

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: GEORGE FIRST RIDER  
SMOKING PIPES 2, FUNCTION  
AND TABOOS  
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: BLOOD RESERVE  
CARDSTON, ALBERTA  
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CARDSTON, ALBERTA  
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INTERPRETER: DAVE MELTING TALLOW  
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GEORGE FIRST RIDER

George First Rider of the Blood Reserve was born in 1904. He had no formal schooling but became an accomplished horseman and worked for a time on the rodeo circuit. After working as a farmer he ended up in jail as a result of alcoholism and theft. He attributes his reform to his conversion to Christianity.

He prides himself on his ability as a storyteller and on his knowledge of Blood culture, particularly the holy societies many of which he joined as a young man.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Discusses the significance of various pipes.  
George First Rider: I was hired to tell the story of how the Medicine Pipes and the Sacred Utility Bag Pipes are constructed and why there are taboos. We don't know why the Medicine Pipe owners have tumors -- they get tumors in their rectums. They get tumors in their vaginas if we say "bear" in their homes. The utility bag owners are afraid to burn wood that are gnawed off by beavers. If they do they will have scabs all over their bodies. Now the taboos. The Medicine Pipes, the Sacred Utility Bag Pipes, the Group Smoking ceremony and the Horn Society, catlinite pipes are not used in any of these various ceremonies. Black stone pipes are used only.

The Motoki, the Pigeons all smoke together. The All Brave Dog

Society smoke together and catlinite pipes are never used. A catlinite pipe is not used in a Group Smoking ceremony. We are scared of red color; we are scared of blood. It is strange. I (First Rider) will tell the story of the highway rules; when we drive through a city we will not go through a red light. In an Indian story, we are scared of red; we are scared of blood. A Medicine Pipe owner, a Utility Bag Bundle owner and the Horn Society are all scared of the color red and blood. The Medicine Pipe have feather decorations at the bud and the Utility Bag Pipes are not feather decorated at the bud, and it happens the pipes of other tribes are constructed in a different way. Now a Utility Bag Bundle Pipe is not feather decorated at the bud. Lately there were some Utility Bag Bundle Pipes that were introduced on the Blood Reserve and on the Blackfoot Reserve. They were feather decorated at the bud.

The Medicine Pipe owners sing the Medicine Pipe songs in one certain way. Medicine Pipe songs are not so many; they sing them in one certain way. Lately the Cree Medicine Pipe was operated in the same operation as other Medicine Pipes. In the past I (First Rider) don't know. The old people tell stories about the Cree Medicine Pipe. There is a Cree Indian; his name is Quirt. And the other man's name is Dog With A White Back, and the other man's name is Shot Many Times. I (First Rider) heard these people tell the story of the Cree Medicine Pipe. They told the story in the year 1910. The reason why I (First Rider) didn't know the song of the Cree Medicine Pipe too well, I was still very young at that time. They had a dance with the Cree Medicine Pipe at a place called Thirty Growth of Trees, along the Cardston River (Lee's Creek). The participants were all Crees. That was the time I (First Rider) saw James Gladstone's mother; she came with those Crees.

I (First Rider) heard the songs of the Cree Medicine Pipe; they were not sung any longer. The Cree Medicine Pipe has different songs. The songs to the Little Medicine Pipe are also

different. The songs of the Black Covered Pipes are also different. The Blood Indian Utility Bag Pipe songs are different. The Blackfoot Utility Bag Pipe songs are also different. The Utility Bag Bundle Pipe songs of the South Peigans are different; the Utility Bag Bundle Pipes are not all the same. The Blackfoot Indians will just sing about their tobacco planting. Now I will illustrate one. I (First Rider) am not yet told to sing, so I will illustrate one. When the Blackfoot sing the Utility Bag songs, when they have their Tobacco Dance, when they plant tobacco with the pipe, there are the songs that they sing:

"Man pity me with my children. They have supernatural powers."

