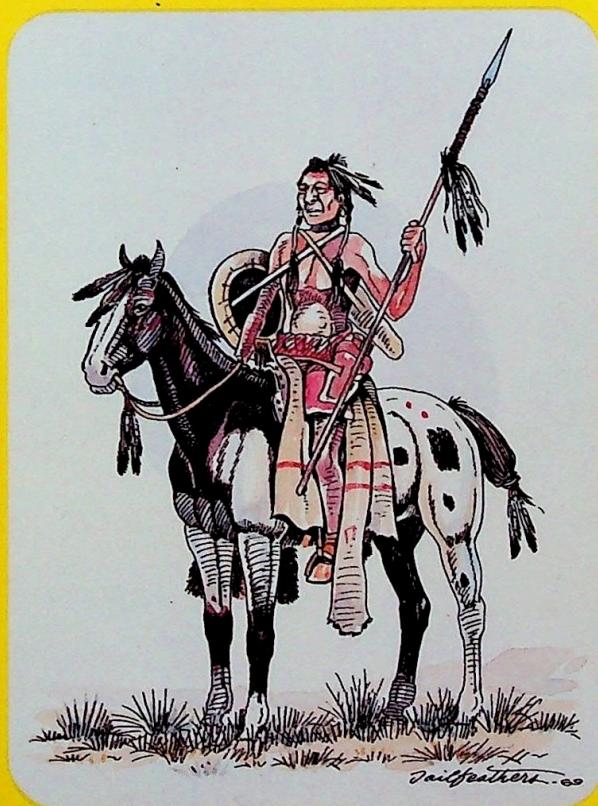


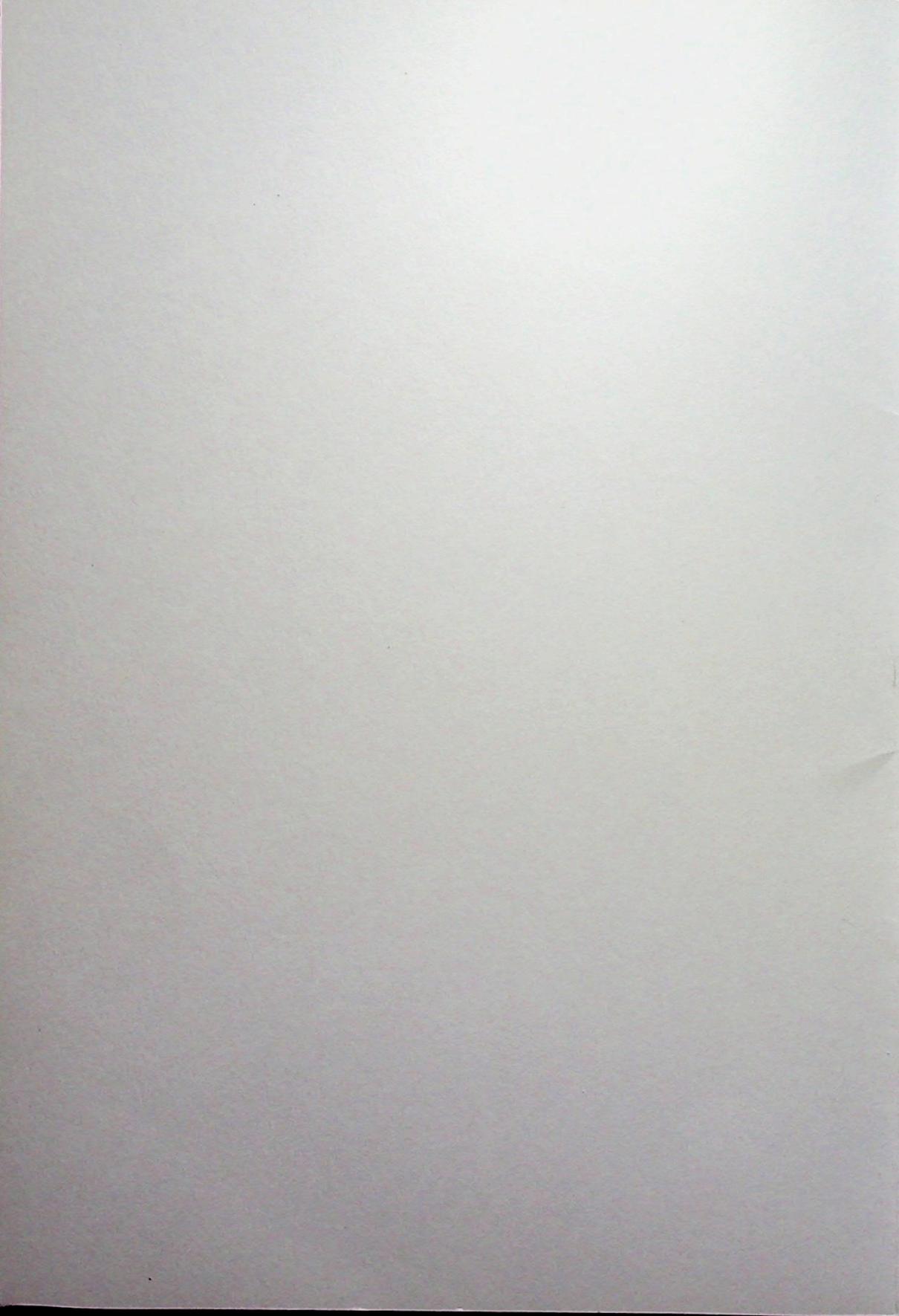
# INDIAN NAMES for ALBERTA COMMUNITIES



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HUGH A. DEMPSEY

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INDIAN NAMES  
OF A TERRITORY  
COMBINED

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## **INDIAN NAMES FOR ALBERTA COMMUNITIES**

The heritage of Alberta has been enriched by the influence of the province's native inhabitants, the Indians; their folklore and culture have provided unique and colorful facets to the history of the area. One of the most significant ways in which they have left a permanent imprint has been in their choice of place-names. Long before the first explorer or fur trader arrived in the west, the Indians had names for the rivers, lakes, mountains and hills. As notable events occurred, new names were chosen to commemorate them. In effect, the place-names often were a reflection of history as seen through Indian eyes.

