

ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 34001



An Historical Album of Blackfoot Indian Music

Produced in cooperation with the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music

EDITED AND WITH NOTES BY BRUNO NETTL

Compiled from recordings collected by

George Bird Grinnell (1897), Clark Wissler (1903-04), Joseph K. Dixon (1909), Jane Richardson Hanks (1939), Howard K. Kaufman (1952) and Bruno Nettl (1952-66),
with assistance from the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.



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SIDE A

- Bands 1a-1c Three Beaver Medicine songs: Marmot Song, Antelope Song and Black Deer Song (1:05, 0:48; 1:19). Sung by James White Calf. Recorded by George Bird Grinnell at Piegan Agency, Montana, Oct. 17, 1897.
- Bands 2a-2d Four short Medicine Pipe songs of the Piegan (1:53). Sung by unidentified male singer. Recorded by Clark Wissler in Montana, 1903-04.
- Band 3 Medicine Pipe Song (1:35). Sung by Spumiapi (White Headed Chief). Recorded by Jane Richardson Hanks at Gleichen, Alberta, Sept. 17, 1939.
- Bands 4a-4c Three Sun Dance songs (0:38; 0:29; 0:45). (Details as for Band 3.)
- Band 5 Scalp Song (2:26). Sung by Chief Bull and several other men. Recorded by Joseph K. Dixon at Crow Agency, Montana, Sept. 12, 1909.
- Band 6 Warrior's Song (0:55). Sung by Theodore Last Star. Recorded by Howard K. Kaufman at Browning, Montana, June 1952.
- Band 8 Crazy Dog Society Song (1:37). (Details as given in Band 4.)
- Band 9 Lullaby (1:47). Sung by Calvin Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966.
- Band 10 Lullaby (Baby Song) (0:19). Sung by Tom Many-Guns. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Bloomington, Indiana, July 1952.
- Band 11 Night Love Song (2:00). Sung by Chief Bull. (Details as given for Band 5.)
- Band 12 Gambling Song (0:55). (Details as given for Band 9.)

SIDE B

- Band 1 Three gambling songs (excerpts) (1:34; 1:24; 1:40). Sung by a group of men. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Heart Butte, Montana, Aug. 7, 1966.
- Band 2 War or Grass Dance Song (1:10). (Details as given for Side A/Band 9).
- Band 3 Fast War or Grass Dance Song (1:28). (Details as given for Side A/Band 9).
- Band 4 Fast War or Grass Dance Song (1:06). (Details as given for Side A/Band 9).
- Band 5 War or Grass Dance songs (excerpts) (3:03; 3:16; 2:30; 1:56). Sung by several groups. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Browning, Montana, July 14, 1966.
- Band 6 Owl Dance Song (1:09). Sung by Calvin Boy and Mrs. Mary Boy. (Details as given for Side A/Band 9).
- Band 7 Two Owl Dance songs (0:46; 0:53). (Details as given for side A/Band 10.)

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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AN HISTORICAL ALBUM OF BLACKFOOT INDIAN MUSIC

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Compiled from recordings collected by George Bird Grinnell (1897), Clark Wissler (1903-04), Joseph K. Dixon (1909), Jane Richardson Hanks (1939), Howard K. Kaufman (1952) and Bruno Nettl (1952, 1966), with assistance from the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

