



Gilbert L. and Frederick N. Wilson
Papers

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Chapter 4

Buffalo Bird Woman Tales

Gilbert L. Wilson.

We Hidatsas do not reckon our kin as white men do. If a white man marries, his wife and children are called by his name. Every Hidatsa belonged to a clan and each child became a member not of his father's but of his mother's clan.

An Indian calls all members of his clan, his brothers and sisters. The men of his father's clan, he calls his clan fathers; and the women, his clan aunts. Thus, I was born a member of the Tsistska or Prairie Chicken Clan, because my mother was a Tsistska. My father was a member of the Midipadi or Rising Water Clan. All members of the Tsistska clan are my brothers and sisters; but my father's clan brothers, men of the Midipadi, are my clan fathers; and his clan sisters are my clan aunts.

These relations meant much to us Indians. Members of a clan helped one another in need; and thought the gods would punish them if they did not. Thus if my mother was in need, members of the Tsistska clan helped her; if she was hungry, they gave her food. If her child was naughty, my mother called in a Midipadi to punish him; a clan father, if the child was a boy; if a girl, a clan aunt; for parents did not punish their own children.

When my father died, his clan fathers and clan aunts bore him to the burial scaffold and prayed his ghost not to come back to trouble the villagers.

Another clan relation is makutsati, or clan cousin. I reckon as my clan cousins all members of my tribe whose fathers are my clan fathers. My mother was a Prairie Chicken; my father, a member of the Midipadi or Rising Water Clan. Another woman, of what clan does not matter, is also married to a Midipadi; her children will be my clan cousins because their father, being a Midipadi, is my clan father.

Clan cousins had a custom that will seem strange to white people. We Indians are proud; and it makes our hearts sore if others make mock of us. In old times, if a man said to his friend, even in jest, "You are like a dog," his friend would draw his knife to fight!

We Indians, I think, are more careful of our words than white men are.

This is the last of the four-chapter series of Buffalo Bird-Woman tales by Gilbert L. Wilson.

You who have read the entire series have now an opportunity to win a book prize by writing a letter to The Household Department of THE FARMER telling (1) how you have enjoyed these Indian tales; (2) in what way the reading of them has been of benefit to you or your family; (3) which one of the four chapters of the series have you found the most interesting? Why? (4) Has reading matter of this kind any value for school children? Why?

Doctor Wilson generously has presented to The Household Department of THE FARMER two autograph copies of his book, Indian Hero Tales, to be given to the writers of the two letters that best answer the preceding questions.

Indian Hero Tales (published by the American Book, New York) contains twenty-two tales of the Indian tribes of New England and Nova Scotia. Every tale is historically true to Indian beliefs, habits and customs. The book is beautifully illustrated and—what will especially interest young people—contains a chapter of exact directions for making and pitching an Indian camp, from the tepee to the bows and arrows.

Mail letters not later than May 1, to The Household Department of THE FARMER, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

It is never good for a man not to know his faults; and so one's clan cousins were allowed to tease him for any fault that he had. Especially was this teasing common between young men and young women. A young man might be unlucky in war; as he passed the fields where the village women were working, he would hear some mischievous girl, his clan cousin, singing a song taunting him for his ill success. Were any one else to do this, the young man would be ready to fight; but as the singer was his clan cousin, he would laugh and call out, "Sing louder, cousin; sing louder, that I may hear you!"

I can best explain this custom by telling you the story of Snake-head-ornament.

A long time ago, in one of our villages at Knife river, there lived a man named Mapuksaokihe, or Snake-head-ornament. He was a great medicine man. In a hole in the floor of his earth lodge, lived a bull snake; Snake-head-ornament called the bull snake "father."

When Snake-head-ornament was invited to a feast he would paint his face, wrap himself in his best robe, and say, "Come, father; let us go and get something to eat!"

The bull snake would creep from his hole, crawl up the man's body and coil about his neck, thrusting his head forward over the man's forehead; or he would coil about the man's head, like the head-cloth a hunter used to wear, with his head thrust forward.

Bearing the snake thus on his head, Snake-head-ornament would enter the lodge where the feast was being held, and sit down to eat. The snake, however, did not eat of the food that the guests ate. The snake's food was scrapings of buffalo hides, that the women of the lodge fed to him.

When Snake-head-ornament came home again, he would say to the bull snake, "Father, get off!" And the snake would crawl down the man's body, and into his hole.

Snake-head-ornament fasted and had a vision; he thought the gods bade him go to war so he made up a war party and led it against enemies on the Yellowstone river. The party killed no enemies and lost three of their own men. This brought Snake-head-ornament into disgrace; for he had told his men that his gods promised him good luck. He thought his gods were angry with him; and when he came home, he went about crying and mourning and calling upon his gods to give him another vision. He was a brave man and had won many honor marks; and his bad fortune made his heart sore.

In those days, when one mourned, he cut off his hair, painted his body with white clay, and threw away his mocca-

sins; he also cut his flesh with a knife or other sharp weapon. Now when a man would seek a vision from the gods, he wept and mourned, that the gods might have pity on him; and he went away from the village, alone, into the hills. So it happened that Snake-head-ornament, on his way to the hills, went mourning and crying past a field where sat a woman on her watch-stage, his clan cousin. Seeing him, she began a song to tease him:

He said, "I am a young bird!"

If a young bird, he should be in his nest;

But he comes around here looking gray
And wanders aimlessly outside the vil-
lage!

He said, "I am a young snake!"

If a young snake, he should be in the hills among the red buttes;

But he comes here looking gray and crying

And wanders aimlessly everywhere!

When the woman sang "He comes here looking gray," she meant that the man was gray from the white clay paint on his body.

Snake-head-ornament heard her song and knowing she was his clan cousin, he cried out to her: "Sing louder, cousin! You are right; let my 'fathers' hear what you say. I do not know if they will feel shame or not; but the snake and the bald eagle both called me 'son'!"

What he meant was, that the bull snake and the bald eagle were his dream gods; that is, they had appeared to him in a vision or dream, and promised to help him when he went to war as they

would a son. In her song, the woman taunted him with this. If she had not been his clan cousin, he would have been beside himself with anger. As it was, he but laughed, and did not hurt her.

But the woman had sung her song for a cause. Years before, when Snake-head-ornament was a very young man, he went with a war party and killed a Sioux woman. When he came home, the people called him a brave warrior and made much of him; and he felt very proud that now they looked up to him.

Not long after this, he joined the Black Mouth society. It happened one day, that the women were building a fence of logs, set upright around the village to defend it; and Snake-head-ornament, as a member of the Black Mouths, was one of the men overseeing the work. This woman, his clan cousin, was slow at her task, and did not move briskly. Seeing this, Snake-head-ornament came close to her and fired off his gun just past her knees. She looked up, but seeing it was Snake-head-ornament who had shot, and knowing he was her clan cousin, she did not get angry. Nevertheless, she did not forget! And

Indian Lore On The Rearing Of Horses

First of a Series of Tales on the Origin, Breeding, Care and Training of Horses Among the Indians in Early Days—The Birth of a Colt Described Here

Told by Tseca-matseitic, or Wolf Chief, to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

I DO not know of any story telling how we Hidatsas first obtained horses. In olden tales that my father used to tell, he spoke only of dogs as our beasts of burden, never of horses. Once I heard him tell of a hunt that our tribe made up the Little Missouri when they lived at Five Villages, on the Knife river.

"They killed many buffaloes," said my father; "and when the women had dried the meat, they loaded it on *travois* dragged by dogs."

"Had we no horses then?" I asked.

"No," answered my father; "at least, I never heard that we had."

So far as I know, the Mandans also had no horses until about a hundred years ago. I have heard a tale of a hunt the Mandans had long ago, to the north. They found and killed a buffalo herd at a place where there was no timber; so they had no wood for building drying stages.

The women cut the meat into long, thin sheets, like thin blankets. One of these meat sheets was thrown over the bare shoulders and back of each woman's son-in-law, who stood all day in the hot sun, to dry the meat; and he kept turning with the hours so that his back was always toward the sun. By evening the meat had dried; and it was

packed home on the backs of men and women, in bundles about three feet long by two feet thick.

"This," said my father, "shows that the Mandans did not then own horses. If they had, they would have packed the meat home on the horses' backs."

It was about the time of this hunt, I think, that we Hidatsas obtained our first pony. I have heard that it came from the western Cheyennes, or Spotted Arrow Plume people, as we called them. Our winter counts do not tell us how long ago this was, but I think it was not quite three hundred years ago. After we got this, our first pony, our horses increased, and many came to be owned in the tribe.

Two years ago THE FARMER published a series of articles, or tales, on the methods of corn-growing practiced for generations by the Hidatsa Indians in western North Dakota. These tales were told by the aged Maheedi-wea, or Buffalo Bird Woman, the "Keeper of the Corn," to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D., Field Collector for the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Dr. Wilson has spent many summers with the Hidatsas, has gained their innermost confidence, and has learned more than any other man their agricultural traditions and practices, their tribal customs and ceremonies, and the history and legends of their race. In this issue of THE FARMER Dr. Wilson begins a new series of five tales told to him by Tseca-matseitic, or Wolf Chief, a brother of Buffalo Bird Woman, on the origin, breeding, care and training of the Indians' horses.

"The Hidatsas," says Dr. Wilson, "are a Siouan tribe, now numbering but a few hundreds. For over a century they have lived in villages close to the Mandans, on the Missouri River, raising good crops of corn and beans and defending themselves against their enemies, the Dakotas or Sioux. Indians familiar with the old life are often too superstitious to tell us much of it, as they fear the gods will trouble them for telling the secrets of the tribe. Wolf Chief is one of the few older Indians who has thrown his superstitions to the winds. His account of the care and breeding of horses is the most detailed account yet taken from an Indian."



Tseca-matseitic, or Wolf Chief, the teller of this tale, now seventy years old and nearly blind. On the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota he is farmer, storekeeper and member of the Congregational Church. Yet in his youth this man was a member of not less than twelve war parties, once leading a party that brought back five Indian scalps.

The Assiniboins owned horses before my tribe obtained them, but my father thought we could not have gotten our horses from this tribe. "The Assiniboins," he said, "think their horses are very holy; and they have prayers and

ceremonies, and sacred horse songs which they sing to them. For this reason I think that our horses have come to us from some other tribe. If we had gotten them of the Assiniboins, we too would sing holy songs to our horses, as the Assiniboins do."

However, we Hidatsas believed our horses to be sacred, as, for that matter, we believed all animals to be. When I was somewhat past ten years of age, my father took me one day to watch his ponies as they grazed on the prairie. We watered them, and came home about the middle of the day. After our dinner we drove the herd out again to pasture. There were many enemies around at that time, and we had to watch our horses closely lest they be stolen.

While we sat and watched, my father said: "These horses are gods, or mystery beings. They have supernatural power. If one cares for them properly and seeks good grazing and water for them, they will increase rapidly. I am sure, my son, if you will remember my words and observe them when you grow up, your horses will increase and all will know that you are a good raiser of horses."

The Spirit Horse Speaks

"I have said that these horses are gods, or mystery beings. They have minds and understand. I had a stallion once, but did not guard him as I ought, so he wandered away and joined another man's herd. Even then I did not go after him, but let him go as if I did not care. One night I dreamed that the stallion stood before me. 'You have not cared for me as you should have done,' he said, 'You did not give me good water and grass to eat, so I am going to another country.'

"Not long after that, some enemies came and stole the stallion from me. So the dream came true. It was the stallion's spirit that spoke to me in the dream; and, as he said, he went away to another country and I lost him. Ever since then I have taken good care of my horses; and this, my son, I want you to learn to do also."

When the birth of a colt was expected, a pint or two of dried dung, of antelope, elk or jack-rabbit, was gathered and kept ready to rub over the colt's body as soon as it was born. This was done to dry the gummy moisture with which a newborn colt's body is always covered. Only dung of jack-rabbit, elk or antelope was used, because these are all speedy animals, and the use of their dung, we thought, would make the colt grow up a speedy animal, good for races and hunting.

The mare should bite off the umbilical cord from the afterbirth when her colt is born (my nephew, Good Bird, knew

of a mare that bit the umbilical too close, and the colt died). The dung was rubbed over the colt after the umbilical had been bitten off. Then the colt's owner broke the soft yellow pads from the bottom of the hoofs and, with his thumb and forefinger, pressed the soft inside part of the hoof along the edge, to make it smooth and even.

I have heard that in old times, when the birth of a colt was expected, everyone went off and left the mare to her-

self; for it was thought the birth was then easier. After the colt was born, the owner led the mare and her colt outside the village and picketed the mare

there. For the first ten days the colt was carefully guarded, lest it be attacked by wolves or injured by the other horses. After that, the colt was turned out with the own-

er's herd.

I have heard of the birth of a colt within the earth lodge, but never witnessed this myself. My father told me that a colt was once born in his earth lodge, but I never knew of this happening elsewhere in our village.

A stallion colt born in May might be castrated the next fall, when about five months old; but more often castration was not done until the colt was two years old. Castration might take place later, as five, six or seven years after birth; two years, however, was the more usual age.

In old times, we Indians were fond of racing our ponies. For this, and for use in war and hunting, we needed speedy animals. Our smaller Indian ponies had bottom, but less speed than the bigger, white man's horses we now own. We thought a stallion colt castrated when two years old would grow into a speedier racer than an uncastrated stallion.

Then there was another reason why

we thought a stallion colt should be castrated. In the spring, when the snow was soft and the ground muddy and slippery, our ponies, especially our stallions, tired quickly. A stallion, no matter what his condition, whether plump or lean of flesh, was apt to give out very quickly and become weary; but a castrated horse did not tire so easily.

Only certain medicine men in our village had the right to castrate horses. To purchase the right to practice the art, a man chose one of these medicine men for his "father," made him a big feast, and paid him a hundred buffalo hides or other rich gifts. The "father" then taught him the art and the prayers and holy songs that went with it. I have said that we Hidatsas thought horses were sacred. It would be unlucky for

any but a medicine man, who has thus purchased the right, to castrate even his own stallion. Misfortune was sure to overtake him if he did.

The fee of a castrator consisted of
(Continued on page 19)



Good Bird, Wolf Chief's nephew, on the back of an Indian pony. These ponies were brought to Mexico by the Spaniards, and spread northward to the Indian tribes. Spain is a mountainous country and at the time of America's discovery had few good roads. A breed of horses was developed fit for mountain climbing, small, wiry, gentle, sure-footed, but not very speedy. These were the ancestors of our Indian ponies.

ten objects. Three of these were essential, while the others might be chosen by the owner of the colt. The three necessary objects given in payment—a knife, a rawhide rope, and the tanned skin from a buffalo's belly worked with porcupine quills or painted white with clay—were symbolic of the castrator's calling. The tanned buffalo skin was used as a saddle blanket; the rawhide rope was to lead the horse; and the knife was employed in the operation.

The castrator always kept on hand sinews from the back of a jack-rabbit, an antelope and an elk, which he used for making the necessary ties. We believed that, according to the sinews used to tie the wounds of the colt, so would he afterwards show the same kind of speed as the animal furnishing the sinew. Thus, the jack-rabbit runs with great speed, but stops every now and then; the antelope runs swiftly, but soon becomes winded; the elk has both speed and bottom.

I once had a colt about two years old, which I had tried and found to have good speed and bottom. I thought to make him a race horse; but I did not want to put him in a race and bet my gun or a blanket and be a loser. So I asked my father's opinion. "The colt," he said, "will make a speedy racer, but he should be castrated to run faster."

There was a medicine man then living in the village, named Big-black-spot, who castrated horses. I sought him in his lodge and said to him: "I want you to castrate my colt. What do you expect for pay?"

"I must ask a knife, a tanned buffalo-belly skin and a rawhide lariat," he answered. "I also expect seven other articles, whatever you may choose to give me."

I brought the colt to him, and Big-black-spot showed me three sinews—a short one, seven inches long, from the back of a jack-rabbit; a second, fifteen inches long, from an antelope; and a third, two and a half feet long, from an elk.

Mystic Power of the Sinew

"Choose which of these I shall use for tying the wounds," he said. "If I use the jack-rabbit sinew, your pony will run swiftly, but will stop when you are not expecting it; if I use antelope sinew, your horse will be a swift racer, but will not be able to keep his pace long; if elk sinew, your horse will not be so speedy, but will have more strength and endurance." I chose the elk sinew.

When Big-black-spot had done, and had prayed for the colt, he said: "Watch your horse carefully for four days; and when you lead him to the river to drink, do not let him enter the water. After the fourth day, you may turn him out to graze; after ten days, you may ride him a little; after fifteen days the horse will be well and you may let him run as he wills."

I paid Big-black-spot moccasins, calico, a wooden bowl and other things, besides the knife, rope and saddle skin he had named. As he had told me to do, the first four days I let the colt run loose outside the village, but watched him constantly. When he had recovered, I rode him in a race and he went very fast. When autumn came, I rode him in battle and pursued the enemy, riding close to them. Some of the enemy turned and shot at me; and my horse was shot through the lungs and killed.

Thus I lost my good horse; and I wished I had gotten some other medicine man to castrate him, instead of Big-black-spot. For I thought: "Big-black-spot's prayers were not strong. They did not save my horse from being killed!"

The Indian And His Horse

Second of a Series of Tales on the Rearing of Horses Among
the Indians—Training a Colt Described Here

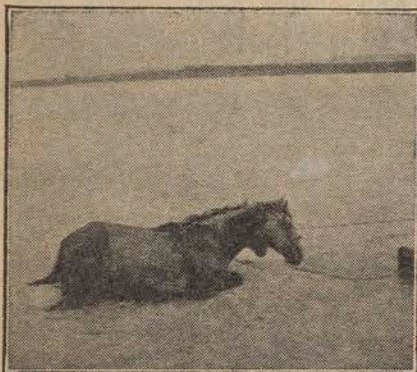
Told by Wolf Chief to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

A COLT was broken at two years of age; for a three-year-old is nearly grown, and is then hard to break. Yearlings were sometimes broken; but were apt to develop lameness, or they grew knock-kneed from the weight of the boys riding them. The joints of a yearling's legs are still soft.

The work of breaking was done by boys, of fourteen to seventeen years of age; but boys as young as eleven helped. As I have often broken colts, I will tell my own experiences.

Several of us droye a herd down by the Missouri, at a place where the current was rather swift and so likely to prevent a swimming colt from too easily getting back to shore. I now roped a two-year-old and drove him into deep water. Swimming out to the colt, I mounted him and made him swim with me on his back. Now a two-year-old still suckles his mare; and, frightened at my weight, the colt tried to make shore where he knew his mare was. I clung to his back, forcing him to swim until, reaching shallow water, his feet touched ground, when he soon struggled to land. By this time I had dismounted. Following the colt, I drove him again into deep water and repeated the lesson; and so for two or three hours, until the colt was weary. The last time he came out, I stayed on the colt's back.

Only one boy mounted a swimming



Indian Horses Entering The Missouri

colt; for, under the weight of two, a colt would sink. A horse drowns more easily than a man. "If a horse sinks until water runs into his ears, he grows weak," we Indians say.

As the colt reached shore the last time, another boy mounted behind me; and together we rode the poor beast forth and back over a low-lying sand-

bank covered with soft mud. There are many such sandbanks along the Missouri; a slight rise in the river covers them with several inches of soft mud. Over such ground we rode the colt until he was utterly exhausted.

Had we tried to mount him when fresh, the colt would have bucked and very likely given us a fall. However, in the soft mud or in the sand we were not likely to be hurt, even if we were thrown off; certainly, a fall would not be dangerous, as on hard ground. It was usual for two boys to ride the colt we were breaking, as the animal was thus more rapidly exhausted. We rode always bare-back when breaking a colt.

These two or three-hour lessons were continued for three successive days, after which we considered the colt broken. It was now usually safe to mount and ride him on land.

A colt was also taught to swim the Missouri. To train my colt thus, I needed the help of two other boys besides myself. One of these swam ahead with a lariat, one end of which was bound about the colt's head like a halter (to have bound the lariat like a bridle about the colt's lower jaw would have been dangerous, as this would have let water run down the beast's throat). I followed, swimming on the down-stream side of the colt, guiding him and clinging with one hand to his mane. A third boy swam at the colt's tail, but not grasping it. Now and then he scratched the colt on ham or leg to frighten him and make him swim ahead; or he struck

the colt on the back above the tail crying, "Yih-ha!"

Water covers a swimming horse only a few inches, and his back is visible from above. The horse works his legs as in walking, and breathes only through his nostrils, with a prolonged snorting sound made by blowing water from them.

There was need to train our ponies to take the river readily. One might be with a war party fleeing from enemies. In such times he needed a pony trained to swim, for he might have to escape across the Missouri.

Then, too, we needed well-trained ponies to pursue our enemies. We were much troubled by these when I was a boy, especially by the southern Dakota Sioux. Our village stood on the north bank of the Missouri, at Like-a-fishhook bend. The river here was rather narrow; and in summer parties of Sioux sometimes approached the south side of the river and, running out on a sand-

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bank there, shot across into the village. More often they hid in the woods that skirted the river, especially at early morning or evening, waiting for some woman or child to come down to the watering place or to bathe. The Sioux would rush out from their hiding place and shoot across.

The sight of enemies on the other side of the Missouri was always a signal for our brave young men to seize their horses, gallop to the river, plunge in, and swim across in pursuit. But unless a pony had been trained to it, he was likely to refuse to breast the swift current. With their well-trained ponies, our young men quickly crossed.

Training a Pony for War

I did not begin to train ponies for war until I was sixteen. A boy fourteen years old we thought old enough to "strike" an enemy perhaps; and some boys at this age began to train and manage war ponies. A boy as young as eleven might help break colts, but his legs were not strong enough for him to keep his seat on an untrained pony. A sixteen-year-old boy should be stout of legs and able to stick on any pony's back, and manage and train him for war.

A war pony was trained to dance, as we called it. I took my previously broken two-year-old, mounted and, kicking him with my heels and drawing in my breath with a whistling sound through nearly closed lips, signaled him to go. But while doing this I also drew on my reins, jerking them repeatedly as if to stop the pony. My colt, not liking this, tried to break away; but I checked him each time with the reins, and even struck him, not severely, on breast and forelegs with my quirt. All this made the colt leap and prance about, and from side to side, his forelegs moving together, but his hind legs alternately.

Again, drawing my breath with a whistling sound and kicking my colt with my heels, I now and then drew on the reins steadily, not jerking them. This made the colt rear straight up on his hind legs. Sometimes a rider, making his pony rear thus, slid down the horse's back, unable to keep his seat.

I gave the colt several such lessons, in the morning and again in the afternoon. After two days the pony had learned what was wanted of him.

Every war pony was taught to dance. In battle, unless a pony was constantly moving, he drew the enemy's fire upon horse and rider alike. A standing pony made an easy mark. A pony trained to dance and prance was much less likely to be shot.

We also thought a pony trained to dance was quicker, more alert; and, if halted, or standing, did not act sleepy, but moved alert and awake all the time.

On quiet evenings in summer, a young man, painted and dressed in his best, often mounted his trained pony and paraded through the village, making the pony dance as he went. Usually just one young man so paraded, not several in a company. His purpose was to be admired by the village maidens. He

wanted them to see what a fine figure he cut on his war pony.

Or a brave warrior, one whom everyone said was an excellent man, and who had won many honor marks, would thus parade on his pony. The warrior did this without his weapons.

Sometimes, when so parading, the rider halted his pony and thrust the toe of his foot under a foreleg of his steed and between the pony's leg and body. At this signal the pony lifted his leg and pawed the ground. The rider then did likewise with his other foot, making the pony paw the ground with his other foreleg. This the pony had also been taught to do when he was being trained to dance.

A war or hunting pony should be trained to turn at the shifting of his rider's weight to either side. Thus, I mounted my colt and, urging him at full speed, fell over on his right side, throwing my left leg over his back and holding to his mane with my left hand, or throwing my left arm over his neck. At the same time I pulled on his right rein, making the pony turn to the right in the arc of a circle. Or, if I dropped on the left side, I threw my right leg over the pony's back. Thus exercised, he learned to turn always toward the side on which he felt the weight of my body.

In time, a pony came to obey the movement of his rider's body very readily, and quite without use of the reins, whether ridden saddled or bareback. This training was of great use both for hunting and war. We hunted buffaloes with bows and arrows when I was young; powder was costly and was saved for war. A hunter overtaking a buffalo, unless left-handed, approached from the right of the animal. Running then on the right and a little back of the buffalo, the hunter leaned over to the left with bow ready and arrow on string. A well-trained pony, feeling the weight of his rider's body on his left, turned in close to the buffalo, thus giving the hunter a good shot. And, being thus trained, the pony did not shy off or show fear, as he otherwise would at approaching the buffalo.

Likewise, if in battle I approached the enemy and they began to shoot at me, I could drop, let us say, on the right side of my pony, clinging, as explained, with my left leg over his back. Feeling my shifting weight the pony would swerve around toward the right, exposing his left side to the enemy and shielding my

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body with his own. In like manner, also, if I dropped on his left side. I once saved my life thus, shielding my body behind my pony. He was killed, but I escaped unhurt.

We also trained our ponies to stop shortly, even when going at high speed. Thus, I laid a blanket or other object on the ground, galloped up to it and, drawing sharply on the reins, brought my colt to a full stop. A pony was usually intelligent and soon learned to stop shortly, even when going at full speed; but a rider had to look sharp that he be not thrown from his horse's back.

This training was very necessary, for in places like the Bad Lands one might come unexpectedly upon chasm or ravine, and must stop abruptly or risk a bad fall. A pony's natural bent was to try to leap the chasm, even if the distance were an impossible one.

Another thing a war pony—and indeed almost every horse—was taught to do, was to leap an enemy. I made a small pile of sunflower or corn-stalks or brush, or something else, and covered the pile with a blanket, usually the blue cloth kind we then wore. I mounted my colt and made him gallop up to the blanket and

leap over it. At first he would be afraid, and would try to go around; but at last he would leap over the blanket. A day's lessons were enough to break a pony to do this.

Let us suppose I was in battle and an enemy fell. If near, I would try to ride up and strike *coup** on the body. But unless my pony was trained, he would be almost sure to swerve aside. A trained pony leaped over the fallen foe, giving me opportunity to strike *coup*.

Even if a warrior did not strike his fallen enemy, if he made his pony vault over the body, it counted a *coup*—first, second, third or fourth—exactly as if *coup* were made by striking with a hand weapon.

Those were brave times we lived when I was young!