When the white man came, many of the Indian names were retained on early maps. Some words which could be easily pronounced were kept in their native form, providing such resonant names as Saskatchewan, Michichi and Minnewanka. Others were translated into English, giving Albertans place-names like Hairy Hill, Picture Butte and Sounding Lake.

When trading posts were established, the Indians had no reason to change their long-established tradition, so these places also received unique native names. While the traders called their main post Fort Edmonton, to the Crees it was Beaver Hills House, while to the Blackfoot it was Big House. The North-West Mounted Police called their first post Fort Macleod, but to the Blackfoot it was Bull Head's Home, in honor of Col. James Macleod, whom they called Bull's Head. When the Colonel moved away, the history-conscious Blackfoot changed the fort's name to Many Houses.

With the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1883, many new towns and villages began to appear. Again the Indians ignored the official names and made their own choices. And so, unknown to most settlers, almost every town and village in Alberta received an Indian name. If several tribes frequented a settlement, a number of names might exist. Or, if some notable event occurred, one name might be discarded in favor of another. In this way, the Indian place-names became part of living history.

Many of the Indian names for new villages were taken from old names describing nearby geographical features. Nanton became "Mosquito Creek", after the stream which passed through the town. McMurray, Peace River and a number of other points at the confluence of two rivers became "Where the Rivers Meet", while Coronation was called "The Nose", after a nearby hill. Of all the Indian names for Alberta towns, the geographical description was the most



Indians who were frequent visitors to Calgary gave the town the distinctive name of "Elbow". Above is a group of Sarcees east of Eight Avenue and Centre Street in 1909.

common. This was a practical method of choosing a name which was easily recognized by everyone. The fact that a number of towns might have the same name was no problem, as they were usually so far apart as not to be confused.

Another method of selecting a name was based upon a physical description of the town itself. For this reason, "Many Houses" was a good name for Fort Macleod at a time when it was the major settlement in southern Alberta. Similarly, Claresholm, with its water tower dominating the skyline was well named as "Barrel House". Coaldale, in the shadow of the city of Lethbridge, was simply "Little Town", while Strathmore, located on a bend of the trail from Calgary to the Blackfoot Reserve, was called "Big Corner". One of the most colorful of these descriptive names was given by Chipewyan Indians who visited Lloydminster. The prominent landmark was a livery stable with a silhouette of a horse on its roof. To these Indians, the town became "White Horse on Top of the Barn".

Some names reflected the industry of the towns. Midnapore was "Making Cloth", after a pioneer woollen mill; Raymond was "Where we Make Sugar"; Lethbridge was "Coal"; and Canyon Creek was "Fish Hatchery". Still other terms indicated the attitude of the Indians towards the towns. Coleman was named "Beer Town", Fort Saskatchewan was "Jail Town", Donnelly was "Frenchman's Land", and Cardston, the Mormon settlement, became "Many Wives". In some cases the local storekeeper was the important figure to the

Indians and the town's name might describe his physical appearance. Gleichen was called "Fat Stomach", Cluny was "Black Moustache" and Magrath was "Hunch Back". This type of place-name seems to have been limited to the Blackfoot tribes.

There were a few instances where the proper name of the town was translated or adapted into the Indian language. In this way Bassano became "Pus-ah-nai", Spedden was "Ispidin" and Glenwood became "Wood Village". And at least one place-name was the result of a misunderstanding by the Blackfoot. They thought Taber was "Table" so they translated this as *itahsoyop*, or "Where we eat from".

Surprisingly, none of the Indian place-names reflects any antagonism or hostility towards the invading settlers. Some have humorous undertones, but most are logical and to the point. The names were chosen for the purpose of identification and they served the Indians well. However, many of the names had a very brief existence and are known to only the older informants. As people became accustomed to the English language, the place-names were among the first words to be discarded. A Blackfoot expression *kunee-tapow-op moh-kins-tsíis* (Let's go to the Elbow, i.e. Calgary), soon became *kunee-tapow-op Calgary*. As a result, the younger people did not learn the native terms for some towns and a few such terms are already forgotten. While attempts were made to obtain for this study the names of all Alberta communities, informants were usually familiar only with larger towns, cities and villages adjacent to their reserves. The names of places like Stettler, Didsbury and Innisfail could not be learned from any Indian informants.

This study provides an interesting insight into the attitudes and history of the Indians while also having practical uses for local historians. The fact that the hot springs at Banff were called "Holy Springs" could imply some past religious significance. The name "Indian Place" for Manning could indicate an early campsite, while Canmore's name "Shooting at a Young Spruce Tree" combines expressive beauty with folklore.

