

Jessie Donaldson Schultz and Blackfeet Crafts

by Anne Banks

History had come full circle in 1964 when Swedish nobility, eminent Blackfeet, a museum curator, and an anthropologist gathered in Browning, Montana, to participate in the return of a sacred object to the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. One of the original participants in 1939 could not be present on that summer day in 1964. Jessie Donaldson Schultz Graham, who had been so much a part of Blackfeet Reservation life in the 1930s and played such a personal role in this unusual chapter of Blackfeet history, rarely

stepped forward to claim her part in events. She had always played the role of catalyst. In a lengthy letter, University of Montana anthropologist Verne Dusenberry, her long time friend, described for her the scene in 1964 at Browning and commented on how much she was missed at the ceremonies. "You have carefully covered your tracks," Dusenberry wrote, and indeed she had. Few knew how much she had contributed in those years.



Jessie Donaldson Schultz in Blood/Blackfeet costume, ca. 1931

Unless otherwise noted, all photos courtesy Montana State Univ. Library, Special Collections

Dearest Jess,

Friday afternoon, September 11. It was five o'clock and the last tourist had been hustled from the Museum of the Plains Indian. A few chairs had been arranged in a semi-circle with their backs to the outside doors. A podium stood in the center of the half-moon design made by the chairs. The murals of Victor Pepion, still looking fresh and daring after their twenty-one years' seemed to look down on the hallway entrance of the museum. Claude Shaeffer paced nervously back and forth, the editor of the *Browning paper* stood with his camera in his hand. Earl Old Person, chairman of the tribal council of the Blackfeet, entered the room, striding in in all the majesty of a fully-dressed Blackfeet of yesteryear; behind him came Darryl Blackman, likewise dressed in all the magnificence that only the Blackfeet can portray.

I paced back and forth. I had posted my companion on the trip, John Fryer of Livingston, at the locked door to check the arrival of the Bernadotte party. I had been upstairs in the workroom and had alerted the women that the party would soon arrive, now rather nervously, I awaited the outcome. What would be the reaction, I asked myself. How would these people react to the homecoming of the iniskums? I talked briefly to the editor and the curator and gave them a little background. Presently John appeared and said the party had arrived. Once more I ran upstairs and told the women that it was time to come down.

The Countess Estelle-Bernadotte av Wieberg walked into the room smiling. Following her were her son and daughter-in-law, the Count and Countess Folke Bernadotte. Carrying an aluminum suitcase was the financial advisor of the Countess, Mr. Erick Ekstrand. The Countess looked around the room in her gracious and charming manner, but before she could say a word she looked to the doorway to the west and immediately rushed toward that corridor. Just before she reached the doorway, there was Nora Spanish, dressed in Indian clothes. The women embraced, not in a formal manner, but each displaying the genuine love and affection that each has for the other. No sooner had they disengaged their arms than Cecile Last Star, that most handsome and dignified of all Blackfeet women, walked into the room. Again a dramatic and sincere meeting, an embrace. Tears came to that Piegan woman, stately, handsome, beautifully garbed. The Countess started to walk with her into the room when her attention was directed to still another entrance. For now walking into the room, somewhat stooped with the years but still with grace and dignity, came Mary Grounds.² The Countess cried out, "My dear friend Mary, so good of you to be here." The old lady smiled

and with tears in her eyes and a sob in her voice answered, "So good for you to come home," and the women embraced.

While the Countess had been greeting her friends, Mr. Ekstrand opened the suitcase and brought out the medicine bundle and handled it gently, unwinding some of the knotted fringe. He handed it to the Countess, who took it and said very simply that she wanted this bundle to come back to the Blackfeet. She recounted the experience of that other time, 1939, when the bundle along with the tipi had been transferred to her husband. She told of the assistance given by Jess Schultz, whose absence on that day in 1964 she deeply regretted. When she had finished her direct and honest and simple statement of why she had returned the bundle she held it out. Nora Spanish replied by saying she believed that the chairman of the tribal council should accept it. Earl stepped forward and the Countess handed the bundle to him.

Earl spoke eloquently and deeply about the significance of the bundle. He touched briefly on the meaning of the bundles to the Blackfeet in times past. He mentioned how Yellow Kidney would feel were he to know of the generosity of the Countess. In the end, he stated that he believed the older people of the tribe should be consulted as to the bundle's final disposition. Nora and Cecile and Mary agreed that the bundle should be given to the museum for safekeeping. Earl then turned to Claude Shaeffer, who stepped forward and received the bundle.

The curator spoke well. He expressed his appreciation in receiving the bundle for the museum and concluded by saying that the bundle had a remarkable record, for he had known and admired its original owner, Yellow Kidney; that it had the distinction of having been in the custody of a great family—great to the Blackfeet, great to Europe, and great to the world. The formalities were over, the pictures taken. The Countess gave gifts to the women and treats to the others, and the visiting began. Finally after six o'clock the doors were again locked and the museum emptied. The transfer had been completed and the little iniskums were home again.

That was it, Jess. We missed you. All of us. Nora was especially distressed, but Estelle explained the situation, which she fully understood. But your presence was there—the free soul, at least—for each one of us felt your presence. Had it not been for you, there would have been no museum, no craft shop, no bundle transfer in 1939 and no return in 1964. You have carefully covered your tracks... how I'm ever going to unearth all that you did on those Indian reservations I'll never know. One of these days I'm going to tackle it...

Love,
Verne

IF VERNE DUSENBERRY³ did unearth more about her accomplishments among the Blackfeet, the Arapaho and the Shoshone, no record exists. However Jess herself, in the unpublished memoirs she tape recorded for the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, Montana,⁴ has uncovered many of her own tracks among these tribes. The following account of her work with them, of the origin of the craft program and shops and of the transfers of the medicine bundle comes from these memoirs.

But first, who was Jessica Donaldson Schultz Graham? Christened Jessie Louise Donaldson,⁵ she was born August 17, 1887, to a well-to-do Minneapolis family. Jess grew up in Minneapolis and McGregor, Iowa, and graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1913. Following a bout of typhoid



James Willard Schultz and Jessie Donaldson Schultz in about 1937, probably at Browning.

Courtesy Elmer Parohini, Las Vegas, Nev.

pneumonia, she moved to Bozeman, Montana, to recuperate with her older sister, Jean, and Jean's husband, George Martin, a Dairy Department faculty member at Montana State College. In 1918, after a joyous interlude of teaching at Grayling, Montana, skiing to the tiny country school with her nine students, Jess, too, joined the Montana State College faculty as an English instructor.

She soon perceived that MSC, primarily a man's school, made little provision for women's activities. Jess, a born organizer, had a knack for conceiving projects and for drawing students and colleagues into them. She was midwife to a host of new organizations: a chapter of Mortar Board; a women's athletic association with competition for girls in hiking, shooting, tennis, swimming and basketball; a women's literary group, the Eurodelphian Society, and a literary magazine, *The Bobcat* (both now defunct); and, most notably, the original chapter of SPURS, the national sophomore women's honorary and service society. Also an innovative and inspiring teacher, she introduced new courses in technical writing and contemporary literature, the latter so popular that she taught an evening section for women of the town.

