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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:

- Description of the Dog Feast ceremony.
- Description of the Group Smoking ceremony.
- Self-mutilation as a form of offering.

George First Rider: Okay, it is the twentieth day of the moon (April) 1970. It is the nineteenth day of the Bear Moon (April). It is the twentieth day. Now it is the twentieth day of the Liar Moon. I (First Rider) made a mistake in saying that it was the nineteenth day; it is the twentieth day.

Now at this point, there is the last part. The last story that I (First Rider) told is the Holy Lodge. These are the chapters of the conclusion of the Holy Lodge. The stories that I have told up to this point, it is not at the time of the last erection of the Holy Lodge.

The times without having Holy Lodges - there are times when we don't have Holy Lodges. Now this one story that I told, the time when we didn't have a Holy Lodge, the activities that took place when there was no Holy Lodge. Now us Blackfoot Real People (Blackfoot Indians), we don't have to wait for the Holy Lodge. When it's haying time, the people of the past will wait when the saskatoons or Juneberries and chokecherries are ripe. When the saskatoon berries dry up and shrink then the chokecherries ripe. They sample the berries and when they are both ready then they have the construction of the Holy Lodge.

During the Haying Time Moon (August) the Horn Societies will transfer their bundles also on that month. So that is how it is when there is no construction of a Holy Lodge. Now the story that I am telling about the time when we did not construct a Holy Lodge, it's the continuation of my story. Now I am through telling stories about the Pigeon Society.

Okay, I (First Rider) am through telling stories about the Parted Hair Society Dance (Sioux Society Dance). I told a story that we make a circular enclosure with wagons; various kinds of dance costumes are brought to this place.

The Dog Feast is celebrated at the circle encampment (Sun Dance). Suddenly we heard that Red Mule Deer is boiling a dog. This Red Mule Deer is a Cree Indian. He became a Blood Indian member and he got married here on the Blood Indian Reserve. His wife's name is Oval Face. This Oval Face's husband, his name is Sleeping On Top. This man Sleeping On Top is a very rich man.

What makes an Indian rich is if he just has a lot of horses and if he is a chief. So this person is a rich person. That is what kind of a person. This person is a rich person. That is what kind of a person this man is, Sleeping on Top. This Sleeping On Top had a house, a log house. He (Sleeping On Top) had a lot of horses.

Oval Face had a son; her son's name is Midget. He was a small boy when she married the Cree Indian (Red Mule Deer). The reason why she (Oval Face) married the Cree Indian (Red Mule Deer) so that the Cree Indian will not be selling her property. She (Oval Face) had cattle, that is why she married the Cree Indian. So that he (Red Mule Deer) will have no claim on her (Oval Face) property so that they will be just looked after by him (Red Mule Deer). So Red Mule Deer became a Blood Indian. Red Mule Deer donated a lot of songs on the Blood Indian Reserve, Cree Holy Lodge songs and Black Seizer songs. The Crees also construct Holy Lodges. The men sponsor a Holy Lodge ceremony, so that is how Red Mule Deer donated so many songs on the Blood Reserve. We heard the news, Red Mule Deer has boiled a meal; what he boiled was a dog. The Parted Hair Society were called, wagons were wheeled in a circle. That is the time I (First Rider) saw that Siouan drums had stakes with crutches. That is what they are called - drums with crutched stakes. These stakes are supports.

The stick has a branch and the branch is cut to a certain length and the other branch is left alone. The example looked like this. It starts down from our elbow and the thumb is the branch that was cut and the finger that we point with is the other branch and it is bent. It is in a long arch. The wooden stake is ochred and it is decorated with stringed beads of various colors, with plumes strung with beads are attached at the end of the arch of the branch. The support wooden stakes are four that lift the big drum. The seats are tree stumps. They are not set upright; they are laid lengthways. The owner of the big drum sits at the back. Red Mule Deer made an invitation call. He invited the Parted Hair Society (Sioux Society). Some of the Parted Hair members got their horses. Wagons were wheeled to the centre. The wagons were wheeled in a huge circle as we did not construct a Holy Lodge and there was obstruction in the camps.

The inside of the circular was lined with canvases to keep out the draft, so that nobody will crawl in, and so that a dog will not come in. There is one entrance. The owner of the big drum came in. The wooden stakes were set up to lift up the drum. So the wooden stakes and the drum were set and the tree stumps are put in place. There will be eight drummers. The owner of the big drum had a log for a seat. He sat right at the back and the rest started to sit down. There are local Parted Hair Society members and the announcer.