This is one of the Blackfoot Utility Bag Bundle songs. You will not hear these songs in the Blood Indian Utility Bag Bundle song. The Bloods dance with their Utility Bag Bundle Pipes. These are their dance songs.

(NO WORDS IN SONG)

These are the Blood Indian dance songs. The Blood Indians just dance with the Utility Bag Bundle Pipes. The South Peigans do magical performances with their pipes. I (First Rider) saw this woman that had T.B. She went into the hut of the beavers. The beavers told her, "Those spruce trees on the ridge, that protruding rocky hill, take some of the pitch from that tree and make a brew with the pitch." So she brewed the pitch and she drank the brew and she vomited all the pus in her and she recovered. This woman's name is Last Calf. The South Peigans always do magical performances with their pipes. The owners are Mistreated Husband, Shaggy Bear, and Wolf Tail. I (First Rider) saw these singers. They all do magical performances with the pipe; they don't just dance with the pipe. I heard the song that was donated by this woman Last Calf:

"The bull buffalo is our medicine."

This is one of the songs. Now I sang three songs -- the song of the South Peigans, the song of the Blood Indians and the Blackfoot song. When the Blood Indians have a dance with the pipe they will not sing the South Peigan song. When the Blackfoot Indians celebrate their tobacco planting ceremony they will not sing the Blood Indian dance song.

The pipes are all made the same but they are used individually in various ways. Today if a Blackfoot Indian hears the Blood Indian Utility Bag Bundle songs he will not agree with a lot of the songs. The reason is, the songs are not the same between

the Bloods and the Blackfoot. The pipes are all the same but they are not used in the same way. It's on account of the people that do magical performances with the pipes.

The Horn Society is the only society that is operated in one way. The Blackfoot Indians and the Blood Indians are the two tribes that celebrate the Horn Society ceremonies. The South Peigans don't celebrate the Horn Society ceremonies but our pipes are all in one. We are made to swear on the pipes. If a person swears falsely on the Black Stone Pipe he will suffer for his life.

The reason why the people that go through transferals don't smoke on catlinite pipes, it's because they don't like to have blood on their bodies; it is the life of the eastern people. The Utility Bag Bundle Pipe is carried out. The ones that have real faith in the transferals that they went through also had visions of Utility Bag Bundle Pipes. The pipes are all made the same. The stone pipe bowls are burnt black but they are constructed into different kinds of pipes. They are all handled in the same way; the mouthpiece is pointed to the person that is offered a smoke. The Medicine Pipe owners and the Utility Bag Bundle owners will take the pipe in the same manner; they will take the pipe in both hands. It is said that a Medicine Pipe was given down from the heavens. The Utility Bag Pipe was given out from the water but they are the same. I

(First Rider) have already illustrated this before. A Utility Bag Bundle owner is not afraid to dance with a Medicine Pipe. He will dance in a Medicine Pipe dance. A Medicine Pipe owner is not afraid to dance in a Beaver Society dance; he will dance in it. I (First Rider) illustrated this before. In the four days' transferals to a recipient of a Beaver Bundle he cannot actually do anything for himself. He is awakened in the morning and they are blessed before they eat. They are initiated into eating and then they eat.

It also occurs, they are initiated into sleeping together by an old man. The husband is blessed before he goes into a sexual intercourse with his wife. The husband is initiated into everything. This is called, he is reborn again, he is reliving again.

The reason why the Cree Medicine Pipe is different. The songs that I (First Rider) sang -- the Blackfoot Indians, the Blood Indians and the South Peigans -- the songs are the same but they use them in various ways individually. When the Crees opened the Cree Medicine Pipe, when they operated it, they sang a lot of different songs. They (Crees) operated the Cree Medicine Pipe in a far different way. The Bloods and the

Blackfoot Indians operated the Cree Medicine Pipes in the same operation as the Plains Indian Medicine Pipes are operated, because they did not know how to operate the Cree Medicine Pipe. There must be four songs to the Cree Medicine Pipe that I (First Rider), that I know. So I will illustrate one song, a song to the Cree Medicine Pipe.

