



## ALWAYS AN ADVENTURE:

### AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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## *Glenbow, Indians, and Me*

My personal, business, and professional activities were often so melded together that it was difficult to separate them. On any given week, I might go with Mom and Dad to an Indian Association meeting where I had some volunteer duties to perform, and at the same time visit with friends on a personal level, and have people approach me on Glenbow business. If I tried to keep this autobiography purely chronological, I believe I would be constantly jumping back and forth between these three phases of my life. So, for the early years at Glenbow, I will separate them, even though I may risk losing the significance of some events where the business, professional, and personal were all tied together.

My work as archivist had nothing to do with collecting Indian artifacts or being involved in Native rituals. But it happened anyway. It all started when Dad and I visited the Peigan Reserve in 1956 to conduct some Indian Association business. I told the Peigans about my new job and shortly after I got back to the office, I had a phone call from Bob Crow Eagle. He told me that his brother, Charlie, had embraced the Full Gospel Church and had come to the conclusion that Native religion was the work of the devil. He owned a beaver bundle and said he was going to throw it out the window and destroy it. However, his family convinced him that he should sell it to a craft shop in Browning, Montana. From past experience, I knew the shop would tear it apart, sell the showy stuff, and discard the rest.

Even at that early date, I had misgivings about acquiring religious objects that were required for ceremonial use. My feeling was that these objects should remain in the community where they would enable the tribe to carry on the rituals. But in this case, it was a question of preservation or destruction. I was able to get Charlie to come to the phone and I asked him if he would sell the bundle to Glenbow. He said he was leaving for Browning the following day,

June 22nd, but if I got there before he left, he'd sell it to us. I then had to dash around to get permission. Fortunately, Doctor Leechman was fully in accord with my plans and I had no trouble in getting a cash advance.

Next morning, I arrived at Charlie's place just before they were getting ready to leave, and I bought the bundle. I tried to find out about the songs and ceremonies that went with it, but Charlie said he didn't know them. All he could tell me was that the bundle had previously been owned by Jim Crow Flag, and he claimed that nobody on the Peigan Reserve knew the songs. He suggested I try the Bloods.

So I drove over to the Gladstone farm, where Dad told me that John Cotton had once owned a beaver bundle and would know the songs. John had been one of my best informants. He had recently retired as a member of the tribal council and I had written a long tribute to him in the *Lethbridge Herald*. He was an active supporter of the Indian Association and a good friend of the Gladstone family. John lived in a tiny house at Moses Lake, and when we contacted him, he said he would round up a crew and open the bundle. I had a Webcor wire recorder with me and got his permission to record the ceremony.

Next day, John Cotton, Jack Low Horn, Jim Many Chiefs, and Willie Eagle Plume came to the Gladstone farm, and we all sat in the porch while they went through the ceremony. This was my first direct involvement in a Native ritual and I was very impressed with the solemnity of it. Cotton explained at the outset that he had paid fifty head of horses for his beaver bundle, which he had held for ten years. He now remembered only some of the hundred or so songs that went with the bundle, but said perhaps he would remember more after he opened it.

Before he started, Cotton told me the story of the origin of the bundle. Back in the dog days, he said, there was an Indian who was an excellent hunter but he killed more animals than he needed. One day when he was camped near Waterton Lakes, a beaver spirit in the form of a man came from under the water and kidnapped his wife. When the husband found where she had been dragged into the lake, he was heartbroken and sadly returned to his lodge. That night, he had a vision in which the beaver spirit came to him and asked him if he would stop killing game unnecessarily in exchange for the return of his wife. The man agreed.

Next morning, a procession emerged from the lake. There was the beaver man, his wife, the hunter's wife, the Sun spirit, and his wife, the Moon. They were singing holy songs as they entered the hunter's lodge. After they sat down, the beaver man explained to the hunter that he would give him the

beaver bundle in gratitude for sparing his children. Inside the lodge were the skins of many animals and birds. One by one, the beaver man took them and sang a song. When he was finished, these became the beaver bundle. It was, concluded Cotton, the oldest bundle in the tribe, and was given to the hunter in the days before horses.

When they were ready to begin the ceremony, Cotton sat with the bundle on his right while in front of him were his altar of clay, sweetgrass, and fire tongs. Each of the participants also had a rattle. The fire tongs were used to bring a glowing ember from the kitchen stove. It was placed on the altar and sweetgrass sprinkled over it. As the smoke curled into the air, Cotton began to sing and the others joined in. When they finished, each in turn said a prayer while holding the fire tongs in his hand. I had no previous experience with ceremonial prayers but I soon became accustomed to their length. Cotton prayed for five minutes and the others weren't much shorter. Cotton explained that they were now ready to open the bundle and explained to me that it was bound with a cord which was tied in seven places and there were seven songs for each knot.

The men picked up their rattles and began to tap them on the floor while Cotton took a bone whistle and made several piercing sounds. After he untied the bundle, he took a pipe from it while the others sang. He then took one item at a time and sang the song that went with it. He started with a beaver skin, placing it close to his face while he said a prayer, then wrapping it around his shoulder and placing it on his lap while he sang. He repeated the ritual with a second beaver skin, and again with the skin of a baby beaver, which he said was the most sacred of the three. Meanwhile, the others were singing and beating the floor with their rattles.

I was transfixed both by the holiness of the occasion and the wisdom of the men involved. Here, on the Gladstone porch, they repeated the songs and rituals which dated back for many generations. These same songs had been chanted while the buffalo still coursed the plains and in the days when the Blackfoot knew nothing of the white man and his way of life. It didn't take much imagination on my part to visualize the freedom and richness of life experienced by those who had sung these songs two centuries earlier.

In the next sequence of the ritual, Cotton sang specific songs as he picked up a badger skin, young antelope skin, a duck, the head of a crow, a woodpecker, another antelope skin, a weasel, and a handful of sticks bound together. The latter, he said, were used for reckoning time.

By now it was noon, so we stopped for lunch. Mom gave us a good feed, and then they started again. Although I had a little trouble with the wire recorder, I got most of it. Cotton resumed with a badger skin and after finishing the song he put it down, then picked it up again for a second song. It was clear that he was getting tired (after all, he was eighty-one years old) and was having trouble remembering the rest of the songs. He would pick up an object, hold it for a moment, then put it down. At last he looked at me and said, "That's all I can remember."

He took the pipe, placed it against each of his shoulders and said a prayer. Then he donned a buffalo hair headdress from the bundle and, shaking some hoof rattles, he imitated a buffalo shaking its head. Afterwards, they all sang for about fifteen minutes and the ceremony was over. Quietly, and without ado, John Cotton returned the objects to the bundle, handling each one with reverence and care. To me, it was quite an experience, and one which impressed me with the responsibility that I (and Glenbow) had assumed when we took possession of this ancient and holy object.

That was my first ceremony, but the second wasn't long in coming – only seven weeks later, to be exact. I started my holidays in late July 1956, and we spent them on the Blood Reserve. On August 4th, Pauline, Irene and Gerald, and Irene's sister Doreen Goodstriker, and I decided to go to the Belly Buttes to see if the Sun Dance had started. When we got to the camp, there were only four tepees and sixteen tents, so we knew nothing would be happening for a few days. But Frank Cotton told us that there would be a dance on the following day, so we decided to come back. This time, it was just Pauline, her dad, and me.

As the three of us were wandering along, I heard a voice calling, "Hey, Dempsey!"

Looking around, I saw Pauline's uncle, Jim White Bull, waving to us. I had interviewed him several times and we had become such good friends that he sometimes acted as my interpreter.

"I'm having a ceremony to transfer some songs to my new tepee," he said. "Why don't you folks join me?"

I was eager to accept, so the three of us followed White Bull to a brand new tepee. It had been painted with a blue background and was covered with a multitude of ten-inch white circles. Jim said it was the Blue Star design, *Otskwi-kukatosi-okoka*, and had been owned by his grandfather, Chief Standing in the Middle. The design had been inactive for years, but now Jim had revived it and was going to invite a number of elders to give him songs to go with it.

After we had settled down, Jim summoned Willie Scraping White, a leading ceremonialist of the tribe, and told him who he wanted to invite to the ceremony. Willie then walked through the camp, calling out the names of the persons, and telling them to assemble at White Bull's tepee. As they entered, each man wore a blanket and carried a wooden bowl in his hands while the women wore shawls and also carried bowls.

The first to arrive was One Gun from the Blackfoot Reserve; he was Jim's uncle. He came with his wife and was followed by two other Blackfoot, Jack Kipp and his wife. In twenty minutes, all had arrived and were assigned their places. Jim, as host, was at the back of the tepee, while in front of him were the fireplace, altar, and various objects he would need for the ritual – a buffalo stone or *iniskim*, paint bag, grease, sweetgrass, fire tongs, and fresh sage. To his left, in order, sat John Cotton, Willie Scraping White, Big Nose, Jack Kipp, One Gun, Black White Man, Mrs. One Gun, and Mrs. Kipp. To Jack's right were me, Jim's wife Katie, Dad, Wings, Steve Oka, and Pauline.

The ceremonial objects had been provided by John Cotton, and as he placed the *iniskim* beside the altar, he said to me in Blackfoot, "Have you ever heard the story of this buffalo stone?"

When I said no, he told it to me, with my father-in-law interpreting. The others relaxed quietly, some smoking their pipes or cigarettes and others reclining on the blankets and buffalo robes scattered on the ground.

"One time long ago," he began in Blackfoot, "there was a camp of Indians who were starving. This camp was in a river bottom and in it were a particular man and his two wives. One time his second wife went out for wood and passed close to a cutbank. She heard someone singing a medicine song and a voice said: 'Say, you woman, take me! I have power. The buffalo know me and know my voice.'

