

**Digging Roots and Remembering Relatives:
Lakota Kinship and Movement in the Northern Great Plains from
the Wood Mountain Uplands across Lakóta Thámákǎóche/Lakota Country, 1881-1940**

by

Claire Thomson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

Department of History and Classics

University of Alberta

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Abstract

Most written Lakota histories jump from the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876, briefly describe the refuge in Canada many Lakota people sought, and then resume in 1881 when Chief Sitting Bull returned to the United States. Typically, the people who stayed in the Wood Mountain Uplands, in present-day Saskatchewan, after this time have been overlooked. This dissertation examines Lakota history after 1881 centred on Wood Mountain but connecting to many Lakota communities to bring a more holistic understanding to Lakota lived relations throughout Lakhóta Třamákřoče/Lakota Country. The analysis rests within a framework of Lakota kinship and belonging to understand historical connections, movements, and decision making. Furthermore, this study demonstrates how Wood Mountain Lakota people slipped through the cracks of settler state government control and surveillance, sometimes deliberately as a strategy for maintaining self-determination on various levels and sometimes because of settler colonial administrations that sought to make and unmake Indians in overlapping, systematic, and sometimes arbitrary ways which served to sever Lakota ties to each other, place, sovereignty, and culture. Thus, the contrast of belonging—categories versus kin—comes into sharp relief. Lakhóta Třamákřoče is more than the land and waters, places and spaces where Lakota people lived, travelled, and fought for, it is the realm of relationships and kinship—a landscape and kinscape that defies settler state geopolitical and social boundaries. Though Wood Mountain Lakota people were in the margins of state categories and Indian policies, they still felt settler colonialism full force. In some ways being in the margins afforded them more opportunities and, in some ways, it caused them more harm. However, Lakota experiences, movement, and resistance continued in relationship networks to kin and to land.

Preface

One June morning in 2020, my good friend Thelma Poirier called me to visit. I told her I was getting ready to go dig tíŋpsila¹ before it got too hot outside. She said she hadn't been out to get tíŋpsila in years and that spending the morning in the hills would be a wonderful way to start the day. As we were ending our phone call, she suggested that “digging roots” might be a good title for my dissertation. She explained that it reflected the way I was digging into the past and the archives to learn more about the roots that bind us to the Wood Mountain Uplands: relatives, places, and stories. I listened and agreed with her. I wrote down her suggestion and stuck it to my bullet-in-board to return to later.

Since my conversation with Thelma, it occurred to me that this work goes even deeper in the parallels to tíŋpsila digging. When I dig up a tíŋpsila and take the tuber root off, I make sure to put the top of the plant upside down back in the hole I just made, so the seeds can start a new plant there next year, ensuring the generations continue. Also, the first tíŋpsila I dig up, I peel the skin off and chew on the root. This makes all the other tíŋpsila around me visible. The tíŋpsila's connections and networks across the prairie become noticeable to help provide sustenance and make my work a bit easier. Importantly, Lakota people relied on tíŋpsila especially when buffalo no longer could be, and maybe this is partially why digging, drying, and braiding them is still a common early summer routine. Tíŋpsila's own relationships and the knowledge and practices around collecting them are reflected in this work. The core of this dissertation is about Lakota connections and kinship, which spread out widely across the prairies even when efforts were made to isolate and individualize Lakota people in the past. When other systems and opportunities failed, kinship and community connections could be relied on. So, like the tíŋpsila,

¹ Tíŋpsila is also known as prairie turnip or breadroot.

one person—whether in the documents or someone sharing their stories with me---opened my eyes to many more people and places in deeply interconnected ways, which only became visible when I entered their realms of relation and became braided together. And like *tíŋpsila*, I'm one small piece in a large network of generations all connected across the prairies, both in everyday life and in researching and writing this dissertation. And like *tíŋpsila*, so many mentors, friends, and relatives sustained me and graciously made their connections visible to me. Thank you, Thelma, for the title inspiration and reflection—writing titles is hard.

Acknowledgements

This work could not have been done without the support given to me from so many people, and I owe many thanks to them for helping me to learn, access sources, think deeply, and point me in a different direction when needed.

First, to the family and community members I am accountable to, thank you for entrusting me with your individual and family stories, photographs, and experiences. Especially Hartland Goodtrack, Philip Lethbridge, Cherie Farlee, my aunt Betty Thomson, Loretta Lethbridge, Nancy Thomson-McIvor, Lawrence Lamb, Judy Fitzpatrick, Charlie White Buffalo, Billy and Shirley Ogle, Thelma Poirier, my late grandpa Billy Thomson, Kim Soo Goodtrack, Bill Mielke, Glenda Polley, Dana Claxton, Jeff Downing, Melinda Goodwill, my late uncle Harold Thomson, Lita Ferguson, and Donna Van de Velde. A special thank you to Joan Bellegarde, Irene Poitras, and Thelma McRae for helping to identify photographs and sharing the joy of seeing familiar places and faces with me.

Thank you to the archivists, clerks, and librarians who answered my numerous questions and helped me navigate and access the many historical texts that serve as the basis of this study. Thank you to the NARA archivists Gene Morris, Cody White, and Elizabeth Burns, Jennifer McRorie at the Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery, Stephanie Jeanes and Donna Kostal at the Moose Jaw Museum, Reference Department, Julie Reid archivist at the Société historique Saint-Boniface, Jean Lindvig at the Williston, North Dakota County Court House, Daniel Sauerwein at the North Dakota State Archives, Sam Herley from the South Dakota Oral History Center at University of South Dakota, Dr. Shelley Gavigan for sharing her knowledge in accessing historical court records, and Dr. Gerhard Ens for sharing many RG 10 files with me early on.

Wopila to the scholars and thinkers who offered me fresh perspectives and different paths to explore. Thank you to Dr. Craig Howe for many theoretical and practical discussions and advice that helped me flesh out my early thoughts. Ron Papandrea for being an enthusiastic supporter of my work since my early graduate days and for always being a quick message away to double check a name or source. Thank you to Thelma Poirier for being a source of inspiration, mentorship, and friendship that helped kindle my interest in history in the first place and helped sustain that interest through all my research and writing. Also thank you Ron and Thelma for taking me to many historical sites on different drives together to more fully link the stories to the places we write about. Dr. Amy Samson for many conversations, knitting lessons, and workout times together to help with the stress of comprehensive exams. Dr. Cheryl Troupe, Dr. Allyson Stevenson, and Dr. Sarah Nickel for inviting me along to conferences and to be on panels with you. Your advice, knowledge, and friendship has helped me push on during otherwise isolated periods of research and writing and to remind me of the exciting connections in this kind of work. Dr. Brendan Hokowhitu for his guidance and knowledge during my comprehensive exams. To Dr. Heather Coleman, thank you for organizing friendly meetings for pushing me and other graduate students on in during the hurdles of writing and editing. I am grateful to my committee, Dr. James Muir and Dr. Kim TallBear for their thoughtful feedback and guidance from the start. Thank you to my external examiners, Dr. Margaret Jacobs, Dr. Kisha Supernant, and Dr. Sharon Romeo, for their insightful comments and engaging discussion. A huge thank you to my supervisor Dr. Sarah Carter for her patience with me and my work. Thank you for sharpening my writing, opening new possibilities to me, and for being a source of encouragement and grounding along the entire way. I am so grateful for the warmth and feelings of welcome you, Walter, and Mary have given me.

Thank you to my friends and family who have been generous with their encouragement and understanding through this long project. Thank you to Kristin Catherwood, Rita Merrick, and Hannah Cook for listening to me gripe about writing block, nerd out about archive finds, and giving me much needed R&R together when we could. Wópila to my sisters, Stephanie and Jenna, for saying yes to the hundred times I asked them to read this. And for sisterly groundings, laughter, and rude awakenings when needed. Thank you to my brother Matthew for taking over my share of farm and ranch chores on many occasions so I could get my academic work done. A loving thank you to my parents for their unwavering support and providing me with a place in my beloved home to live and work while I was undertaking this long project. Thank you for listening to my many long stories about research odds and ends I was trying to piece together and being enthusiastic each time I had a new story to tell. To Corey Yellow Boy for his steadfastness, care, and love. I am so lucky to have found you along the education journey and I will be forever grateful for the profound learning your love has shown me.

Wópila

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A Note on Terminology

Throughout this dissertation, I employ Lakota language terms and phrases where I can, particularly to explain aspects of Lakota culture and worldviews that are not easily captured in English. I also purposefully use Lakota people's names of those who were only given English names later in life and spoke Lakota first and foremost in their lives. I am not a Lakota speaker, only a learner, but privileging the language in my work helps to serve as a reminder of the centrality of Lakota experiences and perspectives here and challenge and humble myself in my learning. I have chosen to use the Lakota Language Consortium's spelling of Lakota words as it is based upon Ella Deloria's orthography, though other spellings will also be included, especially if those are the ones that show up in historical records. I decided to use "Lakota" instead of "Lakhóta" throughout as the former is typically what Lakota people themselves use. I will not use English grammar rules to apply to Lakota words, for example, I do not pluralize words such as "Lakota" and "thiyóšpaye" with an "s" at the end because these words are plural by context in the language, though I recognize other scholars do use such English conventions with Lakota words.

This dissertation pushes back against certain terminology, one such being the word "Sioux." This term homogenizes Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people and harkens back to romantic and false depictions Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people. It is an outside word, with outside connotations, and the people I bring forward from the archives and from family/community memories do not use that word. In their Lakota writing of letters to each other and to governments and in stories and conversations with each other in the language, that word is not used, only in the English translations (at the time or shortly thereafter) is the word "Sioux" used. The term "Indian" has a similar history of being applied to Indigenous people and some generations used it among

themselves as well, but it does not have a basis in Lakota language or worldviews in the time period examined here. It does however have important historical and legal connotations that demonstrate the complex nature of settler colonialism and realities for Lakota and other Indigenous peoples. Therefore, the term “Indian” will sometimes be used within this historical and legal context.

I tend to use the word “Indigenous” over other similar words like “aboriginal” or “native” since the former is more widely accepted in scholarly and community discourse and in recent years, several problematic aspects of the two latter terms have come to light. However, this is not to say that Indigenous may eventually fall out of favour. I will not use words such as “Native American” or “American Indian” because this is a type of colonial possessiveness of Indigenous nations and people that seeks to place ahistorical identifiers of settler geo-political boundaries on top of Indigeneity, the latter which far predate settler nation states. I use this word in particular over other similar ones because of the global connotation it carries since I will be drawing from contexts from around the world, especially where settler colonialism has impacted and continues to impact Indigenous people. In this sense, Indigenous really implies the deeply rooted lived relationships with homelands and the shared experiences of settler colonialism around the world that I will be connecting to more broadly throughout this work. I use Indigenous to refer to both First Nations and Métis people and nations, (in a similar way to how “Aboriginal” is used in the Canadian constitutional and legal sense), however, sometimes these more specific terms are important to distinguish as their experiences are not one and the same. This brings me to the most important consideration in using such broad terms: whenever possible and especially when particular relationships, cultures, perspectives, and experiences are being discussed, using nations’ own names for themselves, in their languages will always be given preference.

Introduction

Kiksúye—Remembering and Being: Challenging Colonial Containers

Indians have a good memory? Yes the buffalo day Indians did. For example: In the late 20s Mrs. Elmer Lamb of Wood Mtn was in South Dakota. There she met a[n] uncle named Capapi (Stabbed)—Capapi asked her whereabouts she was located. Mrs. Lamb told him her ranch was on Horse Creek (South of McCord). Capapi had Mrs Lamb describe the exact part of Horse Creek—so she did—saying on the open big bend of the creek, south from Horse Creek Butte. Where upon Capapi said—I lost or forgot a brand new butchers knife on the southeast slope of the highest hill northwest of where your ranch house is. Will you please look for it there. Soon after Mrs Lamb’s return she went to the place described to her to search for that forgotten knife of over 50 years before. Mrs Lamb found that knife, only the metal was left and that would crumble to dust upon pressure.

-John Lecaine/Okute Sica, December 27, 1958²

The story John Lecaine/Okute Sica recalled about Mrs. Elmer Lamb, Nellie Lamb (née Thomson), and Capapi/Čhaphápi illustrates a place well known by some Lakota people though often left out of the books of Lakota histories: Čhánĥe, Wood Mountain in present-day Saskatchewan, Canada. This story also illustrates the importance of memory and remembering as a central part of how Lakota people passed on history, stories, and knowledge. In the Lakota language, to remember something, kiksúye, also means to be conscious, to feel, or to be sentient.³ The story also illustrates detailed mental maps and intimate lived relationships with land—so much so that one could remember a bend in a creek hundreds of kilometers and more than fifty years away. It tells of kinship, the relationship between a niece and an uncle. It illustrates how some Lakota women were involved in ranching in the early twentieth century. And it shows connections across Lakhóta Tĥamákĥoĥe, Lakota Country, particularly across the Canada-U.S. border. Both Nellie Lamb and John Lecaine/Okute Sica were the children of Lakota people who sought safety north of the Canada-U.S. border, the Čhanĥú Wakĥánĥ or

² Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan (PAS), Everett Baker Papers, R561.30.n, Okute, John, Historical Notes, 1957-1962, Letter to Everett Baker from John Okute, December 27, 1958.

³ Ella Deloria Archives, Dakota Indian Foundation, Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, *The Dakota Way of Life*, “Ch.8 Death and Burial,” page 153, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3213.

Mysterious/Sacred/Medicine Road as some called it,⁴ after the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876 and those who stayed in Canada after 1881. And like the story above shows, many Lakota people went back to the parts of Lakhóta Třamákřoče that are in what is now called the United States, particularly in South Dakota, but that does not mean Lakota connections within Lakhóta Třamákřoče ended. This story encapsulates many of the themes that will emerge in the history examined in this study.

This dissertation seeks to stitch together some of the history and connections of Lakota people in Lakhóta Třamákřoče from 1881 to 1930 despite colonial containers of control, namely Indian policies, settler colonialism, and the imposition of the Canada-U.S. border. It works to refocus Lakota history away from battles and chiefs towards resistance of another kind—the continuation of wótakuye, kinship. Focusing on Lakota ways of being and knowing, and more importantly, relating, also works throughout this study to balance the examination of settler colonialism—the replacement of Indigenous people with settlers in occupied Indigenous lands to create new societies stemming from an imperial power. It is necessary to study settler colonialism because there is no reality away from it, but also that amount of focus should also be given to Indigenous forms of resistance and resiliency that exist beyond and outside settler concerns and actions.

Furthermore, this study will recast Lakota history through a focus on the experiences of Lakota people after 1881 in present-day Saskatchewan and to bring a more holistic understanding to Lakota lived relations throughout Lakhóta Třamákřoče with Wood Mountain being the centre of the examination and framework. Throughout this analysis, the concept that

⁴ University of Oklahoma, Walter Stanley Campbell Collection, Box 85, Folder 12, Statement of Spotted Bear to Judge Frank Zahn; and PAS, G.F. Shepherd papers, A289, 24. Cypress Hills and Wood Mountain, 1935-1972, “John LeCaine. Wood Mtn. April 29. 1943.”

Lakota belonging rested on kinship and being a good relative will serve as a foundation for understanding historical connections, movements, and decision making. It will be demonstrated how Wood Mountain Lakota people slipped through the cracks of settler state government control and surveillance, sometimes deliberately as a strategy for maintaining self-determination on various levels and sometimes because of settler colonial administrations that sought to make and unmake Indians in overlapping, systematic, and sometimes arbitrary ways which served to sever Lakota ties to each other, place, sovereignty, and culture. Thus, the contrast of belonging—categories versus kin—comes into sharp relief. Lakǎ́óta Tǎ́mákǎ́oĉhe is more than the land and waters, places and spaces where Lakota people lived, travelled, and fought for, it is the realm of relationships and kinship—a landscape and kinscape that defies settler state geopolitical and social boundaries. Though Lakota people were at the margins of state categories and Indian policies, they still felt settler colonialism full force. In some ways being in the margins afforded them more opportunities and, in some ways, it caused them more harm. However, Lakota experiences, movement, and resistance continued on in Lakota relationship networks to kin and to land.

Historical Context

Lakota people are part of a larger confederacy, known as the Oĉhéthi Šakówiŋ (The Seven Council Fires) which is made up of seven nations: Bdewákhajthunŋaŋ (Dwellers at the Sacred Lake, Dakota), Sisíthunŋaŋ (Dakota), Waǎ́péthunŋaŋ (Leaf Dwellers, Dakota), Waǎ́pékhute (Leaf Shooters, Dakota), Iháŋkthunŋaŋ (Dwellers at the End of the Camp Circle, Dakota), Iháŋkthunŋaŋna (Little Dwellers at the End of the Camp Circle, Dakota), and

Thítħuŋwaŋ (Dwellers on the Prairie, Lakota).⁵ There is a long history and close association between all these nations. Dakota scholar, Ella Deloria wrote:

The Dakota tribe as a whole, the ‘nation’, was well aware of its three parts; its three brother-tribes; as being (1) Santees or Eastern Dakotas; (2) Yanktons or Central Dakotas, and (3) Tetons or Western Dakotas. There is no ‘pure’ or classical Dakotas apart from these dialects... Though all Dakotas consider themselves as one single nation, under the surface universality of speech and of a social system based on kinship relationships, certain variants of custom, as well as the dialects, are the distinguishing features that give a recognizable character to each of the brother-tribes. That being so, I could not lump all material and offer it simple as Dakota facts. But on the other hand, it would not be feasible to treat each people by itself after sorting into three neat piles the material pertinent to each.⁶

Deloria’s emphasis on Dakota and Lakota as independent but close relatives and not discrete and completely separate is important because some of the people in this study were Dakota and also Lakota, something that confused and defied government categories. Within the Thítħuŋwaŋ or Lakota, there are seven more divisions, sometimes called oyáte (nations, tribes, or people) or as Deloria called them, Oíglake Šakówiŋ/Seven Travelings:⁷ Oóhenúŋpa (Two Kettles), Itázipčo (No Bows), Húŋkpaŋha (Head of the Camp Circle), Mnikhówožu (Planters by the Water), Oglála (Scatter One’s Own), Sihásapa (Black Feet), and Sičhánġu (Burnt Thighs). Deloria wrote that “Originally, when the Teton Sioux were migrating westward they decided that they were too many and that they must divide in order to seek game enough to take care of them” and because they were used to seven divisions within the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, they divided into the Oíglake Šakówiŋ.⁸ Social structure, camp spatial layout, and governance systems stem from these

⁵ Sometimes the Nakota/Nakoda (Assiniboine) are placed within the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ as well, but historically the seven nations outlined here all spoke Dakota and Lakota, not Nakota/Nakoda, which may indicate the Nakota split off before this confederation was created. Deloria addresses this misconception of the Yankton / Iháŋkthuŋwaŋ and Yanktonai / Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna as Nakota when they are Dakota. For more on this see, Lakota Language Consortium, *New Lakota Dictionary, 2nd Edition* (Bloomington, IN: Lakota Language Consortium, 2016), 2-3.

⁶ Ella Deloria, Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, Introduction to “The Dakota Way of Life,” page 2, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=2989

⁷ Ella Deloria, Ella Deloria Archives, Dakota Ethnography: Box 2, “Untitled Ethnographic Notes Manuscript,” Alpha. Peace Pipe, page 8, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=2404

⁸ Ibid.

arrangements, and seven is a common number for such organization. From the name of the Oíglake Šakówiŋ and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ nations, it is clear that place, movement, and spatial organization are important parts of Dakota/Lakota worldviews and societal structure.

The foundational kinship and living arrangement in Lakota society, however was the thiyóšpaye, the extended family unit. Ella Deloria aptly described the way family, society, and land were connected through the thiyóšpaye: “a group of families bound together by blood and marriage ties, that lived side by side in the camp-circle. There was perfect freedom of movement. Any family for reasons valid to itself could depart at any time to visit relatives or sojourn for longer or shorter periods in some other Dakota camp-circle. There was no power to hold them back.”⁹ Foundational then to the thiyóšpaye was independence and movement, especially to access different areas at different times of year or to stay with other relatives. Deloria also explained: “At the same time, there was utmost freedom for any individual or family to come and go at will [in the camp circles] without let or hinderance. Even the titular head of the tiyospaye did not always know who went or stayed unless the matter came up incidentally. And then there was nothing he must say or do about it. It was not for him to keep tabs of every relative.”¹⁰ That kinship was so inextricably linked to spatial movement is important in Lakota society—and these kin and movement systems were especially targeted by settler states’ efforts to assimilate Lakota people into nuclear family arrangements and sedentary lifestyles. The spatial organization and movement were key to political structure as well, depending on the other thiyóšpaye in the camp circle and the larger Oíglake Šakówiŋ they belonged to. The thiyóšpaye system of kinship and organization of Lakota society was also the basis for the camp circle, what

⁹ Ella Deloria, *Speaking of Indians* (New York: Friendship Press, 1944), 40.

¹⁰ Ella Deloria, “Chapter Four: The Dakota Way of Life,” in *Ella Deloria Archive*, Dakota Ethnography Box 1, page 63, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive, accessed January 20, 2021.

Deloria calls hocoka (hóčhoka), which is the centre of the camp circle where many relatives and thiyóšpaye might stay together especially in the summer months.¹¹ Anthropologist James R. Walker similarly noted that group membership rested in residence, and that both membership and residence were easily changed through movement.¹² The thiyóšpaye was the principal but not only form of spatial movement historically. During the summers, large groups of many thiyóšpaye would come together to camp, especially when important celebrations and ceremonies took place or when many people followed certain leaders in times of distress, as was the case just before the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876 when many thousands of people were gathered. Thiyóšpaye were flexible and fluid units that sometimes had shifting membership and kinship attachments. Men or women could initiate this shifting and the membership and size of the thiyóšpaye changed depending on the seasonal work and activities.¹³

Kinship is tied to everything in Lakota worldviews and lifeways, as Deloria emphasized in her manuscript:

I have tried to show that kinship relationship was the very texture of Dakota life; that it was no detachable adjunct but, rather, it's very heart and at the same time its [sic] all-pervading, all-enveloping essence. One could hardly live among tribesman permanently free of kinship's sway, since one functioned properly in society only as a relative. Those who consistently obeyed its rules were the reliable and hence the 'good' citizens of society. Theirs were the utterances in council that compelled attention, because they were weighted with deeds of hospitality and generosity towards relatives. And that was all the government there was; it was what men lived by. Surely it was well to be brave and audacious and heroic—though not all men cared for the warpath. It was well to be truthful and sincere, and in every way moral, and to keep one's name above reproach. And yet, those were in a sense only selfish virtues in that they redounded to personal glory alone. A man might have them all,—and remain out of touch with his fellowmen. But to 'truly-live,' is, to live in relation to others, he needed also the social virtues

¹¹ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography Box 1, "Chapter One: The Camp Circle," pages 20-21, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive.

¹² James Walker, *Lakota Society* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 8.

¹³ Patricia C. Albers, "Sioux Women in Transition: A Study of Their Changing Status in Domestic and Capitalist Sectors of Production," in *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women*, eds. Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), 184-185.

demanded by kinship law. They were the indispensables of group living in *tiyospaye*, band, and tribe.”¹⁴

The difference between “selfish virtues” and “social virtues” is at once so simply drawn and also so complex in the ways they structured society and helped Lakota people truly live. Western societies of today often frame good citizenry in terms of individualistic achievements, accumulations, and successes (selfish virtues) but being a good relative was the way to truly living in historic Lakota communities. Kinship was the foundation to society and living. Ella Deloria also wrote: “Of only relatives, who knew their proper roles, could one be sure. Therefore, the solution was first to make the stranger a relative—thereby putting him on the spot—and then deal with him on that basis. Once he had accepted a kinship relationship might one be reasonably sure that he meant well. And, by the same token, one showed one’s own good will toward him.”¹⁵ Though some have called this “fictive kin” Deloria asserts that it was no less legitimate than kin by blood or marriage.¹⁶ These bonds and behaviours are what rooted Lakota and Dakota social, political, and even spiritual views and actions and they extended well beyond human and genealogical relations.

Though relationships and kinship underpin this study, care is taken not to essentialize or romanticize Lakota social systems either. Aspects of Lakota good relations are important to learn and continue, but like all peoples, humanity includes where we fail to live in good relations. Kinship is not a static expression either and the flexibility may be one of the most important aspects of it. Ella Deloria provides examples of people being “bad” relatives and just as importantly the social behaviours and acts that occurred after to remedy such situations if

¹⁴ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography, Box 1, *The Dakota Way of Life*, “Ch. 12. Relatives of Social Kinship,” pages 291-292, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3354.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, page 278, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3340.

¹⁶ Deloria, *Speaking of Indians*, 27.

possible.¹⁷ Unity and harmony were important in the camp circle, not just for peace but for material and physical wellbeing of everyone as well.

Lakota people's sense of homeland and community were much more nuanced and sophisticated than artificial lines and permanent dwellings. Homelands were fluid and flexible, not static territoriality that we are accustomed to thinking within settler states today. This is why Indigenous definitions of nationhood that rely on settler state paradigms can never fully be realized or encompass Indigenous ways of relating and being. Along with these societal and environmental understandings and protocols, the relationship with non-humans was important for Lakota worldviews and wellbeing. An example that facilitated much of the historical connections and movements discussed in this dissertation is the relationship with horses. Horses were important historically for carrying out the mobility and gift giving that was needed in Lakota life and relationship building. The Lakota came into contact with horses later than other Plains First Nations peoples, around 1760 to 1765,¹⁸ but by the 1780s and 1790s they were establishing themselves west of the Missouri River because of their effectiveness in using horses for warfare, hunting, traveling, and relationship building. Historian Pekka Hämäläinen has also written on Lakota horse culture as it relates to land expansion and economics, as well as the necessary balance with nature needed to sustain horse lifestyles on the Great Plains.¹⁹ For the Lakota, the horse became a central cultural element, found in many winter counts, oral histories, and ceremonies and they also allowed them to be more mobile. In the U.S., seizing horses from

¹⁷ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography, Box 1, *The Dakota Way of Life*, "Ch. 11. Relatives of Birth: Informal," pages 256-257, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3318

¹⁸ John C. Ewers, *The Horse in Blackfoot Culture*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin #159), 5, quoted in Alan M. Klein, "The Political-Economy of Gender: A 19th Century Plains Indian Case Study," in *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women*, edited by Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), 147.

¹⁹ Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 90, no. 3 (December 2003): 859-860.

First Nations people became part of military measures, especially after the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn. General Philip H. Sheridan in particular started the practice of dismounting First Nations people. Troops were sent to agencies to seize horses in order to deny Lakota people mobility.²⁰ Part of the terms for surrender were often to give up horses and weapons, the former being the means to access Lakhóta Thámákhočhe. Indigenous mobility was an obstacle to settlement and “progress” in both Canada and the U.S., particularly when that mobility took Indigenous people across the international border and outside of the jurisdictional reach of one Indian Affairs department/military/police or the other.

Some Lakota oyate signed treaties with the U.S. government in 1851 and 1868 at Fort Laramie. Many of the Lakota leaders who would later come to Canada refused to sign onto treaties with the U.S. though, seeing the agreements as signing away land and sovereignty. These leaders and thiyóšpaye would be viewed as the “hostiles” particularly when they would not settle on the reservations that the U.S. government delineated after the treaties. The 1851 Fort Laramie/Horse Creek Treaty was a peace treaty, not only with the Lakota, but also with the Aaniiih (Gros Ventre), Numakiki (Mandan), Sahnish (Arikara), Tsétséhéstáhese (Cheyenne), Hinono-eino (Arapaho), Apsaalooke (Crow), Nakota (Assiniboine), and Siksika (Blackfoot). The treaty promised to protect these nations from “depredations” and incursions by settlers, though the military posts and roads were to be allowed within certain areas.²¹ The U.S. government attempted to define each nations’ territory through Article 5 of the treaty, and for the Lakota this meant the use of boundaries by the government that would be whittled down over time. The

²⁰ Susan Bordeaux Bettelyoun and Josephine Waggoner, *With My Own Eyes: A Lakota Woman Tells Her People’s History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), footnote 5 pages 133-134. See also, Richard L. Clow, “General Philip H. Sheridan’s Legacy: The Sioux Pony Campaign of 1876,” *Nebraska History*, Vol. 57 (1976): 460-477.

²¹ Charles D. Bernholz and Brian L. Pytlik Zillig, “The Treaty of Fort Laramie with Sioux, etc. 1851: Revisiting the document found in *Kappler’s Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*,” University of Nebraska, Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, *American Indian Treaties Portal*, <http://treatiesportal.unl.edu/treatyoffortlaramie1851/>.

treaty was amended to reduce the number of years the U.S. would provide annuities from fifty to ten years, and it was never published in the U. S. Statutes at Large as ratified, though it was ratified by the Senate in May of 1852. Regardless, the treaty was not upheld for very long, with promises on all sides being broken, especially in regard to peace, no intrusion into Indigenous lands, and annuities. Therefore, a subsequent treaty, the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, was made and superseded the 1851 treaty. This treaty, most importantly, had the U.S. accept Lakota sovereignty over most of their lands, including the Black Hills. Article 2 set aside a Lakota reservation for their “absolute and undistributed use and occupation,” of about 31 million acres and sometimes referred to as the “Great Sioux Reservation.” Two other articles dealt with land: Article 16 set aside “unceded Indian territory” north of the North Platte River and east of the Bighorn Mountains, though no northern boundary was detailed (later the Yellowstone River was interpreted as the boundary). And Article 11 outlined that the Lakota surrender “all right to occupy permanently the territory outside their reservation as herein defined,” though they could still hunt as long as the buffalo were there in sufficient numbers.²² Historian Jeffrey Ostler wrote of the land issues arising from the treaty:

There are at least two ways to read the treaty’s land provisions. Articles 2 and 16 can be taken together as confirmation of Lakota title to the lands the United States recognized as belonging to them under the 1851 treaty (approximately seventy million total acres) and Article 11 as adding an additional, albeit limited, hunting right in lands south of the Platte to the Republican River. From this perspective, the treaty did not involve any cession of land. Yet, the treaty’s establishment of a permanent reservation under Article 2 implied an inferior title to all of the other land, including the unceded territory under Article 16. Read this way, the treaty meant that Lakotas retained permanent title only to the thirty-one-million-acre reservation defined in Article 2. Other elements of the 1868 treaty also threatened the integrity of Lakota territory. Although the treaty required the United States to abandon its posts along the Bozeman Trail, it said nothing about the forts along the Missouri. These were to remain. Article 11 required Lakotas not to interfere with the Union Pacific Railroad or other wagon roads or railroads that might eventually be constructed, even if they cut through the permanent reservation of Article 2. The United States would provide compensation for any damage these roads caused, but Lakotas

²² Jeffrey Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground* (New York: Viking, 2010), 63.

would have no choice but to accept them. The treaty also opened the door to future land loss by including a provision (Article 12) allowing for land cession. Three-fourths of adult men would have to agree to cede additional territory, but the treaty's drafters foresaw the possibility that Americans would eventually demand more land.²³

Although the 1868 treaty is mostly viewed positively today and is recognized as establishing the nation-to-nation relationship between the U.S. and Lakota, it was also the first steps and template for the taking of more Lakota land in the years that followed. As Ostler detailed, for every article that protected Lakota lands, another made the conditions for how it could be taken.

The American assault on Lakota lands came to a head in 1874 with Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's expedition into the Black Hills and the reports of riches and agricultural potential in the area. And, "to rationalize taking the Black Hills, a growing number of Americans developed arguments that the Lakotas had no legitimate need for them" or made false claims that the Lakota did not actually occupy the Hills, only traveling into them occasionally to harvest tipi poles.²⁴ By the winter of 1875, the federal government ordered all Lakota people living outside of the permanent reservation area to report to the agencies by the end of January 1876, or be labelled "hostile" and subject to forced removal from the Black Hills and other surrounding lands. Non-treaty *thiyóšpaye* in particular ignored American orders.²⁵ This began the fight for *Lakhóta Thámákhoche* and the American theft of the Black Hills. The government order and thousands of Lakota people "illegally occupying" their own lands, was the lead up to the Battle of the Little Bighorn in June 1876. But the Lakota victory over Custer and the Seventh Calvary deepened American resolve to obtain Lakota lands. On August 15, 1876, Congress legislated that the Lakota had to give up all claims to their lands outside of the reservation, in what became known as the "Sell Out or Starve" Act and President Ulysses Grant

²³ Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, 63-64.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

created the Manypenny Commission to secure Lakota “agreement” to this. In the fall of 1876, the Manypenny Commission secured 230 signatures of Lakota, Iháŋkthųwajŋa/Yanktonai, Isáŋyathi/Santee,²⁶ and some Cheyenne and Arapaho to give up the Black Hills and all the unceded land in exchange for farming equipment, rations, clothing, and schools.²⁷ This was the beginning of chipping away at the Great Sioux Reservation that would continue until the current individual Lakota and Dakota reservations that are left in present-day North and South Dakota. However, many thiyóšpaye who were living further north in the Powder River and Yellowstone River areas were very critical and angry with the leaders who had submitted to signing the Commission’s agreement. These “hostile” thiyóšpaye refused to cede their land and sovereignty and resisted American terrorism to live in the far reaches of Lakǎóta Thámákǎoche, eventually even across the Canada-U.S. border. Chapter one will show how present-day Canada was part of Lakǎóta Thámákǎoche in more detail.

The pressure to obtain more land in the west did not end with the Manypenny Commission and several more detrimental policies in the U.S. forcibly dwindled Lakota access and use of their lands. In 1887, the General Allotment Act was passed in Congress (also called the Dawes Act or the Severalty Act) which split up the communally held tribal lands into individual lots to families. The goal was to encourage individualism, farming, and private property ownership in order to assimilate Indians into American society. However, it also worked to dissolve tribal governments and make “surplus” lands available for incoming settlers.²⁸ One direct outcome of the Act was that nearly two-thirds of Indian reservation land in

²⁶ Isáŋyathi/Santee are also known as the “Eastern Dakota,” made up of the Bdewákhajthųwajŋ, Sisíthųwajŋ, Waǎpéthųwajŋ, and Waǎpékhute oyáte.

²⁷ Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, 99-101.

²⁸ Eli K.M. Foster, “Sign This and Go Away: Debates Surrounding the Settler Colonial Project of the General Allotment Act, 1881-1906,” M.A. thesis, University of Hawai’i at Manoa, Department of History, 2019: 4-5.

the U.S. was lost: 138 million acres down to 48 million acres by 1934 (the year the federal government decided to end the allotment process with the Indian Reorganization Act).²⁹ Further, in 1889, Congress passed another act, the Indian Appropriations Act also known as the Sioux Agreement which split the remaining Great Sioux Reservation into five separate Lakota reservations that remain today: Standing Rock, Pine Ridge, Cheyenne River, Rosebud, and Lower Brule. However, the agreement did not secure the required three-quarters of signatures from Lakota men that was stipulated in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, as noted above.³⁰ Following this act and the set boundaries of the reservations, millions of acres were additionally “opened up” for settlers. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (also known as the Wheeler Howard Act) ended the official land cessions and allotment process, but the eroding of Lakota land and sovereignty by the U.S. government would continue into the twentieth century.³¹ For example, the Indian Reorganization Act imposed a Bureau of Indian Affairs style governance system onto reservations, including creating American-like constitutions and electoral systems monitored by the U.S. government. These many policies (and more both in Canada and the U.S.) would impact Lakota people’s lives for generations and shape mainstream and government views of what constitutes Lakota land to the present.

Lakota refusal and rejection of American paternalism, land theft, and jurisdiction has taken many forms, including the “Indian Wars,” Ghost Dancing, underground ceremonies, the Black Hills claim, Wounded Knee 1890, and the Standing Rock NoDAPL protests. The nation-to-nation foundation of the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties was to guarantee protection for

²⁹ Foster, “Sign This and Go Away,” 26-27.

³⁰ Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (New York: Verso, 2019), 37-38. For more on violations to the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty see Robert A. Bell, “The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 and the Sioux: Is the United States Honoring the Agreements it Made?” *Indigenous Policy Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Winter 2018): 1-13.

³¹ Joseph P. Brewer II and Mary Kate Dennis, “A land neither here nor there: Voices from the margins & the untenuring of Lakota lands,” *GeoJournal* Vol. 84 (2019): 573.

a large part of Lakǰóta ǂamákǰoĉhe from settler intrusion, but ultimately failed in that regard and has not been upheld as the supreme law of the land by settler governments and citizens. Since that time, much of the Lakota resistance and refusal has been in regards to the treaties failing and American intrusion and taking of Lakota land, particularly the Black Hills.

Part of the resistance against American colonialism and violence was traveling north to present-day Saskatchewan after 1876, and approximately 5,000 Lakota people moved with the leaders who did not want to cede land, sovereignty, horses, or weapons. Among those leaders were ǂathǰnka Íyotake/Sitting Bull, Hé Tópa/Four Horns, Wakínyaŋ Watǰkpe/Charging Thunder, Phizí/Gall, Waŋblí Glešká/Spotted Eagle, Ité Omáĝažu/Rain in the Face, Uŋpǰán Glešká/Spotted Elk, and Wí Sápa/Black Moon and they moved north in thiyóšpaye and Oíglake Šakówiŋ at different times. For example, after Crazy Horse was killed in September 1877, more southern Oíglake Šakówiŋ peoples, especially more Oglála and Siĉhǰŋĝu, started coming north to join other Lakota people already in Canada.³² They purposefully used the border to their advantage, knowing their American pursuers could not reach them there. But this is not to define Lakota people as refugees, but rather to center their decision making and movement within lands already known to them. Scholars Leo J. Omani and David G. McCrady both show in their work how Lakota (and Dakota) people were living in present-day Canada prior to 1867 and 1876. Both Omani and McCrady show that Húŋkpapǰa Chief Little Knife was at Fort Qu'Appelle in present-day Saskatchewan in 1872 as his thiyóšpaye was one of the most frequently north of the 49th parallel.³³ Some northern thiyóšpaye had more connections to places in present-day southern Saskatchewan and these connections will be examined in more detail in chapter one.

³² Kingsley M. Bray, “‘We Belong to the North’: The Flights of the Northern Indians from the White River Agencies, 1877-1878,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Summer 2005): 28-47.

³³ Leo J. Omani, “Perspectives of Saskatchewan Dakota/Lakota Elders on the Treaty Process within Canada,” PhD diss., (University of Saskatchewan, 2010), 114-115 and 196-197; David G. McCrady, *Living with Strangers: The*

The Canadian government was concerned with the influx of Lakota people, but were unable financially or militarily to deal with them as the U.S. had. The Canadian government was especially worried about the impact on “their Indians” a very problematic view of Indigenous people as jurisdictional and possessive issues for the Canadian state. For example, Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories and former Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, David Laird wrote in 1879:

...the presence of the [Lakota] Sioux in the Country has caused nearly all the destitution at present existing among our Indians. It is no doubt true that previous to their arrival, the buffalo were decreasing in numbers year by year on the north of the Line. But as they alone numbered nearly as many as all our plains Indians together, they have been, in my opinion, to a large extent the cause of this year’s famine. Had the Sioux not come, the measures proposed under the treaties to assist our indians...would probably have averted such a sudden difficulty as has come upon us this year. But their return to their own Country would give our Indians and Halfbreeds as opportunity to benefit to some extent by the buffalo probably a few years more.³⁴

The paternalistic and problematic language of this remark is very much in line with government and Indian Affairs rhetoric and views of Lakota people on both sides of the border, which will be examined in more detail throughout this dissertation. The Canadian government wanted the Lakota to return to the U.S. side of the border, and their efforts throughout the decades following the 1870s was with this goal in mind. The trend of claiming Indigenous people as settler government possessions, especially when convenient, continues to this day and will be discussed in connection to present-day court rulings as well below. Claiming Indians as “Canadian” or “American” is not limited to the Lakota. Historian Tyla Betke showed how a similar logic was used to force the Cree out of the U.S. and back into Canada after the 1885 Northwest

Nineteenth-Century Sioux and the Canadian-American Borderlands (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 35-36.

³⁴ PAS, RG 15, Department of Interior, File no. 85869, David Laird to Lt. Col. J.S. Dennis, October 15, 1879.

Resistance.³⁵ Historian Michel Hogue also examined these categories as were applied to Métis people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, arguing that Indigenous Peoples' movements and intermixing frustrated governments' attempts to sort them into "discrete groupings of 'Canadian' or 'American' Indians or into clear tribal groupings."³⁶

While in the Wood Mountain area, Sitting Bull and NWMP Superintendent James Morrow Walsh had grown to trust each and even to become friends. Though this helped to keep the peace and quell tensions, Walsh's superiors were not happy with this perceived leniency. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald "began to suspect that Walsh was lukewarm in his efforts to persuade the Sioux to leave [Canada], and then that the superintendent was actively working to prevent their leaving."³⁷ Walsh was transferred away from his posts at Fort Walsh and Wood Mountain in 1880 to Fort Qu'Appelle, further north and east in present-day Saskatchewan, and eventually that same year back to Ontario on leave, no doubt to remove him from any contact with Sitting Bull. Sitting Bull and his family went to Fort Qu'Appelle to see Walsh to appeal for help in 1881. Sitting Bull told Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney at Fort Qu'Appelle, "I gave Major Walsh my fine clothing and told him to speak for me and that is what I am waiting for."³⁸ This proved unsuccessful because by the time Sitting Bull had arrived at Fort Qu'Appelle, Walsh had already been transferred further east.

³⁵ Tyla Betke, "Cree (Nêhiyawak) Mobility, Diplomacy, and Resistance in The Canada-U.S. Borderlands, 1885-1917," MA thesis, Department of History, University of Saskatchewan, 2019, 3-4.

³⁶ Michel Hogue, *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2015), 221. See also Hogue's writing on Cree borderland history, "Disputing the medicine line: The plains Crees and the Canadian--American border: 1876-1888 Disputing the medicine line: The plains Crees and the Canadian--American border: 1876-1885" *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Winter 2002); and "Crossing the line: The Plains Cree in the Canada-United States borderlands, 1870-1900," MA thesis, (University of Calgary, 2002).

³⁷ Roderick C. Macleod, "Walsh, James Morrow," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, accessed November 9, 2021, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/walsh_james_morrow_13E.html.

³⁸ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3653, File 8589, Pt. 1, Reel C-10114, "Extensive Correspondence & Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1878-83," Indian Commissioner E. Dewdney to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, June 7, 1881.

Eventually with food scarce and the winters more difficult, many Lakota people began trickling back into the U.S. to settle on reservations. Chief Sitting Bull and his *thiyóšpaye* was one of the last large groups of Lakota people to return to the U.S. in 1881. Even in Sitting Bull's surrender, kinship played a role, as it was remembered:

Sitting Bull had an intense love for his family. He demonstrated this by killing the warrior who killed his father and by providing for his mother until her death. In fact, he only surrendered in the end because his daughter, Many Horses, was, he thought, being held a prisoner in chains. On this point one Hunkpapa said, "You hear officers boast of conquering Sitting Bull, but the one who brought him to the post was his daughter. The love of the parent for the child is strong in my race."³⁹

This account of Sitting Bull's surrender is different from even Canadian histories of the event, as often the French-Canadian trader at Wood Mountain and Willow Bunch, Jean-Louis Légaré, is credited with finally persuading the chief to surrender. Reservation conditions and demoralizing Indian policies were well known between Lakota people at the time (more on this in chapter four), and the taking of more Lakota land would continue. These were reasons that contributed to Sitting Bull and others' holding out from settling on American reservations. Furthermore, as historian David G. McCrady pointed out:

Studies of the Lakota experience in Canada commonly note that, when food became scarce in Canada and Lakotas returned to the United States to hunt, individuals and family groups took the opportunity to surrender themselves to American military authorities. Yet this view skips over complex Lakota-Yanktonais [Ihánkthūŋwaŋna] relationships. When Lakota people returned to the United States, they did not simply surrender; they chose instead to join the Yanktonais at the Poplar River Agency with whom they had been in contact with since the late 1860s and had developed numerous kin ties.⁴⁰

Surrender has also exclusively been interpreted within the lens of Western political and military frameworks, but kinship has played a much larger role than acknowledged and is more representative of Lakota lived realities. The connections and movement to and from the Poplar

³⁹ Mark Diedrich, *Sitting Bull: The Collected Speeches* (Rochester, MN: Coyote Books, 1998), 26.

⁴⁰ McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 100.

River Agency/Fort Peck Reservation in northern Montana after 1881 will be a common theme throughout this dissertation as well.

Though the large majority of Lakota people who sought peace and safety from U.S. violence after 1876 returned to U.S. occupied lands by 1881, a few hundred people remained at Wood Mountain. Indian Commissioner and Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories Edgar Dewdney's annual report for 1882 recorded 600 "hostile Sioux at Wood Mountain" as the "remnants" after Sitting Bull's surrender.⁴¹ A draft letter by the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, from November 23, 1883 passed along Dewdney's figures and reassured the council that the Lakota would eventually go south of the border (a reoccurring sentiment throughout government correspondence about the Lakota).⁴² How accurate this estimate of Lakota people at Wood Mountain was, is unclear, but Canadian government policy towards the Lakota would be shaped by both the worry of too many "foreign" Indians under their jurisdiction and by rejecting them from Canadian responsibility to deal with them like other Indigenous nations on the prairies north of the 49th parallel. By 1900, there was reported to be 127 Lakota people north of the border.⁴³ The Indian Act was not completely applied to the Lakota nor were they confined to a reserve like most other First Nations people right away, but this was not out of the Canadian government's benevolence. To the contrary: the Canadian

⁴¹ Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers, 1882*, No. 6 (Vol. 5), Part 1, Manitoba and NWT, Reports of Superintendents for Manitoba, Keewatin, and the North-West Territories, of Superintendent James F. Graham, and the various Indian Agents and the Inspectors of Agencies and Farms, "Annual Report of Indian Commissioner of NWT and Manitoba Edgar Dewdney," pp. 37 and 58, Algoma University, archives.algomau.ca/main/sites/default/files/2010-011_001_015.pdf.

⁴² LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1884-1944, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs draft letter to the Privy Council of Canada, November 23, 1883.

⁴³ Ron Papandrea suggests that there was about 250 people left after 1881. See Ron Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered: The Lakota Sioux Band That Stayed in Canada*, 7th ed. (La Vergne, TN: Lightning Source, 2021), 6. A census taken in 1900 of the "straggling Sioux" counted 127 Lakota people, but it is likely this does not capture every person. Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers, 1900*, No. 27, Part II, "Census of Sioux and Straggling Indians in the Northwest Territories, 1900," pp. 167.

government did not want any responsibility for the Lakota and viewed them as American refugees. The use of the term “foreign” to explain Indigenous Peoples that the settler state governments perceived as another settler state’s responsibility or jurisdiction will crop up throughout this dissertation as Lakota people challenged the international border and colonial categories with their movement. Much of Lakota history has been written like this as well; as historian Sarah Carter wrote “Aboriginal people are neatly categorized as ‘Canadian’ or ‘American,’ and are dropped from each nation’s narrative once they cross the line, skewing understanding of experiences and identities that pre-date, transcend and ignore the border.”⁴⁴ Lakota people, however, were not the foreigners to these places, regardless of the “traditional territories” settler states neatly drew and “recognized” for Indigenous peoples and later “granted” lands through reserves and reservations in government approved (and desired) areas. Defining Lakota people as “refugees” also works much the same way to categorize them as “foreign.” Though “refugee” implies more of the violence Lakota people experienced, it also positions Canada as the benevolent “rescuer,” which was not the case as anxieties ran high over the “Sioux Crisis” and inaction was the official government stance particularly as starvation set in.

Sitting Bull had wanted to enter into treaty and secure a reserve in Canada in 1881, especially as options were becoming scarce. He understood how other leaders who had entered into Canadian treaties like Cree leader Piapot and Nakota leader Pheasant Rump were both “American” and “Canadian” Indians.⁴⁵ He argued in 1881 when at Fort Qu’Appelle, “I have received nothing in comparison with what the Cree have...this is the first time I have asked for

⁴⁴ Sarah Carter, “Transnational Perspectives on the History of Great Plains Women: Gender, Race, Nations, and the Forty-ninth Parallel,” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 33, no. 4 (2003): 566.

⁴⁵ McCrady, *Living With Strangers*, 109-110.

assistance.”⁴⁶ The Canadian government’s position for refusing a treaty relationship with the Lakota or Dakota rests upon the idea of them being “foreign” and “refugees,” regardless of other First Nations being in similar transnational positions. First Nations people were well aware of treaty terms on both sides of the border, especially treaties the Lakota had been part of in the U.S. McCrady explained that the Cree negotiating Treaty Six in 1876 were aware of provisions granted to the “Sioux” earlier which informed their demands of clothing, blacksmiths, food, and carpenters be included in the treaty.⁴⁷

Historian Jill St. Germain argued that in many ways the treaties in Canada and the U.S. worked to the same ends, and she challenged the assumption that Canada was more humane and just in dealing with Indigenous people.⁴⁸ She also demonstrated that Canadian authorities saw the sole purpose treaties to be the of extinguishment of Indian land title.⁴⁹ In some ways, being denied a treaty relationship with the Crown has been damaging for Dakota⁵⁰ and Lakota people, especially in accessing assistance in the difficult times of the 1880s (though many treaty peoples were also neglected regardless of the promises the Crown and Canadian government made), and in other ways it may have been beneficial. Dakota and Lakota nations did not “cede, release, and surrender” any rights or sovereignty over their lands and resources as the written historical treaties explicitly note and the Crown deeply desired. This puts Lakota and Dakota people in a

⁴⁶ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3653, File 8589, Pt. 1, Reel C-10114, “Extensive Correspondence & Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1878-83,” Indian Commissioner E. Dewdney to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, June 7, 1881.

⁴⁷ McCrady, *Living With Strangers*, 64.

⁴⁸ Jill St. Germain, *Indian Treaty-Making Policy in the United States and Canada, 1867-1877* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), xxi-xxii.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁵⁰ Many Dakota people decided to reside on lands claimed by Canada after the 1862 U.S.-Dakota War (also known by many other names including the Dakota Uprising and Little Crow’s War) to escape American violence in present-day Minnesota. Their movement north was categorized with the same kind of language as being “refugees,” and “foreigners” and the Crown and Canadian government refused to deal with the Dakota on nation-to-nation terms as well because they did not view “Canadian” land as part of Dakota traditional territory. This position is still upheld by the Canadian government to this day.

powerful position of self-determination that may be acted upon. This could be valuable for self-determination assertion and rejection, or as Kahnawake Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson wrote, for refusal of state recognition and absorption into colonial sovereignty and political systems. It could also provide current and future opportunities to assert Lakḥóta Ṭhamákḥoche outside of Canadian jurisdiction by Canada's own rules and within Lakota land relations. In some ways, those who were ignored by the settler states and could use their cultural frameworks for flexibility and ingenuity on their own terms sometimes made out better than the treaty people on the western prairies. For example, in the Canadian and Dakota context, historian James Dashuck argued:

Most important to their [the Dakota's] success were the facts that they could live their lives and undertake economic strategies outside the systemic constraints imposed on those who entered into treaties with the crown. Communities that entered into treaties assumed that the state would protect them from famine and socioeconomic catastrophe, yet in less than a decade the "protections" afforded by treaties became the means by which the state subjugated the treaty Indian population. One measure of the dominion's oppression of the Indigenous population of the prairies was the explosion of tuberculosis. The Dakota, however, did not succumb to the epidemic in the early 1880s because they were relatively free from the oppressive management of the Department of Indian Affairs and could participate in the commercial economy of the region; in other words, they were free from treaty.⁵¹

Much more research needs to be explored in this area that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. But Daschuk makes a compelling argument and one that can also apply to the Wood Mountain Lakota, and chapter one will demonstrate the refusal to accept government aid for the very reason of mistrust and not wanting any form of government interference in their lives. The adaptation to agriculture—and success at it—is also a parallel between Dakota people in Canada and the Wood Mountain Lakota, though ranching was the preferred agricultural enterprise of the latter. As Carter has also shown, though the Dakota were not considered as having legitimate

⁵¹ James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Indigenous Life*, (Regina: University of Regina, 2019), 125-126.

claims for the basis of treaty-relations with the Crown, they were still subjected to oppressive Indian policies and laws by the Canadian government—another parallel with Lakota people that will be expanded on in this study.⁵²

Though many nations have gained the securities they desire through the comprehensive land claims in Canada (sometimes colloquially referred to as modern treaties), these agreements have not improved much in terms of respecting Indigenous sovereignty and land connections, particularly as these treaties/agreements continue along in an imperialist and exploitive model which allows Canada access to land and resources and imbeds Indigenous nations in capitalistic and domestic frameworks. In my critical reading of comprehensive agreements and the way historic treaties have been handled by the state, they operate within the theatre of state “recognition” projects. As Cree legal scholar Sharon Venne wrote in regard to the comprehensive land claims process, “Canada continues to seek certainty largely through a de facto extinguishment of Aboriginal title”⁵³ which also speaks to the tenuous nature of settler state legitimacy.

As will be explained further in chapter one, Indigenous land boundaries were often much more fluid and flexible and were outside the realm of understanding for colonial nation states and societies. Private property is the basis for settler conceptions of land, which is based on the idea of exclusion of use by others to establish and maintain ownership. And otherness is the basis for defining who is a citizen in the state, a social form of exclusion on the basis of perceived and created difference. Also, much of this is based on settler jurisdictional issues with Indigenous

⁵² Sarah Carter, “Agriculture and Agitation on the Oak River Dakota Reserve, 1875-1895,” *Manitoba History*, No. 6 (Fall 1983), republished on Manitoba Historical Society, http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/06/oakriveragriculture.shtml, October 27, 2012.

⁵³ Sharon Venne, “Crown title: A legal lie,” in *Whose Land is it Anyway?: A Manual for Decolonization*, eds. Peter MacFarlane and Nicole Schabus, (Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC, 2017), 16.

People which has forced Indigenous People to seek redress within colonial systems on the domestic plane, not in a nation-to-nation forum. This happened in the past and continues on today. These constraints spatially and politically are outside Lakota and other Indigenous Peoples' understandings and relationships with land, waters, resources, and each other where many Indigenous Peoples had overlapping homelands which were sometimes complimentary and sometimes contested. Seasonal changes and animal movements were especially important for sustaining life and cultures which were dependent on mobility and often sharing. Kinship was important for facilitating this sharing and relations outside of the camp circle as well—having flexible but reciprocal kinship frameworks ensured proper roles and respect.

An important aspect to remind ourselves, in everyday lived relations and in reading this dissertation, is to not conflate nation-states with the land. Indigenous Studies scholar Kim TallBear helped me to clearly enunciate this concept with her simple but profound Tweet: “The empire is hideous, the land is stunning. I have learned not to conflate the two.”⁵⁴ This idea had been marinating in my mind for a long time when considering Lakota terms for Canada and the U.S. In Lakota, Canada is called Uŋčiyapi Makǰóche/Grandmother's Country and the U.S. is called Míla Háŋska Țamákǰóche/Long Knives' Country and neither one of these are synonymous with Lakǰóta Țamákǰóche. Uŋčiyapi Makǰóche is in reference to Queen Victoria, literally “their grandmother” or “they have her for grandmother,” and Míla Háŋska Țamákǰóche is in reference to the long saber knives carried by the U.S. cavalry.⁵⁵ Both names

⁵⁴ Kim TallBear, Twitter Post, September 10, 2020, <https://mobile.twitter.com/KimTallBear/status/1304276617414414336>.

⁵⁵ The word Uŋčiyapi is in reference to only the British queen, and though more recently explanations have positioned Lakota/Dakota people historically drawing relation to colonial leaders, the “their” part of the translation is important as these terms clearly indicate that they are non-Lakota people's leaders, not Lakota people's own. Much in the same way, the U.S. president is called Țuŋkášilayapi, “their grandfather” but has been wrongly translated since as just grandfather or “great father” and Indian agents in Lakota are called atáyapi, literally “their father” or “they have him for a father.” Since Lakota kinship terms are so specific, one's own connection would be described in other terms. Therefore, these terms do not reflect authority over Lakota people, but non-Lakota people's

speak volumes about Lakota experiences with the settler states and the relationships with governments on both sides of the international border. It also speaks to the way historically Lakota people did not conflate the land with settler countries, as the land was still Lakǎ́óta Tǎ́mákǎ́oĉhe. These Lakota names reinforce that these were new governments, not new lands.

Lakǎ́óta Tǎ́mákǎ́oĉhe is not the same kind of taxonomy as the other two names, as this term does not denote a government jurisdiction laid on top of land, but rather a network of allies and relations, both human and non-human, and bound to place through reciprocity and interdependence. After all, Lakota simply means friend or ally. The distinction between Lakǎ́óta Tǎ́mákǎ́oĉhe and settler states will be the foundation of much of the overarching examination throughout this study to show another kind of refusal and resistance: one of kin networks throughout and alongside land connections.

Throughout this time period, Canada and the U.S. were trying (and still are) to shore up their sovereignty, claim to land and resources, and control. And much of that is in contrast or opposition to Indigenous sovereignty and lifeways in the same places. The cracks in the nation-state claims, legitimacy, and control are deeply apparent in Indigenous history and present-realities, especially across settler-state borders and in Lakota history. Lakota experiences are not isolated to the past and issues with categories, movement, borders, and control are ongoing. However, much of living kinship relations remain and can be strengthened as a foundational part of Lakota society, sovereignty, and land.

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governing systems and leaders. The Lakota word, *itǎ́ŋĉhaŋ* (leader, chief, person in charge) in comparison, can be broken down into two components—*í* (mouth) and *tǎ́ŋĉháŋ* (body)—so literally the mouth of the body; someone who speaks for the people. Comparing these Lakota words highlights Lakota thought and sovereignty. In addition, translations in English that focus on concepts like “great white father” for the U.S. President and “white grandmother” for Queen Victoria, are non-Lakota erroneous interpretations of Lakota thought.

This dissertation will borrow from and build upon four main areas of literature: Lakota history, Indigenous borderlands history, Indigenous relationships and relationality, and settler colonialism and Indigenous resistance. In many ways, these areas of study overlap and this examination will demonstrate how they converge and diverge to add to the understanding of Lakota history that will follow. Both the disciplines of History and Indigenous Studies have greatly informed this work and continue to create engaging and critical ways of thinking about the past, present, and future of Indigenous realities. This research challenges conventional ideas about settler states and borders, western settlement, and Indigenous responses to settler colonialism. Much of Lakota history has been confined to the U.S. and been focused on men, leaders, and battles, but this study shifts the focus to Lakota ways of being, relating, and adapting within and against the background of government surveillance and intrusion.

Lakota History:

As mentioned previously, there has been a steady stream of Lakota history written both in the academic and popular realms. Many of the earlier Lakota histories were undertaken by non-Lakota people and focused on the Indian Wars time period in the U.S. (1860s and 1870s) where battles and military leaders were almost the sole focus. Certain types of Lakota resistance have often been repeated and glorified, but also misunderstood in these works. Other histories were biographies of great men which also explored some aspects of Lakota history and culture in the late nineteenth-century. Robert M. Utley's *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull* includes four chapters that cover Sitting Bull's time in Canada and goes into more detail than others. Some biographies, such as John G. Neihardt's famous book *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux*, first published in 1932, and Philip Burnham's *Song of Dewey Beard: Last Survivor of the Little Bighorn* mentioned Lakota people's

time in present-day Saskatchewan after 1876, which is important because it is rarely remembered that these well-known men were there in their youth.⁵⁶

There are a few other works that have included Lakota people at Wood Mountain, including Joseph Manzione's *"I Am Looking to the North for My Life": Sitting Bull, 1876-1881*, Robert M. Utley's *The Last Sovereigns: Sitting Bull and the Resistance of the Free Lakotas*, and Kingsley M. Bray's article "'We Belong to the North': The Flights of the Northern Indians from the White River Agencies, 1877-1878" which acknowledged Lakota history outside of the U.S. and the different oyáte that fled north in contrast to the traditional narrative that only Sitting Bull's people, the Húnkpaphá, came north. These works will provide some of the foundational information for understanding the years 1876 to 1881, though the focus of this dissertation is to expand that narrow confine away from leaders and beyond 1881. Ron Papandrea's book *They Never Surrendered: The Lakota Sioux Band that Stayed in Canada*, Bruce Fairman's *Sitting Bull's Moose Jaw Sioux*, and Gontran Lavolette's *The Dakota Sioux in Canada* outlined the history of Lakota people at Wood Mountain after 1881 and helped bring awareness of Lakota people and history in Saskatchewan to wider audiences. Overall, these works are a good foundation for historical narrative and context, but they have not engaged with critical discussions of community, Lakota worldviews, kinship, and settler colonialism.

There has been community-based scholarship within Lakota communities for generations, which is sometimes overlooked in scholarly discussions. Three books in particular belong to this category and provide rich family and community details and connections.

⁵⁶ Dewey Beard's mother may have succumbed to wounds she received at the Battle of the Little Bighorn and died shortly after reaching Canada. Other accounts state his mother died at the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890, including Dewey Beard's own memories of the massacre. Understanding Lakota kinship can mean both of these accounts are correct as Lakota people called more than one maternal figure "mother." See Philip Burnham, *Song of Dewey Beard: Last Survivor of the Little Bighorn* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 4, 55, and 214 n.35.

Josephine Waggoner's *Witness: A Húŋkpáŋa Historian's Strong-Heart Song of the Lakotas*, Susan Bordeaux Bettelyoun and Josephine Waggoner's *With My Own Eyes: A Lakota Woman Tells Her People's History*, and Ella Deloria's *Speaking of Indians*. These books are an intimate look at Lakota women's experiences, memories, and research—working and living in their families and communities. Waggoner's in-depth recording of Lakota kinship, culture, and history is valuable, and in some ways is the earlier equivalent of the work of Ella Deloria, both of whom were from Standing Rock Reservation and were graduates of boarding schools and later worked to preserve stories, language, and histories from their community. Much of their recordings and interpretations of Lakota culture and history will be used throughout this dissertation as a kind of research kinship and matrilineal lineage behind this work.

Historian Pekka Hämäläinen's book, *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power*, also frames Lakota people within the concept of a nation and draws upon Lakota stories and knowledges to examine history. One aspect of his analysis I found particularly insightful was the description of Lakota concepts of borders and kin which he outlines as fluid and dynamic.⁵⁷ Furthermore, his writing on Lakota diversity, modernity, and ongoing sovereignty into the twentieth century and beyond are simple but important statements to drive home within the discipline of History. His inclusion of Lakota stories to ground his work is refreshing, though his framing of the Lakota as another imperial nation is problematic, particularly if understanding specific Lakota sovereignty is the goal. He uses this lens to explain their westward movement onto the prairie in the early eighteenth-century, their relations with other nations and peoples, and their structures of power. Hämäläinen uses the same imperial framework to outline Lakota warfare and alliances that he applied to the Comanche people, and although his work is

⁵⁷ Pekka Hämäläinen, *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 40.

comprehensive by taking a long view of history and knits together complex interactions over a huge geographical and temporal space, it is still defined by Eurocentric ideas of empire building, conquest, and replacement of one sovereignty with another. This is particularly demonstrated in Hämäläinen's use of the Battle of the Little Bighorn as the greatest victory and the central climatic event, but also the beginning of the end of the "Lakota empire." This use of the Battle of the Little Bighorn is not a new interpretation of Lakota history. Hämäläinen's book briefly explains the expansion of Lakota trading and diplomatic ties into Canada in the 1870s but excludes Lakota people at Wood Mountain and movement in culturally continuing ways after 1876, mainly because it is still bounded by "America."⁵⁸ Similarly, historian James O. Gump compared Lakota and Zulu struggles against settler colonialism but also placed Lakota people as conquerors of other Indigenous Peoples.⁵⁹

Much of written Lakota history has been about the struggle against and resistance to U.S. interference, exploitation, and intrusion. This is particularly true when examining Lakota treaties and land in what is now known as the U.S. Edward Lazarus's book, *Black Hills, White Justice: The Sioux Nation Versus the United States, 1775 to the Present*, outlines the Lakota struggle against American intrusion, particularly by examining the theft of H́é Sápa (the Black Hills) and the ensuing decades long court case sometimes known as the Great Sioux Case or the Black Hills claim. In his book, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground*, Jeffery Ostler also examined the original theft of H́é Sápa which was supposed to be protected as Lakota land under the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties and the long legal battle that ended with the 1980 Supreme Court decision that ruled in favour of the Lakota. These are important works for

⁵⁸ Hämäläinen, *Lakota America*, 326.

⁵⁹ James O. Gump, *The Dust Rose Like Smoke: The Subjugation of the Zulu and the Sioux*, second edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2016), 47.

acknowledging Lakota resistance to protect their homelands which did not end in the nineteenth-century nor with the Indian Wars. Instead, Lakota resistance has been ongoing and adapting to use whatever resources and avenues available to protect Lakhóta Thámákhoche.

Though a more comprehensive examination of Indigenous resistance and refusal will be undertaken below, one text stands out for examining the Lakota context of such action. Lakota scholar Nick Estes's new book *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* is foundational for understanding Lakota resistance and connections to land, water, and place as well as nationhood. Estes does not just focus on the Black Hills claim, but positions it and many other Lakota historical events, people, and places up to the present day within a network of Lakota and wider Očhéthi Šakówiŋ resistance. His work is especially important because it reinforces Lakota and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ nationhood and sovereignty against genocide, where often in the past, Lakota people and resistance was framed in written histories as cultures rather than nations and against the inevitable U.S. expansion. Estes reminds us that history always has relevancy for Indigenous People, and present-day matters, such as the #NoDAPL movement, have deep roots that mainstream society ignores. The framework of Lakota nationhood, resistance, and connections within a larger context of genocide and settler colonialism is particularly influential to this dissertation. His book is a sophisticated examination that balances the complexity of settler colonialism with the tenacity of Lakota people and nations: both demonstrating the harsh realities and complicated webs of settler colonialism that has entangled and harmed Indigenous People, but also highlighting the ways Indigenous People have not succumbed to genocidal goals and have actively challenged and defied those efforts. An important differentiation that he also made is this: "Ancestors of Indigenous resistance didn't merely fight *against* settler colonialism;

they fought *for* Indigenous life and just relations with human and nonhuman relatives, and with earth.”⁶⁰ This balancing can be difficult because often settler colonialism gets so much attention in scholarly work almost to the detriment of Indigenous communities and knowledges that should be centred more frequently, but I aspire to Estes’s level of balance.

This dissertation nuances Lakota history, particularly through an analytical focus on gender, kinship, resistance, and land to push beyond typical narratives bounded by settler states borders. Rather than inserting Lakota people into a broader historical narrative within Canada or the U.S., this research seeks to center Lakota experiences while deconstructing the ways settler colonialism worked to remove Lakota people from the prairies.

Indigenous Borderlands:

This dissertation adds to the field of borderlands history and builds on the theme of examining Indigenous experiences in the grey areas of settler political boundaries. However, this study also challenges the way the field of borderlands history still largely focuses on settler borders and settler states at the centre of inquiry and significance. Borderlands studies are still needed to grasp the ways in which settler colonialism functioned in both Canada and the U.S. and how Indigenous nations navigated the splitting of their territories and communities, and this dissertation will also strive to do the same. Many studies of the Canada-U.S. border and the impacts on Indigenous people have been carried out and published in the last fifteen years. Borderlands history as a field is important for understanding the historical context of the prairies and this study will use the frameworks of multiple lenses of inquiry (social, geographical, cultural, political, and familial) in two different settler states and many different Lakota

⁶⁰ Estes, *Our History is the Future*, 248.

communities/families and how they interacted in a shifting and changing political and physical landscape.

I tend to shy away from using the word “borderlands” in this study because this is not an examination of the space or land being “Canadian” or “American” nor the process of border building, but rather an examination of connections within Lakḥóta Ṭḥamákḥoḥe. Canadian and American policies, mainstream ideologies and outlooks about Lakota and Indigenous people, and settler colonial borders will be examined, and all had impacts on Lakota people, but Lakota understandings of place were framed within their own communities, kin, and spaces. The term “borderlands” is used in the context of Lakota navigation of settler colonial impositions, whereas Lakota navigation of Lakḥóta Ṭḥamákḥoḥe is about relationships. The literature on Indigenous people and the borderlands is useful, but I want to reframe the understanding towards Lakota experiences and perspectives rather than centering settler-colonial concepts and delineations. Where this study shifts towards a borderlands lens is to critically examine the project of creating settler states and societies and the tenuous nature of such governments and claims overtop Lakota spaces.

Historian David G. McCrady’s book *Living With Strangers: The Nineteenth-Century Sioux and the Canadian-American Borderlands* is influential to this study in the argument that the land that is now known as Canada was not foreign to Lakota and Dakota people. McCrady concretely documented that they had been living north of the 49th parallel before 1862 (the U.S.-Dakota War) and 1876 (the Battle of the Little Bighorn). He also demonstrated how Lakota and Dakota people had used the border and borderlands for their own needs and devices. The positioning of the international border beyond settler colonial purposes and uses is not unique to McCrady, but within the context of Očhéthi Šakówiŋ history this acknowledgement of agency is

significant. This dissertation also follows in the vein of showing how the border could sometimes be useful to Lakota people, though in a later period.

Beth LaDow's *The Medicine Line: Life and Death on a North American Borderland* goes into deep narrative detail about Sitting Bull in present-day Saskatchewan and his surrender in 1881, but her story and analysis of Lakota history ends there. However, her book centers on grappling with the blurred and artificial nature of the border between Canada and the U.S. on the prairies and what did or did not distinguish Canada and the U.S. from each other. This is very much in line with Wallace Stegner's writing about the borderlands, particularly in his book *Wolf Willow: A History, a Story, and a Memory of the Last Plains Frontier*⁶¹. Both LaDow and Stegner are interested in a feeling of loss in looking back to their childhood "frontiers" and "borderlands," terms that seem synonymous in these works. Stegner lamented that he did not know of the Indigenous history and presence in southern Saskatchewan and is critical of this erasure. However, Dakota writer and scholar, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, is critical of Stegner's placing of Indigenous people only in the past:

'Living in Cypress Hills, I did not even know I lived there and hadn't the faintest notion of who lived there before me:' he [Stegner] admitted in *Wolf Willow*, and as he uttered this ignorance he spoke for all immigrant and pioneer offspring of America. Following this terrible admission and the information that he left there never to return, living some fifty-odd years elsewhere, he gave prominence to the idea that indigenesness was for those who claimed it. His attitude toward what he saw as the ignorance and omission of his ancestors with regard to history was accepting, sympathetic, quite without malice, and compassionate. In his misunderstanding and dismissal of indigenesness and his belief in the theory that American Indians were "vanishing" he was much like writers everywhere who offer only a narrowness of vision and a confused history. Following a compelling description of the Sioux Chieftain Sitting Bull's return to the United States from his Canadian exile at the close of the nineteenth century, Stegner said, as so many American writers and historians had said before him, "The Plains Indians were done."⁶²

⁶¹ Wallace Stegner, *Wolf Willow: A History, a Story, and a Memory of the Last Plains Frontier* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 112-114.

⁶² Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 6.

Cook-Lynn articulates the push by Indigenous people to critically examine what is written of them and their places, what she calls “the analysis in a tribal voice.”⁶³ She is also critical of Stegner (and others) that want to juxtapose an imaginary Canadian benevolence with American violence:

A broader look at history might suggest that the idea that Indian hating was nonexistent and empire building less violent in Canada than in the United States is simply a delusion of the imagination. Racism and its relationship to colonization and nationbuilding on the North American continent seem fairly pervasive and consistent. For Stegner to exempt his beloved Canada is a combination of compelling fantasy and bad history.⁶⁴

This aligns well with other scholars who have also demonstrated that Canada was not just and benevolent towards Indigenous people, like Daschuk and St. Germain. More Indigenous historians doing work to analyze in “a tribal voice” have shifted the focus in recent years more in line with experiences and perspectives that are important to Indigenous nations and people, not just in line with traditional questions and narratives found in the discipline of history.

Sarah Carter’s article, “Transnational Perspectives on the History of Great Plains Women: Gender, Race, Nations, and the Forty-ninth Parallel” and Sheila McManus’s book *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender, and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands* also helped to situate Indigenous women in the historical literature, especially since the Canadian and American Wests are often framed within masculine terms. Also, as McManus and Carter show, women had different experiences many times in the borderlands compared to their male counterparts because of varying policies and norms that placed men as the standard to which laws, morality, and borders were created and constructed. Carter in particular has shown how opportunities for women could differ widely on one side of the border compared to the other, as well that racial lines were increasingly drawn on top of geopolitical lines. But McManus and

⁶³ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays*, 32.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

Carter also show how Indigenous women in particular continued to make space for themselves where the border became blurry and within their Indigenous frameworks of community and territory. For some Indigenous women, the border had little meaning in their lives and they were not confined to European gender norms, instead they worked in important intermediary and community roles that were more in line with Indigenous models of family and mobility. But that started to change in the late nineteenth century as governments and settler communities instituted programs of assimilation where patriarchal family and gender norms tried to transform Indigenous women into domestic housewives and men as the heads of households.⁶⁵ Separating space, gender, and race were keystones to the enforcement of the border and establishing western settlements which reinforced the identity-making and categorization project of “the nation.”⁶⁶ The interwoven discussion of many facets of being and relating—gender, space, and race—will be built on in this dissertation to critique the nation state bolstering project as McManus and Carter have, as well as to center Lakota experiences and perspectives.

Another important contribution to borderlands women’s history is Carter’s chapter “The *Montana Memories* of Emma Minesinger: Windows on the Family, Work, and Boundary Culture of a Borderlands Woman.” Emma Minesinger was a woman of Salish, Shoshone, German, and Spanish ancestry who lived in the Alberta and Montana borderlands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. She made her way in many spaces that are rarely recorded for women, drawing on a large network of relations and places. Carter summarized: “The Minesingers defied tidy boundaries, categories, and notions of fixed identities, and they provide insight into the

⁶⁵ Sarah Carter, “Transnational Perspectives on the History of Great Plains Women: Gender, Race, Nations, and the Forty-ninth Parallel” in *One West, Two Myths II: Essays on Comparison*, eds. C.L. Higham and Robert Thacker (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2006), 92.

⁶⁶ Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender, and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2005), 105.

boundary culture of people of multiple ancestries of the Canadian-American borderlands.”⁶⁷ Like many of the Lakota women discussed in this study, Minesinger functioned and negotiated spatially across the international border and culturally between Indigenous societies and the new settler world being built. Similar to Minesinger, the Lakota women in this dissertation are well-remembered in their families and community and photographs, beadwork, and letters from their lives are treasured connections to kin, place, and culture. Carter concluded that Minesinger “disturbs and haunts the unity and coherence of nationalist histories, which forget the presence and the narratives of marginalized peoples of the borderlands” and she “constitute[s] a powerful counter-narrative.”⁶⁸ Drawing on Carter’s work, this study will illustrate the ways Lakota women also challenged neat categories in their lifetimes and the boundaries in written histories since.

Other Indigenous borderlands history have worked to emphasize how the Canada-U.S. border was sometimes harmful to dividing Indigenous nations, sometimes Indigenous people used it to their advantage, and other times it was not necessarily a demarcation for them at all in terms of their homelands. These studies focus on Indian policies and the enforcement of the border by settler states particularly. Michel Hogue’s *Metis and the Medicine Line: Creating a Border and Dividing a People*, Benjamin Hoy’s *A Line of Blood and Dirt: Creating the Canada-United States Border Across Indigenous Lands*, Hana Samek’s *The Blackfoot Confederacy, 1880-1920: A Comparative Study of Canadian and U.S. Indian Policy*, and Patrick Lozar’s “‘They do not, therefor, regard the boundary line as separating them’: The Ktunaxa Nation and the Enforcement of the U.S.-Canadian Border, 1887” all examined numerous Indigenous nations and communities bisected by the Canada-U.S. border, including the Métis, Ktunaxa, Blackfoot,

⁶⁷ Sarah Carter. “The *Montana Memories* of Emma Minesinger: Windows on the Family, Work, and Boundary Culture of a Borderlands Woman” in *Recollecting: Lives of Aboriginal Women of the Canadian Northwest and Borderlands*, edited by Sarah Carter and Patricia McCormack (Edmonton: AU Press, 2011), 197.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 221.

Cree, Lakota, Dakota, Nez Perce, Sto:lo, Haida, Anishinaabe, and Iroquois. These texts critique the settler colonial agenda of policing and enforcing the international border between Canada and the U.S., and examine how this impacted different Indigenous nations and communities, especially in the late nineteenth century into the early twentieth century. Hoy's argument of different Canada-U.S. border openings and closures since its creation for various communities (Chinese, Métis, African Americans, and Europeans, for example) meant that "Unevenness and variation served as hallmarks of the border at all stages of its operation."⁶⁹ The recognition of the irregularity in the border will be echoed numerous times throughout this dissertation as well.

Ryan Hall's *Beneath the Backbone of the World: Blackfoot People and the North American Borderlands, 1720–1877* argues that the Blackfoot "creatively managed colonial geography to their own benefit" which made them one of the most powerful and largest nations in North America.⁷⁰ Unlike other borderlands histories, it begins much earlier and ends with the Blackfoot negotiating Treaty Number 7 with the British Crown and Canadian Government. Hall masterfully argues against a frontier lens that positions westwardly Euro-Canadian/American movement as the line of historical chronology and analysis. Instead, he argues: "Rather than bracing against a slowly expanding westward frontier, the Blackfoot positioned themselves between rival empires, traveling north and south as it suited them, and preserving their own homeland in the process."⁷¹ This is very much in line with the Lakota history examined in this dissertation, albeit about a later time period and different region of the Northern Great Plains.

⁶⁹ Benjamin Hoy, *A Line of Blood and Dirt: Creating the Canada-United States Border Across Indigenous Lands* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 6.

⁷⁰ Ryan Hall, *Beneath the Backbone of the World: Blackfoot People and the North American Borderlands, 1720–1877* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 4-5.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

Furthermore, Hall's recognition of agency, both the positive and negative aspects of it, are important considerations for this work as well:

Emphasizing Indigenous people's "agency"—that is, their power to shape circumstances to their own ends—entails opportunities and pitfalls. This book, like others before it, shows Indigenous people as creative and not simply reactive, and demonstrates how they impacted colonial North American history in important ways. These insights reframe Indigenous North America as a place full of contingent possibilities instead of a doomed homeland fated to be colonized. At the same time, some scholars have pointed out that a focus on Indigenous nations' agency can itself marginalize historical actors by ascribing fixed identities and motivations upon them, thereby implicitly labeling other forms of adaptation, like diaspora, intermarriage, or ethnic reformation, as failures. A focus on agency also runs the risk of downplaying the very real traumas and losses that Indigenous people suffered as a result of European colonization. This book takes these critiques seriously. Not all Blackfoot people followed the same path. Blackfoot power was always circumscribed; Blackfoot people were never all-powerful, and they suffered profound and irrevocable losses. But as political actors, they showed brilliant creativity in trying times, and shaped the circumstances of their own lives and those around them for generations.⁷²

Hall's recognition that "not all Blackfoot people followed the same path" is important, as diverse perspectives, decisions, and actions were held and taken and still are by Indigenous people. This is relevant in Lakota history (and present) as well, which is apparent in Lakota divergence in deciding what was the best strategy for mitigating settler intrusion and government occupation, especially in the U.S. in the late nineteenth century. For example, the prior discussion about entering into treaties and agreeing to land cessions was historically one such split in Lakota perspectives and actions. This dissertation follows Hall's lead in reflecting how Lakota people's historical experiences were more nuanced and diverse than is often attributed and there never was a monolithic Lakota nation, perspective, or action.

Nation-state and settler-colonial understandings of place fall extremely short, especially when shared places among many Indigenous people are considered. This is a huge topic that is just beginning to be addressed more robustly. I will deal with this in chapter one, but more

⁷² Hall, *Beneath the Backbone of the World*, 7.

importantly with how Lakota people conceived of their places and shared spaces across settler boundaries. I am especially excited to see a blossoming of literature and discussion around settler-colonial boundaries and Indigenous peoples, and to see a move into conversations and understandings beyond the courts and scholars. This moves the discussion forward beyond borders and boundaries to Indigenous centered land practices and worldviews, and to challenging colonial containers as Indigenous people always have and still do.

Relationships:

Indigenous kinship, relationships, and networks are a central part of this study of Lakota history. Indigeneity and who claims to be Indigenous are contested topics in North America today, but instead of focusing on individual “identity,” I will shift the focus to deeper Lakota understandings of belonging, which are rooted in relationships. These are lived relationships, not just ancestral or genealogical connections, the latter which can quickly become rather insidious and lose meaning if used in exclusion of lived connection. For this I have been influenced greatly by Dakota scholar Kim TallBear who speaks often of “good relations” which are about upholding certain responsibilities and respect in a living reciprocity. This cuts through “identity” issues and rather centers on belonging and lived relationships. We need to be careful of discourses that want to bind belonging to only reserve/reservation communities and this is done internally in our communities/families and is still the dominant settler-colonial discourse externally as well. Rather, the focus should shift to a more complete understanding of Indigenous lands/waters that are tied to communities and nations. We also must be careful of the shorthand of “blood” which can be a stand-in for proximity to relation, but often falls short and can be used to control Indigenous sovereignty, racialize Indigenous people, and suppress Indigenous worldviews of belonging. However, we also must be careful not to align Indigeneity with

individual ancestry but instead with living connections of good relations. TallBear's book *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science* deals with all these issues of identity, blood, and DNA testing and how they are poor stand-ins for Indigenous ways of relating, belonging, and being which are about lived connections.⁷³ However, she is careful to argue that as difficult and convoluted as these colonial systems of deciding tribal enrolment are, they are still necessary to safeguard tribal nations' ability to decide their citizenry and sovereignty and Indigenous people must be careful of "new" sciences that seek to decide Indigeneity—sometimes erasing Indigenous people and sometimes "creating" Indians from non-Indigenous people's claims of ancestry.

Similarly, other scholars have used Indigenous relationality as a way to critique settler colonialism, especially the policies that categorize and racialize Indigenous people. Robert Alexander Innes's book *Elder Brother and the Law of the People: Contemporary Kinship and Cowessess First Nation* examines kinship practices in his Cree community of Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan. He shows how for Cree people, the figure of Wîsahkêcâhk, or Elder Brother, in stories, describes social laws around kinship roles and responsibilities. More than just a historical phenomenon and traditional stories, Innes demonstrates how Elder Brother and kinship practices carry on in Cowessess First Nation to the present which challenge colonial Indian definitions.⁷⁴ Significantly, Innes's connection of past kinship frameworks with present realities is key as he uses this as the basis for understanding legal action Cowessess has been part of to begin to repair some of the issues of the nation-to-nation relationship with Canada, particularly through the passing of Bill C-31 which reinstated Indian status to a high number of

⁷³ Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 71.

⁷⁴ Robert Alexander Innes, *Elder Brother and the Law of the People: Contemporary Kinship and Cowessess First Nation* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013), 8.

Cowessess people and the negotiation of Treaty Land Entitlement. Innes's analysis is a good reminder that Indigenous kinship is never just about individual relating, but about Indigenous sovereignty, political movements, and collective wellbeing in the present and future. Hawaiian scholar J. Kēhualani Kauanui's book *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* has also contrasted Native Hawaiian kinship and genealogy systems of belonging with the imposed settler colonial systems of deciding Native Hawaiian membership based on the one-half blood quantum requirement. She argued that blood quantum is part of a genocidal logic of disappearance which "is tied to the project of selective assimilation for those Natives who still exist yet don't measure up for entitlements and benefits. But these specific rights are based on sovereignty. Thus, the 'inauthentic' status of Natives is a condition for sovereign dispossession in the service of settler colonialism."⁷⁵ She concludes though, "Hawaiian kinship and genealogical modes of identification allow for political empowerment in the service of nation building because they are inclusive. Not only is the genealogical approach more far-reaching: it is embedded in indigenous epistemologies that are rooted in land."⁷⁶ The contrasting of the colonial system to the Indigenous system is important to this study, which strives to do the same. Both Innes's and Kauanui's work analyze the past to understand current realities for Indigenous people and suggest different avenues to repair the damaging legacies of settler colonialism.

Several books have thoroughly and intricately explored Indigenous ways of relating that this dissertation is in conversation with. The edited collection of several prominent scholars' work, *Contours of a People: Metis Family, Mobility, and History* is important for the inclusion

⁷⁵ J. Kēhualani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 25. In Canada, Papaschase and St. Peter's First Nations are examples of the Canadian government's effort to dissolve First Nations reserve land and status completely.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 194.

of movement with kinship, a theme that will be present in every chapter of this dissertation. Nicole St-Onge's and Carolyn Podruchny's observation about Métis webs of kinship enabling Métis people to thrive, survive, and adapt especially across the huge distances they moved will be repeated in this study within the Lakota context.⁷⁷ But Macdougall's earlier work, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan*, took these webs even deeper and provided a methodological framework based on Métis worldviews and culture that showed the nuance and efficacy of such an approach in History. *One of the Family* is a very detailed study of Métis connections which focuses on one community, Île-à-la-Crosse, and several generations with a grounding in the Métis/Cree concept of wahkootowin. Macdougall wrote,

“Wahkootowin” has been translated by scholars of the Cree language as “relationship” or “relation,” but such a translation misses much of the meaning and sentiment that the term and its various derivatives actually express. As much as it is a worldview based on familial—especially inter-familial—connectedness, wahkootowin also conveys an idea about the virtues that an individual should personify as a family member. The values critical to family relationships—such as reciprocity, mutual support, decency, and order—in turn influenced the behaviours, actions, and decision-making processes that shaped all a community's economic and political interactions. Wahkootowin contextualizes how relationships were intended to work within Metis society by defining and classifying relationships, prescribing patterns of behaviour between relatives and non-relatives, and linking people and communities in a large, complex web of relationships. Just as wahkootowin mediated interactions between people, it also extended to the natural and spiritual worlds, regulating relationships between humans and non-humans, the living and the dead, and humans and the natural environment.⁷⁸

Macdougall's use of wahkootowin is very similar to this study's use of Lakota kinship terms and concepts as well, though several Lakota terms will be used instead of one. Very similarly to wahkootowin, these connections, expected social behaviours, and worldviews extend beyond the

⁷⁷ Nicole St-Onge and Carolyn Podruchny, “Scuttling along a Spider's Web: Mobility and Kinship in Metis Ethnogenesis,” in *Contours of a People: Metis Family, Mobility, and History*, edited by Nicole St-Onge, Carolyn Podruchny, Brenda Macdougall, and Maria Campbell, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 63.

⁷⁸ Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 8.

human world to how Lakota people interact with the non-human worlds as well. Some people use the phrase *mitákuye oyás'iy* (we are all related) to summarize this, which is a Lakota phrase and concept and encapsulates the deeply embedded worldview of relationality, but it is a phrase I will not rely on in this study because I was taught that it is only to be used in ceremonial contexts.⁷⁹ Macdougall's book is an excellent resource in mapping deep and complex webs of Indigenous relations, and this dissertation will also rely heavily on people's names and their relation to each other and to place to understand Lakota history. Macdougall's close attention to family names, intermarriages, and movements are emulated in this history of Wood Mountain Lakota people and connections as well.