*If an enemy was slain, the first four warriors who reached the body and struck it were said to count *coup*, or strike. For each *coup* counted, a warrior was entitled to wear an eagle's tail feather in his hair. The scalp itself went to the leader of the party. Only warriors who had been leaders of organized war parties were scalps on their shirts. The number and position of these scalps denoted the number of successful war parties the warrior had led.—Gilbert L. Wilson.

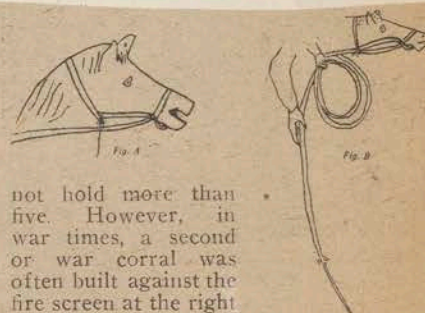
The Indian And His Horse

Third of a Series of Indian Tales on the Rearing of Horses—
Tending the Herd and the Making of Bridles

Told by Wolf Chief to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

[Indians have a natural bent for draughtsmanship, much as negroes have for music. In former days many were employed in the various tribes as designers or artists. They drew the painted designs on robes and painted the pictographs which showed a warrior's war record. The sketches here are by Tsakakasakakish, or Good Bird, nephew of Wolf Chief, the teller of these tales. Good Bird is entirely without artistic training, but many of his sketches are marvels of accuracy and spirit.—Gilbert L. Wilson.]

WITHIN every earth lodge in Like-a-fishhook Village was a corral for the horses. It was a simple railing laid on forked posts, and stood on the left of the fireplace as one faced the door. Our horses were driven to pasture, in the hills or on the prairie, every morning; but as we never left them out over night, it was our custom to stable the family herd in this corral. Only the best horses were brought in, as the corral could



not hold more than five. However, in war times, a second or war corral was often built against the fire screen at the right of the entrance.

If a man owned more than five horses, he usually built another corral underneath the corn-drying stage which stood in front of the earth lodge. It was made by enclosing the posts of the stage with a triple railing, bound on with thongs. Shallow notches were cut in the posts and in the rails to stay the latter in place.

Sometimes, when enemies were about, a man made his bed out on the floor of the stage and stayed there all night guarding his horses and singing. He



Fig. C

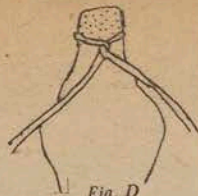


Fig. D

sang so that enemies might know that he was not asleep, but was watching his horses. Our ponies were our most valued property and we did not like to have them stolen.

In early morning we threw corn husks from our breakfast into the corral for the horses to eat; or else we brought in grass for them. They were not driven out to pasture until about ten o'clock. Many families might be sleeping at an earlier hour; and the village, anyway, was rather quiet during breakfast time.

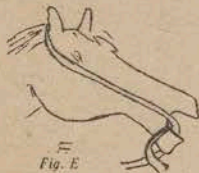


Fig. E

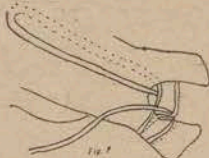


Fig. F

There was good reason for not taking the herd out too early. If an alarm was raised that enemies were stealing our horses, there was not likely to be as quick and vigorous pursuit as would be the case later in the morning when the whole village was astir.

Sometimes horses were hobbled in the woods by the Missouri about sundown and left for the night, as the enemy was not likely to find them hidden as they were in the trees. A stallion was never hobbled and left thus in the woods for the night, as he would struggle to get loose, and would whinny and call to the mares, so that any enemy who happened to be within hearing could discover where he was.

When we drove our family herd in the evening, my father, I remember,

brought only his two fast hunting horses and three mares into the lodge. Deer Horse and White Belly were the names of the two hunting ponies. Sometimes, if enemies had been seen, he brought his whole herd into the lodge, the five horses named going into the regular corral, the others into the war corral at the right of the door. Our mares were valuable for breeding and were brought into the lodge so that enemies would not steal them.

This was when I was about ten years of age. Our family herd then numbered nine, I think. Besides the five I have named, my father owned four work ponies, all geldings, less valuable than our

hunting ponies. He usually stabled these under the corn stage at night. Their names, I remember, were Tsitanehish, or White Tail; Tsidishepish, or Dark Bay; Tsidish, or Light Bay; and Shipishash, or Blackie. They were gentle horses, but slow, and rather sleepy-looking, as they stood in the stage corral.

As they grazed through the day on the prairie or in the hills, it was the duty of the boys of the household to herd the horses. While we guarded the herd we often snared or shot gophers or cow birds, and made a fire and ate them. We also played the arrow shooting game, sometimes two boys against another pair, or one boy against another. We shot for a wager; this was often a bird or gopher that we had killed. The boy who won the game ate the gopher.

When we wanted to water the horses we drove them to the Missouri. We used to drive the herd in at a place where the water was rather deep. A man could stand on the bottom without trouble, but a colt was helpless.



Fig. H-1

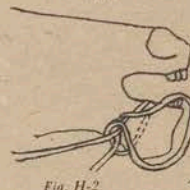


Fig. H-2

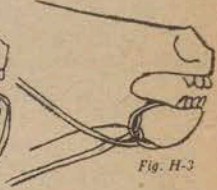


Fig. H-3

When a colt was driven in the water, one of us could go out and catch him; the colt could not escape because he could not touch the bottom. We petted and rubbed and stroked the colt so that he soon grew accustomed to being handled. Thus he became gentle, so that he let himself be caught at any time, in the water or on land, without any trouble.

When a colt reached his second autumn he was broken to ride; but I have already told how this was done.

Our bridles or halters were made by a twist of a rawhide lariat in the horse's mouth, or about it. The lariat was about seven or eight double arm-lengths, or fathoms, measured between the two hands stretched at arm's length at either side. Whether the lariat was used to make a single or a double-rein bridle, the loose end was coiled up and inserted loosely under the rider's



Fig. I

8
belt on the right side. This was an advantage to him, for if he was thrown from his horse he could seize the rein and save himself. We observed this custom both in buffalo hunting and in battle.

I will now describe the various bridles or halters in use in my tribe as I remember them. My nephew Good Bird has made sketches of them for me.

Figure A we called *apa-pihe*, or hangs-from-nose. Such a halter was used in short journeys about home, such as passing to and from pasture, and to the river to water, and the like. It was not hard

to guide a well-trained pony with such a halter, which, as will be seen, had but one rein. If the rein was drawn to the right, the pony understood and obeyed. If to the left, the pony again understood. As will be seen, the lariat fell to the right of the pony.

Figure B is the same halter, showing the lash used as a whip at the end of the lariat. You will note in the figure that the index finger is run the entire length down the lariat. This was done when the rider threw the whip to make it crack. A hole in the end of the lariat received the lash, a thong of soft buckskin. Giving it a jerking throw made a sharp cracking sound, much as I have heard the white men make with a black snake whip; but I never saw one of these white men's whips that I remember.

Figures C and D are nearly, but not quite, identical. They were used when a little haste was needed but not much permanence, as, for example, in a horse race. Such a bridle, made by a twist in the horse's mouth, was easily taken off again, and did excellently in a race when it was necessary for the rider to use both reins. These bridles were not used as war bridles.

Figure E is another form. It was an excellent bridle for races. Our name for it was *iidutikidupake*, or mouth-tied-double.

In Figure F, the dotted lines represent the lariat on the farther side of the horse's head. This bridle was formed as follows: The lariat was carried back of the horse's ears, crossed in the horse's mouth, one end carried clear around the lower jaw, passed under the other end on the right-hand side, and carried back through the mouth again.

This bridle was used especially for a horse with strong neck, one that did not obey the reins readily. It was a war bridle, and was also used in chasing buffaloes. All war bridles and buffalo-hunting bridles should be made with two reins. I do not think this bridle was used for short distances about home; at least, I never saw such use of it.

A Later Racing Bridle

Bridle represented in Figure G is one given me by my nephew Good Bird. I never saw this form in old times. It was used, he says, in horse races when the horse was yet rather wild and not much accustomed to having the lariat in his mouth. The bridle was made by making two similar loops, lying not quite alike, as shown in the figure, and slipping them over the under jaw.

The making of bridle H is shown in three figures. In the first (Fig. H-1), it will be noticed, the lariat is knotted around the horse's neck. The end is carried to the animal's mouth, passed around the lower jaw, and looped under the thus-formed rein. In the second figure (H-2) this loop is drawn out and passed around over the horse's lower jaw. In the third figure (H-3) the bridle's tie is shown complete.

This halter was especially used for swimming horses across the Missouri, as it held the horse by both neck and jaw. The owner might be in a bull-boat towing the horse after him, and it was necessary to keep the horse well under control. This halter might also be used for leading a pony, or even as a bridle when riding horseback, if the pony was rather wild. It was not used in hunting buffaloes or in war.

Figure I is a makeshift. If I happened to have no lariat with me, I took a soft hobble thong and tied it over the lower jaw by an ordinary double knot, as in the figure. The knot was drawn tighter than the figure might indicate.

A well-trained pony obeyed the reins very readily; but I have already said that ponies used for hunting, racing and for war were carefully trained to obey not only the reins, but the very shifting of the rider's body.

The Indian And His Horse

Fourth of a Series of Tales on the Rearing of Horses Among
the Indians—Caring for the Herd in Winter Camp

Told by Wolf Chief to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

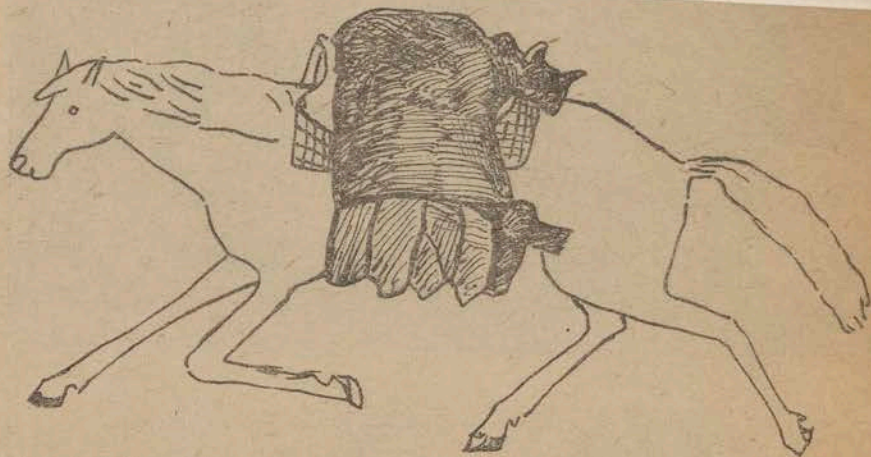
OUR lodges at Like-a-fishhook village made a good summer camp, and here we dwelt until the corn harvest was ended. But in November, the Moon of Yellow Leaves, we packed our goods and went into winter camp. Some place was chosen down in the woods by the Missouri, where fuel was plentiful and where deer were to be found. Out of reach of the cold prairie blasts, we built small peak-roofed lodges, more easily heated than the big, flat-roofed lodges of our summer village, but like them roofed over with a covering of clay.

The year I was eleven years of age (about 1860 by white man's reckoning) we made winter camp in Buckbrush Eagle Pit wood, in the Missouri bottoms opposite Independence hill. This is twenty miles up the river from what is now Elbowoods, North Dakota. Buffaloes were getting scarce, but we killed enough for our use and, with venison

and behind their ears with white clay, to protect their skin from the wind. They had robes folded about them, but these they threw off when running the buffaloes. We hunted with bow and arrows. A hunter had greater freedom to draw and handle his bow when shooting with bare shoulders and arms.

I remember I wore a cap of buffalo skin, with the fur in, on my head. It had two leather ears sewed one on either side, like a coyote's ears. If I thought enemies were about, I could creep to the top of a hill and spy over the edge. Anyone seeing me would think me a coyote.

I do not know how many lodges were in our winter camp. They stood in three groups, in three different places in the timber. Perhaps there were between ten and twenty lodges in each group. In the tribe were, perhaps, two hundred horses, all or nearly all ponies. I am only guessing these numbers, how-



Indian Pack Horse Loaded with Buffalo Meat. The Skin was Laid on the Animal's Back, Flesh Side Up, the Cuts of Meat Were Slung Across and the Skin Folded Back, Covering the Meat from Insects and Dust (Drawings on this page by Good Bird, nephew of Wolf Chief, an Hidatsa Indian without artistic training of any kind)

and our stores of corn, lived very comfortably.

I was but a lad, but my father used to take me with him when he took out a hunting party for buffaloes. The party let me help them take care of the pack horses. Every hunter who owned one, brought a pack pony along to carry home his meat; and when a herd was sighted and the hunters set off to give chase, I followed, mounted on one of the ponies, driving the pack herd before me.

The weather was often bitterly cold in the snow months, but some of the hardy young hunters wore no shirts. They had painted their bare shoulders

ever; I do not know certainly. I think every lodge owned some horses, but the number varied in different families.

We fed the lodge-kept ponies cottonwood bark and the tops and small branches of the same tree. The women of the lodge cut the trees down, one or two trunks of about a foot in thickness, in an afternoon. They stripped off the bark—the green inner bark it was—and bore it and the branches into the lodge, piling them near the fire to thaw.

In the evening the bark and branches and twigs were put under the rail of

the inside corral for the horses to eat. This was about sunset. Part of the bark, however, was saved to feed in the morning.

We fed cottonwood bark to the ponies every night if we could get it. I am speaking, of course, of the winter camp. On pleasant days the women went out every afternoon about two o'clock for bark. They usually made two trips, fetching the bark in on their backs with their packing straps. Sometimes the man of the household went out to help, and cut down the trees and carried in the heavier loads.

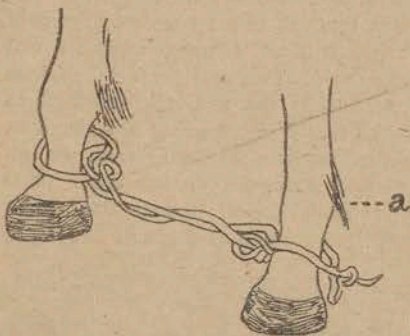
The women were always careful to clean up the felled trees of both bark and tops before leaving them. If they did not, any horses that were running in the woods would likely find the tree and browse on the branches; and thus the women's labor would be lost.

We fed our ponies no other kind of bark, however; only cottonwood bark,

and this in winter. It kept them fat and healthy.

We also fed our ponies dry grass, or hay, but not as a daily feed. The women would go out with iron hoes, clean away the snow from places where the prairie grass was heavy and thick, put the grass up into bundles, and bring it in on the backs of ponies.

There were usually two or three bundles of this grass lying on the floor of the drying stage that stood before every lodge door. If the thongs had been loosed from the bundles, the hay was weighted down with a log, against the wind. On the stage, the grass was out of reach of the dogs. Horses do not like to eat hay that has been trampled or which dogs have run over and fouled.



A Hobbled Horse. This is a "Soft Hobbie," as the Indians Called It, Improvised from a Thong or Lariat

The women went out for grass only at intervals, perhaps of ten days or more. It was not fed to the horses regularly; only when a storm was blowing, or when enemies threatened. It was an emergency feed.

Horses of little worth and wild un-

broken ponies were let run on the prairie in winter. We did not much fear for hostile war parties in the snow months; a raiding party was then easily tracked, and on their fast war ponies our warriors could overtake them and force them to give battle. For this reason we could let our slow-going pack

horses out to run at will, risking the unlikely chance of their being stolen.

However, they were not wholly neglected. The owner would go out every day, separate them from the village herd, and drive them to water. As they ate snow in winter, watering them once a day was enough.

If a blizzard threatened, the owner often drove his pack herd into the woods, out of the wind; and even if a storm had blown up, the owner would go out, seek his horses, bunch them up and care for them.

If enemies were sighted all the horses of the village were hurriedly driven into the winter camp. A man then stabled his more valuable ponies in his earth lodge, driving the others under the drying stage, which he railed in, like a corral.

In winter, on a fair day, our hunting horses were usually driven out into the hills to pasture; but if there was reason to suspect that enemies were about, as many of the herd as possible were kept all day in the village.

In winter we watered our hunting ponies twice, about noon and again about sundown. For watering horses, a spring was the best place. We did water horses at the river, but did not like to do so. The reason was, that spring water is not so cold, and the horses would drink a greater quantity; then, too, the spring did not freeze over and the ponies could get at it more easily. To make it easier for the horses to drink, the men would dig a short trench—deepen the run-way for four or five feet—and let it fill with water.

For household use we used only Missouri river water. This the women fetched in heart skin buckets; or they brought in ice in a skin sack or a basket, and melted it. Some people believed that the Missouri river water strengthened them and kept them in health. We seldom used spring water to drink, ourselves; never, if we could get Missouri river water.

Small Ankle's Horses

I will now tell how my father, Small Ankle, cared for his horses, this winter of which I am speaking.

In the morning we rose before day, breakfasting about daybreak. The ponies were fed by the men of a house as soon as they arose. After breakfast, a little after sunrise, they drove the horses that had been stabled in the lodge over night, into the hills to pasture.

Commonly it was the young men and boys of a household who did this.

In our lodge, it was my father. He would drive his herd to the hills, and look about for a good place to pasture them. Finding a spot where the grass was thick, he would kick away the snow with his foot. He would not hobble his horses, as they, too, would scrape away the snow from the grass they wished to eat, and this they could not do if hobbled. My father usually pastured his horses about three miles from the camp.

As the horses grazed my father sought another place of good grass, and presently drove his herd there. Again he kicked away the snow from the grass. Left to themselves the horses would not know where to find pasture, and would wander off the way they happened to face, or else would drift with the wind.

Thus my father spent the morning. A little after the noon hour, he returned to the lodge to eat; and about two or three in the afternoon, he sent me out to watch the herd for the rest of the day. After he had eaten, my father often went out to help his wives cut down a cottonwood tree, and strip it of bark. I think he would cut down the tree, letting them strip the bark, as they were more expert at that work. All ax work, we thought, was women's labor.

Meanwhile, as I guarded the horses, I went about seeking good pasture and driving them thither. If I had nothing else to do I would go around the herd crying and weeping and praying to the horses. I would say: "You are my gods. I take good care of you. I want to own many horses in my life."

My father had taught me to do this. "If you pray thus to the horses," he said, "you will never lack for a herd when you grow up; and you will have

good luck always, and never be poor." As I thus wept, sometimes real tears ran down my cheeks. We were taught to weep thus, so that the gods would be moved to hear us.

About sundown I drove the horses back, arriving a bit after the sun had set. I would catch one of the ponies, mount, and drive the others before me. I approached the pony I wished to mount, and, holding out my hand, palm down, I said "Ha, ha, na-ha-de (So, so, stay there!)."

As I came to the lodge in camp I would cry out, "Raise the door!" My father or one of my mothers raised the skin door and let the horses in. I dismounted from my pony, removed the lariat from his mouth, and let him go in also.

If the weather was bad my father stayed out with his horses all day; or else went again in the afternoon instead of sending me. When he thus stayed out, he never bothered to take a

lunch with him expecting to eat when he came in in the evening. Carrying a lunch, however, was not uncommon among us Indians. Hunters often took a heart skin bag of parched corn with them, thrust in the belt, or tied to the arm.

If there was a heavy storm blowing, my father did not drive his horses to the hills, but kept them in his lodge, feeding them whatever we had on hand—hay or bark. However, even then he let the animals out in the near-by woods to browse what they could. They could eat wild bean vines and ghost whistle rushes and rose berries; also buck brush berries, which were always black in winter. In spite of the thorns, the ponies readily cropped the berries from the rose bushes.

Ghost whistle rushes, or scouring rushes as I have heard white men call them, we counted very good feed for horses, in the fall, before they were frozen. But in winter there was ice in the rushes, and this often gave the horses diarrhea, so that they died.

Sometimes if the storm was very bad, the horses were kept in the lodge all day; especially, if we had plenty of feed ahead.

We fed our hunting ponies a little corn, a cupful of shelled grain at a feeding. This was both a winter and summer custom. We did not feed every day, only now and then.

I have heard that hunters, when about to chase a buffalo herd, would sometimes parch an ear of corn on the cob; and, having broken the parched ear in three pieces, would feed a piece each to three horses. This made the pony run strong and swift. I never saw this done myself, however.

Pack horses were apt to develop sores on their backs where the saddles chafed them. Such horses were much troubled by the magpies, which did not fear to perch on the horses' backs and peck at the raw sores. To keep away the birds we would tie an arrow to the horse's mane, where it hung, feather up, frightening the birds.

The arrow was made for the purpose, with broad feathers, often of an owl, which are barred and, so, easily seen by the birds. We thought the arrow had magic in it, and so frightened the birds.

These arrows were used chiefly in winter; for in summer the horses were fat and healthy and any sore quickly healed. In winter they were less vigorous and were perhaps more often used. Then, our camp being in the woods, the magpies bothered us more than they did in our summer camp. Winter was a hard season for the birds also; for they too were often hungry.

The Indian And His Horse

The Last of Five Indian Tales on the Rearing of Horses—
Use of Horses in Warfare Described Here

Told by Wolf Chief to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

(This story from Wolf Chief's life he told me in the summer of 1918. It is given to illustrate the use of the horse in Indian warfare.—G. L. Wilson.)

THE year I was thirty years of age (about 1869) we were much troubled by Sioux, so that we had to take more than usual care to guard our horses. Our family herd, I think, numbered nine when we left our winter camp and went back to our summer village for the corn planting. Most of them were good hunting horses and valuable. One of them was my own, a black pony with a white face, from which we had named him Sheepisha-ita-atakish, or Blackie-with-a-white-face. He was a swift, reliable pony, sure-footed and well trained.

One evening in the middle of May, I was lying on my bed resting; for we Hidatsas used our skin-covered beds much as white men use sofas. One of the boys had just driven in our herd. I could hear them stamping the soft ground without, as they waited for the skin door to be lifted. The Sioux had made so many attempts to raid our herds, that we never left them out on the prairie later than three or four o'clock in the afternoon.

I was humming to myself one of the Kit Fox Society war songs, when suddenly I heard the voice of our village crier, an old man, calling loudly: "Young men, enemies shoot at us across the river. Up, make ready your weapons. Go against them!"

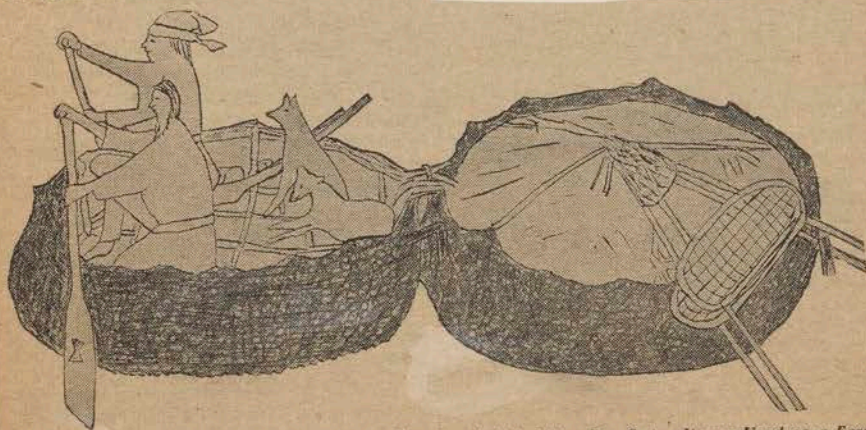
I bounded from the bed, and as I leaped for the door I heard the shooting, *po, po-po, po-po-po, po!* of the enemies' guns. Evidently the Sioux had obtained repeating rifles; guns were more common then than they had been when I was a boy.

My own horse stood without with the family herd. Catching up my lariat, I doubled it and, passing the ends through the double, made a noose which I slipped over the horse's lower jaw. One of the loose ends I tied to a post of the drying stage; and, leaving my pony thus secured, I ran back into the lodge to get my weapons and strip for battle.

I was dressed in moccasins, leggings and shirt, and from my neck hung a necklace of big glass beads. All these I threw off, dropping them on the lodge floor wherever they happened to fall; for I was in haste. I even removed my moccasins; and my clout, of heavy blue-black blanket cloth, I exchanged for one of light sheeting.

As I thus stripped for battle, my father stood before his sacred medicine bundle and prayed. He then opened the sacred bundle and took out a small hawkskin, stuffed with buffalo hair and wrapped about with a piece of calico. It was tied with a thong.

"Here," said my father, as he put the hawkskin in my hands, "take this. You know its use. It is very holy!"



A Bull Boat Was a Frame of Willows Covered with a Buffalo Skin, Fur Out. It was Used as a Ferry Chieftly, for Crossing the Missouri River. Good Bird, the Untrained Indian Artist, Here Represents His Father and Mother Returning from a Buffalo Hunt Near the Yellowstone River, Having Made Their Bull Boats from Skins Obtained in the Hunt

13

I took the hawkskin, passing the thong over my head so that the bundle hung down on my breast like an ornament; and I caught up my repeating rifle, and buckled my shell-belt about me. I now ran outside, untied my pony, sprang on his back and galloped down to the river.

Many were already crossing, although I had leaped at the first call of the crier; and the warriors' horses dotted the river, for the young men were swimming them across. Every moment brought more young men to the river, for the village was astir.

A few of the young men crossed in bull boats. There were five of these, I think, two of them paddled by women. A bull boat was able to carry two passengers, besides the woman who manned it. But we were disposed to laugh at young men who thus crossed in bull boats. A warrior should know how to swim across with his horse. However, even those who swam thought it well to place their guns in the boats, that they might not be wetted in the current.

A bull boat was useful when a hasty crossing was thus made with horses. Very often a pony got excited and refused to swim against the current. A lariat was passed about his head for a halter, and the free end placed in the hands of some one in the boat. Two women, paddling one at either side of the craft, could tow any horse across, no matter how he might struggle to turn back.

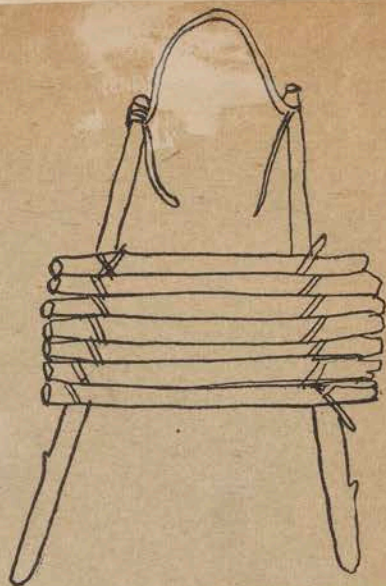
Our custom of crossing the Missouri with bull boats to give battle comes down to us from long ago, as I have heard. There was once a village of Hidatsas called by their neighbors the Xopa, or Noisy-worm People; because at night when good people should be in bed, they danced and sang and made

much noise, like a kind of green worm that swarms the trees at certain seasons of the year, moving about among the leaves and making a weak, shrill noise.

