ON THE EDGE OF CHANGE:
SHIFTING LAND USE IN THE PIKANI TIMBER LIMIT,
PORCUPINE HILLS, ALBERTA

by

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Abstract

In the 1880s, Piikani land use was transformed by their settlement on reserve, shifting from a mobile existence to one centred on homesteads. This precipitated a significant social and economic change that had lasting consequences. My research examines the Piikani Timber Limit (IR 147B), an isolated reserve belonging to the Piikani Blackfoot located in the Porcupine Hills.

The timber limit, as an artifact of the 19th century, is particularly conducive to chronicling landscape changes in Niitsitapi territory in the early reserve period. 147B was set aside for timber harvest; its designation as a timber limit marks a significant change from its previous role as a component of the whole Piikani Landscape. I triangulate evidence from oral history, archival materials, and archaeological sites, to analyze the changing role of this timber limit in Piikani history. The sites discovered on 147B include a historic eagle trapping site, logging camps and operations, and the hideout of a notorious Blackfoot outlaw. The archaeological sites on Piikani timber limit 147B speak to the nuance of the Piikani colonial experience, and bring forward indigenous narratives about Canadian settlement on the prairies.

Keywords: Early reserve period; Piikani; timber limit; landscape change
Dedication

To my parents, for believing in me

To Matt, for keeping me going
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A Note on Names

The doctrine of discovery in North America resulted in the naming of the landscape, animals and peoples. I recognize the power of names and where possible try to use Piikani names. When writing about the past however, the old names form a large part of the narrative. Thus historical names such as “Peigan”, “Blood”, “Blackfoot” and “Indian”, are found in this thesis, to maintain historical accuracy. The renaming of Niitsitapi territory is an important part of the history of the region. I use these words with awareness of their implications.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

In 1869, the fledgling nation of Canada bought Rupert’s Land from the Hudson’s Bay Company. As Canadians assumed control over their new territory they began making a series of treaties with the region’s indigenous inhabitants. Treaty 7 was made in 1877 between the Queen’s representatives in Canada and the Blackfoot, Sarcee and Stony people. It was the means by which Canada opened up the land for settlement.

Following Treaty 7, two reserve areas were surveyed for the Piikani in their traditional territory, an area now known as southern Alberta. The main reserve area (I.R. 147) stretches along the flat prairie on either side of the Oldman River Valley. The second, known as the timber limit (I.R. 147B), is north west of the main reserve in the forested uplands called the Porcupine Hills (See Figure 2.1). The early reserve period was a time of dynamic social and economic change. To understand this transition to settlement, and its impact on the Piikani relationship with their landscape, my goal is to describe changes in the use of the timber limit from the pre-reserve to the reserve period, and to chronicle the changing Piikani experience with their timber limit and the Porcupine Hills.

Within the context of a larger research project Piikani People in the Early Reserve Period conducted by Eldon Yellowhorn, this study records important heritage sites in this timber limit and contributes to the knowledge base about Piikani history. My objective is
to use the archaeological sites uncovered from this survey to develop an understanding of the Piikani experience of the early reserve period. Together they speak to the changing perceptions of landscapes prevalent in this period of transition.

Piikani assert that protecting their heritage is a worthwhile endeavour. This project is endorsed by community members and will produce information for heritage stewardship in the Piikani timber limit. The nature of First Nation heritage protection in Canada means that reserve areas are not often privy to the same level of archaeological investigation as neighbouring jurisdictions. This project, in some small measure offers a point of departure for protection of sites on the Piikani timber limit.

This project builds on Piikani narrative to understand the past, but also incorporates those of settlers to elucidate differences in the rendering of history. The stories retold here build on a popular understanding of colonialism, as such they are located at the heart of this exchange. Tracing their historic antecedents in archival documents, ethnographies and interviews reveal the colonial process in Piikani lives.

The Porcupine Hills

My study region is comprised of an 11 and 1/2 square mile area nestled in the south west corner of the Porcupine Hills. Geographically, these hills form a peneplane, a remnant highland of what was once the level of the entire plains area. These rolling uplands interrupted with jagged buttes run parallel to the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains but are morphologically distinct from true foothills which are tilted strata created by tectonic forces. The Porcupine Hills formation consists of sandstone sedimentary planes deposited in a fluvial environment. Its extant contours were sculpted
by meltwaters from glaciers that ebbed and flowed over steep slopes thus creating peaks
that seem lofty only by comparison to the surrounding plains (Beaty 1975). The
sedimentary rock of the Porcupine Hills erodes from the surface creating spectacular
sandstone outcrops.

The Porcupine Hills provide unique habitat for large numbers of animals and
plants. The higher elevations capture meteoric moisture, creating an environment that
nurters a dense forest that gives way to the plains (Binnema 2004). These uplands
display a heavy coat of timber, with white spruce, limber pine, Balsam and Douglas fir
being the dominant trees. Valley bottoms support lush growth of prairie grasses, with
intermittent springs seeping from the hillsides. Many species of animals, such as elk and
brown bears, and birds including hawks, sparrows, warblers, and bald and golden eagles
make the Porcupine Hills their home (Hardy 1967). In this bucolic landscape, we
conducted a survey to identify sites representing the historic economy of the Piikani.

**Chapter Progression**

Chapter one introduces Piikani history at the dawn of their colonial experience. I
discuss the development of the Piikani Timber Limit 147 B within the process of reserve
creation. I position landscape change as the effect of a bureaucracy manifested through
colonialism opposing the aesthetics of Piikani cognitive geography and their customary
use of forested land.

Chapter two introduces my research design. I explain why the three cornered
constellation of archaeology, archival documents, and oral history are necessary to
understand the full picture of the early reserve period. I employ elements of landscape archaeology to evaluate the data collected from the area enclosed by IR 147B.

In the next three chapters I move on to discuss archaeological sites discovered on the Piikani timber limit during our survey. In my discussion, I focus on their relationship to the narratives of change vital to this process of transition.

Chapter four focuses on sites in the timber limit that represent non-capitalist resource use. These sites sustain physical, social and spiritual nourishment, such as the eagle trapping structure located on the south east side of the timbers. They represent aspects of an indigenous economy that melded seamlessly with spiritual practice and which persisted alongside the subsequent capitalist economy.

In chapter five, I follow the trail of a notorious outlaw Charcoal, from his last hideout located on the north east side of the timber limit. I analyze the different versions of this story to auger its meaning within a larger narrative of change. Charcoal’s story in its many incarnations illuminates the process of the NWMP extending Canada’s jurisdiction into Blackfoot territory. Settlers and Niitsitapi perspectives diverge on some points but they express the dynamic tension extant in their understanding of law.

I discuss the introduction of the capitalist economy into the Piikani Timber Limit (147B) primarily through the optics of the lumber industry. I outline the conception, operation, and demise of the 1899 Piikani sawmill as a historical entity that harbours a nuanced colonial process. Ostensibly dedicated to economic development, the logging industry was intended to be a point of articulation with the burgeoning settler markets in western Canada at the time when wage labour and industrial economic ventures were novel.
I conclude by reflecting on the Piikani experience of economic change through a new labour regime responding to new modes of production. I discuss the phenomological experience of labour in the logging camps and the reorganization of social lives that it entails. Finally I discuss the lasting commemoration of early reserve period history through protecting these archaeological sites and how they serve as mnemonic devices. Their protection will help ensure the vitality of Piikani lyrical history.
Chapter 2: The Studied Piikani

The Transition to Modernity: The Early Reserve Period

European migration to North America was a military, social and ecological takeover that saw North America recreated as a Neo Europe (Crosby 1986). Their arrival brought new virulent microbes, which had devastating impacts. For the Indigenous peoples of the plains this meant epidemic diseases that were exacerbated with the destruction of the buffalo. In its wake came a new life based on plants and animals common to European agricultural practices.

Indigenous economic collapse precipitated settlement onto reserve. Whereas the buffalo had been the mainstay of the economy and a focal point for social life, their disappearance spurred new ways of organizing labour and society. The Piikani transition from mobile to settled lifeways, and from a hunting and gathering economic base to farming came as the barter/trade economy gave way to cash and wage labour in a capitalist system. Their successes and failures in capitalist ventures depended more on bureaucratic whimsy than a shortage of Piikani people willing to take on the ever-shifting market place.

Canadian Government officials and white settlers brokered this new economy with development schemes designed to open up the west. The early reserve period encapsulated the shift from a whole society organized around one economic pursuit, to individual families depending on wage labour. This practice of exchanging labour for
cash ushered in a concept of unemployment that did not exist previously. The stereotypical lazy Indian had no place in a society where all members were actively engaged in gathering resources for their community. My intent is to interrogate the forces that brought market economies to the Piikani timber limit when the buffalo economy disappeared. The section of the Porcupine Hills delimited as 147B is an artifact of this period of change. This thesis is its story.

The Piikani

Piikani today are a nation of approximately 4000, most of whom live on a reserve along the Oldman River in southern Alberta. Prior to the nineteenth century, the Piikani travelled seasonally over their territory, which encompassed a large portion of present day southern and central Alberta as well as parts of Montana and Saskatchewan (Bastien 2004). In 1877, they signed Treaty 7 with the Government of Canada and began to settle on a reserve, resulting in many changes to Piikani social history.

Initially one tribe, the Piikani were split in two by the creation of the Canada/US border along the 49th parallel. Called the Skinni Piikani to distinguish them from their American counterparts, their name means to “live on the edge” (Bastien 2004: 9), which refers to their preference for camping at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Piikani occupied the south and western frontier of the Blackfoot groups and had close ties with the Porcupine Hills and nearby rivers. These forested regions provided ideal wintering camps, when they retreated from the harsh conditions of the open prairie. Traders in their country noted the success of Piikani pastoralism, they described substantial horse herds which they attributed to the quality of their winter residence in the Porcupine Hills (Jackson 2000). Piikani accept that their relationship with their land began in a game
Napi, their mythical hero, played and won, thus securing them a homeland (Treaty 7 Elders 1996).

Piikani life in the ancient past, while not static, did undergo substantial transformation with the arrival of the horse in their culture perhaps as early as the 1720s. Likewise, European goods that reached them through fur trade altered customary lifeways. Whereas previous changes were readily integrated into Piikani lives and worldviews, for a mobile people confinement on reserves wrought unprecedented consequences. As their ancestors insisted, life was centred around the renewal of relationships and visitation to specific places. Everything from food collection to ceremonial life filled up their seasonal round, which encompassed the whole Piikani landscape. The early reserve period began a shift in their interaction with their territory and its resources. Their relationship with the Porcupine Hills and the Old Man River corroborates their strong attachment to their country.

**Studying the Piikani**

Fascination with the pre-contact lives of indigenous peoples of the plains has encouraged authors to write of the *Niitsitapi* or Blackfoot people. This interest spurred the production of ethnographies of the 18th and 19th centuries (eg Ewers 1958; McClintock 1999 [1910]; Schultz 1962[1907]; Wissler 1910), as well as much of the current archaeological literature (Brink 1986; Brink & Dormaar 2003; Kehoe 1993; Peck and Vickers 2006). These tributes to the ancient past all refer to the crucial role of mobility to Plains hunter-gatherer lifeways, yet little research has been conducted on the transition from itinerant lives to settlement on reserves. This monumental and understudied transition represents a significant economic and social shift with impacts on
the lives of Indigenous peoples that persist today. The old, mobile culture bears little resemblance to the one that emerged in the reserve era.

The different bands making up the Blackfoot Confederacy collectively are one of the most studied indigenous groups in the world. Following the ethnographic period, volumes of anthropological, archaeological, ethnobotanical (e.g. Hellson 1974; Peacock 1992), sociological (Biligin 1972) and political studies focused on the Piikani specifically and the Niitsitapi in general. Regional histories also often provided cursory generalizations about Piikani history.

While the majority of the literature has focused on the so-called traditional lifeways of the Piikani, more recently, scholars have begun work on their transition from this traditional life to the modern day. Research on Treaty 7 has blossomed since the 1970s, covering everything from reinterpretation of the events at Blackfoot Crossing to Niitsitapi perspectives on the intent of the Treaty and what it means today. These works by Treaty 7 Elders et al (1996), Carter and Hildebrant (2006), and Richard Price (1987) form a valuable resource for researchers examining First Nations/government interactions in the 1870s. They contain insights about tension inherent in relations between First Nation and settlers. From them we can infer that these relationships did not follow the trajectory laid down in treaty agreements. Each new contribution detailing research on this topic is born of the disconnect between these initial agreements and the reality that followed.
Niitsitapi Revitalization/Repatriation

Niitsitapi scholars have entered the academy and now publish in their own voice the Blackfoot perspective of living, self-determination and political re-birth. Beginning with Percy Bullchild’s treatment of Blackfoot mythology (2005) other Piikani authors, such as Betty Bastien’s *Blackfoot Ways of Knowing* (2004) and Reg Crowshoe’s *Blackfoot Framework for Decision Making and Mediation* (2002) introduced a new wave of literature. Niitsitapi intellectual revitalization begins with the historical changes that severed their philosophical tradition and grows through experiments with modernist influences. They have advanced the repatriation movement and were successful in creating legislation to recognize their ownership of their cultural properties. Publications chronicling their effort (eg. Bell and Napoleon 2008) and films highlighting their action (eg. Narcisse Blood and Cynthia Chambers’ film *Kaaáhsinnooniksi: If the Land Could Speak and We Could Listen* 2006) address repatriation in the context of material objects as an intangible, spiritual connection to the land that renewed visitation enhances. Rescuing their heritage is an attempt to restore the balance in their spiritual life, but it is also part of a larger social movement that seeks to become reacquainted with their ancestral culture through sacred objects and landscapes. This body of work articulates an aspiration for Niitsitapi regeneration and self determination which has meant that historical analysis is cursory.

Michael Ross’ *Weasel Tail* (2008) is a rich life history of Joe Crowshoe, a Piikani elder who passed away in 1999. The stories that fill this book combine ancient Piikani narrative with anecdotes about their modern reserve. The book briefly touches on the timber limit as Joe Crowshoe discusses his travels there to harvest lumber, and references
the Peigan sawmill as an important milestone in community economic development.
Although it is an exceptional portrait of one Piikani man, the depth given to Joe
Crowshoe means broader social trends are peripheral to his story.

**Socio-historical Work**

Scholarly discourse emphasizing socio-historical studies seek to explain the
current malaise among First Nation communities as the aftermath of government
intervention during the early reserve period. While academic authors such as Sarah
Carter’s *Lost Harvests* (1990), Keith Smith’s *Liberalism, Surveillance and Resistance:*
*Indigenous Communities in Western Canada 1877-1927* (2009) and Hana Samek’s *The*
*Blackfoot Confederacy 1880-1920: A Comparison of Canadian and US Indian Policy*
(1987) scrutinize the primary archival record to lay bare government manipulation of
Indian lives, they address structural circumstances not individual experience. Their
research necessarily glosses over the community experience (e.g. Carter 1990, 1999,
2006) in order to focus broadly on an entire province or treaty region.

Keith Regular’s *Neighbours and Networks* focuses on the Piikani’s neighbours,
the Kainah (Blood), illuminating their entrance into wage economy (2009). Regular’s
work is an in depth examination of Blood economic ventures that contests the prevalent
conception of reserve economies as colossal failures. His critique also dismisses the
popular notion that indigenous peoples of Canada were irrelevant to its social and
economic development. Regular traces the origin of this flawed hypothesis and argues
instead, “Natives were an essential determinant of the kind of urban and rural setting that
emerged in Southern Alberta” (Regular 2009:4). His thesis that the Kainah economy was
integrated into regional markets makes his work extremely beneficial as a backdrop to
this study. Although he only briefly touches on the unique situation of the Kainah’s neighbours, they share many attributes in common with the Piikani experience.

Hugh Dempsey is perhaps the most prolific writer on the early reserve era in southern Alberta. He has published a series of biographies of Blackfoot leaders (Crowfoot 1972; Red Crow, Warrior Chief 1980) as well as topic specific works on the entrance of the railroad into western Canada and the impact of the whisky trade. His work with Niitsitapi oral histories also form unique collections of stories. However, Dempsey’s primary interest is in contrasting the so-called pure traditional indigenous perspectives with the views of the first settlers, thus he focuses his work on the moment of contact rather than the period of change that follows. L. James Dempsey’s Blackfoot War Art: Pictographs of the Reservation Period (2007) is heavily weighted towards data accumulation rather than social analysis. However, his brief conclusion about the continuation of Niitsitapi war ethic into the reservation era is enticing, and informative for other scholars.

Piikani Economic Development Studies

Piikani people have been subject to research with a more contemporary perspective, focused on ‘the Indian problem’ or the so-called development problems on First Nations reserves. The most thoughtful among these concerns Piikani economic development. Claudia Notzke’s Indian Reserves in Canada: Development problems of the Stoney and Peigan Reserves in Alberta (1985) and The Past in the Present: Spatial and Land Use Change on Two Indian Reserves (1987) fit the mould of community level academic interest. The former work is essentially an unabridged PhD thesis while the latter is more concise and contemplative. Although Notzke provides a brief historical
introduction to the formation of reserves and reserve economies, her main focus is the potential for future economic development. However her observation of the Piikani’s economic future have been rendered obsolete and after twenty five years her conclusions, such as insisting that land claims would create “economic independence” (Notzke 1987:121), seem dubious at best. Like other studies on Piikani economic development commissioned by the federal and provincial government departments (Price and Associates 1967, Synergy West 1976), they generate data about soil quality, annual precipitation, and tourism potential of the area but make no concessions to the historical process of economic development.

Treaty 7 and the Beginnings of Reserve Life

The Piikani transition fell into the broad colonial project that expanded the borders of Canada. In 1869, the Government of Canada acquired Rupert’s Land from the Hudson Bay Company and gradually asserted effective control. The Canadian Government made a series of treaties with the indigenous inhabitants of this land in order to facilitate settlement. Joining the new provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia to the older ones with a national railway brought Canada directly to Blackfoot country.

In 1877 the Peigan (Piikani), Blood (Kainah), Blackfoot (Siksika), Sarcee (Tsuu T’ina), and Stoney (Nakoda) signed Treaty 7 with the Crown in right of Canada. Blackfoot peoples agreed to share their lands with the newcomers, with some lands reserved exclusively for their own use. As stipulated in this agreement, Piikani leaders chose lands along the Oldman River valley and in the Porcupine Hills, plus a disputed ochre gathering area known as the Crow Eagle Reserve (Treaty 7 Elders 1996).
Government negotiators assigned reserve lands based on a formula of one square mile per family of five, and the forested parcel that was intended to supply timber. Somehow in the bureaucratic process the Crow Eagle Reserve was lost.