Any success achieved by this study can be attributed to the co-operation of informants from almost every tribe in Alberta. During the period from 1960 to 1966 dozens of Indians volunteered useful information. Almost all references are from these native sources. Persons of particular assistance were: *Bloods*, Senator James Gladstone, Jim Whitebull and Jack Low Horn; *Peigans*, Charlie Crow Eagle and Bunny Grier; *Blackfoot*, Cyril Olds, One Gun, Adam Solway and Matthew Melting Tallow; *Sarcee*, George Runner and Dave Crowchild; *Stony*, Judea Wesley and Wallace Twoyoungmen; *Cree*, Joe Giroux, Frank Cardinal, Peter Burnstick, John Samson, Leo Kootenay and Reuben Bull; *Chipewyan*, Gregory Jacko and Thomas Beaverfoot; *Slavey* and *Beaver*, Phil Thompson, Michael Martel, Harry Hedahdona and Harry Chonquolay. *Place Names of Alberta* (Geographic Board of Canada, 1928) was a useful guide and reference during this study, while a manuscript of an 1878 Blackfoot-English dictionary by Jean L'Heureux in the Glenbow Archives was helpful for identifying early settlements.

- ARROWWOOD*; village, 20-23-4; "wood village," *mistsa-ka-tapiskoo* in Blackfoot; the term "wood" is from "Arrowwood."
- ASSINEAU*; siding, 74-8-5; "sinew river," *assineau-sipi* in Cree; old name of river was given to the siding.
- ASSUMPTION*; mission and settlement, 113-5-5; "gun river," *they-tow-zakay* in Slavey; name of nearby creek where an old man lost his gun while crossing on a log bridge.
- ATHABASCA*; town, 66-22-4; "landing," *kawpawin* in Cree; adapted from the town's old name Athabasca Landing; also "hills on each side," *tawah-tinow* in Cree, taken from the name of the river which cuts through the hills and joins the Athabasca River at the town.
- BANFF*; townsite, 25-12-5; "holy springs," *nato-oh-siskoom* in Blackfoot, named for the hot springs; "waterfall place," *minihapa* in Stony, and *nipika-pakitik* in Cree, named for the falls on Cascade Mountain; and "in the mountains," *tsa-nidzá* in Sarcee.
- BASHAW*; village, 42-21-4; "where the hills open in the middle," *tsawat-sinasee* in Cree, descriptive.
- BASSANO*; town, 21-18-4; *pus-ah-nai* in Blackfoot, an attempt to adapt to the name "Bassano" to the Blackfoot language.
- BEAVER CROSSING*; post office, 62-2-4; "beaver crossing," *amiskosipi* in Cree; "crossing," *sa-dizay-nonee-ia* in Chipewyan.
- BEAVER MINES*; post office, 6-2-5; "where we get paint," *estay-sukta* in Blackfoot; a deposit of red ochre used for religious paint was found in the area.
- BELLEVUE*; town, 7-3-5; "slide," *á-wawa-ka* in Blackfoot; named for Frank Slide.
- BLACK DIAMOND*; village, 20-2-5; "white mud," *klas-hlath-tidi* in Sarcee, same name as Turner Valley, named for white clay deposits in the area.
- BLAIRMORE*; town, 7-4-5; "sawmill" or literally "where they rip logs," *nítáy-stato-ksistokyopi* in Blackfoot, named for McLaren's sawmill, built near the settlement at the turn of the century.
- BONNYVILLE*; town, 61-6-4; "French town," *waymistago-sinaak* in Cree, descriptive of the settlers.
- BROCKET*; village, 7-28-4; "Peigan agency," *pikúni-owa-otsit-onipi*, in Blackfoot; literally "where the Peigans have their father."
- BROOKS*; town, 18-4-4; "snake," *pik-six-ee* in Blackfoot; after a storekeeper whom the Indians called The Snake.
- BUCK LAKE*; village, 46-6-5; "bull lake," *eyah-piw-sahigan* in Cree, name of nearby Buck Lake.
- CALGARY*; city, 24-1-5; "elbow," *kootsisáw* in Sarcee; *moh-kins-tsis* in Blackfoot; *otos-kwunee* in Cree, *wincheesh-pah* in Stony; descriptive of the large bend in the Bow River below its confluence with the Elbow. This was an old name for the river and when Fort Calgary was established in 1875 it was called in Blackfoot "elbow many houses," *moh-kins-tsis-aká-piyoyis*. Later it was shortened to "elbow." A more modern term, "horse town," *klincho-tinay-indihay*, is used by the Slavey Indians. In 1878, while still a tiny settlement, Calgary's four



The logging operations of Senator McLaren, seen here in 1903, caused the Blackfoot Indians to name Blairmore as "Where they rip logs".

main establishments had distinctive Blackfoot names. The North-West Mounted Police post was "elbow little home" *okinstsis-enúki-okoway*; the Hudson's Bay Co. post was "where Bear Child lives," *kyá-i-yo-kosiks-okoway*, Bear Child being the name of the trader; the I. G. Baker & Co. post was "where Tall Trees lives," *spita-okoway*, also named for the trader; and the Roman Catholic mission was "elbow holy white man's house, *okinstsis-natowápiyoyis*.

**CAMROSE**; city, 47-20-4; "stony creek," *assiniskow-sipi* in Cree; descriptive.

**CANMORE**; village, 24-10-5; "shooting at a young spruce tree," *too-wup-chinchin-koodibee* in Stony; when the Indians were camped on Canmore flats, young boys practised by shooting at a young tree.

**CANYON CREEK**; post office, 73-8-5; "fish hatchery," *kunoosisuk-puskowoto* in Cree; named after a hatchery which once operated there.

**CARDSTON**; town, 3-25-4; "many wives," *akokimi* in Blackfoot; named for the polygamous reputation of early Mormon settlers.

**CARMANGAY**; town, 3-25-4; "little bow town," *namuk-tai-tapisko* in Blackfoot; named for its proximity to Little Bow River.