THE CULMINATION OF JESS'S MSC CAREER

was a tremendous dramatic production based on Crow Indian history and ceremony, *The Masque of the Absaroka*. Produced at Bozeman's Ellen Theater in June 1927, this extravaganza brought together students, faculty, townspeople and over twenty Crow Indians, complete with horses and ceremonial regalia, from the Crow reservation nearly 200 miles away. The *Masque* achieved great success and drew attention from far beyond Bozeman, but the head of the English Department, Professor William Brewer, forbade Jess to produce another one, remarking grumpily that she had turned the whole college into an Indian camp.

1. Actually twenty-three years. The murals were painted in the summer of 1941. John C. Ewers to Anne Banks, August 1982.

2. The spellings are those used by the original writers, Verne Dusenberry and Jess Schultz Graham. "Grounds" is more properly "Ground"; the family name that Jess spells "Croft" or "Crofts" is generally spelled "Croff." Dusenberry misspells "Schaeffer." Dusenberry used "iniskum", Jess, "iniskim." Jess consistently referred to St. Mary as "St. Mary's."

3. Verne Dusenberry to Jess Schultz [Graham], September 13, 1964, Jessica Donaldson Schultz Graham Collection, [JDSG] Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman.

4. Jessica Donaldson Schultz Graham, unpublished memoirs, edited by Anne Banks, JDSG.

5. She was named at birth "Jessie Louise" (Donaldson) and took the name "Jessica" later in life after a family friend, Jessica Wakefield. She was commonly called "Jess" by family and friends. Robert Martin (Jess's nephew) to *The Piegan Storyteller*, II, (January 1977).

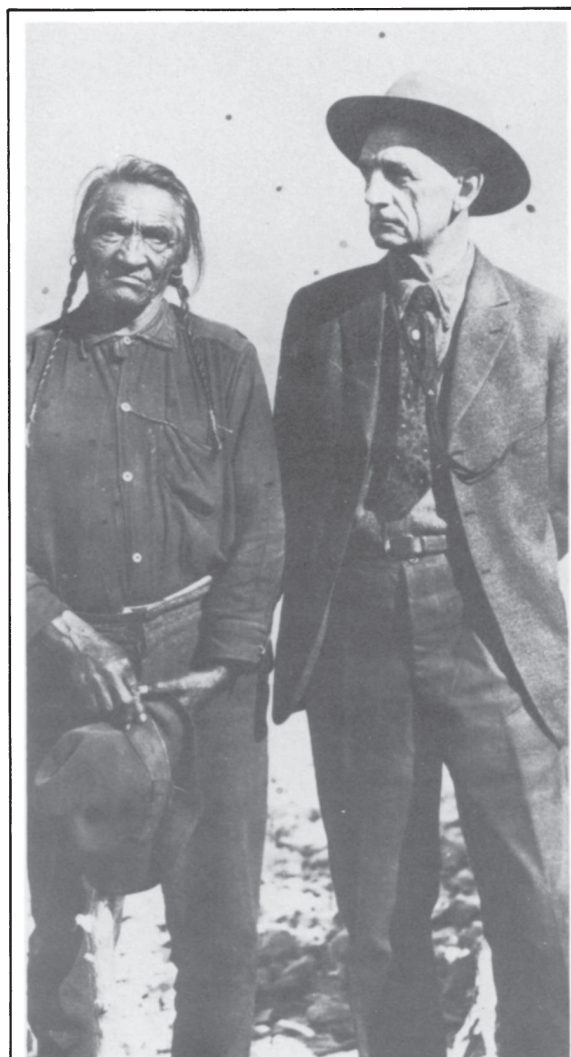
In conjunction with producing the *Masque*, Jess met James Willard Schultz, a man in his late sixties at this time who had himself led a remarkable life.⁶ Coming to Montana as a young man in 1877, he had gone to work for Joseph Kipp at his Fort Conrad trading post, married a young Blackfeet woman, Natahki (Mutsiawotan Ahki, Fine Shield Woman), and lived among the Blackfeet for twenty-five years. Around the turn of the century he guided a number of eminent men, among them George Bird Grinnell, on hunting trips in what is now Glacier National Park. Grinnell encouraged him to write about his experiences. After Natahki's death in 1903, Schultz left Montana but continued writing of his life with the Blackfeet. Schultz published many of his early tales in Grinnell's *Forest and Stream* magazine. By the time Jess met him, he had written at least twenty-five books, the best-known being *My Life as an Indian*.⁷

Although Schultz spent a large part of the years between 1903 and 1931 in southern California and Arizona, he returned to Montana and Alberta most summers to visit friends and attend ceremonies on the Blackfeet and Blood reservations. After their meeting on one of these visits, a mutual interest in Indians drew Jess and Schultz together, and they collaborated on a book, *The Sun God's Children*, a study of Blackfeet traditions, legends and ceremonies.⁸

IN 1931, JESS DONALDSON MARRIED James Willard Schultz, as the nation plunged deeply into the Great Depression. The Schultzes faced hard times themselves: Houghton Mifflin, publishers of all of Schultz's previous books, had a backlog and did not want more; Schultz was nearly disabled by pain from a sciatic nerve injury; Jess was jobless, having been forced to resign from her teaching position at Montana State because of her relationship with Schultz, who was married to another woman at the time (according to Jess, the college authorities' perception of the nature of her relationship with Schultz was mistaken); and the Schultzes were in desperate financial straits. With her brother Gilbert's help, Jess finished her master's degree in anthropology at the University of California, which she

had begun in the summer of 1926 as background for *The Masque of the Absaroka*, but the Schultzes still lived an austere life. Finally, in September 1934, Jess secured a job as a Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) community worker at Choteau, Montana; in November, to her delight, FERA transferred her to Browning, location of the Blackfeet Agency.⁹

When the Schultzes arrived in Browning in 1934, life among the Blackfeet was grim. The Superintendent's Annual Narrative Reports from Field Jurisdictions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for 1934 states, "an epidemic of whooping cough and measles hit the reservation taking a good many lives and leaving many of the children in a weakened condition. Everybody was on the relief roll and it was a grave



James Willard Schultz and Blackfeet friend, Many Tail Feathers.

Montana Historical Society photo archives

6. See *Blackfeet Man*, James Willard Schultz, Montana Heritage Series no. 12 (Helena: Montana Historical Society, 1961).

7. James Willard Schultz, *My Life as an Indian*, (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1907), republished in 1914 by Houghton Mifflin Co., publisher of all of Schultz's other books.

8. James Willard Schultz and Jessie Louise Donaldson, *The Sun God's Children* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930).