Literature on Indigenous relationality often depends on Indigenous languages, place/land, and epistemologies as well. Chicano/O'odham scholar Dennis Martinez coined the term "kincentric" in his ecological studies of Indigenous ways of being with nature based in reciprocal relationships that go beyond just ethics or sustainability.⁸⁰ This speaks to the familial type of knowledges and behaviours between Indigenous peoples and their homelands. Keith Basso's *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* is one such study which weaves together place, language, stories, and local knowledge (an Indigenous epistemology). Basso argues "...Apache constructions of place reach deeply into other cultural spheres, including conceptions of wisdom, notions of morality, politeness and tact in forms of spoken discourse, and certain conventional ways of imagining and interpreting the Apache tribal past."⁸¹ Language then is an important foundation to accessing Indigenous worldviews and

⁷⁹ Thank you to Corey Yellow Boy and Charlie White Buffalo for passing this down from John Around Him.

⁸⁰ Dennis Martinez, "Redefining Sustainability through Kincentric Ecology: Reclaiming Indigenous Lands, Knowledge, and Ethics," in *Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Learning from Indigenous Practices for Environmental Sustainability*, edited by Melissa K. Nelson and Dan Shilling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 140-141.

⁸¹ Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), xv.

relationships to land—a foundation that has often been glossed over or skipped entirely in written histories until recently. Dene scholar Glen Coulthard also writes of his nation’s language and worldviews that are tied to land which position humans as equals in a mutual relationship:

In the Yellowknives Dene (or Weledeh) dialect of Dogrib, “land” (or *dè*) is translated in relational terms as that which encompasses not only the land (understood here as material), but also people and animals, rocks and trees, lakes and rivers, and so on. Seen in this light, we are as much a part of the land as any other element. Furthermore, within this system of relations human beings are not the only constituent believed to embody spirit or agency. Ethically, this meant that humans held certain obligations to the land, animals, plants, and lakes in much the same way that we hold obligations to other people. And if these obligations were met, then the land, animals, plants and lakes would *reciprocate* and meet their obligations to humans, thus ensuring the survival and well being of all over time.⁸²

The Dene perspective Coulthard describes is very much in line with Lakota understandings and lived relationships with Lakhóta T̄hamák̄hoche that will be outlined in this dissertation.

Coulthard also makes an important assertion about Dene resistance to exploitation and colonialism which is applicable here: “Although this place-based ethics has been worn by decades of colonial *displacement*, for many it still serves as the radical imaginary guiding our visions of a just political and economic relationship with non-Indigenous people and communities based on principles of reciprocity and mutual obligation... Indigenous ways of thinking about *non-oppressive* relations are often expressed with this spatial referent in mind as well.”⁸³ This statement is worth repeating because often discussions of Indigenous history fall into the retelling of negative experiences with settler colonialism—which is true and needs to be told—but sometimes falls short of expressing Indigenous peoples’ creative and positive frameworks for creating better systems and relationships into the future. Especially in mainstream discourse of Indigenous experiences there is a mindset of “that’s too bad, but what

⁸² Glen Coulthard, “Place against Empire: Understanding Indigenous Anti-Colonialism,” *Affinities: A Journal of Radical Theory, Culture, and Action*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 2010): 80.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 81.

can be done” as a way of resigning the issues, but the frameworks for doing better and finding redress already exist in Indigenous relationality.

Gendered aspects of kinship cannot be ignored. Chapter three of this dissertation will deal with gender and women more specifically and this rests upon the critical standpoint of Indigenous feminism to critique traditional western feminism as well as the specific ways Indigenous women and LGBTQ2 people have been affected by colonialism. Sarah Nickel and Amanda Fehr’s edited collection of essays *In Good Relation: History, Gender, and Kinship in Indigenous Feminisms* examines kinship and community through the lens of Indigenous feminism which seeks to “...challenge the dominance of Indigenous motherhood in discussions of Indigenous feminism and consider how feminism relates to various Indigenous kinship relationships across a mixture of spaces, time periods, and emotional landscapes. Contributors reimagine and complicate ideas of parenthood, tradition, responsibility, and decolonization.”⁸⁴ An important distinction is made in the contributions throughout this book: “...we are left with a sense of both the power and privilege of motherhood, as well as the ways in which it is bound up in colonial heteropatriarchy, which assumes women’s bodies dictate their social roles and capabilities, thus ignoring gendered bodies that exist outside these normative demands. We also see the ways that Indigenous peoples resist these expectations and how Indigenous feminism can provide the tools to do so.”⁸⁵ Though kinship is the central frame for understanding Wood Mountain Lakota history in this study, this is not to slot Lakota women into normative roles of family. Much of this dissertation is to push against standard ideas that kinship constitutes nuclear family arrangements that had specific roles and exclusions for women socially, politically, and

⁸⁴ Sarah Nickel and Amanda Fehr, editors, *In Good Relation: History, Gender, and Kinship in Indigenous Feminisms* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2020), 13-14.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

legally. Lakota society did have gender disparities which have only been compounded by settler colonialism, and we should work to identify those disparities in the past and remedy them in the present. This study does not ascribe to the view that “tradition” holds all the solutions that we must “return to” and instead an emphasis on the non-static nature of Lakota kin and decision-making works to challenge essentialist notions of the past. As will be discussed in more detail throughout this dissertation, Lakota women were very successful at making space for themselves in various roles beyond what was deemed socially acceptable for women and particularly Indigenous women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and though Lakota kinship was heavily gendered as well, it was typically more flexible and reciprocal for women than western gender systems.

Some Indigenous kinship studies have focused on relating the ways traditional systems worked in different nations and communities, while also relating the ways settler colonialism sought to change, dismantle, and destroy Indigenous kinship. Cheyenne scholar Leo Kevin Killsback provides valuable insight into the ways Cheyenne kinship sustained values of balance, respect, and reciprocity while also relating the history of systemic American assaults on Cheyenne ways of relating. Much like other works described above, he uses three Cheyenne terms as the foundation of his analysis, especially to show how “Traditional Cheyenne family values, their kinship system, and kinship terms reinforced traditional laws, promoted acceptable behavior, as well as sustained a mannered and civilized Cheyenne society.”⁸⁶ Much like what Ella Deloria has outlined about Lakota kinship, Killsback argues, “One might even say that the Cheyenne kinship system is in fact the foundation of the Cheyenne Nation.”⁸⁷ Métis historian

⁸⁶ Leo Kevin Killsback, “A nation of families: Traditional Indigenous kinship, the foundation for Cheyenne sovereignty” *AlterNative*, Vol. 15, no. 1, (2019): 35.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Allyson D. Stevenson also wrote about a more recent form of settler colonialism, the “Sixties Scoop,” which was designed to dismantle Indigenous kinship in Canada through adoption in her book, *Intimate Integration: A History of the Sixties Scoop and the Colonization of Indigenous Kinship*. Stevenson’s study shows that the adoption program to remove Indigenous children from their families, communities, and cultures was another form of settler colonial harm under the guise of social welfare being given to Indigenous people, carrying on from and alongside similar programs and policies like residential/boarding schools in the twentieth century.⁸⁸ One important aspect of Stevenson’s work that will be echoed in this study is the ways governments often had contradictory and/or subjective policies that left children (and adults) in limbo when Western ideas of family or Indian Affairs categories of identity did not align with Indigenous concepts of kin and belonging.⁸⁹

The body of scholarship on Indigenous relationalities has dramatically grown in the past decade, not because there has been a “rediscovery” by Indigenous people—these knowledge systems and lived connections have always been present—but because academia includes more Indigenous scholars who are writing from their worldviews to complicate and challenge traditional narratives and methods.

Settler Colonialism and Resistance:

It has been asked and discussed many times: do we (scholars) focus too much on the colonizer and colonization? Personally, I think: yes and no. The reality is that it cannot be escaped, in the past or present. But we can also balance that by bringing focus to Indigenous experiences, perspectives, and ideas without essentializing, while also giving credit,

⁸⁸ Allyson D. Stevenson, *Intimate Integration: A History of the Sixties Scoop and the Colonization of Indigenous Kinship* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 2021), 17.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 46-49.

acknowledging agency, restoring humanity, and accepting complex realities in the past and present. And we still have a lot of learning to do to have nuanced conversations and sharpened thinking about these complex realities, particularly realities that have pushed against settler-state laws and boundaries, and provide more space for Indigenous relationships with each other, lands/water, non-human life, and the past. That is why I think we need to include Indigenous resistance when we discuss settler colonialism.

Indigenous resistance cannot be left out of discussions of settler colonialism. Lakota people were not just impacted physically, culturally, and materially by colonialism; Lakota worldviews were assaulted as well. But this does not mean that all culture and language were “lost” or that there was some kind of “pure” form of these things. All cultures exist within relationship and change, but not all people had to face genocide, worldview assault, and ongoing systemic racism. Indigenous scholars have argued that we need to turn the scrutiny around onto white society and people; that Indigenous people and communities have been the endless focus of studies and that white structures, systems, and norms are things that need to be studied and deconstructed, but instead they are taken for granted as ordinary, standard, and not “othered,” (which will be discussed more shortly as well). In this way, TallBear wrote that her book *Native American DNA* “...shifts the anthropological and analytical gaze to non-Native subjects and scientific projects.”⁹⁰ In some aspects this study also shifts its gaze from time to time, from Lakota aspects of relationship to settler society and state driven notions and policies. In doing so, this study seeks to balance both Lakota resistance and settler colonialism.

Critiques of settler colonialism—and the basic awareness of this as the defining structure of North American nation-states—grew out of Indigenous activist work and writing in the mid-

⁹⁰ Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 17.

twentieth century, even if they did not necessarily use that term.⁹¹ Activists who were part of the Red Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s and Indigenous writers like Vine Deloria, Jr., N. Scott Momady, and George Manuel in the same time period, brought awareness to the ongoing legacies of assimilation policies, land loss, and erosion of sovereignty that all Indigenous people faced in North America. Their efforts helped further consciousness across Indigenous nations of their shared histories and present struggles, as well as new language and forums to explain this. Other scholars grew the critical analysis in the following decades from there. Possibly the most cited and seminal works in theorizing about settler colonialism is Patrick Wolfe’s article, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native.” His explicit linking of settler colonialism to genocide in which he calls the “logic of elimination” is foundational though still only marginally accepted in public discourse. Furthermore, Wolfe’s whole basis is that settler colonialism is not confined to one particular time and place, it is a structure that seeks access to territory to build settler societies and eliminate native ones.⁹² He wrote:

When invasion is recognized as a structure rather than an event, its history does not stop—or, more to the point, become relatively trivial—when it moves on from the era of frontier homicide. Rather, narrating that history involves charting the continuities, discontinuities, adjustments, and departures whereby a logic that initially informed frontier killing transmutes into different modalities, discourses and institutional formations as it undergirds the historical development and complexification of settler society. This is not a hierarchical procedure.⁹³

This clarification is important to this study because although it deals with formal government policies that worked to silence, eliminate, and dispossess Indigenous people, it also examines the ways settler society reproduced logics of elimination that did not necessarily manifest as outright

⁹¹ Jane Carey and Ben Silverstein, “Thinking with and beyond settler colonial studies: New histories after the postcolonial,” *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2020): 7.

⁹² Patrick Wolfe, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, no. 4, (December 2006): 388.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 402.

violence but exist as harmful rhetoric and the systemic foundations of societal institutions yet—the insidious parts of settler colonialism that are the most stubbornly still with us today.

J. Kēhualani Kauanui’s article “‘A Structure, Not an Event,’: Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity” speaks to Wolfe’s article and argues that Settler Colonial Studies cannot replace Indigenous Studies. Kauanui also examines indigeneity and whether this is a useful category of analysis, and differentiates: “But taking up indigeneity as a category of analysis is not one and the same as the study of indigenous peoples.”⁹⁴ She concludes that “Since settler colonialism is a structure and not an event, and because indigenous peoples are still subject to that structure—an ongoing genocidal project—NAIS [Native American and Indigenous Studies] must be engaged in relation to Settler Colonial Studies for any meaningful examination of the US state in the context of American Studies, Cultural Studies, and other related fields.”⁹⁵ What is significant here is that studies of settler colonialism and Indigenous people are examinations of the settler state—a turning of the focus away from indigeneity as the thing under the microscope and towards critically addressing the taken for granted aspects of settler colonial states and societies.

In this same way, scholar of English and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Mark Rifkin, wrote pointedly about the self-evident nature of settler colonialism in his book *Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance*. Like the title suggests, he argued that settler colonialism becomes the common sense and self-evident way of being for settlers, colonial states, and societies, which are predicated on structures that have and continue to dispossess Indigenous people but are aptly ignored as being “natural” or

⁹⁴ J. Kēhualani Kauanui, “‘A Structure, Not an Event,’: Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity” *Emergent Critical Analytics for Alternative Humanities*, Issue 5.1 (Spring 2016), <http://csalateral.org/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui/>

⁹⁵ Ibid.

“ordinary” or “common sense.” Rifkin explains “settler common sense” the most succinctly: “By this phrase, I mean to suggest the ways the legal and political structures that enable non-native access to Indigenous territories come to be lived as given, as simply the unmarked, generic conditions of possibility for occupancy, association, history, and personhood.”⁹⁶ This dissertation seeks to make visible many aspects of life, opportunity, and institutions that we often take for granted now in settler society, but were not available to Lakota people in the same ways for generations.

Many other texts provide detailed and specific examples of the ways settler colonialism has operated and continues to operate. Within the context of the Great Plains and Indigenous people, Karen V. Hansen’s *Encounter on the Great Plains: Scandinavian Settlers and the Dispossession of Dakota Indians, 1890-1930*, Shelley A.M. Gavigan’s *Hunger, Horses, and Government Men: Criminal Law on the Aboriginal Plains, 1870-1905*, Keith D. Smith’s *Liberalism, Surveillance, and Resistance: Indigenous Communities in Western Canada, 1877-1927*, James Daschuk’s *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*, and Margaret Jacobs, “Reproducing White Settlers and Eliminating the Natives: Settler Colonialism, Gender, and Family History in the American West” all provide explicit and detailed accounts of the ways settler colonialism displaced and dispossessed Indigenous people in order to create the nation states and societies we live in today. These studies particularly rest upon the surveillance and control of Indigenous people by state governments within “the era of frontier homicide” as Wolfe termed it, which is also the time period this study is mostly focused on. What they all show and is important to this study as well is that Canada and the U.S. have been laser-focused on undoing and unmaking Indigenous people in order to access territory and

⁹⁶ Mark Rifkin, *Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), xvi.

“justifying their right to being the deciders” as Kim TallBear superbly put.⁹⁷ The methods of doing this have always been shifting and changing, often to more legal-based, insidious, discursive, and rights-based approaches, but still with the same focus.

Three main sources of Indigenous refusal and resistance are the foundation to the theoretical basis of understanding Lakota history in this dissertation. In addition to Estes’s earlier described work, scholars Audra Simpson, Glen Sean Coulthard, and Vine Deloria, Jr. provide strong counter positions to settler colonialism, recognition, and state political/legal systems. Coulthard has made one of the strongest arguments showing the historical progression of Canadian recognition frameworks and another path forward:

...much of our efforts over the last four decades to attain settler-state recognition of our rights to land and self-government have in fact encouraged the opposite—the continued dispossession of our homelands and the ongoing usurpation of our self-determining authority. I suggest that this conclusion demands that we begin to collectively redirect our struggles *away* from a politics that seeks to attain a conciliatory form of settler-state recognition for Indigenous nations toward a *resurgent politics of recognition* premised on self-actualization, direct action, and the resurgence of cultural practices that are attentive to the subjective and structural composition of settler-colonial power.”⁹⁸

In calling for renewed resurgent politics for Indigenous self-determination, Coulthard draws on past and continuing examples of Indigenous resistance and refusal, such as the Red Power and Idle No More movements. Audra Simpson’s book *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* also asserts refusal in contrast to recognition, especially that the Mohawk have resisted two settler states and boundaries and asserted their self-determination with their spatial movement as well, much like the Lakota people in this study. Simpson questioned the politics of recognition as well and posits refusal as the continuation of Indigenous

⁹⁷ Rick Harp, host, with Kim TallBear and Candis Callison, “The Undead Indians Haunting Canada’s Dreams,” *Media Indigena*, podcast audio, October 29, 2020, episode 231, 10:09, <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/media-indigena-indigenous-current-affairs/id1092220986?i=1000496552564>

⁹⁸ Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 24.

sovereignty. She questioned the legitimacy and authority of those in the position of doing the recognizing and asserts that refusal demands one's sovereignty be acknowledged and exercised.⁹⁹ Wood Mountain Lakota people lived refusal in many ways, rejecting government recognition of categories, borders, and treaties. And this refusal fits in a larger history—and present reality—of Lakota existence.

To Simpson and Coulthard, refusal is in rooted land-based relations that cannot be distilled into capitalistic, extractive, or bureaucratic frameworks. Sometimes the messages of Indigenous protest, theory, practice, and connection are dismissed by non-Indigenous people and governments as unattainable or intelligible, especially in water protection and land back movements, but Coulthard wrote concisely:

Stated bluntly, the theory and practice of Indigenous anticolonialism, including Indigenous anticapitalism, is best understood as a struggle primarily inspired by and oriented around *the question of land*—a struggle not only *for* land in the material sense, but also deeply *informed* by what the land *as a system of reciprocal relations and obligations* can teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and the natural world in nondominating and nonexploitative terms...¹⁰⁰

Indigenous concepts of land are often at odds with private property, which is the bedrock of settler colonial nation-states legal and political foundations. Nation-states perceive property as private—as exclusionary to all others but the owners—and even common lands (Crown and Bureau of Land Management lands for example) are held within specific private domains of settler governments and bureaucracies which often exclude Indigenous relations with those lands in meaningful ways and place jurisdiction (i.e. deciding power) with those governments. But as Coulthard and this dissertation demonstrates, land is not just about the material resources nor

⁹⁹ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014), 11.

¹⁰⁰ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 13.

ownership, but about reciprocity and relationships and this basis can redirect our understanding of the past and future.

Renowned Dakota scholar, Vine Deloria, Jr., outlined the historical, intellectual, and cultural basis of Indigenous protest movements in North America during the 1960s and 1970s in his seminal work *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. Deloria was critical of the treaties, termination policy in the U.S. in the 1950s, the social sciences/humanities, and Christianity, which set the Red Power movement ablaze. His following numerous works spelled out the ways Indigenous resistance did and could continue to bolster Indigenous sovereignties that were in opposition to the U.S. political and economic systems. And many of his arguments and observations still hold true today. He argued: “Peoplehood is impossible without cultural independence, which in turn is impossible without a land base”¹⁰¹ an observation that still has present resonance as self-determination and resistance efforts simultaneously call for land restitution. Deloria has been critical of the bureaucratic acrobatics tribes in the U.S. have had to perform and conform to in order to get services. His critique of the Bureau of Indian Affairs is still relevant today and he wrote: “As long as policies remain so nebulous with respect to the actual status of tribal governments this charge will continue to be made. Recognition of basic sovereignty would provide a solution for this problem.”¹⁰² The nebulous yet formidable nature of Indian Affairs and its opposition to Indigenous sovereignty on both sides of the border will be outlined in this dissertation as well.

This is just a scant outline of the influential and important scholarship on critiquing settler colonialism and bolstering Indigenous resistance and self-determination. This work is

¹⁰¹ Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 180.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 145.

multi-faceted and does not only exist in scholarship; Indigenous people live it every day as well. Throughout this dissertation, more will be borrowed and built upon from Indigenous scholars and activists in these areas, and this work will provide more examples of the diversity and strength of Indigenous lived resistance.

Methodology

This dissertation is largely based upon archival research, though informal conversations with various community and family members also have been influential and significant to the overall conclusions and their contributions are referenced as well. Many people shared their stories, photographs, and documents with me about their families' and communities' histories which has been very important to understanding Lakota perspectives and addressing gaps and misinterpretations in literature and archives. Many times, these same people asked questions of me and my work, a reciprocal and integral part of Indigenous relationships and research. So, the archival research that this dissertation is based on was in part to locate and address questions many of us had about our family and community histories as well. So much of archival, museum, and art gallery sources/items are difficult for people outside of academia to access, and I want my work and this dissertation to also be a part of opening these collections up and helping to facilitate the access and sharing of those sources. Much of my work is not about me having the answers for the people who ask things of me, it is about me having privilege of access and the resources to visit these collections that others sometimes do not have. And that means I have an accountability to share what I have with family and community members in relationship.

I have included many of my own family stories, records, and histories not because this is a reflection of their importance, but as a way to discuss complex aspects of relationships that exist in all communities and families that are not always positive or easy. Some of these difficult

discussions include the proximity to whiteness and the privilege that it afforded my ancestors and therefore myself, clashes between individual community members and relatives, and the dynamics of positions of power that some individuals had within structures like the NWMP and Indian Affairs. These sometimes uncomfortable and difficult aspects of my history exist for many others as well and we should not shy away from having these conversations and realizations. We can actually learn a lot from these things because Lakota people had ways to mitigate social issues especially in the framework of kinship. But I felt more comfortable discussing these issues as it related to me and my ancestors, rather than unnecessarily sharing difficult stories of historic people and families that have descendants today, especially without their permission. Some of those stories do not belong here and should be shared in a different forum regardless. I did not shy away from difficult stories and experiences, but I also sometimes made choices as to what stories were mine to share, or whether I could help bring nuance to difficult parts of the past in order to deepen and broaden our learning without doing harm.

Like many historians, I have often felt excited reconnecting with stories in the archives: flipping through thousands of pages of documents in archives to find the familiar penmanship of my ancestors or Lakota words spelled out or simply “Wood Mountain” at the top of a letter. Such was the case in the first U.S. National Archives record centre I visited in Broomfield, Colorado (NARA at Denver). After scanning through the finding aids and making my selections of the boxes I wanted to view, the first box, the first folder, and the first letters I opened up had my great-great-grandfather’s familiar handwriting in them to my shock. I was not sure upon that visit how fruitful the trip would be, but to find such correspondence about my Lakota family and other Lakota community members at Wood Mountain within the first five minutes of my research was extremely exciting and encouraging! Other trips to National Archives record

centres would also prove exciting and useful, though the searches often took many more hours to locate the gems. This is not to romanticize the records in these collections—they are predominantly records made by white, male, and government officials in their surveillance programs of Indigenous peoples which means they clearly have limited Indigenous perspectives in them. It is not discovery in the archive—it is reconnection and recovery. All these things were known in families and communities and what might be framed as “lost” information has really been displaced, taken, or hidden in archives. This has not been a passive process of “loss,” but an active one of distancing and dispossessing Indigenous people from their histories, stories, and knowledges.

Research was carried out at numerous archives and repositories, including Library and Archives Canada, the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, Glenbow Institute and Archives, Moose Jaw Public Library, North Dakota State Archives, Information Services Corporation, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers* through the Library of Congress, *Société historique de Saint-Boniface*, Wood Mountain Historical Society collections, and the General Land Office Records through the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Large parts of the records from these collections informed the individual stories that follow in these pages, though read and used within a Lakota context which was typically missing, silenced, or diminished when these records were originally created. Where these typically government, missionary, and/or male created sources do (rarely) include Lakota, women, and/or children’s perspectives, those are highlighted to try to provide a more nuanced and balanced interpretation. What these archival sources have done most of all is provide information about how settler colonialism functioned on many levels, settler societal views, and the movements of Lakota people under the surveillance.

Most of all, speaking and connecting to people has been an education for me. I was in conversation with many people much more knowledgeable than myself. I started my work with the intention of carrying out formal interviews, but the questions I asked about times long ago, connections to different *thiyóšpaye*, and certain movements were not necessarily remembered in depth. Consulting the archives brought forward specific names, places, and stories to myself and my mentors to help fill the gaps we had and sometimes to jog memories. They shared their stories, photographs, and sometimes documents that their families had cherished, and I am deeply grateful to them. Wood Mountain/Standing Buffalo First Nation Elder Hartland Goodtrack, for example, encouraged me immensely on my language learning journey and his enthusiasm for my learning and research has been a source of perseverance and reassurance. Thelma Poirier, respected local historian and poet, fueled my interest in history and writing from an early age as I watched from the sidelines the Wood Mountain Historical Society's work she carried out for many years and that my grandma and aunt were part of. Later in my academic studies and during many visits, she shared with me stories elders, her family members, and some of my relatives had told her. Though she is not Lakota herself, many old people entrusted their stories to her and only her, long before people were eager to seek out this knowledge like they are now. I'm deeply thankful for her kindness, generosity, and friendship. These kinds of stories and connections may not always serve a larger research purpose, but they have meant the most to me.

As an undergraduate student, I read Shawn Wilson's book *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* when it was first published and his chapter on relationality especially impacted me. He argued that we cannot remove ourselves from our "subjects" and that this tenet of Western thought and practice is contradictory to Indigenous ways of knowing,

being, and sharing. He argued that “Rather than viewing ourselves as being *in* relationship with other people or things, we *are* the relationships that we hold and are part of.”¹⁰³ For some time, especially as an undergraduate student, I grappled with what it meant for objectivity and rigor if I was academically interested in topics and questions very close to me personally. This dissertation is a case in point for those questions: it includes my relatives, homelands, and communities. However, from an Indigenous research paradigm, when relationships are centred it brings responsibilities, humility, and accountability as well.¹⁰⁴ Wilson went on to outline that having relations in one’s research “enforces that accountability of the researcher, as they are responsible not only to themselves but also to the circle of relations.”¹⁰⁵ Though throughout this dissertation I analyze the past through a lens of Lakota kinship. I also use relationality as a methodology. This method has been applied to the living people I am accountable to, especially those who shared their stories and knowledge with me. But it also applied to the non-living people and documents I worked with. Most of the archival documents I have read had to be linked in complicated webs of context and relationship across different archives to try to complete the narratives. Archival correspondence was especially like this, with snippets of stories found here and there in different archives and by different authors over sometimes many years of letter writing and penmanship changes. To the people who wrote them many years ago originally, those connections were clear and lived, something I had to honour and work to put back together. Connecting the documents and therefore the people and the stories within them gave me a new appreciation for the ancestors I thought I knew fairly well from previous research, family stories, and photographs. It gave me a new appreciation for the process that always keeps me humble and turning pages.

¹⁰³ Shawn Wilson, *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), 80.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 129.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith's book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* is the foundational text for Indigenous researchers and topics, both in that it is a critique of imperialist/colonialist methods and as a way forward for research from within Indigenous perspectives. Smith's considerations of history are important to this study. She critiques the traditional Western histories produced which served to further marginalize Indigenous people and keep power with those who are already powerful.¹⁰⁶ She identified history along with writing and theory as the keystones to knowledge production and authority in academia which shapes the types of questions asked and methods used in research. Importantly, Smith does not position the decolonizing work she advocates for on a binary with academic work though, rather she argues that this work needs to be done by all and within academia too. In her critique of Western history, Smith acknowledges the need for Indigenous people to tell and write their histories: "Telling our stories from the past, reclaiming the past, giving testimony to the injustices of the past are all strategies which are commonly employed by Indigenous peoples struggling for justice."¹⁰⁷ This explains the impetus for still writing and re-writing history, and partially explains my own motivation for this study as well. In her examples of Indigenous grounded research, she shows how Indigenous knowledge, practices, and perspectives are valid and that reclaiming Indigenous languages, connections, and cultures can be reinforced in projects. Though there have been many histories written about Lakota people, a different kind of history, one centered in Lakota ways of being and belonging, is part of the reclamation and justice purposes Smith describes and what I strive to contribute with this study.

Relevance

¹⁰⁶ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 2021), 37-38.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 38.

Though many historians shy away from connecting their historical studies to the present or future, Indigenous historians and scholars have pushed back against this traditional Western view of the practice of history because Indigenous present realities have so much historical context that needs to be discussed and understood, not just by Indigenous people, but by the general public as well. Furthermore, many Indigenous epistemologies and worldviews do not conceptualize a break between past-present-future and/or time in a linear line with chronology working towards “progress” in the present and future. Therefore, history is never only in the past. The Lakota language demonstrates this kind of time concept as well because Lakota grammar does not differentiate between a past and present tense, they are the same—the only way to tell the difference between speaking of the past or the present is by context.

Lakota people and nations are trans(colonial)national, actually super-national in that Lakota sovereignty and Lakǰóta Țamákǰoĉhe supersede settler nation states. This has very exciting and real potentials to be realized and exercised. Though I do not advocate the legal systems as the best way to exercise Indigenous sovereignties, the courts have provided notable precedents, especially recently. The Supreme Court of Canada case, *R. v. Desautel*, (also known as the Sinixt case) was decided in April 2021 after more than ten years in the courts. Rick Desautel, a Sinixt man and enrolled member of the Lakes Tribe of the Colville Confederated Tribes in Washington, U.S.A., shot an elk in British Columbia in 2010. The case eventually went to the Supreme Court of Canada, questioning whether he had an “aboriginal right” to hunt for food in Canada. Much of the discussion was around the interpretation of the phrase “aboriginal peoples of Canada” as it relates to section 35 of the constitution and whether aboriginal rights could be held by aboriginal people geographically outside of Canada. A notable statement arises from this question in the ruling: “finding that Aboriginal groups outside of Canada are

‘aboriginal peoples of Canada’ raises the possibility that these groups may, in principle, hold constitutionally protected Aboriginal title to Canadian lands. It would be a remarkable proposition that a foreign group could hold constitutionally protected title to Canadian territory. The drafters of s.35(1) could not have intended these deleterious consequences to arise.”¹⁰⁸ The use of the term “foreign group” is a horrifically colonial perspective of a sovereign Indigenous nation, and the entire ruling is predicated on deciding how “to recognize the prior occupation of Canada by Aboriginal societies and to reconcile their contemporary existence with Crown sovereignty.”¹⁰⁹ On top of this, the Canadian government had already declared the Sinixt “extinct,” which came as a surprise to many Sinixt people.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, the premise of “aboriginal peoples of Canada” positions Indigenous people as the possessions of Canada, another problematic perspective that places Indigenous people within the jurisdiction, ownership, and paternalism of Canada. However, the court eventually ruled that: “On a purposive interpretation of s. 35(1), the scope of ‘aboriginal peoples of Canada’ is clear: it must mean the modern-day successors of Aboriginal societies that occupied Canadian territory at the time of European contact.”¹¹¹ Throughout this case the “*Van der Peet Test*” was employed to decide whether there was continuity between a historic community and practice and the current claimant’s culture:¹¹² the basis for aboriginal rights in Canada and its courts today which each nation has to pass in order to practice their inherent rights as well. The language used in this case is the same kind of language used in the history presented here to categorize Lakota people,

¹⁰⁸ *R. v. Desautel*, 2021 SCC 38734, [2021] 17 SRC, <https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/18836/index.do>

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹¹⁰ For more about this declaration and the history of erasing Sinixt people and lands in Canada, see Andrea Geiger, “‘Crossed by the Border’: The U.S.-Canada Border and Canada’s ‘Extinction’ of the Arrow Lakes Band, 1890-1956,” *Western Legal History: The Journal of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society* Vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2010): 121-154.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 51-55.

especially around state concepts of “our Indians” and “foreign Indians” and I lay out the details of this recent case to show the continuities in settler state rhetoric and logic from the nineteenth century history discussed in this dissertation to now. What this case means for Indigenous nations and rights transcending Canadian boundaries is compelling and complicated, especially since the Canadian courts had to “affirm” these rights in order for the Sinixt people to be able to practice their traditions and access their own lands and waters unhindered. But it also sets an important precedent for understanding the ways Indigenous sovereignties and territories are foundational and ever-present, regardless of settler jurisdictions that overlay them.

In the U.S. legal context, a recent case has also reaffirmed how treaties and land protections for Indigenous people have been overlooked. The 2020 *McGirt v. Oklahoma* case ruled that Jimcy McGirt, an enrolled citizen of the Seminole Nation charged with sexual assault, could not be convicted and sentenced under state jurisdiction and would have to be tried under the federal Major Crimes Act (MCA). The basis for this argument is rooted in historical agreements: eastern Oklahoma is still reservation land belonging to the Creek, Seminole, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw, regardless of current reservation lines that are much smaller than the original “Indian territory” set aside after their removal to present-day Oklahoma and a treaty in 1833. The Supreme Court ruled in McGirt’s favour, and eastern Oklahoma was upheld as “reservation land.”¹¹³ Though the implications of this ruling are still unclear, it is important for at least taking the first step in making the U.S. government and citizens acknowledge the legally binding terms of the treaties made with Indigenous people—particularly when it comes to land. The court decision is still rife with problematic settler logics, for instance that Indian country is only as treaties and the U.S. government defines it within its past and present legal

¹¹³ *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, 2020, 140 S. Ct. 2452, 2459 (2020), https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/19pdf/18-9526_9okb.pdf.

tradition. However, it might be it a step towards compelling the U.S. government and citizens to at least play by its own rules and at least start the restitution of Indigenous claims to their treaty lands that have been whittled away but not “disestablished.” The historical components of this case has very clear commonalities with the whittling down and theft of Lakota lands after the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty outlined above.

Part of this focus on Lakota worldviews and understandings is to challenge the notion that Indigenous nations need to always look to the settler state for recognition, claims, and guidance/laws for solutions. Indigenous people have ongoing sovereignties and realities independent of colonial powers and governance systems; the latter are more often than not paternalistic, patronizing, and self-serving. There is work to do inside settler-state systems for sure and change to these systems is needed, but there is also work to be done amongst, with, and for each other in Indigenous nations. Our ancestors used the opportunities and tools available to them while working within their own Indigenous understandings and connections. This is not a call for a glorified view of the past for solutions, but rather a call to work together for self-determination according to Indigenous people’s own governance and relationality systems instead of always turning to colonial channels for redress. This comes from a “rights versus responsibility” lens—the colonial state perspective is framed within “rights” and “recognition” in dealing with Indigenous people, but fails to act in a respectful and reciprocal way where responsibility is central and much more in line with Indigenous understandings of relationships. This study will show that Lakota people were able to do both in a period where colonial pressures were increasing: they used settler state channels to find space and redress, but when that fell short or was denied (which it almost always did in this study), they were able to continue drawing from their own Lakota connections and understandings in many cases.

Chapter Organization

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter one examines Lakota understandings of Lakhóta Třamákřoče particularly centred on what is now called southern Saskatchewan and how this area was and is part of Lakhóta Třamákřoče though this flies in the face of categories of “Canadian” and “American Indians” and their corresponding “territories.” This will set up the basis for understanding Lakota movement, land, connections, and limitations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that is necessary in the following chapters. Chapter two is a photographic history of Wood Mountain Lakota people which works both as an examination of Lakota families, relationships to settler communities, and photographs as well as a deep description and introduction to the families and individuals frequently named and explained in the remainder of this dissertation. Chapter three focuses on Lakota women and how certain realities they lived were shaped by gendered circumstances of Lakota society and Indian policies. It argues that Lakota women were the centre of the Wood Mountain Lakota families in the decades after 1881. Chapter four examines borderlands of physical and social spaces with an emphasis on Lakota experiences at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain in keeping kin and community connections across the border in the turbulent years of the 1890s following the Ghost Dance and the increase of settler colonial intrusion and fear of Lakota “hostilities.” Chapter five examines the next generation of Lakota people born at Wood Mountain to those that originally fled from U.S. violence. It argues that Indian policies and settler ideas about the lines between race and community constrained this generation’s ability to move and live in Lakhóta Třamákřoče but that Lakota belonging and lived kinship still overcame settler colonial impositions. Lakota kin, community, belonging, nationhood, and land in every chapter are the

defining and flexible parts of Lakota resiliency, survival, and resistance in the difficult settler colonial atmosphere of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Conclusion

Belonging is not tenuous—having connections to Lakḥóta Tḥamákḥoče and to Lakota kin and community is lived. What this history shows is that settler colonial recognition is tenuous—categories of status, labels of “Canadian” or “American”, and borders are often arbitrary and rest in exclusivity of control and jurisdiction that is never fully grasped by nation-states. That those categories of state recognition are artificial does not mean that they are not real. They work to punish some and reward others around settler logics of marriage, residency, and “blood” masquerading as biology, but above all with the goal of “making” and “unmaking Indians.” To say Indian policy (whether in Canada or the U.S.) was rigid yet arbitrarily applied with blurred boundaries and counter-intuitive assumptions would be a well-known observation and is not a novel finding here, but has been often repeated by historians, Indigenous Studies scholars, and the people who lived under those policies. Indian policy would help Lakota people when it shored up settler-states sovereignty and control. And when the rules applied to someone but challenged settler-state legitimacy and power, the policies and laws would be disregarded. The arbitrary nature of colonial policies and laws as it applied to Lakota people (and Indigenous people more generally) will be on full display throughout this dissertation.

These issues are not just Indigenous problems to be fixed. Settler states and societies created and still maintain these systems and therefore need to change the gatekeeping of these institutions and structures that still regulate the lived realities of Indigenous people in North America. Indigenous people did not create these issues and therefore it is not up to Indigenous people to be the ones to make all the changes in settler society and states. Indigenous self-

determination is ongoing and runs parallel to settler populations and states taking accountability and action in fixing these issues within mainstream society. Unfortunately, in order to be intelligible to nation-state systems, Indigenous people have had to work within their colonial frameworks and rules, but Indigenous people did not bend all their understandings and relationships into these frameworks in order to persist. This will become clear in the Lakota history presented here.

Chapter One
“They seem wedded to this part of the country”: Lakhóta T̄hamák̄hočhe Beyond Borders, 1876-1930¹

American Indians hold their lands—places—as having the highest possible meaning, and all their statements are made with this reference point in mind. Immigrants review the movement of their ancestors across the continent as a steady progression of basically good events and experiences, thereby placing history—time—in the best possible light.²
 --Vine Deloria, Jr.

The Wood Mountain Uplands are a range of hills, more than a hundred miles from the Frenchman River in the west to the Big Muddy in the east. The Uplands have numerous springs and is a unique drainage where water either runs north to Old Wives Lake or south into the Missouri River. It is characterized by these streams and springs, as well as the hills, treed valleys, and occasional badlands, all of which made some call it an oasis and others deem it inarable.³

When Lakota people came to the Wood Mountain Uplands after the Battle of the Little Bighorn, it was a place well known to them already. Through the subsequent years and generations, it became a more firmly Lakota place. This process is not new to Lakota people, nor to Indigenous people more generally. Movement within the prairies between nations and bands was fluid and fluctuating with flexible boundaries between peoples who had sometimes competing and sometimes complementary claims on places—concepts colonial states and settler understandings of nationhood, territory, and law could not (and still do not) grasp. The argument that Lakota (and other Indigenous nations) were colonizers and conquerors of other Indigenous peoples does not take historical and cultural contexts into consideration and is rooted in trying to dismiss Lakota (and other Indigenous peoples’) sovereignty and claims. Oglala lawyer and activist

¹ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from Aspdin, April 10, 1895.

² Vine Deloria, Jr., *God is Red: A Native View of Religion*, 3rd ed., (Golden, Colo: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003), 61.

³ “Introduction,” in *The Wood Mountain Uplands*, edited by Thelma Poirier (Wood Mountain, SK: Wood Mountain Historical Society, 2000), x-xi.

Charlotte Black Elk argued: “[a] lot of that is the whole prejudice that the Sioux migrated. That way they can justify stealing land by saying these people stole land. They don’t want to say these people were here a long time.”⁴ Instead, we need to look to deep worldviews embedded in kinship and movement systems to understand Lakota history. The connection between Lakota societal structure, kinship, movement, and land is also important because these are the sustaining factors to Lakota life and culture. Ella Deloria wrote of these connections:

It is said that camp circles moved independently, bent on their own business. But though they were on an endless search for buffalo, and lacked a fixed home base, that did not mean that they moved haphazardly. On the contrary, each group kept more or less to its own customary orbit and aimed to reach specific regions at the right times, for deer hunting or for gathering the wild fruits and vegetables where they would be in season...As the Tetons moved about, their *wakicuzas* (planners for the common good) led the migration. They always knew where they were going so that even if the people did not know they could rely on their leaders. Individuals or families going into the wilds temporarily for reasons of their own, might possibly become lost, but the camp circle, never. It moved according to plan; a rough, elastic plan perhaps, without only approximate timing, but still a plan. One thing the people knew: That in due time they would return to the same place,—after a year or two, or longer, as required for that country to renew and restock itself.⁵

Deloria challenges the notion of Indigenous people as “nomads” or “wanderers,” showing instead that there were deliberate plans and decisions made regarding movement and land. These decisions were not only made to benefit Lakota people themselves, but to consider what the land, waters, and animals needed as well.

This chapter will illustrate how Wood Mountain became firmly part of the larger Lakḥóta Ṭhamákhōčhe/Lakota Country through a study of relationships, maps, place names, culturally significant sites, and the creation of the Wood Mountain Lakota reserve. First an analysis of the historical context in settlement patterns and Indigenous displacement in southwestern

⁴ Charlotte Black Elk, *Indian Country Today*, July 8, 1993, quoted in Mikael Kurkiala, “Objectifying the Past: Lakota Responses to Western Historiography,” *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (2002): 450.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 21-22.

Saskatchewan, and more specifically the Wood Mountain area, will be undertaken to explain why their movement was more possible at this particular place and time. Next, Lakota place names will be examined in order to understand different kinds of relationships with place and cultural encoding on landscapes. Following this, an analysis of government efforts to restrain Lakota movements as well as Lakota resistance to these interferences will be carried out. Lastly, the processes and politics of the Wood Mountain Lakota reserve creation will be outlined as a demonstration of the kinds of compromises that were being negotiated around land as well as the unilateral land cessions following the First World War that ignored Lakota input. One very important aspect to place was the kinship networks that connected Wood Mountain with Lakota places south of the border, which will be discussed in greater detail in following chapters. This chapter will work as the basis of centring Lakhóta Tǎmákǎoche to escape the narrow confines of colonialist and nationalist boundaries of Lakota history that the rest of the chapters will be built upon.

Historian David G. McCrady examined in detail the Dakota and Lakota presence in Canada prior to the 1862 Dakota-U.S. War and prior to the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn, respectively. He argues that historians have overlooked Lakota or Dakota “transboundary” history, and that these peoples often lived in the borderlands and crossed and recrossed the international border many times.⁶ He wrote: “The Lakotas had frequently ventured north of the boundary before 1876; in fact, leaders like Sitting Bull traded with the Métis at Wood Mountain at least as early as the winter of 1870-71.”⁷ This goes against conventional views about Lakota history and place. Kainai Elder Wilton Goodstriker also notes Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people in what is presently Canada long before the 1870s. He wrote: “In 1810 there was a meeting between the

⁶ McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 32.

⁷ Ibid.

Bloods and the Sioux in the Cypress Hills to establish peace between the two nations. At that time, the reason for peace was so that they might share hunting territories. It was decided that the Cypress Hills would be the boundary point, with the Sioux to the east and the Bloods to the west.”⁸ This is much earlier than previously acknowledged in the literature and although it is not specified by Goodstriker what is meant by “Sioux” there is good reason to believe these were Lakota people. Dakota scholar Leo Omani concluded that this peace alliance was with the Lakota based upon historical observations of Lakota traditional hunting territory extending into present southwestern Saskatchewan.⁹ Goodstriker also mentioned the strengthening of the alliance between the Blood nation (Kainai) and the Lakota nation more specifically following the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty in the U.S.: “By this time there was a strong alliance between the Sioux and the Bloods, and a meeting was held to discuss the rapid encroachment of outsiders on territories they now shared for hunting. At this meeting, held at the Cypress Hills, there was tremendous gift giving between the two nations. The Bloods received the big drum, the long knife, the whip and whistle, the headdress, the Crow belt, and all the ceremonies attached to these gifts.”¹⁰ Goodstriker discusses more meetings between the Lakota, Bloods/Kainai, Blackfoot/Siksika, and Sarcee/Tsuut’ina from 1876 onward as well.¹¹ These alliances and meetings between the Blood and Lakota nations show that Lakota people were in present-day Canada long before most scholars or government authorities understand, however these nations were facing similar kinds of pressures and erasures on both sides of the border as settler-colonial intrusion increased. Diplomacy, self-determination, and alliances between Indigenous nations

⁸ Wilton Goodstriker, “Introduction: Ostistsi Pakssaisstoyiih Pi (the year when the winter was open and cold),” in *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7*, Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council with Walter Hildebrandt, Sarah Carter, and Dorothy First Rider (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996), 7.

⁹ Leo Omani, “Perspectives of Saskatchewan Dakota/Lakota Elders on the Treaty Process within Canada” (PhD diss., Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Saskatchewan, 2010), 114.

¹⁰ Goodstriker, “Introduction: Ostistsi Pakssaisstoyiih Pi,” 8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

that are typically only recorded in oral histories have often been overlooked and diminished in histories that have relied only on settler produced sources.

Lakota people themselves often included Uŋčiyapi Makǰóche (Grandmother's Land/Canada) in their descriptions of Lakhóta Țamákǰoche though this has typically been dismissed or overlooked. For example, Ella Deloria recorded:

Fast Whirwind the Oglala-Teton spoke for his people with supreme certainty, "Why, we have always lived here!" And, with a wide sweep of his arm he proceeded to delimit a great expanse which was "the Tetons' hunting range," he said. "From the M.nisose (Roiled Water is the Missouri) westward to the foothills of the Heska (White Mountains or the Rockies), and from the Uciyapi-Tamakoce (Grandmother's Land is Canada) southward to the Pakeska-wakpa (Mussel-shell River is the Platte in Nebraska) our people roamed and hunted; and sometimes went beyond these boundaries."¹²

An important consideration is that it was an Oglala man who passed this information to Deloria, as the Oglala are typically but inaccurately regarded as one of the more southern oyáte who did not come as far north as Uŋčiyapi Makǰóche, and also that he pointed out the flexibility of these boundaries.

The international border was an issue for accessing Lakhóta Țamákǰoche especially in negotiating with settlers and settler governments that were becoming increasingly intrusive, but Lakota people also used the border to their advantage in some ways. McCrady argues, "The Sioux had taken advantage of the boundary, fleeing across it on the approach of American troops, and trading with the Métis. But they had not become 'Canadian' Indians. They remained in the borderlands, traveling from one side to the other, and committing themselves to neither the British-Canadian nor the American regime, for a decade longer, before finally settling on Canadian reserves and American reservations."¹³ Acknowledging Lakota use and resistance as

¹² Ella Deloria, Introduction to "The Dakota Way of Life," 5, *Ella Deloria Archive*, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php, accessed June 15, 2021.

¹³ McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 30.

McCrary does is significant, especially since the literature prior to his work almost completely ignored these factors. This movement and resistance to both settler states are two of the most important aspects to beginning to understand Lakota history beyond the typical narratives of Lakota warfare, great leaders, and U.S.-centered approaches. Lakota people shrewdly ignored the international border in some ways and used it to their benefit in others, and most definitely do so within the framework of their own community, kin, and land ties. This study will take McCrary's important observation a step further and demonstrate that the Lakota people who did not surrender in 1881 continued traveling from one side of the border to the other even after the Wood Mountain reserve was created in 1911. They continued to draw upon their relationships within and to Lakhóta Thámákhočhe for decades beyond the 1880s, though this study will end in 1930 with the ratification of the Wood Mountain reserve and the beginning of the Depression era.

Settlement, Movement, and Relationships

Settlement at Wood Mountain was delayed compared to other parts of the Canadian prairies which helped leave space for Lakota people beyond the reach of settler land rushes and government supervision. Historian Barry Potyondi's study of southwestern Saskatchewan's cultural and environmental history demonstrated that this absence of settlers started with the British North American Exploring Expedition (known more commonly as the Palliser Expedition, named for the leader John Palliser) and the Canadian Red River, Assiniboine, and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition (known also as the Dawson-Hind Expedition, named after the leaders Henry Youle Hind and Simon James Dawson), both between 1857 and 1860. These expeditions completely ignored the area from Wood Mountain to the Cypress Hills, claiming it was an extension of the Great American Desert. Potyondi argued, "That they dismissed it, both

in their reports and on their maps, as having no agricultural potential, ensured that it would remain a *terra incognita* to non-natives for many more years.”¹⁴ Thirty years later the southwest was still sparsely populated, “Without question, southwestern Saskatchewan had become a vacant land. Under the Dominion census of 1891, much of southwestern Saskatchewan was encompassed by the Swift Current Sub-District [including Wood Mountain], comprising 15,904 square miles (4,200,00 ha). Only 320 people lived in that entire tract. The population density was about one person per fifty square miles (1 person/12,950 ha).”¹⁵ The 1891 Census arguably may not have captured the numbers of Indigenous people living in the area, though some Métis and Lakota families were included at Wood Mountain, but Potyondi’s census observations shed light on the relative lack of settlement.

The hilly terrain, semi-arid climate, and higher elevations with more unpredictable frost days in the growing season meant the landscape was more suited to open range ranching when the area was finally recognized as good grazing country. The Wood Mountain Uplands were hailed as some of the best grazing land in the Northern Great Plains in the 1880s,¹⁶ though cattle ranching did not necessarily equate to an increased settler population. Large American ranches let their herds wander far afield and some enterprising Canadian ranchers had relatively small herds because access to eastern markets was difficult with no railroads close by. The twentieth century did not improve too much for ranchers either: the harsh winter of 1906-07 killed thousands of head of livestock and kept ranching to a small scale, the eventual opening up of more land to homesteaders after 1908 in the southwest threatened to pen in ranching operations, and the drought from 1918-1922 caused a marked increase in the sale of horses and cattle

¹⁴ Barry Potyondi, *In Palliser's Triangle: Living in the Grasslands, 1850-1930* (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing, 1995), 39-40.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 65-66.

because of lack of feed.¹⁷ Ranching did hold on in the Uplands longer though in comparison to the farming boom elsewhere on the prairies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century because the landscape was not immediately suitable to farming. Homesteading was not opened in the Wood Mountain area until after 1910 as the land survey itself was not approved until September 3, 1910¹⁸ (Figure 1). Settlement picked up after this time, but the droughts of the late 1910s and the early 1920s in the Uplands may have cleared as much as forty percent of the original homesteaders in some townships.¹⁹ In the 1920s, farmers rushed in again, but the drought of the 1930s further forced settlers out of the rural prairies who were eking out an agricultural existence. This ebb and flow of settlers allowed the Lakota people to continue on in their own ways and understandings of place, and their tenacity to do so as well as their resistance to any kind of government interference was often noted.

Some Lakota people in the early 1880s established a seasonal migration between the new town springing up along the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) line to the north, Moose Jaw, and Wood Mountain, others stayed at Wood Mountain on a more permanent basis particularly if they married non-Lakota people there, and others tried their hand at different places, like Batoche and Regina before coming back to Wood Mountain more permanently. The CPR line went through Moose Jaw in 1883, and Lakota people found work in the growing town, some men as farmhands and some women as domestic help and laundresses. They would spend part of the year working in Moose Jaw and living outside of town, primarily in tents, and the other part of the year travelling to the Wood Mountain area to hunt, visit relatives, and graze their horse herds

¹⁷ Potyondi, *In Palliser's Triangle*, 55-62.

¹⁸ University of Alberta, Peel's Prairie Provinces, Peel 10807, Canada Department of the Interior, Immigration Branch, "Canada West, the last best West: Ranching, dairying, grain raising, fruit raising, mixed farming. Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1910," 18-19, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/10807.html>.

¹⁹ Barry Potyondi, "Losing Ground: Farm Settlers on the Periphery," *Wood Mountain Uplands: From the Big Muddy to the Frenchman River* (Wood Mountain, SK: Wood Mountain Historical Society, 2000), 143.

away from Moose Jaw. This seasonal movement between Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw went on from about 1883 until 1911. After this time, most families stayed at Wood Mountain; some of the younger generation taking up homesteads and others settling on the newly created reserve.

Relationships with the NWMP, settlers, and other Indigenous people were important in the process of maintaining Lakǎóta ǂamákǎoche north of the 49th parallel after 1876. Estimates of how many Lakota people who did not surrender by 1881 and remained in present-day Saskatchewan range: historian David G. McCrady simply stated that there were “several hundred,” author Ron Papandrea estimated about 250, and Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney thought in 1882 that there were about 600.²⁰ It was not just a gap in settlement that allowed the Lakota to live more freely at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw. Other Indigenous peoples had been intentionally and forcibly removed from the area in southern Saskatchewan by the Canadian government to vacate the land for settlement.²¹ The Canadian government also tried to remove Indigenous peoples from close to the international border and the CPR line in order to make “free” land for settlers and assure them that they were safe from Indians (Figure 2). By 1876, the treaty process on the Canadian prairies was well underway, and Indigenous people were negotiating from a place of sovereignty but also hardship, particularly with famine looming. Although the Numbered Treaties on the prairies were created to build a nation-to-nation relationship between the Crown and First Nations, they were also congruent with Canadian colonialist projects that displaced and dispossessed Indigenous peoples. Present southwestern Saskatchewan was common ground to many Indigenous nations, including the Niitsitapi (commonly called Blackfoot and made up of the Kainai, Piikani, and Siksiika people),

²⁰ McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, xvi; Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, 6; Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers, 1900*, No. 27, Part II, "Census of Sioux and Stragging Indians in the Northwest Territories, 1900," pp. 167.

²¹ See John Tobias, “Canada’s Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885,” *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 64, no. 4, (December 1983): 519-548.

Nêhiyawak (Cree), A'aninin (Gros Ventre), Nakota (Assiniboine), and Metis, all of whom are often left out of the Lakota historiography. The one exception to this is historian David G. McCrady's work that seeks to address this gap in the literature. The Lakota who lived in the Wood Mountain Uplands and Cypress Hills predominately from 1877 onward had to try to maintain good relations with these nations. The Lakota were very cognizant of the area being common ground and that buffalo were scarce, and so peaceful relations were essential for existence. For example, Sitting Bull sent tobacco in the spring of 1878 to neighboring nations to invite them to a council. McCrady states that by mid-April, many Nakota (Assiniboine) and A'aninin (Gros Ventre) people from the Milk River and Fort Benton, Montana had come to the Cypress Hills to attend the meeting, though peace efforts were largely unsuccessful.²² All Indigenous peoples on the prairies suffered the hardships that the decimated bison herds, disease, hard winters, and increasing government and settler pressures had brought, and whether this created peace or heightened tensions in the 1870s and 1880s was predicated on past relations and current availability to dwindling buffalo herds. The Lakota who came to Canada were relieved to find peace, and Major James Morrow Walsh of the NWMP later wrote of these years: "The Indians [Lakota] conducted themselves very well and spent their time hunting the Buffalo which were at this date in droves of thousands on the prairie between Cypress and Wood Mountains. The Indians subsequently said that the happiest days of all their lives were those past in the period between the spring of 1877 and 1879."²³ After this time though, the situation changed for the worse.

²² McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 93-94.

²³ University of Saskatchewan Special Collections, A.S. Morton Manuscripts Collection, Series C550 File/Item Reference C550-1-22-2 (Box 35), James Walsh Papers - Letter to Cora Walsh from J.M. Walsh - 31 May 1890, <http://scaa.sk.ca/ourlegacy/solr?query=walsh&start=10&rows=10&mode=view&pos=0>,

The Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Nêhiyawak (Cree), Dakota, and Nakota (Assiniboine) people were all being actively removed to reserves away from the Cypress Hills and the Wood Mountain Uplands by the Canadian government in the 1870s and 1880s. However, that does not mean this area was devoid of people—actually to the contrary. Historian James Dashuck found that, “In 1877, the critical shortage of bison prompted almost 3,600 treaty Indians to move to Cypress Hills, the last refuge of the species in Canadian territory. Many others who had yet to enter treaty had also converged in the hills, and to all them were added, in the spring of 1877, Sitting Bull and 5,000 followers from south of the border in search of both sanctuary and sustenance.”²⁴ However, Daschuck also points out that the goal was to rid the Cypress Hills of First Nations people even though many First Nations wanted their reserves located there: “Bands were driven from their chosen reserves in the high country of the Cypress Hills to meet the related goals of opening the country close to the railway for European settlement and to minimize the potential threat of a concentrated Indian population to the planned establishment of an agricultural economy.”²⁵ The Nakota (Assiniboine) and Nêhiyawak (Cree) people were promised reserves in the Cypress Hills, and the Assiniboine/Nakota reserve was surveyed there in 1880, but by 1882 they were told to leave the Hills and rations were no longer issued at Fort Walsh to enforce this directive.²⁶ The Lakota too were a threat to government plans and were dealt with in much the same manner as other First Nations: a policy of starvation. By 1883 the last of the lingering Nêhiyawak bands, especially under Chief Big Bear, were forced to accept reserve life because of starvation²⁷ and Sitting Bull and many of the last of his followers returned

²⁴ James Daschuck, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*, (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2013), 105.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁶ John L. Tobais, “Canada’s Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885” *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 64, no. 4 (December 1983): 528-531.

²⁷ Daschuck, *Clearing the Plains*, 123.

to the U.S. in 1881 under the same conditions. The Lakota people who remained in present-day southern Saskatchewan after this time were able to stay because they were few in number and therefore there was less competition for scarce game and most government action was focused on monitoring larger First Nations groups on newly created reserves.

Similarly, Métis people were being pushed off their lands by increased settlement and racism, particularly after the 1885 Northwest Resistance in present-day Saskatchewan. Lakota relationships with the Métis had already been established long before 1876, especially because Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe and Métis homelands overlapped and a trading relationship was very advantageous for both. Trading had been so successful that American army authorities claimed that the Métis had been trading guns and ammunition to the Lakota (and Dakota) for years, especially during the “Sioux Wars,” and that the Métis actually encouraged hostilities so that this trade would flourish.²⁸ At Wood Mountain, the Métis and Lakota had camped together on at least one occasion in 1873 when Chief Little Knife was in Canada to try to speak with Governor Adams George Archibald, the lieutenant governor of Manitoba and the North-West Territories and the Crown representative for the negotiations of Treaties Number 1 and 2.²⁹ French Canadian trader Jean-Louis Légaré at Wood Mountain and the Métis had established good relations with the Lakota, particularly in helping to feed people and in providing provisions to Sitting Bull to make the journey back to the U.S. in 1881. There are even claims that Sitting Bull spoke French³⁰ and he professed strong ties to the Métis, stating to General Alfred H. Terry during the 1877 Terry Commission at Fort Walsh: “I was born and raised in this country with the Red River Half-breeds and we are going over to that part of the country, and that is the reason

²⁸ McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 26-28.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁰ Willis Fletcher Johnson, *The Red Record of the Sioux: Life of Sitting Bull and History of the Indian War of 1890-1891*, (Philadelphia: Edgewood Publishing Company, 1891), 27.

why I have come over here.”³¹ Some Lakota people ventured farther north, all the way to Batoche where they worked for Métis families as farm hands and domestic help. When violence broke out in 1885 during the North West Resistance, the Lakota families at Batoche actively fought and assisted the Métis against the Canadian government. One Lakota man died during the battle, Mathó Wakákišya³² (Tormenting Bear) and two other men, Mathó Lúta (Red Bear) and Kǎŋgí Tǎmáheča (Lean Crow) were tried for treason and sent to Stony Mountain Penitentiary. Mathó Lúta (Red Bear) died shortly after his release from the prison and Kǎŋgí Tǎmáheča (Lean Crow) joined the other Lakota people at Moose Jaw after his release.³³ These overlooked ties between Métis and Lakota people challenge the conventional idea that they were “traditional enemies”—a term typically applied by outsider (Western) observers that could not understand complex and nuanced forms of Indigenous sovereignties and relations and only served to further divide Indigenous people and interests for colonialist gain.

Wood Mountain had been a large Métis community, and the Métis and Lakota people in the 1870s had been the biggest population the Uplands has ever seen since. For example, historian Barry Potyondi found that, “Even as late as 1877, with the buffalo herds dwindling markedly, there were reportedly about 150 [Métis] families at Wood Mountain.” Using other historians’ calculations of about ten people per family on average (comprising of extended relatives as well and not just the nuclear family), Potyondi estimated: “On this basis, and taking 100 families to be more or less the usual size of the settlement, we can estimate the Wood

³¹ Mark Diedrich, editor, *Sitting Bull: The Collected Speeches* (Rochester, MN: Coyote Books, 1998), 95.

³² Sometimes spelt Mato Wakaesija. Lawrence Barkwell, “Dakota and Lakota in the 1885 Northwest Resistance,” unpublished article, https://www.academia.edu/39708658/Dakota_and_Lakota_in_the_1885_Northwest_Resistance_Allies_of_Gabriel_Dumont.

³³ Elizabeth and Rory Thomson, “The Wood Mountain Sioux,” in *Wood Mountain Uplands*, 72-73; and Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, 8-9. See also Sessional Papers of the Dominion of Canada, Volume 13, fourth session of the fifth Parliament, session 1886, No. 52 for *Queen vs. Oka-Doka et. al.* trial court proceedings where Lean Crow and Red Bear were tried (note sometimes their names are transcribed as Poor Crow and Red Bean in this source).

Mountain population at around one thousand people throughout the 1870s.”³⁴ Through the 1870s livestock and wildlife seem to have flourished, and when necessary, Lakota people were still able to go south of the border to hunt—though this was a dangerous option as General Miles took any chance to launch an attack. But after a devastating prairie fire of 1879-1880 at Wood Mountain that kept the buffalo from coming north of the border, many Métis people moved to settlements at the Frenchman River, the Milk River, and to nearby Willow Bunch (called “Talle de Saule”/Clump of Willows and Bonneauville to the Métis).³⁵ Most significantly, the Lakota and Métis were the largest groups of Indigenous people left in the Wood Mountain area after 1882 as most others had been forced out by starvation and government removal as mentioned previously. In comparison to the small settler population at the time at Wood Mountain in the 1880s and 1890s, this meant that the Lakota and Métis communities made up the bulk of the people in the area, and even the whole of present-day southwestern Saskatchewan. A scan of the 1881 census for the Wood Mountain subdistrict (which would have most likely covered Willow Bunch and Fort Walsh as well, though maps of the subdistricts have been lost or destroyed) shows a majority of Métis families and the enumerated white settlers in the area belonged to the NWMP with the exceptions of a few traders, farmers, and ranchers. Lakota and other First Nations people were not enumerated, maybe because it was assumed they were counted on the reserves/reservations they had been relocated to.

Siksika Chief Crowfoot and Sitting Bull had met while the latter was in Canada after 1877 to continue their peaceful alliance, but with food growing scarcer, some Blackfoot leaders saw the Lakota as competition for declining herds. Relations were good enough though between

³⁴ Potyondi, *In Palliser's Triangle*, 30.

³⁵ Ron Rivard and Catherine Littlejohn, *The History of the Metis of Willow Bunch* (Saskatoon: Ron Rivard and Catherine Littlejohn, 2003), 141.

the leaders that Sitting Bull named his son Crow Foot after the Siksika chief.³⁶ Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney reported in 1879 that Crowfoot said “...if you will drive away the Sioux and make a hole so that the Buffalo can come in, we will not trouble you for food. If you don’t do that you must feed us. That is the same story from one end of the Country to the other; the Sioux are preventing the Buffalo from crossing the line.”³⁷ However, it seems Sitting Bull regarded Crowfoot as a friend and the peace between the Lakota and Niitsitapi was never broken.³⁸ Indian Affairs officials were already concerned with the expense of feeding “their Indians” and the “foreign” Lakota added extra pressure they did not want. In 1881 Dewdney reported that when Sitting Bull surrendered, other First Nations people thought the buffalo would be able to return, especially because the Lakota were keeping other people from the herds, and so the Blackfoot went south of the border to hunt buffalo.³⁹ In 1882, Dewdney again reported that other First Nations wanted to go south from their reserves to Wood Mountain to hunt because they heard there are buffalo there.⁴⁰ Tensions between nations could run high as starvation on the prairies took hold.

The Lakota were drawing on all their diplomatic skills and connections to strengthen alliances with other nations, as well as with the British Crown. As mentioned briefly previously, Húŋkpapha Chief Little Knife with about three hundred lodges of Lakota and Iháŋkthunwaŋna/Yanktonai travelled to Fort Qu’Appelle and Fort Ellice in 1872 in order to

³⁶ Quoted in McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 89, Morris Bob-Tailed Bull Interview, University of Oklahoma, Campbell Collection, Box 105, Notebook 11, pages 10-11.

³⁷ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3696, File 15266, Reel C-10122, Dewdney to Col. Dennis (Deputy Minister of the Interior), July 22, 1879.

³⁸ Stanley Vestal, *New Sources of Indian History, 1850-1891* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), 238.

³⁹ 1882 Sessional Papers, No. 6 (Vol. 5), Manitoba and NWT, Reports of Superintendents for Manitoba, Keewatin, and the North-West Territories, of Superintendent James F. Graham, and the various Indian Agents and the Inspectors of Agencies and Farms, Part I, page 37-39.

⁴⁰ 1883 Sessional Papers No. 5 (Vol. 4), Part I, Reports of Superintendents and Agents, Manitoba and the North-West Territories, Annual Report of Indian Commissioner E. Dewdney, Regina, December 15, 1882, page 194.

make their intentions of good relations with the British and residing and trading more north of the 49th parallel.⁴¹ The Lakota leaders spoke about their alliance with the British against the Americans in 1812 and showed the King George III medals that they were given at that time.⁴² Peter Douglas Elias in his book *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest: Lessons for Survival* goes into much richer detail about the alliance with the British during the War of 1812 and the importance of the Lakota/Dakota military aid: “Even the Ihanktonwan [Yankton/Ihánkthūṣṣwāṅ/Dakota], Ihanktonwona [Yanktonai/Ihánkthūṣṣwāṅna/Dakota] and Tetonwon [Teton/Thithūṣṣwāṅ/Lakota] entered the alliance, remaining far out on the prairies and insulating the Mississippi from attack by Indians of the south and west who were sympathetic to the Americans. This left the entire area from the Rock River in the south to the Great Lakes in the secure control of the alliance.”⁴³ It is well recorded that Dakota leaders were upset when British promises to help protect Dakota lands and sovereignty against American invasion fell through, even with their military victories, and the British more or less abandoned them and their lands to the Americans after 1814.⁴⁴ Dakota leaders still remembered the alliance well into the nineteenth century though and knew they had a legitimate claim from this relationship with the Crown to base negotiations upon.⁴⁵ Some Dakota bands turned down a Métis alliance during the 1885 Northwest Resistance, citing their historic 1812 alliance as the reason for neutrality.⁴⁶ Later, in 1877 when Sitting Bull came back into present-day Saskatchewan, he expressed Lakota disappointment and confusion as to why the British abandoned the alliance and the relationship passed down: “I don’t understand why the Redcoats gave us and our country to the Americans

⁴¹ McCrady, *Living with Strangers*, 36.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Peter Douglas Elias, *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest: Lessons for Survival* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 2002), 12.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 13-14.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 67.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 172.

(after the War of 1812)...My own grandfather told me the Redcoats were our people, and good people, and I must always trust them as friends."⁴⁷ For the most part, Canadian officials did not agree that there was a continuation of a relationship with the Lakota or Dakota stemming from the previous 1812 alliance, even though this alliance helped secured the British presence in present-day Canada.

The NWMP at Wood Mountain had better relationships with the Lakota people which stemmed from the earlier friendship between Major James Morrow Walsh and Sitting Bull. While Sitting Bull was in Canada, the guarded generosity of the NWMP towards the Lakota (because Walsh was under strict orders not to assist them) helped to get them through very difficult winters and periods of near starvation for some people. One report made by Walsh in 1880 reflects this:

April 1st. The Sioux camp at this post [Wood Mountain] had increased to 150 lodges, with Bull at its head. The meat of the camp this day became exhausted and owing to the poor condition of the Indian horses, the buffalo, 70 miles distant, could not be reached and further supply could not be procured. Hunger and suffering prevailed for the next five or six weeks. Horses that died from scurvy, and carcasses of horses that died during the autumn and early winter, were gathered up and eaten. In some cases persons became so reduced as to render them unable to assist themselves, and I was forced to make small issue of food to save their lives. Following this want of food and the eating of diseased horses, an epidemic appeared, which marked its results by the many graves now to be seen in Wood Mountain. The conduct of those starving and destitute people, their patient endurance, their sympathy, and the extent to which they assisted each other, their strict observance of law and order, would reflect credit upon the most civilized community. I am pleased to inform you, as no doubt it will give you pleasure to know, that the greatest good feeling and consideration was extended to those poor sufferers by the men at Wood Mountain Post. The little that was daily left from their table was carefully preserved and meted out as far as it would go, to the women and children. During this five or six weeks of distress, I do not think that one ounce of food was wasted at Wood Mountain Post. Every man appeared to be interested in saving what little he could, and day after day they divided their rations with those starving people. I must further mention that the Indians received assistance from the half-breeds.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Diedrich, *Sitting Bull*, 79.

⁴⁸ 1880-1881 Sessional Papers, No. 3 (Vol. 3), Part II, North West Mounted Police Force, Commissioner's Report 1880, December 31, 1880, page 27, http://archives.almogau.ca/main/sites/default/files/2010-011_001_014_002_1.pdf

Walsh's superiors were probably not pleased to hear of his assistance in any form to Sitting Bull and the Lakota, as Walsh was transferred to Fort Qu'Appelle in the summer of 1880 because the Canadian government felt he was hindering the Lakota from returning to the U.S. From there Walsh returned to Ontario on health leave.

Sitting Bull's emotional and diplomatic speeches often referred to the NWMP's fairness in juxtaposition to the cruelty they experienced in the U.S. One such example of this is Sitting Bull's reported words to a trader at Wolf Point, Montana in 1877:

I did not leave the Black Hills of my own will; the soldiers pushed me out. I loved my home, but the paleface came and with his coming all the old things began to change. I kept out of his way; I did not seek war with him but he never slept till he drove me among the redcoats. The redcoats do not say much to us but what they speak is fair and straight. So long as a gopher remains on the plains I will stay and I will fight. All my life I have been a man of peace but now my back is to a rock; I shall run no more. I am not afraid to die and all my warriors are of the same mind.⁴⁹

Maybe the best example of Sitting Bull's juxtaposition of his experience in the U.S. and Canada is found in his speech and behaviour towards Brigadier General Terry when at the Terry Commission in 1877 at Fort Walsh, where Sitting Bull spoke of the lies told by the U.S. government and instead shook hands with the redcoats.⁵⁰ This was certainly not the case for NWMP and Indigenous people generally—typically relations were strained at best and absolute subjugation at worst. But for the most part, relations were positive at Wood Mountain. In her book *Hunger, Horses, and Government Men: Criminal Law on the Aboriginal Plains, 1870-1905*, Shelley A.M. Gavigan provides several cases of the Lakota taking their grievances to the NWMP in the Wood Mountain area and having their issues fairly dealt with.⁵¹ While some

⁴⁹ Diedrich, *Sitting Bull*, 91.

⁵⁰ Stanley Vestal, *Sitting Bull, Champion of the Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 239-240.

⁵¹ Shelley A.M. Gavigan, *Hunger, Horses, and Government Men: Criminal Law on the Aboriginal Plains, 1870-1905* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012), 109-111.

Lakota men fought at Batoche with the Métis, others worked for the NWMP at Moose Jaw as scouts and runners.⁵² As will be discussed in chapters two and three, some families made the NWMP their kin through the marriage of Lakota women to NWMP members. The NWMP members who married Lakota women at Wood Mountain in particular stayed in the area and established their families amongst and alongside the Lakota community. However, the views and goals of the NWMP as an institution were very much about subduing and replacing Indigenous people, regardless of what some individual NWMP (including Walsh) practiced on the individual level and regardless of the individual good relations between some members and Lakota people.

The relationship between the NWMP and Lakota and the fair treatment they received from 1876 to 1881 in Canada seems to have left a lasting impression on some of the Lakota people who returned to the U.S. as well. A story/rumor circulated at the Standing Rock Reservation about 1884 that a redcoat (NWMP) visited the reservation and promised that they would help the Lakota get back the Black Hills from the U.S. government.⁵³ Later in 1895 when Indian agent and former NWMP Thomas Aspdin and his Lakota wife Mary Black Moon-Aspdin were visiting her family at the Cheyenne River Reservation, he reported a rumor there of a letter received by the Lakota from Walsh, this time advising the Lakota to “adapt themselves to civilized ways and not fight anymore.”⁵⁴ These rumors may have circulated for some years and worried government officials, at least for the hope it fostered and the spirits it rose on the reservations, so much so that eventually Walsh himself was questioned about it and whether he was in contact with Lakota people in the U.S. He wrote in June of 1896 to the office of the

⁵² Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, 10-11.

⁵³ Stanley Vestal, “The Mysterious Red Coat (1884?),” *New Sources of Indian History, 1850-1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), 300.

⁵⁴ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from A.E. Forget to Walsh, February 30th, 1896.

Canadian Commissioner of Indian Affairs stating that “I have made no communication to the Sioux Indians by letter since 1881 when I advised poor 'Bull' [Sitting Bull] and his few remaining followers roaming about the prairie to return to the U.S. and become wards of the government. When travelling through the western states and meeting the Sioux I strongly advised them to abandon from their hearts any feeling of hostility they entertained towards the whites for their future existence they must look to the goodwill of the government.”⁵⁵ Walsh may have been nervous about these rumors, as he had already been reprimanded and removed from Wood Mountain by his superiors in 1880. The difficult times in the early reservation period in the U.S. made some people hold on to hope of the NWMP and Walsh’s friendship, but nothing would come of those hopes.

After 1881, the smaller number of Lakota people in present-day Saskatchewan, likely under 500 people at most, helped to ease relations with those who saw them as a barrier to game and also helped to establish the remaining Lakota people there even more firmly because they could live beyond government reach for the most part. Their diverse marriage, trade, and diplomatic relationships with the other people in the area also helped to firmly maintain Lakhóta Třamákřoče north of the 49th parallel.

Place Names

Possibly one of the most seminal works on Indigenous understandings of place and landscape has been Keith Basso’s *Wisdom Sits in Places* which centers on Western Apache ways of relating and knowledge making imbued in place. Basso wrote: “Place making is a way of constructing history itself, of inventing it. Of fashioning novel versions of ‘what happened here.’ For every developed place–world manifests itself as a possible state of affairs, and whenever

⁵⁵ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from James Walsh, June 7, 1896.

these constructions are accepted by other people as credible and convincing – or plausible and provocative, or arresting and intriguing- they enrich the common stock on which everyone can draw to muse on past events, interpret their significance, and image them anew.”⁵⁶ He goes on to write: “Long before the advent of literacy, to say nothing of ‘history’ as an academic discipline, places served humankind as durable symbols of distant events and as indispensable aids for remembering and imagining them—and this convenient arrangement, ancient but not outmoded, is with us still today...for what people make of their places is closely connected to what they make of themselves as members of society and inhabitants of the earth...If place-making is a way of constructing the past, a venerable means of *doing* human history, it is also a way of constructing social traditions and, in the process, personal and social identities. *We are*, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine.”⁵⁷ Place-making is closely tied to placenames because the transcription of landscape reflects cultural connections and use of those spaces, especially for passing down histories and stories of places.

One Wood Mountain Lakota’s man’s work in recording and mapping Lakota places has been instrumental in the passing down of the knowledge of stories captured in place names. John Lecaine⁵⁸ (Woonkapisni/Woúŋkapi Šni/They Can’t Knock Him Down) recorded many Lakota place names in southwestern Saskatchewan in the 1950s and 1960s, which was becoming more of an interest to hobbyists, anthropologists, and historians at that time. After returning home from the Regina Industrial School in 1906, John spent many hours with his father, Okhúte Šíča/Hard to Shoot (sometimes also called John Lecaine, Sr.) visiting different important places and listening to other elders tell stories and histories. He created several maps of the Wood

⁵⁶ Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places*, 6.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁸ John Lecaine sometimes went by the surname Okute-Sica or Okute.

Mountain area with Lakota ceremonial sites, winter camps, and other important features detailed on them. His maps are a wonderful visual source of Lakota inscriptions of the land. In one of the best examples, he circled the places on a topographical map and inscribed in the margins and included a written key to all the places he identified.⁵⁹ (Figure 3) These maps, annotations, and stories collected, remembered, and retold by John Lecaine are the basis for this section on Lakota place names. Basso's work informs the reading of these maps because they clearly detail the cultural and social tying of Lakota people closely to place through lived experiences on the land and through shared stories.

Other scholars have shown the overlay of colonial mapping projects on Indigenous territories as a way of laying claim to land. Historian Sheila McManus wrote on this subject within the context of the Alberta-Montana borderlands that were made out of Blackfoot territory. She argues that maps made by colonial governments were made to assert national and imperial ownership, which differs greatly from maps made by Indigenous peoples.⁶⁰ Government produced maps after 1870 were created to assert jurisdictional control, inscribe the kinds of economy building they wanted to encourage on certain landscapes, and illustrate Indigenous people as managed through reserves and agencies.⁶¹ However, Indigenous people also created their own maps often with the purpose of illustrating their claims and connections to certain areas, but also to transmit culturally important sites and stories. Such is the case with John Lecaine's maps, for it is clear from his written correspondence that he wanted to record and share the landscape with later generations and contemporary historians who may not have the

⁵⁹ Glenbow Archives, S.T. Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-147, Annotated Map by John Lecaine, Correspondence w John Okutesica re Sitting Bull & his winter camps, 1960-1962.

⁶⁰ Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2005), 18.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 18-24.

same kind of opportunity to visit those places and learn the stories and meanings as he had. His two maps locate the same sites with slight variations in the details of the place names and their corresponding stories and meanings. They are wonderful repositories of Lakota place names, stories, ceremonial uses, and history---knowledge that may not necessarily have survived otherwise.

John Lecaine wrote that: “The Sioux never saw the Wood Mtn. country till for the first time in the fall of '76. and probably all the creeks and land marks were already named by the Red Coats and other tribes of Indians and metis inhabiting the country.”⁶² Contrary to what Lecaine states, the Lakota had been in the area before, but Lecaine’s statement echoes how many place names that the Lakota used were translations of other people’s place names. For example, some place names were the translations of other Indigenous names, such as Čhánǰhe which came from the older Métis word for the area, Montange des Bois, both the Michif and Lakota names are translated literally to mean Wood Mountain. The White Mud River (also known as the Frenchman River) near present-day Val Marie in southern Saskatchewan similarly had dual names in Lakota. The first was a literal translation of White Mud River, Wísaŋye Wakpá (White Paint River), and the second is Míčha Wakpá or Coyote River⁶³ which may have come from Lakota people’s own experiences or memories from that place. Translated place names are important for illustrating the ties Lakota people had to other Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the Wood Mountain Uplands. These place names acknowledge the other peoples who have relations with the same spaces, which is important in caretaking and sharing these places amongst many. Furthermore, surviving on the prairies necessitated common and close shared

⁶² PAS, Shepherd Papers, A289, File 24, John Lecaine Letters to Shepherd, “Wood Mtn. April 29. 1943.”

⁶³ Glenbow Archives, Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-147, Annotated Map by John Lecaine, Correspondence w John Okutesica re Sitting Bull & his winter camps, 1960-1962.

resources and ways of communicating about specific places between diverse peoples, something shared place names could help convey. Conveying the idea of shared places through shared names could have possibly helped in diplomatic relations between peoples. Moreover, shared place names may have helped to more quickly identify the specific physical landscapes and landmarks that may have been needed in discussions of trade, hunting, traveling, and natural events like weather and fire when communicating amongst many diverse people and languages was necessary.

Lakota place names that came from significant events or people that were part of their own oral traditions and histories also grew in number in each subsequent generation that lived in the Wood Mountain Uplands. These kinds of place names are particularly important for inscribing meaning and specific significance of the landscape of one's own community because they are much more personal and often have specific cultural contexts. Some examples of these are *Tháčheyáka Pahá*, Peppermint's Hill or Three Mile Butte, named so in Lakota because of a man named Peppermint who went to the top of that butte to *haŋbléčheya* (fast/ "vision quest").⁶⁴ It is called Three Mile Butte in English because it is three miles east from the old NWMP post at Wood Mountain. Other names like this include Stolen Black Horse Creek (McEachern Creek),⁶⁵ Arm Creek (Moose Jaw) because they found nothing but arm bones when they first went there,⁶⁶ and *Čhánĥe Čík'ala*, Little Wood Mountain or the place where the town of Rockglen, Saskatchewan is today that looks similar in landscape to the hills and trees of the old post area of Wood Mountain. This was also the site of the sixth winter camp in 1881.⁶⁷ All these names come

⁶⁴ John Lecaine to Wood Mountain Homemakers Club, "Peppermints Hill," n.d., Thelma Poirier personal collection.

⁶⁵ Glenbow Archives, Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-147, Annotated Map by John Lecaine 1-- Correspondence w John Okutesica re Sitting Bull & his winter camps, 1960-1962.

⁶⁶ Moose Jaw Public Library, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, Leith Knight "History of Wood Mountain Indians-supplied by George LeCaine, L.K. Oct. 69"

⁶⁷ Glenbow Archives, Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-147, Annotated Map by John Lecaine, Correspondence w John Okutesica re Sitting Bull & his winter camps, 1960-1962.

from Lakota people's own stories and perspectives of landscapes as they experienced these places. Some names, like Oíyoŋpeya Waŋkátuya (High Descend) which was the best crossing place on the Frenchman River but named for the steep descent down about a half a mile north of the ford,⁶⁸ are utilitarian, emerging from people's uses and experiences with those places and the names are useful mnemonics for returning to those areas. Even if the specific stories of certain names are not known anymore, we can image what those places may have represented through the names which served as mnemonic devices in Lakota everyday lived knowledge and now history.

Similarly, other Lakota place names have become firmly entrenched in historic events. For example, the winter camp locations that Lakota people made in the years immediately after the Battle of the Little Bighorn are embedded in Lakota history and memory in the Wood Mountain Uplands. The first winter camp site in 1876 near Val Marie is called Očhéthi Óta (Many Hearths), "named so because the fire-places of the Metis people remaining there where a short time before the Metis had a winter camp" which was actually south of the border but the Lakota camped on the north side of this place and therefore the north side of the border in Canada. Lecaine goes on to write that "General Miles (U.S.) ordered the Metis to move back into Canada and had all the adobe houses burned"⁶⁹ and just the many hearths/fireplaces were left standing.⁷⁰ The third winter camp place in 1878 was called Čhaŋ Kasótapi (Cleared Timber)⁷¹ because all the trees had been used up and cleared in that area in that winter.⁷²

⁶⁸ Ibid, Letter from John Okute-sica (Lecaine) to S.T. Wood, September 15, 1960.

⁶⁹ PAS, Everett Baker Papers, R561.30.n, Okute, John, Historical Notes, 1957-1962, "Sioux Historical Sites In Wood Mountain Country By John Okute (Lecaine)."

⁷⁰ Glenbow Archives, Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-147, Annotated Map by John Lecaine, Correspondence w John Okutesica re Sitting Bull & his winter camps, 1960-1962, Letter from John Lecaine to S.T. Wood, September 28, 1962.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² John Lecaine original letters, Thelma Poirier personal collection, "News," no date.

Ceremonial sites have important cultural, spiritual, and historical significance on the landscape to Wood Mountain Lakota people. *Wiwányaŋ Wačhípi Wakpála* (Sundance Creek), today known as Medicine Lodge Creek after the Lakota name no doubt, was the place the first and second sundances were held after 1877 by *Wiŋyaŋ Iglúš’aka* (Pregnant Woman) and *Waúŋžiča* (Bob Tail).⁷³ The third sundance site, known as “Long Horns Suicide,” is an important but complex community story. John Lecaine recorded this story briefly: “This young man [Long Horns] was shamed by his father when not knowing his son was asleep in the next teepee attempted to rape a step daughter.”⁷⁴ In another letter, Lecaine wrote that the girl ran to Long Horns for protection and “Long Horns was shamed so deeply by the father that he blowed his head off a few moments after the shameful event. From that day that ground was known as Long Horns Knoll.”⁷⁵ After this, the rest of the people in the camp held a sundance there. This sundance was probably held there as a cleansing and part of the healing process for the family and community. Some elders more recently have said that stories like these would not have been repeated. This might be the case, and sensitivity to these topics is always necessary. But this is not the only example of suicide in Lakota historical and cultural contexts. Lakota winter counts feature certain years remembered by suicide, and in present-day Nebraska, a butte well-known to Lakota people is named Lover’s Leap after a Lakota girl who took her life there following the death of her love. The songs the girl sung before her death have been turned into well-known love and sundance songs as well.⁷⁶ The cultural and historical views of suicide in Lakota society may be hard for us to grasp today, and we have to be careful not to color them with our present

⁷³ PAS, Everett Baker Papers, R561.30.n, Okute, John, Historical Notes, 1957-1962, “Sioux Historical Sites In Wood Mountain Country By John Okute (Lecaine).”

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ PAS, Shepherd Papers, A289, File 24, Letter from John Lecaine to George Shepherd, n.d.

⁷⁶ Personal communication with Corey Yellow Boy, June 18, 2021.

views. There may be something to learn about community and family healing in collective and ceremonial ways. Furthermore, difficult stories like these can remind us that the past is full of a broad range of human experience, no different than today, and to remind us to avoid romanticizing the past. In the past, just as now, people were sometimes bad relatives. Today Long Horns Knoll is known as Storey Lowell's after the homesteader who later lived there.⁷⁷

These examples are just a few of the Lakota places and names with historical, cultural, and familial importance to Lakota people in the past and today. Collectively they show a wide area that had many diverse uses, meanings, and relations for Lakota people. The landscape was inscribed, travelled, and understood as Lakhóta Thámákhoche within diverse experiences of hardship, healing, sustenance, and ceremony.

The Government's "Lakota problem"

The American and Canadian governments were concerned with where the "remnant" Lakota were residing after 1881. The Lakota at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain often fell between government categories and beyond Indian Affairs' reach. They were considered American Indians and refugees, and therefore ineligible for a reserve. Furthermore, there were too few Lakota people who were still very mobile after 1881 to have a full-time agent assigned to them. Indian agents from other reserves, such as the aforementioned Thomas Aspdin from the Assiniboine Agency in the 1890s, reported on the Lakota from time to time or when urgent situations necessitated. Thus, the Lakota sometimes slipped through the cracks of administration and surveillance by Indian Affairs in Canada, and this is how the Lakota people preferred it. Government officials on the other hand were often frustrated and still tried to keep up to date records of them, particularly on their numbers and whereabouts. Also, Indian Affairs officials on

⁷⁷ Personal communication with Thelma Poirier, July 9, 2018.

both sides of the border were aware of Lakota people's movements across the 49th parallel. For example, Indian Commissioner W.M. Graham later wrote in his book "These Indians [the Lakota at Wood Mountain] came into contact with other Indians in Canada but they continued to visit friends across the border quite often."⁷⁸ Government plans to curtail Lakota people's access to land and kin outside of their imposed nation-state boundaries was routine—sometimes successful, sometimes not.

