

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: GEORGE FIRST RIDER
TIPI FLAG/MEDICINE PIPE
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: BLOOD RESERVE
CARDSTON, ALBERTA
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CARDSTON, ALBERTA
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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 transfer of various ceremonial objects.
George First Rider: Okay, I am still telling a story. Now myself I am telling a little bit of the stories that I know, the things that occurred to me, what was done to me. This was not done to a person. A person will illustrate a thing that he doesn't know the way he thinks. I said before, I will not give a false information of a thing that I don't know. I will say, "I don't know this." I will not argue with a person that knows it.

The transferable artifacts are recent. What I saw, I saw this belt. This woman, Small Mouth, dreamed the belt. She shook the belt as she sang the belt song and puff balls fell from the belt. She said, "If I was a man I'd dance with it and I will perform a different miracle. I am a woman. That is all I can

do." Miracles are performed with all these constructed artifacts; the ones that constructed artifacts perform miracles with them. My father constructed a drum. He sang after he drew the bear. He ochred his heel and he stepped on a red hot rock and his foot sizzled and he set the drum down. After he got his foot on the red hot rock he jumped on the drum; he didn't tear the drum. I saw a lot of those constructed artifacts.

The two constructed artifacts that I saw are of no use. Steel constructed the Black Seizer Pipe; he completed it. That Black Seizer Pipe was transferred to Calf Sleep Alone; his other name is Many Fingers. Lately Steel also constructed a Medicine Pipe. The Medicine Pipe was not finished yet, he was still looking. He had a headache, he slept, and when he woke up he looked but he didn't see. He (Steel) went blind. His eyes are still open but he can't see. He was constructing the pipe. It was not long after his wife had a runaway team and she got hurt on her hip and she died of that; not long after, he (Steel) died. The pipe was never finished. He completed the first pipe; the second pipe that he (Steel) was constructing was never finished.

There is a deceased man, his name is Night Wailer; his other name is Lone Caller. I (First Rider) recognized him. He was going to construct a Black Covered Pipe. When he (Lone Caller) got the materials then he constructed the pipe in a different way. He had everything he wanted for the pipe then he constructed a Police Pipe. He didn't make the Black Covered Pipe, he (Lone Caller) made the Police Pipe; there was a hair lock on it. He made it just the way he dreamed of the pipe. The hair locks were ready, then he got some beaver hides. He said, "I am going to construct the Beaver Pipe." Those beavers, there are two small ones. Myself, I am Miserable Boy, I donated those to him. I also killed a loon and I also gave that to him and the pipe was complete.

He said, "My friends." These friends of his are called Crow Carriers. They are the ones that will use the pipe. They will amuse themselves with it; they are all old men. My father made a rattle for the bundle and the pipe was complete; Lone Caller made it. His friend's name is Limping Bull Buffalo. His other name is Spear Chief. The pipe was transferred to him. Lone Caller transferred it to Limping Bull Buffalo. Limping Bull Buffalo now owns the pipe. It wasn't long after, his wife died. He kept the pipe, then he noticed that the pipe was not holy so he cut the tails off of the beavers and he sold the hides. The tails were still in the bundle.

He (Spear Chief) died too. His son took the pipe; his name is White Pants. He almost died at the time he took the pipe. When White Pants almost died he made a vow to sponsor a Group Smoking ceremony. He said, "I will make a berry soup for Dog Child so that I (Harry Spear Chief) recover." So he got well again. The pipe was given to Dog Child. White Pants told him, "This is my father's pipe, your friend's pipe. I give it to

you for payment." My father took it. I (First Rider) told my father when he came back with the pipe, "That pipe is not good. Put it away." He took that pipe to Browning, Montana, U.S.A. It was there for two years. Nobody ever bought it because it was all new. He took it back and he went and gave it to Little Eagle Ribs; it will be transferred to Little Eagle Ribs.

My mother died at the time when my father gave the pipe away. It wasn't long after, my father died too, who is going to transferred it to Little Eagle Ribs. It wasn't long after, Little Eagle Ribs died too. The pipe was kept in his stepson's home. His stepson gave it to Calling Last and Calling Last took it to Browning, Montana. He sold it at an antique shop. I don't know how much he got for it and now Calling Last is dead too. A newly constructed artifact that is considered holy, I know now of the people that own it, is still alive. That pipe is of no use; it's a false constructed pipe.