In the summer of 1879 Allan Patrick began surveying borders of IR 147 on the Oldman River with the intent of defining of the Piegan Reserve. Survey historian Judy Larmour noted that: “[Patrick] worked closely with the Indian Affairs branch, riding with Edgar Dewdney, Indian Commissioner, who selected the boundaries of a Peigan Reserve and the location of the associated Indian farm and timber limit” (Larmour 2005:39). Once these boundaries had been planned, Patrick left his assistant John Nelson to complete the survey work. On May 7, 1880 the Indian Affairs branch of the Department of the Interior became a department in its own right and proceeded to set up its own survey branch with John Nelson in charge (Larmour 2005:40). As lead surveyor, Nelson produced initial maps of many reserves in Canada including the Peigan Reserve and Peigan Timber Limit (I.R.Nos. 147 and 147B respectively).
The Piikani Timber Limit (No. 147B)

When he had completed the boundary survey of Indian Reserve No 147, Nelson turned his attention to an eleven and a half-mile section of the Porcupine Hills to be established as a timber limit for Piikani to harvest. They had by custom visited the Porcupine Hills annually to gather a variety of resources, and to find shelter from the elements when necessary, so they requested a tract there. Anticipating their changing livelihood, they saw its game and other resources as essential to fend for themselves (Treaty 7 Elders 1996). Department of Indian Affairs bureaucrats saw the timber limit as a good fit in their mandate to civilize the Indians. Whereas the main reserve area enclosed
mostly prairie, the timber limit was heavily forested and would supply the lumber to build homesteads on the reserve.

The designation of this area as a timber limit, separate from the settlement area on the reserve, marked a considerable change in land use, because it was not intended for residential or agricultural purposes. Rather the community as a whole could access it to hunt, gather berries, or cut logs.

I.R. 147B is different from the traditional definition of timber limits in Canada, which holds them “as the area to which rights of cutting timber, granted by government license, are limited” (Encarta 2011). The Department of Indian Affairs, by contrast, makes clear, from the treaty period onwards, that Piikani Timber Limit 147B is more than an area where the Piikani have timber rights. Rather, it was a reserve as defined in the Indian Act (LAC DIA correspondence Mikan no 2061901 1904, 1911). After 1900, in addition to their Timber Limit Reserve, the Piikani also held timber limits in the area north of 147B, Timber Berths 884 and 886, both of which were dissolved after the timber had been cut in the following decade.
Figure 2.2 Survey Plan of Timber Limit 147B from 1888

(Natural Resources Canada 310 CLSR AB)
Drawing of Boundaries: Creation of Colonial Landscapes

Piikani people, like many indigenous peoples, enjoyed a unique sense of their homeland, manifest through mental maps. They accept that their relationships with the landscape is mutually affirming and by exercising their rights and obligations to places bound in history and myth they reaffirm their cognitive geography (Oetelaar and Meyer 2006). Travelling their ancestors’ trails over the landscape reminded them of stories embedded in special places (Basso 1996). Unique locales form mnemonic landmarks that elicit narratives to reinforce memories of their travels (Oetelaar and Meyer 2006:357). This relationship would be replaced by one that emphasized philosophical concepts that focused on the domination of land through cultivation.

Trails linked important nodes in a network consisting of physical space punctuated by ethereal places in a culture’s landscape. Indigenous peoples create trail networks through their travels, and in turn these networks helped bring order to their lives. Trail systems developed according to both physical and social characteristics of the landscape. They maintain the pathways of their ancestors, and in doing so literally and figuratively walked in their footsteps. Retelling the stories of places helped them recognize the landmark in their cognitive geographies.

Following the treaty, bureaucrats arrived with their own expectations of how land was organized, and began to reorder the landscape according to their sense of order. Government mandates imposed a Cartesian aesthetic, starting with surveyors who divided up the land into grids. New roads were planned which focused on the efficiency
of travelling from A to B, based on straight lines drawn arbitrarily through varied terrain. Especially in the 1880s when completing the railroad across their land meant modifying landscapes instead of selecting routes appropriate to the season or terrain.

Colonial reorganization of the landscape was one in a series of initiatives that began to alter Blackfoot cognitive geography. Bureaucrats living among them managed land with tunnel vision focused on new economic systems, coupled with government restrictions on movement backed up by coercive force. The mechanism of state-imposed separation from the landscape has strained Blackfoot relationships with their territory, creating what Blackfoot elder Frank Weasel Head describes as a situation where the landscape no longer recognizes you (Blood and Chambers 2006). Thus tracing old trail systems unfolds the landscapes of Piikani ancestors. Archival documents and elders’ testimony reinforce the importance of these roads in narratives whereas the physical routes themselves capture the phenomenological experience of place.

**The Beaver Creek Trail**

Beaver Creek drains a small watershed starting in the Porcupine Hills and flowing southeast until it spills into the Oldman River valley along its north bank. Just a few meters wide and less than a meter deep, it is now an ephemeral stream crossing farmland, but its significance owes much to the old wagon trail that ran from the main reserve to the timber limit following its banks.

Before township grids drew straight roads through the countryside, trails commonly followed rivers or streams. In the transitional period at the end of the 19th century, the Piikani were living in homesteads mostly along the north side of the Oldman
River. The trail connecting their settlements left the Oldman River valley at the Beaver Creek Coulee and proceeded to the timber limit in the Porcupine Hills. Although overgrown ruts are all that remain, archival maps and correspondence testify to its popularity. Following it today is possible after leaving the country gravel road and crossing an open pasture along its fenceline then exiting through a barbed wire gate to reach the trail beside the creek bed.

Understanding this trail network helps put site locations in the timber limit in perspective, because the modern road systems bear little resemblance to the old public trails. Sites may seem remote due to their relationship to the older landscape rather than the present one. Contemporary travellers approach the timber limit by a secondary road that crosses in at the southern boundary. During the early reserve period tree fallers reached the north-eastern corner of the timbers after leaving the Beaver Creek trail and riding west. The traveller’s landscape of that time moved by slower due to an undeveloped transportation network and roads followed spatial priorities no longer evident, but capturing a sense of it helps imbue archaeological sites with meaning.

The Beaver Creek corridor may be a geographical link, but it also links the past with the present. Although it is not technically a part of the land base that makes up the Piikani timber limit, I incorporate it into my analysis to contribute knowledge about Piikani cognitive geographies of the timber limit in the past.

**Bureaucratic Boundaries**

The conception of where the timber limit was and what area of land it comprised constantly changed. When surveyed initially in 1880, Piikani chief North Axe travelled
up to the timber limit with the surveyor so he could see the boundaries for himself. Unfortunately, North Axe died a few years later and apparently, so did the knowledge of these boundaries. DIA correspondence from the 1890s onwards contains multiple letters from Indian agents requesting maps of the timbers. The high turnover of Indian agents and the unfamiliarity of eastern DIA officials with western terrain meant the majority of officials were not familiar with the boundaries of the timbers. With unsure officials, government derived boundaries were not a limitation to the Piikani.

Though this study refers to the legal definition of the timber limit as it is today, awareness of these changing conceptions of boundaries is crucial. Uncertain boundaries blended Timber Limit 147B into the surrounding landscape, so Piikani travellers paid little attention to its porous borders.

**Telling Indigenous Histories- Theoretical Approach**

Simplistic renditions of colonial relationships (eg colonized/ colonizer, agency/structure) are inadequate to address the specific nature of the economic and social changes embedded in the Piikani relationship with their timber limit. The Piikani experienced colonization as a relationship that was constantly renegotiated, instead of the commonly displayed dichotomy of victim/victimizer. Cemented with Treaty 7, Blackfoot leaders understood the white negotiators as their equals (Treaty Elders et al. 1996), but this relationship eroded gradually, from an agreement to share the land in return for assistance with agricultural activities and annual dues, to a framework of paternalism and subjugation.
Piikani entanglement with global capitalism at the end of the 19th century was part of a general phenomenon, and at the same time a unique, idiosyncratic, and community experience. Capitalism’s constant need for new markets and raw materials precipitated its spread in North America, which philosopher Derrick Jensen explains, creates a colonial system of control that is an inevitable outcome of western desires for resource exploitation (Jensen 2006:ix). This economic takeover facilitated by colonial forces of social change formed the backdrop that Piikani witnessed when their focus on social consumption became a system where market prices regulated economic activity.

**Colonial Entanglements: Many Arms, Many Measures**

The expansion of liberal values through the Department of Indian Affairs aimed to transform the Indians into private property owning individuals and nuclear family based consumers. The DIA in tandem with the NWMP sought to create the bureaucratic apparatus to control, restrict and surveil the Indians. This web of Indian agents, commissioners and policy makers created extensive files of paperwork including annual reports, daily diaries, and scores of numbered correspondence. Surveillance of indigenous peoples enabled both processes of control and the reproduction of difference between native peoples and whites, or othering, enabled exclusionist, isolationist and assimilative policy decisions (Smith 2009).

A large number of restrictive economic and social policies were developed to protect, civilize, and assimilate the Indigenous people of Canada (Tobias 1992). Many scholars have documented these processes (eg Carter 1990, Tobias 1992), so my intention is not to replicate these works; instead, my analysis of the specific changes in the early
reserve period incorporates the influence of these particular forces to understand how they operate in the unique circumstances surrounding the Piikani timber limit.

**Piikani Archaeology and Colonialism**

The lack of work on the Piikani early reserve period is glaring. This thesis is one aspect of Eldon Yellowhorn’s project *Piikani People in the Early Reserve Period*, which seeks to redress this significant data gap. Dr. Yellowhorn’s project is the first investigation of the reserve period of Piikani history to utilize archaeology. Work on this time-period has traditionally relied solely on historical documents (e.g. Potyandi 1992; Smith 2009; Regular 2009). However, the majority of Piikani people at this time were not literate, the written materials from this era were created by outsiders, hence they privilege that perspective. This is particularly problematic because the majority of the outsiders engaging with the indigenous people at this time were agents of the government in one capacity or another. Although I employ archaeological evidence, in combination with oral history and archival materials in order to develop a more complete understanding of the Piikani experience in the early reserve period, through examining their timber limit, I must acknowledge the burden of my discipline’s history.

The scientific study of indigenous peoples promoted the idea of the Indian as the “other” and gave rise to their subsequent marginalization, which coincidentally was very profitable for colonizers. Anthropology and archaeology were responsible for creating terms such as primitive, barbarian and civilized (ie Lewis Henry Morgan) and the categories of race that justified cultural domination practices (Nicholas and Hollowell 2010). Likewise the study and surveillance of Blackfoot peoples in southern Alberta in the early colonial period facilitated conquest (Smith 2009).
As a white person invited to work in Blackfoot territory, I recognize the historical parallels. Though the twenty-first century is referred to as the post-colonial era, my experience tells me there is nothing post about colonialism, in Canada. Although I would be naïve to suggest that this study falls outside the bounds of colonialism, I hope that an awareness of this processes will help me aspire for decolonized practice.

Earlier generations did not have the benefit of intellectual tools to help them confront issues of colonialism in archaeological practice. Self-reflective archaeology or “archaeology with, for, and by indigenous people” (Nicholas and Andrews 2007), as well as internalist archaeology (Yellowhorn 2002) emphasize indigenous scholars working with their own communities. As a white graduate student assisting an Aboriginal archaeologist, I am cognizant of the ongoing negotiation of colonialism in a very personal manner.

My focus on Piikani narratives of their colonial encounter combats the conventional version of transitions. I searched for nuanced understanding of the process of colonialism in Piikani territory because of the diversity of colonial encounters across Canada (Scheiber and Mitchell 2010).
Chapter 3: Methodology

Developing Understanding

This thesis aims to chronicle the Piikani experience with their timber limit and the Porcupine Hills from the time of the ancestors to the 1950s. I delve into contemporary Piikani thought about their timber limit and the changes that deviated from its original meaning. For this narrative, I triangulate evidence from archival documents, material culture, and Piikani oral history. Each on its own generates one interpretation, but accounting for multiple perspectives that mutually inform and interrogate one another brings into focus the forces that influence the Piikani interaction with their timber limit.

The archival materials primarily consist of Annual Reports by the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), the RG 10 record group and other DIA correspondence, NWMP Annual Reports and correspondence, and newspaper materials from local towns. These materials all have in common the perspective of the white settlers and newcomers, and are conspicuously devoid of a Piikani voice. However, they do illuminate the differing perspectives and relationships between First Nations and settler communities.

Archaeological survey methods became advantageous when transversing the Porcupine Hills on foot. Physical manifestations of the past logging industry appear through aerial photographs and other remote sensing techniques that lend themselves to ground truthing and intensive surface surveys.
Finally, the oral history of elders is a very fruitful source of information about the past, since their lived experience reveals how Piikani people made use of IR147B. They can draw connections from the material remains to the bureaucratic processes that exercised control over local affairs. Traditional Piikani storytelling has its contemporary counterpart and in this research it helped to put the flesh on the skeleton that is Piikani history.

Archaeological Survey

Archaeological survey methods proved an ideal fit for this study because they uncover material culture and economic infrastructure across a wide swath of land. My survey of the Piikani Timber Limit (IR147B) had a goal to uncover evidence of a particular type of material culture associated with specific site types. The survey revealed tangible evidence of the Piikani relationship with the landscape, manifested as archaeological sites and trail networks.

I employed a survey strategy to cover the key areas and conducted a pedestrian survey covering both the forested area of the timber limit and the naturally non-forested area. Following E. B. Banning’s place method, I focused my survey of the timber limit on specific topographic/geographical features (Banning 2002). I studied aerial photographs provided by Natural Resources Canada to glean areas of interest. In particular, I concentrated my survey work on forested uplands as this area was more prone to yield sites of interest and examined satellite imagery to identify landforms of interest (see Figure 3.1). Preliminary evidence as well as previous work by archaeologists suggested the location of these sites would be on upland ridges (Dormaar 2003; Yellowhorn 1999). This project specifically sought out sites to elicit the Piikani story of
the period of transition. To do this I used a grounded research approach that allowed the mutual feedback of oral history and survey technique.

In total we spent 9.5 days surveying the timber limit, with a crew ranging from 2 to 5 members. I used a Garmin GPSMAP 60 to log sites and features and produced 142 waypoints of interest (See Figure 3.2). Eleven of these sites were recorded as archaeological sites with the Alberta Archaeological Survey and were recorded in site forms (see Appendix A). The other locations represented spiritual sites/ and evidence of logging activity that were not appropriate for archaeological paperwork. Sites recorded on the upland topography include vision quest sites, campsites (including one historic
hideout of the notorious outlaw, Charcoal), and an eagle trapping area. I use the sites uncovered in my analysis of the changes in the way the landscape was employed over time and to construct a narrative of this period of transition.

Figure 3.2 Survey Extent Map with Pedestrian Survey Routes and Waypoints

This study was designed as an exploratory survey, and should not be considered exhaustive. The timber limit is rich in material remains. Further development of the timber limit will require a more in depth analysis of archaeological sites in the region.
Archival Analysis

The goal of the archival component of this project is to document recorded uses of the timber limit, to understand government intentions and interventions and how these forces affected Piikani people, and to provide background information regarding the economic and social system within which these changes took place. I examined dispatches from the field, Indian Affairs and NWMP annual reports, DIA correspondence and local newspapers to understand and outline the mechanisms that operated to change Piikani lives.

I accessed different archival material through the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA), the Glenbow Archives, the Pincher Creek Archives, as well as online through the Library and Archives Canada (LAC). Newspaper materials were accessed on microfilm. Local people also provided personal historical materials and family photographs.

The Provincial Archives of Alberta is a repository for government and private records significant to the province of Alberta; it provided some key maps of interest, including the early settlement maps of the Beaver Creek area. Over the course of a few visits, I reviewed their map collection and some of the initial surveyors’ field notebooks to get a grasp of the early reserve period landscapes of southern Alberta and retrace reserve period trails systems in relation to the Piikani timber limit. The Provincial Archives also houses a marvellous research resource centre that lead me to pursue new avenues of data.

The Glenbow Archives located in downtown Calgary has a mandate focused more broadly on western Canadian history. Its proximity to Piikani meant it became the
repository for expansive holdings of Indian agent diaries, receipts and economic information as well as a wealth of photographs.

The Pincher Creek Archives, located in the Kootney Brown Pioneer Village, focuses on the settlement history of the region and has ample holdings relating to isolated settlers and hamlets in the surrounding countryside. For this project the NWMP records and unique settler fonds were easily accessible and illuminating, while the chief archivist Farley Wuth’s personal interest in the logging industry in southern Alberta provided ample sources of unpublished secondary material.

The RG 10 series housed at Library and Archives Canada contains the correspondence between the Indian agents in charge of the Peigan Agency and their superiors in Ottawa as well as between higher levels of the bureaucracy. My research specifically focused on the Black series, which covers the administration of Indian Affairs for western Canada between 1872 and 1962. When Indian Affairs became a ministry it had to file an Annual Report to publicly account for its budget, which it did in a thick volume that featured two page summaries of the developments on individual reserves and well as summary reports from each successive commissioner on the bureaucratic pyramid. One of the main advantages of the annual reports is the wealth of statistical data they contain. I charted the pertinent statistics from the annual reports to get a visual depiction of economic and social changes.

Outside the public archives, the best private source was the Macleod Gazette. Founded in 1882 and still published today, it is the longest running newspaper in the Alberta region. I accessed the newspaper via microfilm available at the Edmonton Public Library. I was fortunate to have access to Barbara Marshalsay and Margaret Wheeler’s
biographical and subject index of the *Macleod Gazette* (1981), which was incredibly useful for locating information on local developments, logging, and industry, as well as settler views on First Nations issues.

Archival maps I viewed located historic sites for my study and helped to develop a more complete image of my study area in the early reserve period. While these came from a number of sources the majority I obtained through Natural Resources Canada’s digital archive of survey plans. I scanned archival maps and georectified them in order to import them into a patchwork of historic maps and trail networks created by the Archaeological Survey of Alberta. This information was crucial to location data confirming archaeological sites I visited in this study and helped put them into their historical context.

Archival materials provided crucial details on this period of transition, and were also beneficial to examine the effect of government policy and individual Indian agents and officials on Piikani people. This archival record set enabled me to look at the factors that contributed to the creation of government intention and interventions as well as their mechanisms, such as surveillance, policing, restriction of movement, such that I was able to further examine the relationship between indigenous economies and settler interests.

**Interviews**

The interviews I conducted for this project were vital to formulating stories of transition in the colonial era. I sought out members of the community whose lives were steeped in the Piikani lumber industry and who carried specialized cultural knowledge. I
also had informal discussions with community members ranging from elders to young adults, who spoke volumes about the importance of the Porcupine Hills.

I completed ethics clearance through Simon Fraser University, and sought to create an interview format that was appropriate for the Piikani First Nation. Prior to my arrival in southern Alberta I created twelve open ended questions to guide the conversations and allow a free flow of dialogue.

My conversations with Yvonne Provost, Piikani land manager were especially informative in the discussion of Piikani heritage protection and its importance to local history. These interviews guided my research towards key narratives that I explored in greater detail through archaeological and archival evidence. Interviews also provided me with information not accessible through other means. Though only a minimal number of interviews were conducted to complete this project, Piikani have a great deal of knowledge about this time that is not covered in this work.

In addition to the interviews I personally conducted, I was fortunate to have access to a series of interviews conducted in the mid-1970s, for the TARR (Treaty and Aboriginal Rights) Project archived by the Canadian Plains Research Centre. These interviews enabled me to glean information from elders long deceased. Particularly of relevance was the interview of John Yellowhorn who had an intimate personal relationship with the Piikani timber limit.

