Office Copy.
Memo prepared Sept 18, 1927, from notes previously prepared by John G. Carter, for Mr. Simpson of the Ind. Office

THE RIVER AND MOUNTAIN CROWS.

MEMORANDUM.

file Blackfeet

1750. In this year occurred the last great migration of the Crows, from a stream they term the Flint River, where they had dwelt for an indefinite period. From this name is said to be meant the Kansas River, and from the location they give it, the idea is probably correct.

Bradley's Journal, II Hist. Soc. Mont., 178.

1775. Minnetarees, (Hidatsa, or Gros ventres of the River), permanently separate from the main body of the Crows, and migrate north-east to the Missouri River, the main body of the Crows continuing north-west.

Bradley's Journal, II Hist. Soc. Mont., 179.

1806. John Colter of the Lewis and Clark Expedition was among the Crows, and is thought to be the first white man to come in contact with them. The Crows were then known to range through and occupy that tract of country stretching from the North Platte River to the Yellowstone along the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, roaming as far eastward as the mouth of the Yellowstone and occasionally passing north of that stream into the valley of the Musselshell and Judith Rivers.

Bradley's Journal, II Hist. Soc. Mont., 177.

1825. Major Atkinson and Benjamin O'Fallon, on behalf of United States, made a treaty with the Crows, who were lead by Rotten Belly (Arapooash), at Mandan Village, on the Missouri River. By this treaty the Crows promised amity, and acknowldeged the sovereignty of the United States, but made no cessions, nor were the boundaries of the Crow country defined by the United States. Long Hair's name also appears on the treaty.

II Kappler Indian Treaties, 244.

American State Papers, Indian Affairs, 1825.

III Hist. Soc. Mont. , Fort Benton, 216.

II Hist. Soc. Mont. Bradley, 180.

1825-1830. No authority can be found giving the exact date of the division between the Mountain and River Crows. Long Hair and Rotten Belly both signed the Atkinson-O'Fallon treaty of 1825, and on that treaty Rotten Belly's name is given, apparently, as The Yellow Big Belly. The two bands of the Crows probably drifted apart gradually, as they always seem to have maintained friendly relations thereafter.

1832. Bonneville meets Rotten Belly.

II Hist. Soc. Mont., Bradley, 181-2.

1833. Larpenteur meets the Crows on the upper Big Horn. Says the Crows at that time generally roamed together.

~~1834~~ Forty Years a Fur Trader, Larpenteur, v. I p. 45.

1834. Concerning events in this year, Bradley makes the following comment: "Another celebrated chief of those early daays was Long Hair, between whom and Arapooash (Rotten Belly) a rivalry existed that divided the nation. As had occrred fifty years before, the tribe separated into two camps, rather less than one third following Arapooash, while the remainder acknowledged the leadership of Long Hair. Though frequently uniting their forces they were generally asunder and began to haunt different localities, the followers of Long Hair remaining generally south of the Yellowstone on Clark's Fork and the Big Horn, while the band of Arapooash frequented the valleys of the Judith and Musselshell and sometimes ranged to the Missouri. The separation at last became so complete that the whites gave to the bands different names, distinguishing them acroding to their different haunts as Mountain and River Crows- names they still bear. They are on terms of friendship, exchange visits, and occasionally united their camps; but differences

of habit are growing up that will probably prevent their ever coalescing again, though some of the older men, who knew the tribe as one, yet cherish dreams of reunion." (Written by Bradley in 1877).

II Hist. Soc. Mont., 182.

1834. Rotten Belly is forced by his followers into laying siege to Fort Benton, and the traders in the Fort, after nearly starving to death, scatter his Camp with cannon fire. Chagrined at this, Rotten Belly led his people in a foray against the Blackfeet, and was killed in action.(1834)

~~1854~~. III Mont. Hist. Soc., Fort Benton, 316.

1857. Piegans make peace with the River Crows, and were looking for a visit from them at any time. Gros Ventres on friendly terms with Piegans, but not with the Blackfeet.

III Mont. Hist Soc., Hamilton, 61.

1865. On September 12 , at Fort Union, the Assiniboines had a fight with the Crows, (River?), the Crows being led by Rotten Tail. Four Assiniboines killed, two Crows wounded, and the Assiniboines ran off with forty five head of Crow horses, which was what they were after.

Forty Year a Fur Trader, Larpenteur, v. II, p. 373.

