



Permission.

A Blood Reserve
Sourcebook
Drawn from Settler
Records

Curated by Chris
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Fifteen years (1913 – 1928)

The death of Crop Eared Wolf¹ (April, 1913)

With the passing of Crop Eared Wolf one of the last of the last of the old time Indians is gone. The deceased Indian was chief of the Blood band whose reserve is one of the largest in Canada. Wolf was the head of some 1,200 Indians and nothing of importance was done without his advice and sanction. He was stern with his people, but kind with the white man so long as nothing was said or done to interfere with the Indian or his rights. He was a most careful guardian of Indian rights. Some six years ago an agitation was raised among the Indians to sell the portion of their reserve lying south in the vicinity of Cardston in southern Alberta².

A price was offered that would have made every Indian on the reserve an independent citizen, built them comfortable homes and given them a better status with the white man³. This the old chief resolutely refused⁴ to agree to. He would have nothing to do with the sale of Indian lands to the white man. He insisted that the treaty gave the land to the Indians as long as water ran and grass grew, and from this position he could not be moved.

It is said that one of the last things Crop Eared Wolf did before his death was to call his minor chiefs and people together and make them promise that they would never sell their land to the white man. Their tract is one of the most fertile in the whole province of Alberta and would be valuable as a tract for colonization purposes.

Crop Eared Wolf was the proud possessor of one of the medals given to the chiefs at the time of the visit of the governor general of Canada some few years ago. He always wore the uniform of a chief which in modern times is blue serge with brass buttons, and is supplied by the Indian department. He was an ardent advocate of peace. Many a tempestuous time on the reserve was brought to a happy issue by his intervention. At the time Charcoal was at large, Crop Eared wolf was one of the party constantly on the watch for his capture. It was through his help that Jas. Wilson, now registrar of the brands at Medicine Hat, then Indian agent at Macleod, was able to finally make the capture that brought the murderer to the gallows.

¹ From CROP EARED WOLF, OLD BLOOD CHIEF CALLED BY DEATH. (1913, April 22). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 8.

² "The government [...] has made two propositions to the Indians. One is to purchase a small strip on the south end between the St. Mary's River and the railway line comprising about 3,200 acres, and the other to purchase a larger strip, four by sixteen miles. This last strip begins at Cardston and skirts along the St. Mary's River to near Caldwell." INDIANS SELLING PART OF THE BLOOD RESERVE. (1907, June 11). *The Edmonton Journal*, p. 12.

³ "The government proposes to give the Indians \$12,000 for the small strip. This they propose to divide among the Indians in cash which would give to every man, woman and child the sum of \$10.00 per head. The sum of \$800,000.00 is offered for the larger strip which is to be given to the Indians as follows: 300 houses at \$500 per house, and the amount of barns, stables, etc., and the balance to be placed to the credit of the Indians." *Ibid.*

⁴ "Crop Ear Wolf, the main chief of the tribe has been to Macleod and sent a letter to the Indian Department at Ottawa setting forth the objection of the Indians to the proposed sale." *Ibid.*

The old chief was, of course, a brave man. On more than one occasion he has shown the writer the scars of many a severe test. His breast is covered from the armpits to his very throat with thong marks but never in one of the ordeals did he flinch or show anything but the bravery that would one day elect him chief of his Indian band.

Crop Eared Wolf had rather a greater sense of the fitness of things than is usually found in an Indian. It is said that on one occasion a missionary from one of the stations near the reserve took an interpreter with him and called on the old chief for the purpose of taking his picture. Wolf was very indignant. He explained through the interpreter that it would have been all right if he had asked the camera man to visit him for the purpose set forth, but it was a violation of good taste for him to come unsolicited. Crop had an aversion to having his face snapped and the photographer had to go home without gaining the end he came for.

It might surprise most people to know that Crop Eared Wolf had a house as well furnished as the average home in most towns or cities. Carpets covered the floors. The wigwam with its open fire was replaced with the kitchen with its modern range. Instead of sleeping on a blanket on the ground, this Indian and his squaw had their comfortable mattress and iron bedstead. Lamps lit the house, blinds covered the exterior from becoming weather-beaten, cooking utensils hung up in their proper places and a table was set to which the Indian agent, farm instructor or any one else might sit up.

While Crop Eared Wolf was averse to selling any part of the Indian lands, he was not in favor of allowing the whole to lie idle. When the Indian department, under R. N. Wilson, inaugurated a plan by which the Indians would work a portion of the land the old chief was one of the first to fall heartily in line and work for the accomplishment of the purpose. As a result of his efforts large tracts were broken in different localities on the reserve and Indians are working it for the production of crops. In later years he has worked with the agent, Mr. Hyde, in preventing the old sun-dance, a pagan festival in which the Bloods would be sporting themselves now if permission were granted.

Crop Eared Wolf became an adherent of the Roman Catholic faith and in his latter days was ministered to by Father Bauax, of the Stand Off mission. At his funeral a band of Indian boys consisting of 15 instruments, played "Nearer My God To Thee." The direct cause of death was cancer. It is rather amusing that the Indians should call it lump jaw, for the reason that it was on the jaw about the place a cow throws out a lump when infected with lump jaw. Crop Eared Wolf was a patient sufferer, and while he suffered much pain during the last several months, his end was peaceful, and unlike so many of his predecessors in the chief office of the Indian band, he has not gone to the happy hunting ground, but to the abode of his Father in Heaven.

The funeral was attended by all the Indian department staff on the reserve as well as by many friends of the old chief from Macleod and other places. His burial was at Stand Off in the cemetery of the Roman Catholic church there.

“There would still be plenty of room”⁵ (May, 1913)

For a long time there has been a movement on foot to have the 350,000 acres of the most fertile land of Southern Alberta, known as the Blood Reserve, thrown open to the farmers of the south. The answer has always been that this could not be without the unanimous consent of the Indians. But heretofore the government has always leased a large portion of the reserve to ranchers, receiving therefor about one cent per annum per acre. At present, McKeown & Co. hold the lease and have sub-let it to Gordon, Ironside and Fares, the Winnipeg cattle dealers. It was on this tract of land that the Winnipeg firm ran a herd of several thousand head of Mexican steers a couple of years ago.

The lease expires in July next. The farmers in the vicinity of the reserve border desire that the lease not be renewed on expiry. They wish to have the privilege of leasing small tracts for farming and ranching purposes, and would be willing to pay from five to eight cents per acre per annum. About 300,000 acres of the land are available for this purpose. There are few Indians now on the reserve, and even though some thousands of acres were leased, there would still be plenty of room. Memorials are being prepared by the farmers of the district in the vicinity of the reserve which will be forwarded to the department of Indian affairs, setting forth the above facts. Hon. Duncan Marshall will also be memorialized, the farmers seeking his aid in the movement. The Indians are said to have held meetings when the disadvantages of the big leases were explained to them, and have declared in favor of the small leases.

“Applications for more than 150,000 acres”⁶ (June, 1913)

Farmers throughout Southern Alberta have awakened to the possibility of the opening up of the Blood Reserve to small leases, and are [filing applications] to the Indian Department to be forwarded through the Associate Boards of Trade of Southern Alberta, in large numbers.

“I am in receipt of applications for more than 150,000 acres,” said Secretary Finley this afternoon. “They are coming from all parts of the southern district, and from all around the reserve, and in most cases are for tracts in size in keeping with the amount of stock the applicants plan to run. This speaks well, for it shows that the intent in all cases, is to utilize the leases for their own livestock and not to sublet them, as was done when the last lease was granted.”

Meeks Brothers, of Raymond, in a letter that accompanied their application for 10,000 to 20,000 acres, wrote: “We commend you in this very thoughtful undertaking and do hope you are successful in this matter.” [...]

⁵ From MOVEMENT TO LEASE BLOOD INDIAN RESERVE IN SMALLER PORTIONS. (1913, May 29). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 1.

⁶ From FARMERS AFER LAND LEASES ON BLOOD RESERVE. (1913, June 20). *The Edmonton Journal*, p. 5.

“Every farmer in the Leavitt district is enthusiastic over the work the Associate Boards of Trade is doing on their behalf in this campaign to open the Blood Reserve to small grazing interests,” [said W. G. Smith, a rancher of Leavitt].

“We have a committee out visiting every farmer and they are signing them up for the amount of acreage they would care to lease and the number of animals they would run on the lease. The same is being done in the Cardston district, and from what I hear, they are going to do everywhere around the reserve before the end of the week.

“Every farmer resents the attitude of the big grazing interests, in endeavoring to convey to the Indians through their old time stockmen, the impression that the small farmer with the possibility of the erection of fences and the division of the reserve into small grazing tracts would mean the ultimate loss of the lands to the Indians; and we are going to show them the sincerity of the farmers and send representative men, whom they know, to the Indians and set them right. Why, the leasing of these lands to farmers at 2 to 8 cents an acre annually for grazing purposes will make that entire tribe of Indians rich, and they know it, for they will compare the prospective income with that they have had through the big interests’ leases, and it will convince them that the best thing for them is the farmer enjoying these privileges.

“I have filed with Secretary Finley an application to forward to the Indian department at Ottawa for the lease of one township, or 23,040 acres, on which I shall run for a time some 1500 head of cattle, and at other seasons some 600 head of sheep. I am ready to take a lease right off, too, at any reasonable rate of annual payments the government may prescribe provided they are not too severe in requirements that make a lease prohibitive to a small farmer or stock man.”

“Where the most people would be benefitted”⁷ (September, 1913)

Hon Dr. Roche, the minister of the interior, [...] made it clear that it was his desire and [the] wish of the department to place grazing privileges where the most people would be benefitted, and he intimated that conditions had been unsatisfactory in the past and a new arrangement would be made, looking to the permitting of small stock owners and farmers to run their stock on the reserve at a reasonable charge per head. Dr. Roche openly stated that the land would not be granted to the former holders, and in fact he included all large cattle concerns in his remarks. Intimation was also made that the forest reserve sheep grazing lands would be opened.

⁷ From ROCHE WOULD PLACE GRAZING PRIVILEGES. (1913, September 5). *The Edmonton Journal*, p. 6.

“30,000 head of stock are ready”⁸ (October, 1913)

Word has been received here that Gordon, Ironsides & Fares, of Winnipeg, sub-lessees of the Blood reserve’s grazing lands, under D. McEwen & Co., of Ottawa, have issued a call for tenders on their entire holdings of cattle, saddle horses and round-up outfit, now on the reserve. This means that the long fight made by the associated boards of trade asking for a right to farmers to graze their cattle on these lands in preference to the large cattle interests, probably will be granted by the minister of the interior.

The minister indicated on his recent western trip that the lease would not be granted to the former holders, who now announce their sale, which is to take place before November 1. The herd numbers 3,000 head of cattle. If the lease is granted to the farmers, nearly 30,000 head of stock are ready to go on the reserve.

“Vexed with the board of trade”⁹ (October, 1913)

Officials on the Blood Indian Reserve, which adjoins Cardston on the north, are vexed with the board of trade of Cardston for sending representatives to the reserve on matters of business without first consulting the department. Inspector Swinford, who is in charge pending the appointment of a new agent, threatens that a recurrence will be prosecuted. It seems that several members of the board of trade went to Stand Off to confer with the band on matters related to grazing leases, and called the chiefs without seeing the agent or farm instructors.

“My plans for the future farming on the Blood Reserve”¹⁰ (August, 1914)

Written by W. J. Dilworth, Indian Agent for the Blood Agency, to Duncan C. Scott, then Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs.

Sir,

I beg to inform you herewith of my plans for the future farming on the Blood reserve, for your approval or otherwise.

Tho this has been the worst year in the history of farming operations in this district our Indians are still prepared to go on with farming. And I am pleased to have them do so. For while there is farming the Indians have employment, and manual labor performed by the Indians means advance. Moreover, employment on the home reserve will be far more effective advance than if the Indians were driven off the reserve to work and spend their money thus made in intoxicants, etc.

⁸ From BIG CATTLEMEN WILL SELL WHOLE OUTFIT. (1913, October 22). *Calgary Herald*, p. 13.

⁹ From DISREGARD RULES. (1913, October 20). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 7.

¹⁰ From Dilworth, J. D. (1914, August 22). [Letter to Duncan C. Scott]. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Fonds (RG 10, Volume 4080, file 474,347). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by William John Dilworth (1869 – 1961).

This excessively dry season has not been without its compensating features. It has shown Indians that if they must farm, they must farm well, and if they do farm well they are assured of having some crop even under the very adverse conditions that prevailed this year. It has also taught me that it would not be advisable to increase the area under cultivation at Farm # 1 near the agency. As on account of the light and sandy nature of this soil, conditions are too adverse, farming with Indians, to make any rapid progress. The opposite prevails at Farms # 3 and # 4. The farmers there have some really good crop, grown under conditions of practically no rain.

I am of the opinion that if possible both engines should be put to work breaking sod next season as soon as spring sets in, and kept at it while proper conditions prevail. Both engines have been thoroughly repaired and are in good condition to do a season's breaking. I am of the opinion that this breaking should be done in two places; at Farm # 3 and at Farm # 4. These two locations are beside what has already been broken, [and] are close to water. Splendid clay soil, plenty of hay within reach, and [they] are the best places on the reserve for the Indians to build homes. Farming here is sure of a crop every year. I intend to move as many would-be farmers as possible to Farm # 3's location, with the object of not only bettering the condition of the Indian, but also consolidating the settlements as much as possible. As conditions are at present the agency office is set off on one side of the reserve, where the least amount of activity is. I would have operations confined to a smaller area so that conditions were correct for the removal of the agency buildings to the neighbourhood of Farm # 3, not many years in the future. As the buildings now around the agency will before many years have to be abandoned and new ones built, Farm # 3 would be the desirable location, being nearer the center of operations. Also, if at any time the Blood Indians desire to sell any of their land, it would be better that the end near the agency should be sold, and by the removal permanent improvements could be kept where the centre of activity would be.

I would like to break up 1500 acres if the funds are available in the locations indicated on the rough map enclosed. I will have the Indians keep all seed necessary this year. I am closing the Blacksmith shop today and all refunds possible will be made between now and the season's close.

Should it be the Desire of the Department that I go on with the work as indicated next year, I beg to suggest that this fall some time the parts indicated on the map be surveyed into quarter sections if possible; and if the Department have a surveyor working in the west, I would like to have this work done.

I think I can safely assure the Department that breaking sod will not be so expensive as it has been in the past few years, as I have had considerable experience along these lines, and know that I can reduce the expense from what the records show to have been the cost since 1910.

Kindly permit me to hear from you about this matter at your earliest convenience, that I may make preparations for the next season.

A report on the Blood Reserve in 1914¹¹ (March, 1914)

Prior to 1917, Indian Agents would publish detailed narratives of the year's events in the Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs. This was Agent Dilworth's report for the year ending March 31, 1914.

Health and Sanitation – Comparatively speaking the health of the Blood Indians has been good for the past year; no serious infections or contagious disease being prevalent. Nevertheless, there is a heavy mortality among infants and young children due to bronchial and intestinal troubles, occasioned largely through the sole use as a food diet of beef and bannock. Until these Indians realize that domesticated beef is not so healthy for them as the buffalo meat was in the old days, and change their diet to one mixed with vegetables, so long will mortality exist.

The health of the reserve is looked after by a resident physician and a well regulated hospital conducted by the Sisters of Charity. Many of the older Indians have no faith in white man's medicine, but prefer the administrations of their own medicine men, whose favorite cure is bleeding. The Blood Indians are a much more cleanly people than the world at large realizes. The cleanliness of their yards would shame many a white farmer. Yearly, deaths from tubercular and scrofulous troubles are becoming less, due in a large measure to the good influences of school children on the reserve.

Occupations. – Twenty-five years ago the sole occupation of the Blood Indians was to go to the ration-house for their beef and flour, in fact it was stated by many people who were then acquainted with their habits of life that they would never be capable or desirous of following any industrious pursuits; to-day nearly one-half of the tribe support themselves, one-sixth are engaged in farming, one-half in stock-raising, and nearly every adult puts up every year a large quantity of hay for sale. They also do a large amount of freighting for outside farmers. A coal mine is operated on the reserve. Though still spasmodic in their efforts, nearly all the males accomplish yearly a large amount of work.

Farming. – The Blood Indians have now about 5,000 acres under cultivation. Some are good farmers, some indifferent. All are well supplied with implements and take as good care of their machinery as their white neighbours do of theirs. There is a healthy tendency to increase the farming area, and, if the present rate of progress is kept up, a few years hence the younger Blood Indians will be one large farming community, each with a good and comfortable home. Nearly every able-bodied man has a wagon, a mower, and a rake. Crops during the past season were poor, due in a large measure to the ravages of the eel worm on winter wheat. A Blood Indian thinks a great deal more of, and will take better care of, the plot of land that he has developed himself than he does of a ready-made farm.

¹¹ From Dilworth, W. J. (1914). REPORT OF W. J. DILWORTH, INDIAN AGENT FOR THE BLOOD AGENCY, ALBERTA. In *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year ended March 31 1914*. Ottawa: J. de La Tache.

Stock-raising. – The Blood Indians have for a number of years raised all the beef required on the reserve. Their herd is made up of the beef types only. Through careful selection of sires this herd is now one of the very best range herds in the North West. The Indian does not take care of his cattle individually, but they are handled as a band herd. Their horses have shown some improvement through the use of stallions loaned them by the department, but not as much as they should have, as the Indians in a large measure sold their horses as they pleased, with the result that they got a chance to exercise their traits for profligacy, which they surely did in this case. They have now approximately 3,000 head of horses where they once had 20,000.

Buildings. – Ninety per cent of the Blood Indians live in log houses during the winter months, and in tents during the summer. The log hut with mud floor and sod roof is now a thing of the past. Instead, all houses are floored and have plenty of air space through the construction of gable roofs on the houses. Some of the farmers have clean, well-built, comfortable frame houses painted inside and out, and well furnished.

Characteristics and Progress. – The Blood is a dignified Indian. This self-pride is in many ways a detriment to his progress, giving him a tendency to scorn innovations; yet show a Blood Indian how he can make money, and he will work, but not in a persevering manner. He will not plod along doggedly towards any desired end, but rather wishes to proceed too rapidly; his expectations no being realized as soon as anticipated, he sometimes becomes discouraged. The present generation requires plenty of hard manual labour; by that means and that alone they will progress. They have been brought in some measure to realize that upon their own shoulders they must bear the burden of making a livelihood for themselves and their families; but they must be brought to a more stern realization of that fact. Hard and steady work will do much to improve conditions mentally, morally and physically. There has been steady advance and with judicious management there will continue to be progress.

Temperance and Maturity. – Drunkenness is decreasing only in ratio to the watchfulness of the officers and men of the R.N.W.M.P. and of the reserve scouts. As long as tramps, half-breeds, and people who ought to have better principles, eke out a precarious existence in the neighbouring towns of MacLeod, Lethbridge, Cardston and Pincher Creek, by supplying intoxicants to the Indians, so long will there be drunkenness among the Bloods.

Moral conditions are slowly changing for the better. Family relations and the marriage tie still remain loose. Until the men of the Blood Indians are brought to fully realize that the women of the tribe are not the property of the men, so long will there be loose marriage relations. Happily education is rapidly changing old ideas in this respect and cleaner moral conditions may be looked for.

“These Indians could well spare that portion”¹² (November, 1914)

From a report by J. A. Markle, government inspector, sent to Duncan C. Scott.

Sir:-

I have the honour to make the following report of an inspection made of the Blood Agency and Reserve between the 27th October and the 10th instant.

I perused the Agent's letter to the Department dated August 22nd, and agree with the main opinions expressed therein. I would like to see the best farming land within the northern ½ of township 4, all of townships 5 and a portion of township 6 in ranges 24 and 25 sub-divided into 80 acre lots. A portion of the land referred to was subdivided a number of years ago but is not sufficient for the requirements of the Indians who desire, or may at a later date [desire], to farm. I would confine the subdividing to the area stated herein with a view of confining the farming area as compactly as possible. Farming operations can be supervised more cheaply and expeditiously when close together than when scattered. Moreover, at some distant period the Indians owning this reserve will be disposed to surrender a portion of it, and they are more likely to be willing to cede areas without improvements thereon than areas on which they are residing. These Indians could well spare that portion of their reserve lying northerly of the center of township 7 and southerly of the center of township 4. No more encouragement should be given to the Indians to farm in the vicinity of the Agency, townships 7 and 8, for the land therein is not suitable to Indian farming and no results follow, outside of loss of work. This has been my opinion from the outset of the farming on this reserve, but the agents thought differently until recently, and their opinions prevailed. The threshing return for this season at Farm 1 was only ½ bushel per acre of spring wheat, while at Farm 3 the average yield was 16 bushels and at Farm 4, 15 bushels. This has convinced Mr. Dilworth that grain growing by Indians in the vicinity of Farm 1 is likely to be a failure 4 seasons out of 5.

In [the] event surveyors are sent to this reserve to sub—divide lots for the locations of farms, I advise that they start work not later than April 1st next, so that any new breaking may be done next season at suitable points. Furthermore, I suggest that locations be reserved for new agency headquarters easterly of Farm 3, and reservations, 160 acres, [be] made for new boarding schools. While it may be years before either new agency buildings or schools are supplied, it is well to look into the future in this particular, as well as [in] many other matters, for this precaution may save a good deal of worry to some one in the days to come.

Yours obediently,

Sgn. J. A. Markle, Insp.

¹² From Markle, J. A. (1914, November 13). [Letter to Duncan C. Scott]. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Fonds (RG 10, Volume 4080, file 474,347). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by John A. Markle (1851 – 1927).

“Growers of grain and raisers of cattle”¹³ (January, 1915)

The Indians on the Blood Reserve, situated between the Belly and St. Mary's rivers in Southern Alberta, are coming to the front as growers of grain and raisers of cattle. The gaudy Indian warrior has discarded the war paint and the war path to guide the plough. The reserve is the largest in Canada, containing some 354,000 acres of good agricultural land, and the wards of the government who inhabit it are said to be worth over \$5,000 per capita. If they continue to show the interest in agriculture that has produced for them such abundant harvests, they will before long, easily double their per capita wealth. It is now about seven years since farming was taken up as an occupation, but in that time the Indians have been able to prove their ability to grow grain that compares favorably with that of their white neighbors along the reserve.

This year Agent Dilworth estimates a yield of 20,000 bushels of wheat, besides a big crop of oats. Considering the sparse yield in some parts of Alberta this year, this is a tremendous crop for the red men.

In addition to grain the Indians have also put up 4,000 tons of hay. This was harvested under exceptionally favorable conditions and ready sale is being found for all that is not needed for the stock on the reserve. A contract was filled with Gordon, Ironside & Fares, the lessees of the grazing on the reserve, for 1,500 tons, and the Royal Northwest Mounted Police at MacLeod for 180 tons. For this latter a price of \$12 a ton was paid.

This year 105 head of steers were sold to James Watson of Great Falls. The steers averaged \$103 a head, which very nearly approaches a record price for grass fed steers. The lot averaged 1,650 pounds in weight. As a result of the deal the Blood Indians are nearly \$11,000 better off. A heifer will be purchased in place of each steer in order that the size of the herd may not be reduced.

The cattle on the reserve are doing well, no bulls but pure breds of the beef strains being used. All the beef needed for rations among the Indians is raised on the reserve. The cattle are handled as range stock in one large herd with a stockman in charge and Indians to assist him. A few individual Indians own their own cattle and take care of them.

The Bloods have a sufficient number for their own use, and from time to time the agent issues permits to sell ponies. Their horses are improving through the use of stallions provided by the Indian department. One Indian, Alex Stevens, out of the profits of his farming last year purchased 40 sheep, of which he has taken good care and profited accordingly. Many of the Indians that are not engaged in farming go to Raymond, the sugar town, and find employment in the beet fields.

This is the tribe of Indians that has contributed \$1,000 out of a sum of \$4,000 funded for their benefit, toward the cost of war within the British Empire. At a large council held recently, the tribe offered itself, and the Indians volunteered individually to serve in whatever way the King might command.

¹³ From FARM OPERATIONS OF RED MAN SUCCESSFUL. (1915, January 28). *The Crossfield Chronicle*, p. 4.

A report on the Blood Reserve in 1915¹⁴ (March, 1915)

Agent Dilworth's report for 1915.

Health and Sanitation. – The general health of these Indians has been comparatively good, though as usual there has been a heavy death toll, from tubercular troubles among adults, and from bronchial and intestinal troubles among infants and children.

The health of the band is looked after by a resident physician and a well regulated hospital conducted by the Sisters of Charity.

All the Indians are required to clean up around their premises and to burn all refuse. They are yearly becoming more sanitary in their habits. All the Indians get their water-supply from the mountain-fed streams surrounding the reserve, which accounts for the total absence of typhoid.

Occupations. – About one-fifth of these Indians engage in farming, half are stock-owners, and nearly all able-bodied men yearly put up and sell a large amount of hay. During the year about 200 families were induced to plant and take care of a potato and garden patch.

Farming. – No new land was broken during the year; the efforts were directed rather in getting the land already broken into better condition. All Indian farmers worked well and faithfully in the preparation of their fields, which during the earlier part of the season, gave promise of producing a good crop; but continued and excessive drought burned up all grain planted at the lower end of the reserve; while at the upper end of the reserve, on heavier soil, a fair crop was harvested. Winter wheat this year as last proved a failure through some disease. It would appear as if the spring sown variety would supersede the winter variety. A propitious tendency exists among the Indians to increase the farming area, a sign pointing distinctly towards progress.

Stock-raising. – The Bloods own one of the best beef herds in the Northwest. During the year there was sold 105 head of three, four and five year old steers for an average price of \$104 a head. These steers at point of unloading weighted before fed or watered 1,550 pounds. In addition to this, all beef was raised that is used on the reserve.

A change was made during the year in the wintering grounds of the herd, the winter camp formerly located on the exposed valleys of the St. Mary's river being transferred to heavy brushed, well opened, watered valley of the Belly river adjacent to the farms at the upper portion of the reserve. All cattle fed in this yard came through the winter in splendid condition and without loss. Cattle on the range also came through the winter without loss, though thin in flesh.

¹⁴ From Dilworth, W. J. (1915). REPORT OF W. J. DILWORTH, INDIAN AGENT FOR THE BLOOD AGENCY, ALBERTA. In *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year ended March 31 1915*. Ottawa: J. de La Tache.

Haymaking. – This industry for the past fifteen years has been an important and profitable one for these Indians – in fact it was owing to the presence of abundant grasses on the reserve that these Indians made their first progressive move along industrial lines. During this past year the industry reached record proportions, the Indians harvesting in splendid condition over three times the amount of hay harvested in any single previous year. In all 10,000 tons were harvested between July 15 and September 15, and the Indians were as a result \$30,000 better off. A fair idea of how our haymakers' work can be gathered from the operations of one day. There being no hay at the agency end of the reserve, I went to the hay camp and asked that all all haymakers bring one load each to the agency headquarters, eighteen miles distant. On that day 105 tons were delivered and stacked in splendid order, the prize containing 7,940 pounds.

Buildings. – Approximately 90 per cent of these Indians live in fairly comfortable log houses during the winter months, about 5 per cent in good, well built roomy frame houses; nearly all live under canvas in the summer. Each year sees an increasing number of houses being built of more roomy and better ventilated designs. There is now little overcrowding in close, ill ventilated houses during the cold winter nights.

Characteristics and Progress. – This tribe is one of the few Indian tribes that have not been subdued by the sword. They are loyal to the Crown, in fact their proffers of assistance to the "Grandson of the Great White Queen" in this war would shame many white communities.

They are naturally a proud and dignified people; they will work well when remuneration is in sight; in fact, our largest problem is to provide sufficient work for the many willing hands. They are intensely superstitious, and hard to wean away from their pagan beliefs and practice. The great problem to solve for the present generation is to teach them to work. Manual labour will do more than any other single agency to civilize them, and obliterate their nomadic and pleasure-loving habits; it will make them home-makers rather than camp-movers.

Generally speaking, I believe there is reason for satisfaction in the progress made during the year. Their business affairs are in better condition, there is less of pauperization, [and] they have been taught that the ration-house must not be the limit of their outlook. There is a healthy tendency towards individual home-making and to settle down in their own home separately and removed from their relatives, and a greater tendency to have their children educated.

Temperance and Morality. – There has been a decrease of one-third in convictions for drunkenness as compared with the previous year. This can be attributed largely to the fact that the Indians were kept at home on their reserve and at work for a greater portion of the time. Some improvements in moral condition are noticeable, there being less homes broken up by marriage separations; but still their mental and moral development is not such as can differentiate between right and wrong; fear of detection and swift punishment for wrong-doing is still the thought that restrains.

