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The Woman Who Loved Mankind

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The Woman Who Loved Mankind

The Life of a Twentieth-Century Crow Elder

Lillian Bullshows Hogan

As told to Barbara Loeb & Mardell Hogan Plainfeather

University of Nebraska Press
Lincoln and London

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Set in Sabon by Kim Essman.
Designed by Mikah Tacha.

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To our families and to
storytellers everywhere

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Contents

List of Illustrations viii
Acknowledgments ix
Introduction by Barbara Loeb xi
Thoughts about My Mother by Mardell Hogan Plainfeather xxxi
Genealogies xxxvii
1 Chapter One: My Birth and Infancy
13 Chapter Two: My Mother
25 Chapter Three: My Father
47 Chapter Four: My Parents Meet and Marry
57 Chapter Five: My First Memories
73 Chapter Six: Boarding School
93 Chapter Seven: Memories of Youth
147 Chapter Eight: My Mother Teaches Me to Be a Good Woman
175 Chapter Nine: Tobacco Iipche (Sacred Pipe Society) and the Medicine Dance (Tobacco Society)
197 Chapter Ten: We Were Always Hard Up
205 Chapter Eleven: The Last Years in School
213 Chapter Twelve: My First Marriage Was to Alex
225 Chapter Thirteen: We're Adopted into the Tobacco Society
229 Chapter Fourteen: I Married Robbie Yellowtail
241 Chapter Fifteen: Paul
263 Chapter Sixteen: George
307 Chapter Seventeen: The Kids Are Growing Up
333 Chapter Eighteen: Sacred Experiences
341 Chapter Nineteen: Traditional Healing
357 Chapter Twenty: I Gave Indian Names
363 Chapter Twenty-One: I'm an Old-Timer
379 Chapter Twenty-Two: Education
387 Chapter Twenty-Three: Life as an Elder
Bibliography 405
Index 409

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Illustrations

following p. 170

1. The Bullshows and Baumgartner families, circa 1910
2. Little Horse's half sister, Clara White Hip, and husband
3. Lillian, approximately fifteen years old, circa 1920
4. Finds Them and Kills Them (Ohchiish) in front of his home, 1928
5. Bone scraper
6. Lillian and her first husband, Alex Plainfeather, 1921
7. Lillian holding her first child, Samuel Plainfeather, 1922
8. Lillian's second husband, Robert Yellowtail, with Chief Plenty Coups, circa 1929
9. Lillian with her third husband, Paul Singer, and daughters, 1934
10. Detail of elk-tooth dress
11. Lillian's fourth husband, George Hogan Sr.
12. Lillian's sons, Adam Singer and Samuel Plainfeather, circa 1943
13. Lillian's parents, Bull Shows and Little Horse, with Lillian's daughter Mary and her grandson Russell, 1946
14. George and Lillian Hogan with their daughter Mardell, 1951
15. Lillian with Lady Bird Johnson, Betty Babcock, Stewart Udall, 1964
16. Mardell, Mary, and Nellie, 1964
17. Lillian and her daughter Mardell, 1979
18. Floral sketches by Lillian, 1981
19. Lillian's great-grandson Calvin Walks Over Ice, circa 1991
20. Lillian seated with her daughters and many of her grandchildren, 1976
21. Lillian seated in elk-tooth dress, with her daughters, 1976
22. Nellie and Lillian, 1980
23. Lillian in elder years

Map

Crow Country and the areas in Lillian's stories xliv

Genealogies

1. Family Tree xxxvii
2. First Marriage xxxviii
3. Second Marriage xxxix
4. Third Marriage xl
5. Fourth Marriage xli

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Introduction

Barbara Loeb

"She's a kind little girl" she says.
"She's kind to me—therefore,
I'm going to give her a necklace,
this green necklace."

Says "I have some [green beads] in my stomach" she says "and
I keep them there.
They're my medicine" she says,
"but you get her a string of green beads,
a-a-nd let her wear that,[1]
she grow to be a big,
good woman" she said.
"I want her to have that green beads for necklace."

–*Lillian Hogan*, from "Green Beads from a Real Old Lady"

An elderly Native American woman said these words around 1910, giving a small child the privilege to wear green-bead necklaces. The gift was not a simple piece of jewelry, but a special medicine imbued with spiritual power.[2] It was also a prayer that this tender five-year-old would grow to adulthood, enjoy a long life, and prove industrious, skillful, and responsible to the ways of her people (be a good woman).

The little girl's name was Bachée Issítcheesh (Likes Men, or Loves Mankind). Her English name was Lillian Bullshows, her married name was Hogan, and she belonged to the Apsáalooke (Crow) tribe, one of the most influential on the northern Great Plains. This book is her life story as told to her daughter, Mardell Hogan Plainfeather, and to me, a long-time family friend. It recounts how she was raised, who she became, and what the community was like around her. Sometimes it reaches back to the youths

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of her mother, Little Horse (Horse, for short), and her father, Bull Shows. Occasionally it goes further, to the customs of elders like the woman with the green-bead necklace. Together her stories cover almost the entire span of Crow Reservation life.