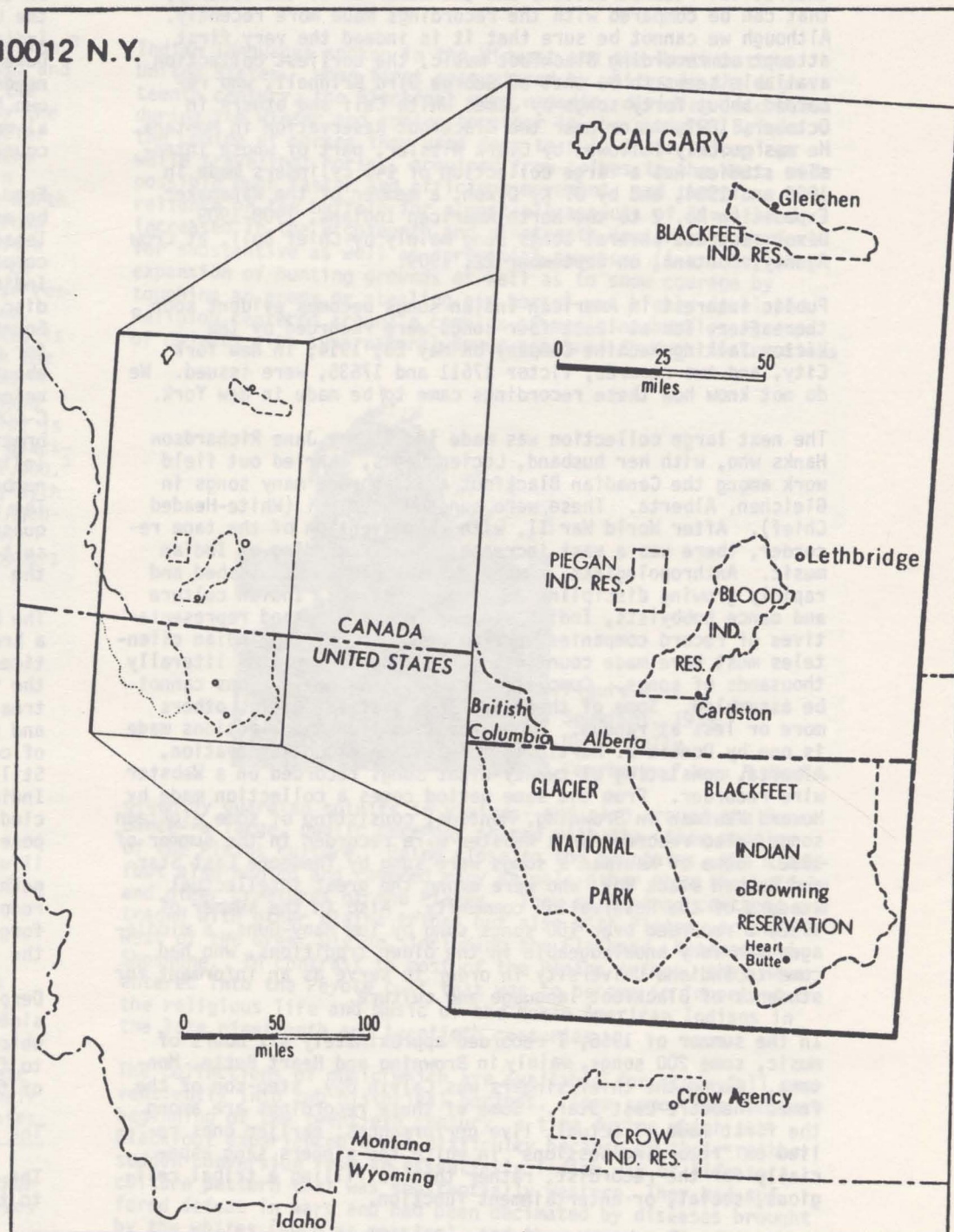
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Series Editor: Frank J. Gillis

The Recording of Blackfoot Music

The Blackfoot are among the most thoroughly studied Indian peoples of North America. Since the late nineteenth century, they have been visited by scholars of many disciplines, and, of course, particularly by anthropologists, among them some of the most illustrious figures of the field: George Bird Grinnell, explorer, ethnographer and folklorist, who was there in the late nineteenth century; Clark Wissler, who went on to provide the most important ethnographies of the Blackfoot; Walter McClintock, explorer and writer; Christian Cornelius Uhlenbeck, the famous linguist, in the first decade of this century; Julian Steward and Oscar Lewis, both of whom were later to be ranked among the world's leading anthropologists, in the 1930's; John C. Ewers, the most important scholar of Blackfoot culture and history after Wissler, from the 1950's on; and many others. It is safe to say that there are probably very few older fullblooded Blackfoot Indians in the United States, at least, who have not been interviewed by at least one scholar or graduate student trying to get insight into the history and lifeways of his people

In the tradition of North American ethnography, a great many of these scholars as well as other interested individuals made recordings of Blackfoot music. Realizing the importance of songs and dancing in the lives of the Blackfoot, they made use of whatever recording devices were available as early as the opportunity presented itself. As a result, a large number of collections of Blackfoot music may be found in various archives, but particularly in the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University. The first of these were made on wax cylinders, and while their fidelity is modest, they show us how the Blackfoot sang decades ago and permit us to make historical studies of a traditional sort, with concrete sources (rather than merely



LOCATIONS WHERE RECORDINGS WERE MADE

theoretical reconstructions and the memories of the elderly) that can be compared with the recordings made more recently. Although we cannot be sure that it is indeed the very first attempt at recording Blackfoot music, the earliest collection available seems to be that of George Bird Grinnell, who recorded about forty songs by James White Calf and others in October, 1897, in or near the Blackfoot Reservation in Montana. He was quickly followed by Clark Wissler, part of whose intensive studies was a large collection of 146 cylinders made in 1903 and 1904, and by J. K. Dixon, a member of the Wanamaker Expedition No. 2 to the North American Indians, 1908-1909. Dixon recorded several songs sung mainly by Chief Bull, at Crow Agency, Montana, on September 22, 1909.

Public interest in American Indian songs becomes evident soon thereafter, for at least four songs were recorded by the Victor Talking Machine Company on May 23, 1914, in New York City, and two records, Victor 17611 and 17635, were issued. We do not know how these recordings came to be made in New York.