"The woman looked around and saw a stone had fallen from the cutbank. She picked it up and put it inside her dress. That night she had a dream and told her husband: 'I have power. I pity the people who are starving. Tell everyone in the camp to look for something to eat – anything, even a bit of grease – and bring it to me. Then go and build a buffalo pound.' The husband did as he was asked, and everyone searched through their empty bags until at last one woman found a tiny bit of grease. This was brought to the second wife.

"The woman then made an altar like ours. She took some incense and invited all the old people to her lodge. She sat where Jim White Bull is sitting now. The woman began to sing her medicine songs the stone had taught her. Then she took the buffalo stone from her dress and rubbed the grease over it.

She said: 'I will now stand this buffalo stone in front of the altar. If it falls over on its face, it is a sign of good luck and we shall have food.' She put the stone down and, as everyone sang, the people saw the stone fall on its face. The next day, the men went out on the prairie and found a herd of buffalo. These were driven into the pound which the woman had told them to build, and they again had food."

"That," ended John Cotton, "is how the buffalo stone came to us."

For the next two hours, I witnessed the song-giving ceremony. Only this time there was a difference, as I was a participant, not an observer. After Wings had placed a glowing ember on the altar and sprinkled it with sweetgrass, the women served the food which had been sitting in pots and saucepans near the stove. This is when everyone produced their wooden bowls, and I saw they had also brought their spoons. As Pauline, Dad, and I had come unprepared, Aunt Katie supplied our needs. Saskatoon berry broth was ladled into our bowls and each of us was given a piece of bannock. Before starting to eat, each of us picked a single berry from the broth and held it aloft while we prayed. There was a cacophony of humming within the lodge as each person said their own prayer quietly but aloud. I watched and as each person finished a prayer, they buried the berry in the ground, so I did the same. Afterwards we all began to eat. That's when I noticed the women had brought small pails into which they dumped their broth. I was told they were saving it for their grandchildren. I also learned that every bit of food offered during the ceremony had to be accepted and that nothing could be left behind. A person had to either eat it or take it with them.

After the incense was renewed, John Cotton gave rattles to Willie Scraping White, Big Nose, and Jack Kipp, keeping one for himself. These were used during the singing. After this, each person was painted. Here is what I wrote in my notebook:

I moved up to a point in front of John Cotton after Mrs. White Bull had returned to her former seat. Everyone was singing. John Cotton gave a prayer and passed his hands over my face and passed them over the altar. He took some red ochre from the bag, rubbed it on his hands and rubbed it over my forehead, on my left cheek, right cheek, and chin. Then he painted my left wrist and my right wrist. I then returned to my seat and all began to sing.

I have been painted many times since then, sometimes at ceremonies and other times after bad dreams or when in need of spiritual help, but I will always remember the song-giving ceremony because it took place at the Sun Dance grounds, in a tepee, and included some of the most respected patriarchs of the tribe. It was, in every sense, a great honour. I appreciated it then, and appreciate it still.

In the next part of the ceremony, Cotton picked up the buffalo stone, rubbed it with grease (to feed it) and held it close to his heart while he prayed. He then passed it to his left and each person prayed with it until the stone came to the women. At this point, Mrs. One Gun asked something, and Cotton nodded. I learned later that she was asking for permission for the women to pray with the stone. I said my prayer in turn, and when the buffalo stone got back to Cotton, he greeted it with a hearty “*Oki! Iniskim!*” (“Hello! Buffalo Stone!”)

The rest of the ceremony revolved around the transferring of songs. Each of the four men giving songs – One Gun, Big Nose, Black White Man, and Jack Kipp – in turn sang the song he was giving away. As I noted, “One Gun and others, while singing their own songs, made motions of ‘tossing’ something to Jim White Bull, who made motions of catching something and clutching it to his chest with crossed arms. This signified the ‘giving’ of the songs.”

After the last song was sung, John Cotton collected his ceremonial items while everyone sat around and chatted. There was a happy atmosphere in the lodge because everything had gone so well. Gradually people drifted away. The last thing that John Cotton said to me was that I should not remove my paint until the following day.

“Any paint given to a person when the moon is in the sky,” Dad translated, “cannot be removed until she has gone. The same is true in the daytime. If paint is given while the Sun spirit is overhead, it cannot be removed in his presence.”

That practice has always been faithfully followed by Pauline and me, and by our children. A number of times I have stopped in a cafeteria in Fort Macleod or Claresholm while on the way home from a ceremony and had people staring at the paint on my face. But I didn’t care; I knew why it was there.



During the late 1950s and into the 1960s, Glenbow did not have an Ethnology Department, so I was the one who always seemed to get involved where Indians were concerned. I guess that’s because of my personal interest, the fact that people sought me out, and the fact that I was willing to take on the extra



work. It started with the Beaver Bundle and went on from there. In 1957, for example, I was told there was a woman on the Peigan Reserve who had a Sun Dance or Natoas bundle that she wanted to get rid of. There hadn't been a Sun Dance on the reserve for twelve years and people said there never would be another. I went to the reserve and located Mrs. Man Who Smokes, who was more than willing to sell the bundle. She also had no hesitation in opening the bundle, putting on the headdress, and posing for a picture.

Over the years, I had quite a few adventures and misadventures. One example of the latter occurred in 1959 at an All Smoke ceremony on the Blackfoot Reserve. One day while I was out of my office, Ben Calf Robe came with some things to sell. He was sent to Jack Herbert, the director of research, and in their conversation, Ben asked if Glenbow would be interested in tape recording an All Smoke ceremony that was going to be held at his house in the middle of April. By the time the discussion was finished, Jack agreed – for a hundred dollars – to record the ceremony on tape and with a still camera. Because this was Jack's baby, he took charge of the whole affair. He arranged for two sound men and a photographer and delegated to me the task of making notes and observations.

Briefly, the All Smoke is a ceremony where a number of people get together to sing those holy songs they are authorized to use because of their membership in secret societies, or through their past or present ownership of certain sacred objects. Normally these can be sung only when their own societies are opening bundles, etc., but a special dispensation is made for the All Smoke ritual. It is usually held when someone has a sick member of the family and puts on the ceremony so that the songs and prayers may benefit them. To accomplish their goal, a human-like figure was made from two crossed sticks, like a body with arms outstretched. Attached to it was a calf skin, while at the top was a willow hoop with seven eagle feathers attached. At the end of the "arms" were sagebrush clusters. This figure represented an enemy warrior who would carry the songs and prayers of the evening to the Sun spirit. In Blackfoot it was called *Iki'tstuki*, or Offering to the Sun.

Most of the ceremonialists from the Blackfoot Reserve were there. Amos Leather was the leader, while others included One Gun, Dick Brass, Joe Good Eagle, Paul Wolf Collar, Tom Turned Up Nose, Anthony Pretty Young Man, Charles Raw Eater, Joe Cat Face, John Butterfly, and their spouses or partners. Ben arranged to have George Crow Chief sit next to me to let me know what was going on and to translate anything said in Blackfoot.

It started about 7 p.m. in Ben's living room at the Four Corners and lasted for almost seven hours. An altar was made of grey clay and decorated with symbols of the sun, moon, morning star, and sun dogs in yellow ochre outlined in black. Incense was burned, the people were purified, and their faces were painted. Finally the pipes were lit and passed to the participants. The smoking went on all evening, as did the burning of incense. The belief was that the prayers and songs were being drawn by the smoke into the offering. Each person sang his own song four times in order to complete a "round" before they had a rest. Then the whole process was completed three more times, which meant that each person sang fourteen songs. In between the songs were prayers. Among the songs were those for the Horn Society, Beaver bundle, All Brave Dogs, Prairie Chicken Society, medicine pipe, tobacco dance, bear tepee, antelope tepee, buffalo head tepee, and many more, for a total of 148 songs.

When it was finished, Ben told everyone to bow their heads and not watch the conclusion of the ceremony, which consisted of giving prayers and purifying the offering. We were then permitted to watch while the offering was shaken over the altar, indicating that there were enemies all around them and the Blackfoot were looking for one of them to kill. Then, while everyone gave loud war whoops, the offering was lowered and the feathers used to destroy the altar. This signified that the enemy had been killed and now would take their songs and prayers to the Sun spirit.

With the ceremony over, the Calf Robe family distributed canned goods and food to the people and our own crew began packing up their equipment and prepared to leave. This is when my problems began. I was loading some things in my car when Jack Herbert came over to me, the sacred offering in his hand. He told me he had bought it from Ben for \$75 but didn't have room for it in his car. He told me to put it in my trunk and to deliver it to Glenbow next morning.

Frankly, I was appalled. The whole evening had been devoted to prayers and sacred singing that were destined for the Sun spirit. The offering was supposed to be planted at the top of a high hill and left there until it rotted. That we should take it was a downright sacrilege. I tried to argue but Jack Herbert was my boss and there was no changing his mind, so I had no other recourse but to do what he said. I think he believed that I was just being superstitious. When Pauline saw the offering in the trunk of our car, she said in no uncertain terms that it would not be going into our house.

The ceremony ended at 1:15 a.m. on a Wednesday. We stayed at a hotel for the rest of the night and then I took the offering to Glenbow. On Thursday I became so ill that I could not leave my bed. Five days later I tried to go to the office but had to give it up. Two days after that Jack Herbert resigned from Glenbow after a dispute about his lack of co-operation with the Harvie group. My sickness continued for another four days, at which time Pauline finally called the doctor. (They used to make house calls in those days.) He thought I had a stomach ailment that would soon pass, but three days later he was out again when I wasn't showing any signs of improvement. Two days after that, I noted in my diary, "Doctor out again. Seems worried. Me too." The next day I was taken to the hospital emergency ward and a second opinion was given by another doctor.

