

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: JAMES TAKES A GUN STRONG
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: BLOOD RESERVE
ALBERTA
INTERVIEW LOCATION: BLOOD RESERVE
ALBERTA
TRIBE/NATION: BLOOD
LANGUAGE: BLACKFOOT
DATE OF INTERVIEW: NOVEMBER 9, 1973
INTERVIEWER: MIKE DEVINE
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD
SOURCE: OFFICE OF SPECIFIC CLAIMS &
RESEARCH OF THE INDIAN ASSOC. OF ALTA.
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TAPE NUMBER: IH-241
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RESTRICTIONS: NONE

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Treaty 7 negotiations.
- Transfer of chieftainship from Bad Head to Red Crow.
James Takes a Gun Strong: My friends, the Blood Indians, what I am going to talk about is quite important. I don't quite remember, it's too long ago. About 45 or 50 years ago, when Yellow Shine invited some elder Indians, such as Tough Bread, Many Fingers and others and my father, Takes the Gun Strong. My father is very quiet and doesn't say much. Tough Bread told my father, "My friend, do you remember when Tall White Man recieved our first money payment from him?" I was too young yet when it happened and the rest of the elders said the same as my father answered. I was about seven years old when this treaty took place. I jump ahead of my story.

My father's name was Bad Head and his friend's name was Seen Far Away, from the Blackfoot tribe. And my grandfather a Blood Tribe. My grandfather visited his friend, Seen Far Away and told him "My friend, we are old and our power and spirits are fading away. I will give my chieftainship to our son-in-law, Red Crow. He'll be the next head chief and rule over the Blood tribe. He is a wise man. He will be able to help my people." And Seen Far Away died of black pox disease. I don't know how long afterwards.

The Blood tribe usually spent winters at Fort Benton across the U.S.A. border. Other times they spent their winters at what is now known as Fort Whoop-Up. And some of the Blood tribe came

back to Fort McLeod and they were told by some French halfbreeds, "There is some government official coming up to meet with you at Ridge Under the Water." That's where the whole Blackfoot tribe will gather to meet them and everybody will start to move their camps for Ridge Under the Water. On a certain day they were supposed to arrive there.

It was still summer yet when some of the tribes arrived at Ridge Under the Water and some white men also arrived at the Indian camps. They all came from the east. They were government officials. Amongst the white men, one of them was called Tall White Man and the Tall White Man told the Indian tribes, "We have come on a very important mission to tell you Indian people. The main purpose is to make a peace treaty with you Indian people and to quit making wars and also quit drinking and stop stealing horses. You will be arrested." This is what Tall White Man said. "This is why we came, you will receive some money if you all agree." Bad Head raised his hand and stood up before his people and Tall White Man and his companions and he went on to say, "I am the overall ruler of all my people here and I am up in age. Therefore, I am handing my leadership to Red Crow and he will be the one you are going to negotiate with and he will be the leader of my people." Tall White Man called on Red Crow, "Are you agreeable to what I

have just said? Red Crow answered, "I will wait for my friend, Crowfoot, a Blackfoot Indian who was away across the U.S.A. border at Fort Benton to trade with some hide and furs to purchase some winter needs such as rifles, bullets, axes, blankets, and tobacco. A word has been sent to my friend. He will be here in two days time. I will tell my friend on what I have just learned and he will tell me if he is agreeable." This made the government official feel Crowfoot must be the leader of the whole Blackfoot tribe. That's why he wanted to wait for him and Crowfoot arrived the following two days. In the meantime, the Bloods were told to select their minor chief, which the Bloods did. Bad Head did the selection of Chief Red Crow and minor chief which he called them by names, Bull Horn, Day Chief, Weasel Horse, and others.

Then he told the Blood tribe and other tribes who have camped at Ridge Under the Water, "You will receive \$12.00 per head, every child and old people." Crowfoot arrived and met with Red Crow. Red Crow told his friend what took place before he had arrived. Crowfoot answered, "I am agreeable to what you have agreed. I can't go against your wish." In the meantime cattle will be slaughtered and given out in rations to everyone in camp and also some tea and sugar. Other food was given out in rations to everybody. You will be given rations and this great Mother Queen's government will take care of you. At this time, I don't remember who was used as interpreter, whether it's Jerry Potts or other French halfbreed. Red Crow was told which part of land he wanted to keep and he answered the Belly Buttes. I will look over and decide for myself. Crowfoot was the next to decide where he intended to stay and land he wanted to keep, and he said, "Right here at Ridge Under the Water." The rest of the tribes picked the land they wanted to keep and

the whole tribe received some money in payments. Everybody received \$12.00 per head and the peace treaty concluded.

I don't remember how many years when another payment was made. On this second payment, the Blood tribe received \$5.00 per head. The \$7.00 was to be put in a trust account and used for supplying ammunition, axes, rations and \$2.00 will be used as school children to purchase books and other things they will need. Some of the money will also be used for doctoring the Indian people and some medicine. After the arrival of the Scarlet Coats, the police and peace treaty was over. A high official uniform was given to Bad Head, same as the Governor General wears today.

This is the conclusion.

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