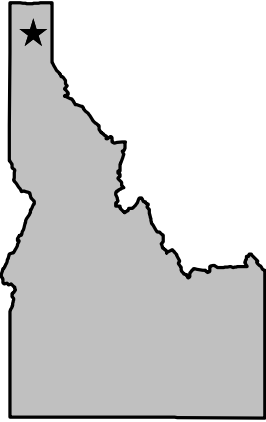


CHAPTER 4 — Kootenai Reservation, Kootenai Tribe, Bonner's Ferry



Bonnors Ferry, Idaho
(Area: 250 acres)

In 1825, Alexander Ross, chief trader at Spokane House (established by the Northwest Fur Company) sent 16-year-old Spokane Garry and Kootenai Pelly to the Episcopalian mission at Red River in Winnipeg, Canada, for schooling.

Garry returned to his people in 1831 and began enthusiastically teaching them about Christianity. Because his people misunderstood his attempts to teach them, Garry abandoned his missionary work and became an interpreter for the Protestant missionaries. Although the missionaries were not especially successful in converting the Indians, after the Whitman Massacre, Spokane warriors escorted the missionaries to Walla Walla. Later, when Catholic missionaries arrived, Garry opposed the building of a Catholic mission on the lands of the Upper Spokane.

When Spokane Garry became chief of his band, he was one of the negotiators who attempted to forge a treaty with the U.S. government for peace and for a reservation.

In the 1870s, white immigrants settled near present-day Spokane, Washington. While Garry was away at a fishing camp, white farmers took Garry's farm, and he and his family moved to Indian Canyon, near Spokane. He lived there for the rest of his life, never compensated by the whites for his property. Spokane Garry died of pneumonia in January 1892.



History

For centuries before the whites arrived, the Spokane Indians lived on a 3-million-acre territory that covered parts of Washington, Idaho, and Montana, which later were included in the Oregon Territory. The Spokane belong to the Salish group of Native Americans. The Spokane was divided into the Lower, Middle, and Upper Spokane bands according to where they settled along the Spokane River.

In 1807, David Thompson, of the Northwest Fur Company, came into contact with the tribe while he was setting up trading posts. Thompson supposedly gave the tribe the name "Spokane," which is believed to mean "Sun People" or "Children of the Sun." The Nez Perce called the Spokane "salmon-eaters" because they were the only Salishan tribe who lived where there was salmon.

After the fur traders were established in the territory, the Indians traded fur pelts for items such as wool blankets that replaced their tanned animal hides and iron pots and pans that replaced their coiled baskets. Eventually, the Canadian Hudson's Bay Company

dominated the fur trade, and the Indians traveled to Fort Colville to trade pelts for goods and guns.

In 1850, Congress passed the Donation Act. Non-settled land in the Oregon Territory, including land occupied by Indians, was opened to white settlers and miners. To claim their own land, Indians had to give up their tribal affiliations and become American citizens. Understandably, friction increased between the white settlers and miners and the Indians.

When attempts to construct a treaty failed, the Spokane and other tribes in eastern Washington allied to protect their lands. The U.S. Army raided and attacked these tribes, and weather conditions worked against them. In early 1860, Chief Garry again attempted but failed to obtain a treaty. In 1881, after a council of head men of the Spokane tribe met with Brigadier General R. B. Hayes in 1880, the Spokane Indian Reservation was established.

The Lower Spokane band moved onto the reservation, and eventually the Middle and Upper Spokane bands agreed to move to the Coeur d'Alene, Flathead, and Spokane reservations. They were paid to move and eventually received allotments of land on these reservations.

Despite continuing incursions into Spokane territory as late as 1910, the reservation thrives and is self-sustaining and the Spokane retain their identity.



Culture

The daily life of the Spokane depended on the seasons of the year. In spring, small groups left the winter camps to gather food; hunt deer, elk, and antelope; and fish. From early summer to early fall, the groups would come together to dig roots like brown and white camas, pick berries, and socialize. These social gatherings were called pow-wows. In early winter, the Indians regrouped and settled where there was shelter and water. In winter, the tribes held ceremonies, traded items such as salmon, and visited each other.