The problem was they couldn't find anything wrong with me. But Pauline knew what it was. And I knew what it was. Twenty-three days after the All Smoke ceremony I was well enough to stagger to the office, pay Glenbow the \$75 that Jack Herbert had given for the offering, and take the object back out to the Blackfoot Reserve. I gave it to Ben Calf Robe and he promised to place it where it belonged. After that, my health improved rapidly and I was soon back at work.

As for Jack, a couple of things happened to him. First, he lost his job. Then, just after the All Smoke ceremony, his daughter began to suffer with foot problems. The way it was described to me, the tendons at the bottom of the foot tightened so that the foot became arched and it could only be cured by a serious operation. Significantly (if one follows Native beliefs) it had a name like "eagle's claw."

Word soon got around the Indian community and the general reaction was that I should have known better than to tamper with religious objects. I tried to explain that I had been an innocent party in the whole exercise, but my involvement in carrying the offering away from the reserve seemed enough to make me guilty. Some of the Bloods kidded me about getting into trouble with "those Blackfeet" but most of them took it quite seriously. And so did I.

A different kind of situation arose one day while I was walking down the main street of Cardston. I was stopped by Steve Oka, and he said he wanted to sell Glenbow his medicine pipe bundle. My first inclination was to turn him down so I told him I did not like to see holy objects taken out of use. That's when he told me his story.

He said that he had been a *minipoka* or "favoured child" and when he was small his father, Mike Oka, announced that he was going to get him a medicine

pipe bundle. He went to the owner of the bundle to smoke with him; when this happens the bundle owner cannot refuse. And when he smokes, he automatically agrees to transfer the bundle. After their ceremony, the old owner told Oka to take the bundle and they would go through a transfer ceremony after the first thunderstorm in the spring. As the day approached, the two men got together to agree on the number of horses, money, etc. that would be paid for the transfer. Only they could not agree. Steve's father made an offer so low that the old owner was insulted and refused to have anything more to do him. When Mike Oka offered to return the pipe bundle, the man again refused, saying that when he had smoked the pipe he had given up all rights to it. As a result, Steve told me, he had inherited the pipe bundle as a young man but he had never used it as the rights had never been transferred to him.

On the basis of this information I concluded that the pipe bundle was inactive and could not be used by him, so I applied to Glenbow and was told to go ahead and get it. I returned to the Blood Reserve and picked up Ben Strangling Wolf to use as my interpreter. We went to Steve's house and now that he knew we were interested he turned out to be an astute businessman. He started at \$600 and I deliberately started low at \$150. Four hours later we finally agreed on \$300. That may seem like a pittance by today's standards but it was a reasonable price for 1962. It was about this time that I saw a dealer offering a decorated Assiniboine robe for \$200 while another dealer had Shot Both Sides' trailing eagle feather headdress decorated with porcupine quills and couldn't find a buyer when he offered it for sale for \$1,000.

Even though I had been assured by others on the reserve that the medicine pipe was inactive, I wanted to leave an opening in case someone heard about the sale and found a way to place it back into ceremonial use. As a result, I included a clause in the agreement that stated Steve could reclaim the pipe bundle anytime within the next year by refunding the money that we had given him. I heard nothing from him during that time and then forgot about it.

In the 1970s, Steve Oka showed up at Glenbow, saying that he wanted to reclaim the pipe bundle that he had "pawned" with us and was prepared to return the \$300. I was puzzled, so I asked him why he wanted the bundle when he couldn't use it. He now claimed that he did have the rights to it and wanted to have a ceremony for a relative who was sick. I told him I was sorry, but he had not "pawned" the pipe nor had he reclaimed it during the year provided in the agreement. I said that several years had passed and the matter was now closed.

I felt a bit guilty about it until someone tipped me off that Steve had been approached by a dealer who didn't know that the pipe had been sold or thought Steve could get it back from Glenbow. He reportedly offered Steve a thousand dollars for it. The vision of a \$700 profit, I concluded, was what brought Steve to our door. However, he was a stubborn man and I had to make a point of avoiding him at dances or on the streets of Cardston, for he was sure to collar me and demand that I return his pipe. Now that I was armed with the knowledge that he simply wanted to resell it, I wasn't so sympathetic.

There is another story of a medicine bundle that has a less than happy outcome. In 1961, May Owl Child, the wife of Nat Owl Child from the Blackfoot Reserve, came to see me during the Sun Dance. She was desperately in need of money (I can't recall why) and was willing to leave her Old Women's Society bundle with me as security. This surprised me, as she had just joined the society at which time the bundle had been transferred to her from Mrs. Louis Running Rabbit. Her situation seemed serious enough that I agreed, for she only needed about \$35, but I made it clear that I was doing this personally, not as a representative of Glenbow. I expected her to return the money and I had no intention of letting this active bundle fall into the museum's hands.

Several times in the ensuing months, either Nat or his wife contacted me with an urgent need to get the bundle back immediately. Sometimes it was needed to pray for a sick friend, and at other times for a meeting of the Society. Nat even wrote me a long letter in November 1961, saying they needed the "Godess Bundle" for a ceremony right away.<sup>57</sup> But each time they did not offer to repay the loan, so I turned them down. Finally, in the summer of 1963 Mrs. Owl Child came in with the money but told me she now wanted to sell the bundle to Glenbow.

I explained to her that I did not like buying religious objects that were still in use. I had a long talk with her, doing my best to convince her that the best thing she could do was to return the bundle to Mrs. Running Rabbit or go through a ceremony to transfer it to someone else. I stressed how important it was to keep the culture alive. She seemed to be convinced and said she would take the bundle back home. I must confess I felt a bit smug as I believed I had just helped to keep the *Motokix* active on the Blackfoot Reserve. However, I was less than sanguine some time later when I was told that she had gone directly from my office to a second hand store in East Calgary and sold it. When I checked with them, I was told a tourist had bought it.

This raised an ethical question in my mind. Had I done right in refusing to buy the bundle? If I had taken it, the object would have remained intact in

Glenbow's hands and would ultimately have been returned to the tribe. There was no way of knowing this at the time, but it did make me wonder. In the end, I concluded I had been right, even if the outcome had resulted in the loss of an important religious object. If I had bought it and the word got around, very likely others would have been in to sell their bundles, thus speeding up the disappearance of that society.

Often, Sarcee or Blackfoot Indians arrived at the front door of Hull House with a paper bag containing objects they wanted to sell. Sometimes they asked for Gooderham, and when this happened, he turned them over to me. On other occasions while attending a dance or other festivities on the Blood or Blackfoot reserve I would be approached by someone with an item to sell. People even collared me at Indian Association meetings. Sometimes it was just a pair of new moccasins or a roach headdress while at other times it might be a feather headdress or medicine bundle.

Right from the start, I had my own set of rules about religious objects, and I tried my best to impose these on Glenbow – with mixed success. First, I did not want to take a religious object that was still in use, particularly if it belonged to the Horn Society or the Old Women's Society. I would accept it in those instances where it would normally be replaced, such as a Prairie Chicken Society staff that was made new for each dance. I would do my best to determine that the object was actually owned by the person trying to sell it. In some instances, old society items were jointly owned by two partners, and if something like an All Braves Dog rattle was offered for sale, I would try to find out if it was still in use (on the Blackfoot Reserve it wasn't) and if it was jointly owned.

I also tried to arrive at a price that I thought was fair to both parties. Sometimes an Indian would come in with an object and ask an extremely high price, such as a hundred dollars for a pair of moccasins. I would explain that the going rate for moccasins was ten dollars but that I did not want them to sell if they thought the price was too low. Usually they sold and I concluded that they really didn't have any idea of the object's actual value and had pulled a round figure out of thin air. There also were numerous times when I told the person they were not asking enough. For example, they might ask two dollars for a pair of moccasins and I would tell them that they were worth more than that, and offer them ten. Fortunately, none of the bean counters at Glenbow ever heard me, as they would have said this was a poor way to conduct a business. But I was trying to be fair, rather than businesslike.

I also made it a point to get as much information I could about the object – its name in Blackfoot or Sarcee, its maker, line of ownership, its use, and what it was made of. Sometimes I even got some mythological or cultural stories that went with the item. Then, not trusting Glenbow's cataloguing system at that time, I drew a picture of the object and made a copy for my files. In later years, those drawings sometimes were the only means of identifying the objects I had acquired.

In some ways I felt like a voice crying in the wilderness about preservation, for even many Indians did not subscribe to the view that their religion and culture should be preserved. People today, particularly young Indians, cannot grasp what it was like in the 1950s and 1960s. There were no annual Indian Days, Sun Dances were sporadic, and pow-wows taking place in community halls had fewer and fewer people in Native dress. Even the Indian village at the Calgary Stampede was seen by some as an anachronism. An example of Native attitudes towards their religion was demonstrated in 1962 when I was one of the judges at the Stampede and we had to choose the best decorated tepee. Imagine my surprise when we went to the lodge of Johnny One Spot. He was the owner of the Peace Pipe Bundle, the only medicine pipe on the Sarcee Reserve. In order to compete for the prize, he had opened the bundle and spread the contents all around the floor of the tepee and hung the parfleche container over the doorway. As we went inside to make our inspection, we had to step over ancient ceremonial objects that were now nothing more than ornaments for the entertainment of tourists.

With the exception of the Bloods, most of the Indians I met felt that their culture was a thing of the past and if it hadn't completely died out, it was well on the way. Many people who sold objects to Glenbow did not do so entirely for the money – although in some cases it was a factor. Rather, these objects were relics of the past that had no roles in their lives and would have even less relevance, they believed, for their children. Yet they remembered enough of the old days to want to see these things preserved and Glenbow seemed to be the only place where this could happen. So the sale of artifacts was largely governed by these emotions, as well as a feeling on the part of some elders that if they didn't sell to Glenbow, their children or grandchildren would steal the objects and sell them to a second hand store for liquor money. This happened often enough for us to know that their fears were well grounded.

