

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT:	GEORGE FIRST RIDER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOON & THE BEAR IN BLACKFOOT CEREMONIAL LIFE
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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 animals in ceremonialism.

NOTE: The informant appears to be rambling, since this document is little more than a mass of incoherent and totally unrelated material.

George First Rider: Okay, I am going to tell the other story, the questions that I was asked. I am completed the story of why the owl was in the Medicine Pipe Bundle and now I am going to illustrate why the loon is in the Medicine Pipe Bundle.

The items that are amongst the contents of the Medicine Pipe -- the owl, the loon, the whistle, the rattle and the bear which is the outer wrapper -- these are amongst the contents of the Medicine Pipe. The contents of the Water Bundle Pipe are all water animals and waterfowls. I (First Rider) told the story

about the facial paintings before. I used to see the Water Bundle Societies transferring their bundles. The transferals last for four days. Their transferals cannot last less than four days.

The first facial painting of the four days is different. The next morning the facial painting is different again. The following morning the facial painting is also different again. The fourth day of the transferal for the new recipient, on the fourth day the Water Bundle Pipe owner's face was painted like a medicine owner. The Medicine Pipe and Water Bundle Pipe are the same. The reason why the Water Bundle owner paints his like a Medicine Pipe recipient, because he is not afraid of it. He can dance with the Medicine Pipe; there is nothing wrong with that. It's just like having his face painted for the Medicine Pipe.

The reason why the berry bags are in the bundle, they were donated by the man whose wife was taken into the water. He invited all the various kinds of animals and birds. He gave invitations for his apology; that is why he invited them all. A person knows. The people will be talking to him. He will say, "I want so many horses to be given to me," and he will send a word to the one that he caught his wife with in their entertainment. "Tell him to give me his stallion and I will spare his life," and the man that coveted his wife will give him the horse. That is called, he was approached with the horse with an apology from the man.

The horse that was given to him was the other man's best horse. Now he is approached with the horse and he might just hitch him onto a travois. He will be very cruel to the horse because he caught his wife with him. So that is why the strange person that took the wife of the human into the water invited all the birds and animals so that he will approach the human with a gift. They all had songs. Every one of the birds and animals sang. All the birds and animals were put into the bundle.

The Medicine Pipe and the Water Bundle Pipe are the same. They are of the same kind but there is a difference between the pipes. Now the reason why the pipe is called Water Bundle Pipe, because it was transferred in the water. The water creatures owned the pipe and they transferred it. On the other hand there is the Medicine Pipe. The Medicine Pipe is just a pipe and the same are the -- we will say the Black Covered Pipes. Those are also pipes. They are just given various names. The people, all the Indians, more people owned the pipes. One pipe is called the Long Time Pipe because it is ancient. The other one is a different one, the Eastern Person Pipe. The Cree Pipe is different; all the Indians here owned it. Okay, there are the Water Bundle Societies and the Medicine Pipe owners; they owned the same kind of tipis. Let's say a tipi with an otter design, a Beaver Designed Tipi and we will concentrate on all the tipis. We cannot say a Water Bundle owner cannot obtain that tipi because the design is different. He will have any tipi that he wants. A Medicine

Pipe owner will have any tipi that he wants.

Now the Medicine Pipe, the Black Covered Pipe, and the Black Seizers' Pipe is there too. The Seizers' Pipe, they're all there. I (First Rider) saw the Black Seizers' Pipe; it was reconstructed. How the Black Seizers' Pipe disappeared we don't know. I (First Rider) saw Everybody Gets Mad At Him, alias Steel, reconstruct the Black Seizers' Pipe. All those pipes are the same as the Water Bundle Pipes and the Medicine Pipe, but it's like this: the Medicine Pipe is made bigger; the Water Bundle Pipe is made bigger.

The Water Bundle recipient's last facial paint on the fourth day was a Medicine Pipe facial painting. A Water Bundle owner is not afraid to Medicine Pipe ceremony. The contents of a Medicine Pipe are not too many. The Water Bundle Society's particular item is the loon. The eagle is not a waterfowl but they use it. The rest are all water animals and waterfowls.