“Robbing the Wards of the People”¹⁵ (April, 1915)

Ottawa, April 11. – “How Bob Cruise Annexed a Homestead” is the subject of the first of a series of fourteen articles by T. R. Ferguson, compiled after exhaustive research into the mysteries of Hon. Frank Oliver’s administration of the public domain. [...] “Robbing the Wards of the People” would be a suitable title for the second instalment of Commissioner Ferguson’s report. The hero in this graft exposure is Frank Pedley, formerly superintendent of Indian affairs, who, when the exposure came, resigned his position. He now is one of the chief Liberal organizers and social leaders in the capital. This investigation had to do with grazing privileges on the Blood Indian reserve, near Macleod, and the connection therewith of Pedley, who, at the time the transaction was engineered, occupied the important position of deputy superintendent-general of Indian affairs.

Shocking as it sounds, the said Pedley displayed more zeal in feathering his own nest than in noble aborigines, or in seeking that the scales of justice were held evenly between various applicants for those privileges. Perusal of the evidence in the Pedley case explains the sudden termination, last year, of that official’s connection with the department.

The essential facts in the case, as reported, briefly stated, are as follows. In 1903 several applications were made for grazing privileges on the Blood reserve. One of the applications on file in the department was made in December, 1902, by J. F. McLaughlin of Toronto, who had associated with him Charles Miller, barrister, of Toronto. This application was vigorously pressed, and it is clear from the evidence that they interviewed Pedley in connection with it, and had reason to be hopeful that it would be granted. In fact, they went so far as to organize a cattle company and engaged a foreman to look after their interests. However, Pedley had other plans. He wanted a slice of these privileges himself, as things had been a little tight with him around that period. This no doubt occurred to him as the simplest and easiest method of relieving the financial stringency. Application was put in on behalf of one Donald McEwen, by a firm of Ottawa solicitors, Latchford, McDougall and Daley, and appealed more to his high sense of duty. This application was not made until April, 1903. Pedley’s preference is explained by the clearly-proven fact that the application was in reality made on behalf of his bosom friend, the redoubtable Peter Ryan, of Toronto, with whom he had had numerous transactions in recent years.

Pedley, while still deputy superintendent-general of Indian affairs, became, as the evidence conclusively shows, beneficial owner of a one-sixth interest in the Blood reserve privilege, and he became owner of this interest by virtue of the assignment of the same to him by Peter Ryan, his old college chum. This six per cent. interest was held by A. C. Bedford-Jones, a lawyer of Toronto, for four years, when, with the knowledge and approbation of Pedley, it was sold to Charles Miller, for \$1,000, which money was paid over to Pedley, Jones retaining \$100 for looking after the legal

¹⁵ From *Jobbery in Western Lands Under Liberal Government*. (1915, April 21). *Red Deer News*, p. 7.

affairs. This connection of Peter Ryan with the deal is definitely established by various agreements which are on the departmental files.

One of these agreements, dated December, 1903, is between Peter Ryan and Donald McEwen, as parties of the first part, and Gordon, Ironside & Fares, of Winnipeg, parties of the second part. The latter firm agreed to stock the reserve for 10 years (the life of the lease) and after certain payments and agreements were carried out, the shares of the respective parties in the profits were to be divided as follows: forty per cent. to Ryan and McEwen, and 60 per cent. to Gordon, Ironside & Fares. The evidence of Pedley was very contradictory, but in the end he admitted having received \$1,000 that was paid for one-sixth interest, but refused to admit that Jones had been acting as trustee for him. The evidence of Ryan and Pedley was also contradicted in many points, but Ryan admits that he was the real owner of the grazing lease. This deal was not the extent of Pedley's operations, but that is another story.

“Personally interested in a grazing lease”¹⁶ (April, 1915)

The disposition of the public domain under the regime of the late government has been under investigation for a couple of years by T. R. Ferguson, K.C., of Winnipeg. [...] The cases occurred in the time when the Hon. Frank Oliver was minister of the interior. [...] The second case relates to Frank Pedley of Ottawa, former Deputy Superintendent of Indian affairs, and in this the finding is that Mr. Pedley, while acting in his official capacity, was personally interested in a grazing lease on the Blood Indian reserve near Macleod, Alta. [...] In 1903 a number of applications for these privileges were made, and the applicants included J. F. McLaughlin of Toronto, with whom was associated Charles Miller, barrister of that city. It is stated that a company was formed for ranching.

Another application on behalf of Donald McEwan nominally, but really for Peter Ryan of Toronto, was put in by Latchford, McDougall and Daly, barristers of Ottawa. The commissioner finds that a one-sixth interest in the grazing privilege was assigned by Mr. Ryan to Mr. Pedley, and held in trust for Mr. Pedley by A. C. Bedford Jones, a Toronto barrister, for four years. It was then sold to Charles Miller for a thousand dollars, and the money, less one hundred dollars for legal expenses, was paid to Mr. Pedley.

The commissioner finds that on the departmental files there is an agreement, dated 1913, between Peter Ryan and Donald McEwan on the one part and Messrs. Gordon, Ironsides and Fares on the other, whereby the latter were to stock the reserve during the ten years of the lease. The shares of the parties were to be divided, following certain details, 40 per cent. of the profits going to Ryan and McEwan and 60 per cent. to Gordon, Ironsides and Fares. The report states that Messrs. Pedley and Ryan contradicted one another on material points, but that Mr. Ryan admitted being the owner of the lease. Mr. Pedley denied that Jones had acted as his trustee.

¹⁶ From DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC LAND IN THE WEST. (1915, April 12). *The Ottawa Citizen*, p. 5.

“The Indians got what was coming to them”¹⁷ (April, 1915)

The ex-minister, [Frank Oliver,] took up the case of the Blood Indian reserve. There was no question, he said, of the propriety of the leasing of grazing rights on the reserve to McEwen of Brandon, Peter Ryan of Toronto, and a Winnipeg cattle firm. There was no question that the price paid for the privileges was not fair, but the whole report was an attempt to prove that Frank Pedley had a beneficial interest in the transaction. [...] Mr. Pedley’s connection with the transaction had been this. Mr. Peter Ryan owned the Bank of Commerce money on Pedley’s endorsement. The bank pressed for payment and Ryan had assigned part of his interest in the leases secured to Mr. Bedford Jones. Mr. Jones had sold it to Mr. Miller for \$1,000, and had applied the money to reduce Ryan’s indebtedness to the Bank of Commerce. For this, said Mr. Oliver, Mr. Pedley’s name had been dragged through the Conservative press as if he were a horse-thief instead of an honest citizen.

Dr. Reid – “Doesn’t the report show that Pedley got something out of it?”

Mr. R. B. Bennett – “He admitted a good deal more.” [...]

Mr. Oliver said [...] there had been no suggestion that the men got an acre of Indian lands for less than it was worth. “The Indians got what was coming to them,” said Mr. Oliver. The only question concerned was that of the propriety of government officials meddling in government property. He did not approve of that and never had permitted it while minister. [...]

[Dr. Roche] considered the case of the Blood Indian reserve. Mr. Peter Ryan, he said, had admitted in his evidence that he had executed a deed of trust in favor of Mr. Bedford Jones, who held in trust for Pedley one-sixth interest in the lease. This had afterwards been sold to Mr. Miller for \$1,000, which he had handed over, less \$100, to the then superintendent-general of Indian affairs. There were other Indian lands for which blank tenders had been filled in Toronto with fictitious names and then sent to Mr. Smart, then superintendent-general of Indian affairs, who became the purchaser himself in association with the other two men concerned. The sum of \$84,000 in all had been cleared by these gentlemen in connection with the Moose Mountain and other lands. If Mr. Oliver thought that was all right, Dr. Roche had a different idea.

¹⁷ From SOME AMAZING REVELATIONS IN THE HOUSE. (1915, April 15). *The Ottawa Citizen*, p. 5.

“If ever these Indians decided to surrender any land”¹⁸ (June, 1915)

A report from J. A. Markle, government inspector, to the Department of Indian Affairs.

Sir, –

I have the honour to make the following observations on an inspection made of the Blood Agency during this month.

In [...] my report of Nov. 13th last, I also suggested that the northern ½ of township 4, all of township 5 and portions of township 6 in ranges 24 and 25 be subdivided into 80 acre lots. I stated my reasons for so advising. Mr. Surveyor Hamilton arrived on the reserve about the 12th and started work on the 14th instant, where directed, and which is the eastern half of township 4, range 26. My desire was to keep the southern portion of the reserve free from improvements so that if ever these Indians decided to surrender any land the southern ½ of township 4 and all of township 3 would not be improved and be a bar against a surrender. Moreover, the closer farming operations are confined the less expense it will be to the Department or to the Indians. It is doubtless true that the soil along the Bull Horn is good, but there is abundance of good land within the area described by me.

Your obedient servant,

Sgd. J. A. Markle, Inspector.

A report on the Blood Reserve in 1916¹⁹ (March, 1916)

Agent Dilworth’s report for 1916. This would be the last detailed Agent’s report written on the Blood Reserve published in the Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs. From 1917 onward, reports are far more general.

Occupations. – The occupations of these Indians are farming, stock-raising, hay-making, and agricultural labour off the reserve.

Farming. – This occupation started some seven years ago, is now the most important one of the tribe, and last year reached its highest record. Owing to propitious weather conditions, and the well sustained and purposeful effort of the Indian farmers themselves, a large harvest was gathered in good season, and twice the acreage prepared for the coming year’s crop was seeded this year. Also 1,000 acres was broken from sod to allow fourteen new farmers to make a start.

¹⁸ From Markle, J. A. (1915, June 23). [Letter to Duncan C. Scott(?)]. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Fonds (RG 10, Volume 4080, file 474,347). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁹ From Dilworth, W. J. (1916). REPORT OF W. J. DILWORTH, INDIAN AGENT FOR THE BLOOD AGENCY, ALBERTA. In *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year ended March 31 1916*. Ottawa: J. de La Tache.

Stock-raising. – The Blood Indians own one of the best beef-type herds in the Northwest. This herd supplies the rationing requirements of the reserve, some 350,000 pounds [of] beef annually.

The horse herds have increased in numbers and improved in quality, dourine discovered amongst them two years ago having been practically obliterated.

Haymaking. – Haymaking, which last year reached record proportions, was this year curtailed owing to the abundance of feed in the district and consequent lack of demand. The Indians, however, in addition to supplying the requirements of the reserve, were able to sell their surplus at fair prices.

Agricultural Labour. – White settlers off the reserve having heavy crops, and labour being scarce, in the first week in August I sent every able-bodied Indian not required to perform the labour on the reserve, off the reserve for three months or until harvesting operations were completed. Some 150 teams and 200 men availed themselves of the labour at remunerative wages and with satisfaction to their employers.

Implements. – These Indians take good care of implements purchased by their private earnings, but poor care of implements purchased for their use out of band funds.

Buildings. – Each passing year sees a marked improvement in the housing conditions. New houses are being built yearly, and all are more roomy, better ventilated and lighted. As a result of this last season's farming operations, a number of new farm houses and stables are in course of erection.

Health and Sanitation. – As there is yearly an improvement in the housing conditions, and as the Indians are yearly changing their diet from one wholly meat to one made up of vegetable and cereal foods, there is an improvement in the general health. Scrofulous cases are less and less prevalent amongst children. Tuberculosis is not so frequently met with. During the year the numbers of the band increased. While the old diseases are not so frequent or virulent in form, yet there have appeared for the first time cases of appendicitis, three patients having been operated upon successfully.

Characteristics and Progress. – These Indians are naturally a pleasure-loving people, and so far in their development, old men especially, look upon the adventurous days of the past as the ideal life. These old men are boastful and vainglorious of their former exploits and adventures. These ideals are being rapidly changed. Each passing year sees them more content to keep up a sustained and purposeful effort at some industrious pursuit. The toil and the moil of a busy life is weaning them away from their former desires, it is encouraging them to make a home, individual and separate from their relations; is developing their physique, mentality and moral habits, and is giving them the stick-to-it-iveness that makes for lasting benefits, independent of help outside their own efforts.

Progress in the direction of applied efforts has been marked throughout the year, in that it has gone a long way towards obscuring the ideals of the past, and decisive in obliterating those acquired instincts that tend to make of these Indians public parasites and private mendicants.

Temperance and Morality. – As the year has been a busy one, there has been much less of intemperance and immorality than has been usual.

“When that time arrives”²⁰ (February, 1917)

J. A. Markle, government inspector, to the Department of Indian Affairs.

Sir, –

I have the honour to submit the following report of an inspection made of the Blood Agency last month.

There were about 480 acres of new land broken last season and 2200 acres summer-fallowed, or summer ploughed. For some years past I desired farming operations to be carried along with a view of concentrating this work, i.e. new farms and new breaking located in the central portion of the reserve. My opinion was, [and] is still, that at some future date these Indians will be disposed to surrender portions of their reserve and that when that time arrives fewer obstacles are likely to be in the way of a surrender if improvements to land [are] made nearer the center than near to the extreme ends of the reserve. My views, however, on this point did not prevail. There are about 10 acres under alfalfa, 5 acres under timothy and 210 acres under western rye grass.

Your obedient servant,
Sgd. J. A. Markle, Insp.

“It isn’t every day”²¹ (August, 1917)

It isn’t every day in the history of Southern Alberta that a deal for more than 4,000 head of stock and 349,800 acres of range is consummated. But such a transaction has just been put through whereby Ray Knight, leading stockman of the south, and J. D. Watson, known to every cattleman from Winnipeg to the coast as the former buyer for the Vancouver-Prince Rupert Packing Company, become owners of the Alberta herds of Gordon, Ironsides and Fares, Winnipeg packers, and their grazing privileges on the Blood reserve south and west of the city.

The deal was consummated a week ago. There are at least 4,000 cattle in the outfit. There may be more along with the stock and range. The new owners take over a string of cow-horses and have already engaged a dozen or more riders who have been in charge of the old outfit.

A couple of years ago the firm of Gordon, Ironsides and Fares renewed their lease on the grazing privileges of the Indian reserve. Lately, however, their packing business has grown – so greatly that they were willing to talk business when approached to sell their Alberta business. Just how much money is involved in the

²⁰ From Markle, J. A. (1917, February 7). [Letter to Duncan C. Scott(?)]. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Fonds (RG 10, Volume 4080, file 474,347). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

²¹ From Immense Land Deal is Closed in the South. (1917, August 1). *The Red Deer News*, p. 6.

deal will not be definitely known until the cattle are counted out. However, on a conservative estimate, it will take between three and four hundred thousand to swing the purchase, making it easily the biggest transaction of the kind in western Canada this year.

“Would throw open to settlers a fine tract”²² (February, 1918)

If the Indians of the Blood reserve show by their vote that they are willing, the Dominion government will this fall sell a block of land at each the north and south ends of the reserve, each block approximating 50,000 acres in extent. An upset price of \$20 per acre will be placed on the land. The Indians were to have voted yesterday on the proposal, but owing to the small numbers present the vote was adjourned to February 28.

Ray Knight, who with J. D. Watson, is the lessee of the grazing rights of the reserve, stated that he understood such a proposal was on foot, but he did not think that the amount of land involved was quite so large, nor did he think that the Indians would vote away their birthright.

The proposed northern block, if sold, would throw open to settlers a fine tract of land between Lethbridge and Macleod. On the south end the proposed block is west of Cardston, close to the Old Man river. The land is the choicest in southern Alberta. The whole reserve consists of 349,000 acres, so that the proposal is to dispose of about 30 percent of it. This would still leave some 250,000 acres on which about 8,000 Blood Indians are domiciled. The Lethbridge board of trade has been working for a long time to have all or part of the reserve set apart for bona fide settlers, and the present effort on the part of the government may be the result of the local body's activity.

“Understood to have voted”²³ (March, 1918)

The Indians of the Blood Reserve are understood to have voted this week on the sale of 52,000 acres from the north part of the reserve and 51,000 from the south part. The land would be surrendered to the Government, subdivided and sold by public auction, if approved by the Indians.

Sheep on the Blood Reserve²⁴ (April, 1918)

Levi Jensen and Harry Goodwin, of Kimball, moved about 4,000 head of sheep on to the Blood reservation leases which they have obtained, passing their herds through the town early this morning. It is understood that Mr. Jensen and Mr. Goodwin have obtained a large lease of about a dozen sections for sheep grazing

²² From BLOOD RESERVE TO BE OPENED UP FOR SETTLEMENT SOON. (1918, February 18). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 11.

²³ From THE BLOOD RESERVE. (1918, March 2). *The Financial Post of Canada*, p. 15.

²⁴ From ARE MOVING SHEEP TO BLOOD RESERVE. (1918, April 24). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 15.

purposes. Quite a number of sheep men have obtained leases on the southwest corner of the Blood reserve. Inasmuch as there is no place in Canada set apart for sheep, it appears opportune for the industry to be fostered, at least to a certain degree, although this land could probably have been farmed to advantage.

It is understood that Messrs. W. E. Pitcher, A. J. Stoddard, J. W. Kearl, et al., have secured farming leases of land adjoining Cardston on the north, and will this summer break up several sections and plant it to fall wheat for next year's harvest. By the occupation of the southwest part of the Blood Indian reserve by farmers and ranchers, the town of Cardston will materially benefit thereby, the chief necessity being at present good roads over the Blood reserve.

“The Indians themselves are contributing”²⁵ (May, 1918)

Close to 100,000 acres of new land is being broken this year on the Indian reserves in Saskatchewan and Alberta, it was stated today by W. M. Graham, chief of the department of Indian affairs in Western Canada, and while a portion of this amount must be credited to the government, the Indians themselves are contributing to the greater production campaign in new breaking to a considerable extent.

The federal government has leased considerable tracts from the Indians, both in this province and Alberta, and is in turn leasing the land out to farmers for grain production and for grazing purposes, with the object of increasing the production of wheat and beef. In one reserve alone, the Blood reserve, 93,000 acres have been leased out for this purpose.

“A new departure”²⁶ (June, 1918)

Indian Commissioner Graham, of Regina, is visiting the Blood Indian Reserve in Southern Alberta. The Bloods are horse Indians, a tribe of the Blackfeet, and they formerly enjoyed the reputation of being the best horse rustlers and the most turbulent Indians in Canada. In the early days thousands of horses were owned by the Bloods. Subsequently, the department prevailed on the Bloods to go in for cattle, for probably the Blood reserve constitutes the biggest and best ranches in Canada. It contains a great variety of the most nutritious pasture in the world, and much of the high land is particularly adapted for sheep.

A new departure has been recently taken under Mr. Graham's comprehensive and varied scheme for fostering greater production of food on the reserve by the introduction of some thousands of sheep, and among other things Mr. Graham is visiting the reserve with an eye on this new sheep industry.

²⁵ From BIG ACREAGE INDIAN LAND BEING BROKEN. (1918, May 29). *Edmonton Bulletin*, p. 1.

²⁶ From SHEEP AND CATTLE REPLACING HORSES ON BLOOD RESERVE. (1918, June 4). *The Saskatoon Daily Star*, p. 3.

“Every inch of the Blood Indian reservation”²⁷ (July, 1918)

Sir – I was much interested in your editorial of yesterday’s issue, entitled, “A Bad Report.” But, Mr. Editor, it is not at all necessary to force our returned soldiers to go on land that is unsuitable²⁸ for soldier cultivation.

In your issue of March 14 on this year there appeared²⁹ the following news item:-

“LETHBRIDGE, March 14. – An urgent petition to the Dominion government to save the new areas to be thrown open in the Blood reserve from the hands of speculators is being forwarded to Ottawa by the Board of trade here. The idea is favored that returned soldiers should be given an opportunity of securing this splendid land.”

The reserve referred to contains about 575 square miles of as good land as is to be found anywhere in the world, and it is all ready for the plough. That it is “splendid land” may be inferred from what Joseph F. Smith, of Salt Lake City, president of the Mormon church, said on August 5, 1913, when he was over here in Canada dedicating the site for the Mormon temple at Cardston. “The president was very much struck with the beauty and fertility of the land which comprises the Indian reserve. Viewing it from his seat in the car, he said to the people round him, ‘It makes me feel bad how our own government treated the Indians. But this land here we will pay for. When the Indians are ready to sell we will pay for it. We won’t begrudge any money they ask for it.’ From the above statement, made by the head of the Mormon church, it would seem that they intend, if possible, to obtain possession of the Blood reserve.” See *Morning Albertan*, August 5, 1913.

In your issue of April 24, 1928, there appeared another interesting news item: “CARDSTON, April 23. – Levi Jensen and Harry Goodwin, of Kimball, moved about 4,000 head of sheep on to the Blood reservation leases which they have obtained, passing their herds through the town early this morning. It is understood that Mr. Jensen and Mr. Goodwin have obtained a large lease of about a dozen sections for sheep grazing purposes. Quite a number of sheep men have obtained leases on the southwest corner of the Blood reserve. . . . This land could probably have been farmed to advantage. It is understood that Messrs. W. E. Pitcher, A. J. Stoddard, J. W. Kearl, et al., have secured farming leases of land adjoining Cardston on the north. . . . By the occupation of the southwest part of the Blood Indian reserve by farmers and ranchers, the town of Cardston will materially benefit thereby, the chief necessity being at present good roads over the Blood reserve.”

²⁷ From Shearer, W. (1918, July 11). Opposes Leasing of Blood Lands. *The Calgary Herald*, p. 6. Written by William Shearer (1892 – 1961).

²⁸ “W. Bouchner, who travelled [...] as a commissioner [...] for the purpose of sizing up the land in places where the government has reserved blocks near the railways for soldier settlement, makes a detailed report. If he speaks truly there does not seem to be anything specially inviting in that country for the soldiers. [...] Provision should be made for their settlement elsewhere and the reserved lands placed on the list for homesteading again.” A BAD REPORT. (1918, July 9). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 6.

²⁹ BAR SPECULATORS. (1918, March 14). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 1. This brief box is quoted below in full by W. Shearer.

Besides the men mentioned above, who have secured from the government leases of this splendid land, I have the names of nine others who have secured leases on the same reserve, and they are all Mormons. They have all secured their leases since the Lethbridge Board of Trade sent the following telegram to Ottawa: "Provided Blood Indians favorable, suggest certain portion land set aside for sale might be reserved against soldiers' applications."

I maintain, Mr. Editor, that in view of what our returned soldiers have endured and suffered for the Empire, and in view of the world-wide glory they have brought to our Dominion, every inch of the Blood Indian reservation should be put at their disposal.

I also maintain that it is scandalous to offer our returned soldiers such land as you describe in your editorial, when about 350,000 acres of such magnificent land lies right here at our very door waiting to be cultivated.

WILLIAM SHEARER.

Calgary, Alta., July 10, 1918.

"A remarkable success"³⁰ (November, 1918)

An official report made to Hon. Arthur Meighen by Mr. W. M. Graham, who was appointed commissioner to take charge of the greater production campaign on the western Indian reserves, shows that the campaign has been a remarkable success and that preparations are being made for production on a greater scale than ever next season.

Five greater production farms have been located on western reserves and a large amount of land has been plowed this fall ready for seeding. The farms are situated as follows:

Gleichen, Alberta, Blackfoot Reserve, 2,500 acres; Cluny, Alberta, Blackfoot Reserve, 5,500 acres; McLeod, Alberta, Blood Reserve, 5,000 acres; Edenwold, Sask., Muscowpetung Reserve, 3,600 acres; Broadview, Sask., Crooked Lakes Reserve, 3,600 acres; Sintaluta, Sask., Assiniboine Reserve, 1,000 acres.

Sixteen large gas tractors were used continuously almost night and day to bring this land under cultivation. Bunk and cook houses have been built to accommodate men and granaries are being erected. It will take thirty-six thousand bushels of wheat to seed this land. The best pure-bred Marquis wheat alone is being used.

In addition to preparing this extensive area for wheat, Mr. Graham has been devoting considerable time to the work of increasing beef production. Last March 384 head of stock were purchased and were grazed on the File Hills Reserve. They were recently sold and showed approximately an increase of one hundred thousand pounds of beef, and also netted the greater production account a profit of \$10,000.

As a result of the department's efforts, fourteen thousand acres of prairie land were brought under cultivation by the Indians, while the Indians on the various

³⁰ From INDIANS HELPING TO INCREASE CROPS. (1918, November 26). *Montreal Gazette*, p. 10.

reserves summer-fallowed over ten thousand acres. The area prepared for crop in this one season is estimated by Mr. Graham as about four times as great as would have been effected under ordinary conditions. The western Indians have now over twenty thousand head of cattle.

Besides the work among the Indians, in the neighborhood of twelve thousand acres were leased to white settlers and have been prepared and ready for seeding next season. Over two hundred thousand acres have been leased for pasturage at a rate profitable to the Indians and the department.

The following land is now ready for this coming season:

Greater production farms, 21,200 acres; broken by Indians, 14,000 acres; broken by white men, 12,000 acres; summer-fallowed by Indians, 10,000 acres.

“A scorching attack”³¹ (February, 1919)

EDMONTON, Feb. 13. – A scorching attack on various departments of the federal government was the feature of a lengthy address in the house today by Martin Woolf, government member for Cardston, who [...] attacked the federal department, unnamed, which had permitted the leasing of huge tracts of land in the Blood Indian reserve to certain individuals. [...] He pointed out that the house had adopted Opposition Leader George Hoadley’s resolution last year asking to withhold these lands from homesteading until they could be made available for soldiers; as a result, they were divided up among big cattlemen for grazing purposes. [...] He read some of the names [of the leaseholders] and their political pedigrees³²: W. P. Smith, six sections; W. H. Steen, four sections; Chris. Jensen, six sections; Ephraim Hart, four sections; Marston Bros., four sections; Knight and Watson, who got a lease from Gordon Ironsides and Fares for blanket privileges to graze 10,000 cattle on it during the summer with the right to put up hay to carry them over the winter. [...] One lease for farming of 5,000 acres he knew was for five years.

“Over 300 head of horses have died”³³ (April, 1920)

On the Blood reserve over 300 head of horses have died this winter, and at the present time the Indian farmers are wondering how they will manage to put in their crops this year. Many of the Indians are making a little money disposing of the hides

³¹ From Dominion Government Criticized for Leasing Blood Reserve Lands. (1919, February 14). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 14.

³² “Mr. Conroy, a lessee of lands on the Hobbema reserves, has written that all the leases on the two reserves there were given to opponents of the Dominion Government. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of the policy of grazing leases, which apparently are for short terms, it is reasonably clear that the Department did not use them for purposes of party patronage. Whether the land is suitable for farming for returned veterans, or anybody else, remains to be seen.” NOT USED FOR PARTY PATRONAGE. (1919, March 14). *The Red Deer Advocate*, p. 4.

³³ From BANK MANAGER IN MACLEOD IS MOVED. (1920, April 26). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 15.

of the animals; also they have been very busy catching and obtaining the skins of beavers, lynx, muskrats and other furbearing animals which have been plentiful this year, thereby making a living for the winter.

“Without asking the Indians”³⁴ (April, 1921)

Grazing leases on the Blood Reserve will be continued throughout this year, according to an announcement by Premier Meighen, in the Dominion house. [...] In 1918 leases were first granted through the authority of an order-in-council, without asking the Indians, but ample ground was left to support the animals of the Indians. The leases can be terminated on six weeks notice in writing. The leases are granted for one year only.

“Persecution, bad faith and chicanery”³⁵ (May, 1921)

A remarkable story, containing allegations of persecution, bad faith and chicanery by the government of Canada, in regard to the relations of this country with the Indians of the Blood Reserve, is told by Mr. R. N. Wilson, of Standoff, Alberta, who is in Ottawa on behalf of the Indians in an effort to get some of their numerous wrongs redressed. Mr. Wilson describes himself as an Indian trader who has known these Indians intimately for the past forty years. He was originally a member of the R.N.W.M.P.³⁶ when in 1881 he met his first Blood Indian. He was sent in 1882 on duty to the Blood Reserve, where he learned to speak the language of those Indians, and after securing his discharge from the force in 1884 opened up a general trading store at Standoff, adjoining the reserve in southern Alberta, in which district he has resided practically ever since, and always in business associations with the Indians, more than thirteen years being spent in the Indian service of the government, from which he resigned in 1911.

“I am merely a friend and neighbor of the Indians,” said Mr. Wilson when he showed a Citizen representative a power of attorney from the head chief of the Blood tribe and credential signed by two hundred Blood Indians, including all of the chiefs and comprising two-thirds of the adult male residents of the reservation, authorizing him to act for and represent them in urging their complaints upon the attention of the government. [...]

ADVENT OF HON. MR. MEIGHEN

In the course of the interview, sometimes quoting from a memorandum which he has prepared in an effort to ventilate this subject, Wilson contended that the

³⁴ From WILL CONTINUE GRAZING LEASES BLOOD RESERVE. (1921, April 14). *The Macleod Times*, p. 1.

³⁵ From Anonymous & Wilson, R. N. (1921, May 6). INDIANS OF THE BLOOD RESERVE MAKE ALLEGATIONS OF SCANDALOUS TREATMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT. *The Ottawa Citizen*, p. 17. Written by Robert Nathaniel Wilson (1863 – 1944), who served as an Indian agent on the Peigan and Blood reserves from 1898 to 1911.

³⁶ Royal North-West Mounted Police.