**CARROT CREEK**; village, 53-13-5; "root river," *skatask-sipi* in Cree; descriptive.

**CHAMPION**; village, 15-23-4; "little town across the Bow River," *omi-onukukai-tapisko-minamukkai-aputoksokitos* in Blackfoot; properly speaking, this was a method of identification used in conversation, rather than a name.

**CLARESHOLM**; town, 12-27-4; "looking glass house," *mah-pyat-soyis* in Blackfoot, descriptive of an early building in town; also "barrel house," *asoyi-napiyoyis* in Blackfoot, by the Blood

- tribe, a common name for a town with a water tower; also called "next-to-barrel house," *mistasoyin-apiyoyis* in Blackfoot, by the Peigan tribe, to distinguish it from Granum, which they also called "barrel house."
- CLUNY;** village, 22-21-4; "black moustache," *siksistoyi* in Blackfoot, after a store-keeper named Maynard; previously it had been called "long-time young bachelor," *itsisama-nikipeeyopopi* in Blackfoot, after an early resident.
- COALDALE;** village, 9-20-4; "little town," *enukukai-tapisko* in Blackfoot, descriptive.
- COCHRANE;** town, 26-4-5; "sitting bobcat," *nitalh-sitah-tay* in Sarcee, a name originally given to nearby Cochrane Hill; also "deep valley," *gaw-ay-mayhay-doowa* in Stony, descriptive.
- COLD LAKE;** town, 63-2-4; "big fish lake," *thooway-show-tway* in Chipewyan; also "cold lake," *takikawew-sahigan* in Cree; both names were originally given to the nearby lake.
- COLEMAN;** town, 8-4-5; "beer town," *ásakots-aka-tapisko* in Blackfoot; a name given after experiences of Indians who attended the Coleman rodeo.
- CORONATION;** town, 36-11-4; "the nose," *oskiwuni* in Cree; named after a nearby hill.
- COUTTS;** village, 1-15-4; "the line," *isk-skaksin* in Blackfoot; descriptive of the international boundary crossing.
- COWLEY;** village, 7-1-5; "many prairie turnips," *akái-sowkaas* in Blackfoot; named because of the edible wild turnips found in the area.

The construction of a three-storey log house at Fort Edmonton in 1831 caused Indians to name the place "Big House".



- CROWFOOT*; siding, 21-20-4; "barrel house," *asoyi-napiyoyis* in Blackfoot, a common name for a place with a water tower.
- CROWSNEST*; siding, 8-6-5; "crow's nest," *mai-stow-kowa* in Blackfoot, a translation of the railway siding name.
- DEL BONITA*; village, 1-21-4; "opening through the ridge," *kai-kim-i-kay* in Blackfoot, descriptive.
- DONNELLY*; village, 78-21-5; "Frenchman's land," *umstosee-owuskee* in Cree, a common term for a French-speaking community.
- DRIFTPILE*; siding, 74-11-5; "windfall driftwood river," *mitaktah-gow-sipi* in Cree, descriptive of the nearby river.
- DRUMHELLER*; city, 29-20-4; "coulee town," *pistanaka-tapisko* in Blackfoot, descriptive.
- DUNBOW*; post office, 21-28-4; "middle hill," *ksistazigá* in Sarcee, named after a little round hill which is evident while going down hill to the old Indian school.
- EDEN VALLEY*; settlement, 18-3-5; "pictograph rock," *inpubin-owabi* in Stony, named for a pictograph rock west of the settlement.
- EDMONTON*; city, 53-24-4; "beaver hills house," *amiskowatsi-waski-gan* in Cree, and *sawayh-thay-koi*, in Chipewyan; name originally given to Fort Edmonton because of its proximity to the Beaver Hills; also called "big house," *omukoyis* in Blackfoot, *nasagachoo* in Sarcee, *titunga* in Stony, and *kwaygothee* in Slavey; name given to Fort Edmonton when Chief Factor John Rowand built a three-storey log house inside the fort in 1831; also "many houses," *too-duh* in Stony.
- EDSON*; town, 53-17-5; "hospital," *yazúmti* in Stony.
- ELK POINT*; village, 57-6-4; "thick willow bush," *kipoohopah* in Cree; also "prairie to the river," *desoring-kai* in Chipewyan; both descriptive.
- ENILDA*; village, 74-16-5; "crossing the tracks," *pustotiwın* in Cree; an old trail crossed the railway at this point.
- ETZIKOM*; village, 6-9-4; "coulee," *istsikoom* in Blackfoot; named for the coulee at that point.
- EXSHAW*; village, 24-9-5; "point of the dry wooded hill," *tsansay-impa* in Stony; old name describing a good source of firewood; also "many stumps," *champáy-oda* in Stony, describing the clearing after the settlement started.
- FALHER*; village, 28-21-5; "Frenchman's land," *umstosee-owuskee* in Cree, a common term for a French-speaking community.
- FAUST*; village, 73-11-5; "fish drying racks," *akosisi-gunakai-ago* in Cree; site of an old camp used for drying fish.
- FERINTOSH*; village, 44-21-4; "place of beavers," *amiskayat* in Cree, descriptive.
- FORT ASSINIBOINE*; village, 62-6-5; "house in the timber," *sagawas-kahagnis* in Cree; old name for the Hudson's Bay Co. post at this site.
- FORT CHIPEWYAN*; village, 112-7-4; "priest's house," *yatseekwen* in Chipewyan, *yatseekwen* in Slavey; named for the early mission at that place; "willow ground," *kaitekúm* in Dogrib, descriptive.



Impressed by the size of Fort Macleod in the 1870's, the Indians called it "Many Houses". This group of Bloods is performing for the police at the barracks in 1898.