These Xopa folk lured away the wives of their neighbors, and got in such bad repute with the other villagers that there was much strife and bad feeling. One night the Xopa disappeared; nor has anyone ever learned what became of them. However, even if they were bad neighbors, the Xopa were brave; and

when attacked their warriors would run for their boats, into which they cast their bows and arrows and clothing. These the women ferried over while the warriors swam. They had no horses in those days.

This day, I had no clothes to put in the boat; but I handed my gun and shell-belt to one of the rowers. I now took off my clout and bound it about my head, not wishing it to get wet and



A Travois, or Drag, on Which White Buffalo Bull was Borne Home from the Fray. The Thong Uniting the Upper Ends Was Thrown Over the Horse's Back. The Lower Ends Dragged on the Ground. Drawn by Good Bird Under Wolf Chief's Directions

heavy and so impede my swimming; and, taking my pony's reins in my teeth, I entered the water and struck out.

My pony followed. As soon as I found he was swimming freely, I fell back and, holding my reins in my right hand to guide my horse, I swam with my other hand, always on the downstream side of my pony. One could not guide his horse properly swimming on the up-stream side.

The Missouri was rather narrow at Like-a-fishhook bend, and I reached the other side in a few minutes. Standing with the water still covering my hips, I untied my cloth clout from my head and put it on again. Women were in the company; and to have come ashore in their presence without clout would have been shame to me, especially if any of them happened to be my relatives.

I mounted my pony and, quickly riding to the boat—it had reached land first and I had landed below it—I took my gun and the hawkskin, which I now unwrapped from its covering. I held the hawkskin up toward the direction in which the enemy had fled, and sang the sacred song which belonged to it and which my grandfather had taught me. The words of the song were, "I want you!" meaning that I wanted my enemies dead before me!

Then, with the thong that tied it, I bound the hawkskin to my hair, which I bunched in a knot over my forehead. The song and the hawkskin were both holy, and were to protect me from bullets and arrows.

As I fastened the hawkskin to my hair, I prayed: "Let no arrows or bullets touch my body. I do not care if pow-

der burns me, but let no bullet touch me!" I meant that I was willing to go so close to the enemy that their powder might burn me, even if the hawkskin's spirit-power protected me from bullets.

Death of White Buffalo Bull

Among my boyhood friends was a boy named Striped Snake, whom I loved dearly. He was a member of the same clan as myself, the Tsistska Doxpaka, or Prairie Chicken People. We had grown up together and had both joined the Kit Fox Society of warriors. Striped Snake was so brave that his society fathers had given him the name of White Buffalo Bull. My friend and three other warriors had landed at almost the same moment as myself, and they were making ready to dash off after the enemy. I joined myself to them.

"How many Sioux were they who attacked us?" I asked.

"We saw but three," said White Buffalo Bull. "I think they hoped to shoot some woman at the watering place and get away before we could cross to attack them. They had swift mounts."

We urged our ponies through the wooded bottoms and came out on the prairie, where we soon picked up the Sioux' trail. White Buffalo Bull was a good tracker, and we lashed our tough little ponies to the top of their speed. In a short time we sighted the three Sioux about two miles ahead.

At sunset we were thirty miles from the village and pressing the Sioux hard. White Buffalo Bull, mounted on a swift pony, had forged ahead and had just overtaken the hindmost Sioux. I heard his war whoop, *u-i, u-i, u-i!* ring out in the growing dusk, and he was raising his arm to strike, when the Sioux suddenly turned and fired. White Buffalo Bull's arm fell, his pony slowed down to a trot, and White Buffalo Bull slipped to the ground. He was shot through the lung.

We did what we could to make him comfortable. We made a rough *travois*, cutting two poles and binding sticks across them, on which we laid a bed of grass. A saddle skin was laid over the grass. We laid the wounded man on

this *travois*, on his back, his feet to the left. One man walked behind, holding the edge of the skin on which the sufferer lay, so that he might not roll off. Another held his feet, and a third his head. We had rolled up a thick blanket-cloth clout and put it under White Buffalo Bull's head for a pillow.

Our march was slow. "Stop, I suffer!" the wounded man would cry; and we would stop a while and rest. We took turns supporting the sufferer's feet. The night I remember was quite cold.

We reached the village at sunset the next day. White Buffalo Bull died about an hour after.

Afterwards, when the Government

made peace between us and the Sioux, we learned that the three enemies we had pursued had been sent as a decoy to lead us into an ambush; but we had pressed upon them so hard that we turned them from their course. This was lucky; for if we had ever met with their main body, our smaller party would have been surrounded and killed.

Not long after White Buffalo Bull died, I formed a war party to go into the Sioux country. We found and surprised a camp, and took five scalps. So my friends did not die unavenged.

Our whole village mourned for White Buffalo Bull. He was a kindly man and very brave.



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R. 1912.

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY — READING ROOM SLIP

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Little ugly boy & the bear & The
Rainbow snake E 95/. F6W7

TAKES RECORDS OVER THE JUMP

George Kelly Plays Perfect Game in Billiards Meet



GEORGE KELLY

A perfect game was George Kelly's contribution to the national pocket billiards tournament which was supposed to have been concluded at the Recreation rooms last night.

BATTERED NAVY NOW HOLDS KEY TO ROSE BOWL

Middies Meet Both the Army and Princeton in Next Two Weeks

New York, Nov. 14.—(U.P.)—Pittsburgh and Columbia battered all championship hopes out of Navy, but by a queer twist of schedule-making, the Middies still are the eleven which must be crushed for the eastern grid title and possibly a ticket to the Pasadena Rose bowl.

BOWLING NOTES

By DAD HULL

CENTRAL ALLEYS
City Club bowlers were distinctive in Royal league, smashing the setup for the sturdy scores of 350, 985 and 965 to book a 2,881 aggregate and a triple victory over the Warnins.

RECREATION ALLEYS
High class team production put the Farmers Union bowlers into the column near the Metropolitan division of the Park Board Women's league.

LINCOLN ALLEYS
The Bears set the pace in the U. S. Veterans' league last night, rolling games of 818, 877 and 868 to capture a pair of games from the Tigers.

Change of Pace Puts Oregon Webfeet on Top

Eugene, Ore., Nov. 14.—(U.P.)—Prince Callison, youthful Oregon football coach, borrowed a baseball phrase—"change of pace"—and today he was the only unbeaten, untied team on the Pacific Coast.

Although the Oregon webfeet have two more hurdles, neither of which could exactly be classed as sinecures, in Southern California and St. Mary's, Oregon, none is already dreaming of New Year's day in Pasadena and a potential national crown.

Oregon has four fine ball-carriers in Mike Mikulak, Mark Temple, Leighton Gee and Bob Parke. They work behind an experienced, hard-charging line.

Oregon's attack is bewildering because all four backs carry the ball. Leighton Gee is a superb cutback runner. Temple is the inspiration to his team and against Oregon State showed almost unbelievable power for a 179-pound man.

Parke does the kicking and is developing into a ball-carrier as well as a fine interference runner. The line is good, but not brilliant from end to end. It outcharged and ripped wide the Oregon State line which held El Trojan.

Prep Coaches Meet to Discuss Cage Season

High school basketball coaches met today for their first meeting of the season. Officials were to be selected and the official ball was to be adopted. Under the prep rulings, team may begin practice sessions tomorrow but may not play practice games until Dec. 10.

The season's schedule will begin Jan. 12 with the windup scheduled March 2 after a week's idleness Feb. 23. A plan whereby the final three weeks of the schedule may be placed on a fluctuating basis with outstanding attractions being played at night, will be discussed.

Sibley Merchants Grid Team Has Good Record

The Sibley Merchants football team boasts a brilliant record for its season's play in the Citizens' Club league. The Sibley eleven scored nine points while winning five straight games. Its goal line was uncrossed.

Points were: Sibley 8, East Lakes 0; Sibley 12, Phantoms 0; Sibley 21, Wells Bulldogs 0; Sibley 31, East Lake 0; Sibley 25, Wells Bulldogs 0.

that Committee Room No. 1 on the third floor of the City Hall, in the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, on Tuesday, the fifth day of December, 1933 at 2 o'clock P. M., have been and are hereby designated and fixed as of land, viz: Lot 5, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

AWARDS
The following are the descriptions of the interests and improvements by the proposed improvements in the above entitled proceeding, and the several amounts awarded as damages and compensation thereon:

To William M. Hollister—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 1, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To William M. Hollister—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 2, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To William M. Hollister—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 3, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Florence H. Lufkin—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 4, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Louis J. Westen—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 6, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Louis J. Westen—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 7, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Wm. A. Zetterberg—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 8, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Wm. A. Zetterberg—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 9, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Wm. A. Zetterberg—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 10, block 7, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

of land, viz: Lot 4, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Franklin W. Springer, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 5, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 6, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 7, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 8, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

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To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 10, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 11, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 12, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 13, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

To Gust Wickberg, and others—For the following described tract of land, viz: Lot 14, block 12, Prospect Park Second Division (Revised), Hennepin County, Minnesota. No damages. Benefits in excess of damages.

The New All Rubber--Completely Washable--Life-like--Latest Creation from Doll-land

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"MY DOLLY" ORDER BLANK

THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR: Please send me The Star for three months to help the bearer get a "My Dolly" FREE. I am not now taking The Star. The Star costs 45c a Month, Payable at the End of the Month--Including the Saturday Colored Comics, Extra Sports Pages, Etc., at No Extra Cost! Regular Star Carriers Will Deliver Papers.

USE THESE ORDER BLANKS

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THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR: Please send me The Star for three months to help the bearer get a "My Dolly" FREE. I am not now taking The Star. The Star costs 45c a Month, Payable at the End of the Month--Including the Saturday Colored Comics, Extra Sports Pages, Etc., at No Extra Cost! Regular Star Carriers Will Deliver Papers.

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THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR: Please send me The Star for three months to help the bearer get a "My Dolly" FREE. I am not now taking The Star. The Star costs 45c a Month, Payable at the End of the Month--Including the Saturday Colored Comics, Extra Sports Pages, Etc., at No Extra Cost! Regular Star Carriers Will Deliver Papers.

The Minneapolis Star 427 6 Av. S.

BOOK REVIEWS

What War Did to One Woman Told in Book 'Festivals of Youth' by Vera Brittain...

'Festivals of Youth' by Vera Brittain, an account of a generation's life...

'Junkies' by J.K. Jones, a study of the lives of addicts...

'The Master of the House' by Robert Coates...

'The Sixth Year Yorker' by J.H.H. A study of a young man's life...

'The Tutts' by Crawford Young, a comedy about a family...

RADIO PROGRAMS

List of radio programs including 'The Star' and 'The Big Broadcast'...

WEDNESDAY programs including 'The Star' and 'The Big Broadcast'...

THURSDAY programs including 'The Star' and 'The Big Broadcast'...

FRIDAY programs including 'The Star' and 'The Big Broadcast'...

SATURDAY programs including 'The Star' and 'The Big Broadcast'...

SUNDAY programs including 'The Star' and 'The Big Broadcast'...

Today's Cross-word Puzzle with grid and clues.

GRAIN, LIVESTOCK, PRODUCE AND FINANCIAL

STOCK MARKET QUIETER AFTER EARLY ADVANCE

Utilities Take Brunt of Pressure - Rails Firm

Market news and analysis for various sectors.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table showing stock prices for various companies.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with market data.

Minneapolis-St. Paul Stock Transactions table.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table with updated data.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with updated data.

EVERETT'S PUTS REGEZ IN BACKGROUND

Tenner Recovered; Will Be Ready for Full-time Duty Against Michigan

Princeton, Georgia, Illinois Roll on to Victory in Cameraman's League

News articles about tennis players and sports events.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table showing stock prices.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with market data.

Minneapolis-St. Paul Stock Transactions table.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table with updated data.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with updated data.

PRODUCE QUOTATIONS

Table of produce prices including flour and feed.

FLOUR AND FEED MARKET table with pricing.

PRODUCE QUOTATIONS table with market data.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table showing stock prices.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with market data.

Minneapolis-St. Paul Stock Transactions table.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table with updated data.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with updated data.

STAR KICKS 41 TO 55 YARDS AGAINST HAWKS

ROUNDY SAYS: GOPHERS WORK ON NEW PLAYS FOR BIG TILT

Indoor Work Continues - Team to Leave for Jackson Thursday Night

News articles about sports teams and events.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table showing stock prices.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with market data.

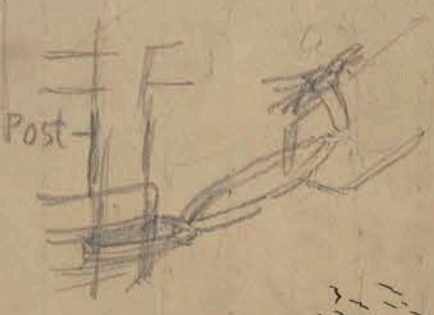
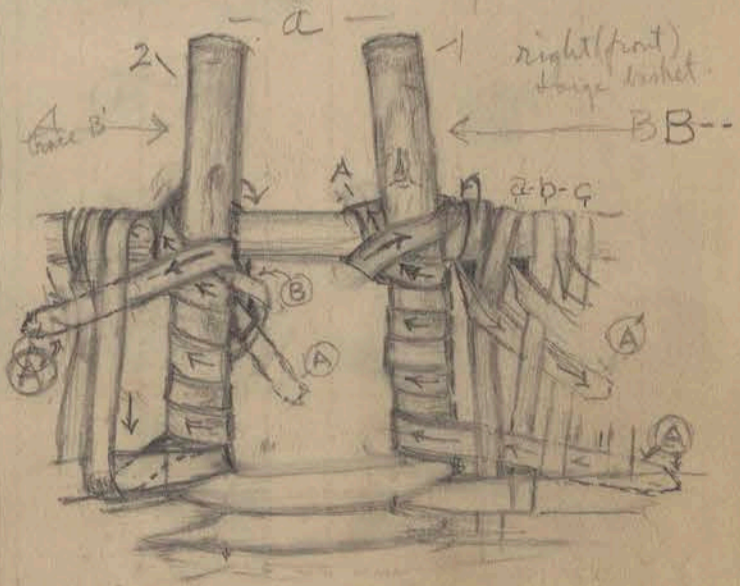
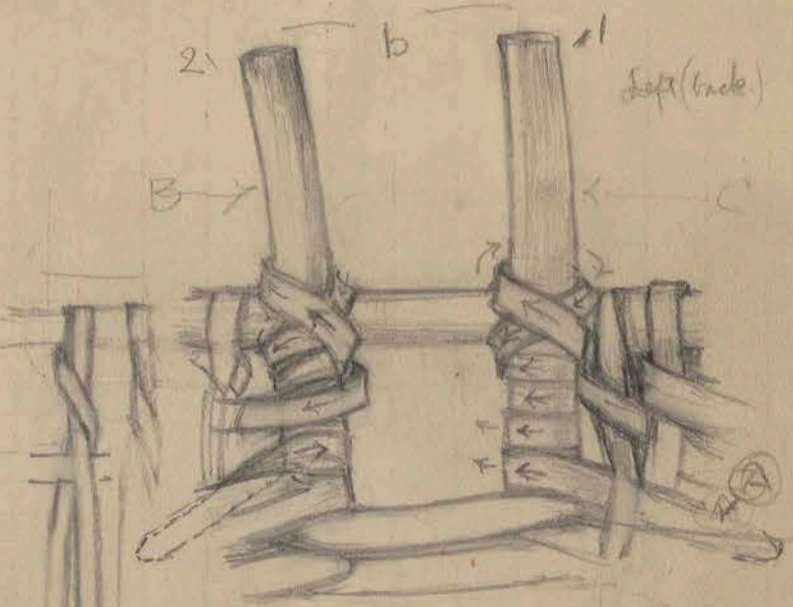
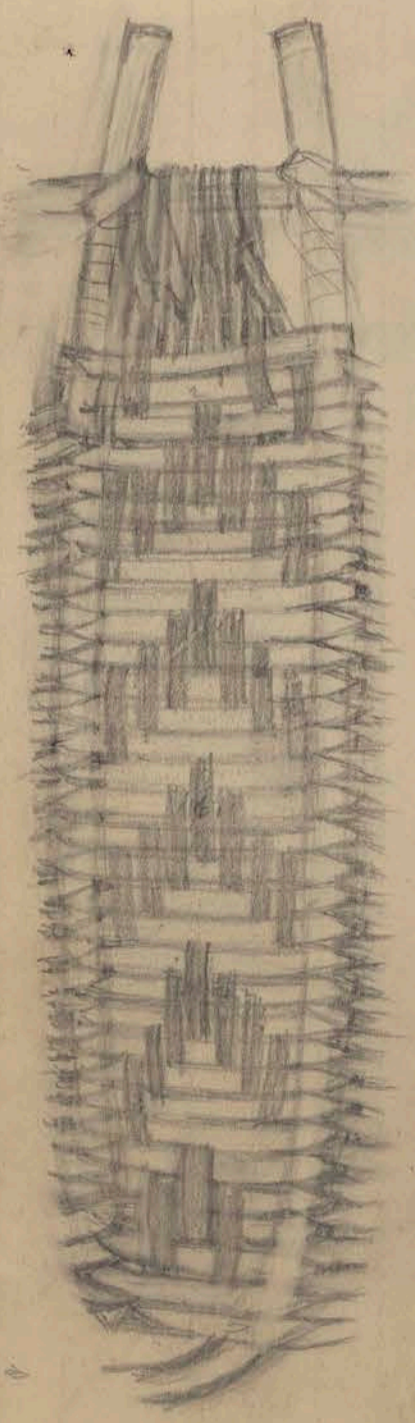
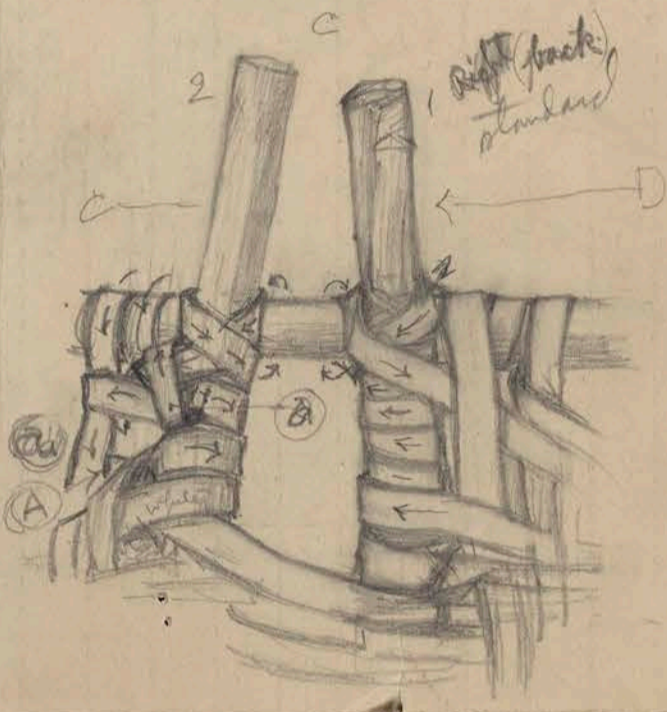
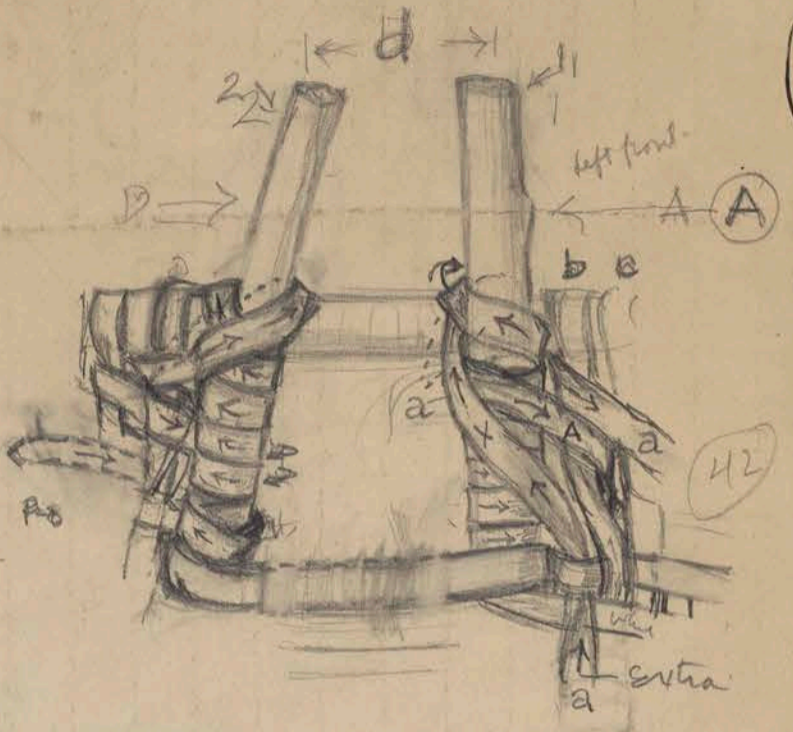
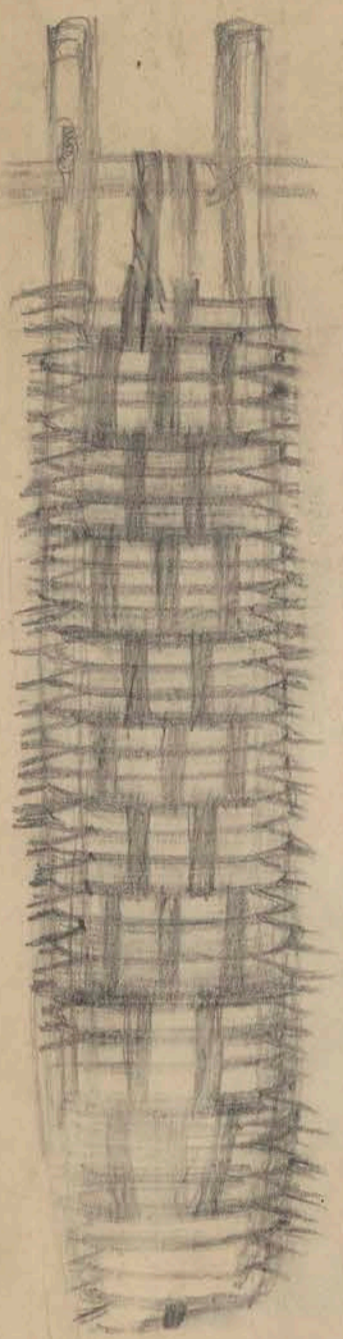
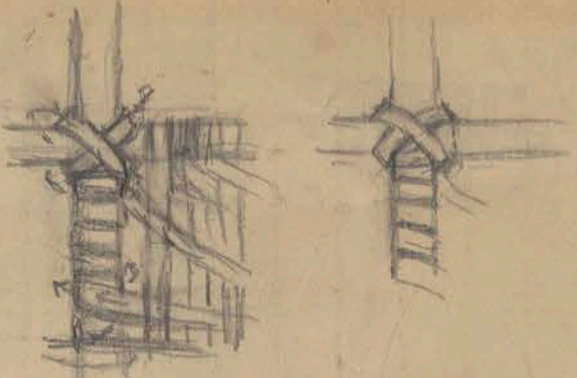
Minneapolis-St. Paul Stock Transactions table.

MINNEAPOLIS RANGE table with updated data.

WHEAT CLOSES AT SMALL GAIN table with updated data.

Kato Lager Beer advertisement with logo and pricing.

Milwaukee Road advertisement with logo and route information.



Buffalo Bird Woman's Story

How the Hidatsas Stored Their Corn for Winter in Grass-lined Cache Pits—The Sixth Chapter in the Life of Buffalo Bird Woman, as Told by Herself

To Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

I HAVE heard that white people have cellars dug under their houses, where they store potatoes and turnips; but cellars are not new to us Indians. We had cellars, or cache pits as white men call them, from long ago—ever since the world began, my mothers have told me.

In these cache pits we stored our corn, beans, and strings of dried squash, for winter; here too we stored bags of sunflower seed, and smaller bags of dried Juneberries, pounded and dried choke-cherries, and sliced and dried wild turnips. These last are wild fruits and roots that we gathered and put away in considerable quantities.

It is a great mistake to think that we Indians did not eat fruit. We had no apples nor peaches; but we had wild plums, wild currants, wild gooseberries, wild raspberries and strawberries, cactus berries, sand cherries, and red and black haws, in season. However, some of these fruits are rather rare and hard to get.

Juneberries and choke-cherries were plentiful almost every season, and we

dried quantities of both, storing them in skin bags. Choke-cherries were mashed between two stones, the pulp was squeezed out between thumb and first finger in little lumps or balls, and dried in the sun. These choke-cherry lumps were used in cooking, or were eaten like sticks of candy. They were quite sweet, and grown folk and children alike were fond of them.

Dried Juneberries were often boiled with a flour of pounded wild turnips; this made a very good pudding. My son's wife cooks on a stove, and my son buys white men's foods; but I think our

old-fashioned foods and our Indian ways of cooking were much better.

My mothers owned five cache pits—jug-shaped pits five or six feet deep, lined with grass. Four were without, one was within the lodge. The last was used more as I have heard white men use cellars. In it we stored sunflower seed, dried berries, and even bladders of bone butter. The pits that were without the lodge we used for storing our corn.

Mice were rather troublesome in the lodge—not the white-bellied kind that white men have brought us, but a smaller kind that made nests in the grass-and-earth covering of our lodge walls. These mice sometimes got into a cache pit, and were then very hard to dislodge.

What the Mice Accomplished

They got into one of my mothers' pits, burrowing into the walls under the grass lining and did so much damage that my mothers abandoned the pit and filled it up with earth.

"We shall have to dig another cache pit," said Red Blossom. "Those bad mice have ruined this one."

It was autumn and our harvest was a

big one—so big that my mothers had to add a fourth section to their drying stage to dry all our corn. I have dug more than one cache pit since, but that cache pit I shall always remember because it was the first that I helped to dig.

We began work one morning just after the early meal. The spot chosen was on the left of the door, a little way from the lodge. The Sioux used to raid our empty lodges when we were away in our winter village; we had to hide our cache pits so that they could not find them and steal our corn.