The next large collection was made in 1938 by Jane Richardson Hanks who, with her husband, Lucien Hanks, carried out field work among the Canadian Blackfoot and recorded many songs in Gleichen, Alberta. These were sung by Spumiapi (White-Headed Chief). After World War II, with the invention of the tape recorder, there was a vast increase in the recording of Indian music. Anthropologists, members of the newly established and rapidly growing discipline of ethnomusicology, Indian culture and dance hobbyists, Indian singers themselves, and representatives of record companies serving both general and Indian clientele must have made countless collections comprising literally thousands of songs. Complete data on these collections cannot be assembled. Some of them were made systematically, others more or less at random. Among the significant collections made is one by Donald D. Hartle in 1949 on the Blood Reservation, Alberta, consisting of twenty-eight songs recorded on a Webster wire recorder. From the same period comes a collection made by Howard Kaufman in Browning, Montana, consisting of some eighteen songs, also recorded on a Webster wire recorder in the summer of 1952. Some of Kaufman's songs were sung by Theodore Last Star and Reuben Black Boy, who were among the great intellectual leaders of the Reservation community. Also in the summer of 1952, I recorded over 100 songs sung by Tom Many-Guns, a middle-aged man very knowledgeable in the older traditions, who had come to Indiana University in order to serve as an informant for students of Blackfoot language and culture.

In the summer of 1966, I recorded approximately six hours of music, some 200 songs, mainly in Browning and Heart Butte, Montana. Among the chief singers was Calvin Boy, step-son of the famed Theodore Last Star. Some of these recordings are among the first made of actual, live performances; earlier ones relied on "recording sessions" in which the singers sang especially for the recorder, rather than fulfilling a tribal religious, social, or entertainment function.

In the summer of 1968, Robert Witmer, then a graduate student at the University of Illinois, carried out field work on the Blood Indian Reserve in Alberta under the sponsorship of the Doris Duke Project, the purpose of which was to gather materials needed to help the American Indians study and understand their own history. A large collection resulted, some of it traditional music and some consisting of European-style music (such as country and western) performed by Indian musicians.

From the 1950's on, professional Indian singing groups began to be established, and recordings by some of them have been released, largely for Indian consumption, through such recording companies as Candelario, Tom-Tom, and, more recently, Taos, Indian House, and others. Among recent releases is a longplay disc, BLACKFEET TRIBAL GRASS DANCE, issued by American Indian Soundchief (BLKFT-104). The record consists entirely of songs for one very important type of social dance, sung in Canada about 1967 by Edward Morning Owl and Wilbur Morning Owl. Other releases are FROM THE LAND OF THE BLACKFEET, Canyon Record C-6095, recorded at the annual North American Indian Days celebration in Browning, Montana, in July, 1972, and BLACKFEET, Indian Records and Supplies IR220, sung by Pat Kennedy and a number of other leading singers of the Montana reservation. The singers of these records are members of the professional or quasi-professional singing groups which have developed as a result of the pan-Indian movement and the intertribal powwows of the 1950's and 1960's.

The history of the recording of Blackfoot music provides us with a broad panorama of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century practices. There are gaps--we have little between 1910 and 1950, the various subdivisions of the Blackfoot people have been treated unevenly, and the musical culture has changed so much and rapidly and is itself so complex that even this large number of collections and songs represents but a small sampling. Still, we have the basis for a better knowledge of Blackfoot Indian music than of most of the world's musical cultures, including even most other North American Indian groups. Our purpose here is to give examples of this sampling, in order to illustrate the historical depth of the total corpus, to draw together the variety of sources, to compare recent with earlier recordings, and last but not least, to honor the first and often forgotten scholars who recorded the Indian songs that must at the time have appeared musically confusing and inferior.

Despite the large number of collected songs and despite the considerable amount of ethnographic and historical research to which the Blackfoot culture has been subjected, it is curious to find that there have been few studies of the musical culture of this people.¹

The Blackfoot Indians

The Blackfoot have for at least some centuries been divided into three groups which are distinguished by dialect and

(relatively minor) variations in custom, and by their location.² The largest of them, the Piegan, are also the southernmost, and after the various treaties that were forced upon them in the second half of the nineteenth century, they came to occupy the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana, immediately East of Glacier National Park. Most of the collections mentioned above were made among the Piegan. The Blood Indians and the Northern Blackfoot, the two smaller branches, lived farther to the North and hence finally took up residence, along with a small group of Northern Piegan, on three reserves in Alberta. There is a great deal of contact among these groups now, and members of other tribes have in small numbers found their way to these reservations as well--particularly Plains Cree and Assiniboine. The total number of Blackfoot before contact with the whites is estimated to have been about 15,000, which would make them the second-largest tribal group of the Plains, after the Sioux. The number of Blackfoot living today (counting those of mixed ancestry who choose to enter themselves on the tribal rolls) is somewhere in the vicinity of 20,000. The total number of Blackfoot living in the United States in the 1960's was over 12,000.³ Of these, some 7,000 live on the Montana Reservation along with several thousand white merchants, employees of the Indian Agency, and caterers to tourists on the way to Glacier National Park. The standard of living of the Canadian Blackfeet appears to be higher than that of the Montana Blackfoot, and,



Figure 1.
James White Calf, 1936.