The Lakota experience falls within the wider context of government surveillance and control of Indigenous people, particularly in the borderlands. The Canadian government purposefully removed Indigenous peoples from the immediate area along the border on the prairies in the 1870s and enforced this rigidly as they could throughout the 1880s and 1890s. Moreover, government officials were particularly anxious about Indigenous peoples who had strong and numerous connections on either side of the border, like the Lakota, Métis, Blackfoot, and Cree.⁷⁹ Comptroller Fred White of the NWMP requested in 1886 that statements be drawn up showing the movements of the Indians across the boundary line during the past season, both to and from the U.S. and Canada. White wanted to identify the different bands, the number of Indians and horses, the dates and places where they crossed the line, and where they returned to. He also wanted details about horse stealing that may have been going on. He thought it was important to include Indian Commissioner Dewdney in communications, who fully supported White's efforts, especially for details about permission given to Canadian Indians to cross to the

⁷⁸ William M. Graham, *Treaty Days: Reflections of an Indian Commissioner* (Glenbow Museum: Calgary, 1991), 32.

⁷⁹ Michel Hogue, "Disputing the Medicine Line: The Plains Cree and the Canadian-American Border, 1876-1885," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 52, no. 4 (Winter 2002), 2-17; Michel Hogue, "Between Race and Nation: The Creation of a Métis Borderland on the Northern Plains," in *Bridging National Borders in North America: Transnational and Comparative Histories*, edited by Benjamin H. Johnson and Andrew Graybill. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010), 59-87.

U.S.⁸⁰ White's request was sent to at least the Blood, Blackfoot, and Sarcee agencies/reserves in present-day southern Alberta (the Siksika, Kainai, and Tsuut'ina nations) and to the Oak Lake Sioux Reserve in southern Manitoba as the archival record shows Indian agents immediately replied from these places about "their Indians" movements across the border. There are other examples in Canadian Indian Affairs correspondence records of unease over Assiniboine/Nakota people traveling back and forth across the border as well.⁸¹ Anxieties over the movements of Indigenous people were high after the 1885 Northwest Resistance and this is when the pass system policy was implemented to keep First Nations people from leaving their reserves without permission.⁸² Therefore, the surveillance and reports White requested fall in line with the broader context of heightened government restrictions on the Canadian prairies for Indigenous people at that time.

Wood Mountain did not have an official Indian Agent, instead there were a number of "overseers" appointed to report annually and carry out duties for Indian Affairs. On at least two occasions, the Lakota people themselves asked for certain individuals to represent them to the Canadian government, the first being J.H. Thomson,⁸³ and after his death, J.H. Grayson a Moose Jaw land agent,⁸⁴ and although his appointment never happened, he did write on behalf of Lakota people at Moose Jaw occasionally. After Thomson died in 1923, Sičhánj/Čhaŋté Ohítika (Thigh/Brave Heart) wrote several times to Indian Affairs to ask for a new agent to be

⁸⁰ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. A, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1886-1889," Letter from Fred White to Commissioner of NWMP, November 11, 1886.

⁸¹ National Archives at Denver (NARA), 8NS-75-97-173, Letters from Agencies, 1878-1930, Box #17, David Laird to Ft Peck Agent letter, February 21, 1901.

⁸² F. Laurie Barron, "The Indian Pass System in the Canadian West, 1882-1935," *Prairie Forum*, Vol. 13, No. 1, (Spring 1988): 25-42.

⁸³ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, "Memo of Pow-Wow of Sioux Indians at Wood Mountain, July 8th, 1912."

⁸⁴ WMHS, Lee Soparlo Collection, RG3.SG4, Letter from J.H. Grayson to "my Indian friends at Wood Mountain," April 25, 1923.

appointed.⁸⁵ Thomas Aspdin also reported on the Lakota at Moose Jaw quite frequently prior to his death in 1906. Thomson and Aspdin had long-established kin relations within the Lakota community through their wives and children that could have influenced their views on their work as overseers. For example, sometimes when writing to the reserve residents to request something for another Lakota person or himself, Thomson switched to using his Lakota name, Tokalla (T̥hokh̥ála/Kit Fox),⁸⁶ which is more in line with a Lakota understanding of asking for help and using a different kinship term or name that denotes a closer relationship than what might typically be used.⁸⁷ Regardless of these men's kin connections however, they sometimes acted in self-interested and contradictory ways when it came to enforcing Indian policies and carrying out government orders.

It is not clear how much the pass system impacted Wood Mountain Lakota people because it is difficult to follow the archival remnants of the pass system as so much of the documentary evidence was destroyed in Canada⁸⁸ and the U.S. equivalent has not garnered much investigation yet. There is evidence of the Fort Peck Reservation enforcing a pass system, particularly as people travelled quite frequently between Fort Peck and Wood Mountain (to the Indian agent and superintendent's consternation). Some Lakota people wrote to the Fort Peck authorities to ask for extensions of their leave and passes while they were at Wood Mountain and

⁸⁵ WMHS, Lee Soparlo collection, RG3.SG4, Letter from Thigh, Indian Chief, to Department of Indian Affairs, 1923.

⁸⁶ WMHS, Lee Soparlo collection, RG3.SG4, Letter from J.H. Thomson to Thigh, July 29, and Letter from J.H. Thomson to "those who are to sell hay, friends," September 12, 1918.

⁸⁷ Personal communication with Corey Yellow Boy as Calvin Jumping Bull told him, August 27, 2021.

⁸⁸ Research done by filmmaker Alex Williams into the pass system uncovered a July 11, 1941 circulation by director of Indian Affairs Harold McGill ordering employees to return all pass/permit books and records to Ottawa in order to be destroyed, which explains the limited documentary records existing of this policy. For more information and research on this topic, see Alex Wilson's film *The Pass System* (2015) and Joanna Smith, "Documentary chases fragile trail of pass system that once controlled movement of First Nations" *Toronto Star*, April 9, 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/04/09/documentary-chases-fragile-trail-of-pass-system-that-once-controlled-movement-of-first-nations.html>.

others ignored these passes and were subsequently inquired after by those American authorities.⁸⁹ Lakota people who were enrolled at U.S. agencies seem to have been limited by the American pass system which sometimes included their movement to Wood Mountain.⁹⁰ And Lakota people from Wood Mountain who were not enrolled at U.S. reservations but wanted to visit them, likely would have need passes in order to be allowed there. Two unique letters written by J.H. Thomson in 1920 and 1922 may show this. The letters explain the trip that Čhaṅté Ohítika was going to make to Poplar, Montana from Wood Mountain and the 1922 letter was signed by Fort Peck Reservation Superintendent Eugene D. Mossman upon Čhaṅté Ohítika's arrival. This seems to indicate that the letters were intended for U.S. authorities, but it could be possible that they were drawn up in case the traveler was intercepted by Canadian authorities as well.⁹¹ These letters were in a personal collection, not a government archive, and that may be the reason they survive. It also appears they were never submitted back to Thomson or his superiors, suggesting they were not possibly written for the Canadian pass system policy at the time, and therefore never became part of a government record that was later destroyed. A 1919 letter from Fort Peck Superintendent Mossman regarding a Wood Mountain Lakota man, Núnpa Kikté/Kills

⁸⁹ For example, see National Archives at Denver (NARA), RG 75, 8NS-75-97-181, Box 52, A. Copies of Letters Sent, March 1917, Misc. Letters Sent, 1914-17, letter from Supervisor in Charge Ft. Peck Reservation Michael to J.H. Thomson, March 5, 1917 regarding granting an extension of Richard Benedict's pass from Fort Peck to be at Wood Mountain longer. And also see National Archives at Denver (NARA), RG 75, 8NS-75-97-181, Box 43, Misc. letters sent, 1914-17, Superintendent Lohmiller to J.H. Thomson, March 6, 1915 stating that Benedict needs to return to the Fort Peck Reservation when his pass expires because he has been away for too long.

⁹⁰ For examples, see Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, Misc. Lett Rec'd, 1911, Box #67, 8NS-75-97-183, Letter from Edward Gray Bear and Archie Red Elk at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan to Superintendent Lohmiller at Fort Peck, September 27, 1911 requesting an extension to their pass from the agency to continue working threshing at Moose Jaw; Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box #17, Letters from Agencies, 1878-1930, 1919-1921 Wood Mtn Stock Ranch folder, Letter from Superintendent Mossman to Indian agent at Carlyle/Moose Mountain, November 20, 1919 regarding a man named Cloud who left to go to Canada without a pass; and Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-171, Box #10, Letters Received from the Commissioner of BIA, 1877-1888, Letter from Commissioner J.D.C. Atkins to Indian Agent Edwin C. Fields clarifying the pass requirements for an Assiniboine man named Big Robe.

⁹¹ Wood Mountain Historical Society (WMHS), Lee Soparlo Collection, RG3.SG4, Letter from J.H. Thomson to To Whom it May Concern, June 3, 1920 and June 19, 1922.

Two/Big Joe Ferguson, illustrates that Indian Affairs officials in the U.S. were concerned about Lakota people traveling from north of the border: “The only thing that we ask is that he does not come over here as we do not like to have visiting Indians.”⁹² This seems indicative of an administration that would want passes to be shown upon arrival. Other letters from the time that are not passes show that Lakota people were still traveling to and from Fort Peck, but it is difficult to tell whether Mossman and other authorities knew about their movements or not.

Other evidence shows that permits were also being required in order to sell products from the reserve. The permit and pass system policies worked together worked together to restrict First Nations people on reserves from traveling or participating in local markets freely, though only the permit system was included in the Indian Act after 1885 and the pass system was never law.⁹³ Addressed to the reserve residents, J.H. Thomson wrote in 1918 that hay cut to be sold would need to have a permit by government order, stating “I will give permits to all who want them.”⁹⁴ Two later letters by overseer G.T. Brown seem to be more restrictive: a 1925 letter advised Čhaŋté Ohítika that an ox could be killed to feed the destitute (five people) and a 1926 letter granted permission to Tǎšúŋke Ópi (Alex/Alec Wounded Horse) to cut wood, but only enough “to tide you over for spring work.”⁹⁵ Regardless of Lakota people’s “status” in Canada, they were still subjected to varying degrees of government control and Indian policies by these overseers. After the creation of the reserve, enforcement of Indian policies definitely increased over Lakota people as can be seen from this fragmented record trail.

⁹² Denver NARA, RG 75, 8NS-75-97-173, Box #17, Letters from Agencies, 1878-1930, 1919-1921 Wood Mtn Stock Ranch folder, Letter from Fort Peck Superintendent Mossman to Arthur Gore, November 19, 1919.

⁹³ Sarah Carter, *Aboriginal People and Colonizers of Western Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 163.

⁹⁴ WMHS, Lee Soparlo Collection, RG3.SG4, Letter from J.H. Thomson to the Indians on Reserve, September 12, 1918.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Letter from G.T. Brown to Thigh, Indian Chief, February 20, 1925, and Letter from G.T. Brown to Alex Wounded Horse, February 11, 1926.

Historian Brian Hubner made a compelling argument that ties together Indigenous movement across the international border, the centrality of horses, and resistance as well as the NWMP and Indian Affairs crackdown on these aspects of Indigenous life in the 1880s and 1890s. He argued: “Horse stealing across the border was given special emphasis by the police [NWMP] because it most clearly symbolized the Indian's free nomadic lifestyle, and eliminating it was the most obvious way to reduce their autonomy and control of their lives.”⁹⁶ He provides many examples of Assiniboine (Nakota), Blood (Kainai), Piegan (Piikani), and Cree (Nêhiyawak) people crossing the border in this period, especially to hunt and raid for horses. The border acted as a shield for other Indigenous people from the 1870s to 1890s, sometimes from American reach and sometimes from Canadian, and this was not only a Lakota method of resistance. Similarly, Amanda Nettelbeck and Russell Smandych showed that despite enduring narratives about “the relatively benign operation of law and order, mounted police forces were actively required to ensure the submission of Indigenous peoples to colonial rule. In both Australia and Canada, we argue, the responsibility of colonial mounted police to extend the protection of the law to Indigenous peoples was compromised by their requirement to ensure the negation of Indigenous sovereignty, and to implement effective policies of containment and surveillance.”⁹⁷ NWMP and Indian Affairs actively wanted to confine Indigenous people and movement was the basis for continued Indigenous sovereignty and resistance, especially across the international border. Movement is a key part of Lakota resistance and ties to kin and place, and Indian Affairs and police/military officials on both sides of the border knew this.

⁹⁶ Brian Hubner, “Horse Stealing and the Borderline: The NWMP and the Control of Indian Movement, 1874-1900,” *Prairie Forum* Vol. 20, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 283.

⁹⁷ Amanda Nettelbeck and Russell Smandych, “Policing Indigenous Peoples on Two Colonial Frontiers: Australia’s Mounted Police and Canada’s North-West Mounted Police,” *The Australia and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (2010): 357.

For the Lakota people at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw, there was another factor that played into their desire to stay in southern Saskatchewan: suspicion and fear that they would be punished for their involvement in the Battle of the Little Bighorn and later in the 1890s, that they would be subject to violence like the murder of Chief Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre. Chapter four will explore how these 1890 events impacted Lakota people in present-day Saskatchewan in more depth, but these events only helped to further entrench Lakota peoples' connection to southern Saskatchewan and their desire to stay there. Many Lakota people thought that they would be punished for their direct involvement in the Battle of the Little Bighorn since many of them in Saskatchewan were present at the battle.

A January 1887 report outlined Lakota hesitancy and distrust well. John Taylor, an employee of the Department of Indian Affairs, was asked by Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney to visit several reserves and settlements and report back, including the Lakota at Moose Jaw. Taylor reported that he tried to get a list of names of the Lakota, but that they were very suspicious of him because they were involved in the Little Bighorn and they were afraid he would inform the U.S. government about them.⁹⁸ Later in January of 1895, Aspdin related that the Lakota had a scarcity of work and supplies: "I think the fact that some of them stayed out on the prairie later than usual has also something to do with it. They feared it was the intention of the Government to put them forcibly across the line and so kept out of the way."⁹⁹ This clearly shows that the Lakota were wary of governments trying to send them anywhere and punish them, even eleven years after the Little Bighorn.

⁹⁸ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. A, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1886-1889," Letter from John Taylor to Indian Commissioner, January 18, 1887.

⁹⁹Ibid., Letter from Aspdin, January 14, 1895.

Lakota people were rightly cautious and defensive when governments sent men to inquire or interfere in their lives: memories of American government and military harshness and the ongoing Canadian government's efforts to remove them to the U.S. made some families resist even more. One such case in 1890 left a bitter impression: three families, among them Čhanté Ohítika, were persuaded to go to the Standing Rock Agency in South Dakota,¹⁰⁰ and on their way they were intercepted by American authorities and held in custody at Fort Berthold instead. When Lakota people in Canada heard of this, many families more firmly decided not to return because they did not want to become prisoners.¹⁰¹

Numerous times the NWMP and Indian Affairs escorted Lakota individuals and families back into to the U.S., only to have those people return back to Wood Mountain within a few months. More examples of these cases will be discussed in following chapters as well. This was not confined to Lakota experiences or the Canadian side of the line. Historians Tyla Betke and Michel Hogue examined the same kind of experiences faced by the Cree, but in the U.S. The American government labelled some Cree people as "Canadian" after many fled south after the 1885 Northwest Resistance. The American military tried to separate those they thought were "Canadian Indians" and force them back across the line, but when force did not work, they used indirect strategies to prevent kin from joining each other.¹⁰² Similarly, Lakota or Cree people's vague and cloudy "status" category in the U.S. or Canada helped enable removal from either settler state to the other. But Betke shows that even when some Cree were removed from the

¹⁰⁰ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3652, File 85589, Pt 2, Letter from Hayter Reed to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, August 28, 1890.

¹⁰¹ Thelma Poirier, Grasslands National Park report, "Lakota in Canada, 1881-1911," March 13, 2014, page 13.

¹⁰² Michel Hogue, "Crossing the Line: Race, Nationality, and the Deportation of the 'Canadian' Crees in the Canada-U.S. Borderlands, 1890-1900," in *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-ninth Parallel*, edited by Sterling Evans (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 160-161.

U.S., a lack of border control meant some Cree could easily return south again.¹⁰³ Many Lakota people did the same in the opposite direction in the 1890s.

Indian Affairs even changed their tactics in 1895 and told Aspdin that they would pay him \$3.00 for each Lakota person he convinced to settle on a reserve at Prince Albert (in present-day central Saskatchewan) or Birtle (in present-day southern Manitoba).¹⁰⁴ He was also paid an additional \$8.00 for each person that he “removed to the U.S. Territory within the next 12 months”--half to be paid upon proof of the people crossing the border and the rest to be paid after one year, “provided that the Indian has not returned.”¹⁰⁵ Clearly there was a well-established pattern of Lakota people returning to Canada that Indian Affairs was aware of and wanted to end. There were many Lakota people who preferred to be in Saskatchewan, and maybe some who went temporarily to the U.S. did so to visit relatives when the pressure from authorities heightened in Canada. Okhúte Šíča, is a good example of this: he left Canada in 1890, was back again in Saskatchewan, and then returned to the U.S with other Lakota families in May of 1894, but was back yet again in southern Saskatchewan by the fall 1894.¹⁰⁶ Okhúte Šíča stayed in Canada eventually to raise his children at Wood Mountain, one of which is the aforementioned John Lecaine. This cross-border mobility was a fundamental way of making Wood Mountain part of Lakhóta Thámákhoche, through the extended kin and movement networks that had been functioning in Lakota societies for generations.

Refusing Assistance and Resisting Interference

¹⁰³ Tyla Betke, “Cree (Nēhiyawak) Mobility, Diplomacy, and Resistance in The Canada-U.S Borderlands, 1885-1917,” MA thesis, Department of History, University of Saskatchewan, 2019, 28.

¹⁰⁴ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, Letter from Hayter Reed to A.E. Forget, December 30, 1895.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., A.E. Forget to Hayter Reed, December 21, 1895.

¹⁰⁶ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, Letter from Aspdin to Forget, October 15, 1896.

Before 1910, Lakota people at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw resisted efforts to move them to reserves or reservations and they opposed being given assistance, which they saw as the government's attempt to make them dependent. The Lakota in southern Saskatchewan were sometimes considered the "holdouts" who were the most fiercely attached to independence and self-determination or at the very least, the Lakota who were trying to continue their own lifeways, therefore they were sometimes considered the most "troublesome" or "hostile," particularly to the American government.¹⁰⁷ When considering their strong opposition to receiving assistance or being enticed or forced to move anywhere they did not want to be, this may be true.

Sioux Interpreter W.E.A. LeQuesne¹⁰⁸ in February of 1887 reported that the Lakota were living at Moose Jaw, moving between there and Wood Mountain, hunting and working. Others reported that they were destitute, but LeQuesne reported that they were not and did not want government handouts, but wanted to be left alone to work instead. The Lakota told him that 500 head of cattle died at Wood Mountain in a snow storm of January 28th and 29th; this winter was an especially difficult one on the prairies and was known as the Big Die Up because of the huge number of livestock that died in the blizzards. In his letter, LeQuesne included a "rough census" of the "Sioux Camp South of Moose Jaw" which equaled 104 people. One of the most interesting parts of his letter that illustrates the Lakota resistance is as follows:

The Indians also told me that an Interpreter from Regina and the mayor of Moose Jaw visited them a short time previous to my arrival, and had offered to them some supplies,

¹⁰⁷ Personal communication with Ron Papandrea and Thelma Poirier, July 2018.

¹⁰⁸ W.E.A. or William Edward Archibald LeQuesne also went by the surname Le Cain. This is the same man T̄hašúŋke Nún̄pawīŋ/Her Two Horses/Emma Loves War-Lecaine was in a relationship with and had one daughter with, and where the Lecaine surname comes from for the Wood Mountain Lakota family. LeQuesne/Le Cain was a NWMP constable (regimental number 359) and later reengaged with the NWMP during the North West Resistance in 1885 as an interpreter and scout. By 1896 he was living in Cleveland, Ohio and later Cedar Rapids, Iowa with a different wife. It is unclear if in 1887 T̄hašúŋke Nún̄pawīŋ and LeQuesne were still together, but possibly by 1890 T̄hašúŋke Nún̄pawīŋ had married again, to a Lakota man, Okhúte Šíča. See chapters two and three for more about T̄hašúŋke Nún̄pawīŋ, Okhúte Šíča, and these relationships.

provisions, tents, etc. but they did not exactly understand where the goods were coming from, and some had an idea that they were from the American Government, and did not want to take anything, but stated that if they could see me, they would understand better and then be able to decide what to do. I explained very explicitly which government was offering them the supplies etc., when they replied that they believed it was the Canadian Government now that I told them so, but still persisted in refusing to take or ask for anything; and stated that they liked to be at Moose Jaw as they liked the people, and there is good hunting between there and Wood Mountain most of the year. They make a very good living, cutting wood, washing, scrubbing, and making and selling curiosities, etc., and would sooner make their living that way than take goods from the Government for nothing. They do not want the Government to think ill of their refusing to take or ask for anything as they think they have acted right.¹⁰⁹

LeQuésne was not the only one who noted the Lakota resistance to government interference and aid. Inspector C. Constantine of the NWMP reported in 1892:

It would be advisable to get them a Reserve if possible, but they do not like the idea of restraint either on the part of individuals or [o]f the Government... Three summers ago a complaint was made about the ponies doing damage to the settlers crops – It was reported on and the Indian Commissioner offered them rations to have and take their ponies to the hills. They took their ponies out but refused the rations, saying if we accept them we put ourselves in the power of the Government, the same as treaty Indians...¹¹⁰

The Lakota were keenly aware of the conditions and treatment treaty First Nations people on both sides of the border were enduring, and they resisted being put in that same position. These people had seen firsthand from two different governments within Lakḥóta Tḥamákḥoče how treaties and lands were dealt with and knew how to stay self-supporting and independent without forfeiting their relationships to their lands and relatives. However, this does not mean that the Lakota people at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain were insular, trying to live isolated and “non-progressive” lives or were bitter towards government men or settlers. Instead, they had lasting and important relationships amongst themselves and with settlers, took on new opportunities, and

¹⁰⁹ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3652, File 8589 Pt. 2, no. 36985, Microfilm C10114, Sioux Interpreter W.E.A. LeQuésne to Asst Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 4, 1887.

¹¹⁰ LAC, RG 18, RCMP, Series A-1, Vol. 84, File: 465-93, Letter from Inspector C. Constantine to the Officer Commanding NWMP, July 23, 1892

innovated new livelihoods for themselves, but they did so within a Lakota framework of good relations that did not impede on their lands, independence, and lifeways.

Reserve Creation

Local Wood Mountain historian Thelma Poirier wrote, “The years from 1881 to 1911 were marked by the determination of the Lakota to remain an independent people, answerable to Canadian law, but not governed by Canadian systems, institutions or treaties. For their determination, many of them suffered great hardships. As a last resort they agreed to live on a reserve near Wood Mountain.”¹¹¹ Though the Lakota maintained their independence, dynamics started to shift as settlement increased. Tensions between settlers outside of Moose Jaw and the Lakota were growing, while other residents in the town benefited from the Lakota people who worked for them and wanted to see them stay. A discussion of these relations and tensions will be taken up more fully in chapter four, and for now the focus will be on the events and reactions leading directly to the creation of the reserve at Wood Mountain.

The Canadian government was eager to have all the Lakota removed from north of the border, and as early as 1883 the Privy Council issued a report to call for communication with the U.S. government on the matter, and stated that there were 600 Lakota people left in Canada since Sitting Bull with about fifty lodges had left two years earlier.¹¹² That matter seems to have been put on hold for some time, but was picked up again by the Privy Council in 1885. Following the North West Resistance in 1885, in which a few Lakota people fought with Métis forces, Canadian government authorities had renewed zeal in efforts to remove the Lakota from north of the border and in controlling (and punishing) Indigenous people more generally. At this time,

¹¹¹ Thelma Poirier, “Lakota in Canada 1881-1911,” Grasslands National Park report, March 13, 2014, 2.

¹¹² LAC, RG 10, Volume 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114 Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1884-1944, “Certified Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honorable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council on the 4th December, 1883.”

judging by the amount of correspondence surrounding their presence in Canada the Lakota people seemed to garner the most government attention since Sitting Bull had left, as anxieties around Canadian settlement of the West and surveillance of Indigenous peoples increased after the North West Resistance. Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney in particular was not happy with having the Lakota in Canada and wrote in August of 1885:

Many of those being allowed to remain quietly in the country for some years since the Custer fight have joined the rebels during the late rebellion and were the most active in committing depredations in the district of Prince Albert...I would recommend that negotiations be opened with the United States authorities with a view to their removal into the States. They have lost any claim to sympathy from us and if it is not thought advisable to communicate with the American authorities I think their horses and arms should be taken from them and themselves taken across the line by the Police with a notification that if they are found upon this side they will be shot. I have reason to believe that if protection is assured them by the American Government they would go quietly back to their friends.¹¹³

It is an exaggeration to say that many had joined the Métis during the resistance, in reality only four men actually had (see chapter two for more on this). However, his words show that without direct American communication and action, Canadian efforts to remove the Lakota stalled. And no one seemed anxious to start an international incident, even with fiery opinions in the Department of Indian Affairs like Dewdney's. The situation reached an impasse.

In 1886, a petition was signed by sixty-eight Moose Jaw residents asking to have a reserve created nearby for the Lakota. In the 1880s, this was not at all what government authorities had in mind. Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, L. Vankoughnet wrote to Sir John A. Macdonald in November of 1886, enclosing a copy of the petition and strongly

¹¹³ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1884-1944, E. Dewdney, Commissioner of Indian Affairs to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, August 3, 1885.

suggesting "that it would be a bad precedent to establish were a reserve allotted to any foreign Indians on Canadian soil."¹¹⁴ The reserve idea was dismissed and put off until the next decade.

In 1890, it seemed unlikely that too many more Lakota people were going to return to the U.S. Assistant Indian Commissioner A.E. Forget suggested that "If their return across the line cannot be obtained, I think it would be a wise policy to deal with them as the Sioux of White Cap and Standing Buffalo have been dealt with."¹¹⁵ The Dakota were dealt with by "granting" small reserves in what would become Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan, but the government refused to enter into treaty with them on the basis that they were "refugees" from the U.S.—the same argument used to deny the Lakota. The direction was shifting to settling the Lakota on a reserve if none could be induced to go to reservations in the U.S. and both the NWMP and Indian Affairs officials were keen to see something be done.

Echoing the same concerns, in 1892 Superintendent of the NWMP, A.B. Perry wrote asking the Commissioner of the NWMP: "Are they to be allowed to become permanent residents, or are they to be induced or forced to return to the United States? They are not desirable residents for they are not a source of wealth, but quite the contrary. They are no-mads [sic] free to wander over the Country, killing what little game remains. They will not settle down on a reserve, even if the Government were willing to place them on one. The children are growing up as their fathers, without chance of education or means of earning a living."¹¹⁶ Later in the same year, Perry commented in his annual report that "No attempt has been made to place them under control, or confine them on a reserve, and it is probable that if such an attempt were

¹¹⁴ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1884-1944, L. Vankoughnet to Sir John A. Macdonald, November 23, 1886.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., Asst Commissioner Forget to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, June 17, 1890 and Commissioner Hayter Reed to Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, June 19, 1890.

¹¹⁶ LAC, RG 18, RCMP, Series A-1, Vol. 84, File: 465-93, "Sioux Indians Belonging to US, living at Moosejaw and Wood Mountain," (I-49708), August 8, 1892 letter to the Commissioner of the NWMP from Supt. A.B. Perry.

made they would exhibit considerable impatience, and would be difficult to manage.”¹¹⁷ Though Perry was at the forefront of trying to incite government action to settle the Lakota, he was clearly aware of their resistance. The Lakota made it clear to government and police authorities that they would not be treated like other First Nations people had been and would not tolerate being controlled or confined. Lakota suspicion towards government men when they came to their camps, rejection of any supplies, goods, or assistance, and refusal to even report how many were in their camps to authorities, makes their stance clear. The only government employees they conversed with more openly were those that have kinship connections within their community, such as Thomas Aspdin (whose wife was Mary Black Moon-Aspdin) and W.E.A. LeQuerne (whose wife was *Thašúnke Nún̄pawin*/Emma Loves War-Lecaine).

At first efforts were made by Indian Affairs to try to persuade the Lakota to go to already established Dakota reserves, particularly Standing Buffalo and Wahpeton, and although some Lakota people visited these places, they did not want to settle there permanently. In April of 1895 Aspdin wrote about trying to get the Lakota to go to a reserve near Prince Albert:

You may remember that I replied that I would talk it over [with the Lakota] during the winter as it was a question they could not answer offhand nor could I see them all at once owing to the camp being divided up so - some at Wood Mountain, Willow Bunch, Old Wives Creek and this place [Moose Jaw]. Whilst not unwilling to take the opportunity- if receiving help from this Department and some of the younger generation particularly would like to advance themselves and children yet they do not care to go as far north as Prince Albert. They seem wedded to this part of the country including the Wood Mountain district to here and they very rarely go much north of this place. I feel certain of some more going across the line although probably no great number. The old men are not so adverse to going across as the generation who have grown up on this side.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ 1893 Sessional Papers (No. 15) NWMP, Appendix D, Annual Report of Superintendent A.B. Perry, Together with those of Inspectors J.A. McGibbon, J.O. Wilson, C. Constantine, D.H. MacPherson, and A.C. Macdonell, "Sioux Indians," NWMP 'B' Division, Regina, 30th Dec, 1892, p 50.

¹¹⁸ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from Aspdin, April 10, 1895.

Aspdin's letter shows that the Lakota people who had grown up in the Wood Mountain Uplands and Moose Jaw area were particularly adamant about staying north of the border, presumably and understandably because for them this was Lakhóta Thámákhoche and their home.

In 1896 Indian Commissioner A.E. Forget wrote to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in Ottawa asking how the department felt about "taking advantage of the situation to remove the children of these Indians [the Lakota specifically at Moose Jaw] from demoralizing and vicious surroundings by placing them in the Industrial Schools." He continued: "It may now I think be taken for granted that no more of these Indians will go back to United States Territory or, if they were persuaded to do so, that they would shortly return, as some have already done. In view of the almost certainty of this and the fact that we are quite unable without special legislation, to either deport them or keep them out, it would seem useless to pursue efforts in this direction any further." He thought another hard winter would bring the Lakota to accepting land in existing Dakota reserves but giving them assistance in the meantime would be acceptable as long as authorities could get their consent to place their children in industrial schools right away. Forget wrote that if their consent could not be gained that "Section 9 of the Indian Education Act against non-treaty and practically alien Indians, compell [sic] attendance where necessary."¹¹⁹ The matter of schooling children was tied to the matter of land for Lakota people in the government officials' view. Some Lakota people at Moose Jaw become more willing to accept a reserve after many bouts of illnesses, including smallpox and tuberculosis, and especially after their children were taken to industrial/residential schools. Government discussions of Lakota land and settlement were also closely bound up with issues of Lakota children, not a surprising

¹¹⁹ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Forget to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, November 11, 1896.

revelation because it is well documented now how the engine of settler colonialism fed on the removal of Indigenous ties and relations, to their lands and children.

By the mid 1890s, it seemed Lakota people were less averse to getting a reserve and Indian Affairs started to consider this as an option, but they were aware that it would have to be where the Lakota wanted it for them to actually settle there. For example, Forget wrote in May 1895: "They appear to be desirous of settling on a Reserve, but desire that it should be in the vicinity of Moose Jaw or in the Wood Mountain country."¹²⁰ Aspdin was employed to help start discussions more concretely about a reserve, and he suggested getting J.H. Thomson as interpreter because he could read and write the language in all its dialects and he was employed with the NWMP at Wood Mountain.¹²¹ This was the first real step taken by the government to recognize a Lakota need, if not a claim to land in present-day Saskatchewan and to act towards a reserve in the Wood Mountain area as a possibility. Forget later stated that a reserve at Wood Mountain would be the best because they wanted to settle in a familiar place even though he was aware of the objection to placing First Nations close to the border, but he thought "these people are likely to become industrious farmers and cattle-raisers..."¹²²

The matter seemed to drop for more than a decade. In 1909 a Presbyterian minister, Reverend A.D. Pringle from the town of Limerick (north of Wood Mountain), started advocating for the Lakota to have land set aside for them at Wood Mountain so they could homestead. He suggested they should have thirty-six sections of land as soon as possible because they were industrious and self-supporting.¹²³ In his view: "A cruel injustice will be committed if these poor

¹²⁰ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3652, File 8589 Pt. 2, no. 128138, Microfilm C10114, Asst Commissioner of Indian Affairs A.E. Forget to Supt General of Indian Affairs Hayter Reed, May 29, 1895.

¹²¹ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Aspdin Letter, October 25, 1895.

¹²² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3652, File 8589 Pt. 2, no. 133799, Microfilm C10114, A.E. Forget (Asst Commissioner of Indian Affairs) to Hayter Reed (Supt Gen of Indian Affairs), November 2, 1895.

¹²³ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, no. 345553, Reel C12061, A.D. Pringle to David Laird, June 27, 1909.

Indians are turned out of house and home and become vagrants through not being allowed to become land-owners."¹²⁴ Through numerous letters between 1909 and 1910, Pringle emphasized that the Lakota did not want a reserve and would not live on one, but instead he insisted that they wanted homesteads and so asked if there was some way for them to become citizens.¹²⁵ He reasoned: "these Indians would hardly submit to the regular disciplines of a Reservation..."¹²⁶ and that all Lakota, including those who are mixed with white, should have land because they are more Indian than white,¹²⁷ so in his view, homesteading rather than a reserve was the best solution. Though one did not need to be a citizen to acquire a homestead, property ownership and citizenship were closely tied for Indians in Canada because they could not legally own property without enfranchising—the giving up of Indian status (whether voluntarily or involuntarily) in order to gain voting rights but also to “abandon Indigenous identity and communal society (with its artificial legal disabilities) in order to merge with the ‘free,’ individualistic and non-Aboriginal majority.”¹²⁸ Although Pringle visited the Lakota, their actual own views on the matter are not clear from the documentary record.

Homesteading in Canada and the U.S. meant a person could file for a free grant of 160 acres of land from the federal government, and, after paying a small filing fee, relocate to that quarter in order to “prove it up” by cultivating, “improving,” and residing there, after which legal ownership would be granted.¹²⁹ In Canada, the 1872 Dominion Lands Act set the homesteading

¹²⁴ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, no. 349382, Reel C12061, Reverend Pringle to the Minister of the Interior August 27, 1909.

¹²⁵ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, no. 354073, Reel C12061, Reverend Pringle to the Sec. of Department of Indian Affairs, November 23, 1909.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, March 26, 1910.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, April 25, 1910.

¹²⁸ Bennett McCardle, “Enfranchisement,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, edited September 25, 2014, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/enfranchisement>, accessed February 1, 2021.

¹²⁹ Sarah Carter, *Imperial Plots: Women, Land, and the Spadework of British Colonialism on the Canadian Prairies* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016), xx.

process in motion and it closely resembled the U.S. 1862 Homestead Act.¹³⁰ However, homesteading differed on either side of the border in some key ways, especially as it applied to women, which will be discussed in chapter three. In Canada, the *Indian Act* outright prohibited Indian people from homesteading: “No Indian or non-treaty Indian...shall be capable of having acquired or acquiring a homestead or pre-emption right to a quarter section or any portion of land in any surveyed or unsurveyed lands...”¹³¹ A few Lakota men did homestead, which will be examined more later in this chapter and again in chapter five, because they either enfranchised (gave up their Indian status) or they were not considered status Indians to begin with. Therefore, Pringle’s attempt to have the Lakota homestead was not the most desirable solution for the Canadian government because it would be in opposition to established practice of restricting First Nations people from homesteading and private land ownership.

Canadian government authorities wanted to have the issue of a reserve for the Lakota settled. In 1909, Indian Commissioner David Laird wrote that if the Lakota would settle at Wood Mountain then a reserve should be made there as Reverend Pringle suggested: “Though the proposed reserve is nearer the boundary than is desirable, yet it is so very important that these straggling Sioux should be settled, that I am of the opinion that the Wood Mountain location, if acceptable to the Indians, should be granted to them, especially as there is a detachment of the R.N.W.M. Police stationed there.”¹³² Most authorities found Pringle’s suggested acreage much too large, and Chief Surveyor S. Bray suggested a reserve of 160 acres per each family of five should be allotted, since this was the smallest amount under the treaties. Bray stated they should

¹³⁰ U.S. National Archives, “The Homestead Act of 1862,” <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/homestead-act>, accessed September 5, 2019.

¹³¹ *An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws Respecting Indians*, (also known as the *Indian Act*), S.C. 1876, Chapter 18, Section 70.

¹³² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, No. 350034, Reel C12061, David Laird (Indian Commissioner) to D.C. Scott July 7, 1909.

be given land because they were good citizens and self-supporting and it is only because they are Indians that they are not allowed to homestead.¹³³ In comparison, Dakota reserves were surveyed and established on the basis of 80 acres per family of five, after protest from Dakota people when 40 acres per family was initially suggested by the government, and the reserves established under the Numbered Treaties ranged between 160 and 640 acres per family of five.¹³⁴

Finally, a temporary reserve was created for the Lakota at Wood Mountain in 1910. J.D. McLean (Assistant Deputy and Secretary of Indian Affairs) reported to Pringle in the spring of 1910 that Township 4, Range 4, West of the 3rd had been temporarily reserved for the Lakota (removed from homesteading) and that the issue of Lakota people being able to homestead would be decided later.¹³⁵ There was still some question though about how much land should be reserved. Agencies Inspector W.M. Graham wrote in 1910 after visiting Wood Mountain that: “While I think it is a wise idea to set aside a tract of land as a reserve for these people before it is all taken up, still I am of the opinion that it will be a long time before they will decide to settle down on a reserve, and I think it would be unwise to force them to do so, as they are in demand as workers.” He went on to report that many of the people at Wood Mountain thought the whole township was to be set aside and “would no doubt be used as pasturage by the Ranchers, as there will be no resident Indians to speak of on the land for a number of years. I should not be in the least surprised to hear of requests being made by outsiders to set the whole township aside for the Indians, as I have been told that the whole townships should be reserved. As the land in the Township is hilly (excellent pasture).”¹³⁶

¹³³ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, S. Bray to Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, September 27, 1909.

¹³⁴ Elias, *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest*, 209; and Government of Canada, “The Numbered Treaties (1871-1921),” May 13, 2020, <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1360948213124/1544620003549>

¹³⁵ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, J.D. McLean to Rev. A.D. Pringle, March 8, 1910.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 368206, W.M. Graham, Inspector of Indian Agencies, to Secretary of Department of Indian Affairs, July 12, 1910.

Discussions about how large or small the temporary reserve should be carried on for years, and the Lakota people did not settle on it permanently like Indian Affairs officials wanted, but knew would be the case. Inspector of Indian Agencies, W.M. Graham wrote in his 1910 report: "I am of the opinion that it might be well to give these Indians a little more per head than was granted the Indians in Treaty four, and would say that the 73 Indians should have about 150 acres per head which would mean the north half of the township, less a quarter in section 27 (N.E. ¼) which is homesteaded and three quarters in section 26 which belong to the Hudson Bay Company...I am of the opinion that it is unnecessary to set aside a larger area of land and would advise that the Department of the Interior be informed that the south half of the Township is not required."¹³⁷ McLean suggested in 1911 that twenty acres per head of family would be sufficient¹³⁸ but Graham thought this was too small and the Lakota would starve.¹³⁹ Graham at this time was leading the operation of the experimental Indian farm, the File Hills Colony in southeastern Saskatchewan, which was being heralded as a huge success. Therefore, Graham was considered by Indian Affairs officials to be an expert in Indian agriculture and settlement. In 1911, Graham was sent to report on the settling of the reserve at Wood Mountain, but on his way, he learned that nearly all of the Lakota families were away from the reserve and working in the vicinity of Moose Jaw for white farmers. Instead he met with some of them at Moose Jaw and learned that eight or nine log houses had been started at the reserve (three of which were completed) and half of the Indians would reside at the reserve that winter (1911-1912), more than Graham expected. He said they all intended on residing on the reserve the next winter and

¹³⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, No. 368206, W.M. Graham, Inspector of Indian Agencies, to Secretary of Department of Indian Affairs, July 12, 1910.

¹³⁸ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, J.D. McLean (Asst. Deputy and Secretary of Indian Affairs) to Wm. Graham (Inspector of Indian Agencies), August 29, 1911.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 8589/2, W.M. Graham to the Sec. of the Department of Indian Affairs, November 1, 1911.

they claimed they all would have been living there now if they had been able to get a supply of provisions. Graham also reported they were anxious to discuss taking over the reserve and “certain school matters.”¹⁴⁰

From 1912 onward, Lakota people at Wood Mountain started writing and dictating letters to voice their own concerns to Indian Affairs directly regarding land and their community. On July 9, 1912, some Lakota people who had started settling on the reserve met to discuss and direct their concerns to the government. Their perspectives were recorded and sent to Indian Affairs. The memo from their meeting recorded Wounded Horse (T̥šašún̄ke Ópi), William Bocas (Anún̄k̥hasaŋ Mathó/Bear with Grey on Both Sides), Thigh (Sičhán̄, also known as Čhaŋt́é Ohítika/Brave Heart which will be used here forward), Big Joe (who took the surname Ferguson but had the Lakota name Nún̄pa Kikté/Kills Two), Okute (Okhúte Šíča/Hard to Shoot), Big Jim (Šiyáka/Eared Grebe or Maštín̄ča/Rabbit), Good Track (Oyé Wašt́é), and Maple (Čhaŋhásaŋ) speaking on issues such as establishing a school on the reserve, keeping the whole township as reserve land, acquiring farm machinery and stock, and appointing "Mr. Thompson" (J.H. Thomson) to act as clerk or acting agent.¹⁴¹ Other than having Thomson act as their clerk or agent to the government, their other concerns were not met. This document serves to show a change in Lakota people's positions regarding settling on the reserve and important discussions regarding their needs going forward. This does not mean they submitted to government demands however, and many people continued living both on and off the reserve in seasonal cycles.

The issue of schooling and education for children was the topic most frequently brought up in this 1912 meeting. On the matter William (Billy) Bocas (Anún̄k̥hasaŋ Mathó/Bear with

¹⁴⁰ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, No. 8589/2, W.M. Graham to the Sec. of the Department of Indian Affairs, November 1, 1911.

¹⁴¹ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, "Memo of Pow-Wow of Sioux Indians at Wood Mountain, July 8th, 1912"

Grey on Both Sides) started off by saying: “thirteen years ago the question of sending their children to Boarding Schools was talked over with them and they at that time approved of it and let some of their children go but in that they were unfortunate as many of those children are not now alive. He was glad at that time to send his children because then they had no Reserve and were just wanderers...now that they have their land and can have homes for their families he wants a School built on the Reserve and he will guarantee that the children will attend.”¹⁴²

Čhaŋté Ohítika, also echoed the same matter: “Also he sent children to school 13 years ago and now there are no children left living, he wants a Day School built on the Reserve.”¹⁴³ Nún̄pa

Kikté drew on his observations from surrounding communities:

He had lived for years himself at Moose Jaw and worked among the white people and his conclusion was that Indian children must have education in order to make their way in life. He wants a Day School built on the Reserve, not a big spending of money but any kind of School that would hold 20 or 30 children would be enough even if it was a sod building. He compared all the white settlements with the Reserve. Every few miles in the white settlement there was a School for the white children and he wants the same treatment towards the Indians. If the School is on the Reserve it will tend to making the Indians build homes for themselves and keep their wives and families there while the men go out to earn money.¹⁴⁴

Other men who attended spoke on the same schooling matter. They knew land and education were important issues to the government and played into those views by arguing things like a day school would make them build homes and keep their families in one place while the men worked, which is clearly a settler concept of family structure and a desire in “civilizing” First Nations people. These Lakota men (and the women and families they represented) were distraught and frustrated over losing their children to the residential school system. Many of their children had been taken to the Regina Indian Industrial School, one of the worst in terms of

¹⁴² LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, "Memo of Pow-Wow of Sioux Indians at Wood Mountain, July 8th, 1912"

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

hygiene and death.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, many Lakota people did not want to return to the U.S. because they learned their children would be taken and placed in boarding schools,¹⁴⁶ so facing the same issue in Canada was a dilemma. Unfortunately, their concerns and requests were denied or overlooked because government officials believed residential schools and/or boarding schools were the best and only option for Indians. A 1912 report stated that the Lakota people requested a full township of land because they wanted to farm and raise livestock, but along with this they specifically explained they wanted a school there because they objected to the high death rate of students at the industrial schools.¹⁴⁷ Graham replied in line with government policy that a school on the reserve was not possible and that the children should go to residential schools.¹⁴⁸ Noting the close correlation between land, community, and children for Lakota people is important, and the matter of residential schools for Lakota children at Wood Mountain will be a continuing theme examined further in the following chapters as well.

But Lakota people's questions and concerns went unanswered. In November of 1912, T̃hašúŋke Ópi wrote in Lakota to the Chief Inspector of Indian Agencies, Glen Campbell¹⁴⁹ expressing concerns about white encroachment on the reserve.¹⁵⁰ All that Campbell wrote in response was that the reserve matters come to him through the appointed chief and council and that he hoped all the Indians of the band would cooperate with each other and the Department of

¹⁴⁵ Douglas Stewart, *The Regina Indian Industrial School (1891-1910): Historical Overview and Chronological Narrative* (Regina: Benchmark Press, 2017), 15-16.

¹⁴⁶ Thelma Poirier, "Lakota in Canada 1881-1911," Grasslands National Park report, March 13, 2014, 24.

¹⁴⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, No. 404784, Reel C12061, J.H. Grayson to the Gen. Supt. of Department of Indian Affairs, February 6, 1912.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, W.M. Graham to Sec. of Department of Indian Affairs, Feb. 27, 1912.

¹⁴⁹ From the handwriting, this appears to have been written by J.H. Thomson and transcribed what Wounded Horse told him in Lakota. Thomson was fluent in writing and speaking the Lakota language, and particularly because he worked as telegraph operator/ postmaster and was married to a Lakota woman, he was often requested by Lakota people to write for them. It is unclear how Campbell translated this letter once he received it. See Claire Thomson, "Layers of a Letter: Lakota History, Language, and Voices in the Archives," Artifactual column in *Prairie History*, No. 3, Fall 2020, 82-85 for more on this particular letter.

¹⁵⁰ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, No. 425212, Reel C12061, Letter in Lakota by Tasunka Opi, Wounded Horse, November 22, 1912.

Indian Affairs. He added, “You can always depend that the desire of the Government is to assist the Indians to be self supporting and self respecting like the white settlers in the country.”¹⁵¹ Not a very helpful response, but definitely not the end of the matter.

The following year, Čhaŋté Ohítika wrote (through an interpreter and scribe) to Campbell as well, pressing the necessity of being allowed to have the full extent of the land set aside for their use. He stated “With exception of two or three quarter sections, the whole Reserve is hilly and broken, altogether unsuitable for farming purposes but will suit us to grow what crops we need and graze our horses. If we were restricted to 160 acres each we could not possibly live on it as no doubt the remaining land would be leased to whitemen and we would have no room to graze our horses and the cattle we expect to get when we are able to buy them.” He went on to write that fourteen people had built houses now on the reserve and they intended to break up land and plant crops in the spring. He closed by saying “We know well that we have to live now as the whiteman live, but unless protected for years to come and the Reserve as it is made a permanent one we will be driven out by whitemen leasing the country around us. Therefore, we beseech you to intercede for us with the Big Chiefs—Authorities at Ottawa—and we earnestly hope that you will be able to assist us and induce those who will determine what is to become of us, to take pity on us and allow us to live.”¹⁵² Thomson wrote an accompanying letter to Čhaŋté Ohítika’s, stating that the Lakota could get signatures from thirty or more white people supporting their contention for getting the half township as a permanent reserve.¹⁵³ Čhaŋté Ohítika was very perceptive of what was to come in a few short years with the “surrendering”

¹⁵¹ RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, No. 425212, Reel C12061, Glen Campbell to Ta Sunka Api (Wounded Horse), December 6, 1912.

¹⁵² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061, Dictated and signed by Thigh, Headman of Sioux Indians at Wood Mountain, to Glen Campbell, Inspector of Indian Agencies, March 5, 1913.

¹⁵³ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, No. 433338, Reel C12061, J.H. Thomson to Glen Campbell, March 7, 1913.

and leasing of reserve land under a government scheme to move reserve land into non-Indian hands following the First World War.

By 1917, things were still unclear though for the Lakota people with regard to their reserve land. Thomson wrote on their behalf stating there was some confusion about which quarter sections were within the reserve, particularly quarters that had been set aside originally as school and HBC land but were supposed to be within the township set aside now as the reserve. The Lakota people wanted to know whether those were open to purchase and/or rental and Thomson stated that they were anxious about this matter.¹⁵⁴ In maps from the time, the HBC quarters were not marked as reserve land (though they were within the reserve boundaries) and John Lecaine's quarter section was also left out, as he voluntarily enfranchised in order to homestead on that land and the reserve was created around it (see chapter five for more on this). Land issues were not going to be resolved though, and things were about to get worse in that regard. At the end of the First World War, the following year in 1918, the western half of the Wood Mountain reserve was taken and given to returning veterans as soldier grants and opened up to other non-Indigenous settlers.

Historian Sarah Carter has examined the process of soldier grants from reserve lands and she outlined that it began as a leasing program to increase "productivity" of land especially because Indian people were seen as "unproductive": "Amendments to the *Indian Act* passed in the spring of 1918 gave the DIA unprecedented powers as they allowed reserve land to be leased without the consent of the band and the use of band funds to purchase machinery, stock and labour to improve or cultivate land on the greater production farms set up on some reserves. The amendments were intended to expediate the campaign for greater production by removing 'all

¹⁵⁴ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, no. 500315, Reel C12061, J.H. Thomson to Sec. of the Department of Indian Affairs, April 23, 1917.

obstacles to the utilization of these lands.”¹⁵⁵ W.M. Graham, at this time Indian Commissioner and acquainted with the Wood Mountain reserve from his previous work as Agencies Inspector, was in charge of seeking out land surrenders and he was enthusiastic about this project. As historian E. Brian Titley put it, Graham was an energetic promotor of Indian education and agriculture “the twin pathways to civilization and self-sufficiency. And yet he was always ready to sell off ‘surplus’ Indian land—a process that was counterproductive to the achievement of the latter objective.”¹⁵⁶ Government efforts at this time worked to streamline the process of removing reserve lands from Indians. Carter argued: “The greater production scheme involved some modest effort to enhance the production of reserve farmers, and it included the establishment of government-run farms on some reserves, but the main agents of increased production were non-reserve residents, and the central objective was to facilitate the leasing of land to non-Indian interests.”¹⁵⁷ Finally, “An Act of 1917 created this board [the Soldier Settlement Board], which administered the government’s scheme for settling returned soldiers on the [‘surrendered’ reserve] land. It provided that a discharged non-Indian soldier could acquire a quarter-section of Dominion lands in addition to his homestead right. Loans of \$2500 were authorized for the purchase of livestock and equipment and for the construction of improvements.”¹⁵⁸ However, these land surrenders under the 1918 amendments to the *Indian Act* were supposed to be done by at least consulting and negotiating with the bands, but this did not always happen. Carter goes into detail about the process that occurred at Wood Mountain in this way:

¹⁵⁵ Sarah Carter, “‘An Infamous Proposal:’ Prairie Indian Reserve Land and Soldier Settlement after World War I,” *Manitoba History*, Vol. 37 (Spring 1999): 12.

¹⁵⁶ E. Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1986), 185.

¹⁵⁷ Carter, “‘An Infamous Proposal,’” 12.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

Formal surrenders were not always required for reserve land that ended up in the hands of the SSB. The Wood Mountain reserve in southwestern Saskatchewan, set aside in 1911 for the Lakota who for many years camped near Moose Jaw, was regarded by some DIA authorities as a ‘temporary reserve.’ Graham described these people in 1919 as ‘American Indians’ with ‘no real claim on this country,’ despite the fact that by this time most bands members had been born in Canada and the elderly members had resided in the country for over forty year [sic], longer than many non-Aboriginal settlers. As their reserve was not set aside under treaty, Graham argued that it need not be treated in the same manner as other reserves. In 1911 Graham reported that as the terrain was hilly, the residents should have at least 150 acres per person, and the land was set aside on this basis. ‘Indians would starve on 20 acres of land such as it is at Wood Mountain,’ he wrote. ‘In my opinion it is unwise to restrict them to any small amount of land.’ In order to make the reserve a permanent one, the residents were to show that they had ‘occupied and made good use’ of the land. Although no time frame was specified for this accomplishment, Graham concluded only eight years later that sufficient time had elapsed, and that ‘these Indians have not made use of the land to any extent and I doubt if they every [sic] will.’ He believed that one-half of the land set aside for them was ample. In April 1919 Graham and a representative of the Board examined these nine sections, describing it as mixed farm land although they found ‘odd pieces of inferior land’ and it was at least thirty miles from the nearest railway. They recommended that it be sold at \$6.00 per acre for the sum of \$34,560.00.”¹⁵⁹

Clearly ideas about the Lakota being “American” and with no “real claim” played into Graham’s justifications for taking the reserve land more easily. Although it was clear to Graham and other Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs officials that the land was not suited to farming completely, the idea that the Lakota needed more land for grazing (as Čhaŋté Ohítika stressed to Indian Affairs earlier) and that most local people (both Lakota and non-Indigenous) were involved in ranching at this time, does not seem to have occurred to them. Lakota horse herds at this time were still large and many Lakota families were well known horse traders and ranchers both on and off the reserve. Many Lakota people relied on larger horse herds for trading and selling as well as social and cultural aspects such as at rodeos and giveaways. But grazing land appeared vacant to government officials and to settlers who wanted to reside on those lands. Ironically, much of these opened up lands are almost completely used for grazing still today.

¹⁵⁹ Carter, ““An Infamous Proposal,”” 16-17.

Local and government pressures mounted to have the reserve opened up. Several letters from returned soldiers to the Department of Indian Affairs asked before the Wood Mountain reserve was “thrown open” whether they could obtain soldier land grants on the reserve. Clearly local settlers and veterans more generally were aware of where soldier land grants were coming from and were impatient to see it happen. These soldiers were eager to “urgently apply” because there were plans for a railway to go through in the near future (1927) and one wrote that he was sure that “throwing this land open would not injure the small band of Indians there as the East half more than meets all their needs.”¹⁶⁰ They were all directed to the Soldier Settlement Board by Indian Affairs. The Secretary Treasurer of the Rural Municipality of Waverley No. 44 even wrote to the Department of the Interior (which was eventually forwarded to the Department of Indian Affairs) to inform them that the Lakota resided in the southeast corner of the reserve and they had more land than they needed. He wrote, “...the apparent shortage of lands for soldier settlement and also the fact that this municipality is seriously handicapped by the fact that this half township which is included in our boundaries is non-revenue producing, we would be pleased to hear the opinion of your Department as to the advisability and probability of the government opening a part of this reserve for soldier or other settlement.”¹⁶¹ Though the Wood Mountain area had been slow to settlement, now it was amidst a land rush grab. Čhaŋté Ohítika’s earlier fears had become reality.

As Carter mentioned, Graham requested that these lands be opened up for settlement on the basis that the Lakota had no real claim to any land. He was aware that soldiers were inquiring

¹⁶⁰ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7535, File 26137-1, Letter from C.G. Sigurdson to Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs, February 17, 1919.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., Letter from E.B. Linnell to Department of Interior, March 19, 1919.

about it as well and he did not see why they should not be granted it.¹⁶² By April 1919, Chief Surveyor S. Bray concurred with Graham and it was decided that the reserve residents would keep 160 acres each and the “balance” would be transferred to the Department of the Interior.¹⁶³ The transfer to the Department of the Interior and the SSB was completed in May of 1919¹⁶⁴ and this was all done without consultation with the band, and though payment was made, it was taken rather than surrendered under the stipulations of the Indian Act.

Another part of the arguments made by Indian Affairs and Graham to seize this reserve land was that it was “unproductive” and “not in use” by Lakota people. However, during the war years and at the same time that government efforts to take more land from the reserve were occurring, the reserve residents were becoming quite diversified in their economic endeavours and self-sufficiency as they began to mine for lignite coal on the reserve to supply a growing demand in the area for the fuel. J.H. Thomson was approached in January of 1915 by Čhaŋté Ohítika asking if “whitemen [sic] were privileged to take coal from within the Boundaries of the Reserve and also if the Indians would be allowed to mine and sell the coal.”¹⁶⁵ Thomson told Čhaŋté Ohítika he was not certain and would defer to the Indian Affairs authorities. Assistant Deputy and Secretary of Indian Affairs J.D. McLean was favourable to their enterprise and instructed Thomson, “You will be good enough to give the Indians assistance in this undertaking, and report as to how they are progressing from time to time.”¹⁶⁶ He advised that a royalty would be paid on each ton taken at ten cents per ton to be collected by Thomson and forwarded to the

¹⁶² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7535, File 26137-1, Letter from W.M. Graham, Indian Commissioner, to Arthur Meighan, Minister of the Interior, April 22, 1919.

¹⁶³ Ibid., Letter from S. Bray, Chief Surveyor, to Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, April 29, 1919.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., Letter from Duncan C. Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, to W.M. Graham, Indian Commissioner, May 12, 1919.

¹⁶⁵ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7462, File 18137, Reel C-14764, "Wood Mountain Agency-Coal Mining-Location on the Wood Mountain Reserve," Letter from J.H. Thomson to Department of Indian Affairs, January 25, 1915.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., Letter from Assistant Deputy and Secretary of Indian Affairs J.D. McLean to J.H. Thomson, February 4, 1915.

DIA to be placed in a trust fund for the band. He also stressed that no white men be allowed to take coal from on the reserve. And so, this arrangement was carried out and Thomson reported and collected royalties for the band on their coal sales of 372 tons between 1915 and 1920. It is unclear when or why their mining operations stopped, but several individuals on the reserve as well as several local settlers wrote to Indian Affairs to inquire about obtaining leases to mine the coal in the following decade. The grey area of whether the Lakota “owned the land” and therefore could mine it and the legalities of mining on reserve seemed to raise issues however. Graham was of the mindset in 1931 that the “Sioux Indians who live on the Reserve...are not owners of the land.”¹⁶⁷ He elaborated: “I presume the Department are aware that this reserve does not belong to the Sioux. It was only set aside by myself some twenty years ago as a temporary measure to give these Sioux Indians a place to reside.”¹⁶⁸ A report by the Mines and Resources Branch of Indian Affairs looked into the matter further in 1949 and inspected the coal seam, concluding that the band would have to pass a resolution to approve mining and a royalty set up as previously, but without these things, individual Indians could not mine it themselves.¹⁶⁹ A follow up letter stated that there was no authority for the mining and sale of coal from the reserve and no regulations to govern coal mining on reserves in general, and therefore only a surrender of resources obtained from the band could allow for the band to sell the coal.¹⁷⁰ Lakota people were viewed as not owners of their lands nor of their resources for many decades beyond the soldier settlement surrender period which played a large role in determining their access to

¹⁶⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7462, File 18137, Reel C-14764, Letter from Indian Commissioner W.M. Graham to Secretary of Indian Affairs, September 30, 1931.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., Letter from Regional Supervisor of Indian Agencies, J.P.B. Ostrander, November 16, 1949.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., Letter from Superintendent Reserve and Trusts D.J. Allan to Regional Supervisor of Indian Agencies, J.P.B. Ostrander, November 25, 1949.

economic opportunities and sustenance which were all tied to having a large enough land base in the Wood Mountain area for agriculture, mining, or even hunting.

The reserve land base was decreased from 10,240 acres to 5,280 acres once land was taken for these soldier grants.¹⁷¹ Although the large majority of these opened lands went to non-Indigenous settlers, Lakota people had also served in the First World War. Other Indigenous people had volunteered as well, and Canada was well aware of the highly regarded Indigenous participation to the war effort at home and overseas, but this did not translate into Indigenous veterans being well treated after they were back in Canada. For example, Carter shows that the loans made available to Indigenous veterans were not as large as provided to other veterans and were purposely kept this way because of ideas that Indian farmers did not need as much as white farmers. Additionally, they were not eligible for homesteads or regular Dominion land rights, and there was still resentment and jealousy from settler communities about anything that Indian veterans did receive, even though overall it was comparatively little or sometimes nothing at all.¹⁷² Some Indian veterans were able to obtain soldier grants—from lands taken from their own reserves—and some settlers did voice protests to the reserve land surrenders on behalf of First Nations people.

At Wood Mountain, only one Lakota veteran, Charles Lecaine (brother of the aforementioned John Lecaine) received a soldier grant.¹⁷³ Another Lakota man, John Thomson (son of aforementioned J.H. Thomson) applied in January of 1920 for a soldier grant, but by May

¹⁷¹ Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, Appendix P-4.

¹⁷² Carter, ““An Infamous Proposal,”” 18-19.

¹⁷³ PAS, Homestead Files, Charles Lecaine, NW 31-4-4-W3 file # 3199601 (1930). See also LAC, RG 150, Personnel Records of the First World War, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5507 – 34, Item number 519279, Charles Lecaine, regimental number 925680.

it was in another settler's possession as a homestead, so he did not gain ownership of it.¹⁷⁴ Only John's grant was in the "surrendered" Wood Mountain reserve lands, but he was living in the U.S. shortly thereafter. Charles Lecaine's grant was outside the recently taken reserve land, but nearby to the east of the reserve (NW-31-4-3-W3). Charles had another homestead he filed on (NW-6-5-4-W3) as well.¹⁷⁵ Both these men were not considered status Indians however, and therefore could own private land, but could not reside on the reserve. They were in an anomalous position that sometimes worked in their favour, but more often against. How the category of "Indian" in government terms still applied to them, especially in the Thomson and Lecaine families, will be explored in chapter five in more detail. Two other Wood Mountain Lakota men were drafted in the First World War, James Wounded Horse¹⁷⁶ and Peter (Pete) Lethbridge.¹⁷⁷ These two men were not given soldier grants as it seems they did not see active service, but regardless Pete Lethbridge did homestead in the Wood Mountain area.¹⁷⁸ In general, Indigenous veterans faced much different circumstances after the war compared to other Euro-Canadian veterans, including being excluded from their home reserves because some men were told they had to enfranchise (and lose their Indian status) and those who did not enfranchise often received fewer veteran benefits or none at all (including soldier grants and loans).¹⁷⁹ Some of these Wood Mountain Lakota veterans found themselves without government aid because of their ambiguous status after the First World War, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

¹⁷⁴ PAS, Homestead files, John Thomson, NE-28-4-4-W3, file # 4185146. See also also LAC, Personnel Records of the First World War, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9646 – 4, Item number 264731, John Thomson, regimental number 925692.

¹⁷⁵ ISC, Certificate of Title, Charles Lecaine, NW-6-5-4-W3, Grant No. MC80, August 16, 1918.

¹⁷⁶ LAC, RG 150, World War I CEF Attestation Papers, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 10586 – 40, James Wounded Horse, regimental number 258089, drafted January 24, 1918.

¹⁷⁷ LAC, RG 150, Personnel Records of the First World War, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5601 – 25, Peter Edward Lethbridge, regimental number 3353238, drafted June 21, 1918.

¹⁷⁸ PAS, Homestead Files, Peter Lethbridge, NE-9-4-4-W3, SHIP # 2515915

¹⁷⁹ Magdalena Paluszkiewicz-Misiaczek, "'They Should Vanish Into Thin Air...and Give no Trouble': Canadian Aboriginal Veterans of World Wars," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 19, no. 2 (2018): 119-123.

Finally, the reserve was ratified by an Order-in-Council on August 5, 1930, making it permanent but half the original size.¹⁸⁰ The HBC lands in question before were transferred to the reserve in October 1930, bringing the total acreage to 5,760 acres.¹⁸¹ The government's stance was always that Dakota and Lakota reserves were granted "as a matter of grace, not right."¹⁸² Some Lakota families did not settle on the reserve—some not at that time and some not ever. Some were married to non-Indians and therefore were ineligible to reside on the reserve (especially in the case of women) and others had taken out homesteads in the area and therefore without status, could not reside on the reserve either. Though the reserve was a debated issue, this land helped to solidify the Lakota presence at Wood Mountain. When the reserve was going to be settled, the Lakota people met to draw up their own list of desires, and did so from a place of self-sufficiency and self-determination while also acknowledging the changes that had to be made. This does not mean times were not difficult—to the contrary. Many Lakota people had faced food shortages, an outbreak of smallpox in 1909, terrible winters in canvas tents, and hostility from settlers. But Lakota people found ways to stay part of the larger Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe and assert their ability to stay relatively independent doing so. They were not passive participants in the process of establishing a reserve and did not submit to the will of government officials once the reserve was created.

Conclusion

Contrary to what most histories have presented and what most government officials have argued, present-day southwestern Saskatchewan was part of Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe and

¹⁸⁰ LAC, Canada Gazette, Vol. 64, No. 7, July-September 1930, page 509, Order in Council no. 1775, August 5, 1930.

¹⁸¹ Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, Appendix P-4.

¹⁸² Alexander Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories* (Toronto: Belfords, Clarke & Co. Publishers, 1880), 279.

especially became more firmly entrenched after 1881. By examining Lakota relations with the places and people, Lakǰóta ǰamákǰoĉhe is illustrated as a historical network of movement, diplomacy, and common lands that includes present-southwestern Saskatchewan. Potyondi made the case that the Cypress Hills were both “neutral ground” and “any man’s land” between many Indigenous peoples,¹⁸³ and Wood Mountain functioned much the same way, especially for the Lakota from the 1870s onward. The circumstances around slow settlement, removal of other Indigenous peoples, and Lakota peoples’ tenacity to stay on the lands that the Canadian government and settler populations were pressuring them to leave, meant that Lakota people were able to retain the Wood Mountain area as part of Lakǰóta ǰamákǰoĉhe.

The Wood Mountain Uplands saw many shifts in population and communities over time, especially for Indigenous peoples. Surviving depended on good relationships with other people in the area and a close knowledge of the landscape. Today (2021) the population is very small as compared to the past. As of the 2016 Census, the two surrounding rural municipalities of Old Post #43 and Waverley #44 had a respective 377 and 336 people (0.2 people/square kilometer).¹⁸⁴ The Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation (a separate census subdivision than the rural municipalities, though located between the two RMs) had a population on reserve of twenty people¹⁸⁵ though there is a band membership of about 230 people (as of the 2013 Aboriginal and

¹⁸³ Potyondi, *In Palliser’s Triangle*, 21.

¹⁸⁴ Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016 Census, Old Post No. 43, Rural municipality, Saskatchewan, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4703011&Geo2=PR&Code2=47&SearchText=Old%20Post%20No.%2043&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=4703011&TABID=1&type=0>; and Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016 Census, Waverley No. 44, Rural municipality, Saskatchewan, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4703022&Geo2=PR&Code2=47&SearchText=Waverley%20No.%2044&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=4703022&TABID=1&type=0>

¹⁸⁵ Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016 Census, Wood Mountain 160, Indian reserve, Saskatchewan, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4703801&Geo2=PR&Code2=47&SearchText=Wood%20>

Northern Affairs Canada information).¹⁸⁶ The majority of band members do not live in the rural Wood Mountain area however. A recent settlement was reached between the Canadian government and the Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation in December 2019 regarding the land taken from the reserve after the First World War. A settlement of \$50 million will be awarded to the Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation for the loss of the use of the land after more than a decade in court.¹⁸⁷ The agreement reached has maybe quashed Graham's 1931 attestation that Lakota people were not owners of their reserve lands. It may still be a long road to a nation-to-nation relationship between the Wood Mountain Lakota First Nation and the Canadian government, however.

Mountain%20160&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=4703801&TABID=1&type=0

¹⁸⁶ Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada, Wood Mountain Connectivity Profile, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1357840942288/1360166815640>

¹⁸⁷ Dave Deibert, *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, "Wood Mountain Lakota reaches \$50M land claims settlement with feds," December 9, 2019, <https://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/wood-mountain-lakota-reaches-50m-land-claims-settlement-with-feds>.

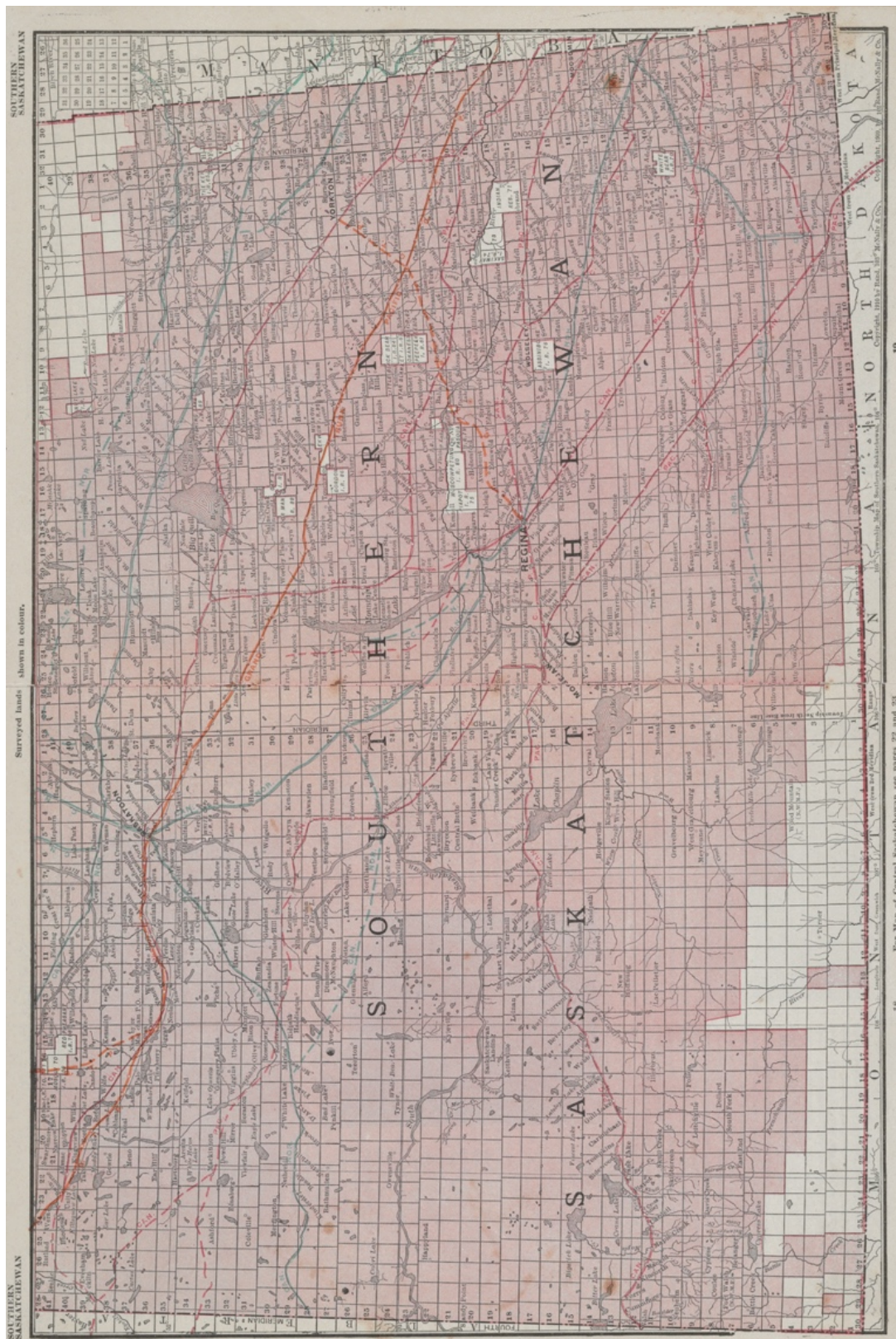


Figure 1.1
Map in 1910 "Canada West" magazine showing Wood Mountain area in white not yet surveyed.

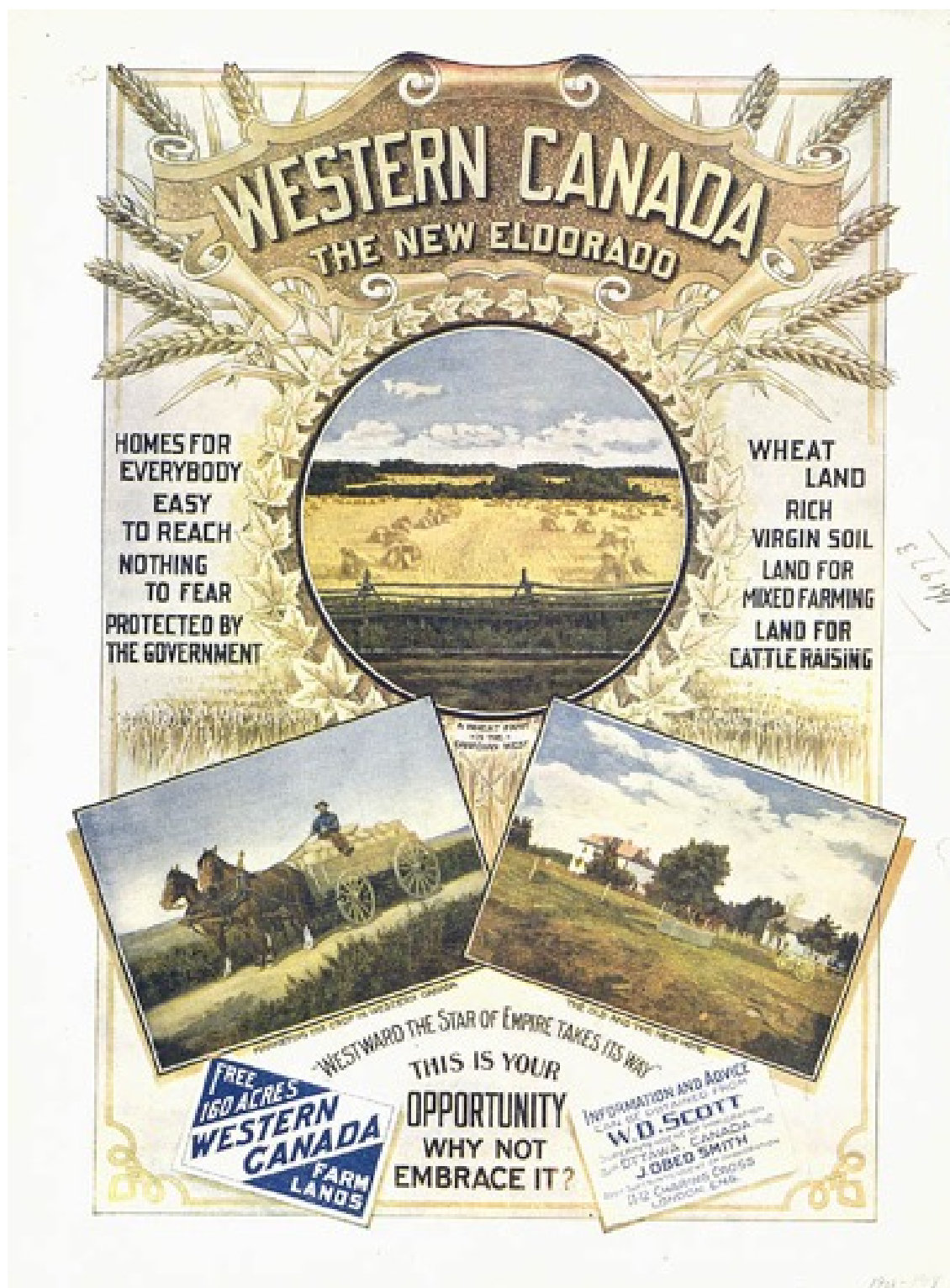


Figure 1.2

Poster created by Canadian government to promote lands for settlement, c. 1908-1918. Note the "nothing to fear, protection by the government" line. These kinds of promotional materials were always devoid of "Indians."

LAC, RG 76, Immigration Records Branch, Vol. 162, file 161973.

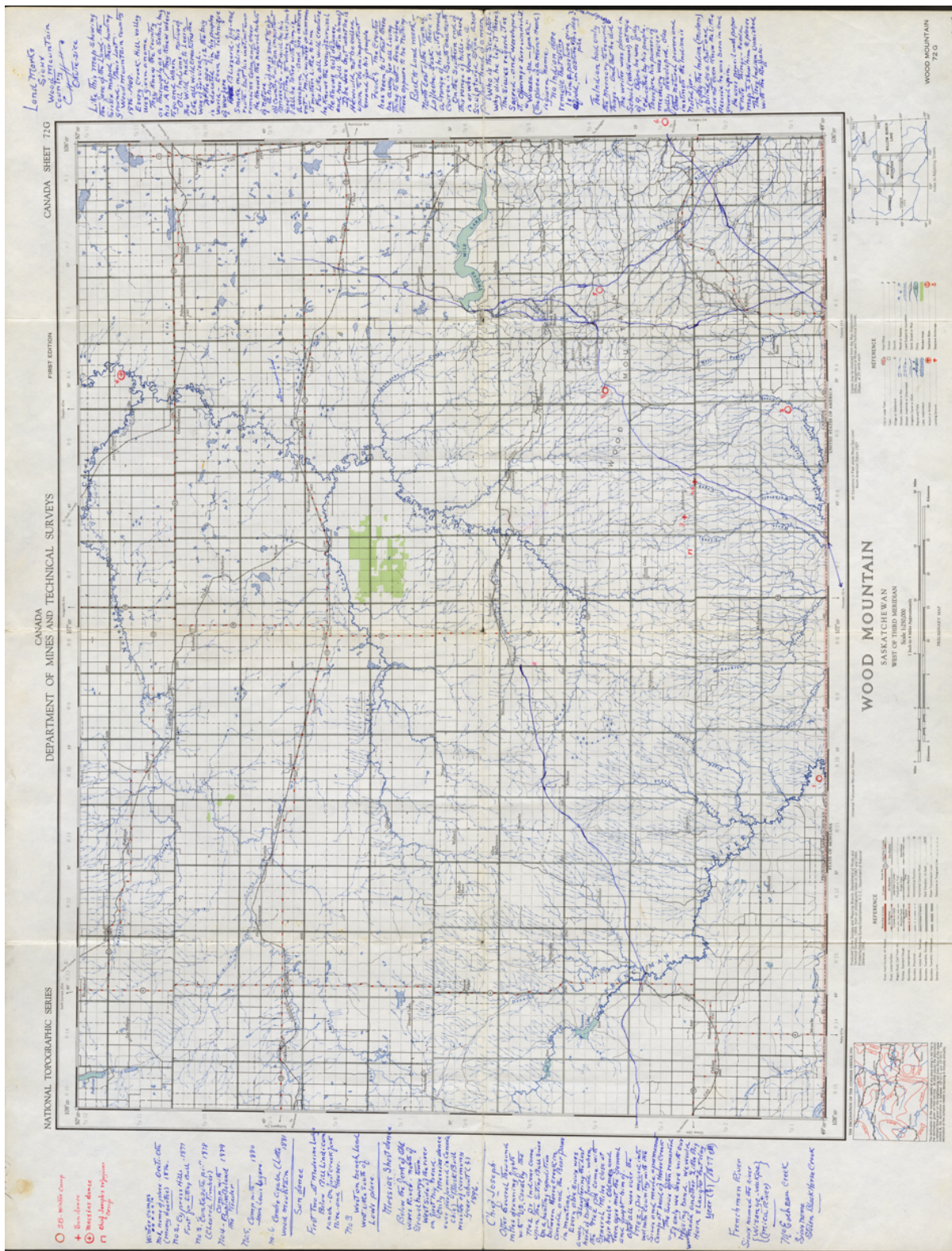


Figure 1.3
 Map by John Lecaine, c. 1960-1962
 Glenbow Archives, S.T. Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-147, Annotated Map by John Lecaine

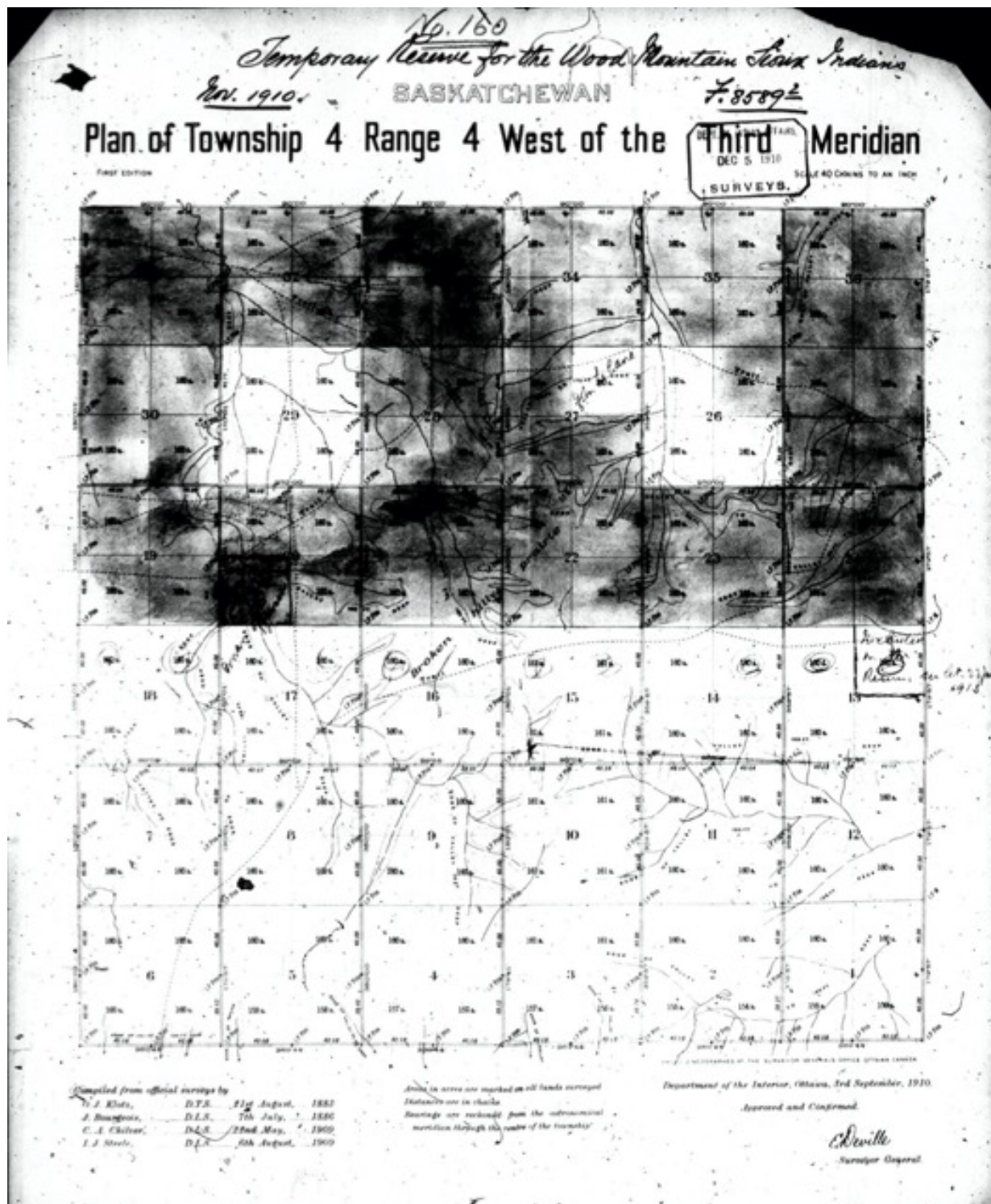


Figure 1.4
 Map of "No. 160, Temporary Reserve for Wood Mountain Sioux Indians."
 LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C12061

Chapter Two
Kinscapes and Landscapes: Wood Mountain Lakota Connections Through Photographs, 1898-1941



Figure 2.1

Mary Black Moon-Aspdin (seated centre) with daughters, left to right, Kate, Annie, and Alice, and friend Clara Williams.

Personal collection of Williams family, copy shared with author by Ron Papandrea

Many of the photographs in this chapter are in personal collections of the families who are related to the people pictured, a unique and exciting revelation because so many historic photographs are in institutional and archival collections, often without much information accompanying them. One such family photograph is of **Mary Black Moon-Aspdin**, a Lakota woman with deep connections to Wood Mountain and Cheyenne River Reservation, whose life reflects the adaptability, connections, and movement of Lakota people on the prairies between present-day Saskatchewan and South Dakota (Figure 2.1).¹ Mary will be discussed throughout this dissertation repeatedly because aspects of her life and movements are exceptionally well-

¹ It is not clear what Mary's Lakota name was, so her English name will be used throughout this study.

documented in the archival record and in her living descendants' knowledge still today. This photograph visually depicts the centrality of Mary in her family and the close bonds to her daughters, which have been enshrined in family stories and memories of all of them since.² Photographs illustrate these connections, which is exemplified by the retention of many of these images by families, which will be explored in more depth in this chapter.

Mary was born in about 1860 to Mnikhówožu Chief Black Moon and his third wife, Passing Bear.³ As a girl, she was at the Battle of the Little Bighorn and many years later, told what she remembered of the battle in a written interview and how she had lost her favourite pony in the fighting.⁴ After the Battle of the Little Bighorn, she came with her family to the Wood Mountain area and eventually married Thomas W. Aspdin of the NWMP there. They had three daughters together, Alice (born c. 1883), Annie (born c. 1886), and Kate (born c. 1889). Thomas eventually left the NWMP and they acquired a homestead south of Moose Jaw and lived there for a few years. He was employed from about 1898 to 1906 as the Indian agent at Sintaluta for the Assiniboine Agency where his wife and daughters joined him. This is most likely where the above photograph was taken. Thomas died in 1906 and was buried in the Sintaluta cemetery.⁵ After this time, Mary and her daughters went to live closer to her family on the Cheyenne River Reservation, though for many years they continued traveling between Saskatchewan and South Dakota. Mary and her daughters eventually acquired allotments on the reservation and started

² Cherie Farlee, personal communication with author, July 2018.

³ Monument with some of her life history written, erected by Mary's descendants, headed by her grandson Maurice Williams, in the summer of 2007 on Mary's original allotment on the Cheyenne River Reservation. Author visited the monument in July 2018.

⁴ Unfortunately, the original account is missing from the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan collections, but a copy was kept by her great-grandson, J.D. Williams. At least part of this document was included in a pamphlet Williams made as part of a celebration in 2007 to unveil a monument on the Cheyenne River Reservation to commemorate Mary's life.

⁵ Saskatchewan Cemetery Project, Sintaluta Cemetery, Aspdin, Thomas Williams.
<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~cansacem/sintaluta.html>

ranching. Mary died in 1944 and is buried in the Cherry Creek cemetery on the Cheyenne River Reservation.

Historic photographs can help impart the humanity of the historical subjects upon the reader and remind us that these people had real lives and still have relatives and legacies today. People in the past were more like us than we think: they made decisions, faced difficulties, and celebrated happiness in much the same ways and sometimes that is more clearly communicated through visual aids. The historic photographs in this chapter serve to bring humanity and agency to the people and their stories that make up the analysis throughout the rest of this study and are a way of introducing the names and families repeated throughout. Though not every individual nor family will be represented here, the selected images are representative of the themes, connections, and community that will be discussed throughout the remainder of this work. Moreover, this chapter will examine the layers of these photographs as complicated but important historical sources. Examining frameworks around gaze, power, and creation of these images as well as Lakota people's own use and understanding of them is crucial because photographs, like any other source, are not without biases. The visual aspect of these sources can provide illuminating details about the past, but they can also be incredibly complex and sometimes create more questions, particularly when it is unknown why a photograph was taken, where, when, by whom, and upon who's request. Unfortunately, some of the photographs shared below have few provenance details, but that does not mean they are not useful to study.