We Hidatsas did not like the Sioux;



Feasting. The Indians Like to Eat; That They Gorge Themselves is Hardly True. In Old Times, When Food Supplies Came Irregularly, the Indian Ate All He Could. But the Hidatsas and Other Corn-raising Indians Had More Regular Habits than the Purely Hunting Tribes

we thought them wild men because they hunted and did not plant corn, and lived in tents instead of comfortable earth lodges. But if we did not like the Sioux, neither were we afraid of them. We were a little tribe and they were a big one; but we could give them a warm time of it, if they came up against us in summer, when we were at home. Those Sioux were great thieves; but our brave young men made war on them, and went right into the Sioux country and stole their horses!

My mother Red Blossom and I did the work of digging. "It is time you were learning to prepare a cache pit," she said. "Some day you will grow up and be married; how will you and your family eat if you do not put away corn for winter?"

Red Blossom had a short-handled hoe with an iron blade; with this she began digging the round mouth, dragging the loosened earth away with her hoe. The mouth of the pit was just big enough for one to enter. At about a yard's depth—as I here show with my hands—my mother began to widen it, cutting away at the walls with the blade of her hoe. She had a wooden bowl at her feet; into this she raked the loose earth; and when the bowl was full, she handed it to me. I bore it a little way off and emptied it.

We were two days and a good part of a third digging the cache pit. It was now about five feet wide at the bottom, and

of a depth that my mother standing within could just reach with her hand to the level of the ground above. I fetched a ladder to let her climb out; we always had a ladder resting against the drying stage. It was made of a cottonwood trunk, with steps cut into it.

Digging the cache pit did not end our labors. "We must line the walls with grass," my mother said, "to keep dampness from reaching our corn and spoiling it."

"What kind of grass?" I asked.

"Only one kind will do," she answered. "It is the long, bluish kind that grows near springs and water-courses. All other kinds will mold; and we Hidatsas know, for we have raised corn since the world began!"

There was a little stream flowing from a spring some distance from the village. The next morning my mother and I set out for the spring, where we knew there were beds of blue grass growing. I led a pony, and my mother was followed by four dogs harnessed each to a *travois*.

Lining the Cache Pit

The grass grew about three feet high; and as it was now autumn, the grass was dry and dead at the top, though still green down at the roots. We cut it with our hoes and made it into bundles, enough to load our beasts and ourselves.

I loaded my pony with four bundles, two on a side, bound firmly to the saddle. My mother packed a bundle on

her back, and our four dogs dragged each a bundle on a *travois*.

A bundle was about four feet long and two and a half feet thick, pressed tightly together. Each bundle was bound with a rope of grass, for in old times,

(Continued on page 14)

remember, we Indians had no binder twine, or hempen ropes.

To make a grass rope, my mother sought a place where there was some tall, dead, last-year's grass standing. Stooping over she took a whisp of grass in her hand and twisted it to the left, at the same time gently lifting it, so that the dry stems would break off at the roots. Taking a step forward, she grasped another whisp of grass, which she twisted and broke off as before, but in such manner that it made a part of the continued twisted strand. She continued this until she had a rope long enough to tie the bundle.

We reached our lodge in the afternoon. Our grass bundles we laid on the floor of the drying stage until we were ready to use them. Just before using, we took them up on the lodge roof, broke the binding ropes, and spread the grass out to dry for one day.

The walls of the cache pit had been left bare for the grass lining; but a floor was rather simply made of dead and dry willow sticks, laid evenly and rather snugly over the bottom of the pit. Over this willow floor the thoroughly dried grass was spread to the depth of four inches. Grass was next spread over the walls to the depth of three or four inches, and stayed in place with willow sticks, eight in number, raised vertically against the walls and nailed in place with wooden pins made each from the fork of a dead willow.

Into the bottom of the pit my mother now fitted the skin cover of an old bull boat, with the willow frame removed.

The cache pit was now ready to be stored.

"Fetch me an old tent cover," my mother now bade me. I fetched one from the lodge.

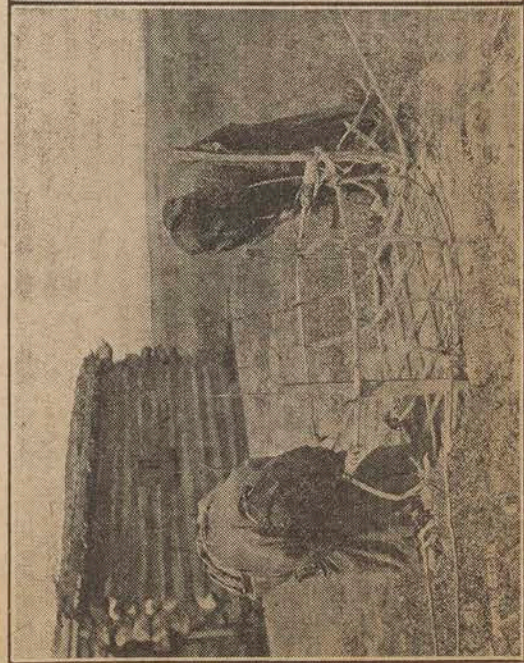
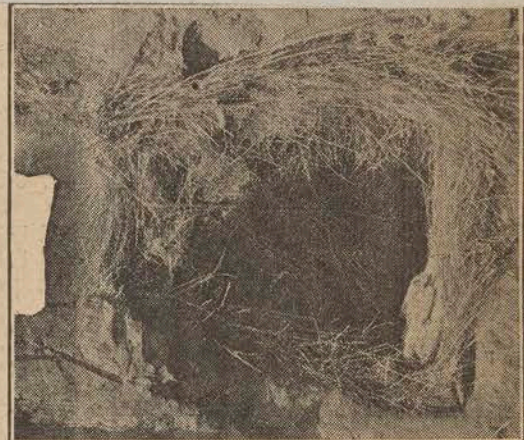
My mother laid it by the cache pit, so that one end of the cover hung down the mouth of the pit. On this tent cover she poured a big pile of shelled corn, fetched from the lodge where it had been stored temporarily in bull boats. We also fetched many strings of braided corn and laid them on one side of the tent cover; and strings of dried squash.

We let down the ladder, and my mother descended into the pit. Having withdrawn the ladder, I leaned over the pit and handed down a string of the braided corn. My mother took the

string of corn, folded it once over, and laid it snugly against the wall of the cache pit, on the skin bottom covering, with the tips of the ears pointing inward. Folding a string thus, kept the ears from slipping and stayed them more firmly in place; laid husk end to the wall, the ears were better preserved from danger of moisture.

My mother continued thus around the bottom of the pit, until she had surrounded it with a row of braided corn laid two ears deep—for the strings, remember, were doubled. She now laid a second row, so that the bottom of the pit was surrounded by strings of braided corn, which, because doubled, now lay four ears deep.

"I am ready for the shelled corn," my mother called; and she stepped back from under the pit's mouth.



Building Activities in the Hidatsa Villages of Western North Dakota. Left, Bottom Frame of a Bull Boat, Made of "Mahohisha" Buffalo Hide Woman in the Bank of the Missouri to Show How the Indians Stored Their Corn. Right, Model of the Fran

Seventeenth Chap. in Life of

Buffalo Bird Woman (I)

AND so I grew up, a contented, happy, Indian girl, obedient to my parents. I did not go to dances often, and when I did my mothers went with me; for ours was one of the better families of the tribe, and my mothers were careful of what I did. I learned to be industrious. There was always plenty to do in the lodge, but I had time for rest and to go and see my friends, and I was never given tasks beyond my strength. My father did the heavy lifting, if posts or beams were to be raised.

For my industry in dressing skins, my band aunt gave me a beaded belt with an end hanging down before in a long trail. Only a very industrious girl was ever given such a belt; nor could it be given her by one of her relatives—a band aunt, remember, was not one's blood relation. I was as proud of my belt as a war leader of his first scalp!

I was eighteen years old the *Bent-enemy-killed* winter—for we Hidatsas reckoned by winters, naming each for something that happened in it. An old man then lived in the village named Hanging Stone; he had a step-son named Magpie, a young man and a good hunter.

A Proposal of Marriage

One morning after breakfast, Hanging Stone came into our lodge. It was a little while after our morning meal. We had hollow buffalo hoofs hanging to the skin door for bells; I remember how they rattled as he raised the door. My father was sitting on his couch before the fire. Hanging Stone walked up to my father; he laid his right hand on my father's head.

"I want you to believe what I say," he cried. "I want my boy to live in your good family. I am poor. You are rich. But I want you to favor us and do as I ask!"

He went over to my mothers and did likewise, speaking the same words to each of them. He then left the lodge.

Neither my father nor my mothers said anything, and I did not know at first what it all meant. My father sat for a while, facing the fire. At last he

spoke: "My daughter is too young to marry. When she is older, I may be willing."

In the evening Hanging Stone and his relatives brought four horses and three flint-lock guns to our lodge. The horses he tied to the corn stage outside. They had good bridles, with chains hanging to the bits; and on the back of each horse was a blanket and some yards of calico—very expensive in those days.

Hanging Stone came in the lodge. "I have brought you four horses and three guns," he said to my father.

"I must refuse them," answered Small Ankle. "My daughter is too young to marry."

Hanging Stone went away; but he did not take his horses with him. My father sent them back by some young men.

Persistence Wins

The evening of the second day after, Hanging Stone came again to our lodge. As before, he brought the three guns and other gifts, and four horses; but two of these were hunting horses. A hunting horse was one swift enough to overtake a buffalo, a feat that few of our little Indian ponies could do. Such horses were valuable and hard to get. A family that had good hunting horses had always plenty of buffalo meat.

After Hanging Stone left, my father said to his wives, "What do you think about it?"

"We would rather not say anything," they answered. "Do as you think best."

"I know this Magpie," said my father. "He is a kind young man. I have refused his gifts once, but I see his heart is set on having our daughter. I think I will agree to it."

Turning to me he then spoke: "My daughter, I have tried to raise you right. I have hunted and worked hard to give you food to eat. Now I want you to take my advice. I want you to take this young man for your husband. I want you to try always to love him. Do not think to yourself, 'I am a handsome young woman, and this my husband is older and not handsome!' Never taunt

Buffalo Bird Woman's Story

The Indian Girl Reaches Marriagable Age and Assumes the Duties of a Wife—The Seventh Chapter in the Life of Buffalo Bird Woman, as Told by Herself

To Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

your husband. Try not to do anything to make him angry."

I did not answer "no" or "yes" to this, for I thought, "If my father wishes me to do thus, why that is the best thing for me to do." I was taught to be obedient to my father; I do not think white children are taught thus, as we Indian children were!

For nigh a week my father and my two mothers were busy preparing the feast foods for the wedding. On the morning of the sixth day, my father took from his bag a fine weasel-skin cap and an eagle-feather war bonnet; the first he put on my head, the second he handed to my younger sister.

We were now ready to march to Hanging Stone's lodge. I led, my sister walking with me. Behind us came some of our relatives leading three horses, and

bonnet as worth each a horse; and with these and our three horses, my father felt he was going his friend one horse better. It was a point of honor in an Indian family for the bride's father to make a more valuable return gift than that received from the friends of the bridegroom.

As we two girls sat on the floor—ankles to the right as Indian women always sit—Magpie's mother filled a wooden bowl with dried buffalo meat, pounded fine and mixed with bone butter, and set it for my sister and me to eat. We ate as much as we could. What was left my sister put in a fold of her robe, and we rose and went home. It would have been impolite for us to have left behind any of the food given us to eat.

That day Magpie's relatives and

after them five great kettles of feast foods on poles, borne on the shoulders of women relatives—boiled, dried, green corn and pounded, dried, ripe corn boiled with beans.

Hanging Stone sat on his couch, against the puncheon fire-screen. I went up to him and put the weasel-skin cap on his head. The young man who was going to be my husband was sitting on his couch—a frame of poles covered with a tent-skin. My sister and I went over and shyly sat on the floor near by.

The kettles of feast foods had been set down near the fire-place, and the three horses had been tied to the corn stage without. Hanging Stone had fetched my father four horses. We reckoned the weasel cap and the war

friends came and feasted on the foods we had taken to Hanging Stone's lodge. Each guest brought a gift, something useful to a new-wed bride—beaded work, fancy work bag, girl's leggings, woman's belt, blanket, woman's robe, calico for a dress, and the like; and in the evening, two women of Magpie's family brought these gifts to my father's lodge, packing them each in a blanket on her back. They piled the gifts on the floor beside Red Blossom, to whom, as the elder of my two mothers, this courtesy was due.

Red Blossom spent the next few days helping me build and decorate the couch that was to mark off the section of our lodge set apart for my husband and me; and we even made and placed before the



Entrance to an Old-fashioned Earth Lodge in the Hidatsa Villages of Western North Dakota. This



An Hidatsa Earth Lodge Usually Was Inhabited by Several Families of Relations. Each Couple Had Their Bed, Which Belonged to Them Alone and Was Used in the Daytime for a Lounge.

couch a fine, large, willow lazy-back or chair.

All being now ready, my mother said to me: "Go and call your husband. Go and sit beside him and say, 'I want you to come to my father's lodge.' Do not feel shy; go boldly and have no fear!"

So with my sister I slowly walked to Magpie's lodge. There were several besides the family within, for they were expecting me; but no one said anything as we entered, as was quite in keeping with Indian custom.

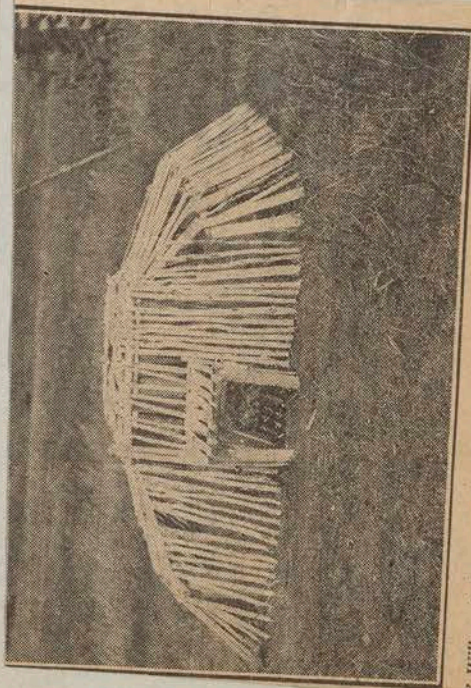
Magpie was sitting on his couch, for this in the daytime was used as white men use a lounge or a big chair. My sister and I went over and sat beside him. Magpie smiled and said, "What have you come for?"

"We have come to call you," I answered.

"Good," he said.

My sister and I arose and returned to my father's lodge. Magpie followed us a few minutes after, for young men did not walk through the village with their sweethearts in the daytime; we thought that foolish. And so I was wed.

My life as a young married woman did not differ so very much from what it had been. I was still in my father's



Willow, to be Covered with Skin. Center, Section of a Cache Pit, Made by one of an Earth Lodge—the Large Type Supported by Posts and Beams

lodge, and worked as before at household duties or in the field with my mothers. Still, my husband and I now made a little family of our own, and as a married woman I felt a somewhat greater responsibility for my share of work in house and field. Then, planting time was coming and I took more interest in getting ready for it.

A white man once asked me if Indian women never got tired of their hard work in the field and lodge. No; why should we? We loved our work, quite as much as white people love theirs; and we took just as much pride in it. We Indian women never thought of our work in the corn fields as wearisome or degrading.

The Sunflower Crop

We came back from winter camp just before the ice broke on the Missouri. Usually the Missouri ice broke about the first of April; and the first planting, of sunflower seed, followed very soon after. Sunflowers were planted in hills, five or six paces apart, around the edge of the field. Three seeds were planted in a hill, pressed down with thumb and fingers. We had different varieties of seed, black, white, red, striped; but all were cooked and prepared just alike.

We reckoned sunflowers as a regular crop, and in my father's family we put away two or three bags of seed every year. Seed for planting, as always of all our crops, was carefully chosen. A sunflower plant has generally one big head at the top, sometimes two or even three such heads. These were threshed and the seed sacked separately from that of the smaller heads, which we called *mapi naka*, or baby sunflowers. For seed, we took only from sacks threshed from the larger heads. Our sunflowers, remember, grew wild along the Missouri; they were not the big kinds that white men have now brought us.

The seed was much used for making sunflower balls. These were important articles of diet in old times. To make sunflower balls, I parched the seed in a clay pot at the lodge fire. When well parched, I put the seed in a corn mortar and pounded them to a fine meal. I reached into the mortar and took out a handful of this meal, which I squeezed in my hand into a lump or ball. This I took between my two palms and gently shook to bring out the oil in the meal, making the ball shiny and smooth. It was then ready to eat.

In old times, nearly every warrior and hunter carried one of these sunflower balls in his handy bag, which hung at his belt and in which he carried sinew and awl for mending his moccasins. When worn with fatigue or overcome

with sleep or weariness, the warrior took out his sunflower-seed ball and nibbled it to refresh himself. If weary, he began to feel fresh again; if sleepy, he grew wakeful. To hunters and warriors, sunflower-seed balls were a very important food.

Buffalo Bird Woman's Story

*Hidatsa Methods of Preparing the Soil and Planting the Hills for Corn—
The Eighth Chapter in the Life of Buffalo Bird
Woman, as Told by Herself*

To Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

CORN planting began rather early in May, as white men count months. We knew when corn planting time had come, by watching the wild gooseberry bushes. The fuel for our lodge fires was dead and dry wood gotten in the timber along the Missouri River. The women of the lodge went twice a week or more, with axes and dogs, to bring the firewood. They cut

corn field to crop the standing fodder and eat the husks left in the husking place. Any dried dung left by these horses we also bore off the field in the spring, for we thought this dung bred weeds. Anyway, we observed that the weeds grew thickest in places where dung had fallen.

Our corn was planted year after year in the same hills. The soil around the

and bound it in bundles on *travois* dragged by the dogs.

Gathering firewood was largely the work of the older women, all of them skilled in the signs of the seasons; and when these old women saw that the gooseberry bushes were in nearly full leaf they would say, "Get your hoes and your rakes ready; the gooseberry bushes are in leaf—corn planting time has come!"

Corn planting lasted several weeks, well into June sometimes, but not later.

The sun then began to go back into the south; old men began to tell eagle-hunting stories; and we knew that the planting season was over.

Corn planting was a busy time, the busiest of the year except the harvest season. The strings of braided corn had been selected beforehand for the seed. Only the very best and choicest ears were taken, and we were careful to look to see if any of the ears had black hearts. That part of the grain that grows next the cob we called the heart, and if this heart was black we knew that the corn would not grow.

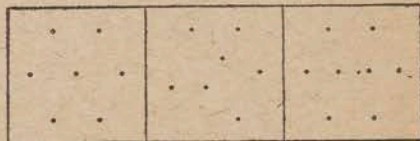
The field had to be cleaned up for planting; this we did with our rakes of wood and horn. The dead leaves, grass and refuse thus gathered we bore off to the edge of the field and burned. In the fall, our horses were turned into the

old hills I loosened up with a hoe, first pulling up the dead roots and stumps of stalks. These, as they collected, I raked off and burned with the other refuse.

This pulling up the dead roots and working the old hill with my hoe loosened the soil for a space about eighteen inches in diameter. I now stooped over and, with my fingers, raked away the loose earth for a bed for the seed. I even stirred the soil around with my fingers with a circular motion to make the bed perfectly level so that all the

seed would lie at exactly the same depth.

A wooden bowl at my feet held the seed. With my right hand I took up a small handful of the corn, quickly transferring half of it to my left hand. Still stooping and plying both hands, I pressed the grains a half-inch into the soil with my thumbs, planting two at a time, one grain with each hand. Six or eight grains were planted to a hill, in patterns something like these: *



*Each pattern above represents a hill of corn. Buffalo Bird Woman could not recollect how the grains were arranged in the hills, having planted since girlhood



Changing Times! Left, an Indian of the Old School with Weasel-skin Shirt; Child with Elk-teeth Dress. At the Right, a Little Indian of the New School



Independence Congregational Chapel in Western North Dakota, Where Buffalo Bird Woman's Son, Edward Goodbird, Preaches Every Sunday. This Chapel Was Built and Paid for by Indians; All Its Officers Are Full-blood Indians

Then with my hands I raked earth over the planted grains so that they lay about a finger-length under the soil of the hill. Finally, still stooping, I patted the hill firm with my palms.

We Hidatsa women were early risers in planting season. I was usually up before the sun and, with one of my mothers, was on my way to the corn field while the air was still cool and bracing. This we thought the best hour for field work. Having arrived at the field, I began a hill, preparing it in the way I have said with a hoe; and so for

ten rows, each for the distance of about thirty yards. The hills stood a little less than four feet apart in the row, and the rows the same distance one from its neighbor.

The hills being thus prepared, I went back and planted them, patting each hill down firmly as I have already described. By this time I was tired, and went home, to return the next morning.

The ten rows making a morning's planting contained about two hundred and twenty-five hills. I usually went out every morning in the planting season, if the weather was fair. Sometimes I went out again in the evening a little before

sunset, but not often.

Sprouting the Corn

Corn planting season lasted about a month in normal years, for planting by hand is slow work. Sometimes a late spring made the season a tardy one, so that we feared our last-planted corn might not ripen. To hasten its growth, we soaked the seed in tepid water. The corn was soaked only a little while and the water was then poured off through the fingers. Care was taken of the temperature of the water; if very warm, it would kill the seed.

A corn seed thus soaked grew very fast; in four or five days after planting, there would be quite a sprout growing out of it, as I have seen in seed that I have dug up. However, the seed first planted in the season was, of course, the first to ripen.

Sometimes, if warm water was not handy, I put the seeds in my mouth, held them there till well wetted, and then planted them. But we thought that corn seed thus wetted in the mouth was apt to grow ears that we called goose-roof-of-mouth ears. Such ears had every alternate pair of seed rows vacant, making the ear, we thought, look like the roof of a goose's mouth.

It was customary for the women of each household to do their own family planting; but this was not always possible. If a man's wife was sick, or if for some other reason she was not able to do her own planting, she cooked a feast to which she invited the members of her *age society* and asked them to plant her field for her. The members of her society would all come upon an agreed day and plant the field for her. Sometimes a half-day was enough for this work.

In my own *age society* there were about thirty members the year I was married. I remember, when we went to help a sick member, each of us would take a row to plant and strive to complete it before the others. We had a good deal of fun thus vying with one another who was the swiftest planter. A member, having finished her row, might begin a second; or if, when each woman had completed her row, there was but a small part of the field yet unplanted, we all pitched in miscellaneously and finished the remainder of the planting.

Planting Squash and Beans

When the corn was all in, we planted our squash, and then our beans. Our squash seed we sprouted before planting. I would cut out a rectangular piece of buffalo hide and lay it, fur up, on the floor of our lodge. I took sage and buck-brush leaves, wetted them and laid them on the skin, upon the fur. Into this mat of sage-and-buck-brush leaves I worked the squash seeds, and folded the whole up into a bundle which I hung on the drying pole near the fire-place.

At

squash seeds had sprouted nearly an inch. These sprouted seeds I put in a bowl, sprinkling over them a little moist earth.

Two or three women usually planted together, one going ahead to make the hills, the others following with the sprouted seeds. Squash hills were somewhat longer than their width. The squash sprouts were planted in one side of the hill, in two pairs, a foot or fifteen inches apart; they were planted two inches deep in the hill.

As with corn, we used always the last year's hills for planting. In old times we thought we raised much better crops because we were always careful to use the same hill each time and to make the soil very soft with a hoe. It was easier to soften the soil of a previously used hill than it was of a hill in new ground.

Beans we planted immediately after squash. If they were planted alone, they were placed in hills in rows about two feet apart. More commonly they were planted between the rows of corn, sometimes over the whole field, more often over a part of it.

As in the case of squashes, we planted beans in the side of a rather long hill. I would dig out two little cavities with my fingers, about fifteen inches apart, and in each drop three beans. I have heard that some families dropped in four beans instead of three, but I never did this myself. I think three is better and brings a better yield.

We had different varieties of beans, handed down to us from old times; shield-figured, spotted, red, black. All these bore purple blossoms, and were native strains. We raised a white variety that was brought to us when I was a little girl, bearing a white blossom.

The fruit of the squash vines showed many colors and shapes—striped, white, green, spotted, elongated, flattened at one end, and others—but we recognized but one strain, and thought all these varieties grew from the same seed. At least we never tried to isolate distinct varieties of squashes. But we were just as careful to select and dry our bean and squash seed as we were our corn seed.

I am an old woman now, and everything has changed from what it was when I was a girl. Our young men plow fields with horses and plant wheat and other white men's seeds. But I do not see that we have any better food, nor so much of it, as we had when we lived in our Indian way.

My son can read English and preaches every Sunday out of the Bible. He is good to me, and my heart does not feel bad because he worships the white men's God; but I cannot myself forsake the gods of my fathers.

Until a year or two ago I always kept a little garden of corn and squash and beans in a corner of my son's plowed field, cultivated it with my hoe in Indian fashion. But now I cannot longer do even this. I wish I were younger again, so that I could work; then the days would not seem so long to me.

I often think of the good times of my childhood. Then our villages were full of earth lodges, and many children and old men were in the lodges, eating corn and buffalo meat. Now they eat white men's foods and use white men's ways, and our children die and the old men die.

I sit in the evening and think of those good times; but I know I shall never see them again.

February 9, 1918

Buffalo-Bird-Woman Tales

Gilbert S. Wilson, Ph. D.

Two years ago, readers of *THE FARMER* greatly enjoyed the serial story of Buffalo Bird Woman as told by Doctor Wilson. The Household Department of *THE FARMER* is happy to be able to publish a few more of these really valuable "tales" about the Hidatsa Indians. Doctor Wilson is Field Collector for the American Museum of Natural History of New York, and the look-in he gives us, upon the life of the Hidatsa Indians is historically and scientifically accurate.

We suggest that these stories—of which there will be several—will make the very best of reading-aloud stories for the whole family. Perhaps the children's school teacher would be glad to see them and read them aloud to the school.

MY FATHER'S earth lodge in Like-a-Fishhook Village was a large one, with floor measuring more than forty feet across. In the center of the floor was the fireplace. A screen of puncheons set upright in a trench, stood between the fireplace and the door. This screen shut out draughts and kept out the dogs.

The screen was carried quite to the sloping wall on the right; but on the left, there was space enough for a passage from the door to the fire. Right and left in an Indian lodge are reckoned as one stands at the fireplace, looking toward the door. We thought an earth lodge was alive and had a spirit like a human body; and that its front was like a face, with the door for a mouth.