*Courtesy of
Smithsonian Institution
National Anthropological
Archives.*

interestingly, the Canadian groups also have held on to their traditional music, dance, and art more readily than have their southern brothers. But it is the Piegan, in the United States, whose culture is best known to scholars.

Blackfoot culture in earlier times appears to have been rather typical of the North Plains culture area, which also comprises many of the Sioux or Dakota tribes, the Crow, Gros Ventre, Assiniboine, and perhaps the Cheyenne and Arapaho. The Blackfoot language is Algonquian and thus related to that of the Arapaho and Cheyenne, the Cree, and to a very large number of

Indian languages spoken in the Midwest and the Northeastern United States. When first encountered by whites in the eighteenth century, the Blackfoot were nomadic, dividing into bands during the winter and coming together in the summer. Before the coming of horses they used dogs to pull their belongings while traveling; horses, acquired from tribes to the West, made possible much faster and efficient movement, and therefore the reliance on the buffalo for almost all aspects of livelihood increased in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Warfare for substantive as well as ceremonial purposes (i.e., for the expansion of hunting grounds as well as to show courage by touching an enemy or stealing his horse) was highly developed. Religion centered around a complex of medicine bundles--groups of objects with supernatural power acquired through instructions



Figure 2.
Spumiapi, 1939.
By F. Gully.
Courtesy of Jane R. Hanks.

given by guardian spirits in visions--and also around the Sun Dance--a large, public ceremony shared with the other peoples of the Plains culture. Being close to the mountains, the Blackfoot also hunted and revered many animals other than the buffalo and other creatures of the Plains. They maintained contacts and traded with other Plains tribes but also with Plateau tribes west of the Great Divide, including the Flathead, Kutenai and Shoshone. In contrast to most of the Plains tribes, they never entered into the Peyote cult that was to become so important in the religious life and music of the North American Indians in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The collections of music which are available for study fall conveniently into two historical periods. Some come from the very beginning of the twentieth century, a time during which the Blackfoot experienced great difficulty because of their rather sudden conversion from an essentially Indian way of life to a culture pattern that was substantially Western. They had suffered defeat in wars and had been decimated by diseases brought by the whites (such as measles), and they were confined on what seemed to them tiny spots of undesirable territory. Most of them had been converted to nominal Christianity and there were great pressures on them to give up their traditions. Neverthe-

less, the collections of Grinnell, Wissler, and Dixon provide some insight into what Blackfoot music must have been like in the late nineteenth century, before the Indians had come into intensive contact with whites and their music. Many of the songs are sung by older individuals who provide us with a record of music demonstrably a century old.



Figure 3.
Blackfoot gambling game,
1966.
Courtesy B. Nettl.
By Bruno Nettl.

Most of the other collections come from a period half a century later, a time when the Indians of North America were (and are) seeking a renewal of national identity, when music became the greatest symbol of "Indian-ness," but when tribal distinctions had begun to break down in favor of an intertribal, Indian culture (in which there are nevertheless important tribal and regional differences). The collections by Kaufman, Witmer, and Nettl, and the recently issued commercial records fall into this period.⁴

When these collections were made, after World War II, much of the culture of the nineteenth century and before had been forgotten, or lived only in the vague memories of a few older individuals. Thus, these collections consist mainly of twentieth-century Indian music, not substantially different in style from the older materials, but associated with different functions. The older materials consist chiefly of religious or semi-religious music. It seems likely that most Blackfoot songs in the nineteenth century, and certainly those songs that were regarded as most important, were associated with the large and rich complex of religious and semi-religious practices--medicine bundles such as the Beaver Bundle or the Medicine Pipe, the Sun Dance, religious music accompanying war activities and the activities of the ceremonial and social men's societies. The recent collections are comprised largely of social dance songs and gambling songs--genres surely also present, but less prominent, in earlier times--which are the staple of Indian singing today.

Practically all songs in the collections known to exist are sung by men. Women did and do, of course, know songs and sing. But singing was not considered particularly appropriate for the modest position of women, and men dominated ceremonial life. Moreover, men were more apt to take contact with outsiders such

as anthropologists and ethnomusicologists, while women remained in the background. But today, older men often rely on their wives to help them remember songs and even to sing them. Still, even the professional and semi-professional singing groups that perform at social dances today--and there are some forty or fifty men who are considered "singers" in a new, somewhat Western sense on the Montana Reservation today--are comprised of men.