Now there are a lot of people that take things from the ghosts, the things that they went to the burial place with, and they sell them. A person will say, "I will also sell my dead relative's designed tipi." This is really all false. A person should perform a miracle with the thing that he is going to sell. A person should show how the thing that he is going sell is transferred and the songs. Myself, I am Miserable Boy. All the things that were transferred to me -- I wasn't at all a grown-up man, I was a small boy when I went through a transferal -- I know all the songs of the sacred artifacts that were transferred to me and I could transfer any of them away.

One horn headdress was transferred to me. I (First Rider) was ten (10) years old when it was transferred to me. Today I still remember the way my face was painted for that horn headdress, I still remember how I performed, I still remember how I got up to dance, I still remember how I whooped when I was dancing and I still remember the song. I still remember the goring song. I still remember the song when I was made to get up and dance. I know all the songs to the tipis that were transferred to me, and the performances. I owned four tipis; they're all yellow painted. The headdresses, I took four headdresses in one (1) day. I know how I performed and how my face was painted and the song. The same song was sung to the four headdresses, so how can I not know it?

Now if I want to give away the headdress, I will transfer them. If I want to transfer the four tipis, I will transfer them myself. I know how they were. I know how my Horn Society bundle was transferred to me and I will give it away in the same way. Now the sacred bundle that was transferred to a person, the person will say, "I will give it away. Then he says, "Someone will give it away for me." This kind of a giveaway, the person that is hiring will pay the one that he hired. The recipient will not pay him. He will not be paying two people. These are crooked works. There are too many transferable items that we just make money on.

Now where I (First Rider) stand, the story that I am going to tell, I will tell a story that I know. There is nothing in life that is too difficult that I cannot illustrate. I will not give a false information on what I don't know, I will give an information on what I know. There are newly constructed items amongst the transferable items. The Fast Horse Owners, the Crow Carriers got together. Those are the only ones that were in the Horn Society many times. A man named Donald Camoose didn't take any of the Horn Society bundles. They traced back, they found out that a woman by the name of Sharp Body once had a Horn Society bundle and she remade it. When the Horns dance it can be seen; it looks white. When some of the sacred artifacts were sold, it doesn't look good to reconstruct a sacred artifact that is sold. A sacred artifact that was transferred cannot be reconstructed. Now it occurs when a person gets desperate for money he will reconstruct whatever he wants and he'll sell it to get the money. He didn't bless a child with the thing he was going to sell. In the past we make a vow to a sacred artifact so that we may live long. That is why these transferable artifacts existed. It is not like that any more. We are just after the money. We just give up a remade artifact so that we'll get some money for it.

A miracle is performed with a remade artifact. A person lived long by it, that is the reason why he took it. This ceremonial

belt is the belt of the Braves and the Pigeons; these are the two societies that I know that owned it. The belt was used for curing; it was transferred to a person. There is Scraping White, he is still alive today. The belt was transferred to him; he does curing with it. There is a deceased man, his name is Low Horn. A ceremonial belt was transferred to him and he uses it for curing the sick. Little White Weasel (Cog Child), a belt was transferred to him; he uses it for curing. That is the reason why the transferable items are transferred.

Now if the person that is going to transfer his sacred bundle, even if the recipient is a white man, even if it's a black man, even if it's a Chinese, it does not matter what kind of an Indian the recipient is going to be, he will bless him with the sacred artifact that he is going to give him. A person that is going to give a name to another person, he is going to change his name. He will give the other his childhood name and he will give him a charm and he will bless him. A person who is going to change a name will say, "Okay, I am going to give this man my child name." Okay, his life is changed to a good life, now he is going to be given a name. He is held on his back. "Okay, his childhood name is now sitting here. You will rely on him, you'll go to him for help. He is wealthy. He is a kind person. You'll borrow a horse from him for your buffalo chase, arrows, a knife," and he'll be pushed away. That is how we give names.

Okay, when a chief white man* is coming, the people will argue over him. They will say, "I will give him a name," and a dominant man will give him a name. He doesn't know how. He just give away the name that he heard. Some white man will pay

one hundred (\$100.00) for changing their names. The person will put the money in pocket. He made one hundred (\$100.00) just for talking. A person who is going to give a name by his vision, he is going to give a name with his heart so that the person he is going to give a name may live long; and today that does not exist any more.

Now I am not afraid to illustrate life. Now the transferable artifacts. Some will join the Horn Society for nothing; they never know what the Horn Society is. Some will be obtaining Medicine Pipe and they never the significance of a Medicine Pipe. Some will have a Beaver Bundle Pipe and they never what it is; they don't know how the bundle is going to be used for. The reason why sacred artifacts are transferred to us, we will depend on what is transferred to us to live long by it. That is why the people go to war with what was transferred to them and they'll come back safely with them. Now these don't exist.

