Document Name/Informant: Joe Gambler 3
Fertility staff for tobacco dance, medicine pipe sweat lodge, origin myth of Horn society

Informant's Address: Blood Reserve
Cardston, Alberta

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Highlights:
- Origin myth of the Horn Society.
- Description of the construction of a sweat lodge.

Joe: The staff that is used for a skewer is the man thing. It is carved like the man's thing with furs attached to it. It looks real. It is used for skewing. It is the first one to be held inside and good stuff is put on it. It is held inside four times. It is covered with a good blanket and the owner of the staff keeps whatever is put on the staff. After it's used four times the owner just puts it down. He cannot use it more than four times. It's called the man thing.* It is transferable.

Diane: Tell a little story about the Pigeons. Ah, how many are they in number and what do you call the ones that join in? There are some that are called uh -- there are Bears.

Joe: Yes, there are various kinds of comrades.

Diane: Yes, call them out. Give the names of the Pigeons.

Joe: Okay.

Diane: What you know?
Joe: Okay.

Diane: Go ahead, start.

Joe: He has switched it on?

Diane: Yes.

Joe: The coyote owner is their leader. He packs the coyote on his back and the one that sits next to him owns the rattle. Those are the main ones.

On the south side there are two men painted with yellow ochre. They are called the Yellow Pigeons. And two on the north side and there are four Bear Pigeons. They have bear skin belts and arm bands and they paint their eyes black and they have bow and arrows. There is also a long pole; it is called excrement. It is dabbed with axle grease at the top. It is used for smearing. It is called the smearing staff. Feathers are attached to it. Those that refuse to get up will be smeared with it. It is called the excrement. In the past excrement was used and those that refuse to get up and dance are smeared with it. That is the reason why it is called the smearing staff. So that is how many main bundles there are in the Pigeon Society. There are the Red Pigeons; the Red Pigeons are the Bear Pigeons' slaves. If they cover themselves with their robes they'll shoot them. They will shoot them with their arrows. They have no sympathy for them and then they will sit bare. So that's how it is, yes. There are their leaders and those are all Red Pigeons. They chase them. That is how it is.

Diane: Their leader is the coyote.

Joe: The coyote carrier.

Diane: Yes and next?

Joe: Next the owner of the rattle is their leader too, just a rattle.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: They have their bed at the back and the owner of the smearing staff is by the doorway and at the back are the Yellow Pigeons standing on each side and the four Bear Pigeons sit by
the doorway.

Diane: Do you know the origin, how they existed?

Joe: It was transferred to here by the North Peigans. It was not transferred here originally. It came from the North Peigans. I don't know, a story was never told how it originated. Some people from here that went to the Peigan Reservation saw the Pigeons when they held their dance and they admired them and they told them, "Please give us your Pigeon Society." They were told, "We will transfer half to you and you can make the rest of the bundles and us we will rebuild them." That is how it is.

Diane: And the -- did they have bundles?

Joe: None.

Diane: The bows and arrows are just there.

Joe: Yes, the bows and arrows are just there and the belts and arms bands of the Red Pigeons and they also tie a band of skins on their ankles. The Yellow Pigeons just painted themselves with yellow ochre and they have bows and arrows and the smearing staff is as long as the cross section and wing feathers are attached to the smearing staff. That is how it is made.

Diane: Ah, tell a little story of the sweat lodge.

Joe: Yes.

Diane: The sweat lodge of the Medicine Pipe owners.

Joe: Yes.

Diane: Ah. How many willows are there to build it?

Joe: There are 12 willows to a Medicine Pipe sweat lodge -- ten and two.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: This is how many there is and two more.

Diane: That's the willows?

Joe: Yes, the willows are bent into an arch.

Diane: Yes, when do they have their sweat lodge.

Joe: They'll build their sweat lodge any time. He will say, "I will build a sweat lodge," and he will and he'll build a sweat lodge at any time he wants to build a sweat lodge. The Holy Lodge sweat lodge is hard to build. The willows are small in diameter. They are this size. They are set close together
and they shape up like this. Ah. They are one hundred in number. Fifty on one side and fifty on the other side. That is hard to build. The Medicine Pipe sweat lodge has 12 willows. It can be built in no time.

Diane: Ah. How many rocks are there? Those that are in the centre?

