintock (1909). Unfortunately, Wissler omits (or neglected to record?) many of the specifics concerning plant gathering and processing. Perhaps this is because "the fact, that the vegetable food of the Blackfeet seems to have been normally used as the secondary element in meat dishes, leaves little to be said as to cooking and preparation" (Wissler 1910:43).

The works of John Ewers are also important sources of Blackfeet ethnographic data. Ewers, a student of Wissler's, became curator of the Museum of the Plains Indian on the Blackfeet Reservation in 1941, and worked with the Blackfeet for many years. His 1958 publication, *The Blackfeet: Raiders on the Northwestern Plains*, presents Blackfeet history and culture, and has been called "perhaps the best single introduction to the Blackfeet" (Johnson 1988:40). Ewers' book discusses the contribution of plant resources, saying, "Wild plants, especially roots in early summer and berries in fall, supplied vegetal foods which brought some variety to their heavy meat diet" (1958:15). However, food plants are mentioned only briefly at the end of a chapter detailing buffalo hunting (1958:72-87). Further, the plants listed are essentially the same set of plant foods originally published by Grinnell (1892) and Wissler (1910).

Walter McClintock's botanical bent appears to be the exception to the focus on hunting. In 1896, McClintock served as a member of the U.S. Forest Service expedition to northwestern Montana. In this capacity, he worked closely with a Piikáni guide, Billy Jackson, who later became his interpreter. After leaving the Forest Service, McClintock remained in Montana, where he lived with the South Piikáni, and was adopted by one of the chiefs, Mad Wolf. During his travels, McClintock became interested in collecting and processing various plants, and spent time with Piikáni men and women as they collected. He notes (1910:364): "When I started a botanical collection of my own, the women were constantly on the look-out to aid me, pointing out the different varieties, telling their Indian names, and explaining their different uses and methods of preparation. Our outfit was frequently halted to secure additional specimens."

The result of McClintock's efforts is a list of over 60 plants that the Piikáni used for food, medicines, and spiritual purposes (McClintock 1909). For each plant, he records the Blackfoot name(s) and a brief description of how the plant was collected and used. This list was later included as an appendix in *The Old North Trail* (McClintock 1910:524-531). It is worth mentioning that Piikáni elders highly respect McClintock's observations today. In fact, one elder (Joe Crowshoe) refers to *The Old North Trail* as "the bible," because he finds it to be an accurate account of traditional Piikáni ways at the end of the last century. Elder Crowshoe is the great-grandson of Brings-Down-the-Sun, a prominent North Piikáni chief whom McClintock visited.

The foregoing is not intended to be an exhaustive review of the ethnographic literature concerning the Piikáni's use of plants; nor is it meant to imply that plants are not mentioned in any other portions of these studies, or in other works. It is meant, however, to demonstrate that, with the exception of

McClintock's studies, few ethnographic works have treated plant use in any systematic fashion (in a manner comparable to buffalo hunting, for example). The net result is a picture of past lifeways that tends to overemphasize the importance of the buffalo in Piikáni diet and culture at the expense of plant contributions.

This picture persists today, and may account for the fact that there are only a handful of modern Blackfeet ethnobotanical studies. A review of the published literature reveals that only two sources deal specifically with Blackfeet plant use. These include the works of Johnston (1960, 1969, 1970, 1982, 1987), and Hellson and Gadd (1974). A third study by Raczka and Bastien (1986) remains unpublished. A number of secondary sources make reference to Blackfeet plant use in the broader context of the native economic plants of Montana (e.g., Blankinship 1905; Hart 1976). However, for the purposes of this discussion, we examine only the primary sources.

The first major source of recent Blackfeet ethnobotanical information is the work of Alex Johnston. Johnston, a range ecologist in southwestern Alberta, and a member of the Kainaa Chieftainship (Johnston 1987:7), has published numerous studies on Blackfeet plant utilization. Although he appears to have been a prolific writer on the subject, these works present essentially the same information, revised and expanded through the years (see, for example, Johnston 1970, 1982, and 1987). For this reason, we discuss only his last publication.

In *Plants and the Blackfeet*, Johnston (1987) presents a thorough review of all Blackfeet ethnographic literature, including some 90 sources that make reference to plant use. This is an impressive synthesis of the existing historical documents, and provides relatively detailed information on over 180 plants, along with historic photographs and numerous plant illustrations. The plant information is arranged taxonomically, with plants listed by their botanical name, followed by the common and Blackfeet name(s) when available. The uses of each plant, as recorded by historic observers, are included and referenced. Although Johnston did not conduct formal field interviews with the Blackfeet, he does list several native consultants in his references.

Hellson's and Gadd's 1974 *Ethnobotany of the Blackfeet Indians* was the first contemporary study to document, first-hand, the traditional plant knowledge of the Blackfeet elders. It represents a collaborative effort by John Hellson, an anthropologist, and Morgan Gadd, a field botanist.

During the summer of 1971, the authors interviewed 14 men and women elders "all of whom had the specimens in hand" (1974:2). Although the scope of this research is said to include all three tribal divisions of the Blackfeet, including the South Piikáni, it focuses primarily upon the Kainaa (Taylor 1989:361). *Ethnobotany of the Blackfeet Indians* includes information on approximately 100 plants, and is illustrated with photographs of historic artifacts and selected plant specimens.

An unpublished study of the culturally significant flora and fauna of the Piikáni Reserve (Raczka and Bastien 1986) also merits discussion. It was prepared for the Piikáni band administration to assist in assessing the impact of the Oldman River Dam on Piikáni religious practices. The researchers -- Paul Raczka, an anthropologist, and Leonard Bastien, a North Piikáni band member -- continue to be actively involved in the cultural and religious activities on the reserve (Bastien is a past chief). They interviewed 11 elders (10 men and one woman), and incorporated information from previously published works (such as Johnston 1969), and taped interview materials from the Provincial Archives

of Alberta. This work emphasizes the ceremonial use of plants, and the authors provide an insightful discussion on the role of religion in Piikáni life. Plants are listed under a variety of use categories, including ceremonial bundles, curing bundles, horse medicine, curing, food, crafts, and miscellaneous. Unfortunately, detailed information on the collection, preparation, and use of the plants is not included.

The most current and comprehensive study of Piikáni ethnobotany is Peacock's 1992 master's thesis. Peacock combines data from field work with North and South Piikáni elders, particularly women, with the previously published ethnographic sources discussed above. The study records information on over 90 plants consumed as food, administered as medicines, prepared for spiritual purposes, and used as materials for a variety of tasks. It differs from previous studies in that it systematically records details concerning the use, collection, processing, and preservation of each plant resource. When possible, the Piikáni plant names are included, as are the ecology and distribution of each species. The database created by this research augments existing ethnographic and archaeological information, and assists in identifying and interpreting archaeological sites and settlement patterns.

### *Importance of Previous Ethnobotanical Research*

Although the previous ethnobotanical studies fail to specifically mention the plant resources of Glacier National Park, they do provide a vast amount of detailed information about which plants were traditionally utilized, how and when these plants were collected and processed, and what the cultural significance of the resources was to the Piikáni. As such, they are important sources of data that enable us to draw inferences about the manner in which the native people and their ancestors likely utilized the diverse plant resources and environments of Glacier National Park. The information from these ethnographic sources is incorporated into this study where appropriate.

## **Traditional Piikáni Plant Use and Glacier National Park**

### *Overview*

The results of the ethnobotanical investigations conducted in 1993 and 1994 with the Piikáni (see Figure 9) reveal that over 80 plants that the Piikáni traditionally utilized occur within the boundaries of Glacier National Park (based on lists provided in Lesica 1985; and Lesica and Ahlenslager 1993). Of these, 41 species were consumed as food, 66 prepared as medicine, 25 utilized for spiritual reasons, and 48 employed as materials for a variety of purposes (see Table 6).

This list represents a synthesis of information collected through elder interviews during the 1993-1994 field season and previous ethnobotanical research by Peacock (1992). It is important to note that this list includes any culturally-significant plants that the Piikáni may have collected within the park boundaries. Because the Piikáni and other native peoples essentially lost access to the resources of this portion of their traditional territory some 80 years ago, much of the information obtained from the elders pertains to the former use of the region by their parent or grandparent generations. Consequently, data about specific plants and plant collecting locations are quite general, although some site-specific information was collected.

Detailed information on the plants traditionally utilized by the Piikáni was also assembled as part of this study. Plant data were summarized in a standardized format, and arranged alphabetically according to

the scientific name of the plant. Information for each plant was divided into a number of headings representing the broad categories of information sought during interviews. Information presented in the Annotated List of Plants (on file at Glacier National Park) consists largely of the original information



Figure 9 : Several of the Piikáni elders who participated in the ethnobotanical study. Right to Left: George and Molly Kicking Woman, Doris Many Guns, Margaret Plain Eagle, and Elsie Crowshoe.

provided by the Piikáni elders during field interviews. All elder comments regarding a specific plant have been included, unless some confusion was obvious concerning the plant in question. Because plant knowledge varies with age, gender, and community, it is important to record all observations without making assumptions as to which is the more accurate or appropriate. In many instances, evidence from previous ethnographic work was incorporated on the plant summary forms.

While it is not the intent of this study to include all previously published Piikáni ethnobotanical data, such details were included to clarify, corroborate, or to contradict a point. These are referenced accordingly.

The following sections briefly summarize the plants consumed as food, administered as medicines, prepared for spiritual purposes, or used as materials for a variety of tasks.

### *Plants as Food*

The results of the study suggest that 41 plants consumed as part of the traditional Piikáni diet occur in the park, and may have been collected there on a seasonal basis (see Collection discussion). These include 11 species of edible roots; 14 kinds of fruits and berries; a variety of green "vegetables"; several beverage plants; the inner park, pitch, and cones of several tree species; and black tree lichen. These categories, and the plants appropriate to each, are listed in Table 7. While a detailed discussion of each of the plant foods is beyond the scope of this report, it is possible to summarize the major food groups.

Traditionally, edible roots (including corms, tubers, bulbs, and rhizomes) were consumed in considerable quantities by the Piikáni. In fact, root vegetables account for about one-third of the plants in the diet. Large quantities of roots were gathered by each family in late spring or early summer, and then dried and stored for use throughout the year. These dried roots could then be ground or mashed and added to soups and stew. Culturally significant root foods that occur in Glacier National Park

include camas (*Camassia quamash*) (see Figure 11), Western spring beauty (*Claytonia lanceolata*), balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*) (see Figure 10), bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*), and glacier lily (*Erythronium grandiflorum*).

A nutrient analysis of several of these more important root resources reveals a food source high in carbohydrates. Camas, for example, contains 71.0 grams of carbohydrates per 100 grams fresh weight (Kuhnlein and Turner 1991). The same weight of bitterroot contains 81.0 grams of carbohydrates. Carbohydrates provide energy to the body and are essential to the efficient metabolism of protein. Without sufficient carbohydrates in the diet, the amino acids in protein are converted to meet energy requirements, resulting in a loss of protein for the body's normal uses (Speth and Spielmann 1983:13). Thus, these root resources and the carbohydrates they provide can be seen as necessary components of the Piikáni diet, which incorporated substantial amounts of animal proteins in the form of buffalo and other game.

Fruits and berries (including drupes, pomes, and aggregate and accessory fruits) comprised an additional one-third of the Piikáni diet. Like roots, significant quantities of berries were collected, dried, and stored for use throughout the year. Choke cherries, for example, were mashed and shaped into cakes and dried in the sun prior to storage. Sarvis berries were added to pemmican, or dried whole for use in soups and stews. Berries found in Glacier National Park include huckleberries (*Vaccinium membranaceum*); saskatoons, or sarvis berries (*Amelanchier alnifolia*); choke cherries (*Prunus virginiana*); and the berries of the red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*). These also contributed carbohydrates, as well as essential vitamins and minerals. For example, sarvis berries, considered the most important berry by the Piikáni, are high in vitamins A and C, and contain unusually high concentrations of iron and copper (Turner and Szczawinski 1979:137).

The remainder of the diet consisted of a variety of edible shoots, stems, and leaves, which were consumed fresh as they became available. These, too, provided nutrients to the diet. Cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), for example, was eaten as a fresh vegetable in the spring, and provided folate, ascorbate, and other water-soluble vitamins (Kuhnlein and Turner 1986:318). The inner bark, or "cambium," of the "cottonwood" trees (*Populus spp.*) was also an important source of food energy in the spring, at a time when other resources were scarce. The bark of the balsam poplar (*P. balsamifera*), for example, provides 230 kcal of food energy per 100 grams fresh weight. The same weight of trembling aspen bark (*P. tremuloides*) provides 684 mg of calcium (Kuhnlein and Turner 1991:347).

It is difficult to estimate the overall caloric contributions of plant foods to the Piikáni diet, although it is reasonable to suggest that these contributions have been underestimated and undervalued in the past. Research with other indigenous groups has revealed the importance of plant resources to hunter-gatherer diets. For example, Lee's (1968) seminal study of the !Kung showed that plant foods comprised over 60% of the diet. Similarly, Hunn (1981) has demonstrated that the pre-contact peoples of the Columbia-Fraser Plateau obtained about 70% of their food energy needs from plant foods, rather than from salmon resources, as commonly assumed. Whether these figures are appropriate to the Piikáni remains to be determined. The preceding discussion does demonstrate, however, that the Piikáni utilized a wide variety of plant foods, and that these were important--and essential--sources of food energy, vitamins, and minerals.

**Table 6: Plants Traditionally Utilized by the Piikáni that Occur in Glacier National Park**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Food	Medicinal	Spiritual	Other
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine fir	x	x	x	x
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common yarrow		x		x
<i>Actaea rubra</i>	Baneberry		x		x
<i>Allium</i> spp.	Onion	x	x		x
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon	x	x	x	x
<i>Anemone multifida</i>	Cut-leaved anemone		x		
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i>	Yellow angelica		x	x	x
<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	Indian hemp		x		
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Common bearberry	x	x	x	x
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Pasture sagewort	x	x		x
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie sagewort	x	x	x	x
<i>Asclepias viridiflora</i>	Green milkweed		x		
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Balsamroot	x	x	x	x
<i>Berberis repens</i>	Creeping mahonia	x	x		x
<i>Betula</i> spp.	Birch		x		x
<i>Bryoria fremontii</i>	Black tree lichen	x			
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	Blue camas	x	x	x	
<i>Castilleja</i> spp.	Indian paint-brush		x		x
<i>Chimaphila umbellata</i>	Prince's pine				x
<i>Cicuta douglasii</i>	Western water-hemlock		x		
<i>Cirsium ?bookerianum</i>	Elk or White thistle	x	x		
<i>Claytonia lanceolata</i>	Western spring beauty	x			
<i>Clematis columbiana</i>	Blue clematis		x		x

**Table 6: Plants Traditionally Utilized by the Piikáni that Occur in Glacier National Park**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Food	Medicinal	Spiritual	Other
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red osier dogwood	x	x	x	x
<i>Disporum trachycarpum</i>	Fairy bells	x	x		
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf willow	x	x		x
<i>Equisetum</i> spp.	Common horsetail		x		x
<i>Erythronium grandiflorum</i>	Glacier lily	x			
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild strawberry	x	x		
<i>Fritillaria pudica</i>	Yellow-bell	x			
<i>Geum triflorum</i>	Old man's whiskers		x		x
<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	Wild licorice		x		x
<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i>	Gumweed		x		
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i>	Cow parsnip	x	x	x	x
<i>Heuchera</i> spp.	Alum-root		x		x
<i>Hierochloa odorata</i>	Sweet grass		x	x	x
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	x	x	x	x
<i>Ledum groenlandicum</i>	Common labrador tea	x			
<i>Letharia vulpina</i>	Wolf lichen		x		x
<i>Lewisia rediviva</i>	Bitter-root	x	x	x	
<i>Lithospermum ruderale</i>	Yellow puccoon			x	x
<i>Lomatium dissectum</i>	Chocolate-tips	x	x	x	x
<i>Lomatium triternatum</i>	Prairie parsley	x	x		x
<i>Lonicera involucrata</i>	Bracted honeysuckle		x		
<i>Lycoperdon</i> spp.	Puffballs		x	x	x
<i>Matricaria matricarioides</i>	Pineapple-weed		x	x	x
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Wild mint	x	x	x	

**Table 6: Plants Traditionally Utilized by the Piikáni that Occur in Glacier National Park**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Food	Medicinal	Spiritual	Other
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild bergamot	x	x		x
"Moss"	Moss				
<i>Musineon divaricatum</i>	Leafy musineon	x	x		
<i>Oplopanax horridum</i>	Devil's club		x		
<i>Osmorbiza occidentalis</i>	Sweet cicely		x	x	x
<i>Pachistima myrsinites</i>	Mountain boxwood		x		
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Wild caraway	x	x		x
<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i>	Double bladder-pod		x		x
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole pine	x	x		x
<i>Polyporus</i> spp.	Pore fungus		x	x	x
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Aspen	x	x	x	x
<i>Populus trichocarpa</i>	Black cottonwood	x	x		x
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed	x	x		x
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Choke cherry	x	x	x	x
<i>Ribes inerme</i>	Gooseberry	x	x		
<i>Rosa</i> spp.	Rose	x	x		
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Wild red raspberry	x			
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Thimbleberry	x	x		x
<i>Rumex</i> spp.	Dock		x		
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	x	x	x	x
<i>Sedum lanceolatum</i>	Lance-leaved stonecrop		x		
<i>Shepherdia canadensis</i>	Canadian buffalo-berry				
<i>Solidago</i> spp.	Goldenrod				

**Table 6: Plants Traditionally Utilized by the Piikáni that Occur in Glacier National Park**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Food	Medicinal	Spiritual	Other
<i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp.	Snowberry and Buckbrush				x
<i>Taraxacum</i> spp.	Dandelion	x	x		
<i>Thalictrum occidentale</i>	Western meadow rue	x	x	x	x

### *Plants as Medicine*

The importance of plant medicines in traditional Piikáni culture is reflected by the fact that at least 75 species were commonly used as herbal remedies in treating a variety of ailments (Peacock 1992). This preliminary study indicates that of these, 66 species grow in Glacier National Park (See Figures 18-22, and Table 8).