The time I (First Rider) saw that celebration there were two announcers. I also saw the owner of the forked staff and I also saw the - let's say a person that is tall. The length

of his arm is the same length of a staff which is wrapped with otter skin. The staff was sharpened at the one end. This staff is dipped in the soup and the person that made the vow is made to lick the tip of the staff which was dipped in broth. The staff is also owned by Red Mule Deer and the forked staff to skewer out the meat. Okay, the two announcers were there, there were the eagle belt owners, the quirt owners. There are four eagle belts and four quirt owners and there are four men that owned long knives (swords). As we did not construct a Holy Lodge at this time, the participants all sat down. Those are the associates of the Dog Feast. They formed a society. The ceremony started.

The society selected warriors that killed an enemy. They took the ones that were encountered by the enemy; the head warriors attended. The men that just dressed up for the occasion all sat on one side. The dance started. The first one to dance was the owner of the big drum; he danced in one place. After he danced, the long knife owners were made to dance. The whip owners were made to dance. The last one to dance was the owner of the eagle belt. This is at the Dog Feast. The announcer was also made to dance. The last ones to dance were the whistle owners.

The whistle owners danced towards the door and then they passed

each other crosswise and they blew on their whistles. When they had danced around four times they blew on their whistles. As they blew on their whistles all the participants got up and danced.

(No words in song.)

This is the song that they danced to. After the song was sung they were made to dance continually. All the participants got up and danced. The man that was going to beat the drum was just dancing in one place. After the dancers had danced for a considerable time, the man walked up to the drummers. While they were still drumming he gave one beat on the drum and the drummers stopped singing. As the drummers stopped the dancers stopped dancing and the drummers sang. They did not beat on the drums they just sang.

(There are no words in the smoking song.)

This is a smoking song. They were offered a smoke so they all sat down and smoked. That is where the Dog Feast started. Men that were in the midst of a battle were made to dance, men that cut the lariat that a horse was tied with were made to dance, men that went on the warpath on their own were made to dance and also the ones that stole from the enemy. That is why

Indian sketches are used. Some don't know what they are. I (First Rider) have seen a lot of false writings and they are all mixed. Lone survivors were also made to dance. People made big confessions in the Dog Feast.

There was Martin Runner. This Martin Runner is slightly tall and husky with a big nose and with a big chest. He was a well-built man. He wore a horned headdress and fully beaded vest. His suit were like underwears and tied a string of bells around his ankles and there are some more bells tied below his knees and his wristlets were cowrie shells. He had a blue silk shirt. His aprons were of red cloths and beaded. That is how he was dressed. He (Martin Runner) was the one that is going to fork out the boiled meat.

There is just one song, the song when to fork out the meat.

(SONG: No words in song.)

He (Martin Runner) just performed and singing stopped, and in the next singing he raised himself up slowly until he was up. He danced slowly around in the direction of the way the sun travels (clockwise).

(SONG: No words in song.)

There is a drumbeat now and then, a rattling beat on the drum. He (Martin Runner) was stepping very neatly, with his horned headdress on, and looking in all directions. He was stepping high and very neatly, and he was whooping all the time. He held the skewer ready with the forked end resting on his

shoulder. When he danced close to the door the drummers made a fast drumming, and as it was sung like this:

(No words in song.)

And he (Martin Runner) danced up to the pot of boiled meat. He was stepping very gracefully and keeping time with the drum beat when he came up to the pot, and as they sang like this (slow).

(No words in song.)

Then he danced up towards the pot of boiled meat. He (Martin Runner) didn't dance fancy but he just danced real fast, stepping from side to side, pointing the skewer to the pot of boiled meat. He did not touch the meat. He swung the skewer over the pot. As he (Martin Runner) swung the skewer over the pot, the drummers sang slowly again, the song real fast before.

(SONG: Here the informant sings very fast and then real slow.)

He (Martin Runner) was looking in all directions as he danced away and then he lifted the skewer. He danced around. As he came even with the door the drumming went faster again.

(SONG)

How come he missed the pot? He almost stuck the skewer into the meat. As he missed the pot the singing went slower again.

(SONG)

He did the same thing. He walked away with graceful steps. When he came back to the same place the drum beat went faster and he danced faster again out on. And he missed the pot again and the singing went slower again and he (Martin Runner) went around again. When he came back to the same place again, there was tumult from the spectators.