I first met Lillian at her family camp on a hot August day in 1979, when I was a young PhD student studying the tribe's beadwork. I was attending my second Crow Fair, near Crow Agency, Montana, and was looking for Mardell, an interpreter and historian at the Custer Battlefield (now the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument). Mardell was not in camp, but her sisters, Mary and Nellie, invited me to wait with them. Two hours later we were still talking. "You feel like a sister," one of them said, and gestured to an empty teepee. "You'd better stay here." That kindness touched my heart and initiated a family friendship that I treasure.

At the time, Lillian was busy in the background. An industrious woman wearing a green-bead necklace and tending to the tasks of camp, she was already about seventy-four years old and the matriarch of several generations. She also knew considerable Crow history, which she relayed generously during my doctoral studies.

Our friendship continued long after the degree. We shared adventures and developed many personal memories, none momentous but the stuff of friendship, richly affecting this book. While recording her memoirs, she was addressing two people she knew well, so she spoke with warmth and intimacy. In turn, my affection spurred me to devote many years to our project.

The stories have been a joy and an education for me, and I hope that you too will enjoy and learn from them. If you are a Crow reader, you can step into history one of your elders lived. If you are a scholar of Plains culture, you will gain access to additional perspectives. And if this is your first exposure to Crow culture, you will be welcomed into a different world, where a woman might keep a medicine power in her stomach.

I wanted this compelling storyteller to speak directly to you from the page, so I have worked to preserve both her words and her expressive speech. My writing technique is related to ethno-poetics, and my version adheres to the rhythms of her voice, changing lines each time she pauses. Readers, however, do not need to pause at each line but can move through the stories at a natural speed. (More information on our format follows, near the end of this introduction.)

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Lillian

Lillian Hogan was a member of the Big Lodge Clan, which was her mother's, and a child of the Ties the Bundle Clan, which was her father's. In English, her tribe calls itself Crow because this is the label Europeans gave them when they misunderstood their name. Apsáalooke (pronounced ăb *săă* lō gĕh) is the name they use in their own language, meaning Children of the Long Beak Bird, but they also simply call themselves Our Side.[3]

Lillian was born in 1905 or as early as 1902, and she died in 2003, so she lived at least ninety-eight years, possibly one hundred one.[4] With the exception of a short stay in Arizona, she spent all her life on her reservation, near Billings, Montana. She worked hard, developed many skills, and adhered to traditional cultural values. Thus, she fulfilled the wishes of the old lady with the green-bead necklace by becoming a big, good woman: long-lived, hardworking, knowledgeable, and responsible to the Crow way of life.

In many ways, Lillian was a modern woman. She drove a car, maintained a bank account, and read the newspaper. She shopped in supermarkets and department stores, watched television, and picked up her mail at the post office. She fervently urged her children to become well-educated. But she was also a traditional woman, born on the cusp between past ways and modern life and raised by people who remembered the buffalo days and had lived nomadically when young. Carefully schooled in the knowledge Crow women once needed to help their families live in comfort and dignity, she was a good beadworker and she knew how to braintan an animal hide, make a saddle from part of a tree, or find and prepare a whole range of traditional foods.[5] She grew up near Plenty Coups, the last traditional chief of the Crows, she translated for William Wildschut, an important early collector, and she had affectionate memories of Finds Them and Kills Them, the last of the old-time Crow berdaches, men who dressed and lived as women. She witnessed ceremonies that no longer exist and remembered when old people told her to jump toward the moon so she would grow. For everyday wear, she dressed much the way her mother had, with braided hair, a home-made, long-sleeved cotton dress, and a wide, decorative belt. She wore high-top moccasins, which she protected from inclement weather with rubber overshoes, and when she was

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in public she always carried a wool blanket or fringed shawl, worn across her shoulders, around her hips, or draped over her arm, depending on the season and what she was doing. Only a few older women use the fashion today.

From the start, Lillian had to find her way between Apsáalooke and Euro-American customs. So did her parents and her children, as you will see, but neither could have told this story. Like the rest of her generation, Lillian never lived the nomadic life her grandparents had known and her parents had at least tasted. She learned to read, write, and speak English, so she was more prepared to confront the non-tribal society pressing in. Yet, unlike the generations born after her, she heard mainly Apsáalooke in her first years, so English was still her second language, and she spoke it differently. Unlike today's children, she did not come home each night on a school bus. Instead she was shut into a government boarding school, where she was punished for speaking Apsáalooke. After the boarding schools closed, she traveled to school on horseback.

Lillian was raised in a time when missionaries called Native religious practices ungodly. Torn between Crow customs and her Christian beliefs, she resolved the conflicts by attending traditional rituals without actively participating. This too sets her apart from later generations who live more comfortably with both religions.