By examining the visual and written components of photographs and postcards in this chapter, it is clear that Lakota people commissioned, used, and shared their own images. Significantly, many of the photographs in this chapter still reside with the descendants of the Lakota people in the photos and this bolsters the argument that Lakota people were in control of

the use and dissemination of their images. Furthermore, the photographs were shared and sent amongst families and the community to help keep those bonds strong, illustrating that the Lakota community was not separated by borders. The images shared in this chapter illustrate that Lakota kinship was resilient and adaptive with people using different mediums to keep close connections to each other whether in the U.S. or Canada well into the twentieth century.

The use of photographs for research in Indigenous histories is not new, and this chapter will rest upon many important scholarly works. Ho-chunk scholar Amy Lonetree's examination of a collection of her community's historic photographs is one such study that influenced this examination. She wrote:

For me, one of the most significant aspects of the Ho-Chunk photographs is that, while they were taken during the so-called dark ages of Native history, their existence provides visual proof of our presence. The images challenge the commonly held view that nothing of significance happened once Native people were confined to reservations in the nineteenth century, until the American Indian Movement's militant activism captured the public's imagination in the 1960s... The images gave us a sense of what life was like for our families and people during this period. The so-called dark ages of Native history are no longer as dark. This collection of photographic images powerfully conveys the importance of kinship, place, and memory, as well as ongoing colonialism—all central themes of the Ho-Chunk experience during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Every encounter with the images should begin with the recognition that you are not just looking at Indians; you are looking at survivors whose presence in the frame speaks to a larger story of Ho-Chunk survivance.⁶

Much the same as Lonetree, the photographs in this chapter speak to Lakota survivance and challenge the narrative that nothing of importance happened in Lakota history beyond the end of the Indian Wars and the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890. These faces are resilient and complex beyond the typical colonial gaze and narrative.

⁶ Amy Lonetree, "Visualizing Native Survivance: Encounters With My Ho-Chunk Ancestors in the Family Photographs of Charles Van Schaick," in *People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879-1942*, ed. Tom Jones, Michael Schmudlach, Matthew Daniel Mason, Amy Lonetree, and George A. Greendeer (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society, 2011), 22.

Lakota people and places have been so frequently photographed that, in some ways, their representation has become the stereotype. Images of famous Lakota leaders and places like battlefields and massacre sites are engrained in the western popular imagination. Lakota men especially became the romanticized image of an “Indian” largely through wild west shows, anthropological efforts to record the “vanishing race,” and later, film. These stereotypical depictions are constraining at best and often outright false. Today images of Lakota people persist in sometimes still damaging and nefarious ways. One such example, is Aaron Huey’s 2010 TED Talk, “America’s native prisoners of war” which showcased his photography of the Pine Ridge Reservation and Oglala people, which was swiftly pointed out by many Indigenous people as being poverty porn and one dimensional.⁷ The dominant, mainstream imagery of Lakota people is still strongly the stereotypical representation of Plains people, stuck in the past and unchanging, or otherwise unable to cope with modernity. Such examples of essentialized ideas of culture and time are not useful. Tom Jones states of the Ho-Chunk photograph collection examined in *People of the Big Voice*, “Taken over a sixty-year span, these photographs show the visual evolution of Ho-Chunk culture. Van Schaick [the photographer] does not create a static fiction like Edward Curtis, who constructed his photographs in order to create a visual record and a way of life before white contact. Ours is not a stagnant culture. The Ho-Chunk were adapting to, not assimilating to, societal changes, just like any other persons of this time.”⁸ Similarly the photographs featured in this chapter show change and adaptation of Lakota people.

⁷ “With a White Gaze Upon Us,” *Righting Red: Ramblings, Ruminations, and Activism from an Idealistic Lakota Storyteller blog*, August 11, 2013, <https://walkerwrackspurt.wordpress.com/2013/08/11/with-a-white-gaze-upon-us/>; Jeff Berglund, “‘Go Cry Over Someone Else’s Tragedy’: The YouTube Activism of the 1491s,” *Australasian Journal of Information Systems*, Vol. 21, (July 2017), <https://doi.org/10.3127/ajis.v21i0.1581>.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

Though these photographs can be positive expressions of Lakota modernity, survivance, and connections, they can also shed light on the colonial gaze and the fetishization of Indigenous people. The colonial gaze in Canada, revealed in photographic, literary, and artistic representation of Indigenous people by settler peoples and governments, demonstrates that Canadian views of Indigenous people were completely in line with public discourses in the U.S. Scholars Alison K. Brown and Laura Peers wrote about their experience working with Kainai photographs and community members:

Churches, schools, and government restrictions were obvious manifestations of attempts to control and assimilate Kainai people. One other, less obvious way of imposing control by non-Natives has been the use of representational genres that have contributed to an accumulation of visual stereotypes used to affirm messages of cultural difference. Since contact, Kainai people have been sketched, painted, and photographed, largely by outsiders who viewed them within such preconceived categories as Noble Savages, Warriors, or a Vanishing Race—or sometimes as claims of success in assimilation programs.⁹

These photographic tropes also apply to the following Wood Mountain Lakota photographs. Often these photos served to contrast with settler society, especially at Moose Jaw where photos taken at the “Indian camp” were meant to capture the “primitiveness” of their homes. Often these types of photographs were meant to depict the “vanishing race” and the “last of the buffalo men.” Though little information is known about the photographers, studios, dates, and locations of many of these photographs, they do follow a long tradition of posing and contrasting Indigenous people in order to convey ideas of difference and race to non-Indigenous viewers. These kinds of messages are found in famous works such as that of Edward S. Curtis and David Francis Barry who photographed Lakota people and places in the late nineteenth and early

⁹ Alison K. Brown and Laura Peers, *‘Pictures Bring Us Messages’: Photographs and Histories from the Kainai Nation*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 33.

twentieth centuries. Other photographers, whether professional or amateur, would have fed into and off of these same kinds of tropes and messages.

Brown and Peers mention how some sitters in photographs did so in their own clothing, with family and friends, and posed how they wanted in confidence and pride, "...reflecting self-defined identity and image rather than stereotype."¹⁰ This is also the case for some of the photographs featured here. However, Peers and Brown go on to write: "What makes these images different, of course, is the different dynamics of power between photographer and photographed, the levelling of such dynamics through the establishment of personal relationships and feelings of respect. Very few images record such relationships, because they rarely existed. The stereotyped, superficial, exoticized, or trophy nature of the vast majority of images of First Nations people says much about the nature of Native-white relations in general."¹¹ I believe this can be said of some of the studio photographs in this chapter, the majority taken in Moose Jaw studios. Outside the studio and costume—away from the drive of settler creation and gaze--often times the photographs can convey a rich narrative of community, resilience, and connection.

Regardless of the reasons why many of the photographs were originally created, which may remain unknown, they still hold importance to many families and have their own purpose. Historian Jane Lydon has explored these ideas in her article "Democratising the Photographic Archive" where she argues that present Indigenous significance and use of historic photographs is very different from their past original purpose (which was often created by non-Indigenous people), thus the photographs and archives can be "democratised." This chapter will build upon this idea in examining Lakota people's requests for photographs, family collections of those photos, and their own narratives that accompany them. Lydon also wrote about the use and place

¹⁰ Brown and Peers, *Pictures Bring Us Messages*, 43.

¹¹ Ibid.

photographs can have in the Australian Indigenous context which is also reflected in the Wood Mountain Lakota experience:

Today many Wurundjeri people, the traditional owners of the Melbourne region, use the photographs to assert a kin-based identity, to record and strengthen family relationships. Despite their often very different original purpose, at a personal, individual level descendants may now define themselves intersubjectively through particular biographies, connections to other family members, and shared histories and values, which are generated through viewing photographs... Photos become a kind of family currency exchanged to flesh out family history, and cement ties between family members, triggering stories, and giving people a sense of connectedness to each other and the past.¹²

Photographs can help with the process of transferring knowledge and connecting relations. They help kindle discussion of the lives, experiences, and realities of those people and times, especially when people in the photographs are identified and remembered. This is why it is important to have photographs brought back to community and family members. Without the stories and connections, they lose their meaning.

Paul Seesequasis's book *Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun* beautifully showcased photographs of Indigenous people from across Canada between 1900 and 1970, in which he took the position of letting the photographs "speak for themselves."¹³ He provides context to the regions and communities in the photographs without overanalyzing each photograph or set of photographs specifically. Photographs do have a power that engages the viewer in a different and often deeper way than written text, but historic photographs also need to be connected to community and stories to have their richer meaning expressed. Photographs, like any other source, cannot stand alone and do not represent all of reality, no matter how easily sometimes the visual seduces the viewer into thinking they are an unbiased window into the past. Analyzing

¹² Jane Lydon, "Democratising the photographic archive," in Kirsty Reid and Fiona Paisley. *Sources and Methods in Histories of Colonialism: Approaching the Imperial Archive*. (New York: Routledge, 2017), 22-23.

¹³ Paul Seesequasis, *Blanket Toss Under the Midnight Sun* (Toronto: Knopf Canada, 2019), 5.

what a photograph depicts goes without question, but often it is just as fruitful to ask what a photographer has left out and why. Furthermore, often photographs need to work together to provide a more complete picture, so while it may seem repetitive, multiple photographs of the same people, places, and time periods appear in this chapter to work in concert. The photographs were clearly created with purpose, particularly if they date to when photography was a time consuming and expensive process. But the photos need the stories passed along with them to retain anything beyond being visually stimulating or speak to more than generalizations about “Indians” from the time. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is very much like the position of these photographs in context and community: to provide faces and humanity to ancestors and historical subjects, demonstrate connections and resiliency, and provide a reciprocated context between the written and the visual shared throughout this dissertation that give more meaning to both the stories and the photographs. As Ho-Chunk scholar Jones wrote:

To understand the photographs more fully, it is our task as viewers to add the historical contexts back in. Whether we read these photographs through the lens of tribal history or through family stories, the interpretation we place on the image today comes from our understanding of what the people in the photographs have experienced. Without stories or history, the photographs in this collection have little meaning.¹⁴

To add to this, the opposite can also be true: photographs can also give more meaning and humanity to the historical lives shared through written text, particularly for our current visually driven mainstream cultures in North America. The photographs and the stories can work in harmony to provide a more nuanced and deeper appreciation for the realities and relationships these people lived. I would argue that this also applies to material culture, and that often the true value of those things resides with the people and communities that have the memories, stories, and people connected to those objects, less so than the institutions that have giant collections of

¹⁴ Tom Jones, “A Ho-Chunk Photographer Looks at Charles Van Schaick,” in *People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879-1942* (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society, 2011), 24.

such objects out of sight and out of mind. Repatriation is another topic for another place and time deserving of deep thought and many pages, but in general, some discussion of material culture will be touched upon to get a deeper appreciation for the objects seen in the following photographs, and historical objects often work in very similar ways as photographs.

An important part of these photographs, and of central importance to this study as well, are names because they signify Lakota connection, history, and cultural understandings. Many times, Lakota names have been poorly translated, either because of the lack of interpretation skills at the time or because they simply cannot be encapsulated neatly in English. Language and naming issues have been grappled with throughout this dissertation, but in the context of photographs names are important because they are central to passing down connections. When people remain nameless in photos, particularly when they have been removed from community and family for decades or generations, the significance and relevance quickly deteriorate, especially as many people naturally cannot pick out their ancestors' faces without names being included, especially those they have never met nor seen other photos of. Unfortunately, that is the case in a few of the photographs included in this chapter as well. Using these people's own names rather than their English names, the latter which were often taken or given to them later in life, will be given preference. For the younger generations, their English names will be used since that is what they were most commonly known by among their peers, family, and community members as English became more widely used in Lakota communities.

Names can have different significance historically and culturally though. Peers and Brown pointed out: "...some names recall significant events in Kainai history, images have immense value for people who hold those names today: they provide a visible link with the past, with those ancestors who held their names before them, and an opportunity to recall the stories

that some names are connected with.”¹⁵ In this way, names and photographs can work together to jog family and community members’ memories and to provide tangible links between people. Oglála elder Severt Young Bear described how Lakota names came from something spiritual or part of family history, and therefore it would be important to remember the stories associated with them. Most importantly, he discussed the certain contexts to using people’s proper names, typically only in ceremony or for making important requests of someone.¹⁶ He also distinguished between “ceremonial Indian” and “census” names, the latter being the name given at the time of census taking historically and subsequently passed down in the patriarchal and Christian Euro-American custom.¹⁷ However, the significance of names cannot override the significance of kinship: kinship terms were used over proper names amongst Lakota people historically. Another Oglála elder, Luther Standing Bear wrote: “All relations, not of the immediate family, and all close friends were *tahunsa* [t̥h̥aŋáŋši], or cousins, since it was not customary to call anyone by name.”¹⁸ This is especially important because individual names are just that, individualistic. Kinship terms on the other hand reflect collectiveness and connectedness, a much more Lakota understanding of the world. And as such, these photographs reflect those connections, as there are rarely photographs of just one Lakota person found in my research, the only exceptions being less than a handful of studio photographs. Most of the photographs here show people together in relation.

As mentioned briefly above, these photographs are also significant because many of the originals still reside with the families of the subjects. Copies were made by some archives and

¹⁵ Brown and Peers, *Pictures Bring Us Messages*, 115.

¹⁶ Severt Young Bear, *Standing in the Light: A Lakota Way of Seeing* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 10-12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁸ Luther Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 148.

museums, but often the originals still are kept by a descendent of the people in the photographs. Some photographs were taken by non-Indigenous people and were not shared with the Lakota individuals or families, instead they were created solely for a settler audience, but that is less often the case in the photographs represented here. This might be attributed to the selection of photographs I find most meaningful and that I am most familiar with: those that come from community and family, rather than those that might have been created and collected by outsiders. The latter were often carried away to audiences and places that were removed from the original Lakota sitters and therefore maybe the context, connection, and relevance eventually forgotten by those that possess the photos. This is often the case in large institutions' collections of Indigenous art, objects, and images. There might be many more photographs in existence that are relevant here, but their stories and presence have been removed and forgotten because they have been physically removed from the people they would have held the most significance for—those connections and stories are much harder to recover as well. In the following discussion of one collection of photographs I recently unboxed in an archive, these avenues of inquiry will be taken up in more detail.

The following analysis will be grouped around themes emerging from the photographs and will be in concert with later discussions throughout this dissertation. Sometimes each photograph is examined individually, and other times a group of photographs is discussed. This has to do largely with the information available about certain photographs, what can be gleaned from them visually, and how they work together to convey meaning and interpret the past. In the group analyses, however, sometimes the sole reason for a photograph's inclusion is the depiction of certain people who will feature in more detail in later chapters. This chapter is not representative of all the photographs I consulted in my research (over 300 photographs from a

variety of family and archival collections that were graciously shared with me) and as mentioned previously, nor representative of all the families, individuals, or places that will be discussed. Sometimes the opposite is true as well: a particularly rich photograph will feature individuals that will not be heard from again in the following chapters, but their stories here tie into the overall theme and meanings throughout this dissertation in just as important ways.

Héktakiya Wičhóuŋčhaǵe, Previous Generations

One photograph has long been my favourite because it shows so many of the matriarchs of the older generation that I heard stories of growing up, and some of these women I have never seen another photograph of. This photograph (Figure 2.2) centers the women of the Wood Mountain Lakota community and was more than likely taken by Father Gontran Laviolette as one of the two original copies resides in his collection at the Société historique de Saint-Boniface archives. Laviolette was an Oblate priest who became close with Dakota and Lakota people in southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Through his missionary efforts he visited Wood Mountain several times, working to build a Catholic church on the reserve which was completed in 1946. He became very good friends with many Lakota people on the reserve at Wood Mountain, though sometimes his photographs are very much in tune with celebrating the success of his converts to Catholicism. This distinction can be seen in his notes as well, where “B.C.” follows certain people’s names who were baptized Catholic and “P” demarked those that were “pagans.”¹⁹ The Laviolette photographs and papers were unprocessed when I visited them in the summer of 2020, and the Société historique de Saint-Boniface archives were supportive and eager in providing me with high quality copies in order to help identify people in the

¹⁹ Laviolette’s address book and some other notes often were recorded in French, so these notes may also appear as “baptisé catholique” and “païenne/païen.” Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Gontran Laviolette, small address book with notes, archival reference number not yet assigned.

photographs. I could identify a few of my own ancestors, but they did not play largely into the photographs because, as Laviolette recorded, they were “pagans”²⁰ and the Lakota people that he was closest to were Catholic converts. I have sent some photographs on to other family and community members digitally, but unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic has made gathering with elders who may be in these photographs or remember their relatives’ faces in order to work to connect more memories, names, and stories about these photographs, has not been possible yet.²¹

The other original copy of this photograph is part of the Dorothy Ogle photograph and postcard collection, owned and cared for by Bill Mielke of Wood Mountain (Dorothy was the daughter of W.H. Ogle and *Thašúŋke Hiŋ Hótewiŋ*/Roan Horse/Mary Ogle). This copy has James (Jimmie) or Elizabeth (Lizzie) Ogle’s (Dorothy’s brother and sister-in-law) writing on the back that supported some of the earlier conclusions I had made, including that it was taken at the Wood Mountain Stampede in 1938. Notably, Lizzie and Jimmie addressed the photograph on the back “to Willie and Mazie,” Willie being Jimmie’s older brother who lived with his wife Mazie (née Longee) in Montana. This writing exemplifies the cross-border kinship connections of Lakota people well into the twentieth century. One more copy also exists in the private collection of Lawrence and Denny Lamb, whose great-grandmother is pictured in the photograph, *Ihá Waštéwiŋ*/Good Laughing Woman (Mary Thomson), and their grandmother Nellie Lamb (née Thomson) passed the photo on to them. That both Nellie Lamb and Dorothy Ogle had copies of the photograph suggests it was printed multiple times to share with family members at Wood Mountain sometime after it was taken.

²⁰ Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Gontran Laviolette, small address book with notes, archival reference number not yet assigned.

²¹ Thank you to Joan Bellegarde, Irene Poitras, and Thelma McRae for helping to identify some of the photographs in Laviolette’s collection.

The visual components of the photograph can shed some light on community history and kinship as well. It seems to have been taken rather impromptu, as the people are lined up, but not completely staged. They are along a road, some holding each other's children, and all in their fancy clothes. The photograph is a visual indication of close community and kinship connections between the generations, especially centered on the elder women. The people on horseback in the background are unidentified, except for one, Nún̄pa Kikté, but they also give a sense of self-representation, especially the man with his back turned to the camera. Laviolette was a Dakota/Lakota speaker (and the presumed photographer) and he could have told everyone gathered here that he wanted to take a photo; that all the subjects are lined up and facing the camera, even most of the people on horseback, seems to suggest they were coordinating with him. So, possibly the man on horseback had turned his horse away on purpose, or could not be bothered to be part of the photo and remained how he was. Though the people and horses are in their finery, it is in a way that reflects their own use of aesthetic, self-representation, place, and mix of traditional and modern dress—all aspects that will be to the contrary or at least uncertain to varying degrees in studio portraits to follow. This photograph helps to remind the viewer (with the assistance of the names and place) of the smallness of community, the overlapping and intertwined kinship connections, the importance of horses, and the centrality of the matriarchs depicted.



Figure 2.2

Left to right: unidentified child, Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ/Crossed Eagle Quills (Julia Lethbridge),²² John Lecaine Jr., Christina Lecaine holding baby Grace, unnamed girl, Mrs. Little Eagle, Thiyoŋpa/Door (Ellen Brown), Ptesáŋwiŋ/White Buffalo (Katrine Ferguson), Ruth Hawk, Ihá Waštéwiŋ/Good Laughing Woman (Mary Thomson), Thašúnke Hiŋ Hótewiŋ/Roan Horse (Mary Ogle), and Nora Ferguson. In background on horse to the right is Núnpa Kikté/Kills Two (Big Joe Ferguson). Taken during Wood Mountain Stampede, 1938.

Société historique de Saint-Boniface, 91700

In many ways, the women in this photograph were the foundation to the Lakota community at Wood Mountain because they made purposeful decisions to stay in the Uplands and cemented Wood Mountain as an enduring Lakota community. Maybe most importantly, these women's lives and influence on the shaping of the Wood Mountain Lakota community by passing down their language, stories, and resilience is very much remembered and shared even yet today. Therefore, this photograph and what it represents is important to beginning the study of Wood Mountain Lakota photographic history that follows. Each older woman in this

²² Some renditions of this photograph's caption have this first woman listed as Tasunke Topa Naunkewin/Her Horse Runs Four Times, Julia's mother. But according to her grandson William Lethbridge, she died in 1923 so this could not be her in this photograph and so this must be her daughter Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ/Crossed Eagle Quills (Julia Lethbridge). Other photographs of Julia resemble her in this photograph as well. Moose Jaw Public Library Archives, A. First Nations, Sioux files, Letter from William Lethbridge to Mrs. Knight, May 27, 1970.

photograph is a large part of the foundation of the surviving Lakota families still found at Wood Mountain today and which will be discussed throughout.

Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ/Crossed Eagle Quills²³ (**Julia Lethbridge**) was born in 1866 in the Powder River Country west of the Black Hills.²⁴ She came with her parents, *Thašúŋke Tópa Naúŋkewiŋ* (Her Horse Ran Four Times) and *Mathó Lúta* (Red Bear), to Canada when she was about eleven years old after the Battle of the Little Bighorn. She moved with her family to Batoche in about 1881 where her parents worked for Métis families.²⁵ Her father was imprisoned for his part in the 1885 North West Resistance and after that time she moved with her mother to the Qu'Appelle Valley and Regina area. While there sometime in the late 1880s or early 1890s, she began a relationship with Charles Lethbridge, a surveyor. Charles Anthony Watts Lethbridge was more than likely the nephew of Edgar Dewdney. Dewdney himself also started out as a surveyor and eventually became the Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories, Minister of the Interior, and the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs.²⁶ Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ had several children with Lethbridge: William Lethbridge (Wasú Mathó/Hail Bear, born 1895), Peter/Pete Lethbridge (*Heháka Glešká*/Spotted Elk, born c. 1898), James/Jim Lethbridge (*Mathó Lúta* /Red Bear, born 1905), and Kate Lethbridge (born c. 1893). Charles eventually moved away and Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ moved to Moose Jaw to join other Lakota people there. She worked as a

²³ Spelling is unclear but this is the most common spelling by her descendants. I cannot find a Lakota word that corresponds with “page” though the “sun” part of this spelling may correspond with the Lakota word “šúŋ” or large wing feathers of a bird. Though I am not clear on the actual meaning of “Sunpagewin” this is the spelling that I will use throughout this dissertation because it is what is most frequently in the records and the spelling her family uses.

²⁴ Moose Jaw Public Library, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, letter from William Lethbridge to Leith Knight, May 27, 1970.

²⁵ Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times*, Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, “Wanbli Sunpagewin,” https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_25e.html#Wanbli-Sunpagewin

²⁶ Fanny Dewdney Lethbridge Lawrence was the mother of Charles Anthony Watts Lethbridge and it is more than likely that Fanny was the sister of Edgar Dewdney, though official documentation of Fanny’s parents or Dewdney’s siblings has not been located yet. For one reference to Fanny as Dewdney’s sister see, “The Bravest Canadian: McBride family history and West Kootney local history” blog, <https://thebravestcanadian.com/category/edgar-dewdney/>, accessed February 17, 2021.

servant and sold beadwork to make a living; her daughter Kate also worked as a servant in Moose Jaw for many years.²⁷ Eventually she moved to the reserve at Wood Mountain. She died on November 11, 1956.²⁸

Thiyópa/Door (Ellen Brown) came to Canada with her parents, Išná Wakhúwa (Hunts Alone) and Wamniyomni (Whirlpool or Whirlwind)²⁹ in 1876 or 1877. Her birth date is not exactly known, though the 1906 and 1911 Canadian censuses list her birth year around 1866 based on her age at those times.³⁰ Her family was part of the Charging Thunder thiyóšpaye,³¹ part of the Húŋkpapha oyáte that would eventually become part of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. She married Frederick Brown, a NWMP member and later rancher at Wood Mountain,³² and they had six children together: William/Billy (born c. 1881), Ellen/Nellie (born c. 1885), Alonzo/Lawrence/Toto (born c. 1890), Alfred (born c. 1894), Albert/Soak (born c. 1895), and Nora (born c. 1897). She was a midwife in the Wood Mountain area to many Lakota and settler women and Frederick helped construct the telegraph line between Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw, later called the Pole Trail, and also became the lineman who worked checking on it.³³ In about 1920 Fred and Thiyópa separated (see chapter three for more on this) and she went to live

²⁷ LAC, Statistics Canada, RG 31, 1921 Census of Canada, Saskatchewan, District No. 221, Subdistrict No. 50, Moose Jaw, page 1, Kate Lethbridge.

²⁸ Moose Jaw Public Library, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, letter from William Lethbridge to Leith Knight, May 27, 1970.

²⁹ NARA, Washington, D.C., RG 75, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, File 68800-1921-0953, Part 1, Affidavit by John Dog Eagle, March 10, 1922.

³⁰ LAC, RG 31-C-1, Statistics Canada, *Census of the Northwest Provinces, 1906*, Microfilm reels T-18353 to T-18363, Saskatchewan, Assiniboia District No. 12, Subdistrict No. 3A, Page 1; LAC, Statistics Canada, RG 31-C-1, *Census of Canada, 1911*, Microfilm reels T-2032 to T-20460, Saskatchewan, District No. 211, Subdistrict No. 28, Moose Jaw, Page 5.

³¹ NARA, Washington, DC, RG 75, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, Affidavit by John Dog Eagle, January 11, 1922 and Affidavit by Charging Thunder, January 11, 1922.

³² Carol Morrow, "Searching for Fred Brown: A Case Study," *The Pioneer Times*, Cloyne and District Historical Society, Vol. 10, No. 2 (December 2012), 6-7, <http://pioneer.mazinaw.on.ca/news/2012/Fall%202012%20edition.pdf>.

³³ Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times*, Wood Mountain Ranching Biographies, "Tiopa," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_21e.html#Tiopa

at the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana. Frederick died in 1925 and is buried on his homestead at Wood Mountain. Possibly around 1922 Thiyópa married Frank Derby on the Fort Peck Reservation. The 1930 U.S. census lists Frank Derby and his wife, Mary Derby, which is likely Thiyópa since she is not enrolled in the tribe there. She is listed as 14 years his senior (approximately born around 1863), and as a “Teton Sioux” compared to her Yankton husband.³⁴ Thiyópa died in 1943 at Fort Peck.

Ptesáŋwiŋ/White Buffalo (Katrine Ferguson) was born in about 1872 and came to Canada with her father Zuyá Thehíla (Loves War), who was the son of Mnikhówožu leader Wí Sápa (Black Moon). She married Núnpa Kikté/Kills Two (Big Joe Ferguson) around 1900 and they lived at Moose Jaw for many years where she made beadwork to sell. In 1911 they moved to the reserve at Wood Mountain. They had many children together, but four survived into adulthood: Bill (Nážiŋyaŋpi/They Hold Him At Bay, born c. 1901), George (Itúh’añla/Donates/Gives Away, born c. 1905),³⁵ Ida (Ĥupáhuwiŋ/Bird Wings Woman), and Lisa (Tħášúnke Wanjyáŋkapiwiŋ/They See Her Horse, born c. 1902). Ptesáŋwiŋ died in 1946 and is buried at Wood Mountain on the reserve.

Iħá Waštéwiŋ/Good Laughing Woman (Mary Thomson) was born between 1867 and 1869 and came to Wood Mountain with her parents Ĥetáŋ Zí (Yellow Hawk, sometimes also called Ĥláhlaya/Rattling) and Makhá Thówiŋ (Blue Earth Woman). They were part of the Takes the Gun thiyóšpaye.³⁶ In about 1882, Iħá Waštéwiŋ married James Harkin (J.H.) Thomson, a former NWMP member stationed at Fort Walsh and Wood Mountain who later became the

³⁴ NARA, Washington, D.C., Bureau of the Census, 1930 U.S. Federal Census, Montana, Enumeration District 0009, Roosevelt School District, Sheet No. 4A.

³⁵ This is a Dakota way to say “to donate” or “to giveaway.” Maybe it was more common in the past, but the Lakota language way to say donate is “otúh’añ.” However, this name has been recorded as Itúh’añla so it could be possible it was an older Lakota word as well or that they had Dakota family/roots.

³⁶ NARA, Washington, D.C., RG 75, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, File 68800-1921-0953, Part 1, Affidavit by John Dog Eagle, March 10, 1922.

postmaster and telegraph operator at Wood Mountain when he left the NWMP in 1884. Together they started horse ranching, supplying the NWMP with riding horses, and later started cattle ranching as well. They had eleven children together, eight survived into adulthood: John (Hokšíla/Boy or Óta Khutépi/They Shoot Lots, born 1884), James (Wakínyan Čhaᅇgléška/Chain Lightning, born 1886), Percy (born 1889), Nellie (Mázaskawiᅇ/Silver Woman, born 1893), Andrew (Bully, Mázawakᅇaᅇ Wičhákhi/He Took the Gun From Them, born 1895), George (Cow Puncher, born 1898), Ida (Thí Kiᅇ Wanýáᅇkewiᅇ/Can See Her House, born 1900), Frank (Jepi/Spurs, born 1903), Willie (Ziᅇtkála/Bird, born 1906), Howard (Wakᅇápᅇ/Winner, born 1910), and Bessie (born 1914). They lived with their children on a quarter of land James received from the NWMP upon his discharge right next to the NWMP post at Wood Mountain, first in an adobe house and then in wood frame houses, the first of which burned down. The second frame house was built around 1919 and when James died in 1923, Iᅇá Waštéwiᅇ moved back into the adobe and rented out the frame house to be used as the Red Cross Hospital at Wood Mountain. Iᅇá Waštéwiᅇ died in 1949 and is buried with James in the Thomson family cemetery on their original quarter of land south of the old post.

Tᅇšaúᅇke Hiᅇᅇhotawiᅇ/Roan Horse (Mary Ogle) was born between about 1874 and 1876, and her father was named White Cap. Not much is known of Tᅇšaúᅇke Hiᅇᅇhotawiᅇ's young life, but in about 1890 or 1891 she married Englishman William Hall (W.H.) Ogle and lived with him on the Milk River in Montana where he worked for the N Bar N Ranch. It may have been Thiyópa who introduced the couple to each other, and later she delivered all their children.³⁷ In 1898, W.H. Ogle bought Edward (Buffalo/Buff) Allen's ranch at the Wood

³⁷ Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times*, Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, "Tasunke Hin Hotewin (Roan Horse/Mary Ogle)," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_33e.html#Tasunke-Hin-Hotewin; Ibid., "Tiopa," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_21e.html#Tiopa.

Mountain Old Post and they moved there to expand their ranching enterprise.³⁸ They started out raising draft horses to sell to incoming farmers to the west and eventually cattle ranching.

T̥šašúnke Hín̥hótawin̥'s father White Cap lived with them at the ranch as well.³⁹ They had seven children together: William Jr./Willie (born 1892), James (Jimmy/Č̥haŋnún̥pa Š̥á/Red Pipe, born 1893), Dorothy (born 1895), Edith (born 1897), Richard (born 1899), Lucy (born 1901), and Joseph (Joe, Ógle Š̥á/Red Shirt, born 1904). The 1897 Fort Peck Indian Census Rolls, shows

“Mrs. Ogle” was enrolled with her children William, James, and Dorothy as

Yanktonai/Ihán̥kth̥uŋwaŋna Dakota.⁴⁰ It could be that T̥šašúnke Hín̥hótawin̥ was

Ihán̥kth̥uŋwaŋna or had relatives there who she was enrolled with, but because she only shows up in this one census, it is hard to know for certain. A.H.N. Gore, who lived with the Ogles on

their ranch, stated that her father was Hún̥kpap̥ha which is possible as lines between related

Dakota and Lakota people were never hard and fast.⁴¹ W.H. Ogle went back to his homeland of

England to enlist in the First World War in 1915 and after the war, he sold all his cattle and

horses at Wood Mountain. Shortly thereafter, in 1919, he left Wood Mountain for good,

returning to England. He died in England in 1953.⁴² Ogle had left most of the ranch affairs with

his business associate Gore, but T̥šašúnke Hín̥hótawin̥ continued living at Wood Mountain and

ranching with her children as well. She died on October 23, 1942⁴³ and is buried in the Ogle

family cemetery on their ranch.

³⁸ William Lethbridge, “Notes on the Sioux” in *They Came to Wood Mountain*, page 23; and Mrs. Allen, “Mrs. Allen” in *They Came to Wood Mountain*, page 25.

³⁹ WMHS, George Douglas Papers, RG3.F3.17, A.H.N. Gore, “Stories of Wood Mountain: Chief White Cap.”

⁴⁰ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, *Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940*, Fort Peck Agency, Microfilm M595, Roll 39, Line 3.

⁴¹ Eventually her son, William, Jr., would marry a woman from Fort Peck as well, Maize Longee, and they lived between Fort Peck and Wood Mountain. In the Indian Census Rolls for Fort Peck however he is listed as not enrolled but their children and Maize are. Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, *Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940*, Fort Peck Reservation 1934, Maize and William Ogle, Microfilm M595, Roll 159, Page 190.

⁴² William Ogle, “William Ogle,” in *They Came to Wood Mountain*, 33-34.

⁴³ Dorothy Ogle photograph and postcard collection, photo number 40, courtesy of Bill Mielke and Glenda Polley.

These women represent many of the historic and the still remaining Lakota families at Wood Mountain. Only one other, the 1930 Wood Mountain Stampede panoramic photograph, has this many Lakota elders in it and many of these same women, though the stampede photograph is less personal, does not include the children, and unfortunately not everyone is identified (Figure 2.3). These photographs show the close connections of Lakota people and their ability to endure, survive, and adapt while being Lakota and part of the wider Wood Mountain community.



Figure 2.3
Portion of 1930 Wood Mountain Stampede panoramic photograph with Lakota people.
WMHS 101

Moose Jaw Photographs

Nineteenth and early twentieth-century posed studio photography of Indigenous people are familiar scenes to most, especially those of famous people. Lakota leaders like Chief Sitting Bull and Chief Red Cloud were photographed multiple times in this kind of way and their images

were widely circulated, becoming the basis for much of the general public's image of Indians from the 1880s onward. The below photograph (Figure 2.4) fits this kind of image well. The photograph is of two couples, *Tħášúnke Nún̄pawĩŋ*/Her Two Horses (Emma Lecaine, née Loves War) and *Okhúte Šíča*/Hard to Shoot (John Okute/Lecaine, Sr.), and *Nún̄pa Kikté*/Kills Two (Big Joe Ferguson) and *Ptesán̄wiŋ*/White Buffalo (Katrine Ferguson, nee Loves War). It was most likely taken in about 1902 in Moose Jaw.⁴⁴ One copy of this photograph exists as a postcard, made by the Moose Jaw Drug and Stationery Company and captioned "The Heads of Two Sioux Indian Families," and this postcard has a message dated from January 1903, which supports the 1902 possible date of the original sitting.⁴⁵ The photograph style is in line with portraits of married couples where the convention was for the husband to be seated and the wife to stand beside him. But this photo also tells of these Lakota people's circumstances and connections. Firstly, the women in this photograph, *Tħášúnke Nún̄pawĩŋ* and *Ptesán̄wiŋ*, are sisters (and their resemblance to each other is noticeable). They were granddaughters of *Mnikhówožu* Chief Black Moon and their father was *Zuyá Thehíla*/Loves War and in some records these women have their father's name as their surname. These two couples adopted surnames of Okute/Lecaine and Ferguson respectively and much of the community are their direct descendants. These four people are still keystones of Wood Mountain Lakota community, kinship, and oral histories today.

⁴⁴ Moose Jaw Public Library, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, "Old Photo Proud Possession of Okute," May 20, 1961.

⁴⁵ This postcard is in the personal collection of Chelsea Klassen, Moose Jaw. Personal communication with Chelsea Klassen, February 4, 2021.



Figure 2.4

Left: T̄šašúnke Nún̄pawin/Her Two Horses (Emma Loves War) & Okhúte Šíča/Hard to Shoot (John Okute/Lecaine, Sr.)

Right: Nún̄pa Kikté/Kills Two (Big Joe Ferguson) & Ptesán̄wiŋ/White Buffalo (Katrine Loves War)

Moose Jaw Public Library Archives 68-277

T̄šašúnke Nún̄pawin/Her Two Horses (Emma Lecaine, nee Loves War) was born in approximately 1868 as she was about nine years old when she fled with her family after the Little Bighorn.⁴⁶ She was the sister of Ptesán̄wiŋ as mentioned above. When she was thirteen, her father convinced her to marry NWMP member Archibald Lecaine (see chapter three for more discussion of this) so that their family could be supported, particularly with food, through the scarce years. They had one child, Alice (born c. 1888). Lecaine eventually moved back east and T̄šašúnke Nún̄pawin stayed back at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain. In about 1888 or 1889, T̄šašúnke Nún̄pawin remarried **Okhúte Šíča/Hard to Shoot (John Okute/Lecaine, Sr.)** and

⁴⁶ Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times*, Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, “Tasunke Nupawin,” https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_14e.html#Tasunke

they had five children together: John (Wouŋkapi Šni/They Can't Knock Him Down, born 1890), Charles (born 1892), Walter (born 1894), Elizabeth (Thániya Wakháŋ/Her Breath Is Holy, born 1895), and George (born 1896). Okhúte Šíča was born about 1866 or 1868 to Thášína Híŋ Wašté (His Fur Robe Is Good) and Apé Lutawiŋ (Red Insect Wings Woman). Okhúte Šíča was part of the Kigláška thiyóšpaye of Húŋkpaŋhá.⁴⁷ Thášúŋke Núnŋpawiŋ and Okhúte Šíča lived near Moose Jaw where she worked as domestic help to some settler families, until 1907 when they stayed at Wood Mountain. They spent the rest of their lives on the reserve at Wood Mountain and are buried there: Thášúŋke Núnŋpawiŋ died in 1940 and Okhúte Šíča in 1922. More of their experiences in Lakhóta Thámákhočhe will be discussed in chapter five.

Núnŋpa Kikté/Kills Two (Big Joe Ferguson) was born in about 1868 and family stories tell how as a boy he held the horses for warriors during the Battle of the Little Bighorn.⁴⁸ There was one man Núnŋpa Kikté called his brother, Bee (Tohmuha/Tuŋmúŋga), who was enrolled on the Fort Peck Reservation with the Yanktonai Dakota (Iháŋktŋuŋwaŋna).⁴⁹ As a young man of about 16 at Moose Jaw, it may have been possible Núnŋpa Kikté went to Batoche to fight in the Northwest Resistance as a handful of other Lakota men had.⁵⁰ While he was living at Moose Jaw, he worked as a butcher for Hugh Ferguson, and eventually was given the Ferguson surname from his employer.⁵¹ As mentioned above, Núnŋpa Kikté married Ptesáŋwiŋ and they lived at Moose Jaw for many years. Later when they moved to Wood Mountain permanently in 1914, he

⁴⁷ Personal collection of Lecaine/Okute Sica family, document outlining John Lecaine's family by John Lecaine, original kept by Gus Lecaine and a copy made for Ron Papandrea, the latter who shared this with me.

⁴⁸ Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times*, Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, "Nupa Kikte (Kills Twice-Big Joe)," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_07e.html#Nupa-Kikte

⁴⁹ See Denver NARA, RG 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Misc lett sent, 1914-17, 8NS-75-97-181, Box #43, Letter from Fort Peck Superintendent C.B. Lohmiller to J.H. Grayson regarding Joe Nupakikte's request of his brother Bee's estate, March 15, 1915. Also see Washington D.C. NARA, RG 75, *Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940*, Microfilm Roll M595_153, 1909, Line 3, Fort Peck Agency, Yanktonai Sioux/Dakota, Census number 58.

⁵⁰ Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times*, Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, "Nupa Kikte (Kills Twice-Big Joe)," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_07e.html#Nupa-Kikte

⁵¹ J.F. MacCallum, "A Territories Shepherd," in *Canadian Cattlemen*, January 1951, page 15.

worked for many ranchers in the area. He died in the spring of 1953 and is buried on the Wood Mountain reserve.⁵²

The posed aspect of the couples' studio photograph is noteworthy because it is so visually rich. It is unclear whether some of the clothing they are wearing were studio props and which pieces are theirs. The women's dresses in particular are very unique to any fancy dress worn by Lakota women at Wood Mountain at the same time or later. They may have been supplied by the studio, but dresses such as these with so many ribbons were becoming more popular on women's fancy dresses. Lakota women's dresses did feature some ribbon, but more often elk teeth, beads, or shells. Both dresses seem to have significant volume in the skirt which was becoming more popular in the late 1900s and into the 1910s for social fancy dresses of many Plains Indigenous women as well as Edwardian fashions of the time. The Annie Wallis Collection in the Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery has clothing that was originally gathered and gifted from Lakota people at Moose Jaw which date to the same approximate time period as this photograph.

Though there are no examples in that collection of Lakota women's styles of fancy dress with so many ribbons this does not necessarily mean that large ribbon dresses such as these did not exist.

Two photographs of women from Wood Mountain in their finery from close to the same time show more common Lakota styles and dress construction (Figures 2.5 and 2.6). Note the straighter skirt sides and the open sleeves in comparison to Figure 4. Showing skill, social status, and wealth was especially communicated through the use of dentalium, shells from the Pacific coast like in the woman's cape (Figure 2.5), and the use of elk teeth, whether real or imitation made out of bone, wood, or shell (Figure 2.6). Ribbons were used, but in much smaller quantities

⁵² John Okute-Sica "Last of the old Sioux dies at Wood Mountain," *Regina Leader Post*, Regina, Saskatchewan, May 8, 1953, page 2; and "Big Joe, Witness of Custer's Last Stand, Has Died," *Brandon Daily Sun*, Brandon, Manitoba, June 9, 1953, page 20.

and strategically placed at the hem line of the skirt and sleeves. Unfortunately, these two women's names are unknown, emblematic of studio photographs possibly not intended for the subjects' possession and eventually kept in large institutional collections. The woman in Figure 2.6 seems to be standing on bare ground, which might indicate that these photos were taken in a traveling photographer's tent which was also common at the turn of the century. Regular everyday wear dresses were often calico cotton without embellishment in this period, which can be seen in other photographs below (Figures 2.12, 2.14, and 2.15) and part of the adaptation and change in the early twentieth century at Wood Mountain. The study of historical fancy dress for Lakota women, particularly around ribbon dresses/skirts warrants more research.



Figure 2.5
Portrait of Sioux woman in beaded dress,
from Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan.,
c. 1907-1908
Glenbow, NA-5462-11,
William Morris Graham fonds



Figure 2.6
Portrait of Sioux woman from Wood
Mountain, Saskatchewan,
c. 1907-1908
Glenbow, NA-5462-12,
William Morris Graham fonds

Another studio photo of Nún̄pa Kikté around the same time as Figure 7 (it is undated, but he looks close to the same age) shows him next to a young white woman, dressed in very similar clothing and adornment as the Lakota women in the earlier couples' photograph (Figure 4). This photograph dates from before 1905, as the photographer's stamp on the matting says "Moose Jaw, N.W.T.", and was taken at the Cunningham Studio, but nothing more is known of its origins, the photographer, or the studio. The identity of the white woman posing with him is unknown, though it is speculated that it could be Annie Wallis of Moose Jaw who took an interest in Lakota people and collected beadwork and other items from them at the turn of the last century. Wallis (née Smith) was the daughter of the CPR hotel manager in Moose Jaw, their family arriving there in 1890, and she became good friends with a number of Lakota people, including Nún̄pa Kikté. This photograph was in her possession. She was asked whether it was her in the photograph in an interview, and she stated it was not, but the interviewer at the time still wondered if it was indeed her.³⁵³ Where the white woman obtained her dress, breast plate, and belt for this photograph is not clear. The dress seems in line with turn of the century Euro-Canadian Edwardian styles rather than Lakota, particularly with the full skirt and voluminous sleeves. Nún̄pa Kikté is wearing possibly the same or a very similar ribbon sundance skirt as in the circa 1902 photograph. Why he wore it for a portrait is unclear because ceremonial pieces are typically not to be used outside of ceremony or photographed. Studies of Lakota clothing and handiwork beyond the pre-reservation period bead and quillwork are woefully lacking—not entirely surprising given the fixation on everything "traditional" and "disappearing" especially when it came to visual aspects like dress.

³⁵³ Moose Jaw Public Library, Archives Department, Interview with Annie Wallis, Cy Knight, and Jim Keah by unknown, "The Sioux of early Moose Jaw Days," page 8.



Figure 2.7

Núnpa Kikté/Kills Two (Big Joe Ferguson) and unknown woman (possibly Annie Wallis but unverified), n.d. Cunningham Photograph Studio, Moose Jaw, NWT.
Moose Jaw Public Library Archives 68-287

Regardless of which parts of these Moose Jaw portraits are studio props and which are not, these people did wear their own items and finery as well. A question Tom Jones asked in *People of the Big Voice*, applies here as well: does knowing that these people, photographed in their finery, were living in canvas tents affect the viewer's interpretation?³⁵⁴ That these people have fine clothing suggests that they were doing better than non-Indigenous people reported at the time. Often their poverty, starvation, and struggles were reported on by Moose Jaw citizens,

³⁵⁴ Tom Jones, "A Ho-Chunk Photographer Looks at Charles Van Schaick," 27.

police, missionaries, and government officials, and these tensions and reports will be discussed in more detail in chapter four. Frequent reports of being poorly dressed, living in ragged tents, and having little food are in opposition to these photographs. This shows Lakota people at Moose Jaw had not traded off their finery for necessities and therefore were not living in the squalor sometimes reported. This photograph shows that treasured items were maintained, added to, and tucked away for special occasions. Yet humble everyday living might have been the norm for them, especially in tents, which contrasted with settler ideas of wealth, social status, and respectability. At least a portion of the negative reports were part of the effort to forcefully push Lakota people away from Moose Jaw. This is not to say there was no hardship, but the criteria used to measure the standard of living were not Lakota understandings, particularly when material goods were dispersed amongst themselves consistently among those who were most in need (the elderly, young, ill, and injured). Many of the hardships and obstacles were a result of lack of access to necessities and were intentionally created by settlers to discourage Lakota people from being able to stay close to white settlements and farms. Photographs therefore can help deepen our understandings and complicate histories that rely heavily on written sources, including this study. Photographs help nuance written voices with physical and visual presence.



Figure 2.8

“Old Bogue, Sioux Indian with family at Moose Jaw, 1898”
 Taken by N.J. Porter, early photographer at Moose Jaw
 MJPL Archives, 76-2, J.E. Pascoe collection



Figure 2.9

“Old Bogue, Sioux Indian with family at Moose Jaw, 1898”
 Taken by N.J. Porter, early photographer at Moose Jaw
 MJPL Archives, 76-3, J.E. Pascoe collection

Two photographs that were created to possibly contrast settler refinement and advancement with the simple living of Lakota people at Wood Mountain are titled “Old Bogue, Sioux Indian with family at Moose Jaw” (Figures 2.8 and 2.9). **Old Bogue** got this name from Richard Bogue, storekeeper and mayor of Moose Jaw,³⁵⁵ but his Lakota name was **Šiyáka** (**Eared Grebe/Pied-Billed Grebe**³⁵⁶ or **Teal Duck** as was more commonly recorded in English at the time). He was also known as **Maštíŋča** (Rabbit but also recorded as White or Jack Rabbit in English sometimes)³⁵⁷ and **Big Jim**. Šiyáka was a brother to Mato Wakakesija (Mathó Wakákišya/Tormenting Bear), Kangi Tamaheca (Kħaŋǵi Thámáheča/Lean Crow), and Tasunke Skawin (Thášúnke Ská Wiŋ/Her White Horse).³⁵⁸ Both photographs feature him and his family sitting on the ground in front of their canvas tents and tipis, though the rest of people remain unnamed. Though their living conditions may seem meager, they are well dressed and the children in particular are dressed up. To settlers’ eyes at the time, their homes may have seemed rudimentary and rough, but living in tipis and having ease of movement were central to these people’s livelihoods. Certainly, for Šiyáka as one of the old “buffalo men” or men who lived hunting buffalo for most of his life, this would have been ordinary. The white men in the second photo are unidentified, but the sense of contrast of white modernity against the backdrop of Lakota tents and tipis would have been a widely understood message at the time. The “othering” of Šiyáka and his family in contrast to the white men and “civilization” falls in line with common tropes of the time. Tuscarora artist and art historian Jolene Rickard argues that many

³⁵⁵ C.W. Parker, ed., *Who’s Who and Why: A Biographical Dictionary of Men and Women of Western Canada*, Vol. 3 (Vancouver: International Press, 1913), 69.

³⁵⁶ Translations vary between Buechel’s Lakota-English Dictionary and the LLC dictionary, respectively.

³⁵⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Teton Sioux at present at Moose Jaw vicinity-28th October 1896" written by Thomas Aspdin.

³⁵⁸ Gontran Lavolette, *The Dakota Sioux in Canada* (Winnipeg: DLM Publications, 1991), centre photograph pages.

photographs of Indigenous people were to visually show the lack of technological “advancement” compared to settler society, which may also apply to these photographs of Šiyáka and his family, which clearly feature stretching frames, drying racks, and the standing woman may be leaning on a cooking tripod. Rickard writes: “The notion of progress of technological advancement remains a tenant of Western thought. Therefore, the desire to locate the state of technological development of a people was often an unacknowledged goal of many photographers. An indirect yet equally effective way to establish the technological acumen of Native people was to document their production or ‘level of technology.’”³⁵⁹ Nathaniel J. Porter, photographer of these two photos and well-known in Moose Jaw, occasionally toured the area to photograph the advancement of settlement, most often through capturing the new architecture in Moose Jaw and new farming technologies on the prairies surrounding the growing city. The juxtaposition of the technological production between the settlers and the Lakota in his photos then was maybe not unintentional.

A 1913 *The Moose Jaw Evening Times* article included another photo of Šiyáka with the following story: “‘Old Bogue’ is Medicine Man for the tribe now, and Lewis Rice, who took the photograph, together with the other Indian pictures used to illustrate the article [of Šiyáka’s sister and nephew], states that he is a pretty good business man as well, for he turned the tables on the artist, and demanded pay for the privilege of being photographed.”³⁶⁰ The veracity of this story is unknown, but it does subvert traditional narratives of photographs and power by providing possibly one example of Lakota people’s agency over their representation and supports their visual sovereignty. The term “visual sovereignty” was coined by Jolene Rickard who wrote:

³⁵⁹ Jolene Rickard, “The Occupation of Indigenous Space as ‘Photograph,’” in *Native Nations: Journeys in American Photography*, edited by Jane Alison (London: Barbican Art Gallery, 1998), 63.

³⁶⁰ *The Moose Jaw Evening Times*, “Remnants of Sioux Indians Who Camp Neat Moose Jaw: New Chieftain Chosen for Sioux Tribe of Indians Camping South of City,” Saturday, September 13, 1913, page 6.

“Sovereignty is the border that shifts indigenous experience from a victimized stance to a strategic one...As part of an ongoing strategy for survival, the work of indigenous artists needs to be understood through the clarifying lens of sovereignty and self-determination, not just in terms of assimilation, colonization, and identity politics.”³⁶¹ This includes photographic visual sovereignty, which Rickard has centred her scholarship and art creation on.³⁶² This story is in line with Lakota people’s independence and resiliency, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter four where interactions with settlers at Moose Jaw in particular are examined. Art historian Morgan F. Bell argues that by the late nineteenth century, photographs were common in many Native American communities, and families commissioned their own photographs, especially those people who were economically successful. She writes that these commissioned photographs were typically for private consumption and not created for non-Native audiences. She asserts that “Private portraits like these are historically significant because they provide evidence of increased personal control over representation of the self.”³⁶³ This can apply to the story of Šiyáka and how he took control of his image.

The 1913 newspaper article also featured individual portraits of each person, presumably taken on the same day by Lewis Rice though where these other photos exist beside the copies in the newspaper is unknown. The group photograph (Figure 2.10) shows Šiyáka with his sister Tšašúnke Ská Wiŋ (Her White Horse), and his nephew Tšašúnke Ópi (Alex/Alec Wounded Horse, the son of Šiyáka’s brother Kħaŋǵí Tħamáheča). Later in the 1940s, Father Laviolette published this photo in his book. William Lethbridge provided some more context for the photo.

³⁶¹ Jolene Rickard, “Sovereignty: A Line in the Sand,” *Aperture*, no. 139 (Summer 1995): 51.

³⁶² Jolene Rickard photography in *Native Nations: Journeys in American Photography*, ed. J. Alison, 57-71 (London: Barbican Art Gallery, 1998), 298-303.

³⁶³ Morgan F. Bell, “Some Thoughts on ‘Taking’ Pictures: Imaging ‘Indians’ and the Counter Narratives of Visual Sovereignty,” *Great Plains Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Spring 2011): 94-95.

Though some of the things in this photograph are more than likely props, it was probably part of Šiyáka's own commission as the newspaper described, especially because it was kept within the community, as Laviolette states that William Lethbridge had supplied the original.³⁶⁴

Lethbridge's grandfather, Mato Luta (Mathó Lúta/Red Bear), had gone with Šiyáka and others to live near Dundurn and then Batoche, Saskatchewan, and Lethbridge provided more information to Laviolette about the men's involvement in the 1885 Northwest Resistance. Šiyáka, his brothers, and Mathó Lúta took part in the Battle of Batoche: Mathó Wakákišya was killed in the battle and Kħaŋǵí Ťhamáheča and Mathó Lúta were tried for treason and sent to Stony Mountain Penitentiary.³⁶⁵ Kħaŋǵí Ťhamáheča was eventually released³⁶⁶ and made his way to Moose Jaw but Mathó Lúta died of his injuries shortly after being released from prison and was buried at Regina.³⁶⁷

There are a few objects in the photo of Šiyáka, Ťšašúnke Ská Wiŋ, and Ťšašúnke Ópi that are worth mentioning. The pipe bag Ťšašúnke Ópi is holding does not seem to be Lakota style beadwork, which could be indicative of possible trading or gift giving with the Cree or Métis, but it also could be a studio prop. On the other hand, the headdress Ťšašúnke Ská Win is wearing may very well be a personal item. A later photo of her husband, Šúnka Háŋska/Long Dog (also known as Crazy Jack), features him wearing a headdress with identical beadwork and white plumes in the front, but with added buffalo horns that do not seem to be attached into the original base of the headdress and therefore could have been easily a later addition (Figure 2.11).

³⁶⁴ Laviolette, *The Dakota Sioux in Canada*, centre photograph pages.

³⁶⁵ *Queen vs. Oka-Doka et. al.*, Sessional Papers of the Dominion of Canada, Volume 13, fourth session of the fifth Parliament, session 1886, No. 52, http://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.9_08052_19_13/846?r=0&s=1

³⁶⁶ "Kangi Tamaheca-(Lean Crow/Kasla)," *Legends of Our Times*, Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmce/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_03e.html#Kangi-Tamaheca; and Ron Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered: The Lakota Sioux Band That Stayed in Canada*, 4th ed. (La Vergne, TN: Lightning Source, 2012), Appendix G.

³⁶⁷ MJPL, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, Letter from William Lethbridge to Mr. Metcalf, November 15, 1970.

The wearing of headdresses by Lakota women is sometimes considered not typical and to some, taboo.³⁶⁸ Though historical photographs of women wearing headdresses exist, it is unclear whether sometimes they were asked or told to by photographers. Other cultural aspects have been considered gendered and taboo, but there were certain spaces and times when these perceptions do not hold hard and fast. For example, drumming is sometimes considered not historically or culturally appropriate for Lakota women, but they did drum in public Kat'éla/Woman's Lodges ceremonies to honour and remember fallen warriors.³⁶⁹

The photo of Šúŋka Háŋska is also significant because it was a self-commissioned photograph that he gave to someone important to him, a storekeeper in Moose Jaw, another example of Lakota use and control of their photographs. The imagery of him in his sweater and trousers with a headdress on is also a refreshing reminder of the everyday nature of Lakota people, not just the curiosities and exoticness photographers often wanted to portray. The headdress was gifted to Annie Wallis upon his death in 1917 and is part of her collection at the Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery.³⁷⁰

The three photographs of Šiyáka here (Figures 2.8, 2.9, and 2.10) were taken by well-known and well-established photographers at Moose Jaw, Lewis Rice and Nathaniel J. Porter. Both men's photography careers were defined by showcasing Moose Jaw as a progressive and burgeoning new city in western Canada. They are both known for their photographs of architecture and landscapes that show the development of the Moose Jaw area and western Canada more generally, and sometimes they photographed important Canadian political leaders

³⁶⁸ Sarah Carter and Inez Lightning also found images of Kainai, Siksika, and Nakota women wearing headdresses that were not props in their research for the *Ancestors: Indigenous Peoples of Western Canada in Historic Photographs* exhibit, http://bpsc_ancestors.sitemodify.com/

³⁶⁹ Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle*, 147.

³⁷⁰ MJPL, Archives Dept., A. First Nations-Sioux file "Excerpts from letter from Sioux William Lethbridge (descendant of Indian named 'Julia' who lived at Moose Jaw in early years) to W.H. Metcalf of Moose Jaw, dated Dec 16, 1968, Fir Mountain, Sask."

in studio portraits and at other public events. Porter was active as a photographer at Moose Jaw from about 1899 to 1909.³⁷¹ It may be that Rice purchased Porter's studio from him around 1907,³⁷² and Rice's studio was located above Porter's art and photograph supply store in Moose Jaw. There is a definite continuity in the style of photography from one photographer to another, even the exact same scenes were captured by both men.³⁷³ It may be that the earlier studio photographs (Figures 2.4 and 2.7) were also taken by Porter, though visiting photographers such as W.C. Lusk³⁷⁴ and W.J. Gould³⁷⁵ (both of whom had a studio in Regina and would visit Moose Jaw working out of tent studios) were also active in the same time period. Both Rice and Porter published souvenir booklets featuring Moose Jaw and area scenes to draw tourists and settlers to the area. Rice was the president of the Moose Jaw Board of Trade for a number of years so he was particularly interested in advertising the city as an ideal place for settlement and business, and as such he published several souvenir booklets and numerous postcards of Moose Jaw architectural and agricultural scenes.³⁷⁶ Indigenous people are almost completely non-existent in their photographs, and some of the only rare exceptions to this are the above photographs. One other example of Indigenous people in Lewis Rice's photography is in a personal collection, one postcard which has two photos inset with the captions "Sioux Crossing Qu'Appelle Valley" and

³⁷¹ *Moose Jaw Times*, Vol. X, No. 46, Moose Jaw, N.W.T., "Local and General News" Mr. N.J. Porter arriving and commencing his photography business, May 19, 1899, page 8, accessed from Peel's Prairie Provinces, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/MJH/1899/05/19/1/>; and Gray Scrimgeour, *Post Cards by Lewis Rice*, Issue #109, *The Northerner*, Newsletter of the Northern Canada Study Group, Postal History Society of Canada (April 2020), 61.

³⁷² Personal communication with Andrew Cunningham, member of the Toronto Postcard Club, December 2020.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ *Moose Jaw Times*, Vol. VIII, No. 14, "Local and General News" Mr. W.C. Lusk with tent studio in Moose Jaw, October 9, 1896, page 8, Peel's Prairie Provinces, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/MJH/1896/10/09/8/Ar00804.html?query=newspapers%7Clusk%7C%28publication%3AMJH%29%7Cscore>

³⁷⁵ *Moose Jaw Times*, Vol. VII, No. 21, "Local and General News" November 15, 1895, page 8, Peel's Prairie Provinces, <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/newspapers/MJH/1895/11/15/8/Ar00804.html?query=newspapers%7Cphotographer%7C%28publication%3AMJH%29%7Cscore>

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

the other “Indian Industrial School Near Regina, Canada.”³⁷⁷ Based upon what is known of Porter and Rice’s photography focus and styles, it is not too surprising that Indigenous people were not of interest necessarily to them in creating the kind of narratives and scenes that they wanted of Moose Jaw as a modern city, as Indigenous people were not included in those kinds of depictions at the time and often were posed as the antithesis to modernity and progress. Possibly the surviving photographs taken by Porter and Rice of Lakota people then were by Lakota people’s own commission and for their own consumption.



Figure 2.10
 “Teton Sioux of Wood Mountain, 1910”
 L-R: Shiaka, or Hell Driver Duck; Long
 Dog’s wife [Her White Horse]; Alexander
 Wounded Horse
 Glenbow Archives, NA-926-1



Figure 2.11
 “Crazy Jack, Moose Jaw Sioux, from
 original presented by him to Charlie
 Williams, of the Beehive Store, South Hill”
 n.d., but prior to 1917
 MJPL Archives Dept, 75-155

³⁷⁷ Andrew Cunningham personal collection of Lewis Rice postcards, personal communication, December 27, 2020.



Figure 2.12

“Mary, age 87, taken at home of Annie Wallis, 238 Manitoba Street East, Moose Jaw, Nov. 10th, 1920, did washing for old timers, Tasunke Topa Naunkewin”
MJPL, Annie Wallis Collection, 68-289

Another person of this older “buffalo men” generation whose life story exemplifies the rapidly changing landscape of the prairies and also of the flexibility and survivance of Lakota people is **Tasunke Topa Naunkewin (Tǎšúŋke Tópa Naúŋkewiŋ/Her Horse Ran Four Times)** (Figure 2.12). According to her grandson, William Lethbridge, she was born in 1834 in the North Platte River country in what is now Nebraska and Wyoming.³⁷⁸ Her husband was Mathó Lúta/Red Bear and they came to Canada after the Little Bighorn with their children, one being Lethbridge’s mother, Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ/Crossed Eagle Quills/Julia Lethbridge.

³⁷⁸ MJPL, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, Letter from William Lethbridge to Leith Knight, May 27, 1970.

Tǎšúŋke Tópa Naúŋkewiŋ and Mathó Lúta had gone to live at Batoche in 1881, and at the time of the Resistance in 1885, Tǎšúŋke Tópa Naúŋkewiŋ took their children to the Qu'Appelle Valley.³⁷⁹ As mentioned earlier, Mathó Lúta was imprisoned for his involvement in the Battle of Batoche and eventually died as a result. In a 1970 letter, Lethbridge questioned whether this photograph could have been taken in 1920 but thought maybe it was taken closer to 1900. This photo was taken outside the aforementioned Annie Wallis's home. Wallis was married in 1904 to John (Jack) Wallis and they would have probably moved to this house sometime after their marriage. As the photograph title mentions, Tǎšúŋke Tópa Naúŋkewiŋ made a living by washing laundry in Moose Jaw, something that was common work for Lakota women in the town at the time. Lethbridge mentioned that she was baptized Catholic and from then on always wore the crucifix seen in the photo, and because of this some Lakota people nicknamed her Crucifix Woman (Lakota translation unclear), though he did not remember her wearing it and therefore this is another reason why he thought this photo was taken before 1920.³⁸⁰ This photograph is special in that it is very candid, captures the ordinary, and she is smiling brightly; aspects that are often unusual in photographs of a single Lakota person because individual photos were usually posed studio portraits. This photo also hints at the spreading availability and accessibility of cameras closer to 1920. Tǎšúŋke Tópa Naúŋkewiŋ was remembered fondly among her non-Lakota friends at Moose Jaw, and in her lifetime, she was at the crossroads of several well-known historical events, navigating them sometimes alone with her children as

³⁷⁹ “Wanbli Sunpagewin,” *Ranching Biographies, Legends of Our Times*, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmce/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_25e.html#Wanbli-Sunpagewin

³⁸⁰ MJPL, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, Letter from William Lethbridge to Leith Knight, May 27, 1970.

many Lakota women had to do because of colonial violence and displacement, but finding their way back to family and community. She died in July of 1923 at Wood Mountain.³⁸¹

Positive relationships between settlers and Lakota people did take hold in some cases, though dominant negative views and treatment of Indigenous people still overshadowed the cultural climate even at small, new settlements like Moose Jaw. Examples of the negative (and sometimes outright violent) attitudes towards Lakota people at Moose Jaw will be examined in chapter four. Wallis's relationships with Lakota people are a good example of the positive ways the two segments of the Moose Jaw community could come together. Wallis was closer than most settlers to the Lakota, especially since she learned to speak some Lakota (she was called Iyeskawin/Iyéska Wiñ/Interpreter).³⁸² She assisted many Lakota people and was especially close to Núnpa Kikté and Ta Sina Ska Win (Tǎšína Ská Wiñ/Her White Shawl Woman), the wife of the leader at Moose Jaw, Tatanka Sapa (Tǎthánka Sápa/Black Bull). Tǎšína Ská Wiñ left all her belongings to Wallis after she passed away in 1910,³⁸³ and Wallis saw to it that the elderly woman was buried in the city cemetery.³⁸⁴

Relationships between individuals and families sometimes overcame and ignored more generalized and widely held views of Indigenous people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lakota people found friends, partners, and allies among some non-Indigenous people, more so maybe at Wood Mountain than at Moose Jaw. Wood Mountain was known more as a "frontier" with looser social strata, whereas Moose Jaw's residents were

³⁸¹ MJPL, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, Letter from William Lethbridge to Leith Knight, May 27, 1970.

³⁸² MJPL, Archives Department, A. First Nations-Sioux file, "The Sioux of Early Moose Jaw Days," interview with Jim Keah, Annie Wallis, and Sam McWilliams by Mrs. Cy (Leith) Knight, page 4.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁸⁴ Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, 14. See also: Randy Palmer, "Special ceremony unveils restored Tasinaskawin headstone," *Moose Jaw Today*, June 17, 2019, <https://www.moosejawtoday.com/local-news/special-ceremony-unveils-restored-tasinaskawin-headstone-1511279>

actively trying to make it into a modern and “British” city, which to many meant Indigenous people stood in the way of such progress. Settlers arriving in Moose Jaw thought they were coming to an already “cleared” part of the prairie, whereas at Wood Mountain it was clear that Lakota people were part of the community’s foundation families and the area’s culture. This is not to say negative interactions and views did not exist, but overall, the sentiment towards Lakota people at Wood Mountain prior to 1930 seems to have been much less hostile and Wood Mountain is where Lakota people often went when issues with settlers at Moose Jaw escalated. Government interference and assimilation efforts however were not necessarily any less at Wood Mountain, though executing those efforts was more difficult because of the relative remoteness prior to the railroad establishing the new town of Wood Mountain in 1927 north of the Old Post. In her examination of photographs from Fort Walsh in the 1870s, Heather Caverhill argues: “The existence of long term cross-cultural personal relationships, particularly those that resulted in families, is another feature of the social milieu of late-1870s Cypress Hills that contradicts stereotypes that separate Indigenous people and newcomers.”³⁸⁵ This is true of Wood Mountain too but well beyond the 1870s. Relationships could be positive, although depictions of such can be problematic, especially when said settlers don “Indian costumes” (Figures 2.7 and 2.13).

³⁸⁵ Heather Caverhill, “Masquerade and Modernity in the Cypress Hills: Performing Prairie Photography in the late 1870s” (MA thesis, University of Alberta, Department of Art and Design, 2014), 34.



Figure 2.13

“Sioux Indian Brave Heart (or Burnt Thigh) with his wife, and Mrs. Dick Decock³⁸⁶ and her children, at Wood Mountain”, n.d.

MJPL Archives Dept, 70-48

Copy of original owned by Mrs. R. Decock, Moose Jaw

³⁸⁶ Mrs. Dick Decock in this photograph is Violet Decock (nee Barton). Richard (Dick) Decock was a cowboy who started out working for W.H. Ogle and later homesteaded in the Wood Mountain area. Dick’s brother Henry Decock married Dorothy Ogle. Violet had come to Elm Springs (northeast of Wood Mountain) to work for another family as a housekeeper and nanny. She died in 1946 and Dick in 1962. See *They Came to Wood Mountain*, 70-72.



Figure 2.14
Jim, Mary, and Willie Ogle
WMHS 0019



Figure 2.15
Joe and Mary Ogle
WMHS 0020 and PAS R-A26476

Survivance and Self-Representation

Nuancing the atrocities of cultural genocide and physical violence Indigenous people have endured with the survival and agency of those peoples is a delicate balance at times, but necessary in order to respect historical people's realities and full humanity. Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor's creation and use of the term "survivance" has been exceptionally influential to many Indigenous scholars for this reason. He defines the term as such: "survivance, in the sense of native survivance, is more than survival, more than endurance or mere response; the stories of survivance are an active presence.... survivance is an active repudiation of dominance, tragedy,

and victimry.”³⁸⁷ Survivance applies beautifully to the history of visual representation of Indigenous people since photographs can capture this active presence. In the following photographs questions of costumes, studio props, and representation are less an issue because the photos do not follow the conventional and one-dimensional narratives of Lakota people and history, in depictions of traditional dress and mug-shot style profiles. Instead there are candid youth, people at their homes, and self-commissioned photos with friends and relatives. These photographs do not depict just basic survival or static cultural displays, but instead that Lakota people have always been adaptive.



Figure 2.16
“Highback, c. 1919”
MJPL, 98-93

³⁸⁷ Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses, Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 15.

The story of **High Back**, also known as **Paul High Back**, (Figure 2.16), is one that illustrates the movement, survivance, and connections of Lakota people across the 49th parallel, very similarly to those that will be discussed in more detail in following chapters. High Back was the son of Chief Black Moon and brother to Mary Black Moon-Aspdin. When Black Moon returned to the U.S. in 1889, High Back was among the family that went, and they eventually settled along Cherry Creek in the Cheyenne River Reservation. In December 1890, when he was twenty years old, High Back served as one of the scouts to Chief Big Foot/Spotted Elk and a group of about 300 Mnikh'ówožu people on their journey to join leaders at the Pine Ridge Reservation. Their travels south tragically ended in the Massacre of Wounded Knee. He was badly wounded but survived the massacre, later showing his scars while recalling his memories of the terrifying ordeal. His account of the massacre was recorded in 1956 and provides important insight into that devastating day and night.³⁸⁸ How this portrait of High Back became part of the Moose Jaw Public Library Archives Department, where it exists as a negative glass plate, is unknown. It possibly speaks to Lakota connections within Lakhóta Tħamákħoĉhe as it found its way there among relatives and friends who knew him. High Back married Wapħáha Núnpa Wiŋ (Two Bonnets) and lived at Fort Peck Reservation for the rest of his life. He returned to Wood Mountain from time to time, as is evident from his sister Mary Black Moon-Aspdin's statement in 1905 that lists him living in Canada³⁸⁹ and from a letter J.H. Thomson wrote on his behalf in 1910 at Wood Mountain which High Back signed.³⁹⁰ As we will see throughout this

³⁸⁸ "Paul High Back's Version of the Disaster of Dec 29, 1890 at Wounded Knee" as told to John Williamson, *The Wi-iyohi*, Monthly Bulletin of the South Dakota Historical Society, June 1, 1956, Vol. X, No. 3.

³⁸⁹ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Cheyenne River Agency, Series 1, Box 3, Folder 1905 Jan to Dec, Letter from Acting Commissioner Larrabee to Ira A. Hatch, Indian Agent Cheyenne River regarding Mary Aspdin's application for re-enrollment, May 26, 1905.

³⁹⁰ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 1, Letters Received, Box 4, Folder 1910 Nov-Dec, High Back letter from Wood Mtn to Cheyenne River, November 28, 1910.

study, this back-and-forth travel was not uncommon and defines the Wood Mountain Lakota experience before 1930. High Back is buried at the Mnisda Presbyterian Church cemetery, six miles west of Poplar, Montana. High Back, like many others, lived through the Battle of the Little Bighorn as a child, came to Canada, returned to the U.S., and then survived the Wounded Knee Massacre, all by the time he was twenty years old. These events of his generation have immortalized by so many studies, films, and images, but we often forget the personal level for the people that lived through them. More of High Back's relatives' stories during the 1890s will be discussed in chapter three and four. High Back's image and experiences remind us of the connections amidst the intense turmoil that was happening within Lakḥóta Ṭhamáḥčoche, and that Wood Mountain was part of those stories and connections, though often left out of the narrative. His image luckily remains to provide these reminders, while many others do not.



Figure 2.17

Anúnkḥasaṅ Mathó (Bear with Grey on Both Sides)/Pḥehín Zí (Yellow Hair)/Billy Boccase/Bokas & son

WMHS 0939 and original in personal collection of Lamb family.

Another significant part of Wood Mountain Lakota history and survivance is the adaptation to cowboy lifestyles. The self-representation in these photographs is reflective of their adaptations that melded with Lakota understandings, especially their connections to horses and land.³⁹¹ The photograph of **Anúnkħasaŋ Mathó (Bear with Grey on Both Sides/ Billy Bocasse/Bokas/ Pħehín Zí/Yellow Hair)** is important in this regard because it challenges standard narratives and stereotypes about Lakota men (Figure 2.17). Firstly, it challenges ideas that “cowboys and Indians” are in opposition. Anúnkħasaŋ Mathó was a very successful horse trader and did so melding Lakota horsemanship practices with settler agricultural economies emerging in the West on both sides of the 49th parallel. He registered his own horse brand when regulations first came into effect in western Canada and he regularly moved back and forth from Wood Mountain and Fort Peck Reservation with his horse herd. Visual cues from his hair to his dress demonstrate this fusion as well, reminding the viewer that these are not necessarily clashing realities. Secondly, this photograph also challenges ideas of Lakota men being hypermasculine and removed from their children in emotional and physical ways. His children were taken to residential/industrial schools, something Anúnkħasaŋ Mathó became outspoken in opposition to, and maybe this photograph shows part of this story with the contrast of his long hair and his son’s very short hair, the latter reminiscent of shaved hairstyles children received at the schools. Yet, the closeness of the father and son in this photograph, even in the similarity of their clothing and hats they both wear, imparts a feeling of love and care between them.

Much in the same way, the following group of photographs document close friendships, cherished horses, youth, and togetherness (Figures 2.18 to 2.27). Most of these young people

³⁹¹ Leonard Lethbridge, Harold Thomson, and Thelma Poirier, “At Wood Mountain We Are Still Lakota,” in *Legends of Our Times: Native Cowboy Life*, edited by Morgan Baillargeon and Leslie Tepper (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 125-133.

were only a generation away from the buffalo-hunting lifestyle that their parents had grown up in and they were expected by the expanding settler population and Indian Affairs to adapt to sedentary ways of life, particularly based around agriculture in the west. In some respects, these young Lakota people did that: they were excellent horse people and some men filed for homesteads at Wood Mountain. The horse stayed central in many people's lives, as is seen in these photos, and ranching, rodeo, and cowboying became more of an interest and economic pursuit for many Lakota young men and women. Horses were an important part of Lakota people's social status, wealth, and skills and this remained at Wood Mountain and can be seen in almost every photograph below. Horsemanship was something Lakota people took pride in, displayed at public events, and passed down the generations (Figures 2.21 to 2.25). In other ways, this generation was very much still in tune with earlier Lakota lifestyles and livelihoods, especially in their ability to move across Lakhóta Třamákřoče, speak Lakota as their first language, and draw upon their relationships. In that way, this generation of Lakota people demonstrate the tenuous nature of the colonial borders (social and geographical) and the strength of Lakota relations in this period.



Figure 2.18

Howard Russell/Tasunkenajin/Thašúnke Nážin/Standing Horse and James (Jimmy) Thomson, Jr./Wakinyan Cangliska/Wakínyaŋ Čhaŋgléška/Chain Lightning
 Photographer L.E. Gilman, Lemmon, SD
 Original in personal collection of the Lamb family

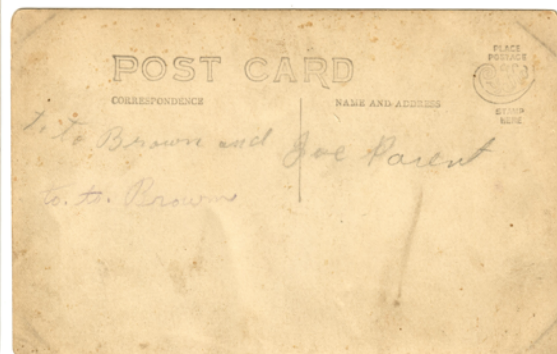


Figure 2.19

“The Ox Race. Wood Mtn 1912”

Lawrence (Toto) Brown and Joe Parent on oxen
 Dorothy Ogle postcard and photograph collection, personal collection of Bill Mielke



Figure 2.20
Dick, Lizzie, Lucy, William Hall, Joe, Dorothy, and Edith Ogle
0018 WMHS



Figure 2.21
James (Jim) Ogle and William (Bill) Lethbridge, 1918
WMHS 0026 and original in personal collection of Judy Fitzpatrick



Figure 2.22

SHSB, Father Gontran Laviolette Fonds, 91724

Possibly taken during the Wood Mountain Stampede at the feast the Lakota people held with a beef donated by the Turf Club/Rodeo Committee, c. 1940s



Figure 2.23

SHSB, Father Gontran Laviolette Fonds, 91718



Figure 2.24

SHSB, Father Gontran Laviolette Fonds, 91719

Sept 11, 1941 is stamped at the back of this photo and the name "Nancee" is legible to one side.



Figure 2.25

SHSB, Father Gontran Laviolette Fonds, 91720

A set of three photographs of a child performing tricks for the camera with their pony immediately caught my attention in the Father Gontran Laviolette fonds at the Société historique de Saint-Boniface (Figures 2.23 to 2.25). Though I was uncertain who this child was, the name “Nancee” was partially written and the date September 11, 1941 stamped on the back of one of the photographs. This is probably Nancy Lethbridge, the daughter of James (Jim) Lethbridge and Edith Ogle, who would have been around five or six years old at the time these photos were taken, if the 1941 stamp at the back of the second photo is correct. Unfortunately, the originals of these photos were at one time glued into an album and have since been taken out and glued into a scrap book, so the back of the photos are extremely difficult to read. Thelma McRae (née Lecaine), an elder who grew up at Wood Mountain, suggested to me that this could be Nancy Lethbridge, especially since Nancy was the only child she could recall that had a small saddle like this that her father would have made for her. Jim Lethbridge and his brothers were well known saddle makers in the Wood Mountain area. These are wonderful photos because they show a close connection to her horse, and that she replicated her uncle Pete Lethbridge’s roping and horse tricks he would perform at the Wood Mountain Stampede (Figures 2.24 and 2.25). Nancy and her parents were proud of her and her horse skills as is indicated by these photographs being staged for Laviolette probably during one of his visits to the reserve.



Figure 2.26
“Pete Lethbridge and Spot”
WMHS 0759



Figure 2.27
Pete Lethbridge trick roping, 1926
WMHS 255

Real Photo Postcards

In July of 2016, I visited Turner Valley and Black Diamond, Alberta to learn more about my relatives who moved there in the late 1950s from Wood Mountain. Lawrence and Denny Lamb graciously hosted me, and we had many hours of visiting over a few days, sharing memories and family history, as their grandmother Nellie Lamb (née Thomson) was a sister to my great-grandfather Willie Thomson. Most of the following photo postcards come from their family collection which has been passed down to them from their grandparents, Elmer and Nellie Lamb. It stood out to me at the time that many of these family photographs were printed as postcards, though I did not understand originally how or why and I did not revisit this thought until almost three years later. A second private collection, originally kept by Dorothy Ogle, also include very similar postcards with similar images and messages which were graciously shared with me by Bill Mielke and Glenda Polley of Wood Mountain in the fall of 2021. This collection has the most connections with the Ogle family, but like the Lamb collection, includes other community members and families. Postcards are a unique medium for melding connection, both in the visual depiction of people together in places important to them on the front of the postcards and in the written messages on the back of some of them. Most in these collections are unposted, but in some cases, the messages on the back are just as interesting as the photographs on the front. Almost all the postcards here are private photo postcards with exception of Figures 2.28, 2.36, and 2.37 which were included to demonstrate the cross-border movement within families.

Anthropologists Patricia Albers and William James have written the most extensively on the representation of Indigenous people in North America in postcards, however, most of their work focuses on postcards that were made for public consumption and therefore the stereotypes

found among the staged scenes. Nevertheless, they provide insight into the private postcard phenomena among some Indigenous communities which helps shed light on the Lamb collection. They summarized the increase in accessibility to photography through the postcard medium: “During the first two decades of the 20th century, many privately made photographs were printed on post card stock. Studio photographers often issued their work on post cards, and people who owned cameras sometimes had their photographs printed on this medium as well. Many of the early 20th-century photographs that Indian people had taken of themselves were of this kind, and some of these still remain in family photographic collections. Many of the photographs that white people took of their Indian neighbors were also printed as post cards.”³⁹² Albers and James further wrote, “Many of the post cards that were locally produced in the years before 1920 have qualities that link their use and meaning to the ‘private’ photograph. These cards were bought primarily by people who lived in the areas where the pictures were taken. Sometimes the cards were mailed to friends and relatives in distant places, but just as frequently these cards were kept as personal mementos and housed in family post card albums so popular during this era.”³⁹³ This is especially relevant here as these postcards were most certainly kept by family and the ones that feature family members have not been posted. Albers and James found that after 1920 in particular, the Minnesota Ojibway people they focused on became highly caricatured in postcard representations that were popular for selling to tourists, especially as more people owned cameras and printed their own photos on regular photo stock paper.³⁹⁴ However, this departs from the examples from Wood Mountain in this chapter, so it can be

³⁹² Patricia Albers and William James, “Images and Realities: Post Cards of Minnesota’s Ojibway People, 1900-80” *Minnesota History*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (Summer 1985): 231.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 232.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 235.

deduced that these postcards were meant for private consumption because they do not showcase Lakota people in stereotypical dress, activities, or locations.

Another study by Albers and James contrasted “private” from “public” postcards, the difference mainly being the audience and intended viewers or holders of the postcards. Figures 2.28 and 2.36 are examples of public photo postcards, sold to at least a local and possibly tourist audience in South Dakota, and oftentimes these kinds of publicly consumed postcards featured more stereotypical depictions of Indigenous people, events, and places, especially to feed the collector and tourist markets. They argue that in contrast, private photo postcards typically depicted everyday life for First Nations people: “Generally speaking, Indian life was depicted as it really appeared when the pictures were taken. It was not divorced from what Indian people or their white neighbors witnessed on a day-to-day basis.”³⁹⁵ They also note that having no captions on the photos implied that the identity of the subjects was self-evident to those most likely to view it.³⁹⁶ Both these qualities fit with the Lamb collection of postcards here as well and lend to the interpretation that they were made for the family’s and individual’s own use.



Figure 2.28

“‘Stay A Long Time Sioux’ McLaughlin Annual Indian Fair and Agricultural Exhibit-Sept 1921.
© #78 Photo by W.D. Odou, Druggist, McLaughlin, So. Dak.”
Personal collection of Lamb family

³⁹⁵ Patricia C. Albers and William R. James, “Private and public images: A study of photographic contrasts in postcard pictures of great basin Indians, 1898-1919,” *Visual Anthropology*, Vol. 3, No. 2-3 (1990): 348.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 352.

Dating postcards and the photographs on them can be a tricky endeavor, especially since they do not necessarily have to be taken and printed at the same time. Scholars and postcard collectors Robert Bogdan and Todd Weseloh's book *Real Photo Postcard Guide: The People's Photography* is the foundational guide to dating and interpreting real photo postcards. Though some of the postcards in the Lamb collection are evidently from the U.S. because of the photo captions and a couple have "Made in Canada" printed on the back, Bogdan and Weseloh note that most Canadian and American postcards so closely resemble each other that they cannot be discerned.³⁹⁷ These examples are all real photo postcards, meaning they are actual printed photographs on postcards, not printed pictures composed of hundreds of tiny dots.³⁹⁸ Figure 2.28 postcard dates to at least 1921, when the photograph was taken. It is in line with First World War to 1930 postcards, often called the "white border era" to mark when U.S. manufacturers added a white border, a reflection of when ink was more expensive.³⁹⁹ The paper company, Azo, seen around the stamp box in the upper right-hand corner, also helps date this card as this style started being used after October 1917. This photograph was taken at the McLaughlin Annual Indian Fair and Agricultural Exhibit, as inscribed on the photo, which is on the Standing Rock Reservation, and probably was acquired by someone in the Thomson family who lived or visited there in the 1920s.

Another important aspect of these postcards that Bogdan and Weseloh mention is that they "were less expensive and more available than earlier forms of photographs, and thus they penetrated socioeconomic levels that the other formats had not. [stereographs, tintypes, cabinet

³⁹⁷ Robert Bogdan and Todd Weseloh, *Real Photo Postcard Guide: The People's Photography* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 38.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31-32.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

cards, etc.]”⁴⁰⁰ This is an important consideration for family photos at Wood Mountain because it was not necessarily accessible physically or financially to travel into the city to have portraits taken or to get costly prints made to give to family members. Interestingly, the photo postcards of the family do not have the photographers’ names or stamps on them. Bogdan and Weseloh state this could be for several reasons, including that amateur photographers almost never marked their cards and other local commercial photographers maybe just assumed everyone in their area knew who they were. Sometimes stock postcard paper was used because of the cost and extra work monograms took to make and some photographers printed any negative on a postcard for a fee, so it did not necessarily have to be a photograph that they took themselves.⁴⁰¹ All of these scenarios could reasonably apply to these examples, and it very well could be that traveling photographers offered their services and provided these photo postcards to the subjects.

Postcards regardless seem like an inexpensive and easier option for making and sharing photographs for families, especially when family members were living on both sides of the border, as was the case for Thomson and Ogle families at the time. The postcards also follow the same kind of family and community connection themes that showcase people together--candid and ordinary. The photo postcards then may be a form of “democratising” the access to and keeping of photographs that Lydon argues Indigenous families and communities carry out, in this case in the early twentieth century at Wood Mountain.

⁴⁰⁰ Bogdan and Weseloh, *Real Photo Postcard Guide*, 24.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 38-39.



Figure 2.29

Howard Thomson, Sam East, J.H. (Jimmy) Thomson, Ida Thomson, Iňá Waštéwiŋ (Mary Thomson), Mrs. Little Eagle, Šúŋka Háŋska (Long Dog/Crazy Jack), unidentified, unidentified, and Charles Rucker at Thomson home at Wood Mountain, c. 1917-1919
 Personal collection of Lamb family

Figure 2.29 is a good example of the photograph on the front of the postcard possibly dating to a different time than when the postcard was printed. The photograph has Šúŋka Háŋska/Long Dog/Crazy Jack seated out front of the house which means the photo must have been taken prior to his death in 1917. However, the Azo postcard with the squares in the corners of the stamp box was not readily used until after June 1926.⁴⁰² So it is more than likely that the

⁴⁰² Bogdan and Weseloh, *Real Photo Postcard Guide*, 223. Bogdan and Weseloh do note that some examples of this postcard was produced in 1910, but does not appear again until 1926.

photo was taken earlier than 1917 and then printed on the postcard paper at a later date, possibly from a negative.