Since the Water Bundle owner couldn't do anything to take something along with him to the Medicine Pipe ceremony, so he took the loon and he went to the Medicine Pipe ceremony. Those are the first pipes. We make collections for them. I (First Rider) also donated a pipe. A man's name is Coyote Running. He is called Curled Up Coyote Running. His pipe was a Water Bundle Pipe. I (First Rider) killed a loon and my father skinned it and he fixed it and it was put in the pipe bundle; so that is how the loon came to be in the contents of the Medicine Pipe. It was taken to the Medicine Pipe ceremony by the Water Bundle owner. The loon was the only waterfowl amongst the contents of the Medicine Pipe Bundle, so they

figured out a way how they should use the loon. The Medicine Pipe is always bare. The transferal rules are there to show how the pipe is to be transferred. There is no water. He has a cup but how is he going to drink some water? The Water Bundle owner noticed the people at the Medicine Pipe ceremony have nothing to drink; the Medicine Pipe owners haven't got the qualification to drink water. The Water Bundle owner, the Medicine Pipe owner and the Horn Society member, important bundles were transferred to these people. They will be initiated into eating and in drinking. These are the rules of the bundles that are transferable.

That is where a person... a boy is born, he becomes an infant, on and on and on. Gradually he is growing and when he is a man whatever is going to be transferred to him will be transferred to him as he wasn't born with it. I (First Rider) will put it this way. The Medicine Pipe. When he gets to be well off... he is wicked and poor how can he become a Medicine Pipe owner? A person will have to have a good life to reach the stage to become a Medicine Pipe owner. At this point he is reborn again; he is going to be on his own. That is what it means. The reason why they are initiated in eating -- as an infant will not eat at its birth, that is why the initiation in eating is performed.

The Water Bundle Society said the reason why a transferal lasts for four days, the things that are transferred to us are completely transferred to us. There are some people that I (First Rider) heard; they said, "I had a complete transferal but one thing, we were not initiated into manual action." The Medicine Pipe is completely transferred to other people and they were initiated into manual action. The manual action initiation is, a man will be blessed before he can have a sexual intercourse. They are put to sleep and they are awakened in the morning and they get up. They are initiated into having a sexual intercourse. Some will say outright, "I never was initiated into having a sexual intercourse." That is the meaning of it and that is the only best way how I can illustrate what I illustrate. What is a Medicine Pipe owner going to drink when he is going to open his pipe? They will have to be initiated into drinking. If they do drink at their own will they will have a big tumor on their mouths. That is not good. The Water Bundle owner initiates people into drinking with the waterfowl. The loon, he took it with him to the Medicine Pipe ceremony. That is why the loon songs are put in with the Medicine Pipe songs. The Medicine Pipe owners can drink water by the loon because the loon is a waterfowl.

The loon is that important in life. A Medicine Pipe owner's name is Striped Calf and his wife's name is False Loon. His granddaughter's name is Loon and his other granddaughter, who is younger, her name is Westward Loon. He gave their names from the loon.

The Medicine Pipe owners blow their whistles by the loon. The Water Bundle owner went to the Medicine Pipe ceremony with the loon. He donated the loon to the pipe owner and the loon will be danced with. The loon owns the water. The loon also has a song.

(NOTE: Information on the Loon ended.)

Now, the other subject. The Medicine Pipe owner couldn't do anything for a wrapper for his pipe. It was just a bare Medicine Pipe. Okay, when the Medicine Pipe owner made invitation calls he didn't have anything to wrap his pipe in, so he invited a bear. When the bear approached -- bears are not neighborly. They'll take anything by force. When the bears joined in, the grabbing with both hands became common. That is why a Medicine Pipe owner will hold a pipe with both hands, imitating the bear. His robe is the hide; that is why the wrapper is included. Now their outer wrapper is a bear skin.