**Analytical Methods**

Landscape studies have become a common component of archaeological practice. Observing patterns about sites strewn about the countryside is made possible when the
landscape is the unit of analysis. We can coax more information out of archaeological sites by examining how they fit into their surrounding terrain (David and Thomas 2008; Fleming 2006). Beyond eruditions of context, archaeologists employ this approach to develop understandings of past landscapes as they were viewed by those who dwelled there, and see a fossil of their cognitive geographies (Oetelaar and Meyer 2006, Oetelaar and Oetelaar 2006).

I use techniques of landscape archaeology as a tertiary level of analysis to examine IR147B as an artifact of the perceived landscape of colonial officials. Within this, archaeological sites are viewed as a component of a landscape narrative of change. I examine the Piikani timber limit from a landscape perspective to ally archaeology with Piikani understandings. Piikani lyrical history binds them to their land (Yellowhorn 1993), and organizes story-telling to complement archaeological sites. As Timothy Ingold writes: “For both the archaeologists and the native dweller, the landscape tells- or rather is- a story. It enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who, over the generations, have moved around in it and played their part in its formation” (Ingold 1993:154). Viewing archaeological sites as part of a landscape narrative contextualizes their role in Piikani history. Michael Wilson writes: “It is through association of landscape features with meanings that they are transformed from material signifiers to retrospective devices in which symbol sets have a reflexive instructional function in ensuring the persistence of memory” (Wilson 2005:8). Thus we can understand these sites as representing both physical events and mnemonic devices which remind the local people of their history.

Post-processual landscape archaeology in North America developed in part as a response to indigenous critiques of an archaeological practice that divorced
archaeological sites from the country where native people dwelt. As a result, it fits well into a theoretical approach espoused among the tenets of indigenous archaeology.

When oral histories of the early reserve period are told, narrative is intertwined with landscape; history is rooted in place. Recounting events gives a voice to the place where those events occurred (Little Bear 2004). Leroy Little Bear, a Blood philosopher and chair of Native American Studies at the University of Lethbridge, writes that for Blackfoot storytellers, “The place acts as a repository of the stories and experiences of both the individual and the tribe… It is the place telling the story” (Little Bear 2004:7).

Eldon Yellowhorn has written extensively on the coherency of using archaeology and oral history together to explain the past (Yellowhorn 2003,2006). Piikani histories and their landscape predictably coalesce into physical archaeological sites.
Chapter 4: The Timbers: Indigenous Economies

Indigenous economies provided the basics of clothing, nourishment and shelter from the environment. Capitalism, economic development, labour, and markets, based on growth and accumulation are the tangible consequences of the reserve era. Even the Piikani Timber Limit IR147B is itself an artifact of the nineteenth century, previously a part of a landscape of resources. While it demarcated a tract of the Porcupine Hills the landscape in the timber limit cannot be ignored. Resources there fuelled the emerging capitalist economy and initiated the first attempt to capture cash for the local community. The Piikani timber limit provided timber for tipi poles and travois, shelter in the winter months, excellent hunting grounds, sacred areas and focal locations for vision quests, as well as being an important eagle trapping area. This chapter is dedicated to Piikani specific economic relations on their timber limit.

Early Archaeological Sites

We know from Piikani sources that the Porcupine Hills were used by Niitsitapi for eons before the reserve era. Thus, there is good early archaeological evidence for people living in what is now enclosed by the timber limit. Ancient sites in the timber limit primarily consist of individual isolated projectile point finds in areas of soil disturbance sometimes with the addition of flakes or fire cracked rock (F.C.R.). Such finds indicate a deep archaeological past that goes beyond the parameters of this study.
Four archaeological sites have been recorded in this area that date prior to the reserve period. Alan Byran completed a small survey in the south section of the timber limit in the 1960s. In the road disturbance he uncovered two side notched points, utilized flakes and cobble tools (DkPl-1). Just north of that he uncovered a Green argillite corner notched projectile point and Chert flakes on a knoll east of the roadway near a spring (DkPl-2). DkPl-3, also located by Bryan, uncovered a point with a stemmed indented base. A 1990 survey by Eldon Yellowhorn turned up an Oxbow point, and a notched projectile point, in the southwest area of the timber limit (DkPl-4). My study focuses primarily on upland areas, where early archaeological sites were not discovered. This groundwork supports the conclusion that these hills have long been an important stop in a seasonal round for Piikani people.

**Early Resource Use the Timbers as a Gathering Site**

As part of a seasonal round, Piikani visited the timber limit for particular resources, and visited as a part of Niitsitapi responsibility to their land. Tipi poles were often gathered from river valleys and the Porcupine Hills and this area was known as particularly important for hunting, which is one of the reasons they chose this area for reserve land (Treaty 7 Elders 1996). Small scale community resource use continues to this day. The Piikani timber limit is still used to gather tipi poles, and we encountered a group of people going to do just that during our survey. Piikani people also visit the timber limit for other resources including firewood and hunting.
Niitsitapi Eagle Trapping

Even though the work of early ethnographers was often heavily biased by Eurocentric perspectives, their work recording oral narratives of the Blackfoot and specifically the Piikani, is valuable and illuminating. George Bird Grinnell’s *Blackfoot Lodge Tales* (2003 [1892]), Walter McClintock’s *Old North Trail* (1999 [1910]), James Schultz’s *Blackfeet and Buffalo* (1962[1907]), and John C. Ewer’s *The Blackfeet* (1958), all assert eagle trapping was significant in Blackfoot life. The various treatment of eagle trapping in these volumes reflects more about the backgrounds of the ethnographers, rather than demonstrating any real differences in approaches to eagle trapping. McClintock and Schultz both situate eagle trapping within the oral narratives, which fits with their Boasian narrative style of essentially copying down the stories told to them; eagle trapping is included in their volumes in tales of Blackfoot spiritual life. Grinnell attempts to organize the oral history into his own categories and thus includes eagle trapping in the general section of animal trapping. Following this vein, Ewers also loosely categorizes eagles into his section on animal trapping.

My understanding of eagle trapping is heavily based on the work of these ethnographers, though Piikani elders have clarified some of the more ambiguous information from the ethnographies. The English term eagle trapping is deceptive; Niitsitapi eagle trapping is quite distinctive from other types of trapping. The eagle plays a singular role in Blackfoot culture and the protocol for obtaining eagle feathers is complex. The honour to be able to trap eagles was a right that could only be transferred by another trapper. Training a new recruit fell to an elder eagle trapper who was willing to pass on their knowledge and their trapping rights. Although esteemed it was an
extremely dangerous vocation; before agreeing to transfer the rights, an eagle trapper had to ensure the novice properly understood the process and the accompanying obligations.

Eagle trapping was a spiritual activity that bore heavily on the trapper and his family, so much so that his wife would first cleanse herself with a smudge to act as purification. This acted to remove any scent the eagle could detect. In Grinnell’s *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, Wolf Calf accounts the construction of an eagle trap:

A man who started out to catch eagles moved his lodge and his family away from the main camp, to some place where the birds were abundant. A spot was chosen on top of a mound or butte within a few miles of his lodge, and he dug a pit in the ground as long as his body and somewhat deeper…When the pit had been made large enough, it was roofed over with small willow sticks, on which grass was scattered, and over the grass a little earth and stones were laid, so as to give the place a natural look, like the prairie all about it (Grinnell 2003:237).

Grinnell also gives eagle trapper John Monroe’s account of the construction of an eagle trap;

The pit is dug, six feet long, three wide, and four deep, on top on top of the highest knoll that can be found near a stream. The earth taken out is carried a long way off. Over the pit they put two long poles, one on each side, running lengthwise of the pit, and other smaller sticks are laid across, resting on the poles” (Grinnell 2003:238).

Bait was then placed on top of the trap and could be carrion of coyote or bison neck. The trapper would stay inside the eagle trap where he would fast, pray, and sing the eagle calling song. Trappers may stay in their pits as long as four days and four nights. While the trapper was in his lair, his wife would be observing her own rituals. For instance, she would refrain from eating foods such as rosehips/rosebuds and she avoided her awl or similar sharp instruments to prevent the eagle spirit from sensing it and clawing her husband (Grinnell 2003, McClintock 1999, John Hellson pers comm. 2010).
Eagle trapping was not about killing the quarry, instead when the eagle alighted upon the bait the trapper would reach up slowly grab the bird by its legs with one hand and pull off the birds’ tail feathers with the other hand (Tyrone Potts pers com. 2009). This method of eagle trapping explains why it was considered such dangerous work. Although both bald and golden eagles nest in the area, the golden eagle was preferred, because the bald eagle was substantially more dangerous to catch. There are reports from south Peigan people of bald eagles preying on bison calves and taking an entire calf with it up in the tree (John Hellson pers comm. 2010).

Eagle trapping was an activity that was frequently carried out in the late summer/fall because that was the time when young eagles matured and had adult plumage (John Hellson pers comm. 2010). An eagle trapper would only go to trap eagles when needed. Bundle holders often required feathers to feed their medicine bundles, thus, they obtained the right to trap eagles in order to fulfil obligations.

**The Permanent Eagle Trap**

In our survey in the summer of 2009, Eldon Yellowhorn and myself relocated an eagle trap on a high butte on the south west side of the Piikani Timber Limit 147B (Site was initially uncovered on a 2007 trip by Eldon Yellowhorn and Simon Solomon). This eagle trap structure is perched high up on the crest of a butte and is well concealed despite its location. It may have been in use as late as the 1960s. The structure is built from sandstone slabs and is supported by two long poles that are approximately six feet long. The construction is oriented north-south with the opening toward the north. Although the structure is partially collapsed, the south end of the structure is intact (see Appendix A for more information on the site).
In the late 1950s, elders in the Piikani community viewed the eagle trapping structure in the timber limit as important; they made the long trek from the Oldman River all the way up to the structure to show it to John Hellson, at that time an employee of the Glenbow Museum. According to him, most of the eagle traps out on the plains are temporary, only set up for a one time use, whereas this particular eagle trap was known to elders on the Piikani reserve as a permanent eagle trap that had been in use for generations (John Hellson pers comm.).

![Figure 4.1 Eagle Trap in the Porcupine Hills](image-url)
Comparison with Other Known Eagle Traps in Alberta

The Alberta Archaeological Survey has eight other recorded eagle trap structures. Most of the sites are located in southern Alberta and roughly half of them are within the Oldman River basin area. In the ethnographic material, the most frequent depiction of eagle traps portrays shallow pits dug lengthwise and covered with branches, located on the crest of a hill. Such an eagle trap is unlikely to be visible in the archaeological record because its expediency would leave minimal traces. Evidence of these types of eagle trapping structures would consist of shallow depressions with potentially some wood remains surviving. Three of the eagle trapping sites listed by the Alberta Archaeology branch fit this criterion, though the ambiguity of this site type means that many more such features on the landscape likely go unrecorded. The remaining five sites all have some stone components which makes them more resilient to the effects of time, however their stone features also make their identity as eagle traps somewhat indistinct; these sites are generally recorded as possible eagle traps though they also allude to collapsed cairns, or vision quest structures.

The eagle trap on IR147B is unique. Its known historical lineage makes its function unmistakable, and the excellent preservation of both its wood and stone components make it the most complete example of an eagle trap recorded in Alberta.

Eagle trapping is not a thriving practice among the Piikani today. The fact that eagle trapping survived into the reserve era, until the 1960s speaks to the loyalty of Piikani people to their traditions despite the pressure to conform to Canadian life. The end of eagle trapping coincides with the removal of medicine bundles from the Piikani
community. Eagle trapping is a part of the story of the Piikani timber limit and it is also part of the fabric that makes it sacred.

**Vision Quest Sites**

Although our survey did not uncover archaeologically identifiable vision quest structures, the terrain that would house them is certainly present. Vision seekers looked for high promentories with a view facing south. The numerous sandstone outcrops on the high buttes of the Porcupine Hills provide an outlook towards the Tipi Liners (Livingstone Range) to the west and the Oldman River valley to the south. Initials carved into the sandstone surfaces and faded offerings left among the rocks attest to the power of these places. Material remains from recent sweatlodges are visible amid these buttes, because they have the requisite feature of isolation preferred by ritualists. These spaces within the timber limit became all the more important during the early reserve era, because it was an area the Piikani could practice their spirituality without harassment by the NWMP.
Old Woman’s Butte

The most prominent landmark and the highest point on the Piikani timber limit is a high round bluff officially known as Squaw Butte (though in my project I use Old
Woman’s Butte\(^1\)). It guides visitors to the southern edge of the Porcupine Hills. Evidence of its secular and spiritual foci are everywhere visible. Nearby Old Woman’s Butte the remains of contemporary sweat lodges reveals one of its uses. Situated near the southwest corner of the timber limit, it offers a panoramic view of the valley below, and to the Tipi Liner Mountains directly west. The phenomenological experience of standing on this high butte with an approaching thunderstorm truly inspires awe. Gazing across the open prairie below is an impressive testament to the power of this place.

**Chapter Summary**

In a time before capitalism reached the plains, Niitsitapi economy was inseparable from their spiritual lives (Conaty 1995). Thus, the economic activity occurring in the Porcupine Hills was intertwined with their relationships with the landscape. The DIA strove to separate indigenous peoples from their landscape through disciplinary measures such as the pass system; in tandem with capitalist modes of production, these pressures isolated Blackfoot people from their seasonal visitations but did not sever their perception of the land. Though perhaps diminished by mechanism of the state, for many Piikani people, their relationship with their timber limit remains strong; this landscape still recognizes them.

The antiquity of the Piikani relationship with their timber limit and their continued connection maintains the importance of this place. The spiritual connection is

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\(^1\) The origin of the name Squaw Butte is unknown. It may relate to the time in Niitsitapi history when men and women lived separately, until Napi contrived to get them to live together. These names commemorate locations where the women used to have their own camps. Thus this butte may have originally been called “akii” Blackfoot for woman. The English word squaw is a derogatory term used to demean native women (see King 2003). Many landmarks initially called squaw in the English language have been changed to “Old Woman’s” such as Old Woman’s Coulee and Old Woman’s Buffalo Jump near Cayley Alberta (Karamitsanis 1992).
still active despite the influx of modernity, this connection alongside the archaeological sites, and the stories that accompany them reminds Piikani of the significance of their heritage. The lands of the timber limit continue to provide a variety of resources for Piikani people, both those that are tied to communal/ family economies, outside the bounds of the market/ capitalist economy, as well as market opportunities.
Chapter 5: Charcoal’s Last Hideout

Introduction

While surveying the north-east corner of the timber limit during the 2009 field season, Eldon Yellowhorn, myself, and Wallace Yellowface, a band member and our guide for the day visited the site of Charcoal’s last hideout. Although Wallace is familiar with the local area, and this site in particular, the dense brush and slope of the hill initially obscured its whereabouts. After traipsing around for a half hour, he hollered out in delight when he spotted it. The low structure hidden in a ring of mid sized trees, on a tiny plateau in a sheltered country, was barely visible from the surrounding hillside. This site once secreted Kainah’s most notorious outlaw, and remained hidden in the hillside nook.

Locating this site was a profound moment for us, a chance to have our own contact with the story of Charcoal; a story that was once widely told, and which still resonates in local folklore. Charcoal’s plight exhibits the process of this area’s takeover by colonial Canada; his story can still capture the imagination of the people who experienced it vicariously.

In the fall of 1896, the Fort Macleod District was gripped by the tale of Charcoal, a Blood Indian on the run from the North West Mounted Police (NWMP). Despite numerous sightings and encounters with settlers, and members of the Blood and Peigan Reserves, Charcoal evaded capture from the NWMP for an entire month. Hiding out in
river valleys and the timber lands around both reserves, Charcoal eluded his pursuers until his brothers, under threat of incarceration, contrived to betray him.

Charcoal’s story is told differently by the actors involved. For the North West Mounted Police and local settlers, the outcome is celebrated because it fits with their narrative of taming Canada’s wild west and civilizing its people. Revisionism being inherent in historical accounting, the story we tell now has become one of cultural misunderstanding. Charcoal’s kin, from their perspective spin a tale of a spiritual warrior, who haunts them to this day.

Charcoal’s 41 years spans a time of radical change. From the day of his birth to his death by hanging in 1897, his people had experienced a disastrous transformation. Blackfoot peoples saw white-mans’ law encroaching into their territory with the arrival of the NWMP in 1874. Three years later they had signed a treaty that laid the foundation for a bureaucratic network activating the mandate of Indian Affairs and gradually imposing the Canadian state into the lives of indigenous people. Charcoal’s story takes place within this transitional time and it continues to be told in ways that reinforce the varied narratives of change.

Charcoal was born in his father’s tipi in 1856 (Dempsey 1978). At that time, Blackfoot peoples had very little interaction with white newcomers, and so were unaware that foreign powers were claiming their country and dividing it amongst themselves. Encounters were limited to a handful of traders, that later writers would call explorers, such as Anthony Henday, David Thompson, and Peter Fidler, whose role was to expand the fur trade economy. In their wake came a few settlers who trickled in through the mid 1800s, but it was not until after Treaty 7 in 1877, when Blackfoot peoples entered into an
agreement with Queen Victoria’s representatives in Canada to share their land, that the ideas of new people began to affect their lives directly (Treaty 7 Elders et al. 1996).

Historian Hugh Dempsey begins his biography by placing Charcoal in his social context. His research tells us that he was the son of Red Plume (Dempsey 1978:2), a respected man in his community. Red Plume moved as he wished across Blackfoot country. His extended family formed the nucleus of the Choking band. In the post-treaty period, they camped up on the banks of the Belly River, on the newly formed Blood Reserve. As is Blackfoot tradition, Charcoal had a number of names until he earned the name Si’kohkskitsis, or Black Wood Ashes (Dempsey 1978). His English name, Charcoal, would soon become notorious across the North West Territories.
Figure 5.1 Charcoal in 1897 (dressed by photographer)

Glenbow Archives NA-118-54. Used with Permission.
Murder on the Blood Reserve

By 1896, Charcoal and his wife Pretty Wolverine had built as comfortable a life as they could on their new farm on the Blood Reserve. They were prominent members in their community, but trouble was brewing under their veneer of harmony.

In September of that year, while working stacking hay on the Cochrane Ranche, Charcoal received the bad news that his wife had taken a lover. Worse news followed when he learned it was her much younger cousin, Medicine Pipe Stem.

By October Charcoal was ill-at-ease, he had the unpleasant task of confronting his wife and her lover. Charcoal begged them to cease their incestuous affair but they ignored his pleas. Vengeance came later when he stumbled upon his wife and her lover in a blatant embrace. With one fateful bullet Charcoal ended Medicine Pipe Stem’s life. Only after he had fired that fatal discharge did he realize he had initiated the countdown to his own demise.

With a dead body lying before him and a dreadful sense of foreboding guiding his thoughts, Charcoal decided to abscond before the corpse was discovered. He feared rightly, that his action would be considered murder and under any code of law punishment was death.

Twelve days later, news came that Medicine Pipe Stem’s remains had been found and people feared a killer was on the loose. News spread about the murder on the Blood Reserve, but so did gossip about suspects and motives. Knowing the search for the culprit would lead to his cabin, his desire to escape the inevitable led Charcoal to return to his old career as a warrior. He plotted his next move just as Pretty Wolverine struggled to
keep her silence. Evading suspicion might be impossible, so Charcoal decided to flee, but before he left he had one more person to kill.