9. Jess contradicted herself a number of times about the precise dates of her employment by the FERA, the WPA and the BIA; these seem the most probable. The National Personnel Records Center confirms only that she was employed as Supervisor of the WPA Sewing Project on the Blackfeet Reservation at an unspecified date. Her Citation for Commendable Service from the BIA states that she entered the FERA as senior case worker in September 1934 in Montana and that in 1937 she was appointed as community worker with the BIA at the Blackfeet Agency at Browning. JDSC.

problem to secure clothing for the children throughout the reservation.”¹⁰ John Ewers cites Agricultural Extension Agent Earl Stinson’s report in 1934 that “during that year only 138 Indian families were self-supporting, while 747 families had to be assisted through distribution of rations and relief.”¹¹ Rations and relief, however, were not new to the Blackfeet. Since the extermination of the buffalo in the early 1880s, the Blackfeet had suffered periodic hard times and often had been dependent on government aid. Attempts to convert them from nomadic hunters to farmers and ranchers had been thwarted not only by the difficulties inherent in changing a people’s cultural patterns but also by cold and drought and by national economic conditions.

DURING THESE HARD TIMES, particularly the “starvation winters” of 1883-1884 and 1920-1921, James Willard Schultz had raged at the government’s lack of attention to the plight of the Blackfeet, writing letters and newspaper and magazine articles such as his article in *Sunset* magazine in 1922, “America’s Red Armenians: How the Blackfeet Are Allowed to Starve.” While these efforts endeared him to some, they exasperated others.¹² At any rate, the Schultzes were well-known on the reservation, not only from their summer visits to the Sun Dance encampments and from Schultz’s association with friends and in-laws from the buffalo days, but also with mixed notoriety and appreciation from Schultz’s efforts to prod the government into action. Of the appreciation, Jess wrote: “Little wonder, then, that years later when I became Community Worker on the Blackfeet Reservation during the 1930 Depression, the Indians joyously acclaimed the return of Apikuni [Schultz’s Blackfeet name] to relieve their suffering . . . when

the State of Montana began to administer relief to Indians on the same basis as white people, and employed me as its caseworker, the Pikuni were sure that Apikuni was responsible for their good fortune.”¹³

In fact, the Schultzes’ arrival on the reservation coincided with a national watershed in Indian affairs. Government agencies such as the CCC and the WPA began to provide work opportunities and income for Indians as well as whites. When, on November 23, 1933, the Civil Works Administration announced funding for Indian employment, *Indians at Work* reported of the Blackfeet, “Women were so eager to work [on emergency sewing projects] that it was necessary to use them in rotation on a thirty-hour work basis.”¹⁴ Moreover, 1934 marked the passage by Congress of the Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard) Act, which provided a new national policy in Indian administration. Among the first tribes to organize under its provisions, the Blackfeet wrote a constitution that included “a tribal council of thirteen members, elected semiannually by residents of the various districts or communities on the reservation, was empowered to manage tribal property and money, to regulate law and order (except for certain major crimes), to supervise the preservation of wildlife, and to encourage Indian arts and crafts, culture and traditions.”¹⁵ In addition, the Wheeler-Howard Act made such organized tribes eligible for revolving loans from an annual fund of some two million dollars.

Thus the New Deal brought its particular blend of social concern, stress on self-help, and federal funding to the Indians. Jess was well-suited by temperament, training and philosophy to be one of its emissaries to the Blackfeet. She takes up her tale with the Schultzes’ arrival in Browning. . .

10. *Superintendents’ Annual Narrative and Statistical Reports from Field Jurisdictions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1935* (U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C.), Blackfeet Narrative Section, p. 17.

11. Earl Stinson, handwritten report, Blackfeet Agency Archives, cited in John C. Ewers, *The Blackfeet, Raiders on the Northwestern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950), 323.

12. For those who considered Schultz’s 1883-1884 accusations of Blackfeet Agent John Young misplaced, see Ewers, *The Blackfeet, Raiders on the Northwestern Plains*, 294-295, and Helen B. West, “Starvation Winter of the Blackfeet,” *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 9, (January 1959).

13. Jessie Donaldson Schultz, “Adventurous, Amazing Apikuni,” *Blackfeet Man, James Willard Schultz*, 14-15. While “Pikuni” as a tribe is doubtless an exaggeration, some older members did indeed look to the Schultzes as a source of deliverance, as this letter to Schultz from his son, Hart (Lone Wolf), suggests: “. . . Well, the Blackfeet are about finished. Excepting a few old people, they get no rations, and those that are given out last only two or three days instead of the fourteen days they are supposed to cover. Yes, this does finish the Blackfeet. They are surely looking to you for help. . . . Yesterday Many Guns, Dog Gun and others came up and said that they were so hungry that they just had to ask me for help. I gave them what food I had. Have been constantly giving out food and money since I arrived here, and now am just about broke. . . . Unless you help them, these Indians will die like rats this coming winter. . . . It is up to you and your friends to help them as you did last winter.” Hart M. Schultz to James Willard Schultz, August 17, 1921, James Willard

Schultz Collection, [JWS], Montana State University Archives, Bozeman.

14. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, “Indian Women in the Civil Works Administration,” *Indians at Work*, I, 13, (Washington, D.C., January 15, 1934), 40.

15. John C. Ewers, *The Blackfeet, Raiders on the Northwestern Plains*, 324.

16. See note 10. Page 27 of the statistical section of the same report records 328 reported cases of measles, 78 of German measles, 87 of whooping cough and 72 of influenza in a population of just over 4,000.

17. There are three main tribal divisions of the Blackfeet: the Piegan or Pikuni (Jess used Pikuni), the U.S. Branch; the Kainah or Blood, and the Siksika or Blackfeet proper. The latter two have reservations in Canada. (Ewers, *The Blackfeet*, 5)

18. The idea of a crafts program was not original to Jess. Superintendent Forrest C. Stone wrote in 1932: “We have introduced this year a hand work feature that has created a tremendous interest in the Indian. . . . it is now believed we can show some marked improvement over the course of the coming year. . . . We have just this year started a systematic plan through which we hope to bring into existence a stronger organization of Indian women workers in basketry, bead work and other native arts and crafts.” Stone also realized, however, the need for some sort of marketing program to sell the goods made. *Superintendents’ Annual Narrative and Statistical Reports, 1932*, Blackfeet Narrative Section, 2-6. The 1933 report notes the existence of ten Home Extension Clubs with 223 members, who created 50 pieces of beadwork optimistically valued at \$1,000. No sales are reported. Blackfeet Statistical Report, 1933, 8.

In 1934 we were transferred to Browning. This was a happy day for me because I knew so many of the Blackfeet from the summers we had spent there. There had never been a social worker or community worker on the reservation, so a new house had been built for us on the government square, and I had an office in one of the government buildings. (By then I had had enough community work in Choteau to know my way around and to know how to approach people in need.)