**FORT MACLEOD;** town, 9-26-4; current name is "many houses," *akápiyoyis* in Blackfoot, *nanaga-nikluta* in Sarcee, *tee-odá* in Stony; descriptive of the town's importance as southern Alberta's major settlement in the pre-railway period. The earliest known name for the island on which the North-West Mounted Police fort was built was "where they painted the crow lodge," *itoyastoysi-kokow* in Blackfoot, referring to an earlier incident. When the N.W.M.P. arrived in 1874, the fort was called "Belly Buttes camp where they lived," *mokowans-ikoko-okoway*, in Blackfoot, referring to the butte south-east of the settlement. It was then called "where Bull Head lives," *stumixoto-kán-okoway* in Blackfoot, in honor of James F. Macleod, N.W.M.P. commissioner known to the Blackfoot as Bull Head, who resided at the post, 1874-80. In 1878 the Blackfoot also had individual names for the fort and trading post. The fort itself was "police house," *e-enuk-ápiyoyis*, literally "catchers' house," while the I. G. Baker & Co. post was "where Hind Bull lives," *sikoye-stumik-okoway*, "Hind Bull" being the name of the trader.

**FORT SASKATCHEWAN;** town, 54-22-4; "soldiers," *shimáganis* in Cree, describing N.W.M.P. post at that place; "Indian jail house," *dene-daling-kooi* in Chipewyan, and "jail house," *onangthi-tsi-tagaytibi* in Stony, describing provincial jail there; "north big jail," *apítosi-omukitoyokyakop*, and "bush big jail," *istoksomukitoyok-yakop* in Blackfoot, both describing the jail there but distinguishing it from a southern one in Lethbridge.

**FORT VERMILION;** village, 54-3-4; "vermilion house," *tseekwen* in Slavey; named for the trading post which was built near a source of red ochre in a nearby cutbank.

*FRANK*; village, 7-3-5; "slide," *á-wawa-kai* in Blackfoot, given after the avalanche which destroyed part of the village in 1903; old name was "holy springs," *nato-o-siskoom* in Blackfoot, after sulphur springs in the vicinity.

*FROG LAKE*; post office, 56-3-4; "frog lake," *aheeksahigan* in Cree, name given to nearby lake.

*GIROUXVILLE*; village, 78-22-5; "Frenchman's land," *umstosee-owuskee* in Cree, a common term for a French-speaking community.

*GLEICHEN*; town, 22-23-4; "fat stomach," *sokitsi* in Blackfoot, describes V. Beaupre, the first storekeeper in the community; "sand hills," *weeska-baha* in Stony, descriptive of the area south-east of the town.

*GLENAVIS*; village, 55-4-5; "clover town," *hadobownazee* in Stony, descriptive of grazing pasture in the area.

*GLENWOOD*; village, 5-27-4; "wood village," *mistsa-ka-tapiskoo* in Blackfoot; "wood" is from Glenwood.

*GRAND CENTRE*; town, 62-2-4; "duck lake," *che-twey* in Chipewyan; name given to nearby lake.

*GRANDE PRAIRIE*; city, 71-6-6; "big prairie," *mistahay-muskotoyew* in Cree; descriptive.

*GRANUM*; town, 10-26-4; "barrel house," *asoyi-napiyoyis* in Blackfoot, by the Peigan tribe, a common name for a town with a water tower.

*GRASSY LAKE*; village, 10-13-4; "grassy lake," *moyikimi* in Blackfoot; descriptive of nearby lake.

*GROUARD*; town, 75-14-5; "stony point," *asinskow-newatin* in Cree; descriptive of area.



The history-conscious Blackfoot named Frank after the tragic landslide of 1903, seen above.



Two Blackfoot Indians pause in front of Beaupre's store in Gleichen. The town was named "Fat Stomach" describing the owner of the store.

*GUNN*; village, 55-3-5; "rifle town," *yewtahá-ownazeé* in Stony; literal translation of the word "gun."

*HANNA*; town, 31-14-4; "fish lake," *mamyo-aksikimi* in Blackfoot; descriptive of nearby Dowling Lake.

*HAY LAKES*; settlement, and Habay, post office, 113-5-5; "plenty of hay," *kutlowklay* in Slavey; descriptive.

*HIGH LEVEL*; village, 110-19-5; "on top of the hay," *tlowma* in Beaver, and *tlowmeh* in Slavey; descriptive of the village's location on a broad prairie.

*HIGH PRAIRIE*; town, 74-17-5; "high prairie river," *muskotayosipi* in Cree; name of West Prairie River which flows through the town.

*HIGH RIVER*; town, 19-29-4; "tall trees," *spitsi* in Blackfoot, *ichininituli* in Sarcee; descriptive of the area where the tops of the tall trees in the valley could be seen from a distance on the prairies; also called "north tall trees," *ahpúto-spitsi* in Blackfoot by the Peigan tribe to distinguish it from their local name for Pincher Creek; also "thick grove of balm of Gilead trees," *abistoweeda* in Stony, descriptive.

*HILLSPRING*; village, 4-27-4; "spring village," *muksiskom-akatapisko* in Blackfoot; the "spring" is from the name Hill-spring.

*HINTON*; town, 70-10-6; this site was known as "smallpox camp" after an epidemic in 1870. A large party of Indians near Jasper got the disease and started for Lac Ste. Anne for help. When they reached the present site of Hinton the disease forced them to camp while the stronger ones went on for food and medicine. Several died before help came.

*HOBBEMA*; village, 44-24-4; "bear hills," *mískwatsis* in Cree, and "bear bush," *ozinahay* in Stony, named after nearby Bear Hills.