[Treaty] made by the Dominion government with the Blood Indians explicitly gives the Indians the personal and exclusive use of their lands until and unless they voluntarily surrender it, and that this was not questioned by any government of Canada until Hon. Mr. Meighen became superintendent-general of Indian affairs in 1917. That year marked the abandonment by the Indian Department, at least as [far as] the Blood reserve was concerned, of the traditional Canadian policy of Indian administration, and it marked the end of the prosperity of the Blood Indians, who from that time forward were not permitted to enjoy the peaceful possession of their reserve as guaranteed to them by treaty.

The Bloods, who are one of the most important Indian tribes in Canada, were the principal [stock] raising Indians of the Dominion, as well as being the second [most notable] farming tribe in the country when in 1918 the department abandoned its policy of advancing Indians on their reserve in favor of a policy of Indian reserve excision in the interests of covetous white men. In February, 1918, during an official campaign of pressure, the Blood Indians asked to vote on the proposed [sale of] about 30,000 acres of their reserve, a question which they had voted down in the preceding [year]. By enrolling as voters a [group] of boys under age, by purchasing votes with tribal funds and favors, and by intimidating Indians, a small majority in [favor] of the land sale was shown, which was immediately protested by the head chief on the grounds of bribery, intimidation and fraud.

COERCIVE MEASURES

“A few illustrations will show the dangers to which Indians are exposed when a government official considers that it is ‘up to him’ to secure land from them by hook or crook. The first measure taken to force the Indians to sell land was to stop the development of their farming enterprise, to appropriate and use for other agency purposes the funds upon which the farming extension was dependent, and to inform the Indians that no more land would be broken up for new farms until they sold part of the reserve. Thus in 1916 and 1917, when Western Canada was being ‘stumped’ by public speakers urging greater production³⁷ of grain, the Blood Indians, while they had a good crop from their old land, were not permitted to respond to the greater production appeal, though they had the land, machinery, horses, plenty of willing men and the necessary capital to operate their traction breaking plow outfits. The

³⁷ A concerted campaign by different levels of Canadian government that began during World War I: “Co-operation of the provincial governments in the campaign for greater production was asked, on behalf of the Dominion Government. [...] The objects aimed at in the campaign for greater production [...] may be defined as follows: To plant this spring every acre possible of wheat, oats, barley and rye. To bring into cultivation every acre possible of new land for a crop in 1919. To increase cattle, hogs and sheep to the greatest possible extent. To secure cultivation of gardens and vacant lots in town and city, with a view to raising the maximum amount of vegetables, this purpose to be accomplished through municipal or existing organizations in such a manner as will insure proper supervision. To encourage every household in small towns and villages to raise one pig through the season, with a view to utilizing all garbage for food. [...] For achieving these objects [...] Provincial Governments to [...] undertake the work of ascertaining the form of assistance which may be required by their farmers, in order to secure, in 1918, the breaking of a definite increased acreage of new land more than would normally be broken for next year’s crop.” CO-OPERATION OF PROVINCES RESULT OF CONFERENCE. (1918, February 18). *The Montreal Gazette*, p. 9.

irony of the predicament of the Blood Indians in 1917 will be appreciated upon reading the closing paragraph³⁸ on page 1049 Hansard of April 23rd, 1918, in which Mr. Meighen says: 'We would be only too glad to have the Indian use this land if he would; production by him would be just as valuable as production by anybody else. But he will not cultivate this land, and we want to cultivate it; that is all. We shall not use it any longer than he shows a disinclination to cultivate the land himself.'

"The land surrender matter was constantly mixed up with other agency business, Indian after Indian being made to understand that fair and ordinary treatment at the hands of the department was dependent upon signing a pledge to vote 'Yea.' For instance, one of the opposing faction, an honest, hardworking Indian, was told: 'If you come down here (to the agency) and vote against the surrender, your family will starve next winter,' while another opponent of the land sale was offered an appointment of minor chief if he would change his vote from 'Nay' to 'Yea,' a minor chief's medal being held up before his eyes during the conversation.

"The ration house maintained on the reserve by the department for the double purpose of assisting the destitute and providing a medium for the distribution of the beef and flour of the self-supporting Indians, was during this period turned into a vote-getting machine. Aged and infirm Indians who had for years been on the department's 'permanently destitute' list had their rations shut off entirely and were forced to become beggars in order to live, while able-bodied Indians prominent among the 'land seller' faction were to be seen carrying out of the ration house sacks of beef heavier than they could handle without assistance."

Mr. Wilson says that in this campaign of official duress, the charge was made that trust monies belonging to non-assenting Indians were by the manipulation of official agency records transferred to the credit of "land sale" supporters, thus administering a punishment and a reward with the same pen stroke. "Implements purchased with tribal funds and the property of the whole tribe were used to buy surrender votes, and the agent's power to assist his Indians with credit orders upon merchants and dealers for vehicles, tents, machinery and the like, was used to a remarkable extent in vote getting. Indians who would not consent to the land sale were black-listed and systematically persecuted. Some of these with money on deposit at the agency, derived from their personal earnings, were not permitted to withdraw their money while they remained on the 'wrong' side of the controversy and, contrariwise, other Indians who had no deposits whatever but were 'right' in the official estimation were permitted to draw money at the agency as cash advances against future earnings that were not even in sight. As agency cash on hand or in the bank is almost entirely made up of balances from earnings held in trust for individual Indians, the effect of the above discrimination was to give the 'Yeas' the use of the 'Nays' money.

LANDS LEASED TO GOVERNMENT'S FRIENDS

"The immense power of the government, which on an Indian reservation is so far-reaching, was during this period exercised to make miserable the lives of the

³⁸ I have edited this quote to match the relevant passage on page 1049 of the Debates of the House of Commons (Hansard) for April 23, 1918.

'Nays' and their families while the 'Yeas' basked in the sunshine of official favor. The head chief, representing the true majority of the tribe, at once filed at Ottawa charges of fraud, bribery and intimidation and requested the department not to accept the surrender without an investigation of his charges, following which protest no further action was taken by the department with the document, and it was not sent up to the council for acceptance. While the Indians were awaiting a reply from the department to the protest of their chief, they were astonished to see white men appearing on their reserve with many thousands of sheep and claiming the right to do so under leases. Then it developed that the government had peremptorily expropriated and leased out the 90,000 acres which the Indians had so recently declined to sell, and in order to give this arbitrary action a color of reasonableness the executive officers of the department trumped up the utterly false charge that the Blood reserve was empty and unutilized, in face of the fact, well known to them, that there were at that time grazing on the reserve close on to 17,000 head of cattle and horses, belonging to the Indians and an old leasing company that was paying them \$10,000 per annum for grazing rights."

"The Blood reserve was already stocked to its average safe capacity for all the year around grazing in that climate," says Mr. Wilson, "and the issuing by the department in 1918 of 38 additional grazing leases was an act either of wanton recklessness of Indian rights or of deliberate intention to punish the Indians. If the latter, it was certainly successful."

Serious reflections are made by him upon the manner in which these leased lands went into the hands of friends of the present government. "Contrary to Mr. Meighen's assurance to parliament," he states, "that tenders would be called for 'in every case where there is time and circumstances permit,' these leases were let privately, though there was no reason for haste, unless it was a desire to get the land into the hands of certain parties before the public generally knew anything about it. Mr. Martin Woolf, the Liberal M.P.P. for Cardston, in an address in the Alberta legislature that year, charged that the Blood reserve leases were made a political matter of by the Dominion government, and [were] granted to his present and past political opponents. The area covered by these grazing leases included the homes of many Indians who were ordered to vacate in favor of the lessees, while others were dispossessed of their fenced pasture fields. Hay lands used by many Indians, some for 20 and 25 years, and upon which they depended for cattle feed and their own living, were also handed over to the white lessees to be used by them as hay lands."

"GREATER PRODUCTION"

Mr. Wilson describes vividly how the white lessees were allowed to impose upon the Indians. "While the Indian cattle were kept off the white man's land, the white man's cattle and sheep were allowed to graze on the Indian lands. The Indians made strong protests in this connection to the Indian agent of the reserve, but could get no satisfaction. On 16th February, 1918, an order-in-council was passed stating that a special officer would take charge of greater production on Indian lands and would make 'proper arrangements with the Indians for the leasing of reserve land which may be needed for grazing, for cultivation or for other purposes, and for the

compensation to be paid therefor.' These duties were not performed with regard to the 90,000 acres of leases, as no arrangement of any sort was proposed to or discussed with the Blood Indians, who knew nothing of any intention to place sheep on their reserve until the sheep were actually there in thousands, and those Indians who resided within the area were ordered to vacate their homes in favor of government lessees. As for compensation to the tribe for the lands so leased or to individual Indians for losses sustained by the confiscation of their personal holdings, nothing of the sort was proposed then, or has been during the three years that have since elapsed with the confiscations in full force. When some of the Indians were expressing in appropriate language their opinions of the lack of wisdom in crowding their cattle range with sheep, and their indignation at the rough dispossession to which they were being subjected, the agent sent an exaggerated report to Ottawa, causing the government to fear that the Indians contemplated taking the law into their own hands and expelling the invaders from the reserve, a measure which the Bloods, who are a tractable people, had not even considered. In consequence of the report of the agent, however, a higher officer of the department appeared upon the reserve with three armed policemen and the belated information that the leases had been granted as a war measure and would be maintained by force if necessary, to accentuate which the head chief of the Bloods was told that 'anyone who even objects to what is being done on the Blood reserve or anyone who advises anyone else to object will be arrested and persecuted,' which was a considerable threat to make in support of a bunch of predatory leases that were absolutely devoid of moral sanction and of doubtful legality when written.

CALAMITOUS LOSSES

"Eighteen months of wholesale overstocking of the reserve had the inevitable result of ruining the grass and hay. The local agent warned his superiors of this condition in his May report and again in his report for June, but though there was a six weeks' cancellation clause in the leases, the lessees had too much pull and were not to be molested. All warnings having failed to induce the government to cancel its 'greater production' leases and restore the reserve to the use of its Indian owners, at the beginning of the winter of 1919-20 the sacrifice of the Indian cattle herd began. Six hundred were sold for less than half their normal value, and practically lost to their Indian owners owing to the failure of the officials who shipped them to take the trouble to properly identify the brands on the animals. The individual cattle brands of the Blood Indians are numerals, and at the time that these cattle were shipped the brands were indistinguishable owing to the growth of winter hair, and could not be accurately read by anyone without clipping on each animal the area of the brand, which clipping was not done. The I.D. report for 1919-20 shows the sum of \$20,463 from this sale as being held in a tribal account at Ottawa, where it apparently rests yet owing to the fact that the real owners of the money are unknown. Another 400 head of Indian cattle crowded off their reserve by the 'greater production' leases were, to save them from starvation, shipped by rail to the Stony reserve west of Calgary, fed there until the following summer, when they were returned by rail, minus a shortage of 150 head, to the Blood reserve, all this cost and loss being imposed upon

the unfortunate Bloods rather than disturb the 'greater production' lessees who had within twelve months been permitted by the authorities to remove from the Blood reserve thousands of tons of cattle feed, which under any system of fair dealing would have been retained for the use and profit of the Indians.

"In 1919 the Blood Indians had 3,472 cattle; in the following spring the survivors were counted and found to number about 1,200 which, after allowing for the 1,000 sent away, left a heavy shortage that had starved to death on their reserve from which the government had within the year allowed strangers, backed by the police, to remove thousands of tons of fodder. Moreover, the Indians were forbidden to skin animals that had died of starvation, though the hides were worth several dollars each. The Indians believe that the government gave this order to conceal the great losses suffered by Indian cattle through their feed being taken from them by the white lessees.

"The losses were not confined to cattle. Throughout the forty years of their occupation of the reserve, the Blood Indians wintered their horses of all classes by grazing out on the open range, none being stabled except when in use. During this winter of 1919-20, their horses died of starvation in such numbers that by spring no less than 538 fatalities had been reported for record. A deplorable feature of this phase of the calamity was the fact that the work horses were the heaviest sufferers, a total of 454 work horses being reported dead of starvation. Some of the Indians who were farmers lost all of their teams, while many had nothing left with which to either ride, drive or work.

THE "FORTUNATE INDIAN"

"The Indian is very fortunate,' said Hon. Mr. Meighen in the house; 'he has all he had before and now, in addition, he has the rental for this land,' to which the Indian replies, 'You have killed my cattle and my horses, by taking from me the grass that I had before, and though three years have passed I have yet to see the first dollar of the promised grazing rental.'

"A large sum of money was received by the department from the grazing lessees, but it has been of no benefit to the Indians as it was kept in a general fund and was mostly wasted by the government in fruitless efforts to repair the damage caused by the ill-advised leases. A reading of the somewhat elaborately camouflaged

account in the auditor general's report for 1919-20, pp. I-137³⁹ and I-183⁴⁰, will show that \$58,807 was expended for cattle management, mainly on imported baled hay, when \$15,000 would have been ample had there been no G. P. leases.

"Of their 66 pure-bred bulls, 35 were sacrificed in a sale at 5c or 5 1-4 cents per pound, and 22 of the high-priced animals were allowed to starve to death. One valuable bull was sold for \$50 to someone under a fictitious name and reported as 'old,' while he in reality was a young animal quite recently purchased for \$300.

THE CARDSTON LEASE AFFAIR

"The only 'greater production' leasing scheme submitted to the Blood Indians for their consent was a proposition that the government be permitted to lease to white men for farming purposes, for a period of five years, a block of about 10 sections of land (about 6,000 acres) close to the town of Cardston. As this 10-section farming lease was presented to the Indians as a patriotic measure, it was assented to by a large majority led by the head chief, who had opposed the out and out sale of reserve lands. The two conditions then voted upon of particular interest to the Indians were: (1) That all rental proceeds of the lease should be paid to the Indians in per capita distribution of cash; and (2) that all straw grown the leased land should become the property of the Indians for the feeding of their own cattle. After the said 10 sections had been leased by the department to white farmers, and the agent had advised the Indians that the rentals therefrom would bring them during the term of the lease annual per capita payments of about \$24, it was arranged that the department should distribute \$6 per capita on account. This payments was made on the 30th May, 1918, but before receiving the money the Indians were unexpectedly required to sign a paper which was not explained to them. Some thought that it was a receipt for the \$6, but all signed because they were informed by the agent that unless they did so the money would be sent back to Ottawa and no payment made until another year. At the conclusion of the payment, the head chief, who does not speak or read English, was handed a copy of the paper which they had signed, and upon taking this away for translation it then became known for the first time that they had signed another farming lease of a quite different character, cancelling the first one, taking from the Indians the straw and changing the \$6 payment on account into a payment in full.

³⁹ The entry for "Haying operations, etc." of the Blood Indians of Alberta, on this page, totals \$31,000 and consists of the following: "hay, 3,220·114 tons, \$34,107.70, no quantity stated, \$1,271.30; royalty on hay, 114¼ tons at \$2; straw, 367·916 tons, \$2,787.70; green feed, 510·78 tons, \$11,160.33; oil cake, 30 tons, \$2,220; rebuilt hay press, \$400; baling wire, 6,835 lb., \$516.80; baling hay, 1,516·64 tons \$6,049.71; baling straw, 27·175 tons, \$122.28; weighing, \$152.70; stacking, \$379.50; wages of men baling, at \$2, \$2.50 and \$3 a day, \$4,602.34; hauling feed, \$2,375; sundry labour, \$554.03; rider, 79½ d., \$159; rent of quarters for crew, 5 m., \$50; fuel, \$97.60; board and provisions for men, \$2,041.46; travel and outlay of men, \$277.66; stabling, horse feed, etc., \$347.70; skinning dead animals, \$17.50; fencing stacks, \$48; freight, \$1,960.92; demurrage, \$6; postage, \$12.50; telephone tolls and telegrams, \$44.30; hardware, supplies and repairs, \$247.85; various items, \$254.48; advertising for hay, \$1.50; interest on bank overdrafts, \$303.90, dipping 417 head cattle at 50 cts., brand inspection, \$50, feed, \$159, board of men, \$57.90, insurance, \$2, sundry labour, \$12; total, \$73,885.16; less charged as follows: - 1920-21, \$755.24, Acct. 442, Blood Ranch Acct., \$17,400".

⁴⁰ One interesting line item from the Blood Ranch Account detailed on this page: "Grazing dues, Gordon Ironside Fares Co., \$10,000; hides sold, \$3,000.10".

An important point is that this loss of straw produced on several thousand acres of the lessees' crop was a contributing cause of the disaster which overtook the Blood Indian cattle.

"After being deprived of 75 per cent. or 80 per cent. of their benefits from this 10-section farming lease by the substitution of one legal document for another, the victims expected prompt and full payment of that little which was left to them, the annual \$6 per capita, promised in the name of the King to be paid on or about the first of April, but the western officials of the department held back the payment for five weeks in each of the years 1919 and 1920 to enable a government employee armed with a rifle to traverse the reserve and observe the consent of each dog owner, under a threat of shooting his or her dog, to the deduction of dog taxes from the said \$6.

"The Indians requested the government to discard the document that was substituted and to settle with them according to the original and only legal one, but the government made no response to their appeal.

SEIZURE OF MONEYS

"The Indians complain that in September, 1918, the year before the principal calamity, the executive officers of the department gathered up on the Blood reserve and sold a mixed lot of Indian cattle, including three-year-old steers, two-year-old steers and young breeding cows, the orders being to 'take everything that is fat.' For these cattle the authorities received more than \$40,000, the steers in the shipment being sold for \$168 each, at the then price of about 14c per pound live weight. Blood Indians, whose private property these cattle were, have not been able to secure an accounting of the \$40,000. The owners were bluntly informed that the 'Indian share' would be \$50 a head, and after a delay of about six months, credits on that basis were carried to some of their accounts. They subsequently learned that about \$20,000 of these personal Indian funds had been taken and reinvested in other cattle which were, after long being fed with hay, in turn sold for about \$20 a head less than they had cost in the first place, the loss from this absolutely unwarranted speculation with trust monies falling upon the Blood Indians. Another lot of Blood Indians' cattle were sold for about \$15,000 by the executive officers of the department, and of this sum but \$2,000 or 43,000 was credited to the accounts of the Indians who owned the money, and no explanation given of the balance, though the Indians learned indirectly that the greater part of the funds had been used to buy cattle, concerning the branding or disposal of which no information was available.

"Thousands of dollars of personal Indian income derived from beef and grain sales and on deposit at the agency in trust for them individually were peremptorily seized for the ostensible purpose of reinvestment in breeding cattle. Protests of the Indians against this unjustifiable use of their private moneys were repeatedly made, but were met with the statement that it was the order of the government and must be obeyed. Some Indians objected that they already had enough cattle, others that they wanted to handle their own money, but protests availed nothing and the cash was arbitrarily deducted from their accounts in single amounts of \$300 and more, the total running into thousands of dollars which, after repeated appeals to the

government for adjustment, are still outstanding. The laws of Canada seem to provide no method by which Indians can, as a matter of right, secure a hearing of such claims.

SURRENDER AGAIN DEMANDED

“While continuing to avoid discussion of the memorial with the Indians, the government informed them last fall that the only way by which they could free themselves of their misfortunes would be to surrender part of their reserve, from which it was inferred that the 90,000 acres would be kept from them until they did so, and that reparation, if made, would be from the proceeds of their own land. This announcement was followed during the recent winter by the usual preparatory campaign, in which the Indians were made to feel the pangs of hunger, while the many thousands of dollars of their confiscated and misappropriated funds were still withheld from them. At the end of last month, the finances of the Indians being at about the lowest point in the year, it was considered that the propitious moment had arrived for another attack on their land holdings, so the Indian commissioner appeared, accompanied, it is reported, by a force of twenty Mounted Policemen, to record the vote, but the Indians, to their credit, refused to be intimidated by the great display of armed force and voted down the proposition, according to the report, by 144 votes to 99, a majority against the land sale, which would seem to be an appropriate response to the ‘strong-arm’ business methods of a misguided Indian administration.”

“Be wise and persevere”⁴¹ (August, 1921)

“Mokokit-ki-aekakimat – be wise and persevere,” advised old Head Chief Ermine Horses, as he concluded a pow-wow among his people, the Blood Indians, a few years ago. Such pointed phrasing as this might reasonably be expected to have come from the pen of Ralph Waldo Emerson, or from our contemporary essayist, Orison Swett Marden; but paradoxically enough, it is but a commonplace quotation from the many wise sayings among the Bloods. No old Indian of this tribe ever concludes a speech without this entreaty, “mokokit-ki-aekakimat.” Hence it is not to be wondered that the Bloods have attained the distinction of being the most progressive, the most industrious and the most independent tribe of Indians in Alberta, and perhaps, in the entire northwest.

Numbering eleven hundred and fifty individuals, the Bloods occupy a reserve in Southern Alberta five hundred and ten square miles in extent, or an area one-half the size of Holland. If the Blackfoot, Piegan and Sarcee reservations were to be placed on the Blood reserve, a 50,000 acre calf pasture would be left over. Of this vast area, hundreds of thousands of acres are under cultivation by the Indians themselves, and a few thousand acres are leased to outsiders for grazing or grain-growing purposes.

Many will wonder how the Bloods have been able to hold on to this large tract of land against the periodic “opening-ups” which have been instituted by the government in recent years. But after visiting the Bloods, going over every foot of

⁴¹ From Long Lance, S. C. (1921, August 27). Blood Indians are Most Independent and Hold Their Reserve Intact. *The Calgary Herald*, p. 20. Written by Sylvester Clark “Buffalo Child” Long Lance (1891 – 1932).

their reserve and mingling with them for several days, the writer confidently concluded that this successful tenure was consequent solely upon "being wise and persevering." The Bloods, unlike some tribes, have not received much individual aid from the government, with regard to having houses built for them and being provided with individual sets of farm implements and team; but they have attained to the same degree of development through their own personal efforts, which betrays a desirable trait of character not by any means common to all tribes of Indians. This peculiar trait is independence. The Bloods are independent to an extreme degree; and it is this wise, persevering independence that has enabled them to hold on to their domains, while most other Indians have conceded large strips of their territory to be opened up by the government.

The Bloods seem to have ideas of their own when it comes to land values, and in spite of the fact that negotiations have been, and are still being carried on between them and the Dominion government to the end that a certain portion of their reserve might be opened up for settlement, they have always found a pound of flesh lacking somewhere in the bargain and have tenaciously maintained their side of the argument to the last detail, with the result that they still hold their land as it was granted to them in the treaty of '77.

In spite of the fact that the Bloods are identically the same tribe of Indians as the Blackfeet, and, really speaking, are, like the Piegiens, only a band of that tribe that happened to be on their present location when peace was established and the treaty of 1877 was signed, they, nevertheless, seem to have acquired a desirable kick in their make-up that is not enjoyed to the same degree by their two brother bands. The younger Bloods appreciate the value of education more than any other tribe in the west, and are actually aggressive in clamoring for more knowledge. This is indeed strange for Western Canadian Indians, who in the main eye the white man's book-learning with something resembling suspicion.

"Give us an advanced education. We need a new school with modern conveniences. What the United States can do with their Indians, I am sure Canada can do the same, and better, with hers." Thus spoke Mike Mountain Horse, son of the chief of the Bloods, at the 1921 reunion of the Old Boys' Association, of the St. Paul's Blood Indian school.

Joe Beebee, another old boy, told how one Indian had graduated in the United States as a lawyer; one had been elected a senator and many held high positions, to which Emile Bull Shields, an ex-student, replied:

"We, too, are beginning to see daylight; we know a little what to do; in the early days we never tried; we used to make funny remarks about the missionary, but today we listen to him and learn from him."

The Blood views with ironical humor the feathered nests that most Indians like to wallow in, under the protecting wings of the government; as will be gleaned from the following poem written by Joe Beebee and recited to the amusement of his fellow comrades at one of the students' reunions:

“Oh, I wish I was an Indian
With a tall and graceful form,
A Hudson’s Bay white blanket
To shield me from the storm.
I wish I was a Siwash,
A Blackfeet or [a] Plute,
Instead of being a white man,
An unprotected brute.”

The Blood legend telling of how they and the Piegans happened to band off from the parent Blackfeet tribe and become separate tribal units, runs as follows:

Back in the past there lived a chief with three sons, each the leader of a clan of the tribe. The Indians were passing through an extremely hard year and found it practically impossible to secure enough meat to keep them from starving. The chief called in his three sons and told one of them to take his band and go west, another to go south and a third to go east, and not return until they had killed enough game to keep the tribe from perishing. The sons gathered their bands and went their ways as instructed, covering hundreds of miles of territory. During their wanderings, each of them discovered a particular hunting ground that suited him best, bagged their game and returned with their spoils. The father, upon noticing that the soles of the moccasins of one band were covered with black, called them Blackfeet. A second band, having acquired a bloodthirsty nature during their encounters with other strange tribes, were called the Kai-Nais, or Bloods. However, the manner in which the Piegans derived their name is not clearly related.

It is known that the bands returned to their respective hunting grounds and remained there roaming over wide-given areas until the treaty of '77, when the government stopped them where they were and said to each of them: “You remain where you are, on so many acres of land in this vicinity, bounded by so-and-so.” Thus the Blackfeet were placed on their reserve stretching from Namaka to Bassano; the Bloods on a strip running from Cardston to slightly above Macleod; and the Piegans, on a square section of land embracing about six townships and lying between the Blood reserve and Pincher Creek.

One of the greatest forces for good among the Blood Indians is the St. Paul’s school, which is conducted under the supervision of Principal Rev. S. H. Middleton, and run under the auspices of the Anglican church. [...] Rev. Middleton is remarkably progressive in his educational work. Ever on the alert for new ideas from the larger Indian schools in the United States, he collects important facts from all over the continent, weeds out the dross and assimilates the better points in his own institution. He keeps himself in close touch with everything Indian, with the result that his knowledge of the red man, his ways and his peculiarities has widened into a philosophy. [...]

The school is situated on the west bank of the Belly river, so named after the Indian, Mo-ko-wa-ni, about 15 miles southeast of Macleod, and immediately across the river from the agency buildings. It is able to accommodate 60 pupils and the

necessary staff, but the buildings are far from being adequate for school purposes – or for that matter, any purposes of human habitation. They are antiquated remnants of the old log huts that were used in the old days, covered with boarding and painted white, and although they do not present an unpleasant appearance from a distance, their immediate appearance and interiors are woefully ramshackled and deteriorated beyond repair. Many of the floors are actually bulged up by the pressing earth beneath; in consequence of the settling of the buildings, and the lines of the exterior sag pitifully with age.

However, preparations are now on foot to erect one of the finest schools in all Canada for the Blood and Piegan Indians, but considerable disagreement exists with regard to the most suitable location of the proposed institution. Some would like to have the school farther up the river in the neighborhood of the present Catholic school, and the reserve hospital, others would have it situated closer to the Piegan reserve, and a further portion of those who have a say in the matter would rather see the new system of building erected on the present school site, which, it must be admitted, seems to be topographically the best location on the reserve. However, if the agency should be moved farther west in pace with growing tendency of the Indians to move west, the natural geographic location of the new school would be farther west.

The more favorable character of the soil in the western portion of the reserve is causing more Indians to move their homes every year, and already the majority of the Bloods reside west of the agency, the vicinity of which is becoming rather isolated.

A drive from the agency through the western portion of the reserve takes one past scores of excellent crops, farm houses and horse and cattle ranches, all of which are owned and operated by the Bloods. The Indians were haying when the writer visited the reserve, and hundreds of them, old and young, could be seen working silently on immense stacks of the golden stems, mowing and cutting, or turning the summer fallow. They were “haying” about 50 tons every day, said Agent Faunt.

So striking was the appearance of one golden field of rye along the route through the reserve, the writer requested that the car should be stopped for a closer examination. Here, he saw what was undoubtedly one of the best crops of rye in the whole of Alberta if not the ace of the 1921 yield. Although harvesting was a few weeks off yet, the mingled green and gold stalks reached well into an ordinary man’s chest. This wonderful crop had been grown in the face of the drought that has prevailed all summer in the southern part of the province.

Charlie Pace’s camp and horse ranch could be seen in the distance, and when his herd was finally passed, it was surprising to notice that most of the horses were of the larger type and that although the herd contained a few pintos, there were none of the ordinary cayuses, so commonly owned by Indians present. This fact was remarked upon by the writer, which brought forth from the agent the information that the majority of the Indians refused to have anything to do with cayuses; they would not allow any to be brought on the reserve and when they picked their horses they invariably chose the larger type.

A little farther on another productive looking farm was passed, and the writer was soon to learn that this belonged to Jim Three Persons, the champion bucking-horse rider of the world, who had turned from saddle horses to the plow.

The greater production farm started by the government during the war was still being run full blast; but now by the Indians and for the Indians. The grain raised on the farm is sold and the proceeds are used for starting new farmers. Six new farmers had already been given their starts this year, explained the agent.

The Bloods, not having surrendered any of their land to be sold for tribal funds, do not possess the tribal wealth enjoyed by the Blackfeet, nor the lease money accruing to the Sarcees. Therefore, there is not yet any systematized way of providing new farmers with homes and complete farming outfits. Although many of the Bloods have established themselves on farms by dint almost solely of their own efforts, the agent always finds practical means of providing the more promising young men with sufficient equipment with which to begin their farming career – and the above is one of the methods now being employed.