The day we arrived in Browning I was told that both whooping cough and measles were epidemic on the reservation¹⁶ and that many children were dying. My first visit was to a family of twelve out at Starr School. Several of the children were ill and two of the babies had died. So I entered that home with beautiful parents, fine people who had just lost two babies. . . . That was the beginning of my welfare work on the Pikuni reservation.¹⁷

These people did not want to accept relief. With the help of three fullblood Indians on different parts of the reservation, Willie Rose, Nora Spanish and Maggie Croft, we learned the needs of individuals and made up lists of materials and supplies that they could take along with a form we gave them, to the grocery store and to Sherburne's dry goods store in Browning. At first, some of the people who needed it most refused to accept these papers. They said they had never had to do that. They had had cattle enough that they could kill a cow once in a while, and they lived as they could on the things that they had. But as time went on they became more willing and able to accept relief. People could come into the office and give a distress signal, tell us their needs openly, and do

Blackfeet craft workers, as Jessie Schultz discovered, had great pride in their work and enjoyed showing off their creations. In this photo, taken in front of the craft shop in Browning, Blackfeet craftswomen stand with their backs to the camera, displaying their beaded leather jackets.



it without feeling guilty and without feeling humiliated. That's the problem with relief programs, they aren't good for the spirit. But they are necessary at times. . .

Though this was a sad time, it was still a joyous time because people did come in for help. First I asked them if they'd please tell me how to say "I'm glad to see you" in Blackfoot. So "Sokapi kitsi noa," I said, and they were delighted to have me, a white woman, attempt to come across to them in their own language. They had been expected to do the whole thing, to learn and become fluent in English.

They were happy people in spite of their desperate need for something to do, some way to earn money. They were so willing to work, to do anything to help. During that first year I decided there was something they could do to make an income. This was the beginning of our crafts program.¹⁸

It got its start in a little log cabin in the square in Browning surrounded by government buildings and houses, where the women who were interested came daily to make clothing.¹⁹ The government had sent in barrels of army surplus long underwear that they could cut up to make little boys' pants and shirts and little girls' short dresses and blouses. They even made little coats out of this heavy underwear. The women were expert seamstresses; they had been given sewing machines in the very early days and did a beautiful job of planning their work and sewing. They came there day after day, always laughing, always cheerful, because they were doing something they could do well. The thought kept coming to my mind, "Just give them a chance! They can do anything if they have a chance to use the skills they know!"

We cut the underwear scraps into pieces for quilts. As we went on with the quilt-making program we obtained fleeces (I don't remember where we got that wool; the Blackfeet did not raise sheep)²⁰ but we were given sacks of wool. When the government²¹ found out the women were in earnest, they sent us sets of cards and spindles and later spinning wheels. They also sent an expert spinner, Mabel Morrow,²² to the reservation to teach the women how to wash the wool and card it and spin it. So they made wool quilts, the tops of pieced-together wool material.



Participants in the Works Progress Administration Craft Guild posed in front of the craft shop in Two Medicine. Jessie Schultz had organized and administered the federal program in the mid-1930s.

Later (in about 1936) the women decided to dye their wool using natural dyes. They used juniper for yellow and green, sage for yellow and green, onion skin for brown, lichens for a soft blue-green, and madder roots—bedstraw, they called it—which are difficult to get but make a beautiful red dye.

Another sewing center was formed at Heart Butte, a remote part of the reservation where almost all of the inhabitants were full-blood Indians. It is interesting to read the daily account kept of the workers and what each did that day. For example, the group met on October 4, 1940, at the Heart Butte School

19. This work had evidently begun before Jess's arrival at Browning. The following account tells the story: "When announcement of funds for Indian employment under the Civil Works Administration went out from the Indian Office on November 23, 1933, the Indians on many reservations had already endured weeks of sub-zero weather, with high winds and heavy snows to add to the discomforts of living. Protection from the elements was an urgent need, and women were immediately employed to make warm clothing for the children and the old and indigent, and to do repair work on the clothing of the men. . . ." "Indian Women in the Civil Works Administration," 40.)

20. There had been some sheep-raising on the reservation; however the *Superintendents' Annual Narrative Report* for 1935 states, "Very few Indians now show any desire to raise sheep." *Superintendents' Annual Narrative and Statistical Reports from Field Jurisdictions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1935, Blackfeet Narrative Section, 2.*

at 9:30 A.M. Miss Mabel Morrow and Mary Little Bull, an expert seamstress and beader, were the instructors. Agnes Chief-All-Over started packing her quilt, Judith Sanderville washed her wool, Leona Sanderville prepared her brown wool for spinning, Maggie Shoo Cat and Julia Iron Pipe made blankets. Dolores Calf Tail worked on her quilt, while Millie Hall finished her quilt and brought two pounds of wool for another quilt. Miss Morrow gave a short talk about the work, and her suggestions were put to a vote by the group. A committee was appointed by the president to clean up the room and put the wool away. Moved and seconded that we meet twice a week, on Tuesday and Friday, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M. Signed by Maggie Marseau, secretary-treasurer, and countersigned by J. D. Schultz.

As the program advanced, more and more women attended, and they brought others with them to watch and see what they were doing. When the little dresses and shirts and pants and quilts were made, they had an exhibit and invited people to come and see what they had made. They were very proud of their work, and they had good reason to be, for there were few people who would take the trouble to wash the wool, card it and then spin it on a spindle. This was a brand new craft for the Blackfeet. The government was very liberal in helping with this program to provide clothing and bedding; I've always ap-

The pride of the first years of the craft program was the Blackfeet Indian Craft Shop at St. Mary, which was built in rustic style with government grant funds in the spring of 1937.



preciated the cooperation of the government in the crafts program.

The sewing clubs led to the forming of a craft cooperative. The founders of the cooperative, which was the beginning of the first real native crafts program, met in March 1936 at two centers, Browning and Heart Butte.²³ On July 3, 1936, the government through the tribal council gave the women \$3,733.49 from a

21. Like many people in the 1930s, Jess had trouble keeping track of the profusion of "alphabet soup" federal agencies. She tended to solve the problem by simply referring to all of them as "the government." In this case, "the government" was probably either the Extension Service of the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the Education and Recreation Division of the WPA.

22. Miss Mabel Morrow was an Arts and Crafts Specialist with the Extension Service of the BIA.

23. A slightly different account is given in an article in *Indians at Work*, based on material furnished by Jess and Ethel B. Arnett, Director of the Division of Education and Recreation, WPA of Montana: "The movement began in the summer of 1936 when a small group of Indian women on the Two Medicine River (Mary Little Bull, Mary Little Plume, Angeline Williamson, Cecile Horn, Nellie Buel, Cecile Tail Feathers, Rose Big Beaver and Margaret Middle Calf), encouraged by Mrs. Schultz, made costumes to be sold at the Sun Ceremony encampment. This experiment turned out well. . . . Three other women in Browning—Louise Berrychild, Gertrude No Chief and Annie Calf Looking—were also among the pioneers in the Blackfeet crafts movement. . . . The organization of Indians into local craft groups paved the way for the formation of the Blackfeet Cooperative Society in April 1937," "Blackfeet Crafts Workers Ready for Summer Season," *Indians at Work*, V, 10, (June 1938), 22.

revolving fund set up for such things. In the spring of 1937 a constitution was adopted, and \$2,500 of an Indian Rehabilitation Grant of \$7,500 was used to refurbish a cabin at St. Mary's as a craft shop.