*HUSSAR*; town, 24-20-4; "big lake buffalo jump," *omuksikimi-piskun* in Blackfoot; name given to a buffalo jump in the area.

- JASPER*; townsite, 45-1-6; "in the mountains," *asinee-watsik* in Cree, descriptive.
- JOUSSARD*; village, 73-11-5; "big stones," *kumstasin-skak* in Cree; descriptive of area.
- KANANASKIS*; village, 24-8-5; "where the rivers meet," *owzáday* in Stony, describing the confluence of the Bow and Kananaskis rivers.
- KEG RIVER*; village, 102-20-5; "house where the hay comes from," *kloygaykwen* in Slavey; named for a trading post built at one of the Indians' best sources of hay.
- KINUSO*; village, 73-9-5; "swan river," *wapsi-oo-sipi* in Cree; name of river at that point and former official name of the village. While "kinuso" means "fish" in Cree, this term is not used by them to describe the village.
- KIPP*; siding, 9-22-4; "lower place where the rivers meet," *pinah-itawto-uktai* in Blackfoot; a name originally given to Fort Kipp at the nearby confluence of the Belly and Oldman rivers. It was called "lower place" to distinguish it from Standoff, a fort upstream at the confluence of the Belly and Waterton rivers.
- LAC LA BICHE*; town, 67-14-4; "elk lake," *waskisoo-sahigan* in Cree, and *tzalith-tway* in Chipewyan; name of nearby lake.
- LACOMBE*; town, 40-26-4; "place of balm of gilead trees," *kamay-mitooskak* in Cree, descriptive.
- LEDUC*; town, 49-25-4; "whitemud," *wapatiúmsk* in Cree, named for whitemud deposits for which White Mud Creek was also named.
- LEGAL*; village, 57-25-4; "right angle bush," or "cross bush," *kapimsaskwi-asik* in Cree; descriptive of a line of trees which intersect an old trail at right angles.
- LETHBRIDGE*; city, 10-26-4; "coal," or literally "black rock," *síkokotok* in Blackfoot; *chadish-kashi* in Sarcee, and *kuskuskisay-guni* in Cree; "digging coal," *ipubin-saba-akabin* in Stony; descriptive of the city's beginning as a coal mining town; formerly called "steep banks," *aksaysim* in Blackfoot.
- LLOYDMINSTER*; town, 50-1-4; "white horse on top of the barn," *kling-choiguy-dathay-ing* in Chipewyan; an unusual name given when first visiting Indians saw a large cutout horse sign on top of the town's livery barn; "cross bush" *kapimsaskweeasik* in Cree; descriptive of a line of trees on a hill north of the town which intersected an old trail.
- LONGVIEW*; village, 18-2-5; "long view," *ba-ha-a-humbi* in Stony; descriptive of a hill north-east of the village which was once used as a lookout.
- LUNDBRECK*; village, 7-2-5; "waterfall," *áhk-takoyi* in Blackfoot, descriptive.
- MCLENNAN*; village, 77-19-4; "round lake," *wawigamak* in Cree, descriptive of nearby Kimiwan Lake.
- MCMURRAY*; village, 89-9-4; "where the rivers meet," *ithleedling* in Chipewyan; "end of the river," *taklakwen* in Beaver and Slavey; both terms describe the confluence of the Athabasca and Clearwater rivers, the latter term indicating the disappearance of the Clearwater into the muddy waters of the Athabasca. An old term was "rapids house," *tetcoku* in Slavey.



Chipewyans who visited Lloydminster named the town after the wooden horse sign atop the livery barn. This view in 1906 shows how the sign dominated the skyline.

**MAGRATH**; town, 5-22-4; "hunch back," *ksamuskini* in Blackfoot; named after the town's first storekeeper.

**MAMEO**; village, 46-27-4; "pigeon lake," *maymayew-sahigan* in Cree, name of nearby lake.

**MANNING**; village, 91-23-5; "Indian place," *deney-thow* in Slavey; descriptive of an old settlement of the Beavers and Crees nearby.

**MANYBERRIES**; village, 5-6-4; "many berries," *akai-inskoyee* in Blackfoot; old name descriptive of the area.

**MEANDER**; village, 116-22-5; "where the rivers meet," *tachay* in Beaver; descriptive of old settlement at the confluence of the Meander and Hay rivers.

**MEDICINE HAT**; city, 12-5-4; "holy headdress," *sawáwms* in Blackfoot, *pezoda-taysnaga* in Stony, *kloh-tsinadée* in Sarcee; several accounts have been written concerning the origin of this name, most being associated with a water monster in the nearby South Saskatchewan River. See "Indian Tales of the Canadian Prairie" by James F. Sanderson, in *Alberta Historical Review*, Summer 1965.

**MIDNAPORE**; village, 23-1-5; "making cloth," *chee-isha-atsis-idi* in Sarcee; named after the woollen factory which was opened at this point in the 1880's.

**MILLARVILLE**; village, 21-3-5; "bunch of tipi poles," *toshobah-a-zoobi* in Stony; descriptive of an old campsite.

**MILO**; village, 18-21-4; *mah'no*, an attempt to adapt the Christian name of the first storekeeper, Milo Munroe, to Blackfoot.

*MONARCH*; village, 10-23-4; "holy view," *saamisup* in Blackfoot; common term used to describe a hill used by holy men searching for buffalo; also called "left hand bend," *eyaksik-sakukoy* in Blackfoot; descriptive of a bend in the Oldman River at that point.

*MORLEY*; village, 25-7-5; "cold water," *minisni* in Stony; descriptive; also "where we pick bows," *munutsapanik* in Cree; descriptive of the Bow River. In 1878, the mission was known to the Blackfoot as "where John lives," *tsawn-okoway*, "tsawn" being a Blackfoot adaptation of "John".