Joe: Those are not... the ones that are also counted are the... wait, maybe 50. Yes, they are 50, the rocks that are heated red hot.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: They are small in size. They are not very large.

Diane: Yes, can you tell a little story besides the sweat lodge, the Medicine Pipe sweat lodge?

Joe: The Medicine Pipe sweat lodge will be set up. It will be set up. A skull will not be included. There will not be a buffalo skull that is put to it. The one that built the Medicine Pipe sweat lodge will just put an offering on top of the sweat lodge, an offering with wing feathers attached to it. When it's time for him to make facial paintings he will take the offering into the sweat lodge and after he finished painting the face of a person he will make a downward brushing motion twice on each side of the person. After the conclusion of this brief ceremony the offering will be taken out to the back of the sweat lodge and it will be stuck into the pile of earth from the dugout. That is how the offering is done. And the uh -- they will -- they will sing seven songs. These are Medicine Pipe songs. They sing seven times and on this they will flip the door open and the smoke will blow out and then they'll shut the door again.

Diane: Is that all?

Joe: That's all.

Diane: Tell a story about the Long Time Pipe, the sweat lodge of the Long Time Pipe.

Joe: The Long Time Pipe. They'll cut 50 willows -- 25 on one side and 25 on the other side. The willows are close together. After it is erected the arch structure is painted with red ochre on one side and now this is on the willows and on the other side with black ochre and now this is done. The ground scraping is a little ways west from where the rocks are and the scraped portion on the ground is divided with a line up the centre. This is drawn with black ochre and half is painted with real paint and the other half with black ochre. This is the same painting on the robe. This is always associated and then the buffalo skull is brought in and it is painted the same way. A line is drawn with black ochre from the top down to the nose and half is dotted with black ochre and the other half is
dotted with real paint and the nostrils are plugged with sage grass, the ears and the mouth. After it is painted it is then taken to the sweat lodge and it is on the portion where the ground is scraped facing where the sun sets in the west. First they'll sing the song of the buffalo skull. The song of the buffalo skull is sung after the buffalo song is sung.

The songs are different for the Long Time Pipe. The people that sing are don't know the songs of the Long Time Pipe. The songs are altogether different for the Long Time Pipe. They sing the ordinary Medicine Pipe songs to it. There is a man by the name of Lone Medicine Pipe Owner (Bob Tail Chief). He is the only one that does it accurately. He'll sing the songs to the Long Time Pipe and there is another man that just died lately; his name is Shorty Crow (Stephen Fox). Those are the two men that sing the songs of the Long Time Pipe. These men that sing don't sing any of the songs of the Long Time Pipe. They'll just sing the ordinary Medicine Pipe songs and they put up an argument and charge a lot for them. If these two were still alive they'll hear them. They have already studied the songs. They'd say, "How is it that these men sang different and these other men also sang different too." Fifty bullets will be emptied. They are stone shaped. The ceremonialist will take the bullets. They're 50. Those are also payments for the sweat lodge. That is how it is. The participants of the sweat lodge will not just go out from the sweat lodge. When the participants come out from the sweat lodge the one that put up the sweat lodge will tell the participants, "You will all come to my home to eat," and they will go to have a feast and they'll sing the songs at this place that they didn't sing at the sweat lodge. The Medicine Pipe owners never fail to pay anything to everything that they are initiated into.

Diane: How many songs are there in the Long Time Pipe?

Joe: They're seven.

Diane: Seven?

Joe: They're seven.

Diane: Yes, how long do they sit in there?

Joe: About one hour.

Diane: One hour?

Joe: Yes, they sit in there for one hour. The owner of a Medicine Pipe will have to participate in the sweat bath and nobody else will flip the door open. His wife will work there. She will be flipping both doors open. She will lift the covering of one door and the other one too when the steam all blows out and the doors are shut again. The sweat lodge is covered real good especially at the base and the inside is just like shutting the eyes (very dark). They are frustrating and those that wanted some tea will be given some while they're in
the sweat lodge. That's all.

Diane: Tell the story of the origin of the Horn Society.

Joe: A man... the people of the past always had a shortage in food. The buffalo goes astray from them. A young man, those are what we call buffalo chasers, he started running. This was winter. He came up to a buffalo that was stuck in a snowbank. He had a staff with an effigy of a man which he tied to the staff. He carries the staff around with him. He walked up to the buffalo and said, "I am not after this." So he poked her in her friend with his staff and walked away. He herded the buffalo. He forgot what he did. That's all; he forgot what he did. So the people had the buffalo over the jump, so they started. The man was a bachelor. He couldn't get a wife, the one that did wrong to the buffalo.

