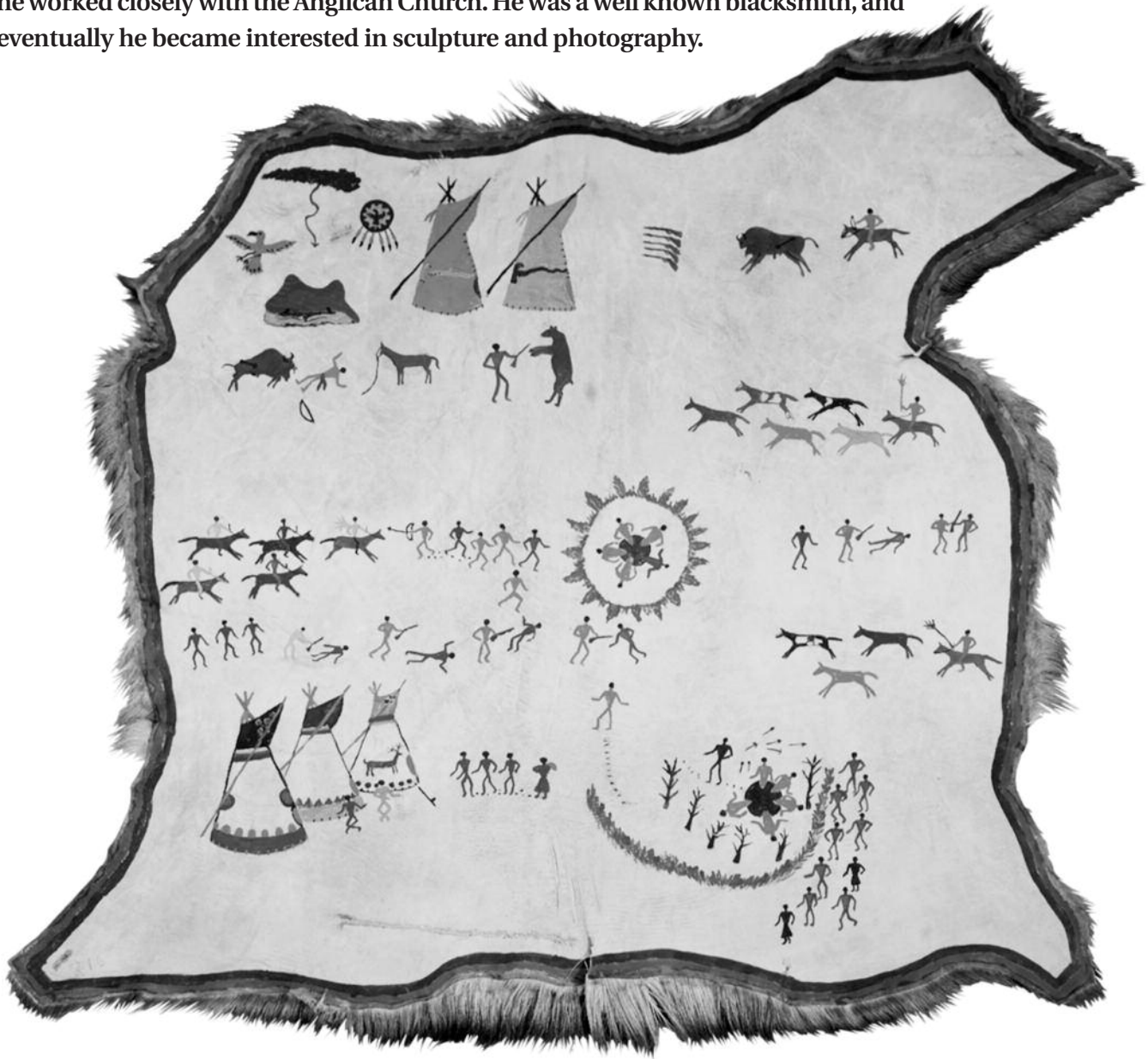


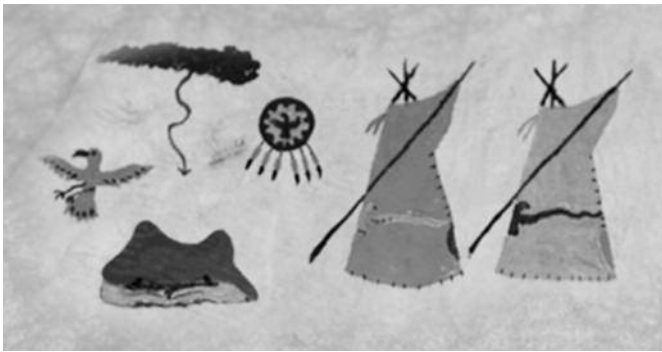


WOLF COLLAR'S STORY ROBE

Wolf Collar recorded events from his life on this robe. These paintings recall the adventures of a warrior during the last days of the buffalo. Wolf Collar was born in the mid 1800s and died in 1929. He was an important warrior and powerful healer among the Siksika. Later on in his life, he worked closely with the Anglican Church. He was a well known blacksmith, and eventually he became interested in sculpture and photography.



In 1961, Paul Wolf Collar offered the following interpretation of his grandfather's robe.



One day, when my grandfather was seventeen years old, he went riding out in the prairies with his partner, Heavy Runner. It started to rain so they tried to protect themselves by covering up with a robe. There was a clap of thunder and the two of them were struck with a flash of lightning.

At the time, it was said that they both died instantly, but Wolf Collar, while in death, dreamed he alone would recover within forty-eight hours. In

his dream, he was also promised a yellow tipi and a blue tipi, which were erected about ten yards from him, together with a shield. All bore the figure of an eagle, representing Thunder.