The founders of the cooperative were from different parts of the reservation: Mary Little Bull, Angeline Williamson, Rosie Grant, Nellie Bush, Nellie Buel, Angeline Wells, Mary Little Plume, Annie Potts, Annie Calf Looking, Maggie Found a Gun, Annie Flat Tail, Rosie Big Beaver, Cecile Tail Feathers, Louise Berrychild, president, and Nora Spanish, secretary-treasurer. Nora had had a good education and could speak both Blackfoot and English fluently. They elected a board of directors who would examine the craft work brought in and test it for its authenticity. Everything must be perfect, perfectly made according to the old formulas.

When their work was accepted, the women were paid by checks, which they had never seen before. They went to the bank and cashed their checks with



Three Blackfeet women who worked closely with Jessie Schultz in the craft cooperative program and had helped her to organize it across the reservation pose alongside the shop in Browning: (l. to r.) Mary Little Bull, Nora Spanish and Mary Little Plume.

great pride. Before that first government grant my husband and I loaned them \$100, to make the women realize that they were really going to make money they could take home from their enterprise.²⁴

It's very interesting to note the earnings from the shops; in 1936 \$523 was earned by the clubs (the amount paid for goods sold); 1937, \$3,499; in 1938 \$16,702. Then in 1939 and 1940 much less again—\$8,900 in '39 and \$8,700 in '40. I don't remember what accounted for that; it might have been paying back the grant.

The original crafts of the Blackfeet were quill work, leather work and bead work, particularly bead work. To these we added (by "we" I mean the government with my help) a weaving program. Since the women had learned to spin their own yarn in the little sewing rooms, they wanted to learn to weave, and they did learn very quickly. It was amazing to me that they could pick up a new craft, a craft of the people of the Southwest, and become adept in no time at all. They started out with small things like table runners and progressed to the point where they could make curtains and even bedspreads of two sections sewn together down the middle. All of this was done with native materials — the natural dyestuffs, even the wool was now bought by the craft shop from

24. The women were paid an advance when their work was accepted, rather than only after it had sold; hence the \$100 loan to create a fund for the initial payments. \$100 was a substantial amount in those days; the Schultzes' loan of it, considering their own financial condition, was a measure of their commitment to the crafts program.

white men who ran sheep on the reservation and paid the Indians for the use of the land. The women bought these great sacks of wool and did all this work from it.

The crafts program reached a peak where many people were involved and exquisite work was being done, very individualistic. One carved piece, for example, showed a family preparing a horse travois, the father leading the horse, the mother riding it, the old grandfather adjusting the travois properly with two children and the baggage in it. It was a fantastic success and sold for twenty-five dollars, a tremendous amount at the time.

Suzie Red Horn did another thing that was particularly exciting: The Dove Society consisted of boys too young — about twelve years old — for the higher men's societies that involved hard work. Suzie made dolls representing the individual Dove dancers. I think there were twelve of them, tiny dolls about three inches high, each in a different costume, each with a tiny bow and arrow, in a

During the tourist season, craft workers sold their creations in the shops on the reservation and they also set up encampments, complete with decorated tipis. In this photo, taken near the St. Mary Craft Shop in 1937, Johnny Ground (left) and Jim Stingy (center) stand in a tipi circle, wearing fancy headdresses.



dance circle. It was an exquisite idea, and so meticulously carried out. The boys in school got very much interested and brought in some splendid carvings. One brought in a rather gruesome but delightfully executed one of the scalping of an enemy Indian by a Blackfoot who just sat down and pulled his scalp off. But the work was so beautiful and the lines of this little sculpture so delicate that it didn't seem gruesome.

It grew, the craft business, and grew. There were still people who came to Glacier Park in spite of the Depression, people who were interested in Indians and came to our little craft shop. Our first shop was at Browning.²⁵ Then we were given an old log building, the first building at St. Mary's, built by Jack Monroe, a mountain man, hunter and trapper, and an old friend of Apikuni. We really made a beautiful craft shop out of that, with deer and elk hides hanging on the outside and craft displays arranged around the inside. The Great Northern Railway and Glacier Park authorities agreed to let their buses stop there if

25. According to an article Jess wrote for *Indians at Work*, the first craft sales took place in the summer of 1936 in a tipi set up outside the Sun Lodge circle. She relates: "The \$31.50 profit of that [first] day seemed like a fortune to the women. It meant hope for the future. People did like their work and were willing to pay a fair price for it . . . they would tell other women . . . This they did, and in two weeks fifty-four women had brought things to sell. But there was no place to sell them. The teepee had been pulled down at the end of the Sun Lodge ceremonies."

"It was then that Mr. C.L. Graves, Superintendent of the Blackfeet Reservation, ordered that an old building back of the Agency Office be remodeled for a craft shop. This building has its roots in Blackfeet history, having served as a council chamber and a hospital in the past. Thus passed the Craft Shop from a primitive teepee in a camp circle to a dignified building on the Government Square." Jessie Donaldson Schultz, "The Blackfeet Indian Craft Shop," *Indians at Work*, IV, 13 (February 15, 1937), 41.

we could provide restrooms. This was done with the help of the tribal council, who somehow scraped together enough money to convert that old building into a usable, functional place for selling and accommodating the tourists.²⁶ That really made our business flourish at St. Mary's.

Then we set up a circle of lodges outside and started a little museum, a perfect replica of an old-time lodge in the best of taste, with the couches and backrests around the sides, the fireplace in the center, the lodge lining with its painted design, the outside of the lodge with its bear or beaver or otter or whatever, very attractive to tourists. We charged them so much, I think a quarter, to go in there. The lodge circle extended around both sides of the road, and in the evening families occupied two of the large tipis. People going up to Many Glacier from St. Mary's would pass between the lodges and stop to see what was going on.



Craft workers paint a lodge cover in preparation for a summer encampment near St. Mary's Craft Shop, probably in about 1937. Popular with tourists, the tipi circles set up near the craft shop drew attention to the Blackfeet craft work.

The crafts workers became more and more enthusiastic. At the time of the Sun Lodge ceremonies they set up a lodge outside the circle²⁷ (of course it couldn't be within the circle because this was a commercial enterprise and the circle was spiritual). The demand for craftwork was so great that the women used some of their own belongings, things which they had had for a long time, and I gave them back gifts which they had given me, pouches and gloves and what not, with the understanding that whoever had made them would make me another pair just like them. This they did. People are so honest when they are treated honestly: their honesty is rewarding.

In connection with the craft shop we set up a library. We didn't advertise to acquire the books, but the editor of one of the newspapers put out a story saying the Blackfeet Indians have shelves and a librarian but no books. He said, "Don't

26. This shop opened in the summer of 1937. "Blackfeet Crafts Workers Ready for Summer Season," 23.

27. See note 25. This section seems to tell of that first summer's sales.

28. The Schultzes wrote to several newspapers with pleas for books. The enthusiastic response referred to was probably from Joseph Henry Jackson, longtime literary editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and friend of James Willard Schultz. James Willard Schultz to Harry C. James, December 15, 1939, and January 12, 1940, Harry C. James Collection, Montana State University Archives, Bozeman.