*A very important person is called a chief white man in Blackfoot.

Okay, others will not illustrate the other sacred items that were transferred to them. The people are just begging for food with the sacred things that were transferred to them. It is too lonely to where we are going. Now myself (First Rider), I am going to illustrate them. I will still illustrate in a way so the one I am going to illustrate to may live a healthy life; I know a lot about life. Okay, I know a lot of the war stories. I know a lot about the transferable items and the things that I obtained in my life. Now myself, I have two Holy Lodge necklaces. Catching Amongst and Making Noise Under, they both sponsor Holy Lodges. They are the ones that gave me the necklaces. I also was an orderly in the lodge. I wore a crow feather headpiece. I paid a brown horse for wearing a crow feather headpiece. I was an orderly in a Holy Lodge and I know a lot about it and I also cut the hide to tie the Holy Lodge.

I (First Rider) know a lot of the songs to the transferable artifacts. When I am going to tell a story of the things that I heard I will not tell a story that I heard from one person, I will tell a story that I heard from several people. I spoke about reconstructed sacred bundles. The ones that reconstructed sacred bundles are all dead because they reconstructed sacred bundles. It's the same as a false oath. Now those that give offerings, their offerings are all different. Now the tipis are all different. A person that made a tipi doesn't know the song to it; what he will sing is one tipi song. A person that is going to attend a tipi transferal ceremony, he will donate his tipi song from the tipi that was transferred to him. The ceremonialist will perform a miracle. This tipi of mine with a Bald Eagle Flag, a miracle was performed with it. A miracle was also performed with the tipi with a marten flag; I really believed in the tipi with a marten flag. This man that had a dream, it was dark when he transferred the tipi; it wasn't when a tipi was transferred to me.

The fireplace was put out when the tipi transferal started. A serpent was designed around the tipi. The serpent had one horn on the nose on one side. There is another serpent, we'll say it's a female. When the song was sung the two serpents glowed. So that is how we illustrate these transferable items.

Now let's say the days that we are spending. There are too many people that are anxious to conduct a transferal ceremony. Why don't we tell them go ahead and start the transferal ceremony and perform with the item that you are going to transfer? The people officiate transferals is just by what they heard; their transferals are useless. They just want to take the money, so that is how a transferal is. People are made holy with holy transferals. That is why there are taboos; we operate by those.

Today the Horn Society bundles are not transferred the way that they are supposed to be transferred. A cow is famous. She had her calf during the winter and the cow's calf freezes. A Lone Woman* will lay her egg out in the open and her egg will freeze. The birds will lay eggs in the spring. The White Horns** will have their calves in the spring. Today the Horns will transfer their bundles at any time. In the past the Medicine Pipe will be opened only in the spring at the first roar of the thunder. Only a Beaver Bundle owner will open his bundle every month to count the moons; today everything is all different. Now the artifact that was transferred to us is going to be given away, the recipient will tell a legend about it so that the artifact that is transferred will still show.

People now just think of getting some money for what they are going to sell. It is false. Life will be ruined that way. Now the ghostly things are starting to be sold. It is best for people that are going to sell is to sell what is transferred to them so that the person will know the transferral song that he is going to sing. It is not good for a person that is just going to give away something just to make money. I (First Rider) just mentioned these. Now people don't want to tell how the Horn Society is and now myself I illustrate it. The first people that I heard about, the Horn woman that is transported, the sponsors of Holy Lodges are transported when the camps are broken, now that doesn't occur anymore. Those are the ones that go out into the wilderness to get a vision of what is transferred to them. Now if someone is going to take the tipi with the marten flag I (First Rider) will perform a miracle. People will see it.

Now when the Horns lost their way, it is not the life that used to be. The Horns are not holy any more. They don't wife each other by the Horn Society rules. The white man water*** took over instead. The Horns now rape the women members with liquor. They don't go by the rule of how they have holy intercourse with the women; now they have sexual intercourses with the white man's water. Now it is going to be extinct; that is why I (First Rider) illustrated the Horn Society. So

that is the best information I can give.

*A hen is called Lone Woman in Blackfoot.
**Domestic cows are called White Horns in Blackfoot.
***White man's water is whiskey.

The buffaloes will have their calves in the summer and the
Horns will transfer their bundles in the summer. They call the
one that they transfer their bundle to, their child. I (First
Rider) will sing the songs when I am permitted to sing them.
You will understand how it is.

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