1868. July 13. A treaty, which was never ratified, was made by the United States with the Gros Ventres at Fort Hawley, Montana, which provided, among other things, that if the United States made a treaty with the River Crows, moving the River Crows on to the Gros Ventres reserve, the Gros Ventres would consent to such a move being made.

III Kappler, Indian Treaties, 7~~14~~. 703

1868. July 15. A treaty, which was never ratified, was made by the United States with the River Crows at Fort Hawley, Montana, which provided, among other things, that the River Crows agreed to move upon the reservation to be established by treaty of July 13, 1868, ~~with~~ to be occupied by the

Blackfeet and Gros ventres. In this treaty the River Crows attepted to cede to the United States their own territory, the country of the Mountain Crows, a part of the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre Territory, and a part of the hunting grounds established by the Treaty of October 17, 1855, for the Blackfeet, Gros ventres, Flatheads and Nez perces.

III Kappler Indian Treaties, 714.

1868. September 1. A treaty, which was never ratified, was made by the United States with the Blackfeet, at Fort Benton, which provided, among other things, that if the United States made a treaty with the River Crows, moving the River Crows on to the Blackfoot Reserve, the Blackfeet would consent to such a move being made.

40th Cong. 3d Sess. Confidential. Executive FF. Treaty HH. Also Indian Office Files, treaty jackfets, 1868, Montana.

1868. April 18. Taylor, Comm. Ind . Aff. to Browning, Sec. of Int. Suggests putting River Crows in with Gros Ventres, and a separate treaty with Gros ventres and Blackfeet, as these two tribes are hostile to each other. The River Crows and Gros Ventres are friendly and can be placed together. The Mountain Crows can be met at Fort Laramie. It would be well if Mountain Crows could be treated with in conjunction with River Crows, but the two bands are too far apart.

Reports Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1868, p. 333.

1869. Commissioner reports River Crows on Blackfeet Reserve with the Gros Ventres, under Supt. Cullen, pursuant to treaties of 1868, ratificationsof which are pending.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1869, p. 36.

1869. General Sully states Assiniboines can be moved in with the Gros ventres if River Crows rejoin Mountain Crows south of the Yellowstone, as the River Crows and Assiniboines are not friendly. River Crows are with the Gros Ventres and have not yet moved to their Reservation on the Yellowstone. There is jealousy between the River and Mountain Crows, which Sully believes will die out. Will endeavor to

persuade River Crows to join Mountain Crows.

Idem. pp. 289-291.

1869. River Crows not on friendly terms with Gros Ventres.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1869, p. 292.

1869. Reed, Superintendent of Gros ventres to Commissioner. Assiniboines have moved in with Gros Ventres. Cause, hostility of other tribes and hunger. Reed recommends placing Assiniboines with the Gros Ventres, and placing River Crows on a separate reservation, or with the Mountain Crows, as the River Crows are not friendly with the Assiniboines.

Idem. 289-299-300.

1870. General Sully to Commissioner. Recommends that Assiniboines be placed with Gros Ventres at Milk River Agency for their mutual protection. Smallpox has decimated Gros Ventres, lowering their population from 2000 to 1300. No mention made of River Crows.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1870, pp. 189-190.

1870. Crow Agency. At Crow reservation there are 2000 well behaved Mountain Crows. River Crows number 1300, and frequent the Missouri River Country. "I have been endeavoring to induce them to join the Mountain Crows and live on the Crow Reservation, in compliance with your instructions."

Idem. 191-192.

1870. Camp to General Sully. Having difficulty with River Crows. Last May persuaded 60 lodges of River Crows to come on Mountain Crow Reservation, and they promised to remain there. They went on a summer hunt and were afterward joined by the rest of the River Crows (60 Odd lodges), and all the River Crows are now with the Mountain Crows. All expected in on the Mountain Crow Reservation when the annuities arrive.

Idem. 198-199.

1870. Reed, Superintendent of Gros Ventres to General Sully. In August, 1869, he moved River Crows to Judith Basin, as

smallpox had broken out among the Assiniboines and Gros Ventres. The River Crows got the contagion in June, however, and scattered, 40 lodges joining the Mountain Crows, on their Reservation, and 32 lodges came to this Agency, the Milk River Agency. The rest of the River Crows remained in Judith Basin. The River Crows are now, August, 1870, all at Judith Basin with the Gros Ventres. Reed tried to induce River Crows to join Mountain Crows, but without effect. Gros Ventres, Assiniboines, and a part of the River Crows have now made peace, and are now on friendly terms.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1870, p. 200.