The drum beat went faster again and he danced to the pot of boiled meat. He danced just like as if he was dodging something. That is what I (First Rider) thought of him. He (Martin Runner) was dodging just like as if he was scared of the pot. Suddenly he stuck the skewer into the pot of boiled meat. He did not pierce the meat. He just stuck the skewer into the pot and he walked around the pot and he let go of the skewer, which means that the meat will be taken out, and the warriors were made to dance.

(SONG)

Some were just walking around in graceful steps and whooping at the same time. Some danced around making signs that the shots from the enemy are missing them. When everybody had danced the drummers sang a different song.

(SONG)

A man walked to the centre of the floor; his name is Tall Person (alias Tall Man). The time I (First Rider) saw the skewer it belonged to Striped Calf. He lifted the skewer, he pointed the skewer in four directions and points it to the pot. He pointed the skewer first to where the sun rises from the east, then he pointed it towards the pot of boiled meat. Then he pointed it to the west. He swung it around and held it to the pot of boiled meat. Then he held the skewer to the west again, then again to the pot of boiled meat. Then he held it to the east again. The skewer is dipped into the broth and licked by the man to sample the broth.

The forked skewer is used for taking out the meat from the pot but it was not used. Something else was used to take the dog meat out from the pot. The head of the dog was served to the owner of the big drum. If the owner of the big drum cannot eat the dog head he will ask any one of the older men. "There is a horse for you and here are some dry goods. Eat this dog head." The owner of the big drum cannot eat the dog head because he is young. The owner of the big drum was Bear Coming Up The Hill (Nick Striped Wolf). He did not eat the head. He gave it to the sponsorer of the Dog Feast to eat the dog head.

All the different societies - I (First Rider) mean like the long knife (sword) owners and the quirt owners et cetera - were all given a little piece of the boiled dog meat to eat. The initiation into eating. Seven top men were seated in the centre. They all raised their hands. They touched the ground first and then they raised their hands. They made an oath so that the coup counters may tell the truth. This is the song that a person will be made to swear on.

(SONG)

When the song was sung, the seven men knelt down and they all touch the ground with both hands and then they raised their hands and they whooped, "hi, hi, i, i, i, i." This is the Dog Feast. I (First Rider) did not illustrate the songs because I did not tell the story deliberately. I told the story because a Holy Lodge was not constructed at this time. So that is how the Dog Feast operated.

Okay, the men started to count coups. They told about their killings, what they stole. They made a big confession all about their wickedness. They made their confessions in the Dog Feast.

The Dog Feast originated from the eastern people (Gros Ventres). It's their way of life. They don't have Holy Lodges. Us plains Indians have Holy Lodges and also the Crees. Here on the Blood Reserve it's the women that sponsor Holy Lodges; the same with the South Peigans. The Many Chiefs, North Peigans and the Blackfoot Indians, the outside people, it's the men that sponsor a Holy Lodge. So that is how the Dog Feast was celebrated because there was no Holy Lodge, so people made confessions in the Dog Feast. The men that counted coups

swore to tell their stories accurately and they swore that they told their stories accurately. A person will be notified, when the people break camp and will disperse back to homes, it will not be long after when misfortune will come to this person. We will know for certain that he gave a false account; that is why misfortune came to him.

Now in the white way, if an Indian is arrested the judge will tell him, "What are you going to swear on, the Indian way of swearing or the white way of swearing?" An Indian will swear in the Indian way. When he swears he will tell the straight truth, the Indian knows that he will suffer if he swears falsely. That is what the Dog Feast is. That is where the people swear. People will confess openly about all the wicked things that they did.

People cannot hide the kind of life they lived. A person that is just proud of himself and tells false stories about himself he will have bad luck for telling lies. People know. It's their life. They are scared to make a false confession; that is why the Dog Feast is celebrated.

Okay, after they had all danced, the ordinary Siouan dance started and it was an obtrusive dance. A person that wants to dress himself up for a dance, he'll have to ask one of the warriors to dress him up. The warrior will dress him up and he is authorized to join in any kind of dance. Nowadays anybody will join in any dance; it's not like the way they used to have dances. Before the Dog Feast came there is no place where we will tell a story about life as there is no Holy Lodge. The only time a Holy Lodge is built is in the summertime. A Holy Lodge cannot be constructed in the winter.