She was a strong and determined woman who paid close attention to the teachings of her mother and her elders and remembered the details. She married four times, bearing nine children, and two of her husbands were educated and politically influential men. Robert Yellowtail functioned as the tribe's lawyer and became the first Crow superintendent, forever removing reservation management from white hands.[6] George Hogan, in the years before there was a formal tribal council, often served as secretary for tribal meetings. These men went to Washington DC armed with educations and wearing suits instead of the ermine-fringed shirts of the old chiefs. In later years, Lillian hosted the First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson, at her home. In old age, she was one of the last living members of the Tobacco Iipche, or Sacred Pipe Society, a rare organization even in her childhood. She endured so long that for several years she was the oldest living member of her tribe, yet she remained intellectually acute to almost the end of her life.

In this book her greatest power may be her ability to tell a story. As a child Lillian listened carefully to her parents' memories and to the old

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storytellers. Some of those storytellers would have been born in the 1830s, 1840s, or earlier, at a time when Europeans in her homeland were few in number and old customs were secure.

[As a child] I like to hear stories—I just sit there and listen and listen.
I tell my mother—I say, "I like them telling stories.
Make some fry bread and make some Indian dessert [berry pudding],
so after they tell the story,
after they finish," I say, "We'll eat the dessert."
And these people a-a-all like it—that's where I got stories.
I sure like them to tell a story.[7]

Lillian too became a mesmerizing speaker, framing her knowledge in the old way, with vivid dialogue, expressive hand gestures, helpful repetition, and careful structuring that places the story within the larger context of community. She had a true gift, supported by sharp memory and considerable artistry. In this account, she creates a history that educates, entertains, and allows us to *feel* her experiences.

Apsáalooke Aliichiiwaaó (History of the Apsáalooke People)

Lillian's long-ago ancestors were semi-sedentary and lived in villages with the Hidatsa, whom the Crow still consider kin. Their home was in present North Dakota, but they made periodic buffalo-hunting forays onto the dry plains to the west, and then, possibly as long ago as the fifteenth or sixteenth century, they began leaving the villages permanently and became full-time Plains people and nomadic buffalo hunters. The changes may have happened over centuries, but descendants still recall two stories. In one, a group left when two factions fought about the division of food, specifically a buffalo paunch.[8] In another, a prominent leader named No Vitals, or No Intestines, received a vision and left with his people to search for the sacred tobacco, the foundation of today's Tobacco Society.[9]

Eventually they claimed a large and beautiful region, stretching across much of southern Montana and northern Wyoming and blessed with handsome, snow-capped mountains and bountiful resources. That land is so beloved by Apsáalooke descendants that tribal historian Joseph

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Medicine Crow wrote, "We Crows believe our country is the best place on Earth."[10]

Early visitors praised this land too. In 1862, geologist F. V. Hayden described the territory as "perhaps the best game country in the world."[11] Writing in the 1840s or early 1850s, Edwin Thompson Denig, a prominent, educated fur trader, had reported that "the Crows seldom suffer for want of meat."[12] By then, according to Denig, they were so prosperous that they owned more horses than any other tribe east of the Rocky Mountains. It was common, he said, for a single family to own a hundred, each valued at sixty to one hundred dollars.[13]

The tribe lived in two main divisions, the River Crow in the open plains from the Yellowstone River to the Missouri, and the Mountain Crow and the Kicked In the Bellies in the mountain ranges of southern Montana and northern Wyoming. In summer they reunited, undoubtedly with considerable enjoyment and celebration. Their language was Siouan in root. Their population, never large, was estimated at 3,500–4,000 for the late eighteenth century and much of the nineteenth.[14] Enemies, notably the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Blackfeet, pressed in constantly, but the tribe also had friends, especially the Plateau groups west of the Rocky Mountains.[15]

Like all Plains nomads, the Crow started on foot, carrying belongings on their backs or strapped to dogs, but dogs were small and unpredictable at best, so possessions and traveling distances were limited. Then, in the late seventeenth century, Spanish horses came north through Native trade routes, and Plains life transformed. Like others in the region, the Apsáalooke became master riders, traveling farther and faster, and carrying more belongings, more food, and larger "lodges"—skin teepees.

In general, the Crow lived much as other Plains tribes. They moved frequently in search of roots, berries, buffalo, elk, and other game. They made clothing of soft, brain-tanned animal skins, and lived in portable, cone-shaped teepees. To cleanse body and spirit, they used small, domed sweat lodges where they prayed and created intense steam by ritually pouring water on hot rocks. Like the tribes around them, they fasted in isolated places, seeking visions for medicine powers, and they practiced the sacred Sun Dance, with its rigorous fasting and prayer. They participated in intertribal warfare, and their warriors gained prestige by leading successful war parties or "counting coup" through military feats.