*MOUNTAIN VIEW*; village, 2-27-4; "little town," *enukukai-tapisko* in Blackfoot; descriptive.

*NAMAKA*; village, 23-24-4; "little corner," *enúksi-kokee* in Blackfoot, descriptive of a bend in the trail, the "little" being used to distinguish it from Strathmore ("big corner"). While Namaka is an adaptation of the Blackfoot term *namuktai*, meaning "Bow River," this name was not used by the Blackfoot to describe the town.

*NANTON*; town, 16-28-4; "mosquito creek," *tsitsiska* in Sarcee, *soysk-situkta* in Blackfoot, named for creek at that point; "buffalo jump creek," *okpagigayingabiaptun* in Stony, named for a buffalo jump west of the town.

*NORDEGG*; village, 40-15-5; "where we saw loons," *watanozah* in Stony; source unknown.

*NOTIKEWIN*; village, 91-23-5; "fighting river," *notnigiwin-sipi* in Cree; descriptive of a battle between Crees and Beavers in the area.

*OKOTOKS*; town, 20-29-4; "big rock valley," *chachosiska* in Sarcee; "where the big rock lays," *ipabitúnga-ingay* in Stony; "stone river", *okatoksituktai* in Blackfoot; named after the large glacial erratic south of the town.

*OLDS*; town, 32-1-5; "old man town," *kisaynew-otsinus* in Cree, *ishagwín-oyadíh* in Stony; an attempt to adapt the town's name into the native language.

*PEACE RIVER*; town, 83-21-5; "where the rivers meet," *sakatawak* in Cree; also "house where the rivers meet," *tachaykwen* in Slavey; both names originally were given to trading posts at the nearby confluence of the Peace and Smoky rivers and later transferred to the town.

*PEKISKO*; post office, 17-2-5; "creek down below," *nistleekasiska* in Sarcee; "rough ridge," *pik-isko* in Blackfoot; both descriptive; "where the Peigans danced," *peegun-wagichibi-wapta* in Stony; named after an incident where Chiniki and Bearspaw, Stony chiefs, made peace with the Peigans.

*PICARDVILLE*; village, 58-27-4; "muskeg town," *muskay-goochinus* in Cree; descriptive.

*PICTURE BUTTE*; village, 10-20-4; "pretty hill," *anatskim-ikway* in Blackfoot; descriptive of a nearby hill.

*PINCER CREEK*; town, 6-30-4; "tall trees," *spitsi* in Blackfoot, by Peigan tribe; also "south tall trees," *úmpska-spitsi* in Blackfoot, by Blackfoot tribe, to distinguish it from High River; both descriptive.

*PINE COULEE*; trading post, 14-28-4; "where the enemy was waiting," *itiso-mai* in Blackfoot; an old name for the area and given to an American whiskey fort at that place in 1874.

*PONOKA*; town, 43-25-4; "bridge," *asoganik* in Cree; named for one of the first bridges on Calgary-Edmonton trail at that point; "crazy people's house," *awatsapsi-okowa* in Blackfoot, and "crazy town," *tangabi-oyadih* in Stony, named after mental institution at that point.

*PRIDDIS*; village, 22-3-5; *kunowaspa* by the Sarcee Indians attempting to adapt to their language the name Gillespie, who operated a store and stopping house.

*QUEENSTOWN*; village, 19-22-4; "queen," *ninowaki* in Blackfoot (literally "chief woman"); adapted from the town's name.

*RAYMOND*; town, 6-20-4; "where we make sugar," *eetiyah-pinowukop* in Blackfoot; named for the sugar refinery which once employed Indian laborers.

*RED DEER*; city, 38-27-4; "elk river," *waskisoo-sipi* in Cree, *jadzishisko* in Sarcee, and *ponokaw-sasukta* in Blackfoot, old name for Red Deer; "elk river town," *pachiditwapta-oyaday* in Stony.

*RIVIERE QUI BARRE*; village, 55-26-4; "log jam on river," *kipotogow-oochinus* in Cree; adapted from the village name. The old name was "present creek," *matahito-sipi* in Cree.

*ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE*; town, 39-7-5; "above house," *kitsapuyoyis* in Blackfoot, identifies the old trading post as being upriver from Fort Edmonton; also "little big house," *enuk-omukoyis* in Blackfoot, a diminutive of the term for Fort Edmonton; "bridge," *apustan* in Blackfoot, probably the oldest term, named after a bridge across the Clearwater River on the trail from the fort to Blackfoot country; "old house," *tishee-ah* in Stony, descriptive; "Rocky Mountain house," *asiniwatchi-waskigan* in Cree, and "mountain house," *tsu-nusula* in Sarcee.

**Rocky Mountain House had been a popular trading post and received several Indian names. This view shows a group of Peigan Indians at the fort in 1871.**





The name "Big Church" seemed appropriate to describe St. Albert as it appeared in this sketch of 1877.

*ROSEMARY*; village, 21-15-4; "many wives," *akokimi* in Blackfoot; named for Mormon settlers in the area.

*ST. ALBERT*; town, 54-25-4; "big lake," *mistaháy-sahigan* in Cree, *naytungá* in Stony, name for nearby lake; also "big church," *omukatoy-apeeyoyis* in Blackfoot; named for the Roman Catholic mission at that point.

*ST. PAUL*; town, 54-9-4; "egg picking lake," *minawansit* in Cree; old name for nearby Therien Lakes.