The graduates of the St. Paul's school make the best farmers, said the agent; as their training at the school peculiarly fitted them for the work. Not only had they gained a good elemental knowledge of farming at the school, but they had also acquired something of even greater importance; a sense of self-discipline which taught them necessity for personal effort and work. Further, the girls had learned the essentials of domestic cleanliness while at school and they were, therefore, able materially to help their husbands by devoting strict attention to the home, which was a prominent factor in successful farming. This might be considered a flattering tribute to Mr. Middleton and his staff of co-workers.

Having traveled from 10 o'clock in the morning until 6 that evening through 70 miles of the reserve, the writer was driven into Waterton Lakes park just as the sun was making a forced retirement behind the higher peaks of the Rockies. A beautiful little camp composed of the older girls from St. Paul's school and Rev. Middleton's and Agent Faunt's families, had brought the party to this out-of-the-way lake valley in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. St. Paul's had closed for two months during the summer, and these girls, ranging all the way from 10 to 18 years of age, had been brought out to this garden spot that they might remain under the influence of the school atmosphere and not be retarded by contact with tepee life during their vacation.

They were, indeed, a happy looking lot, and well should they have been; for they were provided everything that the modern white child enjoys at summer resorts. Boating, mountain climbing, games and, at night, sing-songs around the blazing camp fires, were among the scores of diversions at their disposal. This summer camp is a permanent institution of the St. Paul's school, which has acquired through the efforts of Rev. Middleton, six lots at the lower end of the park, on which there have been erected two bungalows – one for the girls and one for his family.

If the people of the world could have seen this group of dusky daughters of the plains, not yet one generation away from savagery, seated around a big log camp fire that night, singing "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," and many of the latter songs,

the words of which even the writer does not know, they would have been everlastingly impressed. Like all Indian girls, they are [a] very shy and non-committal lot, and by one not acquainted with Indians, it could easily have been presumed that they could not speak a word of English, judging from the silence with which they would possess themselves as they flitted past the main cottage, making their way to and from the river below. [...]

Later on in the night, as the writer sat in the dark, screened verandah of Rev. Middleton's bungalow, [...] he heard a low, sonorous strain of music coming from the Indian girls' bungalow, a few feet away. It swelled and died away against the rocks on the far side of the lake.

"What is that?" he inquired of the Rev. Middleton, who was engaged in laying out his camp clothes inside the bungalow. "Oh, that's the girls singing Vespers before retiring. They always say their prayers and sing their vespers before going to bed, no matter whether any of the instructors are around or not." ("Well," soliloquized the writer under his breath, "I wonder how many white children are so true to the principles of their school, when they are away on their summer vacations?")

In an ancient Indian tepee, an old-time Indian sits,
With his little grandchild resting by his side,
The boy asks his grandsire why must he go to school
And 'neath the white man's rule for years abide

The old chief's face grows serious, but silently he smokes,
And says in language simple, sweet and mild:
"The old-time days are over, the buffaloes are gone;
No more will Indians hunt them o'er the plains,
The great and boundless prairies,
With their rolling hills and dales,
Are now bound fast in civilization's chains.

"No more shall we roam the country, with no one to deny
Or tell us where and when we are to go;
The white brother's laws and customs
Have engulfed us in their clasp
And the Indians' days are passing sure but slow.

"No more shall we fight our battles, or count the scalps we won,
(The old chief's hand strays fondly to his belt);
No more we'll kill the beaver or the gaunt grey timber wolf,
Or treasure up the handsome weasel pelt;
Those days are passing, passing;
We live 'neath white man's laws,
And, therefore, you must learn the white man's ways—
It's wisdom that will count in future days.

And that is just the reason why you must go to school,
And let the white chief teach you all he can;
Mokokit-ki-sekakimat – be wise and persevere,
And they'll say with pride:
'There's one grand Indian,
Hie, hie, hie, hie, h-i-e!'"

Unfortunately, all of the older Indians do not look upon the school in the favorable light conveyed in the above roughly constructed lines. The attitude displayed by the dissenters whose children are taken from them is that of a benefactor. This minority still claims that by placing a child in school he is conferring a great favor on the principal. However, such cases are few and far between among the Bloods today, states Rev. Middleton; and the maturing of the coming generation will render them still less frequent.

Being an offshoot of the Blackfoot tribe, the Blood Indians' chief dance is the sun dance. In the old days this dance, which lasted for two or three weeks, was attended with much bloodshed, and for that reason has been so discouraged by the government that it is much tamer and much less frequently held now than formerly. However, the Indians insist that they should be allowed to hold it at least once a year, which is usually acquiesced in by the government officials and the Mounted Police; for, as the Indians do not know how to perform our modern dances, it is practically the only diversion they have.

The sun dance, which is centred in the medicine lodge, is the great festival of the year; a time of happy meetings, feasting and the exchange of presents. It is a deeply religious affair, and its execution is taken more seriously than any of the rites of the white man's church. And this is not to be wondered at, when the awful pain and suffering, and sometimes death, which attended the dance in its original form, is taken into consideration. In times of stress – when a relative lay at the point of death, or when a warrior was facing a dangerous operation – he would make a vow for the medicine lodge that if the outcome should be successful or if his relative should recover, he would undergo severe physical torture in the sun dance. This was usually accomplished by inserting leather thongs into one's hide, tying the other end to a pole and working upon it until the flesh gave away and freed the dancer.

The vow for the medicine lodge must always be taken by a good woman. Extremely fortunate is the woman who is chosen to preside over the medicine lodge, for she is considered by her tribesmen to be the purest woman among them. When the vow is made to her, she offers up a prayer to the sun, and in case of the fulfilment of the prayer, she builds a medicine lodge, in which the vow must be carried out by the petitioner.

About the time the berries ripen the tribe comes together and [members] pitch their tepees in a great circle, and in the centre the medicine lodge is built. In the old days the ceremony usually lasted four days and four nights, during which the person who had taken the vow would neither eat nor drink, except once in sacrifice. But all

during this time he would dance frantically around the pole in an endeavor to break away the strips of flesh which held the rawhide thongs in his chest.

Several ideas prevail among the Indians as to the origin of the medicine lodge. Some say that it was designated by the Great Spirit as an everlasting feast⁴² unto him, and others interweave an ancient romance between a disfigured warrior and a beautiful maiden into the story depicting its origin.

In the latter derivation it is related that way back into the past there lived a poor young brave with no parents and with an ugly scar across his face, for which reasons the Indians called him "Ukski," or "Scar Face." His appearance, coupled with his extreme poverty, made him the butt of all jokes and he was taunted everywhere he went. There lived at the same time a beautiful girl, the daughter of a chief. Every handsome young buck wanted to marry her, but she refused them all, claiming that the sun had forbidden her to marry, as she was the daughter of the sun.

Scar Face, determining to make an end of the disgraces which had been heaped upon him since his boyhood, resolved to ask the beautiful sun girl to marry him, and thus give little reason for being considered unfortunate by his fellow tribesmen. When proposed to, the sun girl replied that she would marry him under the condition that he should go to the sun and ask his permission, and at the same time have him remove the scar from his face.

The legend bears considerable detail of Scar Face's journey to the sun and how he gained the good graces and gratitude of the celestial body by saving his son, the North Star, from drowning in the great waters. But the meat of it relates that the sun informed him that it was the lord of all that the eye could see on the earth, and told him that the sign by which all of his, the Sun's people, were known, was the medicine lodge. "Go back," said the Sun, "and if any of your people are sick or about to die, promise to build a medicine lodge if the person recovers. The lodge shall be built like the world, round, with arched sticks, one-half to be painted red for me, and the other half black, for the moon."

The Sun then rubbed some medicine on the young man's face and the scar disappeared. He then gave Scar Face two crow feathers and said that they would be the sign of the girl he was giving him, and that they were always to be worn by the husband who took the vow for the sun dance. The rubbing of the medicine on the face of the dancers is always carried out before a dance, as everyone who has witnessed the festival knows.

The making of the braves is always carried out in the sun dance, and in the old days they went through the above described tortures to show that they were worthy of the order of the brave.

The Blood Indians of today do not, of course, carry out the tortures attending the old sun dances, but they hold them in a milder form. They have a special place provided for their different dances, which is not interfered with by officials of the reserve; as it is recognized that, without the white man's many diversions to make life worth living, the red man must have some means of his own for getting rid of his excess energy.

⁴² The original has 'least' here.

Rev. Middleton aims gradually to replace these dances by teaching the younger Indians the modern steps, and he believes that once a sufficient number have learned to waltz and perform the other dances they will prefer them to their own. While at Waterton Lakes, he and Mrs. Middleton escorted the girls to the dancing pavilion occasionally to give them an opportunity of catching on to the white man's dances, by observation. Like all other Indians, the Bloods are good mimics, he said, laughingly, and they would be practicing these dances no sooner than they had got away to themselves.

Socials are held at the school every Friday evening, and he intends very shortly to add a period of dancing to this evening's programme of entertainment.

One place of merit on the Blood reserve, left unmentioned so far, is the reserve hospital, run by the agency under the supervision of the Catholic church. This institution is a model of efficiency and cleanliness, and devotes special attention to the lying-in ward, where the Indian women undergo child birth, and at the same time are taught the principles of midwifery and the necessity for sanitation in this respect. The Catholic school is situated just across the road from the hospital.

In closing this article it is right to state that no little of the progress being made by the Bloods is due to the efforts of the two very practical men who look after the business, educational and spiritual sides of their affairs. Rev. Middleton and Agent Fount are both young men with progressive ideas peculiarly fitting them for the positions which they hold. Mr. Faunt has been with the Bloods about six years, during which time he has brought about several vital improvements in their well-being. He has done much to teach the less scrupulous Indians the value of money and of the chattels and properties which they hold. Instead of having the cattle branded [as government property], as has been the practice in the past, he is now giving each Indian his quota of cattle to breed, care for and sell, which is calculated to bring out more individuality on the part of the ranchers.

Rev. Middleton is assisted at St. Paul's school by a very competent instructor, J. R. Heron, and a staff of teachers and instructors composed of L. Wood, Miss Stapleton, Miss Wilkins and Miss Wood.

The Bloods, with their huge reserve, their usually good health and their invincible spirit of independence, might easily be called the aristocracy of the Indians of Western Canada. They are overcoming the shock of civilization in a remarkable manner, and with no apparent present decrease in their number, they should be able to hold their own among the civilized forces of the future with comparative ease.

Moving the Blood Agency⁴³ (May, 1923)

Residents of Macleod are up in arms over the rumour current here that the new \$100,000 Indian school on the Blood Reserve is to be built at a point three miles from Cardston and that the Blood Agency buildings are to be at an early date moved across the reserve to a point within seven miles of Cardston. People of this town and district are naturally asking what advantages are to accrue to the agency or the Indians by reason of the proposed moving of the agency site – especially in view of the fact that the majority of the reserve’s population is resident on tilled⁴⁴ lands west and south-west of the present agency site and much nearer it than they would be to the proposed new location near Cardston. It would be of interest locally if a definite reason could be figured out to justify the expense⁴⁵ of moving the present agency when it would appear this expense could be obviated by building the new school at a point near the agency as now located and contiguous to St. Paul’s Mission and the Roman Catholic Mission, both of which have been powers for good in Indian Education – why would not the continuance of the community as now established and with the addition of the new school be perfectly satisfactory and do away with much expense in moving – Why?

“The new Anglican boarding school”⁴⁶ (August, 1924)

The new Anglican Indian boarding school on the south end of the Blood Indian reservation is now nearing completion, and will be one of the most up-to-date equipped colleges in Western Canada. It is a large red-bricked edifice of rectangular type, with three floors and accommodation for one hundred and fifty pupils and a staff of sixteen. The building is modern in every way, with hot and cold water, electric light, steam heat, shower baths and other latter day improvements. There is a big auditorium, where meetings, concerts and other gatherings will be held. One of the features of the new school will be the gymnasium, which, when completed, will be one of the finest in Canada. The school will be named after the old Indian mission on the

⁴³ From WHY MOVE THE BLOOD AGENCY. (1923, May 31). *The Macleod Times*, p. 2.

⁴⁴ “The Indians on the Blood Reserve, under Indian Agent Faunt, have magnificent crops, and threshing operations are being carried on there. They have their own machinery, which is being paid for out of the proceeds of the Blood Reserve farms. A number of Indians have private fields of grain which are threshed by the reserve outfit, the cost of same being borne by the individual. Mr. Faunt states that this year’s output will break all records for production on the Blood Reserve.” FINE CROPS ARE BEING THRESHED. (1923, September 21). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 24.

⁴⁵ “Bennett-White Construction Co., of Calgary, announced Friday afternoon that the company had just been awarded two contracts in the province, amounting in all to \$67,000. One is for the erection of a group of agency buildings at the Blood Indian reserve near Cardston at a cost of \$27,000.” AGENCY BUILDING WILL BE ERECTED AT BLOOD RESERVE. (1923, September 29). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 14.

⁴⁶ From NEARLY FINISH INDIAN SCHOOL BLOOD RESERVE (1924, August 28). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 11.

north end of the reserve, St. Paul's, with Rev. S. Middleton, B.A., noted Indian educationist, as principal.

The boys will be fully instructed in farming of every description, as there will be a large experimental farm attached to the school, which will be managed by competent farm instructors. Already many hundred acres have been summer-fallowed and a large acreage put into wheat this spring, which will soon be ready for harvesting.

The girl pupils will be given a full course in housekeeping and domestic science by a staff of fully qualified teachers. The pupils will receive a complete course in education up to Grades 10 and 12.

The new edifice is situated within about four miles of Cardston, and is attracting a large number of tourists, as it is only a short distance from the main trail to Waterton Lakes. The building will be completed this year, and arrangements are already made for occupation in the next few months.

“The best satisfied and most prosperous citizens”⁴⁷ (January, 1925)

Five or six years ago the eleven or twelve hundred Indians of the Blood reserve in Southern Alberta were causing the department of Indian affairs all sorts of trouble. They were discontented with their conditions, had apparently lost all faith in the officials of the department, and were about ready to go on the war path. Now, according to a report received by the department, summarizing results of the last two or three years of most successful farming operations⁴⁸ under the direction of the Indian commissioner, W. M. Graham, the reserve contains some hundreds of the best satisfied and most prosperous citizens of the Dominion. It is one of the most thriving communities in Southern Alberta.

“Excellent work is being done”⁴⁹ (June, 1925)

Indians on the Blood Reserve are breaking considerable new land this season, from 1,500 to 2,000 acres. In most cases excellent work is being done. In fact, most whites could profitably emulate methods used by the Indians, who, under intelligent supervision, are raising good crops.

Certainly no exception can be taken to Indian Agent Faunt's contention that the sooner all the Indians get into the farming game, the better for all concerned.

Tom Three Persons, famous as a rider of the wild and woolly bronc, has proved beyond doubt that he can ride a bucking plow as well as a bucking horse. He is today, perhaps, one of the largest individual farmers on the Reserve, with his 150 acres into crop and about 100 acres of summer fallow.

⁴⁷ From Indians Farm Successfully. (1925, January 28). *The Oyen News*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ “On the Blood Reserve the Indians have been moved to the southern area to secure the benefit of better soil. During the past two years these Indians have spent over \$100,000 in additional equipment.” PROGRESS OF THE RED MAN. (1925, April 1). *The Red Deer News*, p. 2.

⁴⁹ From HEAP RICH INDIAN. (1925, June 25). *The Macleod Times*, p. 4.

Joe Bull Shield is a close second, however, if not on a par with Tom. That Joe is trying to make good use of the profits from his 6,300 bushels of wheat, raised last year, is evident. He is building a barn and a good house on his place at farm four.

As he glides by in his Wyllis-Knight sedan, with the engine purring like a cat before an open fire on a winter night, it causes one to reflect upon the advancement made by the Indians in the last quarter century.

“They are becoming real citizens”⁵⁰ (July, 1925)

A journey from Cardston across the Blood Indian Reserve, reveals the most splendid country in Alberta, or in Canada for that matter, in passing over this wonderful tract of land, which is a veritable wonderland. The Blood Indians bid fair to become the richest people on the face of the earth. If as the Duke of Argyle wrote, in that splendid “Dominion Hymn,” “Our sires, – won, with master hand, far more than gold in Mountains – the Glorious prairie land,” there was one corner of it they were kind enough to leave to the original owners, and these Blood Indians are reaping the full benefit.

But the outstanding feature of the ride across the Reserve, is not the waving fields of luxuriant grain, nor the big herds of fat cattle, nor the vast numbers of excellent horses, both saddle and work animals of the best types, but it is the imposing spectacle of St. Paul’s Residential School at the side of the road as one leaves the town of Cardston, and then to pass on a mile or so more and again come into view of another vast structure being built in like manner as St. Paul’s, the new Roman Catholic school near the Agency Buildings.

This splendid new R. C. school is now going up rapidly and typifies the progress being made by the Indians in that department of life, the intellectual, which is worth more than gold or even the “glorious prairie land.” This second new school on the borders of the town of Cardston will be a credit to the Indians, and will, with St. Paul’s, provide ample accommodation for the entire child population of the Reserve.

A visit to the Reserve, too, is an education nowadays. The conversation with the Indians themselves is enlightening. They are becoming real citizens, and it is a very unusual thing to find a young Indian unable to converse in English.

“Infamous legislation”⁵¹ (June, 1920)

Mr. Owen Wister⁵², the distinguished American writer, in his latest and timely volume on British-American relations, states that America’s blackest page in history is her treatment of the R----- Indians. Few Canadians will disagree with Mr. Wister’s

⁵⁰ From Rapid Progress On New R. C. School On Blood Reserve. (1925, July 27). *The Lethbridge Herald*, p. 2.

⁵¹ From Wilson, R. N. (1920, June 25). INDIAN AFFAIRS. *The Ottawa Citizen*, p. 22. Written by Robert Nathaniel Wilson (1863 – 1944), who served as an Indian agent on the Peigan and Blood reserves from 1898 to 1911.

⁵² Owen Wister (1860 – 1938), an early and influential writer of American Western (“cowboy”) fiction.

condemnation of his country's Indian policy, but most Canadians will be surprised to learn that there is at the present time being written into the history of Canada a black page in connection with that same subject which, if not checked, will soon reduce this country to the level of the United States fifty years ago in Indian administration, with the difference, of dubious credit to us, that the Americans dishonored their Indian treaties when the Indians were warlike and strong, thus involving their country in costly and bloody wars, while we Canadians honored our treaties sufficiently to keep the Indians quiet until they were numerically weak, unarmed and helpless, when by means of sundry acts of parliament under the skillful guidance of the Hon. Arthur Meighen⁵³ we have proceeded to make "scraps of paper" of every treaty obligation assumed by Canada insofar as Indian landholdings are concerned.

The safeguarding of such land as was retained by the Indians under the descriptive name of "reserves" was the principal obligation assumed by the government of Canada in her Indian treaties. We Canadians are not openly refusing to acknowledge our treaty obligations because, to quote Mr. Meighen, "it is desirable, if possible, to avoid anything in the nature of dissension, or anything in the nature of a charge against us of infidelity." We prefer to invade the treaty in a roundabout way, attack them on the flank, as it were, and under cover of various catch terms such as greater production, enfranchisement, emancipation, etc., which method enables us sometimes to accomplish our objects without even attracting the attention of the law-maker.

It would be interesting to know how many members of parliament were aware that in 1918⁵⁴ they gave Mr. Meighen autocratic power to seize the individual holdings of Indians on their reserves, their pasture fields, their hay lands and their homes, and, if he were so disposed, to trade these off for the political support of the covetous white men of the neighborhood. It is not here suggested that Mr. Meighen would descend to such practices, but the point is that parliament has given him the power to buy votes with Indian lands, so long as all transactions are covered by leases arranged between the lessee and a specially provided official, without consulting the Indian owners of the property.

Another use to which the present administration's radical Indian legislation can be put and which has already been exercised, is the persecution of Indians who have refused to sell land to the government. A case in point is that of the Blood Indians in Southern Alberta, one of the most enterprising and progressive tribes in the Dominion. These people turned down in January, 1918, a proposition from the government permanently to relinquish 90,000 acres of their reserve for sale. In the following month, Parliament amended the Indian Act as above, and immediately the heavy hand of the government fell upon the unfortunate Bloods. The 90,000 acres in question were peremptorily seized by a special officer appointed by Mr. Meighen and operating under himself personally, independently of the ordinary machinery of the

⁵³ Arthur Meighen (1874 – 1950) would serve as Prime Minister in 1920, 1921 and 1926. At the time this article was written, he was Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

⁵⁴ Meighen served as Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1917 to July, 1920.

department. This official proceeded to lease out the 90,000 to white men, ordering out of their homes a score or more of the Indians, whose long established holdings happened to be in the way, and this initial attack was followed by a campaign of persecution which in two years has placed the affairs of these Indians in such deplorable state that they have memorialized the government in the person of the responsible minister, Mr. Meighen, for immediate relief from the intolerable conditions imposed upon them, or for a judicial investigation of their grievances. While the minister has not shown a disposition either to relieve the Indians or permit their troubles to be investigated, there is reason to hope that he may be eventually induced to do so.

A paragraph in our "black page" is the legislation known as Bill 14, the object of which is supposed to be education, enfranchisement, etc., but which is another attack upon the Indian Reserves, as it empowers the minister to declare an Indian or tribe of Indians enfranchised by fiat from Ottawa, following which the minister assumes the legal right to dispossess the "emancipated" s----- of his lands and dispose of the same, the idea seeming to be that having an interest in a landed estate is inconsistent with citizenship, or with the particular brand of citizenship that Mr. Meighen has in store for the Indians.

The educational feature of Bill 14 is as bad as the rest of it, as it provides for arrest and imprisonment of children in sectarian boarding schools, the only schools in existence on most of the western reserves. In a country which boasts of its religious freedom, it will be time enough to enforce compulsory education when we have provided the reserves with non-sectarian national day schools. What right have we to, as this bill does, compel an Indian to choose either a Roman Catholic or a Protestant boarding school for his child? What if he prefers the religion of his fathers or some white man's faith, neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant? He should be perfectly free to do so if our vaunted religious freedom is real. Compulsory proselytization or compulsory Christianization is aimed at, rather than compulsory education.

Where in Canada or in any other civilized country can the police, in the sole interests of education, wrest a seven-year-old from its parents and incarcerate it in a boarding school conducted by another race? The writer knows many Indian mothers who have themselves been educated in the Indian boarding schools who emphatically declare that no daughter of theirs will ever attend one, and the grounds of their prejudices are well known.

Some of the schools are excellent and conducted by first class people, but all classes of girls necessarily attend them, the depraved and the good often occupying the same dormitory for years. In his capacity of justice of the peace of Alberta, the writer is frequently applied to by the authorities of the Indian boarding schools in their efforts to check the practice of young men gaining access to the girls' dormitories in the night time; and in one case of the sort, involving four young men, two of them were afflicted with loathsome disease. Would Mr. Meighen compel a daughter of his to take such risks? He certainly would not. Then let him withdraw his infamous legislation.

“In the face about three times”⁵⁵ (April, 1928)

One of the most important appeal cases heard in the district courts of Alberta was heard Tuesday in Macleod before His Honor Judge A. M. Macdonald. The case was an appeal from Magistrate Low’s finding in the hearing of Rex vs. Edwin Smith. The defendant, Smith, who was disciplinarian at the R. C. Mission on the Blood Reserve, was fined \$10 and costs by the magistrate for assaulting one of the pupils at the school, Albert Many Fingers. The case was appealed and in the hearing today J. D. Matheson of Macleod and J. W. O’Brien of Cardston, appeared for the crown, while G. E. A. Rice, of Shepherd, Rice and Fairbairn, of Lethbridge, appeared for the defendant Smith. Judgment was reserved.

The first witness on the stand was Albert Many Fingers, who stated that he was 17 years of age, and a pupil at St. Mary’s R. C. school on the Blood Indian Reserve. On January 9 of this year while the pupils were marching in to breakfast, Edwin Smith, one of the masters at the school, called him out of the line and after the other boys had gone in to breakfast, punched him (Many Fingers) three blows on the nose and another on the side of the face at the same time calling him an animal. Smith refused to let witness go and wash his face, although it was all bloody, but took him into the dining room and then told the other pupils that that would happen to any animal who did not do what was right in the school. Witness stated that he had never given any cause for such treatment, and during his six years as pupil at the school had only been punished once. He also said that the principal, Rev. Father Raux, came up to him in the dining room just after the beating and told him he was glad to see he had been punished, and raised his hand to hit him on the head.

In cross-examination, witness denied that he had ever been disobedient, or had talked or teased the girl pupils. He said that until that time Smith had always been friendly with him. He (witness) had never told anyone that Smith was frightened of him, and that he was going to fight him.

The last witness, although able to speak English perfectly, refused to answer counsel’s questions on many occasions unless he had an interpreter, Emil Smallface, to assist him.

The next witness was Jim Big Crow, who bore out the former witness’s statement as to Smith calling Many Fingers an animal in the dining room and saying that it was the punishment the rest of the animals would get if they misbehaved themselves.

Bob Big Sorrel Horses, another pupil of the school, gave corroborative evidence of Jim Big Crow as to Smith’s remarks in the dining room.

The Rev. W. R. Haynes, pioneer missionary of the Peigan Reserve and Missions, was then called by the crown. He stated that he had been in charge of Indian schools for the past 30 years. In reply to Mr. Matheson, witness did not think Smith had any right to hit the boy with his fists. He had never done so, and never would. If there

⁵⁵ From INDIAN PUPIL ASSAULT APPEAL HEARD, MACLOED: JUDGMENT IS RESERVED – DISCIPLINARIAN OF R. C. SCHOOL, ADMITS HE PUNCHED FACE OF “BAD” SCHOOL BOY. (1928, April 5). *The Macleod Times*, p. 1.

had been any serious trouble the lad should have been sent to the principal for punishment. In reply to His Honor, witness emphatically stated that in his opinion there was no difference between white boys and Indian boys. They always acted the same; he could never see any difference, although he had taught both in Indian schools and white schools. In cross-examination, witness admitted that if one of the older boys had offered to fight, he (witness) would have knocked him down, then taken him to the principal. Witness had not heard of any assault on masters at other Indian schools.

This was all the evidence for the crown.

The first witness for the appellant was Edwin Smith himself. He stated that Albert Many Fingers had been a source of annoyance to all the staff for several months prior to the beating he had given him. Witness had talked to Many Fingers about it and tried to correct him by kindness, but the boy only laughed and grinned at witness and openly defied him on many occasions. Just prior to the 9th of January, witness received a complaint from one of the Sisters that Many Fingers had been carrying on indecent conversation with the girls during the master's absence. He therefore changed Many Fingers' seat in the dining room so that the boy's back was towards the girls, but the boy only became more insolent. He also had told other lads in the school that he (witness) was afraid, and he was going to fight him. Smith consulted with the principal of the school as to what should be done, and the Rev. Father told him that he would have to punish the boy himself, otherwise he would lose all prestige with the other boys.

The next morning, which was the 9th of January, witness called Many Fingers from the breakfast line, and told him to go into the playroom. He followed the boy in and said that on account of his rank disobedience and insolence he would have to be punished. The boy then put up his fists and witness immediately punched Many Fingers in the face about three times. The boy stepped back, and there was no more fighting.

After this he told Many Fingers he was sorry he had to do that, as he had treated the lad with great kindness previously and he had taken advantage of it. He then asked Many Fingers if he would obey him, and the boy replied he would, so he told him to kneel on the floor, which was done. He did not let the boy wash his face, as he thought it would be an example to the other big boys, especially so after Many Fingers boasting that he would fight Smith and beat him. When he took Many Fingers into the dining room he told the other boys that any lad who disobeyed the rules and regulations of the school would also be punished. He had never called the boy on any occasion an animal, and never had any thought of doing so. He considered he took the best course in hitting the boy in the face, after seeing him put up his fists, to maintain the dignity of the school and for further discipline and order. Witness stated that the school teacher, A. Cody, witnessed the whipping in the playroom.

Arthur Cody, teacher of the St. Mary's school on the Reserve, thoroughly bore out the statements of the former witness in every point. In answer to the judge, witness stated that in his opinion the boy certainly deserved the whipping. He had been obstreperous for several weeks previous and warnings had no effect on him

whatsoever. In witness's opinion, Indian pupils were far harder to teach and handle than white children. There had been no swelling on Many Fingers' face after the fight, as witness had cause to correct the boy shortly after for irreverence during prayer, and there was no mark whatever on the lad's face. He often had to correct the same boy in school, and only a short while previous to this whipping had punished him for running away from school.

William Mills, a pupil of the school, gave evidence as to Many Fingers boasting that he was going to fight and whip Smith.