As far as we know, the Blackfoot used only drums and rattles, and most of the recordings include drumming. "Flutes," probably flageolets, are mentioned by older individuals but seem to have been little used in the last 100 years, if ever. Like most American Indian repertoires of the United States and Canada, that of the Blackfoot is essentially vocal.



Figure 4.
Blackfoot singing group,
1966.
Courtesy B. Nettl.
By Bruno Nettl.

SONG TYPES REPRESENTED

Side A

Beaver Medicine Songs

A/Band 1a-1c: Three Beaver Medicine songs, from the ritual unwrapping of the beaver pipe: (a) Marmot Song (1:03), (b) Antelope Song (0:46), and (c) Black Deer Song (1:14). Sung by James White Calf. Recorded by George Bird Grinnell at Piegan Agency, Montana, Oct. 17, 1897. (Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music: Tape No. ATL 1858.7, 1858.8, 1858.9)

The Beaver Medicine Bundle was the largest and most prominent of the medicine bundle types used by the Blackfoot. It consisted of literally hundreds of objects--animal and bird skins, sticks for keeping count of days and weeks, pipes, rattles, etc.--with accompanying songs. The objects had supernatural power which was activated when the bundle was opened and appropriate songs, prayers, or other actions were presented. There were few beaver medicine men, and in the twentieth century there have been few who have known much of the ritual. Even around 1910, evidently no one knew the entire ritual, which would have taken several days to perform. Beaver medicine men kept the tribal calendar, helped to bring buffalo, and had a special

association with water and the underworld. Most Beaver Medicine Bundle songs were sung solo, and each object in the bundle had its own song which was sung when the object was taken out of its wrappings. Even the medicine bundle used in the Sun Dance is thought to have been derived from, or in some way associated with, the older and originally more powerful Beaver Medicine Bundle.

Medicine Pipe Songs

A/Band 2: Four short Medicine Pipe songs of the Piegan (1:50). Sung by unidentified male singer. Recorded by Clark Wissler in Montana, 1903-04. (IUATM: ATL 1861.7)

A/Band 3: Medicine Pipe Song (2:25). Sung by Spumiapi (White-Headed Chief). Recorded by Jane Richardson Hanks at Gleichen, Alberta, ca. Sept. 17, 1939. (IUATM: ATL 1169.5)

Translation of text: *"Old man saying, my pipe is saying, Holy."*

The Medicine Pipe Bundle was smaller than the Beaver Bundle and had a less complex ceremony associated with it. It was thought to have been given to man by Thunder, who was, so the Blackfoot myths tell us, temporarily married to a Blackfoot woman. The Medicine Pipe Bundle ceremony was performed each year in the spring, just after the first thunderstorm, and was thought to bring rain and to cure sickness. It consists of a half dozen objects and only a dozen or two songs, some of which accompanied dance. It is known to have been part of Blackfoot religion as early as 1800, and perhaps because it is simpler, its ceremony has been retained better than that of the Beaver Bundle. Indeed, Medicine Pipe songs are still sung frequently, and a Medicine Pipe ceremony is still held occasionally in the summer, but it has been changed from a more or less private, religious event to a public entertainment whose purpose is to keep Blackfoot traditions alive.

Sun Dance Songs

A/Band 4a-4c: Three Sun Dance songs (0:32, 0:27, 0:43). Sung by Spumiapi (White-Headed Chief). Recorded by June Richardson Hanks at Gleichen, Alberta, ca. Sept. 17, 1939. (IUATM: ATL 1169.7, 1169.8, 1169.9)

Translation of texts: (a) *"Running Rabbit, really kill pretty young man"* (later, words are changed to: *"Calf Chief, just take away his gun"*); (b) *"Sun says to smoke"*; (c) *"One Chief, Sun pities him."*

The Sun Dance was the most important and largest religious ceremony of the Blackfoot. It was similar to the Sun Dance of other Plains tribes but contained some typical Blackfoot traits such as the use of a Medicine Bundle among its associated activities. The central activity involved dancing around a pole by men who then sought visions of supernatural guardian spirits. During the dancing, the men gazed at the sun and sometimes tortured

themselves in various ways. The dancers were accompanied by singers who performed in a group around a drum which they beat in unison. Originally, the Sun Dance was preceded by a complex ritual in which the entire tribe participated, consisting of four daily moves of the tribal camp; and during the Sun Dance, various social and athletic events took place, also accompanied by singing. The songs given here are not designated by their collectors as to specific function within the Sun Dance.

In 1887, the Sun Dance, along with many other traditional activities, was suppressed by the Indian Bureau of the United States. It was revived a few years later, and became associated with the July 4 celebrations. Today it is still occasionally held, if appropriate sponsorship can be found; but many of its social functions have been taken over, on the Montana Reservations, by the North American Indians Days powwow celebration.