Figure 2.30

At Thomson house. Left to Right: Jules Haggai, Iñá Waštéwiŋ/Mary Thomson, Howard Thomson, Willie Thomson, and J.H. Thomson
Personal collection of Lamb family

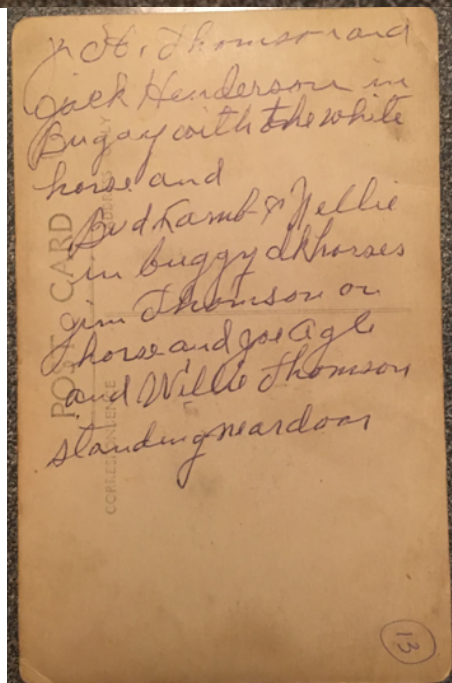


Figure 2.31

At Thomson house, left to right: Elmer (Bud) and Nellie Lamb, Willie Thomson (beside door), Joe Ogle, James Jr. (Jim) Thomson, J.H. Thomson, and Jack Henderson.
Personal collection of Lamb family

Elmer (Bud) and Nellie Lamb were married in 1911, and the house behind them and their friends/relatives in Figure 2.31 looks like the original Thomson house, which burned down. Part

of Wood Mountain Lakota history are the interactions with non-Lakota people and the spaces that were common ground. The places and homes in the Wood Mountain area are especially demonstrative of this. The photographs of Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ and James Thomson's home are examples of this because it was both a private and public space (Figures 2.29, 2.30, and 2.31). Their house was open to many Lakota relatives and friends who travelled back and forth from the U.S., and they cared for and housed elderly Lakota people there; this is possibly why Mrs. Little Eagle and Šúŋka Háŋska are in the photograph. Some of the people seated out front are such friends and relatives, Lakota, white, and Métis. Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ was a midwife who brought many Lakota and settler babies into the world and their home later would be turned into the Red Cross Hospital for a few years after James's death in 1923. Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ moved into the earlier adobe house they had before building this wood framed house, possibly the adobe seen in the background on the left of Figure 2.28. Adobe homes were common in this time period for settlers and Lakota people alike, though virtually none survive today (see also Figure 2.13 of Čhaŋté Ohítika/Brave Heart and Waŋbli Hóta Wiŋ/Gray Eagle in front of their adobe house). The larger house was also the post and telegraph office for the community. Many Lakota homes served as community hubs, with multiple generations and relations residing within, and functioned in much the way Lakota homes always had—as physical extensions of Lakota kin and community and the Lakota values that centered on generosity. Elder Luther Standing Bear wrote: “The home was the center of Lakota society — the place where good social members were formed and the place whence flowed the strength of the tribe. Here it was that offspring learned duty to parents, to lodge, to band, to tribe, and to self.”⁴⁰³

⁴⁰³ Luther Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 84.

First Nations' land often gets minimized to reservation/reserve land today, but this is a narrow conception. Historic photographs have documented the displacement of Indigenous peoples from their lands, often literally framed in terms of individual Indigenous people posed in photographs separated at least in the public imagination from their nations, communities, and lands.⁴⁰⁴ But photographs can also demonstrate the resistance and continued connections Lakota people kept outside the colonial boundaries placed upon their bodies and lands. This is also the case for Lakota photographs, especially of these postcards taken at Wood Mountain which illustrate Lakota lands both “on” and “off” the reserve and north and south of “the border.”



Figure 2.32
George Thomson and George Lecaine
Personal collection of Lamb family

⁴⁰⁴ Jolene Rickard, “The Occupation of Indigenous Space as ‘Photograph,’” in *Native Nations: Journeys in American Photography*, edited by Jane Alison (London: Barbican Art Gallery, 1998), 64.



Figure 2.33

Left to Right: Andrew (Bully) Thomson, Albert (Soak) Brown, and George (Puncher) Thomson
 Personal collection of Lamb family

Figures 2.32 and 2.33 with no correspondence, name, or address indicators on the back and the pointy “R” date this Cyko paper postcard to after July 1915.⁴⁰⁵ Again, these two photo postcards are very much of the mundane and every day, but also demonstrate the cowboying lifestyle and friendships of these men. George Thomson’s nickname was Puncher or Cow Puncher because of his cowboying skills and Albert (Soak) Brown was a very well-known bronc rider in the area. In this photograph the men appear to be young and could very well be in their late teens or early to mid-twenties (Andrew was born in 1895, George in 1898, and Albert in 1898).

⁴⁰⁵ Bogdan and Weseloh, *Real Photo Postcard Guide*, 233.



Figure 2.34

Willie Ogle and Jimmy Thomson with two unidentified women. Taken at Poplar, Montana.
Personal collection of Lamb family



Figure 2.35

“Carnival Queens and Indian Cowboys. Poplar, Mont.”
Signed by “Mowrer Photo”

Willie Ogle and Jimmy Thomson with two unidentified women
Dorothy Ogle postcard and photograph collection, personal collection of Bill Mielke

Figure 2.34 may be an example of the Kruxo 7 postcard with the ornate writing and no stamp box. This postcard style dates to 1907 and later, which may be in line with how young Willie Ogle and Jimmy Thomson look, as well as being taken in Poplar, Montana, where there may have been a photographer to take and produce the photos on postcards more readily available than at Wood Mountain. Another copy of this photo postcard is in the Dorothy Ogle collection (Figure 2.35). That both families retained a copy of this photo postcard suggests the men photographed shared it with them. Willie was the older brother of Dorothy Ogle, and this version has a caption and photographer name which suggests it was being sold as a souvenir card as well. This postcard is still of importance because it demonstrates the relationships among young people from the Wood Mountain Lakota community, as well as their frequent visits to other Indigenous and Lakota communities across the 49th parallel, like Poplar on the Fort Peck Reservation.

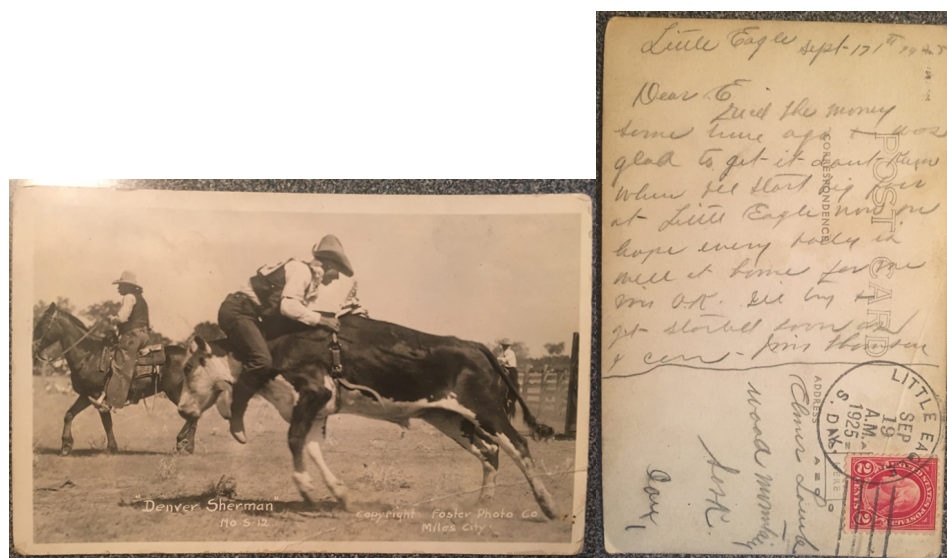


Figure 2.36

Back reads: “Dear E, Rec’d the money some time ago & was glad to get it don’t know when I’ll start by [?] for [?] at Little Eagle now on hope every body is well at home for me im o.k. I’ll try & get started soon as I can. Jim Thomson.” September 19, 1925. Jim (James, Jr.) Thomson to Elmer Lamb, husband of Jim’s sister, Nellie.

Personal collection of Lamb family



Figure 2.37

Back has a written message in Lakota, addressed to Joe W.H. Ogle, Wood Mountain, Sask. Dated March 28, 1914 and sent from Dupree, South Dakota (Cheyenne River Reservation) Dorothy Ogle postcard and photograph collection, personal collection of Bill Mielke

Sometimes, the postcards can tell us more from the messages on the back than the photos can on the front, especially if the images are for commercial/souvenir purposes. Figures 2.36 and 2.37 are such examples, included because of the correspondence on the back. Figure 36 features a message written by James Thomson, Jr. (Jim or Jimmy, who is featured in Figure 2.34 and 2.35 as well) from Little Eagle, South Dakota on the Standing Rock Reservation to his brother-in-law

at Wood Mountain, Elmer Lamb. Jimmy Thomson married a Lakota woman from Standing Rock and lived there for many years, which will be examined in more detail in chapter five. As mentioned previously, this photo postcard is a “public” example as it was intended for local and tourist purchase as it showcases and describes a rodeo scene and was copyrighted by a specific studio, rather than being a “private” card capturing specific family members or friends who are unnamed. However, the image still speaks to the writer and receiver, both of whom were stockmen. Of more interest to this study though is the message which encapsulates a cross-border Lakota connection and speaks of Wood Mountain, family, support, and home. Similarly, Figure 2.37 is a unique document for its message written in Lakota on the back, sent from Dupree, South Dakota on the Cheyenne River Reservation to Joe Ogle at Wood Mountain. Some words are illegible and so translation efforts have stalled. But regardless, the Lakota language usage and cross border connection shows the continuation of Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe in a new generation of Lakota people at Wood Mountain, especially as Joe Ogle was only about ten years old in 1914.

Together these postcards capture connections and ordinary life at Wood Mountain for families from about 1915 to 1923. Postcards helped photography become more accessible and reach a more diverse range of places and people than in the nineteenth century. The historic photo postcards here document Lakota people in their own spaces and contexts and, instead of about colonial narratives and gaze which styled Indigenous people in narratives of loss and difference. The importance of good relations and self-representation is clearer in these photos because they reflect everyday experiences and connections rather than an image that has been staged away from the backdrop of community and place as in the case of studio photographs.

Conclusion

Photographs are a form of “written” history that can reinforce people’s connections, stories, and culture when it is sometimes not available in other ways. The photograph of High Back in a Moose Jaw collection illustrates connections beyond the border, the image of George Thomson and George Lecaine hints of their friendship and shared cowboy experience, and the closeness of a father and son in a studio portrait, all serve as reminders and remnants of stories and connections maybe not shared in stories and memories anymore, but still present in the images. They remind us that these were real people with their own lived realities, not just historical “characters” in a study. This is especially true in helping to provides context and faces to the various names that are used in complex kinship/community webs throughout this study. Though historic photographs are difficult to interpret at times because they are not unbiased “windows into the past,” they can help challenge or affirm other historical sources and narratives when used together.

These photographs document important kinscapes and landscapes for Wood Mountain Lakota people between the 1890s and 1940s. In this time period and beyond, these Wood Mountain people were not forgotten in their communities separated by borders and in many ways the connections were kept alive through the movements of many generations and through the passed-on knowledge of family names, places, and ties. Sometimes photographs even helped to keep those bonds strong across many miles as the postcards show, and sometimes they remind us now of the existing bonds that cannot be gleaned necessarily from historical records or family oral histories anymore. One such example of this is the presence of Thiyópa in the 1930s photographs at Wood Mountain—though she was remarried and living on the Fort Peck Reservation, her connections to her lifelong Lakota community and family at Wood Mountain

continued to be lived connections. Active presence, participation, and relationship across Lakhóta Thámákhoche is illustrated in these photographs.

Chapter Three
**“Take care of me for the rest of my days”: Lakota Women as the Centre of Kin,
 Community, and Connection at Wood Mountain**

Mrs. Thomson was a very admirable woman and made a lot of friends during the course of her life. She was full of kindness and hospitality and her house was always open to a stranger. When she died some years after Mr. Thomson. I intended to go to the funeral which was on a Sunday...I got up early and found the country in possession of a black blizzard. We both stayed home. I was told the next day that the funeral was one of the largest ever seen in the south country until that time, a testament to the many friends of Mrs. Thomson.¹

-Charlie Wilson, Limerick, SK, 1967

Though my great-great-grandmother, Ihá Waštéwiŋ/Good Laughing Woman/Mary Thomson is well remembered in family stories, I was surprised to find more stories and fragments of her life in the archival records. For example, I learned that at least one of her grandparents, Maǰpíya Ğíwiŋ/Brown Sky or Cloud Woman, had come to Čháŋĥe with their thiyóšpaye after the Little Bighorn. Supposedly, she was over a hundred years old when she died at Wood Mountain.² It made me wonder how many other old people at that time made the arduous journey north and the things they saw in their lifetimes. My family did not remember Maǰpíya Ğíwiŋ by the time the oral histories were shared with me, or maybe no one thought to ask the right question to get her name when someone was alive to remember her. Or maybe she was simply remembered as uŋčí/grandma, and her name to remember into posterity was not as important as her lived relation to those who knew her. I was not expecting to find these little snippets of people and experiences in Ihá Waštéwiŋ's life scattered in the archives. But Ihá Waštéwiŋ's proximity to opportunities endorsed by the Canadian government and record keeping through her white husband, my great-great-grandfather James H. Thomson, meant her life was sometimes recorded as well, though through layers of interpretation and transcription not

¹ Charlie Wilson, “Recollections” in *They Came to Wood Mountain*, 49-50.

² National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC, RG 75, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, Affidavit of John Dog Eagle, January 11, 1922.

of her own. Because James was literate and fluent in both English and Lakota, had a relative position of wealth and standing as the Wood Mountain postmaster and telegraph operator, and worked as an interpreter and reserve overseer, his writing made it into official archives. Because of his work and writings and Ihá Waštéwiŋ's proximity to him, she is sometimes in the archival record more than other Lakota women of her generation.

But this was not a one-way exchange, nor was it for other relationships at Wood Mountain. Her Lakota connections and knowledge facilitated her husband's social standing and even survival, as her language and skills with horses gave him work as an interpreter and rancher.³ It was her kin and community they relied on and established themselves in, as he had no kin ties of his own without her and refused to speak of his life in eastern Canada before he came to Wood Mountain. Ihá Waštéwiŋ was not the only well-remembered Lakota woman in the Wood Mountain community who passed on their knowledge and forged good relations with the new settlers; many others like Lizzie Ogle (nee Lecaine), Thašúŋke Núŋpawŋ (Emma Lecaine), and Pté Sáŋwiŋ (Katrine Ferguson) did the same. Many of these women worked as midwives, passed on stories and language, and made gifts for many friends and relatives that are still cherished. Their knowledge and connections throughout Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoche were the foundation to survivance at Wood Mountain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which functioned and carried on within well-defined Lakota modes of relationship, adaptation, and movement.

This chapter analyzes the layers of experiences and stories from Lakota women between Wood Mountain and Lakota reservations in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota from the mid-1880s to the 1930s while interweaving an analysis of Indian policies and settler societal

³ Garrett Wilson, "Jimmy Thomson," in *Fort Walsh to Wood Mountain: The North-West Mounted Police Trail*, edited by Fedyk, Mike. (Regina: Benchmark Press, 2010), 60.

pressures on them. The Lakota ways these women grew up with, lived within, and passed on to their children were becoming more constrained within the atmosphere of settler colonialism in Canada and the U.S. Though we look at this time as extraordinary now, their decisions and adaptations may have been rather ordinary to them because they were living within Lakhóta Třamákřoče and within their cultural understandings of good relations to kin, community, and place like ikčé wíŋyaŋ, ordinary women. They drew on opportunities through their Lakota understandings of resourcefulness and community that encompassed different and broader geographical and social areas than settler society thought women, and especially Indigenous women, should have the autonomy to do. These women helped establish themselves and their families at Wood Mountain while maintaining their connections and finding new opportunities within the wider Lakhóta Třamákřoče.

Historian Jennifer S.H. Brown's use of the term matriorganization to describe Métis ethnogenesis and historical patterns of cultural continuation and societal growth is particularly useful to this examination. She argued that Métis women were more likely to stay in the West and contribute to the growth of the Métis (culturally and in population) through their marriages and as the centre of their families and communities because the social, kin, and economic networks primarily extended through them.⁴ Similarly, Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge traced very detailed Métis genealogies of certain buffalo hunting brigades in the nineteenth-century to find "a pattern of sisters" or related women marry brigade members and "linking otherwise unconnected males into a kinship system predicated upon interfamilial structures." They concluded that Métis women created complex kinship networks that "played a pivotal role

⁴ Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1983): 39-41.

in the creation, formation, leadership, and maintenance of brigades.”⁵ This matrilineal structure of Métis society and culture also applies to the early years of the Wood Mountain Lakota community. Lakota women connected otherwise “outside” men, especially NWMP members and ranchers and sometimes men from other Indigenous nations, together through marriage and to the place of Wood Mountain. Today still, many of the descendants of these Lakota women describe their matriarch ancestors as the foundation of their families which aligns with matrilineal systems of relating. The photographs, knowledge, stories, and material culture that these women passed on in their families is still highly prized because they often represent the basis of the community, cultural affiliation, and relationships with each other and to the place of Wood Mountain. Though the women discussed in this chapter were not the first Lakota women to live in Canada and at Wood Mountain (many had parents and grandparents that lived at Wood Mountain as well as other ancestors long before that), they were the generation to live the transitional time of either being part of or excluded from government recognized permanency of the Lakota community, through status and the establishment of the reserve. This chapter will argue that at the intersection of government categories and Lakota continued cultural systems, the centre of the community came from the matriorganization at Wood Mountain from the 1880s forward.

There are many valuable works of Indigenous women’s history that informs this chapter. Many scholars of Indigenous women and gender studies have commented on the difficulty of grasping a clear picture of gender roles and relations because historical sources often

⁵ Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, “Rooted in Mobility: Metis Buffalo Hunting Brigades,” *Manitoba History*, No. 71 (Winter 2013), http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/71/metisbrigades.shtml

misrepresented Indigenous women and societies.⁶ And we have to be careful to not essentialize Indigenous women in the past, a delicate balancing act acknowledging their contributions to the survival and continuation of cultures, often with great difficulty, without opening the door to ahistorical, binary, static, or generalized notions.⁷

Brenda J. Child's book *Holding Our World Together* is an excellent example of a rich exploration into family and community history with women at the centre. Her book "makes a case for the significant involvement of women as society builders, which allowed their communities to persevere in an era dominated by the expansion of American colonialism. At each stage, women marshaled much of the economy, and their roles and traditions were critical in sustaining Ojibwe communities in the face of forces that often aimed not only to cause physical destruction but to stamp out their entire way of life."⁸ This chapter draws on Child's argument of Ojibwe women as "society builders" as this relates to the Wood Mountain Lakota women's centrality in community perseverance as well. Child works to "remember the work and vision of generations of Ojibwe women who shaped life in their communities, a force greater than treaties that binds us to our homelands."⁹ Ordinary Indigenous women's contributions in their communities have not garnered as much scholarship and acknowledgement as large aspects of Indigenous history, like treaties. But with a turn towards local, gender, and twentieth century Indigenous histories, this is changing. Choctaw historian Jacki Thompson Rand called for more studies of Indigenous women in the twentieth century and to do so from their perspectives and what they feel is important instead of using western assumptions of scholarly importance. She

⁶ Brenda J. Child, *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community* (New York: Viking, 2012), 2-3; Betty Bell, "Gender in North America," in *A Companion to American Indian History* , edited by Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 310.

⁷ Betty Bell, "Gender in North America," in *A Companion to American Indian History* , edited by Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 318.

⁸ Child, *Holding Our World Together* , 8.

⁹ *Ibid.* , 9.

pointed out that adaptable, politically visible, and “prominent” Indigenous women are often categorized as those that have become “influential tribal chiefs and council members, as pioneers in journalism, the law, and academe, and as radical activists in domestic and international realms” and overlooks those “who devoted their energies to persistent social and health issues, politics, environmental concerns, and tribal code reforms. Absent, too, are women’s initiatives in food sovereignty, language retention, and traditional manufactures and arts.”¹⁰ This chapter pulls on the thread Thompson Rand started in that Indigenous women’s extraordinary work and contributions happened every day within their own communities, not necessarily in only publicly visible ways.

This analysis will focus on six Lakota women: Ihá Waštéwiŋ/Good Laughing Woman/Mary Thomson; Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ/Crossed Eagle Quills/Julia Lethbridge; Tǎšúnke Hiŋ Hótewiŋ/Roan Horse/Mary Ogle; Thiyópa/Door/Ellen Brown; Tǎšúnke Núnŋpawiŋ/Her Two Horses/Emma Loves War-Lecaine; and Mary Black Moon-Aspdin.¹¹ These women all came to the Uplands in 1876 or 1877 after the Battle of the Little Bighorn, some being children or teenagers at the battle. Their children followed the same kinds of paths they took in finding opportunities on both side of the international border and in connecting with Lakota kin and community to find the support and resiliency they needed in ever-changing and sometimes restrictive colonial environments.

Mary Aspdin’s life has been examined in part by two well-known Canadian writers. Maggie Siggins’s *Revenge of the Land* includes a chapter on Thomas Aspdin, and his wife Mary

¹⁰ Jacki Thompson Rand, “Status, sustainability, and American Indian women in the twentieth century,” in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, edited by Chris Andersen and Jean M. O’Brien (New York: Routledge, 2017), 171.

¹¹ Mary’s Black Moon-Aspdin’s Lakota name is not known for certain, therefore her English name will be used throughout.

Black Moon-Aspdin is included in telling his story. Siggins reached out to their descendants and their family stories are invaluable in her book. Historian Sarah Carter wrote about Mary Aspdin in her article “Transnational Perspectives on the History of Great Plains Women: Gender, Race, Nations, and the Forty-ninth Parallel” as an example of how Indian policy in Canada and the U.S. differed and the impacts of the border as a broader discussion of the transnational experiences of Indigenous women. This chapter will expand on Carter’s discussion and also examine more specifically Lakota women’s experiences and how the two nations attempted to categorize, assimilate, and disregard them in varying ways. Lakota women’s experiences are somewhat different from most other Indigenous women’s experiences at this time in North America. Most First Nations people after the 1870s faced living in confinement on reserves/reservations under regimes of surveillance. Wood Mountain Lakota women were on the margins of Indian policy categorizations in both settler states, which occasionally afforded them more freedom in movement and opportunities away from Indian Affairs scrutiny. However, they also often faced the same kinds of limitations and assimilation efforts when they tried to exercise their autonomy.

More specifically this chapter demonstrates how Lakota women used their own cultural sets of relationships to navigate the complex realities imposed by settler colonialism. It also seeks to understand the differing opportunities they took advantage of and the challenges they faced on each side of the border. These six Lakota women appear more often in the archival record because their settler husbands were well-known in the area and had positions of standing in the community as ranchers or NWMP (as well as being literate) and occasionally their wives are mentioned in their written records. Additionally, they appear in the documentary record sporadically because visitors to the Wood Mountain area, whether government officials, traders,

missionaries, or later anthropology and history interested individuals, mentioned these men and their “Indian wives,” discussing them as relics of the Old West past (especially when tied to any mention of the Little Bighorn) and as possessing interesting skills, appearances, and attitudes especially in contrast to settler society norms of the day. These accounts must be balanced with Lakota perspectives and gendered historical contexts. The Lakota women who married settler men had lives distinct from Lakota women who had not—having a settler husband sometimes afforded Lakota women access to property, financial support, visibility, and even basic things like food because they were in closer proximity to settler societal systems that benefitted white men. In light of these frameworks, this chapter will show how these women navigated the policies to their own advantage as much as they could while maintaining connections to their Lakota communities, although often with a lot of heartache and obstacles along the way.

Okíčhiyuze, Marriage, Respectability, and Settler Sexuality

By 1881, times were difficult at Wood Mountain. Game was scarce, the past few winters were very hard, and almost every family had lost loved ones. Lakota historian Josephine Waggoner recalled: “The Indians had suffered terrible in Canada. The land around Woody Mountain and Fort Walsh was barren for miles, without any game. The wild game in that part of the country had been depleted long before the country in Montana, Wyoming, and Dakota. The British gave the Sioux protection and refuge but did not issue any supplies. The result was a continuous famine. The women and children died from undernourishment: the young men died from the hardships of hunting long distances.”¹² Major James Morrow Walsh had been feeding the Lakota with some of the NWMP rations, and relations between the Lakota, the NWMP, and the French-Canadian trader at Wood Mountain Jean-Louis Légaré were necessarily close

¹² Waggoner, *Witness*, 169.

because survival hung in the balance. So, it is no surprise that marriages sprouted between these groups, especially to foster good relations and out of the necessity of relying on each other. The Lakota were in a particularly difficult position though because all their subsistence was derived from the land and hunting, whereas Jean-Louis Légaré and the NWMP had connections to eastern and U.S. trade markets for their goods and food. The NWMP and Canadian government more generally used this access to security and food as a leverage of power, though good relations with Lakota people were still necessary as settlers were outnumbered and Lakota people were still militarily and diplomatically powerful. It was within this context that all six of the Lakota women focused on in this chapter entered into relationships with white men in the 1880s and 1890s. And in many of the family stories of these early marriages, having access to food and shelter was a motivating factor, not just for the women, but also for their parents, siblings, and extended families.

The term “marriage” is used loosely here as these unions were not formally legalized by the Canadian state or in a Christian church and the term does not necessary completely align with Lakota understandings of what constituted a relationship. So, when “marriage” is used, the Lakota word *okíčhiyuze* (literally “they hold each other”) is actually what I am referring to as it is closer to the understandings that these relationships were based upon. These unions had the same significance and standing within the wider Wood Mountain community as any other marriage. I begin my discussion of Lakota women with their marriages, not because I think it was the most important part of their experiences, but because not much is known about their lives prior and because their marriages signify when their interactions within both Lakota and settler societies dramatically increased. Straddling the lines of kinship duties, differing cultural

and gender expectations, the 49th parallel, and Indian Affairs policies come into sharp relief once they entered into these okíčhiyuze.

As introduced in chapter two, Ihá Waštéwiŋ, Mary Black Moon-Aspdin, Tšašúnke Núnnpawiŋ, and Thiyópa all entered into relationships in the early 1880s with NWMP members stationed at Wood Mountain (James Harkin Thomson, Thomas Aspdin, Archibald Lecaine,¹³ and Fredrick Brown, respectively). Tšašúnke Hiŋ Hótewiŋ began a relationship with a white rancher who worked between Montana and Wood Mountain in 1890 (William Hall Ogle)¹⁴ and Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ married a white land surveyor in the Regina area in the late 1880s (Charles Lethbridge).¹⁵ Tšašúnke Núnnpawiŋ's father, Zuyá Thehíla (Loves War) convinced his daughter to live with Archibald (Archie) Lecaine so that their family could have access to support in hard times.¹⁶

Marriages out of need were not unheard of in Lakota communities, but women could refuse a partner if they disagreed with the match. Ella Deloria wrote of this, "In theory, and for the most part in practice, girls were allowed to make their own decision to marry. 'Let her decide since she must do the marrying' was a common saying, despite the sprinkling of known cases of one's being privately coerced into accepting a wife-buyer [a man who was offering gifts to the woman's family, one of the three ways Deloria says marriage could be initiated] for her own

¹³ Other spellings of Lecaine's name include, William Edward Archibald (W.E.A.) LeQuesne, LeCain, and LeCaine. Thank you to Jeff Downing for enlightening me about this in his ongoing genealogy research. LAC, RG 18, NWMP Personnel Records, Vol. 10038, William Edward Archibald Le Cain/LeQuesne, <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/nwmp-personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=41236&>.

¹⁴ Canadian Museum of History (CMH, formerly Canadian Museum of Civilization), *Legends of Our Times*, "Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies," "Tasunke Hin Hotewin (Roan Horse/Mary Ogle)," April 2nd, 2019, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_33e.html#Tasunke-Hin-Hotewin

¹⁵ Ibid., "Wanbli Sunpagewin (Crossed Eagle Quills/Juilia Lethbridge)," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_25e.html#Wanbli-Sunpagewin.

¹⁶ CMH, *Legends of Our Times*, "Ranching, Wood Mountain Biographies," "Tasunke Nupawin (Owns Two Horses-Emma Lecaine)," accessed April 2nd, 2019, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_14e.html#Tasunke

sake or for the sake of her family in need. But even though both parental urging and parental objection were in tribal disfavor, sometimes a girl made her decision with the need of her family in mind.”¹⁷ Deloria goes on to say that when a woman refused a potential husband or marriage, especially if it was at the last moment and she had “run away from her nuptial bed,” it was called “pilasni”¹⁸ (philášni) or literally “no thanks.” The fact that access to support and sustenance was the driving force for some, if not all, of these unions does not necessarily detract from these women’s autonomy, but rather they would have been operating in a Lakota understanding of good relations that extend beyond the partnership of a man and woman to their extended families. And that woman, in prioritizing her family’s needs, would be considered honorable for doing so. Conversely, it was considered dishonorable if her family pressed her into the marriage by outward urging or their desire for something (such as horses) from the marriage.¹⁹ Good relations always meant a balance of individual choice with the collective well-being in mind within very structured kinship roles.

Furthermore, these unions often held fast to Lakota understanding of kinship responsibilities by providing a home and care for other relatives. Mary Aspdin’s sister and mother lived with Thomas and herself for many years. Iňá Waštéwiŋ and James H. Thomson often cared for elderly relatives and friends, particularly an elderly woman named Aunty or Corral/Fence Woman (Čhúnkaške Wiŋ). They also often accommodated Lakota family and friends for extended periods who traveled between Wood Mountain and U.S. Lakota communities. Deloria wrote, “Possessiveness of one’s spouse was hardly possible; each was ever a separet [*sic*] person and both had their right to be independent, and both would always have

¹⁷ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, The Dakota Way of Life, “Ch. 6 Courtship and Marriage,” page 121, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3180

¹⁸ Ibid., 122.

¹⁹ Ibid., 121.

certain precisely prescribed rules of attitude and behavior to observe in relation to all their kith and kin.”²⁰ This is in stark contrast to Western and Christian ideals of marriage, particularly where women were considered under the authority of the husband who was the head of household and property in nearly all ways. To all these women, relying on and upholding the proper responsibilities to their Lakota kin and community were important within their marriages, which is clearly demonstrated by the following accounts of how their marriages started and ended. These kinds of kinship responsibilities will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter.

These relationships are notable because they formed many of the families that persisted at Wood Mountain and established the Lakota community there permanently. This was no insignificant endeavor in a time when settler governments were adamant and forceful about deciding where Indigenous people could and could not base their communities in a sedentary and fixed manner. Additionally, these unions demonstrate the importance of individual and family security for the Lakota people through marriage and kinship, which would not have been discarded once these women entered into relationships with white men. On the contrary, Lakota networks were very much needed by settlers as well. Beyond the assistance their families gained, these women brought their own skills and community connections that their husbands would have benefitted from as well, particularly when connections to settler communities for these men were sometimes tenuous (and thus why they came west) and often geographically far away. These women did not simply assimilate because of their relationships and often they continued residing with their Lakota family and community, only speaking Lakota, and continuing their own cultural practices, things their husbands instead had to adopt or at least accommodate.

²⁰ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, The Dakota Way of Life, Ch. 7 Wedded Life, page 131, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3191

Indigenous women have always been a key component to cultural transmission, and settler outcry, policies, and reform efforts to “civilize” Indigenous people frequently targeted Indigenous women in damaging ways. Carter has written at length about this, and she concluded that constructing Indigenous women as “squaws” who would delay progress, prevent morality, and endanger white women in the Canadian West and “...served to confirm the Euro-Canadian newcomers in their belief that their cultural and moral superiority entitled them to the land that had become their home.”²¹ In this same manner, frustrated government officials often cited Lakota women at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw as carrying on “Indian ways.” For example, the 1915 and 1916 annual reports of the Indian agent for the Assiniboine Agency in Saskatchewan noted that Lakota women at Moose Jaw “still cling to the blanket” in their dress and customs, whereas the men had welcomed at least the white man’s mode of dress.²² This was not just a criticism of women’s wardrobes, but of the cultural practices they kept. Indian agent and later Indian Commissioner William M. Graham visited the Lakota at Wood Mountain several times after the reserve was created in 1911, and he visited Wanjbli Sunpagewin/Julia Lethbridge on at least a few occasions. He noted that she lived alone, her children having all grown up and moved away, and that she was making a living by hunting, a disappointment to him when previously she had worked doing laundry and mending at Regina. According to Graham, she had forgotten how to speak English by this time, but they spoke to each other through an interpreter: “I asked her why she had not continued to live on at Regina where she was apparently making a good living. She said she was fond of the open prairie and the animals,

²¹ Sarah Carter, “Categories and Terrains of Exclusion: Constructing the ‘Indian Woman’ in the Early Settlement Era in Western Canada” *Great Plains Quarterly*, Vol. 13 (Summer 1993): 159.

²² 1915 Sessional Papers (No. 27), Dept of Indian Affairs, (Vol. 50, No. 23), Part II, Reports of Indian Agents, Thomas E. Donnelly, Indian Agent for Assiniboine Agency, Sask, "Moosejaw Sioux," page 56; 1916 Sessional Papers, No. 27, Dept. of Indian Affairs, Part II, Reports of Indian Agents, "Report of Thos. E. Donnelly, Indian Agent for Assiniboine Agency, Sask," 59.

that she was living the life the Lord intended, and was happy and contented. I must say I could not understand why she was happy...²³ Waṅblí Sunpagewiṅ was clearly enjoying her life and being back in her homelands and community, especially as an older woman at that time, but to Graham she had regressed.²⁴ These kinds of observations are repeated in different contexts in this chapter (marriage, movement, morality), but clearly show attitudes and frustrations towards Lakota women and the continuation of their visible cultural practices, which no doubt they were passing to their children as well.

The families of these women fondly remember the culture and language they passed down. Mary Black Moon-Aspdin's granddaughter recalled that "She dressed in mixed Indian and white fashion" and she was "very feminine, very motherly."²⁵ Siggins wrote that Mary Aspdin's household was definitely an Indian one as she liked to do beadwork and quillwork, tan hides, dried berries and meat, while learning other things like growing vegetables to can.²⁶ She went on to say the Mary insisted Lakota be spoken at home and their daughters "had been brought up Indian-style, protected and loved."²⁷ The same can be said of the other Lakota women. Photographs of Țhašúṅke Hiṅ Țótewiṅ and Ihá Waštéwiṅ for example show them with moccasins on their feet, well into their older years, no doubt made by themselves for everyday use. Stories of these women using and passing down their Lakota knowledge still are told, particularly of gathering willow along the creek banks for horses' winter feed and of their

²³ William M. Graham, *Treaty Days: Reflections of an Indian Commissioner* (Calgary: Glenbow Museum, 1991): 30.

²⁴ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from Thomas Aspdin to the Indian Commissioner, October (or November?) 9, 1896.

²⁵ Quoted in Maggie Siggins, *Revenge of the Land: A Century of Greed, Tragedy, and Murder on a Saskatchewan Farm* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 95.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 97.

midwifery skills.²⁸ Lakota women's lives did not necessarily change to fit settler ideals of women's roles once they married white men, settled on ranches, or settled on the reserve, and certainly they passed the Lakota language and cultural knowledge to the next generation.

Lakota women did not always conform to settler understandings of marriage either. In the colonial view of the settler state at this time, monogamous marriage was the only acceptable relationship, and Thiyópa/Ellen Brown had an interesting paper trail attached to her in her later years because she was viewed as breaking these social norms. In the fall of 1919, the Fort Peck Agency Superintendent, E.D. Mossman, wrote to Fredrick (Fred) Brown and reported that Fred's wife, Thiyópa, was passing "herself off as a single woman and collected about \$100.00 from an old man named Shooter on the proposition that she was about to marry him."²⁹ The Superintendent was shocked as "It was of course impossible for her to marry him [as] she was already married" and suggested Fred send for his wife at once "and take her back to the protection of your own home otherwise it will be necessary for me to put her in the guard house here as she refuses to leave this reservation."³⁰ Mossman wrote again in March 1920 regarding his disapproval over Thiyópa seeking to be with another man: "We have some Indians and some white men in this locality that have more than one wife but we do not want to add to the number of irregularities in that line. Of course, if this old woman was properly divorced, we could hardly prevent their marriage if they so desired but as long as she is not divorced I shall certainly object to it and will continue to object after she is divorced as long as my objections would prevent it."³¹ Superintendent Mossman was quite preoccupied with what to do about Thiyópa's supposed

²⁸ Personal communication with Thelma Poirier, June 2013.

²⁹ Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box #17, Letters from Agencies 1878-1930, 1919-1921 Wood Mountain Stock Ranch, Letter from Fort Peck Superintendent to F. Brown, Wood Mountain, October 30, 1919.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box #17, Letters from Agencies 1878-1930, 1919-1921 Wood Mountain Stock Ranch folder, Letter from Mossman to Gore, March 20, 1920.

extra-marital relations with Shooter as he wrote a number of letters to James H. Thomson and Arthur Gore (who worked as W.H. Ogle's ranch secretary) at Wood Mountain asking if they could somehow keep her from returning to Fort Peck. Thiyópa's adult children and grandchildren were living at the Standing Rock Reservation and Mossman wanted Thiyópa to go take care of them and live with them. He was very intent on regulating Thiyópa's personal life and relations. One letter exists in Thiyópa's own words, although transcribed for her by Gore:

I have received your letter asking me to go to fetch the children of mr [my] son Alfred. It is noy [not] possible for me to fetch them for I have no money for the purpose- nor have I the means to keep them. I have lived forty years with my husband, and he never gives me money. Even if I was able to fetch and keep them it is not up to me to do so; their Mother is alive and she must look after them. My husband has taken from me a will by which he provides for me, and says that he will not have any more of me. My husband really quit me four years ago, and he has not since provided for me. During that time Shooter (the writer is unable to spell his Indian name) on your Reservation has given me money, and he wants me to go and live with him, and will take care of me for the rest of my days. If you will write and tell me that this can be done I will at once go to Poplar and can then look after my grandchildren and thus save you further trouble about them.³²

Still her statement did not satisfy the superintendent. Thiyópa made her own decisions confidently it seems. At the same time, Gore wrote a letter stating his opinion of what was best for Thiyópa: "Mrs Brown will be far better off away from the wretched remnant of sin and senility with whom she has consorted here for many years, and she would probably be happy enough with Mr Ute Sa and her grandchildren at Poplar."³³ This reply did not please Mossman either.

Thomson, who had long since left the police by this time but often worked as a liaison of sorts for the Lakota at Wood Mountain and was a long-time friend of Fred Brown's, talked to Fred and reported to Mossman that the separation was mutual. In their community, nothing more

³² Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box #17, Letters from Agencies 1878-1930, 1919-1921 Wood Mountain Stock Ranch folder, Letter from Tiopa Brown to Mossman, February 20, 1920.

³³ Ibid., Letter from Gore to Mossman, February 20, 1920.

was needed to be divorced. Thomson also wrote that Fred and Thiyópa had never been legally married and Fred was agreeable to Thiyópa doing as she pleased.³⁴ Thomson saw and spoke to both Fred and Thiyópa at the same time and Fred told Thiyópa “you can go if you want to and you can come back any time you want to” so the separation seemed amicable, with it being more desirable to Thiyópa.³⁵ Thomson also mentioned that Thiyópa had 25 horses of her own, which suggests she was not the dependent woman Mossman made her out to be.

About a month later, in June 1920, Thomson and Gore wrote to Mossman again to help Thiyópa secure land at Fort Peck. But Mossman replied in a very agitated and aggressive way:

I have written you fully both of you concerning this old woman previous to this time and told you that she has no interests whatever on this reservation and as far as I am concerned she will secure no interests here...I did not want her here, do not want her here and will not have her here and when I get rid of her this time I hope you will not send her back here again...Unless some money is sent for this old woman within a reasonable period of time by her relatives to send her on her way to Standing Rock or return her to Wood Mountain I will either put her in the guard house for robing this old man [the man she promised to marry and gave her \$100] or have her arrested for vagrancy...³⁶

Much to Mossman’s exasperation, he also had no jurisdiction over Thiyópa because she was not enrolled at Fort Peck or any U.S. reservation, nor the Wood Mountain reserve, and Thomson called her a “free agent” then as far the governments’ were concerned.³⁷ Thomson wrote that Fred would send money so that Thiyópa could go to their children at Standing Rock,³⁸ but in the end, Mossman reported that Thiyópa had “quieted down” at Wolf Point with her son-in-law and this seemed to satisfy the superintendent’s scruples.³⁹

³⁴ Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box #17, Letters from Agencies 1878-1930, 1919-1921 Wood Mountain Stock Ranch folder, Letter from Thomson to Mossman, March 22, 1920.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., Letter from Superintendent Fort Peck Agency to Thomson and Gore, June 4, 1920.

³⁷ Ibid., Letter from Thomson to Mossman, June 30, 1920.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., Letter from Mossman to Gore, September 21, 1920. Thiyópa eventually married Frank Derby at Poplar, Montana on the Fort Peck Reservation in about 1922. Interestingly, Frank Derby is Ite Ska Win’s brother according to John Lecaine. See PAS, Everett Baker Papers, R561.30.n, Okute, John, Historical Notes, 1957-1962, Letter from

Thiyópa's appearance in the written record is noteworthy for several reasons, one of the most interesting being that her own words are recorded—a rare occurrence for Indigenous women of this time especially of her generation who did not speak, much let alone write, English. Another reason this particular record of Thiyópa is remarkable is its illustration of relationships and the monitoring of them by Indian Affairs officials. Women had some obvious freedoms in Lakota society compared to the norms of settler society at the time, especially around “divorce,” for lack of a better word. Lest we get too romantic of a picture, double standards definitely existed in traditional Lakota society for men and women, and as Ella Deloria noted, women could be publicly called out, shamed through songs written about them, and even punished for their improper conduct, but “Nothing was done about men’s.”⁴⁰ However, Deloria wrote that “There were cases also wherein a young wife sent for her own relatives to take her home because marriage was not pleasing to her or because she gathered from her husband’s attitude and behaving that he was dissatisfied with her. To stay on and try ‘by tricks’ to win him over was beneath her pride. ‘If he does not want me, I do not want him.’ She would not be compelled to stay against her will, so her going home with her people—without saying for how long—was practically a divorce.”⁴¹ This was in stark contrast to Canadian legislation around divorce, particularly because fault had to be clearly shown on one party’s behalf and often the cost of taking such claims to court made it out of reach for many women. Divorce was easier to attain in the U.S., but still the associated shame and immorality that was attached to divorce in settler society at the time made it even more difficult for many unhappily married people to

John Okute-Sica to Everett Baker, September 14, 1957. William (Bill) Lethbridge also told Thelma Poirier in a March 10, 1993 interview that Ite Ska Win had two brothers, and one named Derby married Thiyópa.

⁴⁰ Ella Deloria Archive, *Dakota Ethnography*: Box 1, *The Dakota Way of Life*, Ch. 6 Courtship and Marriage, page 109, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3168

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Ch. 7 Wedded Life, page 139,

http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3191

pursue. The comparative ease of divorce in the U.S. did not hinder the goal of instituting “proper” marriages without divorce onto Indigenous people either. These settler stigmas did not necessarily accompany divorce in Lakota society however.

As Sarah Carter has shown in her book, *The Importance of Being Monogamous*, settler ideas of monogamy, heterosexuality, and life-long marriage was the foundation for building Canada as a nation and forming society into “respectable” nuclear families and individuals. This excluded and subjugated people who fell outside these norms and were targeted as needing to be controlled and changed, just like Thiyópa. Thiyópa also pushed back against roles that white men thought she should stay within—particularly that of wife and caregiver to children (her grandchildren in this case). Her children were grown, her grandchildren cared for, she was separated from her husband which was mutual, and she sought her own path and relationships, and even security in the form of land among her community at Fort Peck. However, this all flew in the face of the kinds of structures and norms that settler governments were trying to force onto Lakota people.

Another example of understandings of okíčhiyuze and Lakota women’s autonomy at Wood Mountain is the relationship between Ité Ská Wiñ (White Face Woman) and NWMP officer Major Jarvis⁴² which began into in order to secure reliable food for Ité Ská Wiñ’s

⁴² It is not completely clear who Major Jarvis was and John Lecaine does not provide his first name. There were several men with the last name Jarvis in the NWMP at this time, and only one who had the title of Major, but was stationed in Calgary (E.W. Jarvis, regimental no. 073, active from 1886 to 1894). Sarah Carter identified Jarvis as W.D. Jarvis who was active in the NWMP as an Inspector from 1873 to 1881 (regimental no. 02) at Edmonton and Swan River, so it is not certain if this is the correct Jarvis either. The 1881 census at Wood Mountain includes a NWMP member “S. Jarvis” as being stationed there which may be Stephen Murray Jarvis (regimental no. 347, active from 1879-1884) and so this may be the man who married Ité Ská Wiñ. William (Bill) Lethbridge told Thelma Poirier in a March 10, 1993 conversation/interview that Inspector Wood of the NWMP (this may be Zachary Taylor Wood who was engaged as an Inspector in 1885 and stationed at Maple Creek) told him that the man was Inspector Macdonell. Bill said his mother saw what happened when the woman left Macdonell. There were two Macdonells stationed at Wood Mountain (who were also related to each other): A.C. Macdonell, who had a short stay in Wood Mountain in the 1890s (regimental no. 95), and A.R. Macdonell who was an Inspector and spend a lot of time at Wood Mountain from 1876 until at least 1885, though he remained in the force until 1895 (regimental no. 39).

siblings. But when Jarvis publicly embarrassed and mistreated Ité Ská Wiŋ, she fled during the night to South Dakota and effectively ended their marriage and no less was thought of her.⁴³ The ability for her to leave to another part of Lakǰóta ǂamákǰoĉhe in order to facilitate the end of their relationship is also important as it exemplifies connections to other Lakota communities and kin to seek protection and support. Women leaving their husbands was not outside the bounds of Lakota society, but was outside the bounds of settler norms. It seemed incomprehensible to Mossman that Thiyópa could leave her husband on her own accord and he worked for some time to get Fred's approval in the matter. The extent Mossman was willing to go to restrict Thiyópa's movements and relationships with other people (especially men) at Fort Peck, even as far as throwing her in the guardhouse, is indicative of the kind of moral and social threat Lakota women's bodies and relations supposedly posed to the forming settler colonist regime and thus the policing of women that was allegedly needed.

Like Thiyópa and Ité Ská Wiŋ, Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ and ǂašúŋke Nún pawiŋ's marriages ended as well. Charles Lethbridge returned to eastern Canada, leaving Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ and their children behind, but the circumstances around the end of their marriage are not known. Conversely, ǂašúŋke Nún pawiŋ left her husband, Archie Lecaine, when he was transferred to Regina, either because she refused to leave her Lakota family and community behind or because her father did not want her to leave, depending on the account.⁴⁴ John Lecaine wrote this account: "Mother refused to accompany LeCaine to a new appointment in the East. Fearing the

⁴³ PAS, Everett Back fonds, R-834, 17(b), Legends, 1970-1973, Okute-Sica, John. Letter from Everett Baker to John Okute-Sica, September 10, 1957. For more discussion on the end of this marriage also see Carter, "Categories and Terrains of Exclusion," 152; and Carter, *Capturing Women*, 180-181.

⁴⁴ CMH, *Legends of Our Times*, "Ranching, Wood Mountain Biographies," "Tasunke Nupawin (Owns Two Horses-Emma Lecaine)," accessed April 3, 2019, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_14e.html#Tasunke; and "Woonkapi Sni (John Lecaine/John Okute)," accessed April 3, 2019, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_16e.html#Woonkapi-Sni

new mode of life she must face. So there was a separation (natural consent).”⁴⁵ Tǎšúŋke Nún̄paw̄iŋ and their daughter Alice remained at Wood Mountain living with her family, and in 1888 or 1889 she was remarried to a Lakota man named Okhúte Šíča (Hard to Shoot At). The end of Tǎšúŋke Nún̄paw̄iŋ and Archie Lecaine’s marriage shows clearly the centrality and importance of Lakota kinship connections and Tǎšúŋke Nún̄paw̄iŋ’s willingness to act in accordance with those Lakota relationship responsibilities, much as that very marriage had begun. Other relationships felt the strain of settler norms sometimes as well, especially as Indigenous women became more frowned upon as “suitable” spouses for white men. For example, Mary Black Moon-Aspdin and her husband Thomas Aspdin were not able to live together for some time because as a NWMP member he had to take employment away from Wood Mountain, and according to Siggins, the NWMP frowned upon such unions at that time.⁴⁶ Mary Aspdin stayed with her family and community at Moose Jaw during those years, even though they continued in their relationship, again reinforcing the importance of Lakota systems of kinship and support. As Sarah Carter wrote: “Among the police, there were radically different points of view about what was suitable behaviour. Some of them married Aboriginal women in ceremonies sanctioned by customary law or Christian rites. Others clearly exploited the women. Some condemned all such relationships, while others believed that they were vital to the virile image of the force.”⁴⁷ As a small outpost, Wood Mountain and the NWMP may have been more relaxed about such marriages in the 1880s, but eventually as white women became more numerous and positioned as the best option for wives and for populating the West, Indigenous

⁴⁵ PAS, G.F. Shepherd papers, A289, 24. Cypress Hills and Wood Mountain, 1935-1972: Lecaine to Shepherd, no date, titled: "RE Stone Circles."

⁴⁶ Siggins, *Revenge of the Land*, 86. However, these types of relationships between NWMP members and Indigenous women were not uncommon nor were they necessarily hidden. For more discussion on this see Carter, "Categories and Terrains of Exclusion," 151-152 and Carter, *Capturing Women*, 168-85.

⁴⁷ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 172.

women were blamed for vice in the new settlements and “squaw men” for causing more “Indian troubles.”⁴⁸

Property Lines of Gender and Race

Scholars Sarah Carter and Kim TallBear have thoroughly examined how heterosexual, patriarchal, monogamous, Christian ideals of marriage, love, and sex have been the basis for nation-building and settler colonialism and enforced onto Indigenous (and other non-conforming) peoples.⁴⁹ Historian Tonia M. Compton summarized that women “negotiate[d] a rocky terrain, littered with the racialized and gendered expectations which accompanied the American efforts to establish an empire in the West...For indigenous women, this meant assimilation to a new gender order through the restructuring of both conceptions of property ownership and rights, and compliance with dominant ideas about marriage and gender roles.”⁵⁰ All three of these scholars outline the inextricable link between the western institution of marriage and property ownership, which is key to understanding how Indigenous people were dispossessed of land and relationship norms imposed. TallBear terms this “settler sexuality” and argues that these norms explicitly exclude Indigenous understandings and different sets of relationships, not just sexual, romantic, or nuclear family-oriented relationships which were all reframed as the most important.

Wood Mountain Lakota women grew up in a society where individual land ownership was a foreign concept but lived in a changing world where property was key to survival,

⁴⁸ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 184-185.

⁴⁹ Sarah Carter, *The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2008); Kim TallBear, “Yes, Your Pleasure! Yes, Self-love! And Don’t Forget, Settler Sex is a Structure*,” *The Critical Polyamorist*, April 22, 2018, <http://www.criticalpolyamorist.com/homeblog/yes-your-pleasure-yes-self-love-and-dont-forget-settler-sex-is-a-structure>

⁵⁰ Tonia M. Compton, “Proper Women/Propertied Women: Federal Land Laws and Gender in the Nineteenth-Century Imperial American West” (PhD diss., University of Nevada, 2009), 3.

movement, and social access within settler society. For men, having a wife was a benefit to obtaining more property as their labour was needed and governments often incentivized marriage with access to more acres, but women were not passive in their families' opportunities and eventually sought their own opportunities as well. To explain this link between property and marriage, TallBear wrote,

Those relationship forms [monogamous, heterosexual, etc.] were intimately tied up with the appropriation of Indigenous collectively held land and its division into individual allotments to be held privately. Men as heads of households qualified for a certain acreage. They obtained more if they had a wife and children. Women of course were tied to men economically. Accordingly, compulsory monogamy and marriage have been forced on other non-monogamous and sometimes non-Christian communities as well. Thus, settler sexuality can be translated more straightforwardly as both heteronormative and homonormative forms of "love," "sex," and marriage that are produced along with private property holding in the US and Canada.⁵¹

As Indigenous women dealing with two different sets of property laws on either side of the international border, the navigation of land ownership would have been daunting. However, these women were able to secure access to their own legally held land and understood especially as time went on that to provide for their children and extended families participating in these kinds of colonial tenure might be necessary.

In addition, TallBear has also written about the way Indigenous women's power was intentionally eroded by state colonialism with private property systems. TallBear wrote, "The colonial state targeted women's power, tying land tenure rights to heterosexual, one-on-one, lifelong marriages, thus tying women's economic well-being to men who legally controlled the property. Indeed, women themselves became property."⁵² TallBear goes on to emphasize an

⁵¹ Kim TallBear, "Yes, Your Pleasure! Yes, Self-love! And Don't Forget, Settler Sex is a Structure*," *The Critical Polyamorist*, April 22, 2018, <http://www.criticalpolyamorist.com/homeblog/yes-your-pleasure-yes-self-love-and-dont-forget-settler-sex-is-a-structure>

⁵² Kim TallBear, "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family," in *Making Kin Not Population*, edited by Adele E. Clarke and Donna Haraway (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2018), 148.

important point, that for Dakota people prior to colonization, the fundamental social unit was extended family groups (thiyóšpaye) not the nuclear family and included plural marriage. Thiyóšpaye works within the tribe/people/nation (oyáte) and “governance happens in ways that demonstrate the connections between the two.”⁵³ This is the same in Lakota society and separating the kinship systems from governance systems is impossible. This is why colonial states that have tried to dispossess Indigenous people from their land and self-governance in order to place that land and governance into new (settler) structures and systems firstly and simultaneously targeted Indigenous people’s bodies and relationships.

Canada and the U.S. followed very similar paths in Indian policy in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and possibly there was even more similarity in their land and settlement policies as well. Where all these policies intersected for Indigenous women, especially Lakota women in two nation states, was often a blurry, ever-moving line that could be enforced strictly but arbitrarily by government officials. There were many policies and laws that differed for women and for Indians, and homesteading was one of them. Carter has written at length on how most women were denied access to homesteading in Canada and yet, in some instances, found other ways to obtain land and protest being barred from homesteading. In her book *Imperial Plots: Women, Land, and the Spadework of British Colonialism on the Canadian Prairies* she noted that in Canada before 1874, single settler women and men over the age of twenty-one could homestead, and in 1874 the age was lowered to eighteen years of age. But by 1876, single women were no longer permitted to homestead and only a woman who was the sole head of household with a minor child or children could homestead; “generally interpreted to mean a widow.”⁵⁴ Women could purchase land regardless of their marital status outside of the

⁵³ TallBear, “Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family,” 148.

⁵⁴ Carter, *Imperial Plots*, xxi.

homesteading process, and hopefully outside of the Department of the Interior's scrutiny. In Canada and the U.S., married women were denied the right to homestead, but in the U.S., single, widowed, and divorced women could homestead and did successfully.⁵⁵ Moreover, homesteading was prohibited to any Indians (the 1876 Indian Act in Canada explicitly excluded Indians from homesteading) and more generally were barred from obtaining land off a reserve more broadly.⁵⁶ So with these two restrictions leveled at Indians and women, Lakota women especially had little chance to obtain land in Canada, if they were inclined to do so.

Anthropologist Martha C. Knack outlined in the U.S. that under the General Allotment Act, Section 4, Indians "not attached" to a tribe with a reservation could apply for 160 acres of pasture land, 80 acres of crop land, or 40 acres of irrigable land and though they had to deal with an Indian agent, the process followed closely the larger homestead system though the land was held in federal trust for twenty-five years when the patent was obtained. Women and minor children after 1918 could also apply through this process. A second way Indians could gain homesteads was similar to the Canadian enfranchisement system, with the individual having to give up their "tribal relations" and show they were living in a "civilized" manner. The BIA did not prefer this homestead option though because it was handled by the General Land Office (GLO), leaving them uninformed and out of control of Indian homesteaders.⁵⁷ By 1920, Knack found that 8,776 Indian people had taken up the first type of homesteads, but it is unclear how many of those were women.⁵⁸ With the many obstacles and restrictions, especially between the BIA and GLO both having hoops to jump through that were unique to Indian applicants, it is not

⁵⁵ Carter, *Imperial Plots*, 18.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁵⁷ Martha C. Knack, "The Saga of Tim Hooper's Homestead: Non-Reservation Shoshone Indian Land Title in Nevada," *Western Historical Quarterly* Vol. 39 (Summer 2008): 127-128.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 128.

surprising that the documentary trail of these homesteaders is hard to follow and that few saw the land come under their ownership.

There were also systems set up by Indian Affairs in both countries to deal with private land tenure for Indians on reserves and reservations: the American allotments system and the Canadian system of severalty. Both served the same purpose: to foster “individualism” rather than “tribalism” through private property holding and to sell “surplus” or “unused” lands to incoming settlers after all the tribal/band members had been given what was considered their fair share (of their own land) by Indian Affairs.

Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed announced his plan to implement severalty in October of 1888 and he consulted with American officials to learn about their allotment system. Carter states that “Canadian officials were aware of the potential profitability of severalty, however, well before that date [1888].”⁵⁹ Severalty worked with a system of location tickets that divided up the reserves to give to individual band members.⁶⁰ This went hand in hand with establishing agriculture on reserves as each head of household (man) received land for cultivation and put men at the helm of the new agricultural and land tenure order being established. In Canada, the fears of losing reserve land by this process were well founded as other government plans to seize land from reserves were successful, but “surplus” land from reserves could not be thrown open to settlement without consent of the band and individual parcels held by band members could not be sold or leased to non-band members.⁶¹ Severalty had for the most part ended in Canada after

⁵⁹ Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990), 201.

⁶⁰ Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 193-209. Also see: Christopher Alcantara, “Individual Property Rights on Canadian Indian Reserves: The Historical Emergence and Jurisprudence of Certificates of Possession” *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2003): 391-424; and Robert James Nestor, “Hayter Reed, Severalty, and the Subdivision of Indian Reserves on the Canadian Prairies” (PhD diss., University of Regina, 1998).

⁶¹ Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 201; Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy 1880-1920*, 30.

the early 1890s and since the Wood Mountain reserve was not created until later, in 1910, and was not considered good farm land, this system was not applied there.⁶²

The U.S. allotment system was created under the Dawes Severalty Act, or the Allotment Act of 1887, and was founded on the idea that the “Indian problem” stemmed from treating Indians as a group rather than individuals.⁶³ Each head of family would receive 160 acres of reservation land and the government would hold this land in trust for the allottee for twenty-five years (and for those years it could not be sold or mortgaged). Once the allottee received their title to the land, the owner would become a citizen.⁶⁴ Turning Indians into “productive” citizens was the ultimate aim for both the American and Canadian governments. Indian women in the U.S. seem to have had more open access to gaining allotments than their Canadian counterparts could gain location tickets, and many women held their allotments regardless of their marital status after an 1891 amendment equalized this between men and women,⁶⁵ but this warrants more investigation. As Tonia M. Compton shows, Senator H. Dawes, creator of the Dawes Act, declared that Indian women and their property rights were protected from white men “who would enter the reservation, start a family, and then desert them when his opportunities for profit-making had disappeared” and he declared that ““hereafter whosoever takes an Indian woman for his wife, takes her to his home and his heritage and the heirship of his household, and she becomes a white man rather than he an Indian woman.””⁶⁶ But allotment was not directed at protecting women and their property, and this statement still speaks volumes about the ultimate

⁶² Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 209.

⁶³ Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy 1880-1920*, 27.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Barbara Leibhardt, “Allotment Policy in an Incongruous Legal System: The Yakima Indian Nation as a Case Study, 1887-1934,” *Agricultural History*, Vol. 65, no. 4 (Autumn 1991): 83, n.19.

⁶⁶ Henry Dawes, “Past and Present Indian Policy,” Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Missionary Association, Hartford, Connecticut, 1892 in the Henry L. Dawes Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, in Tonia M. Compton, “Proper Women/Propertied Women: Federal Land Laws and Gender in the Nineteenth-Century Imperial American West” (PhD diss., University of Nevada, 2009), 98.

goal of dispossession, assimilation, and enfranchisement of Indigenous people, particularly women.

After the allotment process was completed, lands deemed extra to what the tribe needed were opened for settlement. The allotment system was ended by the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, and by this time reservation lands had diminished from 138 million acres to 48 million acres.⁶⁷ Canada had a similar system of location tickets in the Indian Act which allowed some band members to reside on and use a certain parcel of reserve land with legal protections to do so. Some bands did not use this system however and after 1951 the tickets were changed into three different types of documents.⁶⁸ Much like the allotment process in the U.S., it was created in order to encourage private property ownership and settler ideals of land use, as well as being the first step in the process of enfranchisement.⁶⁹ Although not as widely discussed as the U.S. allotment system, the Canadian location ticket system was likewise part of a larger scheme to secure the surrender of “surplus” or “idle” reserve lands, though the Canadian political and legal route to enable this occurred over many Indian Act amendments and government administrations.⁷⁰

The allotment system in the U.S. was also created to supplant Indigenous forms of gender relations with patriarchal settler ideals about the roles of men and women in the domestic and public realms aligned with private property.⁷¹ This was also the goal of the severalty system in Canada. However, as Compton points out in her study of Nez Perce women: “While the purpose behind the Allotment Act clearly included the detribalization of indigenous peoples and the

⁶⁷ Compton, “Proper Women/Propertied Women,” 29.

⁶⁸ Christopher Alcantara, “Individual Property Rights on Canadian Indian Reserves: The Historical Emergence and Jurisprudence of Certificates of Possession,” *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, Vol. 23, no. 2 (2003): 401-405.

⁶⁹ Titley, *A Narrow Vision*, 8-9 and 12-13.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 15-16 and 20-21.

⁷¹ Compton, “Proper Women/Propertied Women,” 233.

forced adoption of ‘civilization,’ especially in terms of gender relationships, among the Nez Perces, allotment allowed women to protect the right to own property that already marked their native society. In addition, women challenged the provisions of the Dawes Act by asserting their ownership of the allotment, when there was a marked preference for husbands to be viewed as familial heads and controllers of land holdings.”⁷² She starts with the basis that, “Native women (at least the Nez Perce women in this study), while subject to the demands of white men and women colonizers, benefitted from a gender order within their own societies that granted them greater power than white women typically enjoyed in gender relations.”⁷³ This was also the case for some Wood Mountain Lakota women with regard to land access and authority. In a Lakota/Dakota context, Ella Deloria wrote:

Men’s working tools were exclusively theirs, but wives and children owned certain horses and cows individually, which ran in the family herd. These were designated as ‘mother’s cow’ or ‘son’s horse.’...Thus men and women did as they would with personal possessions...Ideally, marriage was a partnership wherein each person was expected to do his own stint fairly...From the beginning she [the wife] was his [the husband] peer. The marriage relationship started and remained on that basis.⁷⁴

Deloria’s description of property ownership/sharing and marriage relationships reflects back to Kim TallBear’s use of “good relations” and her statement, “What I know of my ancestors is that women controlled household property. And marriage did not bind them to men economically in the harsh ways of settler marriage.”⁷⁵ These statements reinforce that Lakota women were coming from an understanding of property and partnership that differed greatly from that of settler society and colonial nation-states. This cultural perspective would have been the foundation for Wood Mountain Lakota women (and men) in their endeavors to access their own

⁷² Compton, “Proper Women/Propertied Women, 18.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷⁴ Ella Deloria Archive, *Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, The Dakota Way of Life, Ch. 6 Courtship and Marriage*, page 134, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3180.

⁷⁵ TallBear, “Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family,” 156.

lands which had come under colonial state regulations and their marriages and property did not necessarily erode their power and roles in their communities and families.

Within this context of policy and a cultural lens, some Lakota women (as well as men) at Wood Mountain were able to obtain allotments on American reservations. *Tǎšúnke Núnnpawin* obtained an allotment on the Cheyenne River Reservation in 1913,⁷⁶ her husband *Okhúte Šíča* also got one at the same time⁷⁷ as well as their children John, Alice, and Charles Lecaine⁷⁸ and they were granted them as enrolled members (this enrollment process will be discussed more in chapter five). *Thiyópa* also obtained an allotment, though at the Fort Peck Reservation and through inheriting it in 1929.⁷⁹ She in turn eventually left it to her son, Albert Brown,⁸⁰ and even though her children could not obtain allotments previously based on their own Lakota community and belonging, Albert could become more formally entrenched in the community through this inheritance.

J.H. Thomson wrote in the spring of 1920 to the superintendent of the Fort Peck Reservation, E.D. Mossman on his wife, *Ihá Waštéwiŋ*'s, behalf to ask about acquiring land in the U.S. He wrote: "My wife is an American Indian woman, on father's side Minnicozu [sic], mother's side Hunkpapa. She has been given to understand that she and her children can obtain a free grant of land on the American side. As I understand it the land would be either in S. Dakota or Wyoming."⁸¹ It is clear from this letter that *Ihá Waštéwiŋ* was aware, possibly from other

⁷⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, Cheyenne River Sioux allotment patent, Ziebach County, Mrs. Hard-To-Shoot-At, April 8, 1913, Allotment No. 3136.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Hard-To-Shoot-At, April 8, 1913, Allotment No. 3135.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Don't-Shoot-Him-Down, April 8, 1913, Allotment No. 3138; *Ibid.*, Beaded-With-Porcupine-Quills, April 8, 1913, Allotment No. 3137; *Ibid.*, Wounded-With-Arrows, April 8, 1913, No. 3139.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Fort Peck Reservation allotment patent, Roosevelt County, Tiyopawin, or Mrs. Frank Derby, January 28, 1929. Allotment No. 563.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Albert Brown, September 25, 1961, Allotment No. 563.

⁸¹ Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box 17, 1919-1921 Wood Mtn Stock Ranch, Letters from Agencies, 1878-1930, letter from J.H. Thomson to E.D. Mossman, May 17, 1920.

Lakota women's experiences at Wood Mountain or from friends and relatives in the U.S. that would stay with her regularly, that she and her children could obtain an allotment and had requested her husband to inquire for her (Ihá Waštéwiŋ was not an English speaker). Mossman wrote in reply to tell Thomson to take up the matter with Superintendent Henry J. McQuigg in Belcourt, North Dakota because he was in charge of allotment in the public domain,⁸² but no further archival evidence of their request has been found as of yet and it seems she never obtained an allotment. Eventually it seems that because she was not residing on the reservation at the time, she was not granted an allotment. Chapter five will take up more discussions about tribal enrollment and access to property that Ihá Waštéwiŋ, Tšašúnke Núnŋpawiŋ, Thiyópa, and their children had to navigate within their communities in the U.S. That the channels for this access was through these matriarchs is of importance to the interpretation of Lakota women's centrality in their families and community at Wood Mountain, especially for retaining connections to larger Lakota communities and kin networks across the border.

Mary Black Moon-Aspdin and her three daughters Alice, Annie, and Kate eventually obtained allotments at the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota in 1910. Thomas Aspdin died in 1906 and by 1908 Mary and their daughters tried to enroll at Cheyenne River where her family lived. According to the February 13, 1908 edition of the *Forest City Press*, "The application of Mrs. Thos. Aspdin and children for enrollment was taken up and it was unanimously voted not to enroll them, for the reason that they had separated themselves from the tribe and were not entitled to an allotment."⁸³ However, Mary and her daughters are listed in the

⁸² Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box 17, 1919-1921 Wood Mtn Stock Ranch, Letters from Agencies, 1878-1930, Letter from E.D. Mossman to J.H. Thomson, May 22, 1920.

⁸³ Library of Congress, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, *Forest City Press*, Forest City, Potter County, South Dakota, Vol. XXV, No. 42, February 13, 1908

1909 Indian Census Rolls for Cheyenne River⁸⁴ and by January of 1910, Mary and all three of her daughters had allotments on the reservation (they would also acquire more land on the reservation in the following nine years).⁸⁵ So although their initial attempt to become members and land owners at Cheyenne River may have been denied, it seems Mary quickly found success. Possibly her Black Moon relatives at Cherry Creek on the Cheyenne River Reservation had some standing in the community and were able to support Mary's efforts to enrol and obtain allotments. By the time of the 1920 U.S. Federal Census, she is listed as a cattle rancher in Ziebach County, South Dakota on the reservation.⁸⁶ However, Mary and her daughters may not have been in Cheyenne River or even in the U.S. at the time of their enrollment and obtaining allotments. Kate, the youngest daughter, received patent to land at Cheyenne River on January 28, 1910⁸⁷ but was still in Canada where she attended business school to become a secretary until 1914 and worked in Regina and Weyburn, Saskatchewan after this time. The 1920 U.S. Federal Census lists Kate (with Mary and Annie) and noted that the sisters immigrated to the U.S. in 1914 (although the 1930 Federal Census listed this as 1917), and that Kate was a stenographer at the post office.⁸⁸ In December of 1920 in Regina, Saskatchewan, Kate married Chris Williams. Clearly Kate was fairly mobile between Saskatchewan and Cheyenne River and was not necessarily residing in the U.S. at the time of her enrollment or land acquisition, and possibly her

⁸⁴ Washington, D.C. NARA, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, RG 75, *Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940*, National Archives Microfilm Publication M595, 692 rolls, page 5-128.

⁸⁵ U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, Cheyenne River Sioux allotment patent, *Ziebach County*, Katie Aspdin/Ista-To-Win/Blue Eyes, January 28, 1910, Allotment No. 2275; *Ibid.*, Alice Aspdin, January 28, 1910, Allotment No. 2271; *Ibid.*, Annie Aspdin, January 28, 1910, Allotment No. 2272; and *Ibid.*, Mary Aspdin, January 28, 1910, Allotment No. 2273.

⁸⁶ Washington, D.C. NARA, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, NARA microfilm publication T625, 2076 rolls, *Township 13, Ziebach, South Dakota*; Roll: *T625_1726, Page 1A*; Enumeration District: 218.

⁸⁷ U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, Katie Aspdin/Ista-To-Win/Blue Eyes, January 28, 1910, Accession #107402, Cheyenne River Sioux allotment patent.

⁸⁸ National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, NARA microfilm publication T625, 2076 rolls, *Township 13, Ziebach, South Dakota*; Roll: *T625_1726, Page 1A*; Enumeration District: 218.

sisters and mother were not either. It was not until 1926 that Kate moved to South Dakota permanently with her husband to begin their ranch on the Cheyenne River Reservation.⁸⁹ The Williams family still resides and ranches on this land outside of Dupree, South Dakota today (2021). In all the cases of Wood Mountain women who gained allotments in the U.S., it seems residence on the reservation where they applied was not necessarily a deciding factor. Nor did their marriages to white men factor in, as it did in Canada.

The processes for obtaining an allotment for these women differed. In Ihá Waštéwiŋ's case, the fact that she was not residing on the reservation at the time of her application may have been the reason she did not obtain one. However, in the Aspdins case, their residence at the time does not necessarily seem to factor into their allotment acquisitions. In all their cases, their marriages to white men does not seem to matter, though this disqualified them from reserve life in Canada. Sarah Carter's research into Shoshone woman Emma Minesinger's life found that she obtained an allotment on the Flathead Reservation in Montana where she went to live in 1908, and because she was married to a white man, Emma was considered the head of the family.⁹⁰ This was upheld in U.S. Indian law, and furthermore it stated: "In the case of *Reynolds v. United States*, a Sioux woman who had been born on the reservation and was a member of the tribe and was taken from the reservation by her father. She moved away from the reservation, adopted the habits of white people and married a white man. Her rights to share in the tribal property were recognized, under the 1887 statute."⁹¹ This would have been the case for all these Lakota women. Children of women who left the tribe/reservation and married white men were also

⁸⁹ "Chris and Kate Aspdin Williams," *South Dakota's Ziebach County: History of the Prairie* (Dupree, SD: Ziebach County Historical Society, 1982), 635-636.

⁹⁰ Sarah Carter, "The Montana Memories of Emma Minesinger: Windows on the Family, Work, and Boundary Culture of a Borderlands Woman," in *Recollecting: Lives of Aboriginal Women of the Canadian Northwest and Borderlands*, edited by Sarah Carter and Patricia A. McCormack (Edmonton: AU Press, 2011), 209.

⁹¹ Felix S. Cohen, *Handbook of Federal Indian Law* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), 187.

guaranteed the same rights to property as any other members of the tribe,⁹² but this does not necessarily seem to be the case for all Wood Mountain Lakota people. This will be explored more fully in chapter five.

Mary Aspdin was not the only Lakota woman in Canada to pursue ranching. Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ, ǂašúŋke Hiŋ ǂótewiŋ, and Thiyópa all had varying degrees of involvement in ranching, first with their husbands and then later with their adult children. These three families were ranching in the Wood Mountain area as early as the 1880s, typically horse ranching and then later cattle ranching. The earliest registered livestock brands for these families at Wood Mountain were registered in 1900.⁹³ At this time and in 1907, J.H. Thomson and W.H. Ogle had the horse brands registered in their names (they had no cattle brand and possibly no cattle herds at this time). However, the Browns' horse brand was registered under Thiyópa's name (more specifically as Mrs. F. Brown) from the very beginning.⁹⁴ Thiyópa had the horse herd brand registered in her name up until 1918.⁹⁵ This is worth noting because it demonstrates that it was not a one-off occurrence for the Brown family and because by 1919 it is clear from the letters discussed earlier in this chapter, that Thiyópa and Fred had been mutually separated for some time but she still had her own substantial horse herd.

Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ and ǂašúŋke Hiŋ ǂótewiŋ also had livestock brands registered in their names.⁹⁶ By 1917, Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ and ǂašúŋke Hiŋ ǂótewiŋ had both the cattle and horse brands registered in their English names for their families' ranching operations.⁹⁷ Some

⁹² Cohen, *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*, 187.

⁹³ PAS, RG AG 15, *North West Brand Book 1900*, 210, 243, and 287.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 286.

⁹⁵ PAS, RG AG 17, PI-460, *Saskatchewan Cattle and Horse Brands Revised and Corrected to December 31, 1917*. Published 1918, 220.

⁹⁶ Claire Thomson, "Lakotapteole: Wood Mountain Lakota Cultural Adaptation and Maintenance Through Ranching and Rodeo, 1880-1930," MA thesis, Department of History, University of Saskatchewan, 66.

⁹⁷ Saskatchewan Animal Industry Branch, *Saskatchewan Cattle and Horse Brands, Revised and corrected to December 31, 1917* (Regina: J.W. Reid, King's Printer, 1918), 23, 76, 182, and 198.

daughters of these three women also had brands registered in their names as they started their own endeavors as young women.⁹⁸ Although it was not completely unheard of for women to register brands in their names, it is rather unique for Indigenous women in Canada, though more study needs to be done in this area. This reinforces the idea that Lakota women held positions of importance not just in their families' domestic lives but also in their means of making a livelihood, an understanding that would have been central in Lakota social and family systems.⁹⁹ And since these women were not literate in English, their husbands would have registered the brands for them, so these men must have seen a benefit in having it done this way. Local Wood Mountain historian Thelma Poirier speculated that the brands were registered in these women's names possibly so they would not be left completely penniless if their husbands died,¹⁰⁰ especially since these Lakota women were sometimes stuck with uncertain status between Canada and the U.S., and between off- and on-reserve/reservation communities which could leave them in a precarious situation.

Being left in precarious situations did happen. When W.H. Ogle went back to his native England in 1914, Tǎšúŋke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ was left behind with their adult children. Although she had the brands registered in her name, the ranch affairs were left with Arthur H.N. Gore to be settled and maintained at Wood Mountain. In a short memoir, Ogle wrote that he had lien notes and mortgages of about \$80,000 to collect, but that his agent (presumably Gore) lost most of it owing to the dry years and that the agent "had instructions to keep the pot boiling on the ranch for some time and this he did for a while."¹⁰¹ Tǎšúŋke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ had her horse brand

⁹⁸ Thomson, "Lakotapteole," 66 and PAS, RG AG 17, PI-460, Saskatchewan Animal Industry Branch, *Saskatchewan Cattle and Horse Brands, Revised and corrected to December 31, 1917* (Regina: J.W. Reid, King's Printer, 1918), 152, 184, 188.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁰¹ William Hall Ogle, "William Ogle," *They Came to Wood Mountain* (Wood Mountain, SK: Wood Mountain Historical Society, 1995), 34.

registered up until at least 1927, so possibly she was maintaining it for her own horses apart from the larger Ogle ranch,¹⁰² but she was not left with the management role that having the family's brands in her name might suggest as that was left to another man (Gore). She was cared for by her children, but things may have still been precarious for her because evidence shows that she tried two other avenues of support. Firstly, in February 1915 she tried to acquire a loan from the Fort Peck Agency. Superintendent Lohmiller however informed her that women could not be placed on the loan list and loans were only for young Indian men to improve their allotments for farming. Lohmiller told her "We would be glad to help you if there was any way to get you on this list, but there is no way."¹⁰³ Her letter to Lohmiller is missing from the record, so it is unclear what she requested this loan for, but regardless it was denied. She must have felt she did not have enough resources to draw on that her husband had left or she had other endeavors she wanted to pursue with loaned money. The bluntness of Lohmiller's reply reflects the gendered aspect of property ownership and agriculture being encouraged by Indian Affairs which turned away women regardless of their ability, experience, and eagerness to be involved in the same opportunities. Secondly, in 1930, Tšašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ and her youngest son Joseph applied to become band members of the Wood Mountain reserve and status Indians. Again, the reasons in their own words for this application are not completely known, but Indian Affairs viewed it as an attempt to draw on government support and their request was denied.¹⁰⁴ Tšašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ was exercising her autonomy and knowledge of property, business, ranching, and Indian policies

¹⁰² PAS, PI-469, *Supplement No. 1: Saskatchewan Cattle and Horse Brands Allotted or Renewed during 1927*, Published 1928, 175.

¹⁰³ Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-181, Box 42, Misc. letters sent, 1914-17, Letter from Lohmiller to Mrs. W.H. Ogle, February 22, 1915.

¹⁰⁴ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7973, File 62-137, Vol. 1, "Wood Mountain Band Membership, 1930."

in order to find security for herself and her family, even if she was not left with the decision-making role of their ranching operations.

After Ihá Waštéwiŋ’s husband, J.H. Thomson, died in 1923 she also continued to have both her horse and cattle brands registered in her name. Again, her adult children were more than likely helping to keep their family herds operating in the same manner as before James died. When her husband died, the property was left to her,¹⁰⁵ an interesting and important case for the time. She was the only Lakota woman at Wood Mountain who inherited property from her husband and she kept it in her name and lived there until her death, in turn leaving it to her son Howard Thomson.¹⁰⁶ After her husband’s death, she moved out of their frame house and into the adobe house on the same property where she felt more comfortable. Shortly thereafter, she rented out the family’s frame house to be the Red Cross Outpost Hospital at Wood Mountain from 1926 to 1934,¹⁰⁷ where some of her grandchildren were born, including my grandfather. Ihá Waštéwiŋ was said to be a skilled horseback rider and she passed on her horsemanship skills to her children, teaching them to gentle rather than buck out horses.¹⁰⁸ She lived the rest of her life being cared by her children and relatives on her family’s ranch until her death in 1949. The archival and oral history records in these spheres—property, livestock, and leases—seem to indicate that she was the primary decision maker even if her adult children were probably ensuring the documentation was carried out in English.

¹⁰⁵ Information Services Corporation (ISC), Saskatchewan Certificate of Title, No. ZF238, Mary Thomson, November 28, 1936; and "Saskatchewan Probate Estate Files, 1887-1931," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VNTJ-JHZ> : 12 March 2018), James Harkin Thomson, 1923; citing Wills and Estates Registry, Saskatchewan Assiniboia, Queen's Bench Provincial Court, Regina, File 54, James Harkin Thomson, 1923.

¹⁰⁶ ISC, Saskatchewan Certificate of Title, No. AIE37, Albert Howard Thomson, executor of the estate of Mary Thomson, July 22, 1949.

¹⁰⁷ "Red Cross Outpost Hospital," *They Came to Wood Mountain* (Wood Mountain, SK: Wood Mountain Historical Society, 1995), 215-216.

¹⁰⁸ Canadian Museum of History, Legends of Our Times, "Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, Iha Wastewin," https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_42e.html#Iha-Wastewin.

Lakota women's access to land through state sanctioned means demonstrates their ability and keenness to find new ways of accessing older systems of kin and place. The systems they had to navigate to gain access favoured men and white settlers, but a few of these women were still able to make room for themselves and their families out of necessity and to continue on their networks of place and kin.

Movement and Access to Place, Kin, and Community

Historian Sheila McManus wrote that the international border “reduced the mobility of aboriginal women, faster and more completely than it did for aboriginal men” particularly in her study of Blackfoot experiences in Alberta and Montana in the 1870s and 1880s where men continued in horse raids and sought refuge with relatives but Blackfoot women did not have as many avenues for mobility as it became more illicit.¹⁰⁹ However, Wood Mountain Lakota women's movement across the international border in the 1890s in at least a few cases were well documented, particularly compared to Lakota men in the same time and places, and though they faced considerable obstacles, they still seemed to undertake their mobility without much regard for government limitations. As the keystones of the Lakota community in Canada, Lakota women were also the center of kinship and cultural networks into the U.S. and so their movement was often important for sustaining these connections for themselves, their families, and other community members. Mary Aspdin's experience shows how Lakota networks and government interference collided and worked in opposition. In the spring of 1894 Mary, her daughters, mother, sister, and nephew went to the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota to visit family there. When she tried to return to Canada, they were not allowed to leave the reservation. Mary was considered just another Lakota woman, and so the policies of Indian

¹⁰⁹ Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates*, 79-80.

Affairs on the reservation were enforced against her and her family and ultimately the Indian agent did not grant her permission to leave. It seems that it did not matter to the agent that she lived in Canada and was married to an Indian Affairs employee there; she was still a Lakota person on a reservation under his jurisdiction. After much correspondence with government officials to try to have his wife allowed to return to Canada, and over a year later, Thomas went to Cheyenne River to bring his family back himself.¹¹⁰

After Thomas went to retrieve his family and they were reunited, they toured the Cheyenne River Reservation to report back to Indian Affairs in Canada on the conditions and they visit many Lakota people who had been at Wood Mountain. Thomas and Mary must have known that their relationship would have also been easier in some ways in the U.S. because they could have lived together on the reservation, which was not permitted in Canada. Thomas remarked on the number of white men living on the reservations ranching and farming with Lakota wives and children.¹¹¹ However, as Sheila McManus pointed out, white men who were in relationships with Indian women in the U.S. (or “squaw men” as they were known at the time) and particularly those that started agricultural pursuits on the reservations with their families, were becoming more frowned upon by settler society and governments as the line between race and gender (and the separation of property along gendered and racialized lines) became more heavily delineated and enforced from the 1880s onward.¹¹² The differing circumstances for Lakota women in the U.S. must have been clear to them too. Maybe this was so clear to Thomas, that on his deathbed he told his daughter Alice to make sure her mother (Mary) would go back to

¹¹⁰ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from Thomas Aspdin to the Indian Commissioner, September 11, 1895.

¹¹¹ Ibid., Letter from Thomas Aspdin to the Indian Commissioner, September 26, 1895.

¹¹² McManus, *The Line Which Separates*, 100-102.

her family in the U.S.¹¹³ Other than having the support of her family in the U.S., he might have been aware that there were more opportunities there for her as a Lakota woman, especially when it came to owning land. He encouraged this, even if the restrictions on her movement were evident to them both and caused him much anxiety, as is clear from in his impassioned letters to Indians Affairs in the U.S. to reunite with his wife and children. Difficult compromises in uncompromising systems were an unfortunate part of life for many Indigenous people and their relations in this time.

Hindering or prohibiting movement altogether was a settler colonial goal and a barrier especially for Lakota people in the U.S. reservation system. The effects of a confinement and surveillance system is made clear in Mary Aspdin's detainment on the Cheyenne River Reservation and the efforts by the Fort Peck authorities to restrict Thiyopa's "vagrancy," both of which had real impacts on their personal relationships and security. To these women, moving to seek opportunities and spend time with their relatives, sometimes living with family members in various communities, would not have been out of the ordinary for them because that was what they grew up and lived with in their Lakota kinship networks. And most of these women housed their extended kin and had taken their children to live with other family members when government and settler societal pressures did not allow them to live with their husbands. For example, Mary Aspdin's mother and sister lived with her and Thomas. And Ihá Waštéwiŋ and James Thomson took care of some elderly Lakota people and hosted traveling people from Lakota reservations to Wood Mountain for extended periods of time. It was not uncommon for Lakota people to access their families' homes in this way nor uncommon to house more than the nuclear family. The nuclear family has become the default for the term "family" especially in a

¹¹³ Siggins, *Revenge of the Land*, 109.

domestic context, but that does not align with Lakota conceptions of family. The systems of support, living arrangements, and movement characteristic in these women's lives was very much in line with Lakota understandings of family and community.

One woman who stayed with James and Ihá Waštéwiŋ Thomson and traveled between Wood Mountain and Montana quite a bit was Aunty, or Čhúnkaške Wiŋ, Corral/Fence Woman. In her later years, Ihá Waštéwiŋ took care of her in the Thomson home at Wood Mountain until her daughter came to take her to Fort Peck Reservation to live with her (where Čhúnkaške Wiŋ also had an allotment and sold it around 1917).¹¹⁴ Prior to living in the Thomson home, Čhúnkaške Wiŋ took care of several children, some her grandchildren, and traveled between communities and families with them. When Thomas Aspdin was the Indian agent for the Assiniboine Agency and asked to report on the Lakota from time to time, in the mid-1890s he wrote several letters concerning Aunty/Čhúnkaške Wiŋ. Mostly he was frustrated that he had supplied Čhúnkaške Wiŋ with provisions to travel to the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana in the fall of 1895 so she could stay there, and by the next spring she was back at Wood Mountain. He was trying to get Lakota people to settle in one place, and especially tried to get them to return to the U.S. as was the governments' wishes on both sides of the border, but some refused to make permanent homes. He wrote in an 1896 letter "I am sorry they have come back as they are a very indigent outfit and the old woman is dragging around ten of the children who are nearly naked the whole time."¹¹⁵ Even Aspdin was frustrated by some Lakota people's ability to still access their connections and lands outside of reserves and reservations, and in particular this woman's capability to do so, although he was frustrated when his own wife was detained for

¹¹⁴ Denver NARA, RG 75, Fort Peck Agency, 8NS-75-97-173, Box 17, 1919-1921 Wood Mtn Stock Ranch, Letters from Agencies, 1878-1930, letters from James H. Thomson to E.D. Mossman, July 7, 1918 and January 11, 1917.

¹¹⁵ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, Letter from Thomas Aspdin to Indian Commissioner, October 17, 1896.

doing the same. These kinds of double standards are all too familiar in examining histories of Indigenous women's lives and the colonial state.