*SEVEN PERSONS*; village, 11-7-4; "seven persons were killed," *kitsikitapi-itsinitipi* in Blackfoot; old name for creek at that point. Origin of the name may be found in "*A Blackfoot Winter Count*," by Hugh A. Dempsey, Glenbow Foundation, Calgary, 1965, p. 8, and in Sanderson (see "Medicine Hat"), pp. 11-12.

*SLAVE LAKE*; town, 72-5-5; "end of the lake," *ksipigomow* in Cree; descriptive; also "Blackfoot Indian Lake," *iyachinew-sahigan* in Cree; old name for the lake.

*SLIDEOUT*; location, 8-24-4; "point of timber running out," *ehpitset-sowaskoyi* in Blackfoot; descriptive.

*SMOKY LAKE*; town, 59-17-4; "smoking lake," *askapatew-sahigan* in Cree, old name for the nearby lake where coal beds once smoldered.

*SPEEDDEN*; village, 59-12-4; *ispidin*, an attempt to adapt the name "Spedden" to the Cree language.

*SPIRIT RIVER*; town, 78-6-6; "spirit river," *chipy-sipi* in Cree; old name for the river.

*SPRING COULEE*; village, 4-23-4; "dam," *okyaksin* in Blackfoot, named for St. Mary Dam; also "where the grass grows," *mokutoyi-skoyi* in Blackfoot; descriptive of the area.

*STANDOFF*; village, 6-25-4; "standing apart," *sapoyi* in Blackfoot, modern term adapted from the village name; formerly "middle ration house," *tetsiki-testinoh* in Blackfoot, descriptive of the government ration house built in the area in the

- 1880's; also "stiff finger," *kaisko-kitsi* in Blackfoot, named for Fred Pace, a local trader; originally "where the rivers meet," *itawto-uktai* and "Belly Buttes," *mokowans*, in Blackfoot, both descriptive.
- STIRLING*; village, 6-19-4; "big meadow grass," *omukotsi-mokoyi* in Blackfoot, descriptive of the area.
- STONY PLAIN*; town, 52-1-5; "Stony Indian plain," *asinipwat-muskotayo* in Cree; "open plain," *ethkutiníh* in Stony; named because the Stony Indians made their last camp there before going to trade at Fort Edmonton.
- STRATHMORE*; town, 24-25-4; "big corner," *omuksee-koki* in Blackfoot, descriptive of a bend in the Blackfoot Crossing to Calgary trail near the town.
- SUCKER CREEK*; village, 75-14-5; "sucker creek," *nimipi-sipisis* in Cree, old name for the creek.
- SYLVAN LAKE*; town, 38-1-5; "snake lake," *kanaypoko-sahigan* in Cree, old name for nearby lake.
- TABER*; town, 9-16-4; "where we eat from," *itahsoyop* in Blackfoot, named through a misunderstanding by Blood Indians who thought the town was called "table" or, literally, "where we eat from."
- TURNER VALLEY*; village, 20-3-5; "white mud," *klas-hlath-tidi* in Sarcee; named after white clay beds in the area; "ram creek," *kish-kah-wapta* in Stony, descriptive.
- TWIN BUTTE*; community, 4-29-4; "double hill," *natsikapwáy-tomo* in Blackfoot, descriptive.
- TWO HILLS*; town, 54-13-4; "two hills," *misoyik-kispakinasik* in Cree, descriptive.
- VALLEYVIEW*; village, 70-22-5; "red willow creek," *mikik-opow-sipisis* in Cree, descriptive.
- VEGREVILLE*; town, 52-14-4; "birch creek," *puskwa-isipi* in Cree, old descriptive.
- VERMILION*; town, 50-6-4; "red paint creek," *weeyaman-sipi* in Cree, old name for Vermilion River.
- VICTORIA MISSION*; settlement, 58-17-4; "holy white man's Cree home," *natoyitapi-saiyi-okoway* in Blackfoot, named for the Methodist mission established there in 1863.
- VILNA*; village, 59-13-4; "prairie," *apuskwa-witiik* in Cree; descriptive.
- VULCAN*; town, 17-24-3; "knee town," *motoksin-akai-tapisko* in Blackfoot, named for nearby hills shaped like a knee; also "village on the hill," *otomyi-kai-tapisko* in Blackfoot, descriptive.
- WABAMUN*; village, 53-3-5; "large whitefish lake," *wabumik-sahigan* in Cree; name of nearby lake.
- WATERTON*; townsite, 1-30-4; "inside lake," *pukto-na-sikimi* in Blackfoot; old name for Waterton Lakes which are inside the first range of Rocky Mountains.
- WESTLOCK*; town, 60-26-4; "wusnow" an attempt to adapt the name "Westlock" to the Cree language.



**Wetaskiwin** was named for the Peace Hills which were north of the town. A popular gathering place for Crees, they are seen here performing a tea dance at the turn of the century.

**WETASKIWIN**; city, 16-24-4; "place of peace," *witaskiwini* in Cree, also "peace hills," *inuststi-tomo* in Blackfoot, and *natzuna-atsi-klukee* in Sarcee; named for nearby hills where peace was made between the Cree and Blackfoot tribes.

**WHISKEY GAP**; village, 1-23-4; "valley through the ridge," *ukskuni-kini-tuksin* in Blackfoot, descriptive of gap through Milk River ridge.

**WHITECOURT**; village, 59-12-4; "where the rivers meet," *sakitowak* in Cree, descriptive of the confluence of the Athabasca and McLeod rivers.

**WHOOP-UP**; location, 8-22-4; "many dead," *akai-nuskwi* in Blackfoot; old name describing burial site after a smallpox epidemic.

**WIDE WATER**; village, 73-7-5; "wide water," *kiaguskpeeyug* in Cree, translation of the village name.







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