Traditional War Music

A/Band 5: Scalp Song, on occasion of the killing of White Dog (1:58). Sung by Chief Bull and several other men. Recorded by Joseph K. Dixon at Crow Agency, Montana, Sept. 12, 1909. (IUATM: ATL 1856.1)

A/Band 6: Warrior's Song (0:55). Sung by Theodore Last Star. Recorded by Howard K. Kaufman at Browning, Montana, June 12, 1952. (IUATM: ATL 868.4)

Translation of text: *"I don't love anyone, I'm telling the truth."*

A/Band 7: Wolf Song (1:29). Sung by Reuben Black Boy. Recorded by Howard K. Kaufman at Black Boy's home, Browning, Montana, June 1952. (IUATM: ATL 868.5)

A/Band 8: Crazy Dog Society Song (1:40). Sung by Spumiapi (White-Headed Chief). Recorded by Jane Richardson Hanks at Gleichen, Alberta, ca. Sept. 17, 1939. (IUATM: ATL 1169.11)

Translation of text: *"It's a bad thing to be an old man."*

Various kinds of songs were associated with war. When a war party prepared itself a dance was held, and songs were sung while the members painted themselves. Warriors sang personal songs when they were wounded or thought they were about to die, or to give themselves courage. When the party returned, a "scalp dance" was held, at which trophies were exhibited and the events of the conflict briefly told in song. The function of these songs disappeared about 100 years ago, and those that are recorded here were doubtless resurrected by older singers from experiences of their youth, or more likely, learned by them outside the context of their original functions. One of the songs is associated with the Scalp Dance, another is simply labeled "Warrior Song." Two others come from the repertoires of the men's societies which at one time had a major function in war and social life. These, "Wolf Song" and "Crazy Dog Song," come from such societies, but we do not know specifically whether they were indeed associated with war.

The Piegan had seven men's age-grade societies, each with its own ceremony (which was performed during the Sun Dance complex), its particular function in a tribal war, and other duties. The Wolf Society was one of these--but its function was no longer understood by my informants in 1966. The Crazy Dog Society served frequently as a sort of tribal police force, especially at large gatherings, and this may account for the fact that it is still known, for it provided the white Indian Agent with a ready-made police force. While it no longer performs this duty, having been replaced in Montana by the Blackfoot Tribal Police with its modern police cars, there are still a few older men--among them Uhlenbeck's interpreter of the first decade of this century, the late John Tatsey--who regard themselves as members and who can sing a few of the songs.

Lullabies and Love Songs

A/Band 9: Lullaby (1:47). Sung by Calvin Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Calvin Boy's home, Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966. (Univ. of Illinois Archives of Ethnomusicology: Collection no. 1, tape no. 5, song no. 22)

A/Band 10: Lullaby (Baby Song) (0:22). Sung by Tom Many-Guns. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, July 1952. (IUATM: ATL 291.16)

A/Band 11: Night Love Song (2:00). Sung by Chief Bull. Recorded by Joseph K. Dixon at Crow Agency, Montana, Sept. 12, 1909. (IUATM: ATL 1856.2)

Lullabies are known to most American Indian tribes and are still sung to small children. Typically, they have no words, and do not differ very much from other songs in their style. Love songs were associated with ceremonies using special secret medicinal formulas--different not in nature but in scope from the medicine bundles--that were taken by lovers whose advances had been repulsed. They are part of a widespread North American Indian repertory whose style differs somewhat from that of the typical songs of most tribes, being short and simple.⁵ More recently, songs with English words used at social dances and dealing humorously with relations between the sexes are referred to as "love songs" by the Blackfoot.

Gambling Songs

A/Band 12: Gambling Song (0:39). Sung by Calvin Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Calvin Boy's home, Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966. (UIAE: 1/5/5)

Side B

Gambling Songs (cont.)

B/Band 1a-1c: Three gambling songs (excerpts) (2:46, 1:24, 1:34). Sung by a group of Blackfoot Indians, mostly residents of Heart Butte, Montana. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at a hand game held outdoors at Heart Butte, Montana, Aug. 7, 1966. (UIAE: 1/4/excerpts)

Gambling games have long been widespread among the American Indians. Most often they took the form of hiding games in which two teams faced each other, one hiding a small piece of bone, a seed, a bullet, or the like in its hands or in a row of mocassins before it while the other team searched. Men's societies frequently played against each other. The hiding team normally sang special songs. In the nineteenth century these games, like other Indian activities, were frequently suppressed. In the twentieth century they became again important souvenirs of earlier times, and gambling is now a very popular Saturday afternoon pastime. The players sit behind long planks which they strike rapidly for percussive accompaniment. According to Herzog,⁶ gambling songs are different from the main repertory in most Indian musical cultures. This is certainly true among the Blackfoot, whose songs are short and have a breathless quality. The songs on this recording come from recent collections; some of them were especially elicited, but others were recorded during the playing of the game and hence contain the typical extraneous noises of a social event--children calling, babies crying, conversation, cars and motorcycles.