Certain that his doom approached, he recalled the old ways and how a warrior sent a messenger ahead to announce his arrival in the Sand Hills, the entrance to the Blackfoot afterlife. An important chief was the ideal herald, but since he no longer travelled the war road the candidates were limited to a few whitemen who had the stature for the task.

His mind settled on E. McNeill, the farm instructor stationed on the reserve. He decided to ambush McNeill that night. Although the darkness obscured his identity, it also made his aim less certain. Fortunately for McNeill, Charcoal’s shot passed through a potted plant on the windowsill and by the time it struck the farm instructor it only caused minor injuries.

October 13th, brought more bad news for Charcoal when he learned of the wounded whiteman. Having failed in his objective, he turned south. Charcoal and his family camped out at Lee’s Creek south of the reserve near the Mormon settlement. The next day he headed into the forested refuge of the Blood timber limit. On October 17th smoke from his camping spot in the trees wafted up from the campfire and signalled his location to the police. NWMP Insp. Jarvis and two dozen Indian scouts ambushed Charcoal who managed to escape amid a chorus of gunfire. While the police captured his mother in law, his daughter and his step-son, Charcoal successfully fled into the dense timber accompanied by Pretty Wolverine, as well as his junior wife and a second step-son. Later that night he brazenly stole two horses from the NWMP while their owners were out looking for him.
Thus began the cat and mouse chase between the North West Mounted Police and Charcoal. Large numbers of police recruits swept the countryside while Charcoal and his family camped in forested groves and raided provisions from settlers and NWMP alike. He camped across Kainah territory, travelling as far west as the Piikani timber limit, as far south as the American border, and east to Fort Macleod.

In the first week of November, Charcoal was spotted at his campfire south of the village of Pincher Creek. During the pursuit that followed, NWMP Sergeant Wilde was shot and killed. The death of the Mountie provoked a furor among the local settlers, and roused the ire of NWMP commander Sam Steele who was still smarting from the criticism he received for allowing Charcoal’s first escape. It meant too that Charcoal’s personal narrative moved closer to its conclusion, but he had achieved his goal and acquired a herald for the afterlife.

The following day Charcoal visited his brother Left Hand, unaware of his brothers’ pact to betray him. Left Hand and Bear Back Bone conspired to capture him and hold him prisoner until a constable arrived, in order to secure their own freedom. By dawn on November 11, Charcoal was behind bars at the police outpost on the Blood Reserve, and he remained in jail until his trial in the first few weeks of January 1897, at which time he was sentenced to death. Gallows were erected in the Fort Macleod barracks in March of that year and soon fulfilled their fatal task. Thus ends the epic saga.

This basic story takes on a different flavour according to who tells it. The character of Charcoal is variously cast as a villain or martyr, and the story is told with varying degrees of embellishments. The different perspectives of the storytellers turn this story from a thriller, to a cautionary tale, to a romance; but in all versions it ends
tragically. Like any good story, it has changed with different political times, and adapted to the circumstances surrounding its telling.

Figure 5.2 Medicine Pipe Stem (photo taken in 1891)
Glenbow Archives NA 668-57. Used with permission.
The Story of Charcoal as Covered by the *Macleod Gazette*: the Thriller

As the closest town to the Blood and Peigan reserves, and the only one in the area with a newspaper, Fort Macleod was a hub for local news. In the fall of 1896, Charcoal’s story dominated Fort Macleod’s weekly publication, the *Macleod Gazette*. During this time Charcoal’s story made up the vast majority of local content for the four page newspaper, filling up the first and fourth pages, those dedicated to news and local events, leaving room only for the weekly novella, cattle brands and ads. Each issue of the Gazette featured an update of the search for the fugitive. When covering Charcoal’s trial and execution, the newspaper reproduced the events in obsessive detail, publishing what comes close to a complete transcription of its proceedings.

The Gazette’s approach to Charcoals’ story is explicated by the sensationalized style of journalism popular at that time. In the 1890s, New York newspaper giants the *World* and the *Journal* competed for readership each striving to produce increasingly dramatic stories to increase circulation. The result was the creation of a highly emotional style of reportage, later referred to as “Yellow Journalism” (Campbell 2004). This journalistic style spread to many newspapers around North America including the *Macleod Gazette*, and the tale of Charcoal was tailor made for sensationalism. Local headlines told its version of events with dramatic breaks printed in capital letters. The story line offered a stark dichotomy of good vs. evil.

In the pages of the *Gazette*, the editor had no qualms about characterizing Charcoal as an evil figure, referring to him as “Bad Young Man” or “Lazy Young Man”
with poor translations of his earlier names. Adjectives such as “bad”, to “clever”, and “murderous”, invariably appear in the sentence preceding his name (Macleod Gazette [MG] 1896; 1897). With typical flourish, the Macleod Gazette claimed Charcoal murdered his family on the first page of one issue then recants that statement as rumour on the last page. No shortage of hyperbole ran through the articles, one even labelling him as “the north-west ripper” a flagrant comparison to the notorious English serial killer (MG 16 October 1896:4).

Hand in hand with Charcoal’s villainous characterization in the Gazette is the one that casts the North West Mounted Police as heroes. The Mounties, as they came to be known, fit the adjectives “chivalrous, brave and square”, and especially “gallant”. They were, in the editor’s eyes “ideal” men (MG 13 November 1896). In a time when newspapers were more concerned with entertaining than informing, Charcoal’s story was a thriller and a godsend for the struggling newspaper. This dangerous and cunning Outlaw featured in the pages of the Gazette, surely terrified the citizens of Fort Macleod and the surrounding area. Vilifying Charcoal and celebrating the Mounties certainly was entertainment, but also part of a popular process of lionizing the police force for bringing law and order westward.

There was certainty about heroes so when a rumour began spreading in February of 1897, that even Father Lacombe, the respected Catholic priest was trying to get Charcoal’s death sentence commuted, the Macleod Gazette wrote, “We trust that there is no foundation for the rumour. There should be no false sentiment in Charcoal’s case, for if ever a man was proved to be a cold blooded murderer it is he” (MG 5 February 1897:4). The Gazette’s last dispatch on Charcoal, on March 19, 1897, concludes the epic
story with the dramatic headline “FATAL LEVER WAS PULLED” in all capital letters, exclaiming Charcoal’s fate to give readers their closure.

North West Mounted Police Narratives about Charcoal: Placating Settlers with Heroic Rhetoric

In 1896, the year of Charcoal’s plight, the NWMP were still establishing Canadian law in the old North West Territories. They had arrived twenty-two years earlier, after a highly publicized march west. But their authority among the Indians was tenuous. Oral testimony states that when the NWMP arrived, Piikani Chief Bull Head gave their head of command Col. Macleod permission to stay the winter, but told them they should pack up come spring (Treaty 7 Elders et al. 1996; Yellowhorn 1975). However, their directive was to stay and to assert Canadian law over the territory. From the start their presence was controversial. Today historians still debate whether Blackfoot peoples were pleased by the NWMP presence because of their efforts to keep the whiskey traders at bay (Mayfield 1998), or whether Blackfoot peoples resented the NWMP for meddling in their lives (Hildebrandt et al. 1996). What is clear, however, is that the police brought effective control to the region and gained traction until no questions remained over their purpose.

Subsequent re-telling of the Charcoal story expresses this social milieu. Popular accounts of the Mounties begins with “[h]eroic young men, clad in their scarlet tunics, battling all sorts of nefarious ruffians with only the lonely prairie and its accompanying evocative sky as a constant companion” (Hewitt 1998:351).
While great writing is not a prerequisite for police work, Inspector G.E. Sanders’
heaped vitriol on his antagonist in a manner more fitting to pulp fiction than a
bureaucrat’s annual report. In his opinion:

“Charcoal” during the whole time of the pursuit kept within this district. Knowing he would be caught eventually, wherever he went, he desired to
leave a record as a bad man with his tribe for generations to come. His
conduct after killing “medicine pipe stem” (sic) showed that he intended
to do as much shooting as he could. Towards the end his particular prey
were the police for the uncomfortable time they had given him, hence his reasons for shooting at Corporal Armer and the evident delight he
displayed when he shot Sergeant Wilde. Mr. Jon Brotton who was close by tells me that the Indian shouted and sang when he committed this last foul murder [Government of Canada 1897:47].

Sanders reported the poignant remark that Charcoal “intended to do as much
shooting as he could” and that Charcoal shot after the NWMP for the “uncomfortable
time they had given him”. Emphasizing his delight in killing Sgt. Wilde, Sanders
ignored compelling reasons Charcoal may have had for his actions. Within their law and
order agenda the NWMP translated the complex Blackfoot social and spiritual milieu into
a straightforward contest of good and evil.

Charcoal’s flight took place during a tenuous time for the police because they
already had one fugitive Indian on the loose. A Cree man named Almighty Voice had
killed a policeman before fleeing, exactly one year earlier. The force feared these examples could inspire another Indian uprising like the 1885 rebellion (Horral 1973). More than ever, the NWMP had to appear to be in control of the Northwest Territories.

The Indians, newly under their command, had to recognize their authority and
Canadian law. The NWMP accepted the rightness of their rule by holding up to the ideals
of the British system of laws to which Canada aspired. Thus their narratives about the
pursuit of Charcoal spoke to the righteous mission of the Mounties, and further embellished their mythology. They did not seize this outlaw, who was captured by his own brothers, but they did reap the credit. With threats of incarceration Major Sam Steele bartered Charcoal for the safety and well-being of his extended family (Dempsey 1978; Steele 1915).

Wherever this story appeared, NWMP are the virtuous and popular lawmakers. Occasionally, attempts to reconcile this ideology with their actual work resulted in conflicting accounts. For example, the superintendent in charge reported that many Piikani volunteers were willing to aid the search for Charcoal under the NWMP command (Government of Canada 1897).

There are a number of contradictions between the idealized official version of the NWMP hierarchy, versus the lived realities of the individual inspectors. For example, a large portion of the report issued by Major Steele Commander of the Fort Macleod Division speaks favourably about how the Indians supported the NWMP in their mission to catch Charcoal and were happy to be led and directed by the police.

Yet Inspector G.E. Sanders writes: “… I sent out scouting parties of Indians under experienced leaders (those that were considered adepts with war-parties in the old days) in different directions through the hills” (Government of Canada 1897: 44).

Other reports written by officers involved in the pursuit reveal that local trackers went out mostly under the direction of the Piikani leaders to search for Charcoal, who were surely nervous about his movements. The distinction is between a large search party of Piikani recruits acting under the NWMP command or acting with the NWMP. Piikani chiefs were not waiting for results; they acted on their own volition because they
were targets of a desperado’s raids. They understood that Charcoal posed a serious danger to their community. They knew that a warrior on the brink of death was no ordinary villain.

For the redcoats, Charcoal’s story is told in a way that upholds popular folklore. Idealistic representation of the NWMP helped justify the expansion of the Canadian nation state and affirmed the primacy of Canadian law. As more settlers arrived, the dual narratives of the west as an uncivilized place and the necessity and inevitability of a progress towards civilization were fuel for colonialist expansionism.

**Story of Charcoal as Recorded in Early Histories of the NWMP: Supporting a Myth**

Canada was a young nation when its leaders initiated an ambitious agenda for the old Northwest Territories recently acquired from the Hudson’s Bay Company. The North West Mounted Police would be the core policy for asserting Canadian sovereignty. An interesting by-product of nation building was the desire to foster symbols that appealed to the broader sentiments of nationalism. In the early 1900s, popular histories of the NWMP flourished, and were produced in large quantities (e.g. Chambers 1906; Turner 1950; Fort Macleod Historical Association 1958). Their ability to evoke such admiration is remarkable. Fans of a history that barely existed wrote dozens of NWMP fan histories that were published between 1900 and the 1970s. Some authors attempted biographical history based on lived experience that were equal parts reminiscence and fancy. Many of these works cite the Charcoal case as a difficult episode for the NWMP, who, ever
stalwart, persevered and captured the cunning villain. In bringing about justice, they brought the rule of law to the prairies.

The Charcoal story related in these volumes invariably cast the NWMP in the most favourable light. The construction of an idealized NWMP is ever-present in the retelling. For example, the Fort Macleod Historical Association writes;

“It has always been a source of wonder to historians of the North West Mounted Police that, in the early days of the force between 1874 and 1900, though the Indians of the Old West outnumbered the police 100, to 1, there were singularly few cases involving the murder of the police by an Indian” (Fort Macleod Historical Association 1958: 86)

The assumption here is that native peoples are naturally murderous; only the goodness of the Mounties persuaded them to be otherwise. Lionizing them in popular media and historical writing had a purpose. As historian Steve Hewitt writes, the Mounties were imbued with “valorous trappings that bordered on a religion” which was necessary for the psychological well-being of the settlers (Hewitt 1998:354). Such mythologizing was meant to allay fears, because here the law on horseback kept the frontier area “orderly and safe for settlers” (Hewitt 1998:354). Every myth needs its villains to perpetuate its mystique and early accounts obliged with the popular history of the NWMP.

The story of Charcoal according to the Fort Macleod Historical Society concludes: “Charcoal was hanged in the Barracks Square at Fort Macleod. The saga of Charcoal left behind a lesson that law and order would always prevail in the land patrolled by the men of the mounted” (Fort Macleod Historical Association 1958: 87). This message is in line with the popular mountie always gets his man rhetoric. A
comforting message for citizens of a young nation that was already insecure about its neighbours.

**Duncan Campbell Scott; A Parable for Indian Affairs Policy**

Somewhere between 1897 and 1904, Canadian poet and storyteller Duncan Campbell Scott wrote his own version of the Charcoal story. Scott was a senior bureaucrat in the Department of Indian Affairs and as such had access to correspondence about the case from the Blood Indian Agent James Wilson (Slolim 1979). Scott’s version is highly romanticized, and surprisingly sympathetic to his protagonist; he exaggerates the villainous qualities of the antagonist who precipitates the chain of events, even giving Charcoal’s victim, Medicine Pipe Stem, one of Charcoal’s names, Bad Young Man. Unlike the marlin of the archive, which chronicle his convictions for cattle killing, and accusations of rations fraud, the Charcoal in Scott’s story is an Indian Agent’s ideal Indian. Scott coats Charcoal’s inner monologue thick with the rhetoric of Indian Affairs:

“More and more evident were the results of his toil and his obedience to his agent and instructor… Verily the white man’s ways were the best”(Scott 1947:213).

According to Scott, Charcoal was led astray by his wife, who slept with the nefarious Bad Young Man, and his grandfather whose advice leads him to react in the traditional way. The sad old man who sits around telling war stories of his youth, is a figure who appears only in Scott’s narrative and appears to be a figment of Scott’s imagination. In this account Charcoal’s decision to act on advice from his grandfather explains his downfall.
Every rendition of this story is a tragedy, including this one, because the author casts the story as a dispute between the old ways, and the more civilized laws introduced by white newcomers. Scott was given the mandate to modernize the Indians and subvert their traditional beliefs. Typical for someone who worked at Indian Affairs at that time, Scott was clear that holding traditional values could only reap misfortune. Sensible policy would Canadian-ize the Indians. In this way, Scott’s version of the Charcoal story is a parable whose moral is assimilation.

Duncan Campbell Scott went on to be named one of a Canada’s confederation poets, and also the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932. During his tenure as head of Indian Affairs he became known for his callous implementation of government policy (Titley 1986). His strong insistence that assimilationist polices were best for Indians paradoxically resulted in their marginalization and further injury.

The story penned by Scott would not be retold again for eighty years, and by then the aesthetics of Canadians would be very different.

Dempsey’s Story: the Tragedy of Cultural Misunderstanding

Canadian historian Hugh Dempsey published the first modern account of the Charcoal story in 1978. In Charcoal’s World he relied heavily on conversations he had with elders on Blackfoot reserves. The book weaves together oral history with archival sources for the most complete rendering of Charcoal’s story yet.

Hugh Dempsey uses his extensive research to highlight the fundamental differences between Blackfoot historical memory and reports of white officials. Their
voices, combined with those of Indian agents and NWMP, cast the story of Charcoal as one of sweeping cultural misunderstanding. Dempsey focuses his story on the disconnect between NWMP reality and Charcoal’s world. Through his book, Dempsey seeks to blame Charcoal’s plight on an inevitable cultural misunderstanding.

For Dempsey, the tragedy arose because Charcoal could not comprehend the actions of the NWMP. Likewise, the police failed to understand the shooter’s motivations. Dempsey’s Charcoal collided with the code of law brought to his country by the North West Mounted Police where before there was only the principle of retaliation in kind. Moreover, Blackfoot tradition held when a warrior reached the end of his life he should be preceded by an important person to herald his arrival in the afterlife (Dempsey 1978).

Dempsey recounted how, in 1896, Charcoal and his wife Pretty Wolverine were a power couple in their time. He was a religious man who held a medicine bundle and she had purchased membership in a prestigious women’s society. Jealously gnawed at Charcoal when he learned of the tryst between Pretty Wolverine and her cousin, Medicine Pipe Stem. Her wanton disregard for taboos of an incestuous affair, meant that disgrace would follow in their wake. This was more than he could bear. Charcoal warned his wife of the danger of her actions, not only to their relationship but most importantly to their status in the community. Pretty Wolverine ignored his warning and continued this criminal communication. Later, catching the pair in the act, Charcoal found reasonable ground to shoot Medicine Pipe Stem. Under the code of retaliation he had acted justly but a cloudy sense of the new justice of the NWMP filled Charcoal with dread, he knew that they would call this action murder and their punishment for it was
death. Ordering his family to break camp, they moved away from the area of his crime.

Charcoal was now on the run.

In this rendition Charcoal is the misunderstood criminal who displays exceptional acumen to elude the confused Mounties who chased him. Since they could not understand him, they misinterpreted his apparent elation at shooting Sergeant Wilde as the victory shout of a cold-blooded murderer. Only in a more enlightened time could anyone appreciate his personal victory at being able to die an honourable warrior’s death.

For Hugh Dempsey, this episode was merely one more instance of the unfortunate cultural disconnect that was occurring all over western Canada.

It is a consistent theme in all his work. For example, he frequently produces tragic biographies of important native leaders. Great cultural misunderstanding between settlers and Native peoples is the usual template in his treatment of Cree leader Big Bear (Dempsey 1984), and the Blackfoot chief Crowfoot (1972).

There is no doubt that these leaders’ lives were tragic. Unfortunately, as in his tome on Charcoal, Dempsey reduces the travails of these leaders to cultural misunderstanding, and mistranslation, thus eliminating the nuances and controversy that surrounded them. Readers are left to wring their hands and exclaim: If only the judges trying Big Bear had understood Cree metaphor (Dempsey 1984). Likewise, he would have his audience believe that if only those pursuing Charcoal had understood his cultural context, the story would elicit a better conclusion. Dempsey’s view of this time-period, though lushly populated with archival documents and oral histories is altogether too simplistic. There is more to the story, such as racism and the cultural superiority complex of the settlers, that his constant refrain of misunderstanding cannot capture.
The expansive scope of Dempsey’s work has shielded him from criticism. Certainly there is a tendency, perhaps even a routine, to use a lachrymose brush to paint all of early western Canadian history. Keith Regular, the author and economic historian, points to uniform belief in the failure of native economic ventures to explain the same situation. He insists that Dempsey’s consistently gloomy perspective overlooks successes of native farmers, and views all of the Northwest Territories as having one narrative (Regular 2009).