In front of the fireplace and against the puncheon screen, was my father's bed. Forked posts, eighteen inches high, stood in the dirt floor; on poles, laid in the forks, rested cottonwood planks, over which were thrown buffalo robes. A skin pillow stuffed with antelope hair, lay at one end of the bed.

The beds of the rest of the family stood in the back of the lodge, against the wall; they were less simply made than my father's, being each covered with an old tent skin drawn over a frame of posts and poles. The bedding was of buffalo skins; as these could not be washed, my mothers used to hang them to air on the corn stage on sunny days.

Most of the earth lodges, at least, most of the larger ones, had each a bed like my father's, before the fireplace; for here was the warmest place in the lodge. Usually the oldest in the family slept in this bed.

My father's bed, not being enclosed, made a good lounging place by day; and here he sat to smoke or chat with his friends. My mothers, too, used to sit here to peel wild turnips or make ready the daily meals.

Two or three sticks usually burned in the fireplace, not piled one upon the other as white men pile them but laid with ends meeting together; as the ends burned, the sticks were pushed in, keeping alive a small but hot fire. Every night, the last thing my father did, was to cover one of these burning sticks with ashes that it might keep fire until morning.

Unless he had spent the night with some of his cronies, my father was the first to rise in the morning. He would go to the fireplace, draw out the buried coal, lay some little dry sticks upon it and blow with his breath until the fire caught; sometimes he fanned the coal with a goose wing. A little column of blue smoke would rise toward the smoke hole and my father would call, "Up, little daughter; up, sons! Get up, wives! The sun is up. To the river—hasten—for your bath!" And he would go up on the roof to look if enemies were about and if his horses were safe.

My mothers were already up when I crept from my bed, still sleepy but glad that morning had come.

If the weather was cold, we did not go to the river to bathe. An earthen pot full of water stood by one of the posts near the fire; it rested in a ring of bark, to keep it from falling. Red Blossom would dip a big horn spoon full of water, fill her mouth, and blow it over her palms to wash her face. She next washed my face in the same way. I did not like it very much; and I would shut my eyes tight and pucker my face when I felt the cold water. Red Blossom would say, "Why do you pucker up your face? You look like a piece of old, dried buffalo skin!"

Her face washed, Red Blossom sat on the edge of her bed to finish her toilet. She had a little bag of fawn's skin, embroidered with red porcupine quills. From this bag she drew a porcupine tail mounted on a stick, with the sharp points of the quills cut off; it made a very good hair brush. Red Blossom brushed her hair smooth, parting it in two braids that fell over either shoulder, nearly hiding her ears. She was no longer young but her black tresses had not a grey hair in them.

Red Blossom now opened her paint bag, of native red ochre. She put a little buffalo grease on her two fingers, pressed the tips lightly in the dry paint, and rubbed them over her cheeks and



Yellow Corn, Buffalo Bird Woman's Granddaughter. She Has Picked a Squash. The Hidatsas Believe That Squashes Once Were Dogs Variouslly Striped and Spotted

face. She also rubbed a little red into the part of her hair.

When I was a little girl, we Indian people all painted our faces; and when there was a dance, and the villagers came in embroidered shirts and leggings, and with faces painted, all was bright with color, like the prairie when flowers bloom. Now only a few old men paint, and our Hidatsa people go about with pale faces, like dead men from the Ghosts' village.

Meanwhile the pot had been put on the fire. We Indians did not eat many things at a meal, as white men do. Usually breakfast was of one thing, often buffalo meat, dried, and boiled to soften it. When a buffalo was killed, the meat was cut into thin slices, some parts into strips; these were dried in the open air, over the earth lodge fire, or on the smoke of a small fire out of doors. For breakfast, an earthen pot was filled with water, dried meat was put in, and the water was brought to a boil. Red Blossom used to lift out the pieces of steaming meat with a sharp stick, laying them on a piece of clean raw hide.

A rough bench stood back of the fireplace, a cottonwood plank, with ends resting on two blocks chopped from a tree trunk. My grandmother, Turtle, sat on this bench to eat her meals. My mothers sat beside her, or on the floor near the meat they were serving. My father ate sitting on the edge of his couch. A wooden bowl, with a heaping portion of the steaming meat was set before each. Our fingers did for forks.

Boiling the meat in water made a thin broth which we used for a hot drink. It was very good, tasting like white man's beef tea. We had few cups; but we had big spoons made of buffalo horn; and ladles of mountain sheep horn. Either of these did very well for drinking cups.

Another morning dish was mapeé-nakapa, pounded-meal mush. From the cache pit on the left of the fire place, Red Blossom would take a string of dried squash; for squashes, sliced and dried, were strung on long grass strings. She cut off a length and tied the ends together, making a ring four or five inches in diameter. This ring and a double handful of beans she dropped in a pot of water, and set on the fire. When boiled, she lifted the ring out with a stick, mashed the softened squash slices in a bowl, and put them back in the pot.

Meanwhile my other mother, or old Turtle, had parched some corn in a clay pot; and toasted some buffalo fats on a stick over the coals. Red Blossom now pounded the parched corn and toasted fats together in the corn mortar, and stirred the pounded mass into the pot with the squash and beans. The mess was soon done; Red Blossom dipped it out into our bowls with a horn spoon.

We ate with horn spoons or with mussel shells; for we Hidatsas had few metal spoons in those days. There was a shelf, or bench, at one side of the room, under the sloping roof, where were stored wooden bowls, uneaten foods, horn spoons and the mussel shells that we used for tea spoons. When I was a little girl nearly every family owned such shells, worn smooth and shiny from use.

After breakfast, unless it was in the corn season, when they went to the field, my mothers tidied up the lodge. They had short brooms of buckbrush; with these they swept the floor, stooping over and drawing the broom forward with a sidewise motion. As my father stabled his pony in the lodge at night, there was a good deal of litter to be taken out. Red Blossom used to scrape her sweeping into a skin basket, which she bore on her back to the river bank and emptied.

Other duties were then taken up; and there were plenty of them! Moccasins were mended. Deer and buffalo skins were dressed, or scraped of hair with an elk horn scraper armed with a steel blade; in old times, I have heard, the blade was of flint. In winter when the women had no corn to hoe, leggings and shirts were embroidered.



There was a good deal of visiting in our lodge for my father was one of the chief men of the village and always kept open house. "If a man would be chief," we said, "he should be ready to feed the poor and strangers." A pot with buffalo meat, or corn and beans cooking, was always on the fire in my father's lodge. His friends, and other chief men of the village, often came in to talk over affairs. A visitor came in without knocking but did not sit down until asked.

Friends of my mothers also came in to sit and chat, often joining them at whatever task they might be doing. Red Blossom would set a bowl of food before each; what she could not eat the



Wolf Chief, Buffalo Bird Woman's Brother. Hero of Twelve War Parties and Taker of Several Scalps but Now a Peaceful Trader

guest took home with her. It was impolite to leave any uneaten food, as that would mean, "I do not like your cooking—it is unfit to eat!"

My mothers were good housekeepers and kept the ground about the lodge entrance swept as clean as the lodge floor. Many families were careless, and cast floor sweepings, scraps of broken bones, and other litter on the ground about the lodges. In time this refuse made little piles and became a nuisance, so that people could not walk between the lodges with comfort. The Black Mouths then went through the village and ordered the women to clean up. The Black

Mouths were a society of men, of about forty years of age. They acted as police and punished any one who broke the camp laws.

These clean-ups were ordered every once in a while. I do not know how often but they came, I think, in the summer, about twice a month. They were always ordered by the Black Mouths.

One morning, I remember, just after breakfast, I heard singing outside, as of a dozen or more men. I started to run out to see what it was, but my mothers cried, "Do not go; it is the Black Mouths!" I thought my mothers looked rather scared. We were still speaking, when I heard the tramp of feet; the door lifted and the Black Mouths came into the lodge.

They looked very terrible, painted with the lower half of the face black; and many, but not all, had the upper half of the face red. Some had eagle feathers in their hair and all were wrapped in robes, or blankets. Some carried guns; others had sticks about as long as one's arm. They used these sticks to beat any woman who refused to help in the clean-up.

I fled to my father but dared not cry out; for I, too, was scared.

"One of you women go out and help clean up the village," said the Black Mouths. They spoke sternly and several of them at once.

Like all the other women, my mothers were afraid of the Black Mouths. "We



Indian Woman Packing a Load of Wood. The Packing Strap Passes Across Her Shoulders Around the Load and the Ends are Held in the Hands. These Loads Are Often Heavy

will go," they said and Red Blossom caught up broom and skin basket and went out.

The Black Mouths went also and I followed to see what they did. They entered another lodge not far away. I heard voices, then the report of a gun and a woman screamed. After a time, the Black Mouths came out and before them went a woman, very angry but much frightened. She had not moved quickly enough to get her basket and one of the Black Mouths had fired off his gun at her feet, to frighten her. The gun was loaded only with powder.

After they had made the rounds of the village, the Black Mouths returned to the lodge of their society's "keeper," a man named Crow Paunch. Soon we heard singing and drumming and knew they were singing their society's songs.

When they had sung three or four times, there was silence for a while, no doubt because a pipe was being passed. Then all came out and made the rounds a second time, to see if the work of cleaning was done and to hurry up lag-gards. The village was all cleaned before noon; but some women got their work done sooner than others.

After the clean-up, the children of the village came out to play in the spaces between the lodges, now swept clean and smooth. The boys—especially liked to play at throw sticks—light willow rods which they darted against the ground, whence they bounded to a great distance.

4 Columns over
counting
pictures & del.

~~Storhugst~~

Fugham

Fish Lines

Hooks

Tuna Lines

School

Buffalo-Bird Woman Tales

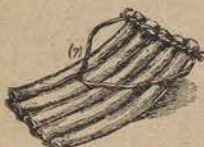
Gilbert S. Wilson, Ph. D.

Two years ago, readers of THE FARMER greatly enjoyed the serial story of Buffalo Bird Woman as told by Doctor Wilson. The Household Department of THE FARMER is happy to be able to publish a few more of these really valuable "tales" about the Hidatsa Indians. Doctor Wilson is Field Collector for the American Museum of Natural History of New York, and the look-in he gives us, upon the life of the Hidatsa Indians is historically and scientifically accurate.

We suggest that these stories—of which there will be several—will make the very best of reading-aloud stories for the whole family. Perhaps the children's school teacher would be glad to see them and read them aloud to the school.

The first chapter of this series was published in THE FARMER of February 9.

In old times we Indian people had no horses and not many of my tribe owned them when I was a little girl. But I do not think there was ever a time when we Hidatsas did not own

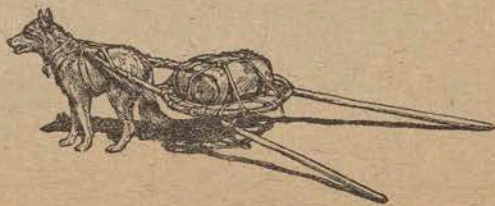


—Boy's Buffalo-Rib Sled

dogs. We used them to draw our tent poles and loaded travois; we never trained them to chase deer as white men do.

Our Hidatsa dogs, the breed we owned when I was a little girl, had broad faces with gentle, knowing eyes, ears erect and pointed, and tails curling, never trailing like a wolf's. They had soft, silky hair, gray, black, or spotted red or white. All had stout, heavy legs. I think this was because we saved only dogs of stout build to drag our travois.

The Sioux, who live south of us, owned dogs like ours but of slenderer build and legs. I think they liked these dogs because they



could run fast for the Sioux were hunters, always moving from place to place.

Almost every family in Like-a-Fish-hook village owned two or more dogs and as there were about seventy lodges in the village, the dogs made a large pack. The dogs knew every woman and child in the village, and being well trained—and the surly ones, anyhow, being always killed—they seldom bit any one. They were quick to wind a stranger. An Indian from a strange tribe was sure to be beset by a troop of dogs barking at his heels.

The dogs had one habit I liked. In the evening about bedtime—and bedtime for a little Indian girl was early—some dog was sure to start up, "Wu-wu-wu!" and all the others would join in, even the little puppies. I used to like to lie in my bed and listen to them.

About midnight, the barking would start up again, especially if there was a moon; and a third time, a little before daylight. But I was usually asleep at these hours.

In daytime, through the summer months, lookouts were always on the roofs of some of the lodges, watching for enemies or buffaloes. If they saw hunters coming in with meat, these lookouts would cry out, "Hèy-da ey!" The dogs, knowing what the cry meant, would join in with "Wu-u-u!" They liked buffalo meat as well as we Indians.

But the greatest excitement was when enemies were seen. The lookouts then cried "A-ha-huts—they come against us!" Warriors, hearing the cry, seized

their weapons and ran out, yelling shrilly. The chiefs sprang for their horses, twisting lariats in the ponies' mouths, for bridles. Medicine

men chanted holy songs, and women rushed about calling to their children. But high above all would be the barking of the dogs, every beast in the village joining in the hubbub.

My mothers usually kept four, sometimes five dogs, well trained, gentle animals and my little half sister and I were fond of playing with them. My sister's name was Cold Medicine, the name of a pretty prairie plant with a purple flower. She was two years younger than I.

My mothers were careful housekeepers and did not often let our dogs come in the lodge; and in warm weather the dogs slept outside. A covered entrance way led to the earth lodge door; at night our dogs used to huddle down against the puncheon wall of this entrance way, on the side away from the wind. If the weather was not windy, they often slept on the roof over the entrance, or on the flat top of the lodge roof; an old bull boat frame was upturned over the smoke hole to keep the dogs from falling in. In cold weather, my mothers sometimes let the dogs sleep beside the fire.

In daylight, one often saw dogs sitting or lying on the lodge roofs. Our village was rather crowded, and the roofs of the lodges were used in summer by both men and dogs as lounging places.

One day after the midday meal—I think I was then eight years old—old Turtle went down to the river and fetched an armful of dry willows; they were about four feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; some were forked at the top. She set them in a circle, with their tops brought together like a tepee, at one side of the lodge entrance, near the place where the dogs slept.

"What are you doing, grandmother?" I asked.

Turtle did not answer my question. "I want to get some dry grass," she said, "come and help me."

We went out to a place in the hills where was some long, dead grass. Turtle pulled a quantity, piling it on her robe which she had spread on the ground. She drew the corners of the robe together, slung the bundle on her back and we came back to the village.



Hidatsa Bed. In Covered Bed. Does

She laid the grass thickly over the sides of the little tepee, leaning chunks of wood against it to keep the grass in place. She left an opening or door in front; and she even bound a stick over the door, like the pole over a hunter's lodge that holds the deer-skin curtain. Last, she put grass inside, as if for a bed.

"Grandmother, what are you doing?" I begged, but she led me into the lodge, telling me nothing.

I was awakened early the next morning by dogs barking on the roof. As I lay listening, I thought I heard a faint whining outside. It seemed to come from the place where the little grass tepee stood.

I fell asleep and awoke a second time to see Red Blossom fanning the fire with a goose wing. Breakfast followed, of fresh, boiled, buffalo meat; for our hunters had made a kill the day before and the young men had brought a whole side and two hams for a present to my father.

After the meal, I saw Turtle gather up the scraps of uneaten meat into a wooden bowl. "Come," she said, leading the way out of the door.

She stopped before the little tepee and thrust the bowl of scraps within. Again I heard the faint whining, I dropped to my knees and peered through the opening. There I saw our best dog, the pet of us all; beside her lay four little, wriggling puppies.

"Eh, *sakits!*" I cried, "Oh, good!" And drew the puppies out one by one, to cuddle them. The mother dog whined, and raised her eyes to me; she was

a gentle animal and did not snap at my hand.

I do not know whether I or the puppies' mother cuddled them more, the next few days. One puppy especially I learned to love, a little wriggling mite with a bob tail for all the world like a rabbit's except that it hung down. There were a dozen or more bob tailed dogs in the village, all born so. My puppy was black, so I named him Sheep-isha or Blackie.

It must have been a funny sight to see me take my puppy out for a walk. Stooping slightly, I would lay the puppy between my shoulders, draw my tiny robe over his back, and walk off proud as any Indian mother of her new babe. The old mother dog would creep half out of her kennel, following me with anxious eyes; I was careful not to go out of her sight.

When the puppies were ten days old my grandmother brought in some fresh sage, the kind we use in a sweat lodge.

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She laid it in a pile beside the fire place and fetched in the four puppies, barring the skin door, so that the mother dog could not come in. We heard her whining pitifully outside.

"What are you going to do, grandmother?" I asked.

"I am going to smoke the puppies."

"Why do you do that?"

"Because the puppies are old enough to eat cooked meat, for their teeth come through the tenth day. The sage is a sacred plant, and the smoke will make them hungry, so that they will eat." As



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It Look Comfortable?*

she was speaking, I opened my little pet's jaws. Sure enough, four little white teeth were coming through the gums.

Turtle raked some coals out of the ashes and laid a handful of the green sage upon it; a column of thick, white smoke arose, ascending upward to the smoke hole.

My grandmother took my little black puppy in her hands and held its head in the smoke. The poor puppy struggled and whined pitifully; and thick spittle, like suds, came out of his mouth. I was frightened, thinking he was going to die.

"The smoke will make the puppy healthy," said Turtle. "Now let us see if he will grow up strong, to carry my little granddaughter's tent!"

She lifted the puppy, choking and half strangled, from the floor and let him fall so that he landed on his four feet. The puppy was young and weak and strangling; but his little legs stiffened, and he stood, without falling.

"Hey, hey," laughed my grandmother. "This is a strong dog. He will grow up to carry your tent." For in old times, when traveling, we Hidatsas made our dogs drag our tents bound on the poles.

My grandmother tried the other three puppies. One of them, not as strong as the rest, fell over on his side. "This dog will not grow up strong," said Turtle. "We will give him to our neighbor, who has asked for one."

She now lifted a clay pot from the ashes and emptied its contents into a flat bowl—some mush, boiled soft with lumps of buffalo fats. She set the bowl before

the puppies; they licked the mush up eagerly. My little black pet even gulped down a thick lump of fat.

Turtle laughed. "I told you that puppy is strong," she cried. "He will soon grow up to carry your tent. But to grow strong, puppies must be fed. That will be your work; see they do not starve!"

But if the task of feeding the puppies was mine, my good old grandmother helped. Indeed the whole family watched that they had enough. When fresh meat was brought in, we always boiled some and gave to the puppies. Scraps of meat, left from the meals, were also given them, but never raw. "Raw meat is not good for puppies; it will make

them sick," said my wise old grandmother.

As the dogs grew up we began to feed them raw meat. My grandmother also boiled corn for them, into a coarse mush. They were fond of this. As they grew older, any food, that turned sour, and so unfit for the family to eat, was given me for my doggies. They ate greedily and it did not seem to harm them.

Sometimes a deer was killed or an elk that was poor in flesh; this was cut up and given to the dogs of the village, and of course mine got their share. When my father went buffalo hunting, he would save for me the parts we could not use ourselves, if the hunt was not too far from the village.

When several buffaloes were killed, the hunters could not carry all the meat home and took only the best cuts. The next day anyone who wanted could go out and take the cast-away pieces for her dogs. Then, there were parts that we always threw away or gave to the dogs. The tough outside meat of a buffalo's hams we cut off and saved for the dogs; the meat inside, next the bone, we thought our very best; hunters were fond of roasting it before the fire, on two stones.

Even in famine times, we did not forget our dogs; but we sometimes had only soft bones to give them, that had been crushed and broken for boiling. The dogs gnawed these, and so got a little food.

We Hidatsas loved our good dogs, and were kind to them.

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Buffalo Bird-woman Tales

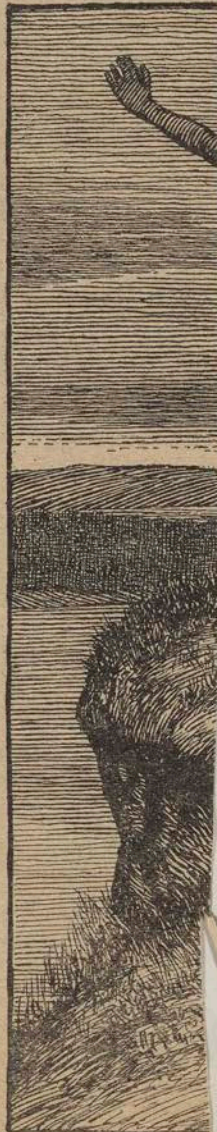
Gilbert L. Wilson. Ph. D.

Autumn twice came around and my puppy had grown into a romping dog; with the moon of Yellow Leaves, my tribe went again into winter camp. We returned to Like-a-Fishhook village rather early in the spring. Patches of snow lay on the ground and the ice was still firm on the Missouri when we crossed. We reached the village in mid-afternoon.

My father had two pack horses loaded with our stuff and our dogs dragged well-laden travois. While my mothers unpacked, my father made a fire. He drew flint and steel and with a bit of soft, rotten wood for tinder, struck a spark. In olden times the Hidatsas made fire with two sticks. "I saw very old men make fire thus when I was a lad," my grandfather once told me. I never saw it done myself.

Small Ankle put the spark caught in the tinder, in a little bunch of dry grass and waved this in the air until it blazed. He had raked together some bits of charcoal in the fireplace and on them laid a few dry wood splinters; to these he held the burning grass and soon had a fire.

There was a little firewood in the lodge, left from the previous autumn but not enough to keep the fire going



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long. As my mothers were still unpacking, my father offered to go out and get wood for the night. Gathering firewood, we thought, was women's work but my father was a kind man willing to help his wives.

From a newly-opened pack, Small Ankle drew a raw hide lariat and to one end fastened a short stick. There were some cottonwoods under the river bank not far from the village; into one of the largest trees he threw his lariat until the stick caught in some dead branches overhead. A sharp pull broke off the branches; my father gathered them up and bore them to the lodge.

Logs and dead wood lay along the river but were so wet from the snows that they would not quickly burn. My father knew the dead branches in the trees would be dried by the winds; he wanted dry wood to kindle a quick fire.

The next day after the morning meal,

Red Blossom took her ax and dragging a travois from its place against the fire screen, led the way out of the lodge; Many Strikes followed her. Our biggest dog, lying outside, saw them coming; he got up, shaking himself, wagging his tail, and barking *wu-wu-wu!* Our dogs were always ready to be harnessed; they liked to go to the woods, knowing they would be well fed afterwards.

This, our best dog, was named Akeekahee, or Took-From-Him. He belonged to Red Blossom. A woman owning a dog would ask some brave relative to name him for her and Red Blossom had asked my grandfather Big Cloud to name her dog. Once an enemy had stolen his horse but Big Cloud gave chase and re-took his horse from that bad enemy. For this, he named the dog Took-From-Him.

My mothers harnessed their dogs and started off. They returned a little after midday; first, Red Blossom, with a great pack of wood on her back, the ends of her packing strap in her hands; after her, Many Strikes; then the four dogs, marching one behind the other, Took-From-Him in the lead. Each dog dragged a travois loaded with wood.

My mothers dropped their loads before the entrance.

The dogs were unhitched and while old Turtle fed them, my mothers bore the wood into the lodge and piled it by the corral when it was handy to the fire.



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Red Blossom after her work



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I was eager to have my dog broken to harness and begged my grandmother to make a travois for him. "I will," she said, "but wait another moon. Your dog will then be fed fat, after the winter. A dog should be two years old and strong, when he is broken. To work a dog too young, or when he is weak, will hurt his back."

A month after this, I saw my mothers coming in one afternoon from woodgathering, dragging each a cottonwood pole about eight feet long; they peeled these of bark and laid them up on the corn stage to dry.

"What are the poles for?" I asked.

"They are for your travois," said my grandmother. "Your dog, Sheep-isha is old enough to work; and my little granddaugh-

ter, too, must learn to be useful."

I thought those poles would never dry! The heavy ladder we used to mount the stage, lay on the ground when not in use and I could not lift it to climb up to the poles; but I went every day to stand below and gaze up at them.

One afternoon my grandmother fetched the poles into the lodge. "They are dry now," she said. "I will make the travois frame."

With her big knife, she chopped and cut the greater ends of the poles to make them flat, so that they would run smooth on the ground. The smaller ends she crossed, for the joint, cutting a notch in each to make them fit. She bound the joint with strips of the big tendon in a buffalo's neck that we Indians call the *itsuta*. These strips drew taut as they dried, making the joint firm.

Turtle now drew a saddle or cushion, over the poles, just under the joint, sewing it down with buckskin thongs.

This saddle served to keep the dog from fretting his neck and shoulders against the poles.

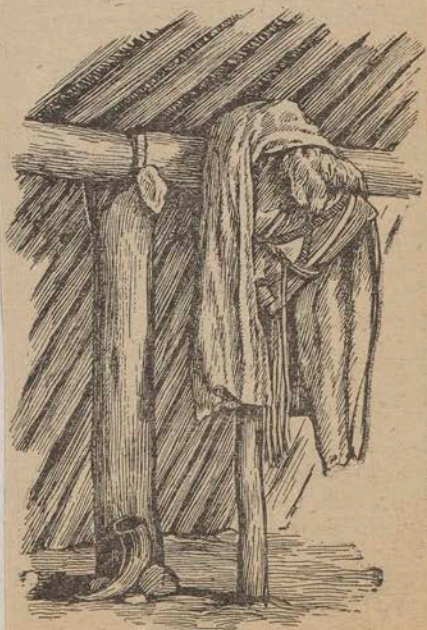
The hoop for the basket was of ash. My father webbed it. He cut a long, thin thong from the edges of a hide and soaked it to make it soft. Taking some wet paint in his palm he drew the thong through it, thus painting it red. He laced the thong over the hoop and my grandmother bound the basket in place.

The harness was a collar, to go around the dog's neck; and a breast thong, that was drawn across his chest, through a loop in the saddle, was lapped once or twice around one of the travois poles and was finally carried under the dog's body to the other pole, where it was made fast.

I could hardly wait to eat my breakfast the next morning, for my mothers had promised to take me with them to gather wood. "And we are going to begin training your dog today," they told me.

I knew a dog should be fed before he was harnessed and I saved half my breakfast meat to give to mine. Owning a dog and invited thus to go with my mothers, I felt that in spite of my girlish years I was almost a woman now.

Breakfast ended, Red Blossom fetched the new travois and laid it over my dog's back. He looked up, puzzled then sank to the ground and lay wagging



Medicine Post with Beautifully Painted Parfleche Bag and Sacred Relics

his tail from side to side, sweeping a clean place in the dust. My mother

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bound the collar about his neck; and drew the breast thong, and fastened it in place. While she was doing this, I gently patted my dog's head.