We cannot say "bear" in a Medicine Pipe tipi because the outer wrapper of a Medicine Pipe is a bear skin. They took the bear skin as their son-in-law, to have a son-in-law. The people of the past don't see their son-in-laws. They're shy at their son-in-laws. Why they're shy at their son-in-laws? Now a home that doesn't belong to a white man, he cannot use obscene words before the children and the woman. He will be shy to speak

obscene words in their presence. An Indian that is the man, his daughter is going to get married. The father of the boy that he is having for a son-in-law will take each other as relatives. The man's son is his son and the other man's daughter is his daughter and now he has the boy for his son-in-law. When he made his daughter marry the man, the man paid for the girl. When the man's daughter got married he gave all the obscenity to his son-in-law. The various ways that his daughter is going to be intercoursed, the hymen will be stretched, her husband will make her get on top of him like a man and she will be sucked and she will suck her husband too, so the man gave these to his son-in-law. And especially there is the blood and why the girl is going to bear a child.

The reason why the mother never sees her son-in-law, it's because of all the obscenity in their marriage. That is why the woman is very shy at her son-in-law. She knows, "He is having sexual intercourse with my daughter." That is the way with the native life. It is not the stupidity of the natives, it is their knowledge. The Indians are wise; that is why they are shy at their son-in-laws. A woman will think, "I will not go to that gathering because my son-in-law may see me." The woman will always be shy at her son-in-law because his son-in-law may hear, "My mother-in-law is being intercoursed by another man." That is what it is. So that is what the bear skin wrapper is. The pipe owner is shy at it. That's why we're not to say the word bear in a Medicine Pipe owner's home.

It's on account of the bear that the Medicine Pipe owner will make a sound (ishp) and he will take whatever he wants to take. The Medicine Pipe owner's outer wrapper is a bear skin; that is the reason why the bear is included.

The drums are beaten with the roar of the thunder. They are beaten to a rattling beat and that is why they are beaten with a loud noise; that is the roar of the thunder. They have four items to use, there are four stops in drumming, and there are four songs. Then they are counted. A former Medicine Pipe owner will go into a Medicine Pipe owner's home. Immediately the Medicine Pipe owner will tell his wife, "Burn the incense." The altar of a Medicine Pipe owner is always there. Now the wife puts a hot charcoal on the altar and she burns the incense. The Medicine Pipe owner tells the former Medicine Pipe owner, "Okay, the smoke is blowing right to you. Sing one song." The former Medicine Pipe owner knew then, "I will sing seven." That is one song. If he tells him, "Sing two songs," the former Medicine Pipe owner knows then, "I will sing two seven songs. That is fourteen songs that I will sing." The songs are up to four. He will sing four seven songs. In this manner they are rehearsing the Medicine Pipe songs. There are a few that are attached to the Medicine Pipe songs. The rattle, the whistle, the wristlets, and the top knot.

Recently I (First Rider) just heard about the scraped Medicine Pipe altar. The reason why the altar is scraped for the Medicine Pipe owner, it's because he cannot do anything for

himself. He is reborn again. A child is unable to put his shoes on and the child is unable to feed itself. That is why a Medicine Pipe recipient is initiated into eating. A different man scrapes the altar and the Medicine Pipe recipient pays him. And now people started to transfer the altar. It was not like that in the earlier times, and now a Medicine Pipe owner has nothing. When somebody feeds a person, the person who is fed

will give something in return. Now the Medicine Pipe recipient receives some clothes in the transferal from the man that transferred his pipe to him. A horse will be saddled and the recipient will be made to ride the horse and he will ride it home. The horse and saddle are included in the transferal and now Yellow Fly (John Hellson) is not given a horse in the transferal. Red Crane (John Red Crane) was given a horse in his transferal, so he (John Hellson) is cheated in not being given a horse in the transferal.

A bundle owner will have to know all about these rules before he can transfer his bundle. The people that are transferring their bundles are just after to get some money. They don't go by the story of a Medicine Pipe.

The reason why the Medicine Pipe saddle and the Medicine Pipe rope are there, they are for the horse that is included in the transferal. Now the Long Time Pipe was transferred to Yellow Fly (John Hellson). I (First Rider) didn't notice him to have a whip and to have a rope. He (John Hellson) has no horse. While he has a whip, a rope and a saddle, the transferor will give him (John Hellson) a horse which he will ride home. I (First Rider) saw a transferal of the Long Time Pipe. A horse was given to the recipient in the transferal.