Generally, I would say the attitude was one of fatalistic acceptance that the white man's culture was now their culture, and that the white man's religion was now their religion. Many families refused to speak Blackfoot or Sarcee

in front of their children because they didn't want to see them "held back" in gaining a knowledge of English. I have a note in my diary for April 29, 1962, that touches on this subject of religion and culture. "The Sarcees are a very difficult people and for a small tribe (330 people) are broken up into small cliques. There are the Crowchids, Manywounds, Whitneys, and the Starlights (and maybe others) who seldom co-operate on anything. They seem to have lost much of their culture and when I spoke about reviving it as a means of working together, one man said the others would just laugh and make fun of them and make them shy."

The main reason many of the Blackfoot and Sarcees kept their beadwork and horse gear was because of the Calgary Stampede. That institution was, unknowingly, the aegis by which much of the Indian material culture was preserved. The tepee owners refused to part with their beadwork, buckskin outfits, horse gear, utensils, and other objects because they helped them to win prizes in the Indian village and in the parades.

I mentioned that the Bloods were an exception. I always felt that I was so lucky to be married into that tribe. Over the years they had maintained their pride when other tribes were losing theirs. They had retained their religious societies where others had abandoned theirs. They had maintained a lively interest in their past, their war exploits, religious practices, and mythology, when others had let theirs fall by the wayside. I always like to quote something a Mountie said in 1889: "The Bloods think they are the cream of creation." That summed it up.

After the resurgence of Native culture in the 1970s and 1980s, many young people could not understand how their parents or grandparents could have possibly sold their family treasures to Glenbow. The only obvious answers to them were that Glenbow somehow had stolen the objects, or that undue pressure from people like me had caused them to sell, or that poverty and starvation had driven them to it. None of these was true. Even some of the elders who had sold things to us years earlier could not understand why they had done so in light of the tremendous interest now being shown by their families. I had one lady from the Sarcee Reserve who came in one day to retrieve a dress she had "pawned" with us twenty years earlier. When we showed her the sales receipt she had signed, she still refused to believe she had actually sold the item. I had not been involved in that particular purchase, but I knew that this lady and her husband had been frequent visitors to Glenbow in the 1950s, each time bringing in items they wanted to sell. The subject of "pawn" had never



been raised, for if it had been, Glenbow would have been quick to say that it was not a pawnshop.

But to return to my main point about museums, places like Glenbow were not trying to destroy Native religion or steal their culture, as some younger Indians claimed, nor were people forced to sell their objects because of abject poverty. At that time, poverty was a way of life on most reserves, and as virtually everyone was in the same situation, it was considered “normal.” I know that after a short time I became quite accustomed to tiny welfare houses almost barren of furniture and log houses with earthen floors. I wasn’t so conscious of that as I was of the fact that almost universally the houses were neat, clean, and well maintained within the economic limits of the householders. Sometimes broken windows were covered with cardboard or broken doors were fixed with plywood, but these were all the people could afford. At the same time, I never knew of anyone, man, woman, or child, to die of starvation, or to even have the haunting look of a person suffering malnutrition. Starvation wasn’t the reason they sold to Glenbow. The loss of culture and a desire to see their artifacts preserved were more compelling reasons.

It might be useful at this point to describe the usual routine I followed when buying objects. Let’s take a hypothetical situation which might not be a verbatim account of what happened, but is pretty typical.

When someone comes to Hull House I am summoned. We shake hands, talk about nothing in particular for a few minutes, then I ask them why they are here. They say they have something to sell and produce it. I find out all I can about the object then ask how much they want for it. Usually they say they don’t know. I explain that under Glenbow’s rules I must get an offer before I can name a figure. They eventually come up with something and I tell them it is either too high, too low, or just right. If too high, I name my figure but stress that they should not sell if they think it’s worth more. Sometimes we negotiate but usually the person agrees. Once an agreement is reached, I write out a bill of sale and get the person to sign. I then get the cash from Accounting and pay them.

At first, this latter action caused a lot of trouble, as Accounting wanted the goods in hand, then a cheque prepared and mailed. I finally got it through to them that this was not the way to do business and we either had to do it on Native terms or not at all. Mind you, if quite a bit of money was involved, I sometimes had to get the person to return later in the day and give them a cheque. When this happened I sometimes had to go to the bank with them to identify them and approve the cheque. After a while, I was able to carry some

petty cash in the Archives and remitted an accounting once a month. That turned out to be the best for all concerned.

One of the fairly frequent visitors was Mrs. Water Chief, the holy woman at the Sun Dance. She was a real contrast, for on one hand she was obviously very devoted to her religion and was involved in most of the sacred activities on the reserve, but on the other hand she was constantly coming in to Glenbow with holy objects such as the Natoas or Sun Dance bundle and holy woman's wristlets that she wanted to sell. George Gooderham didn't like her, as he had been forced to depose her husband as head chief because of his drinking. On the other hand, I found her to be a very pleasant woman who had devoted many years of her life to maintaining the sacred rituals of the tribe.



Speaking of the Sun Dance, I became a reluctant participant in a project to produce a film of the ceremony. Sometime earlier, Philip Godsell had entered into a discussion with the Blackfoot about making the film and convinced Eric Harvie that it was a good idea. Godsell got the backing of George Gooderham but no one approached me, presumably because Godsell and I didn't get along. This was fine as far as I was concerned. As I noted in my diary, "I hope I can keep out of this as I value my health and just can't afford to get involved with native religion. Look what happened to me for carrying the sacrifice from the All Smoke Ceremony."

In the spring of 1961 Godsell suffered a heart attack and Gooderham was given the task of seeing the project through. At the end of June he and Bill Marsden, our photographer, had a meeting with the Blackfoot and came to a preliminary agreement that Glenbow would pay the Blackfoot \$1,000 for the right to make the film. They were to meet again during Stampede week to finalize the details.

But it seemed as though I was destined to get involved whether I wanted to or not. On the day of the meeting, Gooderham took sick and Marsden had not returned from Edmonton, so I went to the Indian village to tell the Blackfoot that the meeting was off. However, when I arrived, they were all sitting in the tepee of Clarence McHugh, head chief of the Blackfoot, waiting for the Glenbow representative and wanted to proceed immediately with the meeting. What could I do? Fortunately I knew everything that was going on, and also how far Glenbow was ready to go to finalize the deal. So, resignedly, I became the negotiating agent for the Foundation. The meeting lasted for 2½

hours, and when it was over, we had settled on a budget of \$1,900 plus four sides of beef and a supply of beef tongues.

Once I was involved in the project, I couldn't get out. Gooderham begged off any further participation so it was left to Bill Marsden and me to proceed. Late in July, while I was otherwise involved, Bill went to another meeting on the Blackfoot Reserve, where the contract was presented for signing. With Glenbow's approval I had added the clause that the film would not be used for commercial purposes and would be shown only to Native groups and to others with a direct interest in Indians. Any exceptions would have to be approved by the elders of the tribe. At the meeting, Bill added \$350 to the agreement and it was signed.

I then had the task of putting together a budget. The breakdown was as follows: All Brave Dogs Society and Prairie Chicken Society to get \$350 each, Horn Society, \$400, and Old Women's Society, \$350. The holy woman was to get \$500 and we would pay \$10 per tepee at the Sun Dance to a limit of thirty tepees. That was the deal we had with the Blackfoot, but when I prepared the budget I added a large undesignated chunk of money to each society's total, knowing that it would be needed during the ceremonies. Meanwhile, other expenses appeared. Amos Leather rightfully wanted to be paid as the ceremonialist who would direct the whole Sun Dance. Originally, the money for him was supposed to come from the societies, but once the budget was approved they balked at it. Then there were a multitude of other expenses so that by the time I was finished the budget it had come to more than \$3,000, not counting staff time, travel, etc.

I hired Adolphus Weasel Child as my interpreter but when Ben Calf Robe heard about it he was very angry. I learned later that he and Joe Bear Robe were the ones Godsell had discussed the project with years earlier but it had bogged down. When it was revived I guess Ben expected to play a major role, but I knew nothing about it. In the end I created the position of camp crier and gave him the job. He was responsible for going through the camp announcing when ceremonies would begin or when meetings were called. I always liked Ben and we got along well together over the years, but I had chosen Adolphus because I thought he was the best man for the job. He spoke good English, was a member of the Horns and the Prairie Chicken societies, and was contemporary in his outlook. Besides, he was Pauline's sister-in-law's brother-in-law, so that made him a relative and therefore easier to work with.

I don't think Ben held it against me for not hiring him, but he did complain in his book *Siksika, A Blackfoot Legacy* that Adolphus had not been able to

do the work properly and that we had been obliged to call on Ben and Joe “to do the directing for certain parts.”<sup>58</sup> Actually, Adolphus did an excellent job throughout the whole Sun Dance.

In order to properly oversee the project, it was decided that I would live at the Sun Dance camp while Marsden and the film crew would stay at a hotel in Gleichen. Glenbow owned the Wave Tepee that had been obtained from Mrs. Heavy Shield. We arranged to have it pitched on the west side of the camp, next to the Horned Snake Tepee of Head Chief Clarence McHugh, while behind us was the tent of Mark Wolf Leg. In all, there were twenty-eight tepees and fifty tents in the camp, and at its height some seven hundred people were living there.