The traditional Piikáni concept of health is much more holistic than that associated with the practice of western medicine. The Piikáni believe that a person's physical health is inextricably linked to his or her spiritual well-being. Piikáni medicinal practices vary according to the ailment's nature and severity. Minor disorders, such as those outlined in Table 8, are treated with herbal remedies readily available to all members of the community. As one elder woman (EW-4) said, "in the old days, [we] never had clinics--[we] had to make medicine."

Knowledge of these common medicines differs between individuals. Age, gender, and life experiences frequently influence a person's "recipe" for a particular plant medicine. Often, the same plant is used to treat several different illnesses. For example, the roots of old man's whiskers (*Geum triflorum*) are used as a medicinal tea for coughs, colds, sore throats, fevers, stomach aches, and kidney troubles.



Figure 10: Balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*) was used as food and medicine and for spiritual purposes by the K'tunaxa and Piikáni.

**Table 7: Traditional Plant Foods of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<b>Edible Roots</b>		<b>Spring*</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>
<i>Allium</i> spp.	Onion	x	x		
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Balsamroot	x			
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	Blue Camas	x	x		
<i>Claytonia lanceolata</i>	Western Spring Beauty	x			
<i>Erythronium grandiflorum</i>	Glacier Lily	x			
<i>Fritillaria pudica</i>	Yellow-bell	x			
<i>Lewisia rediviva</i>	Bitter-root	x	x		
<i>Lomatium triternatum</i>	Prairie Parsley	x	x		
<i>Musineon divaricatum</i>	Leafy Musineon			x	
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Wild Caraway	x	x		
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed		x		
<b>Fruits &amp; Berries</b>					
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon		x		
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Common Bearberry	x	x	x	
<i>Berberis repens</i>	Creeping Mahonia		x	x	
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red Osier Dogwood		x		
<i>Disporum trachycarpum</i>	Fairy Bells		x		
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf Willow		x	x	x
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild Strawberry		x		
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper		x	x	
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Choke Cherry		x		
<i>Ribes inerme</i>	Wild Gooseberry	x			
<i>Rosa</i> spp.	Rose		x	x	x
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Wild Red Raspberry		x		
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Thimbleberry		x		

**Table 7: Traditional Plant Foods of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<b>Edible Roots</b>		<b>Spring*</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>
<i>Vaccinium membranaceum</i>	Black Mountain Huckleberry		x	x	
<b>Greens</b>					
<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	Wild Chives	x	x		
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Pasture Sagewort	x	x		
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie Sagewort	x	x		
<i>Cirsium ?bookerianum</i>	Elk or White Thistle	x	x		
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i>	Cow Parsnip	x			
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Wild Mint	x	x		
<i>Taraxacum</i> spp.	Dandelion	x	x		
<b>Tree Inner Bark, Pitch, Cones And Tree Lichen</b>					
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine Fir			x	
<i>Bryoria fremontii</i>	Black Tree Lichen	x	x	x	x
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole Pine	x			
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Trembling Aspen	x			
<i>Populus trichocarpa</i>	Black Cottonwood	x			
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willows	x			
<b>Beverage Plants</b>					
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild Strawberry		x		
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Wild Mint	x	x		
<i>Ledum groenlandicum</i>	Common Labrador Tea	x	x		

\* Spring (late April, May, to early June)  
 Summer (late June, July, August)  
 Fall (September, October)

Traditions surrounding these herbal remedies are passed from generation to generation. Another elder woman (EW-2) said that "old people would know what they used and they would explain to us what they use it for." Another North Piikáni woman elder's (EW-5) knowledge of medicinal plants was acquired through watching and listening to her mother-in-law. "She doesn't teach. You see things happening, you know and hear and watch. You learn better that way. That's how you get it in the Indian way. It's not like teaching. To tell you, is not the way."

As previously mentioned, common herbal remedies are available to all individuals, and are not considered to be supernatural in origin (Helson and Gadd 1974:64). This does not diminish their importance, however. The collection, preparation, and administration of the common medicines is always undertaken with great respect. A Piikáni spiritual leader (SL-4) said: "When I prepare my roots, I am in the mood of the spirit. I have a spiritual confidence in them. I don't just take them and boil them and give them away to someone."

Amongst the Piikáni, individuals considered to have spiritual powers for curing are called upon to treat more severe illnesses. These specialists are commonly referred to as "medicine men," although, as Grinnell (1892:286) notes, "there are also many women in the guild, some of which are quite noted for their success." According to EW-5:

"There are some plants that everyone knows and can use to help for minor things. But there are some medicines that have strong power that one certain person will be given to use. That's why many years ago, when someone got very sick, they'd say, "Go tell so and so, they know." They come and help the person."

Spiritual curing powers are obtained by an individual through a dream or vision, but as EW-5 noted, "the spirit doesn't work through all people, only those who will use it." According to her husband (SL-4), "it's a mystery to explain and understand these cures except that a man is given the right through spiritual contact. Certain people are good at healing."

According to the elders, individuals with spiritual curing powers are prohibited from revealing those powers to other members of the community. This taboo is mentioned by McClintock (1910:247), who notes that the Piikáni "had a superstition that a doctor should not relate his dream (sources of inspiration), nor reveal his methods, nor hand them down to others." EW-5 explains:

"We have a law that we can't go out and tell people 'Come to this.' The spirit will put



Figure 11: Camas (*Camassia quamash*) was an important root food for the K'tunaxa and Piikáni. The bulbs were collected in large quantities and cooked in large, stone-lined ovens.

it in their heads to go. We can't put on our doors that we do medicine for the sick and help people, we can't. That's the law. There's people that say 'I make this medicine.' Some don't know, but some do, but it won't help. If he (EW-5) uses a root to help somebody--it works for him. So, I think, 'I'll get the same kind of root and I'll use it.' The roots and things that are given to people--they can use them. But if I use them because I've seen them use them, if I pick the same root, it won't work for me. But it will work for her. That's the way it is."

Due to the sacred nature of spiritual curing, it would be inappropriate to discuss personal medicines and curing methods. Several ethnographic sources, however, provide general descriptions of the curing ceremonies. Grinnell (1892:284) states that "as a rule, doctors sing while endeavouring to work their cures, and, as helpers, a number of women are always present .... No two doctors have the same methods or songs. Herbs are used, but not always." Other references (Grinnell 1892:283-286; McClintock 1910:244-250; Hellson and Gadd 1974:63-64) provided more detailed accounts. Readers are referred to these sources for further details.

**Table 8: Traditional Medicinal Plants of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

**Medicines for colds, sore throats, tuberculosis, influenza and "chest problems"**

<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> (Alpine Fir)	needles (?) used as poultice
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Common Yarrow)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Actaea rubra</i> (Baneberry)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Allium</i> spp. (Onion)	roots/leaves (?) brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i> (Yellow Angelica)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Artemisia frigida</i> (Pasture Sagewort)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i> (Prairie Sagewort)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Castilleja</i> spp. (Indian Paint-brush)	roots/leaves (?) brewed as medicinal tea?
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i> (Red Osier Dogwood)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Geum triflorum</i> (Old Man's Whiskers)	roots chewed; brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i> (Wild Licorice)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i> (Gumweed)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Heuchera</i> spp. (Alum-root)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Hierochloa odorata</i> (Sweet Grass)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Lomatium triternatum</i> (Prairie Parsley)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Lonicera involucrata</i> (Bracted Honeysuckle)	berries brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Matricaria matricarioides</i> (Pineapple-weed)	flowers, leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Mentha arvensis</i> (Wild Mint)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea

**Table 8: Traditional Medicinal Plants of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Monarda fistulosa</i> (Wild Bergamot)	flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i> (Sweet Cicely)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i> (Wild Caraway)	roots chewed
<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i> (Double Bladder-pod)	roots chewed; brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Pinus contorta</i> (Lodgepole Pine)	pitch chewed
<i>Prunus virginiana</i> (Choke Cherry)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i> (Thimbleberry)	berries used
<i>Salix</i> spp. (Willow)	roots? brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Solidago</i> spp. (Goldenrod)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Thalictrum occidentale</i> (Western Meadow)	seeds brewed as medicinal tea(?)
<i>Valeriana</i> spp. (Valeriana)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Veratrum eschscholtzii</i> (False Hellebore)	roots snuffed (toxic)
<b>Medicines for stomach and/or digestive tract</b>	
<i>Allium</i> spp. (Onion)	roots/leaves (?) brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Common Yarrow)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i> (Saskatoon)	berry juice used
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i> (Yellow Angelica)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Artemisia frigida</i> (Pasture Sagewort)	leaves chewed
<i>Berberis repens</i> (Creeping Mahonia)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Betula</i> spp. (Birch)	catkins/bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i> (Red Osier Dogwood)	berries eaten; leaves brewed
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i> (Wild Strawberry)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Geum triflorum</i> (Old Man's Whiskers)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i> (Gumweed)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i> (Cow Parsnip)	stems brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Heuchera</i> spp. (Alum-root)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Juniperus</i> spp. (Juniper)	berries brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Letharia vulpina</i> (Wolf Lichen)	lichen brewed as medicinal tea (toxic)
<i>Lonicera involucrata</i> (Bracted Honeysuckle)	berries brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Matricaria matricarioides</i> (Pineapple-weed)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i> (Sweet Cicely)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i> (Double Bladder-pod)	roots chewed; brewed as medicinal tea

**Table 8: Traditional Medicinal Plants of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Polyporus</i> spp. (Pore Fungus)	fungus brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Populus tremuloides</i> (Aspen)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Potentilla anserina</i> (Silverweed)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Prunus virginiana</i> (Choke Cherry)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Rosa</i> spp. (Rose)	roots? brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Valeriana</i> spp. (Valeriana)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<b>Poultices, salves or washes for sores, wounds, infections, burns</b>	
<i>Allium</i> spp. (Onion)	roots/leaves brewed for wash
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i> (Yellow Angelica)	roots chewed for salve
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> (Bearberry)	leaves? used for salve
<i>Artemisia frigida</i> (Pasture Sagewort)	leaves chewed for salve
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i> (Prairie Sagewort)	leaves crushed for salve
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i> (Balsamroot)	roots chewed for salve
<i>Berberis repens</i> (Creeping Mahonia)	root, berries brewed for wash
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i> (Wolf Willow)	bark brewed for salve
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i> (Wild Strawberry)	roots brewed for poultice
<i>Geum triflorum</i> (Old Man's Whiskers)	roots brewed for wash
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i> (Cow Parsnip)	stems brewed for rinse
<i>Heuchera</i> spp. (Alum-root)	roots ground for salve
<i>Letharia vulpina</i> (Wolf Lichen)	lichen crushed for salve (toxic)
<i>Lycoperdon</i> spp. (Puffballs)	spores applied as styptic
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i> (Wild Bergamot)	flowers crushed for salve
<i>Pachistima myrsinites</i> (Mountain Boxwood)	leaves as astringent for sores, rashes
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i> (Wild Caraway)	roots chewed for salve
<i>Polyporus</i> spp. (Pore Fungus)	fungus applied as styptic
<i>Potentilla anserina</i> (Silverweed)	roots chewed for salve
<i>Salix</i> spp. (Willow)	roots? brewed for wash
<i>Urtica dioica</i> (Stinging Nettle)	grnd. roots? as poultice for acne, rashes
? <i>Xerophyllum tenax</i> (Bear Grass)	roots brewed; applied for poultice
<b>Medicines for arthritis and/or rheumatism and/or muscular aches and pains</b>	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Common Yarrow)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i> (Yellow Angelica)	roots brewed and applied as wash

**Table 8: Traditional Medicinal Plants of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i> (Balsamroot)	roots smudged and inhaled
<i>Juniperus</i> spp. (Juniper)	roots? brewed for liniment
? <i>Musineon divaricatum</i> (Leafy Musineon)	roots brewed for liniment
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i> (Sweet Cicely)	roots brewed for poultice
<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i> (Double	roots chewed, boiled for liniment
<i>Valeriana</i> spp. (Valeriana)	roots brewed for poultice
? <i>Xerophyllum tenax</i> (Bear Grass)	roots brewed for poultice
<b>Purgatives, laxatives, emetics</b>	
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i> (Saskatoon)	berries eaten (?)
<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i> (Indian Hemp)	roots brewed as laxative (toxic)
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i> (Red Osier Dogwood)	berries eaten
<i>Letharia vulpina</i> (Wolf Lichen)	lichen brewed as purgative (toxic)
<i>Lonicera involucrata</i> (Bracted Honeysuckle)	berries brewed as purgative
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i> (Wild Caraway)	roots eaten as laxative
<i>Polyporus</i> spp. (Pore Fungus)	fungus brewed? as a purgative
<i>Potentilla anserina</i> (Silverweed)	roots brewed as emetic
<i>Ribes inerme</i> (Wild Gooseberry)	berries eaten as laxative
<b>Medicines used by women</b>	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Common Yarrow)	flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Anemone multifida</i> (Cut-leaved Anemone)	plant (?) brewed (?) as abortive (toxic)
<i>Artemisia frigida</i> (Pasture Sagewort)	leaves used during menstruation
<i>Betula</i> spp. (Birch)	flowers, leaves used
<i>Camassia quamash</i> (Blue Camas)	roots brewed to induce labor
<i>Castilleja</i> spp. (Indian Paint-brush)	roots/leaves? brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Hierochloe odorata</i> (Sweet Grass)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i> (Double Bladder-	roots brewed as abortive
<i>Populus tremuloides</i> (Aspen)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<b>Tonics &amp; General Medicines</b>	
<i>Cirsium ?hookerianum</i> (Elk or White	roots as blood purifier
<i>Geum triflorum</i> (Old Man's Whiskers)	roots brewed as tonic
<i>Juniperus</i> spp. (Juniper)	roots (?) brewed as tonic
<i>Lomatium dissectum</i> (Chocolate-tips)	roots brewed as tonic

**Table 8: Traditional Medicinal Plants of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Lonicera involucrata</i> (Bracted Honeysuckle)	berries brewed as cathartic
<i>Mentha arvensis</i> (Wild Mint)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Salix</i> spp. (Willow)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Thalictrum occidentale</i> (Western Meadow)	roots brewed as tonic
<b>Eye medicines</b>	
<i>Disporum trachycarpum</i> (Fairy Bells)	seeds used
<i>Geum triflorum</i> (Old Man's Whiskers)	roots brewed as eyewash
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i> (Wild Bergamot)	flowers brewed as eyewash
<i>Populus tremuloides</i> (Aspen)	bark brewed as eye wash
<i>Salix</i> spp. (Willow)	roots? brewed as eyewash
<b>Medicines for "headaches"</b>	
<i>Anemone multifida</i> (Cut-leaved Anemone)	seeds smudged and inhaled
<i>Letharia vulpina</i> ** (Wolf Lichen)	lichen used (toxic)
<i>Polyporus</i> spp. (Pore Fungus)	fungus smudged and inhaled
<i>Sedum lanceolatum</i> (Lance-leaved)	leaves (?) brewed as tea
<i>Veratrum eschscholtzii</i> (False Hellebore)	roots snuffed (toxic)
<b>Medicines for kidney &amp; urinary ailments</b>	
<i>Berberis repens</i> (Creeping Mahonia)	root, berries brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Castilleja</i> spp. (Indian Paint-brush)	roots/leaves brewed as diuretic
<i>Equisetum</i> spp. (Common Horsetail)	stems brewed as diuretic
<i>Geum triflorum</i> (Old Man's Whiskers)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Matricaria matricarioides</i> (Pineapple-weed)	flowers, leaves brewed as diuretic
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i> (Wild Bergamot)	flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i> (Sweet Cicely)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i> (Wild Caraway)	roots brewed as diuretic
<b>Medicine for diabetes</b>	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Common Yarrow)	leaves, flowers brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Actaea rubra</i> (Baneberry)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i> (Prairie Sagewort)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Berberis repens</i> (Oregon grape)	roots brewed with huckleberry
<i>Equisetum</i> spp. (Common Horsetail)	stems brewed as medicinal tea

**Table 8: Traditional Medicinal Plants of the Piikáni Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Lonicera involucrata</i> (Bracted Honeysuckle)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Mentha arvensis</i> (Wild Mint)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Vaccinium membranaceum</i> (Huckleberry)	leaves brewed as medicinal tea
<b>Medicines for "the heart"</b>	
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i> (Sweet Cicely)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<b>Medicines for "the liver"</b>	
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i> (Red Osier Dogwood)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i> (Gumweed)	roots brewed as medicinal tea
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> (Balsam Poplar)	bark brewed as medicinal tea
<b>Medicines, miscellaneous or unspecified</b>	
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> (Bearberry)	leaves brewed as mouthwash
<i>Berberis repens</i> (Creeping Mahonia)	bark (?) brewed as medicine
<i>Cicuta douglassi</i> (Water hemlock)	unspecified; note HIGHLY TOXIC
<i>Clematis occidentalis</i> (Purple Clematis)	leaves brewed for salve
<i>Ribes inerme</i> (Wild Gooseberry)	berries used as medicine
<i>Taraxacum</i> spp. (Dandelion)	a "good medicine"
<i>Vaccinium membranaceum</i> (Huckleberry)	leaves brewed as cancer medicine

In summary, Piikáni medicine incorporates the purely medicinal properties of plants with the spiritual aspects of curing. Common herbal remedies are used to treat a variety of minor ailments, and are widely available to all members of the community. The difference between common and spiritual curing powers is not determined by the plant or its properties, but rather by how the plant is ultimately used in curing.<sup>19</sup>

### *Plants and the Spiritual World*

In traditional Piikáni culture, plants are believed to have spiritual properties, which can be called upon for purification, protection, and power. This spiritual role is equally as important as the nutritional and medicinal contributions of plants, and, frequently, the roles are inseparable. As one Piikáni elder (SL-4) noted, "plants all connect with the spirits of things."

