

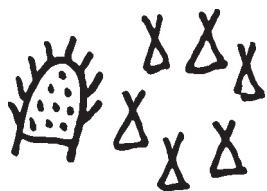


A WINTER COUNT

A winter count is a type of calendar where one person records a symbol which represents an important event during the year. This may be a personal event, or something which affected the tribe or clan of the recorder.

This winter count comes from the **Apatohsipikani** and dates from 1764 to 1924. Five individuals, including Iron Shirt, Brings Down the Sun and Bull Plume, continued the record throughout each of their lifetimes. The winter count was originally painted on a tanned buffalo hide, but was later transcribed into the journal of Reverend Canon Haynes, who was also the last recorder. This journal is now in the Glenbow Archives -M156. Some dates are:

1764 BIG SMALLPOX SCARE



"About one third of us died, but in some camps there were tents in which everyone died. When it left us, and we moved about to find our people, it was no longer with the song and the dance; but with tears, shrieks, and howlings of despair for those who would never return to us. War was no longer thought of, and we had enough to do to hunt and make provisions; but the bison and red deer were also gone, we did not see one half of what was before. Our hearts were low and dejected, and we shall never be again the same people." - Saukamappee quoted in Thompson: 1916

1769 WHEN WE TOOK THE SNAKE INDIANS' WIVES AND CHILDREN



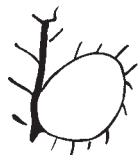
"Now we must revenge the death of our people and make the Snake Indians feel the effects of our guns and other weapons; but the young women must all be saved and if any has a babe at the breast it must not be taken from her, nor hurt. All the boys and lads that have no weapons must not be killed, but brought to our camps and be adopted amongst us, to be our people, and make us more numerous and stronger than we are." - Saukamappee quoted in Thompson: 1916

1784 WHEN WHITE MEN WITH SHORT HAIR FIRST CAME



Prior to this the Cree and Assiniboine were the main traders to the Blackfoot. Occasionally the Hudson Bay Company sent agents to the Blackfoot to encourage them to travel east to trade. This date probably refers to the arrival of free traders from Montreal who established Umfreville's House on the North Saskatchewan River at the present Alberta-Saskatchewan border.

1791 WHEN LOG HOUSES WERE FIRST BUILT



This could be Chesterfield House. It was the furthest south post that had been built at this time. It was located on the South Saskatchewan River, below its junction with the Red Deer River.

1831 WHEN THE WHITES FROM THE SOUTH AND NORTH MET



This was the establishment of the first American post among the Blackfoot, Fort Peigan, at the mouth of the Marias River. Jacob Berger, a former employee of the Hudson Bay Company, led a small party into the Blackfoot country to ask permission to build a fort to trade with the Blackfoot.

1855 WHEN TREATY WAS FIRST PAID



On October 17, 1855, Isaac I. Stevens negotiated the first treaty between the Blackfoot and the United States government. In addition to the Blackfoot, the Gros Ventre, Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, Kutenai and Nez Perce all agreed to be at peace with one another and respect tribal boundaries established at this council. We call this the Lame Bull Treaty.

1864 SMALLPOX



This was an epidemic of scarlet fever that swept through the camps in the winter of 1864-65. By early spring 1,100 of our people had died.

1874 WHEN THE POLICE CAME



In this year the Northwest Mounted Police were guided to Blackfoot country by Jerry Potts, who was hired to take them to Fort Whoop-Up so that they could stop the whiskey trade. By the time they arrived, the whiskey traders were gone. The police then travelled to near present-day Fort Macleod, where the Apatohsipikani leader Bull Head allowed them to spend the winter.

1877 TREATY AT BLACKFOOT CROSSING



On September 22, 1877, the government of Canada signed a treaty with the Siksika, Kainai, Apatohsipikani, Nakoda and Tsuu T'ina. It changed our lives forever. This is called Treaty 7.

1903 TURTLE MOUNTAIN SLIDE



Early in the morning of April 29, 1903, ninety million tons of rock wiped out the town of Frank, Alberta. The slide swept over one mile of the valley, killing seventy people and burying a mine and railway. It occurred in ten seconds.

1915 WHEN PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS AT OTTAWA WERE BURNED AND BIG FIRE AT GLEICHEN



(From Paul Raczka, *Winter Count: A History of the Blackfoot People*, 1979)

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