Each Plains tribe had distinctive customs, though, and the one most

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central to the Crow was the sacred Tobacco Society. Birthed from the vision of No Vitals, the society developed through ceremonial adoption of new members, and the ritual planting and harvesting of tobacco that was not used for smoking. The plant became linked with Crow prosperity, identity, and continuation as a people.[16]

The Crow clan system was distinctive too, based on a matrilineal structure in which each person joined his or her mother's clan but built complex, carefully prescribed relationships with members of his or her father's clan. The system bound the tribe together, providing networks of supportive relatives. As Tom Yellowtail said in his own life story, the clan system reinforces "the cooperation of each person, working toward the common welfare of the tribe."[17]

By the early nineteenth century, the Crow were gaining attention for their dignified bearing and gorgeous, costly dress. Prominent men wore beaded buckskin shirts fringed with snowy ermine. Women wore handsome red or blue wool dresses ornamented with elk teeth that represented the wealth and success of the family.[18] Some women carried soft, animal-skin robes exquisitely decorated with slender, parallel bands of beading. Even moving from camp to camp could be a festive occasion, for they often donned their best, creating a fine sight as they paraded the plains on horseback.[19] As a long-time scholar of Crow art, I have often imagined them talking, joking, and flirting as they trailed across the prairie in colorful splendor.

This nomadic way of life ended because of Europeans. Contact began at a trickle, perhaps through rare meetings with eighteenth-century visitors, and they entered the written record in 1805 in the journal of fur trader François Larocque.[20] Though the Crow did not meet him in person, William Clark, of the Lewis and Clark expedition, passed through their territory the same year.

In 1806, Lewis and Clark returned home, bringing maps and information. Explorers, fur trappers, and traders hurried to retrace their steps, and by 1807 Spanish fur trader Manuel Lisa had established a trading post at the mouth of the Bighorn River. The post did not last long because of Blackfoot attacks, but it marked the beginning of European settlement in Crow territory. By the 1840s, miners were rushing westward, indifferent to indigenous societies, and in 1865 the Civil War ended and a land-hungry nation turned its eyes to the West.[21]

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Some tribes fought with guns and arrows to protect their way of life and suffered brutal retaliation. The Crow decided to coexist, negotiate, and do their best to outmaneuver their new opponents. In 1825, they had signed a treaty of friendship, which they never broke, and there is no record of Crow attacking settlers or the military.[22]

Nonetheless, the century ended harshly for the Apsáalooke, as for all Plains tribes, and nomadic life became impossible. The thirty-nine million Crow acres that the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie acknowledged shrank to eight million acres in the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, and Washington continued to carve away more.[23] Game declined, and in the early 1880s white hunters purposefully slaughtered the great buffalo herds, shattering the indigenous economy and leaving the landscape reeking of rot. The Crow were confined within ever smaller reservation boundaries and couldn't leave to search for food or other resources.

Vigorous assimilation policies came next. The first Crow agency had been established at Fort Parker, near Livingston, Montana, in 1869, and white, government-appointed agents took control. With the support of churches, schools, and government policy, they attempted to uproot Crow culture, undermine indigenous governance, and turn the Crow into homesteaders and farmers.[24] In 1884, Congress established the Courts of Indian Offenses system, and with further support from Indian agents, prosecuted customs at the heart of Crow life. Congress also passed an act in 1882 and another in 1887 (the Dawes Act) that divided tribal land into individual Indian homesteads called allotments and put more pressure on Indian people to become homesteaders and farmers. The proponents of the bills hoped to open "surplus" acreage to white settlers, one of several such efforts. Boarding schools were built, and children forced to attend, and this removed them from the influences of their parents and grandparents while teachers did their best to reform them into Christians with European habits.

The damage from those years affected the Crow and many other tribes for a long time. Five decades after the buffalo slaughter, Chief Plenty Coups said to his biographer, Frank Linderman, "When the buffalo went away the hearts of my people fell to the ground. . . . After this nothing happened. There was little singing anywhere."[25] Around the same time, Pretty Shield was about seventy-five years old and trying to cope with this

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new life, and she told Linderman, "I am trying to live a life that I do not understand."[26]

Lillian's parents were born about twenty years after Plenty Coups and Pretty Shield.[27] They too saw nomadic life, but they began the shift from airy skin lodges to log cabins when they were only teenagers. They ate beef and government rations instead of buffalo. They reached maturity under restrictive government laws, without the Sun Dance and other important customs, and were surrounded by English-speaking Christians, farmers, ranchers, and a money-based economy. Confined to reservations, the young men of their generation became the first that couldn't count coup. Sometimes they could not even leave the reservation without written passes from white authorities.[28]

There were also good times, as evident in these stories, but these were hard years. By 1910, disease and malnutrition had reduced the Crow population by 50 percent.[29] Reservation lands were a fraction of their original size. Boarding schools were still in place, and white authorities continued to devalue Crow customs. In that year, Lillian was five years old and just beginning to establish memories.

The Stories

Lillian's stories are deeply marked by the physical and social dislocation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her father and his hungry family had to leave their beloved mountains when he was a boy and move to Reno Creek, Montana, then to Pryor, Montana, abandoning their nomadic life forever. As a teenager, her mother lost a brother when a white man killed him, and in those years of declining population, she buried eight children. Only Lillian and her brother Caleb lived to adulthood. Lillian experienced the forced cultural assimilation of boarding school. She and her brother both had their names changed by white authorities without their parents' permission. She spent much of her life conflicted over Christian and Apsáalooke religious beliefs. The family was wracked by the alcohol that had gained a footing as the old life fell apart, and they struggled with the poverty that resulted. Later her young husband Paul died because of alcohol.