Social Dance Songs

B/Band 2: War or Grass Dance Song (1:10). Sung by Calvin Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Calvin Boy's home, Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966. (UIAE: 1/5/19)

B/Band 3: Fast War or Grass Dance Song (1:28). Sung by Calvin Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Calvin Boy's home, Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966. (UIAE: 1/5/20)

B/Band 4: Fast War or Grass Dance Song (1:06). Sung by Calvin Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Calvin Boy's home, Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966. (UIAE: 1/5/21)

B/Band 5a-5d: War or Grass Dance songs (excerpts) (2:54, 3:16, 3:32, 2:12). Sung by several groups of singers, each comprised of six to ten men. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at North American Indian Days of 1966, at the campground at Browning, Montana, during the dance festivities, July 14, 1966. (UIAE: 1/1/excerpts)

B/Band 6: Owl Dance Song (1:09). Sung by Calvin Boy and Mrs. Mary Boy. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at Calvin Boy's home, Browning, Montana, July 27, 1966. (UIAE: 1/5/10)

B/Band 7a-7b: Two Owl Dance songs (0:46, 0:58). Sung by Tom Many-Guns. Recorded by Bruno Nettl at the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, July 1952. (IUATM: ATL 291.15 and 291.13)

Text of second song (sung in English): *"If you wait for me after the dance is over I will take you home in my purchased wagon."*

Social dances were evidently always important in Blackfoot life. In the nineteenth century and before, they seem to have been

associated with religious events such as the Sun Dance. When these religious practices lost much of their significance, the social dances replaced them as the most important avenue of traditional Indian musical expression. Various social dances were introduced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from other tribes, laying the foundation for the contemporary intertribal culture pattern that dominates the Plains today, characterized by powwows at which professional singing groups appear, white hobbyists dance, and Indians from various reservations come together for social and cultural exchange. Thus, today, almost all Blackfoot music actually performed consists of social dances, and songs are sung for large audiences by singers who are truly musical specialists. The collections made since the 1950's consist largely of this type of song.

The Musical Style

The musical style of the Blackfoot is essentially that of Northern Plains music at large.⁷ Scales are typically pentatonic, sometimes tetratonic or hexatonic, with the use of major seconds and minor thirds, and occasionally perfect fourths, major thirds, and perfect fifths. The melodic contours descend, often in terrace fashion, and the forms are frequently (but not always) of the "incomplete repetition" variety, in which the second strain omits the (often repeated) initial phrase. The older recordings depart most frequently from this form, often exhibiting shorter stanzas and ranges smaller than the octave, ninth, tenth, or twelfth found in later recordings. The songs are always monophonic with the exception of one curious but obviously intentionally polyphonic song (A/5). This polyphonic example consists of a rather conventional song accompanied at times by a higher voice which concentrates (but also departs from) a single drum tone. Drumming is normally in even beats which slightly precede or follow the beat of the melodic rhythm. The drumming of the Owl Dance songs, however, approximate a dotted rhythm.

Since the older recordings are sung almost exclusively by soloists in especially elicited performances (and this is true of some more recent recordings as well), it is difficult to compare the true performance practice of the period of 1897 to 1910 with that recorded after 1950. The more recent recordings indicate rather standardized practices by singing groups. In

Grass Dance songs, for example, the leader of a song hits the drum hard once, then sings the first phrase which is repeated by a second singer (and sometimes by the leader as well), after which the rest of the song is sung by the entire group. A song is repeated several times, first softly, with drumming on the rim of the drum, then several times loudly, with full drumming, and then, near the conclusions, with variation of the drumming by the use of such techniques as crescendo, skipping of beats, and rests. It is likely that these more complex and standardized performance practices are a recent introduction and have something to do with the development of music as entertainment.

Many of the older recordings have songs with the words, but unfortunately most of the collectors did not take them down or

arrange for a translation. About half of the songs in this record have meaningful words. When translations are available for the collector, these are given in the source listing of the songs. The more recent songs rarely have words at all--in part because of the gradual receding of the Blackfoot language, and in part because of the intertribal provenience of the songs. A few (such as B/7b) have words in English along with meaningless syllables.

A few songs depart rather radically from the general style: the gambling songs, the lullabies, and the love songs. These, as a whole, can be characterized as shorter forms with brief and sometimes repeated phrases. They evidently share a style associated with their functions in other North American Indian repertoires.⁸

An examination of recordings of Blackfoot music made over a period of almost a century illustrates many things. Most important among these are the considerable variety of musical style and uses of music, the great changes occasioned by the modernization and westernization of tribal life, and the extraordinary vitality of Indian musical culture in recent years.