Dempsey’s perspective is more troubling though than a simple pessimistic, nostalgic tale, because he holds cultural misunderstandings responsible for the tragedy of native lives in western Canada. According to him, native people were inevitable collateral damage following the arrival of white settlers. While the vagaries of individual experiences cannot be ignored, the Bloods were being transformed by the purposeful machinations of colonialism. The misunderstanding coating race relations allowed him to ignore a much more sinister reality. The Canadian colonial project designed by the Department of Indian Affairs included a complex surveillance regime (Smith 2009). Protected by the actions of the NWMP and Indian agents, white settlers would have unfettered control over the development of the old North-west Territories.

Many scholars now equate the frontier justice of the NWMP as integral to the Canadianization of the area. They argue that activities such as horse stealing and cattle killing were targeted specifically to undermine the vestiges of native custom (Hubner 1998, Satzewich 1996, Nettlebeck and Smandych 2010). For example, Brian Hubner writes that the criminalization of horse stealing allowed the NWMP to “circumscribe
Indian movement and restrict Indian men to their reserve, symbolically crushing their way of life” (Hubner 1998:53).

**Charcoal’s Hanging- Niitsitapi Viewpoint**

Charcoal’s demise was a turning point in race relations because Aboriginal peoples of the NWT would never question the motives of the NWMP. On March 16, Charcoal was hung in the barracks in Fort Macleod. Although too weak to walk, likely a result of his worsening tuberculosis, he was carried up to the scaffold and placed on a chair. Despite his weakness, he went to his death singing a war song. Officially Canadian laws required executions to be carried out in private (Leyton-Brown 2010), so local officials created public awareness in other ways. Executions were a reinforcement of power relations, and the means by which the Canadian state exercised its authority, thus the population had to know of their occurrence (Leyton- Brown 2010). Even though they were technically private affairs, witnesses were crucial for disseminating the news. Therefore, executions were attended by newspaper reporters, public officials, and church ministers. Inviting First Nation chiefs was both a deterrent and a warning. Charcoal’s hanging was no exception. Attending that day were the sheriff and deputy, 4 police inspectors, 2 doctors, 1 priest, 2 journalists, the Indian Agent for the Peigan Reserve as well as 3 constables and 2 unaffiliated men. Niitsitapi leaders, Chiefs Crow Eagle and Heard Before, related the event before its details appeared in the Macleod Gazette. As Leyton-Brown writes: “The policy of inviting (or requiring) First Nations chiefs[…] to witness executions is perhaps the clearest example of the attempt to use executions as a civilizing force” (Leyton-Brown 2010:155 N14).
Government policy ensured that while the gallows remained behind closed doors, the hanging was the talk of the town. To foment the public’s imagination, an order in council called for a black flag to be displayed prominently outside the execution venue. A bell tolled for fifteen minutes before and fifteen minutes after the executioner pulled the fatal lever. According to historian Ken Leyton-Brown newspaper reporters played a prominent role, they “became partners with the authorities and ensured that the people were vicarious spectators at hangings” (Leyton-Brown 2010:11).

Execution was accompanied by formal customs. For Charcoal up on the scaffold, “a short prayer was offered by Father Legal, the white cap was placed over the condemned man’s face and the noose adjusted. At exactly eight minutes past eight the FATAL LEVER WAS PULLED by the executioner and Charcoal dropped swiftly to eternity” (MG 19 March 1897:4). This singular event in the barracks of Fort Macleod was remembered for a long time to come. Although his hanging was technically not public, and as journalists reported “few native people were in from the reserves” (MG 19 March 1897:4), the memory of Charcoal’s death made a deep impression on Blackfoot memory. Winter counts drawn after Charcoal’s demise reference 1896 as the year Charcoal was on the run and 1897 as the year he was hung. Decades later Houghton Running Rabbit at Cluny, Alberta, over 200 km from Fort Macleod, still alluded to Charcoal’s hanging. The pictorial account by Bull Plume of the Peigan reserve simply depicts a figure hanging. It was a visceral warning of what would happen if you did not follow the white man’s laws.

For the Blood and Piikani, Charcoal’s life inspires a strain of heroism that recalls their uneasy history with the mounted police and Canadian law. Five generations on,
Charcoal the icon is still the enigmatic warrior who eluded the best efforts of the constabulary, but who ultimately met his fate at the end of a rope.

Figure 5.3 Prison Guards Adjusting Charcoal’s Shackles (1896)
Glenbow Archives NA-4035-70. Used with permission.

The Red Devil’s Advocate

One version that has not been widely told is that of Charcoal’s defence attorney in 1897. In defending his client, Mr. Horance Harvey made the case that the justice system
failed an innocent man, especially the police who were supposed to act in the interests of all the peoples of Canada.

On trial for double murder, for Medicine Pipe Stem and then for Sgt. Wylde, Charcoal’s conviction in the first case rested on a confession he made to Indian Agent James Wilson through his interpreter R.N. Wilson. His lawyer argued that the confession was made to an authority, who served as Charcoal’s legal counsel, it was inadmissible in court. Judge Scott overturned this argument and forced the Wilsons to speak, even though they resisted, holding the belief this testimony betrayed their ward.

On March 5, 1897, roughly a week before Charcoal was hanged, a panel of lawyers and judges reviewing the case for the North West Territories Law Review determined that this was an incorrect ruling by Judge Scott. The agent was considered legal counsel for the Indian under his care, and therefore the confession was not admissible in court (Rimmer and Johnstone 1975 [1897]).

In Charcoal’s second trial, the trial for the murder of Sgt. Wylde, his lawyer put forward another vigorous defence. Mr. Harvey, called a series of witnesses to the stand who testified about Charcoal’s interactions with the NWMP. This testimony demonstrated that when Charcoal left the Blood Reserve to camp out in the timbers, he was ambushed by NWMP Inspector Jarvis and numerous Indian scouts. The scouts testified to seeing Charcoal’s tipi in the trees and, without warning, fired upon it in rapid succession. The defendant ran out of the tipi and into the dense timber, while hundreds of shots rang out around him (MG 1897).

A similar situation occurred when Wylde’s party came upon Charcoal near Pincher Creek. Mr. Harvey reminded the court that proper procedure was not carried out;
“the prisoner was not told what he was wanted for or that his pursuers were trying to arrest him, and from the way he had been shot at before, and from what had been called out to him he thought it was their intention to kill him” (MG Jan 22 1897:4). With this evidence, Mr. Harvey argued that the killing of Wylde was justifiable homicide because overzealous police actions had precipitated the fatal shooting. Although sound, his argument failed to sway the all white jury, which deliberated only briefly before submitting their guilty verdict.

In 1896, on the run from the NWMP, Charcoal hid out on the slopes of the Porcupine Hills in the Piikani timber limit. Initially hiding out with his family in early October, Charcoal returned there alone in November after all his family had run away or
been captured. Having nothing left to lose, he visited the sacred areas within the Piikani timber limit (Dempsey 1978).

Charcoal’s relationship with the area reinforces the tradition of linking place and memory, which continues in the Piikani community today. The power of his story reminds us of the importance of this forested upland as an area of shelter and reflection. Considering the dramatic events unfolding there has imbued the location with significance because of the story of Charcoal.

In a time before Indian Affairs imposed its own definitions of who was Indian and who belonged to which band, identity was tied with relationships. Charcoal may have been defined as a Blood Indian, but his identity was linked into a network of kinship ties that also included his Piikani relatives. Identity was based on his extended family and not strictly membership in a single group as determined in the Indian Act. Before reserves became their homes people could move freely between different groups and they did (Binnema 1996). With family members among the Piikani to whom he could turn for help, and his own connection to the timber limit, Charcoal is a character that belongs as much to the Piikani as to the Kainah.

Charcoal’s Hideout

The interesting feature of Charcoal’s hideout is not its exclusivity, many Piikani people who have experience with their timber limit will tell you they know where he hid out. The undeniable presence of Charcoal there makes IR 147B a special place in local folklore. It makes the legend real.
There are many nearby locations where Charcoal made camp; his first hide out was up Tennessee Coulee and then he camped out at the south central edge of the timber limit (Dempsey 1978). Later all alone, Charcoal hid out among the sacred buttes and hillsides (Dempsey 1978). His final campsite is now a non-descript pile of wood up on the eastern edge within view of the old trail from the Piegan Reserve that runs along Beaver Creek. The campsite we visited in the spring of 2009 would not attract attention without prior knowledge of who made it. The structure is situated on a tiny ledge midway upslope. Five large trees surrounded a collapsed heap of beams, overgrown with lichens. The structure was once a tipi like lean-to constructed with scavenged logs and is approximately 2 meters in diameter. The characteristics of the structure itself, and its location reveal its function.

Wallace Yellowface, a Piikani elder in his mid 60s, has moiled among the timbers since his childhood, and through many years harvesting trees with his father, came to possess knowledge of this site.

The nature of the structure itself also corroborates the conclusion that this is Charcoal’s hideout. It was built in the centre of a ring of trees that would have been slightly larger than saplings a century ago. Accounts of Charcoal’s flight tell us that he would often select a grove of trees and tie them together at the tops to create a shelter (Dempsey 1978). Such an expedient lodge also creates a blind to make it indistinguishable from the surrounding trees. Warlodges were typically made for stays of short duration so the builder made use of whatever material was available. By all accounts, Charcoal’s tipi was taken from him by the NWMP, so he would have had to rely on another form of shelter (MG 22 January 1897; Dempsey 1978).
Its location fits into accounts of Charcoal’s movement, which place him in the vicinity for a significant time before his capture. Piikani storytellers say he took his wives up into the timber limit through the south end at Tennessee Coulee and made camp at the sacred places thereabouts, especially on the west side. In his final days of freedom, Charcoal was spotted on the edge of the timber limit closest to the Peigan Reserve.

There is the story of Charcoal, possessed by coyote, raping a young woman at one of the Piikani settlements along the Oldman River (Dempsey 1978). As the legend goes, he returned to his campsite each night, on the eastern edge of the timber limit. This area was a logical choice because it lay along the old wagon road along Beaver Creek, that woodcutters would have travelled to the forest. Maj. Steele of the NWMP noted in his journal that the day prior to Wylde’s shooting, Charcoal was spotted along Beaver Creek (Steele 1915:283). In his trial testimony Charcoal states he was able to see the NWMP from his hideout, but did not believe they could see him (MG 22 January 1897). This site was a good vantage point from where to watch the Beaver Creek trail and surrounding hillsides.

Circumstantial evidence points to the conclusion this is Charcoal’s last hideout, and remains from the day he left for good. We must ask, finally, if this structure is not Charcoal’s hideout, what is it? The tenuous location of the structure on the edge of the hill surrounded by forested landscape suggests that this area would not have been a prime camping spot. Because it favours hiding over the practicality of a flat campsite it would be the ideal place for someone looking for solitude. Finding Charcoal’s hideout brings us into contact with this great story and leads us to ask more questions.
It may hold more secrets about Charcoal’s last days on the run. However, as it is not threatened in any way, there is no reason to disturb it for the sake of archaeological investigation. The Piikani have long been careful stewards of their lands, and Piikani loggers in the area in the 1960s and 70s were aware of the site and took care not to damage it (Yellowface pers. comm. 2009). Providing GIS co-ordinates to the Piikani Land Office will assist the Nation in continuing to protect this site.
Figure 5.5 Charcoal’s Last Hideout?
(Photo taken by the author August 2009)
The Puzzle of the Tree Scars

On the eastern edge of the eastern most trees surrounding the hideout, there are scars approximately 10 cm wide and 30 cm long. Were these scars made by Charcoal? Further analysis of these remains could provide unique information about his life on the run.

The marks on the tree could have been made by Charcoal to mark the hideout or they could be commemorative, made years after his death, in the manner of tree markings common among Blackfoot (McClintock 1958). Given the prominence of Charcoal and his story, commemorating his hideout in this manner would make sense. Taking a sample core of the trees would enable us to determine through simple dendrochronology, when the tree was marked. This approach would yield new information without damaging the site.

Chapter Summary: One Story in the Many Narratives of Charcoal

An intensely spiritual man, Charcoal’s journey while on the run was that of a warrior (Dempsey 1978; Yellowhorn 2010). Charcoal invoked the spirit of the coyote and demonstrated traditional Piikani spiritually co-existing with the post-Treaty era. Charcoal was frightening to the Piikani people not only because they understood he was out to kill an important man but that he had taken on the spirit of the coyote. In this sense only the Blackfoot people really knew how dangerous he was.

To this day, the story of Charcoal is important to Piikani people. Seeking out this site as part of my archaeological investigation was vital to tell the story of the timber
limit; it is key in constructing the narrative of change in the timbers and for the Piikani story. Locating Charcoal’s last hideout shed new light on his last days, and verifies an understanding of the past that is important to people in the Piikani community today. The story of Charcoal is critical to the narratives of change in southern Alberta, it is illuminating not only because of the events of 1896 and 1897 but also because of its many incarnations in stories told about that time. These many versions taken together become an informative case of the intangible mystique of Piikani Timber Limit 147B.

Charcoal terrified local citizens in the fall of 1896. Although he frightened everyone, he has come to mean different things to the various people who began to settle in this country. To this day, the story of Charcoal is an important artifact in the story of southern Alberta. A placard on the roadside near Pincher Creek and the replica police barracks standing in Fort Macleod make the Charcoal story visible in the landscape. However, Charcoal’s influence also exists in the landscape in a less tangible way, the trails he took, the forests where he sought refuge remind us of the land that was and the history that we attach to those places.
Chapter 6: The Timbers: Colonial Artifact, Capitalist Resource, Community Property

Piikani have always sought shelter amongst the trees, while the forested Porcupine Hills had their economic role. The movement of capitalism into Piikani territory meant that the forests would soon have a different role. The trees in Niitisitapi Territory and the lumber they produced rapidly became commodities in the emerging market economy.

The Early Logging Industry in Piikani Territory

The short history of lumber industry in this region is borne out in the multitude of stumps, tall and small, cut by axe, hand saw, and chainsaw. These stumps range from small diameter trees cut for tipi poles, to the large stumps of old growth forest cut high up to allow dragging during the winter. Although IR147B had many uses, its most obvious was for harvesting timber. Chronicling the imprint of this important social and economic change on the timber limit reveals a continuity from long before the colonial era. Once market economic forces began to influence the mode of usage, Piikani people discovered it potential to satisfy a demand and capture cash for their community.

Throughout the early reserve period harvesting timber was a singular enterprise. Early trade relationships provided Piikani people with metal axes, but only in the post-treaty era did the combination of axes and hand saws cut a swath through the forest.
Finally, in the 1950s, the chainsaw came into vogue. Piikani people went up to the Porcupine Hills to gather lumber for everything from tipi poles to fence posts, but when they built their sawmills into the area, it increased the versatility and demand for the processed wood.

**Sawmills**

The first sawmills established in Piikani territory started operating in the 1880s. Typically the mill machinery got power from large steam-powered engines that required a consistent supply of water to operate. They consisted of a steam engine and boiler connected to a spinning circular saw blade and a log carriage attached to steel tracks at least 12 feet long. Housed in a building at least 20 feet long and 8 feet wide, steam powered sawmills were popular until the introduction of diesel and gasoline powered portable bush mills in the 1940s (Lee 1984).

The majority of the early steam-powered sawmills in the area of the Oldman River basin were short lived, succumbing to flooding, mechanical breakdowns, fires or financial misfortune (Lee 1984; Potyandi 1992; Wuth 1995). Being high maintenance machines they required skilled mechanics, who were rare among the settlers who were then trickling into the old North West Territories, so operating them was a fickle venture. However lumber was a hot commodity to the nascent ranching economy, which dominated the Oldman River area after the 1880s, as many homesteaders were building their houses, stables, and barns. At the turn of the century, when farming was eclipsed by ranching ventures, sawmills strained to meet their orders.

Almost as soon as they settled on their reserve the Peigan had access to outside markets, because of the new transportation system in the area. Construction of the
Canadian Pacific Rail (CPR) line through Calgary in the 1880s and the Crows Nest Pass
CPR line a few year later created stronger ties with national markets. Lumber prices were
gradually being influenced by the market economy, as well as local demand. Ostensibly,
the Piikani timber operation had a contained market, but it was still only one node in a
regional network of competing mills. Typically, lumber mills grew from an
entrepreneurial ethic that responded to product demand. Such was not the case at Piikani,
where the command economy of the Department of Indian Affairs saw economic
development and make work projects as one and the same.

**Mountain Mill and Senator McLaren**

The first mill recorded in the Oldman River basin was Mountain Mill established
by the Canadian Government in 1879 along Mill Creek, a tributary to the Oldman River,
south of the village of Pincher Creek. Its goal was to encourage and support First
Nations in their settlement on reserve (LAC, Wuth 1995). The mill ran for two years
before the government decreed it a failure and sold it to Ontario lumber baron Peter
McLaren. Under McLaren’s control the mill proved quite lucrative. Buoyed by his
success, he opened another in the town of Fort Macleod just in time to benefit from the
CPR construction in 1897-98. His business expanded substantially when the McLaren
Lumber Company secured the contract to supply railway ties. Trains, in turn, increased
his access to outside markets, while he faced minimal competition in the lumber industry
at home. Thus his cozy little monopoly kept prices high (Potyandi 1992; Wuth 1995).
Mountain Mill operated until 1902 when a flood destroyed most of its buildings and
equipment (Wuth 1995).
After Mountain Mill shut down McLaren’s lumber operations in Piikani territory continued to prosper and in 1890 McLaren himself had been appointed to the senate by Prime Minister John A. Macdonald. As a senator, McLaren’s business and political connections grew, further expanding his lumber empire.

**Other Logging Operations**

Although Peter McLaren was the regional lumber baron, a few other operations sprang up in the area. In 1882 the North West Coal and Navigation Company set up a mill in the Beaver Creek area of the Porcupine Hills, which ran for two years (Wuth 1995:9). This company later relocated their operation to Lethbridge, some 50 Miles east.

Arthur Gillingham ran his own sawmill near Pincher Creek, primarily selling lumber to the town and west to the Crow’s Nest Pass (LAC DIA Correspondence RG 10 Vol 3990). Gillingham, originally from England, homesteaded in the Calgary area before entering into a string of unsuccessful business ventures. He had no first-hand experience with the logging industry and his mill was not very successful. He lost money on the mill until 1896, when the machinery blew up and ended his career (Pincher Creek Historical Society 1974: 321). Following this failure, Gillingham left Canada and travelled to Japan to serve in the diplomatic service.
Figure 6.1 Timeline for Piikani Sawmill

The Peigan Sawmill

From the start, the Piikani sawmill was an experiment in economic development via the lumber industry. Starting in 1899 and operating until 1910 this sawmill is particularly significant as a communal Piikani economic venture and a source for local wage labour.
Conception

In 1898, when the CPR expanded their Crow’s Nest Pass rail line through the newly formed Peigan Reserve, the Peigan received $2173 in compensation. RN Wilson, who became the Indian agent on the Peigan reserve that same year had the idea to use these funds to build a sawmill. Previously, Wilson possessed an entrepreneurial ethic and had operated a store on the Blood Reserve. He was frequently called to act as an interpreter for Indian Affairs in the region eventually joining the department. With encouragement from Wilson, the Piikani decided to use their funds to build a sawmill to be located on their timber limit.