Judge Macdonald said he would reserve his decision, as he had not decided on the point whether or not Smith should have punished the boy the way he did. His Honor was convinced that Many Fingers thoroughly deserved chastisement as there was no doubt he was a bad boy and had caused lots of trouble at the school. His actions on the witness stand had left a bad impression with the court. In spite of his speaking fluent English he was cunning enough when it came to a somewhat difficult question to ask for an interpreter who could not speak as good English as himself. It was a very important case to decide, as it would be a ruling for all other Indian schools. There was no doubt whatever that discipline was absolutely necessary in these schools, as in any other school, and there was also no doubt that the boy thoroughly deserved the punishment, but the only question His Honor would have to decide on was this: was the mode of punishment administered by Smith the correct one? His Honor clearly stated the ruling was one of the most important he had had to decide upon, and he reserved his decision⁵⁶ on the point before mentioned.

This is the first case in Canada where an Indian child's parent has laid information of this kind against a school principal, master or matron.

“Metamorphosis”⁵⁷ (December, 1927)

Our where the west ends, if the Rocky Mountains mark that point, Canada's Indian “citizens” are telling strange tales. They are not tales of war, or of the hunt, or of horse stealing escapades. Nor are they tales of love underneath the prairie moonlight. Yet they are tales of romance quite as fascinating as those sung to the throb of the tom tom when the frontier was young.

The word “citizens,” you will notice, is quoted. To “crib” a line from the breakfast food advertisement – there's a reason. For while our Indians are real native sons and daughters of Canada, they have no voice in public affairs. And while no fewer than 4000 of these braves of the new era served overseas [during the Great War], not a few making the great sacrifice, they have no vote.

⁵⁶ “The appeal of Edwin Smith, disciplinarian at the Roman Catholic Indian school on the Blood reserve, a case arising out of certain punishment meted out to an Indian student, Many Fingers, by Smith, has been upheld by Judge A. M. Macdonald of the district court here.” RIGHT TO PUNISH PUPIL SUSTAINED. (1928, May 3). *The Edmonton Journal*, p. 1.

⁵⁷ From Steele, C. F. (1927, December 17). Metamorphosis of the Red Man. *The Edmonton Journal*, p. 33. Written by Charles F. Steele (1857 – 1932).

We Pale Faces point to our proud and ancient forbears, the cultured French, the sturdy English and Scotch, the adventuresome stock of many nations that pioneered the West in the days of the prairie schooner and plodding oxen. Splendid roots of a mighty race they were! That we admit. And yet these trail-blazers were not the first Canadians. When they set foot on Canadian soil they met peoples – the Indian tribes – whose histories reached far back into antiquity.

Citizenship, full and complete, might not be a good thing for the Indian – today. He might not make good use of that gift. That is not a problem for today. But tomorrow – that is another story.

I have before me a copy of the weekly newspaper printed in a southwestern Alberta town – Cardston. I read this:

“Tom Three Persons of the Blood Indian reserve drove home from town today at the wheel of a new sedan.”

This little item about Tom and his sedan wasn't much to look at. It was buried in the middle of a column of social and personal stuff, wasn't even given a heading to earmark its real news. In fact, an Indian driving a motor car wasn't news – at Cardston. And yet Tom Three Persons at the wheel of his new sedan somehow summed up the whole story of Indian development in Canada.

Changed, indeed, are the Indians of today. They are doing remarkable things; they are telling strange tales.

Now, take Tom Three Persons. Tom is one of the 400 out on his reserve. If the Indians had a “Who's Who” Tom would be listed. He is a famous Indian. A few years ago he won the Canadian riding championship at the Calgary stampede and has been a hero ever since. He learned to ride mean horses on the range. Tom is still riding the range, but it is at the wheel of an automobile.

Certainly, Tom can afford that car, for this upstanding Indian farmer threshed 3,573 bushels of hard spring wheat in the fall of 1926. When he bought the sedan he was not extravagant. Tom needed the car in his business, for he is farming and ranching on a big scale. “It's coming to Tom. He's worked hard and he's a good Indian,” one of Tom's neighbors remarked as the erstwhile bronco buster tackled another sort of “cow pony,” one that worried him more than did Dynamite in the Calgary championships.

One often hears the remark that it is a pity the red man is passing. The pity is unnecessary, for the red man is not passing. Under the fostering policy of the Canadian authorities, a policy based on that Magna Carta of our Indian tribesmen, the proclamation of King George III. on October 7, 1762, the native races are increasing. There are now over a hundred thousand Indians in Canada, located on 1,570 reserves, tribal home lands representing some five million acres.

The Indian branch attached to the department of the interior informs us that the real and personal property of the Canadian Indians approximates in value \$75,000,000, and that their income for the season of 1925-26 was over \$10,000,000. The amount of the Indian trust fund during the year was \$12,418,450, showing an increase of over a quarter million dollars as compared with the previous year.

This is the wealth of the Indians of Canada, who a decade or more ago were restless and indolent wards of the government.

Nor is this evolution of the Indians confined to dollars and cents, cattle and cars. Far from it. Culturally, the Indians are progressing through that intimate and beneficent contact with the church and the leadership provided by the government. Consider the education of the Indian for a moment. It is one of the major expenditures of the federal government, for it requires two millions a year to finance the 74 residential schools for Indian children, operating over the dominion, plus the 16 combined residence and day schools and 254 straight day schools.

Religiously, the Indian has likewise responded to the influence of the white man. Most of the Indians of today are members of the Christian faith. Six thousand alone, chiefly the older members of the tribes, still cling to the ancient aboriginal worship. In point of denominational adherence the government figures are enlightening. There are among the Canadian tribesmen 48,671 Roman Catholics, 23,557 Anglicans, 13,930 Methodists, 2,175 Presbyterians, and 1,173 Baptists.

Someone has said that "in the Indian youth lies the hope of his race." It is true. Given an education he has a powerful something that will keep him climbing, contented and solvent. Although the thought may be tinged with sadness, the modern Indian youth knows but little of the customs and traditions of his fathers. His eyes are set forward, not backward. He sees a new day dawning for his people. Indeed, that day is here for history furnishes no example of progress by a primitive race in a similar time to match the progress made by the western Indian tribes of Canada.

I quote here a man who has spent many years among the Bloods of Southwestern Alberta – Rev. Canon S. H. Middleton, principal of St. Paul's residential school:

"Under the service of this (the Canadian) educational system the Indian is casting away the things which typify his old barbarous life. He has gone from the moccasin to the shoe, from the blanket to the coat, from feathers to the hat. He has exchanged the bow for the plow, and turned from the buffalo to the white man's herd and flock. He is forsaking a weird and uncertain conception of divinity for the church and organized Christian benevolence of his white brother. He is lifting drudgery and burdens from the woman of his race and granting them higher ideals of home-keeping and womanhood."

It is a far cry from the Indian of today – Tom Three Persons at the wheel of a \$2000 automobile – to Tomb's forbears of yesterday, those splendid but savage tribesmen who defied the white man's invasion of his lands and the white man's intrusion upon his tribal institutions. The years between are crowded with stories of pain and self-sacrificing, patience and devotion, stories reaching back to the years of the Jesuit Fathers, those fearless priests who carried the cross into the wilderness. That story must be left to others, for our purpose is to picture the Indian of today, the red men who are telling strange tales.

As in the progress of the Bloods is reflected the whole evolution of the Western Indian tribes, let us look at these Bloods, these dusky plainsmen whose very name suggests war and pillage.

They were the leading tribe of the great Blackfoot Confederacy, of whom Capt. Palliser in the late fifties writes with such vivid description in his report to the British government. The Palliser expedition sent out by his majesty's government to explore far western Canada 10 years before Confederation spent several years among these Blackfoot tribes, and in his report the famous geographer and scientist says of them:

“The Blackfoot Tribes comprehend the Blackfeet, Blood Indians and Peigans, who all speak the same language and have the same habits of life. They trade chiefly with Americans, as they share in the subsidies granted according to the Indian treaty by the United States government, a portion of that territory lying south of the boundary line as well as to the north within British rule. The Blackfeet themselves trade a good deal at the Rocky Mountain House, principally bartering provisions for rum, tobacco and ammunition; and they all prefer the goods supplied by the Hudson's Bay Company as superior in quality to those from the American forts.

“In the summer these Indians form large camps along Red Deer river or Bow river, far out into the arid plains, but where there is always enough grass in some spots to support their large bands of horses. They are the real Bedouins of the prairies, having always parties on the move in every direction, making rapid journeys, sometimes to the American trading posts, for the sake of gathering news concerning other Indians, or of the buffalo. They have large bands of horses, and some of fair quality. Their only food is the buffalo, and most of them will go a long time hungry rather than eat ducks, rabbits and any kind of small game.

“As part of the subsidies they receive flour, sugar and coffee; but they care very little for such articles of food, which they say make them sick. Like the Cree, when moving about they use the ‘travaillies,’ but their tents are much larger than those of this latter people, it being not uncommon in a Blackfoot camp to see them of forty or fifty buffalo skins sewn together, the more usual size only requiring from twelve to twenty skins. They are always conical, with triangular lappets at the apex for directing the smoke as it escapes. As they travel so much over bare plains, where there is no timber, their tent-poles are made of light dry wood, so that they are easily conveyed by attaching them to a horse with their ends trailing on the ground. The smallest tent requires thirteen poles.

“The Blackfoot tribes are fond of fine dresses for themselves and gay trappings for their horses. Their chiefs have state robes of ermine fur and of other skins, and their medicine-men have dresses adorned with eagle feathers. The women of this tribe are often comely, and they always dress neatly with ornamented tunics and leggings of cloth or deerskins, worked with beads and porcupine quills.

“They have many mysterious and ceremonious dances, in which they make great use of drums, rattles and shrill whistles. Their chanting on these occasions is more harmonious than that of the Cree, and they seem to join in these rites with greater sincerity than other Indian tribes. They are of wilder nature and more treacherous than the Cree, and yet have certain ideas of honor to which they rigidly adhere.

“The young men are great horse thieves, but are more under the control of their seniors than is the case with the other Indians. They are constantly at war, either

with the Cree, Assiniboine or Crow Indians; horse-stealing on one side or the other being generally the cause of all their quarrels.

“The Roman Catholic missionary at Lac Ste. Anne, M. Le Combe, has made one tour among these Indians with a view of establishing a mission, but, as we have already remarked, it will be much more difficult to effect any real improvement among these tribes than among those who dwell in the woods. Their constant communications with the Americans, their frequent migrations and their mode of life, and their sole dependence for food on the chase of the buffalo, are all against their adopting those habits of industry without which there can be little real advancement in their condition.”

Such were the Bloods as Capt. Palliser saw them in 1858.

Today the picture is completely changed. In the blaze of a new day the Indian is enjoying the influence of the white man's civilization. He is up-to-date. The Blood Indian father runs his farm as efficiently as his neighbor; his wife takes a pride in keeping her kitchen clean and her chickens laying; his son is “stepping on the gas” and buying \$50 suits; and his daughter is bobbing her tresses and amusing the family with her version of the latest dance steps.

There are schools and churches, movies and radios, motor cars and blooded animals, brass bands and church choirs, on the reserve, and if things move as they are, Pres. H. W. Wood and his Farmer supporters in Alberta will soon be organizing a U.F.A. local among the 190 Indian farmers growing wheat on the Blood tract.

Just a few facts now about these warlike, light-fingered Bloods of yesterday:

They thresh annually in the neighborhood of 200,000 bushels. In 1926 the disastrous fall storms cut down their crops to 125,000 bushels. The Indians do all their own work, owning their implements, including two or three threshing outfits. The revenue from their farming operations is controlled by the agency, each Indian farmer having his own account through which all his business transactions are negotiated. He is furnished with a yearly statement of his income and disbursements.

As with the whites, there are good farmers and poor farmers among the Indians. We have already mentioned the bumper crop of Tom Three Persons. He stands first, but there are other “wheat barons” on the reserve as well as Tom. Take Joe Bull Shields. Joe threshed 2,800 bushels; Leonard Sweet Grass, 2,300 bushels; Big Sorrel Horse, 2,600 bushels; Chas. Davis, 2,300 bushels; Dan Chief Moon, 2,00 bushels, and scores of others that harvested 1,000 bushels or more.

Good grades of beef cattle, 2,000 head in all, are to be found on the Blood reserve. A few years ago the government gave the Indians a regular ration of meat. Now the Indians are raising their own meat and have fat steers to sell every fall. Finished on some of the finest prairie grass ranges in the west, the Indian beef always commands top prices. Leading stockmen of the tribe are Tom Three Persons – Tom, you see, bobs up again among the successful ones, possessing that “it” which spells success – Cecil Tallow, Shot Both Sides, Running Antelope, Stephen Fox, Maurice Many Fingers and others with similarly queer names, but with sound ideas as to the good and bad points about an animal. Departmental instruction and guidance in the selection of good marketable stock has resulted in an impetus in ranching among the

western tribes generally, and it is estimated that they run on their reserves approximately 20,000 head.

The Indian has always been a keen lover of the horse, and a favorite pastime in the “good old days” was horse stealing. Once a white man’s steed was spotted it was as good as gone. Twenty years ago the Indians rode diminutive ponies, multi-colored and fantastically marked. These non-descripts have given way to stout, well-bred, useful animals. Many own thoroughbred stock, for the Indian is an ardent follower of the “sport of kings”.

Such a man is the Indian of today: Quick to learn and ready to go forward he has made remarkable progress. True, much of the romance that surrounded him in the days of the Sun Dance and tribal war has faded out of the picture, just another reminder of the passing of the old west, the west of the buffalo, the whisky trader, the lonely priest. The Indian of today is the symbol of that transition through which western Canada is passing, the departure of the “wild and woolly” era of foundation building, the incoming of that new era of growing industrialism, expanding cities, improving social conditions. In him may be visualized the spirit of the new west.

Government reaction to conventions at Macleod (1924 – 1925)

“A conclave of sober-minded men and women”⁵⁸ (November 13, 1924)

More than a hundred Indian delegates from every Blackfoot tribe on the continent attended the first convention of Blackfoot Indians held in the town hall, Macleod, yesterday and today. The Bloods, North Peigans, South Peigans and Blackfoot reserves sent a number of delegates, accompanied by their chiefs and minor chiefs, to take part in the discussions and air their grievances against the government and government officials.

It was no longer a meeting of feathered and painted savages gathering together to discuss the affairs of a fresh marauding venture, but a conclave of sober-minded men and women seeking to obtain rights which they claim are justly theirs.

“Our land should not be leased”⁵⁹ (November 13, 1924)

Thursday morning, November 13th, 1924, the Indian convention opened in the usual way and the majority of those registered answered their names. The chairman then called on G. G. Coote, M. P. [for Macleod,] who told them he came to learn, by hearing, what they had to say. “We are all brothers and the King knows the Indians as well as he knows the white brothers, and all are the same to him. You were given lands for yourselves to have and hold and not to be leased or sold without your consent.” Mr. Coote said he would listen and talk later. [...]

John Cotton, Blood, complained that they took their wheat to the elevator, their cattle to the butcher, “and we don’t get any account for what these are sold for. I had a good crop in 1923 and have not heard what it was worth. I went to see the agent but he is always away. Why do we have an agent if it is not to give help? We asked agent to give us orders on Macleod but he gives them on other places. We like Macleod and the people.” [...]

John Mountain Horse (Blood): “I was overseas and did my part there [during World War I], with your white boys, and we don’t want to go to war to get our rights at home in Canada. Our land has been leased. We want to trade in Macleod, but our agent sends us to other places.” [...]

Mike Oka (Blood) – “We all know we cannot outdo the white man. Our reserve has been leased for sheep and they destroy the land for cattle, and it takes them a long time to grow again. Our boys went to the war. They came back wounded. Some died. And we don’t get any pension. I am now raising cattle. Our wheat was shipped and we got very little for it. Our land should not be leased.”

⁵⁸ From GREAT RALLY OF BLACKFOOT INDIANS IN SOUTH ALBERTA. (1924, November 13). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Indians’ Chief Grievances Concern Grazing Leases and Attitude of Agents. (1924, November 17). *The Lethbridge Herald*, page unknown. Clipping from Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

John Mountain Horse brought in the following resolution: "That we petition the government to remand Section A 90 of the Indian Act and place us where we were before the war, as in the Treaty of 1877," and asked Mr. Coote to present the petition to parliament. This was carried.

Sgt. J. A. Webb to C. Junget⁶⁰ (November 14, 1924)

J. A. Webb was a Sergeant with the R.C.M.P. This was his report on the 1924 convention to Christen Junget, commanding officer of the Southern Alberta District.

Sir:-

I have the honour to report the following re: [the] Indian convention held at Macleod 12th & 13th November, 1924.

At 2.p.m. Wednesday 12th November 1924 the meeting was called to order, on the Platform was W. M. Shields Esq. M.P.P., Mayor MacDonald, Dr. Fanset, President of the Board of Trade, Archdeacon Hines of Brocket, Chief Shot Both Sides, of the Blood, Chief Calf Child of the Blackfeet, and Chief Crow Eagle of the Peigans, and other Minor Chiefs.

There were about One hundred Indians, and a good number of Macleod people present. The Convention was opened by May MacDonald, who gave all a hearty welcome and the freedom of the City. Dr. Fanset also made a few remarks.

H. J. Hamilton, a South Peigan from Browning, was elected Chairman, and Mike Mountain Horse Secretary.

The Secretary told those present that the object of calling this Convention was to tell their grievances and get the sympathy of the white people so that they might bring pressure to bear on the Macleod Member of the Federal Parliament, and he bring their grievance before Parliament at the next session.

Mr. Shields, M.P.P., was the first speaker. He told those present that he was there to represent Mr. Coote, M.P., who was unable to be present due to a previous engagement, but that he (Mr. Coote) would arrive in Macleod at mid-night, and would attend Thursday's session. He told the Indians he was sorry to hear of their troubles, and complimented them on their endeavor of trying to have their grievances adjusted, and that they were going the right way about it, (that a little stick was easily broken, but it was very hard to break a bundle of little sticks when tied together,) and that if they all worked together they were bound to get results, and their grievances would no doubt be remedied, wishing them success this closed his remarks.

I might state that the Indians had a number of grievances, and although none of these were discussed separately and disposed of one by one, each Indian as his name was called up got up and spoke on his own grievance, thereby losing a lot of time and [causing] a great deal of repetition. Their grievance were as follows:-

⁶⁰ From Webb, J. A. (1924, November 14). [Letter to commanding officer]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Sgt. Major James Albert Webb (1870 – 1954).

That the Agents on both the Blood & Peigan Reserve were not treating a number of the Indians properly, that on both Reserves there are a number of old people that can not work, getting no rations and are very hard up. That according to the Treaty of 1877 The Great White Mother, by her Agents had said that the Indians should have rations so long as the Sun should rise and set, and the rivers flow. That this part of the Treaty was now disregarded.

That lands on both of the Reserves were leased without the consent of the Indians, contrary to the Treaty of 1877. And that the Indians who had lived all their lives on these leased portions had now been ordered to move elsewhere on the Reserve.

That the Indian [grain] Elevator at Brocket had been sold and the Indians had received only \$2,000.00 on same, and they wanted to know what had become of [the] balance of Money paid for this Elevator.

That there was no individual book account kept on either Reserve, whereby an Indian might know at any time just how his account stood, some of them stated they had not received any money, neither a statement for their 1923 crop, and now money was due for the crop of 1924.

That the Agent on the Blood Reserve would give them no cheques, only purchasing orders and these were always made out to merchants at Cardston, he would issue none to other Towns. One Indian stated that he had to pay in Cardston \$7.00 more for a piece of machinery, than in Macleod, and he thought that as they earned the money they should be allowed to spend it where they wished, and finally that both Agents were crooks and should be discharged.

That at the signing of the Treaty in 1877 the Indians were promised \$12.00 per person, this was to be the annual payment, this amount was received at the signing of the Treaty, since then we have received only \$5.00 per person, and want to know what has become of this extra \$7.00 per person since that time.

That the Government had promised to give employment on the Reserves to the ex-pupils after leaving school; this was not done, and an ex-pupil could not even get a job as teamster on the Reserve.

The foregoing with minor grievances took up the afternoon, and the meeting adjourned at 5.P.M. until 8.P.M. After the adjournment the Indians were banqueted by the Board of Trade and the Town's people.

At 8.p.m. the meeting was again called to order, and discussion on the forementioned grievances continued until 11.p.m. at which time [...] ⁶¹ Mr. A. F. Grady was made an Honorary Chief of the Blackfoot [...] and given an Indian name: "Ah-po-kops, O-to-kon." [...] After this ceremony the meeting adjourned until 10 a.m. Thursday morning.

At 10 a.m. Thursday morning the meeting was again called to order, Mr. Coote M.P. for Macleod being present. He was the first speaker called, and told the Indians he was sorry that he had been unable to attend the previous session, and at the present time he had nothing to say until he had heard their grievances.

⁶¹ Omissions are due to damage to the original document.

Then there was a repetition of the previous day's talk, and this lasted until 5 p.m. after which Mr. Coote told the Indians that he was only one in the Parliament but that he would do whatever he could for them. [...] The convention closed at 6.p.m. [...] The convention was very quiet and orderly, and the Indians behaved themselves very well indeed.

C. Junget to R.C.M.P. Commissioner⁶² (November 17, 1924)

Although you have undoubtedly seen an account of this Indian Convention, the first of its kind ever held in this District, I thought I would bring to your attention certain matters relative thereto.

There is a great deal of resentment at Macleod over the fact that the Indian Agency has been moved from Standoff to within a few miles of Cardston, owing to the fact that the Indians engaged in agriculture have moved to the Southern part of the Blood Reservation and there being practically nothing left up around Standoff.

It would appear that the Indian Agent of the Blood Reservation is in wrong with the people of Macleod, and that Macleod resents very much the attitude he takes toward the old Town in using his influence in taking everything to Cardston.

A. F. Grady to Charles Stewart⁶³ (November 18, 1924)

Alfred Francis Grady (1857 – 1944) occasionally handled legal matters for the Blood Indians. Charles Stewart (1868 – 1946), a former premier of Alberta, was Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in 1924.

Dear Mr. Stewart,

On Wednesday and Thursday of last week the Blackfoot-Bloods and Peigans, Indians, held a convention in Macleod for the purpose of talking over their troubles, as they told me, "just like the white people do." They asked me to help them in arranging matters for them, which I did.

They talked of their difficulties with the Agents, not giving them statements of what they turned into them, as Beef, Wheat, and labor, they were charged for all they get, and think the Agent should give an account to each man, like white men do.

They spoke about the Treaty of 1877, and that the Chief should received \$25.00, each minor Chief \$15.00, and each person \$12.00, now they get only \$20.00, \$10.00, and \$5.00.

They were given land, after all theirs was taken from them. Now the Indian Department tries to sell some land, and they lease the land without the consent of

⁶² From Junget, C. (1924, November 17). [Letter to R.C.M.P. Commissioner]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Christen Junget (1876 – 1969), then R.C.M.P. Commanding Officer of the Southern Alberta district.

⁶³ From Grady, A. F. (1924, November 18). [Letter to Charles Stewart]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Alfred Francis Grady (1857 – 1944).

the Indians. They can use all the land for their stock, and hay, if they had hay left over they could sell it to White men.

They want an investigation into their affairs, so that they may have an accounting of all their business every year.

They want to be able to get their money when there is any coming to them, and to be able to talk with their Agent some time.

They do not blame the Government, they blame all on the employees of the Government, who they say are not all straight in business matters.

These are the things they talked about, and asked me to tell you, as head of their department. I am only giving you these facts, as they gave them to the convention, and to me for you. I do not hold myself responsible for anything said or done, only as said or done by these Indians.

They intend to hold another big Convention, and Celebration in Macleod, next summer, and ask their "BIG CHIEF" to come and help them at the time, June 29th to July 4th 1925.

Mike Mountain Horse to J.T. Faunt⁶⁴ (November 22, 1924)

Mike Mountain Horse (d. 1964) was a Blood Indian and World War I veteran. J. T. Faunt (1882 – 1949) was the Indian Agent for the Blood Agency.

You have spoken to me about what took place at the convention of Indians at Macleod and [I] will explain as follows:

In the first place, the meeting was arranged for by Long Lance, an Indian of the United States, to get the sympathy of the public, in order that pressure be brought to bear on the Government with a view to having that section of the Indian Act which authorizes the Government to lease at will any portion of an Indian Reserve without the consent of the Indians, out of the Indian Act.

Long Lance himself was unable to be present and he asked me if I could carry through the convention, which I agreed to do and notified the Chief of the Blackfoot Reserve and the Peigan Reserve that such a convention was being held. I also asked Bob Hamilton, an Indian from Browning, if he would come and act in an advisory capacity, which he agreed to do.

I then saw Mr. Grady and Mr. Ferguson in Macleod and asked them what arrangements could be made for renting the town hall in Macleod and explained to them the purpose of the convention. They sent me to the Mayor, who agreed to let us have the use of the town hall free for two days. The people of Macleod also, very kindly arranged to provide the delegates with a banquet on the first night of the convention.

When the meeting was opened up I explained to the delegates why the convention was called, that it is for the purpose as mentioned above. Very few of the delegates, however, did confine themselves to this one subject and were inclined to

⁶⁴ From Mountain Horse, M. (1924, November 22). [Letter to J. T. Faunt]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Mike Mountain Horse (d. 1964).

voice personal grievances and I invariably told them that this was not what the convention was called for and also told different ones to quit talking which it was hard to get them to do.

I told the Blood Indians that they had nothing to kick about especially about their lease, but it was altogether different with the Peigans as the lease over there was crooked.

The statement which appeared in the paper⁶⁵ of what Chief Shot on Both Sides was supposed to have said was not correct. What he did say was this: "That he was not going to sell any land, but he was not opposed to leasing the Reserve." He did not speak at all the second day.

In connection with the above and from personal observation on the Reserve, I still feel that the Bloods have no kick coming, as I have witnessed their pay-day when individual Indians have drawn cheques from fifty to a hundred dollars at the Agency and fail to see where the distress comes in as talked of at the convention.

I find that they are making great progress towards independence and am also of the opinion that the Indians as a whole are not yet in a position to manage their own affairs, as anyone observing them making purchases could see for themselves. I am in hopes however that with guidance, they may soon reach this condition.

I am making this statement with a view to offsetting the wrong impression conveyed in the several reports which have appeared in the public papers recently.

C. Stewart to A. F. Grady⁶⁶ (November 24, 1924)

Dear Mr. Grady,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of November 18th, [...] dealing with the meeting which was held by certain Indians of the Blackfoot, Blood and Peigan reserves at Macleod.

It is of course impossible for me to say to what extent this meeting was representative of the various elements on these reserves, but I shall give the matter my best attention. You are no doubt aware from your own experiments with Indians that their grievances are sometimes imaginary. In my administration of the Department I have always taken care to find out what was the basis of any complaints brought to my attention. I presume the outcome of the meeting will be that the Indians will present me with a copy of their grievances in order that I may be able to obtain proper explanations and give the Indians the information they require. I shall be glad to receive any representations that the Indians may formally care to make.

⁶⁵ "Shot-on-Both-Sides, chief of the Bloods, said: 'I will speak on the land only. We do not want our reserves leased, but it is, and many sheep have been driven on the land. We don't like this, and still they are there. We have not received any lease money for the leases. I want to keep our reserve for our people; we need it all, and will not sell a foot of it.'" PEIGANS SEEK PROBLE OF LEASE ON 22,000 ACRES. (1924, November 15). *The Lethbridge Herald*, unknown page. From a clipping in Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁶ From Stewart, C. (1924, November 24). [Letter to A. F. Grady]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Charles Stewart (1868 – 1946), then Superintendent General of Indian Affairs.

W. M. Graham to D. C. Scott⁶⁷ (November 28, 1924)

In 1924, William Morris Graham (1867 – 1940) was the Indian Commissioner at Regina.

You wrote me last week regarding a gathering of Indians that had taken place at Macleod. I regret that such a gathering did take place. It was perhaps engineered by outside influences, in fact according to press reports it was. This, in all probability, means the start of a very serious situation, and the Department should take steps at once to see if something could not be done to stop this outside interference. Personally I would be helpless to do anything; it would have to come from higher up.

There is no doubt in my mind if this is to continue, and it will, that the Department will be faced with a great deal of discontent on the part of the Indians, which shall be put into their minds by people who do not understand the Indian character, and who will lead them to believe that they have grievances where no grievances exist. I doubt whether the instigators of this meeting really know what has been done on the Blood reserve in the way of advancement. It is needless for me to tell you what the Indian character is like, you know as well as I do that they can be made to believe that they have a grievance whether they have or not.

J. T. Faunt to W. M. Graham⁶⁸ (November 30, 1924)

The meeting was not at all a representative gathering of the Indians & consisted for the most part of a few agitators and loafers. The man Hamilton has been a thorn in the flesh of Superintendent Campbell for years and has been the author of several petitions etc. which reached Washington & which resulted in an investigation of conditions on the Blackfoot Reserve, with the result that Hamilton was proved to be an unscrupulous liar & trouble maker & now the United States authorities pay no more attention to his correspondences.

I think myself however that the people who were really at the bottom of the whole affair were a few of the Board of Trade of Macleod who are still sore over the moving of the Agency from the North end to its present location. I am the one who is supposed to have engineered this move.