Pauline and I arrived at the grounds on August 2, 1961, with our children, three-year-old Lloyd James and four-month-old Louise. Thus began two weeks of the most enjoyable time of my life. Our first activity was to install the linings, then furnish the lodge with the mattresses, blankets, folding chairs, cooking utensils, groceries, and other items. While we were getting set up we had a steady stream of visitors, mostly women who used the excuse of wanting to borrow some sugar or tea, or to bum a cigarette, but really to cast a critical eye on the way Pauline was setting up the lodge. After all, I was the only white man in camp and Pauline was from another reserve. But she hit it off right away with most of the women because of her personality and her fluency in Blackfoot. Mrs. Wolf Leg noticed that our little baby didn't have anything warm for night (it was August but we didn't realize how cold it could get after dark in the river valley) so she took some flannel she had and quickly made her a nice warm nightgown. She also showed us how to fashion an ingenious hammock by stringing ropes between two tepee poles, separating them with two sticks, then wrapping a blanket around the ropes. Once we tucked Louise in there she was happy for hours, any slight movement on her part causing the hammock to sway gently between the poles.

That first night was a most memorable one. As soon as it was dark we went to bed and the silence was almost deafening. For a while, some singers entertained themselves at Dick Brass's tepee but they finished about midnight. Then, according to my diary, “After about ten minutes of silence a new high-pitched voice came from the distance in a haunting night song. I thought it was a solo, but he was soon joined by a few other lower voices and the singing started again. They remained mostly on the east side and it was a beautiful sound as it floated over the camp and echoed down the valley. They carried on until about 2 a.m., when they reached our tepee and sang an Owl Dance

song and some others. Then, led by the solitary quivering voice, they uttered the strains of the beautiful and familiar Sun Dance ‘serenade’ to end their performance. Almost a lullaby, the serenade was a restful climax to an interesting evening. After they finished, a solitary dog yapped from across the camp and we all slept.”

These “lullaby singers” were young men who were following a practice that was generations old. They would stop in front of a tepee and sing until they were given food or gifts. They did it just for fun and everyone enjoyed themselves. They performed almost every night and after they finished in front of our tepee we would give them a couple of dollars or food and then hear them move on to the next tepee. But I enjoyed them the most when they were on the other side of the camp, as their distant voices were haunting and free as they echoed through the darkness of the river valley.

Next morning the camp began to stir about 5:30 a.m. and pretty soon it was a beehive of activity. It was a terribly hot day, so at midmorning Jack Crow dropped around and volunteered to build us a sun shade made of poles and canvas. When this was done, I drove to Gleichen to check in with the Mounted Police and to let them know our plans. Then I stopped at the local bank, where I drew out \$550, mostly in one- and five-dollar bills. These small bills were a practical necessity. Whenever I gave out money, I knew it had to be shared so big bills would have been a problem and an inconvenience for the people. But there was another reason. I kept all the bills stuffed in my pants pockets and these made huge bulges that everyone soon recognized. This way, anytime I had dealings with a society, they knew they would be paid right away, and at the same time the obvious presence of this money was an incentive for some people to come up with innovative ideas for getting their hands on it. Over the period of the Sun Dance there were quite a few extra things that we filmed because of this money. I remember when someone from Glenbow saw me with all this money they asked me if I wasn’t afraid of being robbed. I replied with the hoary old joke, “I’m not worried; there isn’t another white man for miles.”

By the time I got back to the camp, the first shipment of rations had arrived – about 400 pounds of beef and 175 loaves of bread. After some quick math, Adolphus and his helpers distributed ten pounds of meat and four loaves of bread to each family. That evening, I sat with Clarence McHugh and leaders of the various societies to lay out a schedule for the Sun Dance. It was all very neat and orderly. I had a program for each day with notations in my diary such as “Motokix to put up lodge & have 4 days of ceremonies,” “Horns to have ceremony,” and “Holy Woman comes out & Sun Dance lodge is built.”

Often, nothing worked according to the schedule we had prepared, but rather, things happened when the group was ready. Sometimes events or ceremonies happened but weren't on the list. We had one photographer who almost went crazy because of the changes. He was a very orderly person and expected everyone else to be the same way. But Bill and I soon adapted to the situation, and he always tried to have a photographer on hand and ready to go even during those times when nothing was supposed to be happening. As a result, we didn't miss anything important during the entire two weeks.

The only sour note occurred that first night. People had received their ration payment of six dollars each and a bootlegger slipped past the Mounted Police patrols into the camp. Pretty soon the lullaby singers were being interrupted by raucous drunks and then things turned nasty when a young Blackfoot commandeered the drum used by one of the singing groups. It was finally returned but then the drunk went to the Wolf Leg tent immediately behind us and demanded the use of the family's truck. When this was refused, he threatened to take the truck and drive right through their tent. Pauline and I were laying in bed listening to all of this, realizing that if he drove over the tent he would probably also go through our tepee. This was a bit unsettling but finally the drunk was quietened down and there was no more singing for the rest of the night.

Those were the only troublesome drunks I saw or heard during the entire Sun Dance. In fact, I don't think I have ever been among a more law-abiding and helpful group in my life. They were co-operative, friendly, and were willing to do all sorts of things to make the ceremony a success. For example, on the day that a ceremony was to be held, everyone moved their cars and trucks out of the camp so they wouldn't show up in the film. Once when a car broke down and couldn't be moved, a bunch of young men went down to the river and cut some saplings. They piled these around the car until it was completely hidden from view. They did this on their own without any expectation of payment. Similarly, people went out of their way to provide our cameramen with the best viewpoint, while even the people taking part in the ceremonies co-operated by not looking at the cameras and by making sure they were providing an unobstructed view of what they were doing. It was a real pleasure to work with them.

It's not my intention to go through a day-by-day account of what happened during the two weeks of the Sun Dance. That is covered in a nineteen-page single-spaced report now at Glenbow that I produced after it was over.

But I would like to touch on some of the highlights and make some personal observations.

The first ceremony was held by the *Motokix*. It was supposed to start about noon but they were definitely on “Indian time” and it didn’t get underway until nearly 6 p.m. As a result it was almost completely dark when their lodge was finished and our cameramen had their lenses open wide in the hopes that they would get something on film. This was followed by a grass dance in which everyone, including Pauline and Lloyd, participated. Everyone except me, as I am neither a dancer nor an Indian.

As the days wore on, the different societies would meet with me in the morning when their ceremonies would be held, and I would give them most of their allotted money. None of these society funds were ever used for personal purposes, that is, no individual benefited from them. The entire amounts were used to buy canned goods, bread, blankets, cloth, and other items for the giveaways. At the same time we discussed the day’s activities and altered schedules where necessary to avoid any overlaps. By the number of meetings I held and the decisions made, it was clear that with the concurrence of Head Chief Clarence McHugh I had become the “straw boss” of the camp. And because I employed the only scout (at first it was Ed Turning Robe and later Norman Running Rabbit, Ken Yellow Fly, and George Leather), people were constantly coming to me to report bootleggers, drunks, family disputes, and other matters that required intervention.

By now my fears of religious retribution were quickly disappearing as I saw how the Glenbow program was providing an opportunity for a real resurgence of the ceremony. Ben Calf Robe, who thought the Sun Dance was dying out, later wrote, “The Blackfoot Elders agreed to have a movie made of the whole Sun Dance, so that future generations could see how it was. We knew that our old ways were nearly ended and that our grandchildren might never see the most important ceremony in the religion of their ancestors.”<sup>59</sup> Several people told me that it was the best Sun Dance they’d had since the big Victory Sun Dance in 1919, right after World War I. Not only that, but we were able to honour any religious restrictions or limitations placed on us and thus avoided doing anything that might be considered sacrilegious or untoward. The only incident occurred during the Horn Society ceremonies when one of the photographers, Joe Rosettis, walked in front of the procession to get a good head-on shot. He was not aware that the pathway the Horns followed had become sacred and that he should not have been there. After the ceremony, the Horns called us in and told us of the infraction. They were not worried about the

effect of such action on the Horns, but rather for the well-being of Joe. Some members wanted him to go through a sweatlodge ceremony but Adolphus convinced them that he should be painted. A couple of days later Joe took two cartons of cigarettes to their lodge, where he was painted and purified.

Mom and Dad and Pauline's nephew Jimmy joined us after the fourth day, so we readjusted our lodge to make room for them. Dad's presence added to our tepee becoming the centre of attention, as many Indian Association people kept showing up to discuss business with him. Not only that, but Mom had a lot of friends in the camp, particularly our next door neighbour, Vicki McHugh. The folks stayed with us for three or four days and had a nice time. Pauline and I were certainly glad to see them.

In the interval between the Old Women's Society ceremonies and the Horns, we were able to undertake some of the extra projects that had been suggested. I gave Dick Brass \$75 to put on a medicine pipe ceremony which lasted for about two hours, \$30 to Tom Yellow Sun for a holy hand game, and I put \$20 into a pot for two teams wanting to play a hand game.

Then each of the societies performed their rituals, some inside their lodges and others outside. We saw the impressive Horn Society dance inside their double-sized tepee – a sight seldom seen by non-members – and their dance outside with their huge curved staffs and ancient headdresses. We saw two Blackfoot elders recite their war honours while holding the Horn staff, and the finale of the ceremony when one of the members fired a rifle into the air and a crowd of children fell down as though dead. We saw the Prairie Chicken Society members, mostly young people, starting their dance with low bows and rattling, then following each other in a haphazard line until a drum beat told them to stop. And we saw the All Brave Dogs being pressed into a small circle by two riders during their dance, and then the finale while the riders dismounted and joined the others.

Some of these ceremonies I had seen before on the Blood Reserve, but this was different for now I had a ringside seat and was directly involved. This was when all the nuances of the ceremonies were revealed to me because of my nearness to them and the explanations given to me, so I had a much greater understanding of the whole ceremony.

The culmination of the Sun Dance was the raising of the centre pole and the building of the brush lodge, and this was all new to me. Although the summer festival on the Blood Reserve was called a Sun Dance, it really wasn't. No holy woman promised to fast; there was no sacrament of beef tongues, and no building of the Sun Dance lodge in which the final ceremonies were held.



I had never seen such rituals so I was very anxious to witness the performance of the Blackfoot.