1871. Yankton and Santee Sioux are crowding in on the Milk River with the Gros Ventres, and are being fed. Vail to Commissioner.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1871, p. 412.

1871. Pease to Vail. August 31, 1871. River Crows attached to ~~this Agency~~ Mountain Crow Agency since I took charge of it number 1400. Mountain Crows 2700. River Crows drawing rations on this Agency and intend to remain. All River Crows here except 20 lodges who have remained north to drink whiskey.

Idem. 420.

1871. Simmons, Superintendent of Gros Ventres to Vail. August 31, 1871. Reports he has under charge Assiniboines, Gros Ventres, River Crows, and that large bands of Santee and other Sioux are coming in. Says he cannot induce Sioux to go east to their own agency. Cheyenne and Arapaho have come north to visit Gros Ventres and say the rest of their people are coming up to winter with them. Half of River Crows came in to Agency of Gros Ventres, and are camped with them. 50,000 buffalo slain last summer. Game has disappeared in the eastern country.

Idem. pp. 430-431.

1872. Commissioner. Indian population in Montana.

Blackfeet, Bloods, Piegans,	7,500
Assiniboines,	4,970
Gros Ventres,	1,100
Santee, Yanktonais, Unopapa, Cut Head Sioux, (Milk River)	2,625
River Crows,	1,240
Mountain Crows,	2,700
Flatheads,	460
Pend d'Oreilles,	1,000
Kootenays,	320
Shoshones, Bannocks and Sheepeaters,	677
Roving Sioux (Teton, so-called) near Fort Peck,	8,000
Estimated Total,	30,412
Northern Arapaho and Cheyenne with Sitting Bull	1,000

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1873, p. 48.

1872. River Crows are at Milk River with the Gros Ventres. Most of Sioux at Milk River were in the Minnesota Massacre of 1862.

Idem. 48.

1872. Simmons, Superintendent of Gros Ventres to Vail. Assiniboines, Gros Ventres, River Crows and Standing Bull's Santee Sioux, and Strike the Ree's Yanktonais Sioux at this Agency. Rations are scarce. Weather is cold. Buffalo this summer.

Idem. 276.

1872. Crow Agency. Pease to Vail. River Crows detached from this Agency and parties of them frequently visit this place. River and Mountain Crows closely cemented, and River Crows when here subsist on Mountain Crow supplies.

1873. April 3. Smith, Commissioner to Wright, Superintendent Ind. Affairs, Montana Terr. Acknowledges receipt of Wright's letter of 13th, ultimo, stating that in view of fact that whiskey is being sold to River Crows on and near Missouri River, that he has instructed Agent Pease to remove these Indians to Yellowstone country and subsist them there, and requesting instructions as to disposal of River Crow fund

in his hands. In reply Commissioner states that Department desires location of River Crows on Mountain Crow Reservation, and instructs Wright to use all peaceable efforts to accomplish their removal, and to advise this office of the result. With reference to River Crow fund, Commissioner states that it should be used to pay all outstanding indebtedness of River Crows, and the balance, if any, to be used for their support, at whatever place they may be located. Commissioner states for Wright's information that River Crow fund now amounts to $147.16, and that no part of the appropriation for the next fiscal year can be used to pay any indebtedness incurred during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1873. The Commissioner is very Reppectfully, & c.& c.

Ind. Office Files. Finance. Letter Book 20, No. 109; Oct. 7, 1872 to Apl. 16, 1873. Page 490. Comm. Ind. Affairs to James Wright.

1873. Crow Agency. Pease to Commissioner. 50 lodges of River Crows remained with Mountain Crows last winter, and subsisted out of the Crow fund. 20 lodges more have joined the Mountain Crows and the balance (30 lodges) have notified me that they will soon come to this Agency and remain permanently with the Mountain Crows, making one tribe. The River Crows number 1200.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1873, p. 348.

1873. August 16. Treaty negotiated at Mountain Crow Agency, between the United States and representatives of the Mountain Crows and the River Crows. Treaty was never ratified, and copy of treaty cannot be found in Indian Office files, but the minutes of the council containing and account of the persons present at the treaty, and the provisions of the treaty by them discussed, is to be found in the Indian Office Files. The treaty among other things provided: That the Crows ceded to the United

States lands claimed or possessed by them, and accept in lieu thereof, in place of the lands south of the Yellowstone River, a reservation to be described roughly as lying within the valleys of the Dog, Arrow and Judith Rivers. The provisions of the Laramie treaty, not in conflict with the above, are reaffirmed by the United States, and the sum of one million dollars is to be set aside for the Crows, the interest on such principle to be expended for their use or reinvested for them in the discretion of the President.