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During Lillian's youth and young adulthood, a battle was clearly underway, as agents, the U.S. government, and various tribal factions struggled over land, the distribution of tribal funds, the politics of running the reservation, religious freedom, boarding schools, and other issues. Lillian was closely connected to some of the most prominent figures in those struggles. Her family was close to Chief Plenty Coups and visited him frequently, and she was no doubt sent to his little store as a girl to pick up occasional groceries. She married Robert Yellowtail in the 1920s, while he was prominently involved in Crow politics, and she managed his ranch when he went to Washington DC. After 1934, when John Collier was appointed commissioner of Indian affairs and reversed long-standing policies of oppression, the Crow could once again practice their traditions openly, and Lillian supported her brother Caleb in his efforts to bring back the Sun Dance, an important step toward cultural rebuilding.[30]

Yet Lillian only occasionally spoke of politics or specific historical events, so this is not a history in the academic sense. Nor is it a record of Crow mythology, although she knew many myths. It contains her personal memories of her own life and the lives of those around her, as far back as the 1870s, sometimes earlier, providing a warm, accessible, truly remarkable window into Crow Reservation experience. She gives us a precious record, not of distant, anonymous events, but of individual struggles, sorrows, laughter, celebrations—everyday issues of real people.

We open Lillian's book with her birth because that is how she began her account when she told it. We close with her thoughts about old age, her pride in her accomplishments, and her worries for future generations. In between, of course, is her lifetime of experiences.

The overriding subject is living an Apsáalooke life, for in spite of the best efforts of the early agents, schools, and churches, many Crow are bilingual and conduct much social conversation and tribal business in Apsáalooke.[31] Their clan system thrives and continues to bind them together. They use English names, but they still emphasize Indian names too. They continue to take new members into their Tobacco Society. Although few women tan hides the old way, they still wear spectacular elk-tooth dresses and bead so prodigiously that celebrations are a cornucopia of color.[32] They are generous gift givers, often in formal, distinctly Crow formats. In Apsáalooke terms, as observed by Voget, "there is no better way to show respect for another and to maintain kinship loyalties than by periodic

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gifts."[33] They find many reasons to "take in," or adopt, additional family members, gaining new children, siblings, or parents while keeping those they have.[34] From their perspective good relatives represent a kind of prosperity, and they maximize that wealth. They also find many reasons to celebrate, sing, drum, dance, play hand games, bet on horse races, and generally enjoy being Crow.

In 1892, agent Moses Wyman had reported in frustration, "These Indians are friendly . . . but I have never seen a tribe more attached to their traditions and older customs."[35] Even then, the cultural dice may have been cast, for the tribe lost a great deal but still managed to preserve an impressive amount. A century later, Apsáalooke customs were fundamental to Lillian's life. They also dominated the way her book unfolded.

Making This Book

Eight Apsáalooke have previously told their life stories for book-length publications, a large number for a small Native tribe. As already mentioned, Pretty Shield and Plenty Coups recounted their experiences to Frank Linderman in the early 1930s. Others include Two Leggings, an ambitious warrior from the same generation; Tom Yellowtail, an important Sun Dance leader of Lillian's generation; and Agnes Deernose, born just a few years after Lillian.[36] Tribal historian Joseph Medicine Crow, who was born in 1913 and descends from the noted Chief Medicine Crow, told his story in a form accessible to young adults.[37] Helen Pease Wolf, born in 1906 into a mixed-blood family of ranchers and businessmen, also contributed a story.[38] Alma Hogan Snell, who was Pretty Shield's granddaughter, Lillian's stepdaughter, and Mardell's half sister, was born in the generation following Lillian's. She published her life story just a few years ago.[39] Now Lillian Hogan's story joins this list, bringing the total to nine.

These are not the only publications on or by the Crow. The tribe has intrigued outsiders since the nineteenth century, and ethnographers, historians, anthropologists, art historians, and early visitors have written extensively about them. The Apsáalooke themselves have actively published too.[40] These more academic publications are important, and a number are cited in this book. Yet it is the biographies that hold a special place in Crow literature, for through them the Apsáalooke exert rare influence on

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their written narrative. Native people share many customs, so outsiders sometimes assume they think alike, yet there is a common joke in Indian country that goes something like this: "Ask twenty Indian people for their opinions, and you will get twenty-two opinions." That becomes clear in these books, for all of the speakers share a set of Apsáalooke values, but each is a strong individual with unique views of the world. If you think that Native thought is homogeneous or one-dimensional, read these books. They preserve the details of Crow customs and by sheer numbers succeed in creating an unusually textured record of who they have been and are.

We began our own project in 1993, when Lillian was eighty-eight years old. We sat at my dining table in Big Sky, Montana, with a small, portable tape player between us, surrounded by the sounds one might expect around three women conversing at home: children's voices, telephones, the noises of cooking. The process was slightly untidy, so our tapes are unpolished, but the results are warm, honest, and informative in a way that may not have been possible in a more self-conscious setting.