Early in the morning of August 12th, Ben Calf Robe paraded through the camp, announcing that tomorrow would be the big day. He told everyone to get ready, for all the men, women, and children to work together to make the Sun lodge a success. A short time later, people started heading out along the river bottom to cut trees and branches for the lodge. Each of the twelve bands that formed the tribe was responsible for cutting one upright pole that formed the foundation for the lodge. These were planted deeply in the ground in a large circle, members of the Horn Society directing the work.

Mrs. Water Chief had gone into her fasting tepee a couple of days before, and had allowed us to go in once briefly to see her cut the beef tongues for the sacrament and again to see her fasting. When she was ready, she led a procession outside and to a sweatlodge that had been made of a hundred willows. It was very impressive. The group was led by Amos Leather, as the ceremonialist. Behind him were Mrs. Water Chief (called the Holy Woman), Mrs. Rides at the Door (the Holy Mother), and two men, the Holy Man and the Holy Father. They prayed as they walked. I'd never heard anything like it before. It was a low mumbling sound almost like the buzzing of bees. The prayers were recited so quickly and quietly that they could not be translated. The procession stopped four times to pray, and when they got to the sweatlodge the men went inside while the women knelt to pray outside. A buffalo skull was then painted with the symbols of the sun, moon, morning star, and sun dogs, and then the men had a sweat bath. With that purification ceremony, everything was now ready for the big day.

You could feel the excitement in the air as people went about their duties beginning about noon the following day. First the members of the Old Women's Society went out to collect green branches and came back singing a joyful song and wearing green wreaths in their hair. A short time later, the Horns went into the woods to find a centre pole. I accompanied them and was very impressed with the ceremony. Mark Wolf Leg, as a warrior, went out in search of an "enemy," a forked tree. When he found one, he came back to the group in a zigzag fashion and gave the cry of a crane, indicating he had found the enemy. The Horns then went through the ceremony to attack the tree and when it was cut down, they dashed forward to count "coups" on it. After further rituals the pole was taken back to the camp and placed beside a hole that had been dug for it.

This was a big day for the Blackfoot but it also was a big day for me. Not only were Bill and I scampering around to make sure we covered everything, but this was the day that Eric Harvie and his entourage chose to visit. So I had to escort them, make the proper introductions to Chief Clarence McHugh and others, and make sure they had a good spot to view the ceremonies. I also had a lot of money problems to resolve. When the various societies had performed their dances a few days earlier, I had pretty well given them the whole amount that they had agreed upon. Now they were back, telling me that they had major roles to play in the Sun Dance itself and wanted to get paid for it. This was perfectly true, and I knew it before we started. That is why I had increased their allotments without telling them. For example, if I had told the All Brave Dogs that they had \$500 instead of \$350 in their budget, they would have demanded it all at the time of their dance. Instead, they got their \$350. Now when they approached me, I reminded them of their agreed figure, told them that we had a deal, and made all sorts of noises, but in the end I gave them what they wanted and everybody was happy. Interestingly, these “final” figures were about what I had estimated.

But all this took time, and as I said sadly in my diary, “I found myself inundated with work – traffic problems, visits of Glenbow Foundation officials, etc., and as a result I was not able to observe many of the activities taking place or to properly record them.” I did see the holy woman break her fast and go to a sun shade where she painted members of the Old Women’s Society and blessed offerings that were destined to be placed in the forks of the Sun Dance pole. The real excitement came when the pole was being raised. It was nothing less than electrifying. The drumming, singing, shouting, war whoops, and firing a gun in the air all mingled to create a feeling of overwhelming exhilaration – for me at least. As the fervour mounted, the holy woman left her sun shade and walked with her helper to the base of the main pole. At this point (darn it!) I was called away so I could only see what was happening from a distance. Hundreds of excited people were crowded around the frame of the lodge, but even in their excitement they left a clear path so that our photographers could get everything. The climax was reached when the pole raisers, using long sticks in pairs with a rope joining them together at their ends, successfully raised the tree. When this happened, there was more gunfire, war whoops, and emotional cries.

Then suddenly the whole atmosphere changed. The rafters were run into place and then people dashed away to get greenery for the walls of the lodge. As I mention in my diary, “The ceremony became quite festive. When the

vehicles returned, all participants were singing happily as children climbed on the trucks as they circled the camp... Some of the young men bringing in the branches had their best girls behind them on their horses.”

By the time the lodge was built, I was thoroughly exhausted, and so were many of the people. Next morning, things were slow to start. Mr. Harvie had obviously enjoyed himself the previous day for he came back at noon, this time in an airplane flown by his son Neil. They landed on a hill above the camp and I went to meet them. Shortly afterwards, the dances and ceremonies took place in the lodge but I didn't get a chance to see much of them. I was busy arranging for Jack Kipp to go through a simulation of the self-torture ritual (which caused great hilarity among the elders, as Jack used an elastic bandage instead of his skin and it stretched out to a ridiculous length). I also coordinated the honouring of Eric Harvie when he was paraded around the inside of the lodge amid singing and drumming.

Everything finished about suppertime, and the only sour note came when Mrs. Water Chief refused to put on a giveaway and Clarence McHugh had to do it on behalf of the council. Mrs. Water Chief was mercenary to the end. After the ceremonies she tried to sell me the sacred buffalo skull that had been placed at the base of the Sun Dance pole for the ceremonies. It carried the blessing of the Sun Dance and was supposed to remain there until it rotted. I'd already had my experience at the All Smoke ceremony so there was no way I was going to agree to buy that skull.

Within a couple of hours there were only about thirty tepees and tents left in the camp and the night became a festive one for those who had stayed. Long after dark I walked over to the main lodge and saw that the young people were having a good time. Boys and girls were walking around with blankets wrapped around them and often over their heads. Sometimes two or three were under a single blanket and not always of the same sex. They had an owl dance inside the main lodge until about 1 a.m.

The next morning, the last of the camp disappeared and our own tepee was packed away and shipped back to Calgary. My pockets full of money had almost disappeared and the few dollars I had left I gave to Adolphus for his fine work. By the time we got back to Calgary the entire family was so exhausted that we virtually collapsed and didn't do anything for the next five days but rest up.

Bill Marsden and I spent much of the winter of 1961–62 editing the film. I wrote the script and got both Adolphus and Vicki McHugh to do some small bits of narration, while the main text was read by a professional from Toronto. When it was finished, the film was a one-hour documentary entitled “Okan:

Sun Dance of the Blackfoot Indians.” Jack Ewers described it as the best ceremonial film ever made in the northern plains.

As a footnote, in the spring of 1962 we had a special showing of the film on the Blackfoot Reserve. The Harvie family came, and afterwards Harvie announced that he would match any money raised to put on another Sun Dance this summer. Then there was an honouring dance at which time Harvie received the name of *Natósapi*, or Old Sun, after one of the great traditional chiefs of the tribe. When we came back to Calgary, Bill Marsden and I stopped at the Garrison Officers’ Mess at Mewata Armouries, where Bill was a member. As we came in, Bill saw one of Harvie’s old ex-law partners and told him that our boss had been named Old Sun. Snapped the ex-partner, “Old son of a what?”



Obviously Harvie was quite interested in Indians so I was encouraged to continue my work – even though ostensibly I was still an archivist. At the 1962 Sun Dance, Clarence McHugh had arranged to take over the leadership of the Horn Society and his wife joined the Old Women’s Society. As they were close personal friends they were very generous in inviting me to their ceremonies. In May 1962 I attended a prayer meeting of the Old Women’s Society held in Vicki’s tepee, which had been pitched in her yard. I was not painted or purified but I did take part in the prayers and in making the offerings of meat and berry broth. A few weeks later I was invited to a sweatlodge ceremony put on by the Horn Society. I was asked if I wanted to go right into the sweatlodge but I demurred as I was shy, but I did have a chance to take notes on everything that happened. Then, during the late summer Pauline, our three children (we’d added John that August), and I went to the Harvie-supported Sun Dance. We didn’t stay for the whole time, as in the previous year, but we were there long enough to know that it was almost as good as the one we filmed.

A delightful event occurred on the second day we were there. The Prairie Chicken Society had finished its dance when One Gun called me into the centre of the circle, where he conducted a naming ceremony, giving me the name of Calf Chief, *Onistaina*, his grandfather’s name. Afterwards Clarence McHugh presented me with a pair of moccasins. This came as a complete surprise and its happening in the Sun Dance circle made it all the more important to me.

But that wasn’t the end of it. Two days later, just as the Blackfoot were getting ready to raise the centre pole, Ben Calf Robe informed Pauline that he wanted the right to name our four-week-old son. Pauline rushed around

and found a beautiful yellow blanket. When John was wrapped in it, I took him in my arms and Ben led us to the framework of the Sun Dance lodge. We stood in front of the sun shade where the holy woman was seated, while all around us were members Horn Society. As we stood in respectful silence, the Horns performed their traditional dance, ending with a “whooh” sound as they touched their fingers to the ground. During all this time, Ben was praying for our young son. Here is what I wrote in my diary: “After they finished Ben spoke. He said he wanted to name this child, giving him his own name as a boy. He hoped it would bring him strength and good luck, and also to the parents. The name is *Ninam’skoh’kitopi*, or Medicine Pipe Rider. He then gave me a push, intended for John, as a symbol of being humbled so that the naming would not make him swell-headed over the honour given him. I then gave Ben the blanket which had held the baby.”

During the Sun Dance, Eric Harvie had raised a question about the beadwork and other objects and wondered if they were ever for sale. I told him that from time to time the Blackfoot came in to sell things but that we had never actually gone out seeking objects. Over the winter the matter was raised again, and as a result Harvie gave me a thousand dollars and told me to see what I could find on the reserve. Rather than going about it helter-skelter, I made a rough list of our current holdings and a “want list” of items needed to round out the collections.