Indian Office Files, Treaty Jacket, Montana, 1873.

1873. Map of the proposed Judith River Reservation for the Mountain and River Crows, showing the limits of the same.

Indian Office Files, Map No. 162, Tube No. 94.

1874. Report of Commissioner to Secretary of Interior. Mountain and River Crows are on same Reservation. "Their agreement" (River Crows)"obtained last year through special Commission, to exchange their present Reservation for the Judith Basin has not been ratified by Congress."

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1874, p. 49.

1874 River Crows belonging to this Agency are unwilling as yet to remove from their haunts with other Indians along the Missouri River, where facilities for drunkeness and lewdness are more attractive than any inducements the government has yet been able to make.

Idem. 50.

1874. Fort Belknap Agency established by Executive Order 1873, has the following Indians: 960 Gros ventres, 1700 Assiniboines; Crees, Canadian Assiniboines visiting there, 1000.

Idem. 50.

1874. January 31. Executive Order by Grant, President. Withdraws from settlement tract of country in Territory of Montana, described in the first article of agreement with Crow

Indians concluded August 16, 1873, namely, all the country drained by the Judith, Arrow and Dog Rivers, and orders the same set aside as a reservation for the Crow Indians.
Ex.Orders Relating to Indian Reservations, v. I, p. 99.

1874. Crow Agency reports: Mountain Crows, 3,000; River Crows, 1,200, the latter uncivilized.
Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1874, p. 261.

1874. Belknap reports only Gros Ventres and Upper and Lower Assiniboines at that Agency.

Idem. 263-264.

1874. Milk River Agency. Fort Peck, Montana. Old Gros ventres-River Crow Agency. New Agency for Gros Ventres (Ex. Order, 1873) is at Fort Belknap.

Idem. 265.

1875. Commissioner to Secretary of Interior. The River Crows are now on the Mountain Crow Reservation with the Mountain Crows. They roam north, however, and drink whiskey upon the Missouri River. This summer they were on the Mountain Crow Reservation for the first time, in a body., and promise to remain there for the winter.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1875, p.61.

1875. March 25. Executive Order by Grant, President. Restores to the public domain that tract of country withdrawn by Executive Order of January 31, 1874, inasmuch as the Crow Indians have not removed to the tract so set aside, by the previous Executive Order, and it is not probable they will ever make it their home, and as Congress has not taken any decisive action on the agreement concluded with the Crows on August 16, 1873.
Ex.Orders Relating to Indian Reservations, v. I. p. 100.

1875. Crow Agency, reports that: All River Crows were at the Agency this summer. River Crows are not increasing. They are addicted to whiskey. They Mountain Crows are not addicted to whiskey.

Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1875, p. 301.

1875. Fort Belknap. Gros ventres and Assiniboines. Established 1873. Sioux and some Assiniboines were left at Milk River Agency, and Gros ventres and Assiniboines put on new

Agency, and Gros Ventres and Assiniboines put on new Agency at Fort Belknap. River Crows attached subsequently to Mountain Crow Reservation.
Report Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1875, p. 303.

Conclusions:

1. The River Crows were never put on the Mountain Crow Reservation by means of actual force employed by the United States against them.
2. When game became relatively scarce after 1873 or 1874, the River Crows became more dependent upon the United States for subsistence.
3. The United States appears to have been willing to subsist them at the Gros Ventre Agency or the Mountain Crow Agency, but would not, or at least did not create a special Agency for the River Crows, from which they could draw supplies .
4. It appears to have been the policy of the Department from 1873 to subsist the River Crows if they complied with the Departments wishes, and joined the Mountain Crows, but not to subsist them as an independent tribe or band.
5. From 1872, and later, the Gros ventre country became inhabited by Assiniboines and Sioux, both hostile to the River Crows, and it became increasingly unsafe for the River Crows to go to the Gros Ventre Agency to obtain subsistence.
6. The Judith River Reservation would probably have been satisfactory to the River Crows, but it is doubtful if the Mountain Crows could have been induced to move there.
7. Hunger, and hostile Indians were the ultimate reasons which made the River Crows join the Mountain Crows, the Department giving them a choice of drawing rations among the Mountain Crows, friendly to them, or among the Sioux and Assiniboine, north, on Milk River, where the would be in great danger.