George First Rider is sixty-nine years old (Blood Indian). His father was 'Little Dog'.

He will now tell you how he knows the Treaty (No, 7) as was given (told) to him from his ancestors.

'The time when Mr. Laird and Col. MacLeod were here'-(George)

George: "I am going to tell about the treaty as I heard it. I was not present, but my father and other old timers were there and this is how it was related to me. A man by the name of 'Cross Painted Teepee' also "Chief Moon" and "Wolf Chief" these were some of the people who told me these stories. Not only them, many others too!"

"Now about Red Crow. He was our (Blood) principal chief. He was a war-chief. A war chief is one who helps and feeds his people voluntarily. They were responsible in the administration of weapons and ammunition for the people. 

Crowfoot was the chief of the Blackfoot (Segment). Red Crow though had always been regarded as the better chief of the
people. Crowfoot always abided by what the white man asked.

As Mr. Laird prepared for treaty negotiations with the Indian people, Red Crow told the interpreter that he would wait for Crowfoot, because Crowfoot was better acquainted personally with the white man.

As the treaty (No, 7) negotiations began - "You shall lay down your arms (weapons). You will become our children (government wards). Now the Queen is to become your mother. In between her palms she will form a nest for you. Now we will give you money, we will feed you." These were the first promises made, and Crowfoot was the first to accept. Red Crow stated that he would follow Crowfoot. That is how it was at Blackfoot Crossing.

There is many things but I will try to be as brief as possible.

At this first treaty we got a payment of $12.00 for every person, adults and children alike. At a treaty payment later, south of Fort Macleod at a place called Center Hills, the Indian agent then was Short Man, the interpreter was a man by the name of James Bird (Chief Bird).

Chief Bird then attempted to explain and clarify the promises made to the Indians by the government at the original treaty. At this time we were promised that rations (food) could be drawn every four days. This made it so that rations could be drawn twice a week. It was then that we were told about the $7.00 (that was reduced from the $12.00 payment, making the treaty annuity payment only $5.00) being put away for future beneficial use (Trust Fund) for our people.

These were the times when cattle was slaughtered for the people's daily consumption, thirty and forty head at intervals. The meat was treated with some kind of chemical. Shortly after, it would turn blue and would not be eatable. Those were the days when the people were dying off. Bodies were hauled out of camps at a high rate and carried to the burial grounds. During the time of the issuing of rations, many people got sick and very many died. From then on the promises started to be altered. The rations were decreased; the money was decreased to $5.00. They had made these promises for as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow. Also education and medicare were included.

In later times the reserve was surveyed and Red Crow used two rivers as boundaries for the country he retained. We, the Bloods, had a piece of timberland in Waterton country. It was maintained for general purposes of the people (such as, fire wood, and buildings). Spruce gum, which the Indians used, was obtained there; game was also abundant. Whatever we needed on the reserve in regard to game and birds was never out of season - there was no such thing as closed season. The allowance of trapping was another promise. All these promises came about at intervals as time progressed.

As we settled in the Belly Butte country, we began the
technique of transporting logs by floating them on the Waterton River. Guns at this time were issued. When ammunition was supplied to us, they stated again that as long as we were issued rations, ammunition grants would also be given. Traps were also issued so food could be obtained. Later on we went to get vouchers type which we used to obtain ammunition from the store in town. This was issued to a few chiefs of Treaty 7 this way. The chiefs in turn were to issue this ammunition to the people, but White Striped Dog was the only chief that I had ever known who had carried out this type of issuing. There was only a few people who received ammunition at that time. This happened at the Old Agency, which was located in the centre of the reserve. It was the last issuance of ammunition I had ever heard of.

Various tools such as axes, knives, files, assets of this type used in obtaining food, which were once distributed, also terminated.

There was a hospital. That is where we obtained our medical supplies and necessities. Most of these and many other promises pertaining to the people's welfare slowly terminated. There was a time when livestock was issued. This, too, terminated. The people wondered and could not understand why and how all these 'promises' made with them could possibly be changed and terminated.

Later on when the 'Many-wives' (Mormons) came into our country, they approached Red Crow seeking his permission to make camp for the winter. In the spring when the weather warmed they would move; they would leave their buildings behind for Indian use. Red Crow, being of generous character told them not to leave, but to stay.

All what I have said is what I have heard from the older generation, I do not wish to add anything that isn't true, also I do not wish to over-express more than what I know. This has been told to me.

On our land timber was always used, for buildings at later times. In earlier times it was used for tipi-poles, tipi pins, pickets, pillow supporters and many other uses. Wood was mainly used for fires, for handling of cooking food. Wood was used in portions of our sacred ceremonies, as to heat ashes for the burning of sacred incense burning.

Paint was obtained from the land. "Seven-paint" had always been attained in its natural color.

Food (some forms) was gotten from the earth's natural vegetation, such as wild turnips, onions, carrots, and many kinds of berries and plants. Also many types of roots, and herbs were used for medicine. We brewed these to make a liquid for coughs; also we brewed our own type of tea. All these necessities came from our land.

Pipe bowls were of a certain type of rock; wood was used for pipe stems. It was not anywhere that these materials were
obtained, but we know where to get them from our land.

Most basics and circumstances within our culture has been destroyed by the white man society. Our land has been taken away from us, our religion ruined and our culture destroyed. The medicine pipe had always been our principal representative of honesty and truth in this life.

I will relate again to the promises that the government made to us, which were binded by the words "As long as the sun shines and the river flows'. 'When the sun ceases to shine and the rivers cease to flow,' said David Laird and Short Man, only then would these promises likewise cease. (Mr. Laird known among the Indians as "Tall White Man" or "Spe-tu-ku-un'.) To us, the Indians, it seems as though the sun has quit shining and the rivers have quit flowing since the white man has not fulfilled his share to these promises.

It was once, that we depended entirely on the natural resources of our country. These are not readily available today - coal is gone, oil is being taken.

Now we wonder what next is the government going to think of, to take away from us. We have kept our side of the treaty; we obeyed and kept the peace. You will always benefit from the resources of your land. We were told not to fight anymore and to lay down our arms. We were not to partake in any future confliction of wars, but today we find we are subject to the taking up of arms (compulsory military training).

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