Shot Both Sides & the other chiefs have been in to see me about the meeting & are very much put out at the whole affair & Shot Both Sides wanted to write to the papers repudiating the several charges supposed to have been made at the meeting

⁶⁷ Graham, W. M. (1924, November 28). [Letter to D. C. Scott]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by William Morris Graham (1867 – 1940), then Indian Commissioner at Regina.

⁶⁸ From Faunt, J. T. (1924, November 30). [Letter to W. M. Graham]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Joseph T. Faunt (1882 – 1949), Indian Agent.

& he expressed himself as being thoroughly satisfied with the way things were working out on the Reserve under the present policy, and that he, nor any of the Band were ever in as good shape as they are now & that those who were kicking were those who would not work and that if they would just keep their hands as busy as they kept their tongues they would be well off too.

The reporting to the papers was done I believe by A. F. Grady, a seeker after every Government job that comes along & by Mr. Underwood the brother-in-law of Mr. Middleton & who acts as press agent for his reverence.

A. F. Grady to C. Stewart⁶⁹ (January 6, 1925)

Dear Mr. Stewart,

The Indians of the Blood and Piegan Reserves, with other Indians of Alberta, and adjoining Provinces have decided to hold a Big Indian Celebration in Macleod, June 29-30th, and July 1-2 & 3rd, and have asked me to write you [for] approval of this, and to invite you to attend it as Their big Chief. It will be only as Indians celebrate among themselves, and part of it may be along the line as given to the big Jubilee in Macleod, during 1924. They will be assisted by the white people, and are willing to give assistance in the way of Policing among themselves, as they did last summer. Awaiting your early and favourable reply,

Yours truly,

(Signed) A. F. Grady

Mike Mountain Horse to D. C. Scott⁷⁰ (January 9, 1925)

Dear Sir, –

I am writing in the hope of laying a few facts before you. We had a convention at Macleod last November, at which it was decided to hold the next convention at Macleod in July of this year when the Indian is through with their work, and it was also decided to ask you or Mr. Hon. Steward to attend and open this convention if your work permits you, and it was also decided to hold a joint celebration, an all round Indian affair.

I see in the Indian Act where the Indian Act prohibits Indians being used by exhibitions or [for] stampede purposes. I am very sorry this has never been enforced for the simple reason that the Indians are kicking about the white people for using them for these purposes, and never get equal treatment with white contenders such as was done at the Macleod Jubilee, and that the Calgary management does not see that the Calgary management does not see that the Indians are rationed properly during their stay.

⁶⁹ From Grady, A.F. (1925, January 6). [Letter to Charles Stewart]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁰ From Mountain Horse, M. (1925, January 9). [Letter to D.C. Scott]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Mike Mountain Horse (d. 1964), a World War I veteran.

This celebration we [are] intending to hold will be along progressive lines and [we] hope it will be an incentive for the Indians to keep climbing the ladder towards good citizens if we get enough backing. We also intend to display Indian school children's work and other provisions of Indian advancement, and I hope that the Indian Department will give us all the possible support so that in time this progressive celebration will take the part of the sun dances.

I may add, Sir, that we don't intend to have a white man act in any capacity on the committee. Everybody will be Indian from the President to the last man on the committee.

Mike Mountain Horse to C. Stewart⁷¹ (January 24, 1925)

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter to Mr. A. F. Grady of the 24th Nov. 1924 on behalf of my people who attended the Indian convention at Macleod on Nov. 12th, 13th of last year. As it is your desire, Sir, to have a copy of the complaints and grievances brought before the convention sent to you, I have been given the task, as I was the secretary of that convention. I will give you the complaints in rotation by tribe, taking the Blood Indians first.

The Blood Indians complain that they are never given a statement of their earnings, especially their wheat money, and also a statement of their rations, that they are never told what price their wheat sold for and that the only time they know they have no more money is when the Agent tells them verbally.

Second complaint is that the Indian Agent is hardly at the office to attend to his work as he is at Cardston; all the time he takes his children to school in the morning when he should be in the office, he spends very little time in the office some mornings and the same thing in the afternoon, he goes to Cardston at 4 o'clock to get his children from school and the consequence is that some of the Indians don't get no attention from him after traveling considerable distance to see him.

Third complaint is about the lease of the Blood Reserve of sheepmen. In the first place the Indian Agent negotiated separately with each Indian Chief to sign terms for this lease which is contrary to the Indian Act, as it is clearly set forth in section 49 of the Indian Act that no lease of any Indian Reserve shall be binding unless assented to by a majority of the band, at a meeting summoned for that purpose. However, we are given to understand that at a later meeting between the Indian Commissioner and the Head Chief that terms were signed by the Chief on behalf of the Indians which is again contrary to the Indian Act for we cannot find any section of the Indian Act where the Head Chief has authority to sign alone on behalf of his people.

Fourth complaint is against S. S. 3 of Section 90 of the Indian Act giving power to the Supt. General of Indian Affairs to lease Indian Reserves without consulting the Indians, which is contrary to the Blackfoot treaty of 1877 which gave us these

⁷¹ From Mountain Horse, M. (1925, January 24). [Letter to Minister of the Interior]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

Reserves forever and that never gave any power to any future government to amend any of its clauses and stipulations in the future and we the Indians assembled in convention do hereby petition the Federal Government to repeal Section 90 of the Indian Act at the next session of Parliament and give us back our rights in having a controlling voice in the disposition of our lands.

D. C. Scott to Colonel C. Starnes⁷² (January 31, 1925)

Cortlandt Starnes (1864 – 1934) was Commissioner of the R.C.M.P. in 1924.

Mike Mountain Horse seems to be the person chiefly interested in this proposed celebration, but I think the good people of Macleod are really providing the motive power. They wish to maintain whatever allegiance is left to Macleod in these reserves and to make it a point of interest. Both the Minister and I have received letters asking for our approval of this celebration. We have not yet decided to give it. While on the surface it is supposed to be just a sports day for the Indians, it will be made, no doubt, an occasion for all the grouchers to air their imaginary grievances.

D. C. Scott to Mike Mountain Horse⁷³ (February 2, 1925)

Dear Sir, –

I am in receipt of your letter of January 9th, inviting the Honourable the Minister or myself to attend the celebration which you think of holding at Macleod from the 29th June to the 3rd July, 1925.

I am obtaining some additional information for the Minister on this subject. You will readily understand that he cannot say so far ahead whether it will be possible for him to be in Macleod at that date.

I am very doubtful whether you can usefully prolong this celebration for five days, but I would sympathize with anything that was progressive. In a celebration of this kind an attempt should be made to get away from the objectionable features of stampedes, etc., but I am not aware how this can be done and at the same time attract the public.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) Duncan Scott
Deputy Superintendent General.

⁷² From Scott, D. C. (1925, January 31). [Letter to Colonel Cortlandt Starnes]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

⁷³ From Scott, D. C. (1925, February 2). [Letter to Mike Mountain Horse]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

D. C. Scott to J. Byng⁷⁴ (February 3, 1925)

Viscount Julian Byng (1862 – 1935) was Governor General of Canada in 1924.

The Deputy Superintendent General presents his compliments to the Governor General's Secretary, and begs to acknowledge the receipt of the letter addressed to His Excellency by Mike Mountain Horse.

The Deputy Superintendent General notes that His Excellency is disposed to give his patronage to the proposed convention⁷⁵, and he therefore hesitates to give adverse advice, but under the circumstances he feels compelled to do so.

Last year some restless spirits on a Southern Alberta Reserve organized a convention at Macleod, at which certain grievances were aired, and the matter has been given a good deal of attention in the public press. There is hardly any foundation for these grievances which might as well have been brought to the attention of the Government through its Agents.

Unfortunately the Town of Macleod has been deprived of a section of the Indian trade by the removal of the agency headquarters to the southern part of the reserve near Cardston, and it is very evident that these Indian demonstrations were supported by citizens of Macleod, with the hope of holding the allegiance of the Indians.

Mike Mountain Horse has written to both the Honourable the Superintendent General and his Deputy, asking for their presence and support, but no favourable answer is being sent. The Agents of the district have been communicated with, and until there is a better understanding than exists at present, it is not the intention to give support to this gathering.

J. T. Faunt to D. C. Scott⁷⁶ (February 15, 1925)

Joseph T. Faunt (1882 – 1949) was an Indian Agent for the Blood Reserve.

The meeting of Indians held at Macleod was not representative of the progressive element on the Reserves, but was merely a gathering of a few of those who don't work themselves & who try their utmost to hold back others from work & you will know how representative it was when I tell you that it was held in the little two by four office of Mr. Grady who has an eye to being an Indian Agent or Postmaster or anything else that the Government might care to hand out to him.

⁷⁴ From Scott, D. C. (1925, February 3). [Letter to Governor General]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Duncan Campbell Scott (1862 – 1947).

⁷⁵ The Governor General declined his patronage of the event on February 9, acting on Scott's advice.

⁷⁶ From Faunt, J. T. (1925, February 15). [Letter to Duncan C. Scott]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

Mike Mountain Horse himself does not stay on the Reserve but lives in Macleod on the earnings of his wife who does washing & cleaning to support herself & husband.

So far as the Indians not receiving statements of their earnings, I have yet to learn of one Indian who has been refused such a statement, but having just one man in the office & knowing as you do the amount of work transacted in this office you can readily understand that it is hard to have these accounts all copied out of the ledger just when an Indian should happen to call for a copy. I make a practice of allowing any Indian farmer who has a mind to, [to] inspect his account in the ledger & if he cannot read it himself, bring anyone he wants to interpret the entries to him & I do not think anyone could be more open than that.

So far as the rations are concerned, I do not know what they mean by a statement of their rations as none of them have up to the end of 1924 had any ration credit & I have been issuing Destitute rations to all the farmers throughout the working season & collecting from out the proceeds of their crop in the Fall & for the most part these collections have not yet been made, not having had the time so far. When these collections are made the amount is refunded to Ottawa to offset any overdraft beyond the allowance voted for rations.

In the Fall of the year when harvesting operations are on, I do not spend a great deal of time in the office, except on Wednesdays which I devote entirely to the Indians & on Sundays when I attend to my correspondence. For two months, September & October, I took my own, the clerk's & the Farm Instructor's children to Cardston at 8 o'clock in the morning & got the mail & met any Indians there who required any repairs or who had purchases to make in the way of machinery &c. & all those who were working knew where to find me in the morning & your correspondent does not mention that I had more than likely been in the office since five in the morning writing wheat tickets for those who were going through early with loads of wheat. No; he would be sound asleep at that time & there was no chance of his knowing that other people were working while he slept. Then again I was in the field all day directing the operations & generally keeping things going & when you stop to consider that I had as high as seven outfits threshing at once time & hauling nine to ten thousand bushels of wheat to the elevator in a day, I did not have much time to sit around in my office. I always left instructions when I left the office, that if I was not back by five o'clock, a team be sent in to bring home the children. Since the weather got colder the children have been boarding in town & are only home for the weekends & sometimes not then. This is one of the comforts we enjoy through the buildings being erected eight miles from town when they might just as well have been build close to Cardston & alongside the point where all the trading is done.

About the leasing of the North end of the Reserve, I would explain that when Mr. Graham was here in the Summer he met Shot Both Sides, the head chief, & one or two of the minor chiefs & discussed the terms on which they would be prepared to lease that portion of the Reserve & they came to terms on the matter. When Mr. Graham went back to Regina a form of resolution was drawn up & sent to me to submit to the Indians. At that time the Indians were all assembled in camp for the

filming of the "Policing of the Plains" & I sent word to them that I would be in the camp on a certain day & met them on that day & had the resolution read to them & interpreted by several different interpreters & even by the official interpreter for the Blackfeet Reservation at Browning, Montana & having business to attend to in Macleod, I left the papers with the Chief so that they could discuss them in my absence & would call in there on my way back & get the verdict. When I came back they advised me that the terms were satisfactory & that they were willing to sign & this was done in the presence of witnesses & right in the open.

There might have been a few objectors to the proposition but these were a very small minority & I am satisfied that if it were put to a vote tomorrow, it would carry by an overwhelming majority.

This same Mike Mountain Horse wrote me a letter some time ago repudiating a lot of the stuff that was supposed to have been said at the meeting in Macleod & saying that the Blood Indians had no kick coming in connection with the administration of their affairs. A copy of this letter I sent to Mr. Graham & I have good reason to believe that most of this stuff is being stirred up from the outside & by people who probably think they have an axe to grind.

I trust, Sir, that I have made myself clear & that the explanation given of the several matters may prove satisfactory to you.

A. F. Grady to C. Stewart⁷⁷ (March 7, 1925)

Dear Mr. Stewart,

The Committee in charge of the Indian Convention, and Celebration for June 30th 1925, and following days, were delighted with the report from you, as given to Mike Mountain Horse, and myself at Calgary, that you had no objections to this, and that to assist in making it a greater success, the Indians, Bloods and Peigans would be paid their Treaty money the week before July 1st, so that they may be able to have a good time. The Committee asks for your confirmation of this in a letter either to myself, or to Mike Mountain Horse. Last year these Indians were paid their money just a few days before the 1st of July. They are all looking forward to seeing you open this big celebration, on July 1st, 1925.

Yours truly,

(Signed) A. F. Grady

⁷⁷ From Grady, A. F. (1925, March 7). [Letter to Charles Stewart]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

C. A. Arthur to D. C. Scott⁷⁸ (March 9, 1925)

Chester A. Arthur (1876 – 1929) was Indian Agent for the Peigan Reserve.

As far as I can see the proposed celebration is doomed to failure as I am informed that the head Chief on the Blood reserve will have nothing to do with it as he rightly assumes that it is promoted by some Blood Indians and whites in Macleod in whom he has no confidence and he is not desirous of embarrassing the Minister in his administration of the Indian's affairs.

For these reasons I think you would be ill advised to accept an invitation to attend or to in any way give official sanction to this celebration.

Personally I have always opposed this kind of celebration as I have found that anyone can unsettle the Indians by talking to them from the outside and making them believe that they have a grievance where none exists.

D. C. Scott to A. F. Grady⁷⁹ (March 25, 1925)

Dear Sir. –

The Honourable the Superintendent General has directed me to reply to your communication to him of the 7th March, and to say that while he has consented to approve for this year of the gathering of the Indians at Macleod, he has done so under a certain definite understanding as to the character of the celebration and the way in which it is to be carried out.

It is understood that the sports engaged in will not consist of any pagan dances or performances of any kind, and that in the competitions Indians only will take part. The Honourable the Minister thinks that all such celebrations or sporting events should be carried out by the Indians on their own reserves, and hereafter this should be looked forward to. It is though that three days is quite sufficient time, as within this time limit there should be all possible scope for any games or competitions or for an exhibition of industrial or school work.

Arrangements will also be made to pay the Indians treaty on the Blood and Peigan reserves on or about the 25th of June, but this is not to form a precedent.

Will you kindly communicate these facts to Mike Mountain Horse, who wrote to the Minister under date of March 8th.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) Duncan C. Scott

Deputy Superintendent General.

⁷⁸ From Arthur, C. A. (1925, March 9). [Letter to Duncan C. Scott]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada. Written by Chester A. Arthur (1876 – 1929), Indian Agent for the Peigan Reserve.

⁷⁹ From Scott, D. C. (1925, March 25). [Letter to A. F. Grady]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

J. T. Faunt to D. C. Scott⁸⁰ (March 25, 1925)

If the Indians go to Macleod [at] the end of June by which date they cannot possibly have their farm work done, I will not be able to get them back on the land again until harvest, as immediately after Treaty & the Sports they will be into the hay camp & from there to the harvest, which will mean practically no land prepared for [the] 1926 crop.

Mr. Arthur & Mr. Gooderham will also be affected adversely & I think Mr. Gooderham is having a lot of trouble now on account of the shortage of feed through the Indians being away last Summer to the Stampede in Calgary & the Jubilee in Macleod & I certainly don't want to [go] up against anything like that as we have practically no Band Funds to fall back on. There is a certain season for doing the work & if it is not done during that season it is generally left undone & if this Macleod event is to be pulled off we might just as well begin to figure out how much the Department is going to be called upon to put up to see the Indians through 1926.

I think the suggestion as to the granting of \$200.00 from Band Funds towards the prize list for the fair on the Reserve is a good one & if you consider it favorably I will obtain a resolution from the chiefs authorizing the spending of this amount.

I trust, Sir, you will give the matter serious consideration before approving of this proposed celebration in Macleod.

J. T. Faunt to W. M. Graham⁸¹ (April 7, 1925)

The Minister has granted permission to the Indians to participate in a three day celebration in Macleod on the understanding that the sports will not include any pagan dances or performances of any kind.

I am sorry that his permit has been given as it is going to seriously interfere with my work on the Reserve and I do not think the Indians as a whole are in favor of going to Macleod & would prefer to have their sports on the Reserve along about the 14th & 15th of July and I had already asked the Department to pay treaty on July 13th to fit in with these sports.

Those Indians instrumental in setting up the Macleod affair are offering upwards of three thousand dollars in prizes for the various events and are figuring on receiving from some moving picture outfit \$3500.00 for the picture rights in connection with the affair, and no picture outfit is going to give \$3500.00 for pictures of Indians running races etc. and I know they are figuring on Indian parades, dances, sham battles etc. and where is it going to stop?

We lost a lot of valuable time last year on account of the Jubilee and if the Department is looking for progress along industrial lines amongst these Indians, I think the local Agents ought to be consulted, that is, if they are to be held responsible

⁸⁰ From Faunt, J. T. (1925, March 25). [Letter to D. C. Scott]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

⁸¹ From Faunt, J. T. (1925, April 7). [Letter to W. M. Graham]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

for any progress the Indians do not and can not make if they are allowed to leave their Reserves at the call of every jerkwater town along the line who want to stage something of the kind as a means of helping out their merchants who are slowly starving to death, and by coaxing the Indians away from their work (and God knows it has been hard enough to keep them at their work) will soon have them in the same condition.

I have been planning to have this a record year so far as preparation of land is concerned, but I might just as well crawl back into my hole until this thing is over and dream of what might have been.

C. Stewart to W. M. Graham⁸² (May 18, 1925)

With regard to the Macleod Indian celebration, I am becoming somewhat alarmed about this matter. I note the letter from Indian Agent Faunt, complaining that his Indians have already become somewhat disturbed, and that he fears the celebration will have a bad effect upon them, with consequent difficulty of getting them to do any work.

Upon thinking the matter over, I have decided to ask you to make an investigation and find out exactly what the Indians and Grady are doing at Macleod. The head-lines on the letter you sent me from Mountain Horse would indicate that they are going away beyond anything that was contemplated. I distinctly refused them permission to carry on their old pagan customs, but agreed that there was no objection to including all the white man's games, including horse races. However, I think the best thing to do is to put the whole matter in your hands in order that it may not get out of bounds, and I will write Grady and Mountain Horse to this effect.

C. Stewart to Mike Mountain Horse⁸³ (May 18, 1925)

Dear Chief Mountain Horse,

You will doubtless recall that when you interviewed me in Calgary, along with Mr. A. F. Grady, with reference to the proposed celebration at Macleod, it was distinctly understood that the Indians would not indulge in any of the old pagan customs, but that all white man's games would be allowed.

I note by the advertising on the letterhead you are using, that the celebration has the appearance of going beyond what was originally contemplated, and as complaints have come in from different Indian Agents that the Indians are already becoming unsettled on account of the forthcoming event, I have thought it well to have Indian Commissioner Graham personally take this matter in hand. I would

⁸² From Stewart, C. (1925, May 18). [Letter to W. M. Graham]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

⁸³ From Stewart, C. (1925, May 18). [Letter to Mike Mountain Horse]. Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 4093, File 600,107). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

therefore be obliged if you would address any communications you may have in connection with the celebration to the Commissioner at Regina.

I have sent similar advice to Mr. Grady.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) CHAS. STEWART

“Fast passing in Canadian history”⁸⁴ (July 2, 1925)

For the first time in the history of Canada, three thousand redskins from four western provinces and Montana have journeyed into Macleod to hold an all-Indian celebration and to form a league of plains Indians. Vivid reminders of a day that is fast passing in Canadian history are to be seen everywhere. On the east side of the town eleven hundred Bloods are camped in picturesque, bright colored tepees. In the centre of the town are the Blackfeet from Montana, and here and there throughout the town limits are other camps of Stony, Sioux, Cree, Sarcees, Peigans and Assiniboines.

The three-day celebration was opened yesterday with a gigantic Indian pageant nearly two miles long. The only white persons in this spectacular procession was a small contingent of mounted police which led it.

That the Indian still retains his old superstition of the white man's camera was evinced by the fact that the three motion picture men who had come to town to film the celebration were forbidden to do so by the chiefs. A letter which the frantic cameraman procured from Mayor Macdonald later in the day had no effect on the chiefs, who were obdurate in their decision. Hence, this historic event will never be seen by the outside world. [...]

Indian methods of transportation which have been all but forgotten, were seen in this remarkable pageant. Old women glided along between squads of mounted warriors with the dog travois carrying their household possessions and their children. The dogs trotted along as though they, too, belonged to the recent dark age in American history. Many of the braves were totally stripped to the breech-cloth and painted from head to foot.

Five thousand visitors brought in on special and regular trains over the Canadian Pacific railway, attended the all-Indian stampede. In the afternoon, Tom Three Persons, Blood Indian, former world's champion bucking horse rider, won the calf-roping contest. [...]

As the sun sank below the Porcupine hills last night, the Indians retired to their camps and began to sing and dance to their mournful music and throbbing tom-toms. Macleod was never more reminiscent of the days of '74 than it is at this colorful moment.

⁸⁴ From MOVIE MEN ARE BANISHED BY INDIAN CHIEFS HEADING M'LEOD'S BIG TRIBAL MEET. (1925, July 2). *The Edmonton Journal*, p. 2.

Rations and Cattle Killing⁸⁵ (1888 – 1895)

“We killed our cattle from hunger”⁸⁶ (March 19, 1888)

In 1888, Hayter Reed (1849 – 1935), then assistant Indian Commissioner, met near Edmonton with Chief Alexander Laviolette (1867 – 1919) of the Montagnais (or Innu) First Nation⁸⁷, and Chief Michel Callihoo (1824 -1911), founder of the Michel First Nation. Their bands were accused of killing government cattle; the chiefs argued this was the result of starvation from insufficient rations. Though not with the Blood Indians, the report of this meeting provides insight into Reed’s thoughts about rations and cattle killing in Alberta.

A public interview between the assistant Indian commissioner and the chiefs Alexandre and Michel, with their councillors, was held at the police barracks, Edmonton, on Thursday forenoon. Major de Balinhard, Indian agent, Supt. Griesbach, Insp. Casey, H. S. Young, of the H. B. Co., Rev. Pere Blanchet, D. Maloney and others were present. John Rowland of St. Albert interpreted for the Indians and Mr. Reed employed his own interpreter.

Mr. Reed said he had come in pursuance of his promise of the day before to hear what the Indians had to say.

Alexandre said he spoke as it might be for God and for the government on behalf of the poor people who could not speak for themselves. “I don’t depend on what you are doing here – both of you (Messrs. Reed and de Balinhard). Everything has been going badly since you two came here. We consider that you have acted against the law. It is you who have caused the government cattle to be killed. You knew last fall that game and fish had failed in this country. You have come from far and you have seen no track of anything to kill and eat. You see how miserable the Indians are here, and when you go back you will tell them all is well.”

Mr. Reed – You told me all this when I saw you before, and I gave you your answer then. The government is pretty well aware of the facts of the case. My business here is to report the facts to the government, which I will do.

Alexandre – What I say is truth, as everyone who is here knows. Because it is true I sent the telegram to Sir John. I have waited for an answer, but have got none. I am not as wise as you, but I have a mind to think of these things. I follow the track of the law and am not ashamed. White men would do as we have done. We killed our cattle from hunger. Hunger might make us kill each other. It is as [if] you were pushing us to do evil. That we have eaten our horses and the cattle that the

⁸⁵ Unless otherwise stated, all extracts are from Blood Agency – Correspondence regarding certain individuals of the Blood Reserve charged with killing cattle belonging to the Cochrane Ranch Company. (1893-1896). Indian Affairs (RG 10, Volume 3894, file 97,443). Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada.

⁸⁶ From HUNGRY INDIANS. (1888, March 19). *The Edmonton Bulletin*, p. 4.

⁸⁷ His headstone in Edmonton reads ‘Chef des Montagnais, Fort Chipewyan’.

government gave us should be blamed on you. What the poor people are saying every day rings in my ears. We do not depend on you.

Mr. Reed – Does he mean that the promises I made him yesterday won't be kept?

Alexandre – I am talking not of what is ahead but what is behind, since last fall. It is since then we have eaten the cattle.

Michel – When we were forced with hunger we went to the agent here. He spoke well to us but that did not fill us. When matters did not improve we said, "Let us see how it is further away." We got no answer from the telegram we sent. We see that nothing is going right from Regina. You knew that it was a hard year with us. If you wanted to save us, why did you not send the food while the roads were good? The Indians had asked for 500 sacks of flour this winter. He heard that only 300 sacks had been sent. "Perhaps Sir John does not know we are starving."

Replying to Mr. Reed Michel said that before sending the telegram they had gone to the agent and asked for food. They knew that next day was ration day, but they did not wait to see what would be given them on that day.

Mr. Reed said that the total number of sacks of flour asked for was 500, but the department were using their judgment about the time for delivery.

Mr. de Balinhard said that was the trouble; 200 were not to be delivered till June.

Mr. Reed – The object of the government in not sending the flour sooner was to assist the farmers of the country by buying as much as possible from them. It was not until late in the fall that the department found they could not get enough flour here. It had to be brought all the way from Winnipeg. The contractor met with many accidents and did not get in when agreed. The government would have delivered the flour sooner if they could.

Replying to Mr. Reed Michel said that he had two cattle of his own and had had five pigs, but they had starved to death. He had earned money by freighting, but had not yet received it. His son had earned some and had received it.

Rev. Father Blanchet, at Michel's request, conversed with Mr. Reed in French.

Ma-me-na-wa-ta, of Stoney Plain, said "I have been called a coward for not killing cattle. It is true. I am a coward and have killed none. I am glad to see you here, and am surprised that you have come now when everything is scarce. This one and that one is naked. The wives are freezing for lack of clothing. Why is the clothing now lying in the store on the reserve not distributed? When you go those you leave behind will not do as you promise. They seem to be above you. If your promises are not carried out after you leave I will kill cattle as others do. The only way to get anything from the agent you send us is to flatter him. I have always wanted you to look favorably on me. You put an egg – the law – into my hand. I did not break it and neither have these others. We are trying to gain what the Queen promised us. What we gain we like to have in our hands. We want these promises fulfilled now."

Sknee Kue blamed the Regina officials and accused them of misusing the money placed in their hands by the government for the benefit of the Indians. He said, "You do not expend as much this year as before. When we could help ourselves

you helped us more, this year we cannot help ourselves and you bring less. Do you promise to give us three meals a day until the ice is gone, or is this increase of food to be only for one day? When we see that you will help us, we will thank you.”

Mr. Reed – I am here on behalf of the government to see whether the Indians are able to provide for themselves or not. After making enquiries I find that they require more rations. Consequently I increased them, and will allow them a reasonable quantity until such time as those who are able go off to hunt. The government does not wish for any one to suffer from lack of food. But though the government aids the Indians, and in most cases very liberally, the Indians are expected to aid themselves by every means in their power. Some Indians receive a great deal of provisions, others only a little and others none at all, according to circumstances. As I told you, my promises are being kept and both flour and meat are being sent out to you so that you will not want. A few Indians are out hunting, and are doing remarkably well. Alexandre himself has killed thirty deer this winter, and two others whom I met have killed 90. I know it is hard to get out and hunt, the snow is so deep, but some can help themselves. Michel said a day or two ago on his reserve, “If these promises are fulfilled we are happy.” They are being fulfilled.

Alexandre said he had killed thirty deer, but he was the best hunter in this part of the country. Others could not do as he had done. There was not more than twenty deer left in this vicinity. “You know it is deep snow and a hard season. You knew these things before. If you had opened your eyes before, things would not be as they are. But you did not want to see; you want to do nothing but gather money. Your name is neither good with Indians or whites – neither of you.”

Mr. Reed – We know many things, but we did not know whether or not there was going to be fish or game.

A young man said he had lost his wife and two children by hunger, and as he was now alone he could manage to support himself.

Mr. Reed said if the government thought he could earn his living it would not help him at all.

Alexandre said he understood that the government said, “If you help yourselves we will help you;” not, “If you help yourselves we will leave you off.”

Another councillor said, “I am a coward, but when I hear my children cry from hunger I kill cattle. I think of you as the cold; you want to kill all on the reserves.”

Alexandre – You were sent word last spring about sickness on the reserves. On my own reserve many have died of sickness and hunger. Medicine is no use without food. Thirty have died on my own reserve, and fifteen besides. Five of my own children have died, most of them grown up. I sent word every day but you would do nothing for me. You think what I say of the sickness is not true. I tell you in your ears you lie when you say you take the part of the sick children.