The results of this study suggest that at least 25 of the plants utilized by the Piikáni for spiritual purposes occur in Glacier National Park. These are presented in Table 9 below. While a detailed discussion of the Piikáni belief system is well beyond the scope of this report, the information presented in the following discussion serves to emphasize the cultural significance of plants in Piikáni ideology.

It should be noted that much of this information is considered privileged, and, consequently, a great deal has been summarized from previously published sources. Readers are referred to the Annotated List of Plants on file at Glacier National Park.

One of the most important functions of spiritual plants is that of purification and protection. Plants used for these purposes tend to be highly aromatic, and are placed on hot coals as a smudge or incense. Hellson and Gadd (1974:7) note, "plants were the ideal mediators between [humans] and the supernatural realm. This was especially true of their ability to replace the [human scent] with their own and so symbolically release [humans] from mortal bonds."

The "mediating" nature of plants is illustrated by the Piikáni use of alpine fir (see Figure 12). Alpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*), or "sweet pine" (SL-4, EW-2,3,5), is smudged for protection during thunderstorms (EW-2,3), in the belief that Thunder will smell the sweet pine offering and protect his people by preventing the lightning from striking them (Hellson and Gadd 1974:36). Sweetpine is also used during ceremonies associated with medicine pipe bundles (EW-2,3,4,6); the pipes were given to the Piikáni by Thunder.

Sage is another spiritually significant plant. Although several species are found in Piikáni territory, only "man sage" (*Artemisia ludoviciana*) is utilized ritually (SL-1, EW-2,3,4,5). Fresh sage is tied to offerings in order to purify them (EW-2,3), and is spread as a ground covering in the sweat lodge (EW-5). Sage is also smudged for spiritual purification (EW-2,3). EW-5 explained that Feather Woman, upon her return to the earth, "cleansed herself with sage to purify herself because she was in another world" (see discussion of mythology below). Hellson and Gadd (1974:24-26) provide a list of additional uses of sage.

The Piikáni also use the branches of "smooth juniper" (*Juniperus horizontalis*) in a variety of ways (EW-2,3,4,5,6). In the home, branches are smudged for protection against thunderstorms (EW-2,3), or "just anytime." It is also used as a smudge by "those who put up the Sundance" (EW-2,3,5). In addition, the branches cover the floor of the medicine lodge of the Sun Dance (EW-2,3). The "sharp juniper" (*J. communis*) can be used as a smudge as well, and according to an elder (EW-4), "it's the same thing." It is interesting to note that juniper berries, leaves, and branches contain a volatile oil (Kowalchick and Hylton 1987:347). The berries produce a disinfectant gas when burned (Turner and Szczawinski 1978:23-24).

Several food plants also attained spiritual significance in Piikáni ceremonies. A soup made of saskatoon berries, for example, is served at medicine pipe bundle openings and during the Sundance (EW-2,3,4,5). Cow parsnip or "wild rhubarb" is another food plant which is considered to have spiritual properties. A stalk of the plant is incorporated into the rituals associated with the "medicine lodge" of the Sundance (EW-2,3,4,5,6).

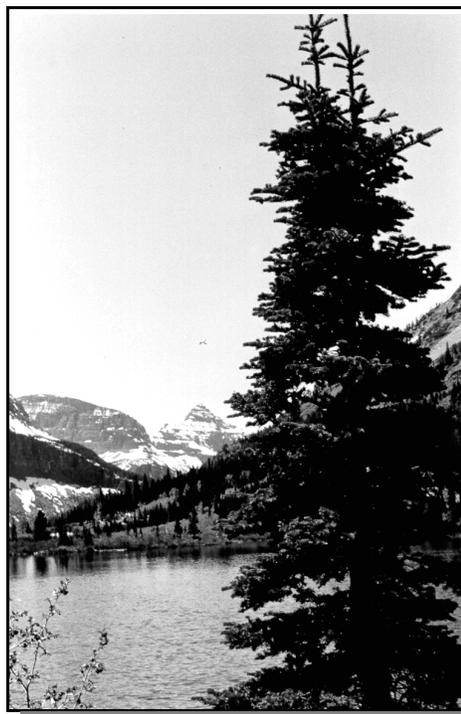


Figure 12: "Sweet Pine" (*Abies lasiocarpa*), whose fragrant needles are central to many Piikáni spiritual activities, growing along the shores of Two Medicine Lake.



Figure 13: "Licorice Root" (*Osmarhiza occidentalis*) plays a prominent role in traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni medicine.

Smoking is an integral element of Piikáni ceremonial occasions, and the Piikáni use several plants in this capacity. Dried leaves of bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) are crushed, mixed with grease, and added to tobacco. This is smoked in pipes during ceremonies (EW-1,2,3,4,5). The bark of red osier dogwood is prepared and used in this manner as well (EW-1,4,6,7).

Ethnographic evidence also indicates that the Piikáni formerly cultivated wild tobacco (*Nicotiana attenuata* Torr. ex. *S. wats*). According to Grinnell (1892:268):

"Before the coming of the whites, the Blackfeet used to smoke the leaves of a plant which they call na-wuh'-to-ski, and which is said to have been received long, long ago from a medicine beaver. It was used unmixed with any other plant. This tobacco is no longer planted by the Piegans, nor by the Bloods, though it is said that an old Blackfeet each year still goes through the ceremony, and raised a little. The plant grows about ten inches high and has a long seed stalk growing from the centre."

Piikáni mythology includes numerous references to plants; those listed in Table 9 represent only a fraction of the rich traditional ecological knowledge of the Piikáni peoples. Many of these oral traditions explain the origin of the natural features of a particular plant. For example, EW-5 said the marks visible on the bark of the birch tree were put there long ago by Napi (Old Man). This oral tradition is recorded by Grinnell (1892:173), who tells us that:

"... A hard wind came, and it blew [Old Man] away down to Birch Creek. As he was flying along, he caught at the weeds and brush to try to stop himself, but nothing was strong enough to hold him. At last he seized a birch tree. He held on to this, and it did not give way. Although the wind whipped him about, this way and that, and tumbled him up and down, the tree held him. He kept calling to the wind to blow gently, and finally it listened to him and went down. So he said: 'This is a beautiful tree. It has kept me from being blown away and knocked all to pieces. I will ornament it and it shall always be like that.' So he gashed it across with his stone knife, as you see it to-day."

The preceding discussion demonstrates that plants play an important role in the traditional Piikáni belief system. The purifying and protective properties of plants were central to spiritual activities. In many instances, supernatural beings introduced the more powerful plants to the Piikáni. Yet, despite their supernatural origins, these plants are widely available to all members of the community for personal use.

**Table 9: Plants associated with Piikáni spiritual beliefs found in Glacier National Park**

**Plants used for purification, protection, power**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Use
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine fir	needles smudged
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i>	Yellow angelica	roots impart power, luck?
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie sagewort	leaves fresh; smudged
<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>	Sweet grass	leaves fresh; smudged
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	branches smudged
<i>Lycoperdon</i> spp.	Puffballs	smudged
<i>Valeriana</i> spp.	Valeriana	roots smudged

**Plants associated with ceremonies**

<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine fir	needles smudged
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon	berries eaten as soup
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i>	Yellow angelica	roots impart power in rituals?
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie sagewort	leaves fresh; smudged
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Balsamroot	roots smudged
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	Blue camas	bulbs added to berry soup
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red osier Dogwood	bark mixture smoked
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i>	Cow parsnip	fresh stalks used
<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>	Sweet grass	leaves fresh; smudged
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	fresh branches; smudged
<i>Lycoperdon</i> spp.	Puffballs	used as punk
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Wild mint	brewed as tea
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i>	Sweet cicely	root imparts power?
<i>Polyporus</i> spp.	Pore fungus	pipe rest for medicine pipes
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Trembling aspen	wood used?

<b>Table 9: Plants associated with Piikáni spiritual beliefs found in Glacier National Park</b>		
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	branches form sweatlodge frame
<b>Plants used as smoking substances</b>		
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Common bearberry	leaves mixed with tobacco
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red osier dogwood	bark mixed with tobacco
<i>Chimaphila umbellata</i>	Prince's pine	leaves smoked?
<b>Plants in Piikáni mythology</b>		
<i>Betula</i> spp.	Birch	origin of markings on bark
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red osier dogwood	origin of grease when burned
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf willow	origin of name "stink wood"
<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>	Sweet grass	origin of ceremonial use
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	origin of ceremonial use
<i>Lycoperdon</i> spp.	Puffballs	origin of "dusty stars"
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole pine	origin of pine forests

### *Plants as Materials*

The diversity and versatility of Piikáni ethnobotanical knowledge are reflected in the additional ways in which plant materials were utilized. In fact, the Piikáni may have used at least 48 plants found in Glacier National Park as materials for a wide variety of purposes. (These are listed in Table 10. Full details are available in the attachment to this report).

As is evident in Table 10, a wide range of implements were manufactured from the wood of various trees and shrubs common to Piikáni territory. Dishes, eating utensils, and containers were just a few of the many artifacts that incorporated wood in their design. Grinnell (1892:203) notes that "wooden bowls and dishes were made from knots and protuberances of trees, dug out and smoothed by fire and the knife or by the latter alone" (Grinnell 1892:203). Spoons and ladles were also made of wood (Grinnell 1892:202; Wissler 1910:28). Although most containers were manufactured from hide, they usually had a wooden rim.

Composite tools, such as knives, scrapers, mauls, and other items, were often hafted to wooden shafts. The bow and arrow were also manufactured from wood. Bows were usually made of "ash wood," but when this was not available, choke cherry (*Prunus virginiana*) was used, although "this had not strength nor spring enough to be of much service" (Grinnell 1892:199). Arrows were made of saskatoon wood, which was "straight, very heavy, and not brittle" (Grinnell 1892:200), although willow (*Salix spp.*) was used occasionally (Wissler 1910:157). The shafts were smoothed and straightened with "a stone implement" (Grinnell 1892:200).

Rope and cord were manufactured from the bark of the wolf willow. McClintock (1910:529) notes that "the bark was very tough and made strong rope for tying skins and parfleches when raw-hide was not at hand." Wissler (1910:53) also states that cord was formerly made from the "tough bark of an unidentified shrub [the buffalo berry?] which was twisted or plaited into ropes."

Wood was also essential in constructing the traditional Piikáni dwelling -- the tipi. As Grinnell (1892:198) notes, "lodge coverings were supported by light, straight pine or spruce poles, about eighteen of which were required." McClintock (1910:234) notes that "the best poles are made of slim and straight mountain pines, which the women cut and peel and season slowly, to keep them straight. Their length varies from fifteen to thirty feet according to the size of the tipi."

Tipis were owned by Piikáni women who were responsible for cutting and preparing the pole (Wissler 1910:99). Tipi poles were collected in the spring, according to McClintock (1910:52-53), who notes that:

"It was in early summer, the time when the camass is in bloom and they were engaged in cutting and peeling lodge poles. In those days the Blackfeet travelled so far in a year that their lodge poles were worn too short. Every spring they went into the mountains to cut new poles and to dig camass roots."

Wood played an important role around the tipi as well. Wooden pegs of birch (*Betula spp.*) or willow were used to stake the outer rim of the covering (EW-2,3). Backrests "used in tipis at the heads of couches" (Wissler 1910:54) were made of willow woven with sinew (EW-2,3,4).

Fuels for cooking and warmth were also essential to the Piikáni, especially during the winter months. Cottonwoods and numerous shrubs of the river valley bottoms were particularly important in this respect. The collection of firewood was the responsibility of the women. In 1811, Henry (cited in Wissler 1910:84) noted that:

"The [Piikáni] women ... have much difficulty in collecting fire wood. Those who have no axes fasten together the ends of two long poles, which two women then hook over dry limbs of large trees, and thus break them off. They also use lines for the same purpose .... Others again set fire to the roots of large trees, which having burned down, the branches supply a good stock of fuel."

The Piikáni employed numerous plants in manufacturing craft items. Berries and seeds, for example, were dried to create necklaces, bracelets, and "beads" for ornamentation. In most instances, the berry was simply threaded and dried. Saskatoon berry necklaces were prepared in this manner. Others required more elaborate treatment. For example, the berries of the wolf willow (*Elaeagnus commutata*) contain a large, striated seed which was softened by boiling, and then threaded (EW-1,2,4,5,6,7). Today, small beads are placed between the seeds, although juniper berries were traditionally used. Piikáni

women still manufacture these necklaces and sell them in craft stores.

The final category in Table 10 below, that of miscellaneous uses, contains an array of plants utilized in highly diverse manners, including everything from mosquito repellent to children's toys and diaper fresheners.

<b>Table 10: Traditional Piikáni Plant Materials Found in Glacier National Park</b>		
Craft manufacture		
Scientific Name	Common Name	Use
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon	dried berries used for necklaces
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Com. bearberry	dried berries used for necklaces, rattles
<i>Berberis repens</i>	Creeping mahonia	bark produces yellow dye
<i>Castilleja</i> spp.	Indian paint-brush	plant used as dye; waterproof hides?
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf willow	berries used for necklaces
<i>Equisetum</i> spp.	Common horsetail	stems produce blue? dye
<i>Heracleum lanatum</i>	Cow parsnip	stems used as toy blow gun
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	berries used for necklaces, beads
<i>Letharia vulpina</i>	Wolf lichen	lichen produces yellow dye
<i>Lomatium dissectum</i>	Chocolate-tips	roots mixed with brains for tanning
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild bergamot	dried flowers used in hide processing
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Wild caraway	roots used to shine arrows
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole pine	pitch used for waterproofing
<i>Polyporus</i> spp.	Pore fungus	fungus used to whiten hides
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Thimbleberry	berries used to dye hides, quivers
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	bark used as red? dye
Wood for implements, construction, shelter		
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon	arrow shafts, incense tongs
<i>Betula</i> spp.	Birch	tipi pegs, digging stick
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf willow	bark for strong rope
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole pine	tipi poles, travois poles, bowls

**Table 10: Traditional Piikáni Plant Materials Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Aspen	brooms for camping
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Choke cherry	backrests, incense tongs, digging stick
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	backrests, tipi pegs, tipi pins
<i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp.	Snowberry	brooms for camping
Wood and other plants for fuel		
<i>Betula</i> spp.	Birch	collected for firewood
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	Wolf willow	"stink wood" burned?
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Lodgepole pine	collected for firewood
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Aspen	collected for firewood
<i>Polyporus</i> spp.	Pore fungus	used as tinder to start fires
Perfumes, scents and/or cleansing agents		
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine fir	needles kept for perfume, hair tonic
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Pasture sagewort	stems, leaves used as freshener
<i>Hierochloe odorata</i>	Sweet grass	leaves kept for perfume, hair tonic
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	infusion as footwash, tonic for face
<i>Lomatium triternatum</i>	Prairie parsley	fruits in tanning to improve scent
<i>Matricaria matricarioides</i>	Pineapple-weed	leaves, flowers as perfume, hair rinse
<i>Osmorbiza occidentalis</i>	Sweet cicely	roots as perfume; female deodorant
<i>Polyporus</i> spp.	Pore fungus	pieces used as perfume
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	infusion of roots as hair tonic
<i>Thalictrum occidentale</i>	Western meadow rue	seeds used as perfume
Plants used in the treatment of horses		
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine fir	smudge to fumigate sick horses
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common yarrow	infusion used as eye wash
<i>Actaea rubra</i>	Baneberry	roots eaten; brewed for wounds
<i>Allium</i> spp.	Onion	roots smudged for sinus problems
<i>Angelica dawsonii</i>	Yellow angelica	roots used as medicine

**Table 10: Traditional Piikáni Plant Materials Found in Glacier National Park**

<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Pasture sagewort	infusion for wounds, sinus problems
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie sagewort	leaves smudged for distemper
<i>Berberis repens</i>	Creeping mahonia	infusion of berries, roots used
<i>Clematis occidentalis</i>	Purple clematis	plant brewed as diuretic
<i>Equisetum</i> spp.	Common horsetail	stem brewed as diuretic
<i>Geum triflorum</i>	Old man's whiskers	infusion of root for wounds
<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	Wild licorice	roots used for windgalls
<i>Heuchera</i> spp.	Alum-root	root brewed for respiratory problems
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.	Juniper	infusion of roots used to shine coat
<i>Lomatium dissectum</i>	Chocolate-tips	roots smudged; brewed for distemper
<i>Lycoperdon</i> spp.	Puffballs	pieces applied as styptic to wounds
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i>	Sweet cicely	roots eaten for health; distemper
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Wild caraway	root chewed; brewed as diuretic
<i>Physaria didymocarpa</i>	Double bladder-pod	roots used as liniment
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Aspen	cambium fed to horses
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	root used for sore, tired eyes
<i>Valeriana</i> spp.	Valeriana	root smudged; brewed for ailments
<i>Veratrum eschscholtzii</i>	False hellebore	snuffed for respiratory problems
Miscellaneous uses		
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Pasture sagewort	juice used as mosquito repellent
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Balsamroot	leaves used in pit cooking camas
<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	Wild licorice	burrs sucked to prevent thirst
<i>Lithospermum ruderale</i>	Yellow puccoon	children's toy
<i>Osmorhiza occidentalis</i>	Sweet cicely	diapers sweetened infusion of root
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Wild caraway	buffalo runners chewed roots
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed	roots used to tie blankets, leggings

This brief and by no means exhaustive review of the additional uses of plants by the Piikáni demonstrates that they possessed a comprehensive knowledge of the properties and characteristics of each plant in their environment and understood how to maximize those resources to their fullest extent.

### Traditional Piikáni Plant Collecting Strategies

The distribution of plant resources is influenced by local geography and climate, as well as by the tolerance of each species to varying environmental conditions. As a result, some plants traditionally utilized by the Piikáni are widely distributed throughout a variety of ecosystems in Glacier National Park, while others are much more restricted, or "patchy," in distribution. The spatial distribution of plant resources also affects their temporal availability, because plants at lower elevations are generally "ripe" before those at higher altitudes.