"Nah!" said my mother, "Come!" But my doggie was a bit frightened. He twisted about, trying to rid himself of the travois but only hurt himself; he looked up and whined. Red Blossom tied a thong to his collar and put the end in my hand. "Lead him," she said. "He will follow the other dogs." She led off, Many Strikes behind her; the dogs rose and followed after, in a line.

I tugged at my dog's thong, pursing my lips and making a whistling sound. My doggie understood; he rose to his feet and seeing the other dogs moving off, followed after the last.

We thus came to the woods about a mile and a half from our village. The dogs sank in their tracks, to rest; and my mothers searched for branches and dead-and-down wood, which they cut in lengths of two feet, or a little more. They piled these in the path near the dogs.

When they had cut enough wood, my mothers lifted each travois by its basket and turned it so that the dog's nose was pointed toward the village; they loaded the travois with a double armful of wood, bound to the basket with two thongs. My mothers then lifted each a load to her own back and started to the village.

I did not carry any load myself, as my shoulders were not yet strong but I led my dog. Not a very big load was put on him, as it was his first. I called to him, tugging gently at the thong;

seeing the other dogs ahead, he followed willingly.

Old Turtle awaited us at the door. "Grandmother," I called joyfully, "my dog has brought home a load of wood. He did not try to run away!" Turtle laughed, and helped me unload.

That night I sat by the fire petting my good dog; now and then I slipped him a bit of meat I had saved from my supper. My father had thrown some dry wood on the fire, making it blaze up yellow; he sat on his couch, with his long pipe, which he laid down now and then between smokes. I heard the lodge door raised, and looked up; Coyote Eyes, a Ree Indian, was coming around the screen.

"Hau!" cried my father, making a place for him on the couch; he politely handed his pipe to the Ree, who took long pulls, blowing the smoke from his nostrils.

Coyote Eyes gave the pipe back to

my father. "That is a good dog," he said, looking at me; "I know a story of my tribe about two dogs!"

Being a little girl, I did not think it proper for me to talk to a stranger but my father answered for me, "What is the story?"

"In the beginning, my tribe came out of an opening in the earth," said Coyote Eyes. "They journeyed long until they came to the Missouri River. 'Let us ascend the river,' they said, 'and seek a place to build our villages.' They were weary of journeying.

"They had two dogs in the camp. One was black; his name was Death. The other was white; and her name was Sickness. These dogs were asleep when the tribe broke camp the next morning; so eager were the people to go, that they forgot to waken the dogs.

"The third day after, the people saw two great fires sweeping toward them over the prairie. The women cried aloud; all thought they would die.

"When the fires came near, the people saw they were their two dogs, Death and Sickness.

"'Do not fear,' said the dogs. 'Our hearts are not all bad. It is true we will bite you because you forgot us. But we will also live with you and be your friends. We will carry your burdens; when we die, you shall eat us!'

"The dogs grew old. The white one died and her skin became the squash. Now our squashes are of different colors, white, grey, yellow, spotted, just as are dogs. These squashes we eat; and we also eat dog meat, for before he died, the black dog said, 'You shall eat my flesh!'

"And to this day, when our Ree people sicken and die, we say 'We are bitten by Sickness and Death!'"

My father smiled. "We Hidatsas do not eat dogs," he said; and then to me, "Little daughter, it is bedtime!"

I did not always obey my mothers for like all little girls, I was naughty sometimes but I dared not disobey my father!

I put my dog out of the lodge and went to bed.

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MY FATHER'S earth lodge in Like-a-Fishhook Village was a large one, with floor measuring more than forty feet across. In the center of the floor was the fireplace. A screen of puncheons set upright in a trench, stood between the fireplace and the door. This screen shut out draughts and kept out the dogs.

The screen was carried quite to the sloping wall on the right; but on the left, there was space enough for a passage from the door to the fire. Right and left in an Indian lodge are reckoned as one stands at the fireplace, looking toward the door. We thought an earth lodge was alive and had a spirit like a human body; and that its front was like a face, with the door for a mouth.

In front of the fireplace and against the puncheon screen, was my father's bed. Forked posts, eighteen inches high, stood in the dirt floor; on poles, laid in the forks, rested cottonwood planks, over which were thrown buffalo robes. A skin pillow stuffed with antelope hair, lay at one end of the bed.

The beds of the rest of the family stood in the back of the lodge, against the wall; they were less simply made than my father's, being each covered with an old tent skin drawn over a frame of posts and poles. The bedding was of buffalo skins; as these could not be washed, my mothers used to hang them to air on the corn stage on sunny days.

Most of the earth lodges, at least, most of the larger ones, had each a bed like my father's, before the fireplace; for here was the warmest place in the lodge. Usually the oldest in the family slept in this bed.

My father's bed, not being enclosed, made a good lounging place by day; and here he sat to smoke or chat with his friends. My mothers, too, used to sit here to peel wild turnips or make ready the daily meals.

Two or three sticks usually burned in the fireplace, not piled one upon the other as white men pile them but laid with ends meeting together; as the ends burned, the sticks were pushed in, keeping alive a small but hot fire. Every night, the last thing my father did, was to cover one of these burning sticks with ashes that it might keep fire until morning.

Unless he had spent the night with some of his cronies, my father was the first to rise in the morning. He would go to the fireplace, draw out the buried coal, lay some little dry sticks upon it and blow with his breath until the fire caught; sometimes he fanned the coal with a goose wing. A little column of blue smoke would rise toward the smoke hole and my father would call, "Up, little daughter; up, sons! Get up, wives! The sun is up. To the river—hasten—for your bath!" And he would go up on the roof to look if enemies were about and if his horses were safe.

My mothers were already up when I crept from my bed, still sleepy but glad that morning had come.

If the weather was cold, we did not go to the river to bathe. An earthen pot full of water stood by one of the posts near the fire; it rested in a ring of bark, to keep it from falling. Red Blossom would dip a big horn spoon full of water, fill her mouth, and blow it over her palms to wash her face. She next washed my face in the same way. I did not like it very much; and I would shut my eyes tight and pucker my face when I felt the cold water. Red Blossom would say, "Why do you pucker up your face? You look like a piece of old, dried buffalo skin!"

Her face washed, Red Blossom sat on the edge of her bed to finish her toilet. She had a little bag of fawn's skin, embroidered with red porcupine quills. From this bag she drew a porcupine tail mounted on a stick, with the sharp points of the quills cut off; it made a very good hair brush. Red Blossom brushed her hair smooth, parting it in two braids that fell over either shoulder, nearly hiding her ears. She was no longer young but her black tresses had not a grey hair in them.

Red Blossom now opened her paint bag, of native red ochre. She put a little buffalo grease on her two fingers, pressed the tips lightly in the dry paint, and rubbed them over her cheeks and

Chapter D



Yellow Corn, Buffalo Bird Woman's Granddaughter. She Has Picked a Squash. The Hidatsas Believe That Squashes Once Were Dogs Variouslly Striped and Spotted

face. She also rubbed a little red into the part of her hair.

When I was a little girl, we Indian people all painted our faces; and when there was a dance, and the villagers came in embroidered shirts and leggings, and with faces painted, all was bright with color, like the prairie when flowers bloom. Now only a few old men paint, and our Hidatsa people go about with pale faces, like dead men from the Ghosts' village.

Meanwhile the pot had been put on the fire. We Indians did not eat many things at a meal, as white men do. Usually breakfast was of one thing, often buffalo meat, dried, and boiled to soften it. When a buffalo was killed, the meat was cut into thin slices, some parts into strips; these were dried in the open air, over the earth lodge fire, or on the smoke of a small fire out of doors. For breakfast, an earthen pot was filled with water, dried meat was put in, and the water was brought to a boil. Red Blossom used to lift out the pieces of steaming meat with a sharp stick, laying them on a piece of clean raw hide.

A rough bench stood back of the fire-place, a cottonwood plank, with ends resting on two blocks chopped from a tree trunk. My grandmother, Turtle, sat on this bench to eat her meals. My mothers sat beside her, or on the floor near the meat they were serving. My father ate sitting on the edge of his couch. A wooden bowl, with a heaping portion of the steaming meat was set before each. Our fingers did for forks.

Boiling the meat in water made a thin broth which we used for a hot drink. It was very good, tasting like white man's beef tea. We had few cups; but we had big spoons made of buffalo horn; and ladles of mountain sheep horn. Ei-

ther of these did very well for drinking cups.

Another morning dish was mapeé-nakapa, pounded-meal mush. From the cache pit on the left of the fire place, Red Blossom would take a string of dried squash; for squashes, sliced and dried, were strung on long grass strings. She cut off a length and tied the ends together, making a ring four or five inches in diameter. This ring and a double handful of beans she dropped in a pot of water, and set on the fire. When boiled, she lifted the ring out with a stick, mashed the softened squash slices in a bowl, and put them back in the pot.

Meanwhile my other mother, or old Turtle, had parched some corn in a clay pot; and toasted some buffalo fats on a stick over the coals. Red Blossom now pounded the parched corn and toasted fats together in the corn mortar, and stirred the pounded mass into the pot with the squash and beans. The mess was soon done; Red Blossom dipped it out into our bowls with a horn spoon.

We ate with horn spoons or with mussel shells; for we Hidatsas had few metal spoons in those days. There was a shelf, or bench, at one side of the room, under the sloping roof, where were stored wooden bowls, uneaten foods, horn spoons and the mussel shells that we used for tea spoons. When I was a little girl nearly every family owned such shells, worn smooth and shiny from use.

After breakfast, unless it was in the corn season, when they went to the field, my mothers tidied up the lodge. They had short brooms of buckbrush; with these they swept the floor, stooping over and drawing the broom forward with a sidewise motion. As my father stabled his pony in the lodge at night, there was a good deal of litter to be taken out. Red Blossom used to scrape her sweeping into a skin basket, which she bore on her back to the river bank and emptied.

Other duties were then taken up; and there were plenty of them! Moccasins were mended. Deer and buffalo skins were dressed, or scraped of hair with an elk horn scraper armed with a steel blade; in old times, I have heard, the blade was of flint. In winter when the women had no corn to hoe, leggings and shirts were embroidered.

There was a good deal of visiting in our lodge for my father was one of the chief men of the village and always kept open house. "If a man would be chief," we said, "he should be ready to feed the poor and strangers." A pot with buffalo meat, or corn and beans cooking, was always on the fire in my father's lodge. His friends, and other chief men of the village, often came in

to talk over affairs. A visitor came in without knocking but did not sit down until asked.

Friends of my mothers also came in to sit and chat, often joining them at whatever task they might be doing. Red Blossom would set a bowl of food before each; what she could not eat the



Wolf Chief, Buffalo Bird Woman's Brother. Hero of Twelve War Parties and Taker of Several Scalps but Now a Peaceful Trader

guest took home with her. It was impolite to leave any uneaten food, as that would mean, "I do not like your cooking—it is unfit to eat!"

My mothers were good housekeepers and kept the ground about the lodge entrance swept as clean as the lodge floor. Many families were careless, and cast floor sweepings, scraps of broken bones, and other litter on the ground about the lodges. In time this refuse made little piles and became a nuisance, so that people could not walk between the lodges with comfort. The Black Mouths then went through the village and ordered the women to clean up. The Black

Mouths were a society of men, of about forty years of age. They acted as police and punished any one who broke the camp laws.

These clean-ups were ordered every once in a while. I do not know how often but they came, I think, in the summer, about twice a month. They were always ordered by the Black Mouths.

One morning, I remember, just after breakfast, I heard singing outside, as of

a dozen or more men. I started to run out to see what it was, but my mothers cried, "Do not go; it is the Black Mouths!" I thought my mothers looked rather scared. We were still speaking, when I heard the tramp of feet; the door lifted and the Black Mouths came into the lodge.

They looked very terrible, painted with the lower half of the face black; and many, but not all, had the upper half of the face red. Some had eagle feathers in their hair and all were wrapped in robes, or blankets. Some carried guns; others had sticks about as long as one's arm. They used these sticks to beat any woman who refused to help in the clean-up.

I fled to my father but dared not cry out; for I, too, was scared.

"One of you women go out and help clean up the village," said the Black Mouths. They spoke sternly and several of them at once.

Like all the other women, my mothers were afraid of the Black Mouths. "We



Indian Woman Packing a Load of Wood. The Packing Strap Passes Across Her Shoulders Around the Load and the Ends are Held in the Hands. These Loads Are Often Heavy

will go," they said and Red Blossom caught up broom and skin basket and went out.

The Black Mouths went also and I followed to see what they did. They entered another lodge not far away. I heard voices, then the report of a gun and a woman screamed. After a time, the Black Mouths came out and before them went a woman, very angry but much frightened. She had not moved quickly enough to get her basket and

one of the Black Mouths had fired off his gun at her feet, to frighten her. The gun was loaded only with powder.

After they had made the rounds of the village, the Black Mouths returned to the lodge of their society's "keeper," a man named Crow Paunch. Soon we heard singing and drumming and knew they were singing their society's songs.

When they had sung three or four times, there was silence for a while, no doubt because a pipe was being passed. Then all came out and made the rounds a second time, to see if the work of cleaning was done and to hurry up laggards. The village was all cleaned before noon; but some women got their work done sooner than others.

After the clean-up, the children of the village came out to play in the spaces between the lodges, now swept clean and smooth. The boys especially liked to play at throw sticks—light willow rods which they darted against the ground, whence they bounded to a great distance.

For interpretation of band father, ^{aunt} band aunt, see "Hidatsa Age Societies"; of band cousin, "Wolf-chief's Account of Bullman's War Party"; ^{customs of} of band customs, ^{and other} other papers, ^{relations} passim, this series. G.L.W. ^{various pertaining to the band, other papers of this series. passim.}

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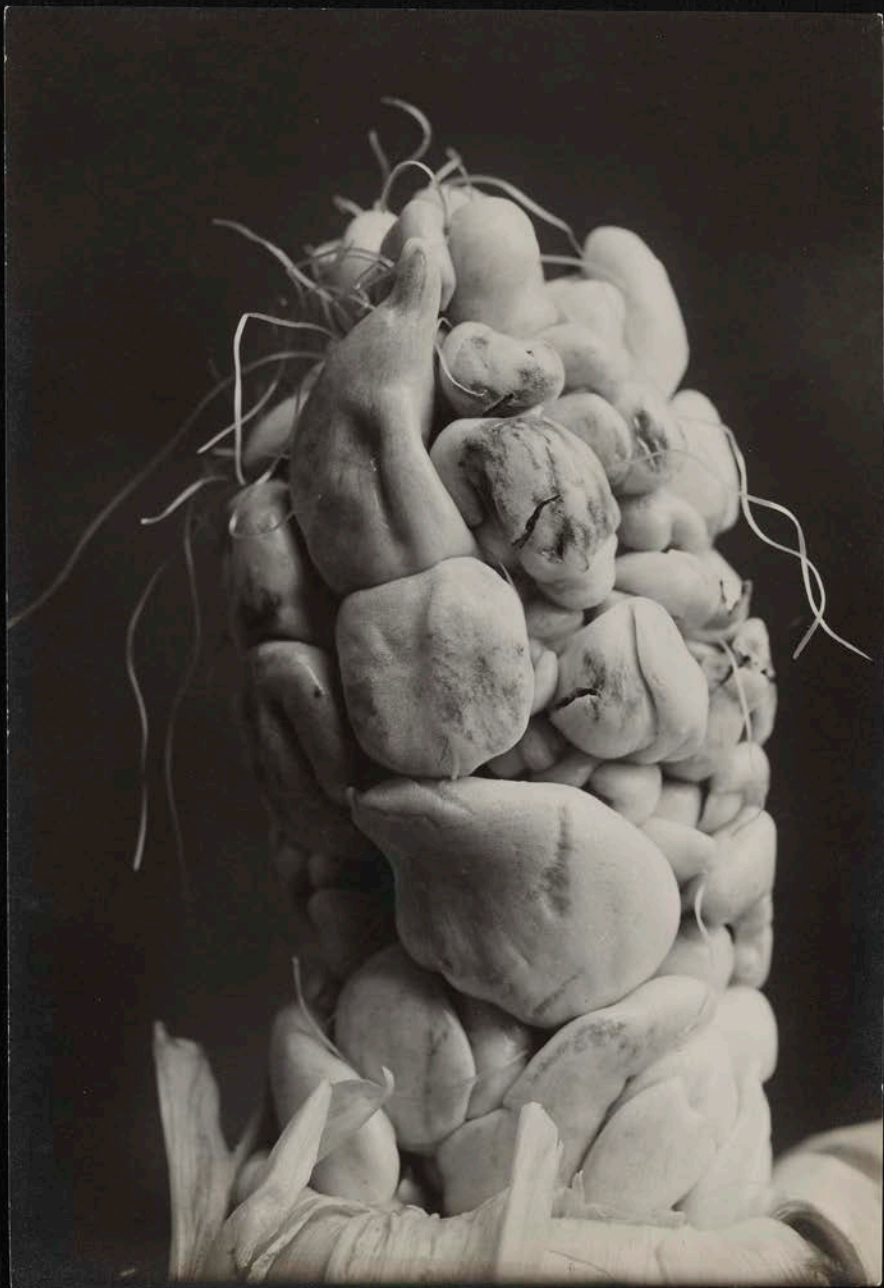
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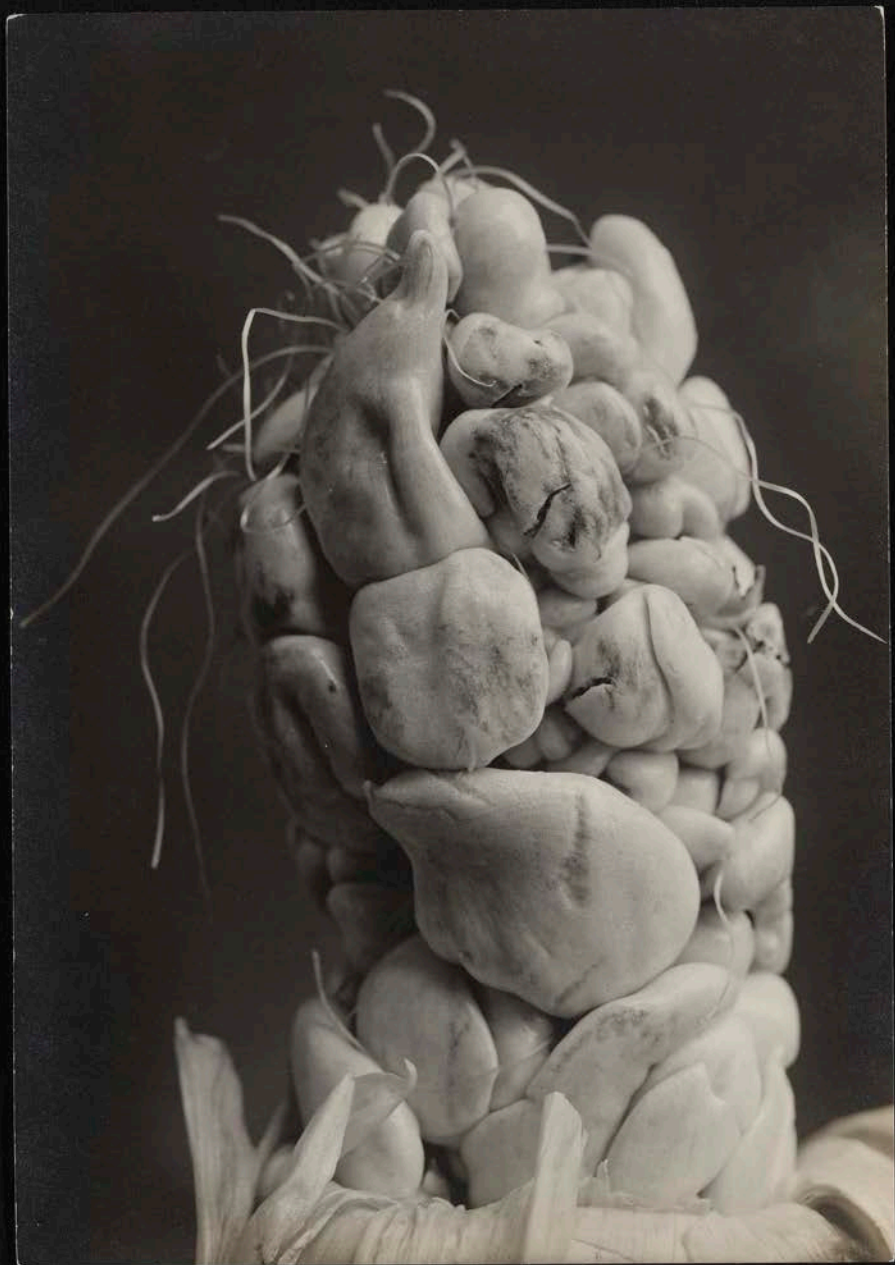
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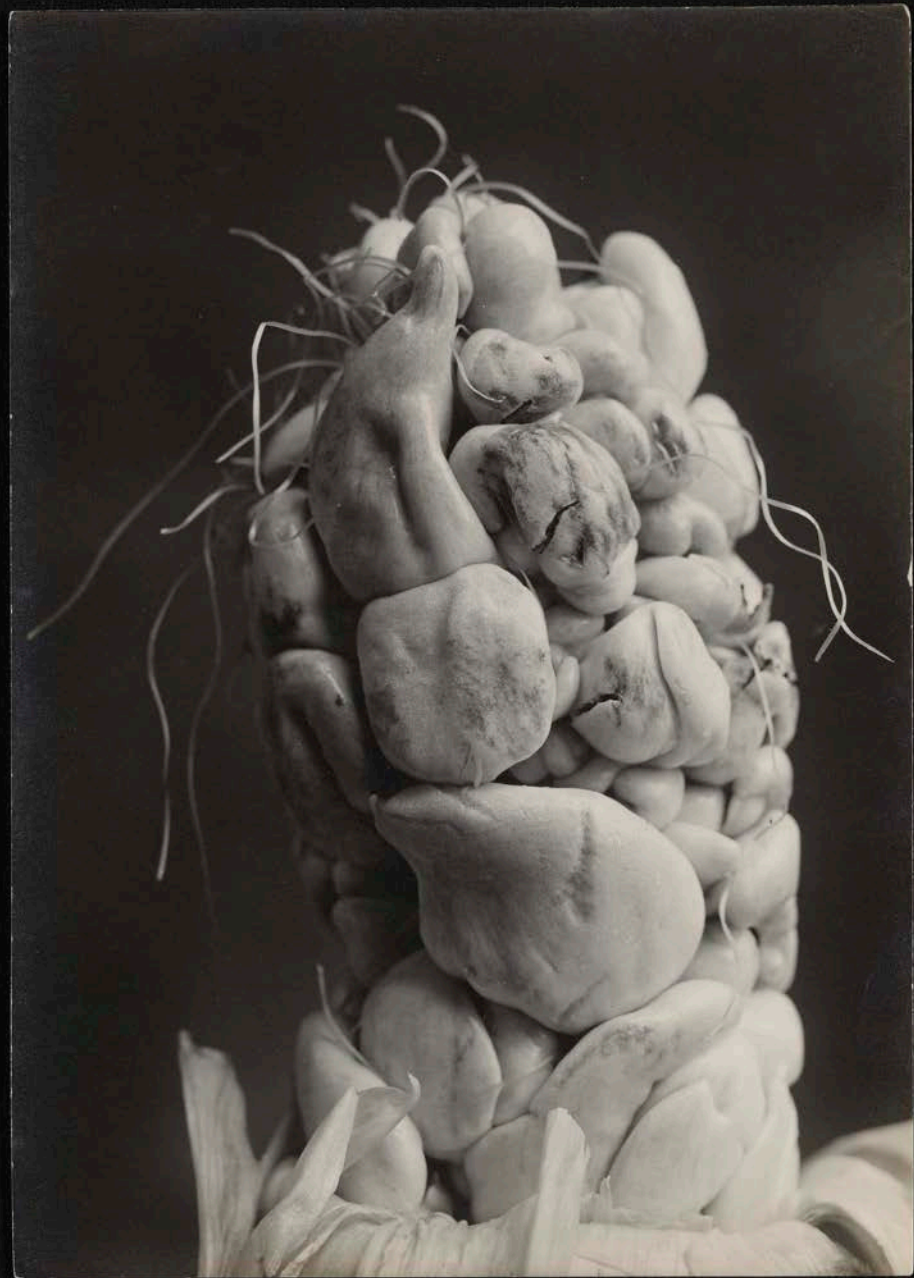
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"Buffalo Bird Woman"

Childhood with the Hidatsas, the Fir

By Gilbert L. W

First Story

R M E R

Pa

—Her Own Life Story

st Corn Growers of the Northwest

uson. Ph. D.

I WAS born in an earth lodge at the mouth of the Knife River, in what is now North Dakota, three years after the smallpox winter. The Mandans and my own tribe, the Hidatsas, had removed some years before from the Heart River, where firewood was growing scarce, and had built the Five Villages, as we called them, on either bank of the Knife where it flows into the Missouri. Here were rich bottomlands for our corn fields, timber for posts and beams for our lodges; and the dead wood that floated down the current of either river helped to keep us in fuel.

When I was ten days old my mother made a feast and asked an old man called Nothing-but-water to give me a name. He named me Good Way; "For I pray the gods," he said, "that our little girl may go through life by a good way; that she may grow up to be a good woman, never quarreling, nor stealing, nor doing evil, and have good luck all her days."

However, as a babe I proved rather sickly, and my father determined to give me a new name, hoping, as he said, that this might make my little body stronger. We Indians thought that sickness was from the spirits; and as a child's name was a kind of prayer, a change of name, we thought, sometimes prevailed upon the gods to help a sick babe.

Named for the Gods

For these reasons my father called me Maheedi-wea, or Buffalo Bird Woman. In the language of my tribe, *wea* means girl, or woman; *maheedi* means cow-bird, or buffalo-bird, as this little brown bird is called in the buffalo country. I do not know why my father chose this name. Perhaps he had had a dream or vision of buffalo birds. His gods, I know, were birds, and these we thought had great mystery power.

I am still called by the name my father gave me; and as I am now a very old woman, I think the name must have brought me good luck from the gods.

My mother's name was Want-to-be-a-woman. She was one of four sisters, all wives of my father. I was still a wee girl when smallpox took away my mother and one of her sisters. My father's remaining wives were Red Blossom and Strikes-many-women; and I was taught to call them my two mothers. Such was our Indian custom. I do not think either could have been kinder to me if I had been an own daughter.

I remember nothing of our life at Five Villages. Afterwards, my great-grandmother, White Corn, told me something of it. I used to sleep in her bed when the nights were cold.