Our approach centered on collaborative scholarship, with each of us playing critical but different roles. Lillian recorded eighteen hours of stories, speaking mostly in English, sometimes in Apsáalooke, and she decided most of the topics. Mardell and I asked clarifying questions or requested favorite stories, but we did not have a specific agenda or list of questions, so Lillian directed the flow of the narrative. That influenced the very nature of the information we gained, sometimes leading us to knowledge we might not have received through more academic questioning.

Mardell was co-interviewer for the first eight tapes and later translated everything told in Apsáalooke. She contributed research and many endnotes, augmenting the Crow knowledge in this book. We have identified those endnotes with her initials, MP. When time permitted, she reviewed my writing, alerting me to the mistakes that inevitably arise in cross-cultural projects. She is the first Crow to edit an Apsáalooke life story.

My main job was to turn oral stories into a cogent book. I participated in all interviews, transcribed the tapes to disk, designed and implemented our editing methodologies, and did research to clarify confusing sections. I also introduced some stories and added basic endnotes, which are noted with my initials, BL. My introductions and endnotes are, for the most, designed to guide those who are new to Apsáalooke culture.

Sadly, Lillian's health began to decline soon after taping. By the time

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we translated and transcribed the recordings, she was no longer strong enough to answer questions or decide how she wanted her book to be treated. This plunged me into the writing process without her guidance, but two intentions helped me stay on track: remaining mindful that the stories belonged to Lillian, not to me, and striving to create a beautiful and readable book without distorting her words or reforming them to European standards of writing. Too often we academics distort Native knowledge, even with the best intentions, taking oral information and altering it through Western customs of scholarship. We gather the information, analyze it, rearrange it to suit our inquiry, and edit it to European tastes. That is our training. But like a growing number of academics, I had become increasingly uncomfortable with this cultural overlay. I wanted to protect Lillian's right to speak for herself.[41]

At first, I thought I could attain these goals simply by changing her words minimally. Such optimism came from ignorance, and I immediately ran into trouble. My first problem was the unbending silence of print—I was trying to force active, three-dimensional speech into static, linear paragraphs, and every time I tried, Lillian's beautiful stories fell flat. In the 1920s, Nez Perce scholar Archie Phinney stated the problem well after he put his mother's animal stories into writing. "A sad thing in recording these animal stories is the loss of spirit. . . . [W]hen I read my story mechanically I find only the cold corpse."[42]

My second problem was structure. As Rodney Frey noted in *Stories That Make the World*, "the speech patterns found in literacy-based cultures are significantly grounded in literacy structures and forms and are not equivalent per se to the speech patterns found in oral-based cultures."[43] He confirmed that difference when he learned to speak Apsáalooke.

And then there was language. To the ear, Lillian sounded exactly right. Not so on paper. English was her second language, and her unconventional grammar did not read well. The Apsáalooke language represents gender and tense differently, so Lillian, like many elders, applied "he" and "she" loosely and frequently interchanged past and present tenses. She often used short phrases that seemed choppy in writing, and she randomly dropped subject pronouns such as "they" and "we" from the beginnings of sentences. She left out words or arranged them in seemingly odd ways. And like many who come to English as a second language, she sometimes

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confused words that sound alike (such as "done" and "don't") or missed the distinction between words such as "them" and "those." Like many old-fashioned storytellers, she tended to repeat herself, a device that helped her listeners remember but felt redundant on paper. She interjected "says" or "say" a lot, often inserting the word at the beginning of every phrase, sometimes two or three times in a single sentence. Indian storytellers do this to tell listeners they are quoting someone else, but that too became intrusive on paper.

In short, in transcription Lillian's beautiful stories lost their grace and became muddled. Accounts that had been clear and compelling to the ear became fragmented, repetitive, and ungrammatical in paragraphs. I was left with two choices, edit heavily or change my approach.

That is when I altered the form of this book, abandoning paragraphs for a verse-like structure that follows the rhythms of Lillian's voice. With earphones in place and foot to the pedal of a cassette transcribing machine, I listened repeatedly to each story, breaking the text to a new line each time Lillian paused. This technique is inspired by ethnopoetics and Dennis Tedlock's concepts of oral history as performance, as well as by the pioneering work of anthropologists such as Dell Hymes and by the authenticity of writing by Wendy Wickwire and Julie Cruikshank.[44]

The approach was time-consuming and unfamiliar, but it transformed the project. The rigidity of the page softened, and Lillian's powerful stories regained their eloquence. Awkward idiosyncrasies stopped being awkward. Odd word orders began to make sense. Choppy sentences began to fit. So did the repetitions. Missing pronouns no longer mattered because they usually fell at pauses. The "says" began to provide emphasis, especially at the beginning of a new line, and, mysteriously but happily, the grammar problems faded into the background. I almost always clarified gender when Lillian transposed "he" and "she" because it was too confusing, but I preserved many of her speech patterns and much of the cyclical, repetitive structure so characteristic of traditional Native histories.[45]

Once the text began to read more smoothly, I felt it could take a few bumps, so I preserved most of her tenses as she spoke them, even when she mixed past and present. This trait also flavors the speech of many elders, but I suspect that readers will be able to decipher the tenses once accustomed to this manner of speaking. In short, ethnopoetics allowed me

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to stay far closer to the original text than would have been possible with standard editing.