These spatial and temporal restrictions on plant resource availability meant that traditional Piikáni plant collecting had to be systematically planned and seasonally patterned. This is especially true for the



Figure 14: The leaves of Kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) are collected, dried, and mixed with fat and tobacco as a traditional mixture.

important plant foods, particularly the staple roots and berries, which were harvested in large quantities and dried for use throughout the lean winter months. However, it should be noted that the seasonal divisions--spring, summer, fall, and winter--apparently did not exist in Piikáni culture prior to European contact. According to Wissler (1911:44-45), the Piikáni recognized only two seasons: summer and winter. This division may more accurately represent the actual weather patterns of the region (spring and fall can be very short!). However, Piikáni elders today refer to all four seasons; thus, these will be used throughout the study. The seasons are defined, rather loosely, as spring (April, May, early June); summer (late June, July, August); fall (September, October); and winter (November to March, early April). As is evident, the seasonal divisions overlap considerably. This reflects the nature of plant gathering activities, which, as discussed above, must respond to varying weather conditions (seasonal and annual), as well as to changes in geographic locations.

Plant food collecting was a communal activity. As in many other indigenous cultures, Piikáni women possessed the knowledge and skills necessary to harvest and prepare the wide assortment of plants consumed in the diet or utilized for a variety of other purposes. They were usually assisted by the children.

The collection of plant foods began in the spring and continued throughout the summer and fall as the various greens, roots, and berries became available at different locations and elevations. The first fresh greens were collected in the spring. Stalks of cow parsnip, or "wild rhubarb," were one of the most important green vegetables. According to the Piikáni elders, these stalks had to be harvested before the plant bloomed; otherwise, the stalks became tough and dry, and were said to "have bones in them" (EW-1,2).

Gooseberries were also collected in the spring, and according to the Piikáni elders, they were traditionally gathered at the same time as the wild rhubarb (EW-4). Gooseberries were the earliest berries harvested, and although they were green at that time, the elders said that if the berries were left to ripen on the bushes they "get worms" and are inedible (EW-2,3,4,6). One elder (EW-4) said her grandmother used to collect the berries in lard buckets. She punctured holes in these buckets, placed the bucket in the sun, and left the berries in there to ripen and turn red.

The inner bark of the cottonwoods (*Populus spp.*) and other trees was collected in the spring while the sap was running. According to an elder (EW-6), "you just peel them skins--get a knife and scrape them. They're just like juice and you can eat them."

Edible roots were harvested in late spring and early summer. The "wild potato" (Western spring beauty), "wild carrot" (wild caraway), and balsamroot, were among the first roots collected. As the season progressed, these were followed by other important root crops such as camas, bitterroot, and wild onion. Camas was formerly an important staple, and was time-consuming to harvest and process. According to Wissler (1910:25), "the camas root received more elaborate treatment in which were manifested certain social and ceremonial functions." McClintock (1910:442-443) provides additional information concerning this process:

"For baking the Mississa [camass roots], Menake and Nitana dug a hole about three feet deep. They places hot stones at the bottom of the hole, covering them over with long grass and leaves of the a-pono-kauki [Paper Leaves], *Balsamorhiza sagittata*. The camass roots were placed in layers, with the grass and leaves between each layer. When the hole was filled, it was covered over and a fire built on the top. In this was the camass was thoroughly baked. Menake said that it required two days and two nights to prepare it properly for food. In former times, when the women were baking camass, it was contrary to their custom for men to come near the place. The camass roots, that Menake dug, were in size like a small potato, and had a very delicate sweet flavour. The women generally secured them in the mountains, where they grew in great abundance. It was best for eating after the blossoms had fallen."

These root-roasting sites represented a considerable investment in time and energy, and appear to have been re-used seasonally. Thus, the Piikáni regularly visited sites where camas is abundant, such as the mountains (McClintock 1910:442-443).

The Piikáni began collecting berries in the early summer. Saskatoons, or sarvis berries, were one of the first berries to ripen. Wissler (1910:20) notes that, "in their opinion, the service berry was the most important vegetable food, reference to its gathering and curing being frequent in ceremonies and narratives." According to Grinnell (1892:203), "large quantities of sarvis berries were gathered whenever there was a crop [which occurs every other year]." Choke cherries were "also gathered when ripe" (Grinnell 1892:203), which was generally in late July or August. Other berries, such as fairy bells and strawberries, ripened during the summer months. According to Piikáni elders, these berries were eaten fresh, often as snacks. It does not appear that they were collected and preserved to the same extent as saskatoons and choke cherries.

The collection of the saskatoons, and presumably of other important berries, was a communal effort. According to McClintock (1910:467):

"One evening, a crowd of sarvis berry pickers, consisting largely of women and children, filed past our camp, with bags and parfleches filled with the fruit ... I was interested in watching the women dividing up the fruit, before separating to their tipis. Each woman seemed to know exactly the amount she had gathered, and there was no bickering."

Ethnographic sources indicate that camps were moved during summer months in order to be situated at the productive berry areas. "During the berry season, the Blackfeet camps were shifted to favourable localities where the women and girls worked industriously gathering the fruit" (Wissler 1910:21). Although these areas were not "owned," they were apparently visited on a yearly basis. Brings-Down-The-Sun, the North Piikáni chief, said, "We pitch out tipis in this grove of cottonwoods every summer, to gather sarvis berries for our use, when the snows are deep" (McClintock 1910:385).

By fall, the majority of the plant foods had been collected. However, certain roots and berries were still available. According to ethnographic information, certain edible roots, such as leafy musineon (McClintock 1910:529; 530), were also gathered in the fall. In addition, a number of other berries, such as rose hips, common bearberry and wolf willow, remained on the bushes throughout the fall and winter, providing an important source of emergency food.

In contrast to food plants, which were often gathered communally, collecting medicinal plants appears to have been an individual task undertaken by both men and women. This is illustrated by McClintock's (1910:363) comment:

"... [The women] were industrious collectors of medicinal herbs .... Whether in camp, or on the trail, whether in the forest, or along the streams, or even on the dry and dusty plains, they never lost an opportunity for collecting them."

The collection of plant medicines began in the spring and continued throughout the summer and into the fall. As discussed previously, the distribution and seasonal availability of plants are influenced by a variety of factors, and, as a result, some plant resources are more widely distributed than others in any given region. This is true also of the medicinal plants that the Piikáni gathered. Although McClintock's observation suggests that the harvesting of medicinal plants was somewhat opportunistic, the Piikáni elders continually emphasized the importance of collecting medicines at the "right" time:

"The time for roots is mostly from the spring season. You have to pick when they're prime, just like all the roots. Everything has a certain time to pick. If you use them at

wrong time, they won't be as effective. Like choke cherries--there's a certain time, like apples and pears--like all fruit. There's a certain time when they're right. It's the same thing" (SL-4).

To some extent, the "right" time appears to be a matter of individual preference and experience. For example, SL-4 felt it is best to collect roots in the spring and summer, while EW-2 and EW-3 said they usually collect roots in the fall. As EW-5 noted, "You have to wait until its right to pick the root. It's hard to explain. That's why it's not taught. You learn by watching and knowing."

According to the Piikáni elders, one gathered "as much as was needed." From this, it can be assumed that people collected medicinal plants in quantities commensurate with their individual needs. Medicinal plants were dried and stored in sufficient amounts to last until the following season. According to EW-4, "the old ladies make little sacks for plants. They can smell them and tell what's in them." Today, prayers and an offering are made prior to collecting any medicinal plant. She also said, "I have to pray and put tobacco when I want to dig plants. I pray that I can pick the right ones that I want to pick."

As discussed earlier, the Piikáni planted and cultivated tobacco for spiritual use. Traditionally, native tobacco was planted in early May, after the women and children had prepared a plot "in the timber." The seeds were planted in an elaborate ceremony, and the tobacco was left to grow unattended throughout the summer, except for the occasional visit of a "medicine man" who monitored the crop's progress. In the fall, "the season comes for gathering the crop, and, at a time appointed, all the camps begin to move back toward the tobacco patch, timing their marches so that they all may reach it on the same day" (Grinnell 1892:270). Another ceremony is held prior to harvesting the tobacco. Once harvested, the tobacco is "dried and put in sacks for use during the year. The seed is collected for the next planting. After the gathering, they all move away again after the buffalo" (Grinnell 1892:270-271).

This brief review of Piikáni plant collecting strategies demonstrates that plant collecting was not opportunistic, but rather was planned and patterned, in keeping with the seasonal availability of plant resources and a group's other subsistence needs. Food plant collecting was a communal effort, with camps moving to productive root digging grounds or berry picking areas annually in order to harvest and process winter supplies. In contrast, medicinal plants tended to be gathered on an individual basis -- and yet, again, each plant had a special time for collecting when it was at its most effective or potent.

### **Plant Collecting Locales in Glacier National Park<sup>20</sup>**

Settlement on the reservation curtailed many of the traditional activities of the Piikáni peoples, particularly plant collecting and processing. Loss of access to the resources of Glacier National Park aided in this decline; and grocery stores, hospitals, and hardware stores have come to replace the mountains and valleys of Glacier National Park as the sources of sustenance for the Piikáni people. However, several Piikáni elders remain who remember their parents or grandparents utilizing the area, or who have themselves collected within what is now Glacier National Park. The former importance of Glacier National Park to traditional Piikáni lifeways is reflected in a woman elder's (EW-4) comments:

"You're right about [the use of the park]. These people, that's where they get everything. They get tipi poles, and there's a lot of other things they get up in the Park. They dig roots and they pick flowers and paint. Then they stopped it, you know, from

hunting. That's where they hunt, all the time. But they stopped everything. It seems the white people stop everything for the Indians."

One of the more interesting patterns to emerge from discussions with Piikáni elders concerned the use of specific river valleys by certain families. According to the elders, family groups or bands traditionally camped along the major river valleys, including those of Two Medicine River, Cutbank Creek, and Midvale Creek. These valleys provided direct, and relatively easy, access to the resources of the mountains of Glacier National Park. A Piikáni spiritual leader (SL-1) explained:

"It's like I was telling you. Like where we lived, where we utilized areas. Like us, we lived on Two Medicine, so we utilized these areas, Two Medicine and through that area there. And the people that lived here, on the north side, they utilized this area here. And those people that lived over further north, they utilized that area there. So they had there areas they utilized. All they had was wagons, they couldn't go long distances to haul wood, or hunt, or stuff like that."

The antiquity of this pattern remains to be determined; however, ethnographic information indicates that bands camped in the foothills along the river valley bottoms during the winter months. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that at the time of European contact and the subsequent establishment of the reservation, families occupied the same valleys as their ancestors had for generations.

It appears, then, that the major valleys -- Midvale, Two Medicine, Cutbank, St. Mary's, and Many Glacier -- have been the focus of traditional native resource use activities in Glacier National Park. The following represents a selection of elders' comments regarding the use of these particular areas:

### *Midvale Creek*

"That's where they used to camp. They would pick berries and the roots they used" (EM-1).

### *Two Medicine*

"They go up there, they go up there right now. They go in June to pick the roots. They go up there and get the things that they need" (*ibid.*).

"They hunt for elk, deer and then they get their wood. That's where they all camped up at Two Medicine Chalet, 'round there. They have a camping place there. That's where they all camped and they get their wood and whatever they need. My folks used to pick huckleberries. They pick them up there. They pick them all alongside the Chalet, along that lake, that big lake. I remember, I was a little girl. I was only about 10 years old. Went in the wagon and we camped there. Almost to that mountain. Next day we went to that side hill, that's where we were picking, almost to that mountain. That's where we picked huckleberries. We stayed there about two or three days" (EW-4).

"Yes, people camped at Two Medicine and Cutbank Creek. There's a certain place where you camp, where you have good water and everything. There's a place where you had good water and a camping place, you know" (*ibid.*).

## *Cutbank Creek*

"Cutbank Creek, that's where we lived. Way up inside the line. In the fall, during haying time, that's when the huckleberries are ripe. And we used to go up in there, at that Ranger Station, there's a park there, we camped. And we'd go up the next day, the women used to ride, we'd walk. We'd go way up, right next to that mountain. There's a road, way up past the Ranger Station, next to the mountain. You go in, on this side, that's where the huckleberries are. They're about this high. Right in the bottom, that waterfall, a little creek there, where the bank is. That's where the women used to cook and get berries. There's some roots you find sometimes. And the Ranger, all he says is 'don't separate,' you know, don't go alone. At that time, the black bears, they're just like dogs. Unless if you go between the cubs and the mother. Otherwise they don't bother you."

After looking at map of Glacier, and Atlantic Falls, an elder Piikáni man (EM-6) told us, "Right down where the falls, right down on that side, that's where we picked them. That creek comes down. That's where they cook."

## *Many Glacier*

Elders (EW-4, SL-2) said they collected roots (food, or medicine?) and picked berries at Many Glacier.

According to an elder Blackfeet resident of Babb (EM-3), his grandmother used to camp at Apikuni Basin to collect huckleberries:

"Yeah, they'd go up and dig roots and pick berries. Up there at Many Glaciers, up there. In the fall of the year when the berries go ripe, they'd pick huckleberries in the Apikuni Basin there. They'd pick huckleberries, sarvis berries, choke cherries, dig roots. To Cracker Lake. They used to have their own trails. They'd be camped up there in the spring of the year until the snow came."

In general, the comments of the Piikáni elders tend to pertain to the use of the river valleys for the collecting plant foods, such as roots and berries; this use, as previously discussed, was often conducted in conjunction with hunting activities. However, elders are much more reluctant to discuss the specific collecting places of medicinal plants. This reluctance may be attributed to the privileged nature of any information about medicinal plants, as well as the desire to protect favored locales. Therefore, information about medicinal plant collection is much more general. For example, a Piikáni medicine man (SL-1) recalls that his grandmother and the other women collected paint and medicinal roots up Cutbank Creek. "The women always came back with the sack of medicine they dug along the way," he said. He collects certain roots in the area today:

"Yeah, [Glacier National Park] that's where we pick all our roots. Especially them 'toe jam roots' (*Valeriana spp.*). We were getting wood, and oh, there was just all of them. I said to my husband, 'Come over here. There's some.' So I start digging them up. I got quite a bit. Then we stopped at a little creek and I washed them. Then you put them out, you know. You never get the smell out of them!" (EW-4).

Through an interpreter, a holy woman (EW-1) discussed a medicine she used to collect in the

mountains. "She wanted to mention this because, see, that medicine she gets in the mountains, in the Park. It grows right up in the Park area. You know, it grows kind of high, the stronger ones grow high."

"You can dig roots around here [Babb]. I know the roots, the medicines. But they used to go up in the mountains and dig roots. They dig enough to last them all winter, they just use it more for medicine" (EM-3).

In summary, evidence from interviews with Piikáni elders points to the importance of the major river valleys as access corridors to the resources of Glacier National Park. These areas have high cultural significance.

### **Piikáni Plant Resource Management Techniques**

Much of the anthropological literature tends to view native peoples as passive consumers of plant resources. While acknowledging that traditional plant collecting was planned and patterned, there is no mention of the techniques used to manage economically important plant crops. One is left with the impression that the availability and abundance of plant resources were controlled solely by the forces of Mother Nature.

A growing body of ethnobotanical knowledge indicates that native peoples throughout North America actively managed critical plant resources (e.g., Anderson 1990, 1993, Hunn 1990, 1993). The Piikáni and their ancestors may be included in this group. Information gathered during interviews with Piikáni elders provides a glimpse of what must have been more extensive and widely applied plant management techniques prior to European contact.

The comments of elders reflect an understanding of the ecosystem concept in recognizing the connections between all living things. For example, while discussing the remarkable number of medicinal plants that grow in concert with one another, a Piikáni medicine man (SL-1) remarked: "Right. They all help each other. That's what the old people say. There's nothing on this mother earth that you can find that doesn't do anything. That's what the old people say. You might think it's [the plant's] is worthless, but it's helping this plant. Helpers."

Piikáni peoples also recognized the connections between plants, animals, and themselves, especially in regard to medicinal plants. SL-1 and author Peacock were discussing the bears' use of glacier lilies (*Erythronium grandiflorum*) as food, and Peacock wondered if bears used the glacier lilies as a medicine, too. He responded, "Probably do. Animals seem to have all that, that's why you get, say, your medicine from a bear. They have so many different medicines, bears. And they give me a lot of things too."

Traditional Piikáni plant management techniques included selective harvesting, rotation of harvesting locales, replanting of seeds, and landscape burning. For example, when harvesting root foods, the Piikáni kept only roots of a certain size. Others were left or replanted in the newly broken soil. According to another Piikáni elder man (EM-1), "They got different places they pick. Next year, someplace else they go. That's the way they use things. You left the roots, they increase and new ones, you pick them and leave them till next year and they increase." Such traditional ecological knowledge is supported by more recent "scientific" investigations, which demonstrate that, in fact, digging roots actually maintains and enhances a plant community because it aerates the soil, decreases intra-species

competition, and allows more room for growth of other members of the species (Anderson 1993; Thoms 1989).

In addition, Piikáni peoples were careful not to over-exploit one area. As a Piikáni medicine man (SL-1) noted about root foods:

"My grandmother, she knew all this stuff. She'd never pick a field out. No, she'd just go over there with her stick and dig. When she had enough from one spot, she'd move to another spot. Always the constant conserving, conserving. And each person, each group had their areas where they picked. I mean, nobody from over there went over here to pick. And nobody from over here went over there."

People were careful to pick at a variety of locales on a regular basis. According to SL-1:

"When I was growing up, I watched my grandmother sometimes. They go into an area, and the medicine is there. They don't pick them all. They'll pick maybe every other one. Or certain areas they'll just stay away from. You know, just pick this stuff here and then they'll go. Next year, they pick this here. It's like rotation. They'll pick this area and in the meantime, the other is all grown up again."