As I noted in my diary, “I began checking the Indian artifacts and confirmed my suspicions that they are in an awful mess.” In spite of my complaints, Glenbow was just not keeping proper records. The objects themselves were stored reasonably enough, but if someone other than myself acquired something, it just appeared on the storage shelves with no number or documentation. If I was lucky and noticed it early enough, I could find out the details and put a tag on the item. But too often, no one knew where the object had come from, who had purchased it, or what tribe it belonged to. This was particularly true of donations, where the items were simply accepted and put on the shelves with nothing to connect them to any documentation that might exist. True, we did not yet have an Ethnology Department, but we were getting more and more artifacts, both Indian and pioneer, and the record keeping was shabby at best. I couldn’t help but to compare it to the Archives, where we had no trouble in documenting our collections, simply because we had a routine that we followed. In any case, hundreds of hours were spent in later years trying to match the collections with the documents, and far too many items were never identified. Yet it would have been so easy to have done so at the time.

Early in 1963 I set out to spend Eric Harvie's thousand dollars. Joe Cat Face and Olive Olds had evidently heard about the deal and they didn't wait for me to visit them. They showed up at Glenbow with a few items which I bought. Ben Calf Robe and George Runner also dropped by so I decided to wait until the weather cleared before tackling the snow-choked roads on the Blackfoot Reserve. Finally, I made my first foray at the end of January, a personal one on a Sunday for an Indian Association meeting that dealt with attempts of municipalities to tax non-Indians on reserve lands. I also went to see One Gun and Ben Calf Robe about a study I was doing on Blackfoot animal names. When a blizzard blew in, I decided to spend the night in the Cluny Hotel and next morning to do some Glenbow business. The blizzard was still blowing next day and once I had to get hauled out of the snow but I finally made it to Gleichen and to Clarence McHugh's house. There I found Dick and Emma Brass visiting them. I told them about the money for purchases and they promised to look around. Also, Dick offered to make reproductions of some of the sacred objects used in the tobacco dance. It was impossible to go anywhere on the reserve because of the storm, so I headed back to the safety and security of Calgary.

But I was back two weeks later when I picked up a fungus necklace and iron kettle from Vicki, six naval cord amulets from Cyril Olds, and the tobacco dance items promised by Dick Brass. The latter proved to be wonderful pieces. Included were a couple of painted bent sticks with tiny moccasins and bags attached to them. These are the "little people" who guard the tobacco fields during the summer. As soon as the Blackfoot leave the fields after a planting ceremony, these figures are believed to turn into little people who wear the moccasins, use the food stored in the bags, and guard the tobacco. Dick also made a rawhide bowl that was central to the whole ceremony. As I wrote to Jack Ewers, "The most significant is the raw-hide berry bowl which Schultz describes in great detail in *Sun God's Children*. The main difference is that the symbols on our bowl are the raven, two feathers, lizard, moon and Pleiades, scalp, and a hand. I just wonder whether this bowl is the type originally used when preparing food by the hot stone method?" I had no hesitation in taking these religious items as they were unblessed reproductions. At that point another blizzard rolled in so I hightailed it back to Calgary.

A week later I tried again, this time picking up Adolphus Weasel Child as my interpreter. I won't go into details, but by the time the day was over, I'd spent a good part of the money and had picked up a lot of items during visits to Mrs. Heavy Shield, Mrs. Water Chief, Jack Kipp, Mrs. Ayoungman, Tom

Turned Up Nose, Mrs. Gunny Crow, Mrs. Boy Chief, Jack Black Horse, and Dick White Elk. But it didn't end there. When word got around, I had visits for the next couple of months from such people as Rosary Duck Chief, Charlie Turning Robe, Alphonse Sleigh, and Joe Bear Robe. It was like a tap that, once turned on, couldn't be turned off.



An interesting sidelight occurred when I had visited the McHughs. After the 1961 Sun Dance the question had been raised by Indians about Glenbow filming the black-tailed deer dance, the tobacco dance, and other ceremonies. I said the door was open for discussion but nothing further came of it. But during my visit at the McHughs, Emma Brass said that there hadn't been a Ghost Dance on the reserve for twelve years but she and her husband were willing to sponsor one if we wanted to film it. I took the matter back to Glenbow and as we had lost our movie photographer we decided to record the ceremony on a sound tape and with still photographs. I went back to the reserve for a meeting with Dick and Emma Brass and with Cyril and Olive Olds, and we settled on a price of \$85 and enough saskatoon berries to make the broth. Here again, one can see that the Blackfoot weren't in it for the money. The \$85 would barely cover the cost of gas money and the giveaway. Rather, the Brasses, Olds, and all the others were motivated by a sense of preserving a dying ritual, of having Glenbow making a record of it before it disappeared completely. It was another sad example of the state of Blackfoot religion and culture in the 1960s.

During our discussions, Emma Brass told me the following story about the origin of the dance: "A man went to war with his comrades but they were attacked and he was separated from the others. On his way back, when nearing his camp at night, he came upon a lone Blackfoot lodge. Because it was dark he did not notice that it was a 'death lodge,' but thought it belonged to a family camped apart from the others. He entered the lodge and that night he was awakened when he heard people singing and bones rattling. He opened his eyes just a little and could see only some skeleton feet of ghosts who were kneeling as though they were playing a hand game. They sang four times and at the end of each song they tried to get up. After every dance the man could see a little more of their bones and during the fourth song, when they finally arose, he could see everything except their faces. They repeated this entire ritual four times. During the third dance a skeleton came in, danced by himself, and when he was finished he lit a pipe and gave it to the man. After he had smoked, the Blackfoot was told to take the ritual home to his people and to perform it when they wanted good health or good luck."

The Ghost Dance ceremony, or *Sta'ai-puska*, was held at the Olds' home on February 24, 1963. The Brasses and Olds were the sponsors and Ed Axe was the ceremonialist. Those participating were Clarence and Vicki McHugh, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Crow, Alex Breaker, Jack Black Horse, Gordon Yellow Old Woman, Ken Yellow Fly, Doris Stimson, and the wives of Teddy Yellow Fly and Charlie Raw Eater. The two "ghosts" were Francis Axe and Henry Backfat.

The ceremony itself re-enacted the events that had taken place many years earlier when the Blackfoot had entered the "dead lodge." The participants danced in the manner of the skeletons, and on the third round two masked figures entered the room and danced with them. It was important that the dancers not acknowledge the presence of these two figures, as they were supposed to be invisible. I won't go through the entire ceremony, as it was fully described in the monograph I wrote entitled *The Blackfoot Ghost Dance*, published by Glenbow in 1968. However, I must repeat what I've said before. Not only was I honoured at having the privilege of attending such a ritual but again I felt strongly about the need for the Blackfoot people to preserve their culture. During the ceremony I was very honoured when a special prayer was given for me. Pauline later translated it as follows:

O You who pities us, the One we pray to  
May this white man have a long life  
He is working with us now  
Pity him, pity his body  
May he be skilful in his work  
Gather around me, Above People  
Bring good fortune to his children  
Help them to have a long life

In 1963, I commented to Glenbow authorities that we had very little from the Plains Cree in our collections. A short time later, I was given a purchasing budget of \$500 and set out on a buying trip with Doug Light of the Luxton Museum. Doug had been raised in Battleford and had started collecting Cree artifacts while he was still a teenager. I got to know Doug quite well and in spite of a few misgivings, we got along pretty well.

We were on the road for nine days in east central Alberta and western Saskatchewan. During that time I had plenty of good opportunities to see various aspects of Cree culture and religion. I saw a lot of similarities but also many differences from the Blackfoot. I also learned that most people had never



heard of or seen anyone from a museum but they treated us openly and without suspicion. It was soon apparent that these people had lost many aspects of their culture and religion to a much greater degree than the Blackfoot. I ascribed part of this to the fact that the entire Blackfoot nation was on just four large reserves while the Crees were scattered about on a lot of little ones. There they had been obliged to mix more with the surrounding communities, learned to speak English to get along with the shopkeepers, been heavily influenced by missionaries and by nearby Metis settlements and had few opportunities to get together in large groups to practise their religion. At the same time, I found the Crees placed a much greater reliance upon individual medicine men and that these people still exerted considerable influence. They were the ones who were willing to show us their religious items but were unwilling to sell them as they were still in use.

During our travels, it also came as a surprise to me – although it shouldn't have – to learn that the Blackfoot lost some of their battles. Over the years, the only stories I had ever heard were ones where the Blackfoot celebrated victories, so it seemed strange to listen to Cree stories about them losing.

Doug and I went first to the Saddle Lake Reserve to visit Ralph Steinhauer, who was a good friend of mine. The next day he took us to see Edward Cardinal, or Memnook, whose grandfather had been killed at the Battle of Frenchman's Butte in 1885. We got an eagle feather fan and a stone pipe from him while another member of the family sold us an old Ojibwa pipe. In these instances and during the rest of the trip, I tried to get the name of the object in Cree, its history, and significance. We picked up a couple of pipes and other such items, but we struck a real gold mine in William Half and his wife. She turned out to be a healer and produced a moose skin medicine bag which had belonged to her grandmother and was filled with roots, leaves, and other items used for medical purposes. She sold us the bag and shared a number of medicines with us, including those for sore throat, bleeding, throat constriction, menstrual problems, and for removing warts. She also sold us a beaming tool for tanning and obligingly posed for photographs of herself using it.