As there is a lot of sickness going around and people will make a vow to give some tobacco to the sponsorer of a Holy Lodge so that he may recover from his sickness. He is going to cut a tongue for the sponsorer of a Holy Lodge. A Medicine Pipe will be opened. The man will help with a pot of brewed berries and he will dance with the pipe. We make vows to the Beaver Bundle. The Beaver Bundles are opened every month and the bundle owners will turn a bag around the opposite way.

It's not the buffalo bladders that are turned around, it's the outer tissue of the heart. The use of animal bladders were founded by the Crees. The Crees have filthy lives. That is why they eat coyotes. The plains people will not eat a coyote. They don't eat crows, magpies and owls. Today the Indians still think that pigs are filthy. The white men's best food is bacon and bacon grease. The Indians think that pigs are filthy.

A person has nothing to rely on. The utility bag owners are the only ones. We will say the people have no confidence in the sacred Utility Bag Bundles where else people will go to for survival. That is why the Group Smoking Ceremony existed. We will say the Group Smoking belongs to our homes. People that are moving camps, they own the Group Smoking. Those that are

just walking along cannot sponsor a Group Smoking Ceremony. The people of the past never did settled down. I (First Rider) witnessed one thing. It is now winter. How can a Holy Lodge be built?

I am First Rider. The Holy Lodge didn't have to be there. I made a vow. I said, "I will brew some berries for Bear Black Color so that nothing may happen to my child." As the Holy Lodge operates with tongues, so tongues are also used in the Group Smoking ceremony. The Group Smoking ceremony is closely related to the Holy Lodge.

I got myself a beef tongue. We cannot just boil a tongue; the shaman will give the orders. I am First Rider. As it was winter, I (First Rider) went down to the Belly River and I came to a really big house and I rented the house. The ones that I invited arrived in the evening. My mother and my wife made a big cooking. The blood and the tongues, they cooked the food. And I got some tobacco, a calf skin which was tanned by my mother and seven wing feathers which will be attached to my offering. The offering was made in the morning with feathers attached to it and I hung it outside.

The people started to arrive in the evening. When they all came and the ceremony is about to start, I (First Rider) took a steel sharpener and a knife which I am going to give to the shaman. A pipe is also used. The pipe is beside the incense burning place. As the ceremony was about to start, the tongue was the first thing to be prepared. The tongue was ochred with black ochre and then it was cut in pieces. It was boiled in blood and the tobacco was cut. After it was cut the ceremony started.

On the north side of the door four men sat. They were the old men that were not useful any more. Bear Black Color sat at the back. I (First Rider) sat beside him as I was going to be a recipient. I shouldn't sing but I was too aggressive so I sang. The participants said, "That is not the way it should be." The shaman made a mistake; that is the reason why I sang. When the participants sang, they all sang of the transfers that occurred to them. They will sing about one sacred artifact. Myself (First Rider), the Group Smoking ceremonies that I attend I will sing a Horn Society song. And the next song I will sing another Horn Society song, and the next song I will sing another Horn Society song. After I sang four songs I gave away the rattles then I spoke. I (First Rider) said, "Such a sacred bundle was transferred to me, and this is a

sacred bundle that was transferred to me that I sang about." And again, "Such a bundle was transferred to me that I sang about, and such a bundle was transferred to me which I also sang." I sang about four bundles that were transferred to me.

The participants all sang in the first go round. They all sang four times. The singing started again. I (First Rider) owned

four tipis; I sang all of the four tipis and I make announcements saying, "So and so transferred this tipi to me and I paid so much on the tipi." I (First Rider) owned four tipis and I sang all of them. Now I have sung about eight bundles that were transferred to me. The others kept on singing; they also sang the same way.

When it was my turn to sing again in the second round, when I sang again. In one day four straight up headdresses were transferred to me; the headdresses were the dancing type. I (First Rider) took the four headdresses in one single day. I didn't take the headdresses just because that I was aggressive. It's because my father loves me and I am a favorite child to my parents, that is why the headdresses were transferred to me. So I sang of the four headdresses. So at this point I sang twelve songs.

The other participants started to sing again. They all sang the same way. They all sang of many various transferable bundles. The singing went around, the participants started to sing again and my turn came again. I sang of a Horn Society headdress; it was transferred to me. When I sang again I sang of the Yellow Pigeons and when I sang again I sang of the Crow feather headpiece. So I sang another four songs.