When it was summer all the children were playing on a hillside bush. Suddenly a little boy came out from the bush; he was a handsome boy. His robe was a calf skin. The little boy would play with the children and when they quit playing in the evening the little boy would go home into bush. When one of the boys got home told his father, "Father, there is a boy, a very handsome boy out where we play at the hillside bush. He comes out from the bush and when we disperse he goes home into the bush." The man told his son, "Try and deceive him to come home with you. Try and deceive him to come home with you so I'll know. Grab him and tell him, "You are coming home with me.'" So the children were playing again and in the evening, "Now we'll quit playing." They were ready to go home. He grabbed the boy. He told him, "My friend, come home with me and you can eat." "Wait, you are right, I will go home with you. Release me, I'll go home with you." So he led the boy away. When he got inside he told his father, "Here he is."

When the man looked at him he couldn't recognize him. He knew that he was a mysterious being. The child was fed. He ate and after he got through eating the man told him, "Okay, to be known, tell me why are you travelling." The boy said, "My mother is in the hillside bush. I came to look for my father in the camps. He is staying amongst here." He told the boy, "Son, sit there. I'll look into it." So people were invited and they all went into the tipi. The man told him, "Okay, son, look for your father in the camps." The boy looked for him amongst the men. He didn't come in. So again other well-to-do people were invited and he didn't come in and then, and again three groups had come in. When they were all invited the fourth time, those are the big feet; that is the bachelors. They all came in and as he came in the boy was sitting there. He jumped up and walked to a man that was... that sat on the

*When the young man came up to the buffalo, he poked her in her vagina with his staff and said, "I will claim her."
opposite side. The boy sat on the man's lap. The boy told the man, "Here is my father." The bachelor was mystified. He thought, "How can he be my son?" The boy said, "We will go to my mother and we will come to the camps with her." After everything was over they all went out and the man was led away by the boy. They went to the hillside bush. The boy told his father, "Just go and tell my mother to come." So he went to the hillside bush. The boy told him, "Don't flee from my mother. If you don't flee from her you will come out with her but if you flee from her you will be killed on the way." So he went and as he got there the buffalo gave a snort and charged him. He just stood still and told her, "I came for you and here you try to attack me." He walked up to her and kissed her. He told her, "Now, just tell me the truth, the reason why we're together and how did you know that you was my wife?"

The woman told him, "I was stuck in the snow in a coulee and you poked me with your staff and that is how I got our son." "You are right," the man said. So he took her home. As he was a bachelor and she was a mystic woman she would just cover up the hides and then flip the cover off and the hides are scraped and tanned. His tipi was completed in a short time and finally he got to be a leader and a very rich man. The woman told him, "You can stab me and if you want to beat me up you can hit me with a stick, et cetera. You can throw a stone at me but never strike me with a hot charcoal. That is one thing you'll not hit me with."

His tipi was always crowded by visitors; he was always crowded by men. He invited some men at night. He gave an invitation call and the wind blew and the tipi was filled with smoke. He told his wife, "Go out and set the ear flaps." The woman jumped out and settled the ear flaps. "The smoke is not even going out. How are you setting the flaps?" The woman came in and told her husband, "You go out and set the ear flaps. I don't even know how to set them." The man told his visitors, "Our pipe smoking is concluded. She'll never know how to set the ear flaps." They jumped out and set the ear flaps in place and the smoke from the fireplace blew out. He told her, "You are a real woman now and you don't know how to set the ear flaps." The woman told him, "You people know how to go about your properties. Me, I never did own a tipi. How should I know how to set the ear flaps?" The man grabbed a burning stick. He told her, "You'll never know how," and he lifted the burned stick to strike her. The woman ran out and the little boy. Then he heard the dogs barking. As he looked out he saw his wife dodging the dogs with her little calf running ahead of her. They had turned into buffaloes again.

The man lamented for his wife every day and when summer came told his clan, "I am going for my wife." The man had two crows as pets. "If I don't come back, let my pets look for me. I will go in that direction. Just let my pets loose and they will track me down."