During the warm months, the Indians lived in tipis, which were easily assembled and disassembled for travel. In winter at the permanent camps, four or five families would live in a rectangular log houses.

The Indians wore buckskin clothing, including shirts or dresses, leggings, and moccasins, made from tanned animal hides. When the weather was cold, the animal hair was left on the hide and worn against the skin. Both men and women wore fur hats. The men also wore feather headdresses. Clothing was decorated with dye or paint or by adding beads or porcupine quills. Each Indian had a guardian spirit, usually an animal that appeared in a vision. These guardian spirits were often a subject of the decoration on clothing.

Game: Rattler

Rattler is an adaptation of a game played by Indians who live where rattlesnakes are found. The game is based on methods to outsmart the snakes.

Two blindfolded players must stand on smooth flat ground inside a circle of people. The circle is about 40 feet in diameter. The players stand in the middle of the circle, about 12 feet from one another. One player is the "hunter," and the other is the "rattlesnake." The rattlesnake has a little box with a pebble in it or another device with which to make a rattling sound.

The rattlesnake must rattle the box three times at intervals of about 10 seconds between each series of rattles. The hunter tries to catch the rattler, but when the hunter gets close to the rattler, someone in the circle warns the snake who then moves silently in an attempt to escape. If the hunter fails to capture the rattler after a couple minutes, the snake wins. If the snake is tagged, the hunter wins.

Before the missionaries arrived and introduced Christianity, the Indians believed in a three-part world. A supreme being ruled the upper world and sent rain and abundant supplies of food. Humans inhabited the middle world. An evil being ruled the lower world and caused food to be scarce.



Government

The tribe operates under a constitution that established the five-person Spokane Business Council. Council members are popularly elected to 1-, 2-, and 3-year terms. Tribal headquarters are in Wellpinit in northeastern Washington. The reservation currently covers 155,000 acres.

CHAPTER 4 — Blackfoot Reservation, Blackfoot Tribe



Browning, Montana,
Area: 950,643 acres)

Game: Bump Ball

Bump ball is similar to several other games that were played by tribes of the Plains and Northwest. The object of the game is to direct a scoring ball on the ground into the goal by hitting it with throw balls. For throw balls, Indians used round, inflated bladders covered in woven fiber nets. To play bump ball

1. *Select an area about the size of a basketball court and mark a 6-foot-wide goal at each end.*
2. *Position two teams on each side of the centerline of the court. Each team has from one to three colored "throw" balls. The color of the balls is different for each team.*
3. *Place a ball, different from either team's ball, on the center line.*
4. *Throw the balls at the center ball. Each team tries to move the ball to its goal or to keep its opponent from moving the ball to its goal.*

Chief Seen From Afar (d. 1869) was considered the century's greatest Blackfoot warrior. He was a skilled buffalo hunter and led numerous Blackfoot war parties against the Crow and Hidatsu. Seen From Afar was the brother-in-law of Alexander Culbertson who became chief trader of the American Fur Company in 1839. The chief's intervention on behalf of the traders helped enable Culbertson to operate a string of posts on the upper Missouri from Fort Union to Fort Benton. Seen From Afar perished in the 1869 smallpox epidemic.

The origin of the name Blackfoot is disputed. The name may have come from moccasins blackened by the ashes of prairie fires or from the black moccasins that distinguished certain southern tribes. Blackfoot also is the name of a prominent war-society among tribes of the Plains.



History

The Blackfoot originally lived in the area north of the Great Lakes, perhaps as far east as Labrador. They were eastern woodland tribes in prehistoric times and, like many other tribes, are members of the Algonquin linguistic group. The Blackfoot became an important tribe of the Northern Plains. They form a confederacy of three sub tribes that speak the same language, namely, Siksika or Blackfoot proper, Kaina (Kæna) or Blood, and Pikûni or Piegan. Each sub tribe is divided into bands, approximately fifty in all.