The Piikáni also replanted seeds of various plants to ensure successive harvests. SL-1 explained:

"They used to take the top stuff [seeds] and dig them down. They buried it, they covered it--the seeds are in the top, see--it all goes back in. See, they were smart, you know. And that's what I seen myself. In my gathering, that's what I do. Put the whole tops back in and pray to them that they'll grow, grow again and help us out again."

The use of fire by native peoples to improve berry picking bushes and important root fields, and to improve the production of important materials for the manufacture of arrows, baskets, and other materials, is well-documented (Anderson 1993; Lewis 1989; Norton 1979; Turner 1991). Information obtained from several Piikáni elders suggests that the Piikáni peoples were also aware of, and utilized, this technology. According to EM-1:

"Yeah, they burned certain places where they can burn. They have to watch it and they have to wait for still days before they burn. And where the creek runs, they get close to it, and they have water bags to use [to control it]. They do that a long time ago, but today, we don't do it. [They burned] just to clear the land, trails or to pick berries. So the bears don't get too close to them. They're scared of fire."

During field work in 1993, EM-1 mentioned that the mountains have more "brush" than they used to. When asked about this in 1994, he replied:

"Yeah, it's thick now. My people, a long time ago, our ancestors left us the mountains. And keep them clean, make use of them. So everything is clean. Game is clean. And anything we pick--berries or other things, they're clean. We don't abuse it. We go up there and camp, or sometimes, along the creek, pick berries or wood, roots, we use those."

Interestingly, the Aborigines in Australia also refer to keeping their traditional lands "clean" through the use of landscape-burning (Lewis 1989). It might be suggested that EM-1 is also referring to the use of landscape-burning to clear the "brush" and keep the mountains clean. Photos of the entrance to Waterton Lakes National Park, taken at the turn of the century, show the valley devoid of aspen. Today, the aspen is encroaching on the grasslands to the point that Waterton Lakes National Park has initiated a program of grassland burning (B. Dolan, personal communication, 1994). A pollen profile from Lake Linnetin Waterton suggests that systematic burning has gone on for the past 5,000 years in the Waterton Valley (Hill, Christiansen and Reeves 1986)

One elder, EW-1, related an old story concerning the gift of fire. According to her (as interpreted):

"That's what I was gonna bring up. That gift of fire, and they used it. I mean, nobody went out and set the fires. They just all went some place that would mysteriously burn. My grandpa was talking. Mysteriously burned so they moved. And somehow it would go out. And I guess the next time they went through it was lush there. It was lush. That was the way they done it. There was people in the tribe that had the gift of fire. They used to put on certain clothes and they'd go out alone and the next thing mysteriously a fire would start. Everybody would pack up and go, move to a different location until it settled down. And maybe six months, a year from now, they go back through and it's just lush, the plants and everything just lush. These are the stories I hear, that I remember."

The sophistication of Piikáni plant management is exemplified by the story of tobacco, as Schultz recorded (1916). As this excerpt shows, the Piikáni were cultivating tobacco annually and fully understood the processes involved in this horticultural pursuit:

"Then, one night, the beaver chief handed him some stalks of na-wak'o-sis, the tops stems all covered with little round seeds. 'These,' he said, 'are the children of the big-leaved plants; put them into the ground and they will grow and make other plants that bear children. And no, I must tell you how to plant: Gather a great, long, wide pile of old dry logs, dry brush and weeds, and set it afire. The heat from it will burn the ground, burn the sod, and make everything soft under it. Then, when the place has cooled, gather from around badger holes, squirrel holes, and wherever you can find it, plenty of the brown earth they have thrown out, and mix it with the burned black earth, so that it will not pack hard around the seeds, and keep them from coming up into the sunlight ... Return after one moon has passed and you will find that the young plants have grown above the ground. Watch them, that insects do not destroy them. Give them water if the rains fail you. They will grow all summer, and fade with the ripening of the choke-cherries. Cut them then, care well for them, and you and your people will have a plenty for your winter smokes and ceremonies'" (Schultz 1916:221-223).

In summary, the Piikáni peoples possessed a sophisticated understanding of their plant world, and through techniques such as selective harvesting, replanting, and landscape-burning, they were able to influence the productivity of key plant resources. This traditional ecological knowledge also reflects an understanding of the relationship between plants, animals, and people. While demonstrating that "use ensures abundance," this knowledge also points to the necessity of wise use. As SL-1 notes,

"Conservation was number one with them old people. I don't care what they do. They just conserve on everything. They thought about it. It was a way of life for them, automatic with them. They didn't have to think, 'wait a minute.' If they depleted, there was nothing. It's amazing how they lived then, Indian people all over the country."

### **The Cultural Significance of the Plant Resources of Glacier National Park**

The oral traditions of the Piikáni peoples reflect a rich botanical heritage, which continues to thrive despite acculturation and loss of access to traditional collecting areas. The strength of these traditions is reflected in the fact that although the plant resources of Glacier National Park have been off limits to the Piikáni for nearly a century, certain plant foods, medicinal roots, materials, and spiritual aids continue to be collected within park boundaries by Piikáni traditionalists.

The collection and consumption of traditional food plants by the Piikáni have decreased significantly with the introduction of European foodstuffs. While elders remember collecting roots and berries as children with their mothers and grandmothers, at least 50 or 60 years have passed since many of the edible roots, berries, and greens were regularly collected and consumed. Huckleberries, saskatoon berries, and choke cherries are the exception; they are still highly prized, and are gathered in large quantities and preserved.

Traditional Indian medicine is still widely practiced in the community. While only a handful of elders could properly be considered medicine men and women, many other old people retain the traditional medicinal knowledge of their ancestors, and continue to use plant remedies to treat a variety of ailments. In addition, there is a renewed interest in traditional Piikáni medicinal practices amongst a younger generation of Piikáni who are beginning to explore their cultural heritage. In fact, the Blackfeet Community College offers a course in traditional herbal medicines.

Plants continue to play an essential role in the spiritual life of Piikáni peoples. Smudges of sweet pine, sweet grass, and juniper are regularly used in prayer, pipe bundle openings, and sacred ceremonies. As SL-3 noted, "plants all connect with the spirits of things."

It is the spiritual connection between plants and all living things that provides insight into the cultural significance of the plant resources of Glacier National Park to the Piikáni peoples. To the Piikáni, the mountains of Glacier National Park--and the resources found there--are sacred. Outside the park, ranching, agriculture, and industrial activities have disturbed the natural ecosystem, polluting in both an environmental and spiritual sense. The mountains, however, remain pure. Consequently, the plants growing there are more powerful, and thus more effective as food, drug, or spiritual aid than their counterparts on the prairies. And, of course, many of the plants essential to traditional Piikáni culture are found only in the ecosystems of the mountains and valleys of Glacier National Park.

The comments of the Piikáni elders reflect the importance and significance of the park. A Piikáni medicine man informs us:

"Here, our medicine on the Reservation, is not as strong as that up there [in the mountains]. And it's bigger up there. Because up there in the mountains it's so pure. And here, it's been trampled over and cars disturb it, everybody disturbing, cows graze it off. And so, it doesn't have a chance to even develop sometimes .... It's been so

overgrazed on the Reservation for years, it doesn't give them plants enough time to really get out and grow. Whereas in the mountains, the elk and the wild game they respect the medicines. And they use them themselves.

"There's so much of the Park left because it hasn't been bothered, it's been clean all these years. Where on this side, horses, cattle tromp all over it and people tromp across it and stuff like that. And so, over there it's not disturbed, for years and years and years. And so they're clean and naturally they're stronger.

"She (EW-1) said these mountains have a lot of history, in a spiritual way. And she said in the past, and she says, all these mountains, once they start bothering them, she said the spirits, they just withdraw. You don't see those things anymore. That's why you don't see those things anymore. They're there, they just withdraw, you know .... Everything has a different spirit. Every plant and animal. Like my medicines here. Every one of them is a different spirit that represents that medicine, that one medicine. Some of them have two, some of them have three, some of them have four. They're helpers, you have a main one and you have helpers."

The plant resources of Glacier National Park, then, have high cultural significance to the Piikáni peoples. First is the purity and power of the plants found in the mountains of the park. Second, many important plant resources do not occur elsewhere. And finally, the mountains are the last remnant of traditional Piikáni territory not disturbed by modern economic activities.

#### Endnotes for Chapter 4

1. Climbers have found buffalo skulls on the mountains over the years. Some have removed them for souvenirs as recently as the early 1970s. This form of vandalism was first reported in 1913 by Stimson (1949: 66-69), who had returned to climb Ninaistáki for the second time. While riding up Kennedy Creek the day before his ascent, which was to occur almost to the day of his first climb in 1896, he met a couple of young men who were just breaking camp after their climb of Ninaistáki. Stimson told them of his climb, and asked if they had seen a buffalo skull on the top. The eldest, a Methodist missionary student who had spent the summer at Fort MacLeod, answered:

"His face sparkled with interest. He said, 'To be sure I have, and I have brought it down. I have it right here', and opening his pack he showed me the same buffalo skull which Indian Billy and James and I had discovered twenty-one years ago. I said to him, 'I wonder if you know that there is a story attached to that old buffalo skull which make it a very interesting relic', and I told him the story . . . . The young man's face glowed with interest. He said, 'Why no, I never heard that story. If I had, I would never had touched that skull. I should have had too much respect for the old fellow who put it there'. He stopped and hesitated. Then he said, 'I don't want to take away that skull. If it belongs to anyone, it belongs to you for you first discovered it.' and he picked it up and handed it to me. I thanked him and said, 'If you do that, I will take

it back tomorrow when we climb the mountain and put it back where the old chief left it' and we shook hands and parted.

"The next day we climbed Chief Mountain by the western side and replaced the old Indian's buffalo skull, but this time I took very good care to bury it so deep among the rocks which formed the summit of the mountain that no future tourist is likely to discover and remove it. The spirit of the mountain was as favorable to us as it had been before, and I had again the magnificent view which it commands over the wide green sea of prairie as well as the peaks behind it, and we came back satisfied that the old chief and his totem would sleep in peace hereafter.

"At least it was a most astonishing coincidence. As I have said, during that long period of twenty-one years other parties had visited and climbed the mountain, but apparently none of them had seen or tried to remove the little skull. If my niece and I had been ten minutes later in our ride up Kennedy's creek, the young man who had taken it down would have finished his packing and probably been out of sight and gone, and the skull with him and I should never have heard of it again. But the man who twenty-one years before had first seen the skull, and the man who the day before had just removed it from its resting place, happened to meet in that brief interval and the skull went back to where it belonged."

2. There are also cairns located at various locations around the base of Ninaistákis. Along the spine of the ridge connecting Ninaistákis to Ninaki is a row of some thirteen stone piles, now mostly collapsed. Lichen is well developed on the rock, suggesting considerable age for cairn construction. Some are being rebuilt. Cairn rows and isolated cairns of some age, as well as modern structures, have also been noted on ridges on the northeast and northwest flanks. In August 1990, a small medicine wheel and associated cairn were constructed in the boulder field on the west side.

Modern vision quest structures are also present. One large structure is located on the northwest summit. This structure, now used by natives, was originally built by white climbers to enable them to stop overnight on top of the mountain without fear of rolling off. Other climbers' structures and native-constructed vision quest structures occur on this summit, as well as on a lower buttress. A climber's stone shelter is located on the middle summit, adjacent to a U.S.G.S. geodetic survey bench-mark. It, too, is used by native people. This would have been an ideal location for a vision quest structure. It is where Simson found the buffalo skull in 1896.

3. Holtz and Bemis (1917:197-199) give a conflated account of the circumstances and events surrounding the holding of the two medicine lodges. Hungry Wolf's account (1971:8-9) appears to have been taken from Holtz and Bemis's (Hungry Wolf cites no sources in his book for any stories or photographs that he uses). A similar but much less elaborated account was recorded by Ella Clark in the 1950s from Percy Creighton, a Kainaa elder (Clark 1966). Laut's (1926:33-35) account is pure fantasy, claiming that the name derived from two great medicine men coming together here to settle some tribal disputes. McClintock appears to be unaware of the oral tradition relating to the origin of the name because he (1910:438) cites Brings-Down-The-Sun, who says the name refers to two piskuns that were located on the river, presumably in the vicinity of the Holy Family Mission.

4. Although Holterman is not sure that this is the traditional Blackfoot name for the trail, North Piikáni elders, the great grandchildren of Brings-Down-The-Sun, who traveled portions of the trail in the 1930s, refer to it today as the "Ancient North Road."

5. Romantic tales have grown up around the Old North Trail (e.g., Holtz and Bemis 1917: see Chapter 5, "The Old Travois Trail"; Laut 1926: 87-92; and Cushman 1966). In some versions, we find Mongul hordes, Mound-builders, and other non-Indian and entirely fictional peoples moving south along the trail.

6. Holterman (1978:73), following Schultz (1926a), states that this name applies to the Kootenai Pass (Glacier). However, North Piikáni elders refer to the South Kootenay by this name. They have no knowledge of -- or name

for -- the pass at the head of Waterton Lake (Interviews, August, 1994).

7. While the war party is somewhere west of the South Fork of the Flathead, the narrator (Black Elk) notes (p.203) that the Sun River Pass Trail is very much used by the Salish to cross to the eastern slopes in the winter to hunt buffalo because they were not threatened by the Piikáni, who seldom wintered there.

8. Hungry Wolf's (1971:7) account of this battle appears to have been drawn from McClintock. Hungry Wolf does not cite his sources.

9. Hungry Wolf (1971) tells a different story of this encounter. He does not cite his source.

10. Schultz notes in a footnote at this point in the narrative: "That was the long name that the Blackfeet tribes then had for the trail. Later on, when it became the favorite trail to the west of their virgin woman warrior, they named it after her; Pi-ta-ma-kan Ok-sok-wi [Running Eagle's Trail]. And they also spoke of the low pass in the range as Pi-ta-ma-kan Ot-si-tu-mi-so, which is, as nearly as we can turn it into English, Where Running Eagle Crossed the Mountains."

11. Hungry Wolf (1971:18-19) gives the same account, taking it from Schultz, but not crediting him.

12. "Rising Wolf," according to Schultz, deals solely with Monroe's first winter with the Piikáni, but actually covers a number of years of Monroe's life with the Piikáni, as does the sequel, "Red Crow's Brother."

13. I have found no such record in the HBC journals of a visit by a mixed party of Piikáni, K'tunaxa, and Pend d'Oreille at either Rocky Mountain House or Edmonton House.

14. Certain kinds of clays were also used as "earth" medicines by the Piikáni. There was a place in the Sun River Canyon where this clay was collected by the Indians. This source was developed for commercial purposes in the late 1800s (Keith Wolverson, p.c. 1990). North Piikáni elders (SL-3) are knowledgeable about the former use of certain clays collected on the Oldman River in Southern Alberta for medicinal purposes.

15. Wissler (1910:133-135) summarized traditional Piikáni pigments and painting. He identified 11 different paints:

- Yellow earth
- Buffalo yellow (buffalo gall stones)
- Red earth (burned yellow earth)
- Red earth (as found)
- Rock paint (a yellowish earth)
- Many-times-baked-paint (a yellow earth made red by exposure to the sun).
- Red many-times-baked (a similar red, as found).
- Seventh paint (a peculiar ghastly red-purple)
- Blue (a dark blue mud)
- White earth (as found)
- Black (charcoal)

16. McClintock identified a green paint, which was made from the dried scum from a large lake (Pakowki Lake) northeast of the Sweet Pine Hills. Technically, this green paint is a dye, not a paint (Wissler 1910:134).

17. Oxidized meteoritic iron was also a very special source of red paint to a number of the plains tribes (D. Blaklee, personal communication, 1994). The Lakota, for example, especially valued this paint for painting their war shields. This red paint was obtained through grinding unweathered or weathered meteoritic fragments into a powder and baking the powder to oxidize it. Wissler (1912) describes what appears to be a meteoric fragment in a medicine bundle.

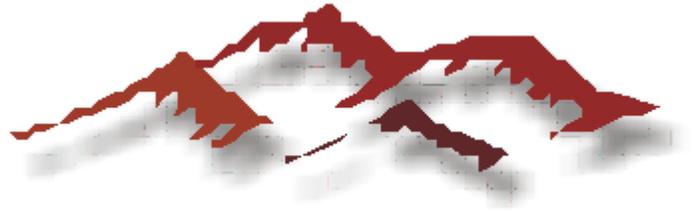
18. Much of what our elder consultants related to us deals with hunts or knowledge they have of hunting dating from the 1950s back to the early years of this century, both before and after the establishment of the park. Their recollections clearly indicate that hunting has had a continued and important role among some Blackfoot residents. To what extent these subsistence activities continue today among younger persons we are unable to estimate. Hunting and trapping are younger persons' activities, and our consultants did not wish to comment on what they were not personally knowledgeable about.

19. **WARNING:** A number of the plants used by the Piikáni for medicinal purposes are extremely toxic and can cause illness, even death, if they are used incorrectly. Such plants are identified in the list by the word "toxic." The medicines described in this study are not recommended for use, except under the advice of a physician. Several of the plant names are prefaced with a "?". This indicates that the use of this plant for a particular purpose is questionable. Similarly, the actual portion of the plant used as a medicine was often unclear. These instances are also noted with a "?".

20. See Table 4 in Chapter 2, and Figure 10 found earlier in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS



The preceding study focuses on traditional K'tunaxa and Piikáni ethnohistorical and ethnological associations with the Glacier National Park region, documenting, through both written and oral consultations with Piikáni elders, the associations these Native American People have with the region which became Glacier National Park. A rich record exists, particularly for the Piikáni and their traditional and ongoing interests in the Park's eastern slopes. The Blackfeet are an integral part, in the mind of Americans, of both the history and image of Glacier National Park. Their continuing role is essential in their minds to the maintenance of this most special place.

Our study brings together and integrates considerable information of value in understanding the Native associations with and concerns for these lands. The principal intent of the authors' overview is to provide information relevant to managing and interpreting Glacier National Park's Native American Heritage.