I (First Rider) sang of sixteen artifacts that were transferred to me. I still had some sacred artifacts that were transferred to me to sing of. I did not run out of songs so I sang of sixteen items. I (First Rider) cannot borrow from a relative, for me to sing of an item that was transferred to my relative. Some can do that. He can borrow and sing of what is transferred to his child. So that is why the Group Smoking Ceremony is celebrated. The reason the subject is about the Group Smoking Ceremony, because there is no Holy Lodge during the winter.

A woman Holy Lodge sponsorer will go to a Group Smoking Ceremony. She will not go to the dance of the All Brave Dog Society; she will not go to the dance of the Pigeons Society; she will not go to a Dog Feast dance; she will not go to a victory dance; she will go to a Group Smoking Ceremony because beef tongues are used in the Group Smoking Ceremony. The Group Smoking Ceremony originated from the Holy Lodge ceremonies.

The people can't put up a Holy Lodge during the winter. They say the sacred items that are transferred to them will be stirred up in a Group Smoking Ceremony. That is why the offering existed. The offering is offered up into the heavens in the Group Smoking Ceremony.

The offering is given to the sun during the night; the offering will be taken away before the sun rises. It will be put in an isolated place. All the participants sang sixteen songs on the offering. They swore that they went through a number of transferals.

The sponsorer of a Group Smoking Ceremony. The time I (First

Rider) sponsored a Group Smoking Ceremony I made a vow for my child. I concentrated on the ones that are going to tell the truth in the Group Smoking Ceremony and about the sacred items that were transferred to them. I know some that told the truth that a sacred bundle was transferred to them. They all prayed for my child; the child survived. My child grew up and today my child is a full-grown person.

So that is why the Group Smoking Ceremonies originated. They are associated to the Holy Lodge. The Holy Lodge is for the summer. How can they put up a Holy Lodge during the winter? So the Group Smoking Ceremony is celebrated in winter. The very same songs of the Holy Lodge are sung in the Group Smoking Ceremony. The songs are the moon songs.

The offering was given directly to the sun. That part is called, "My robe I now give you." The reason why the song is worded, "My robe I now give you," because the offering is a hide. A child will have a calf skin for a robe. Calf skins are also used for quivers. A person that is counting coups will say, "The quiver that I took was made out of a calf skin." A calf skin belongs to a child. A person that is going to sponsor a Group Smoking Ceremony will have to know all the rules. Today the people that sponsor Group Smoking Ceremonies don't do them accurately.

The way the old people taught me, I (First Rider) made a vow to sponsor a Group Smoking Ceremony for my child. The hide was a calf skin and it was ochred. The calf skin was sketched. The calf skin was given to the sun and the wing feathers were also given to the sun. As I (First Rider) am sitting here talking, the song for the offering to the Sun is not the same song. The calf skin is the child's robe and the child gave it to sun for his robe. Now the song, it was transferred to me and I know the song. Now I (First Rider) will officiate a Group Smoking Ceremony. That is the kind of a man I am. I will not fall

back on it. It was transferred to me and I know how it is. People question me. What song will be sung for the offering to be offered up into the heavens? Wolf Old Man (Willie Scraping White) sang the offering song like this:

(SONG: No words in song)

When the offering was offered up into heavens, he (Scraping White) sang and worded the song like this:

WORDS IN THE OFFERING SONG:

"Sun, my robe I now give you."

I (First Rider) said no. There is a deceased man; he is buried east from here where I am sitting. His name is Long Hair (alias Spider). He talks Cree. He'd say, "Namaya (no), we don't sing this song like that." This song is the song of the sponsorers of Holy Lodges. It is the woman's song. She sings the song when she wants to sing a song of praise. The song is

different for the giving of the offering to the heavens above. Here is the song for the giving of the offering up into the heavens. I (First Rider) will give it away free.

(NOTE: First Rider sang the offering song different but with the same words in the song.)

This is the song to give the offerings up to the heavens. Right. Now myself, I am First Rider. I could illustrate all the songs of the Group Smoking Ceremony. It would be very good if I go to Edmonton and I will put up a Group Smoking Ceremony, and I will be photographed as I am singing and making gestures. I (First Rider) wish it could be seen in picture; it will look very nice.

I (First Rider) am very sorry that these songs that I am singing, that my bosses, the all bosses, that they did not send me a drum, for not sending me a whistle and for not sending me a rattle. The reason why I did not hire the people to help me in singing the songs that I was singing in the past, they will not like to be helping me in singing and to be holding them for nothing and for me not to have anything to pay them.