After forty-eight hours, Wolf Collar recovered with only the side of his face burned, and right away he followed the designs from his dream. He then put up a holy gathering where an Indian gives his valuables to different people. Wolf Collar's offerings included his two sacred tipis and the shield. During the ceremonies, something happened to prove their sacredness. On one of the tipis, which has a lightning bolt around the middle part, the design became real lightning going through the tipi.

The blue tipi is now owned by an Amsskaapipikani in Browning. During the ceremony when a Siksika was transferring this tipi to Browning, the lightning bolt and the circle at the bottom all lit up like real lightning. The Siksika man transferring the tipi was a brother of Joe Bear Robe's father and the Amsskaapipikani receiving it was Ed Running. The same thing happened when the yellow tipi was transferred. Spring Chief was the last to own it. The shield is now owned by Rosemary Duck Chief. It could not be pierced by an enemy weapon.

As a result of these experiences, Wolf Collar was able to foretell the weather. When he died on December 27, 1929, a blizzard came up, and every now and again a blue flare and a yellow flare could be seen in the sky. These were associated with the two tipis he had obtained in his dream.

Wolf Collar had another dream which predicted that he was going to have five adventures and if he overcame the hardships he would end up with five guns. In the old days, an Indian with a gun trophy meant he had taken a gun in an enemy attack. This prophecy came true and is told in his other war exploits.



Wolf Collar was on a buffalo hunt and wounded a buffalo. He followed it and, when he came to a patch of ice, his horse slipped and Wolf Collar fell off. The wounded buffalo turned and charged at him, hitting him in the stomach. Because of his powers, Wolf Collar came through this adventure without serious injury.

Wolf Collar was hunting with a group of Blackfoot when they met a bear. The others fled, but Wolf Collar faced the bear when it charged and killed it.





Wolf Collar joined a Blackfoot war party to raid the Crows on foot. When they were seven hundred miles from home, he caught pneumonia during a blizzard and could not continue. He was left behind by the others, who thought he was going to die, but Wolf Collar travelled on by himself. He found a Crow camp, stole six of the fastest horses and returned home safely.

Another of Wolf Collar's prophecies came true when he went with twenty warriors to raid the Crows. Being low on grub the party shot a buffalo. Two of the men had half-butchered it when Wolf Collar kicked it in the side. The half-skinned animal jumped up and ran off with the hide flapping on all sides. It went a short distance and then fell dead.



The unusual sight made the warriors laugh, but Wolf Collar said that it was a bad sign and predicted something was going to happen to them that very day. The wise words came true, for they were discovered and attacked by the Crows. Being surprised, the Blackfoot retreated to the hills while Wolf Collar remained on foot to hold the enemy back. Finally, he reached a clump of bushes where the others were waiting in trenches. They fought the enemy until nightfall, when the Crows built observation fires to keep them from escaping. Wolf Collar slipped through the guards, killed some of the enemy, and the Blackfoot got away with one man killed in the whole battle.



Wolf Collar and a relative, Little Old Man, met a Tsuu T'ina in a friendly way, but he kept bothering them and struck one of them. They warned him, but he persisted in bothering them, so Wolf Collar killed him.

The Blackfoot went to war against the Cree and, in the fight, Wolf Collar captured a gun. This was the first gun in his prophecy.



On another raid against the Cree, Wolf Collar met an enemy in the water, overpowered him and took his gun. This is how he could give the name "Taking a Gun in Water". This was Wolf Collar's second gun trophy.

When the Blackfoot raided the Nakoda there was a battle in which Wolf Collar snatched a rifle from an enemy and killed him with it. After this exploit he had captured three guns and gave the name "Three Guns" to a relative.



In a raid against another enemy tribe, Wolf Collar captured his fourth gun in battle.



Wolf Collar's fifth gun was taken in battle with an enemy tribe to fulfill his prophecy.

In a raid to the south, Wolf Collar captured four enemy horses and returned safely to camp.



When the Tsuu T'ina learned that one of their men had been killed, they suspected Wolf Collar and Little Old Man. They went to a Blackfoot Holy Woman and asked her to get the Horn Society to question them. It was believed that when the Horns went through a ceremony and gave a man the Horn pipe to smoke, he must tell the truth or he could not accept it. The Holy Woman, wearing an elk skin robe and carrying dried tongues, went to the Horns and directed the ceremony.

Wolf Collar denied he had killed the Tsuu T'ina, smoked the pipe, and threw it back to the Horns. He was able to do this because of the power he had received in his dream, and everyone believed he was innocent.

A Siksika war party went against the Crows and was discovered. They took refuge in a place where there was a steep cutbank on one side. During the fight, the Siksika party killed one man who rushed their trenches (figure in black).

At nightfall the Crows built a ring of fires around the three sides of the trapped men. There were a few clumps of sagebrush sticking out of the cutbank, so the leader of the party decided that he would go with Wolf Collar to see if it was possible to escape. They found it was very difficult, but at last they discovered a way to climb to the top. When they reached it, the leader told Wolf Collar to go back and bring the others. He was chosen because of his strength and endurance.



When he got back to the bottom, he found that the others had escaped by slipping through enemy lines. Looking around, Wolf Collar saw a powder horn and a few other things which he and the leader had left behind. He climbed up the cutbank again and said that the others had left. The leader did not believe him and claimed that Wolf Collar had been afraid to climb all the way back down. As he spoke, Wolf Collar poked him in the shoulder with the powder horn and the leader had to admit that he was telling the truth.

These were Wolf Collar's exploits. They all took place before the Treaty and after the wars ended, he lived a quiet life.

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