In the 1890s, most of the Peigan had built settlements around the north bank of the Oldman River. Many families were transitioning from tipi life to spending their winter months in low, sod roofed log houses. Indian agents complained that these
expedient structures had very poor air circulation and were a great cause of sickness on the reserve (LAC DIA Correspondence RG 10 Vol. 3990). Cramped living conditions led to large numbers of consumption (Tuberculosis) and grippe (flu) related deaths on the reserve. Indian agents felt that the solution to this problem was building frame houses, but in order for the Peigan to build these houses they needed access to cheap lumber, which a locally owned sawmill would give them. In the Annual Report of 1900, the DIA’s Calgary Inspectorate writes; “The saw-mill has long been looked forward to, as the Indians think it will prove to be the panacea for any domestic discomfort; while the richer ones will be able to build new houses, the poorer ones will floor theirs, and make tables, bedsteads, & c.” (DIA Annual Report 1900:264).

The process around the purchase of the mill was complicated by DIA resistance. Even though RN Wilson laid out a very detailed scheme, and the opinions solicited by the DIA came out in favour of the mill, concerns about the ability of Indian ponies to haul lumber and debates about the amount of timber on the limit led to departmental indecision and further investigation. Eventually the tenacity of the Indian agent and the refusal of the Piikani to acknowledge outsider authority in their own economic affairs lead the DIA to acquiesce.

In April 1899, after the DIA refused to allow the purchase of a sawmill without further research, Wilson penned a desperate letter, in which he said, “[The Peigan] have never admitted to me that anyone but themselves has a right to say what shall be done with this particular fund which they consider to be their very own…” (LAC DIA Correspondence RG 10 Vol 3990:38).
Wilson’s letter is telling of the tenuous position Indian agents had in the North West Territories at the time; they were intermediaries between a government that was trying to assert control and autonomous First Nations who were unwilling to be subordinate to foreign entities. The Piegan were beginning to suspect the integrity of the governments’ promises, especially after hearing Siksika complaints of government deception regarding their CPR land sale.

Wilson writes, “There are many Piegans who said ‘when we see with our eyes or feel with our hands the money or good paid by the railway, then and not before then, we will believe that the land was not stolen from us’” (LAC DIA Correspondence RG 10 Vol 3990:38).

RN Wilson further explains;

If you do not reconsider this postponement you will deal a heavy blow at my influence with these people, who do not know the government, and the vast majority of whom do not feel the weight of authority other than vested in their agent. Thus my power to control their people is largely dependent upon possessing their confidence, which confidence I now have, but which I stand to lose at one sweep on account of this vexatious turn in the sawmill matter (LAC DIA Correspondence RG 10 Vol 3990: 38).

Apparently this letter was effective, the Indian Commissioner agreed to move forward, providing suitable timber be arranged. The DIA concluded that the timber limit did not have enough timber on it. Thus RN Wilson suggested the lots immediately north of there. One hundred pages of correspondence and telegrams followed before the Piikani were granted Timber Berths 884 and 886 along Beaver Creek directly to the north and east of the Timber Limit 147B. The Leonard Bros. steam engine and boiler for the mill
arrived in Fort Macleod on October 30th 1899 (Glenbow Archives M 1832 File 2 Peigan Agency Notebooks). The Peigan sawmill was immediately constructed in the lower portion of Berth 884, on Beaver Creek, and initial work at the mill began that fall.

**Operation**

Under the management of RN Wilson, the Piegan sawmill flourished. It produced thousands of feet of lumber, which, among other things, enabled band members to build new frame houses on their homesteads. The 1901 Annual Report indicates that in the winter months forty-five Piikani were up in the timber berths sawing logs in preparation for April when the mill would begin operation. Once running it employed seventy-five Peigan and their horse teams, hauling lumber from the mill to the agency headquarters, to their own homes and also to Fort Macleod. Most of the lumber produced at the mill ended up in the hands of those who worked on the sawing and processing of the wood, while other Piegan were paid piece meal to haul the lumber into Macleod. The mill itself was run by five white employees, including an engineer, and seven Piikani, ten hours each day (DIA Annual Report 1901:233). The mill ran for just a short period in the spring leaving time for other work, such as farming, freighting, and putting up hay.
### Table 6.1 Number of Frame Houses vs Log Houses on the Peigan Reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Frame houses</th>
<th>Number of log houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>21</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Compiled from Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports)

**Demise**

In 1904, RN Wilson was reassigned from the Peigan Agency to the higher status position of agent on the Blood Reserve. In the years that followed, a series of less enthusiastic agents took over at Brocket. J.H. Gooderham replaced Wilson and served as the agent from 1904 to 1907. Gooderham, with support from his boss, Inspector Wadsworth, decided that overseeing a sawmill detracted too much from his regular duties on the main reserve and leased the mill. This is when problems began. Although in 1906 Gooderham still reported that the Piikani were receiving lumber for less than half the price of the surrounding district, no new frame houses were built after 1904. The financial arrangement at the mill was that the Piegan would still receive a percentage of profits, as well as wages from their work. Under this new management, focus changed from production of lumber for Piegan use, to manufacture of lumber for sale. DIA correspondence indicates that the new management of the mill was fraught with errors from the outset. Without a plan to market the product, they experienced difficulty selling
lumber at the site itself. When the manager requested assistance in selling the lumber produced at the mill staff at the Piegan Agency refused.

Whether poor marketing, market prices, or decreasing supply of trees on the timber berths played the largest part in the overall diminishing economic success of the sawmill operations is not clear. The Piikani were no longer getting lumber for their own use out of the mill and given that they were not getting any money either, they decided it was no longer worth their while. They petitioned to have it sold (Potyandi 1992). In 1910 the Piegan sawmill was moved to Brocket by the Maunsell brothers, local business men who also leased much of the Piegan Reserve as ranch land (DIA Annual Report 1911). What happened to the mill machinery is unknown. The Annual Report for 1910 lists expenses of $8.40 for advertising the sawmill for sale and $300, which was the cost of moving the mill from the Porcupine Hills to Brocket. There are no entries in the Piegan Agency logbook that indicate any payments were received for the sawmill buildings and machinery.

The short history of the Peigan sawmill was a history of band control and communal agency, though external parties interfered with its operation, the Piegan had final say. It demonstrates the inefficiency of the DIA management, which went hand in hand with the refusal of the DIA to allow the Peigan to control their own affairs. This time is commonly understood as a transition to outside control over indigenous economies. In this case, Piikani people were still able to make their own economic choices.
The Piegan Sawmill - Settler Views

The case of the sawmill reveals settler concerns about the effect of Indian business upon their own economic pursuits, and public’s unwillingness to live up to the terms of the treaty. In his early descriptions of the sawmill and its planned operations, RN Wilson took great care to point out that the sawmill would be purchased solely with Piegan money and would not be a financial burden for the Department of Indian Affairs. He stated resolutely that the mill would not compete with white business interests and even benefit settlers who desperately needed access to lumber themselves. Further, he pointed out that the mill would bring the Peigan closer to economic independence and take the burden off the department (LAC DIA Correspondence RG 10 Vol. 3990). At the end of the 19th century, public opinion commonly declared Indians should not be allowed to compete with white settler interests (eg MG 26 July 1895; 2 August 1895), and this sentiment would prove detrimental to the DIA goal.

In 1900, Frank Oliver, Member of Parliament for the provisional district of Alberta, petitioned the Deputy Minister of the Interior. He complained that Peter McLaren had his business damaged, by Indians selling their lumber at Macleod. He writes, “I do not see how the department can justify using the public taxes to enable Indians to compete with the private businesses which paid these taxes” (LAC RG10 Vol. 3990 File 181 425:108). The minister’s response was illuminating, he did not bring up that fact that the mill was run entirely on Piegan funds, nor did he reference the treaty obligations that Canadians hold to indigenous peoples. Instead, he wrote to Oliver and explains that the Peigan are not selling lumber out of Macleod and therefore the grievance is not justified.
This episode is congruent with the formation of a settler society that saw itself as the rightful beneficiaries of all local resources. Settlers accepted their entitlement to the NWT in the late 19th century and saw no opposition to the idea that the land was theirs. Editorials penned for the *Macleod Gazette* make no ambiguity about this standpoint (e.g. MG 1885). Moreover, many settlers commonly felt that Indians stood in the way of their economic prosperity. Ethnic tensions arose from the competition for resources in this boom period, resulting in, among other things, the negative portrayal of Indians in newspapers (Macleod and Driscoll 2001).

**The Piegan Sawmill and Wage Labour**

Although the Piegan had entered into the wage economy at this time via freighting, and contracts to put up hay from farmers, the Piegan sawmill operation was only peripherally a source of cash income. Under RN Wilson’s management, the mill operated on a communal basis, with those who did the work receiving the gains. After the mill was leased, it operated as another opportunity for Piegan wage labour. During this period Piikani labour was crucial to local ranchers and Piikani farming was also relatively successful (Potyandi 1992, Regular 2009). The skills the Piegan gained cutting wood and operating their sawmill likely enabled them to compete for jobs at the sawmills that came later. Piegan also learned techniques for falling logs that they could sell for lumber.

**Lumber Industry in Alberta After 1910**

Piikani saw their sawmill fail by 1910 because of poor management rather than scarcity of resources. This is demonstrated by the number of viable logging operations that grew in the region afterwards.
**Johnson Brothers Sawmills Encircling the Timbers and Contract Labour.**

The Johnson Brothers operated a number of sawmills at various locations in the Porcupine Hills in the 1940s and 1950s. At least three of these sawmills operated not far from the outside borders of the timber limit. The majority of these sawmills set up work camps that employed both settler and indigenous seasonal workers. These mills also occasionally bought wood brought in by free agents, including Piikani. The work camps often hired young men from the Piikani and Kaniah reserves who had run away from the residential schools. Sometimes one member of a family would work there and be joined later by kinfolk (Wallace Yellowface pers. comm. 2009).
Gifford’s Sawmill and Glen Ranch Sawmill

Two sawmills that operated within the vicinity of the Piikani timber limit were the Glen Ranch sawmill that operated only a few meters south of the fence lines in the early 1940s and Hugh Gifford’s sawmill that operated within a few miles of the timbers around 1949 onwards. Both mills processed large amounts of lumber from the limit that was
brought down by Piikani people and sold. Gifford’s sawmill used a diesel powered tractor as the engine to power the saw (David Glass pers. comm 2009), which was becoming the popular method. The lumber industry meant that those Piikani who lived on the timber limit in the early days were able to make ends meet by falling their own logs and selling them to outside sawmills. Sam Yellowface’s cabin still stands on IR 147B and is one of the few permanent examples of this enterprise.

![Figure 6.4 Piikani Workers at Gifford’s Sawmill](https://example.com/image)

**Figure 6.4 Piikani Workers at Gifford’s Sawmill**
*(Photos compliments David Glass)*

**Other Piikani Sawmills**

Since the movement towards band self-management began in the 1950s, individual Piikani have operated small scale saw mills in their timber limit. Their first initiative in 1899 was one of many communal ventures into capitalist markets. The knowledge of their ancestors’ participation in the milling industry informs Piikani people
about their own economic futures. Though to my knowledge no mills are currently 
operating, lumber resources in the Piikani timber limit continue to be important.

**Material Remains for Piikani Logging in Their Timber Limit**

The remains from a century or more of logging in the Piikani timber limit speak 
to the phenomenological and social changes occurring for them. The technological 
change visible through stumps cut by axe, handsaw, chain saw are evident. So too are the 
new ways of understanding wood production, for example, tree cuts high on the stump 
allow for easier skidding in the winter time. While on survey we came across a stump 
with the name Jace Joslin etched into its surface, an indicator of the carvers’ prowess 
with a chain saw. Who was Jace Joslin? Possibly an employee of the Johnson Bros 
sawmills from the later period of logging in the timber limit. This area memorializes this 
logging history in every stump, every tin can left behind. The shape of the contemporary 
forest stand outs as an artifact of this time.

**Chapter Summary**

The lumber industry swept into Piikani territory on the back of the twin forces of 
capitalism and colonialism. The entrance of indigenous people into capitalist modes of 
production was variable and limited by DIA officials. Economic pressures meant settlers 
often lobbied to suppress Indian success in the capitalist economy, even as their 
alternatives were reduced.

The story of the Piikani sawmill is remarkable because it exemplifies their ability 
to maintain control over their own economic futures while living under the oppressive 
and controlling environment of the DIA surveillance and control system. Though the
decision of outsiders ultimately had a negative impact on the future of the sawmill, this episode provides a more nuanced understanding of early reserve economic activity.

As Littlefield and Knack point out in their volume *Native Americans and Wage Labour*, the dispossession of land and the dispossession of labour are intricately linked (1996). When the Piikani lost control of their landbase, they had to participate in the wage labour market. IR 147B is an artifact of the colonial reordering of the land, and reveals the official policy that doomed their lumber industry to failure even as it was being built. However, as Piikani territory legitimized by colonial authority yet lacking surveillance, it provided a vehicle for independent Piikani work within the new capitalist order.
Chapter 7: IR 147B in Piikani History

Current social problems on the Piikani First Nation such as underemployment are the chronic symptoms of their moribund economy. Their story is hardly unique; its bleak culmination is rooted in the early historical period when change swept through Piikani territory. As the nineteenth century ended, Treaty 7 was signed, and the Piikani were dispossessed from their lands. Their ancient economy disappeared with the bison and the new economic reality relied on cattle ranching, farming and wage labour.

IR 147B is an artifact of that time and this thesis has shed new light on its presence in the long history of Piikani people. As a result of their treaty agreements they possessed a tract of forested land that would be a significant part of the Piikani economic encounter with the fledgling colonial power of Canada. The archaeological sites I discovered relate the myriad ways the Piikani used their timber limit in this transitional time. It speaks of capitalist ventures mired in a centrally planned economy and individual negotiating their relationships with the state.

The Early Reserve Period’s Impact on the Modern Era

Capitalist resource exploitation is founded in a very different way of relating to the environment than plains indigenous economics. The Piikani adapted as the new economic system was moulding their lands to resource extraction. Their engagement with it precipitated changes their perception of landscapes, economics and labour. Industrial
logging was an unprecedented mode of exploiting one resource that introduced a novel ethic about the environment that continues to be manifested on the modern landscape.

The economic changes compelled Piikani participation in wage labour. Resource exploitation in Niitsitapi territory required labour and the recently dispossessed Piikani both exploited and were exploited by this demand. They struggled to control their economic destiny, while facing grievous and challenging living conditions.

**Logging Industry and Piikani Wage Labour**

Entrance into the wage economy forced Piikani engagement with western technology and philosophies. The initial operation period of their sawmill brought them some autonomy, and was better than the contract wage labour that was brokered by their Indian agent with white settlers. Following the establishment of their sawmill they became engrossed by industrial machines and its accompanying work ethic.

As Alvin Toffler famously pointed out, the technology we use is interrelated with the way we think about the world. An example of this phenomenon is the invention of the clock that then inspired the Newtonian image of the world as a giant clock-like mechanism (Toffler 1974). The concept that technology changes semiotic experience is not new; indeed the archaeology of the body has expanded our understanding of tactile impacts on philosophy (Joyce 2005). The Piikani participation in the lumber industry, changed their lives through both the phenomological experience of working with these machines as well as the influence of European ideas about wage and labour.

This novel suite of philosophical concepts about labour irrevocably altered the indigenous work ethic (Dickason 2000). As producers and consumers of their own goods,
the very concept that work was separate from life was foreign to them; this made the
notion of unemployment absent from Piikani minds. Other differences between the
Indigenous lifeways and European attitude towards labour included the work day as a
discreetly measured time, strictness of work assigned/controlled by a hierarchical boss,
and the separation of the worker from their family (Treaty 7 Elders 1996). Moreover, the
wage economy devalued the work women did and celebrated men’s participation in paid
labour.

Previously Blackfoot peoples had travelled in family units to meet their economic
needs. Early work groups in tasks such as haying or freighting often included women and
men working side by side, but in the logging camps women were excluded, and
frequently not allowed to perform the same tasks as men. This was one more element in a
sea of institutional and economic pressures that forced Piikani people into Western
European gendered division of labour (Carter 2008).

Thus the fate of indigenous economies in the capitalist system meant more than
the exposure of Indigenous people to mechanization because wage labour immersed them
in the whole suite of philosophical concepts that defined the modern workplace. Current
economic problems on the Piikani reserve have their roots in the economic shift from
indigenous economies grounded in spirituality to capitalist systems centred around linear,
measured time and resource exploitation. The market economy’s focus on accumulation
of goods and progress had lasting impacts. These changes gave rise to the studied
problems of a stagnant reserve economy.
Piikani Heritage

First Nations now take an active role in controlling their heritage, for example in British Columbia where it is included in land claim negotiations. Although a treaty relationships prevails in southern Alberta, “to the Peigan, and other tribes, culture can not be surrendered with the signing of a treaty; therefore an interest in the archaeological record is retained” (Yellowhorn 1999: 108). Despite the official silence on this matter, this statement expresses the importance of Piikani control of their heritage (Yellowhorn 1993;1999). Although North American indigenous nations participate in heritage governance in some capacity there is still a gap in their ability to rely on their own numbers for professional advice. However there are some challenges to the status quo, for example the artificial distinction between historic and pre-contact sites, which they regard as meaningless in the long duration of their history. Moreover, some dispute the necessity of site destruction through excavation, and criticize the arbitrary delineation of activities across the landscape (Bruchac et al. 2010, Hammond 2009, Yellowhorn 1996, 2006).

In the past decade the Archaeological Survey of Alberta initiated the Blackfoot Landscape Heritage Advisory Committee to acknowledge Niitsitapi interests, and exercises the Alberta government’s duty to consult them on development plans and recognizing heritage sites. Through this committee they can express their concerns about development of their traditional lands, which has fostered a new relationship between the Archaeological Survey of Alberta and Niitsitapi. This type of consultation came about as a result of decision made in the Supreme Court of Canada rather than the treaty relationships that established the settler presence in Blackfoot lands. At the moment First
Nations only have direct control over heritage on their reserves. Limiting their oversight to their reserve lands is to circumscribe false colonial boundaries on indigenous landscapes. If First Nations’ voice on heritage is to be meaningful it has to encompass the whole landscape.

The lack of any federal heritage legislation has left the protection of archaeological sites on reserves up to political will of individual nations (Burley 1994, Yellowhorn 1993). With few exceptions, the personnel or resources to set down heritage guidelines and enforce them are conspicuously absent. Unofficially and without prompting, Piikani residents express concern and respect for archaeological sites such as those uncovered on their timber limit and demonstrate the Piikani understanding of their dialogue with their history.