If my bosses, Not Owing Nice Horses (Eric Waterton) and Omnipotent Chief (Bruce McCorquodale), if they had brought these items, if they had sent some money to pay the people, my stories would be very nice. A person that boasts about his life says, "Only my story did not go walking away." That is how I (First Rider) tell my stories, only the items were not there.

I actually say that Not Owing Nice Horses (Eric) and Omnipotent Chief (McCorquodale) are not even telling the truth.

They put me on a big job and I say they are telling lies. Now I am complaining about their lies. They are putting it in a way so that my story will not turn out good. If all the items were complete my stories would have been very good. I always think that the job I (First Rider) am involved to be good. When I am not around in the future people will have nothing to say against the work that I am involved in.

I (First Rider) concentrate for a considerable time on the stories that I tell and then I put them in sequence, just the way they were told, and now I told the story of the Holy Lodge right from where it originated. Now I have told my story up to the time when a Holy Lodge was not constructed and now there is no more Holy Lodge completely. And now I was promised to go to the Big House (Edmonton) to supervise the construction of a Holy Lodge that is going to be erected in the museum.

I (First Rider) am not shy to supervise the Holy Lodge because I am associated to the Holy Lodge. I could be the instructor. I can sing the songs but I cannot sing all the songs, but I know a lot of songs. I could illustrate the songs. So that is what my life is; that is how I operate. Omnipotent Chief (McCorquodale) and Not Owing Nice Horses (Eric) are very lucky

to find me (First Rider) to work for them. They don't improve things. The reason why, it's because they don't know their work. If they had understood their work it would improve my stories and the work. It happens that various tribes don't have the same kind of living, maybe they (Mr. McCorquodale, E. Waterton) know only of one tribe. Today, amongst all various Indians, the funniest people are the Sarcee Indians. I will say to a clumsy person I consider him as a Sarcee. The Sarcees are the strangest people.

It occurred, a person was badly wounded. This person cured himself, he plastered his wounds. While a Sarcee Indian just had a flesh wound also cured himself. The person that was badly wounded just drank a brew of ochre and the bullets came out from his mouth and he spit them into a cup. The name of the Sarcee who just had a flesh wound is Gopher. His helpers sang. They sang a Holy Lodge song:

WORDS IN THE HOLY LODGE SONG:

"Nothing will happen to Gopher."

This is the song that the Sarcees sang when Gopher the Sarcee Indian cured himself. He (Gopher) cured himself with the Holy

Lodge ceremonialism. He was just nicked on the outside of his arm muscle. A bullet just passed him and burned his arm, so he (Gopher) thought that he'd cure himself too. The Blackfoot Indian was shot in the chest by a musket that was loaded with two lead shot balls. He cured himself and he survived so that is what happened.

Now in life the Sarcees are the funniest people amongst all living human race. It's the Sarcees; they designed the Onerous Designed Tipi. I (First Rider) am complaining about Not Owing Nice Horses (Eric) and Omnipotent Chief (McCorquodale). If they understood their work my stories would be very good. They'd make more big money with my stories if they had helped me good.

So that is how I had everything in sequence from the time when there was no Holy Lodge, but naturally everything went to the Grouping Smoking Ceremony. There is nothing in the Group Smoking Ceremony that is associated to the Holy Lodge, and now it occurs that things are changing. The most songs are in Group Smoking Ceremony. There are not many Horn Society songs; so's the Medicine Pipe songs. And there are not many Utility Bag Bundle songs, but what increases the songs in the Utility Bag Bundle, it's because one song is repeated four times.

If there are twenty participants in a Group Smoking Ceremony, each participant will sing of sixteen items that were transferred to him. The songs are all of various society songs. The Group Smoking Ceremony has the most songs. The facial painting of the Group Smoking Ceremony is black. Same with the facial painting of the Holy Lodge; it also has a black facial painting.

I (First Rider) know all the songs. If one day should be given to me to sponsor a Group Smoking Ceremony and to be photographed and to give the history of it, it doesn't matter, I can work it. But I will pick out the men that will help me good. As I (First Rider) am getting old my singing is not so good any more. Some of these singers, their singing is much poorer than mine. The cause of it, it's because they're old and besides they are losing some of the songs. Myself I still remember them very good; I am naturally like that. In the past I actually know all the songs. The Group Smoking Ceremony is settled at this point.