#### **Other Native American Tribes Associated with Glacier**

Our documentary review indicates that a number of different native American tribes visited, traveled through, or briefly resided in the Waterton-Glacier area in the last two centuries. Among the more important were the Salish and Pend d'Oreille (Upper Kalispel), whose traditional territory encompassed most of the Flathead Valley. Other than documentary accounts of Salish and Pend d'Oreille travels over the passes to hunt buffalo, and their conflicts with the Blackfeet, both east and west of the Continental Divide, we found nothing in our literature searches about other traditional associations with the area.

The Salish, as noted in the study's introduction, did not participate in the elder consultant and oral history program relating to traditional historical and contemporary associations of the Salish with the park. Our information on the Salish has therefore been compiled from documentary sources. The relative discussion given to the Salish in our report vis-a-vis other tribes may reflect this lack of contemporary traditional information.

#### **Intertribal Conflicts of the 1800s**

The 1700s, and particularly the first three decades of the last century, were times of increased conflict between the eastern and western tribes. The Blackfeet raided western tribes, particularly the Salish and Upper Kalispel in the Flathead, for horses and slaves. They, in turn, encountered the Blackfeet while on buffalo hunts east of the Continental Divide. Eastern incidents appear to have increased as the buffalo herds rapidly diminished during the mid-1800s.

K'tunaxa bands were also subject to occasional Blackfeet raids west of the mountains, and were also involved in eastern slope incidents. They did not, however, have the large horse herds that the Salish and Upper Kalispel had, and were therefore of less interest to Blackfeet horse stealing parties than the tribes farther south. The primary fur trade documents indicate that relationships between the K'tunaxa and the Piikáni were often more friendly than most Montana histories would lead the reader to believe (see also Chance 1981).

Native and non-native perceptions of "Blackfeet-K'tunaxa" and "Blackfeet-Salish" relations during those two centuries have been heavily colored by Montana historians' and ethnohistorians' uncritical reliance on certain tribally, ethnically, or racially biased published works, such as David Thompson's *Narrative* (Tyrell 1916; Glover 1962; Hopwood 1971); Biddle's *History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*; Father de Smet's and other Jesuits' accounts; and the records of Indian "traders" like W.T. Hamilton.

While these documents are very important sources, their use must not be uncritical, and must be balanced by the examination of other documentary sources relating to this historical period. The contents of all document sets must be critically analysed from historical and anthropological perspectives. History writers must also be most careful not to engage – as many historians are wont to do -- in trying to write a "good read" through the conflation of events and personalities, etc., and reading interpretations into these histories that are entirely unwarranted, given the limitations of the historic record.

Montana histories have in general given short shrift to, and biased interpretations of, the native Americans of the late 1700s and 1800s (Reeves d). There is a need for a new synthesis that incorporates primary documentary research, and balances the east-side- versus- west-side views of events of that time -- particularly from the 1830s-1880s -- to tell the native Americans' history from a balanced viewpoint, rather than from the white man's viewpoint of the fur trade and the missionizing and settlement of Montana. For a native point of view of historical events we highly recommend to the reader James Welsch's most recent work, *Killing Custer*, as well as his earlier fictional work, *Fools Crow*.

### **K'tunaxa Ethnohistory and Ethnology**

Certain bands of the K'tunaxa have a long-standing and close association with the park. Tobacco Plains people hunted on the east slopes into the late 1800s. The K'tunaxa, as the introduction noted, did not participate in the elder consultant and oral history program relating to traditional historical and contemporary associations of the neighboring native American tribes with the park. Our information on the K'tunaxa has therefore necessarily been compiled from documentary sources. Therefore, the relative treatment given in our report to the K'tunaxa vis-a-vis the Piikáni may reflect this lack of contemporary traditional information.

Our study indicates that serious discrepancies exist between Claude Schaeffer's list of K'tunaxa place names and those compiled 10 years earlier by James Willard Schultz. We have suggested that most of Schultz's names, because they are honorific, are probably not original K'tunaxa names. Others that are descriptive, but not listed by Schaeffer, may be.

The foot of Lake McDonald is considered by most historians, as well as by K'tunaxa, to be the "Place of Dancing," and a traditional Akiyiniik camp. There is an archeological site at this location (Reeves 1993b, Reeves and Short 1995). While its age and cultural affiliation have not been established, it clearly does not date to the last two centuries. Some accounts put the "Place of Dancing" near West Glacier, suggesting that it could be on the Middle Fork of the Flathead. K'tunaxa elders may have knowledge of its location, as may Thaine White, who also recorded the name.

Our report has not dealt with K'tunaxa traditional religion as it was or is practiced today, for there is little in the documentary literature relative to Glacier National Park, and contemporary oral traditions were not accessible. Ethnographic accounts of K'tunaxa religion can be found in such works as Chamberlain (1893), Schaeffer (1940), Turney-High (1941), and Hungry Wolf (1989). Specific stories relating to the Waterton-Glacier region were not found in the documents we examined.

The region was, and, we presume, still is, sacred to the K'tunaxa. This place was particularly important to the bands who traditionally associated with it seasonally. Of particular importance were Chief Mountain and "Hand Up In the Mountains," Two Medicine, and the Place of Dancing. Many of the vision quest sites identified along the eastern slopes of Waterton-Glacier (Dormarr and Reeves 1993; Reeves 1993, 1995, 2000) were no doubt constructed and used by both the K'tunaxa and the Piikáni.

The K'tunaxa, like the Piikáni, utilized a variety of sources for sacred paint. One of these was, according to Paul David, at the head of the Marias River, from which the K'tunaxa name for the Missouri came. This source, as we noted earlier, is most probably the Cutbank Creek locale, well-known to the Piikáni.

Other K'tunaxa ethnogeological and ethnozoological associations of a sacred nature within the park were not identified in our documentary study. No doubt this region was an important source of sacred material to the K'tunaxa, as it was to the Piikáni. The K'tunaxa may well have trapped eagle on the east slopes.

Our K'tunaxa ethnobotanical review did not identify any specific information relating to K'tunaxa plant collecting in Glacier National Park. A number of species collected by the K'tunaxa within their traditional range are present in Glacier.

### **Piikáni Ethnohistory/Ethnology**

Our study of Piikáni ethnohistory and ethnology has been detailed. It also included two seasons of consultations with elder Blackfoot tribal traditionalists.

### **The Blackfeet and the Fur Trade**

The Piikáni, as we have discussed earlier, played a central role in the beaver trade on the Missouri. The period that is least known through primary documentary research consists of the 1840s and 1850s,

which saw the final decline of the fur trade and the rise of the robe trade. The valleys of the Rocky Mountain Front, including those of today's Waterton-Glacier area, were major sources of beaver for the Piikáni during the trade. As noted, the Piikáni asked the Hudson's Bay Company to establish a post at Chief Mountain.

The Hudson's Bay Company journals chronicle trade fluctuations in the earlier decades of the century, as do the accounts of the American Fur Company. The latter have yet to be studied in detail in respect to the Piikáni trade.

### **The Blackfeet, the Great Northern Railway, and the Park**

The first 40 years after the creation of Glacier National Park -- particularly those before the Second World War -- were the times in which the Blackfeet became indelibly associated with the image of the park, primarily through the promotion of the Great Northern Railway. A detailed historical analysis has yet to be done of this time to fully document and interpret the written, visual, and other records, and the roles played by the GNR, the park, and the Blackfeet.

A great deal of professional photography of the Blackfeet and the Park done by freelance and company photographers has been amassed. A considerable amount of this is in the Park Archives; other materials are located in various public archives, private collections and photographic studios. Comprehensive documentation has yet to be made of the still and motion picture photography relating the to the Blackfeet and the park. The question of the movie shoot of the Sun Dance at Two Medicine in 1914 has yet to be identified insofar as it was staged or unstaged is concerned.

### **Traditional Piikáni Religion**

Through both the literature and the elder consultant program, we have documented the fundamental significance of the Waterton-Glacier region to Piikáni traditional religion.

As our research has progressed over the last two years with both the South and North Piikáni, we continued to learn and understand more fully the fundamental relationship of the mountains to traditional Piikáni religion. This is an ongoing process of learning about the sacred objects, stories, and other components associated with this region, including Medicine Pipes, Sacred Lodges, and a variety of other sacred objects. With few exceptions, all the Medicine Pipe Bundles have come from the mountains. We have noted the origin of two specific pipes -- the Long Time Pipe from Ninastakis, and Red Eagle's Thunder Pipe from the Two Medicine.

There is no doubt in our minds about the fundamental sacred nature and sacred significance of this place to the Piikáni.

### **Ninastakis (Chief Mountain)**

Ninastákis is of particular concern to traditional Piikáni people as more native and non-native people come to the mountain. The seismic event and rock slide of July 2, 1992, markedly decreased visitation

for the remainder of that year, as well as in 1993 -- both to the base and top of the mountain. Visitation, as well as native use, increased significantly in 1994, because the BIA and Blackfoot Tribal Business Council no longer showed any interest in restricting visitor access or forcing road closure. Logging continues on tribal and nontribal lands between the Chief Mountain Highway and the rock field. New landslides occurred in 1994 on the northwest base. A major rock fall and slide may happen in this area at any time.

Increasing numbers of native and non-native visitors can be expected to Ninastákiis as the revival of native religion continues, and as more non-native people, particularly those practicing "new age" religions, become aware of this sacred mountain--the only one that exists in these latitudes of the Rocky Mountains. Non-native religious use of Ninaistákiis will increase as it has at other sacred native American sites, such as the Bighorn Medicine Wheel. Increased use will attract more tourists, and subsequently more vandalism, erosion, and littering.

Clearly, these non-traditional visitor activities must be regulated, as must the clearcutting and selective logging of adjacent forests. While the passing of an access bylaw by the Blackfoot Tribal Business Council is an important first step, it must be enforced. A number of other proactive steps should be taken. Some are listed below (Reeves 1994:288-289):

1. Ninaistákiis should be designated a National Historic Landmark under the National Historic Preservation Act. The area so nominated should be of sufficient size and configuration to ensure protection and conservation of the forested slopes within the Blackfoot Reservation. Once designated, a joint management committee and plan should be developed by the Blackfoot Tribal Business Council and the U.S. Park Service, to ensure long-term conservation of Ninaistákiis, and guarantee freedom of use for traditional native religious practitioners. Biophysical and cultural inventories should be made of Ninaistákiis, and areas and appropriate uses designated. A proper trail system should be constructed to avoid continued trail erosion and trail braiding.
2. Ninaistákiis and a suitable encompassing landscape should be jointly nominated by the Government of the United States, the Blackfoot Tribal Business Council, the Government of Canada, and the Blood Tribal Council for designation as a World Heritage Site under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Ninaistákiis meets the criteria for nomination as a World Cultural Site. Designation as such would require that land use bylaws be established in Glacier National Park, the Blackfoot Reservation, Waterton Lakes National Park, the Blood Indian Reserve, the Province of Alberta, and the Municipal District of Cardston, to regulate land uses that visually and spiritually impair Ninaistákiis and the landscape within which it is set.
3. The National Park Service should encourage hikers to use the existing Gable Pass trail for access to the base of the mountain as the alternate and preferred route, rather than that through the Blackfoot Reservation. The Gable Pass route would not interfere with traditional native religious activity at the base of the mountain. Signage could be placed at the base of the ascent to the peak, informing visitors of the traditional

significance of Ninaistákis and the native religious activities which go on, and ask that they use respect, if they should encounter an offering site or a native person vision questing on the summit.

4. The existing access road on the Blackfeet Reservation should be gated and locked at the Chief Mountain Highway. Use of this road by vehicles should be by special permit only for native elders and others with physical impairments. Natives should be encouraged to use traditional methods of transportation to approach Ninaistákis for religious purposes, by walking or riding horses from this gate to the base. Other access roads to the east from the highway should be cut, to ensure that persons cannot drive four-by-fours up onto the grassy slopes of the northeast ridges.

5. The Chief Mountain Highway offers outstanding views of Ninaistákis, photographed by thousands of passing tourists each year. There are no developed roadside interpretive exhibits. An exhibit should be developed at an existing pullout that interprets Ninaistákis's history and significance. This should be a cooperative effort between the relevant federal, state, and tribal agencies. A little information goes a long way.

If logging continues to be permitted, and visitor use is unregulated, eventually Ninaistákis will, like other sacred places, become permanently impaired. The Animal Persons and the Dream Persons of this place, among whom is Ksiistsikomii'kssi (Thunderbird), the most powerful of all the Up Above People, will leave this place, as they have other sacred native American places, desecrated by non-traditional native and white economic and tourism development. No longer will Other-Than-Human-Beings reside in Ninaistákis -- The Chief Mountain. No longer will elders and younger people go up to Ninaistákis to await their visions. No longer will the marmots whistle, the ravens cry, the falcons dive, and the eagles soar – nor will real bears (grizzlies) come to sleep in the flower fields. Although the wind will still whistle through the spires, as it has for millions of years, Ninaistákis will no longer sing, because there will be no one to listen.

### **Paint, Pipestone, and Sacred Materials**

Cutbank Creek, as discussed earlier in this report, is one of the Piikáni's important sources of paint. Cutbank and Divide Creek were traditional sources for pipestone. A variety of zoological materials are incorporated into Piikáni ritual bundles and activities. Some come from the mountains, and, like paint and pipestone, cannot be found anywhere else.

### **Ethnobotanical Considerations**

The plants of Glacier National Park and the surrounding region have provided native peoples with food, medicines, materials, and spiritual well-being for generations. Our study documents over 80 species within Glacier National Park that the Piikáni traditionally utilized. The fact that this knowledge remains after more than a century of restricted access and acculturation reflects the significance of plant

resources to the area's native peoples, and provides a glimpse of what must have been a much more extensive and richer relationship prior to European contact.

Our study also highlights the value of traditional ecological knowledge. Specifically, it demonstrates that the oral traditions of the Piikáni (and other native peoples) are not "superstition" or "dogma," but rather represent an intimate and sophisticated understanding of the natural world. Oral traditions indicate which plants were utilized, the specific harvesting times, preparation techniques, resource management strategies, and the benefits accruing from the proper use of each plant. In essence, these oral traditions are guidelines governing the interaction between the people and their environment. They are ecological, in that they represent a complex and integrated system of practices and beliefs. As Hunn (1993:13) notes, "Traditions are the products of generations of intelligent reflection tested in the rigorous laboratory of survival. That they have endured is proof of their power."

In addition, information presented in this report points to the need to rethink concepts of "wilderness," and to reconsider the role of native peoples in shaping the landscapes of North America. In doing so, it becomes apparent that the "wilderness" that conservationists sought to protect from human disturbance use is, in fact, the culmination of generations of wise use and management by native peoples and their ancestors. Further, the loss of biodiversity and cultural diversity may be linked. As Anderson (1993:163) notes:

"Loss of animal and plant diversity in the world's wildlands is equated with habitat loss, fragmentation and the degradation of biological resources from modern land uses (Miller et al. 1989; Hudson 1991). Seldom are the root causes equated with the absence of former indigenous interactions. Unfortunately, most scientists still do not seek the link between loss of cultures and the subsequent loss of knowledge about how to manage for plant and animal biodiversity (Oldfield 1991; Dasmann 1991). Therefore, terminology, legislation, policies, management, and research for preservation of cultures and preservation of flora/fauna remain largely on separate tracks."

### Co-management

Landscapes containing plant communities important to native peoples may be defined as both "cultural" and "natural" resources. Thus, the proper management of these resources requires the integration of traditional native ecological knowledge with the western scientific knowledge of cultural and natural resource managers. The challenge, however, is to resolve differences in terminology, values, perceptions, and objectives among cultural scientists, resource managers, and native peoples about the use and management of plant resources (Anderson 1993).

One of the fundamental issues facing the development of co-management strategies is the opposing philosophies regarding the "use" of wilderness areas. Native Americans encourage sensory involvement with nature as an ongoing process of renewal. Thus, native peoples associate the notion of use with wild places. "Nature with humans" is not distinguished from "nature without humans." In fact, most native cultures commonly assert that plant use ensures abundance, and they believe that in the absence of

human harvesting, tending, and use of the flora and fauna, the plants and the animals are offended and consequently disappear (Anderson 1990; 1993).

This differs dramatically from the human/nature dichotomy established by western scientists and conservationists. To wilderness managers, human use is incompatible with wild places, and people are viewed as an impact that decreases diversity and endangers plants and animals. To allow digging, pruning, weeding, or other traditional native plant management techniques in wilderness areas would give "natural" vegetation a groomed or manicured appearance, in direct conflict with the aesthetic appeal of virgin landscapes (Anderson 1990; 1993).

The recognition and understanding of these opposing philosophies of wilderness is the first step toward developing effective co-management agreements between public agencies and native groups. If public agencies are to take an active role in maintaining, tending, and encouraging the growth of plants important to native peoples, then the second step in this process involves surveying the resources, recording their conditions and numbers, and matching these with indigenous needs. Anderson (1993:187) identifies at least nine areas of inquiry in this process:

1. Which are the native groups in the area that currently gather plants?
2. What plants are currently important to native people of the area, and how do they fulfill native cultural needs?
3. What parts are gathered from these plants?
4. What tools are used to gather and/or manage these plants?
5. Where are these plants located in the field? What is their present-day abundance and distribution? (This may require an inventory and mapping of plant occurrence.)
6. What are the current native harvesting and management techniques for the plant? What are the frequency, time of year, and intensity of harvesting or management? Is this kind of management in conflict with any of the present-day uses of land, and, if so, how can such conflicts be mitigated?
7. What is the impact of native harvesting on plant productivity and numbers, and what is the sustainable level of utilization from field populations that would not jeopardize conservation goals?
8. What traditional collection sites exist in public areas that have a long and distinguished history of use, and how can these sites be preserved for future generations?
9. What public areas would make good new plant collection and management sites in

which to tend, maintain, and encourage the growth of plants important to native people?

Our ethnobotanical study has laid the foundation to address many of these issues -- particularly issues one through four. The remaining questions -- six through nine -- relate to the development of plant gathering policies and traditional use site protection.