29. Winold Reiss was an artist of German birth who was noted for his portraits of the Blackfeet. He had also illustrated the Schultzes' book, *The Sun God's Children*. See also John C. Ewers, "Winold Reiss, His Portraits and Proteges," *Montana, the Magazine of Western History*, 21, (Summer 1971): 44-55 for more on Reiss, Albert Racine and Victor Pepion.

go down to the basement or up in your attic to get books; take them off your shelves. They want good books to read."²⁸ The books came pouring in by the hundreds. We got two sets of encyclopedias, and many very fine books, not rubbish. One set even came all the way from the Philippines. One of the young women who had been trained in library work at the Flandreau Indian School was the librarian; she especially looked after the children who came in. She had little tables and chairs for them, and she gave them the kind of literature they could read and enjoy. It made a happy time for them.

When the WPA saw what the Indians wanted to do and could do, they came in to help. They set up White Collar projects to enable the best of the young artists to go on with their art. One boy, Albert Racine, made it his project to portray the mythological characters of the Blackfeet, their appearance and dress. His pictures of Napi, the trickster character, part divine and part human, appeared in papers in the East. Others wrote on mythological subjects. One young

Martin Pepion, Blackfeet artist, proudly wore this costume made by craft workers in his appearance in the Shirley Temple film shot on the Blackfeet Reservation, *Susannah of the Rockies*.



woman wrote about the techniques of the craft workers.

In addition, I had gone to Winold Reiss²⁹ to ask him if he would teach three particularly outstanding young people, Isabelle McKay, Stanley Croft and Victor Pepion, to draw and paint.³⁰ They were such fine young people that I thought he would get great enjoyment from them, and he agreed to do so. One of the mothers, Mrs. Croft, set up a tipi near Winold Reiss's studio at Glacier Park and housed them, cooked for them, and saw that everything was clean and comfortable and nice. Winold Reiss told me later that they were the most talented students he had ever had. He was very proud of them.

To return to the crafts program: Things were going very well³¹ when the craft people received a letter from Countess Estelle Bernadotte of Sweden. Her husband, Count Folke Bernadotte, was the head of the Boy Scouts in Sweden. He wanted to acquire a Blackfeet tipi, to go through the medicine bundle ritual that took place when a tipi changed hands, and she wanted him to have the proper clothing for the ceremony. Her father, the Manville of the Johns-Manville Roof-

30. Victor Pepion was also one of the WPA-sponsored workers, doing research on ancient Blackfeet designs ("Blackfeet Crafts Workers Ready for Summer Season," 22), and the painter of the murals at the Museum of the Plains Indian referred to by Verne Dusenberry.

31. The Craft Shop had received considerable publicity for preparing costumes the previous year for Shirley Temple and Martin Pepion ("Good Rider") for use in the film *Susannah of the Mounties*; they were participating in the large Indian Arts and Crafts exhibit at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco; their goods were carried for sale at Marshall Field in Chicago and Abercrombie and Fitch in New York.



Countess Estelle Bernadotte and Count Folke Bernadotte wore these highest quality shirts, skirts, leggings, moccasins, and headdresses, which were made to order for them by the craft workers, when they visited the Blackfeet Reservation in 1939. This was the beginning of a decades-long connection between the Bernadottes and the Blackfeet of Montana.

ing Company, had been very interested in the Blackfeet. As a little girl she had gone several times with him to the Blackfeet reservation, where he had put on big feasts for the Indians. They remembered him as a fine and generous person. So Estelle had grown up with some knowledge of Indians, and she and her husband had also visited the Laplanders in the north of Sweden and seen some of their rituals.³²

Soon after receiving the order for the Count's full outfit—war bonnet, heavily beaded shirt, leggings, breech cloth and moccasins—we received a letter from him, asking the craft shop to provide his wife with a buckskin dress, to be made as they made them in the old days, so that both of them could be properly attired. This gave the craftswomen a chance to do craft work at the top level, to fill a large order in a given amount of time and to do it perfectly. A committee of expert craft workers met regularly to evaluate the craft work brought in, and they got together and discussed the situation. They decided to spread the work around—give one sleeve to one woman, the other sleeve to another woman, a moccasin to a third and so on, because they take a long time to bead completely. They must use the finest Venetian beads, red, yellow, blue and white, as did the women in the old days.

The time came when the costumes were completely finished, beautiful, beautiful costumes, as fine as those the Sherburnes had collected years before.

32. Count Bernadotte, the nephew of the King of Sweden, was High Commissioner of the Swedish exhibit at the Golden Gate Exposition. He intended to use the lodges and costume in his capacity as head of the Swedish Boy Scouts. The Countess had been adopted as a girl in 1917 by the Blackfeet and given the name of "Sinopaki," or Kit Fox Woman. "Swedish Count and Countess Highly Honored by Blackfeet," *Great Falls Tribune*, August 1, 1939.

33. These were actually Kerstan of Buren-Stavenow, the Countess's companion, and Lare Edstrand, Swedish Boy Scout Executive.

The party arrived—Folke Bernadotte, Estelle Bernadotte, and a personal secretary for each.³³ Instead of staying at the Glacier Park Hotel as everybody expected they would (the Glacier Park people were very disappointed that they didn't), they chose to stay at the Rising Wolf Dude Ranch close to the reservation, where they could come into the craft shop and chat with the women. They said they could see plenty of white people elsewhere; that they had come to visit the Indians.

One afternoon when they came into the craft shop they met Insimaki, the wife of Yellow Kidney, the man who was in charge of the tipi exchange. She was a delightful little person, a clown, really. She herself would conduct the exchange of the medicine bundle, the iniskim bundle. It is a household hearth bundle that belongs only to the woman of the tipi.

Yellow Kidney would take care of the tipi—he was going to give Count Bernadotte a Beaver Lodge³⁴—and besides the Count wanted a second tipi, which he would paint himself under the instruction of Yellow Kidney.³⁵

When a tipi changed hands from one man and wife to another man and wife, the new owners became the adopted son and daughter of the old owners. So from the time a sum of money was paid and the ceremony was conducted, the Bernadottes became the son and daughter of Yellow Kidney and Insimaki. And they really meant it on both sides; they were very happy together.

The tipi was prepared for the ceremony. There was a couch at the head of the lodge on which the four main participants sat, two couches on either side for other members of the Beaver Society, and a fire in the center with the sweet grass incense customarily used. At the doorway the musicians knelt and beat their rattles on the buffalo hide and sang lustily the four songs for each step in the ceremony. It was an exhilarating atmosphere in that tipi.

Apikuni had been to such ceremonies so he knew what was going on, but I had never been to the exchange of an iniskim bundle. The iniskims are stones which are present in the household bundle; like the lares and penates of the Romans they represent the hearth, the heart of the home.³⁶

When the ceremony was well on its way, after a number of songs and beating of the rattles, Insimaki opened the bundle, turned the flap back and leaned it against the rocks at the edge of the fireplace. After the four songs again, she leaned over, and while she was singing, picked up one of the stones, pressed it to her lips and passed it to Estelle; Estelle pressed it to her own lips and handed it back to Insimaki, who put it on the hearth next to the bundle. They did this again with the second large stone and with each of the two little stones. This was the formal part of the ceremony, but the whole thing took several hours because there was so much singing to be done.