Mr. Jim had been used to working for the whites. This winter he could get no work. There was no game and no fish, and he had nearly starved to death depending on the Indian department. He did not go to the whites to sell his country. They came to him to buy it, and now they would not pay the price.

Mr. Reed ordered dinner to be provided for the Indians, and assured them that they would receive the increase of rations promptly.

“They immediately say it is the Indians”⁸⁸ (January 17, 1890)

Major McGibbon, inspector of Indian agencies, being in town, THE HERALD called his attention to published statements in reference to Indians killing cattle on the ranches, and asked him if there was any foundation for these statements.

“No definite charges have been brought against the Indians,” said the inspector. “The charges have been of a general character. No direct case has been brought under our notice which we could investigate. It is well known that calves and young cattle are often killed by wolves and coyotes. So much is this the case that some of the larger ranches in the Macleod district have provided packs of hounds to hunt and kill these animals. When certain people find their calves killed they immediately say it is the Indians, but they have no proof. It is not fair to make general charges against those who have no means of defending themselves. The charges should be specific. They should give date, place and all particulars. If such definite charges were made I would sift them to the bottom, but up to this time no statement has been made that we could lay hold of. I have been inspecting the agencies around here for the last four years, and I have never had a case of this kind brought before me that there was a shadow of truth in. The Indians are exceedingly well behaved and orderly, and have great respect for other people’s property. This opinion I have formed after four years’ study. The Indians have no occasion to steal. They are well fed and well looked after and have no need to resort to killing cattle to get a living. I repeat: If any one has any definite charge to make, I will see it promptly and fully investigated.”

“A question of rations and money”⁸⁹ (January 22, 1890)

Referring to the question of the conduct of the Indians, especially in regard to killing range cattle, Mr. George K. Leeson, the well-known contractor, informs us that he has had several hundred cattle at large at Morley for several years, and much of the time they are running with Indian cattle, and he has never known an instance of the Indians killing his stock.

It is only right to say in this connection that Mr. Stimson, at the Gun club meeting, spoke very positively of Indians killing cattle on the High River ranges. He spoke of what he knew; not of what he did not. His statement in regard to Indian depredations was corroborated by a correspondent at Mosquito Creek who, writing without any knowledge of Mr. Stimson’s having made a statement on the subject, alleged that within his knowledge Indians had been killing cattle in that locality. Notwithstanding the good conduct of the Indians at Morley, it must be assumed that range cattle have recently been killed by Indians. There is something, however, in

⁸⁸ From Major McGibbon on the Indians. (1890, January 17). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 4.

⁸⁹ From THE INDIAN QUESTION. (1890, January 22). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 2.

Major McGibbon's contention that provable cases should be submitted to the Indian department for investigation.

If the keeping on the Indians on their reserves is merely a question of rations and money, the expense should not be considered for a moment. If the Government are powerless under treaties to keep them from wandering in armed bands over the cattle ranges, then they should endeavor to secure such a re-arrangement of the treaties as will prevent this go-as-you-please business from continuing. No one wishes to extend to the Indians treatment less generous than what the whites receive, but at least the Indians should not be fed at the expense of the whites and at the same time enjoy privileges which are denied to whites. The indiscriminate killing of game out of season and the invasion of cattle ranges in armed bands would not be tolerated in the case of whites and should not be permitted in the case of Indians. The country is getting settled up too fully, game is getting too scarce, for a continuance of the proceedings which might have been all right in a different condition of the country, long ago, and the management of the Indians should be changed to suit.

H. Reed to T. M. Daly (January 6, 1893)

Hayter Reed (1849 – 1935) was Indian Commissioner in January of 1893. Thomas Mayne Daly (1852 – 1911) was Minister of the Interior and Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

Dear Mr. Daly,

I return herewith Mr. W. F. Cochrane's letter⁹⁰ with the following expression of my views as asked for:-

Although unaware of this complaint when making a visit to the district from which I have just returned, I made particular enquiries relative to the Indians killing stock. Ever since ranchers went into the Western country we have heard such complaints. While quite prepared to admit that individual Indians are occasionally unable to resist a favorable opportunity for killing an animal, we always held about the Calgary Districts what I now hold regarding that of McLeod, that White criminals were more to blame than Indians. With regard to the Calgary District the truth of this has been demonstrated and the conviction and commitment to the Penitentiary of some White men has pretty well put an end to such complaints.

If the Bloods have been killing cattle it cannot be properly attributed to insufficiency of rations for on my visit just referred to, I found them in receipt of the same average per capita rations as given for nearly a year back, with which, they went out of their way to inform me when I was there last September, they were well satisfied, however the Winter being severe and fewer opportunities existing at this season to enable them to help themselves, and with a view to remove any temptation to kill cattle, I increased the ration, on the occasion of my recent visit.

⁹⁰ This letter is apparently missing. In the archive this item is followed by a letter from W. F. Cochrane on the same subject, dated September, 1893.

I did hear some reports, but learned from the Sergeant in charge of the Police Detachment, the facts to be that four carcasses had been found, only one of which showed signs of having been shot.

The animals had been driven down to the low lands to shelter them from a storm, and as some cows were in poor condition the Police Sergeant's suggestion that they may have succumbed to exhaustion, seems not unreasonable.

The Sergeant informed me furthermore that the Ranch Inspector, when a Constable mentioned the subject to him, said that he had heard such reports before and "took mighty little stock" in them or something to that effect, meaning that the killing was not done to any great extent.

He told me moreover that five days before Mr. Cochrane's complaint, the Police Patrol called in the usual course to enquire if there were any complaints to make about depredations, and learned that there were none.

The Indians claim that much of the suspicion attached to them results from their having to drive away the Rancher's herds and the cattle of others from trespassing on the Reserve, which is one of the finest for grazing purposes in the country, and I have therefore instructed that before driving off cattle they shall get one of our people to accompany them for their protection, ill as the time of our Employés can be afforded for such purpose.

I have had more than once to draw the Company's attention, through the Agent, to such trespassing, which last year caused serious inconvenience, by the destruction of grass which our people depended on, but even if not used for themselves, these Indians as well as all others are very jealous of trespassing on their Reserve, and must of course be protected in their rights.

It may be next to impossible for the Company to prevent such occasional trespass, but if it occur they need not be surprised if the Indians chase the cattle off. I may add that if the Company keep six men only to look after some 15,000 cattle they need not be surprised if they occasionally suffer at the hands of White or Indian marauders.

Those acquainted with what goes on across the Line consider Ranchers on this side have cause to be thankful, and give our Indians great credit for their behaviour in this respect; still however, we are only too anxious to put an entire stop to such conduct, and I cannot but regret that if Mr. Cochrane had any reason to believe killing was going on to any such extent as he describes, he did not inform us in order that extra precautions might be taken.

I have now communicated with the Police Commissioner with a view to extra exertion to put a stop to cattle killing by whomsoever it may be committed.

In conclusion I may remark that these people are apparently only in a position to judge of the rations the Indians have been receiving, from the amount of beef purchased from themselves, and while not unnaturally they may desire to see increased liberality in a direction which materially affects their own market, they are ignorant of many circumstances upon which the question of the sufficiency of the beef ration hinges.

No doubt, as Mr. Cochrane says, many Indians are at times away, the inducements offered to visit their relations across the Line are largely responsible for this, but I have never heard of Indians on the Reserve not drawing their rations, nor do I believe it.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) Hayter Reed

Memorandum by H. Reed (February 22, 1893)

Mr. Cochrane's statement, as to the Peigans of the United States being much more liberally provided for than our Indians, is correct, but it is submitted that this fact must prove the good management and treatment of our Indians by our officials.

As to calling for returns, the Department, it is thought, is in possession of the facts connected with the daily issues. It would certainly be bad management if our Indians were, year in and year out, to receive the same daily allowance. The issues are governed by circumstances. No such instructions, by themselves, have ever been given new Agents as mentioned. Certainly every effort is expected to be made by all to reduce the issues as much as possible, consistent with circumstances, but other and more important qualifications are necessary to entitle an Agent's claim for advancement to be considered. Those who are the most liberal in the issue of rations are not, as a rule, the most successful officials.

Mr. Cochrane is apparently disinclined to give us credit for knowing much of the work with which we are particularly charged. It is thought our own officials are the most likely to know whether Indians draw their rations or not, and they believe that they do.

The undersigned would ask the Department to compare the issues to the Blackfeet and Peigans for the same periods which shew, it is thought, a higher rate to the Bloods, but no complaints have come from either of the former, nor have any complaints been received about cattle-killing.

A construction has been placed upon the last clause of the letter of the undersigned of 6th January foreign to that intended, as the undersigned has always entertained a much higher estimate of Mr. Cochrane's character than to impute motives of endeavouring to create a larger market by making such complaints.

(Signed) Hayter Reed

"Self Supporting Indians"⁹¹ (February 22, 1893)

We hear great complaints from cattlemen about Indians camping on the range. There are, it is reported, at the present time no less than twenty-seven lodges on High River alone, and a party of Sarcees with fourteen tepees have been camped near Pekisko all winter. It is perfectly obvious to the meanest capacity that a party of from 100 to 150 Indians are not living on game shot on High River. There is no game worth

⁹¹ From SELF SUPPORTING INDIANS. (1893, February 22). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 3.

mentioning on High River or in any other part of Southern Alberta. The Indians have killed everything living there they could come across both in season and out of season until there is nothing left to kill.

The logical consequence is that they are living on beef, a deduction which is supported by actual evidence. Hides and beef have been found in their lodges quite recently. Of course the Indians have found a dead animal. They always do. Equally of course it would be pretty hard to convince any reasonable individual that if they had happened to run across a live steer, when nobody was looking, they would not have to search very long before finding a dead one pretty close to the same locality. They must be killing cattle or they could not live. It is impossible to prove, but it is as morally certain as anything on earth.

Now, why are those Indians allowed to wander over the country and inflict this loss and annoyance on the neighboring cattlemen? For a very simple reason. The whole aim and object of an Indian Agent's existence is to show a clean ration sheet. It is the highly commendable ambition of the Indian Department to make the Indians self supporting. This idea conflicts with the life-principle of the Indian, which is simply to get as much of the Indian Department for nothing as possible. But he also has a rooted objection to be obliged to live within the limits of his reserve, and of this the much worried agent takes advantage. By granting passes for the purpose of "hunting" he gratifies his wander-loving charges and soothes the departmental mind with a small "total drawing rations." Whether there is anything to hunt or not is a minor matter. The ration sheet, at all events, is "clean." If the unfortunate cattlemen have to furnish the objects of the Indian hunt, that does not appear on any return, and the returns are what count at Ottawa. The blue book statistics of self supporting Indians in Treaty No. 7 do not contain a hint that they support themselves at the expense of the nearest herd, but that does not render them any the less available for refuting the factious opponents of the Minister of the Interior when the Indian Department estimates come up.

We do not blame the Indian Agents. Indeed, what between the Indian Department and the Indians, the traders and the missionaries, the inspectors and the ever-lasting call for returns, and yet more returns, we do not know any government officials in the country more sincerely to be pitied. It is the whole system of making results appear to have been attained, which have not been attained, that is to blame. No doubt the idea of making the Indians self-supporting in course of time, is an excellent one in its way. Considerable progress has among them in the course of the last ten years. But they are a long way off from being self supporting yet, and will be for quite a while, in spite of all returns and blue book figures to the contrary. And it is high time that this farce of making clean ration sheets by granting passes for the purpose of "hunting" was discontinued, at all events south of the Saskatchewan. The sooner the department recognizes the fact that "hunting" is merely a facetious way of writing "shooting cattle" the better. The little official farce may be very amusing at Ottawa, but the cattlemen in Alberta rather fail to see where the funny part comes in.

H. Reed to T. M. Daly (March 11, 1893)

I have the honor to refer to an article which appeared in the Calgary Herald's weekly issue of 22nd ultimo, under the caption "Self-supporting Indians," to the effect that our Indians in Treaty 7 are hanging about the Ranges and living on cattle which they find dead, but actually at any rate in many instances, kill, and that this is the outcome of the insufficiency of the issues of food made.

It is of course difficult to ascertain what amount of truth, if any, there may be, in these allegations.

I have instructed all the Agents to do all in their power to put a stop to what is being complained of, to employ if necessary Indian scouts as detectives, and to go out and bring in Indians who are in situations which are likely to tempt them to commit such depredations as are complained of.

I have, moreover, directed the attention of the Commissioner of N. W. M. Police to the matter and he informs me that his force is patrolling the country as well as possible, but they themselves have seen nothing to justify such indiscriminate statements.

In the article referred to, particular reference was made to the Sarcees, but I have quite recently been advised by Mr. Agent Lucas that he had been asking Mr. Fred Stimson, one of the stock owners upon whose range the Sarcees are generally to be found when away from their Reserve, about the matter, and was informed that the Sarcees had not troubled him this winter.

The Blood Agent reports that many cattle have been dying in the District and a number of Ranchers [have been] giving the Indians permission to remove the beef.

With regard to insufficiency of rations tempting Indians to commit these depredations, I am not prepared to admit that there is justification for the assertions made. It is of course regarded as a matter of the greatest importance to keep rations down as much as possible without entailing suffering, and when it is remembered that an ounce per diem multiplied by the number of souls rationed will represent an annual money expenditure aggregating many thousands of dollars, the necessity for the strictest economy will be apparent. A sound discretion is, however, exercised and if the circumstances are in any way exceptional, a corresponding increase is made, but it is obvious that if these Indians are to be allowed all they want without exerting themselves, nothing will ever be accomplished in the direction of making them self-supporting.

That cattle killing would to some extent be carried on by Indians under any circumstances is altogether probable, and more so when they are surrounded by such large Ranches as are in their District, nor can the hope to entirely put a stop to such depredations, whether committed by Indians or whites, under these circumstances, be reasonably entertained.

J. Wilson to H. Reed (March 16, 1893)

James Wilson (1850 – 1923) was Indian Agent for the Blood Agency.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters dated 28th ultimo and 10th instant, and to inform you that I have engaged the services of two Indians, "Running Crane" and "Bear's Hat" to act as scouts and detectives.

The former lives opposite the Cochrane Ranch Company's place, while the last named resides in Red Crow's village. Both Indians are good reliable men and I have every confidence that they will do what is wanted of them.

During the last month there has been only one case of suspected cattle killing by Indians in the neighborhood of the Reserve, and in that case the cow was so weak she lay down to die, and there was proof that the animal had not died of exhaustion.

The greater part of the trouble comes from the fact that some Ranchers will give Indians letters authorizing them to take dead cattle with their brands on and although it does look hard to see good beef going to waste, still when an Indian is armed with a letter of authority, it is hard to put a stop to them or to keep them from wandering around the Reserve looking for dead cattle.

When in Lethbridge some time ago I had some conversation with Mr. Curry & Mr. Harvis, the Manager and Foreman to Messrs. Conrad Bros., about giving Indians notes and they admitted they had done so, while the Indians have told me that the Brown Ranch Co. on the St. Mary's River have also been giving them leave to take the beef from the dead animals. I also know that at the Mormon Colony they have been allowed to do so.

As far as possible however, I will endeavor to keep the Indians from going over there, but these places are so close that they never actually require to leave their Reserve to obtain possession of these dead animals.

H. Reed to T. M. Daly (March 25, 1893)

In my letter already referred to I explained how a small daily saving in rations to so many mounts up in the course of the year, and that if Indians are to be allowed all they want without exerting themselves, nothing will ever be accomplished in the direction of making them self supporting. I may add that nothing you could give these Indians would prevent a demand for more.

The Government gives them far more than in any way bound to do by Treaty, and while they are in possession of ponies, rifles, etc., etc., which if hard pressed they would speedily dispose of for food, and while supporting (instead of killing and eating) large numbers of dogs, no credence need be placed in stories of their seriously suffering.

I have, however, given such instructions as to remove any doubt as to their being in want.

The Indians however are not wandering about much, and everything considered they have been very successful in keeping them at home. Nomadic by

nature, they would roam when the fit was on them, even if by doing so they left abundance behind them, and an army of soldiers or police could not prevent their slipping away.

It was specially stipulated by them when they entered Treaty that they should not be tied down to their Reservations, and although I have often taken the responsibilities of employing police to send them home, the greatest caution has to be exercised, for were they to offer resistances and conflict ensue, they have the law on their side. Under these circumstances Agents must often, against their own wishes, issue Passes to Indians who they know will leave in any case, and so preserve an appearance at least of control, and a knowledge of their movements.

“He can snap his fingers at the police”⁹² (March 29, 1893)

Speaking of the killing of cattle by Indians, the *Macleod Gazette* says:-

“Unless, therefore, an Indian is found actually in the act of the killing it is more than probable that he can snap his fingers at the police. Only this week four Blood Indians were brought in by the police from Stand Off charged with cattle killing, each one when arrested having a quarter of beef in his possession, but the brand was missing, and although they were put in the guardroom and given a preliminary trial, it will be next to impossible to convict them. This condition of affairs calls for some action; either the law of this country should be amended so as to make anyone arrested for cattle killing, with beef in his possession, prove his right and ownership to that beef, and not as at present, lay the onus of the proof on the owner of the missing animal; or some scheme should be devised whereby Indians should not be allowed off their reserves at any time without the written permission of the agent in charge, stating distinctly when the bearer was allowed to go, what for, and how long he was to be away. And any Indian found off his reserve without a pass, or found in any other direction than that his pass called for, etc., should be promptly arrested; and we have no doubt that the annoyances complained of by the ranchers resulting from itinerant bands of Indians would then speedily end.”

“An agreement for mutual protection”⁹³ (June 28, 1893)

In the absence of an incorporated association, a number of the stockmen of Southern Alberta are entering into an agreement for mutual protection. For some time past depredations on the range are known to have been committed in nearly every part of the country, but unfortunately for the ranchmen the arm of the law has not always been long enough to reach the scoundrels, who are fattening on their ill-gotten gains. Detectives have been employed by the stockmen, but the experiment has not proved a success, for even in cases where men, well known to have never owned a head of stock, and with unsavory reputations otherwise, were found in

⁹² From CATTLE KILLING INDIANS. (1893, March 29). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 4.

⁹³ From \$500.00 REWARD. (1893, June 28). *The Calgary Herald*, page unknown.

possession of beef, the law as it stands gives no one the power to compel such men to prove their claim to the beef, and it would be very difficult to prove the crime by circumstantial evidence. The law punishes the offence severely when discovered and satisfactorily proved, and as a means to that end the large ranchers are now offering a reward of \$500 for information leading to the conviction of persons killing, branding or otherwise illegally handling cattle bearing their brands. The reward may possibly have a better effect in securing evidence that will convict than any means yet tried, as it will virtually make every man in the country a detective.

W. F. Cochrane to L. Vankoughnet (September 6, 1893)

W. F. Cochrane, rancher, died in 1944. Lawrence Vankoughnet was Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs (Hayter Reed would soon succeed him in the role).

The claim that white criminals are more to blame for cattle killing in the neighbourhood of the Blood Reservation may do to make the Department in Ottawa, or to anyone unacquainted with the District, but though it may have been true of the Calgary District, the claim would carry no weight with anyone who knows the Country about the Bloods.

With regard to reduced rations causing cattle killing, Mr. Reed's answer is not an answer to my statement. I state that from the time Col. Irvine went there as Agent (1st Feb. 1892) and commended the reduction of rations, cattle killing had been on the increase. When I wrote, the first severe wintry weather was on, and some cattle had been drifted down to the Range between our home ranch and Stand Off, where cattle killing if going on, would be more easily detected, and in consequence six head were discovered butchered, without anyone going out of their way to look for them. Another was reported to me afterwards that had been killed the same week, which makes seven. The Police and Local Indian Officials have always known my views on this subject, which has often been talked over between us, and I had ceased to report every case discovered, as nothing could be done about it; but this was too much to stand without making a protest. There are other ways of killing cattle than by shooting, and cattle were not dying with exhaustion at this time. I do not know who the Ranch Inspector is, whose opinion is quoted, nor can the Police Commissioner inform me, but [I] do not consider it worth much.

With regard to the Police Patrol receiving no complaints. It was before I had heard of them, that they were there, I think, and, I do not remember their ever asking if there were any complaints, or answering that there were none. It would not, however, have occurred to me to have made any complaints to them, as I could see their Superior Officer any time, and actually did, and talked the whole matter over with him that week, as I did also with Supt. Steele before posting my letters.

I do not deny that our cattle do trespass to some extent upon the Reservation, but, the Indians trespass to quite as great an extent upon our Range, which, I have always considered an off-set. If I could keep the cattle off the Reservation, I should

like to do so, but, where they run on the Reserve it is part and parcel of the same piece of range that we have the lease of the greater part of, and, you cannot make cattle respect a survey line.

We have always tried to be neighbourly, and do not wish to receive any benefit from grazing on the Reserve for nothing. This is a matter which I hope to take up with you when I go down to Ottawa shortly. I do deny though, that the Indians drive our cattle off, though, I know they have done so to other people's cattle on other parts of the Reserve, or that this has anything to do with their killing cattle. We have several times received instructions from the Agent to remove cattle from the Reservation, and have always done so when requested, and many more times when not requested.

I should like to know who informed Mr. Reed that I kept only six men to look after some 15,000 cattle, and am willing to leave the question to anyone in this Country as to whether I have the reputation of neglecting the care of our cattle by being shorthanded, or otherwise. Of course, if I have to hire men to do Police duty, I do need more.

As to the Indians going out of their way last September to inform Mr. Reed that they were well satisfied with their rations, either the Interpreter deceived him, or some Indian that wanted something said so to please him, or he was deceived in some way. Because, my men who deliver beef on the Reserve, and see a great deal of the Indians, and understand their language to a great extent, told me that there was a great deal of dis-satisfaction amongst them.

It is not so much the way our Indians are rationed or treated, that makes them more law abiding than those on the American side, as the different administration of the law in the two Countries, for, I do not believe our Indians are as well treated as the South Peigans at whose Agency I have been in Montana.

Mr. Reed's insinuation that this complaint is made with the view of increasing our own market, was expected, and that is the reason that I hesitated to make this complaint until the matter got so serious that I could not neglect to, any longer. As a matter of fact, there is no profit in selling beef at Contract prices at this season, and it would pay us much better if we were not obliged to furnish any at this time of year.

Mr. Reed thinks we only judge of the rations by the amount of beef purchased from ourselves, but, I happen to know more than he thinks about it.

You can easily call for returns which will show you that the per capita ration has been very materially reduced during the past year. The ration used to be a pound and a quarter, and was reduced to 0.98 of a pound, and I was told a still further reduction was contemplated. If you ask for the instructions given New Agents, I think you will find that they were given to understand that their chances of getting on were in proportion to the amount of rations they could save. I have seen some of the ration returns, and compared them with those of the previous year.

As to the last statement that the Commissioner does not believe that the Indians on the Reserve sometimes omit to draw their rations, who is most likely to know something about this – he who pays an occasional visit to the Reserve, and has

never lived among or near these Indians, or, we who are practically among them all the time?

In conclusion, if this policy of reduction goes on, our lives as well as our property will be in danger. These are very different Indians to deal with, from those that broke out in 1885, and very differently placed.

S. B. Steele to H. Reed (June 9, 1894)

Sir Samuel Benfield Steele (1848 – 1919) was District Commander for the N.W.M.P.

I have the honour to report, that in consequence of having heard a great deal of talk among the settlers, to the effect that cattle killing was increasing since the rations of the Indians had been reduced, I caused inquiries to be made and with a great deal of difficulty, have secured some valuable information from three Indians of the Blood Reservation on the subject.

These Indians have never been before the Police upon any charge, and are of good character. I therefore rely upon what they say.

Inspector Jarvis and Staff Sergeant Hilliard have been working at this matter for some months past, but have only just succeeded in obtaining any reliable information, the Indians being afraid at first to tell the whole story, but I promised them that their information would, as far as their names are concerned, be confidential, and on that promise, they told me all they knew. The substance of their statement is as follows:-

The rations are issued as follows: three days' rations at one time, and then another four days' rations.

The three days' issue is used up on the morning of the second day, leaving the Indians 1½ days without food.

The four days' issue only lasts them for two days, and they are therefore two days without food before the next issue is made.

They state that the "meat choppers" and Indian Department employees get plenty to eat, issued to them.

They all agree in saying that the Indians kill cattle, and estimate the number at from 25 to 30 head per month.

The killing is always done at night, and upon the same day of the week as rations are issued, their object being to conceal the offence, because the fresh meat would not be noticed so much on that particular day.

The Indians stated that there are times when they are hungry in spite of all they kill.

The Indians do not kill small cattle; they kill the large animals and have a preference for cows.

Up to last Summer Chief "Red Crow" had no complaints, but from last fall, he has not had sufficient rations.

The Indians say that if there were two cordons of sentries around the camp, the hungry Indians could go through, kill cattle, and return with the meat, without being discovered.

The above statement is, I believe, founded on fact, and as far as the hunger of the Indians is concerned, can be corroborated by Inspector Jarvis, and the Department at Stand Off.

The Indians do not cast any reflection upon the officials of the Indian Department; they believe that they receive all the officials are authorized to issue to them.

As you are aware there is a great deal of patrolling done, but as I have said before, as long as the Indians cannot support themselves, which they cannot do in a country where there is so little rain and no irrigation, they will not starve, while there are upwards of 80,000 head of cattle running on the ranges, and I may add that were it not for the vigilance of the Police there would be a great deal more cattle killing done.

Even if the number of Police were doubled or trebled, it would be an easy matter for an Indian to steal out at night and kill an animal without being caught, as anyone acquainted with their craft knows full well.

A. E. Forget to H. Reed (June 16, 1894)

In 1894, Amédée Emmanuel Marie Forget (1847 – 1923), was Assistant Indian Commissioner, and Hayter Reed was Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs.

I enclose herewith a further report received from the Commissioner of N. W. M. P. relative to affairs on the Blood Reserve, in connection with which I would offer the following remarks.

If so extensive a system of cattle killing is going on as is referred to, it seems incredible that the arrangements necessary for the distribution of some 20,000 lbs. of beef per month, which is derived therefrom, can be carried on with such perfect secrecy as to completely escape the notice of our officials, the Agency Scouts or the Mounted Police.

Upon looking into Red Crow's statement that up to last Summer he had no complaints to make, I find that while the average rations for the 10 months from July 1893 to 30th April 1894 are actually slightly higher than the average for the preceding fiscal year (as will be seen from a comparative statement enclosed herewith), the average number of Indians rationed has fallen from 1524 in 1892-93 to 1386 in the first 10 months of 1893-94.

The Annuity paysheets for 1893 show 1494 Indians as having been paid, and there were 117 absentees of whom 47 could not be accounted for.

If, as is assumed, some 1400 Indians on an average were drawing rations prior to July 1893 for 1524 Indians, there would very naturally be a pinch felt when the number allowed for was reduced by some 124 rations, even though the average p. c.

was slightly increased. This seems to account in part, if not wholly for the cry of reduced rations.

H. Reed to F. White (June 28, 1894)

Frederick White was Comptroller of the N.W.M.P.

It seems incredible that some six or seven animals should be killed, and some 800 lbs. of beef, derived therefrom, distributed weekly, without some sign being found by your men, the Indian scouts, or our own people, which would enable the depredations to be traced to the perpetrators.

Were the Indians in receipt of the quantity of beef which it is alleged they steal, in addition to the allowance they receive, together with flour, from the Department, it is hardly conceivable that even they would be complaining of being hungry; and consequently the conclusion seems forced upon one, that the statements made by the Indians who furnished the information are exaggerations of what doubtless may have a sub-stratum of truth, but as already said, enquiries are being instituted.

H. Reed to J. Wilson (August 2, 1894)

Let counsel be secured to defend any Macleod Indians lately or about to be arrested for cattle killing.

H. Reed to A. E. Forget (July 4, 1894)

Strong complaint has just been made by Senator Cochrane about the Indians killing cattle on the Company's Ranch.

Something must be done to put a stop to these depredations, and the Agent should be told that he is expected to devise measures for that end.

If necessary an additional scout or two should be temporarily engaged, and consultation should be held with the North West Mounted Police with a view to co-operation with them. Again, the offer of the reward of \$500 made by the Ranchers' Association for detention of such crimes should be widely circulated among the Indians. These suggestions are such as occur on the spur of the moment and at a distance, but the Agent on the spot should be in the best position to devise effective measures, and, as already said, should be told that he is expected to do so.

I would again remind you of what has already been written you in this connection about giving a sufficient ration, and may add that it should be made such as to remove occasion for grumbling on the part of the Indians.

S. B. Steele to N.W.M.P. Commissioner (July 17, 1894)

I have the honour to report that two Blood Indians named "Broken Leg" and "Crow spreading his wings," have laid an information against another Blood Indian named "Big Forehead" for cattle killing.

In the event of a conviction being obtained, could you do anything towards obtaining a reward for the informants? I think \$100 would be ample.

Some time ago I wrote to Mr. Curry of Lethbridge on this subject, and he informed me that although there is a standing reward of \$500 offered by the Association for information that would lead to a conviction in such cases, that reward is not offered to Indians.