He walked on and on and he would hide by springs because the
buffaloes came to drink from the springs. He longed to see his son. As he was gone for a length of time his people had taken him for dead and as he came up to another water hole there were a heard of buffaloes so he hid besides the place. He laid there and the calves were going for a drink. As he looked, there was his son. He jumped up and greeted his son. He told his son, "Where is your mother?" "She is with my grandparents," his son told him. "They are all sitting out there with my brothers." He told his son, "I am looking for you and for your mother." His son told him, "It will be very hard for us just to go home with you. My grandfather will tell you that we will have a dance. If we have a dance you will have four guesses. If you can pick me out four times and then we will go home with you. If you can't pick me out on the fourth time you will be killed." He told his son, "Think of something of how I can pick you out." "You will make a mistake because us calves we all look alike." His son told him, "In the first dance I'll be limping and just grab me. And the next dance I'll dance with one eye shut and grab me again. And in the next dance I'll dance with one ear flopped and grab me again. And on the fourth I'll raise my tail." The other calves overheard him. The calves said, "He is telling his father this and that. He told his father, "I'll dance with my tail raised on the fourth time and you will grab me for the fourth time." The boy ran off and told his grandfather, "My father is here." The buffalo told him, "Bring him over here." So the boy took his father to his grandfather. He told him, "I made a special trip to look for your daughter. I am used to her and I loved her." His father-in-law told him, "Tomorrow we will have a dance. We will have a dance. If you pick out your son four times you will go home with him."

So the next day the dance started. The calves started dancing and there was his son limping. He grabbed him. The man told him, "That is your son." They started dancing again. He had grabbed him three times. "One more. Have courage. If you grab him again you will go home with him." As the other calves had overheard him that he'll dance with his tail up on the fourth dance and as all the calves started dancing again they all raised their tails. He was trying to grab one in confusion so he grabbed one calf that looked like his son. "Now you have made a mistake," the buffalo told him. As he looked around the people had transformed themselves into buffaloes again and the buffaloes gored him from all sides. They gored him again and again and he was completely trampled into nothing. A strand of his hair was the only thing that was left of him.

The man that was sitting at home thought, "He hasn't come home yet. He is killed." So the crows were fed and the man told the crows, "Now run along on his trail. Fly after him and look for him. Try and find something of him." The crows flew away and they had been away for two days. They have gone for two days and they haven't flown back yet. Three days and then on the fourth day the crows were heard. Here they are. They flew in. One had a strand of hair in its beak. The crow dropped it
in front of the man. As the man had mystic powers he treated the hair and covered it and as he uncovered it the man sat up. He had come back to life again so he... again, again. So there was nothing wrong with him. "I'll go for my wife again and they can kill me again," the man said. So he started off again with a big chopped tobacco. He came to a river and all the buffaloes were bedded down in an inlet. His father-in-law said, "My son-in-law is here. There he is." The woman ran to him and greeted her husband. She told him, "I am going home with you this time. They will not put you through a test any more. A dance will be held for you." So his son took him to the centre. The Horns had already staked the staffs into the ground and the, uh... his son sat him down. "Now study the staffs. That staff that has a white binding is the main one and that other one is also the main staff." He named all the staffs. "Those are given to you. When you get home start making them. Your wife will show you how." So they started to dance. He was told, "Those staffs represent our tails and those three men that dance in the opposite way, their trailer headdresses represent our vertebrae and the headdresses of the others represent the skulls." So that's how it was. That is what he was told.

He was told, "That man that is sitting at the end, what he's got is called the marten. I got one at home, the same kind of marten. It was sent to me. A white man wanted to have the marten fixed and I haven't fixed it yet. The Horns dance with it. They dance in a circle with it. So he was instructed on the staffs and he got his wife back. That is how the Horn Society originated. So he went home to his home and he started to kill otters and he cut the hides in narrow strips and then he started to bind the Horn Society staffs and he made the headdresses. He killed a marten and fixed it too. The man had a battle with the enemy. He wore the leader's headdress and he fought. As he poked his head up he was hit with an arrow on the forehead. He didn't remove the arrow. When he got home he invited the older people. He told them, "What do you think of this arrow? What are we going to do with it?" They told him, "You forced your way through the Crees. When the Horn Society dances you will take the lead in the dance. The children will throw something at you and you will dance through them and you will fire a shot." That is how it is. That is the reason why that headdress has an arrow in front. That is all.
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