"The Mandans lived in two of the villages, the Hidatsas in three," she said.



A year or so ago a great deal of interest was manifested, in Northwestern agricultural circles, in the belated discovery that certain tribes of Indians, on the Upper Missouri, in Western North Dakota, had been growing and breeding corn for generations. The man who has done more than any other to learn of their methods of corn growing, as well as their many interesting tribal customs and ceremonies, is Dr. Gilbert L. Wilson, Field Collector for the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Dr. Wilson has spent many summers with the Hidatsa Indians, one of these tribes, and has gained their innermost confidence. From Buffalo Bird Woman, the "Keeper of the Corn," he has gleaned the living facts of Indian agriculture, Indian customs and, in very truth, Indian life as the Indians live it and have lived it since legend began.

In this issue of *THE FARMER*, Dr. Wilson begins a series of tales, told by Buffalo Bird Woman herself, that should prove a joy and a revelation to our readers. "Childhood" is described herewith in Buffalo Bird Woman's own words. Follow the development of her life in later issues, and learn from her the Indians' agricultural lore.

"There were many little children and old people in the lodges. The villages were fortified with posts stood on end; in front of the row of posts, ran a deep ditch. We raised corn and squashes, and there was always plenty of buffalo meat. We were happy until the smallpox came. More than half of my

"All the villagers believed that Yellow Horse had been dead. He even told them what he had seen in the ghost land!"

After the smallpox year, the Sioux fell on our weakened tribes, waylaying hunting parties that left the village, or lurking in the near-by timber to slay or

tribe died in the smallpox winter; and of the Mandans, only a remnant was left.

"My husband, Yellow Horse, was one of those who died. There were so many dead that there was no time to make burial scaffolds; and his clan-fathers bore him to the burial grounds and laid logs over him to keep off the wolves.

"That night the people heard a voice calling, 'A-ha-hey! I have waked up. Come for me!'

"It is a ghost!" said the people; and they feared to go.

"Some of the braver young men, listening, thought they recognized Yellow Horse's voice. They went out to the burial grounds and called, 'Are you alive?'

"Yes, I have waked up!" cried Yellow Horse.

"The young men unbound him and carried him to the village; he was too weak to walk.

capture some woman or child. The Mandan and Hidatsa chiefs counseled together, and decided to remove further up the Missouri. "We will build a new village and dwell together as one tribe," they said.

The site chosen for the new village was at a place called Like-a-fishhook Point. It was a narrow bench of land that jutted into a bend of the Missouri. A ditch and a fence of upright logs, the chiefs thought, could be made to protect the village on the land side.

Our removal to the new site was made in the spring, when I was four years old. I remember nothing of the march thither. My mothers have told me that there were few horses then owned by the tribe, and that most of the villagers' household stuff was carried on the backs of women, or on *travois* dragged by dogs.

The march was led by the chiefs and medicine men of the tribe. My grand-



Buffalo Bird Woman, the Teller of This Tale. In the Center, an Indian Gardener is Cultivating Her Corn. To the Right, a Young Child, and to the Left, the Interpreter, Tsakakakashish, or G.



White Call and Good Road, Hidatsa Indians of North Dakota in Ceremonial Attire

father was one of these; his name was Missouri River. On the pommel of his saddle he carried his sacred objects—two human skulls, which tradition said had been the skulls of two thunder eagles, who had changed themselves into Indians. Young men who owned ponies were sent ahead to hunt deer, or galloped up and down the line to see that no child strayed off to fall into the hands of our enemies, the Sioux.

The earth lodges of my tribe were real houses of posts and logs, roofed over with earth; but every family owned, besides, one or more tepees, or skin tents, for use when traveling. In these tents our tribes camped the first summer, while the first clearings for fields were being made.

The labor of clearing fell chiefly to the women, although the older men helped. Young men were expected to be off on a war party or hunting. Our small, first year's clearings could not give us large crops, and for winter we must have abundance of meat, dried and stored away. We had few guns in the tribe then, and hunting buffaloes with bow and arrows was thought to be anything but sport. Only men in the vigor of youth could stand it.

Keepers of the Corn

My mothers were industrious women, and began their work of clearing almost as soon as camp had been pitched. My old grandmother, Turtle, chose the ground for our first field. It was in a rich piece of bottomland that lay along the Missouri a little east of the camp.

My mothers had brought seed corn with them from the Five Villages; also bean, squash and sunflower seed.

I am not sure that they were able to plant any corn the first season; I think they planted some squashes. I am told that when the squash harvest came in, my grandmother picked out a long, green-striped squash for me, for a doll baby. I carried this about on my back, snuggled down under my calfskin robe, just as I had seen Indian mothers carry their babies; and at night I sang my squash doll to sleep.

In the evening, my father often sat on his couch by the fire and sang me to sleep. He had many songs. Some of them were for little boys only; others were for little girls. Of the girls' songs, there was one I liked very much. It was something like this:

"My sister asks me to go out and stretch the smoke flap.

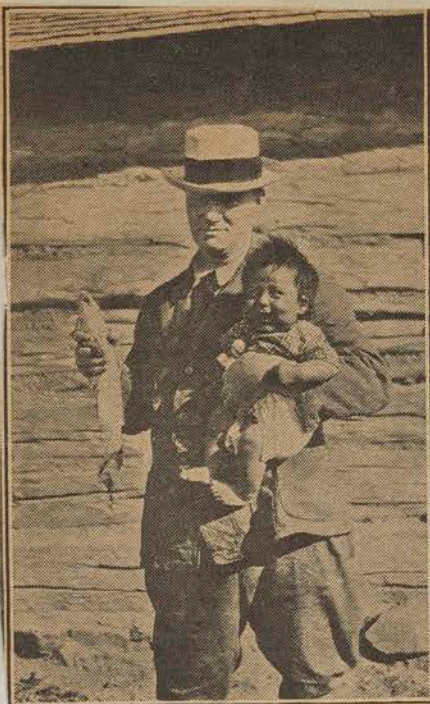
My armbands and my ear-rings shine!
I go through the woods where the elm trees grow.

Why do the berries not ripen?
What berries do you like best—the red?
the blue?"

This song I used to try to sing to my squash doll; but I found it hard to remember the words. My grandchildren

(Continued on page 1662)

Second Chapter



Crops with a Bone Hoe. At the Right, Dr. Wilson
Woodbird, the Son of Buffalo Bird Woman

now play with white man's dolls, that have red dresses and blue eyes; but I do not know that they are any happier than was I, with my squash doll!

Before autumn came, the villagers had begun building their earth lodges. In this work the men helped, especially in the heavy lifting. Our medicine men had laid out the plan of the village. There was to be a big open circle in the center, with the lodges of the chiefs and principal men opening upon it. Aside from these, earth lodges might be placed wherever the owners wished.

Building an earth lodge was far from being a simple task. Forked posts and beams had to be found, and cut, and let lie to cure. A hundred rafters must be cut and trimmed for the roof. Puncheons must be split to make the walls, willows and dry grass gathered, and sods cut. Few of the lodges had been completed when November forced our villagers to go into winter camp.

In Winter Quarters

The winter village was always built down in the timber of the Missouri bottoms, out of reach of the chilling prairie winds. Like our summer village, it was made up of earth lodges; but as these were small, and quite roughly put together, they could be built in a few days. We made camp this winter not very far from Like-a-fishhook Point.

My father's winter lodge was built in the usual way, with earth heaped thick on the roof, to keep in the warmth, and

rows of thorny rose bushes leaned against the walls without, to keep the dogs from climbing up on the roof. Unless this was done, the dogs would dig holes in the roof. The fire-place stood in the center of the floor within; and around the walls stood the family beds, six of them, each covered with an old tent skin and with robes for blankets.

At best, however, a winter lodge was never very warm. It was usual to add a "twin lodge," as we called it, if there were old people or children in the family. This was a small lodge, peaked like a tepee, but covered with bark and earth. A covered passageway led from the twin to the main lodge. The twin lodge had two uses. In it, elderly or feeble persons could sit, snug and warm, on the coldest days; and the children of the household used it as a playhouse. I can just remember playing in our twin lodge; doubtless I pretended to

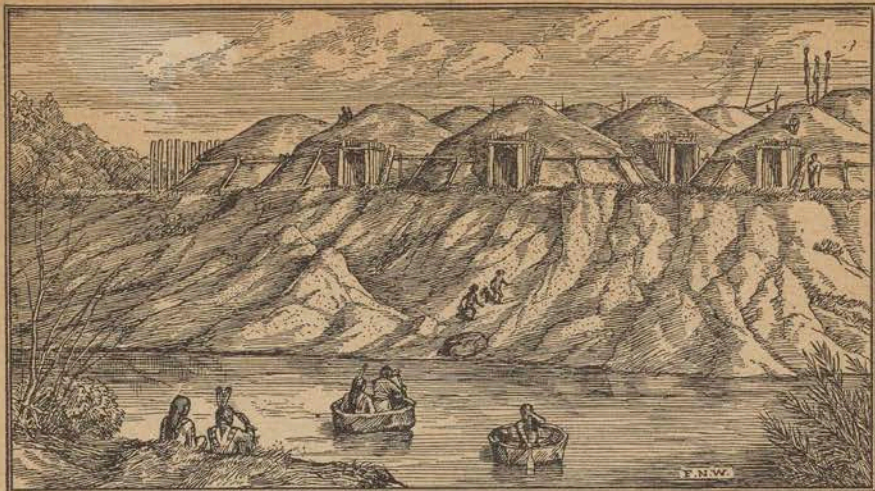
keep house, sang my dollies to sleep, and made little feasts with bits of food that my mothers gave me.

Early in the spring, the villagers returned to Like-a-fishhook Point and took up in earnest the labors of clearing and planting their fields. Each family had its own field, laid out in the timbered bottomlands near the village; but this was always at a place where there were no large trees to fell. Clearing was done with iron hoes and axes, gotten of the white traders. However, there were three old women in the village who still used the old-fashioned, bone-bladed hoe for hoeing their corn. My grandmother, Turtle, was one of these; and she even used a wooden digging stick for breaking the soil of the newly cleared ground of our family field.

Digging Stick and Bone Hoe

I have seen many digging sticks made since, for they are still in use in my tribe for digging wild turnips. The best kind is made from a stout ash sapling, with a slight bend near the root. Here the stick is cut to a three-cornered point, well oiled with bone butter, and charred slightly by tying a bunch of dry grass about the oiled point and firing it. This charring makes the point almost as hard as iron.

But I think my grandmother was the very last woman in the village to use a bone hoe. It was made of the shoulder bone of a buffalo, set in a light wood



An Old Hidatsa Village on the Bank of the Missouri, with Earth Lodges Drawn True to Type

handle split for the purpose. Rawhide thongs bound the blade firmly in place. The handle was rather short, and my grandmother stooped as she hoed.

She used to keep the hoe under her bed. As my little companions and I grew a little older, the hoe was quite a curiosity to us. Sometimes we would try to take it out to look at it, when



"In the evening, my father often sat on his couch by the fire and sang me to sleep. Around the walls stood the family beds, each covered with an old tent skin and with robes for blankets"

Turtle would cry, "Na, na! Go away! Let that hoe alone; you children will break it."

We children were a little bit afraid of Turtle.

Buffalo Bird Woman's Story

How the Hidatsas Cleared and Prepared Their Fields for Corn and Garden Crops—The Second Chapter in the Life of Buffalo Bird Woman, as Told by Herself

To Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

(Chapter 2)

IF I was a little bit afraid of my grandmother, Turtle, I loved her nevertheless; and I know she was fond of me. After the death of my mother, Want-to-be-a-woman, it fell to Turtle to care for me much of the time. There were other children in the household, and with so many mouths to feed, my two other mothers—as I called them—had plenty of work to do. My own mother died, I think, when I was six years old.

Indians are great story-tellers. Especially are they fond of telling tales around the lodge fire in the long evenings of autumn and winter. My father and his cronies used sometimes to sit up all night, drumming and singing and telling stories. Young men often came with a gift of robe or knife, and asked him to tell them tribal tales.

I was too young yet to understand many of these, but my grandmother used to tell me stories as she sat or worked by the fire.

The Mandans' Gift of Corn

One evening I was trying to parch an ear of corn over the coals. I had thrust the ear on the end of a stick, as I had seen my mothers do; but my baby fingers were not strong enough to fix the ear firmly, and it fell off into the coals

and began to burn. My mouth puckered, and I was ready to cry.

My grandmother laughed. "You should put only half the ear on the stick," she said. "That is the way the Mandans did when they first gave us corn!"

I dropped the stick and, forgetting the burning ear, asked eagerly, "How did the Mandans give us corn, grandmother? Tell me the story!"

Turtle picked up the stick and raked the burning ear from the ashes. "The gods gave the Indians corn to eat, not to waste," she said. "Some of the kernels on this cob are very well parched." She shelled off a handful and put one of the hot kernels in her mouth.

"I will tell you the story," she continued. "I had it from my mother when I was a little girl.

"Our Hidatsa people once lived under the waters of Devil's Lake. Here they built earth lodges and lived much as we do now. Some hunters one day discovered the root of a grape vine growing downward; they climbed it and found themselves on this earth. Others climbed the vine until half the tribe had escaped; but the vine broke under the weight of a fat woman, leaving half the tribe still under the lake.



The Arts of War and Peace: an Hidatsa Bowman—Wolf Chief, Brother of Buffalo Bird Woman—Shooting with Bow and Arrow; an Hidatsa Woman with a String of Wild Turnips

"Those who had safely climbed the vine built villages of earth lodges, such as our tribe still builds. They lived by hunting; but some very old men say that they planted small fields with ground beans and wild potatoes. As yet the Hidatsas knew nothing of corn or squashes.

"One day a war party, wandering west to the Missouri River, saw on the other side a village of earth lodges like their own. It was a village of the Mandans. But neither the Hidatsas nor the Mandans would cross over, fearing each that the others might be enemies.

"It was in the fall of the year, and the Missouri River was running low, so that an arrow could be shot from shore to shore. The Mandans parched some ears of ripe corn, with the grain on the cob; then broke the ears in pieces, thrust the pieces on the points of arrows, and shot them across the river. 'Eat!' they called. The word for 'eat' is the same in the Hidatsa and Mandan languages.

"The Hidatsas ate of the parched corn. They returned to their village and said: 'We have found a people on the Missouri River who have a strange kind of grain. We ate of it and found it very good!'

"Some time after this, a party of Hidatsas went to visit the Mandans. The Mandan chief took an ear of corn, broke it in two and gave half to the Hidatsas for seed. This half-ear the Hidatsas took home, and soon every family in the tribe was planting corn."

My father had been listening, as he sat smoking on the other side of the fire. "I know that story," he said. "The

name of the Mandan chief was Good-fur-robe."

My grandmother then put me to bed. I was so sleepy that I did not notice she had eaten up all the corn I had parched!

Claiming and Clearing the Fields

Winter came again, and spring; and as soon as the soil could be worked, my two mothers and Turtle began clearing new ground for our field. Clearing land was hard work, and only a small piece of ground could be broken the first year; but, each season, a little more was cleared and added to it.

I was too little as yet to note very much of what was done. I remember my father had set boundary marks—whether wooden stakes or little piles of earth or stones, I do not now recollect—at the corners of the field we claimed. My two mothers and Turtle began at one end of the field and worked for-

ward. My mothers had heavy iron hoes, but Turtle used her old-fashioned ash digging-stick.

With their hoes, my mothers cut the long grass that covered much of the ground, and bore it off the field to be burned. They next dug and loosened the soil in places for the corn hills, which they laid off in rows. These hills they planted. Then all summer they worked with their hoes, clearing and breaking the soil between the hills.

Small trees and bushes, I know, must have been cut off with axes; but I remember little of this, most of such work having been done a year or two

before when I was quite small. My father once told me that in very old times, when clearing a new field, my people first dug the corn hills with digging-sticks and afterwards worked between the hills with bone hoes.

I remember this season's work the more distinctly from a dispute that arose between my mothers and two of their neighbors, Lone Woman and Goes-to-next-timber.

These two women were clearing fields adjoining ours, the three fields meeting at a corner. I have said that my father, to set up claim to our field, had placed marks, one of them in the corner at which met the fields of Lone Woman and Goes-to-next-timber. While my mothers were busy clearing and digging up the other end of their field, their two neighbors invaded this marked-off corner; Lone Woman had even dug up a small part before she was discovered.

My mothers showed Lone Woman the mark my father had placed. "This land is ours," they said; "but we will pay you and Goes-to-next-timber for any rights you may think are yours. We do not want our neighbors to bear us any hard feelings."

We Indians thought our fields were very sacred. We did not like to quarrel about our lands. A family's right to a field having once been set up, no one thought of disputing it; for if any one tried to seize land belonging to another, we thought some evil would come upon him, as that some one of his family would die or have some bad sickness.

There is a story of a man who had been a black bear and, therefore, had much magic power; but he tried to catch eagles from another man's pit, and had his mind taken away from him for doing so!

Turtle's Method of Cultivation

Lone Woman and Goes-to-next-timber having withdrawn, my grandmother, Turtle, undertook to clear and break the ground of the corner that had been in dispute. She was an industrious woman. Often when my mothers were busy in

the earth lodge. Turtle would go out to work in the field, and she would take me along with her for company. I was quite too little to help her, but I liked to watch her work.

With her digging-stick, Turtle dug up a little round place in the center of the corner; and, circling around this from day to day, she gradually enlarged the dug-up space. Resting the handle of her digging-stick against her robe folded across her middle, she would drive the point into the soft earth to a depth equal to the length of my hand, and pry up the soil.

Clods she broke by striking them smartly with her digging-stick, sometimes with one end, sometimes with the other. Roots of coarse grass, weeds, small brush and the like, she took in her hand and shook, or struck them against the ground, to knock off the loose earth that clung to them. She then cast them into little piles to dry. In a few days she gathered these piles into a heap about four feet high, and burned them, sometimes on the cleared land, sometimes a little way outside.

In this way my grandmother worked all summer, but not always in the corner that had been in dispute. I remember seeing her digging also along the edges of the field, to enlarge it and make the edges even. Thus the field was increased from year to year, until it was as large as our family needed. Of course, all the labor of enlarging the field did not fall upon Turtle; but as she liked to have me with her when she worked, I remember best what I saw her do.

It was her habit to rise early, in the summer months, arriving at the field at sunrise. At about ten o'clock, she returned to the lodge to eat and rest.

One morning I grew tired of my play before my grandmother had ended her work. "I want to go home," I said; and I began to cry. Just then a queer bird flew into the field. It had a long, curved beak, and made a queer cry: *cur-lew! cur-lew!*

I stopped weeping. My grandmother laughed.

"That is a curlew," she said. "Once at the mouth of the Knife River a

(Continued on page 1708)

(Continued from page 1704)

woman went out with her digging-stick to dig wild turnips. The woman had a babe. Growing tired of carrying the babe on her back, she laid it on the ground.

"The babe began to cry. The mother was busy digging turnips and did not go to her babe. By and by she looked up; her babe was flying away as a bird!

"The bird was a curlew, that cries like a babe. Now, if you cry, perhaps you will turn into a curlew!"

The field which Turtle helped to clear lay, I have said, east of the village. I was nineteen years old, I think, when my mothers determined to clear ground for a second field west of the village.

There were five of us who undertook the work: my father, Small Ankle; my two mothers, Red Blossom and Strikes-many-women; my sister, Cold Medicine; and myself. We began in the fall, after harvesting the corn from our east field, so that we had leisure for our work.

We chose a place in the Missouri bottoms overgrown with willows. With our axes we cut the willows close to the ground, letting them lie as they fell.

The next spring we went out and burned the felled willows and brush, which the spring sun had now dried. We did not burn every day, only when the weather was fine. We would go out after breakfast, burn until tired of the work, and come home.

We tried to burn over every part of the field, knowing this would leave the soil loose and mellow. To make them burn evenly, we loosened the willows from the ground, or scattered them loosely, but evenly, over the soil. In some places the ground was bare of willows; but we gathered dry grass and weeds and dead sticks, and strewed them over these bare places, so that the fire would run over every part of the field.

It took us four days to burn over the field. It was well known in my tribe that burning over new ground left the soil soft and easy to work; and for this reason we thought it a wise thing to do.

Chapter 5. Begging

III Chapters in Life of Big Women

WHITE people seem to think that Indian children never have any fun, that they have no plays and never laugh. But this is not true. I have seen children at the



Owl Woman Raking Her Cornfield. The Rake is Made of the Antlers of a Black-tailed Deer

Government school playing white men's games—baseball, prisoners' base and the like. We Indian children also had games that we played, and I think they were better than white children's games.

I look back to my own girlhood as the happiest time of my life. How I should like to see all my little girl playmates again! Our playgrounds were the level places between the lodges, or under the corn stage, in sunny weather; or the big, roomy floor of the earth lodge when it rained.

Indian Children's Games

We liked to play at housekeeping. Five or six of us would gather long sticks, stack them up like a tepee frame, and cover them with robes that we had borrowed. To this rude little tent we fetched foods that our mothers gave us, and had a feast. Boiled buffalo tongue we liked to eat best.

In summer we went down to the river for wet clay, which we modeled into figures. These were about four inches high, usually of human shape, man, woman or child. But we had to give each figure three legs to make it stand up!

We had a game of ball, much like shinny; and we used to take a big, soft ball and, with the foot, see how many times one could bounce it into the air without letting it touch the ground. It was lots of fun!

Girls of thirteen or fourteen years of age were fond of playing at "tossing one in a blanket," or buffalo skin, as we would have said. Usually there were fifteen or twenty players. We would borrow a newly dried skin that had been scraped free of hair. There were always holes in the edge of a hide, by which it had been pinned to the ground while drying; and into each hole a small stick was thrust, and twisted around, for a handle.

Along the ditch at the edge of the village grew many tall weeds. We pulled some of these and made them into a pile. We laid the hide on this pile of weeds and, with a player at every one of the stick handles, stretched the hide taut.

A girl now lay face downward on the hide. With a quick pull, the others tossed her into the air, when she was expected to come down on her feet, to be instantly tossed again. The game was to see how many times she could be tossed without falling. A player was often tossed ten or more times before losing her balance. Each time, as she came down, she kept turning in one direction, right or left. When at last she fell, the pile of weeds under the hide saved her from any hurt.

We called the game *it-si-pa-da'-pa-ke*, or *foot-moving*, from the player's habit of wriggling her feet when in the air. We thought this a mark of skill.

My mothers began to teach me household duties when I was about twelve years old. I still had much time for play, but must also do my share of the

daily work. I chopped wood, embroidered porcupine quills, fetched water from the river in heart-skin buckets, and even helped hoe in the cornfields.

My mothers were careful to teach me good morals. "We are a family that has not one bad woman in it," they used to say. "You must try hard not to be naughty!"

My grandfather, Big Cloud, often talked to me. "My granddaughter," he would say, "try to be good, so that you will grow up to be a good woman. Do not quarrel, nor steal. Do not answer anyone with bad words. Obey your parents, and remember all I say!"

do right

I liked to go to the cornfields with my mothers, especially in planting time, when the spring sun was shining and

the birds were singing to their mates. It seemed good to be out under the open sky again, after the long months in our winter lodges.

I am afraid I did not help my mothers much; like any young girl, I liked better to watch the birds than to work! Sometimes I chased away the crows. Our corn, indeed, had many enemies. Magpies and crows pulled up much of the young corn; crows were fond of pulling up the green shoots when they were a half-inch or an inch high. Spotted gophers would dig up the seed from the roots of the young plants.

When the field was all planted, my mothers used to go back and replant any hills of young corn that the birds had destroyed. If only a part of the plants in a hill were destroyed, my mothers did not disturb the living plants. In place of each missing plant, one of

my mothers dug a little hole with her hand and dropped in a seed. *or I dropped*

It was tedious work, and my mothers never relished having to go over the field a second time. "Those bad crows," Red Blossom would groan, "they make us much trouble!"

My grandmother, Turtle, used to make scarecrows to frighten away the birds. In the middle of the field she drove two sticks for legs, with two other sticks bound to them for arms. On the top she fastened a ball of cast-away skins for a head. She then belted an old robe about the figure to make it

look like a man. Such a scarecrow looked very wicked; I was almost afraid of it myself! But the crows, seeing the scarecrow never moved from its place,

soon lost their fear and came back to eat our corn.

The Watching Stage

During the hoeing months, the crows gave us little trouble; but as the Cherry moon, or August, approached, they became worse than ever. The corn had now begun to ear; and crows and blackbirds came in flocks to peck open the green ears for the soft grain. A platform, or stage, was often built in the field, where the girls and young women of a household came to sit and sing as they watched that crows and other thieves did not destroy the ripening crop.

We cared for our corn in those days as we would care for a child, for we Indian people loved our fields even as mothers love their children. We thought that the corn plants had souls as children have souls and that the growing corn liked to hear us sing, just

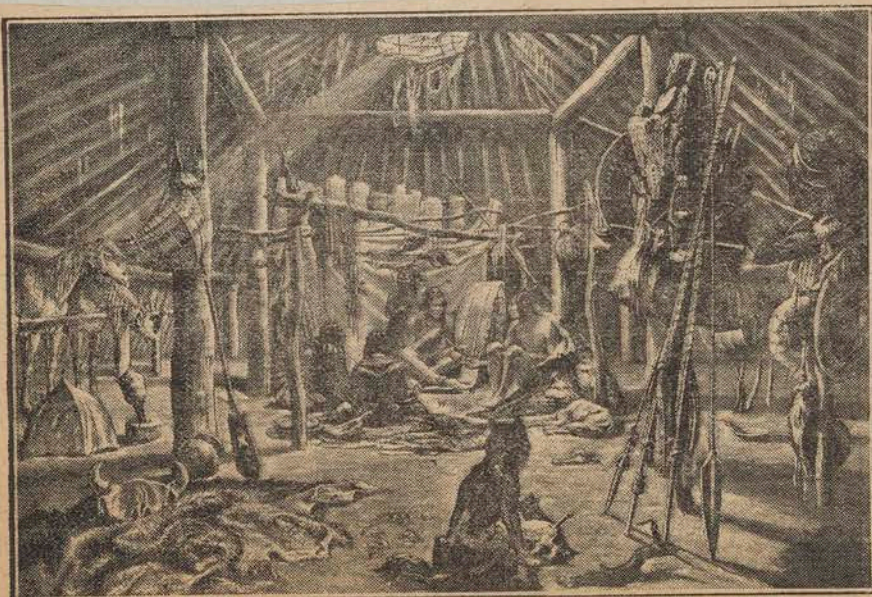
as children like to hear their mothers sing to them. Also, we did not want the birds to come and steal our corn. Horses, too, might break into the field, or boys might steal the green ears and go off and roast them.