Čhúnkaške Wiŋ's ability to move freely in her lands while caring for her relatives and especially children is admirable. Her movements and caretaking demonstrate the links between Lakota land and relatives, connections that settler colonialism worked to disrupt. These networks are what constitute Lakhóta Třamákřoče, not simply a label applied to land but the interconnected relationships within. TallBear writes, "Recognizing possibilities of other kinds of intimacies—not focused on biological reproduction and making population, but caretaking precious kin that come to us in diverse ways—is an important step to unsettling settler sex and family."¹¹⁶ Čhúnkaške Wiŋ was caretaking her precious kin in many different places and communities that were important to Lakota people. And in her elderly years, this is the kind of care she received back. It was not necessarily her biological kin that she cared for and that later took care of her, but she still had families and homes that were open to her when she needed care in multiple places with Lakota Třamákřoče not dependant on biological relatedness. The sharing of care, responsibility, kin, and place is central to Lakota networks of belonging.

Even Čhúnkaške Wiŋ's other name, Aunty, tells us that she was regarded as a relative by everyone and well respected because people knew her by her kinship term rather than what would be considered her "proper" name now. In Lakota culture, kinship terms take precedence over given names, and it could be seen as improper or rude to use someone's given name rather than the relative kinship term. The Lakota language has very detailed kinship terms that do not exist in English, which emphasize the importance of those relationships to the structure of society. Furthermore, these terms designate the belonging, responsibilities, and proper conduct

¹¹⁶ TallBear, "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family," 154.

that was specific to each kind of relation and guided good relations. Ella Deloria wrote “The polite exchange of kinship terms of address is the outward and ‘visible’ sign of mutual understanding, and acceptance of one’s obligations to the other. As such it is the indispensable preliminary for a successful association.”¹¹⁷ Deloria goes on to say that without knowing or having a kinship connection to somebody

...one dealt with the other in [the] dark since what his motives were towards one, whether sincere or sinister, were undeterminable. Of only relatives, who knew their proper roles, could one be sure. Therefore the solution was first to make the stranger a relative...On that premise, and with sublime optimism, the Dakota enters into social kinship where kinship through birth and marriage end. As he addresses his new acquaintance as father, sister, uncle, or whatever, he says in effect that he is prepared to think and behave as a son, brother, nephew, and that he presumes that the other is prepared to do the same.¹¹⁸

Following from Deloria then, by calling Čhúnkaške Wiŋ, Aunty/Thųŋwíŋ, it was an acknowledgement of her respected place in Lakota communities and their proper roles towards each other, especially since she was a caretaker and later had the same care reciprocated back to her when she needed it. Traveling in Lakota Thámákhočhe was as much about reciprocating proper kinship roles and respect as it was about physical movement between place—movement that was often to access the care that land and kin provided.

Categorizing Lakota Women

Wood Mountain Lakota women resisted being neatly categorized by governments, sometimes actively and sometimes unintentionally as their very existence was outside the bounds of state definitions and imagination. But nonetheless they resisted easy definition in their lives as either “American” or “Canadian” and even as legally defined Indians. Sometimes this lack of government categorization meant they were barred from certain things but, in other ways, it

¹¹⁷ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, The Dakota Way of Life, Ch. 12 Relatives of Social Kinship, page 277-278, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3180.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 277-278.

granted them more freedoms and opportunities without government surveillance. Carter has written about the transnational nature of many women's lives in the Great Plains and the importance of going beyond simple narratives that compare and contrast the nations to instead fully examine where race, gender, and nation states converge in people's lives.¹¹⁹ She shows how at first the international border had little meaning for Indigenous women but that started to change by the late nineteenth century, especially as regimes of government administration were emerging in both countries.¹²⁰ This is true for Lakota women as well.

As I have written elsewhere, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "The [Wood Mountain] Lakota still straddled the margins of being considered "refugee American Indians," non-status, and status Indians and in some cases, such as the homesteading question, they slipped into different 'categories' depending on the situations and how Indian Affairs wanted to define the Lakota. These definitions were arbitrary and completely reliant on how Indian Affairs wanted to deal with the Lakota, including handling their reserve land later."¹²¹ In a following chapter, I will discuss this in terms of Lakota men and land, but for now, addressing the issues of status, enrollment, and citizenship for Lakota women have specific constraints that warrant special attention.

Since the Wood Mountain reserve was not permanently ratified until 1930, band membership and Indian status had not been strictly regulated for Lakota people. Prior to this, but also for many years after, these artificial government categories to define belonging were not what Lakota people necessarily ascribed to and used to define themselves and their community. Kinship, language, and cultural connections were much more important to community belonging,

¹¹⁹ Carter, "Transnational Perspectives on the History of Great Plains Women," 573.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 573.

¹²¹ Thomson, "Lakotapeteole," 61.

based on Lakota systems of how to make kin and the responsibilities of relatives. Since there was no reserve, Lakota people were not federally recognized, and the Indian Act was arbitrarily applied to them, Lakota people were not considered status Indians. Hence, when Lakota women married white men in the 1880s and 1890s, they had no Indian status to lose like other First Nations women in Canada at the time. The Indian Act in Canada delineated that an Indian woman would lose her Indian status upon marrying a non-status man (and therefore her right to reside on the reserve, access healthcare, annuities, etc.) and their children would be non-status as well. However, when status Indian men married non-status women, their wives (and children) gained Indian status. This very sexist legislation of regulating community belonging was finally removed from the Indian Act in 1985. However, these Lakota women would also be barred from taking up status later; the only exception being Waŋblí Sunpagewiŋ though she had been long separated from her white husband by the time she resided on the reserve.

As discussed previously, Mary Aspdin and her daughters became enrolled at the Cheyenne River Reservation. Tǎšúŋke Nún̄pawiw, Thiyópa, and Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ were all eligible in various ways for enrolment in U.S. tribes with their children as well and some of these families did become enrolled, which will be discussed in chapter five more. There was no legislation in the U.S. that removed an Indian woman's enrolment from the tribe once she married a white man, so the kinds of restrictions women faced in Canada because of their marriages did not hamper them in the U.S. from gaining tribal enrolment or allotments, and therefore none of the same kinds of removal from community participation and closeness.

Once the Wood Mountain reserve was created in 1911, Tǎšúŋke Hiŋ Ĥótewiw and Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ did not become band members or reside on the reserve because their husbands, families, and ranches were already established in the community elsewhere. Therefore, they were

not considered status Indians and neither were their children. In 1930, Tšašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ and her youngest sons, Richard and Joseph Ogle, tried to become band members and reside on the reserve. Arthur Gore wrote on their behalf, explaining that Tšašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ and her sons wanted to obtain land, but were feeling the pressures of incoming settlers and could not get a foothold buying any nearby land. Since there was so much reserve land and only approximately forty people living there at the time, Gore asked if they could too reside there since they were of the same tribe and related to some of those people. He thought it was germane to state, though she lived as his wife for many years, W.H. Ogle “denies being married to this lady.”¹²² A Moose Jaw lawyer wrote on the Tšašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ’s behalf, mentioning that two other families already on the reserve were similarly situated as well.¹²³ He might have been referring to Waŋbli Sunpagewiŋ because once her children were adults and she was separated from her husband, she became a band member and settled on the reserve. Eventually later that same year, Indian Commissioner William M. Graham and Superintendent Duncan C. Scott decided that Tšašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ and her sons should not be allowed to reside on the reserve because they were still well provided for by W.H. Ogle.¹²⁴ Graham believed that “...it is just a case of shifting the responsibility of Mrs. Ogle’s care to the Department...” and goes on to say: “Mr. Gore...was sent out from England by Mr. Ogle to look after his affairs. He has not made much of a success of it, so no doubt he wishes to shift the responsibility, as far as possible, to this Department.”¹²⁵ Whether this was the actual case or not, the Department of Indian Affairs arbitrarily decided who was and was not status Indian/band member or could be part of the reserve community based on

¹²² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7973, File 62-137, Vol. 1, “Wood Mountain Band Membership, 1930,” Letter from Gore to Duncan C. Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, August 11, 1930.

¹²³ Ibid., Letter from W.B. Willoughby to the Department of Indian Affairs, October 20, 1930.

¹²⁴ Ibid., Letter from W. Murison to W.M. Graham, October 31, 1930.

¹²⁵ Ibid., Letter from W.M. Graham to Duncan C. Scott, November 3, 1930.

their view of who was in need. One Indian Affairs official suspected that possibly T̥šašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ wanted her sons to have access to land that could not be taxed and therefore they should not be admitted on this basis as well.¹²⁶ Interestingly, T̥šašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ's eligibility based on her relationship in a legal manner to W.H. Ogle was not discussed, only whether she was receiving support from him was under consideration.

This case brings up complex issues that arose at this time in the Wood Mountain Lakota community and in many Indigenous communities in the early period of settling on reserves/reservations, particularly around government endorsed categories of belonging and how those are being taken up by the communities themselves. These may have been the same kind of obstacles Mary Black Moon-Aspdin first encountered when she was originally denied access to enrolling at Cheyenne River, but luckily, she had relatives there who may have advocated for her. Lakota people of course did not always act as good relatives either, particularly as Lakota kin and care systems were being replaced with government categories.¹²⁷

Generally, the Canadian government did not want to “take on” more Indians and therefore more (financial) responsibility by legislation that took away women's status and also by excluding some Lakota women from formal government Indian categories on other grounds. Although this exclusion might have afforded their children more opportunities for buying land and beginning their own ranching and farming endeavors. It is worth noting that although T̥šašúnke Hiŋ Ĥótewiŋ and her children were barred from status, her children were not barred from attending residential schools (this will be examined more in chapter five). Some women

¹²⁶ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7973, File 62-137, Vol. 1, “Wood Mountain Band Membership, 1930, Letter from W. Murison to W.M. Graham, October 31, 1930.

¹²⁷ For example, see LAC, RG 10, Vol. 1392, Reel C-13934, Dept of Indian Affairs, File Hills-Qu'Appelle Agency, “Letter regarding Tasunke Opi, Wounded Horse” and LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7973, File 62-137 Vol. 1, Wood Mountain Band Membership, 1930, Letter from W. Murison to W.M. Graham, October 31, 1930.”

were able to gain tribal enrolment in the U.S. which facilitated their access to land there through the allotment process. Overall, Lakota women tried different avenues for support and sustenance, even government endorsed and created avenues, and some found more success than others in their endeavors.

Conclusion

Wood Mountain Lakota women were often on the fringes of Indian policy and government categories, which sometimes allowed them to move and live with less settler state interference and more opportunities. But these same policies and categories served to exclude and therefore limit them. In Canada this took shape most often in Indigenous women not being able to reside with family and community members on the reserve because their lack of government recognized Indian status which sometimes stemmed from their relationships to settler men. In the U.S., regardless of their enrollment, marriage, or residency, they were often subject to the same policies on reservations as other Lakota people who were formally recognized as tribal members. Throughout all this, and wherever they were in Lakḥóta Tḥamákḥočhe, Lakota understandings of relationships—in their marriages, in caring for each other, and in their communities—still framed these women’s lives and decisions. The Lakota network of kin connections far beyond the nuclear family was not eliminated by the border or Indian policies in this time, though these settler state impositions made them more difficult in many cases to maintain.

Chapter Four
Ghost Dancing, Stolen Children, and Indian Scares: Panic, Fear, and Morality in Lakota History, 1890-1915

A Sioux met the Soo at Moose Jaw,
 With buffalo horn and bear claw,
 They were polished quite bright,
 For by day and by night,
 While he loafed, it was done by his squaw.¹

This 1916 “A Limerick From The Past” poem was published in the *Manitoba Free Press* and drew on views, literal and figurative, of Lakota people at Moose Jaw. The Soo refers to the Soo Line, the railroad which linked Moose Jaw to Chicago in 1893. Prior to this, the Canadian Pacific Railroad chose the location of Moose Jaw in 1882 and ignited the settlement of the town. Therefore, as a main hub of two important rail lines, Moose Jaw saw considerable train traffic. As the poem alludes to, Lakota people sold railroad tourists and travellers souvenirs of polished buffalo horns, beadwork, and other objects they had made to support themselves, some of which are today in collections in the Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery. Visitors gladly bought these things up as “Indian curiosities,” but, as this poem reflects, mainstream Euro-Canadian prejudiced assumptions about Indigenous people and especially about Indigenous gender relations were negative and harmful. These views were held by some residents of Moose Jaw and helps explain some of their actions to eliminate Lakota people in and around the new town.

This chapter is about notions of spatial and social separation, settler ideas of morality and refinement, and the tensions and fears in the lives of Lakota people at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain between 1890 and 1915. In these decades, the settler focus on reproducing their own societies, morals, and population grew, all of which pushed Indigenous people, including the Lakota, further into the margins of the new “respectable” social order being established on the

¹ “A Limerick From The Past,” *Manitoba Free Press*, May 17, 1916, page 9.

prairies. This was partially carried out through notions of what behaviour was considered morally ruinous, who were nuisances to the “rightful” owners of the land, and how these people and behaviours were obstacles to “civilization.” Sometimes this resulted in moral panics—an imagined threat to morality and society by some kind of perceived deviance, typically whipped up through sensational stories meant to cause action to “correct” or remove the deviance/deviants so to uphold the social/political order. In the imperial/colonial setting, often these alarms and scares were most evident where Indigenous people were closest, especially when Indigenous people worked in domestic spaces for newcomers and where there were epidemics, and these panics functioned as another way to justify removal of Indigenous people for the good and safety of the newcomers.² This chapter will examine a moral panic that was aimed at Lakota people at Moose Jaw and the moral panic leading up to the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 in South Dakota. Both cases were accompanied by newspaper sensationalism, a common part in projecting panic.

Lakota people experienced the same kinds of pressures, fears, and racism that accompanied these perceptions on both sides of the international boundary. Furthermore, settlers were well aware of the circumstances around interactions with Indigenous people on both sides of the border and often used the same rhetoric and tactics towards Indigenous people, regardless of their governments’ official stances and actions. At the same time, Lakota hopes and desire for returning to their own lifeways and the stability of the past was growing, particularly through the Ghost Dance. Life had become desperate for many Lakota people in the 1880s, particularly on American reservations, and the Ghost Dance provided an outlet for hope and possible change. This was also true for some Lakota people in Canada, and the ties that bound them together

² For more on moral panics in imperial and colonial settings, see Harald Fischer-Tiné, editor, *Anxieties, Fear and Panic in Colonial Settings: Empires on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

across the border were still strong, even when times became more difficult following the killing of Sitting Bull on December 15, 1890 and the Wounded Knee Massacre on December 29, 1890.

Even though the border divided them, it did not separate Lakota people from their relatives and their pain entirely. Ella Deloria remembered: “At nine [about 1898] I was quite callous about death; funerals and graves were an everyday matter. Back home, where the people on Standing Rock (many being remnants of Sitting Bull’s recently hostile wanderers) were finding life under new and strange conditions bewildering, tuberculosis was nearly epidemical and so my father held a funeral at least weekly, and sometimes daily at a stretch. For the people died too fast, and without struggle, lacking the will to live.”³ As will be shown in this chapter, Lakota people who resisted going to U.S. reservations knew the conditions their relatives faced that Deloria described. Lakota people in Canada also knew government and settler vengeance might live on, even decades after their victory at the Little Bighorn. People, in curiosity, sometimes ask me what stories of the Little Bighorn were passed down in my family, but truly they are few because people did not necessarily want to talk of it in the difficult years of settler colonial violence that followed. My family was not alone in this: elder William (Bill) Lethbridge said the same of his grandmother’s reluctance to speak of her memories of the battle, and it was not until years later and the elders were living on the reserve at Wood Mountain that they “loosened up a little bit” about it.⁴

These difficult circumstances, fears, and hopes come into sharp focus when examining three specific aspects of history in Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe: first, the impacts of the Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee Massacre north of the border; second, the Moose Jaw “Indian scare”; and

³ Ella Deloria Archive, *Dakota Ethnography*: Box 1, *The Dakota Way of Life*, “Ch. 8 Death and Burial,” page 175, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3236

⁴ William (Bill) Lethbridge conversation/interview with Thelma Poirier, March 10, 1993.

third, the story of a girl named Anátanwiy (later known also as Annie Russell and Gertrude Turton). How these three events fit together shows the tensions, racism, and panic—real and imagined—that existed on Northern Great Plains. But these events also illustrate Lakota connections across the 49th parallel, the real fears they lived with, and the similar settler colonial violence, discourses, and interferences in both Canada and the U.S. that targeted Lakota people. This chapter will examine the ways in which morality, social order, and panic were mobilized by the state and settler society in order to displace Lakota people (and children) and replace them with white families and settlers. At the same time, Lakota people were struggling to resist government and settler pressures to assimilate, especially through maintaining their movement, kinship networks, and the Ghost Dance throughout Lakhóta Třamákřoče.

The theoretical framework of settler colonialism will be used to further draw these three case studies of Lakota history together. Drawing upon the work of other scholars, settler colonialism is the process by which Indigenous people are physically removed and replaced by Europeans, Euro-Canadians, and/or Euro-Americans. Therefore, settler colonialism is predicated upon land and resources—spatial and physical dispossession and replacement--and the means by which this is done is diverse. Scholar Cole Harris's definition and examination of settler colonialism is directly applicable to this study:

By 'settler colonialism' I mean, simply, that form of colonialism associated with immigrants who became the dominant population in the territories they occupied and, in so doing, displaced the Indigenous peoples who previously had lived there. The coming of settlers was variously buttressed by military force; commercial and, later, industrial capital; and the administrative apparatus of a state. But in the long run, the durability of settler colonialism rested on the creation of resident, settler populations. Colonies that were based on economic exploitation, managed by an expatriate elite, and controlled by force of arms reverted to the Indigenous population when the elite and its military supports withdrew, whereas, in settler colonies, recently transplanted populations, now in control of the territories they occupied, survived and often flourished as imperial support declined. Moreover, as connections with former homelands weakened, and as lives and

societies were recontextualized in different settings, immigrants and their descendants considered these new settings home.⁵

This chapter will focus on the way settler colonialism employed ideas of respectability as tied to gender and family as well as violence (the threat of or actual) to bolster and justify the elimination of Lakota people from their lands and from their children. These ideas and representations were reflected and spread largely in print, so newspapers from towns and cities on both sides of the border will be examined as a tool of settler colonial discourse.

Lakota responses and resistance to settler colonialism encompassed movement, kinship, and the Ghost Dance, all which defied settler colonial definitions and restrictions, often beyond the jurisdiction of one country or another. Historian Benjamin Hoy studied how the federal authorities extended their reach across the international border to make Indigenous people comply with the moral and social order being established by settler states and societies. Hoy argued that Indian Affairs did this in both the U.S. and Canada by carrying out a kind of “coercive bookkeeping”; controlling which marriages were state recognized, stripping people of their legal status, and deciding who could inherit property to punish “interracial marriages, divorces by tribal customs, and illegitimate children, even in cases where the guilty party remained outside of the prosecuting country.”⁶ Though Indian Affairs authorities certainly tried these “coercive bookkeeping” tactics, Wood Mountain Lakota people were typically able to slip through these kinds of state interferences on movement, kinship, sexuality, and marriages prior to 1911 because they were not considered treaty or status Indians in Canada and often were not enrolled in the U.S. Therefore, state recognized marriages and inheritance of property were not something Indian agents could reward or punish people with because these families were not on

⁵ Cole Harris, *A Bounded Land: Reflections on Settler Colonialism in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2020), 3-4.

⁶ Benjamin Hoy, “Policing Morality: Regulating Sexuality Across the Canada-United States Border,” *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 99, no. 1, (March 2018): 34.

their books. Still, Indian agents and police officers in present-day Saskatchewan had authority to decide who could and could not receive assistance, find legal recourse or counsel for their grievances, or get protection from settler violence. And Lakota people still had to follow state laws and appear at least “respectable” and self-sufficient on a base level in order to not provoke action on the calls for the police or military to force them into the U.S. or onto already established Canadian Dakota reserves.

Where Indian Affairs and police may have had limited reach over Lakota lives, settlers sometimes had more. Settlers decided which Lakota people were respectable enough to work for them in their homes and in town (especially at Moose Jaw) and created hostile environments both physically or psychologically to drive the Lakota away. Sometimes settler colonialism played out in subtle and insidious ways, but the actions that will be discussed here were overt and swift. Violent actions against Lakota people in the U.S in 1890 and the removal of Lakota children from their families in favour of “Christian homes” did not stop at the border, as will be illustrated in the Moose Jaw “Indian scare” incident and in the case of Anátaŋwiŋ. The perpetrators of these actions sought to dismantle Lakota families and displace Lakota people from their lands, outside of and in addition to the established policies of assimilation and dispossession.

Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee

Often the history of the Ghost Dance is told solely within the Lakota context, especially in the lead up to the Wounded Knee Massacre of December 29, 1890. Typically, this narrative is limited to Lakota people’s experiences in the U.S. as well. The Ghost Dance was a spiritual movement among many different Indigenous nations, mostly in the U.S., following the teachings of a Paiute man named Wovoka (also known as Jack Wilson) who said he had a divine

experience and message given to him in 1889.⁷ The message preached by Wovoka following this experience mixed Christian and Indigenous ideas and his vision told that if a dance was performed, the renewal of the earth would take place with a return to the old ways and the recently dead would come back to life.⁸ Archaeologist Alice Kehoe rightly pointed out: “It was a marvelous message for people suffering, as the Indians of the West were in 1889, terrible epidemics; loss of their lands, their economic resources, and their political autonomy; malnourishment and wretched housing; and a campaign of cultural genocide aimed at eradicating their language, their customs, and their beliefs.”⁹ Lakota leaders met at the Pine Ridge Reservation to decide on a delegation in 1889 to learn of the Ghost Dance from Wovoka. Among the men who went were Kicking Bear and Short Bull, and as scholar Rani-Henrik Andersson pointed out, they were veterans of the Little Bighorn and “were among the last of Sitting Bull’s followers to surrender.”¹⁰ Lakota people also added different elements to the Ghost Dance, as was common in each new community it spread to. Ghost shirts were introduced to Lakota people by Kicking Bear, and whether he first created them or not, he claimed they were bulletproof.¹¹

As more land was taken from Lakota reservations, the Fort Laramie Treaty broken repeatedly, rations cut, and more children taken to boarding schools, tension and despair were increasing daily. In this context, the difficult relationship between Sitting Bull and Standing Rock Indian agent James McLaughlin only escalated the issues. McLaughlin wrongly believed Sitting Bull was encouraging his people to take up the Ghost Dance. At the same time, Indian agent for Pine Ridge Agency, Daniel F. Royer, frantically reported that the Ghost Dancers there

⁷ Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance of 1890* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 25.

⁸ Alice B. Kehoe, *The Ghost Dance: Ethnohistory and Revitalization*, 2nd edition (Long Grove, Ill: Waveland Press, 2006), 1-9.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁰ Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance of 1890*, 32.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

were certain to cause damages and the only thing that could be done was to bring in the military.¹² Thousands of troops were deployed in the last two months of 1890 to all the Lakota agencies and surrounding areas. In an attempt by McLaughlin to make an example of Sitting Bull in order to put an end to the Ghost Dance and to the chief's leadership and influence, he ordered the arrest of Sitting Bull which was put into action on December 15, 1890. Nearby people in the reservation village came when they heard their leader was about to be arrested, and a conflict broke out between the Indian police and Sitting Bull's followers. In the ensuing chaos, Sitting Bull was shot several times and killed.¹³

Chief Uŋpǎ́ŋ Glešká/Spotted Elk (also known as Sitháŋka/Big Foot), a Mnikǎ́ŋwožu leader at Cheyenne River Agency, left to go to Pine Ridge after Sitting Bull's death to talk with other chiefs about their grievances.¹⁴ General Nelson A. Miles interpreted Spotted Elk's movement as a hostile threat and intercepted Spotted Elk and his people, escorting them to Čhaŋkpé Ópi Wakpála/Wounded Knee Creek to set up camp on December 28th. There were approximately 120 men and 230 women and children in Spotted Elk's camp, and overlooking them all were two Hotchkiss artillery cannons on the rim of the valley.¹⁵ The next morning, the people were ordered to turn over all their weapons, though the officers were not content with the few number of weapons collected even after a search. Different versions of what happened next are found in oral and written accounts, but generally either a misunderstanding or a refusal to give up a weapon started an accidental discharge during a struggle between an officer and a Lakota man, and quickly the army followed by firing on the Lakota. People fought to get away

¹² Kehoe, *The Ghost Dance*, 19.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 23. Corey Yellow Boy told me that Oglala Elder Rick Two Dogs told him that Chief Spotted Elk was a kasní wičháša (a man who "extinguishes" troubles between people or makes peace) and that is why he was coming to Pine Ridge in December 1890. Personal communication with Corey Yellow Boy, December 12, 2021.

from camp and tried to run to a ravine far enough away for protection. Those that had weapons fought back, but eventually along the ravine it became clear that the Mnikhánwožu were completely overwhelmed. Some were able to escape with the Oglála and Sičhánğu men who came from the agency town of Pine Ridge and exchanged fire with the soldiers. In the end, the army counted 39 dead soldiers and 153 Lakota people. However, an unknown number of Lakota people died away from the main camp, some who made it to the shelter of other Pine Ridge people or had died on the prairie in the blizzard that following night. At Wounded Knee, 146 Lakota people were buried in a mass grave.¹⁶

These painful events were felt by Lakota people north and south of the 49th parallel, for many years. Josephine Waggoner provided more connection between the Lakota who had stayed in Canada and eventually returned to Standing Rock. She wrote: “Most of the Ghost Dancers were people who had retreated into Canada and stayed in exile for four years after Custer’s battle. They had suffered untold misery from want and the cold winters in Canada.”¹⁷ She further noted that these “latest captives, who had been brought from Canada, were the first to fall for the new religion.”¹⁸ This lends credence to the interpretation that the people who held out with Sitting Bull in Canada for as long as they could were still continuing to resist and hope when they were at Standing Rock after 1881, regardless of the hardships they had faced. This also might mean that those who had not yet returned to U.S. reservations north of the border were even more resistant. Lakota connections, resistance, and hope were not severed by the border or by hardships, and examining the Ghost Dance helps to illuminate this. Throughout this chapter,

¹⁶ Kehoe, *The Ghost Dance*, 25-26.

¹⁷ Josephine Waggoner, *Witness*, 175.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 311.

the reverberations of these 1890s events will be explored in the lives of Lakota people at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain as they moved throughout Lakǰóta Tǰamákǰoǰe.

One of the most direct ways Lakota people in Saskatchewan were connected to these events in the U.S. was through the Ghost Dance. Kehoe noted in her 1968 article, “The Ghost Dance Religion in Saskatchewan, Canada,” that Father Gontran Laviolette mentioned a “Messiah Dance” near present-day Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan in 1895.¹⁹ He wrote on the subject of the Ghost Dance, or Messiah Craze/Dance, as he and others from the 1890s to the mid-twentieth century sometimes called it:

The Messiah Craze which caused much excitement in the United States had few repercussions among the Canadian Sioux. It was only in the Wood Mountain area that the new religion gained a few adherents. The only Messiah Dance ever held in Canada took place in 1895 at a fork of Wood River, six miles north west of the present town of Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan. This dance was organized by Black Bull. Shortly after the death of Sitting Bull a few of the Wood Mountain Sioux had gone to Pine Ridge, S. Dak., and there learned the tenets of the Messiah religion.²⁰

Contrary to what Laviolette states, Kehoe did show how some Dakota people in Saskatchewan participated in the Ghost Dance, but it was unclear to her and the people she interviewed if there was travel between Oǰhéthi Šakówiŋ people in the U.S. and Canada to learn of the dance.

Through her research it was concluded that most likely the Dakota created a new form of the Ghost Dance.²¹ Laviolette thought there were “few repercussions” among the Lakota (and other Oǰhéthi Šakówiŋ people) in Canada of the Ghost Dance, and possibly the “excitement” it caused refers to the killing of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre. This chapter will show that these events impacted Lakota people in Canada much more than Laviolette concedes. Being an Oblate missionary who visited Wood Mountain to Christianize Lakota people, it is possible that

¹⁹ Alice B. Kehoe, “The Ghost Dance Religion in Saskatchewan, Canada,” *Plains Anthropologist*, Vol. 13, no. 42, Part 1 (November 1968): 297.

²⁰ Gontran Laviolette, O.M.I., *The Sioux Indians in Canada*, (Regina: Marian Press, 1944), 119-120.

²¹ Kehoe, *The Ghost Dance*, 46.

the older generations would not freely speak to him about Lakota beliefs and the impacts they felt tied to such beliefs and practices and therefore he did not learn of all these experiences. Lavolette is well remembered and had close relationships with many of the younger generations at Wood Mountain, however. Regardless, Lavolette was correct in that a Ghost Dance was held by Lakota leader Tháthánka Sápa/Black Bull near present-day Gravelbourg in 1895 and that a few Lakota people from Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw had gone to the Pine Ridge Reservation at the time of the Ghost Dance.

One man in particular, Čhaŋté Ohítika/Brave Heart (also known as Sičhán/Thigh), did go to the U.S. to learn of the Ghost Dance. Author Ron Papandrea took up the challenge of knitting together pieces of Čhaŋté Ohítika's life in the archival record which illustrates very well the close connections of Lakota people across the international border. It has been erroneously repeated that the Lakota at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain were only Húnkpap̃ha and descended from "Sitting Bull's tribe" -- the focus solely on Sitting Bull leads to this misinterpretation.²² Sitting Bull was certainly the most well-known leader and the Húnkpap̃ha okášpe he belonged to was more than likely the most numerous portion of the Lakota population in Canada prior to 1881. But, if we look to the history and leadership of the Lakota community after 1881 and to Čhaŋté Ohítika's story, it is clear that all the Lakota Oíglake Šakówiŋ were represented, including the more southern Oglála and Sičhánŋu that are wrongly assumed not to have come to Canada. Though Sitting Bull's leadership was very important, especially to those who refused to surrender as long as he did and after, it did not replace the importance of the

²² For example, see the article, "Last descendants of Sitting Bull's tribe reach tentative settlement," *Eagle Feather News*, December 12, 2019, <https://eaglefeathernews.com/news/last-descendants-of-sitting-bulls-tribe-reach-tentative-settlement>

thiyóšpaye and the Oíglake Šakówiŋ to Lakota people's ties and identities at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw.

Most of the information about Čhaŋté Ohítika comes from John Lecaine, who called the elder his “principal informant.”²³ John Lecaine wrote that Čhaŋté Ohítika “was a Burnt Thigh Lakota of the Red Cloud Oglallas.”²⁴ As Papandrea points out, “At first glance this seems like a contradiction because ‘Burnt Thigh’ and ‘Oglala’ are two distinct subgroups among the seven Lakota subgroups. However, the Oglala can be further divided in seven bands and one of these bands is the Wazhaza [Wažáže]. The Wazhaza are of Burnt Thigh origin.”²⁵ Lecaine stated that Čhaŋté Ohítika was called “Sican” (Sičhán/Thigh) because he refused to reveal his name and because he was a Sičhánġu (literal translation is Burnt Thigh). Later, he was honored in battle and he was given his father's name, Brave Heart (Čhaŋté Ohítika).²⁶ Lecaine said Čhaŋté Ohítika was orphaned as a child and lived with his uncle until he was 14 years old when he “ran away to follow a small secret war party of Agency Oglallas” going to join Sitting Bull because Red Cloud was at peace.²⁷ Čhaŋté Ohítika had fought at the Rosebud, the Little Bighorn, and the Wagon Box Fight as a young man²⁸ and he probably felt more aligned with those leaders that did not immediately settle on the reservations and wanted to continue resisting. Papandrea wrote in more detail about Čhaŋté Ohítika's life:

Brave Heart was among those who surrendered at Fort Robinson and Red Cloud Agency, but he was not present when Crazy Horse surrendered on May 6, 1877. He was already gone, having transferred to the Brule Spotted Tail Agency on April 23; following Black Bull, who transferred to Spotted Tail on April 21. By that time, 4000 Lakota had already taken refuge in Canada. Brave Heart must have been among those Lakota who went to

²³ PAS, Everett Baker Papers, R561.30.n, Okute, John, Historical Notes, 1957-1962, Letter from John Okute-sica (Lecaine) to Everett Baker, October 5, 1957.

²⁴ Société historique de Saint-Boniface (SHSB), Gontran Laviolette Fonds, PA 626, Letter from John LeCaine to R. Decock, 1-3-1947.

²⁵ Ron Papandrea, “The Secret Life of Brave Heart,” unpublished article, Summer 2012.

²⁶ SHSB, Gontran Laviolette Fonds, PA 626, Letter from John LeCaine to R. Decock, 1-3-1947.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Glenbow Archives, Wood Family Fonds, Series 3, M-9460-126, John Le Caine, Memories of the Sioux, n.d..

Canada following the killing of Crazy Horse and while the Oglala and the Upper Brule were being moved eastward to their present reservations (Pine Ridge and Rosebud). That was in October-November 1877. It is likely that Black Bull, the Upper Brule, also went to Canada at that time. With the addition of the Oglala and Brule followers of Crazy Horse, the number of Lakota in Canada reached its peak of almost 5000 people.²⁹

This provides a good timeline of Čhaŋté Ohítika's life leading up to and the circumstances around him coming to Canada. His life story can help detail important parts of Oglála and Sičhánġu history related to resisting American military control and being in Canada that is often overlooked or forgotten.

Later in life, Čhaŋté Ohítika shared his stories, mainly with John Lecaine but also a select few others. He was visited by Z.M. Hamilton with the Regina *Leader Post* in August 1932, when Čhaŋté Ohítika was 76 years old. Peter Lethbridge translated between Čhaŋté Ohítika and Hamilton, and the old warrior told his remembrances of the Battle of the Little Bighorn and coming to Canada.³⁰ It is not surprising that Hamilton was completely focused on the Battle of the Little Bighorn; many amateur and professional historians were then and have been since. But it is another story from Čhaŋté Ohítika's life that was left relatively unrecorded (at least in an official capacity) that is of the main interest here.

Čhaŋté Ohítika went to the U.S. in the summer of 1890 and was caught up in some of the most tumultuous times for Lakota people. According to a letter written by Canadian Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, probably based on Aspdin's reports, on August 13, 1890, Čhaŋté Ohítika left Moose Jaw to go to Standing Rock Agency with two other men, Rising Bear and The Lungs, and "three lodges of Indians."³¹ At the time, Reed and Aspdin thought this was a victory

²⁹ Papandrea, "The Secret Life of Brave Heart."

³⁰ Z.M. Hamilton, "Ancient Sioux Fighter Who Saw Custer Battle Lives Close to Regina," *The Leader Post*, August 23, 1932, page 9. Hamilton and his wife Marie Albina Hamilton also published a book in 1948 of the early days in southern Saskatchewan titled *These are the Prairies*.

³¹ LAC, RG10, File 8589-2, Volume 3653, Reel C-10114, "Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1884-1944," Hayter Reed to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, August 28, 1890.

for Indian Affairs because more Lakota people were returning to the U.S., but as John Lecaine told it, Čhaŋté Ohítika knew he was going to the U.S. to learn what he could of the Ghost Dance. This was not new for Lakota people—often they left to go to the U.S. for their own reasons and would come back to Canada, and repeatedly Canadian Indian Affairs officials reported their initial leaving as a success and their return as a failure. Lecaine relayed some of what Čhaŋté Ohítika told him about his time in 1890 and 1891 at the Pine Ridge and Standing Rock

Reservations:

I went across to the United States in the midsummer of 1890 with Canadian papers, as a Canadian Indian. These papers were made out for me by Sergeant Aspin [Aspdin], of Moose Jaw, in Saskatchewan. The purpose of my journey was to learn about the Messiah religion of Wovoka, newly come to my pepole [sic], the Sioux. I was detained amongst the Oglalas on the Pine Ridge Reservation under guard of the United States soldiers all that winter. It was during my detention at Pine Ridge that the news of the killing of Sitting-Bull reached me. My greatest desire was to learn the true circumstances of the chief's tragic death. In the spring of 1891, upon my release from the camp I went to the place where Sitting-Bull had been killed. I made it a point to learn the story of the chief's death. I am satisfied that I have heard the whole truth, and I will tell you what I have learned.³²

Lecaine's article goes on to explain what he learned of Sitting Bull's death. In this account, Čhaŋté Ohítika said he went specifically to learn of the Ghost Dance, and he would return to Canada to teach others. He also would return to tell others the truth of Sitting Bull's death, though initially he had no way of knowing when he left that this would be the second purpose of his travels.

In a May 1891 memorandum of instructions regarding the Indian prisoners at Fort Sully, South Dakota, Čhaŋté Ohítika requested to return to Canada with his family, and officers wanted

³² John LeCaine, "An Account of the Cause and Circumstances of The Death of Sitting Bull: As told to John LeCaine of Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan by Cante Ohitika-Brave Heart-also called Thigh, who learned of it from an eye-witness at Standing Rock, S.D.," *Indian Record*, April 1965, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, p. 10.

to know how to best carry this out.³³ A few days later, another letter indicates that White Hawk and his family also requested to return to Canada,³⁴ but it is unclear if this man and his family did eventually go north. After being so close to all the suffering and violence that had just transpired, as Papandrea wrote, “Is there any wonder [why] Brave Heart and White Hawk wanted to return to Canada?”³⁵

Čhaŋté Ohítika returned to Canada and taught Thátháŋka Sápa and others what he learned of the Ghost Dance. Later in this chapter, examples of Lakota people in present-day Saskatchewan learning of the death of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre will be provided, particularly to understand people’s reactions to these terrifying events. But it is clear that the Ghost Dance came with Čhaŋté Ohítika. John Lecaine records the same Ghost Dance practiced by the Lakota people north of Gravelbourg in 1895 that Father Laviolette mentioned. Lecaine was a child then, but heard of it from his elders, particularly Čhaŋté Ohítika with whom he was close.³⁶

Čhaŋté Ohítika continued living at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain after his journeys. He worked for ranchers at Wood Mountain, and his wife, Waŋblí Hótawiŋ/Gray Eagle, worked in Moose Jaw most likely doing laundry or as a servant like other Lakota women.³⁷ Čhaŋté Ohítika died in March of 1934 at about the age of 78 and was buried at Wood Mountain. According to

³³ North Dakota State Historical Society, McLaughlin Papers, National Archives Documents, 1890-1891 Messiah Craze, Microfilm roll 35, “Memorandum of instructions, report and orders in regard to disposition of Indian prisoners at Ft. Sully, S.D., in compliance with endorsement of May 2nd, from Headquarters Division of the Missouri, on papers relating to their return to Standing Rock Agency,” May 4, 1891. Also see Eva Wojcik, “Trust and Survival: AWOL Hunkpapa Indian Family Prisoners of War at Fort Sully, 1890-1891” *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 32, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 287.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Papandrea, “The Secret Life of Brave Heart,” Summer 2012.

³⁶ PAS, Everett Baker Papers, R561.30.n, Okute, John, Historical Notes, 1957-1962, Letter from John Okute-Sica to Everett Baker, October 5, 19157.

³⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, Aspdin to Indian Commissioner at Regina, January 4, 1896 regarding Thigh and wife in Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain. Part of "Birtle Agency-Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the line Being Sent Back by Police" and LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, Aspdin to Indian Commissioner at Regina, March 17, 1896 regarding Thigh and work and illness.

John Lecaine, on his deathbed Čhaŋté Ohítika said “Child, I cannot see anything in this white man’s world to interest me in any shape or form. It is all a foolish excitement with no meaning at all. I am lonely—I want to die—I will die.”³⁸ Outlining Čhaŋté Ohítika’s life and how he brought the Ghost Dance back to Lakota people at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw is important for recognizing ongoing Lakota networks and movement as a form of resistance throughout Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe. His life and the Wounded Knee Massacre provide important Lakota contexts for understanding Lakota experiences throughout the 1890s especially on both sides of the international border.

During the extremely difficult times of the early reservation period, resistance and refusal took shape in the Ghost Dance. For some Lakota people, staying in Canada was also another form of this resistance and refusal, particularly because they were aware of the conditions their relatives faced on reservations in the U.S. Lakota people at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw were keenly aware that Americans sought vengeance for their victory at the Battle of the Little Bighorn as well, so they did not go back to the U.S. permanently, and when the events of 1890-91 transpired, it is likely that some Lakota people saw it through this lens.

Lakota Experiences at Moose Jaw

In about 1883, some families went to Moose Jaw to find work and live outside of the growing settlement. Reports from the 1890s and early 1900s describe their work which was always tied to discussions of morality and social segregation between settlers and the Lakota people. An 1892 report from NWMP Inspector C. Constantine detailed this link best: “...the Indians about Moose Jaw earn a good living by the men cutting wood in winter about town and in the harvest season by working in the fields-the women do washing and scrubbing in the town.

³⁸ “Saw No Meaning in White Man’s Feverish World: Believed to Have Been Last of Indians Who Took Part in the Custer Massacre,” *Brandon Daily Sun*, March 20, 1934, page 6.

Their conduct is good and no complaints of larcenies or crime of any sort being reported among them. The women are moral and for Indians clean and tidy."³⁹ The themes of gender, morality, criminal behavior, labour, cleanliness, and respectability are not accidental—they belong to a category of persistent views and prejudices about Indigenous people, their value, and their interactions with white society.

By 1907, there were approximately 112 Lakota people who lived between Moose Jaw and the international boundary. One Indian agent reported that they worked for the people of Moose Jaw and “Some of them are good butchers and others tanners.” Okhúte Šíča and Nún̄pa Kikté both worked as butchers in Moose Jaw, the former for Alex Zess who had a slaughter house on South Hill near the Moose Jaw River and the latter for Hugh Ferguson. Of these people, the agent said: “These Sioux are hard workers and independent, having learned to shift for themselves. They apparently earn a good living. Their mode of dress is much like that of white men.”⁴⁰ Some Moose Jaw residents saw Lakota people as useful employees and good workers, especially if they adopted settler dress norms. However, difference still played a part and the line between the “town” and the Lakota “camp” is important to note. Lakota people had come to Moose Jaw to take advantage of work opportunities like everyone else, but clear delineations and social segregation were set by the non-Indigenous newcomers between themselves and Lakota people. This is clear from how the Lakota camp was referred to as separate from Moose Jaw, and physically it was a couple miles south of the town and later on Thomas and Mary Aspdin’s quarter of land along the Moose Jaw River. This location was most

³⁹ LAC, RG 18, RCMP, Series A-1, Vol. 84, File: 465-93, “Sioux Indians Belonging to US, living at Moosejaw and Wood Mountain (I-49708),” Inspector C. Constantine to Officer Commanding, July 23, 1892.

⁴⁰ 1907-1908 Sessional Papers, No. 27, Dept of Indian Affairs (Vol. 42, No. 14 on spine), Part I, Reports of Superintendents and Agents, W.S. Grant, Province of Sask, Assiniboine Agency, Sinlaulta, March 31, 1907, “Moosejaw Sioux”, p 109.

likely partially because of Lakota people's desire to move seasonally (spending winters at Moose Jaw and summers at Wood Mountain), their need of land for grazing their horse herds, and partially because of settler social ideals about what was respectable and acceptable for residents, categories that the Lakota did not fit into. This was not an uncommon sentiment or spatial set up for western settlements and Indigenous peoples in Canada or the United States. Lakota people worked in town, but it is clear from the discourse that they were not "residents" or part of the town in the same way the settlers were. Visitors to Moose Jaw might take a trip to the Lakota camp to more or less gawk, and to attend "powwows" and "war dances" (non-Indigenous people's names for the events), which were also held on the rare occasion in town where the Lakota dancers could charge a bit for people to watch.⁴¹ Some real friendships did arise between the two settlements though. For example, Nún̄pa Kikté and Țhăthán̄ka Sáp̄a befriended Annie Wallis and according to John Lecaine she was in love with the son of Thomas and Mary Aspdin.⁴² The Aspdins never had a son, but their nephew lived with them, a son of Mary's sister. Lakota people were definitely part of the town's fabric as far as providing labour and spectacle for visitors and residents, and for a few they were close friends, but clear lines were drawn around social space and difference.

When things were difficult, sometimes the residents of Moose Jaw gave assistance and asked for aid from Indian Affairs for the Lakota. Sixty-eight Moose Jaw residents signed and sent a petition to Dewdney on October 29, 1886 stating that they found the Lakota to be "uniformly industrious, virtuous, and law abiding, and as a great convenience to the citizen engaging as they do in all work given to them by the people with zest and faithfulness

⁴¹ Bruce Fairman, *Sitting Bull's Moose Jaw Sioux: Their History and Times* (Moose Jaw: Home Town Press, 2011), 200-201. Also see Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery, Annie Wallis collection which has some pieces sold at such events.

⁴² November 22, 1957, John Okute-sica (Lecaine) to Everett Baker, personal collection of Thelma Poirier.

particularly the female members of the tribe who are valuable aids to the women of that district, as female servants are difficult to obtain, and we would respectfully request that you as Indian Commissioner assign to them a reserve in this vicinity where they may remain unmolested and where they will feel that they have a place to lay their heads."⁴³ The desire of some to keep the Lakota nearby at least partly stemmed from good relationships, though Aspdin's opinion of the situation seemed to lean towards the residents wanting to keep their workforce:

In the first place these Indians are popular here [Moose Jaw] among most of the whites as they are mostly good workers and supply a cheap and convenient labour, the men by doing outside work, and the women by doing domestic work in the houses, so habited have some families come to employ them for years that they would be lost for a substitute should all these Indians go away. Again the Indians handle a considerable amount of money, received in payment of their work, and from selling such curiosities as polished horns, war clubs &c. that they are no inconsiderable ready money customers with the Merchants. To these people it would be quite a loss should the Indians go away. There are also every summer more or less visitors (generally relatives) from the Agency on the other side [U.S.]. These invariably bring very unfavourable accounts of scanty rations and insufficient clothing and general bad treatment which the Agency Indians are receiving....⁴⁴

His inclusion of "cheap and convenient labour" might be an important consideration here; the petitioners themselves pointed out female servants were hard to come by. And the Lakota by his estimate had "a considerable amount of money," so they may have had the means to resist government (and Aspdin's) attempts to relocate them. Aspdin wrote a few years later: "I have had very strong oppositions from the people in the town [to having the Lakota leave to go to the U.S.] and if I except a few of the best people I may say the town has been unanimous in persuading the Indians not to go. The cause is simply that the Indians have been here so long the

⁴³ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. A, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1886-1889," Petition of Moose Jaw residents, October 29, 1886.

⁴⁴ LAC, RG10, File 8589-2, Volume 3653, Reel C-10114, Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944, Aspdin, "Explanation in the matter of claim for services re inducing Sioux Indians to return to the United States" which accompanies Hayter Reed's January 27, 1891 letter to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs.

squaws have come to be looked upon as indispensable in most households. It is in vain I have reasoned with many that although a slight inconvenience might be felt at first yet I was of opinion that the situation would right itself after the Indians were gone as the demand would soon create a supply."⁴⁵ Though some friendships and good working relationships were forged between the Lakota and Moose Jaw people, Aspdin did not think these relationships were always so altruistic. He felt the need for Lakota people's labour was driving the Moose Jaw residents' campaign to have the Lakota stay in the area.

Moose Jaw mayor in 1886, J.G. Gordon, did not endorse this first petition though, and his position illustrates the split in Moose Jaw opinion regarding the Lakota. The day after the above petition was drawn up, Gordon wrote to Sir John A. Macdonald directly because he saw a notice posted at T.B. Baker's store in Moose Jaw that thanked the petitioners and said the petition would be forwarded to Ottawa. He wrote in response: "There is assuredly another side to this matter than that which the petition in question sets forth." He outlined in six points how the Lakota were troublesome for the nearby settlers with their 200 horses and that the NWMP officers sent out to respond to these complaints had been lenient towards the Lakota. His view was:

The settlers in that neighbourhood are unfortunately few at present, but whether few or many, they object to be pestered by Indians who have no right whatsoever to be there. If some of the people of the Town who signed that petition occupied the position of these settlers, they would be much less ready to petition in favour of their retention where they are. It makes a mighty difference whether a party reaps some little benefit from their presence or is alone on the prairie in their neighbourhood, his crops (when there are any) trampled down and eaten by their ponies, his wife and family afraid to be left alone, as settlers have often told me was the case with them. . . I have come to the conclusion that while they are on the whole a better than usual bands of Indians and while the people of this Town of Moose Jaw are somewhat interested in the retention of them where they are or not very far away from it, it is not advisable in the interest of the settlers.

⁴⁵ LAC, RG10, File 8589-2, Volume 3653, Reel C-10114, Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944, Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, May 14, 1894.

He concluded with "...if this Country advances their presence where they are will sooner or later require attention."⁴⁶

A second petition was sent and it had the support of Gordon this time, though the request and wording were slightly different. Gordon wrote to Dewdney on December 27, 1886 because the residents asked him for help on behalf of the Lakota and stated: "Their [the Lakota] claims upon the Canadian Government may not be strong, not stronger than the claim which a person in a state of destitution has upon a party able to afford relief for assistance, but in recognition of that alone it is our hope your Honour may be able without delay to give them some food and clothing and continue to during the winter season."⁴⁷ Though Gordon drew the parallel between Lakota and settler claims on the government, Lakota people could never be seen as "settlers" with the same kinds of benefits derived from government assistance and access to property. Gordon enclosed the second petition, this one with fifty Moose Jaw residents' signatures and with a different location idea: "there are many here who think that it would be a wise policy for the Government to remove them a little farther from the Town of Moose Jaw and place them upon a small reserve containing some arable land as well as grazing and wood lands and that by so doing they would before long become almost if not quite self supporting..." They also requested that clothing and food be given to them, particularly in the winter (the winter of 1886-1887 was extremely hard across the prairies). Hayter Reed answered in January of 1887 saying that he would have an officer look into the Lakota people's state of need and then supply what the officer thought was proper.⁴⁸ These two petitions illustrate well the split and shifting attitude

⁴⁶ LAC, RG10, File 8589-2, Volume 3653, Reel C-10114, "Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944," J.G. Gordon to John A. Macdonald, October 30, 1886.

⁴⁷ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. A, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1886-1889," J.G. Gordon to Indian Commissioner Edgar Dewdney, December 27, 1886.

⁴⁸ Ibid., Reed to Gordon, January 3, 1887.

of Moose Jaw people towards the nearby Lakota. Generally, the town residents wanted to keep their workers close and the settlers who farmed around the town wanted the Lakota to be removed away from the area. The second petition though shows that merchants, teachers, lawyers, clergymen, and the mayor also wanted the Lakota further away from town.

Transnational Newspaper Panics

Indian Affairs officials were always concerned about the proximity of Indigenous people to white settlements: spatial segregation and Indigenous removal were inextricably linked to western settlement. Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs Lawrence Vankoughnet wrote two letters to Sir John A. Macdonald, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, on November 15, 1883: one regarding removing the Lakota to the U.S. (an overarching theme in government correspondence about the Lakota) and one regarding his anxieties about having Indians too close to settlements. Vankoughnet wrote that during his visit throughout the prairies the previous summer he observed most of the tipis next to towns and villages were occupied by women who were “of abandoned character who were there for the worst purposes.” He stated that several chiefs also made the same remarks and said they could not prevent their women from “frequenting these places.”⁴⁹ He was not speaking directly about the Lakota at Moose Jaw, especially since it is not clear if he visited Moose Jaw as the town and Lakota camp would have been very new, but it is as almost as if his letters were connected. These same concerns and views would soon be held by the residents at the new town of Moose Jaw.

In the first months of 1891, the *Moose Jaw Times Herald* and *Manitoba Daily Free Press* reported on an “Indian scare” that had taken place at Moose Jaw. Just days or weeks prior to this “scare,” Chief Sitting Bull was killed and the horrific Wounded Knee Massacre

⁴⁹ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 1009, File 628, no. 598-635, L. Vankoughnet, Deputy of the Supt General of Indian Affairs, to Sir John A. Macdonald, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, November 15, 1883.

transpired. Both Lakota and settler people in present-day Saskatchewan were well aware of these events in the U.S., though the events carried different implications and meanings in their respective lives. Often when the term “Indian scare” is used in this period, it refers to an “Indian uprising” of some sort against settlers. The vast majority of these “scares” and “uprisings” particularly in Canada were unfounded, and stemmed from long held racist views of Indigenous people as violent and immoral. Even battles, like the Battle of the Little Bighorn were viewed through this lens, with Custer being the one massacred instead of Lakota people defending themselves from his attack. This was a large part of how originally (and for many decades after) the Wounded Knee Massacre was viewed and incorrectly called a battle: Lakota people as violent and settlers as valiant. Settler society on both sides of the border interpreted these events through the lens of Indian violence and “uprisings” and therefore government/police/military action was justified in putting down and civilizing Indigenous peoples, particularly in dealing with Lakota people.

Rumors flourished in U.S. Indian Affairs offices and newspapers as misunderstanding and panic circulated about the Ghost Dance. Shortly before Sitting Bull’s murder, Aspdin wrote on December 2, 1890 to dispel some of the rumors about Sitting Bull and the Ghost Dance that were also circulating in the Canadian Indian Affairs offices. He wrote:

It may not be out of place to question here for your information (in view of the late dispatches in the newspapers) that these Sioux are perfectly cognizant of what is going on at the Agencies on the other side and several of them have talked quite freely to me about the matter. While they admit there is considerable dissatisfaction on the part of 'Sitting Bull' and his immediate following, they do not look upon it as very serious. I am led to question the above by observing a sensational dispatch that 'Sitting Bull' had sent messengers over here to these Indians. It is needless to say the whole thing is a fabrication.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ LAC, RG10, Volume 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, “Correspondence And Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944,” Aspdin to Indian Commissioner, December 2, 1890.

Clearly Indian Affairs officials were anxious and misinformed on both sides of the border. And clearly Aspdin knew of Lakota connections as well. The Lakota people north of the 49th parallel knew quickly about the killing of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre. A lot of people had close family and friends at Standing Rock and Pine Ridge, and likely many knew someone at one or both of these horrific events.⁵¹ Lakota people were worried and uncertain about their relatives' well-being, as well as their own well-being in Canada because relations with settlers north of the border were often tense. At the time, settlers interpreted these events as "uprisings" and "battles" with the "enemies" being punished and quieted. For the Lakota in Canada who were farther away than some of their relatives from these events, these were worrying times because people feared and anticipated retaliation for their victory at the Little Bighorn. These 1890 events must have also solidified in many Lakota people's minds that the U.S. government was maltreating Lakota people on reservations.

Lakota fears, therefore, were well founded. One example of their anxiety is found in the archival record: Thomas Aspdin wrote to the Cheyenne River Reservation Indian agent, P.P. Palmer, on January 2, 1891, asking how Black Moon was because his wife Mary was concerned about her father and family. He wrote:

They [Mary and her family in Canada] have heard so much lately about the soldiers and the Sioux that they are naturally very anxious about their relatives. I was informed by Major McLaughlin of Standing Rock Agency some time ago that Black Moon had gone to your agency. Black Moon whilst on this side was very much respected, being a quite straightforward old man and was always heard counselling the other Indians to go straight and try and get along with the whites. Any information you may be able to give me as to how he and his family are getting along will be gratefully received...⁵²

⁵¹ For example, William (Bill) Lethbridge told Thelma Poirier in a conversation/interview on March 10, 1993 that his mother's cousin lived just a few miles from where Sitting Bull lived and was killed.

⁵² Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 1, Letters Received, Box 12, Folder 1891 Jan-Feb, Letter from Aspdin to Cheyenne River Agency Indian agent, January 2, 1891.

This letter was sent only four days after the Wounded Knee Massacre but it would not be for months that Mary and her family actually learned what became of their relatives in South Dakota. Aspdin wrote to the U.S. Indian Commissioner in Washington D.C. on July 3, 1891 trying to contact his wife's family at Cheyenne River again. He said his earlier letter from January was returned to him from the Indian agent with a small “laconic” note on the bottom which lead him to believe “everything was all right” in the family, but he just learned that two of Black Moon's sons and one of his daughters were killed at Wounded Knee. He found contacting the Indian agent useless and so he wanted to know straightforwardly whether these three people really were killed and the particulars around their deaths.⁵³ Finally, on August 5, 1891, after the Indian Commissioner instructed the Indian agent to give Aspdin a full report on their family,⁵⁴ they received an answer. Indian agent Palmer reported that Black Moon and his family of six arrived at the Cheyenne River Agency on about November 1, 1890 from the Standing Rock Agency. Palmer also talked to Black Moon and learned that another relative with four members in the family came from Canada but went to Pine Ridge with Chief Spotted Elk. Three of those relatives were killed at Wounded Knee: White Dog (son of Black Moon), Yellow Ear (daughter of Black Moon), and Ratting Wind (wife of Black Moon). One relative, High Back, was wounded and was still at Pine Ridge at the time Palmer was writing.⁵⁵ Mary Black Moon-Aspdin’s case shows clearly how closely some families were impacted in Canada, and also how difficult it could be to deal with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It took her and her family months

⁵³ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 1, Letters Received, Box 12, Folder 1891 Jan-Feb, Letter from Aspdin to U.S. Indian Commissioner, July 3, 1891.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, Acting Indian Commissioner to P.P. Palmer, July 3, 1891.

⁵⁵ North Dakota State Historical Society, McLaughlin Papers, National Archives Documents, Standing Rock 1890-91, Microfilm 4364, Roll 34, Perain P. Palmer to Aspdin, August 5, 1891.

to hear definitively what had happened to their relatives, even though in the U.S. Lakota people were increasingly kept under surveillance, reported on, and imprisoned after Wounded Knee.

The massacre created a lot of distrust and worry for Lakota people on both sides of the border. Many Lakota people in Canada even more strongly refused to return to the U.S. after the massacre. For example, in 1892, NWMP Inspector C. Constantine wrote:

In 1889 “Black Moon” with about 12 lodges left for the States, the Indian Dept furnishing outfit, this man’s party took part in the fight at Wounded Knee where some were killed and many wounded. He is now at the Cheyenne River Agency. If it had not been for the trouble in the winter of ’90.91 [1890-1891] many, if not all, would have returned [to] the United States. [T]he Indians look upon the Wounded Knee as a massacre of women and children, and are afraid to trust themselves to the U.S. regulations on the Agencies. It is possible that if some of their friends from the U.S. could see and have a talk with them they might be induced to return as they would put more confidence in them and what they say than in the whites or Government Officials.⁵⁶

This could explain why the remainder of Black Moon’s relatives in Canada more firmly decided to stay throughout the 1890s. Getting people to leave (and stay in the U.S.) would be an even slower and more difficult process after this time because Lakota people rightly viewed Wounded Knee as a massacre right from the start.

For most settlers in Canada and the U.S., the killing of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre were interpreted and understood on a much different level. This is evident in the newspaper reports from the time: The *Manitoba Daily Free Press* (which later would become the *Winnipeg Free Press*) reported on at least one other “Indian scare” in January 1891 and several months after this many first page headlines featured Pine Ridge “hostilities” and “outbreaks” in sensational fashion.⁵⁷ But these events had different meanings and realities for settlers. Settler society, newspapers, and governments interpreted these events as “uprisings” and “battles” even

⁵⁶ LAC, RG 18, RCMP, Series A-1, Vol. 84, File: 465-93, “Sioux Indians Belonging to US, living at Moosejaw and Wood Mountain (I-49708),” Inspector C. Constantine to Officer Commanding, July 23, 1892.

⁵⁷ See *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, January 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, and 27, 1891; February 12, 1891; and April 18 and 20, 1891 issues.

though the provocation and casualties were one sided. The already high tensions (especially being five years after the North West Resistance of 1885) and increasing settler-colonial pressures created a volatile situation, one that some newcomers tried to capitalize on.

Several scholars have pointed out the newspapers' role in the U.S. in creating white misunderstandings, prejudices, and actions against Lakota people in the lead up to the Wounded Knee Massacre and the death of Sitting Bull. Philip S. Hall in his book *To Have This Land: The Political Road to Wounded Knee, 1888-1891* examined in particular the *Rapid City Journal*, also a new settler city at the time although about a decade older than Moose Jaw, which had the same kinds of tensions with nearby Lakota people at the same time. He argued: "The actual number of adherents to the [Ghost Dance] religion was probably not significant in terms of white reaction. The secretive nature of the strange goings on, the gatherings of Indians into large camps, and the increasing defiance of the traditional factions were the factors that disturbed many white settlers on and near the reservation. Rumors began to spread, the kind of rumors that made good reading and sold newspapers. Joe Gossage, editor of the *Rapid City Journal*, printed the story of the suspected uprising [in April 1890] without bothering with verification."⁵⁸ These kinds of editorial actions and "drumming up an Indian scare" as Hall puts it, would be repeated throughout the prairies in the 1890s. Some settlers bought into it, others did not, as Hall also points out,⁵⁹ but apparently these stories sold newspapers regardless and fit into the accepted mainstream opinion of needing "civilization" efforts by the state in Indigenous communities. Scholar Brian Gabriel concluded that American newspapers contributed to a moral panic in 1890 about supposed Lakota threats and "the reporting in the weeks leading up to Wounded Knee

⁵⁸ Philip S. Hall, *To Have This Land: The Political Road to Wounded Knee, 1888-1891* (Vermillion, SD: University of South Dakota, 1991), 31.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

fueled white fears of Native Americans, reinforcing the negative ‘Bad Indian’ stereotype of the Lakota and justifying their annihilation at the hands of the Seventh Calvary.”⁶⁰

Even after the killing of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre, one newspaper in particular was still calling for more bloodshed: the *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer*, owned and edited by L. Frank Baum who went on to write *The Wizard of Oz*. Baum wrote two alarming editorials, the first after Sitting Bull’s death:

With his fall the nobility of the Redskin is extinguished, and what few are left are a pack of whining curs who lick the hand that smites them. The Whites, by law of conquest, by justice of civilization, are masters of the American continent, and the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians... Why not annihilation? Their glory has fled, their spirit broken, their manhood effaced; better that they die than live the miserable wretches that they are. History would forget these latter despicable beings... We cannot honestly regret their extermination...⁶¹

He continued his call for annihilation after Wounded Knee: “The Pioneer has before declared that our only safety depends upon the total extirmination [sic] of the Indians. Having wronged them for centuries we had better, in order to protect our civilization, follow it up by one more wrong and wipe these untamed and untamable [sic] creatures from the face of the earth.”⁶² If Baum’s editorials were palatable to South Dakota readers, then the panics and justifications for genocide did not end with the killing of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre. This was not isolated to the U.S. either. Scholars Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson argue in their book that these tropes and fears, systems of settler logic that work to justify settler occupation of Indigenous lands, and the replication of outright false information about

⁶⁰ Brian Gabriel, "A Moral Panic on the Plains? Press Culpability and the 1890 Massacre at Wounded Knee," in *After the War: The Press in a Changing America, 1865-1900*, edited by David Sachsman, et al. (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Press, 2017), 308.

⁶¹ L. Frank Baum, “The Sitting Bull Editorial,” *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer*, Aberdeen, South Dakota, December 20, 1890, quoted in A. Waller Hastings, “L. Frank Baum’s Editorials on the Sioux Nation,” <https://diogenesii.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/baum.pdf>

⁶² *Ibid.*, “The Wounded Knee Editorial,” January 3, 1891.

Indigenous people was common in Canadian newspapers as well,⁶³ which is evident in the following analysis of Moose Jaw events and reporting.

Articles from Moose Jaw published in the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* about the murder of Sitting Bull provide glimpses into Lakota people's knowledge and growing worries, as well as settler perceptions of potential "Indian troubles." The first report from December 21, 1890, just six days after Sitting Bull's death, ran on the first page exclaiming that "runners and armed redskins" were coming over the border. There is no evidence from Indian Affairs sources that any Indigenous people from the U.S. were coming into Canada any more than out of the ordinary, and in fact the opposite had happened: Lakota people had gone south previously to learn of the Ghost Dance, as in Čhaŋté Ohítika's case. The article went on to say: "The Sioux Indians here [Moose Jaw] and at Wood Mountain are greatly excited over the killing of Sitting Bull and a number of armed Indians have crossed the line. The Messiah craze appears to have reached them. Chief Black Bull, now at Wood Mountain, says the whites will soon be exterminated and the Indians have control of this country again, and that those who have died will appear upon earth in the form of buffalo."⁶⁴ As previously discussed, Thátháŋka Sápa was interested in practicing the Ghost Dance but it is questionable that these were his beliefs, especially since Čhaŋté Ohítika had not returned to teach the message or practices of the Ghost Dance yet. This particular newspaper issue ran several other reports from Bismarck, North Dakota and Pine Ridge Agency, South Dakota from December 20th under the same headline, exclaiming that Indian fugitives were on the move after Sitting Bull's death and "General Miles

⁶³ Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson, *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011), 6-16.

⁶⁴ "To Watch Indians: Northwest Mounted Police Ordered to Pi-a-Pot's Reserve: Runners and Armed Redskins Coming Over the Border: Sioux at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Excited," *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, December 22, 1890, page 1.

and Carr will begin the war next week. Cowboys along the Cheyenne and the militia claim to have killed so far twenty-four Indians.”⁶⁵ A rather uncanny statement for what would happen in just nine days at Wounded Knee. The newspapers were looking for a fight, if nobody else was quite yet.

The newspaper articles that did not sensationalize Lakota actions seemed to fill a need to calm settler anxieties, though these types of stories did not appear as frequently as the more exciting “uprising” reports. A report from Moose Jaw regarding Lakota reactions to the death of Sitting Bull on December 29, 1890 was published the same day as the Massacre but probably before the news had reached Canada. It read: “A few of our Sioux Indians are at Regina having a dance and getting information in regard to the death of their old friend 'Sitting Bull,' for whom they have great respect...[They are] rather excited about the news; but there will be no trouble in the camp here.”⁶⁶ Even prior to the full knowledge of that tragic day, people were on edge. And some settlers were going to take advantage of the tense situation to simultaneously encourage settlement growth and drive away the Lakota.

The Moose Jaw “Indian Scare”

The first mention of an “Indian scare” at Moose Jaw was in a letter from Aspdin to Indian Commissioner, Hayter Reed from January 7, 1891. Soon after the newspapers also got involved and added another layer of colonizer tactics. Aspdin detailed that some settlers in and around Moose Jaw tried to “concoct an Indian scare”⁶⁷ in order to get more North West Mounted Police

⁶⁵“To Watch Indians: Northwest Mounted Police Ordered to Pi-a-Pot's Reserve: Runners and Armed Redskins Coming Over the Border: Sioux at Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Excited,” *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, December 22, 1890, page 1.

⁶⁶ No title, *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, December 29, 1890, page 5.

⁶⁷ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3597, file 1350, Microfilm C-10103, "Unrest-The Influence of the 'Messiah Craze' Movement in the United States Upon Canadian Indians (Indian Commissioner for Manitoba and Northwest Territories)", Letter from Thomas W. Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, January 7, 1890 (mis-print by Aspdin, should be 1891).

stationed at Moose Jaw and bring more government investment into the city.⁶⁸ He completely disagreed with these tactics and stated that if there was any danger, he would be the first to know since his home was “in the midst of the Indians.” Furthermore, he thought settlers were more on guard, not the Lakota: “There has been nothing unusual among the conduct of the Indians to lead me to the belief that there was any danger. Whilst they have danced considerable lately it has not been anything out of the common owing to their being near town...and with the ‘war news’ from the U.S. it may have been more taken notice of.”⁶⁹ The “Indian scare” was carried out by some Moose Jaw settlers, and in order to make it more believable and “to give colour to the plans[,] parties of whites went around the outskirts of the town howling and screaming to imitate Indians...” Aspdin was quite upset by these actions and wrote at length:

...all these things naturally alarmed many of the timid inhabitants more particularly the female population who of course were ignorant of the real nature of the occurrences [sic] happening around them. The Indians here were never more quiet and it is a pity that parties who call themselves men should lend themselves to such despicable schemes. The Indians were told that Police were coming up to disarm them and murder them the same as on the other side and some of them were so alarmed that I had to restrain them from leaving tepees and everything and fleeing to the Dirt Hills [about 20km south of Moose Jaw]. It was only after a good deal of talk that I quieted them. I must say that if the white population of this place were as well-behaved and attended to their own business and tried in every respect to obey the laws of the country in which they live that as the Indians do there would be no requirement for the Mounted Police to be here at all.⁷⁰

The language of “Police coming up to disarm them and murder them [the Lakota] same as on the other side [of the border]” is very telling and was directly linked to the recent Wounded Knee Massacre. The Lakota people at Moose Jaw clearly got the reference as they would have fled, leaving everything in the depths of winter. Violence against settlers by Indigenous people in

⁶⁸ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3597, file 1350, Microfilm C-10103, "Unrest-The Influence of the 'Messiah Craze' Movement in the United States Upon Canadian Indians (Indian Commissioner for Manitoba and Northwest Territories)", Letter from Thomas W. Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, January 10, 1891.

⁶⁹ Ibid., Letter from Thomas W. Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, January 7, 1890 (mis-print by Aspdin, should be 1891).

⁷⁰ Ibid., Letter from Thomas W. Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, January 10, 1891.

Canada was a rare occurrence, but the opposite was much more frequent. Aspdin also refers to this reality in his statement about the Lakota being more respectful than many settlers.

Inspector A.R. Cuthbert of the NWMP at Moose Jaw also made a report of the incident, noting that he had talked to Aspdin who, prior to their talk, had no knowledge of the alarm in town.⁷¹ Interestingly, the NWMP report also included that prior to the “scare” the Moose Jaw magistrates had petitioned the NWMP Commissioner for “a detachment of Police from Regina on the ground of probable trouble with the Indians camped near here.”⁷² In another police report from a few days later, the prime agitator was identified as John Ostrander, owner of the New Brunswick Hotel in Moose Jaw, whom the police stated “delights in frightening the white people as well as the Indians, who are in reality more frightened than the whites.”⁷³ Given the recent violence in the U.S., Lakota people definitely had more reason to be frightened. Cuthbert went on to explain that he found more settlers against the Lakota as well, especially one man, A.B. MacKenzie who was very upset at the proximity of the Lakota and “them being allowed to remain there” at Moose Jaw. His grievances were with the Lakota horses getting into his crops and Lakota people using firewood from his land. Cuthbert stated that the Lakota had moved away from his land onto government land, were peaceable, and earned their living by working in the town, and MacKenzie could pursue these matters through “herd laws” in effect, though the firewood was nothing really of value because it was dry brush from the river bottoms.⁷⁴ Another complaint from MacKenzie in connection to a shot he had heard, Aspdin connected to recent “scares”:

⁷¹ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3597, file 1350, Microfilm C-10103, "Unrest-The Influence of the 'Messiah Craze' Movement in the United States Upon Canadian Indians (Indian Commissioner for Manitoba and Northwest Territories)", Letter from Corporal L. Barnes to the Officer Commanding B. Division NWMP, January 7, 1891.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., “Extract from a report by the Insp. Cuthbert on the ‘Indian Scare’ at Moose Jaw dated 11th Jany ’91.”

⁷⁴ Ibid.,

A young [Lakota] man had died some months ago and had been buried up the Creek. One night lately a relative went to mourn at his grave and took his gun along and when he got there he fired off three shots to scare away the bad spirits. He told me he fired into the high banks of along the Creek. The inference is that McKenzie hearing the shots, his imagination supplied the rest. The place was nearly a mile from McKenzie's. There has been as you are aware a considerable scare worked up here and to parties who were not in [on] the secret of the plot any little occurrence however small among the Indians (which at ordinary times would pass unnoticed) has been made in the minds of some of the people to bear a war like and grave aspect. As the scare was got up by designing white men for purposes of gain, on them should the onus fall and not on the innocent Indian. I think the foregoing are the complaints he had to make. McKenzie is a man strongly prejudiced against Indians to a most unreasonable extent, and I think most of the so called trouble which he imagines they give him does not exist, but is made to appear so in his mind. I live nearer these Indians than [sic] him and I never have any trouble about them. I have sometimes had to check the young men for some thoughtless action (which any one either Indian or White might be guilty of) and have seldom had to speak twice about any fault, and I am sure if Mr. McKenzie would only curb his temper and take these things a little more quietly and sensibly he would get along all right.⁷⁵

It seems "Indian scares" were top of mind for many settlers at Moose Jaw in and around the time of the concocted scare, and as Aspdin noted, they were all the result of imaginations, quick tempers, and strong prejudices.

The newspapers soon picked up the "Indian scare" story, based on Indian Affairs reports. One of the first newspapers to print the story on January 21, 1891 was the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* and was directly based on Aspdin's information to his superiors of the "scare" and reported how it was fabricated by settlers to drive away the Lakota.⁷⁶ *The Moose Jaw Times* responded quickly to the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* article, arguing that "From first to last, it is simply bosh" and that "There has been no Indian scare here at any time this autumn or winter, or no semblance of such," and therefore, "The whole article is rubbish."⁷⁷ This instigated a back-

⁷⁵ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3845, file 73419, Microfilm Reel C-10149, "Manitoba and Northwest Territories-Reports Concerning the 'Messiah Craze' in the United States and Whether Canadian Indians Were Getting Involved," Letter from Aspdin to Indian Commissioner, January 11, 1891.

⁷⁶ "Two Kinds of Scares: Indian Agents at the Blackfoot Reserve and at Moose Jaw Send Reports to Ottawa," *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, January 24, 1891, page 2.

⁷⁷ "The Alleged Indian Scare," *The Times*, Moose Jaw, NWT, January 20, 1891, Vol. II, No. 39, page 2.

and-forth printed debate between the two papers on the topic. On February 2, 1891, the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* released the statement: "The Moose Jaw Times denies the truth of the report telegraphed from Ottawa that there was an Indian scare there, instigated by the citizens to get additional police there."⁷⁸ Aspdin took notice of *The Moose Jaw Times* article and wrote to Indian Commissioner Reed, "You will understand of course that the scheme having failed and been published in the Eastern press there is a feeling to try and deny or in some way gloss the matter over, the evidence procurable is however too strong to permit of this being done successfully."⁷⁹ He confronted the editor of *The Moose Jaw Times* and the editor promised to publish a retraction.⁸⁰ On February 6, 1891, *The Times* reported that Aspdin visited the newspaper and that he "takes issue with us on our comments last week on the matter of Indian Scare reported in the Winnipeg Free Press of the 24th ult." The newspaper went on to say that "we thought there had been no attempt to get up a scare" but Aspdin submitted evidence to the paper to "justify the reports sent by him to the authorities." The newspaper ended with: "These evidences we frankly admit are stronger than we anticipated and go further in justifying his reports than anything we had observed."⁸¹ Thus, the newspaper war came to an end and the matter seemed to be settled that this "Indian scare" really was created by some residents of Moose Jaw to drive the Lakota away and bring in government investment to the town. This is very similar to the military investment some businessmen were hoping to bring to towns nearby the Pine Ridge Reservation like Rapid City and Sturgis in South Dakota and Chadron and

⁷⁸ No title, *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, February 2, 1891, page 8.

⁷⁹ LAC, RG 10, Indian Affairs, Vol. 3597, file 1350, Microfilm C-10103, "Unrest-The Influence of the 'Messiah Craze' Movement in the United States Upon Canadian Indians (Indian Commissioner for Manitoba and Northwest Territories)", Letter from Thomas W. Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, February 4, 1891.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, and copy of letter from E.B. Rothwell, Editor of *The Moose Jaw Times*, to Thomas W. Aspdin, February 2, 1891.

⁸¹ "The Alleged Indian Scare," *The Times*, Moose Jaw, NWT, February 6, 1891, Vol. II, No. 40, page 2.

Rushville in Nebraska by “drumming up” anxiety that there would be an “Indian uprising,” which quickly lead to the Wounded Knee Massacre.⁸²

These kinds of disturbing comments and actions are not surprising, though the scale and elaborateness of this effort by the Moose Jaw residents is peculiar. Tactics to dispossess and drive away Indigenous people were wide ranging and far reaching, taken on by many different factions of settler societies from top to bottom. Cole Harris argued, “The initial ability to dispossess rested primarily on physical power and the supporting infrastructure of the state. Once the power of violence had been demonstrated, the threat of it was often sufficient. The colonial state sought and, backed by the British military, was often able to impose a monopoly on violence. It introduced the governmental framework of the modern state, within which colonization proceeded.”⁸³ When official means of dispossessing Indigenous people through sanctioned systems did not work fast or well enough, settlers used the threat of violence and drew on well-founded fears as another means. Though this “Indian scare” incident may be one of the most bizarre schemes, unfortunately this would not be the last attempt by some Moose Jaw newcomers to rid themselves and the area of the Lakota, especially to ensure “prosperity” would flourish.

Settler Colonialism: Segregation, Space, Morality, and Gender

Settler colonialism’s focus on replacement of Indigenous people with settler peoples is rooted in spatial displacement of Indigenous people from their lands and controlling access to resources. This process was clear at Moose Jaw, though a bit more complicated because Lakota people were able to be more independent of government interference, though not always of individual settler interference. The threat of outright violence against Lakota people still carried

⁸² Hall, *To Have this Land*, 112-113.

⁸³ Harris, *A Bounded Land*, 261.

on after the “Indian scare” and further forms of “othering,” in which newspapers had no small role, were frequently used in the settler colonial process throughout the 1890s at Moose Jaw. These reports were not only racist but also employed notions of morality, gender, and labour to define what was “respectable” and therefore justify the removal and displacement of Lakota people. Creating a binary of morality worked to uphold dispossession: “The legitimation of and moral justification for dispossession lay in a cultural discourse that located civilization and savagery and extolled the advantages for all concerned of replacing the latter with the former.”⁸⁴

The “Indian scare” was not the last of threatened violence either. In March of 1895, Aspdin reported an incident where a drunk white man named Vigars came into the Lakota camp and threatened to shoot Okhúte Šiča and other people (the camp was on Aspdin’s land at this time). Aspdin went to help Okhúte Šiča and sent for the police, and together they were able to disarm the man and take him into custody. However, Vigars got out on bail and then tried to charge Aspdin with assault. Aspdin got a warrant against Vigars and he was re-arrested, but Aspdin pointed out that the Lakota could not get counsel so they would not be able to see any justice.⁸⁵ Indian Commissioner Forget’s reply to Aspdin’s request for help only echoed that there were no funds for employing counsel for Indians and the matter would be placed in the hands of the Crown Prosecutor for investigation.⁸⁶ Interestingly, Aspdin was adamant that a NWMP magistrate (he suggested Superintendent Perry) hear the case rather than any Moose Jaw Justices of the Peace. Justice of the Peace Gordon, the same previous mayor of Moose Jaw, ended up hearing the case and let Vigars, who had pleaded guilty to assault, go with a five-dollar fine

⁸⁴ Harris, *A Bounded Land*, 261.

⁸⁵ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, March 2, 1895.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Forget to Aspdin, March 4, 1895.

without the case going to trial. Aspdin was not happy as he thought the magistrate “was in favour of letting the prisoner go” because:

[The] Local Justices of the Peace are influenced no doubt by local feeling and in the case of Indians such as this case I am firmly of opinion that a Government official such as a Mounted Police officer would have been far better, as a Magistrate, than any local J.P. I regret very much to state that a feeling prejudicial to the Indians was attempted to be stirred up by interested parties by setting around rumours that the Indians were thieving when Vigars fired upon them, there was of course no truth in this. As a matter of fact three out of the five shots fired were shot by Vigars when on property belonging to myself...I beg to state that as one who has always kept before the Indians that they must be quiet and law abiding I felt strongly that such an unprovoked attack upon them should be promptly punished as showing that they would be protected and anything to the contrary would not be justice and moreover have a bad effect.⁸⁷

Gordon’s earlier 1886 letter and petition to have the Lakota moved further away and where he also expressed that the NWMP were biased in favour of the Lakota has come into focus through Aspdin’s observations. Gordon’s stance on relations with the Lakota may be interpreted by this case which he presided over, particularly because he belonged to the circles in Moose Jaw that wanted the Lakota removed. The attempts to drive the Lakota away, orchestrated by residents and probably those in local business and political positions, would be repeated throughout the 1890s at Moose Jaw. Though the Lakota tried using settler strategies and systems for redress, often their issues were not addressed nor remedied, even when physical violence against them took place. Aspdin’s repeated observations of their “peaceful” and “law abiding” nature did not seem to influence settler perceptions nor actions that would assist the Lakota in any meaningful way. This is a repeated aspect within settler colonial nations and Indigenous realities—no matter if Indigenous people “play by the rules” or how “respectable” they strove to be, they were

⁸⁷ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, March 14, 1895. This occurrence has striking resemblance to recent prejudices and events in Saskatchewan, particularly around the shooting death of Colten Boushie. It is not at all shocking to me that this parallel story occurred in 1895 and in 2016; the very same prejudices and systems exist that lead to violence and injustice.

neglected by settler systems that sought to distance them from their lands, self-determination, and kin. Explaining this process of setting respectability and race, Harris wrote:

The tendency to turn ways of life into symbols was pervasive, and when the racialized European colonial discourse of the late nineteenth century was superimposed on the uncertainties of an emerging immigrant society, race became an overriding symbol. Whiteness became the first and most essential marker of social respectability. From the idea of race followed a number of boundary operations intent on affixing space for insiders and outsiders and ensuring that the former had most of it. While never entirely successful, they produced and sustained a powerful set of exclusions.⁸⁸

Therefore, the markers of “respectability” became tied to race and unattainable to those who were othered and racialized. In the Lakota context, this served to justify taking their lands, lives, and bodies for the “advancement” of settler colonialism and purposes.

The growing tensions between the settlers and the Lakota at Moose Jaw, especially the settlers who farmed outside the town, often stemmed from using the same shared spaces and resources. A main feature of settler colonialism is the use of land and resources by the settlers and state, especially in capitalist pursuits which are put above Indigenous ways of using and relating to the land. “Assimilation and segregation are both tendencies of colonization that protect the interests of white capital”⁸⁹ particularly access and use of land and all associated production, labour, and profits that stem from that property holding. Patrick Wolfe wrote, “...the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory. Territoriality is settler colonialism’s specific, irreducible element.”⁹⁰ Wolfe elaborated as well about the agricultural component to settler colonialism, and although he

⁸⁸ Harris, *A Bounded Land*, 228.

⁸⁹ Shiri Pasternak, “Assimilation and Partition: How Settler Colonialism and Racial Capitalism Co-produce the Borders of Indigenous Economies,” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 119, No. 2, (April 2020): 301.

⁹⁰ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2006): 388.

argued agriculture has come to be the most understood aspect of settler colonialism's desire for land, it is not, of course, the only one:

It [agriculture] is inherently sedentary and, therefore, permanent. In contrast to extractive industries, which rely on what just happens to be there, agriculture is a rational means/end calculus that is geared to vouchsafing its own reproduction, generating capital that projects into a future where it repeats itself. . . . agriculture supports a larger population than non-sedentary modes of production. In settler-colonial terms, this enables a population to be expanded by continuing immigration at the expense of native lands and livelihoods. . . . Through its ceaseless expansion, agriculture (including, for this purpose, commercial pastoralism) progressively eats into Indigenous territory, a primitive accumulation that turns native flora and fauna into a dwindling resource and curtails the reproduction of Indigenous modes of production. In the event, Indigenous people are either rendered dependent on the introduced economy or reduced to the stock-raids that provide the classic pretext for colonial death-squads. None of this means that Indigenous people are by definition non-agricultural. Whether or not they actually do practise agriculture, however (as in the case of the Indians who taught Whites to grow corn and tobacco), natives are typically represented as unsettled, nomadic, rootless, etc., in settler-colonial discourse. In addition to its objective economic centrality to the project, agriculture, with its life-sustaining connectedness to land, is a potent symbol of settler-colonial identity. Accordingly, settler-colonial discourse is resolutely impervious to glaring inconsistencies such as sedentary natives or the fact that the settlers themselves have come from somewhere else.⁹¹

Wolfe's observations of settler colonial agriculture and views of Indigenous people are spot on in the Lakota context at Moose Jaw, as the tensions and violence there arose from agricultural endeavours. Settler colonial discourse had many glaring inconsistencies at Moose Jaw as well: Lakota people's right to use land for their grazing purposes was contested and not viewed as legitimate as settlers' agricultural pursuits, and the Lakota were framed as the "vagrants" and "refugees" though settlers were the newcomers and often only stayed at Moose Jaw briefly, even homesteaders were sojourners though this flies in the face of still tightly held mythologies about the agricultural origins of the prairies.⁹²

⁹¹ Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 395-396.

⁹² Paul Leonard Voisey, *Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 52.

Another incident shows the connection between settler colonial violence and agriculture, in this case by harming Lakota people's horses, and access to land and resources, as well as the Lakota effort again to find recourse in settler systems for settler offences. In June of 1890 some Lakota horses trampled two farmers' fields outside of Moose Jaw. The farmers, Neil McMillan and R.J. Sceli, rounded up about a hundred of these horses and the latter put them in his corral. Upon hearing this, the nearby Lakota people were upset and sent for Sgt. Littlefield of the NWMP in Moose Jaw. They came to an amicable agreement and the horses were let go, but later four horses were shot--three found wounded and one dead--the latter being found close to Sceli's place. Some Lakota men immediately did their own searching and compared the guns of McMillan and Sceli. They found Sceli's gun loaded and fresh traces of smoke showing that it had been fired recently with the bullets the same size as the one in the dead horse. Assistant Indian Commissioner Forget, in reporting this, wrote "... one must admit that nothing further is needed to justify the Indians in fixing the guilt on the party named." All the same, he thought the evidence would not secure a conviction and told the Lakota people involved as much, but informed them the matter would be given over to the Crown Prosecutor. Forget wrote, "It is now well understood by the Indians that if their horses are again found on settlers [sic] fields, the latter will take them to pound and sell them if the assessed damages are not at once paid. They are quite satisfied to be treated in this way and only wish the settlers had acted in this manner instead of shooting their ponies." Though Forget seemed to side with the Lakota in general, he still repeated the same conclusion as many other government officials stating, "...but so long as

they [the Lakota] are allowed to remain near settlements, they must necessarily be a source of annoyance to both the settlers and the Government.”⁹³

Shortly thereafter, MLA at Moose Jaw, James Ross wrote to Forget and reported that complaints were coming into him daily about the Lakota and what is worse “...the settlers are considerably alarmed, and claim that the Indians are making threats saying they will get even for the killing of their stock.” Ross thought the only way to deal with the issues was to remove the Lakota at once.⁹⁴ Settlers and government officials alike were more and more concerned with the Lakota presence at Moose Jaw, though some residents and settlers were still taking matters into their own hands a few months after the “Indian scare” incident. Regardless of Lakota amicability, the compromises they made, and laws they followed at Moose Jaw, their presence was still considered temporary and their right to utilize the same landscapes as settlers to be somehow inferior, and therefore they were deemed removeable and the ones in the wrong. Lakota people did not simply accept this though, and their ability to conduct their own search, find evidence, and seek recourse (if not completely gained) with police system speaks to their independence and awareness of the double standards they faced when dealing with settlers and the justice/legal systems.