Narratives of change told through archaeological sites on the Piikani timber limit inform us about the local experience of the economic and social change then washing across the nation. The sites narrate the Piikani transition at the turn of the 20th century. Places such as Charcoal’s hideout, Piikani cabins far up in the timbers, sacred sites and tree stumps, archive the physical manifestations of the colonial meta-narrative that explained Canadian expansion. Examining the stories behind these sites brings forward a parallel, indigenous narrative about Canadian settlement on the prairie.

Archival documents shed indirect light on Piikani resistance to the naïve initiatives ostensibly in pursuit of economic development of the Canadian government and its long term goal to thwart their political agency. The early reserve period represents an emblematic change in their life, and the timber limit offered both a communal and individual gateway to market economies. At the same time it remained an area that the
Piikani could visit for spiritual sustenance, even as part of their economic pursuits. It was one spot where their visitation of important places could continue without harassment. Moreover, their independent actions such as the pursuit of Charcoal, their demands for communal property and control over their own economic futures, and continuation of sacred practices, even as their social structure was being systematically attacked, all speak to Piikani perseverance.

Yvonne Provost, retired land manager for the Piikani Nation, relates the efforts of Piikani elders to transmit cultural knowledge with field trips to the timbers. She states, “Without those stories we are lost, we are never going to have our connection to the land” (Yvonne Provost pers comm.). While this statement alludes to the whole spectrum of Piikani narrative and landscape, their archaeological sites preserve memories of the struggles to secure a livelihood under trying circumstances. The scared places and the stories of the timbers coalesce to reengage the importance of the timber limit. Identifying these sites and providing their locations to the Piikani land office enables band officials to make informed policies on protection of their heritage. Moreover, compiling this repository for Piikani members to draw on means anyone can access it when they are ready to rediscover their stories. The Piikani timber limit has long been an area of teaching, of elders showing young members of their community, the plants, the animals, the landscapes and stories; the archaeological sites have been and will be a part of this teaching. Areas of consistent use become mnemonic sites on the landscape, reminding travellers of the long ago events that populate their stories.

Community narratives and cognitive geographies were amended by different patterns of movement resulting from changing economic and social motives. As long as
Piikani visit their timber limit, whether to obtain wood destined for the market economy or so-called traditional resources, the landscape will inevitably evoke stories of the past. While the early reserve period represented a significant social and economic transition, it was not an ideational shift. Instead ancient narratives are joined by those created at the turn of the 20th century. The stories told about those early days on the reserve and their related archaeological sites continue to offer an alternative narrative to popular Canadian/settler versions of this transition.

The material remains found in the timber limit reveal activities there through individual archaeological sites, but from a holistic perspective, the timber limit is the artifact. We can understand the landscape better and re-engage with history by recognizing the boundaries created by colonialism that separate Blackfoot people from their customary landscape. Situating these stories on the ground where the event occurred brings past landscapes into focus and refines our image of the early reserve period.

The social, economic and political transition that took place in Niisitapi territory was a nuanced process. By examining the changes in Piikani landscapes, domestic and institutional space a clearer picture emerges of the challenges they faced. The archaeological sites and their stories will continue to remind us of the radical changes that foreshadowed European settlement in the new province of Alberta.
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Fleming, Andrew

Fort Macleod Historical Association


Government of Canada


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Appendix A: Site Forms
**ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE INVENTORY DATA**

**Return To:** Historic Resources Management, Archaeological Survey  
3620 - 112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2P9

Field No. 13

**Site Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (m)</th>
<th>4. N.T.S. 150,060 Map No.</th>
<th>824H/12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1622m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legal Description:** LSD 08 Section 03 Township 09Q Range 30 W of 4 M

**UTM NAD83 Zone 12 Easting Centres 294566 Northing Centre 5510123**

**Land Owner:** Government of Canada, Government of Alberta, Municipal Government, Reserved

**Land Owners Name/Address:** Pikani First Nation

**Access:**
Access to Timber Limit from Highway 3. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn west onto 510 and follow the road to the west until you reach Range Road 30 1/4. Follow RR 30 1/4 north until you reach the south border of Pikani Timber Limit 147B. Continue north on RR 30 1/4 for 660 m. Park vehicle and proceed on foot. Follow two track to the west about 100 meters from roadway. Leave two track and climb up slope to the NE (towards Old Woman's Butte). Continue climbing slope for 1 km and you reach a wide plateau. Site is located on the SW portion of the plateau.

**Site Environment/Setting:** Site is located on the SE side of a wide plateau on the eastside of Old Woman's Butte. Sloped edges of the plateau are sparsely populated with Pine trees. Site area is located in a grassy meadow surrounded by Pine forest.

**Site Class:** prehistoric  
**Site Context:** surface  
**Component:** single  
**Site Type:** isolated find  
**Site Feature:** stone circle  

**Other:**

---

**Site Class:** prehistoric  
**Site Context:** surface  
**Component:** single  
**Site Type:** isolated find  
**Site Feature:** stone circle

---

14. **Features:** stone circle, medicine wheel, pit, structure, other specify

---

15. **Features:** stone circle, medicine wheel, pit, structure, other specify

---
15. Description (spatial extent, patterning, density and variety of remains, diagnostics and exotic material, for historic archaeological sites provide details regarding site ownership, origins, function and context)

Ring of stones surrounding a small depression. Site may represent a sweatlodge hearth feature.

16. Materials Observed [ ] yes [ ] no  

Materials Observed/collected (frequencies if possible).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
<td>faunal remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
<td>human remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
<td>metal points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
<td>floral remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
<td>tephra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
<td>soil samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
<td>macrofossils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
<td>other, specify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected)

No materials were observed or collected.

18. Collection Repository [ ] Royal Alberta Museum [ ] Private collection [ ] Other...

19. Photos/Mages [ ] yes [ ] no  

Repository Pikean First Nation

20. Culture [ ] Early Prehistoric [ ] Late Prehistoric [ ] Historic [ ] other, specify

[ ] Middle Prehistoric [ ] Fur Trade/Contact [ ] undetermined

Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)

Rocks are partially embedded in the soil, but absence of lichen growth on the rocks indicates this may be relatively recent (historic period).

Culture Remarks (Describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and/or cultural affiliation of the site).

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.)

22. Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions Length (m) 0.5 Orientation N Width (m) 0.5 Orientation W Depth Below Surface (m) 0

24. Estimated Portion Intact (%) 95%

25. Assessment Methods

- Surface inspection
- Backhoe tests
- Mapping
- Erosion exposure
- Excavation
- Monitor
- Shovel tests
- Auger tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># shovel tests</th>
<th># positive shovel tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># backhoe tests</th>
<th># positive backhoe tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># auger tests</th>
<th># positive auger tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# excavation units
- Length (m)
- Width (m)
- # excavated square meters

26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)

Type of Disturbance

- Agriculture
- Road/highway
- Coal mine
- Transmission line
- Industrial area
- Other, specify
- Pipeline
- Gravel/sand pit
- Oil sands
- Dam/reservoir
- Vandalism
- Other, specify
- Forest
- Residential area
- Forestry
- Recreation area
- Erosion
- Other, specify

Will current development impact site? [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Unknown

Disturbance Factors Remarks

27. Permit Holder/Researcher Kristina Hannis

28. Observed by Kristina Hannis, Eldon Yellowhorn Date (YYYY/MM/DD) 2008/09/14

29. Collected by

30. Tested by

31. Excavated by

32. Form completed by Kristina Hannis Date (YYYY/MM/DD) 2010/11/28

33. Report Title/Project Name On the edge of change: Shifting land use in the Pilgrimage Timber Limit, Porcupine Hills, Alberta (MA Thesis)

34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks

35. Additional Remarks
### Archaeological Site Inventory Data

**Return to:** Historic Resources Management, Archaeological Survey 8020 - 112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2P5

**Permission No.:** K. 2010

#### Site Information

1. **Site Name:** Eagle Trapping Structure  
2. **Field No.:** 24
3. **Elevation (m):** 1475 m  
4. **N.T.S.:** 150,060  
5. **Map No.:** 02H/12
6. **Legal Description:** LSD 06 Section 12 Township 009 Range 30 W11 of 4 M
7. **UTM NAD83:**  
   - **Zone:** 12  
   - **Zone Reference Centre:** 287575  
   - **North Reference:** 5513900  
8. **Land Owner:**  
   - Government of Canada  
   - Government of Alberta  
   - Municipal Government  
   - First Nation

#### Access

Access to Timber Limit from Highway 3. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn west (left) onto 518 and follow the road to the west until you reach Range Road 301A. Follow RR 301A north until you reach the south border of Pikani Timber Limit 14B. Continue north on RR 301A for 2 km. Park vehicle and proceed on foot. Hike to the east 1 km to top of butte directly east from roadway.

#### Site Environment/Setting

Site is located on crest of prominent butte. At site location crest is only approx. 3 meters wide. Further north crest becomes a plateau and gradually widens. Thin soils cover sandstone bedrock.

#### Site Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Class</th>
<th>Site Context</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Site Type</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Hillside</td>
<td>Stone circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Historic</td>
<td>Subsurface</td>
<td>Multi</td>
<td>quarry</td>
<td>Medicine wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary</td>
<td>Underwater</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
<td>rock art</td>
<td>Pit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stratified</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
<td>burial</td>
<td>Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stone feature</td>
<td>Other, specify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other Features

- **Precipitation:** Eagle
- **Water:** None
- **Soil:** None
- **Vegetation:** None
- **Vegetation:** None
- **Topography:** None
- **Human Impact:** None
- **Historic Significance:** None
15. Description: (spatial extent, patterning, density and variety of remains, diagnostics and exotic material, for historic archaeological sites provide details regarding site ownership, origins, function and context)

Low structure built with sandstone slab material found in this region of the Porcupine Hills. Structure also features remains of wooden support beams constructed from small trees or branches. Wooden supports are lichen covered and extremely weathered. Two main beams brace west and east sides of the structure. Back of structure is constructed of stacked sandstone slabs and is braced by three ~50 cm long branches that have a diameter ~5 cm.

Structure is less than a meter in width and height and close to 2 m in length. Structure opens away from the crest of the butte to the NE.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials observed / collected (frequencies if possible)</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
<td>☑</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>faunal remains</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>human remains</td>
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<tr>
<td>metal points</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floral remains</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tephra</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>soil samples</td>
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<tr>
<td>macrofossils</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wood</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shell</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>metal</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>ceramics (historic)</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>other, specify</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected)

No materials were collected from this site.

18. Collection Repository: ☑ Royal Alberta Museum ☐ Private collection ☐ Other...

19. Photos/Images: ☑ yes ☐ no

Repository: Pikani First Nation

20. Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Prehistoric</th>
<th>Late Prehistoric</th>
<th>Historic</th>
<th>other, specify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)
Pikani eagle trapping structure from the reserve period. Earliest use unknown.

Culture Remarks (Describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and/or cultural affiliation of the site).

May have been used by last Pikani hereditary eagle trapper, John Yellowhorn.
(Source: interviews with Pikani Elders conducted 2009)

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.)

22. Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions

- Length (m) 2.0
- Width (m) 1.0

Depth Below Surface (m) 0.0

24. Estimated Portion Intact (%) 95%

25. Assessment Methods

- Surface inspection
- Backhoe tests
- Mapping
- Shovel tests
- Auger tests
- Erosion exposure
- Excavation
- Monitor

# Shovel tests
# Backhoe tests
# Auger tests
# Positive shovel tests
# Positive backhoe tests
# Positive auger tests

# Excavation units
length (m)
width (m)
# excavated square meters

26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)

Type of Disturbance
- Agriculture
- Road/highway
- Coal mine
- Transmission line
- Industrial area
- Other, specify
- Pipeline
- Gravel/sand pit
- Oil sands
- Reservoir
- Vandalism
- Residential area
- Forestry
- Recreation area
- Erosion

Will current development impact site? Yes

Disturbance Factors Remarks

Site is currently protected by tall trees on edge of butte. Damage to these trees would expose site to wind damage/erosion.

27. Permit Holder/Researcher: Kristina Hannis

28. Observed by Eldon Yellowhorn, Kristina Hannis

Date (YYYYMMDD) 2020/09/17

29. Collected by N/A

Date (YYYYMMDD) N/A

30. Tested by N/A

Date (YYYYMMDD) N/A

31. Excavated by N/A

Date (YYYYMMDD) N/A

32. Form completed by Kristina Hannis

Date (YYYYMMDD) 2010/09/28


34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks

Only known eagle trap structure on the Pilkari Timber Limit Reserve 147B. May have been in use as late as the 1960s. Structure was used by many generations of eagle trappers.

35. Additional Remarks
1. Site Name: Yellow Face Homestead
2. Field No.: 05
3. Location (m): 1456 m
4. N.T.S.: 150,000 Map No.: 02H/12
5. Legal Description: LSD 13 Section 02 Township 009 Range 30 W of 4 M
6. UTM NAD83: Zone 12 Easting Centre 285514 Northing Centre 5513834
7. Land Owner: Government of Canada
8. Land Owner Name/Address: Pikani First Nation

6. Access (refer to highway, road number, trail, cardinal directions, landmarks, nearest settlement, distances)
Access to Timber Limit from Highway 3. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn west onto 510 and follow the road to the west until you reach Range Road 301A. Follow RR 301A north until you reach the south border of Pikani Timber Limit 147B. Continue north on RR 301A for 1 km. Follow the track to the west about 1 km from roadway. Structure is directly south of two tracks (~20 m).

8. Site Environment/Setting (describe in terms of drainage, slope, aspect, vegetation, soil type, landforms)
Site is located in small flat clearing in valley along two tracks. North of two tracks is a small dry gully.

10. Site Class: prehistoric
11. Site Context: surface
12. Component: single
13. Site Type: lawed find
14. Features (Frequencies if possible): stone circle, medicine wheel, pit, structure, other, specify

10. Site Class: prehistoric
11. Site Context: surface
12. Component: single
13. Site Type: lawed find
14. Features (Frequencies if possible): stone circle, medicine wheel, pit, structure, other, specify
Cabin is constructed of wood with a white interior. Approximately 20 meters to the SE of cabin is a collapsed cellar/dump depression. Depression contains many rusted metal objects. Approximately 10 m to the N of the cabin is a small gully with faunal remains (possibly butchered cow bones). Large amount of historic debris surrounds cabin. Exterior walls of cabin consist of wood planks and have the remains of leather objects nailed to it: (possibly harness remains).

Materials Observed: yes  no  Materials Collected: yes  no

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials observed</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
<td>5 0 faunal remains</td>
<td>wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
<td>human remains</td>
<td>shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
<td>metal points</td>
<td>10 0 metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
<td>floral remains</td>
<td>glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
<td>tephra</td>
<td>beads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
<td>soil samples</td>
<td>2 0 ceramics (historic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
<td>macrofossils</td>
<td>other, specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected)

No materials were collected from this site.

Collection Repository: Royal Alberta Museum  Private collection  Other...

Photomages: yes  no  Repository: To Be Deposited with the Pikani First Nation

Culture: Early Prehistoric  Late Prehistoric  Historic  other, specify  Middle Prehistoric  Fur Trade/Contact  undetermined  Pikani early reserve period

Cultural Affiliation (complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)

Pikani reserve period  Cabin belonged to the Sam Yellow Face family. Occupied from 1940-1960s

Culture Remarks (describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and cultural affiliation of the site).

Yellow Face family members provided the dates for the cabin:

Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.): 1940-1960

Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions
   Length (m) ______ Width (m) ______ Depth Below Surface (m) ______
   Orientation N ______ W ______ E ______

24. Estimated Portion Intact (%) ______

25. Assessment Methods
   ☑ surface inspection   ☑ backhoe tests   ☑ mapping   ☑ other, specify
   ☑ erosion exposure   ☑ excavation   ☑ monitor
   ☑ shovel tests   ☑ auger tests
   
   # shovel tests ______ # positive shovel tests ______
   # backhoe tests ______ # positive backhoe tests ______
   # auger tests ______ # positive auger tests ______

26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)
   Type of Disturbance
   ☑ agriculture   ☑ road/highway   ☑ coal mine   ☑ transmission line   ☑ industrial area
   ☑ pipeline   ☑ gravel/sand pit   ☑ oil sands   ☑ reservoir   ☑ vandalism
   ☑ wells   ☑ residential area   ☑ forestry   ☑ recreation area   ☑ erosion
   ☑ unknown

   Will current development impact site? ☑ yes   ☐ no   ☐ unknown

   Disturbance Factors Remarks

27. Permit Holder/Researcher   Kristina Harris

28. Observed by   Wallace Yelken, Eldon Yelken, Kristina Harris
   Date (YYYYMMDD)   2009/09/28

29. Collected by   N/A
   Date (YYYYMMDD)   N/A

30. Tested by   N/A
   Date (YYYYMMDD)   N/A

31. Excavated by   N/A
   Date (YYYYMMDD)   N/A

32. Form completed by   Kristina Harris
   Date (YYYYMMDD)   2010/09/28

33. Report Title/Project Name   On the edge of change: Shifting land use in the Pilkitik Timber Limit, Porcupine Hills, Alberta

34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks

35. Additional Remarks
### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE INVENTORY DATA

**Return to:** Historic Resources Management, Archaeological Survey

**Attenr:** Historic Resources Management, Archaeological Survey

**5020 - 112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2Y9**

**Remit No.:**

**Permit No.:**

**Date:**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Site Name</th>
<th>Fastley House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Field No.</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Elevation (m)</td>
<td>1217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. N.T.S. 150,000 Map No.</td>
<td>02H/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Legal Description: LSD</td>
<td>13 Section 30 Township 000 Range 20 W of 4 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. UTM NAD83 Zone 12 Easting Centre 2691444 Northing Centre 5517202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Land Owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of Alberta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freehold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Owner Name/Address</td>
<td>Harvey Desch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Access (refer to highway, road number, trail, cardinal directions, landmark, nearest settlement, distance):**

Access to Timber Limit from Highway 8: Follow 765 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn left (west) on Township Road 52, travel west 4 km until you reach Range Road 286. Turn right (north) onto Range Road 286 and continue north until it becomes Township Road 92A. Continue on Township Road 92A northwast for 10 km. Turn west onto drive leading up to the Desch property. Park vehicle in driveway. Proceed on foot 20 m to the southeast.

---

**Site Environment/Setting (describe in terms of drainage, slope, aspect, vegetation, soil type, landforms):**

Site is located on the eastern edge of the Desch property near the eastern edge of gully formed by Beaver Creek.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. Site Class</th>
<th>prehistoric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Site Context</td>
<td>surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Component</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Site Type</td>
<td># components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Features (Frequency if possible)</td>
<td>stone circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stone art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stone feature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

132
15. Description (spatial extent, patterning, density and variety of remains, diagnostics and exotic material, for historic archaeological sites provide details regarding site ownership, origins, function and context)

| Depression remains in location of Paisley homestead. Surface scatter includes blue-on-white ceramics, glass. |

16. Materials Observed ✔ yes □ no Materials Collected □ yes ✔ no

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials observed / collected (frequencies if possible).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>observed / collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected)

No materials were collected.