When it was over it was past noon. The Count had had a cow killed to provide meat for dinner, and the women had made the Blackfeet grease bread, and they

34. The first tipi was in fact an otter-painted lodge; the one which Bernadotte was to help paint was a plumed snake lodge. "Swedish Count and Countess Highly Honored by Blackfeet;" also, Jessie D. Schultz, itemized account of expenditures for lodge preparation, JDSC.

35. The painted tipis of the Blackfeet had similar symbolic border designs, but particular animal designs had specific owners. Generally the original owner had received the design in a dream or vision from the animal portrayed, along with instructions for ceremonial items and rituals to accompany that lodge. Conveying the lodge to a new owner was a complicated ceremonial process. Jessica D.S. Graham, unpublished memoirs, 182.

36. Clark Wissler, in "Ceremonial Bundles of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History* (New York, 1912), VII, part IV, 242-243 and 221, states: "Of all medicines the buffalo rock is most widely distributed. . . . The iniskim or buffalo rock has been noted by Grinnell as Ammonites or sections of *Baculites* or sometimes merely oddly-shaped nodules of flint. The Ammonites seem to be regarded as the most powerful type, but we often found fossil shells and other formations in the bundles, as well as a miscellaneous assortment of oddly-shaped pebbles. Any pebble bearing a special resemblance to an animate object is most certain to be regarded as an iniskim. . . . Grinnell notes the belief that if these stones are not disturbed for some time they will have offspring. . . . on various occasions we were shown small fossils said to have appeared mysteriously at the unwrapping of the bundles." Wissler further notes that the painted tipis use the iniskim as their bundles with the corresponding ritual, mentioning particularly the otter-painted tipi. A detailed description of the otter-painted tipi transfer ceremony is given on pages 227-229 of the monograph.



Insimaki and her husband, Yellow Kidney, talk informally with the Bernadottes at the Browning Craft Shop during the Swedish noble's visit in 1939. It was Insimaki who presented the valued iniskim bundle to the Bernadottes in a formal ceremony.

had oranges and coffee or tea—simple fare, but plenty for everybody. Everyone stood around outdoors and chatted and had a merry time.

Then came the exchange of gifts. The Yellow Kidneys gave the Bernadottes the Beaver Lodge, and they let him do some of the painting on the other tipi. (Yellow Kidney had done most of the painting himself, really, but the Count had selected the design and at least had a hand in painting it.) The Bernadottes on their part had brought reindeer hides from Lapland, beautifully tanned hides rather like deerskin. Insimaki was delighted with this gift.

When the ceremony was over and all of the festivities ended, we got into our cars and went back to Browning. We hadn't been home long when Apikuni suggested that he and I go back out to Insimaki and Yellow Kidney and see whether they were satisfied with the way the ritual had been performed and the part the Bernadottes had taken in it. (Insimaki had been the stepmother of Natahki, Apikuni's Indian wife, and was much loved by everybody.) Insimaki and Yellow Kidney were very pleased with the way things had gone, but Yellow Kidney said, "I'm awfully glad you came back, because I have something I must give my son, another gift, and I would like to see him again tonight if it is possible." Apikuni said that he thought it could be arranged.

Cecile Black Boy was able to get word to the ranch where the Bernadottes were staying, asking them to meet us at a certain place, a little shack out away from everything. We all went out there and sat on a little tiny porch attached to a little empty house. Yellow Kidney made a long speech in Blackfoot and gave the Count a Hudson Bay blanket which he himself had colored with sacred red paint. Yellow Kidney said, "This you must wear when you have your Boy Scouts go through a ritual. You should put it around your shoulders. This is sacred; this is Sun's color. It is something you need to have, and I want you to take it with you." Count Bernadotte was very gracious and was happy with Yellow Kidney's thoughtfulness.

Then Insimaki spoke up, "I have something to ask of my daughter. I wish that she would send her secretary to get the iniskim bundle and bring it over here. I have something to tell you." Estelle sent the two secretaries to get it while Insimaki told her story.

"Last night the little girl that was in that bundle (the stones represented a father, a mother, a little boy and a little girl) came to my lodge and asked to come in. I said, 'No, you can't come in. You are now going across the Great Water. You belong to Estelle Bernadotte. You must go with her. She will be your mother.' But she came back a second time. I had to tell her again that she must not come, she must not try to come back, that she was going across the Great Water to live in the home of Estelle Bernadotte."

She came a third time and the same thing happened. But Insimaki said when the fourth time came she couldn't say no because four was the sacred number, and the little girl had continued to ask until the sacred number was reached. So she was going to ask Estelle if she would take the little girl out of the bundle and return her to her keeping.

Well, Estelle was in tears, tears running down her cheeks. She said, "You know, this is the strangest thing that ever happened to me. The Count and I have always wanted a little girl (we have two boys), but now I know we will never have one."

And they never did, though she now has a granddaughter.

The secretaries brought the bundle and they opened it—ceremoniously, of course—took out the stones, and returned one stone, the little girl, to Insimaki.

This time as the Bernadottes were going back to their car, Estelle called me aside and said to me, "I didn't say anything to you this afternoon, but I want to tell you how much we appreciate your taking hold of this ceremony and the preparation of the costumes. We don't know what to give you to express our appreciation, so we have decided that in return for your graciousness and your help we will return this bundle to the museum in Browning which you have had a great deal to do with starting."³⁷

I was very much touched by this because I hated to see the bundle go off the reservation, even though it was going into such good hands.

This happened in 1939. In 1948 Count Bernadotte was killed by terrorists while he was on a peace mission for the U.N. to Israel. A few years later [1964] Estelle decided to bring the bundle back to the museum. I had by then retired and was living here in St. Helena [California]. Estelle called me from San Francisco and wanted me to drive up with her and her sons to the reservation for the ceremony. However, I was having trouble with my heart at that time, and the doctor would not allow me to go to a high altitude. I regretted this very much.

Happily one of my former [MSC] students, Verne Dusenberry, was able to take care of the situation. He had gone to Sweden to get his doctorate in anthropology under Dr. Ake Hultkrantz, whom I had known on the Arapaho reservation in Wyoming. (When Verne gave me a copy of his dissertation, which was published as a book,³⁸ I was astounded and delighted to see in the front "dedicated to Jessie Donaldson Schultz." That was the highlight of that summer.) At any rate, Verne was able to meet the Bernadottes,³⁹ and the handling of the return of the bundle was perfect."