T.P. Wadsworth to A. E. Forget (July 28, 1894)

T. P. Wadsworth (1838 – 1917) was a government inspector.

My dear Forget,

To confute the statement that the Indians look thinner than formerly on account of insufficient food, I would like to send East the photos of about 50 men and women taken promiscuously. Why! such a contention is absurd, the Indians look remarkably well and I find all such assertions based on hearsay, and the cattle killing is exaggerated. Should not these Indians who are held for trial be defended? The ranchers want their case made as black as possible, anything to force higher and higher rations.

Yours truly,

(Signed) T. P. Wadsworth

J. Wilson to H. Reed (August 4, 1894)

Sir:

Confirming my telegram of today's date, I have the honour to inform you that there are sixteen Blood Indians committed to prison on a charge of cattle killing.

So far, only six committal papers are ready for perusal, and in company with Inspector Wadsworth I went over these very carefully. The other ten will be copied out in a few days, when I shall call for copies. In these first six cases it appears as if a defense will do little good. These men are mostly young, and some of them seem to glory in the fact of having committed the act charged. But it is a strange thing that two of the worst among the whole lot who had anything to do with this cattle killing are allowed free. I am told they are Queen's evidence, but from their past record, and from what appears to be on the face of these six committal papers, there is little doubt in my mind that the two principal ringleaders are to be allowed to go free, while a number of young men and lads are likely to be punished for offences into which they have been, in a great measure, drawn by these two men. The one "Big Bib," was sentenced to 5 years in Stony Mountain about six or seven years ago, and along with

the "Dog" escaped while on his way down East. He eluded the Police for about 3 years, and at last gave himself up and returned to the reserve after being in prison for about 2 years only. Since then, he has been up for rape, though not convicted. He has also been in a number of woman scrapes, and is on the whole one of the worst characters in the on the Reserve.

The other Indian, "Black Rabbit," is also a wild fellow, always into some mischief. It is only a little over a year ago that he pulled his rifle and stood off a Constable of the N. W. M. Police who was sent to apprehend him. These two seem the principal witnesses.

I shall look into the other cases and will report to you later on.

I ought perhaps to mention here that upon receipt of a telegram from the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, I today wired Inspector Wadsworth to secure the services of Charles McCaul, Barrister, Calgary, who, should he accept the defense, will be able to defend them in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

This cattle killing business coming to light is the result of quarrels among the Indians themselves, who to "get even" as they say, give each other away. Once started, then the friends of the first committed immediately turn round and tell all they know about the friends or relations of the first informers; and so it goes.

There is one thing which stands out clearly all through these depositions, which I think shows the spirit of Police supervision and bravado in defying the law; else how can one account for the fact that nearly all these cases have occurred within a short distance of the North West Mounted Police detachment at Big Bend; and yet with all their patrolling and scouting, not one case was discovered by the Police? Out of the whole sixteen cases, as far as I can hear or see, not one case can be claimed as the outcome of careful watching on the part of the police or information got from their scouts. If Indians can ride out within a mile or so of the detachment and kill cattle; what in the name of goodness is the use of having Police? This Big Bend detachment is under charge of Inspector Jarvis, who according to Major Steele's report had been for "some months" busy working up evidence re: starving Indians and rations; evidently to the serious neglect of his legitimate work of keeping an outlook for criminals. What is the use of the Police talking about having Indian Scouts and patrols if cattle can be killed under the very noses of the detachment men?

The fact of the matter is that these Indian Scouts have their time greatly taken up by carrying mail instead of looking for and trying to keep down crime.

In my opinion, if Major Steele is right in his belief that 350 head of cattle are killed every year, the time has arrived when these Indian Scouts should be taken out of the hands of the Police altogether, and a system of Indian Police started on the Reserve, which system, I understand, works in a very satisfactory manner upon United States Reserves. At all events, it is surely worth trying; if for no other reason than the admitted inability of the present system of Police detachments and scouts to find out the cattle killers. And I would strongly ask you to give this view of the matter your favourable consideration.

With further reference to my letter of 23rd July on this subject; I beg to say that this cattle killing has had a good deal of my attention, in order, if possible, to

have an entire stop to it; and after careful consideration, the best plan which suggests itself to me is this, that unless under very exceptional cases, the Indians be not allowed to visit the Timber Limit; except at stated times, and then in one or two large parties, under proper supervision, instead of as at present, where every family goes at will to cut logs. In this way, all those who wished to cut house logs, fencing, saw-legs, &c. could be sent up – say in the fall – to do this work and then immediately after spring work is over, another party could be sent out to run the logs down to their respective villages.

Instructions could then be issued that no Indian be allowed to visit the Timber limit without a pass: and seeing the last 15 miles of the way is over lease land, I think there would be little objection raised, and it would only be under exceptional cases that a pass could be granted.

Should this proposal meet with your approval, I shall intimate this to the Indians, and also ask the Supt. of the N. W. M. Police to keep a sharp lookout for Indians in this Big Bend District.

A step like this would, I think, satisfy the Cochrane Ranch that the Department were anxious to put down cattle killing, and it would then be known when parties were on the River and gave the Police a chance to watch closer.

I have &c.

(SIGNED) Jas Wilson

I. A.

A. E. Forget to H. Reed (August 8, 1894)

My dear Mr. Reed:

I was going to write you today for authority to engage the services of a counsel for the defense of 18 Indians committed to stand their trial at Macleod for cattle killing, then the information reached me this morning that direct communication had been had with you on the subject and that you had wired Wilson to retain a counsel.

Acting on this authority the services of Mr. McCaul have been secured and his terms, which I have approved, are \$25.00 per day and expenses from the time he leaves his office until his return. The Judge will be asked to fix the sitting of the Court for the trials so as to permit of Mr. McCaul leaving Calgary on Wednesday and returning on Saturday, asking a total of 4 days' absence only.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) A. E. Forget

H. Reed to A. E. Forget (August 14, 1894)

It seems evident that a desire exists on the part of interested parties to make it appear that the Indians are kept so short of beef as to be driven to commit depredations, and you should see that our people are on hand and exert themselves to disprove any such contention.

“Kill cattle to keep from starving”⁹⁴ (August 15, 1894)

Macleod Aug. 15th. – No less than seventeen Indian prisoners occupy compartments in the N. W. M. Police goal at this place. Sixteen of them are in for cattle killing, chiefly on the Cochrane lease, the Southeastern limitations of which end in the Blood Reserve, where the Indians were captured. The trial promises to be most interesting, and may result in a change of the ration system at present in vogue in the reserve. The Red men claim that they have not sufficient food and are compelled to kill cattle to keep from starving. If this is true it is hard on the Cochrane Ranch and other companies who suffer in consequence. Inspector Jarvis and Sergeant Hilliard, N. W. M. P. , who are stationed on the reserve, have been most active in making arrests without fear or favour, doing their duty faithfully in that state of life in which it has pleased the Government to place them. C. C. McCaul Q. C. will act for the defense in the trial, while the prosecution will be conducted by M. McKenzie and C. Conybeare C. P.

S. B. Steele to N.W.M.P. Commissioner (August 18, 1894)

I have the honour to inform you that of the sixteen Blood Indians, charged with cattle-killing:-

Six were sentenced yesterday, to two years each, in the Penitentiary.

Five, to terms of imprisonment from one to six months each, in the Guard Room here.

Four, released on suspended sentence, and one, a boy, dismissed.

Those for the penitentiary will be sent down, as soon as possible, after the “Committals” have been received from the Court.

J. Wilson to H. Reed (August 20, 1894)

Sir:

I have the honor to report that His Honour Judge Macleod had the 16 Indians committed by the Police on a charge of cattle killing and for stealing the beef of these same animals, duly tried before him on Thursday and Friday last.

In accordance with instructions, Mr. McCaul, Calgary, appeared and defended them, and this gentleman will report to you on the legal matters in connection with the trial.

On the advice of Mr. McCaul (who saw how matters stood) all pleaded guilty to the different charges or part of the charges laid against them – their depositions leaving little room for calling evidence to clear them. I repeatedly tried to get up evidence in defense of these Indians but it was easy to see from the first that no defence was wanted by the ringleaders in the affair. Their first and only cry was,

⁹⁴ From the Semi-Weekly Free Press. Date unknown. Page unknown. Article extract found in the same collection as the letters.

“How is this going to affect the rations?” All made up their minds to the same story and I was told previously that this was going to be in a manner a test case whether they or the Indian Department were right that rations had been reduced.

White Calf (who has been leader of all this outcry) had a son among the number charged and he was first called. When asked by His Honour what he had to say why sentence should not be passed upon him, young White Calf (Never Ties His Shoe Laces) entered into a long speech about rations and all being starving, that the rations did not last them out &c. The other Indians when called upon all made similar statements, some saying the rations only lasted them for two days and that five days they went hungry. The Judge repeatedly appealed to me to tell him what rations were issued to Indians and I gave him a note of what the average issue was and also told him that the working Indians were given an extra ration. In order to disabuse the Judge’s mind of any opinion that he might have had that these Indians were having their rations reduced, I took the liberty of giving him figures to show that since November 1892 when Col. Irvine resigned, the rations had been considerably increased.

This seemed to satisfy His Lordship because before passing sentence he repeatedly told the prisoners that they were talking nonsense, that their rations could not be used up in such a short time.

There can be no doubt His Lordship saw how matters were because from his knowledge of Indians he could not mistake the meaning of their continued and repeated reference to Inspector Jarvis and rations. One could almost imagine that this cattle killing had been done for the sole purpose of getting rations raised.

His Honour sentenced six of the ringleaders to two years imprisonment, viz., Never Ties His Shoe Laces, Wolf Child, Tough Bread, Nibs, Short Man, and Long Time Squirrel while Slap Face and Many Different Ages were sentenced to six months and Carries Something and Melting Tallow to one month imprisonment each. One boy was discharged before being tried, being too young, while five Indians who were good working fellows and who had been strongly recommended by me to His Honour were discharged on suspended sentence.

After Court “White Calf” addressed His Lordship on the ration question but got little encouragement from him. Judge Macleod spoke to them well and said if this continued there was a chance of their rations being taken away altogether as there was nothing in their Treaty calling for rations.

Were these Indians spoken to in this firm way by the Police instead of being encouraged in their unjust demands, things would be soon in a very different position. As it is, however, this trial will now show the Indians who are their friends and will do a world of good ultimately.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your obedient Servant

(Signed) Jas Wilson.

Ind. Agent.

C. C. McCaul to A. E. Forget (August 21, 1894)

C. C. McCaul (1858 – 1928) was a Calgary barrister.

Dear Sir:

Referring to your No. 1581 of the 8th instant, I beg to say that I left for Macleod on Wednesday the 15th instant, returning on the night of the 17th. On arrival at Macleod I met Mr. Wilson, the Agent, at the Blood Reserve and in company with him carefully read through all the depositions taken on the preliminary examination of the Indians charged with cattle killing, as well as the statements made by the accused.

In each case the evidence was perfectly clear, and indeed, each of the accused, in his statement before the Justice of the Peace, had clearly admitted taking part in what they described as a "hunt". Under these circumstances it appeared to me that there was no other course but to plead guilty, and, as Counsel, to make a statement in each case of any extenuating circumstances. I accordingly prepared a concise analysis of all the cases, stating, from information given to me by Mr. Wilson, which were industrious and steady Indians, and which were idle and bad, and any extenuating facts in each of the cases: this I submitted to Judge Macleod and on it he largely based the sentences which he imposed. Unfortunately the Judge has left this memorandum (with a note of the sentences imposed) at Macleod, and I will not get it until tomorrow, when I will forward it to you.

Before delivering sentence the Judge, as is usual, asked each of the prisoners what he had to say why sentence should not be delivered, and each of them stated much to this effect: that they had been supplied with 7 days rations to go up into the timber and that the rations only lasted them for 2 days, and that they were starving for the remaining 5 days. I asked the Judge however, to consult with Mr. Wilson the Agent, who explained to him the true state of affairs, and I think the Judge was pretty well satisfied that the Indians in question had had probably a glorious feast for the first 2 days that they were out, and having disposed in two days of seven days rations, that their excuse for killing cattle was not one which should entitle them to great leniency.

My fee, as arranged with you, is \$100 and my expenses amounted to \$14.35 for which sums we shall be pleased to receive departmental cheque.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your obedient Servant

(Signed) C. C. McCaul

A. M. Jarvis to Commanding Officer, Macleod (August 27, 1894)

During the past week a number of complaints have been received from Indians to the effect that they are not getting sufficient food. On the evening of the 18th, accompanied by interpreter De Roche, I visited the following Indians, viz: "Bull

Plume," "Crop Eared Wolf," "Rough Body," Minor Chief Eagle Rib's wife and Red Crow; these people are the heads of families. I was only able to find a half lb. of dried beef at Eagle Rib's. I took their statements and forwarded them to you.

While at Big Bend on the 23rd instant Mr. D. H. Cox of "Mountain View" reported to me that while riding on the range near the Bull Horn Corral and close to a Lake, he found four head of Cochrane Ranch cattle that had been recently killed by the Indians. On the same date the foreman of the Hatfield Ranch and myself were coming across country from their place between the Kootenai and the Belly River, we ran on an animal that had been killed about a week from the appearance of the flesh on the bones.

J. Wilson to H. Reed (August 28, 1894)

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1581 of the 22nd regarding the inability of the Indian Scouts to detect or report these cases of cattle killing, and suggesting that steps be taken to secure the services of more useful or reliable men.

In reply I beg to say that I have been changing these scouts for some time back, not having been satisfied with the information received from them. I had "Bear's Teat" and "Running Crane" removed and "Bull Horn" and "Peigan French" put on, but found the change not much [of an] improvement. I then changed these two men and have at present Running Crane and Bobtail Chief as Scouts.

The information I got from the Scouts only take me a certain length, and when pressed, all the length you get is to know that a certain person killed an animal. I have repeatedly tried to get at one or another of the parties concerned, but they invariably hold together and it is only when you manage to get them to fall out among themselves that the whole truth gets out. I knew, for instance, that "Never Ties His Shoe," who was sentenced to two years, had killed an animal, and also knew where the hide was cached, but could not get further and to merely tell this man I knew such was the case would have done him no good.

In the cases referred to by you it must be kept in mind (1) that these cattle were killed on the Western boundary of the Reserve or just beyond it; some 28 miles from the Upper Agency and at least 15 miles nearer the Mountains than any Indian's house, (2) that this beef was not brought into or near the village, but consumed by the Indians either in the Timber Limit or on the drive down. You can thus see how hard it is to get information regarding matters taking place so far away, and had it not been for these Indians falling out and quarreling among themselves, these cases might never have been heard of.

I shall see Farmer McNeil & Clard in the course of a day or two and will talk the matter over with them, and try if another change of men will do any good. Cases like the ones brought before the Courts lately are not likely to occur again because for the future Indians will only go in large parties to the Timber Limit, and will be accompanied not only by a white man but by one of the detectives as well.

A. M. Jarvis to Commanding Officer, Macleod (December 16, 1894)

Sir,

I have the honour to submit this my report for the week ending the 13th instant. While en route to Stand Off from Big Bend, with Scout Big Otter, on the 10th inst., we ran on to a four year old steer that had been shot and killed the night previous by Indians, and about three parts of the beef taken away. The scout and I followed the trail, which led in the direction of a house occupied by an Indian named "Left Hand," "Broken Leg," and "Crane Chief"; beef has been found in the bush close to their house. I issued warrants for their arrest and gave them a hearing, and remanded them for eight days. The animal belonged to the Cochrane Ranch Co.

On the 11th inst. I committed "Black Rabbit" for trial, for killing cattle on the 30th November last. I regret to observe that cattle killing, close to the upper cam just on the boundary of [the] Reserve, is on the increase. I believe that more convictions could and would be obtained if a certain sum of money was placed at my disposal, to be used in privately stimulating some of the Indians secretly to inform on members of their tribe; by small gifts I feel sure this could be done, and I can suggest no better way of getting at the ring leaders than [to] do so.

With reference to the case of David Mills, employee on the Blood Reserve, I have had a long personal interview with Mr. Wilson the Indian Agent, in which I gave him all the information in my power, and have handed him the names &c., of the Indians whom Mills allowed to draw treaty & rations for dead Indians, together with all the evidence I had collected to prove the charge. I also informed him that I could get further evidence if necessary and that I would aid him in any way he might suggest.

"Taken many guns," Blackfoot Indian, was tried before me on the 18th inst., and convicted for removing a hide from an animal found dead, contrary to Hide Ordinance No. 17, 1889. I imposed a fine of \$5.00 and costs or in default one month's imprisonment. On the same date "Stabs twice," a Blood Indian, was charged with the same offence, case dismissed.

I have etc.,

sgd A. M. Jarvis, Insp.

J. Wilson to H. Reed (January 25, 1895)

I am not of the opinion of Mr. Jarvis that cattle killing is on the increase. On the other hand I would point out that since last Summer these Indians have been residing on the reserve more closely than they have ever done; and from all reports got from my own Scouts there seem to be very few carcasses of animals around. Omitting the two animals supposed to have been killed by Indians and for which they await trial, only two animals are reported to me as being found dead on the prairie.

It would be well to remember that all cases of animals found killed are put down as having been killed by Indians, while there are lots of White men in the country at present who have more necessity to kill animals than the Indians. Only

the other day I was told that two men, now out of the country, but who used to reside at Whoop-up, made a practice of going out and killing cattle, and I have no doubt these are not the only men who do.

With regard to Inspector Jarvis' suggestion that secret money be given to Indians to give information, I would say that there has been a good deal of false swearing of late, and I am afraid this would encourage it. If the Police Scouts are not enough, I would prefer seeing them increased rather than this secret way be introduced. Giving money bribes would make it hard for the Indian Department officials to get private information.

J. Wilson to H. Reed (January 17, 1895)

During the month of December Inspector Jarvis, at the request of Supt. Steele, came to me privately and told me certain charges had been made against Mills of trafficking in tickets belonging to dead Indians – that he had accepted Treaty money or part of it from certain parties, and that he had traded in ration tickets. I asked Mr. Jarvis to give me all the information he had on the matter, and said I would enquire into them without letting Mills know anything of it, and would inform him what I thought ought to be done.

Inspector Jarvis thereupon gave me the six following charges against Mills, viz:-

1. A sworn information by a Blood Indian named "Many White Horses" (step-father to Bear's Teat) in which it was alleged that a woman, "Don't Move Lodges," No. 39, had been paid and allowed to draw rations here as a Blood Woman, while at the same time she was being paid and drawing rations at the Blood [sic.] Agency.

2. That "Cross Child," a Blood Indian, had got from Mills a ration ticket under the name of "Little Person" for three, and that he had drawn rations of beef and flour on the ticket and had given the same to a White man.

3. That "Crow Head" in Band G. had been paid as a Blood Indian and rations drawn, he being either a North or South Peigan Indian.

4. That "Porcupine Bull's" ticket for rations was being allowed to be drawn by "Wolf Scout's" wife.

5. That "Shakes His Feet" was dead and that his name had not been taken off my books – that some one had drawn pay and rations for him after death, and

6. That "Bob-tailed Chief" had conspired with Mills and had drawn Annuity money for Indians who had been dead for years. That Mills accepted whole or part of this money. Bob-tailed Chief is said to have admitted this.

Charge 1.

When inspector Jarvis handed me the information re: "Don't Move Lodges" I at once and in his presence turned up my Pay Books and showed the Inspector my pencil notes made before payments. This note was to the effect that this woman was supposed to be drawing at Blackfoot Crossing and here. I told Mr. Jarvis that I had written to Indian Agent Begg, but at that time had not got his reply. I said there did

not appear to be anything in this case against Mills, because I paid the woman on my own responsibility, after hearing the facts of the case.

This case stands thus: This woman ran away to the Crossing some years ago and lived with a Blackfoot Indian. Her husband died and she came back here last year to stop for good. She is a Blood woman and her sister is married to Many White Horses. After she came here and before payments she told Mills the name of her late husband, and it was information got from Mills which led me to suspect she was trying to draw at both places. Since this information was sworn out I received a letter from Indian Agent Begg saying the woman was not paid at his Agency, but was reported as being at the Bloods. I have written Mr. Begg and told him the woman is a Blood and would reside here; and as she was on my books I paid her and asked him to note that she was now going to reside permanently on this Reserve.

In prosecuting this enquiry I cross questioned Many White Horses, and after some trouble he admitted he knew this woman had neither drawn rations nor money for some time at the Crossing – that her tickets had been taken in and torn up some two years ago. The information therefore sworn before Inspector Jarvis by this Indian was a false one. There is nothing as far as I can see against Mills in this case. In fact, as I have already said, it was his calling my attention to the case that led to the correspondence with Mr. Begg.

Charge 2

Cross child admitted having drawn rations on a ticket for 3 when working with some other Indians putting up hay – said he did not know what name was on the ticket nor who it belonged to. Got the ticket from Mills's wife – never on any occasion gave beef or flour to a White man. It afterwards turned out that this ticket belonged to "Spears a Knife," half brother to Mills, who was working off and on in the same haying outfit. There used to be two Indians known as "Little Person" on our books – on the one ticket there were *two* persons and on the other one blind woman. It could not therefore be a ticket with Little Person's name, and was more likely to be "Spears a Knife's" ticket.

Charge 3

Crow Head is one of these cases which have given considerable trouble in the past, and which have often been brought to your attention. This Indian was registered as a Blood years ago, but has been going back and forwards to the South Peigans. In my correspondence with Capt. Cooke, this case was overlooked at the time as well as one or two others, and his name did not appear on the list of Indians supposed to be drawing at both places. No charge was made against Mills of benefitting by this man; merely the charge that Crow Head was a Peigan Indian. I have noted the case for next year's payments and unless his family is able to show they are not drawing at the South Peigans, payment will be refused.

Charge 4

"Porcupine Bull's" sister is married to Wolf Scout, a blind old man who owns a lot of good horses. Porcupine Bull as a rule herds and works for this Indian, and his sister nearly always draws his rations for him. I have known this for years and see nothing wrong in it.

Charge 5

“Shakes His Foot” (or as we have it, Strong Day Light – A. 90) died and his death was duly registered and the ration ticket reduced by one. He died before payments and Treaty money was not paid in this case.

Charge 6

Bob-tailed Chief was examined in every way possible, but on all occasions he most emphatically denied ever having had anything to do with tickets other than his own. He never drew for any one either dead or alive. Says he never had anything to do with Mills or any other person about drawing Government money for dead Indians, and knows nothing of it. He says he never even said such a thing in joke.

This was the result of my enquiries and I took my notes and read them to Inspector Jarvis in his own house, saying that I did not see any charge of trafficking in tickets could be brought home upon such evidence. Farmer Clarke acted as interpreter for me and I also saw some of the Indians alone.

The whole thing is, in my opinion, the result of a feeling for revenge on the part of Bear's Teat, Many White Horses and a Halfbreed named Wagner – the latter being a useless idle fellow who is always into trouble and who has been ordered off the Reserve frequently.

Many White Horses and Bear's Teat are Step-father and son, and what has made them angry is the fact of their ration ticket being reduced by one, owing to a brother of the latter's stopping at the Blackfoot Crossing and having been taken off the rations although paid for here. Bear's Teat, I believe, says Mills was the cause of their ticket being reduced. I have been in correspondence with Indian Agent Begg since November about this young man, who I rather think is drawing pay at both places, but the fact that he goes under a different name at the Crossing makes it hard to identify him.

Police Scout Bear's Teat had been employed by me in former years long before he was a detective on the Reserve, as well as during his term – in going very carefully over the tickets and no Indian knows the pay books or tickets better. I therefore think that instead of censuring Mills for his conduct, he deserves some credit for the very correct manner in which the pay books now stand, because were it possible to bring other cases up against him they certainly would have been brought. It must also be kept in mind that there are over 400 families on the Reserve squandered over a wide tract of country who are constantly moving from one place to another.

I do not however depend entirely upon Mills to report the correct number. Each Farmer is given a book with a list of his Indians and the number in each family, and have instructions to note down any difference they may find, and these books are carefully gone over before the payments to see that all deaths &c. are duly recorded. In any difficulty the detectives are also applied to and ordered to give the exact family. It is also part of their duties to report all deaths. I always carry a book myself and note the families for the purpose of verifying my books.

Under all the circumstances, I do not think it necessary to make further enquiries, but I shall take an early opportunity of seeing Inspector Jarvis again and asking him if he has any more evidence to bring forward or any fresh charges to make.

J. Wilson to H. Reed (January 11, 1896)

With reference to previous correspondences on the subject of trespass by cattle on the Reserve I have now the honour to inform you that I held a meeting, on Wednesday last the 8th inst., with Red Crow, Day Chief, Blackfoot Old Woman and Calf Shirt, representative men, regarding this matter.

I may say the reason I did not bring this matter sooner before the Indians was that I felt certain the best time to bring it up was when any complaint was made, and at one of my recent visits to Red Crow he spoke of cattle on the Reserve, and I at once invited him down with some others to hear the views of the Department and myself and to give me their opinion on what they thought should be done.

I explained to them at the meeting on Wednesday that white men had repeatedly warned for the past 10 years or so to keep their cattle away, but although every step possible had been taken with this view, they had continued to run their cattle here in spite of us.

I then read the Indians part of my letter to you June last and part of your reply dated 11th Sept, and advised them to give this system a trial explaining that the moment they wanted the grazing land for their own cattle notice would be given to the white men to remove their stock and all contracts cancelled.

After a considerable amount of talking they each agreed that it would be well to try it, and said if possible to help them to get some remuneration for the use of grazing rights. I explained to them that the white men had yet to be seen on the matter, and that I would take an early opportunity of going round among them, and if I succeeded in gaining their consent to this scheme would have contracts drawn up and agreed to at a full meeting of Indians.

Since the meeting I have seen two minor chiefs who also said they were agreeable and I feel sure the matter will receive the unanimous consent of the others.

I am glad this subject has been discussed and such a satisfactory conclusion arrived at, and I will lose no time in calling upon the settlers of the surrounding district to find out how many are likely to take advantage of the offer.

This scheme will no doubt receive opposition from the Cochrane Ranch Company, but some other arrangement might probably be made with them which would not press so heavily, and especially as we are indebted to them for a great part of the hay we cut and sell. I shall see Mr. Cochrane along with the other settlers.

“The business is constantly increasing”⁹⁵ (December 20, 1901)

Mr. William Cochrane, of the Cochrane Ranching Company, located in Southern Alberta, [...] said that while the ranching business had been good in the Northwest during the year or two, he regretted that so much money had been lost in Alberta during the early years on account of a lack of experience. He believed, however, that Southern Alberta will in time become a district for general farming.

⁹⁵ From STOCK MEN REJOICE. (1901, December 20). *The Montreal Gazette*, p. 6.

The number of cattle now distributed over the different ranches was, he said, greater than ever before, and the business is constantly increasing.

He has been seven years on the Cochrane ranch, which is between the Belly and Waterton rivers, extending twenty-five miles up and down with a width of from four to six miles, the southern portion being about twenty-five miles from the American line. The ranch embraces 60,000 acres, but as the company has 12,500 head of cattle, the ranch proper is not extensive enough, so it has leased 35,000 acres of grazing land belonging to the Blood Indian reservation, on the other side of the Belly river.

The Bloods, Mr. Cochrane states, number about 1,200 all told, and although [they] do not perhaps increase in numbers, they, however, hold their own. They live mostly in tents during the summer months, and occupy cabins in the winter. They all receive rations from the Government, but the younger and most enterprising among them raise a good many cattle, and will in all probability be self-sustaining in a few years. [...]

Mr. Cochrane is located quite near the Mormons who have come to Alberta in large numbers. These people come from an irrigation country, and they naturally take to these methods, although the past season has not been dry enough to require these artificial methods to any great extent. [...] Mr. Cochrane describes these Mormons as most industrious and they will no doubt be followed by others. On the whole, he considered the outlook in southern Alberta as exceedingly promising.

“Sold in small holdings to settlers”⁹⁶ (July 10, 1912)

The department of Indian affairs made no mistake when they sent in steam working outfits and farm machinery with which to equip several large farms on the Blood Indian reserve, and get the residents of the reserve to work. Several sections have been broken at Bull Horn, Stand Off and Slide Out, and at these points grain is grown to an excellent advantage. Last season, the yield on one of the Indian farms led the entire south country in the matter of production. This year an additional crop has been sown and it is anticipated that the yield from the two reserves, Blood and Peigan, will total half a million bushels.

The large district south of Macleod extending from the Crow's Nest railway between the two reserves of the international boundary, and including the old Cochrane ranch, is one of the richest districts in the province in the matter of grain production. The Cochrane ranch was bought seven years ago by the Mormon church and was broken under their direction, and sold in small holdings to settlers, mostly from the state of Utah. These Mormons are splendid agriculturalists, and have made this desert land blossom as the rose.

⁹⁶ From Conditions Indicate That Southern Alberta Farmers Will Have a Banner Crop. (1912, July 10). *The Calgary Herald*, p. 17.