To reclaim still more emotion, I included nonverbal cues such as laughter or weeping. These are framed in parentheses. As noted in an earlier footnote, I used hyphenated letters where Lillian drew out words. Sometimes I preserved those attenuations because they seemed to add meaning. For example, I believe that "tra-a-vel" is more than just the act of changing location; it seems to imply the passing of time and distance. In other cases, drawn out words add emphasis or punctuate pauses, as when she started a new sentence with "a-a-nd" and then paused before continuing with the next piece of the story.

Out of respect for Lillian's ownership, neither Mardell nor I added significantly to the body of the text. Instead we relegated commentary to endnotes and introductory clarifications so we would not interrupt the narrative. Sometimes I inserted words or phrases if essential for clarity. Those are usually in brackets so readers can identify them. I studied unclear sections repeatedly, taking care with any word change, in hopes of protecting subtle meanings. Lillian was not there to title her stories, but I wanted to keep her voice, so I used a phrase from within each story. I also used italics for translations from Apsáalooke to English because these sections do not represent her exact words or speech patterns. The translations are also more formal, and I want readers to know why. Sometimes, I used commas unconventionally, leaving them out of a line to preserve flow or adding them at the end of a line to emphasize pauses, even if not grammatically required.

If I have done my job as carefully and artfully as intended, this book may read as though natural and untouched. Yet my hand print affects every page. Sometimes Lillian framed her stories clearly. Sometimes she was just talking about life, and I had to find the story and decide its beginning and end. I rearranged sections for flow and nudged phrases into coherence and grace. I had to determine what word or two would bring Lillian's meaning into focus, and sometimes, in consultation with Mardell, I had to decide exactly what the meaning was. I also eliminated confused dialogue and private or potentially harmful information about other people. For better or worse, I removed my voice and Mardell's, which allowed for smoother stories but occasionally forced me to add bracketed words of

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transition. When I titled individual stories, I often had to choose between multiple themes, unavoidably affecting what you as readers will take away from those sections. I also decided how best to order the stories into a picture of Lillian's life, inevitably influencing the way her narrative unfolds. In short, I accepted many little compromises to make this book readable.

Nonetheless, I have done my best to preserve Lillian's words accurately and honestly and to honor both her authority and her wonderfully expressive voice. I hope I have stayed sufficiently out of the way so that you can feel her presence as you read. As I said earlier, perhaps on occasion, she will seem to speak directly to you from the page.

Notes

1. Lillian often elongated words, and I have tried to preserve that expressiveness, as here with a-a-nd. In some cases there may be meaning embedded in the drawn-out sounds.
2. Medicine powers provide spiritual assistance that often originates in visions or dreams. They strengthen the owner by bringing health, material success, special knowledge, or other benefits. See Frey, *World of the Crow*; Curtis, *The North American Indian*; Voget, *Shoshoni-Crow Sun Dance*.
3. "Apsáalooke" has become the standardized spelling, based on the Crow Language Alphabet and Pronunciation Guide. The guide was developed through the Crow Bilingual Materials Development Center as part of a federally funded program to produce bilingual materials for schools. See Tushka, *A Dictionary of Everyday Crow*; Two Leggins, *Apsáalooke Writing Tribal Histories*, 3; McCleary, *The Stars We Know*, xxi–xxii; and Apsáaloke Writing Tribal Histories Project, Little Big Horn College Library, http://lib.lbhc.edu/history/0.01.php.
4. Lillian did not know exactly when she was born. Her family thinks she may have been born in 1902 or 1903, but she always gave the year as 1905, so that is the year we have used.
5. Brain-tanning is a traditional Native American technique that uses animal brains and liver in the softening process. Lillian described the steps in "I Learned How to Make Buckskin," chapter 8.
6. Robert Yellowtail was one of the most influential Crow in the twentieth century. His political involvement is described in Bradley, *Handsome People*; Hoxie, *Parading*, and Poten, "Robert Yellowtail." In 1976 he published personal memories in "A Brief Review." The essay does not cover political activities but provides insight into early reservation life.
7. On another tape, Lillian said they told stories when there was snow on the mountains. She'd ask for stories and her father would tell one of the storytellers that they wanted him over at the house. "And he come in the evening . . . would tie his horse, and I'd sit there, and he comes in and we'd give him supper, and he says,

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'All right, fix me a ni-i-ce, soft cushion to sit on, and I'll tell her some stories'."