Now we will make a research. If the Holy Lodge is not erected, that is where it occurs that there is nothing for me (First Rider) to go to for help in the native belief. One morning I prayed. I went down to the river and I bathed. I used elk food (puccoon) to cleanse myself. I just had a pair of

moccasins on, my loin cloth and my robe and a catlinite pipe which was filled with tobacco and a black charcoal. Then it turned up to be in the white way I took a razor blade and a needle. Awls are used but myself I am soft so I took a needle.

Before the sun rose in the east I (First Rider) went up to a protruding hill along the river. As I was walking up the hill my woman (wife) walked behind me. My offering was a black cloth. As I was climbing the hill I was crying. I (First Rider) was mourning for nothing. I was acting poor to the sun. When I stood up on the hill I was praying and I put down my offering and the pipe on the ground and I took the needle and I stuck the needle through the flesh of my left little finger. My woman (wife) pulled on the skin that was pierced and she cut off the skin with the razor blade. As soon as the skin was cut off it crumbled up and it was put on the crushed black charcoal. She pierced my little finger on my right hand and cut a portion of the flesh. The flesh that was cut off also crumbled up and it was also put on the crushed charcoal.

My left ear was pierced and a portion of my ear was cut off. My right ear was also pierced and a portion of it was also cut off. The portions of my flesh that were cut off would crumble up as soon as they're cut off and they are put on the black charcoal. Then I laid on my back and I stuck my tongue out. I clung to the ground. I (First Rider) didn't mind my fingers that were cut. They were bloody. The blood from my ears was running down my neck. I (First Rider) stuck my tongue out. My tongue was stretched with the needle and the tip of my tongue was cut off with the razor blade. When she started to cut my tongue I thought that my heart was being cut. It was painful the way my tongue was cut. When the tip of my tongue was cut off, immediately my mouth was filled with blood. There was blood all over my face and my hands were bloody too.

I (First Rider) got up and I wrapped up the portions of my flesh that were cut off with the charcoal, then I took my

offering away and I laid it down on the ground and I weighed it down. Then I went back and I took the pipe and I offered a smoke to the sun. I (First Rider) spoke a few words and then I couldn't speak any more. I couldn't move my tongue as it was cut. Tears were coming out from my eyes. I prayed silently. After I prayed I put the pipe on the ground. The pipe was all catlinite; the stem was also catlinite. I just put down the pipe on the ground and I went home. When I got inside I just laid down.

It was very hard the way my tongue was cut. There was nothing wrong with my legs and my hands; still I couldn't get up on account of the pain of my tongue. My ears that were cut and my fingers that were cut were no comparison with the pain of my tongue.

I (First Rider) couldn't eat and couldn't drink water, but I could swallow very little water. My tongue hurts when I swallow the water. I just think of praying. I didn't eat for fourteen days, then I managed to drink some soup. I stick my tongue out and then I drink the soup from a spoon. After thirty-five days I managed to eat the way I used to eat. During the thirty days I couldn't eat good I don't know, I must have lost a lot of weight. Then my life was good again. What I (First Rider) did is the living way of the Indians.

The Indian piety paid me back so that I may understand how the Indian religion operates. This torture originated from the Holy Lodge, how the lodge dancers cut their flesh. So that is how I operated, because there was no Holy Lodge. I (First Rider) think I am the only one now that cut himself like that because of my Indian belief. Now we will say I just gave a brief information of the subject. I don't know about my bosses if they want me to illustrate how I cut myself. I could re-enact what I did and to be photographed. I could illustrate the songs from where the Holy Lodge originated. So this is where I conclude my story.

Now the tapes that were given to me are all done so I end my story at this point. There is my last story about me, cutting myself. If there is no Holy Lodge we live by these, that permit us to keep on praying and that makes the camp circle to carry on. The reason I tortured myself, it's because there was no circle encampment and because there was no Holy Lodge. It's the same with the Group Smoking Ceremony. Look, tongues are used in the Holy Lodge Ceremony. I was alone at the time I made an offering. I used my own tongue. I fed my tongue to the sun.

I (First Rider) did not illustrate plainly what I did. If I illustrate plainly what I did you people will recognize it as a book, why I tortured myself. So I end my story here and now I am going to close my story. I am First Rider. I am sixty seven years old. I was born on a Friday, July 20, so I'll be sixty seven years old on July 20, 1970. I am very close to the time when people die. It is very good that I am giving the

history of Indian life. That is all. I shook hands with you all.

(End of Interview)

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