18. Collection Repository □ Royal Alberta Museum □ Private collection □ Other...

19. Photos/Images □ yes ◐ no Repository __________________________

20. Culture □ Early Prehistoric □ Late Prehistoric □ Historic | other, specify
□ Middle Prehistoric □ Fur Trade/Contact □ undetermined

Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)

| Historic |

Culture Remarks (Describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and/or cultural affiliation of the site).

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.) __________________________

22. Radiocarbon Dates __________________________
23. Dimensions
Length (m) 10 ______ Orientation N ______ Width (m) 10 ______ Orientation W ______
Depth Below Surface (m) 0 ______

24. Estimated Porion Intact (%) 80% ______

25. Assessment Methods
☐ surface inspection ☐ backhoe tests ☐ mapping other, specify
☐ erosion exposure ☐ excavation ☐ monitor
☐ shovel tests ☐ auger tests

# shovel tests ______ # positive shovel tests ______
# backhoe tests ______ # positive backhoe tests ______
# auger tests ______ # positive auger tests ______
# excavation units ______ length (m) ______ width (m) ______ # excavated square meters ______

26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)
Type of Disturbance
☐ agriculture ☐ road/highway ☐ coal mine ☐ transmission line ☐ industrial area other, specify
☐ pipeline ☐ gravel/sand pit ☐ oil sands ☐ reservoir ☐ vandalism
☐ waste ☐ residential area ☐ forestry ☐ recreation area ☐ erosion
Will current development impact site? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown
Disturbance Factors Remarks

27. Permit Holder/Researcher Kristina Hannis

28. Observed by Kristina Hannis, Harvey Dersch Date (YYYYMMDD) 2009/07/05

29. Collected by Date (YYYYMMDD)

30. Tested by Date (YYYYMMDD)

31. Excavated by Date (YYYYMMDD)

32. Form completed by Kristina Hannis Date (YYYYMMDD) 2010/11/28

33. Report Title/Project Name On the edge of change: Shifting land use in the Pilikani Timber Limit, Porcupine Hills, Alberta (MA Thesis)

34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks

35. Additional Remarks
**ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE INVENTORY DATA**

**Return to:** Historic Resources Management, Archaeological Survey
8820 121 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2Y9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field No.</th>
<th>74</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township</td>
<td>009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTM Zone</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easting</td>
<td>260140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northing</td>
<td>5517300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Land Owner**
- [ ] Government of Canada
- [ ] Government of Alberta
- [ ] Municipal Government
- [ ] Freehold

**Site Name**
Beaver Creek NWMP Detachment

**Access**
Access to Timber Limit from Highway 8. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn left (west) on Township Road 82, travel west 4 km until you reach Range Road 296. Turn right (north) onto Range Road 296 and continue north until it becomes Township Road 92A. Continue on Township Road 92A northwest for 10 km. Turn west onto drive leading up to the Bersch property. Park vehicle in driveway. Proceed on foot 20 m to the southeast.

**Site Environment/Setting**
Site is located on the eastern edge of the Bersch property near the eastern edge of gully formed by Beaver Creek.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Class</th>
<th>Indigenous historic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Context</td>
<td>surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Type</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>Stone circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Feature</th>
<th>Other, specify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive lane</td>
<td>Other, specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone circle</td>
<td>Other, specify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Description (spatial extent, patterning, density and variety of remains, diagnostics and exotic material, for historic archaeological sites provide details regarding site ownership, origins, function and context):

Mound disturbed area. Likely the remains of Beaver Creek North West Mounted Police outpost. Presence confirmed on historic map circa 1910. Land owner is in possession of photographs of this area dating from time period of outpost. No materials were collected or observed though debris on surface of DkP-10 may be related to this site.

16. Materials Observed [ ] yes [ ] no  Materials Collected [ ] yes [ ] no

Materials observed/collection (frequencies if possible):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>faunal remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>human remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>metal points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>floral remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>tephra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>soil samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td>macrofossils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
<td>___ ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected):

18. Collection Repository [ ] Royal Alberta Museum [ ] Private collection [ ] Other...

19. Photos/Images [ ] yes [ ] no  Repository ______

20. Culture [ ] Early Prehistoric [ ] Late Prehistoric [ ] Historic [ ] Other, specify

[ ] Middle Prehistoric [ ] Fur Trade/Contact [ ] Undetermined

Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)

Historic

Culture Remarks (Describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and/or cultural affiliation of the site):

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.) ~1910

22. Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions
Length (m) 6. Orientation N. Width (m) 5. Orientation W.
Depth Below Surface (m) 0.

24. Estimated Porion intact (%) 80%.

25. Assessment Methods
☐ surface inspection ☐ backhoe tests ☐ mapping
☐ erosion exposure ☐ excavation ☐ monitor
☐ shovel tests ☐ auger tests

# shovel tests
# positive shovel tests
# backhoe tests
# positive backhoe tests
# auger tests
# positive auger tests

# excavation units length (m) width (m) # excavated square meters

26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)

Type of Disturbance
☐ agriculture ☐ road/highway ☐ coal mine ☐ transmission line ☐ industrial area ☐ other, specify
☐ pipeline ☐ gravel/sand pit ☐ oil sands ☐ reservoir ☐ vandalism ☐ other, specify
☐ wellsites ☐ residential area ☐ forestry ☐ recreation area ☐ erosion

Will current development impact site? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown

Disturbance Factors Remarks

27. Permit Holder/Researcher Kristina Hannis

28. Observed by Kristina Hannis, Harvey Derkow
Date (YYYYMMDD) 2008/07/05

29. Collected by
Date (YYYYMMDD)

30. Tested by
Date (YYYYMMDD)

31. Excavated by
Date (YYYYMMDD)

32. Form completed by Kristina Hannis
Date (YYYYMMDD) 2010/11/28


34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks

35. Additional Remarks
## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE INVENTORY DATA

**Return to:** Historic Resources Management, Archaeological Survey  
5020-112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2M9

**Boden No.:** EkPI-12  
**Form No.:** Harris, K 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Site Name</th>
<th>2. Field No. 78</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Elevation (m)</th>
<th>4. N.T.S. 150,000 Map No. 22H/12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Legal Description: LSD 02 Section 24 Township 09 North Range 30 West of 4 M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. UTM NAD83 Zone 12 Easting Centre 289285 Northing Centre 6514436</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Owner Name/Address</td>
<td>Pikani First Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Access (refer to highway, road number, trail, cardinal directions, landmark, nearest settlement, distance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Timber Limit from Highway 3. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn left (west) on Township</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road 92, travel west 4 km until you reach Range Road 208. Turn right (north) onto Range Road 208 and continue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>north until it becomes Township Road 92A. Travel northwest 8 km. Turn right onto a two track heading west (left)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel 2 km until you reach the Pikani Timber Limit fence line. Proceed on foot 500 m to the west.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Site Environment/Setting (describe in terms of drainage, slope, aspect, vegetation, soil type, landform)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site is located in small valley featuring Aspen trees and dense brush. Small dry gully defines the northern edge of site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. Site Class</th>
<th>11. Site Context</th>
<th>12. Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ prehistoric</td>
<td>□ surface</td>
<td>□ single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ indigenous historic</td>
<td>□ subsurface</td>
<td>□ multi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ historic</td>
<td>□ underwater</td>
<td>□ undetermined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ contemporary</td>
<td>□ stratified</td>
<td>□ # components</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. Site Type</th>
<th>14. Features (if possible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ isolated find</td>
<td>□ stone circle, medicine wheel, pit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ scatter &lt; 10</td>
<td>□ clay, effigy, mound, foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ scatter &gt; 10</td>
<td>□ stone circle, pictograph, depression, cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ composite</td>
<td>□ stone circle, pictograph, depression, cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ midden</td>
<td>□ stone circle, pictograph, depression, cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ site feature</td>
<td>□ stone circle, pictograph, depression, cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ site feature</td>
<td>□ stone circle, pictograph, depression, cellar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>□ structure</th>
<th>□ other, specify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ fence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Description (spatial extent, patterning, density and variety of remains, diagnostics and exotic material, for historic archaeological sites provide details regarding site ownership, origins, function and context).

Campsite featuring a large quantity of historic debris. Concentrations of debris indicate a number of separate camp areas (>4).

16. Materials Observed □ yes □ no     Materials Collected □ yes □ no

Materials observed/collection (frequencies if possible).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
<td>faunal remains</td>
<td>wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
<td>human remains</td>
<td>shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
<td>metal points</td>
<td>metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
<td>floral remains</td>
<td>glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
<td>tephra</td>
<td>beads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
<td>soil samples</td>
<td>ceramics (historic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
<td>macrofossils</td>
<td>other, specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
<td></td>
<td>metal bed frame,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shoe fragment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected)

No materials were collected.

18. Collection Repository □ Royal Alberta Museum □ Private collection □ Other...

19. Photos/Images □ yes □ no     Repository Pikani First Nation

20. Culture □ Early Prehistoric □ Late Prehistoric □ Historic □ other, specify □ Middle Prehistoric □ Fur Trade/Contact □ undetermined

Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)

Pikani historic period campsite.

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.)

22. Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions: Length (m): 20, Orientation E-W, Width (m): 10, Orientation NS.
Depth Below Surface (m): 0.

24. Estimated Porition Intact (%): 90%.

25. Assessment Methods:
- [ ] shovel tests
- [ ] backhoe tests
- [ ] mapping
  - [ ] erosion exposure
  - [ ] excavation
  - [ ] monitor
  - [ ] other, specify
- [ ] auger tests

   # shovel tests: __________   # positive shovel tests: __________

   # backhoe tests: __________   # positive backhoe tests: __________

   # auger tests: __________   # positive auger tests: __________

   # excavation units: length (m): __________ width (m): __________ # excavated square meters: __________


Type of Disturbance:
- [ ] agriculture
- [ ] road/highway
- [ ] coal mine
- [ ] transmission line
- [ ] industrial area
- [ ] other, specify
- [ ] pipeline
- [ ] gravel/sand pit
- [ ] oil sands
- [ ] reservoir
- [ ] vandalism
- [ ] [ ] wildfire
- [ ] residential area
- [ ] recreation area
- [ ] erosion

Will current development impact site? [ ] yes [ ] no [ ] unknown

Disturbance Factors Remarks:

27. Permit Holder/Researcher: Kristina Hannis

28. Observed by: Kristina Hannis, Eldon Yellowhorn
Date (YYYYMMDD): 2008/07/08

29. Collected by
Date (YYYYMMDD):

30. Tested by
Date (YYYYMMDD):

31. Excavated by
Date (YYYYMMDD):

32. Form completed by Kristina Hannis
Date (YYYYMMDD): 2010/11/28


34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks:

35. Additional Remarks:
Site Map

Legend:
- Contour Line
- Site Area

Adapted from NTS 1:50,000 map 82H/12. Contour lines denote 50ft (15.24m).
| 1. Site Name | Charcoal's hide out |
| 2. Field No. | 83 |
| 3. Elevation (m) | 1807m |
| 4. N.T.S. | 150,060 Map No. 02H1/12 |
| 5. Legal Description | LSD 15 Section 14 Township 009 Range 30 W of 4 M |
| 6. UTM NAD83 | Zone 12 Easting Centre 286669 Northing Centre 6513881 |
| Land Owner Name/Address | Pikani First Nation |

Access to Timber Limit from Highway 3. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn left (west) on Township Road 82, travel west 4 km until you reach Range Road 239. Turn right (north) onto Range Road 239 and continue north until it becomes Township Road 92. Travel Northwest 6 km. Turn off onto a two track heading west (left). Travel 3.5 km until you reach the Pikani Timber Limit fence line. Proceed on foot 2 km SW.

Site is located on flat plateaux on the side of a steep slope.

| 10. Site Class | Prehistoric Indigenous Historic Historic Contemporary |
| 11. Site Context | Surface Subsurface Underground Stratified Undetermined |
| 12. Component | Single Multi Undetermined # Components |
| 13. Site Type | Material Find Workshop Homestead Mine Industrial Transportation Other, Specify |
| 14. Feature (Frequency if possible) | Stone circle Medicine Wheel Pit Structure Other, Specify |
15. Description (spatial extent, patterning, density and variety of remains, diagnostics and exotic material, for historic archaeological sites provide details regarding site ownership, origins, function and context)

Ring of mid sized trees enclosing collapsed structure. Structure is composed of tree branches positioned on a 45 degree angle.

16. Materials Observed □ yes □ no Materials Collected □ yes □ no

Materials observed / collected (frequencies if possible).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
<th>observed / collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>projectile points</td>
<td>faunal remains</td>
<td>wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic tools</td>
<td>human remains</td>
<td>shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic cores</td>
<td>metal points</td>
<td>metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lithic debitage</td>
<td>floral remains</td>
<td>glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone tools</td>
<td>tephra</td>
<td>beads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pottery</td>
<td>soil samples</td>
<td>ceramics (historic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire cracked rock</td>
<td>macrofossils</td>
<td>other, specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charcoal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected)

No materials were collected or observed.

18. Collection Repository □ Royal Alberta Museum □ Private collection □ Other

19. Photos/Images □ yes □ no Repository Pikam First Nation

20. Culture □ Early Prehistoric □ Late Prehistoric □ Historic □ Middle Prehistoric □ Fur Trade/Contact □ undetermined □ other, specify

Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups)

Affiliated with fugitive (circa 1896).

Culture Remarks (Describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and/or cultural affiliation of the site).

Location, components of structure, and testimony of elders indicate this was the hideout of Charcoal

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.) 1905

22. Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions

Length (m) 5. Orientation E/W

Width (m) 5. Orientation NS

Depth Below Surface (m) 0.0

24. Estimated Porion Intact (%) 95%

25. Assessment Methods

☐ surface inspection ☐ backhoe tests ☐ mapping
☐ erosion exposure ☐ excavation ☐ monitor
☐ shovel tests ☐ auger tests

# shovel tests __________________________ # positive shovel tests ________________

# backhoe tests __________________________ # positive backhoe tests ________________

# auger tests __________________________ # positive auger tests ________________

# excavation units ______ length (m) ______ width (m) ______ # excavated square meters ______

26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)

Type of Disturbance

☐ agriculture ☐ road/highway ☐ coal mine ☐ transmission line ☐ industrial area ☐ other, specify

☐ pipeline ☐ gravel/sand pit ☐ oil sands ☐ reservoir ☐ vandalism ☐ erosion

☐ wildfires ☐ residential area ☐ forestry ☐ recreation area ☐ other, specify

Will current development impact site? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown

Disturbance Factors Remarks

Site is currently protected by forest. It is recommended logging be prohibited from the immediate site area.

27. Permit Holder/Researcher

Kristina Hannis

28. Observed by

Kristina Hannis, Eldon Yellowhorn, Wallace Yellowface

Date (YYYYMMDD) 2008/07/08

29. Collected by

Date (YYYYMMDD)

30. Tested by

Date (YYYYMMDD)

31. Excavated by

Date (YYYYMMDD)

32. Form completed by

Kristina Hannis

Date (YYYYMMDD) 2010/11/28

33. Report Title/Project Name

On the edge of change. Shifting land use in the Pilskani Timber Limit, Porcupine Hills, Alberta (MA Thesis)

34. Site Significance/Recommendations

Remarks

35. Additional Remarks
| 1. Site Name | Yellow Horn cabin |
| 2. Field No. | 138 |
| 3. Elevation (m) | 1466.3 |
| 4. N.T.S. 15C,000 Map No. | 02H12 |
| 5. Legal Description: LSD 15 | Section 02 | Township 009 | Range 30 | W of 4 M |
| 6. UTM NAD83 Zone 12 | Easting Centre 285281 | Northing Centre 6513748 |
| Land Owner Name/Address | Pikani First Nation |

6. Access (refer to highway, road number, trail, cardinal directions, landmarks, nearest settlement, distances)

Access to Timber Limit from Highway 9. Follow 785 north over Oldman River Dam. Turn west onto 510 and follow the road to the west until you reach Range Road 301A. Follow RR 301A north until you reach the south border of Pikani Timber Limit Y47B. Continue north on RR 301A for 1.5 km. Park vehicle and proceed on foot to the west 50 meters.

6. Site Environment/Setting (describe in terms of drainage, slope, aspect, vegetation, soil type, landmarks)

Site is located in the central valley of the Timber Limit. An intermittent stream runs N-S a few meters to the east of the site.

10. Site Class | prehistoric |
| Indigenous historic |
| historic |
| contemporary |

11. Site Context | surface |
| subsurface |
| underwater |
| stratified |
| undetermined |

12. Component | single |
| multi |
| undetermined |
| # components |

13. Site Type | lowland find |
| workshop |
| quarry |
| rock art |
| cemeteries |
| stone feature |
| settlement |
| site |

14. Features (Frequency if possible) | stone circle |
| medicine wheel |
| pit |
| 1 structure |
| other, specify |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Small wooden cabin. Building belonged to Alfred Yellow Horn (circa 1940). Cabin is within modern Yellow Horn family compound. Modern debris in this area makes the presence of historic debris difficult to assess.

Materials Observed: yes
Materials Collected: no

17. Collection Remarks (formed tools, raw materials, etc. that were collected):

No materials were collected.

18. Collection Repository: Royal Alberta Museum
19. Photos/Images: yes

20. Culture:
   - Early Prehistoric
   - Late Prehistoric
   - Historic
   - Other, specify

   Cultural Affiliation (Complexes, phases, traditions, projectile point types, ethnographic & ethnic groups):
   - Historic

   Culture Remarks (Describe the basis for your inferences concerning the age and/or cultural affiliation of the site):

21. Calendar Date (A.D./B.C.): ~1940
22. Radiocarbon Dates
23. Dimensions  Length (m) 10  Orientation E/W  Width (m) 6  Orientation NS
Depth Below Surface (m) 0
24. Estimated Portion Intact (%) 100%
25. Assessment Methods  
☐ surface inspection ☐ backhoe tests ☐ mapping ☐ other, specify
☐ erosion exposure ☐ excavation ☐ monitor
☐ shovel tests ☐ auger tests
# shovel tests
# positive shovel tests
# backhoe tests
# positive backhoe tests
# auger tests
# positive auger tests
# excavation units  length (m) width (m)  # excavated square meters
26. Disturbance Factors (natural, human, current, potential)
Type of Disturbance
☐ agriculture ☐ road/highway ☐ coal mine ☐ transmission line ☐ industrial area ☐ other, specify
☐ pipeline ☐ gravel/sand pit ☐ oil sands ☐ reservoir ☐ vandalism ☐ erosion
☐ wildlife ☐ residential area ☐ forestry ☐ recreation area ☐
Will current development impact site? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown
Disturbance Factors Remarks

27. Permit Holder/Researcher  Kristina Harris
28. Observed by  Kristina Harris, Eldon Yellowhorn  Date (YY/MM/DD) 2008/09/22
29. Collected by  N/A  Date (YY/MM/DD) N/A
30. Tested by  N/A  Date (YY/MM/DD) N/A
31. Excavated by  N/A  Date (YY/MM/DD) N/A
32. Form completed by  Kristina Harris  Date (YY/MM/DD) 2010/11/28
33. Report Title/Project Name  On the edge of change: Shifting land use in the Pilkarl Timber Limit, Porcupine Hills, Alberta (MA Thesis)
34. Site Significance/Recommendations Remarks

35. Additional Remarks