After Europeans started arriving in North America in the 1600s and because of their enemies, the Cree, the Blackfoot began moving west. Soon they were nomadic buffalo hunters, roaming the plains from northern Saskatchewan to the Rockies and headwaters of the Missouri River and the southern prairies.

The Blackfoot were introduced to the horse in 1730 when they were attacked by a group of Shoshoni on horseback. The Blackfoot obtained their horses through trade and thievery from the Flathead, Kootenai, and Nez Perce. They traded buffalo hides and horses for guns with settlers as far away as the East Coast. The Blackfoot were famous horseman, hunters, and warriors who were greatly feared by their enemies.

Although the Blackfoot were friendly with Hudson's Bay Company traders from Canada, they were generally hostile toward Americans. In the early 1800s, American beaver trappers entered the Blackfoot hunting grounds. The Indians attacked the trappers; the trappers then wisely decided to let the Indians trap the beavers and

trade its fur for guns, metal knives, tools, glass beads, and other articles. In the late 1800s, a troop of U.S. Army soldiers were searching for a tribe of hostile Blackfoot, led by Mountain Chief. On January 23, 1870, because of the incompetence of the U.S. Army, 200 Peigans—women, children, and the old—were attacked and slaughtered. The hostile tribe had escaped to Canada.

By the winter of 1884, buffalo were nearly extinct and many Blackfoot starved. They had to depend on the Indian Agency for food, and the agency was short of rations. In 1888, the Blackfoot were gathered onto their present reservation.



Culture

The nomadic Blackfoot lived in tipis made of deer, moose, antelope, and buffalo skins. They were known for the quill work, designs, and paintings on their tipis, clothing, weapons, and riding equipment. The Blackfoot war bonnet, for example, had feathers that stood straight up; a picture of the war bonnet appears on the Blackfoot flag. Everyday dress was made of prepared deerskins. Their weapons were the bow, knife, club, lance, shield, and gun. Marriage ties were easily broken, and polygamy was practiced.

The Blackfoot ate buffalo, moose, and deer, which the hunters killed and the women butchered. The meat was cut into roasts and strips. The strips were laid on rocks to dry into jerky. Some of the meat was mixed with fat and berries to make pemmican that the Indians could carry with them as they moved about the Plains.

In the Blackfoot religion the principal deities were the sun and a supernatural being known as *Napi*, "Old Man." Old Man created the world and everything on it and instructed humans in its care. The Blackfoot saw animals and humans as spiritual beings that possessed individual powers. The Blackfoot put their dead in trees or in tipis set up on prominent hills. An important religious area for the Blackfoot is the Badger Two Medicine area in the Lewis and Clark National Forest. In 1895, this area was lost to them in a treaty with the U.S. government.

The great tribal ceremony was the Sun Dance, held annually in the summer season. During such ceremonies, the three principal tribes camped in a circle with the tipis of each band in a definite section of the circle. The medicine lodge (ceremonial sacred structure) was in the center.

Recipe: Wildberry Crisp

*Berries to cover bottom
of baking dish
1 cup of sugar
3/4 cup of flour
1/4 cup of oats
3/4 tsp of cinnamon
3/4 tsp of nutmeg
1/3 cup of butter*

*Spread berries in bottom of
baking dish. Melt butter
and combine with dry
ingredients. Mix should be
crumbly but pretty moist so
it's a little crunchy on top
when cooked. Pour dry
mix over the berries.
Bake at 375 degrees for
about 30 minutes.*

**Government**

The Blackfoot Tribe is organized under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, with a constitution and bylaws. The governing body is the popularly elected Blackfoot Tribal Business Council consisting of nine members elected for two-year terms. The 1.5-million-acre reservation is in northwestern Montana along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains. It is bordered on the north by Canada and on the west by Glacier National Park.

Browning, Montana, is the capital of the reservation and the eastern gateway to Glacier National Park. In Browning is the Museum of the Plains, a nationally known repository of Indian artifacts. North American Indian Days are celebrated annually with dances, ceremonies, and a rodeo.