37. The August 1, 1939, Great Falls Tribune article stated: "The count and countess promised that eventually the bundle would be returned from Sweden to the Blackfeet museum." (The Museum of the Plains Indian was not yet completed; it opened June 29, 1941.) However, in a letter to Jess written after the return ceremony in 1964, the countess said, "He [Earl Old Person] graciously asked me who I wanted to take care of the bundle and I answered that my promise to you had simply involved the return to its own people and I was under the impression that there were no near relatives of Insimaki and Yellow Kidney—Whereupon he turned to the 'elders' (in this case Nora Spanish, Mary Ground and Cecile Last Star) for their opinion. Nora felt it would be best to leave it in the care of the Museum." Estelle Bernadotte to Jess Schultz Graham, October 1964, JWS.

38. Verne Dusenberry, *The Montana Cree, A Study in Religious Persistence*, (Stockholm University Studies in Comparative Religion 3, Stockholm, Sweden).

39. Dusenberry had met Estelle Bernadotte in Sweden in 1962, thanks to an introduction from Jess. Estelle Bernadotte to Jess Schultz [Graham], June 16, 1962, JDSG.



Jessie Schultz (far right) posed with other members of the Northern Plains Indian Association at Fort Washakie, Wyoming, in the early 1940s. Standing in the front row (l. to r.): Nannie Ute, Shoshone; Rena Little, Arapahoe; Emma Helman, Ute-Shoshone; Suzette Wagon, Shoshone; Nora Spanish, Blackfeet.

PRECISELY WHAT ROLE JESS may have had in the development of the Museum of the Plains Indian is unclear. Her friends credited her with at least some influence: Verne Dusenberry's letter reflects this; a reminiscence by Harriette Cushman states, "Also through her efforts we were able to get that gem of the Plains Indian Museum started, working with Dr. John C. Ewers."⁴⁰ (Jess did not work with Dr. Ewers; see below.) As an Extension Poultry Specialist, Miss Cushman had worked among the Blackfeet as well as other Montana tribes, as Dusenberry had done as an anthropologist; both had known Jess since the 1920s and both had served on the committee that nominated her for her honorary degree in 1961. The resume they prepared states, "She conceived the idea and laid the groundwork for the features of the Plains Indian Museum now a state-wide attraction at Browning, Montana."⁴¹ Wilbur Betts, a long-time friend of the Schultzes, wrote, "I believe that Jessica and I did have the original idea of a museum to house Blackfeet bead work and other articles. I know we talked about it. . . . I assumed that Jessica followed through on the idea, though I have no way of proving it. She knew so many people of influence in the Indian world."⁴²

Dr. John Ewers, Senior Ethnologist Emeritus of the Smithsonian Institution and the first curator of the Museum of the Plains Indian, gives a very different account, however:

"It is my understanding that the Museum of the Plains Indian originated pretty much as follows: the National Park Service, largely as the result of the dedicated work of Dr. George Ruhle, Park Naturalist at nearby Glacier National Park, had carefully planned an Indian Museum which was to be built in Glacier Na-

tional Park. They justified it, got it into the Interior Department budget and obtained Congressional approval of the expenditure for the construction of the building. It is my understanding that Richard Sanderville, a leading Blackfoot Indian of the time, who served for many years as interpreter on the Blackfeet Reservation, after he learned of the approval of the funds for an Indian museum in the Park, went to the Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes, (or perhaps met him on a visit to Montana) and convinced him that if there was to be an Indian Museum in that region it should be on the Blackfeet Reservation and not in the Park. So the National Park Service lost a museum they had fully justified to the Congress, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs got a museum project they had not anticipated. . . . The Blackfeet Indian Cooperative Craft Shop existed prior to the construction of the Museum of the Plains Indian. It is my understanding that Mrs. Schultz had played an important role in the organization of the shop, and had continued to be concerned with it until she left Browning for Wind River in 1940. She had collected a number of Blackfoot things, as I remember a great number of them being old medicine bundles, which the Indians had sold to her, some for resale to collectors. When I came to Browning I found some of the material Mrs. Schultz had bought for the Craft Shop with the hope that some might be useful

43. John C. Ewers to Anne Banks, March 22, 1982.

44. Handwritten, undated note, JDSG.

45. A warm letter from Sanderville to James Willard Schultz, commiserating about Schultz's failing health, illustrated with sketches and signed "My love to you and Apahki" (Jess's Blackfeet name), attests to this. Richard Sanderville to James Willard Schultz, December 10, 1946, JWS.

46. James Willard Schultz to Hart Merriam Schultz (Lone Wolf), December 31, 1938, JWS.

40. Harriette Cushman to *The Piegan Storyteller* I, 5, (November 1976): 11.

41. Outline biography of Jessie Louise Donaldson Schultz, undated, JDSG.

42. Wilbur Betts to Anne Banks, May 4, 1982.

Just over a decade before her death, Jessie Schultz Graham visited with members of the Blackfeet Tribal Council in July 1965 at a Sun Lodge encampment on the reservation.



in the museum; some were useful, and I purchased them for the shop from museum funds. However, not all of the items—particularly most, if not all, of the medicine bundles—I did not feel were appropriate for the museum collection. As a matter of fact most of these bundles were completely undocumented, and so of very limited historical or ethonological value. If Mrs. Schultz had any other connection with the Museum of the Plains Indian either directly or indirectly before it opened to the public in June of 1941, I do not know of it.”⁴³

This account elucidates a scribbled note of Jess’s about material she recorded: “Museum—[illegible word] Dick Sandoval [sic] meet Pres of Grt Northern—told activities—interested Pres in interest gov’t—Interior in Plains Ind. Mus.”⁴⁴ Unfortunately Jess did not record anything about this, and although Sanderville and the Schultzes were friends,⁴⁵ there is no evidence that Jess had anything to do with Sanderville’s actions in regard to the Museum.

In a letter to his son Hart (Lone Wolf), dated December 31, 1938, James Willard Schultz wrote, “Well, here is the big news. The Indian Dept is to build here, where the rodio [sic] fair ground is, on the highway, a \$150,000 museum-craft shop-art center building for the Plains Indian tribes. Work on it to begin at once.”⁴⁶ This is all Schultz said, and there is

no implication that the Schultzes were in any way involved. The remark that Jess attributes to Estelle Bernadotte about her own involvement with the development of the Museum is the only instance in her memoirs of her connecting herself with it.

In sum, the only conclusions that can be drawn are that Jess had a strong interest and some training in Plains Indian anthropology, that she had been influential in setting up the tipi “museum” at St. Mary and that she had acquired Blackfeet items for sale or donation to a museum-to-be. It was Jess’s style to act as a catalyst, bringing ideas and people together to create new things, but there is no hard evidence of any catalytic action she may have created on behalf of the Museum of the Plains Indian.

In 1940 Jess was transferred to the Wind River reservation in Wyoming to set up similar crafts programs with the Arapaho and Shoshone. James Willard Schultz died in 1947, but Jess continued her work at Wind River until her retirement in 1953. She then moved to St. Helena, California, but maintained her deep interest in Indians and in Montana (she always considered herself a Montanan), returning for visits as long as her health permitted. In 1961 she was awarded an honorary doctorate by Montana State College. In 1966 she married a longtime friend, Harry L. Graham, and enjoyed travels with him around the Southwest. Graham died in 1973; Jess herself died on June 30, 1976. *AM*



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