A watchers' stage was simply built. Four posts, forked at the top, supported parallel beams, on which was laid a floor of puncheons, or split small logs, at about the height of the full-grown corn. The floor was about four feet long, by three wide, large enough to

Came near.

Ch. H. - 3

He had for her



Interior of an Earth Lodge as Sketched by an Artist Who Visited the Hidatsas in 1833. The Earth Lodges Were Permanent Structures, Large Enough to Accommodate a Number of Indians and Sometimes Their Domestic Animals as Well



A Typical Indian Tepee Made of Skins and Poles. This Type of Dwelling Was Most Popular With the Plains Indians, Being Best Adapted to Their Nomadic Habits

permit two persons to sit together. A ladder, made of the trunk of a tree, rested against the stage. The ladder had always three steps.

When a field was first cleared, a tree was sometimes left standing to shade the watchers' stage, the stage standing always on the north, or shady side, of the tree. Additional shade was had by stretching a robe over three poles leaned against the stage; these poles could be shifted with the sun.

A watchers' stage was not found in every field; however, nearly every one of the more industrious families had one. There was one in my mothers' field, where I used to sit and sing.

Girls began to go on the watchers' stage when about ten or twelve years of age. They continued the custom even after they were grown up and married. Older women, working in the field and stopping to rest, often went on the stage and sang.

Two girls usually watched and sang together. The village fields were laid out close to one another, and a girl of one family would be joined by the girl of the family who owned the field adjoining. Sometimes three, or even four, girls got on the stage and sang together. Older girls and young women often worked at porcupine-quill embroidery as they watched.

"Love-boy" Songs

Sometimes between songs, the watchers arose and stood upon the stage, as they looked to see if any boys or horses

were in the field. Boys of nine or ten years of age were rather troublesome. They were fond of stealing green ears to roast by a fire in the woods. A boy caught stealing was merely scolded. "You must not steal here again," we would say to him.

Most of the songs that were sung on the watchers' stage were love songs, but not all. One that little girls were fond of singing—girls, that is, of about twelve years of age—was as follows:

You bad boys, you are all alike!
Your bow is like a bent basket-hoop;
Your arrows are fit for nothing but to
shoot into the sky;
You poor boys, you have to run on the
prairie bare-foot!

This song was sung for the benefit of the boys who came to the nearby woods to hunt birds.

Here is another song; but that you may understand it, I shall have to explain to you first what ee-ku-pa means. A girl whom another girl loves as her own sister we called her ee-ku-pa. I think your word "chum," as you explain it, has about the same meaning. This is the song:

"My ee-ku-pa, what do you wish to see?" you said to me.
What I wish to see is the corn silk peeping out of the growing ear;
But what you wish to see is that naughty young man coming!

(Continued on page 1740)



The Hidatsas Made Curious Boiling Pots or Kettles of Clay. Pounded Granite Was Mixed With the Clay and the Pot Was Polished With a Smooth Pebble as it Dried, After Which it Was Fired

Here is a song that we sang to tease young men that were going by:

You young man of the Dog Society, you said to me,
"When I go east on a war party, you will hear news of me, how brave I am!"
I have heard news of you!
When the fight was on, you ran and hid;
And you still think you are a brave young man!

Behold, you have joined the Dog Society;
But I call you just plain dog!

These songs from the watchers' stage we called mee-da-hee-ka, or gardeners' songs. The words of those I have given you we called "love-boy" words, and they were intended to tease.

Usually a booth stood at one side of a field in which was a watchers' stage. To make a booth, we cut diamond willows, stood them in the ground in a circle and, bending over the leafy tops, tied them together. A few leafy branches might be woven into the top to increase the shade. A booth was about as high as a woman can reach with her hands, and enclosed a space about three paces in diameter.

The Watchers' Meals

The girls who sang and watched the ripening corn cooked their meals in these booths. I often did so when I was young; indeed, cooking in the booths was done by all the watchers, even young girls of ten or twelve years. I have often seen my grandmother, Turtle, very early in the morning, cooking in her booth.

A meal was sometimes eaten in the field just after sunrise, or a little later; but we had no regular meal-hours. We cooked and ate whenever we got hungry, or when visitors came; or we strayed over to other fields and ate with our friends. If relatives came, the watchers often entertained them by giving them something to eat.

To cook a meal, a fire was made in the booth. Meat had been brought from the village, dried or fresh buffalo meat usually. Fresh meat was laid on the coals to broil; dried meat was thrust on the end of a stick that leaned over the fire, and toasted. Fresh squashes we boiled in our native clay pots, or in iron pots that we bought of the traders. We were fond of squashes.

A common field dish was green corn and beans. The corn was shelled off the cob and boiled with shelled green beans; or, sometimes, the beans were boiled in the pod. The cooked mess we poured into a wooden bowl, and ate with spoons made from the stems of squashes. The stem was split at one end, and the split held open by a little stick.

We went to the watchers' stage early in the day, before sunrise or near it; and we came home only at sunset. The watching season lasted until the corn was gathered and harvested.

My grandmother, Turtle, went almost daily to the field in the watching season. I remember that she used to bring home, in the evening, all the uneaten corn she had cooked that day. This was Indian custom; we were taught never to waste any food.

THE FARMER

Buffalo Bird Woman's Story

How the Hidatsas Harvested, Husked, Prepared and Stored Their
Corn—The Fourth Chapter in the Life of Buffalo
Bird Woman, as Told by Herself

To Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

GREEN corn season came early in the harvest moon, or about the second week in August, as white men would say. It lasted about ten days, and was a time of much feasting, but it also brought work.

We knew the green ears were ripe enough to pluck when the blossoms on the top of the stalk had turned brown, the silk had dried, and the husks on the ear were a dark green. I do not think the younger Indians who go to white men's schools are as good agriculturists as we were when I was young.

Sometimes I say to my son, Goodbird: "You young folk, when you want green corn, open the ear to look at the grain; but I go right into the field and pluck the ear. When you open an ear

and find it too green to eat, you leave it on the stalk; and then birds come, or little red ants, and eat the grain and the ear is spoiled. I do not think you are very good gardeners. In old times, when I went out to gather ears, I did not have to open their faces to see if the ear was ripe enough to be plucked!"

Uses of Green Corn

Green corn was usually boiled—in a clay kettle, when I was a little girl. Sometimes the ears were roasted, by someone who wanted a little change in cooking. I do not remember that my mothers ever served a meal of roasted corn to the family.

If I wanted to roast green corn, I made a fire of cottonwood and prepared a bed of coals. On these coals I laid the ear, stripped of husks, gently rolling it from side to side to keep it from burning.

As the ear roasted, the green kernels sometimes popped open with a rather sharp sound. If this popping noise was very loud, the family would laugh and someone would cry out, "Eh! We see you have stolen that ear from some other family's field!"

Green corn was regularly plucked for roasting until frost fell when it lost its fragrance and fresh taste. To restore its freshness, we would take some of the green corn-silk of the newly plucked ear and rub the silk well into the kernels as they stood on the cob. This restored the fresh taste and smell; but we did this only if the ear was to be roasted.

We made a kind of bread from green corn. The corn was shelled off the cob with the thumb-nail, put in a corn mortar and pounded to a pulp. Fresh husks were laid in a row, overlapping like shingles; over these was laid a second row, transversely to the first; and so on until four or five layers of the green husks were made.

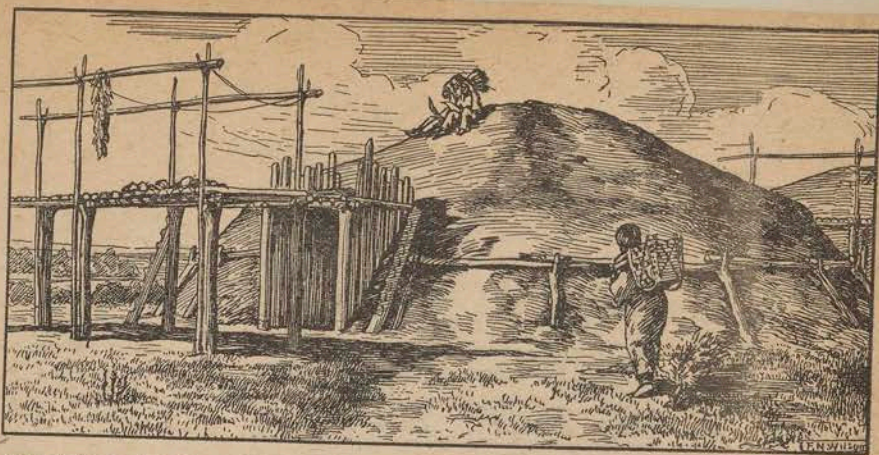
The pounded pulp was poured out on this husk sheet and patted down with the hand into a loaf about two inches thick. The ends of the husks were folded over this loaf, and it was bound with some husk strips. No fats or seasoning went into the loaf.

A cavity was dug in the ashes of the fire-place, about as deep as the length of my hand. Into the cavity were raked live coals. The loaf was laid on these, and over the whole were heaped ashes and live coals. The loaf baked in about two hours. We called this loaf *naktsi*, or thing-baked-in-ashes.

But our chief use of green corn was to boil and dry it, to lay by for winter. Gathering and drying green corn was an important part of the corn harvest. This is the way I prepared my family's store:

Just before sunset I went to the field and plucked off the ears that I found of a dark green outside. I piled these in some convenient place. I left off plucking when I had about five basket-fuls.

The next morning, before breakfast, I fetched the plucked corn to our lodge. I had not done this the evening before,



An Hidatsa Earth Lodge and Corn Drying Stage, Drawn True to Type. Note the Woman Carrying Corn in Her Basket to be Spread on the Floor of the Stage, and the String of Selected Ears on the Upper Railing



The Illustration at the Left Shows Hidatsa Women Husking Corn in the Field, Braiding Selected Ears Making Corn-meal by Pounding Corn in a Mortar Fas

because letting them lie in the open air over night kept the ears fresher.

After my morning meal I husked the ears, using my bare hands. I laid the husked ears on a pile of clean husks.

A kettle meanwhile had been filled with water and set on the fire. When I had husked enough to fill the kettle, I dropped the ears in the boiling water; and when they were about half cooked, lifted them out again with a Rocky Mountain sheep horn spoon.

When all the corn was cooked, I bore the ears outside to the floor of the drying stage and laid them in rows to dry over night.

The next morning, sitting on a tent-skin as an Indian woman sits, with ankles to the right, I shelled off the corn with a mussel-shell. This shelled

corn I spread on skins on the stage floor. It dried in about four days, and was then ready to be sacked and stored in a cache pit for winter.

Dried green corn when boiled tasted much like the canned corn we now buy of the traders.

In the husks of some of the green ears is found a black mass that we call *mapedi*, or corn smut. This we gathered, and when we had boiled and dried it, we broke it into bits to mix with our dried green corn. We boiled these bits with the corn to eat as a kind of relish.

The Husking Feast

Meanwhile, the corn in the field was ripening, and the men of the village began to come in from the harvest hunt; for meat had to be provided for the husking feasts. Buffalo meat was pre-



rs into Strings (as in Foreground) and Throwing the Rest into a Pile. The Woman at the Right is
hioned of Ash or Boxelder and Hollowed out with Fire

ferred, dried usually in the open air, or in the smoke of a slow fire. But if scouts brought news that a herd had wandered near the village as corn harvest began, there was great rejoicing; for we knew then we should have fresh meat for the harvesters.

The homecoming of the hunters was a time of great excitement. I can yet see the village dogs running out, tails a-quiver, with their sharp bark, "Wu-wu-wu!" almost like a coyote's. They scented the fresh meat and were eager for their share. Hardly less noisy were the boys, with their shrill yells, "Yih! yih! yih!" We girls were just as interested, but quieter!

When the corn in our field was fully ripened, my mothers went out with baskets, plucked the ears from the stalks and piled them in a heap for the husking. It took them a day to do this, though our field was a large one. A smaller family might have to work a part or all of the second day.

The day after the corn was plucked, we gave our husking feast. My mothers took dried meat, already boiled, to the field; or they boiled the dried meat in a kettle near the corn pile. Another kettle held boiled corn. If a kill of buffaloes had just been made, a family might take out a side of fresh buffalo meat to roast over a fire.

Invitations had been sent beforehand to young men to be huskers. They soon came, young men from nineteen to thirty years of age for the most part.

(Continued on page 1767)

(Continued on page 1764)

However, a few old men would be in the company, and these were welcomed and given a place at the feast. We Indian people honor our old men.

There might be twenty-five or thirty of the huskers; and they were paid for their labor by the foods given them to eat. Each young man carried a sharp stick, on which he skewered any meat he could not eat, to take home. We Indians always eat any food given us, or else take it home. To leave any uneaten meat would mean, "I do not like this food—you are a very bad cook!" White people seem impolite to me, when they leave uneaten food on a plate, at another man's table.

The husking season, bringing so many young men into the field, was looked upon as a season of jollity; and youths and maidens painted and dressed to look

their best. A young man was pretty sure to give his best help to his sweetheart, though he did not talk to her and she hardly looked at him while others were around! The young men were apt to vie with one another at the husking pile of a popular girl; for, of course, the maidens of the village were out, each at her family's corn pile!

The huskers worked rapidly, with bare hands, never with any kind of husking peg. A sharp lookout was kept for green ears. Such an ear would turn black and spoil if stored in the cache. Every husker knew this, and as he worked he laid in a little pile beside him any unripe ears he found. These green ears were his to eat, or feed to his pony.

Last year a white man hired me to gather and husk his corn. I kept all the green ears for myself. I do not know if that white man liked it or not. It may be he thought I was stealing those ears. But I am an Indian woman, and he must expect me to follow Indian ways!

Most of the corn, as it was husked, was tossed into a pile, to be borne later to the village on the backs of the women. This was true of all the smaller and less-favored ears; but the best of the larger and plumper ears were

braided into strings. Fifty-four or fifty-five ears usually made a string.

I used to like to watch Red Blossom at this labor. When a string was all braided, she took an end in either hand and, placing her right foot against the middle, gave the two ends a smart pull. This stretched and tightened the string, tried if there was any weak place, and gave the string a neater and more finished shape.

The strings of braided corn were borne to the village on the backs of ponies, ten or less strings making a load. They were hung on the drying stage upon the railing that lay in the upper forks. If there was need, poles were laid across the rails and strings were hung over these also.

Meanwhile, the smaller and less-favored ears were being carried home by the women. Even I helped at this. It took the members of my father's family a whole day, and until the afternoon of the next, to get this work done.

Each carrier, as she brought in a basket of corn, climbed the log ladder of the stage and emptied her basket on the stage floor. Here the corn lay in a long heap, in the middle of the floor; for a free path was always left around the edge for the women. Having this path to use, they did not tread on the corn as they moved about.

The husking season, like the green corn season, lasted about ten days. The young men helped faithfully every day; and when they had husked all the corn in one field, they moved to another. Thus all the corn piles were soon husked.

I was but a young girl at the time of which I am now telling you; and seeing all the older girls dressed up so finely, and so many handsome young men coming out to the husking feast, made me wish I were grown up and could wear a fine robe and paint my face a beautiful red. But my mothers had taught me to be modest, and if a young man passed me I would not speak to him, nor even look into his eyes. I turned my face away and pretended not to see him, even if he was very young and handsome!

Buffalo Bird Woman's Story

How the Hidatsas Threshed Their Corn with Flails, Saving Every Kernel—The Fifth Chapter in the Life of Buffalo Bird Woman, as Told by Herself

To Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph. D.

THE corn had dried and was ready to thresh at the end of about eleven days. Threshing days were a busy time in my father's lodge. Our family had one of the largest corn fields in the village, and the care my mothers gave it made our crop a large one. My mothers took much pride in their field labors.

Corn was threshed under the drying stage in a booth made of a tent-skin. I have said that we Hidatsas lived in earth lodges, large roomy ones in the summer village, and smaller ones built down in the Missouri timber in the snow months. But every family owned at least one tepee or skin tent, in which they camped when on a hunt or traveling.

The skin cover of a tent—a tent-skin we called it—was made of thirteen or more buffalo skins scraped bare of hair and tanned with buffaloes' brains; they were rubbed and worked until they were nearly as soft and white as cloth. After a tent-skin had been used for a season or two, the smoke and rains made it harder and less pliable. A new tent-skin was then made, and the old one was cut up to make moccasins. Some families made a new tent-skin every spring.

The morning in which threshing began was a busy one in our family. My father was up before the sun, raking coals out of the ashes to start the fire. "Up, all of you!" he would call. "Wash your faces; it is a busy day today!"

Each of my two mothers, with a big horn spoon brimming full of water in her hand, filled her mouth with the water, blew it over her palms and gave her face a good rubbing. When dry, she rubbed a little buffalo fat and vermilion over her cheeks and chin to keep the skin from chapping and give a touch of color to her face. All Indian women painted their faces in old days. Now-a-days we follow white custom and no longer paint; and our faces are pale, just like ghosts'!

Preparations for the Threshing

A morning meal was eaten, often of dried buffalo meat boiled for a few minutes to soften it. The broth in which it was boiled we drank, much as we now drink coffee. For cups, we had buffalo horn spoons, holding each at least half a pint.

If our store of meat was low, we often ate *mapi-nakapa*, or pounded-meal mush. One of my mothers put a pot of water

on the fire, dropping in some beans and a piece of a string of dried squash tied at the ends in a ring. When well boiled, she lifted the ring of squash out into a wooden bowl, and chopped and mashed the softened squash slices with a horn spoon. This mass of mashed squash she dropped back into the pot.

Meanwhile, my other mother had been parching corn, which she now pounded in the corn mortar with some roast buffalo fats. This pounded mass she also stirred into the pot. The mess was now ready to be eaten.

Pounded-meal mush was especially a morning dish; it was quickly made, was nourishing, and we were all fond of it.

Breakfast over, my mothers began building the booth. Under a section of the drying stage they lashed four poles,

a few inches below the stage floor. To these poles they hung the tent-skin, bottom upward, by means of a long thong woven in and out through the holes in the edge of the tent-skin, thus enclosing the greater part of the section. The upper parts of the tent cover were drawn in and spread flat on the ground, to make a floor for the booth. Stones were laid around the edge to weight the tent-skin against the wind.

My mothers now went above and took up one of the floor planks. Through the aperture thus made they shoved the corn, until there was a pile in the booth below, eighteen or twenty inches high, and running the width of the booth.

My mothers descended the ladder and entered the booth, my grandmother entering with them; the overlapping edges of the tent-skin that made the door, they

tied fast after them. There were usually three threshers in a booth, at least in our family; but I have known my sister, Not Frost, to make a fourth. I have even known other families to have as many as five threshers working together in a booth; but never more than five.

The threshers sat in a row on the floor of the booth, facing the pile of corn. Each woman had an ash or cottonwood stick for a flail. To thresh the grain, she raised the flail and brought it down smartly, but not severely, upon the pile of corn. The grain, thus beaten off the well dried cobs, would fall by its own weight and work its way to the bottom of the pile, while the lighter cobs would come to the top. The skin sides of the booth caught any kernels that the flailing caused to fly about.

The threshers rested now and then, while my grandmother drew off the

empty cobs that had accumulated on the pile and cast them out of the door of the booth, under the next section of the stage, where a tent cover had been spread to receive them. Many of the cobs had a few small kernels clinging to them; and these must be saved, for we Indians wasted nothing.

At the end of the day's threshing, my mothers turned attention to the pile of cobs; and with their thumbs they shelled off *every grain* that still clung to the cobs. From the cobs of a day's threshing enough grain might be collected to fill a white man's hat.

The cobs attended to, my mothers entered the booth and bore all the newly threshed grain into the lodge and emptied it into a bull-boat to store it for the night. The grain safely put by, my mothers returned to the cob pile; these

cobs, heaped on the tent-skin just without the booth, were quite clean of grain.

All day long as they threshed, my mothers had watched that no horse got at the cobs to nibble them, nor any dog ran over them, nor any children played in them. Then in the evening, if the weather was fair and there was little or no wind, one of my mothers carried the cobs to a grassy place outside the village, and heaped them in a pile about five feet high. I used to help in this work, quite proud to have my small bas-

ket on my back heaped high with the fresh-smelling cobs.

In our prairie country on a fair day the wind usually dies down about sunset; and now when the air was still, we fired the cob pile. Other families were doing likewise, for the villagers threshed all in the same season; and I could see the cob piles of other threshers sending

up their flames and lighting the gathering dusk.

My mother and I stayed to watch our fire and keep mischievous boys from coming to play in the burning heap. Children of from ten to fifteen years of age were quite a pest in cob-firing time.

They had a kind of game they were fond of playing. Each got a long flexible green stick, on the end of which he squeezed a ball of wet clay from the nearby river. The boy would try to approach one of the burning cob piles and, with his stick, slap the mud ball smartly into the burning coals. Some of these, still burning, would stick in the wet mud. Whirling his stick like a sling, the boy would throw the mud ball into the air, often aiming at some other boy. Other boys were doing the same, and the balls of mud with the glowing coals clinging to them would go sailing through the air like shooting stars.

We had a busy time of it sometimes, my mother and I, keeping away those wretched boys!

Ash Crust Used for Seasoning

The fire burned down at last, the coals were dead, and nothing was left but a pile of ashes. It was now night, and the



Hidatsa Women Drying Meat. Meat Thus Dried May Be Kept All the Year, Sweet and Wholesome. The Woman is Stirring a Pot in Which the Broken Bones are Being Boiled for "Bone Butter"

stars were out; and my mother and I, tired, one of work, the other of play, went home and to bed. But early the next morning, before the prairie winds had arisen, my mother would be up and on her way to the ash heap.

On top of the ashes, if no horse nor dog had disturbed them, and no wind had blown them about, a thin crust had formed. This crust my mother carefully broke and, gathering it up in her fingers, squeezed the pieces in her palm into little lumps or balls. Four or five of these lumps might be gathered from one pile of ashes, but never more than five.

These balls my mother brought home. There were always several bark or skin baskets hanging in the lodge; and it was our habit to keep some dried buffalo heart skins, or dried paunch skins, in the lodge for wrappers, much as white families keep wrapping paper in the house. The ash balls my mother wrapped up in one of these wrapping skins, being careful not to break the balls. She kept the package in one of the baskets.

These ash balls were used for seasoning our corn foods. We Indians did not have salt such as white men have. We did have alkali salt; spring salt we called it, because we gathered it at the edge of springs where the water left it in thin white crusts. We used this spring salt for seasoning *madakapa*, or dried ripe corn pounded to a meal and boiled with beans.

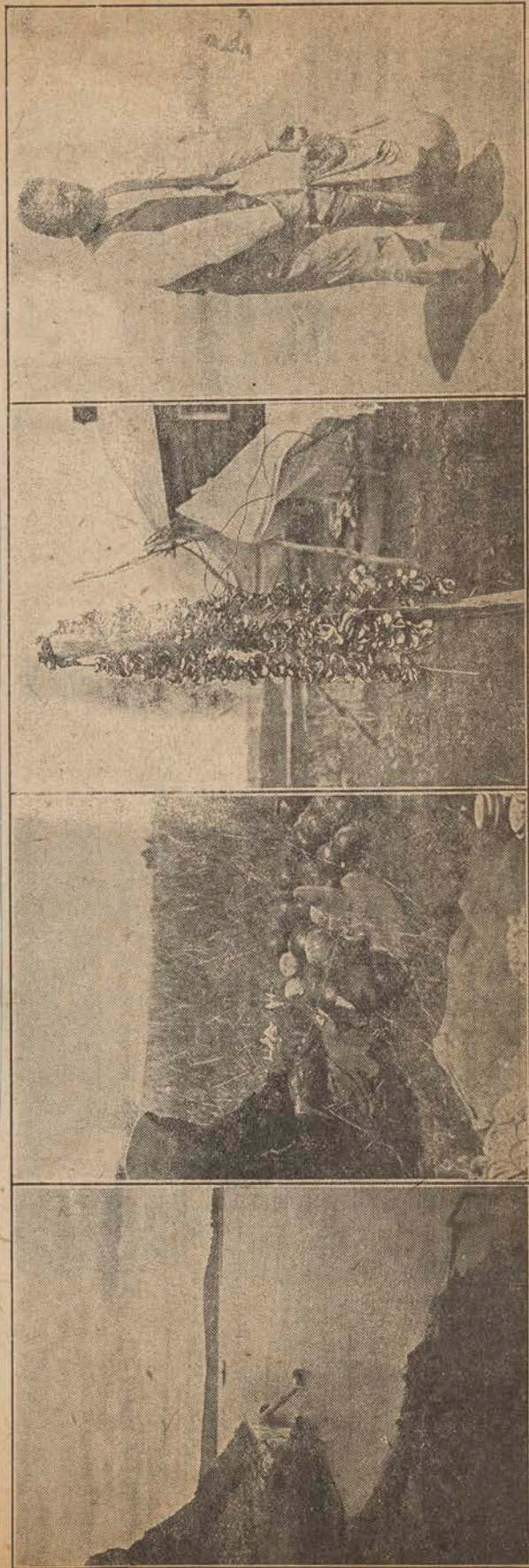
But in the fall, after the corn threshing, instead of seasoning this dish with spring salt, we preferred to use this seasoning of ash crust. We called the ash balls *madakapa isepe*, or *madakapa* darkener, because it turned the boiled corn meal somewhat darker in color.

My mothers burned cobs and collected ash balls after every threshing day, unless hindered by storm or high wind.

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But even if the harvest was a good one—and my mothers' harvests usually were good ones—the ash balls that we got from the burned cobs never lasted long. We were so fond of ash-ball seasoning in our foods that every family used up its store before the autumn had passed.

We Indian children had one custom that will make you laugh. When pounded-corn meal was being boiled for *madakapa*, we used to steal up to the pot and thrust a buffalo horn spoon into the boiling mess. When the spoon was withdrawn, there would stick to it some of the sweet, sticky part of the boiled corn. This we liked to lick off with our tongues. It tasted awful good!



Scenes in the Land of the Hidatsas. First, the Missouri River, on the Bank of Which, in Western North Dakota, the Hidatsa Villages Stand. Second, Owl Woman Making a Squash String—Slices of Squash String on Twisted Grass, to be Buried in Loose Corn in Cache Pits. Third, a Squash String after Drying. Fourth, Wolf Chief with Bucket Made of a Steer's Paunch, Like the Bucket of a Buffalo's Paunch Used in Olden Times