### Plant-Gathering

Piikáni elders and traditionalists continue to use the plant resources of Glacier National Park for food, medicine and spiritual purposes. While elders recognize and appreciate the role the park has played in protecting the flora and fauna of the mountains, many are frustrated and concerned about having to "sneak in" to obtain culturally important plants. This restricted access is particularly frustrating and ironic, because the park was the traditional territory of peoples such as the Piikáni until less than a century ago. Further, most Piikáni elders interviewed do not believe that their aboriginal rights to resources were extinguished with the establishment of Glacier National Park.

Plant gathering policies have been implemented elsewhere in the United States. For example, the California State Department of Parks and Recreation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the national parks have developed and implemented native plant gathering policies, but as Anderson (1990) points out, these policies require government "approval" for plant gathering activities through a permit procedure. The rationale for these permit procedures is based on the notion that native plant gathering may have negative environmental impacts, or may conflict with other social and environmental objectives. As previously discussed, resource managers often equate "wild" vegetation with vegetation that is left alone or not altered significantly through human use. The native harvesting of renewable, above-ground plant parts (berries, leaves, seeds) is often seen as an acceptable, nondestructive gathering method, while the array of other management and harvesting techniques utilized by native Americans -- such as coppicing, rhizome-severing, corm-digging, and burning -- are often regarded as contradictory to conservation objectives, and potentially harmful to plants.

The sustainable harvesting of plant resources should also be considered in developing plant gathering policies. The fact that native peoples were able to harvest critical plant resources for generations points to the sustainable nature of traditional plant management practices. However, the question is whether these practices are sustainable today, given the decreased availability of land and resources. Anderson (1990; 1993) recently conducted experiments in California to document the effects of the horticultural practices of the southern Sierra Miwok Indians on the sustainability of two plant species, deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*) and redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) shrubs. The deergrass is managed with controlled burning in the fall, to encourage the production of flower stalks, which provide the foundation (warp) material for coiled baskets. The redbud is subjected to coppicing once a year in the fall, to stimulate the production of usable branches for basketry material.

Anderson mimicked these native practices on public lands in Yosemite National Park and the Sierra National Forest. She simulated dry season burning, to determine whether or not it affected the

development of new tillers and the production of flowering stems of deergrass. In addition, she evaluated the effects of fall coppicing on the regeneration of redbud.

Results from these field experiments indicated that both management practices increased the desired characteristics that native people look for to meet their cultural needs. In the burn treatment, all of the deergrass plants vigorously developed new tillers. In fact, according to Anderson, after the burn, many of the deergrass plants that had hollow centres (because of accumulated dead material) produced many new tillers, filling in their interiors. Deergrass flowering the year following burning increased by 13%. All redbud shrubs that were coppiced vigorously resprouted, producing many long, straight withes with red bark. These usable shoots increased significantly with coppicing. Moreover, coppicing also removed lanky redbud branches and dead or dying limbs, thereby controlling the potential spread of diseases.

Plant gathering polices must be supported by corresponding land use policies. There is not much point in permitting plant gathering if the resources themselves are not protected from the development of facilities and the intrusion of park visitors.

Finally, the sense of urgency should be emphasized. With each year, more and more of the traditional ecological knowledge of the native peoples disappears with the passing of this generation of elders. Their knowledge is critical to the preservation of the biological diversity of Glacier National Park. Similarly, the landscapes of Glacier National Park, and access to its resources, are essential to the preservation of the cultural continuity and diversity of native peoples.

### **Interpretive Considerations**

Interest in the medicinal and spiritual values of native plants is growing among the American public. Given the significance of the plants in Glacier National Park to the native people, there is an excellent opportunity to interpret those areas of traditional Piikáni plant use that are considered public knowledge, such as the uses of herbs for common colds, stomachaches, and the like, and also an opportunity to educate the visitor about Piikáni ethnobotanical values and the nature of traditional medicine and its practice. It is important for the interested person to understand that many of these plants are combined for medicinal purposes by the medicine people, and that their use is inadvisable without proper native protocol and instruction.

### **Concluding Statement**

Our study has demonstrated a long and intimate association of the native American people, particularly the K'tunaxa and Piikáni, with the region of the Rocky Mountains known today as Glacier National Park.

Traditional ethnohistory and ethnology of native Americans and Glacier National Park are ever-ongoing processes. They have changed, and will continue to change, particularly as native communities turn more toward traditional values respecting Mother Earth and the non-native communities' awareness

of these traditional native "ecological" values and their importance increases.

The present is but an illusory moment between past and future. The past cannot be recovered, only better appreciated through continued research and interpretation in the momentary present, for the benefit of the future. History is continuously created in the Backbone, through the continued actions of humans and other-than-human beings with Mother Earth.

A scant 150 years have passed since the great-grandparents of today's elders frequented this region, hunting and camping in its valleys; digging roots; picking berries; carrying out religious ceremonies; and communing with the sacred -- an activity that continues to this day. This is but a moment in time of the thousands of years -- the long-ago time -- when their ancestors lived with, not on, the land -- respecting and honoring this special and unique place on Mother Earth.

The Piikáni elders say:

"We use the mountains quite a bit. Right now, old people. That old lady, they went up there that one time. She just sit there and smoke. She was really down-hearted. I tell her, 'We don't own the mountains.' She said, 'Why?' I said, 'White people took them, they claim them. The government claim them.' She said, 'Why?' She kept saying 'why' and she just had tears in her eyes. She said, 'We own them,' she said. 'Those are our lives, those are our pillows. We lay our heads on the mountains. Those are our pillows.' She said these things and I believe them. That was some old lady, a long time ago. She said 'Those are our pillows.' That's what she said. 'We lay our heads on that rock, at the foot of those rocks.' And that old lady was still thinking we own them. And she's still got her head on that rock. That's why she started crying. She said, 'I don't know. I feel sorry. I didn't know they took them, and the reason why they took them. Nobody told me.'

"[The old ladies], they won't forget. I know I won't forget. Even if this is my last sacrament or something. I still won't forget the mountains. That's what I'm gonna put, I'm gonna make a word deal. If I ever go, I'm going to have somebody write when I go, 'The mountains are mine.' I'll never forget. They're my own stone. The old people just cried, they thought they still owned them. The old lady. The old lady next to her filled her little pipe, she offered them smoke. She said, 'They took it away from us.' She just nodded her head and said, 'We still own them.' I took the old lady's word. I never forget that. Even if they take me someplace and lock me up, I still will think that's home (SL-2).



## **APPENDIX A**

**K'tunaxa Stories Recorded by Claude Schaeffer:**

**Story of Kutenai and Avalanche**

**War Party**

**Story of Kutenai and Avalanche  
(Paul David, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1935)**

"Paul's father moved during the fall, with Paul and his brothers. Paul was married one year. He went to Saint Ignatius Mission for Xmas. After Xmas, the Indian agent of Jocko invited Indians to come there for the new Year's Dance. The Pend d'Oreille and Akiyiniik held the dance; only one tipi, Paul's father, of Aganahonek. The agent invited all chiefs and prominent men to a meeting, and then urged them to make peace with the Piegan. The Indians agreed to make peace.

"The Akiyiniik started from the Jocko, only able-bodied men and women. They took the peace message east to deliver to some whites traders to deliver to the Piegan.

"They crossed the south fork of Flathead, on a trail, along present-day tourist trail. Camped at Belton and then moved along McDonalds Lake in Glacier National Park. This lake was frozen and they walked on the ice. Previously they had left their horses at Columbia Falls and there made snowshoes. They started to use snowshoes about the south fork of Flathead.

"They remained three days at northeast end of lake McDonald and killed one elk here. This was distributed in small portions to all. They fished in Lake McDonald. Then they moved someways up McDonald Creek and camped again. That night it was announced that the people would hunt mountain-goat. (Two creeks flow into McDonald's Creek and they camped between them; the farther one flowed from northwest past Heaven's Peak and other possibly from Avalanche Lake.)

"This morning all the hunters followed the leader and they went up along the creeks. They sat down and the leader told them some would hunt along one creek, and some along the other.

"Paul was one of a party who moved up creek to Avalanche Lake. This trail was very high and steep; there was no timber at all and everything was covered with snow. Paul sat down to rest and the hunters moved on ahead. In a short time Paul's friend came along and the latter asked him why he did not move ahead. Paul said he didn't think it worthwhile, as it looked dangerous. They talked awhile and presently heard an avalanche across on cliffs opposite. Soon they saw three goats feeding on opposite side. They argued as to who should follow them; and another older Indian came along, who went after the goats. The latter moved along the edge of the snow field to where a few trees were standing and Paul and his friend heard a noise. Soon they saw the snow start at the top and start downwards toward them. The older Indian ran to a tree and encircled with his arms and legs. Paul and his friend started to run; the friend for the timber and Paul ran downwards on the snow field. No sooner had Paul reached the edge of the snow field and gained the timber, than the avalanche swept past him. Paul and his friend then looked up and saw the older Indian still clinging to a tree. The latter then moved farther up and killed the three goats; and Paul and his friend went up to help him bring down the goats. Paul took hold of the goats horns to drag them but was told to grab hold of a hind leg, as it pulls easier (the goats hair does not catch in snow).

"The three dressed the goats when the hunters came along back from above and hadn't seen any goats.

"The goat meat was distributed equally among the hunters. They arrived back at camp in the evening. The other group of hunters had killed ten goats along the other creek.

"Next day the camp moved on eastward to a site halfway between former camp and divide; and the following day they camped immediately below the divide, on the northwest side of the junction of two creeks. The range rose immediately before them.

"The next morning camp broke and the party started out up the steep rise before them on snowshoes (Snowshoe Pass). The two men ahead were breaking the trail. Paul was carrying all his equipment, rolled up in a pack, and his wife was carrying his gun and a kettle. A dog ran past Paul who kicked at him but the dog ran ahead and laid down in front of Paul's wife who was forced to hit him with the gun to make him move out of the way. Someone was then heard talking loudly ahead of Paul and the latter thought that this person owned the dog and was complaining of his mistreatment. The leader, however was signalling that the snow was beginning to give way; then he tried to stop it by stepping on it with his snowshoes. Another old man stuck his gun butt into snow to halt it, but as the trail breaker lifted his right snowshoe, the snow started to move downwards, and the avalanche started. The old man made repeated efforts to halt the snow slide but the snow swept past his gun so that he failed. Paul saw the snow moving and the next second he was sliding downward with it. He rolled over a number of times and could feel snow coming between himself and his pack. Part of the time he was completely under the snow and would emerge at other times.

"He heard someone talking but he still thought that he was moving downwards and hadn't realized that he had stopped. He raised himself upwards and looked around. His wife was not far off, buried in the snow up to her arms. The rest of the Kutenai were in all kinds of positions; some buried completely, others partly out of the snow. Paul got to his feet and went to his wife and asked her if she was hurt. The snow was beginning to freeze hard already and his wife was standing up to her shoulders in it. Paul dug his wife out with aid of his snowshoes and the rest helped each other to get out. No one was hurt. Many were complaining of the different articles that were lost. Paul's wife had lost his gun while being swept downwards; and Paul went up and finally found it under the snow.

"After excitement was over, the Kutenai tried to start on their journey again and put on their packs. Then they heard a Kutenai speaking, loudly, 'We went through this pass once before and we encountered a blizzard in which one of our people was frozen to death.' This person turned back and all followed him. A loud noise like a gun-shot was heard to come from a peak south of them, and a similar noise was heard to come from a peak north of them; while a bad blizzard was seen approaching from the west.

"They moved back to the camp site of the previous night and five lodges of Kutenai immediately moved out along McDonald Creek, to Mineral Creek, and went up the latter stream (Swift current Pass). Among these were Paul's father and the father of Kustataa (and three others).

"The rest of the Kutenai however, continued their journey the next day across the same pass, while Paul's father's party continued up McDonald Creek until they hit Waterton River (Kootenai Pass) up which they continued. There are a number of flat prairies around the mountains between Mineral Creek and the tributary of the Waterton River. (Flattop Mt.)

"Paul and his wife accompanied the rest of the Kutenai over the dangerous region traversed the previous day. (McDonald Creek-kamanahoinu = 'barrier creek', up to where it turns southwest; then it is called "Avalanche Creek", - yake tukume tum atmki 'where a person falls back, avalanche', to where

it empties in to McDonald Lake, stream of which an avalanche brings back a person to the place where he started.)

"The Kutenai broke camp that morning. An old Kutenai advised Paul to wait for a time as it took considerable time to pull Kutenai up the rock wall. They watched them climbing, until they sat down to rest upon the snow. They continued and were soon out of sight. Paul then started out. They finally reached the place of the rock wall, on which the Kutenai used thongs to climb. Here the men stood on each others shoulders to climb to the different rock shelves. There were seven shelves and a man was stationed on each one, to assist in pulling up the people and equipment. The equipment was pulled to the top first; then the babies in the cradle boards and then the children and women. Two rawhide thongs were used, one of which had a loop in the end which was taken around a person's hand, while he pulled and steadied himself by using the other thong. In this the entire party scaled this rocky wall.

"They continued on downward and camped on Reynold's Creek that night in the timber. They continued on the north side along this creek to Saint Mary's Lake where they camped and rested for three days. They crossed the lake at its upper end and traveled to a prairie nearby where six buffalo were killed, probably near Saint Mary's Chalets. There was plenty of meat for all. They moved south eastward to the south fork of Milk River and camped there. The party was now on the east bench of the rockies but large prairies extended up into the lower foothills. They camped here for over a week on the south fork of Milk River. The hunters moved down into the upper reaches of Cut Bank Creek to hunt buffalo. Paul killed six bison on one hunting trip. They hunted between the middle fork and the south fork of the Cut Bank River.

"They next moved to the place where Paul had killed the buffalo and here was where Paul's father found them after delivering the message to the white traders. The party remained for about two weeks, drying the meat and tanning the hides, so that they would have light-weight baggage moving back. A lot of game (bison) was seen near the south fork of Two Medicine Creek and Glacier Park Hotel.

"The party left from Cut Bank Creek and moved to near the present site of Glacier Park Hotel and the hunters killed buffalo in this region. Paul killed four buffalos here. Paul saw an Indian pursuing bison on foot and killing them, reloading on the run. This was Paul's wife's father. He pursued the herd into the snowdrift and killed a number. Paul killed seven of them and removed or lifted the hides from one side of the animal and then turned it over and covered the carcass with snow.

"He turned back to camp. It was announced that they would move next morning to Summit Creek. They camped there to dry the meat. The Kutenai camped here for some time and every day some of the buffalo meat was packed back to camp to be dried.

"While they were camping here, Paul was asked by his cousin to go scouting. They were joined by three others, with the idea of killing some Piegans. They climbed a butte and saw some Piegans hunters to the east. They were discussing whether to attack, as there were so many, when one said, "There is a Piegan right here," and pointed to Paul. Paul was angry and said to him, "Go ahead, but if you miss me, I'll kill you." They quarrelled, and the other pulled a gun on him but the cousin interfered and the other shot into the air. This was a sign that the other was no longer angry. They returned home.

"That night it was announced that they would move the next day. They packed up and started to move

westward. They moved up Summit Creek and then branched off to the south, and across to the south fork of the Flathead River. It took them about a week to get there.

"When the Kutenai arrived at the south fork, some crossed and forded the river and others camped on the east side. One of the men, Paul's uncle, wished that someone would approach them over a flat, open place and wished that an Indian, named Elk, would approach. Soon a man was seen to come near and it was seen that he had different clothes, and that it was Elk. He told them that his party was preparing two canoes and would soon approach. The two canoes were then seen coming down the Flathead River. These were Akiy n k, and one canoe landed on east side and one on the west side of the river. The people of one canoe announced that they had many elk hides, and that they would trade two elk hides for some bison meat and bison hides for bedding.

"One of Paul's friends took two elk hides with which to make a canoe. An Akiy n k told them he would fashion the main center beam of the canoe. This was 3" wide by 12 feet long.

"The canoes were completed during the day and everything was made ready to embark.

"The next morning the equipment was packed in the canoes. They were directed as to the ways they should travel, as they were not familiar with the country. They started out on their journey.

"This was in April.

"The women and children traveled along on foot following the river. They still used snowshoes.

"The next day was spent in portage and then the canoes were run over the falls. A white man went first in his canoe, and he put some rocks in the bow of it.

"The canoes safely migrated the falls; a woman in the last canoe safely ran the falls. This was Mrs. Paul's mother. The canoes were reloaded and they went on to the forks of the Flathead River.

"They picked up their saddles and horses and traveled by land from Kalispel to Saint Mary's."

### **War Party (Pauline, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1935)**

"This is for Aganaho nek around Tobacco Plains before the introduction of horses.

"They were camped at Haydon. One man had the doll for the Medicine lodge. Two comrades were eating dinner and piece of meat was left which they picked up to use during their singing (to grease 'soften' their throat). The leader of medicine lodge was Never-Sitting-Long-at-one-Place.

"Leader of M.I. heard doll speaking and saw him standing over two singers. Doll had a person by the foot in his right hand, and this person was dressed in buckskin and had a fringe of human hair on right arm sleeve but not on left.

"At this moment the leader halted all drumming and stated 'that this symbol meant that the people would go raiding to the Plains, and kill a great leader dressed as the person this doll held in his hand.'

"The season of tobacco gathering approached and while people were smoking, the chief asked for a runner to go to Gakawakami tukinik and tell them that they were prepared to go on a war party to the Plains.

"No runners offered to leave. One middle-aged man who dragged his robe behind him (slow) offered to go on this errand. The Chief told him to go and gave him a small bundle of tobacco for this band. The chief said, 'We will start War Dance tonight, and continue it for four days. On the fifth day they would camp at foot at foothills of Akamina Pass where the other band would join them.'