The transferors of the Long Time Pipe are not transferring the bundle completely. That is why the Medicine Pipe rope, the Medicine Pipe whip, the Medicine Pipe saddle and the Medicine Pipe bowl are there for. The Medicine Pipe owners forbid themselves not to borrow from other people so the drums were transferred to them. And to the greed of the people they didn't include the drums in the transferal. They had to be paid separately; then they transfer the drums. That is why the price of a Medicine Pipe gradually went higher, and now money is used. There are a lot of money that are unrightfully collected.

The items that are transferred besides a Medicine Pipe; the pipe was just a pipe. The items that were transferred besides, the muddy mouth (bear), the loon and the owl. I (First Rider) just mentioned these. I counted them three. They were transferred besides the Medicine Pipe so the price of the pipe will be high and so there will be more in the bundle.

The four periods are the Medicine Pipe owner's life. If a Medicine Pipe owner wants to give a smoke to others he will do it the Medicine Pipe way. He will smoke four times and that will be all and then he will empty the ashes in his pipe bowl. Everything that a Medicine Pipe owner will do he'll do it four

times; so that is the taboos of a Medicine Pipe.

The drummers will not just start drumming; they will have to be initiated into drumming. That is why the former Medicine Pipe owner attends at a Medicine Pipe ceremony. It's their job to initiate people. A person that has a perfect life will count war coups for the shaking of the Medicine Pipe. A person will have to be real perfect to count war coups for the taking of food out from the tipi.

A person that is counting war coups will have to tell the truth so's to take out food; this is an oath. Prayers are said for the Medicine Pipe recipient so that he may be successful in life and so that he may take out what he received without any default. For the shaking of the Medicine Pipe, a person that is going to count coups will have to be real perfect and what he is going to talk about will have to be true; it is an oath. It is not right for a person that is going to do a Medicine Pipe singing to be intoxicated.

In the earlier times a hunter has clothes for hunting. The woman that is going to be taken along has different clothing. She is going to look after the meat. The clothing that she is going to wear at a Medicine Pipe dance are different. That is why they change their clothes because they were reborn. To be reborn again is just like this; a person starts a new life. In the past when he was born his life was filthy and now he is full grown he is reborn again and his life became different and he is clean. That is what the illustrations are.

People that tell the stories about Medicine Pipes don't know them very well. A person will confront people with what he is going to reenact. Somebody that doesn't know too well about the event that a person is going to reenact will dare say, "I know about what you are going to reenact. I will officiate. I will work it." If he starts what he doesn't know the next person that knows it will disqualify him for his illustration and his transferring of the bundle. If the person is good, the one that knows it before will say, "He is right. He did the transferring right."

People think, "I don't own this bundle any more. I will spoil it." They don't know that they are reviving the persons that they are transferring a bundle to. The way they officiate is no good. The meaning of what I (First Rider) spoke about, the story is told in the Holy Scriptures. A person that is teaching a child bad things, it is very right that a huge oblong stone will be tied around his neck and he will be pushed over the cliff into the river to drown, because he taught bad things to a child. This story is told in the Holy Scriptures.

Today the first ones that officiate a transferal are reviving the ones that they transfer a sacred bundle to, so that their children may live good. That is why they do things right. People that know about Medicine Pipe songs are scarce, that know about the Horn Society, and they become holy persons.

Today a person will be drunk and he will do what he wants. He's got insanity. He will imitate anybody that he wants to imitate. A drunken person has no shame. If the words that a drunken person are illustrated back to him he will say, "I was drunk. I did not know that I was speaking those words." So this is the way with a person that is transferring a bundle in the wrong way. He spoils the person that he is transferring a bundle to. He will be painting the person with what is not right. Now a person that is going to transfer a bundle is paid so that he will give the instructions. If he doesn't do it right it is dangerous for him to get arrested.

If people know about this they will not deprive others from sacred bundle and for them to sell the bundle. They'll be scared not to do any more crooked work and not to lie. That is how I (First Rider) tell the stories. That's why I (First Rider) try hard to tell the stories straight. I will not tell a story that I don't know. So that is how I illustrate the loons and why the bears are included and why the owl is included. The owl is used to steal Medicine Pipes. If it wasn't for the owl we will not have the rights to steal Medicine Pipes. That is the end of my story. There are some more stories that I will tell. That is all.

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