(There are no words in the Cree Medicine Pipe song.)

This is a song to the Cree Medicine Pipe. The Little Medicine Pipe is just small and the songs to it are also different. It's still usual. We know that the songs are different. It's a Medicine Pipe, just the songs are different. The Little Medicine Pipe is constructed the same way as the other Medicine Pipes, and this Long Time Pipe is constructed the same way. The Bud Laying To The Center Medicine Pipe\* is constructed the same way as the other Medicine Pipes, only it is called different, the Bud Laying To The Centre.

The Medicine Pipes will all be put together. They're all constructed in the same way and with the same materials. The transferors of Medicine Pipes, the ones that make changes in the sacred pipes, they put them in the same way as their visions. They operate them different through their dreams. They change them because they perform miracles with the pipes. That is what life is.

The Medicine Pipes have all different restrictions probably other than the Medicine Pipe recipient will ride the horse that he is initiated into riding. That is the Medicine Pipe recipient's horse. It is more feared for a woman to ride a Medicine Pipe horse. That is what they are called, Medicine

Pipe dogs (horses). A Medicine Pipe owner has a Medicine Pipe saddle, he has a Medicine Pipe quirt, he has a Medicine Pipe rope and he has his Medicine Pipe bowl. A Medicine Pipe owner has his own property. He will not borrow; he will not lend. It is then fantastic! The Horn Society don't own a drum. They will go to a Medicine Pipe owner. They will tell him, "We will use your drums," and the Medicine Pipe owner gives his drum to them. He did not say, "I don't lend away." When the Horns are through with the drums they will go and give back the drums to

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\*Difference between Bud Laying to the Center Medicine Pipe and the other Plains Indian Medicine Pipes is, the pointed end of the stem points to the east when it is laid on the support rack, while when the other Medicine Pipe stems are laid on the support rack the mouthpieces point east and the pointed end points west. That is why this Medicine Pipe is called the Bud Laying To The Center.

the Medicine Pipe owner and the owner just takes them back. The Horn Society are the major society of all transferable bundles.

A Utility Bag Bundle owner is the same. He will not just lend his things. The Motokiki and the ones that are going to have a Group Smoking ceremony will also go to the Utility Bag Bundle owner to borrow his rattler and his hide drum. The owner will lend his rattlers and his hide drum to the Group Smoking ceremony. Okay, they also lend their rattles and their hide drum to the Holy Woman. The sponsors of a Holy Lodge don't own rattles. They use rattles when there is a fancy lodge singing in the Holy Lodge. They drum on a hide with rattles and again it occurs, they use rattles in the Holy Woman's Lodge, and drumming is done for the Holy Lodge dancer. He is made to dance to the centre.

There is only one song for the Holy Lodge dancer to which he dances to the centre and I will illustrate the song to which he is made to dance to the centre. I also know that there is a drumming to it. He danced out from the Holy Woman's Lodge.

(NO LYRICS IN HOLY LODGE DANCE SONG)

So he danced out and he danced backwards and then straight ahead. When he danced far enough he danced backwards again. As he danced straight ahead again, he entered into the Holy Lodge. Those are the ones that tied plumes on their little fingers. The plumes are tied to a long string with a wing in one hand and fragrant smells (sweetgrass) in the other hand. They made motions with those and a whistle. They paint themselves with white clay.

It is different with the Cree Holy Lodge dance. They change their facial paintings. The structures that they (Crees) dance in are all around the inside of the Holy Lodge. The singers in a Holy Lodge drum on a hide and now they use drums. In the

Holy Lodge is where our elder comrades are useful. That is where the holy men are useful in the Holy Lodge. They swore greatly on the pipes; they illustrated the straight way.