NOTES

1. As of this date (1973), the major studies specifically treating the music and musical culture of the Blackfoot are Bruno Nettl, "Studies in Blackfoot Indian Musical Culture" (*Ethnomusicology* 11(2):141-60; 11(3):293-309; 12(1):11-48; and 12(2):192-207), a series of four articles which appeared in the May and September, 1967, and January and May, 1968 issues of *Ethnomusicology*. These studies and a number of the recordings included in this album result from work done by Nettl in 1965, 1966, and 1967 with support of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and the University of Illinois Research Board. I should like to express my gratitude to these institutions for their assistance, as well as to Dr. Jane R. Hanks, Dr. Howard K. Kaufman, the American Museum of Natural History, the Smithsonian Institution, Mr. F. Gully and the *Calgary Herald* for phonorecordings and photographs used in this album. I am particularly grateful to Frank Gillis for his painstaking work as Series Editor, which involved a large variety of tasks too numerous to list.

2. The material on Blackfoot ethnography and history given here is largely based on the publications of Clark Wissler and John C. Ewers. A number of separate works are involved, but I should like to mention, as the main sources, only the following: Clark Wissler, "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians" (New York: American Museum of Natural History, *Anthropological Papers*, vol. 7, part 1, 1911) and "Societies and Dance Associations of the Blackfoot Indians" (*ibid.*, vol. 11, part 4, 1913); John C. Ewers, *The Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin* 159, 1955) and *The Blackfeet, Raiders on the Northwestern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958).

3. *The Montana-Wyoming Indian* (U.S., Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Billings Area Office, 1965), Table I.

4. See William K. Powers, "Contemporary Oglala Music and Dance: Pan-Indianism Versus Pan-Tetonism," *Ethnomusicology* 12(3):357-72 (September 1968), for a discussion of music in modern Plains Indian culture.

5. See George Herzog, "Special Song Types in North American Indian Music," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Musikwissenschaft* 3(1/2):27-29 (1935).

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

7. Bruno Nettl, *North American Indian Musical Styles* (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1954), pp. 24-30, gives a summary of Plains musical styles.

8. Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 25, summarizes some of the styles which depart from Indian--particularly Plains--music. His article specifies Ghost Dance, Love, Animal Tale, and Gambling Songs as comprising this group of divergent materials.

PHONORECORDINGS • NOTES AND CREDITS

George Bird Grinnell. Collection of 21 original phonocylinders, deposited in the Archives by the American Museum of Natural History, New York. (Accession No.: Pre '54-095-F)

Clark Wissler. Collection of 146 original phonocylinders, deposited in the Archives by the American Museum of Natural History. (Accession No.: Pre '54-096-F)

Joseph K. Dixon. Collection of 5 original phonocylinders, deposited in the Archives by the American Museum of Natural History. (Accession No.: Pre '54-094-F)

Jane Richardson Hanks. Collection of 23 original phonocylinders, deposited in the Archives by the collector, Columbia University and George Herzog. (Accession No.: Pre '54-019-F)

Howard K. Kaufman. Collection of first-generation tape copies from 8 original phonowires, deposited in the Archives by the collector. (Accession No.: 55-003-F)

Bruno Nettl. Collection of 5 original phonotapes, deposited in the Archives by the collector. (Accession No.: Pre '54-018-F)

_____. Collection of first-generation tape copies from 10 original phonotapes, deposited by the collector. (Accession No.: 68-037-F)

PHOTOGRAPHS • NOTES AND CREDITS

Cover photo. Staged Blackfoot Indian camp, with group including Daisy Norris Gilham and child (standing in front of tipi) and Two Guns White Calf (standing at lodge entrance). Original photographs by Roland Reed, employed by the railroads to take scenic photographs to be used as an inducement for travelers to take the trains, taken in Yosemite National Park, 1915 (data courtesy Paula J. Richardson, Museum Specialist). Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives and the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

Fig. 1 *James White Calf*. Older brother of Two Guns White Calf and son of White Calf (Siksika Blackfoot). Original photograph by a Bureau of American Ethnology photographer, Washington, D.C., February, 1936, when subject was 73 years old (according to 1939 U.S. Census). Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives.

Fig. 2 *Spumiapi (White-Headed Chief)* (Siksika). Original photograph taken at Gleichen, Alberta, by F. Gully, 1939, probably for the *Calgary Herald*. Courtesy of Jane Richardson Hanks.

Fig. 3 *Blackfoot gambling game*. Original photograph taken by Bruno Nettl, at Browning, Montana, July 1966, during North American Indian Days. Courtesy of Bruno Nettl. Photograph shows singers and, at right, a member of the team showing bones which had been hidden in playing the game.

Fig. 4 *Blackfoot singing group*, sitting around drum and singing social dance songs. Original photograph taken by Bruno Nettl, at Browning, Montana, July 1966. Courtesy of Bruno Nettl.

Maps, by John M. Hollingsworth, Indiana University Geography Department.

Master tape, by Indiana University Audio-Visual Recording Studio, from copy prepared by Bruno Nettl, Archives of Traditional Music, and Syracuse University Library Audio Archives.

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