Our next visit was to the Onion Lake, where I hired Wilfred Chocan to be our guide. He proved to be a good choice and through him we found some excellent cultural material. One of the most interesting visits of our whole trip was to the home of Johnny Heathen. From him we obtained the Little Bear war medicine, or *Muska-sis*. It consists of a piece of bear skin decorated with coloured ribbons and with a piece of braided sweetgrass inside it. It was

wrapped in a print cloth that was used as an altar during ceremonies. Here is the story that Heathen told me:

Years ago when the Crees and Blackfoot were fighting, the Crees would win in battle because of the help and protection given by the Little Bear. It was hung from a tripod outside the tipi and three or four songs went with it. If the owner went to war, the Little Bear was brought inside and occupied his place in the tipi. The man would sing the songs on his way to war to bring the party good luck. If they fought the enemy and the owner was wounded, the Little Bear would groan in pain. The people at home would know what had happened and would appeal to the Little Bear to protect the owner and see that he came home alive. After hearing their pleas, the Little Bear would sit upright to indicate that the man would be saved or would fall down if there was no hope for him.

Now those days are gone but the Little Bear still has power. After we settled on our reserves, it was used for curing **sick people**, protecting us, and was used in our ceremonies. I used it four times in the smoking lodge ceremony and tied a ribbon on it for each time.... Now if I sell the Little Bear to you, I still will have the songs and these will be used for curing people.

We asked him about “Cree medicine,” sometimes called love medicine. Heathen said that he was a medicine man and admitted that some of the medicines he made could be used to render a person sick or insane but he also had antidotes that could cure such curses that had been imposed by other medicine men. When we asked him if he would sell us some of the Cree medicine, he refused. He said that when we got back to Calgary we might be curious about it and try to use it on someone. When that person got sick or died, the Mounted Police would ask us where we got the Cree medicine and we would say it was Johnny Heathen, and then the police would come looking for him. During the ensuing days we asked at just about every reserve for Cree medicine, but it was finally Solomon Bluehorn, a friend of Doug Light’s, who supplied a small amount to us. He said that his was love medicine and could not be used to curse or injure anyone. He kept it stored in an old coffee can in the trees behind his house. He said it was made of 120 different roots, leaves and

grasses, all reduced to a powder. He said to use the medicine, one must not look directly at it. You touch your finger to your mouth to dampen it, then touch it to the medicine so as to pick up a tiny amount. This is rubbed on your lapel and when you approach a woman, you walk once around her and from then on she cannot resist you. Another way to use it was to sprinkle it along the path where the woman (or man) walked.

To prevent it from working, some women carried anti-love medicine. We obtained an example of this too. It consists of a necklace made of large beads with two brass thimbles at the bottom containing the antidote medicine. When a woman wears this, no love medicine will work. Sometimes a woman acquired this, but often it was a jealous husband who got it and made his wife wear it.

The day spent at Onion Lake was highly successful, and by the time we settled down for the night at Cold Lake, we had a rawhide saddle, beadwork, tanning tools, drum, and other objects. Our visit to Cold Lake gave us our only contact with the Chipewyan Indians on this trip. I looked up Tom Beaverfoot, whom I knew from Indian Association meeting, and he agreed to take us around, in spite of heavy rains and almost impassable roads. These were purely woodland people and our collecting showed it. We picked up such items as snow shoes, a moose call, gun case, birchbark baskets, and bullet bags. When we drove from there to Meadow Lake the roads were so bad that we hit the ditch a couple of times and once we had to get towed out. At this point the country was so waterlogged that we had to give up and go on to Battleford, Doug's hometown.

The next day we picked up Solomon Bluehorn on the Little Pine Reserve. He knew everyone and had been everywhere, and I found him to be a thoroughly enjoyable companion. I interviewed him a bit and just wish I had had more time as I found him to be the most knowledgeable Cree on the whole trip in regards to history and culture. Under his guidance we found some important objects. One of these was a "spirit bundle," a type of bundle we had seen elsewhere but that no one would part with. They were, in effect, family protectors. They contained personal objects owned by deceased members of the family, going back several generations. In them we found quilled moccasins, hair cuttings, and even a rubber nipple from a baby bottle, each wrapped in print cloth. The bundle was supposed to keep the spirits of these people nearby to protect them. I understood that the owner of this bundle had embraced the Full Gospel Church and wanted to get rid of it.

Unquestionably the finest object that combined ceremonialism with creative art was a wooden *Pakakos*, or Bony Spectre, doll. It had brass studs for eyes, a white bead for a mouth, and was festooned with ribbons, beads, and cords. It was obviously very old. We also got a wonderful little brass object in the shape of a thunderbird that had been the war medicine of Loud Voice and had been worn in his hair. We then picked up a Prairie Chicken Ritual bundle from a young man who had inherited it from his father, but as he did not have the right to use it, he had left it out in the trees to rot. Fortunately we got there shortly after he had put it outside.

By the time we got back to Calgary we had obtained fifty-five items, including beadwork, drums, tanning tools, pipes, clothing, and religious objects. We were well over our \$500 budget but nobody objected. I felt good in that we had not taken anything out of active ceremonial use, and in the case of rattles, etc., I was assured that these could be easily replaced. Also, the documentation was the most thorough of our entire Cree holdings, for most of the other objects had been donated by pioneer families or obtained from dealers with little or no information.

My last real collecting trip for Glenbow occurred in the spring of 1964. Because of the success of our Plains Cree trip, it was suggested that I go to northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories to collect material from the Chipewyans, Slaveys, Beavers, and other Dene groups. However, the decision was held up in Harvie's office and by the time I got approval we were in danger of encountering the spring breakup and getting caught for weeks in the North. As a result, approval was given for Doug Light and me to take \$1,500 and make a return trip through Plains Cree country.

This time we went first to the Kehiwin Reserve, where I hired a young man named Lloyd Poitras. He knew the people well and by the time the day was over we had two medicine bags, a drum, two pipes, a rattle, scraper, moc-casins, child's bow, moss bag, and a roach headdress. The next day we were on the Frog Lake Reserve with Fred Fiddler as our guide and obtained a spirit bundle, large drum, medicine bag, and a number of other items. One interesting piece was a little handmade wooden box, called a "joking box." When the top was slid open, it revealed a carving of *Wisakishak*, the Cree trickster, and when it was opened wider, a long penis suddenly sprang into view, controlled by elastic bands. I've never seen anything like it, before or since.

We tried the Onion Lake Reserve again, but as Wilfred Chocan was out trapping muskrats we had little success. On the Thunderchild Reserve we had Norman Sunchild as our guide and among the items acquired here was a stone

“guardian spirit” in a parfleche bag made of buffalo skin. There was nothing for us on the Turtle Lake Reserve so we went to Little Pine, where we picked up Solomon Bluehorn and he found three or four beaded items for us. On his advice we returned to the Thunderchild Reserve to see John Noon. Here is what I wrote in my diary about John Noon:

He had joined the Pentecosts and abandoned the old ways. Two years ago he set his father’s material in the bush. He led us to the place, deep in the bush. It was well protected and damp but not damaged. In the box was ancient *Midewiwin* regalia including a wooden water drum, dog club, drum stick, rattle, wooden dish, and hide. Also there was a *pakahos* [bony spectre], 2 flat rattles, woman’s rattle, 3 eagle claw tipi guardians, bear claw, eagle whistle, wooden medicine box, and Sun Dance feather. We bought everything.

Doug and I proceeded southward, picking up a few odds and ends on the Sweetgrass, Mosquito, Red Pheasant, Moosomin, and Saulteaux reserves, but there seemed to be very little available. James Baptiste, a leader of the Native American Church, showed us his regalia and tried to sell us a whip, but as it was being used in their ceremonies we didn’t take it. We then went to the Moose Woods Reserve, which was Sioux, but found an election going on and no opportunity to see people. However, we did get a beautiful stone pipe from Bill Eagle.

From there both Doug and I were heading into unknown territory – the Cree, Ojibwa, and Sioux reserves of southern Saskatchewan. We engaged Doris Yuzicapi at Standing Buffalo to collect a number of Sioux items, including a navel cord bag, dentalium neck yoke, beadwork and tools. The next day we went to the Qu’Appelle valley, where we hired Bill Peigan and obtained a number of items from the Piapot, Pasqua, and Muscowpetung reserves. Among them were three stone guardian spirits, an eagle bundle, and two rattles. One item of particular interest was a shaman’s mirror. I had read about them but had never seen one. It was a flat piece of board kept inside a decorated case. On the board was a small burn mark; the shaman stared at this and saw his vision on the face of the wooden “mirror.”

But the greatest find of the trip occurred on the tiny Wood Mountain Reserve, home to descendants of Sitting Bull’s refugee Sioux who had not

returned to the United States. I looked up Pete Lethbridge, a saddlemaker who was a good friend of my brother-in-law, Fred Gladstone. He took us to the home of an elderly bachelor named John Wounded Horse. After a general conversation, this man told us that he had inherited a bunch of things after his mother died and he was willing to sell them to us. When he opened her trunk we were dumbfounded. The first things he brought out were a pair of moccasins fully covered with porcupine quills in bright red designs. Then, one after another, the quilled items appeared – a pouch, another pair of moccasins, a navel cord bag, and finally a huge cradleboard cover, the entire surface covered with quillwork. It was then, and still is, one of the finest pieces of quillwork ever produced in Canada. Besides this he had a headdress, bags, buckskin outfit, and horse gear. We bought them all.

Two weeks after we had set out from Calgary we returned with 113 objects that gave us one of the best and most well-documented collections to be found anywhere. It was a fitting conclusion to my years as a field collector for the Glenbow Foundation.

Those years had been beneficial both to the Glenbow and to me. They enabled the institution to gather objects that were important to the history and ethnology of the region at a time when Indians had been eager to dispose of them. There is no doubt in my mind that the majority of items I field-collected would have been discarded or sold to pawn shops with absolutely no documentation regarding their function or use. As for me, this period gave me the opportunity to learn of Native life and culture to a depth that otherwise I could never have achieved. I was both inspired and grateful for the knowledge that had been shared with me.