The Medicine Pipe owners use their Medicine Pipes to offer smokes. The Utility Bag Bundle owners use the pipes to offer smokes and also the Black Covered Pipes are also used in the Holy Lodge. All the pipes are illustrated in the Holy Lodge. The ordinary pipes are used in the Holy Lodge. Every sacred thing is illustrated in the Holy Lodge. That is where the Horns are seen in the Holy Lodge.

People all confess in the Holy lodge, people that do wicked work, people that kill people. People don't know any more about the native styles. Now I see women wearing headbands with tail feathers. I say a person that wears a tail feather headpiece must've killed a person. That is where everything is illustrated in the Holy Lodge. The chiefs tell about their war exploits and make a big illustration of how they killed a man; they reenact their war exploits on other people. That is where it occurs that they suffered. There are two ways that they suffer for life. The life of nowadays they (women) suffer because they will have babies. They suffer because they are going to confess. The Holy Woman suffers at that point. That is where the Holy Woman suffered for the sins of the people herself. The woman that sponsors Holy Lodges doesn't commit sins; that is where she made herself suffer for the sins of the people. People will know about life if they understand these well. When I understood these -- I am First Rider -- when I understood life, that is why I am illustrating life today. I (First Rider) think that there is no one of my age or older than me and that are younger than me that know how to illustrate life. I know there is a friend of mine; his name is Wolf Chief. Many Gray Horses, he is the one that knows the illustrations of life; others don't know. But it occurs he (Many Gray Horses) doesn't know the songs. Now the things that are going to be illustrated, I (First Rider) am not saying that I know all about life but I just know a lot about life. The reason why I sat here, why I work this job, there will be a few that I don't know. I don't have to necessarily tell other people, "Teach me this and I will go and tell a story of it." I (First Rider) illustrate what I know and what I saw.

Now I (First Rider) know that I cannot throw back. There are many obscene words that are with the all holy things in life. Obscene words are all with life and I will say them openly. There are a lot of people that maintain life; they still maintain it and they cannot illustrate it. A person will not tell a story about the woman that he still runs after. When he quits that habit to chase the woman then he will illustrate how he goes about life. At this point he confessed; that is how I live now.

The stories that I am telling now, when I start to talk about them I continuously know what life is. All the transferable artifacts all came from the filthiest part of life. The first

Horn Society recipients give a bucket and a knife as payments for a Horn Society Bundle. And payments in a Medicine Pipe transferal are also poor. That is why Medicine Pipe owners give hints. "Why don't I see that horse?" Medicine Pipe owners will just ask for anything; the Utility Bag Bundle owners don't ask. It is fantastic. The Utility Bag Bundle

owners, as the water animals have no horses, they have no property. None of the people that live the Utility Bag Bundle way, none of them are rich. They are poor; the Medicine Pipe owners are rich. Now our time is up to this day. There are some Medicine Pipe owners that just lock their Medicine Pipes in their homes. We don't see the Medicine Pipes any more. So that is how transferable items are. Indian religion doesn't show any more now. A Utility Bag Bundle Pipe is not considered holy. We'll say the bundle is just a home for the mice; they gnaw away the contents completely. That is why I went to telling stories about it. The Indians have ruined them again. How come that it happened that way? People are drinking continually. People that tell stories, they tell stories just to get their drink and to get their children out of jail with their stories. So that is how life is. So now I close my story at this point. I am just talking about these; I am not criticizing. They are my complaints because people don't care any more. The ones that go through the transferal ceremonies, the artifacts that are being transferred, that are transferred to the whites, they are not initiated plainly as to live a healthy life. The bundles are transferred to them (whites) falsely so that people will get money. That is how people work now. Myself, I will never work like that just to make money. I am afraid to be ruining life just to be making money.

The story that is told about that is called Judas. The Creator that was nailed to the Cross; he (Judas) just got thirty pieces of silver and he betrayed Him (Jesus). Today his (Judas) wicked life is still talked about. So I don't want to be called Judas, so I will always put my stories straight. That is all.

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