The Moose Jaw *Times Herald* was certainly the most vocal about the Lakota and often ran articles calling for their removal. Throughout the 1890s, the *Times Herald* reported on the Lakota causing issues with farmers and ranchers (particularly their horses and dogs) and claimed they killed too much game, and sought Indian Affairs to “either send them home to the States or place them on a reserve where they will not trouble resident settlers and may in time become as

⁹³ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, “Correspondence and Reports Regarding Sitting Bull and His Followers 1884-1944,” Assistant Indian Commissioner A.E. Forget to Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed, June 17, 1890.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, James Ross, MLA to Forget, June 21, 1890.

useful as the average Indian on [sic] these places.”⁹⁵ The *Times Herald* repeated ideas of spatial removal and segregating frequently, calling the Lakota “a species of the genius tramp,” and called for the government to “place them where their children might be educated” to “the ways of civilization and wield an influence over their seniors that might do good service” in order to “remodel the characters.”⁹⁶ This was not just fodder for the general public as these articles were sometimes clipped and sent in with Indian Affairs officials’ correspondence as evidence that government action was needed—this particular article from 1895 served such a purpose.⁹⁷

When calls to government did not work to remove the Lakota from the places settlers claimed and wanted to capitalize on, other methods of fear and threats were used. One terrible situation highlights the racism the Lakota people dealt with and the panic settlers instilled in the Lakota beyond the 1890s. In 1906, a resident of Moose Jaw by the name of Ed Hopkins (who was also a Justice of the Peace for the town) came to possess land that had about forty Lakota graves on it. This man ordered the Lakota people to remove the graves from his land. John Lecaine,⁹⁸ at the time a young man and very recent graduate from the Regina Industrial School, went on behalf of the Lakota at Moose Jaw to Corporal Robert B.C. Mundy to ask if they were bound to remove the graves. Mundy advised Lecaine that “they were not on any account to remove them, [and] that if Mr. Hopkins said anything more to refer him to me.” Later that morning, Lecaine again went to Mundy and said Hopkins threatened them with the police if they did not remove the bodies, and when Lecaine said he had spoken with Mundy, Hopkins replied “he [Mundy] doesn’t know anything about it, and you had better get them [the bodies] up right

⁹⁵ “The Sioux Indians,” *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, Moose Jaw, NWT, September 1, 1899, page 4.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, September 13, 1895, page 8.

⁹⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," clipping of *Moose Jaw Times*, September 13, 1895 article.

⁹⁸ John Lecaine is referred to as O’Kute Jr. in these documents.

away.” Under Hopkins threats, the Lakota disinterred six bodies and Mundy immediately sent Lecaine back to stop them from digging up more. Mundy went down an hour later and by that time all the bodies had been buried again. Hopkins was there, and Mundy “called him over and expressed myself very strongly, and he told me that I did [not] know what I was talking about when I instructed the Indians not to disinter the bodies.”⁹⁹ It was not enough for some to try to remove living Lakota people, but they also tried to remove the dead. Ella Deloria wrote that “Visiting burial places was not a pastime, but, nevertheless, the Dakotas felt pulled to the region where their dead were.” She also wrote that “people were not bound by a set rule [of mourning] and were free to mourn as they were impelled.”¹⁰⁰ Both these observations by Deloria show that Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people kept the sanctity of the lands where their dead laid, which challenges stereotypical notions that after scaffolds were put up, the dead were abandoned, feared, and forgotten.¹⁰¹

In writing to his superiors about the incident, Indian Commissioner David Laird recommended “that a small plot of available land be reserved for a burying ground for these Sioux straggling Indians, otherwise the question as to the disposition of their dead will continually come up as settlement advances.” He suggested that a plot be purchased and fenced off so the graves would not be disturbed.¹⁰² However, by March of 1907, Inspector of Indian Agencies, W.M. Graham reported that after talking with Mundy that he was informed “...that the Indians have abandoned the burying ground he wrote about near the Town, and that the man who owns the land has cultivated all around the graves and there is no likelihood of anything further

⁹⁹ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Letter from Corporal Robert B.C. Mundy, June 17, 1906.

¹⁰⁰ Ella Deloria Archive, Dakota Ethnography: Box 1, The Dakota Way of Life, “Ch. 8 Death and Burial,” page 168, http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php?action=viewpage&id=3228

¹⁰¹ For an example of such stereotypes, see Dan Ketchum, “Lakota Burial Ceremony Beliefs,” *Classroom*, September 29, 2017, <https://classroom.synonym.com/lakota-burial-ceremony-beliefs-12085648.html>

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, Indian Commissioner David Laird to Secretary of Indian Affairs, June 27, 1906.

being heard of the matter.”¹⁰³ The conclusion reached by Indian Affairs was that the Lakota would move on (another form of vanishing and segregating) and the price of the land with the graves was too much for the department.¹⁰⁴ By 1909, the issue was dropped altogether.

Beyond the issues arising from not being able to physically eliminate Lakota people from the Moose Jaw area, the degrading of Lakota people’s character through judgements of their morality also was frequently deployed. This is a tactic of settler colonialism to “justify” the harm done to Indigenous people by “othering” in order to create a dichotomy of settler positive attributes and supposed negative qualities of Indigenous people, especially through settler defined morality. Scholars have repeatedly recognized the harmful policing and representations of Indigenous morality in numerous settler colonial settings and often gender, sexuality, and labour played large roles in defining and othering Indigenous people for their difference from white settler norms being established.¹⁰⁵

Ideas about cleanliness, poverty, and even dress were the basis of standards for morality and played largely into the settler discussions about Lakota people (as well as all Indigenous people more generally). These norms were not only racialized but also gendered, but not just for women. Lakota men and morality often oscillated as well in the views of settlers. As Lakota women were degraded as potentially promiscuous and violent, they were also used as a standard to simultaneously juxtapose their morality with Lakota men’s. As already noted, complaints and reports from settlers and government officials, Lakota men’s supposed laziness was often

¹⁰³ Ibid., LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Letter from Inspector of Indian Agencies W.M Graham to Indian Commissioner David Laird, March 30, 1907.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., Graham to Secretary of Indian Affairs, November 13, 1907; Graham to Secretary of Indian Affairs, December 3, 1908; and Graham to Secretary of Indian Affairs, January 30, 1909.

¹⁰⁵ See Benjamin Hoy, “Policing Morality: Regulating Sexuality Across the Canada-United States Border,” *The Canadian Historical Review* Vol. 99, no. 1 (March 2018): 30-62, Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women*, and Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

juxtaposed with Lakota women's work ethic. This trope is not unique to Lakota people; First Nations men were often depicted in this time period as lazy while First Nations women were depicted as drudges doing all the work for their communities and families. The poem at the start of this chapter clearly shows this stereotype. Inspector of Indian Agencies and Reserves, Alex McGibbon's 1896 report also repeated a long list of settler complaints and heavily gendered prejudices, stating that the Lakota people were thieves, the men were lazy though the women were good workers, their children ran naked, the women were prostitutes, and "One woman threatened a knife to his servant if food was not given."¹⁰⁶ Gender frequently played into the characterization of the Lakota, especially where morality and work ethic was concerned. McGibbon remarked that even "Mr. Aspdin is of the opinion that if something is not done the young girls will turn out to be prostitutes as he already sees them going into town by themselves and he is afraid for no good purpose."¹⁰⁷ These stereotypical and gendered views flourished at Moose Jaw especially since Lakota women were the most employed by, and therefore visible to settlers. Just as Carter points out, Indigenous women did work hard but "to non-Aboriginal observers their work appeared as drudgery, yet these observers failed to understand the social power which the labour helped the women attain. Plains women controlled the distribution of their family's food resources, and this gave them considerable power and influence."¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, appearance and dress also factored into the rhetoric and racism of the time and invidious comparisons of Lakota men and women were concocted to foster judgements about progress and morality. For example, in the annual report of an Indian agent checking up on the

¹⁰⁶ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3964, File 149874, "Northwest Territories - Report on a Visit to Cree Indians who are Wintering at Medicine Hat, Maple Creek and Swift Current and to Sioux Indians at Moose Jaw," Alex McGibbon to Indian Commissioner, October 21, 1896.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 165.

Lakota at Moose Jaw in 1914 and 1915, it was noted that “The mode of dress of the men is similar to that of white men” but women still continued to wear or “cling to the blanket.”¹⁰⁹ This kind of language was particularly prevalent in efforts to communicate what kind of “civilization” efforts were needed and the “progress” of such efforts compared to the normalized gender standards of Euro-Canadian society.

Though Aspdin often worked to help Lakota people especially through Indian Affairs channels, he also criticized Lakota morals and changed his mind frequently about their character. Some of Aspdin’s frustrations seemed to come from trying feverishly to practice “coercive bookkeeping” in keeping track of the Lakota, their movements, and their morality, but also from not being able to fully practice his “bookkeeping” in order to make Lakota people conform. They were more independent, being off the Canadian Indian Affairs “books” as non-status, non-treaty, and non-reserve residents—aspects the Canadian government did not want to change because this would also incur more spending on more Indians. In December 1892, Aspdin came down particularly hard on Lakota people and their morality. He wrote at length about the overall decline in work ethic and discipline as he saw it, and tied this also to issues of gender and production stating: “Whilst the conduct of these Indians has usually been very good in the past, yet I regret to say that the young men growing up in the camp at present bid fair if not speedily checked to destroy their good name. They do nothing but loaf around and gamble living off the proceeds of the women who work in town.”¹¹⁰ He was also concerned that in time these young men would “allow [their] savage instincts to prevail.”¹¹¹ Aspdin’s complaints fed into gendered

¹⁰⁹ 1915 Sessional Papers (No. 27), Dept of Indian Affairs, (Vol. 50, No. 23), Part II, Reports of Indian Agents, Annual Report of Thomas E. Donnelly, Indian Agent for Assiniboine Agency, Sask, "Moosejaw Sioux," page 56; and 1916 Sessional Papers, No. 27, (Vol. 51, No. 23 on spine), Dept. of Indian Affairs, Part II, Reports of Indian Agents, "Report of Thos. E. Donnelly, Indian Agent for Assiniboine Agency, Sask," page 59.

¹¹⁰ LAC, RG10, Vol. 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, “Correspondence And Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944,” Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Reed, December 23, 1892.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

perceptions of Indigenous work ethic and labour. Indian Commissioner Reed wrote in January 1893 agreeing with Aspdin's view of the matter and therefore was "forced to the conclusion that the time has arrived beyond which no option should be allowed them with regard to returning [to the U.S.]. I would therefore recommend that they be sent across the line... To get them to start and to see them to the boundary it will without doubt be necessary to employ the services of the Mounted Police, and a strict watch will have to be kept, at any rate for a time to guard against any attempt on their part to return."¹¹² Enduring tensions only raised efforts to have the Lakota removed to the U.S., the ultimate recurring theme in government opinion and desires when it came to the Lakota in these years. Arguments and prejudices repeated about morality therefore were not in isolation and clearly worked to the same end of removing Lakota people.

Often racialized and gendered stereotypes of Lakota people were a result of misunderstandings of Lakota culture. Aspdin's reports often reflected this kind of moral judgement that did not take cultural understandings into account. For example, he wrote in late 1896, that "...there is a certain section of the camp here that it is useless to give anything to. It consists of 'Long Dog' [Šúŋka Háŋska/Crazy Jack], 'Poor Crow' [Kǎŋǵi ǰámáheča/Lean Crow], and etc. They take a pride in keeping up the worst Indian ways and anything given to them however badly they need it they will persist in giving away at dances and so get into hands it was never intended." He concluded as all government officials did, recommending "...that drastic measures be taken with them to compel them" to either go to the U.S. or to an already established Canadian reserve.¹¹³ Although Aspdin may have had more access to Lakota culture

¹¹² LAC, RG10, Vol. 3653, File 8589-2, Reel C-10114, "Correspondence And Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944," Hayter Reed to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, January 19, 1893.

¹¹³ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Aspdin to the Indian Commissioner, October 9, 1896 (possibly the month is supposed to be November since October is crossed out and replaced with "Nov." in another hand and it is stamped by the Office of Indian Affairs in November, and the letter from Forget reporting to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs about this letter from Aspdin's is dated November 11, 1896).

through his wife, he still did not comprehend some of the cultural purposes of values like generosity which he saw instead as a hindrance to accumulation and wealth. Generosity was highly regarded in Lakota culture and giving away possessions was both a way to earn social standing as an individual or family and it served as a social function to help those in need. Of course, the settler annoyance over “Indian givers” was not limited to Lakota people and the term was entrenched in the mainstream view of Indigenous people of the time.¹¹⁴

Settlers at Moose Jaw and Indians Affairs officials were not the only ones with negative views of the Lakota. One letter received by Deputy Superintendent Hayter Reed in March of 1895 came from Nicholas Flood Davin, the proprietor and editor of the Regina newspaper, *The Leader*, creator of *The Davin Report* which recommended the U.S. style boarding schools for Indian children as the basis for the Canadian residential school system, and the M.P. for Assiniboia West at the time.¹¹⁵ Though it is a brief letter, it was strongly worded and to the point about the Lakota problem. Davin wrote to Reed:

The way these twenty lodges of Indians, Sioux from below the line, are behaving at Moose Jaw is perfectly terrible, cutting good timber, shooting out of season, and stealing. I want you to have them removed. That man, Aspdin, I hear you give so much a month, or year, to and who I believe received money for taking them across the line, is married to a squaw and I hear lives promiscuously with other squaws. You can place no confidence in him. Please have them removed.¹¹⁶

Davin was no stranger to Reed, and Reed replied firmly and cordially to remind the newspaperman “that extreme caution has to be used as to application of force to political refugees, unless we want to raise a storm about our ears.” He also reminded Davin that the

¹¹⁴ Vincent Schilling, “What or Who Is an Indian Giver? A History of the Offensive Term,” *Indian Country Today*, October 11, 2013, <https://indiancountrytoday.com/archive/what-or-who-is-an-indian-giver-a-history-of-the-offensive-term>

¹¹⁵ John Herd Thompson, “Davin, Nicholas Flood,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biographies*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/davin_nicholas_flood_13E.html, accessed February 5, 2020.

¹¹⁶ LAC, RG10, Vol. 3653, Reel C File 8589-2, -10114, “Correspondence And Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944,” N.F. Davin to Hayter Reed, March 16, 1895.

Moose Jaw residents encouraged the Lakota to stay there¹¹⁷ and that the law applied to the Lakota just as to the settlers.¹¹⁸ Reed further reminded Davin with regard to the statements he made about Aspdin “that caution is required about receiving detrimental statements relative to one who has made enemies through defending Indians from the aggressions of a certain kind of settler.”¹¹⁹ Clearly, many people at the time seemed to have an opinion about the Lakota in Canada. And to see Reed cast as the person of civility towards Indians in contrast to Davin is surprising to say the least, as Reed implemented some truly draconian measures like the peasant farming policy, which says quite a lot about the level of Davin’s harmful views and interactions with Indigenous people as well. Davin’s comments about Aspdin living “promiscuously with other squaws” shows the intensity of how morality was judged and enforced against one another, especially where interracial and multi-generational households were concerned. Mary Black Moon-Aspdin’s mother and sister also lived with her and Thomas, very much in accordance with Lakota understanding of kinship and household arrangements, which did not conform to the norm of Euro-Canadian nuclear family households. Though Aspdin himself was quite concerned about morality and social structure among the Lakota, his own relationships and morality came under suspicion sometimes because it was not the ideal to be replicated or encouraged in western settlements. Where the lines blurred between Lakota and settlers, it was seen as morally detrimental to both groups.

Davin’s newspaper had been publishing stories about the Lakota at Moose Jaw for nearly a decade. There were numerous stories that ran in the Moose Jaw, Regina, and Winnipeg newspapers about the Lakota, most of which were not pleasant and often showcased settlers’

¹¹⁷ LAC, RG10, Vol. 3653, Reel C File 8589-2, -10114, “Correspondence And Reports Regarding Sitting Bull And His Followers 1884-1944,” Reed to Davin, March 22, 1895.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., Reed to Forget, March 22, 1895.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

prejudiced views of Indigenous people. Throughout the 1890s, the Moose Jaw *Times Herald* particularly reported on strange and no doubt fictionalized stories that made Lakota people a source of scandalous, bizarre, and tabloid-like reading entertainment that often dehumanized them. For example, stories of a two-headed Lakota baby being born, quarrels and violence between Lakota people (especially women), suicide,¹²⁰ and even the supposed murder of a local man “presumably at the hands of some Sioux Indians camped near Moosejaw [sic]...with whom Manning [the victim] was not on good terms.”¹²¹ All of these types of stories ramped up settler ideas about the Lakota as a problem and fed into more generally held beliefs about Indigenous savagery, primitiveness, and depravedness—on moral and biological levels. The sensationalism sold newspapers and helped the development of the West for its rightful (that is, non-Indigenous) occupants. Presumptions like these were not infrequent and illustrate how far and wide these kinds of prejudices and unfounded fears about Lakota people were held.

In the same vein, the Moose Jaw *Times Herald* reported stories that targeted Lakota women and their supposed lack of morality. A very demeaning and clearly uninformed piece about Lakota women under their “Magistrates Court” column was written as if to make sure papers were sold the following week: “Next week a novel case will be tried before the magistrate, some Sioux Squaws having been carrying on an intestine [sic] war. Two squaws, ‘Crazy’ and ‘Lazy Woman’ it is alleged committed an assault and battery occasioning actual bodily harm on another squaw whose name we have not learned. Besides cruelly beating the squaw they threw a can of hot tea in her face.”¹²² It goes almost without saying that these were

¹²⁰ See *Moose Jaw Times Herald* articles from January 6, 1893, “Attempted Suicide,” December 9, 1892 article about a Sioux woman having a two headed baby, and January 20, 1893 “A Sioux Vendetta: Intestinal Feuds Among our Local Indians” about two Lakota women physically fighting.

¹²¹ “A Missing Settler,” *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, January 14, 1887, Vol. XIII, No. 172, page 1.

¹²² “Magistrates Court,” *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, September 23, 1892, page 4.

not their names and the story was stretched considerably to fit racist ideas of Indigenous women. An earlier NWMP report by Inspector P.C.H. Primrose at Wood Mountain thought their way of living “in a hand to mouth way...put temptation in the way of their women.”¹²³ These depictions of Lakota women fit perfectly with what Sarah Carter argues in her book, *Capturing Women*: “White women, projected as ‘civilizing’ agents, were central to the creation and reproduction of the new community; also central to the new notions of spatial and social segregation were representations of Aboriginal women as dangerous and sinister. Women in the West were polarized at this time into those who were regarded as the virtuous and pure agents of the salvation of (white) men and civilizers of the new region of the new nation, and those regarded as the promiscuous agents of ruin of the same.”¹²⁴ Stories such as the ones about “Crazy” and “Lazy Woman” helped created and build up these notions. Historian Margaret D. Jacobs argues that gendered representations of Indigenous people “...circulated in print media from the earliest colonization of the American continent up through the twentieth century and influenced European and American policies and practices toward Indigenous peoples.”¹²⁵ Lakota women at Moose Jaw had to balance on a fine line: they were credited with being the hardworking foundation who supported the Lakota community but also the source of moral ruin because when they could not make enough money, they might be “tempted” to make it by promiscuous means.

Some newspaper reports were hopeful there were other “answers” to the Indian problems. The idea of Indigenous people “disappearing” as a race was widely held in the 1890s. The Moose Jaw *Times Herald* reported in October 1895 that the total number of Indians according to

¹²³ LAC, RG 18, RCMP, Series A-1, Vol. 84, File: 465-93, “Sioux Indians Belonging to US, living at Moosejaw and Wood Mountain (I-49708),” August 5, 1892 NWMP Inspector Primrose to Officer Commanding,

¹²⁴ Carter, *Capturing Women*, xiii.

¹²⁵ Margaret D. Jacobs, “Reproducing White Settlers and Eliminating Natives: Settler Colonialism, Gender, and Family History in the American West,” *Journal of the West*, Vol. 56, No. 4, (Fall 2017): 14.

the U.S. Indian Bureau was steadily dropping, with the Sioux and other north western tribes particularly decreasing in population. It concluded by stating: "If the rate of decrease maintained for the past twenty five years be kept up, there will not be a full-blooded Indian in the country by the year 2000."¹²⁶ Even some of the friends of the Lakota at Moose Jaw subscribed to this opinion. Moose Jaw's local doctor, Dr. A.R. Turnbull who often visited the Lakota and gave medical assistance, was featured in the *Times Herald* where he gave his opinion about the Lakota: "They prefer to be free to come and go at will without any other restraint than the commands of their chief. They eke out a living, the women by making fancy work and the men by doing odd jobs about town. They are a noble-looking body of people and are quiet and peaceful. Consumption, however, has set in amongst them and their numbers are visibly decreasing. They will soon disappear."¹²⁷ Ideas of the "doomed," "extinct," and "vanishing Indian race" were popular at the time, partly based on the real decline in population due to violence, disease, starvation, assimilation efforts, and the loss of land, but also based on notions of white genetic and social superiority and representations of static noble savages being unable to adapt to progress.¹²⁸ This is all part of the final piece in settler colonialism: amnesia to reasons of Indigenous decline, the "inevitability" of Indigenous disappearance, and the settlers' way of consoling themselves that the "Indian problem" would alleviate itself when all else failed to get rid of the Indians.

Settlers benefited from these notions because they upheld the societal systems that displaced and dispossessed Indigenous people, whether the settlers consciously or unconsciously

¹²⁶ "Decrease in United States Indian Population," *Moose Jaw Herald Times*, Moose Jaw, NWT, October 11, 1895, page 5.

¹²⁷ "The Doctor Talks: Our Town Practitioner Interviewed by an Ottawa Journalist," *Moose Jaw Herald Times*, Moose Jaw, NWT, November 4, 1892, page 1, University of Alberta, Peel's Prairie Provinces, Item Ar00103.

¹²⁸ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1982), 12-15; Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xiii-xvi.

knew how their very presence and “progress” worked in these systems. Notions around Lakota immorality, work ethic, and poverty served to justify efforts to remove them from near Moose Jaw, in other words, to segregate Indigenous and newcomer communities. The Lakota presence at Moose Jaw is indicative of Indigenous experiences more broadly in western Canada: existing on the outskirts of town, permitted to venture into town as a source of labour and curiosity, representing a wilder and fading past, and serving as a physical reminder of what was not suitable in settler society. Carter made the same kinds of observations about Liza, a very poor, solitary Indigenous woman who lived in the outskirts of Virden, Manitoba until sometime in the 1940s. Local rumor also had it that she was one of the Sioux who had come from the U.S. after 1876. Carter argued that “The presence of Liza and the stories told about her served to sharpen the boundaries of community membership and to articulate what was and was not acceptable and respectable. Liza was the object of both fascination and repugnance in that she violated the norms of conventional behaviour, dress, and cleanliness, representing the antithesis of ‘civilized’ prairie society.”¹²⁹ The Lakota people were also viewed in a range of other ways, on a spectrum from nuisances who could be useful in some menial ways, to obstacles to the potentially growing prosperity of the town of Moose Jaw. The latter view was held tightly enough by some settlers to entice them to take matters in their own hands and to try to drive Lakota people away by capitalizing on a very difficult, uncertain, and fearful time for the Lakota. For some, clearing the prairies of Indigenous people was not effective enough prior to their arrival and they did not view Wounded Knee as a tragedy but as an opportunity to instill more fear. Some saw Lakota and other Indigenous people’s presence as obstacles to the growth and transmission of proper progress, morality, and norms, so their removal was necessary for the health and well-being of

¹²⁹ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 202.

new settler societies taking root in the West. But all these efforts, ideals, and notions could not erase or eliminate Lakota people.

Annie Russell or Gertrude Turton?: Anátanwin

A strange, sad, and hugely sensationalized story unfolded in the 1890s for one particular girl between South Dakota and present-day Saskatchewan. Carter wrote at length about this in her book *Capturing Women* and Peter Lorenz Neufeld published an article in 1986 in the *Western Producer* covering this story,¹³⁰ but it deserves another look and added detail because of Lakota connections in this story. This story deeply reflects many aspects of Lakota experiences in the 1890s, particularly with settler colonial harm.

In 1893, John and Adelaide Turton's three-year-old daughter, Gertrude, went missing. They farmed near Cannington Manor in present southeastern Saskatchewan, and they called their farm Rosemount (their house still stands today). They were naturally frantic to find their daughter, and a search was mounted, but to no avail. In October, Adelaide wrote to the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa, explaining that she believed an Indian woman who worked doing laundry for her, knew who took her daughter. She wrote that the local Indian agent, J.J. Campbell was looking into the matter, but they had not heard of any searches being conducted on the reserves. She ended her letter saying "I know what the law would do if a white man was for to take an Indian child and should not the law take hold of the indians [sic]... There is great protection given the indians [sic] from the whites why is not the white protected from the Indians"¹³¹: a bit of an obtuse statement since many Indigenous children were being taken by white people at the time in the residential school system. The Secretary of Indian Affairs

¹³⁰ Peter Lorenz Neufeld, "The disappearance of Gertrude," *Western Producer*, Western People Section, December 4, 1986, pages 4-6.

¹³¹ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3909, File 107422, Mrs. John Turton to Department of Indian Affairs, October 23, 1893.

responded that he had written to instruct the Indian agent to take action though he was sure that the agent had taken the necessary steps already, and reassured her that he would do all in his power to have her child returned and the guilty person punished.¹³² Indian agent Campbell received these instructions and replied to the Secretary of the DIA, outlining the situation. Campbell suggested that the girl had wandered off and had not been stolen: “The child was lost on Thursday afternoon and the search continued until the following Monday night and some further search made for the body on the following Sunday but on account of the nature of the country a great deal of ground within reach of a child’s [sic] wanderings was not searched with the thoroughness necessary to ensure its being found if there and I impressed this view upon Mr Turton and others in answer to the ‘stolen by Indians’ theory.”¹³³ He maintained this position throughout the years.

Still anxious to find their child almost two years later, the Turtons wrote a notice which was published in the nearest city’s newspaper, the *Winnipeg Tribune*. The May 1895 notice stated that the Turtons would be “very thankful to any person who will let them know of a little white girl of five (5) years of age, living with the Indians or halfbreeds, as they had one stolen on August 24, 1893. The child has light hair, blue eyes, and was stout and hearty.”¹³⁴ Campbell wrote a response on June 29 which was published a few days later asserting that there was no evidence or circumstances that suggested the girl had been stolen by Indians.¹³⁵ In Campbell’s view, “It has always seemed to me unnecessary to seek so far afield for an explanation of the unfortunate child’s disappearance when it is remembered that the Turton’s house is within a few yards of a thick wood extending for many miles westwardly, filled with ponds and lakes, and that

¹³² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3909, File 107422, Secretary of Indian Affairs to Mrs. John Turton, November 4, 1893.

¹³³ Ibid., Indian agent J.J. Campbell to the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, November 10, 1893.

¹³⁴ “A Missing Child: Said to Have Been Stolen by the Indians in 1893,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, May 30, 1895, page 5.

¹³⁵ “The Missing Child,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, July 2, 1895, page 6.

the more open country on other sides of the house is dotted with thick bluffs of poplar and willow...¹³⁶ Campbell doubted Gertrude could have been stolen, but his words went unheeded and the panic was set.

Coincidentally, events unfolded three years later in South Dakota which would rekindle the Turtons' search. Reverend O.H. Sproul of Pierre, South Dakota was visiting the Cheyenne River Reservation presumably in 1897, when he saw what he thought was a white girl. He asked about her, but was unsatisfied with the answers that she was a Lakota girl. He immediately got her enrolled at the agency school and then "at once took steps for her release.... and obtained official possession of the girl."¹³⁷ On December 29, 1897, the girl, Anátawwiy (Charging Woman), or Anna or Annie Russell (the name given to her in boarding school),¹³⁸ was delivered to the Children's Home in Sioux Falls, South Dakota from the Cheyenne River boarding school,¹³⁹ the result of efforts between Cheyenne River Indian agent Peter Couchman and Sproul. The superintendent of the Home, William Sherrard and his wife, Elizabeth, then worked with Reverend Sproul to find out more about the girl and find her supposed "rightful" parents.

One of the first things they endeavoured to do was put the word out about their find. In January of 1898, two new widely circulated articles were published in Canada and the U.S. with Sproul seeking help "in restoring to her people, and if possible to her family, a young white girl found with a family of Sioux Indians... who came in from one of the Northwest provinces, I think after the Riel uprising in 1885, or some such depredation that caused them to seek safety in flight from Canada to the U.S. They are among the most uncivilized that we have, and are

¹³⁶ "The Missing Child," *Winnipeg Free Press*, July 2, 1895, page 6.

¹³⁷ "Who Is the Girl?: Mysterious Case of a White Child Among Sioux Indians: Rev. O.H. Sproul, of South Dakota, Would Like to Find Her Friends," *Manitoba Morning Free Press*, January 11, 1898, page 5.

¹³⁸ For clarity and simplicity, and to privilege the name she was originally given by her family, the girl's Lakota name, Anátawwiy (Charging Woman) will be used.

¹³⁹ Children's Home Society, SD File direct system case # 391, Anna Russell, 1897, "Child Received" slip for Anna Russell, December 29, 1897.

located in the Cheyenne agency, on Cherry Creek...”¹⁴⁰ Cherry Creek was the farthest from the agency headquarters on the Cheyenne River Reservation, and was identified by some Indian Affairs officials to be the area where the “hostiles,” “holdouts,” or “traditionalists” lived.¹⁴¹ Many Ghost Dance followers also camped and danced at Cherry Creek regularly, including the well-known leaders Kicking Bear, Spotted Elk, and Hump,¹⁴² and so Cherry Creek was synonymous with resistance in the 1880s. Sproul’s information about the Lakota coming from Canada after the “Riel uprising” is incorrect and although Cree and Métis people fled to the U.S. after the 1885 Northwest Resistance, Lakota people sought safety prior to this in Canada and not the U.S. Eventually, Anátaŋwīj’s Lakota connections to Wood Mountain would come to light.

This article garnered a lot of attention and some replies came from different individuals, hopeful that this supposed lost girl could be theirs.¹⁴³ The original article was clipped and sent to the Turtons by the Winnipeg chief of police, John C. McRae, which started the Turtons’ communication with Sproul.¹⁴⁴ Quickly the Turtons took steps to get more information about the girl and arranged a trip to see her. They arrived in Sioux Falls on February 23, 1898¹⁴⁵ and found Anátaŋwīj sick with measles at the Home. Once she had recovered enough, she travelled back to Rosemount with the Turtons, arriving in early March 1898. No time was wasted in securing the girl, or asking questions.

¹⁴⁰ “Who Is the Girl?: Mysterious Case of a White Child Among Sioux Indians: Rev. O.H. Sproul, of South Dakota, Would Like to Find Her Friends,” *Manitoba Morning Free Press*, January 11, 1898, page 5.

¹⁴¹ Tom Render, “At the Heart of It All: Cheyenne River Reservation and the Leaders of the Lakota Ghost Dance,” (MA thesis, University of Nebraska, 2012), 14.

¹⁴² Ibid., 45 and Rani-Henrik Andersson, “Wanáŋgi Wachípi Ki: The Ghost Dance Among the Lakota Indians in 1890” (PhD diss., University of Tampere, 2003), 79 and 184.

¹⁴³ “The Lost Girl: Ludwig Stetter of Medicine Hat Thinks She May Be His Child,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, February 3, 1898, page 1.

¹⁴⁴ “A North-West Romance: A Moose Mountain Girl to be Restored to Her Parents after Five Years Captivity with Sioux Indians,” *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, February 11, 1898, page 5.

¹⁴⁵ “Reunited: Mr. and Mrs. Turton of Moose Mountain Recover Their Lost Child,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, February 24, 1898, page 1.

At the same time, other stories started circulating that were even more outlandish. In January of 1898, the New York newspaper, *The World*, published a fictionalized article titled “Uncle Sam's Little Ward: Rescue of a White Girl from a Tribe of Sioux Indians: Stolen By Sitting Bull: Her Parents Were Murdered by the Savages in a Raid in Manitoba: Black Dog Was To Wed Her: Marriage Prevented by an Indian Agent and the Girl Placed in Care of White People.”¹⁴⁶ Another article’s claims fed off of false notions of Indigenous people taking white captives and settler panic: “Indians are fond of white children; they are brighter than their own race, and when they grow up they make good advisers, but most of all, are they desired for marriage. It seems it was for the latter purpose that this girl was carefully guarded and kept from association with the whites.”¹⁴⁷ Both these articles fed off of captivity narratives and captivity hoaxes which as Carter argues “...kept alive the image of predatory Aboriginal males who were a threat to the sanctity and purity of white women.”¹⁴⁸ The idea of “predatory” Indigenous men is especially seen in relation to how Anátaŋwiŋ was supposedly going to be married off and as a white girl (in the newspapers anyways) her sexual and racial purity was at risk.

Both these above articles also emphasized the supposed atrocities suffered by captives, including indecent marriages and murder of their white families. Sometimes the supposed parents of Annie Russell, “Mr. and Mrs. Russell,” had been murdered and hence she was stolen,¹⁴⁹ but this name was given to Anátaŋwiŋ while she was at the boarding school and

¹⁴⁶ "Uncle Sam's Little Ward: Rescue of a White Girl from a Tribe of Sioux Indians: Stolen By Sitting Bull: Her Parents Were Murdered by the Savages in a Raid in Manitoba: Black Dog Was To Wed Her: Marriage Prevented by an Indian Agent and the Girl Placed in Care of White People," *The World*, New York, New York, January 10, 1898, page 10.

¹⁴⁷ "Captive for 14 Years: Annie Russell, a White Girl, Rescued From Indians: Captured When Two Years Old-Stolen From Her Home in Manitoba-Kept for Marriage," *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, Cincinnati, Ohio, January 10, 1898, page 1.

¹⁴⁸ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 136.

¹⁴⁹ "Rescued from Sioux Indians," *Sheboygan Times*, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, February 26, 1898, page 6.

therefore there were no parents with these names for her to have inherited it from.¹⁵⁰ The *Manitoba Free Press* pointed out that *The World's* version of the story had serious problems because Sitting Bull was never in Manitoba stealing and killing.¹⁵¹ But captivity hoaxes and narratives worked to validate settler claims to bring civility to the west instead of savage Indigenous violence especially since both white children's and women's innocence were at stake and some murderous event supposedly occurred to cause the captivity. Another *Manitoba Free Press* reprinted Sproul's thoughts: "He [Sproul] thinks the family may, and probably have been all murdered, but possibly some of her friends or neighbors may know something that will assist. He does not think she was kidnapped on the American side because there are so few families between the agency and the North Dakota line and then the crime would have been looked up, no doubt." However, the *Manitoba Free Press* editor noted, "The murdering of whole families, such as Mr. Sproul has in his mind is a thing unknown here, and cases of kidnapping are quite as likely to be 'looked up' here [in Canada] as there [in the U.S.]."¹⁵² Captivity narratives sold newspapers and novels, and these stories reinforced ideas about Indigenous violence and savagery. In his examination of captivity narratives in New Zealand, Andreas Brieger argued that "Violence, a crucial 'savage' characteristic constantly stressed by European sources, was not considered a response to European invasion. It was rather seen as an endemic, traditional element of Maori culture, a trait inscribed into their way of living."¹⁵³ Characterizing Indigenous people as violent served as part of the "othering" process and to position white settlers as the righteous

¹⁵⁰ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 1, Letters Received, Box 18, Folder 1898, July-Aug, Ptan-winyan (Otter Woman) sworn statement, July 9, 1898.

¹⁵¹ "The Kidnapped Girl: A New York Paper Indulges in Fiction Over the White Girl Found with South Dakota Sioux," *Manitoba Morning Free Press*, January 25, 1898, page 3.

¹⁵² "Who Is the Girl?: Mysterious Case of a White Child Among Sioux Indians: Rev. O.H. Sproul, of South Dakota, Would Like to Find Her friends," *Manitoba Morning Free Press*, January 11, 1898, page 5.

¹⁵³ Andreas Brieger, "Mother and the Other: Situating New Zealand Women's Captivity Narratives in a Transcolonial Settler Culture of Anxiety," *Settler Colonial Studies*, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (2011): 135.

and innocent occupants of the land in comparison to savage Indians, even more so when good white families were the victims. Posing Indigenous people as the violent perpetrators and white settlers as the victims transferred blame onto Indigenous people and helped in a large way to justify the colonial project. But just as the *Manitoba Free Press* pointed out, this violence was nearly non-existent. It was often Indigenous people who experienced the brunt of settler induced violence not the other way around—the above examined Wounded Knee Massacre and tensions at Moose Jaw being examples of this. Regardless, as Carter adeptly points out, “the threat of real or imagined violence against white women [and children] was a rationale for securing white control, for clarifying boundaries between people.”¹⁵⁴

Prevalent views of white refinement compared to Indian coarseness played into these reports. When Sproul first noticed the girl on his visit to the agency, he thought she was white based on a set of assumptions rooted in eugenic concepts. His observations of her were: “She is possibly about 12 or 14 years, I would say the former; has fair skin, brown hair, rather wavy or 'kinky,' her ears and hands 'transparent,' as no Indian's ever are. She is a superior type of girl.”¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, he added that she “walked with her toes turned out” supposedly an indication of whiteness.¹⁵⁶ The *Manitoba Free Press* might have cast doubt on some of the misconceptions Sproul spouted, but it did repeat the same kind of ideas about racialized appearance: “The girl is intelligent and fairly good looking; she has dark eyes, and a soft pleasant voice. Her general appearance indicates that she is of refined extraction.”¹⁵⁷ One of the most repeated (and strange)

¹⁵⁴ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 15.

¹⁵⁵ “Who Is the Girl?: Mysterious Case of a White Child Among Sioux Indians: Rev. O.H. Sproul, of South Dakota, Would Like to Find Her friends,” *Manitoba Morning Free Press*, January 11, 1898, page 5.

¹⁵⁶ “Lost One Found: Story of the Kidnapped Gertrude Ellen Turton: Romance in Real Life: The Parents in the City Returning With Their Daughter to Their Home at Moose Mountain--All Doubts as to Her Identity Removed From Their Minds—Offers of Marriage Received,” *Manitoba Free Press*, March 7, 1898, page 1.

¹⁵⁷ “A Girl Rescued: A Young White Girl Taken From Indian in South Dakota,” *Manitoba Free Press*, January 4, 1898, page 4.

aspects of the girl's appearance had to do with her hair and skin purportedly being dyed a darker color. The Turtons endorsed these stories because they were trying to convince people that Anátaŋwiŋ was Gertrude. The *Winnipeg Tribune*, updated their readers on February 28, 1898 shortly after the Turtons made it to Sioux Falls and said "In appearance she strongly resembles their family, although the Indians have tanned her skin with oak tan and died [sic] her hair, which was originally brown, with a darker dye."¹⁵⁸ After the Turtons returned to Rosemount with the girl, Winnipeg newspapers starting circulating more stories from the family about this appearance change, especially as it was connected to concealing the girl's true identity.¹⁵⁹ These accounts were riddled with ideas of race, appearance, and superior versus inferior qualities, justifications rooted in settler colonial logics and social Darwinism.

Much of the Turtons' arguments to prove Anátaŋwiŋ was their Gertrude were rooted in the idea that the Lakota had manipulated her appearance to hide her. While Anátaŋwiŋ was at the Children's Home in Sioux Falls, two photographs and a lock of hair were sent to the Turtons. The matron (superintendent Sherrard's wife) felt "that the girl could not be Mr. Turton's daughter as her eyes were jet black, and also her hair, while the color, according to the description sent by Mr. Turton should have been brown." However, there was an answer for this discrepancy:

Mr. Turton, on examining the hair, suggested to Mrs. Turton that it [the lock of hair] be washed; this was done and the hair was shown to have been dyed. Mr. Turton's knowledge of Indian practices led him to suspect that the girl's whole body had probably been dyed from head to foot with vegetable dye, which can only be removed very slowly and with great difficulty... The girl still shows the effects of the dyeing process to such an extent that a stranger might be inclined to say that she has Indian blood in her veins, but her mother says the color is gradually coming out, that three colors are now to be seen in her hair. Rev. Mr. Sproul states that when he first saw her she had brown eyes and brown

¹⁵⁸ "The Stolen Child: Mr. and Mrs. Taylor Among the Indians—Found the Child Sick With Tanned Skin and Hair," *The Winnipeg Daily Tribune*, February 28, 1898, page 1.

¹⁵⁹ "The Stolen Child: Mr. and Mrs. Turton back With Their Daughter Stolen Five Years Ago," *The Winnipeg Daily Tribune*, March 7, 1898, page 5; and no title, *Argus Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, March 3, 1898, page 8.

hair, from which it appears that the dyeing was renewed not very long ago. The matron of the home obtained some acid and applying it to a small spot on her neck proved that the color was removable. Some of the coloring matter came off also when she wore a white nightdress.”¹⁶⁰

What seems like outlandish stories of dyeing, transparent ears, and walking with toes turned out to modern readers would have fit into contemporary ideas about race and appearance for the time. Historian Theda Perdue found in her examination of racial constructions in the early American south that Indigenous race and phenotype was often framed in ways that could be “fixed” with the “Indian problem.” One colonial example from her study asserted that “the skin of Native infants was ‘much clearer’ than that of adults, who acquired a darker hue by ‘greasing and sunning themselves.’ By refraining from these practices, Native Americans presumably could become white” and therefore Indigenous people could be assimilated.¹⁶¹ This very much applies to the case of Anátaŋwiŋ where Sproul’s efforts can be seen through the lens of trying to “save” the girl or at the very least assimilate her because she has some “refined” (in other words, white) characteristics that are worthy of saving compared to other Lakota children.

From the start, Anátaŋwiŋ’s family at Cheyenne River was working to get her back. Two men in particular, Aspdin and D.F. Carlin, farmer in charge at Cherry Creek, had close associations with Anátaŋwiŋ’s family and worked on their behalf. Carlin first sent Aspdin a letter on March 9, 1898 detailing the case and asking for help from the family:

This girl came here from Canada several years ago, and I am informed by these Indians that you know the circumstances connected with this girl's history. I am informed that she is the daughter of an Indian woman named 'Susie Her Road' who died when the child was about five years old, and that the child's father, (I am unable to learn his name) left the mother before the child's birth. The child has been living with a woman who claims to be her aunt, by the name of 'Otter Robe Woman.'...My object in writing to you is to get

¹⁶⁰ “Lost One Found: Story of the Kidnapped Gertrude Ellen Turton: Romance in Real Life: The Parents in the City Returning With Their Daughter to Their Home at Moose Mountain--All Doubts as to Her Identity Removed From Their Minds—Offers of Marriage Received,” *Manitoba Free Press*, March 7, 1898, page 1.

¹⁶¹ Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 72.

what information I can as to this child's parentage. The woman who claims to be her aunt is very sad, and is anxious to get the child back. If you can furnish me with some evidence, in the form of affidavits, etc., as to this child's identity, you will confer a favour on this woman as well as on myself.¹⁶²

Aspdin did in fact have a close knowledge of the girl and her family; Anátanwiñ, her aunt Ptáñ Wíñyañ/Otter Woman, and her uncle Šúnka Wañbli/Dog Eagle lived at Wood Mountain and Moose Jaw and had first travelled to Cheyenne River with Aspdin's wife, Mary, and their children in 1894.¹⁶³ Aspdin was quick to set the record straight, explaining the girl's family and history:

This girl was born at Wood Mountain in the Summer of 1883. The father was a white man by name of Fred Cadd, who was manager of the Firm of Leighton and Jordan at their trading store at Wood Mountain. The Indian woman 'Susie Her Road' lived with Cadd in the Winter of 1882-3, and the girl is the issue of the co-habitation. She was brought up in camp, and her mother died at Moosejaw in 1891, and she was looked after by her aunt, 'Otter Robe Woman' and her grandmother, the Serpent's widow. They went South to the Cheyenne River in 1894, at the time nearly fifty other Sioux went over. The people who are trying to claim this girl are entirely mistaken, as she is no white girl, but a halfbreed, although white featured. Quite a lot of paragraphs have appeared in the Public Press of late relating to the recovery of the (so called) stolen white child.¹⁶⁴

Aspdin wrote ardently to help Anátanwiñ and her family: "While these people [the Turtons] have my sympathy at the loss of their child they are as I said in my former letter totally wrong about this child, and their endeavor to keep it will avail nothing in the long run. I have received several letters from parties on the other side of the line urging me to get the child returned. When I say that this girl will have to be given up, I mean that the circumstances of its birth and parentage are too well known to many for these people to keep it. I have known this girl from a baby and I cannot ignore the appeals that are made to me, and allow a palpable wrong to be done right under my eyes."¹⁶⁵ Aspdin asked to take time away from his work to go visit the Turtons to

¹⁶² LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3909, file 107422, D.F. Carlin to Thomas Aspdin, March 9, 1898.

¹⁶³ Ibid., Indian Commissioner Forget to Moose Mountain Indian agent H.K. Halpin, March 30, 1898.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, March 21, 1898.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, April 16, 1898.

talk with them about the matter. He listed several men that all knew the girl's history and could give statements including, Father St. Germain, Jean-Louis Légaré, J.H. Thomson, Captain Macdonnell formerly of the NWMP, and W.H. Ogle.¹⁶⁶ He thought:

...the matter appears to have been handled in a hurried, unseemly manner, by a few people who were probably actuated more in trying to make a sensation than any other feeling, and the whole affair seems to have been carried out in a contray [sic] manner to that which should characterize such a serious step as taking a girl of this age (15) from her natural people and sending her hundreds of miles with strangers. I think it right to acquaint you that I am informed that this matter is known all through the Sioux Reserves on the other side, and in a short time no doubt will be the same on this side. It will give a handle to those who do not want their children to go to the schools, to make the most of, a feature to be regretted as it is hard enough to get them to send them as it is.¹⁶⁷

Of particular note is Aspdin's mention of how the taking of Anátaŋwiŋ was well known among the Lakota on both sides of the border, showing the connections between relatives. Also, that Lakota people knew they could draw on the support of their kin, in this case Aspdin, Thomson, and Ogle were the ones who were mentioned, but no doubt their Lakota wives had the closest knowledge and connections to Anátaŋwiŋ and her family and were still in Canada to testify to the veracity of Anátaŋwiŋ being born at Wood Mountain. Aspdin's observation of how this incident would boost Lakota resistance to the taking of their children to be placed in boarding and residential schools shows that their fears were known to be well-founded at the time, and their resistance continued on after this for decades.

Aspdin wrote to set the record straight with the newspapers as well. In April 1898, articles running in the *Moose Jaw Times Herald* and the *Winnipeg Free Press* repeated what Aspdin wrote in his letter to Indian Affairs: that the supposed Turton girl was really the daughter of a Lakota woman, Susie Her Road, and white trader, Fred Cadd,¹⁶⁸ and that the girl was born at

¹⁶⁶ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 3909, file 107422, Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, April 16, 1898.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ LAC, RG 31 Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada, 1881*, Northwest Territory, District No. 192, Wood Mountain, page 15.

Wood Mountain. Susie Her Road's sister, Otter Robe Woman (also Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ/Otter Woman), better known as Julia in Moose Jaw, took care of the girl after the mother's death and they went in 1894 at the urging of the Canadian government with eighty other Lakota people to go to live on the Cheyenne River Reservation.¹⁶⁹ The same people from the Wood Mountain area Aspdin told Indian Affairs who were "well acquainted with the girl's history" were listed in the newspaper, saying that their evidence would be "secured in support of the Indian's side of the story."¹⁷⁰ Echoing Aspdin's disdain for how the situation was handled and the same warning, the *Times Herald* article ended with: "Representations and new evidence will be brought to the attention of Mr. and Mrs. Turton this week, and if not satisfactory to them a civil suit will be instituted to recover the child on behalf of the Indian claimants. It is a pity the authorities of the orphanage delivered the child without a thorough investigation, as the incident will tend to further prejudice the Indians against civilized institutions."¹⁷¹ To Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ/Otter Woman and Šúŋka Waŋbli/Dog Eagle, this probably was one more injustice to make them further distrust supposed promises and protections, just as Aspdin suggested.

Prevalent perceptions at this time assumed Indigenous women were used to being left by partners, especially white men, and were accustomed to having numerous partners and children with different men.¹⁷² Furthermore, by the late 1890s, mixed marriages and children from those unions were frowned upon more by western white society, as white women were more numerous in the west and therefore more "respectable" choices for partners were available. This may have

¹⁶⁹ "A North-West Romance: The Supposed Turton Child Daughter of a Squaw who Died at Moose Jaw in 1891," *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, Moose Jaw, N.W.T., April 29, 1898, page 4; and "New Developments: The Supposed Turton Child Daughter of a Squaw: She Was Born at Wood Mountain and Her Father Was a White Man," *Winnipeg Free Press*, April 21, 1898, page 14.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ "A North-West Romance: The Supposed Turton Child Daughter of a Squaw who Died at Moose Jaw in 1891," *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, Moose Jaw, N.W.T., April 29, 1898, page 4.

¹⁷² Carter, *Capturing Women*, 191.

played into the accounts of Susie Her Road and Fred Cadd that served to show that Anátaŋwiŋ was not really cared for and was living in a “vicious” and “immoral” environment with her Lakota family. These were of course the same kind of common arguments from governments, missionaries, and the general public that supported the residential and boarding school systems—the system that helped take Anátaŋwiŋ in the first place.

Some newspapers reported that Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ had changed her story from claiming that the girl was her daughter to claiming that she was her niece.¹⁷³ Often the newspapers made this out to be proof that Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ was lying more generally or that it undermined the claims of her Lakota family because the relation was less direct or even false. For example, one report read: “Every pressure is being brought to bear on the Indian woman, who has strongly maintained that the girl was her daughter, to make her disclose or confess. She has finally wavered, and now says that the girl, though not her daughter, is her niece. The girl says she remembers having taken a long journey during which she saw no houses.”¹⁷⁴ But what these newspapers and the general public reading them did not understand was Lakota kinship structures: in Lakota kinship, your mother’s sister was also your mother, and Lakota children would have called these women iná (mother/mom) as well. A Lakota child’s aunts (tŋuŋwíŋ) would have only been their father’s sisters. Therefore, Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ was not lying at all nor trying to claim Anátaŋwiŋ in any way that was not completely in line with Lakota kinship understandings, but this was clearly outside of settler kinship systems.

¹⁷³ "The Stolen Child: Mr. and Mrs. Taylor Among the Indians-Found the Child Sick With Tanned Skin and Hair," *Winnipeg Tribune*, February 28, 1898, page 1; "Lost One Found: Story of the Kidnapped Gertrude Ellen Turton: Romance in Real Life: The Parents in the City Returning With Their Daughter to Their Home at Moose Mountain-All Doubts as to Her Identity Removed From Their Minds-Offers of Marriage Received," *Winnipeg Free Press*, March 7, 1898, page 1.

¹⁷⁴ "The Turton Case," *Glenboro Gazette*, Glenboro, Manitoba, March 11, 1898, page 6.

In time though, journalists even started to doubt that Anátaŋwiŋ could be Gertrude. Right from the beginning, Campbell expressed the possibility that the Turton's girl was not stolen by Indians was not a warranted suspicion and that it was far more likely that she had wandered off in the area that had dense bluffs of trees and numerous ponds and lakes. An April 20, 1898 article finally called attention to a "well-defined rumor" that the Turtons' girl recovered was not actually theirs, but was a "native born Indian girl." This article reported that "This news will come as a shock to the family's many friends, but the investigations which have been going on recently appear to confirm the information."¹⁷⁵ Nonetheless, even friends of the family started questioning whether this could actually be their girl, especially because her age and size being much larger and older than what Gertrude should have been: recall that Sproul originally thought Anátaŋwiŋ to be about 14 or 15 years old. One newspaper article summarized:

The lost child, if she were alive today, could not be more than nine years old; this girl is a fully developed young woman. The several children of the family have all light hair and light complexion; but this one has dark skin and jet black hair, and her eyes are also dark. In physique the difference is also very marked, the children being somewhat small with tightly knit frames, while the girl is large and loose. There are two girls of the family who are each more than nine years yet this girl who should be younger than either is almost head and shoulders taller than the eldest of them. Then if her skin and hair were dyed as was alleged there has been sufficient time since she could have been subjected to any dyeing process for all such traces to have worn off, but skin and hair apparently remain the same. Such are some of the reasons that have raised doubts in the minds of those who know most about the family.¹⁷⁶

The Turtons repeatedly claimed their children matured quickly for their age in response to these questions and took offence to these reports. They published their own statement, threatening "legal action if stories as to the legitimacy of the girl are continued in circulation."¹⁷⁷ Other methods were employed to legitimize the Turton claim to the girl, including circulating a story

¹⁷⁵ No title, *Winnipeg Free Press*, April 20, 1898, page 9.

¹⁷⁶ No title, *The Leader Post*, May 5, 1898, page 8.

¹⁷⁷ "The Turton Child: Mr. and Mrs. Turton Positive that Rescued Girl is Their Daughter," *Winnipeg Free Press*, April 29, 1898, page 14.

from a Winnipeg dispatch about how Anátaŋwiŋ recognized a grey pony once she arrived at Rosemont, allegedly showing “how peculiarly retentive a child's memory may be of certain early associations” since the “pony was a great favorite of the child before she was kidnapped and her instant recognition of her old pet removed the last vestige of doubt as to her true identity.”¹⁷⁸ In response to growing questions about the legitimacy of their claims on the girl, Mrs. Turton argued that “Gertrude is well and happy and as full of fun and frolic as she can be” and regardless of the people making claims that she was the daughter of Susie Her Road, “They are doing all they can, but they won't get her as I have the proof and she is getting more like me every day.”¹⁷⁹ Her proof was shaky, rooted in racist assumptions about appearance.

By July 1898 though, it was settled that the Turtons could keep Anátaŋwiŋ. Indian Inspector James McLaughlin (the same that had been the Indian agent of Standing Rock when Sitting Bull was killed) was brought in to help secure the release of the child to the Turtons legally. Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ and Šúŋka Waŋblí made sworn statements before McLaughlin on July 9, 1898 that attested to Susie Her Road and Cadd being Anátaŋwiŋ parents, that she had been born in June 1883 at Wood Mountain and later left in Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ's care, and how she came to be in the orphans' home in Sioux Falls.¹⁸⁰ In another copy, Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ and Šúŋka Waŋblí consented to the conditional adoption of Anátaŋwiŋ/Annie Russell by the Turtons whom she was already living with; the conditions being that Anátaŋwiŋ would remain enrolled at Cheyenne River, be

¹⁷⁸ “The Child Knew The Pony: ‘Annie Russell’s’ Identity as the Lost Turton Child Completely Established by a Pony,” *Argus Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, March 22, 1898, page 5.

¹⁷⁹ “The Turton Child: Mr. and Mrs. Turton Positive that Rescued Girl is Their Daughter,” *Manitoba Free Press*, April 29, 1898, page 14.

¹⁸⁰ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 1, Letters Received, Box 18, Folder 1898 June-Aug, Otter Woman and Dog Eagle sworn statements, July 9, 1898.

allowed to write to her aunt, and at the age of 18 be allowed to decide for herself where she wanted to live.¹⁸¹ Even McLaughlin did not believe that Anátaŋwiŋ was Gertrude Turton:

From 35 years association with the Sioux Indians, the past 27 years of which has been in an official capacity, and acquiring during those years, a very general knowledge of their habits, customs and peculiarities, can state from this long acquaintance that I have never known nor learned of an instance where any white child was kidnapped or stolen by Sioux Indians to be raised by them, and am therefore of the undoubted belief that Mr. and Mrs. Turton are most certainly mistaken in the identity of the girl Annie Russell as being their lost child, as everything connected with the case proves the contrary.¹⁸²

McLaughlin's assertion that no white child had ever been stolen by the Lakota definitely is more historically accurate in contrary to the settler public's panic around kidnapping of white women and children that newspapers and novels enthusiastically printed. McLaughlin knew of the age and appearance differences between Anátaŋwiŋ and the actual Gertrude Turton, and he had taken testimony from a lady named Picks Up Eagle Feather Woman who was the midwife when Anátaŋwiŋ was born. He also disapproved of Anátaŋwiŋ being taken from the boarding school to the Children's Home without the knowledge or consent of her relatives. He was convinced that Anátaŋwiŋ was the daughter of Susie Her Road, but by the papers he secured, signed by Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ and Šúŋka Waŋblí, Anátaŋwiŋ's case was a done deal in favour of the Turtons. The Turtons signed an adoption agreement on August 22, 1898, with the same terms and history given of Anátaŋwiŋ that was outlined in Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ and Šúŋka Waŋblí's consent statement. Even when Lakota families had the support of government officials, the injustices they experienced were rarely resolved in their favour, particularly when removing children from Indigenous community and families was the unquestioned right thing to do.

¹⁸¹ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 63, Box 1, Folder 7, Annie Russell Story, 1898, Cheyenne River, copies of written conditional adoption document, July 9, 1898.

¹⁸² Ibid., McLaughlin to Secretary of the Interior, July 9, 1898.

Both McLaughlin and Aspdin's wives were Indigenous, Dakota and Lakota respectively, and their children would be just like Anátaŋwiŋ. So, even though these men's words and actions were often paternalistic, discriminatory, and unfair to Lakota people, maybe this case hit home for them because their own wives and children could face the same kind of cruel systems that sought to separate Anátaŋwiŋ from her family. Aspdin was separated from his wife, Mary, and their children by American Indian policies in 1894 when she visited Cheyenne River with Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ, Šúŋka Waŋblí, and others. That might have been fresh in Aspdin's mind during this time, and he must have been considered a friend, ally, and maybe even kin when Anátaŋwiŋ's family asked agency farmer Carlin to reach out to Aspdin for help.

Regardless of these newspaper articles to help the Lakota family's side of things, the same newspapers still worked in some cases to delegitimize the Lakota claim to this girl:

...we see no reason to doubt, the Indians have no claim on the child whatever. They [the Turtons] further say that the advertisement of the child's whereabouts was open to other as well as themselves, but they were the only ones who made any attempts to prove the girl's identity, and that they hesitated long, not moving in the matter until they had expert testimony which satisfied them that there were reasonable grounds for believing that the girl was their lost child....And after all, if they are satisfied, and if the Indians have no longer any claim, we do not see that it makes much difference to the public generally so long as the girl has a good home and is properly cared for.¹⁸³

In these articles, no mention was made that the Turtons had seventeen children of their own,¹⁸⁴ only the idea that the girl would now have a "good home" and "proper care" was the factor newspapers and government officials repeated to justify the ordeal. Regardless of the questions aroused, government officials and the public largely thought "...the girl is in a good Christian home, which is very fortunate for her, and they [U.S. authorities] also believe it would not be in her interests to have her returned to the reserve in Dakota if it should be proven that Mr. and

¹⁸³ "The Turton Child Again," *Moose Jaw Times Herald*, May 13, 1898, page 5.

¹⁸⁴ "In Cannington are many manors," *The Leader Post*, August 10, 1991, page 10.

Mrs. Turton are not her parents.”¹⁸⁵ This assimilative view was the predominant one of the time, based in paternalistic and discriminatory ideas of knowing what was best for Indigenous people’s wellbeing, particularly when it came to removing children from their families and so called “vicious environments.” There is a long and enduring history of removing Indigenous children from their families and communities into institutions or into white families that have existed in various forms from boarding/residential schools to the child welfare systems of today. The separation of Indigenous children from their families had the same fundamental goal as any other colonization effort—dispossess Indigenous people of their lands, this method just involved breaking children’s ties to their families, communities, culture, and homelands.¹⁸⁶ And much of this was rooted in moral ideologies that sought “to ‘rescue’ and ‘uplift’ Indigenous women and their children from the supposedly backward and oppressive environment in which they lived.”¹⁸⁷

Carter concluded of this whole incident the best: “It is a curious irony that in this last captivity hoax of the nineteenth century, the only person who could be described as having been made captive was Anatanwin, who spoke only Lakota and renamed Gertie, was taken to Rosemont, the large stone house on the Turton homestead which stands to this day.”¹⁸⁸ The Cheyenne River Census, taken on June 1, 1908, mentioned Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ, now a widow and 50 years old, listed with her daughter, Annie Russell (Runs After Her), 24 years old.¹⁸⁹ Being a census, it is assumed this shows who was present on the reservation at the time of enumeration,

¹⁸⁵ No title, *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 1, 1898, page 9.

¹⁸⁶ Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), xxx.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, xxxi.

¹⁸⁸ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 156-157.

¹⁸⁹ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Series 57, Reservation Census, 1886-1936, Box 1, Reservation Census, 1886-1936, Cheyenne River Reservation Census, June 1, 1908.

so it may be that she visited her aunt at that time. It is also possible that this was done without her being present as part of the process to keep her on the Indian Rolls for the reservation. Letters from Adelaide Turton to the Sherrards at the Children's Home in 1908 make mention that Gertrude is "very happy in her new home"¹⁹⁰ which suggests she was married and living elsewhere. In the 1921 Census of Canada, Gertrude Ellen Ray (Anátaŋwiŋ's then married name) listed her birth year as about 1886 instead of the 1890 birth year the Turtons had been sticking with previously, suggesting that she found a compromise in her life with her past and present.¹⁹¹

Anátaŋwiŋ's precarious position as a maybe white-passing Lakota person had a twofold effect: she was at once picked out by white people as being more worthy of "saving" and therefore afforded some access and privilege given to white settlers, but at the same time she was taken from her family and home, and essentially put on a road to accelerated assimilation only on the basis of her appearance. A strange double-edged sword, but one that would be repeated as more and more Indigenous children were taken throughout North America and placed into white homes, especially in the twentieth century through the adoption and child welfare systems. Intermarriage and the children of Indigenous and white unions were for a time seen as a way of accelerating cultural and biological assimilation, but there was also a push to discourage "mixing" fueled by racist ideas that Indigenous people were incapable of change and that "half-breeds" were even more dangerous.¹⁹² All of these discussions were happening outside of Lakota systems of belonging and kin at the time, and only once ideas of Indigenous identity become racial and biological (rather than social) in mainstream society of measuring who was "Indian"

¹⁹⁰ Children's Home Society, SD File direct system case # 391, Anna Russell, 1897, Adelaide Turton to Mr. Sherrard, June 11, 1908.

¹⁹¹ LAC, RG 31, *1921 Census of Canada*, Folder Number 150; Assiniboia, Saskatchewan District, Sub-district 51, page 3.

¹⁹² Hilary N. Weaver, "What Color is Red? Exploring the Implications of Phenotype for Native Americans," in *The Melanin Millennium: Skin Color as 21st Century*, edited by R.E. Hall (New York: Springer, 2013), 292.

and then the rise of “blood quantum”¹⁹³ do Lakota people start ascribing and replicating these systems in Lakota reservation communities as well. All these discussions, about Anátaŋwiŋ and about measuring “Indianness” come down to ideas of racial “purity” and how that manifests in certain qualities that are distinguishable and either desirable or not by white standards. This results in what Karren Baird-Olson has called “statistical genocide.”¹⁹⁴

The fear of losing children in the West was a very real one, and children went missing for a lot of other reasons which did not include being “stolen” by Indians. Carter says: “The frenzy of interest in the ‘captive’ girl may also have been stimulated by the fact that there were many missing children in Canada and the United States, and people hoped that theirs had been discovered.”¹⁹⁵ Maybe the belief that their children were living with Indians while laying the moral blame with Indigenous people was easier for a lot of settler families to swallow than living with the difficult but more accurate thought of their children wandering into and succumbing to the harsh prairie environment. Though no comfort was afforded the Indigenous families who had their children taken. On a macro level, as scholar G.M. Sayre wrote “the typical captivity plot served ideologically to invert the true terms of the colonial invasion of America.”¹⁹⁶ For Lakota people (and all other Indigenous people) losing children most often was a product of having them stolen and placed into different schools, orphanages, and families--even across colonial borders, often to never be seen again. A reality that would be repeated with regularity for many more generations beyond Anátaŋwiŋ’s lifetime. The protections given and the promises made to Ptáŋ Wíŋyaŋ, Šúŋka Waŋblí, and Anátaŋwiŋ when they were urged to return to the U.S. only

¹⁹³ Weaver, “What Color is Red?”, 289.

¹⁹⁴ Karren Baird-Olson, “Colonialization, Cultural Imperialism, and the Social Construction of American Indian Mixed-Blood Identity” in *New Faces in a Changing America: Multiracial Identity in the 21st Century*, edited by Loretta I. Winters and Herman L. DeBose (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications: 2003), 195.

¹⁹⁵ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 148.

¹⁹⁶ G.M. Sayre, *American Captivity Narratives: Selected Narratives with Introduction* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 6.

resulted in them being separated by the 49th parallel a few short years later.¹⁹⁷ The border was a tenuous but formidable line when it had the full force of the settler state targeted at the most vulnerable.

Conclusion

The commonality among these “Indian scares” and stolen children panics is that it was the Lakota people who had the most to fear, not the white settlers. The violence and panics against Lakota people were all rooted in settler colonial logics of morality, right to land/resources, and purity. Settler colonialism took on many forms and methods—policing morality, upholding settler norms and prejudices, removing children, physical violence, dismantling kinship, and inducing fear (real and imagined)—all with the same goal of eliminating Indigenous people from their lands and replacing them with white settlers. Settler states and individuals worked together to entangle Lakota people in these systems of control and replacement across the 49th parallel, all the while ignoring Lakota connections throughout Lakǎóta Tǎmákhóche in the same places. All of this worked in tandem to intentionally physically/spatially dispossess and displace Lakota people and to create and maintain ideological colonial systems of logic to justify the means of creating exclusive settler presence on the prairies. The settler panic around Lakota presence and morality, especially near settlements, is not isolated to only prairie or Lakota experiences. Moral panics were ubiquitous in imperial/colonial settings where Indigenous people were viewed as obstacles to “progress” and “civilization,” especially as the panic was used to justify further removal and replacement of

¹⁹⁷ Sarah Carter received a letter in the late 1980s from a person local to the Turton family who wrote that Gertrude Turton’s body was found later in a well. The writer explained that Gertrude had succumbed to a farm machinery accident, a piece of machinery her father was operating at the time, and he had buried her body. The father was willing to go along with the story about Gertrude being stolen because of his guilt and because his wife was so grief stricken and the story gave her hope. Personal communication with Sarah Carter, October 23, 2021.

Indigenous people with the new population. Lakota people resisted displacement and outside control, and throughout the 1880s and 1890s they relied on their movements and kinship to deflect and escape violence and intrusion. The Ghost Dance was a response to the difficult circumstances across many Indigenous nations, a movement for change and hope, though interpreted as a threat by settlers and governments.

In written histories, 1890 has been interpreted as the “end of the Sioux nation”¹⁹⁸ and the end of the “Indian Wars.” This may have stemmed in part from Oglala holy man Black Elk’s account, first published in 1932, which ended with the Wounded Knee Massacre and his description of the time after was despondent: “the nation’s hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead.”¹⁹⁹ Similarly, the famous bronze sculpture by James Earle Fraser, *End of the Trail*, of a First Nations man despairingly slumped over on his horse, was created in 1894 and based on the artist’s boyhood in the Dakota Territory, possibly deriving inspiration from Lakota and Dakota people there. Though the artist meant it as a critique of American settler harm on Indigenous people, it also carried connotations of the “conquering” of Indigenous people who are tragically but inevitably doomed to disappear.²⁰⁰ This in itself has become a harmful and persistent trope. Turning to Lakota history in the twentieth century and beyond has worked to reverse this perspective, especially as Lakota writers and scholars, from Vine Deloria, Jr. to Nick Estes, have shown continuing Lakota resistance and nationhood that did not end in 1890. The next chapter will continue to advance this effort by demonstrating how the next generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people continued to resist and challenge settler state

¹⁹⁸ For example, Robert M. Utley’s book, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation*, published in 1963, used this lens, and when the book was reprinted as a second edition in 2004 Utley wrote a new preface to explain that the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee Massacre were not the “final days” for Lakota people or nationhood.

¹⁹⁹ John G. Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux*, the complete edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 153.

²⁰⁰ Shannon Vittoria, “End of the Trail, Then and Now,” *The Met*, February 19, 2014, <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2013/the-american-west-in-bronze/blog/posts/end-of-the-trail>

governments in the early twentieth century by drawing on the resources and connections in Lakhóta Třamákřoče much like their parents and grandparents had.

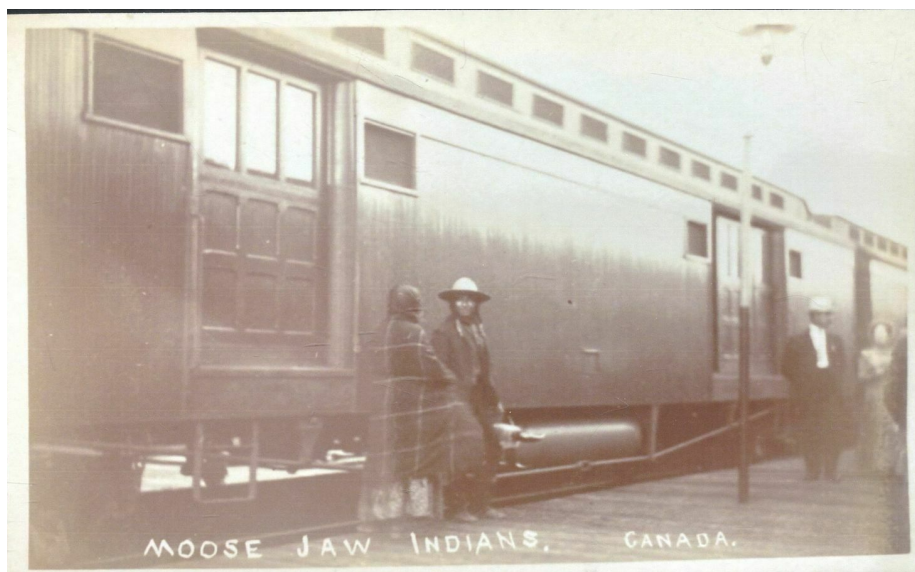


Figure 4.1

“Moose Jaw Indians. Canada”

Most likely Lakota people selling polished buffalo horn souvenirs to tourists at CPR station in Moose Jaw, c. 1910.

Copy of real photo postcard, personal collection of author.



Figure 4.2

“Indian Pow-Wow, Moose Jaw Carnival, Sutton Photo”

Likely shows Lakota people holding a “powwow” for Moose Jaw residents, c. 1910.
University of Saskatchewan Libraries Special Collections, Canadiana Pamphlets Collection, 32.
Postcard Views of Aboriginal Peoples, 222.66.



Figure 4.3

Back reads: "Indian Group Moose Jaw Assiniboia N.W.T."

Possibly two Lakota women selling polished buffalo horn souvenirs in Moose Jaw, prior to 1905.
Bruce Peel Special Collections, University of Alberta, "Indigenous Women and Children"



Figure 4.4

Back reads: "This is a reprint of an old snapshot taken by my aunt Mrs. R.L. Slater of three Indian women and myself in Moose Jaw about the year 1902-3. I believe I was with my aunt on our way from the Slater residence on East High Street to Slaters' Gents Furnishing Store on Main St cutting through on a vacant lot by Doran's Harness Shop. My aunt wrote on back of the old snap 'Agnes, Big Joe's wife & his daughter.' I believe Agnes to be Mrs. High back. Fred J. Gilmour. 1815 Orchard Way, West Vancouver BC"

MJPL Archives, 68-285 c.2

Chapter Five
Takúkičiyapi/Related to Each Other: The Next Generation of Wood Mountain Lakota
Connections in Lakhóta Třamákřoče, 1896-1930

Pankeskalutawin, one of the daughters of Brave Eagle of Bullhead. returned Friday from a two months visit with relatives at Wooded Mountain, Canada. While she was away, her 14 year old daughter became sick and died.¹

--*Sioux County Pioneer*, Fort Yates, North Dakota, July 7, 1916.

Some of the people who came to Canada after the Battle of the Little Bighorn deliberately made their homes there rather than returning to the U.S. As was discussed in chapter four, these people had long memories of the maltreatment they had received at the hands of the U.S. government and were aware of ongoing issues their relatives faced on reservations. But this did not mean that Lakota movements and connections across the 49th parallel ended. Rather, the next generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people, born between 1880 and 1910 in what is now southern Saskatchewan, had paths throughout Lakhóta Třamákřoče in their lifetimes as well. By the time this generation of Lakota children had grown up at Wood Mountain, some of these young people decided to pursue livelihoods, relationships, and opportunities on U.S. reservations that their parents had resisted settling on. But this was not in opposition to their parents' and grandparents' resistance and choices. Instead, their lives south of the international border should be viewed as Lakota peoples' continuing connections within their own lands outside the narrow colonial containers of settler state boundaries. Also, many of this generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people continued traveling to and from Wood Mountain regardless of where their

¹ "Local Happenings," *Sioux County Pioneer*, Fort Yates, Sioux County, North Dakota, July 7, 1916, Library of Congress, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*.

“permanent” homes were, much like their parents and grandparents.² This chapter will use the concept of belonging as the framework for understanding the cohesion of Lakota land, connections, and community in contrast to settler state Indian policies of deciding who was and was not an “Indian.” These policies as well as other settler colonial pressures and opportunities were similar between the two nation-states, but not always the same. Lakota people who grew up at Wood Mountain were impacted by issues of land ownership, tribal enrolment/Indian status, Lakota kinship networks, and residential/boarding schools, which will be examined in this chapter to help understand this generation’s experiences in Lakhóta Třamákřoče between Canada and the U.S. from 1896 to 1930.

Indian policies were incongruous and exclusionary, meant to distance people from their kin and communities. The settler colonial project of replacing and removing First Nations people did not end once reservations/reserves and “Indian wars” were completed in the nineteenth-century. Rather it shifted to a more insidious and legal/political form that continues to this day. The generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people who grew up “bi-culturally” had the familiarity with settler society to be able to access opportunities and fight restrictions. Even being literate in English helped them to converse directly with administrations and lawyers to further their endeavours. Legal avenues for redress, however, were sometimes purposefully made opaque to discourage or limit Indigenous people from using them, or Indian people were prohibited completely from accessing legal aid. Indian policies were instituted to bring about assimilation, but as anthropologist Martha C. Knack argued about Indian homestead policies in

² I would argue that the concept of a “permanent home” or one defined, stationary place being “home” is a Western societal concept and ideal that does not necessarily translate to Lakota people and understandings well where a home is much more about the kin who make up that household and connections to much larger areas of land and water. However, permanency of residence was an important assimilation goal of settler state Indian policies. For more discussion of these ideas, except in the Métis and courts context, see A.J. Ray, *Telling it To the Judge: Taking Native History to Court* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 107-108.

the U.S. aimed at off-reservation Indians, “initialization and pursuit of land title demanded already a substantial and fairly subtle understanding of American culture, its formal institutions, procedures, and values. Fairly extensive bicultural familiarity was therefore a *prerequisite* of the process, rather than a *consequence*.”³ She further argued that it was the next generations, who became citizens in the U.S. after 1924, who were “raised in multi-ethnic communities and educated from childhood in Euro-American schools, were more comfortable, skillful, and successful” in navigating Indian laws than their parents’ generation.⁴ This is the case for Wood Mountain Lakota people who were born after 1880. But this chapter will expand this to argue that even though this generation had more tools to navigate settler society and administrations, government Indian policies were often incongruent and convoluted, and Lakota people still drew on their own networks that afforded them security, particularly when settler systems failed them. Lakota kinship structures and connections did not end and movement within Lakhóta T̄hamák̄hoč̄he continued on, especially to draw on support from each other when opportunities might be limited on one side of the border or the other depending on the Indian policies and categories of each government.

Haphazard and Incongruent Policies

Many Wood Mountain Lakota people found themselves between government categories that only intensified as settler state boundaries solidified over time. Prior to 1930, many Lakota people at Wood Mountain were not legally considered “Indians” because the reserve was not ratified and the federal government did not want responsibility to deal with them as “Canadian Indians.” Dealing with Lakota people in Canada as “foreigners” or “American Indians” is an

³ Martha C. Knack, “The Saga of Tim Hooper’s Homestead: Non-Reservation Shoshone Indian Land Title in Nevada,” *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 39 (Summer 2008): 150.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 151.

absurd claim since their nationhood predates the governments making these claims. It is important to make the distinction between land and settler state nations such as Canada and the U.S., as they are often conflated, but the difference is especially clear in Indigenous relationships with their homelands and their experiences with settler state hegemony. Even after 1930, many Lakota families were not considered legal Indians in Canada because of their white fathers. It was not until the Indian Act underwent major amendments in 1951 that the Indian Register was added to replace the idea of “Indian blood” though still based largely on a similar concept of marriage,⁵ and at this time many of these Lakota families were made “non-status” by being left off this register. Most likely the term “non-status” was not used until the Indian Register was created and people who had legitimate living ties and connection to “status” communities were excluded to exist in a new grey area of government categories, though it may have taken years for those categories to become codified and utilized. When it came to various Indian policies though, oftentimes non-status people were still subjected to it regardless, which was also the case for Wood Mountain Lakota people.

One clear example of this discrepancy between categorization and implementation is the early period of residential and industrial schools in Canada. The Regina Indian Industrial School register for 1891 to 1908 lists several Lakota children, including John and Alice Lecaine (children of Okhúte Šíča and Tšášúnke Nún̄pawin); Edith and Ida Ferguson (daughters of Nún̄pa Kikté and Ptesán̄win); Alice, Annie, and Katie Aspdin (daughters of Mary and Thomas Aspdin); Willie, James, and Dorothy Ogle (no parents listed, but most likely W.H. Ogle and Tšášúnke Hin̄ Hótewin’s children); Howard Russell (son of Heyókħawin); Mabel Pehizi (daughter of Pšehin̄ Zí/Yellow Hair/Billy Bokas and Ptelútawin̄/Red Buffalo Woman); Mary Thompson (daughter of

⁵ Harvey A. McCue, “Indian Status,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, May 11, 2020, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-status>.

Sičhán/Čhaŋté Ohítika); and Ellen Brown (daughter of Fred Brown and Thiyópa).⁶ It could be that some of these children never returned home from the Regina Industrial School. One Wood Mountain Lakota man, Pěhíŋ Zí/Billy Bokas, was especially outspoken about some children from the community dying while attending residential schools in Saskatchewan,⁷ and it is possible he lost his own children to the schools. The Canadian government did not want to deal with some Lakota families as Indians as far as right to live on the reserve, status, and assistance was concerned, particularly those with white fathers like the Brown and Ogle children, however, they were willing to admit these children as “half Sioux” Indians to the industrial school. Indian policy seemed to be flexible in this case when it benefitted government assimilation goals but not when it may assist Lakota people.

Later more Lakota children from Wood Mountain would attend the Lebret Industrial School (later also known as the Qu’Appelle Residential School), but the issue of Indian status would arise in a different way. Lebret Residential School records show that issues of “blood,” parentage, and status came to be a concern for Indian Affairs in the 1930s and 1940s when admitting children. The students in question at this time were the children of the generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people who had attended Regina Indian Industrial School themselves decades earlier as children and are listed above. The principal admitted some “half-breed Sioux” children from Wood Mountain, including a few Brown, Lecaine, and Ogle children, but they

⁶ PAS, R 2.40, Register of the Regina (Indian) Industrial School 1891-1908. The names are listed here as on the register, so have some variations in names which may be alternate names or an issue in transcription at the time of registering the children. For example, Thašúnke Núnŋpawíŋ is listed as Čhekpáwíŋ (Twin Woman).

⁷ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 7779, File 27137-1, Reel C-12061, “Memo of Pow-Wow of Sioux Indians at Wood Mountain, July 8th, 1912.” There are no Lakota children listed among Regina Indian Industrial School’s deceased, but records are far from complete. Douglas Stewart in his book *The Regina Indian Industrial School (1891-1910): Historical Overview and Chronological Narrative* notes that the list of deceased students was put together mainly from the only surviving admissions record in the above footnote from the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan and from mentions in the school’s newsletter *The Progress*. It could be very possible there were other deaths that were not recorded or the records do not exist.

were discharged almost immediately by Indian Affairs authorities because “The parents of every one of these children are voters, and when the children become of age they will have the right to vote. They are not a charge on the Federal Government at all, and if they are to be sent to school the expense should be borne by the Provincial Government.”⁸ It was not uncommon that Indian policies and responsibility for dealing with Indigenous people came down to the various levels of governments’ financial concerns. Voting was the line in the sand regarding these Lakota parents and children, not surprisingly as enfranchisement was a preoccupation and contrasted in this era the difference between who was an Indian (and therefore under the Indian Act) and who was a Canadian (and therefore a citizen). However, voting was not often used in such clear terms to decide who and who was not an Indian particularly when it came to Indian policy.

Indian Commissioner W.M. Graham also wrote on this issue in 1930 and provided a different angle for deciding which children were Indian or not when responsibility for schooling was concerned: “You are aware that at one time (about 15 years ago) nearly half of the children in this school [Qu’Appelle Residential School] were halfbreeds. We succeeded in getting every one of them out, and made it a hard and fast rule that the only halfbreed children who could be admitted were those who were living on an Indian reserve as Indians.”⁹ Therefore, in 1930 H.E. King, overseer of the Wood Mountain Reserve, was asked about the children’s parents and supplied information showing that John Lecaine, Charles Lecaine, Albert Brown, and Jimmie Ogle, were “all white and Indian halfbreeds. Are all voters or at least entitled to vote” and all either lived off the reserve, in the town of Wood Mountain, or owned property in the area.¹⁰

⁸ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6329-6332, Microfilm C-9809, "File Hills Qu'Appelle Agency-Qu'Appelle Residential School-Qu'Appelle Agency-Qu'Appelle Residential School-Crooked Lake Agency-Round Lake Residential School" School File Series-1879-1953, Letter from Indian Commissioner W.M. Graham to Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Duncan C. Scott, March 7, 1930.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., Letter from H.E. King to Indian Commissioner W.M. Graham, February 28, 1930.

Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs Duncan C. Scott's reply to Graham focused on the fact that "the children in question cannot be considered wards of this Department"¹¹ which codifies that the Canadian government authorities (and arguably the American government functioned the same way) were consumed with making and unmaking "Indian wards," and were not concerned with actual community belonging or providing care to the nations it had relationships with. Furthermore, it can scarcely be believed that government good intentions were behind "educating" Indigenous children in residential schools since the outcomes for those children were certainly overwhelmingly negative, another failure in government relationships with Indigenous nations.

The dialogue around the Brown, Lecaine, and Ogle children's admission to the residential school in 1930 was directly based upon the residence, voting ability, and property ownership of their "half-breed" parents. The description of them as voters is notable as this was part of the distinguishing basis for determining who was an Indian in contrast to who was a citizen. The assigned racial and legal categories were at odds—they were half-breeds and Lakota, but also somewhat citizens in that they had some colonial markers of "civilization" (property and enfranchisement). However, this generation did not have enough of these "markers" in many cases to be considered full citizens nor sufficient "blood" to be considered "Indian enough" in other cases. Regardless of these outside colonial preoccupations and categories that served to displace and dispossess Lakota people, their belonging in a Lakota sense was not questioned because the connections of language, culture, and kin were very much part of their everyday lived relationships within Lakhóta T̄hamák̄hoche. And often it was these connections and

¹¹ LAC, RG 10, Vol. 6329-6332, Microfilm C-9809, "File Hills Qu'Appelle Agency-Qu'Appelle Residential School-Qu'Appelle Agency-Qu'Appelle Residential School-Crooked Lake Agency-Round Lake Residential School" School File Series-1879-1953, Letter from Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs Duncan C. Scott to Indian Commissioner W.M. Graham, March 12, 1930.

relationships that this generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people drew on to make their own way, even if changing and complex Indian policies sometimes tried to limit them in doing so. Often Indigenous ways of belonging and kin-making were considered by white settlers and institutions to be overly complicated and tangled—a way of overriding and dismissing them as “not real” or “fictive” in favor of Euro-American/Canadian norms. Colonial definitions, however, of belonging and relation were incongruent and arbitrarily administered and assigned to Indigenous people, with no correlations to actual lived relationship. Thus, this chapter serves as an examination of Lakota kin-making and belonging as well as an examination of the haphazard and incongruent Indian policies to re-make and re-define Lakota family, communities, and nations.

Indeed, the issue of “half breeds” at Wood Mountain was confusing at least in the government’s use and application of the word at the time. The Métis community at Wood Mountain was much smaller by the 1910s as compared to the nineteenth century, but still there were Métis connection between Wood Mountain and Willow Bunch in commerce, marriage, and culture and some had intermarried with this younger generation of Lakota people as well. The term “half breed” in the Lakota context was used to signify those that had white fathers, but the term was also used to delineate Métis people at Wood Mountain with regard to the North-West Half-Breed Claim Commission that processed Métis scrip claims arising from the 1870 Manitoba Act.¹² Though Lakota belonging within their own families and community was very clear

¹² Half-breed or Métis scrip was the federal government’s system of extinguishing Métis people’s Aboriginal title to their land which was protected by the 1870 Manitoba Act. This act brought Manitoba into Confederation and protected Métis land rights through sections 31 and 32, though scrip was not specifically part of the act and was the means used by the government to deal with this land. However, much of that scrip was quickly lost because of speculation, delays to the process, and fraud. For more on this, see Frank Tough and Erin McGregor, “The Rights to the Land May be Transferred: Archival Records as Colonial Texts—A Narrative of Metis Scrip,” *The Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* Vol. 34, no. 1 (2007), <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/crci/index.php/crci/article/view/10811>.

because they were founded in Lakota understanding of kinship and language, how they fell into government categories was evidently confusing for some, and understandably so. Two Lakota applications to the North-West Half-Breed Claim Commission are good examples of this. Applications were made for Métis scrip at Willow Bunch by Frederick Brown for his children William (Billy) and Ellen (Nellie) Brown, who were 17 and 13 years old respectively, and by John Thomson (written as Thompson in the records erroneously), the oldest son of J.H. Thomson who was 15 years old at the time.¹³ Both applications state that the mothers are “Sioux” and fathers are white men and that the applicants were not part of any Indian band. Both applications were refused on the grounds that the mothers were “United States Indians” and “Sioux” and therefore that they were not half breeds in the Métis sense. This distinction between half breed/ Métis and being Lakota was understood and *lived* by these individuals because they were embedded with Lakota kin and community relations, culture, and language, but the grey area of where these children fit into government categories and their parents’ desire to afford them access to land and assistance was no doubt the reason for their applications. Therefore, this is not a case of Lakota people misrepresenting or misunderstanding themselves as Métis but a case of confusion around where they fit into settler created and imposed categories.¹⁴

Furthermore, “half breed” in the U.S. and on reservations was often used in this time period to describe any Lakota person with a white parent and did not describe in this context a

¹³ LAC, R190-44-1-E, North-West Territories Métis scrip applications, Vol. 1369, Microfilm reel C-15006, John Thomson application, May 25, 1900, http://collections.canada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec_nbr=1515388&lang=en&rec_nbr_list=1515388; and LAC, RG 15, Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands Branch, Vol. 1338, Reel C-14953, Frederick Brown on behalf of his children William and Ellen Brown applications, May 25, 1900, accessed through *Canadiana Heritage*, https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_c14953/1?r=0&s=1

¹⁴ This is an especially important distinction to make in recent misunderstandings and misappropriations around Métis nationhood and belonging where many in Canada want to claim Métis identity without having living Métis culture, connections, and community. This also demonstrates the importance of understanding Indigenous nationhood and lived connections that are rooted in Indigenous ways of being in relationship, rather than genealogical or individual identity definitions that have been created and/or muddled by settler state impositions.