"It was past noon when runner, Little Sun, started to leave. He walked while still in sight but then ran as far as Morrissey Meadows. Then walked to top of ridge and then started running to ridge above G. camp. As he forded river he saw the people playing shinny. They noticed his approach, as he walked slowly up. Went to chief's lodge and presented the tobacco. While smoking, he gave the chief the message concerning the war expedition and the time and place of meeting.

"The young men were eager to join war expedition. The chief gave Little Sun a bundle of tobacco as token that they accepted. The runner then left, and walked and ran as in going until he came to Morrissey Meadows. The people were playing shinny when he arrived and everyone asked him where he had been sleeping.

"He went in, gave over tobacco and chief recognized it as G. tobacco (there was a slight difference in each band's tobacco), and Chief knew that he had really been there. He delivered his message that G. had started war ceremonial and that they would only have two nights of it but had had to prepare moccasins and arrows but would take two days to reach meeting place but would be there on 5th day. (Little Sun had only taken one day to go and one day to come.)

"After four nights of ceremony the party move to foothills rendezvous and meet war party of G. there.

"They built small lodges of boughs which they used on war path. On reaching the Plains, they knew that it was the Snake Indians that they were to raid and moved south in search of the Snake leader whom they were to kill. The leader with doll told them who it was. The party was composed of young men, only. The leader with doll was yakasin, of the party.

"On way across Divide there were two comrades, one called Lighting-a-Smoke and another (?). He told his comrade to watch out for a bear and they would eat it when hungry.

"The comrade saw a tamarack knot resembling a bear and pointed it out to Lighting-a-Smoke. The latter shot one arrow at it and everybody heard it strike the tree. He shot another and then people saw the bear climbing the tree which soon fell down dead. The party ate this that night.

"The carcass was disembowelled and the incision fastened with small green sticks. Then a hole was cut above each foot and a forked stick was stuck in incision. (If forked sticks could not be obtained, a small twig was twisted on itself, so as not to break, then tied around a straight stick and the bear's foot.) Then

a man held each stick and carcass was roasted over fire. (In old days the hides of beaver and bear were never used for clothing as the hair was burnt off hides and later eaten with flesh after being roasted.) The hair was scraped off as it slowly burnt. The bear was roasted in its skin.

"While eating bear and party eating in small groups, Lighting-a-Smoke again told comrade that if he saw a piece of stick in river resembling a char (bull-trout) to tell him and he would shoot it.

"As the party moved along, the comrade saw a big piece of wood which resembled a charr and he told his friend. Everybody laughed at him. The comrade took a stick and put his spear head on it and stuck it in log and it broke. The other struck his fish-spear head on a stick and thrust it at log which turned into a charr. (Each hunter carried a goat-horn fish-spear point while travelling). (In camp fish was cooked by means of hot rocks in the pottery or earthenware vessels; while travelling, it was cut into slices and roasted over a fire.)

"The party was now moving southward along foothills. The comrade said if the other saw a spruce windfall resembling a moose, to tell him and he would shoot it and it would turn into a moose. A windfall was seen which resembled a moose and Light-a-Smoke shot one and sound was heard of arrow hitting dirt; and shot again and a moose fell dead. The moose meat was cut up and dried over fires to jerk it.

"Again Light-a-Smoke said if comrade saw moss under water resembling beaver to tell him. Some was seen and another harpoon head made of bone was thrust into it and it turned into a beaver. The beaver was roasted in the same way as bear. Strike-a-Light would not have anything to do with his partner as he had no power. The spearhead for beaver was made of a piece of bone, with one side barb, and hollow in end fitted over shaft.

"One man had a white wolf pelt which gave him power of keen scent. One night the call of the wolf was heard in middle of party and saw it come from this person. (He wore pelt over his shoulder). The yakasin asked him why he gave the cry and the latter told him to make a fire to see what he was standing on. A fire and pine torches were made and by their light it was seen that a large party of Indians had gone by there towards the mountains. (The pelt was of the width so as only to include the ears and extended from nose clear back to tail.)

"The lights were put out and man with wolf power decided to follow the trail by his power of scent. He tied pelt on top of his head and party followed him as they could see the pelt before them. Soon they came to a thick forest and were making so much noise that yakasin decided to camp for the night. In morning two scouts were sent out (one had power from lamb and wore the skin on his head; other had raven power and wore skin with head above his forehead) and traveled across many divides until sundown. (Novices on was party were called ma n k.) A young novice of other party (enemies) saw the two scouts as latter saw this young novice. The wolf with lamb power pulled lamb cap down over his face, and where he was standing only a blackened stump remained and a lamb walked away. The raven scout threw his raven skin into the air and a raven flew away and a stump remained. The young novice was only one who saw this, of enemy party, but couldn't believe what he'd seen, and comrades didn't believe him. Scout with lamb power remained but raven scout returned to his own party.

"This scout told news to camp. They started out that evening and camped below the enemy camp of

Snake Indians. A few scouts watched for their fires to go out so that they could attack. The Snakes had eaten heavily of mountain sheep meat and were not alert, or on guard. The Snake built small lodges of wood and were not suspicious except young novice who moved up to Divide and made his camp. The Kutenai started out to attack and scout with lamb power went ahead, as lamb, as it was dark. (Indians pull out a hair and hold it before them. As soon as there is light enough to see, they started their attack; this is a regular practice of Kutenai.) The Kutenai attacked the camp and killed the Snake chief who was recognized by his cut lip. The Kutenai cut open the rear of the chief's lodge. The Kutenai with doll power killed the Snake Chief with his spear and son of chief of Gak. was second and gave him death blow with tomahawk. All Snake warriors were killed except novice camping on hill.

"He looked over and saw that all Snake killed and camp rifled. He started to cry as he knew he couldn't reach home without equipment. His life was spared so that he could return to Snakes with story of battle.

"This battle was believed to have taken place southwest of Helena and the Snake at this time lived in Bitterroot Valley.

"After the Snake was allowed to go free, there was an argument between the Gakaway and Aganohonek as to who stabbed Snake chief, the former saying that it was the sone of their chief and the latter saying it was their yakasin. The party then split into two parts, the Gakaway returning home.

"One of the Aganohek told the G. that "no one ever took fee away from a grizzly" before the latter left to return home. On returning home, the G. warriors mixed with camp people without holding any Scalp Dance. The people started to prepare for the dance. The chief's son said he would go out to hunt big-horn, for fat to paint his wife; another for moose fat and a third for grizzly fat to decorate their wives. While these were away, the word was brought in that chief's son had been killed by a fall while hunting big-horn; second was gored to death by a moose; and youngest had been killed by a grizzly. This was revenge brought about by Aganahonek. The members of war party informed the chief the cause of this trouble. The chief then said that they would have had just as much prestige for second man to have killed Snake Chief and that the Scalp Dance would have been held in this case.

"The Aganohonek did not hold a Scalp Dance, neither did the GaGawak because both resented the quarrel."



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events : 1750-1995**

**Table 11 : Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events: 1750-1995**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Events</b>
ca. 1700	"Snakes"(enemy) (Absaroke and/or Plains Assiniboine) enter and temporarily occupy part of the Nitsitapii and Haaninin traditional territories which they have occupied for thousands of years.
ca. 1720	Nitsitapii, Cree and Nakota first battle with the "Snakes" on North Saskatchewan. Crees have some guns. Results indecisive.
ca. 1732	Second battle with the "Snakes" near Red Deer River. Snakes have horses. Nitsitapii and allies have more guns. They win.
ca. 1732	First Smallpox epidemic sweeps the Northern Plains. Nitsitapii get both smallpox and horses from "Snakes"50-80% of population dies.
1754	Alexander Henday sent to winter with the Nitsitapii and other tribes by the Hudson's Bay Company. Other follow and over-winter in later years.
1778	Hudson House opened by HBC at the Forks of the Saskatchewan. Nitsitapii come to trade. Other posts of HBC & NWC follow.
1782	Second Smallpox epidemic rages across the Northern Plains Over 50% of the Native population dies.
1785-1786	James Gady sent by Hudson's Bay Company to winter with the Piikáni in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and encourage them to come to trade. Piikáni recognized as best beaver hunters.
1795	Edmonton House and Fort Edmonton opened by HBC and NWC. Edmonton becomes chief post in Saskatchewan District.
1799	Acton House and Rocky Mountain House opened within sight of the Rockies. Piikáni very pleased, don't have to travel so far to trade furs. Houses open and close over the years.
1800-1803	Chesterfield House opened and closed due to Haaninin hostility at Forks of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan.
1803	Louisiana Purchase.
1804-1807	Lewis & Clark Expedition.
1806	Blackfeet (Piikáni) attempt to steal horses from Lewis on the Two Medicine. Later animosity to Americans attributed by some to this incident.

**Table 11 : Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events: 1750-1995**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Events</b>
1807	Manuel Lisa constructs Fort Raymond at the junction of the Big Horn and the Yellowstone. Visited by party of "Blackfeet" (Kainaa and Tsuu T'ina).
1808-1810	Missouri River fur trappers attacked in the Missouri headwaters by the "Blackfeet" (mostly Kainaa and Haaninin). Build and abandon fort in 1810 at the Three Forks. Some Americans believe HBC is behind "Blackfeet" raids.
1807-09	David Thompson crosses Rocky Mountains from Rocky Mountain House. Opens series of posts in the headwaters of the Columbia; Kalispel House and Salish House 1809. Salish and other tribes now able to obtain guns directly.
1810-1812	Salish-Nitsitapii battles in which Nitsitapii "lose". Nitsitapii extremely concerned about trade with Salish, threaten to kill any white men involved. Howse Pass abandoned in favor of Athabasca Pass.
1812	War of 1812. Fort Astoria awarded to Northwest Company. Formulate plans to expand trade into the Snake River Country.
1814	All the beaver hunted out of the Upper Saskatchewan & Northern tributaries of the Missouri. Kainaa and Tsuu T'ina discover rich beaver country of the Snake & Bear rivers. Tribes begin to trap far to the south.
1818-1819	Fort Walla Walla opened by NWC. First Snake River Country expedition in 1819 under Donald MacKenzie. Encounters with the "Blackfeet"(Haaninin) in the Snake River Country and Missouri Headwaters.
1819	Epidemic of Measles kills 1/3 of Nitsitapii and Haaninin trading at Edmonton that winter. Spreads to other camps.
1819	Hudson's Bay Company reopens Acton House, closed since 1813, to counter the NWC west of the mountains who are diverting the Piikáni, their principle source of beaver, to Salish House. Acton (Rocky Mountain House) closes in 1823.
1821-1823	Americans attempt to reestablish trade in the Missouri Headwaters. Parties meet both friendly Blackfeet (Piikáni) who encourage them to build a fort, and hostile "Blackfeet" (Kainaa, Haaninin). Number of Americans killed. Attempts abandoned and trade shifts to the Central Rockies. HBC again accused of inciting the "Blackfeet" against the Americans.
1821-22	Hudson's Bay Company and Northwest Company Amalgamate. Decide to establish post further south in "Blackfeet" territory, based on rumors of rich beaver country.

**Table 11 : Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events: 1750-1995**

Time Period	Events
1822-1823	Bow Fort open and closes at the junction of the Red Deer and South Saskatchewan. Expeditions sent into Piikáni territory along the Rocky Mountain front find no beaver.
1825	Rocky Mountain House reopens to counter the Piikáni's trade with Salish House and the Americans wintering in the Flathead Valley. Trade falls off by 1829. Post closes.
1831	Fort Union opened by the American Fur Company at the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone.
1832	Fort Peigan opened by the AFC at the mouth of the Marias. Rebuilt next year and opened as Fort MacKenzie. Piikáni shift their trade to the Missouri.
1832	Peigan Post opened and closed by HBC on Bow River west of Calgary in attempt to counter the AFC and recapture the Piikáni Trade. Attempt falls. Closes in 1834. Rocky Mountain House reopens for a few more years.
1832/34	Hugh Monroe, then James Bird, sent to winter with the Piikáni and get them to switch their trade back to the HBC. The Piikáni tell Bird they would like a post at Chief Mountain. HBC declines. HBC loses the Piikáni trade. Beaver populations now in sharp decline throughout the Rocky Mountains.
1833	Decline in beaver trade, is vastly offset by trade in buffalo hides on the Missouri. HBC can not compete with AFC in price of trade goods, due to high transportation costs for hides.
1837	Smallpox sweeps across the Northern Plains. Over 50% of the Indians die including some 7000 Nitsitapii.
1843	Francis Chadron takes charge of Fort MacKenzie. Murders party of Piikáni. Trade falls off sharply. Chadron builds new fort in failed attempt to recoup trade.
1845	Chadron replaced by Andrew Culbertson, who builds new fort on south bank of Missouri above old Fort MacKenzie, opening Fort Lewis in 1846.
1847	Culbertson relocates Fort Lewis to north bank of the Missouri to better serve the "Blackfeet". Officially christened Fort Benton Christmas 1850.
1853	Congress realizes need for railroad to the Pacific and to make treaty with the "Blackfeet". Pacific Railway Expedition under Isaac Steven's arrives at Fort Benton. James Doty explores Rocky Mountain Front in 1854 and starts arrangements for treaty council.

**Table 11 : Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events: 1750-1995**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Events</b>
1855	Lame Bull Treaty signed. Blackfeet Reservation, shared with Gros Ventre and Assiniboine to east, established as all lands north of the Missouri east of continental divide. First Blackfoot Agency opens at Ft. Benton.
1860	First steamboats reach Ft. Benton. Hide trade escalates as result.
1861	Civil War begins. Few whites coming west into Blackfeet territory.
1862	Gold Rush underway in Montana. White prospectors start to pour in.
1863	Mullen Road completed from Fort Benton to Walla-Walla. Traffic through Blackfeet reservation increases.
1865	Civil War ends. Discharged veterans begin to flood Montana Gold Fields and enter Whiskey Trade.
1865-1870	"Blackfeet Wars" in Northwestern Montana. White and "Blackfeet"(mostly Kainaa) incidents increase as more Whites come into land to settle.
1868	Whiskey Trade well established in Northwestern Montana. Blackfeet debauchery and conflicts with Whites escalates. Americans make half hearted attempts to enforce law of 1834 prohibiting sale of liquor to Indians.
1869	Hudson's Bay Company sells Rupert's Land to Canada Whiskey trade moves to Canada. Blackfoot Agency moves to Teton River. Violence continues to escalate.
1869	Final straw. Prominent Montanan Malcolm Clark and son murdered by Owl Chief at their ranch on Prickly Pear Creek. Montanans outraged, demand revenge.
1870	Massacre on the Marias, January 23th, 1870. 173 friendly Piikáni killed by Baker under orders from Sheridan. Smallpox epidemics sweep the Indian Nations. Blackfeet "calmed."
1873	Blackfeet Reservation South Boundary moved north from Missouri to Sun River by Executive Order due to pressure from Montanans to open lands up.
1874	Blackfeet Reservation South Boundary moved north by Congress to Birch Creek. Piikáni protests ignored.
1874	Northwest Mounted Police arrive Southern Alberta. Establish Fort MacLeod. Whiskey trade closed down. Traders move back south of the border.
1876	Whiskey trade increases in Northwestern Montana. Debauchery of Piikáni continues.

**Table 11 : Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events: 1750-1995**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Events</b>
1876	Blackfeet Agency moves to Badger Creek. Log cabins begin to be built. Buffalo hunts continue.
1878	Last Buffalo gone out of Northwest Territories. Canadian Indians starving and begin to come south to hunt buffalo.
1883	Last Buffalo killed by Piikáni at Sweet Pine Hills. Other game rapidly hunted out. Attempts at garden horticulture fail.
1883-1885	Starvation Winters. The buffalo are gone, an event not anticipated by U.S. Government. Annuities guaranteed under the Lame Bull Treaty are delayed, fall to arrive or are rancid. 400-600 Piikáni die, 1/4 of the reservation's population.
1883	Gold found in the Sweet Pine Hills. Montanans pressure Congress to open up the lands.
1888	The Blackfeet, after 2 years negotiation cede 2/3 of their reservation, including the Sweet Pine Hills for \$150,000/year over 10 years.
1893	Mineral shows found in the mountains of the Blackfeet Reservation. Montanans pressure the U.S. Government to open up the land.
1896	The Ceded Strip: Blackfeet cede the Mountains. Blackfeet reserve the rights to hunt, fish, cut timber as long as the lands are Public Lands. The "rush" fails within three years. The Blackfeet receive \$150,000/year over ten years.
1895	Great Northern Railroad completed across reservation. Blackfeet Agency moves to Browning. Settlement begins in the northern part of the reservation.
1898	Ceded Strip becomes Lewis & Clark National Forest. Blackfeet reserved rights not affected.
1906	Allotment (Dawes) Act implemented on Blackfeet Reservation. Each individual Blackfeet receives 320 acres, which can be sold. Surplus 800,000 acres to be sold. BIA irrigation and cattle schemes fail.
1910-1914	Glacier National Park established- Ceded Strip no longer public land. Blackfeet reserved rights lost or severely curtailed. Great Northern Railway begins promotion of Blackfeet image and Glacier National Park. Very few Blackfeet find meaningful employment with GNR.
1926	Blackfeet file land claim against Government for compensation for loss of reserved rights in Ceded Strip with establishment of Glacier National Park.

**Table 11 : Piikáni and the Glacier Region Chronology of Significant Historic Events: 1750-1995**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Events</b>
1930	Court rules in favor of the Government and against the Blackfeet.
1934	Allotment Act repealed. 40% of reservation now owned by Non-Blackfeet. Loss of lands and rights have major implications for future self-sufficiency of Blackfeet. Tribe has never recovered.
1935	Indian Reorganization Act. Blackfeet Tribal Business Council formed. Attempts in post war years at tribal and individual economic self-sufficiency continue to fail for majority of Blackfeet.
1938-1945	World War II. Many Blackfeet move to Seattle to work in war industries. Returnees find few opportunities on Reservation after end of war.
1950's	Great Northern's self serving use of Blackfeet Image and Park ceases. Glacier Park Company sold by GNR. Lack of meaningful employment with GPC continues.
1995	80% of Blackfeet on Reservation still remain on welfare.

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