Métis person as the term pertained to in western Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lakota people at Wood Mountain and their non-Lakota spouses would have most likely been aware of the American usage of the term and may have had it applied to them or their children/relatives before by American officials. In particular, both Fred Brown and J.H. Thomson corresponded with Indian Affairs officials in the U.S. regarding Lakota matters and so they may have been aware of this American usage more than most settlers in Canada.¹⁵

There are also Lakota cultural and language contexts that apply: the Lakota word *iyéska* is sometimes translated as “half breed” or “mixed-blood” and does not apply to Métis people (the Lakota word for Métis is *Slót’a*). *Iyéska* can also mean “interpreter” (literally means “he/she/it speaks white”). The evolution of the word *iyéska* started out as “interpreter/speaks white” which gave rise to the term *iyéska čhiŋčá*, literally interpreters’ children or “half breeds” especially in the early reservation period when many interpreters were white men who had Lakota wives and children, with finally *iyéska* coming to mean both things. Eventually the term *iyéska* came to be a negative term to label Lakota people from “mixed” families on U.S. reservations in the twentieth-century which mostly stemmed from U.S. policies which assumed “half breeds” were more assimilated. Policies arose from this assumption which made it easier for “half breeds” to access property on reservations compared to those who were identified as “full-bloods” (and therefore less “civilized” and less “competent” the settler logic went) which created animosity and divisions among Lakota people along the lines of yet more settler-imposed categories.¹⁶

¹⁵ There were specific programs for allotting “half-breeds” land in Minnesota known as “Half-Breed Tract” which stemmed from the 1830 Prairie du Chien treaty between the U.S. and Dakota people in order to provide for and protect the interests of people from mixed marriages within their communities. A “Nebraska Half Breed Tract” also was established from this treaty for the Pawnee and Ponca. The land was dealt through scrip beginning in the 1850s but, much like Métis scrip in Canada, ended up in the hands of white settlers and speculators in the following decades. For more about these tracts and scrip programs, see David Ress, *The Half Breed Tracts in Early National America: Changing Concepts of Land and Place* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

¹⁶ For more on this, see Paul Robertson, *The Power of the Land: Identity, Ethnicity, and Class Among the Oglala Lakota* (Routledge: New York, 2002), 11-13 and 53-56; and Estes, *Our History is the Future*, 136-137. I typically

Another example of the Canadian standard of categorizing people either as Indians or as citizens as it related to Wood Mountain Lakota people was land ownership through the homesteading system. Though the homesteading process was exclusionary in multiple ways on the basis of race and gender, some Wood Mountain Lakota men were able to secure homesteads. Some of these men were not status Indians at the time, and indeed some had to make the decision whether to be an “Indian” or a property owner. In the article “Erasing and Replacing: Property and Homestead Rights of First Nations Farmers of Manitoba and the North West Territories, 1870s-1910s,” historian Sarah Carter wrote of the unique Wood Mountain situation:

By 1914 requests were frequent enough that a Department of the Interior “ruling” was filed on the question of whether Indians could homestead. This was in answer to a letter by John Lecaine, a Lakota of Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan (whose father was a North West Mounted Policeman), as to whether his two half-brothers, “Indians,” were eligible for homestead rights. It was decided that they could homestead only if they “do not belong to any particular band of Indians, and if they are not children of any male person of Indian blood who belong to such a Band; or if they are not in treaty and receipt of annuity moneys; or if they do not belong to any irregular band of Indians, or do not follow the Indian mode of life, they may be granted homestead entries.” Just what constituted the “Indian mode of life” was not specified. John Lecaine and a number of other Lakota men did secure homesteads, however, in the Wood Mountain district, although this was through unusual and special circumstances involving the establishment of their reserve.¹⁷

John Lecaine was not the only one to fall into these unique qualifiers, which included many young men from the Ogle, Lethbridge, Lecaine, Thomson, and Brown families at Wood Mountain, all of whom also provided sworn statements for each other on their homestead

stay away from using the word “mixed” because by default it means the opposite, “pure” is an unquestionable fact. The idea of “racial purity” is not typically called into question with the usage of the word “mixed” though it should be. Furthermore, typically “mixed” seems to be applied to already racialized and marginalized peoples. However, the term “mixed” did (and still does) have real implications as a category and the examination of how governments treated those they identified as “mixed” should not go unnoticed.

¹⁷ Sarah Carter, “Erasing and Replacing: Property and Homestead Rights of First Nations Farmers of Manitoba and the North West Territories, 1870s-1910s” in *Place and Replace: Essays on Western Canada*, edited by Adele Perry, Elyll W. Jones, and Leah Morton. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013), 32-33.

applications in the 1910s.¹⁸ Regardless of their federal Indian status (lack thereof), this shows these men had similar ambitions and close friendships from shared community and kin. To the federal government however, many of these men were considered more “competent” in the sense that they had white fathers, and so this probably played a role in their access to homesteads. John Lecaine had to be “enfranchised” in order to homestead because he was considered a legal “Indian,” and this may have applied to other Lakota men as well, particularly his brothers, though other Lakota men may not have had this barrier because they were not considered legally Indian. In other regards though they were considered “Indians” and later some of these men did reside on the reserve at Wood Mountain as well. In 1930 when the reserve was created permanently, John Lecaine’s homestead was in the eastern half, but in the early 1950s he transferred his quarter to the reserve,¹⁹ and became “Indian” again.²⁰ Indian policies oscillated between firm and harsh, and arbitrary and flimsy, depending on the situation and people involved, and more so, the desires of the Indian Affairs officials in that particular year. This will be a reoccurring experience for this generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people and their dealings with Indian Affairs on both sides of the 49th parallel.

Between Government Categories: Enrollment in U.S. Reservations (1918-1930)

In the early 1920s, some Wood Mountain Lakota families began the process of enrolling in U.S. reservations where they still had relatives. The Brown, Thomson, and Lecaine/Okute families will be examined here because the documentary trail for their experiences survives,

¹⁸ See PAS, Homestead Files, Willie Ogle, file # 1922044 and file # 2157386, William Lethbridge file #3328522, Walter Okute, file #3328522, John Lecaine file #1890785, George Lecaine, file #3325740, Charles Lecaine, file #269109, James Thomson, file #2367741, and Alonzo Brown, file #2392925.

¹⁹ Papandrea, *They Never Surrendered*, Appendix P-4; Canadian Museum of History, *Legends of Our Times* Ranching: Wood Mountain Biographies, “Woonkapi Sni (John Lecaine/John Okute)”, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/rodeo/biography_16e.html#Woonkapi-Sni

²⁰ There is a similar Lakota concept, kilákhota—to become Lakota again, which references someone learning or returning to Lakota ways and language, especially if they had been attracted to a “white man’s lifestyle” and returned to a Lakota way of life.

though it is far from complete or representative of their more personal perspectives. The basis for the Brown and Thomson families' enrolment was almost identical: the same time (both families submitted applications in 1921), the same place (both were from Wood Mountain and Standing Rock), and very similar family connections (both were Húnkpapha and had relatives at Standing Rock who testified in their favour). But their cases for enrolment and adoption in the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe had very different outcomes. The Lecaine/Okute family had somewhat different circumstances that will be examined separately, especially since they gained U.S. tribal enrollment earlier.

The applicants were required to submit various documents to substantiate their claim to be adopted and enrolled in American federally recognized tribes, and these documents proved to be rich family and community history repositories, which was a surprising revelation when I first read these documents in the archives. Although the story of these families' interactions with Indian policies and government systems is important, the community and family stories that are interwoven are of more significance to understanding Lakota kinship, community, and belonging. Often these more personal connections, stories, and experiences are overlooked in histories of Indian policies because they are focused on larger structural and systematic examinations that apply to Indigenous people more broadly historically in Canada and the U.S. However, examining the problematic systems these Lakota families had to navigate, which also applied to many other Indian people at the time, while also emphasizing the unique Lakota connections and stories found in these documents that transcend these settler colonial systems and continue Lakota understandings of place and kin are central to this dissertation as a whole. Both examinations have broader implications, but are also uniquely specific to Lakota culture,

families, and communities that straddled the U.S.-Canada border as they occupied a different kind of cultural, physical, and legal space than many other Indigenous people at the time.

Okhúte Šíča/Hard to Shoot At and Tǎšúŋke Nún̄pawíŋ/Her Two Horses went to the Cheyenne River Reservation in the spring of 1894 when Mary Black Moon-Aspdin and her children also went as discussed in chapter three. Mary was Tǎšúŋke Nún̄pawíŋ's aunt, so it understandable that these families would travel together to see their relatives. Thomas Aspdin reported on December 18, 1894 that Okhúte Šíča, his wife, and three children had returned to Canada since leaving to the U.S. earlier that spring.²¹ While at Cheyenne River, Okhúte Šíča and Tǎšúŋke Nún̄pawíŋ became enrolled. The U.S. Indian Census Rolls for Cheyenne River in 1894 show “Hard to Shoot At” and “Her Horse” as husband and wife. Their three children at that time, Beaded With Porcupine (Alice Lecaine), Don't Shoot Him Down (John Lecaine), and Wounded With Arrows (Charles Lecaine) were also enrolled.²² Okhúte Šíča and Tǎšúŋke Nún̄pawíŋ were recorded in the 1930s in the Cheyenne River Agency Indian Census Rolls as living at Wood Mountain as they had been the majority of their lives,²³ though Okhúte Šíča is continuously listed as “N.E.”—not enrolled—throughout the 1930s since he passed away in 1922.²⁴ The family was enrolled continually, so their residence in Canada did not seem to impact their enrollment at Cheyenne River, worth noting since at the same time this was not the case for other Wood Mountain Lakota people.

²¹ LAC, RG 10, Volume 3599, File 1564, Pt. B, "Birtle Agency - Oak River, Moose Jaw and Wood Mountain Sioux, From Across the Line, Being Sent Back by Police, 1894-1897," Letter from Thomas W. Aspdin to Assistant Indian Commissioner, December 18, 1894. A later letter from Aspdin states more precisely that Okute and his family came back to Canada from Cheyenne River in the fall of 1894, *Ibid.*, Letter from Aspdin to Indian Commissioner Forget, October 15, 1896.

²² Washington, DC NARA, RG 75, Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940, Microfilm M595, Cheyenne River Agency, 1894.

²³ *Ibid.*, April 1, 1930; *Ibid.*, April 1, 1931; *Ibid.*, April 1, 1933; *Ibid.*, April 1, 1934; and *Ibid.*, January 1, 1937.

²⁴ Jeff Downing shared with author, originals most likely kept by BIA, Aberdeen, South Dakota, “Report on Heirship, Cheyenne River Agency, Hard to Shoot At,” October 30, 1923.

When looking at these Indian Census Rolls, there is no inkling of the belonging or kin systems of Lakota people. It is not clear from looking at these census documents alone that Okhúte Šíča and Tǎšúnke Nún̄pawin had been enrolled because they had come to Cheyenne River with family (Mary Black Moon-Aspdin and her children) to see other relatives. There is no connection in these documents (and many other government documents) to show that Mary and Tǎšúnke Nún̄pawin were a daughter and granddaughter respectively of a well-known Mnikhówožu leader, Black Moon, who was enrolled and living at Cheyenne River. There is no connection in these documents either that this connection is the basis to these women's and their children's enrollment at Cheyenne River. The Indian Census Rolls focus completely on the nuclear family set up that Indian Affairs on both sides of the border were so fervently trying to instill in Lakota communities, without any connection or even sequential listing of people in relation let alone in thiyóšpaye. These documents always need a layer of cultural and historical context, and so are not a suitable way to start understanding Lakota connections or belonging—much as these systems historically and currently override and erase relationality as well. They do help decode the one-dimensional kind of familial and community system Indian Affairs was trying to create and oversee on reservations to supplant Lakota systems of belonging, which has ramifications yet today in how tribes and bands administer their enrollment, status, and citizenship, as well as the kinds of kinship and relationships that are viewed as valid today.

Okhúte Šíča and Tǎšúnke Nún̄pawin had three more children who were born after they returned to Wood Mountain from Cheyenne River and those children were not enrolled. In May of 1920, Okhúte Šíča began the process of trying to enroll his three younger children at Cheyenne River: Taniyan Wakawin (Tǎníya Wakhánwin/Holy Breath/Elizabeth/Lizzie), Oyáte Wanjánkapi (Seen by the People/George), and Oyáte Wačín̄yaŋpi (The People Depend on

Him/Walter). Okhúte Šíča stated that his two older sons were already enrolled and allotted land on the Cheyenne River Reservation and that they also filed on homesteads in Canada and did not receive “any benefits from the Indian Department of Canada,”²⁵ another way of saying they were not status or recognized legally as Indians. J.H. Thomson helped Okhúte Šíča make this affidavit for his application in 1920, and that year Thomson also began the same process for his wife, Ihá Waštéwiŋ and children within the Standing Rock Reservation. As mentioned previously, Okhúte Šíča died just two years after this affidavit was made, so it is unclear from the documentary record what became of the younger children’s enrollment at this time, but they did not receive allotments nor were they recorded in the U.S. Indian Census Rolls before 1940.

For the Brown and Thomson families, the process to become enrolled was started after J.H. Thomson helped Okhúte Šíča with his children’s applications and maybe they learned of the process from Okhúte Šíča and after four of the oldest children from these families went to live at the Standing Rock Reservation. Lawrence Brown (son of Fred Brown and Thiyópa), and John Thomson, James Thomson, and Nellie Lamb (the eldest son, second son, and eldest daughter respectively of J.H. Thomson and Ihá Waštéwiŋ) went to Standing Rock to make new homes among old family and community. Lawrence seems to have been the first to venture there in 1918, but came back to Wood Mountain in 1920 before returning to Standing Rock in 1921 to stay.²⁶ John, James, and Nellie probably went with Lawrence after the latter returned to Wood Mountain in 1920, as John and James both stated that they also went to Standing Rock in January 1921²⁷ and Nellie stated later that she went with her brothers at that time too.²⁸ Though they

²⁵ Personal collection of Jeff Downing, originals from Bureau of Indian Affairs Aberdeen, SD Office, affidavit by Hard to Shoot At, May 4, 1920.

²⁶ Washington, D.C. NARA, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A in RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, sworn statement by Lawrence Brown, January 9, 1922.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, sworn statement by John Thomson, November 3, 1921; *Ibid.*, sworn statement by James Thomson, November 7, 1921.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, sworn statement by Nellie Lamb, November 7, 1921.

went to make homes there, all would go back to Wood Mountain from time to time. According to a 1943 border crossing document, Nellie only lived there from 1921 to 1923, but noted that she visited every year.²⁹

In the summer of 1921, applications for adoption and enrollment by the Thomson and Brown families were submitted to the Standing Rock Reservation Business Committee.³⁰ Standing Rock Superintendent E.D. Mossman³¹ passed these applications along to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. on August 19, 1921, relaying that the reservation Business Committee had acted upon them for Mrs. James Thomson and her eight children, and Mollie Brown (also known as Ellen Brown or Thiyópa) and her six children, to be adopted and enrolled, both also extending to “various grandchildren” who would be “affected by these adoptions.”³²

Beginning in 1921 and 1922, affidavits and interviews to demonstrate the Thomson and Brown families’ connections to Standing Rock were collected. It was not just the second generation of Wood Mountain Lakota children (now most of whom were adults) that were making applications. Iǎ́ Waštéwiŋ gave a sworn statement for her application on November 10, 1921 in which she stated that she was enrolled with her parents at Standing Rock in about 1875, after which she was taken with her parents to Montana and then to Wood Mountain when she

²⁹ Washington, D.C. NARA, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85, Series A3448, Roll 006, *Manifests of Alien Arrivals at Havre, Loring, Opheim, Raymond, Turner, Westby, and White Tail, Montana, 1924-1956*, accessed from ancestry.com, U.S., Border Crossings from Canada to the U.S., 1825-1960 (online database), Nellie Helen Lamb nee Thomson, June 24, 1943.

³⁰ The tribal council for Standing Rock was called the Business Committee prior to the 1934 Wheeler-Howard Act or Indian Reorganization Act—which the tribe resisted—and the Tribal Constitution being adopted in 1959. State Historical Society of North Dakota, North Dakota Studies, “Leaders-Standing Rock,” <https://www.ndstudies.gov/curriculum/high-school/standing-rock-oyate/leaders-standing-rock>

³¹ Major E.D. Mossman arrived at Standing Rock in July 1921 and previously he had been in charge at Cheyenne River Reservation for eight years, seven years at Sisseton Reservation, and four years at Fort Peck Reservation.

³² Washington, D.C. NARA, “Central Classified Files, 1907-1939,” Entry 121-A in RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, letter from Superintendent E.D. Mossman to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 19, 1921.

was about nine years old. Her statement outlined that she was “a full-blood Sioux Indian and was affiliated with the Sioux at Standing Rock and at Wood Mountain, Sask, Canada, all my life.”³³ Two of her brothers were members of the Standing Rock tribe and had allotments there at the time of her application as well (two of her sisters were listed at other reservations).³⁴ In addition to her own application, she also applied for her three minor children: Ida, Willie, and Howard Thomson.³⁵ Thiyópa (in these records known as Mollie Brown) seems to have not applied for herself, but meeting minutes of the Tribal Business Committee from January 1, 1923 mention that she was “at one time enrolled as a member of the Standing Rock Tribe and for some unknown reason she was dropped from the roll, and the only reason that could be account[ed] for was that Indians are roaming from one place to an other [sic] in hunting as hunting is their only means of living in those days.”³⁶ By this time, Thiyópa was possibly living at Fort Peck Reservation, though Lawrence’s June 1922 affidavit stated that she and Fred Brown were living at Wood Mountain.³⁷ However, the 1921 Census of Canada does not show Thiyópa living with Fred at Wood Mountain nor on the reserve there, and as mentioned in chapter three, she and Fred had separated, but it is still possible that she was at either Wood Mountain or Fort Peck.³⁸ Furthermore, Lawrence’s affidavit stated that his mother “was formerly enrolled on the Standing Rock Reservation with her father, Isnwakuwa, and mother, Wamniyomni, and that the said mother is coming to the Standing Rock Reservation to live hereafter, and that she is coming

³³ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, sworn statement by Mrs. J.H. Thomson or Ihawastewin, November 10, 1921.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., “Standing Rock Indian Fair Association” Tribal Business Committee meeting minutes, January 1, 1923, page 5.

³⁷ Ibid., Lawrence Brown affidavit, June 1st, 1922.

³⁸ LAC, RG 31, Statistics Canada, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, Saskatchewan, District of Maple Creek No. 220, Sub-District 11 and 79.

sometimes [sic] during the month of June, 1922.”³⁹ Lawrence’s application was rooted in the fact that his mother and grandparents were enrolled there at one time.⁴⁰

In addition to his own enrollment, Lawrence’s wife, Essie Wears Horns,⁴¹ and her father Wears Horns, applied at the same time. Wears Horns’ wife, Pankeskalutawin/Pħaŋkéskalutawiŋ (Red Abalone Shell Woman, Essie’s mother) had been adopted, enrolled, and received an allotment at Standing Rock, along with their other children. Wears Horns, Pħaŋkéskalutawiŋ, and all their children were living at Wood Mountain until about 1916, and there Essie and Lawrence were married and had their own children.⁴² Wears Horns stated that “...I lived at Wood Mountain, Sask, Canada, up to the time my wife, Pankeskalutawin and children were adopted and enrolled as members of the Standing Rock Reservation, and since then, have lived on my wife’s allotment north of the Bullhead Station, and that at the time of her adoption, I was unable to make my application in person to the Tribal Business Committee on account of having to take care of the personal property at Wood Mountain...”⁴³

J.H. Thomson submitted an affidavit as well in support of his wife’s and children’s application for adoption and enrollment. In it, he stated that he married Mary Thomson/Iħá Waštéwiŋ in 1882 and listed all their children and their Lakota names.⁴⁴ John Dog Eagle from Little Eagle, SD was interviewed about all these applicants’ family connections at Standing Rock, and this interview holds some interesting details about the tribal basis for belonging that the Committee wanted to establish for enrollment and adoption. This interview established who

³⁹ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, Lawrence Brown affidavit, June 1, 1922.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Essie was also known as Iši at Standing Rock in her later years. Thank you to Charlie White Buffalo who shared his memories of her and other Brown and Thomson relatives from when he was a boy growing up on the Standing Rock Reservation at Bullhead, South Dakota.

⁴² Ibid., sworn statement of Essie Wears Horns, November 15, 1921.

⁴³ Ibid., sworn statement of Wears Horns, November 15, 1921.

⁴⁴ Ibid., affidavit by J.H. Thomson, December 1, 1920.

these people's parents and grandparents were, whether they were Húŋkpap̃ha and members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, whether those people had allotments (most did not because they died before allotments were made), and how John Dog Eagle was related to them. More specifically, he stated which band or thiyóšpaye their families belonged to: Ihá Waštéwiŋ's family belonged to the Takes the Gun and Bear Ribs thiyóšpaye and Thiyópa's family belonged to the Charging Thunder thiyóšpaye.⁴⁵ Charging Thunder also was interviewed "In the matter of the adoption of Wears Horns, Browns, and Thomsons, and Lambs" and he supported all that John Dog Eagle had said.⁴⁶ These documents are important because they center Lakota kinship and embed it in tribal/reservation belonging. Detailing the way these people were family and their thiyóšpaye connections are foundational to Lakota societal arrangement and belonging, aspects that the tribal system upheld in the reservations better than the Canadian system of Indian status recognized. The Canadian system of federal individual and collective recognition of "Indians" did not bother to ask for these kinds of community and family connections, instead relying completely on settler ideas of marriage and race. However, that is not to say that the American or Canadian system have not been damaging. Examination of these systems has been taken up by scholar Kim TallBear in much more depth and her words are worth repeating in full here because they reflect the complexity of blood quantum, lineage, and tribal membership so well:

In summary, the story of tribal citizenship in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is one in which dominant cultural notions of race— federal 'Indian blood'—have pushed and been pushed against by tribal peoples' own ideas of belonging and citizenship. The 'tribal blood' fractions can be seen to represent a counting of tribal relatives in the conferral of membership. That is not to say that many of us, native and nonnative alike, might not believe vaguely that the concepts of Indian blood or tribal blood represent underlying biological properties— that we are not sometimes being biologically

⁴⁵ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, affidavit by John Dog Eagle, January 11, 1922.

⁴⁶ Ibid., affidavit by Charging Thunder, January 11, 1922.

deterministic in our use of these concepts. But the counting of relatives and establishing a genealogical connection to them is also clearly at play in our blood talk. We use the language of blood and blood fractions while keeping in mind a specific world of policy and while bearing in mind that that language is shorthand for what we know is a far more complicated story of our lineages. When I cite those fractions, I think of my grandparents and great-grandparents. I remember their names and their parents' and grandparents' names. I remember how, through both dispossession and restricted choices, they came to be on the particular reservations now denoted in my blood-quantum fractions. These are relatives whose stories have been passed down to me, sometimes from their own mouths. I am not alone in Indian Country in this practice of accounting.⁴⁷

The Brown and Thomson cases show that notions of blood quantum were used by Indian Affairs officials and the tribe differently to determine whether a person had legitimate claims or not.

Indian Affairs calculated how far removed they were from “full-blood” family to determine blood quantum, but had the final say regardless of those fractions and rest in problematic ideas of “purity.” Community members and tribal governments used the same kind of measurements but to decide closeness to relatives, especially those living, to extend tribal belonging. Therefore, the way those fractions signify family members was important for the legitimacy of the Brown and Thomson applications for enrollment and the reason kin connections were documented through interviews and affidavits at the time.

Following each sworn statement, the Tribal Business Committee Chairman Marcellus Red Tomahawk, Secretary Benjamin White, and Superintendent E.D. Mossman recommended each individual application for all the above-named Brown, Wears Horns, and Thomson family members, and submitted them to the Department of Indian Affairs for approval. Although the superintendent and tribal council approved of the enrollment of these Wood Mountain Lakota people, it was not an open and shut case. Essie Wears Horns-Brown and her father Wears Horns were approved for enrollment in 1922 on the basis that their mother/wife respectively, P̄h̄aṅkéskalutawiṅ, was enrolled and that both Wears Horns and P̄h̄aṅkéskalutawiṅ were residing

⁴⁷ TallBear, *Native American DNA*, 63-64.

on the reservation as their “permanent home.”⁴⁸ For Lawrence Brown and the Thomson family, it was not such an easy case though because the matriarchs of the family had not returned permanently to Standing Rock.

By April of 1922, James Thomson requested a lawyer, George Thwing, to write to Indian Affairs on his behalf since his enrollment had been pending for over two years.⁴⁹ Thwing specialized in “Indian Law and Lands” as his letterhead stated, something that was becoming more common in the 1920s in the U.S., particularly as reform movements from within Indigenous communities and from national Native American organizations were emerging. Assistant Commissioner E.B. Meritt wrote back to Thwing: “James Thomson was born in Canada and his mother had never returned to Standing Rock Reservation, and the family has no doubt, always been affiliated with the Canadian Indians and treated by the Dominion Government as Canadian Indians. Accordingly the Superintendent has been advised that the Office is unwilling to recommend their enrollment especially as it does not appear their mother has returned to the reservation and renewed her affiliation with the Indians thereof.”⁵⁰ However, the Thomson and Brown families were not considered status Indians in Canada and neither were they considered full citizens or British subjects, which was outlined in both John and James Thomson’s enrollment applications. John Thomson had served in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces and was at Passchendaele, France, where he was “blown up and buried” by shell fire, and subsequently suffered from “shell shock.”⁵¹ John’s application summarized his war record and ended stating that he was “not a citizen of the Said Canadian Government, and not entitled to any

⁴⁸ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, letter from Assistant Commissioner E.B. Meritt to Standing Rock Superintendent E.D. Mossman, May 5, 1922.

⁴⁹ Ibid., letter from George Thwing to Commissioner Charles H. Burke, April 2 19 [?], 1922.

⁵⁰ Ibid., letter from Assistant Commissioner E.B. Meritt to George Thwing, May 12, 1922.

⁵¹ LAC, RG 150, Canadian Expeditionary Force, CEF Personnel Files, 1914-1918, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9646 – 4, John Thomson, regimental number 925692.

rights under said Gov't."⁵² James had a very similar experience except he had served for the U.S. in the American Expeditionary Forces in France, but was similarly recorded as "not a Canadian subject."⁵³ Therefore, Indian Affairs concerns with the Thomson brothers drawing on "benefits" as "Canadian Indians" or even as citizens was groundless. This is very illustrative of the ongoing perception that Indigenous people are sometimes seen as "Canadians/Americans" and sometimes they are not. The distinction is drawn when it is convenient or beneficial to the nation-state or general public, Indigenous people are then considered part of that community/nation/state/province, etc. and effectively absorbed into the nation state by claiming Indigenous people as the settler state's possessions, typically by using terms like "our Indians." However, when it is not useful or when Indigenous people exert their own self-determination, they are considered adversarial, separate, and "othered" in contrast and opposition to settler states and communities.

In May 1922, a decision regarding the Thomsons' application was again made with the following explanation:

It appears that Mrs. Thomson's parents were full blood Sioux Indians, and took her to Canada about the year 1875 at the time of the rebellion of Sitting Bull, where she married a white man, and where she has since resided at Wood Mountain, province of Sask, Canada. She has no doubt been affiliated with the Sioux of Canada continuously since, and her children were probably born in affiliation with the Canadian Indians, and have no doubt been treated by the Dominion Government as Canadian Indians. The Office is unwilling, therefore, to recommend this enrollment at Standing Rock, especially as it does not appear that the mother has returned to the reservation and renewed her affiliation with the Indians thereof.⁵⁴

⁵² Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, recommendation by Tribal Chairman Marcellus Redtomahawk and Superintendent Mossman for John Thomson and children, August 22, 1921.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, recommendation by Tribal Chairman Marcellus Redtomahawk and Superintendent Mossman for James Thomson, August 22, 1921.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Letter from Assistant Indian Commissioner E.B. Merritt to Superintendent E.D. Mossman, May 5, 1922.

In their case, the residency of their mother (Ihá Waštéwiŋ) was the most important factor in considering whether they could be federally recognized as tribal members. This was not the case for other Wood Mountain Lakota people living on U.S. reservations however.

Lawrence Brown faced similar challenges. Assistant Commissioner Meritt informed Superintendent Mossman in June 1922 that: “As his [Lawrence’s] father is a white man and his mother is not a recognized and enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux, he would not be entitled to benefits on the Standing Rock Reservation.”⁵⁵ Essie Wears Horns-Brown was approved for enrolment, Lawrence denied, but nothing was said of their children.⁵⁶ However, according to Commissioner Charles H. Burke, it was quickly decided that because “the father of these children apparently has the status of a Canadian Indian and as his children were born on a reservation in Canada, and in view of their short period of residence on the Standing Rock reservation I am unwilling to recommend their application to the Department for favorable consideration.”⁵⁷ Lawrence Brown (nor his brothers or sisters) nor the Thomson family ever resided on the Wood Mountain reserve, nor their children. And there is no documentation to show any of the Brown or Thomson family was ever considered status Indians in Canada because their fathers were white men. Canadian Indian Affairs used marriage (much the same system as blood quantum in the U.S.) to decide who was and was not eligible to be on the Indian Registry (and therefore Status Indian), and this disqualified and distanced many First Nations women and their children from their communities that First Nations men (and whomever they married) did not experience. It is unclear where Commissioner Burke received the misinformation regarding the status that the Brown or Thomson family had in Canada.

⁵⁵ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, Letter from Assistant Indian Commissioner E.B. Merritt to Superintendent E.D. Mossman, June 12, 1922.

⁵⁶ Ibid., letter from Superintendent E.D. Mossman to Indian Commissioner, June 16, 1922.

⁵⁷ Ibid., Commissioner Chas. H. Burke to Superintendent E.D. Mossman, June 30, 1922.

The matter was raised again to the Tribal Business Committee in January 1923. James, John, and Lawrence were married to enrolled women from Standing Rock and they as well as Nellie Lamb were living on the Standing Rock Reservation at this time. The Committee recognized that they had fully investigated these applications in 1921 and all the tribal council/committee members were familiar with the cases, and all voted in favour of reconfirming their earlier adoption decision.⁵⁸ Superintendent Mossman also recommended these people and their children for adoption and enrollment again in February 1923.⁵⁹ However, yet again the Thomsons were denied by Commissioner Meritt because “the mother of the applicants has not returned to the reservation and as the applicants have only resided there a short time, having been born in Canada of one white parent in affiliation with Canadian Indians...”⁶⁰ Nothing was said of Lawrence Brown’s application however at this time.

It seems that although the tribal reservation governance in the U.S. had some say in enrollment and membership, more senior Indians Affairs officials always had the last say. However, these men were able to still live with their families on the reservation, even if they did not have the same access (nor their children necessarily) to the assistance, political participation, and programs enrollment might have afforded. This residence would not have been the case in Canada, and these men were probably very aware of this because their own mothers’ inability to reside on the reserve with their relatives. Prior to the Indian Register in Canada being created in 1951, individual Indian agents kept their own records and lists of band members (known as band lists). These lists may have been largely based on residence on reserves, particularly as residency

⁵⁸ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, Standing Rock Indian Fair Association, Tribal Business Committee meeting minutes, Fort Yates, ND, January 16, 1923, page 4.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, letter from Superintendent E.D. Mossman to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 13, 1923.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, letter from Commissioner E.B. Meritt to the Secretary of the Interior, April 19, 1923.

and movement was highly restrained after 1885 with the pass system, and as the Indian Act made clear throughout its reiterations that no one but “an Indian of the band” could reside, hunt, or use the resources/land on reserves.⁶¹ The residency rules in some ways safeguarded Canadian reserves from white speculation, which happened in U.S. reservations, but Canadian Indian Act residency rules, combined with Indian women losing their status through marriage to non-Indians,⁶² meant these couples could not reside on Canadian reserves and were excluded doubly from federally recognized community and land. Later, the Indian Registry “recorded the name of every person who is entitled to be registered as an Indian.”⁶³ Prior to 1951, “any Status Indian who resided outside of Canada for five years or longer resigned his or her status”⁶⁴ so after many years living at Standing Rock, the BIA’s concern that the Browns or Thomsons were gaining “benefits” as Indians in Canada as the basis to deny enrollment in the U.S. would have been groundless. Indian Affairs authorities on both sides of the border misunderstood or were ignorant of each other’s policies and regulations which only further worked to displace certain Lakota people and families.

Lawrence Brown’s case was eventually elevated in a different manner. In February of 1929, The National Council of American Indians (NCAI) and well-known president and founder of the council, Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkála-Šá) wrote to Commissioner Burke regarding Lawrence’s enrollment. The NCAI was founded by Iháŋkthūjwaŋ woman Zitkála-Šá and her

⁶¹ *The Indian Act*, R.S.C. 1927, c. 98, s. 115, quoted in Sharon Helen Venne, *Indian Acts and Amendments, 1868-1975, An Indexed Collection* (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan Native Law Centre, 1981), 289.

⁶² “Any Indian woman who marries any person other than an Indian, or a non-treaty Indian, shall cease to be an Indian...” *The Indian Act*, R.S.C. 1927, c. 98, s. 14, quoted in Venne, *Indian Acts and Amendments, 1868-1975, An Indexed Collection*, 249.

⁶³ *The Indian Act*, S.C. 1951, c. 29, s. 5, quoted in Venne, *Indian Acts and Amendments, 1868-1975, An Indexed Collection*, 317.

⁶⁴ Harvey A. McCue, “Indian Status,” in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-status>, accessed July 12, 2020; and *The Indian Act*, R.S.C. 1927, c. 98, s. 13, quoted in Venne, *Indian Acts and Amendments, 1868-1975, An Indexed Collection*, 249.

husband Raymond Bonnin in 1926 to, as her letterhead states: “Help Indians help themselves in protecting their rights and properties.”⁶⁵ Historian Thomas W. Cowger wrote that they founded the NCAI “as a means to express the growing twentieth-century Indian identity movement. Short on funds and staff help, the Bonnins singlehandedly lobbied Congress and the BIA to correct Indian injustices.” But by the mid-1930s it folded, “Lacking a large Indian mandate, Indian protests such as legal issues, sovereignty questions, and civil rights remained on an individual tribal basis rather than on a national scale.”⁶⁶ Taking on issues such that Lawrence was facing then would have fit the NCAI mandate and Gertrude Bonnin’s passion for Indigenous resistance, activism, and self-determination.⁶⁷ Much like James Thomson had requested assistance from an Indian law and lands specialty attorney, Lawrence Brown and his family received assistance from the NCAI in their legal matters. Bonnin stated in her letter that a petition with 270 signatures regarding the adoption of Lawrence and his family was sent to the Commissioner but had gotten no response. Bonnin and the petitioners wanted to know if any action had been taken on the matter.⁶⁸ Burke replied to Bonnin, stating that Essie Brown had been enrolled (though nothing of her being able to get an allotment was mentioned again) and Lawrence and their children were denied enrollment in 1922 because Lawrence was a status Indian in Canada and his children were born on the reserve in Canada,⁶⁹ (though this was not actually the case).

⁶⁵ Washington, D.C. NARA, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A in RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, Letter from president of the National Council of American Indians, Inc. Gertrude Bonnin to Commissioner Charles H. Burke, February 25, 1929.

⁶⁶ Thomas W. Cowger, *The National Congress of American Indians: The Founding Years* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 19.

⁶⁷ Estes, *Our History is the Future*, 207-208; and Tadesz Lewandowski, *Red Bird, Red Power: The Life and Legacy of Zitkála-Šá* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 16-17.

⁶⁸ Washington, D.C. NARA, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A in RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, Letter from president of the National Council of American Indians, Inc. Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkála-Šá) to Commissioner Charles H. Burke, February 25, 1929.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, letter from Commissioner Chas. H. Burke to President Gertrude Bonnin, March 11, 1929.

Again in 1931, a decade after beginning this process, the Tribal Business Council voted to adopt Lawrence Brown and his children for enrollment⁷⁰ and again Superintendent Mossman recommended their enrollment to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.⁷¹ The Commissioner, C.J. Rhoads, requested more information about “the degree of Indian blood” of the Brown children, and stated that all of them except one (David Brown) may be entitled to enrollment because they were born at Standing Rock, but because David was born in Canada he “is not entitled by birth to any rights with the tribe.”⁷² It seems like the rules for enrollment within the higher offices of Indian Affairs shifted over the decade ever so slightly each time the Browns or Thomsons applied, particularly because the tribal council unanimously approved their applications numerous times and the superintendent recommended them each time as well. Possibly the rules were actually at the discretion of the commissioner. Whether in Canada or the U.S., residence and birthplace seemed to be the utmost factor to the highest offices of Indian Affairs with regard to deciding who was and was not an Indian and where they belonged officially, particularly as it concerned receiving “benefits” from another colonial government. At the community level tribal governance, showing direct kinship connections that followed Lakota understandings, even though the tribal political system was still a colonial state creation, were unsurprisingly prioritized. The residence requirements were limited to reserves and reservations as well—settler defined ideas of what Lakota Country was, not actual Lakhóta Thámákhočhe where all these people were born and resided.⁷³

⁷⁰ Washington, D.C. NARA, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A in RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, Minutes of the Tribal Business Council, Fort Yates, ND, August 10, 1931.

⁷¹ Ibid., letter from Superintendent E.D. Mossman to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 23, 1931.

⁷² Ibid., letter from Commissioner C.J. Rhoads to Superintendent Mossman, January 9, 1932.

⁷³ This settler state and society concept of Lakota land only being reservation land (and this is not unique to Lakota people) has recently garnered a lot of discussion and attention around the NoDAPL protests at Standing Rock in which the protests camps were “off” reservation land but within “treaty” land and from a Lakota perspective, well within Lakhóta Thámákhočhe. However, settler states and communities have tried to divorce Lakota people from

A follow-up letter from Commissioner Rhoads detailed that “Children born in Canada are not entitled to enrollment with the Standing Rock Indians unless properly adopted by the tribal council.”⁷⁴ However, as mentioned before, this was done several times with the necessary testimonies and documentation with approval being given. Rhoads went on to say, “Only those children born on the reservation after the adoption of the mother are entitled to rights with the Indians mentioned. You are therefore authorized to enroll the children above named [excluding David Brown] from the date of their respective births provided they come within the class last above named and were born after the adoption of the mother.”⁷⁵ However, all of the children except Theresa were born before their mother Essie Brown was enrolled in 1921. Rhoads stated that these rules followed Section 324 of the Indian Office Regulations of 1904,⁷⁶ however, this section only has one part dealing with children: “All children born to annuitants since the last preceding payment will be enrolled with their parents: *Provided*, That a child born to an Indian woman as result of a marriage with a white man contracted after June 7, 1897 is not entitled to annuities or other benefits accruing to the tribe and must not be enrolled.”⁷⁷ This section seems to follow more in line with the Canadian system of Indian status with “outside” marriage being the determining factor and in the Essie and Lawrence Brown case, there was no marrying out to deal with. Rhoads later stated their children “are not entitled unless by and with the consent of the tribe”⁷⁸ even though the tribe had approved them numerous times, which Mossman pointed

land outside (and sometimes inside) reservation boundaries, which can be seen in the arguments around “residence” for tribal enrolment and in rhetoric around protests for protecting water/lands.

⁷⁴ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, letter from Commissioner C.J. Rhoads to Superintendent Mossman, February 27, 1932.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ United States Office of Indian Affairs, *Regulations of the Indian Office, Effective April 1, 1904: Published Under the Authority of the Secretary of the Interior, Revised by the Indian Office* U.S. Government Printing Office, 1904, “Annuity Payments,” Section 324, No. 4, Page 59.

⁷⁸ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, Commissioner C.J. Rhoads to Superintendent E.D. Mossman, March 28, 1932.

out as well.⁷⁹ Finally, a decision was reached in the matter after more than a decade of the same roundabout conversations occurring repeatedly. In April 1932, Rhoads decided that “In view of the long residence of this family on the reservation, their continued affiliation with the Indians; and the favourable action of the Tribal Business Council, the adoption of Lawrence Brown and his children, Charles, Lucy, David and Vincent into the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, is hereby approved.”⁸⁰

John Thomson’s case took a much different turn than the others. In February of 1927, Mossman wrote to the commissioner that John had entered the country illegally, had a hearing in January 1927 before an Immigration Inspector of the Department of Labor, and a warrant was issued for his deportation as an alien. Mossman wrote that John would be deported soon and no action should be taken to give him membership in the tribe.⁸¹ Mossman wrote ten days later to add:

This man belongs to the class known as chronic disturbers. He has no business and lives with a former father-in-law and travels all over the reservation stirring up trouble. He was given a job by me years ago here and he was simply a vagabond and returned my kindness in the bitterest kind of opposition. He has no rights here and has made numerous applications to become enrolled here. His application is now in Washington with the approval of the Tribal Council. I hope that the Office in the interest of these Indians and government generally will see that this man is not allowed rights here, and if that is done, we will be able to get rid of him by deportation sometime this spring in accordance with the order issued by the Department of Labor.⁸²

Whatever kind of conflict passed between John Thomson and Mossman is not clear from the documentary record, but the superintendent’s disdain for Thomson is. Mossman wrote further:

I write you again with reference to the deportation of John Thompson [sic], Canadian half-breed. I saw a letter recently from Case and Calhoun in which they assured the Secretary of the Business Council that they would immediately take up the case of

⁷⁹ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, Superintendent E.D. Mossman to Commissioner C.J. Rhoads, April 4, 1932.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Commissioner C.J. Rhoads to Superintendent E.D. Mossman, April 20, 1932.

⁸¹ Ibid., letter from Superintendent E.D. Mossman to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 16, 1927.

⁸² Ibid., letter from Mossman to Commissioner, February 26, 1927.

Thompson [sic] and that, of course, he could not be deported since he is a member of the tribe or about to become a member, etc. etc. I hope the Office will see that this man's request for adoption be not approved. I cannot see why Case and Calhoun should be dabbling in this sort of stuff. While I did not start this action against Thompson [sic] I was forced to take sides and I, of course, sided in with the government. He is a scamp and if left here will be a distinct slap at me. Why Case and Calhoun should interest themselves in this is more than I know. The new Business Council just elected refuse to have anything more to do with this case. About the next thing Case and Calhoun will get from the Council here will be a suggestion that they confine their efforts to the business for which they are employed.⁸³

The commissioner replied several times requesting the documentation accompanying Thomson's application, but it is unclear if they ever received it. By May, J.H. Brott (signed in place of Superintendent Mossman) stated that he used to approve applications for enrollment without doubt and as a matter of routine, especially in Thomson's case. But he told the Council that they had no judgment in recommending applicants and so he would consider applications from then on only on merit.⁸⁴ Ralph H. Case and Clarence C. Calhoun were the lead lawyers after 1922 in the Black Hills Claim representing eight Očhéthi Šakówiŋ tribes against the U.S. government, calling themselves "The Attorneys for the Sioux Nation."⁸⁵ By 1927, they were well known and their legal accomplishments were many. Case in particular was very well liked by the Lakota people and did most of the work, both in Washington and on the reservations, in filing their claims.⁸⁶ It was probably because of Case and Calhoun's renown as attorneys that Mossman was surprised at their taking up of John's case (as well as his disdain for John factored in), though Case did take up various Lakota people's cases in personal affairs.

Case and Calhoun were not the only lawyers dealing with John's deportation and enrollment case. Aaron McGaffey Beede, a missionary and lawyer, was working on John's

⁸³ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, File 68800-1921-053, Part 1, "Central Classified Files, 1907-1939," Entry 121-A, letter from Mossman to Commissioner, April 6, 1927.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, letter from J.H. Brott to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 13, 1927.

⁸⁵ Lazarus, *Black Hills, White Justice*, 145.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 146-147.

behalf as well. Beede was appointed as judge of Sioux County, North Dakota in September 1914 and served until his death in 1934, a position that he entered into to try to help Indian people get the best out of land settlements and other legal issues.⁸⁷ Beede wrote to the Department of Labor directly about the alleged deportation in March 1927, and argued that Thomson's parents were born in the U.S. (truly only his mother was) and that he was adopted into the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (the Committee/Tribal Council had approved him but the Commissioner kept denying his enrollment as discussed above) and therefore an Indian could not be deported.⁸⁸

Mossman was not pleased by this letter:

With reference to Mr. Beede, he is a meddlesome petti-fogger who interests himself in this case because he is the defender and supporter of all the criminals and bums in this county. Thompson [sic] belongs to this class. Beede says he has been adopted into the tribe. He has not been adopted and probably will not be. I did not start this case but since it has been started I have assisted in what ways I could to see that Mr. Thompson [sic] goes back to Canada where he belongs. Thompson [sic] agreed with your representative that he would leave here April 1st. He is still here. Beede came up here to get your address and I heard afterwards that the case he quoted was dated in 1892. I would be glad to have Mr. Thompson [sic] removed because he is, as I said in the beginning, one of the tough elements here and we do not need him.⁸⁹

Again, it is not apparent from the archival record what happened between Mossman and John Thomson to cause Mossman to dislike and work against John's application so fervently to the point of trying to have him deported. John and Lawrence's ability to hire attorneys and receive legal advice was something they would not necessarily have had access to in Canada. The Canadian government amended the Indian Act in 1927 with Section 141 which prohibited Indians from hiring lawyers, seeking legal counsel, or accepting outside fundraising or

⁸⁷ Sonja Natalie Hathaway, "Conduct Unbecoming a Christian Missionary: Aaron McGaffey Beede's Work on North Dakota's Standing Rock Reservation, 1901-1916" (PhD diss, University of North Dakota, 2018), 11, 227, and 233.

⁸⁸ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Box 146, Correspondence Concerning John Thompson, 1927, Series 8, Standing Rock Agency, letter from A. McG. Beede to Chas. W. Seaman, Department of Labor, March 31, 1927.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, letter from Superintendent Mossman to Chas. W. Seaman, Department of Labor, April 6, 1927.

contributions for such purposes.⁹⁰ This was done in direct response to Indigenous political organizing that was becoming more widespread and vocal in the 1920s.⁹¹ It was meant to keep Indigenous people from being able to press the Canadian government within their own legal system for redress. The Canadian government must have known there was good reason for Indigenous people to seek out these systems for redress if it barred Indians from it, even if the legal system rarely if ever worked in the favour of Indigenous people in its history prior to the 1920s. However, John and Lawrence could have possibly accessed legal aid in Canada as non-status Indians, though a lawyer to take on such matters may have been difficult if not impossible to obtain.

What happened precisely to the deportation effort against John Thomson in the end is not yet known. John married Jennie Crow Ghost on January 31, 1928 and their marriage certificate listed them both as living at Bullhead, South Dakota.⁹² They had several children together all born at Bullhead on the Standing Rock Reservation, the last born in 1936.⁹³ Clearly John was still living at Standing Rock. A border crossing manifest from September 1937 shows that he lived in the U.S. from 1919 to 1929 and again from 1932 to 1937 (when the crossing manifest was current) but during the latter time frame he was living at Poplar, Montana.⁹⁴ Jennie died in 1938 while they were Fort Peck,⁹⁵ and John and the children stayed there after her death as well.

⁹⁰ *The Indian Act*, R.S.C. 1927, c. 98, s. 141, quoted in Venne, *Indian Acts and Amendments, 1868-1975, An Indexed Collection*, 301.

⁹¹ Erin Hanson, "The 'Potlatch Law' & Section 141," *The Indian Act*, accessed July 19, 2020, https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_indian_act/.

⁹² South Dakota Department of Health, *South Dakota Marriage Index, 1905-1914, 1950-2013 and South Dakota Marriage Certificates, 1905-1949*. Pierre, SD, USA: South Dakota Department of Health, accessed through ancestry.com, marriage record for John H. Thompson and Jennie Crow Ghost, January 31, 1928.

⁹³ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Box 395, Standing Rock Birth & Death Registers, 1895-1943.

⁹⁴ Washington, D.C. NARA, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85, *Manifests of Alien Arrivals at Havre, Loring, Opheim, Raymond, Turner, Westby, and White Tail, Montana, 1924-1956*, Series A3448, Roll 006, accessed through ancestry.com, manifest for John Hoksila Thomson, September 27, 1937.

⁹⁵ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940, "Deaths occurring Between the Dates of January 1, 1938 to December 31, 1948," Microfilm Roll M595_563, Standing Rock Agency, accessed through Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1059/images/M595_563-

No one in John's generation of the Thomson family, nor Mary Thomson/Ihá Waštéwiŋ herself, were ever enrolled at Standing Rock, though they were approved several times to be. In 1934, Ida Thomson Braaten, John and James's sister, inquired about her enrollment, but was informed by Superintendent L.C. Lippert at Standing Rock that she was not a tribal member.⁹⁶ These Wood Mountain Lakota people probably assumed they were enrolled after their applications were endorsed by the tribal council and the superintendent, and it seems that Superintendent Lippert did not know of the twisting journey Superintendent Mossman had engaged in earlier with first approving than barring the Thomson family from being enrolled and adopted into the tribe.

James Thomson also continued living at Standing Rock in the Little Eagle District, marrying Louisa Good Boy/Standing Bear in about 1920 with whom he had two sons. According to a 1935 survey, James "was down here [Standing Rock] visiting when he met and married his present wife [Louisa]."⁹⁷ James was listed as being "a stock man all his life" and "In the past he had between fifty and sixty head of livestock."⁹⁸ James's family was listed: his mother, three brothers, and two sisters at Wood Mountain, and two other brothers, Andrew and John living at Poplar, Montana.⁹⁹ This is worth noting because John and Jennie Thomson also had children who were born in 1934 and 1936 at Bullhead, S.D., but possibly were traveling between Standing Rock and Fort Peck regularly.

Lawrence and Essie Brown were also included in this 1935 survey, likewise living in the Bullhead District of Standing Rock. According to the survey, they were married by "common

0361?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=b6ee1f42eca166556c351a1099fedd43&usePUB=true&_phsrc=dVX511&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&pId=4490616.

⁹⁶ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Box 323, Correspondence w Schools & Agencies, 1909-47, Standing Rock Agency, letter from Superintendent Lippert to Roy E. Frost (on behalf of Ida Thomson Braaten), September 24, 1934.

⁹⁷ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Box 384, Standing Rock Agency, Series 51, Family Survey 1935, Thomson, James.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

law” at Wood Mountain in 1913 and then later in the Catholic Church at Bullhead in 1918. It also mentioned that Lawrence’s mother, Thiyópa, was living at Fort Peck yet. Lawrence was recorded as “an experienced stockman and farmer” and was very much interested in the stock association in which he was a member.¹⁰⁰ Both Lawrence and James had no land of their own, but their wives had land through the allotments made to them or their families. Indian women land holders were much more common in the U.S. reservation system. By contrast, it would have been nearly impossible for these women to hold property in Canada and even more impossible for an “Indian” and woman to hold property as discussed in chapter three.

The Brown, Thomson, and Lecaine cases for enrollment and adoption into their Lakota tribal communities in the U.S. demonstrate how Indian policies could be circumvented by some people so they could continue to live in their communities and with their families, albeit often without having the same access to land, assistance, or political rights while still subject to all of the assimilative policies. However, this meant that many Wood Mountain Lakota people who were eligible by the same rules through which others were granted enrolment, were denied for sometimes arbitrary reasons. Especially when comparing the reasons given by the same authorities at nearly the same time and without the knowledge of the applicants or the tribal councils. Belonging had two different realities: the community level belonging that was centered on cultural affiliation and lived kinship relations, and a settler state administered definition of belonging that determined the access and ease of movement (spatial, legal, economic) in the settler state systems. And often Wood Mountain Lakota people found themselves between continually inconsistent state categories, but firmly rooted in their own kin and land. Lakota people’s self-determined belonging in this time period followed earlier understandings of kin and

¹⁰⁰ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Box 380, Standing Rock Agency, Series 51, Family Survey 1935, Brown, Lawrence.

place, though newer settler government regulations and restrictions on Indigenous belonging would gain more traction as time went on.

Belonging: An Estate Case

Belonging from a Lakota perspective was fairly straightforward and very fluid—kinship, whether “blood” or adoptive, was the basis. However, Lakota systems of proper relationship building and maintenance that accompanied belonging and kinship were (and are) complex and detailed, rooted in reciprocity and respect. Settler colonial authorities and systems could not (and still do not) grasp this belonging though, particularly because it was difficult to regulate and surveil, and therefore capitalize and control. Some Lakota people who had roots at Wood Mountain as well as kin connections to other Lakota communities came up against colonial definitions and categories, particularly when dealing with the legal systems in Canada and the U.S. that demanded they “prove” their belonging to the satisfaction of legal and political systems, rather than live it as good relations.

A young Lakota man from Poplar, Montana, Gus Hedderich, Jr. faced such difficulties.¹⁰¹ He was born at Wood Mountain on March 25, 1880 to a Lakota/Dakota woman named Pěžúta (Medicine) and a young clerk for the Leighton and Jordan trading post at Wood Mountain, August (Gus) M. Hedderich.¹⁰² Hedderich (the senior, though he was not known as this in his lifetime) has since been credited as the one who taught Sitting Bull how to write his name, the leader supposedly even taking on Hedderich’s penmanship style.¹⁰³ Sitting Bull also purportedly gave Hedderich a painted buffalo robe before leaving Canada in 1881, which was later donated

¹⁰¹ Sometimes Hedderich is spelled as Hedderick and he was never known as Jr. in the records, however Junior or Jr. will be used here to clarify which Gus Hedderich is being referred to.

¹⁰² Library of Congress, *Chronicling America, The Ward County Independent*, Minot, Ward County, North Dakota, “Half-Breed Son Sues for Father’s Riches: Gust M. Hedderick, the Son of the Late August M. Hedderich of Williston, is After His Father’s \$60,000 Estate.” July 26, 1906.

¹⁰³ Usher L. Burdick, *The Last Days of Sitting Bull: Sioux Medicine Chief* (Landisville, PA: Coachwhip Publications, 2011), 17.

to the North Dakota Historical Society, and this would suggest they had a close friendship.¹⁰⁴ Hedderich definitely was at Wood Mountain as a clerk for the trading post, as he is listed there in the 1881 census when he was 21 years old. In the census he is listed alongside other young men at Wood Mountain who took Lakota wives and had Lakota children, including Frederick Cadd (Anátaŋwiŋ's father), W.E.A. Lecain (first husband of Thášúŋke Núnŋpawiŋ), J. Thomson (Ihá Waštéwiŋ's husband), and Fred Brown (first husband of Thiyópa),¹⁰⁵ so it would not be surprising if Hedderich did the same. Hedderich later became a partner in the trading company, thus called Leighton, Jordan, and Hedderich, and went on to operate a trading company in Montana with his brothers and later the Hedderich department store in Williston, North Dakota.¹⁰⁶ Hedderich died in 1906 and his substantial wealth was left to his wife at the time, Grace. But Gus Hedderich, Jr. came forward to contest the estate, claiming to be the senior Hedderich's only child. The ensuing case became a sensation in the Dakotas and Montana where the Hedderich empire was well known--every prairie newspaper had advertisements for the Hedderich brothers' trading company and later his department store. Gus Jr. was not reflected so well in the newspapers, which described him as the "half breed Indian son suing for father's riches."¹⁰⁷ His father's estate was estimated between \$60,000 to \$200,000, depending on the newspaper account and when it was published, though the amount reported increased in the newspapers as the case lengthened. According to court records, the estate was worth nearly \$100,000.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Mackenzie Art Gallery, "Mackenzie Art Gallery Announces New Permanent Collection Exhibition: Walking With Saskatchewan," June 20, 2019, accessed July 20, 2020, <https://mackenzie.art/walking-with-saskatchewan/>.

¹⁰⁵ LAC, RG 31, Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada, 1881*, Northwest Territory, District No. 192, Wood Mountain, page 4-5 and 14-17.

¹⁰⁶ The store burned down in 2017, but where it stood is still known as Hedderich's lot today (2020).

¹⁰⁷ Library of Congress, Chronicling America, *The Ward County Independent*, Minot, Ward County, North Dakota, "Half-Breed Son Sues for Father's Riches," July 26, 1906; and *The Fargo Forum and Daily Republican*, "The Heddrick Case: Half Breed Son Wants the Estate," August 8, 1906.

¹⁰⁸ North Dakota Supreme Court, *Hedderich v. Hedderich*, 1909, N.D. 488, 123 N.W. 276, file no. 1894.

Historian Sarah Carter has written broadly about how Indigenous women and their children were denied access to their white husbands' estates in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Canadian West. Indigenous women (and all women more generally sometimes) were barred from gaining their husbands' estates so that property changed hands quickly and stayed with settler and male ownership. "Squaws" were especially disregarded on the basis of not having "legal" marriages to white men to exclude their children from being legitimate heirs.¹⁰⁹ Ideas around the legitimacy and legality of relationships and children flood these histories, and Gus Jr.'s case reflects the same type of legal battles and court decisions occurring since the 1880s on both sides of the border. So, like many estate cases of the time, the trials were centered around determining the "...Legality of Marriage With Squaw" as one South Dakota newspaper put in their headline.¹¹⁰ This was particularly of interest because Phežúta was still alive at the time of Hedderich, Sr.'s second marriage to a white school teacher, Grace Dustin, at Poplar, Montana around 1886. This could have meant that his second marriage was invalid and therefore the will leaving everything to Grace could also be called into question. In court, at least one witness, Charles Thompson, who was testifying for Gus, Jr. was asked two revealing questions: he was first asked whether he had ever slept with the "Indian girl, Medicine" and the second asked whether she was a prostitute.¹¹¹ Thompson's answers no longer exist in the archival record, but the questions themselves serve to demean Phežúta and Gus Jr.'s claim.

The case also hinged on whether Gus Jr. was named after the merchant Hedderich because he was truly his son, or because when "the young Indian was enrolled in the government

¹⁰⁹ Carter, *Capturing Women*, 191-192.

¹¹⁰ Library of Congress, Chronicling America, *The Madison Daily Leader*, Madison, South Dakota, "Will Contest: Suit to Determine Legality of Marriage With Squaw," June 28, 1907.

¹¹¹ North Dakota Supreme Court, *Hedderich v. Hedderich*, 1909, 18 N.D. 488, 123 N.W. 276, file number 1894, "Appellant's Brief: Assignment of Errors," 15.

school, 265 other Indian children were enrolled and at that time given the names of white men without regard to parentage, and that the contestant had been given his name by General Heath as a joke on Mr. Hedderich."¹¹² One article reported: "At the school on the reservation it was necessary to have the children known by some English name as the names given by the Indians were too long for common use. It was when the names were being given out that a friend of the teacher arrived in the room and suggested that one young Indian who was blessed with a head of bright red hair, be called Gus. M. Heddrich [sic] from the fact that his hair was the same color as that of the clerk in the office on the reservation."¹¹³ Whether this story is factual or not, the point that it was shared in the newspaper meant that this kind of demeaning treatment of boarding school students to rename them in jest must have been a palatable enough explanation to the public to warrant its publication. Regardless, questioning Gus Jr.'s parentage and name was a way to delegitimize his claim.

To counter these questions numerous people from Wood Mountain and Poplar were asked to testify about Gus Jr.'s parentage. The probate records state that Thundering Bear, Iron Leggings (Jack Culbertson), and Mrs. Iron Leggings from Poplar served as witnesses, as well as "Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Thompson"¹¹⁴ (presumably J.H. Thomson and Iñá Waštéwiŋ) and Jean-Louis Légaré from Wood Mountain.¹¹⁵ Several newspapers commented on the spectacle of "Indian witnesses," one even stating that "More than fifty Indians are encamped about the court house at Williston, awaiting the taking up in the district court of appeal from the decision of the probate

¹¹² Library of Congress, Chronicling America, *The Fargo Forum and Daily Republican*, "Indian Failed to Get the Estate of Merchant Hedderich," September 12, 1906.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, Bismarck, North Dakota, "Heddrick Will Case In Supreme Court: Half Breed Indian Suing for Part of \$100,000 Estate: Claims Gus M. Heddrich of Williston Was Married To Indian Maid in Territorial Days," June 20, 1909.

¹¹⁴ Williams County Clerk, North Dakota, August M. Hedderich probate records, Probate Number 0056,

¹¹⁵ Library of Congress, Chronicling America, *The Oakes Times*, Oakes, ND, "Famous Case Settled: Judge Goss Renders Decision in Favor of Mrs. Hedderick," August 8, 1907.

judge of Williams county, in the Heddrich [sic] will case, in which they will appear as witnesses.”¹¹⁶ The son Hedderich, based his case around two arguments: that Pěžúta and Gus M. Hedderich were married/in a relationship beginning in 1879 to which Gus Hedderich was born and that the older Hedderich was not in sound mind when he made his will. Witness testimony was not been saved in the archival record of this case, but pieces of the questioning can be gleaned. Iron Leggings and Thundering Bear testified they were present at the wedding of Hedderich, Sr. and Pěžúta which was used to establish Gus, Jr.’s birth year in comparison to when this marriage took place.¹¹⁷ Other people from Wood Mountain like James Thomson, Jean-Louis Légaré, and “Kio” Morin (probably Calliou Morin, a Métis man who worked as an interpreter and scout in the Wood Mountain area) were asked about “Indian marriages” with white men at Wood Mountain more generally and whether they had knowledge of Pěžúta and Hedderich, Sr. together at that time. It is unclear from the remaining documents whether their relationship was established through these witnesses, though it was through Iron Leggings and Thundering Bear.¹¹⁸ The district court ruled that Hedderich, Sr. had not married Pěžúta according to “Indian rites and customs,” had never lived together as husband and wife, nor did Hedderich, Sr. recognize Pěžúta publicly, and therefore Hedderich, Jr. was not a son.¹¹⁹ Hedderich, Jr. appealed the ruling and eventually this case reached the North Dakota Supreme Court in 1909. The Supreme Court affirmed the earlier rulings which denied Gus, Jr.’s claim and

¹¹⁶ Library of Congress, Chronicling America, *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, “Heddrich Will Case Is Up: Williston Heirs Would Break Will—Half-Breed Indian is Contestant for Part of the Money—Interesting Testimony to be Given—Indians Are Witnesses,” May 12, 1909; and *The Wahpeton Times*, Wahpeton, Richland County, North Dakota, “Indians Camp To Get In Battle: Legal Strife for Estate of Former Trader Will Center About Medallion Acknowledging That Indian Was His Son,” July 4, 1907.

¹¹⁷ North Dakota Supreme Court, *Hedderich v. Hedderich*, 1909, 18 N.D. 488, 123 N.W. 276, file number 1894, “Appellant’s Brief: Assignment of Errors,” 31-32.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31-34.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

had him pay the expenses of the case. The court found that either argument did not have sufficient evidence and it was inconsequential to the legality of the will.¹²⁰

Though issues of belonging in Gus Jr.'s case with his paternal kin were difficult and entangled in ideas of legitimacy and race, his belonging seems to never have been questioned in his Lakota family and community. He went on to be selected to represent the Fort Peck Tribe as part of a delegation to Washington, D.C. in 1919 to bring matters about tribal land and settlement by white homesteaders to the attention of the federal government.¹²¹ In 1931, he was elected as a councilman for the Fort Peck Tribe¹²² and became the tribal chairman by 1932.¹²³ In November of 1934, Gus, Jr. and his wife Mary were struck by a train in their car at a crossing at Wolf Point and killed.¹²⁴ He was very much centred in his community and worked to represent them in his lifetime. Similarly, Gus Hedderich, Sr.'s standing was enshrined in North Dakota society as is evident in one local history book's glowing summary published in 1917: "His life was ever an upright, honorable one, winning for him the goodwill, confidence and high regard of all with whom he came into contact, and to his family he left not only a substantial competence but also the priceless heritage of an untarnished name."¹²⁵ I doubt the author meant Gus Jr.'s inheritance of his father's "untarnished name" but rather how the courts turned down the young man's attempt to be recognized as his son (and therefore "tarnish" the Hedderich name).

¹²⁰ North Dakota Supreme Court, *Hedderich v. Hedderich*, 1909, 18 N.D. 488, 123 N.W. 276, file number 1894. For more examples of court cases in both Canada and the U.S. that questioned the legitimacy of mixed marriages without sanction of the state or Christian churches, see Carter, *Capturing Women*, 191-193.

¹²¹ *The Glasgow Courier*, "Local Brevities: News in and About Town," October 10, 1919, page 5.

¹²² David Miller, Dennis Smith, Joseph McGeshick, James Shanley, and Caleb Shields, *The History of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, 1600-2012* (Poplar, MT: Fort Peck Community College, 2012), 299.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 302.

¹²⁴ Washington, D.C. NARA, RG 75, Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940, Fort Peck Agency, "Deaths Occurring Between the Dates of April 1, 1934 to December 31 1934 of Indians Enrolled at Jurisdiction, Fort Peck Agency, Poplar, Montana," Roll M595, Line 7; "Two Killed At Wolf Point," *The Fort Peck Press*, Vol. 1, No. 14, Thursday, November 8, 1934, page 1.

¹²⁵ Clement A. Lounsberry, *North Dakota History and People: Outlines of American History*, Vol. 2, (Chicago: The S. J. Clark Publishing Company, 1917), 240, accessed July 20, 2020, <https://archive.org/details/northdakotahisto03loun/page/240/mode/2up?q=hedderich>.

Turning to legal avenues to get their issues addressed is not necessarily acting against Lakota people's self-determination even if it is within systems of their own oppression and subjugation. Legal scholar Shelley Gavigan wrote on this subject in relation to a Wood Mountain Lakota man Ce Tan (Čhetán/Hawk) and his wife's use of the law: "Clearly, a number of First Nations people now turned to the law for assistance, and admittedly the criminal justice 'returns' were modest. Of greater interest, however, are the clear expressions of agency of First Nations women and men notwithstanding their socially subordinate positions, which neither denies their oppression nor supports the suggestion that in going to law or using the law they acted as brokers of their own oppression."¹²⁶ Lakota people have always been flexible, adaptable, and resourceful in finding ways to survive and thrive in changing and new situations—qualities that were particularly essential in the difficult early years of nation-state-building and settler colonialism in Lakḥóta Thámákhóche in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And Lakota use of the law and legal recourse should be seen in this light. Gavigan wrote: "They may not have had a legal claim to police intervention but they appear to have articulated a moral claim, demonstrating an understanding that the white community owed them something for their loyalty."¹²⁷ Much of the legal action taken on by Indigenous people has been to get settler state governments to follow their own laws or fulfill their nation-to-nation relationships, particularly when issues are pursued to the Supreme Court level. This is undeniably still true today. Personal matters that Indigenous people pursue in law or the courts more often than not have found little recourse or return.

Conclusion

¹²⁶ Gavigan, *Hunger, Horses, and Government Men*, 111.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 111.

In March 1925, Robert Lean Crow at Wood Mountain wrote to Superintendent Mossman at Standing Rock to ask about the estate of his aunt. He listed his relatives' names at Wood Mountain and Standing Rock in detail, and ended his letter with "...if you dont [sic] understand this see John Thomson and ask him about it and he will explain it to you."¹²⁸ John and other Lakota people from Wood Mountain continued on living in good relations across Lakhóta T̄hamák̄hoč̄he and sometimes were even called upon to bridge colonial authorities' ignorance of Lakota kin and community because they could help communicate these relationships. Regardless of genetic connection, they were takúkič̄hiyapi, related to each other, and knew their community and relatives well. This letter is illustrative of Lakota people relying on each other and being knowledgeable of precise Lakota kin connections across Lakota lands. Regardless of numerous and ever-changing settler societal and state obstacles, Lakota people continued living in relationship across their lands. Lakota kinscapes and landscapes were mostly unhindered in the lived sense by colonial intrusions in community and family belonging in this generation among Wood Mountain Lakota people, though in the settler state systems Lakota connections may have been ignored and devalued which created obstacles to the same kind of access to opportunities and state recognition that were becoming more solidified in tribal forms of relating after 1930.

The generation born after 1880 were able to make space for themselves within the new "Canadian" and "American" societies on the prairies because they grew up with a familiarity of the social, legal, political, and economic systems their parents had not. Slipping through the cracks of societal categorizes which meant that laws and policies were uniformly applied to them sometimes was a benefit, as they could carry on in Lakota ways of being especially through movement more easily, but also meant they might face considerable limitations when they could

¹²⁸ Kansas City NARA, RG 75, Standing Rock Agency, Correspondence with Schools & Agencies, 1909-47, Box 323, letter from Robert Lean Crow to Superintendent E.D. Mossman, March 4, 1925.

not access the same kind of opportunities and assistance that was afforded to others. They were able to resist and challenge those limitations, and readily did so through new avenues like the courts, though they were not always successful. Belonging in the new social order on the prairies, whether in the predominantly white settlements or in the new administrations for reserves/reservations, was shifting and not equally accessible for all. But belonging in Lakota communities continued to be based in kinship and the associated good relations and behaviours expected. And when utilizing or challenging the emerging settler social order, whether for Indians or not, they relied on Lakota understandings of kinship and movement for support and security. This is evident in how all the individuals discussed in this chapter were very much part of their communities regardless of the restrictions government authorities tried to place on them. This was another kind of Lakota resistance and resilience rooted in kin, land, and movement in the twentieth century.

In recent years in Canadian case law, the courts and federal government have acknowledged the discrepancies in how Indian status was gained historically and since passed on. This began with the Bedard Case, the Lavell Case, and the Lovelace Case which eventually resulted in the changes to the Indian Act known as Bill C-31 in 1985 which allowed women who had lost their status after marrying non-status men to regain it.¹²⁹ The McIvor case in 2007 dealt with the women who regained their status but were not able to pass on their status to their children in the same way men could. This led to Bill C-3 in 2011, changing the Indian Act to counter this discrimination, though great-grandchildren of women specifically are still denied the

¹²⁹ “Bill C-31,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, May 12, 2020, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/bill-c-31>; Heather Conn, “Sandra Lovelace Nicholas,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, January 10, 2018, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sandra-lovelace-nicholas>

same status as great-grandchildren of men.¹³⁰ Ongoing issues with legislation are still being addressed. The 2018 Descheneaux case affirmed that: “The ‘cousins’ issue relates to the differential treatment in how Indian status is acquired and transmitted among cousins of the same family, depending on the sex of their Indian grandparent, in situations where their grandmother was married to a non-Indian prior to 1985. This results in different abilities to acquire and pass on status between the maternal and paternal lines.”¹³¹ This case also addressed other relation inequities: “The ‘siblings’ issue concerns the differential treatment in the ability to transmit Indian status between male and female children born out of wedlock to an Indian father between the 1951 and 1985 amendments to the *Indian Act*. Indian women in this situation cannot pass on status to their descendants unless their child's father is a status Indian. However, Indian men in similar circumstances can pass on status to their children regardless of whether they parent with a non-Indian.”¹³² Convolutioned rules of marriage, relations, gender, and genealogy are still used by federal governments to determine categories of “Indianness” which will undoubtedly be challenged more in years to come. And they said Indigenous kinship was hard to understand.

¹³⁰ Heather Conn, “McIvor Case,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, May 11, 2020, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/mcivor-case>

¹³¹ Government of Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, “The Government of Canada’s Response to the Descheneaux Decision,” January 31, 2018, <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1467227680166/1572460465418>

¹³² *Ibid.*



Figure 5.1

John Thomson with his first wife, Ethel (née Howson). Most likely taken while they lived at Limerick, Saskatchewan where John was the telegraph operator, c. 1913.

Personal collection of Lamb family.



Figure 5.2

John Lecaine with his son, John Marie
WMHS 0083



Figure 5.3
William (Willie) Ogle, Jr and Lawrence (Toto) Brown
WMHS 0024

Conclusion

“To hell with this! I’m going back to Wood Mountain!”

...
 travelled like james [wounded horse]
 james leaving wood mountain’s sioux indian reservation
 to go to the pow wow and stampede
 in wolf point montana
 once a year
 for forty years...then returning with friends
 and relatives
 arriving in time for another pow wow
 at the wood mountain stampede
 james and all
 exercising their aboriginal right
 to cross the border freely with their personal belongings
 without a single incident¹

...

--Andrew Suknaski, *Wood Mountain Poems*, 1976

One evening, Charlie White Buffalo, who grew up at Bullhead, South Dakota on the Standing Rock Reservation, told me some things he remembered of a few Wood Mountain people from when he was a boy in the early 1960s. He remembered John Thomson had square-toed cowboy boots with eagles tooled in the front of them, his pant leg bottoms tucked into his boots a bit as was fashionable at the time. He said he remembered when one of the Brown boys would get “tuned up and pissed off” and he would tell his drinking buddies, “To hell with this! I’m going back to Wood Mountain!” We laughed about that. Sometimes I feel like saying that when I’m away from home too long too. And he remembered an old lady nicknamed Iši Brown² who wore moccasins her whole life and once his mother sent him to see her about mending his boots. We think this was Essie Brown (née Wears Horns).³ Though the majority of my research was done quickly but gently flipping through musty archival papers, and many revelations and

¹ Andrew Suknaski, “Melvin Greene/Oneida Indian Fighting for a Place to Die,” *Wood Mountain Poems* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976), 60.

² Iši is my spelling. Charlie is unsure of the spelling or meaning, but this is a close approximation of the spelling with the phonetic sounds.

³ Charlie White Buffalo, personal communication with author, June 7, 2018.

much excitement was found in them, the stories over coffee and across kitchen tables brought life to the names on paper.

Focusing on Wood Mountain, Čhąŋĥe, as the centre of some Lakota people's connections and experiences throughout Lakhóta Tĥamákĥoĥe after 1881, this dissertation reconnects Lakota history and families where they had been previously split up by the border into separate Canadian and American histories. This dissertation also redirects historical inquiries towards Lakota kinship, movement, and resistance. This is not a complete history of the Wood Mountain Lakota community and nor does it strive to be. It is but one small part of a large and diverse history.

I was drawn to this work because of my lifelong interest in local and family history, as is evident from many parts of this study. Rather than trying to achieve an impossible “objective/neutral” framework for research, my relationship with my research is part of a situated knowledge, a term which stems from feminist theory and is used in Indigenous Studies.⁴ Feminist scholar Donna Haraway argued: “Situated knowledges are about communities, not about isolated individuals. The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular.”⁵ This spoke to me because my “somewhere in particular” has always been my home in the Wood Mountain Uplands and my kin connections there. As it turned out, I also started my own journeys across Lakhóta Tĥamákĥoĥe as many of the people I wrote about had. I was on the road back and forth across the border in regular intervals (until the Covid-19 pandemic slowed that down, of course) for research, to stay with relatives and friends, to attend to farm and ranch duties, and to be with my partner. Another historian, Elizabeth A. Fenn, had similar

⁴ Kim TallBear, “Standing with and speaking as faith: A feminist-Indigenous approach to inquiry,” in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, edited by Chris Andersen and Jean M. O’Brien (New York: Routledge, 2016), 81.

⁵ Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1988): 590.

experiences, shared in her book *Encounters at the Heart of the World: A History of the Mandan People* by switching from her present-day travels through Mandan lands to the history that she pieces together in her research.⁶ Her research perspective and questions are rooted in the environment she moved in and was shaped by the people and places she encountered. Though my own movements did not spark my initial research, my home very much did. I connected throughout Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe with relatives, friends, and mentors across kitchen tables and through pages of archival records, piecing together the fragments and links between us and building a deeper understanding of the past.

The foundation of this study rests in the resilient and adaptive nature of Lakota kinship beyond what most consider to be the “traditional” period for Lakota culture, which is usually confined to the pre-reservation period. This study also argued that settler imposed Indian policies and borders were tenuous and often arbitrary, but had real consequences in people’s lives, in order to bring to light Lakota experiences navigating two sets of settler colonial assimilation, dispossession, and exclusion efforts. For all the hardships faced, there was still sharing, reminiscing, and gathering, based on wótakuye/kinship protocols and values. Wood Mountain Elder Hartland Goodtrack remembered from his childhood in the 1940s on the Wood Mountain reserve some of those moments: “Every time somebody happens to shoot a deer and gets a little extra food, they would have a feast. And they’d sing and sit there and talk about stories, good times, twenty, thirty years back, forty years back.”⁷ The Lakota people remained at Wood Mountain because they were persistent and resistant, but also because they drew from and relied on the immense and complex network of kin relations across Lakǎóta Tǎmákǎoĉhe. This

⁶ Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World: A History of the Mandan People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2014).

⁷ Hartland Goodtrack, interview with author, August 16, 2013.

dissertation has focused on Lakota concepts and lived realities of land, kin, self-determination, and community. The settler colonial project aimed to disrupt all those things by stealing land, children, and the right to govern from Indigenous peoples. But this has been a failed project.

Chapter one and chapter two laid out the foundations of Lakota connections to land and kin centered at Wood Mountain while arguing that these Lakota worldviews did not simply end with 1881, the settling on a reserve, or intermarriage with non-Lakota people. These chapters explained Lakota people's resiliency and flexibility in geographical and social borders from a Lakota perspective of good relations. Chapter one showed how Lakhóta Thámákhoche was a fluid and dynamic relationship with place and expanded beyond the typical definition of Lakota territory to what is now Canada. By demonstrating the patterns of settlement, Indigenous removal, Lakota diplomacy, and the reserve creation, the circumstances for how Lakota people came to stay more permanently at Wood Mountain were delineated. Through an examination of historic photographs, chapter two laid the foundations for detailed family histories that would be expanded upon throughout the remaining chapters and argued that the photographs serve as tangible traces of Lakota connections. Because so many of the photographs are also still in the possession of family and community members, these collections are special as they are still used today to retain and describe connections among friends and relatives. Furthermore, the postcards and photographs examined in this chapter were a visual and material example of Lakota connections throughout Lakhóta Thámákhoche, centered at Wood Mountain.

Chapter three provided new insights into Lakota gendered experiences in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which particularly complicate typical narratives of Lakota women in this time period. This chapter demonstrated that Lakota women moved between many spheres and sought out strategies and opportunities, sometimes even the ones

which were supposed to be the domain of men only at the time, which rooted their Lakota kin at Wood Mountain without compromising their Lakota culture and worldviews. This analysis examined the specific ways Lakota women navigated new settler societal standards and Indian policies, while underscoring their knowledge and connections as the centre of their families and community. Throughout this chapter, the centrality of Lakota women to the Wood Mountain community was emphasized and illustrated, a common arrangement in many Indigenous communities and societies.

Chapter four and five dove deeper into an analysis of the impacts of settler colonialism on Lakota people, but also their resistance through multiple generations ability to move and live within their own relationship frameworks. These chapters work as critiques of the multifaceted levels and tactics of settler colonialism through the lens of Lakota kinship and mobility. Chapter four focused on the 1890s as a period of turmoil, both because moral panics among settlers were commonplace and useful in colonial settings to forward the removal of Indigenous people, and also because Lakota people were facing more dire circumstances in early reservation life. This examination though expanded the discussion beyond American-based narratives that, typically only focus on events like the killing of Sitting Bull and the Wounded Knee Massacre in the context of American history, with little beyond 1890 which has been described as the “end of the Lakota nation.” Including a more diverse examination of Lakota perspectives, with the centre on Wood Mountain connections, helps to push back against simplified tropes of Lakota history trapped in colonial geopolitical boundaries. Chapter five extended the examination into the twentieth century and into a new generation of Wood Mountain Lakota people, born between 1880 and 1910, who defied categorization by settler state governments, which sometimes afforded them more space and sometimes limited their opportunities. Because this generation

grew up with a closer familiarity with settler society, they could navigate policies and borders in ways earlier generations could not. But, as this analysis found, governments efforts to “unmake Indians” often excluded this generation through a series of arbitrary and haphazard policies and rules, often it seems at the discretion of individual Indian Affairs officials. The continuation of Lakota kin and movement afforded the individuals in this generation security and support when settler states failed them, and they remained firmly rooted in Lakota belonging regardless of assimilation efforts to distance them from family and community. Overall, this dissertation argued that Lakota people lived and enacted kinship throughout Lakhóta Tǎmákǎoche and this was the foundation of Lakota survivance and autonomy, especially to defy, adapt, and resist in an explicitly racist and demoralizing settler colonial context. Kinship was the foundation for movements, decision making, and support throughout Lakhóta Tǎmákǎoche well into the twentieth century.

Much more work is needed to recentre Lakota histories with Lakota knowledge, kinship, language, and land relations. Being a good relative has always been the foundation of Lakota society and much more could be learned and shared from this simple but profound basis. Lakota elders and scholars such as Ella Deloria, Vine Deloria, Jr., and Josephine Waggoner already knew, recorded, and lived these things, but much more could be realized if we turn to the foundations they already laid. Much more needs to be done to shift focus away from only human relations and experiences, away from only cis-gender frameworks, and away from colonial containers of inquiry, especially the nation-state. This dissertation only briefly touched on these areas and future work could provide fruitful nuance and insights to challenge the narratives and views we take for grant both of the past and present.

Centring Lakota lived relationships and belonging has taken Lakota history away from the battles, American or Canadian boundaries, and leaders that have been the overwhelming focus of written Lakota histories until recently. This is not just happening with Lakota histories but is part of a more pronounced and recent turn towards knowledge and relating systems by Indigenous communities and scholars alike. Lakota waniyetu iyáwapi (winter counts) rarely recorded well-known battles as the important events of the communities to remember, but more personal events and relationships that impacted the thiyóšpaye.⁸ This is not to say that warfare did not happen or was not important, it clearly was, especially on an individual level when considered how many ledger art drawings were done by men to record their brave deeds in battles. But for the collective, wótakuye/kinship provided the cohesiveness, knowledge, and behaviours needed to live on the prairies and with each other in order to thrive.

Discussing Indigenous ways of belonging and relating are important in the historical context and also have implications for the present. There has been growing concern over claims to Indigenous ancestry without having a living connection to Indigenous nations. Words like “descent” and “ancestry” in the settler context mean someone has faint traces of genealogical connection and describe people’s belonging as existing in the past (where real Indians can only be found supposedly). This is also done to shore up settler colonial claims and legitimacy to control and land because, as the logic goes, all the “real Indians” are dead and their descendants are far removed and assimilated, and therefore anyone can claim to be Indigenous. These claims are made as another insidious form of settler colonialism, appropriation, and theft.⁹ They negate

⁸ For a comprehensive inventory and discussion of Lakota winter counts see Candace S. Greene and Russell Thornton, eds., *The Year the Stars Fell: Lakota Winter Counts at the Smithsonian* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

⁹ See Kim TallBear, “Playing Indian Constitutes a Structural Form of Colonial Theft, and It Must be Tackled,” *Unsettle*, SubStack, May 9, 2021, <https://kimtallbear.substack.com/p/playing-indian-constitutes-a-structural>; Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998); and Darryl Leroux, *Distorted Descent: White Claims to Indigenous Identity* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2019).

Indigenous ways of relating, belonging, and being while also constantly making Indigenous people “prove” themselves to the state and to settler people in order to be “legitimate” to settler standards and notions without taking Indigenous ways of “proving” and connecting into consideration. This repeatedly happens in Indian policies and legal cases to this day that disregard Indigenous forms of belonging that are not categorial, but rest in knowing and acting in lived kin connections of good relations deeper than genealogy alone. And belonging and relating is not confined to the human context—many Indigenous leaders, scholars, elders, and activists are reminding us of our reciprocal responsibilities to the land, water, and animal relatives as well.

Often Indigenous scholars end their work with questions about the future. Though this is something historians traditionally opposed, Lakota worldviews do not share the opposition to forward-looking history. Anthropologist James R. Walker noted: “It is only a Western idea that history has as its purpose the objective evaluation of real past events. Certainly this concept of history was not shared by the traditional Lakotas. For them—as for most peoples throughout the world—history has as its function the validation of the present.”¹⁰ Scholarship and settler thought always placed Indigenous people only in the past, as dead or disappearing and Indigenous writers have pushed against this for generations. Elizabeth Cook-Lynn offered these words of encouragement and reminder of responsibility:

Nothing that I have said suggests that the future will be easy, nor can we know that there is anything except hard work ahead. For now, though, I have to be content to simply encourage the new scholars and writers who have begun to understand what is at stake. For now I have to be content in my own realization that the partisan struggle in which I've been engaged will eventually matter. Indian Studies scholars who have been studying Indian histories and lifeways in the past two or three decades have been doing so for the purpose of petitioning for redresses of grievances in this democracy. In the process of that engagement they have helped everyone to understand that the need for transformation is urgent and compelling. I am certain that these partisan struggles will inspire those who believe they have an intuitive responsibility to humanity.¹¹

¹⁰ Walker, *Lakota Society*, 11.

¹¹ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays*, 39-40.

Working in concert with and alongside community, not just the academy, will help both the discipline and the nations to flourish. Looking to the present and future also helps to remember the nuance and complexity of history. There is not one answer, and I do not pose kinship as a one-dimensional alternative or solution. Kim TallBear wrote of this: "...while the language of sovereignty does important defensive work for us it is a partial reflection of Indigenous peoples' relations with non-Indigenous people, and with each other. The language of kinship may also be a partial and productive tool to help us forge alternatives to the settler-colonial state. Making kin is to make people into familiars in order to relate. This seems fundamentally different from negotiating relations between those who are seen as different—between 'sovereigns' or 'nations'—especially when one of those nations is a militarized and white supremacist empire."¹² Like Elizabeth Cook-Lynn wrote, the way forward is not simple or easy. And neither is the past.

This study demonstrated that Lakǰóta ǂamákǰoĉhe is not a set of boundaries and identities placed on top of land, it is a web of relations and reciprocity that is alive, moves, and adapts. No treaty, battle, policy, or surrender can remove that. As my aunt and cousin concluded in their chapter on Wood Mountain Lakota history, "Just as strong as the sense of kinship, is the attachment most of the Lakota have for Wood Mountain. These hills, where their ancestors sought peace, hunted buffalo, buried their relatives, and raised their children, are home."¹³ Western notions of property fall flat when trying to explain Indigenous homelands or when they try to conceptualize land back and protection movements because they cannot disentangle ideas of territorial exclusivity from nationhood and identity on a legal, political, or social level. There

¹² Kim TallBear, "The U.S.-Dakota War and Failed Settler Kinship," *Anthropology News*, Vol. 57, no. 9 (September 2016), <https://kimtallbear.substack.com/p/the-us-dakota-war-and-failed-settler>

¹³ Elizabeth and Rory Thomson, "Chapter 5: The Lakota," in *Wood Mountain Uplands: From the Big Muddy to the Frenchman River*, edited by Thelma Poirier (Wood Mountain, SK: Wood Mountain Historical Society, 2000), 81.

is a disconnect in the discussions happening in Indigenous circles and the general public/governments about land/water back because the relationality to those places and spaces are so different, especially since mainstream connections to land and waters are still extractive. Learning about other systems of relating and being can help move dialogue and action away from what we view as inevitable to what may be possible.

The conclusions in this dissertation are not necessarily new or surprising to Indigenous people, but they are in the discipline of History. I offer a set of fresh contributions for understanding Lakota history: looking beyond the late nineteenth century, the Indian wars, and male leaders; the incorporation of Lakota knowledge, kinship, philosophies, and worldviews; the importance of women as sustainers of kinship networks; the remarkable persistence and resistance of Lakota people; and the acknowledgment that Lakhóta Třamákřoče was never undermined by the border and by governments' policies and laws. This work builds upon many other Indigenous scholars' work who have argued similar things about their nations' systems of kinship and land relations. Demonstrating the artificial, damaging, and tenuous nature of imposed settler colonial policies of identity and belonging that have reduced Indigenous nations to racialized categories is also a well-entrenched exercise in Indigenous Studies and History. Lakota thought and connections are rarely linear which allows for flexible and diverse ways to be. Looking to Lakota systems of relating and reciprocity can help to encourage and remind us how to live in good relations.

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