8. The quarrel started between two women, but according to Denig (*Five Indian Tribes*, 137) evolved into a serious confrontation between two competing chiefs and escalated into violence. Swanton (*Indian Tribes of North America*, 390) lists "Kihnatsa" as one Hidatsa name for the Crow, meaning "they who refused the paunch."
9. According to oral tradition, No Vitals traveled extensively in search of the right place. For details, see Medicine Crow, *From the Heart of the Crow Country*, 16–24.
10. Medicine Crow, *Counting Coup*, 18.
11. Hayden, "On the Ethnology and Philosophy," 392.
12. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, 160. Denig lived in the upper Missouri River area from 1833–56 and recorded valuable early information on several tribes. He died in 1858. For more on Denig and his writings, see Ewers, "Editor's Introduction" in Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, xiii–xxxvii.
13. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, 144–47.
14. These population estimates are from Lewis and Clark and Mooney. See Swanton, *Indian Tribes of North America*, 391.
15. The Crow and Nez Perce grew so close that the two tribes often dressed similarly. Thomas Leforge, the "White Crow" who joined the tribe in 1868, recalled in his memoirs that it required "an actual personal acquaintance always to distinguish between members of these differing Indian stocks, so closely united in interest and in purpose had they become" (Leforge in Marquis, *Memoirs*, 97–98). For details on the relationship between Crow and Nez Perce beading styles, see Loeb, "Classic Intermontane Beadwork."
16. In "Cultivating Themselves," Nabokov explores the Tobacco Society as a source of regeneration. McCleary ("Akbaatashee," 35) connects the society with "growth within the tribe, protection from enemies, and an abundance of the things which they need to survive."
17. Yellowtail in Fitzgerald, *Yellowtail*, 21.
18. According to Denig, the tribe valued a man's outfit at two to four horses and an elk-tooth dress at that cost or more (Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, 155, 158). Swiss artist Rudolph Friederich Kurz sketched Crow women in elk-tooth dresses in the early 1850s, the first known documentation of the garments, but the fashion likely dates to precontact, using buckskin instead of wool trade cloth.
19. Pretty Shield described the fun of moving camp in her biography (Linderman, *Pretty-Shield*, 21–22). Several nineteenth-century visitors referenced the beauty of Crow on the move, including a detailed description by Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, 158. Noted photographer Edward Curtis (*The North American Indian*, 31) reported new brides particularly festive, bedecking themselves and their horses each time they moved camp.
20. Larocque, *Journal*, 1–82.
21. For detailed analysis of relationships during early contact, see Bradley, *Handsome People*.
22. Plenty Coups, the last traditional chief, attributed this decision to a dream he had in his youth and described the vision quest that led to the dream, as well as its interpretation by Yellow Bear (Linderman, *Plenty-Coups*, 57–75). Helen Pease

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Wolf (*Reaching Both Ways*, 14) attributed friendly relations to her great-grandfather, Fellows David Pease, later known as Major Pease.

23. Today's reservation is approximately 2.2 million acres, roughly 8 percent of the original territory. To trace the reduction through treaties and acts, see Medicine Crow and Press, *A Handbook*.
24. Bradley (*Handsome People*, 124) argues that turning every Crow into a homesteader was the primary goal of all agents.
25. Linderman attributed the words to both Pretty Shield (*Pretty-Shield*, 248) and Plenty Coups (*Plenty-Coups*, 311).
26. Linderman, *Pretty-Shield*, 24.
27. According to official records, Lillian's father was born in 1871 and her mother in 1872 (file 3508, Big Horn County Office of the Clerk and Recorder), but these probably represent family guesses. Lillian's own estimates in these stories are inconsistent.
28. Robert Yellowtail recalled being required to obtain passes, complete with time limits, just to visit relatives in the next district. He described the process as "[o]ne of the highlights of autocratic rule on the Crow Reservation." See Yellowtail, "A Brief Review."
29. The census of 1910 reported 1,799 Crow.
30. When John Collier developed the Indian Reorganization Act ending many culturally oppressive laws, the tribe initially misinterpreted it and voted against it (see Bradley, *The Handsome People*, chapter 10), but the act allowed them to openly practice customs without fear of persecution. In 1941 they held the first Crow-organized Sun Dance in over sixty years.
31. An increasing number of young Crow are growing up without speaking their language, but Crow teachers are actively working to correct that. See Brien, "Fading Fluency," in the online version of the Apsáalooke Writing Tribal Histories Project, Little Big Horn College (http://lib.lbhc.edu/history/5.11.php).
32. In the twentieth century, Crow art, especially beadwork, became a powerful tool for resisting forced assimilation. For a detailed discussion of beading and the protecting cultural identity, see Loeb, "Crow Beadwork."
33. Voget, *Shoshoni-Crow Sun Dance*, 33.
34. As Leforge discovered in his many years with the Crow, "The number of genuine-offspring children in any family was not easily discoverable" (Marquis, *Memoirs*, 165). We confronted similar challenges in writing this book and could not always discern how relatives connected.
35. Bradley, *After the Buffalo Days*, 179.
36. Nabokov, *Two Leggings*; Fitzgerald, *Yellowtail*; and Voget, *They Call Me Agnes*.
37. Medicine Crow, *Counting Coup*.
38. Wolf, *Reaching Both Ways*. This small book provides basic history of the influential Pease family, descendants of Europeans, Crows, Hidatsa, and Gros Ventre. The author's great-grandfather, Major Pease, was the Crow agent in the 1870s.
39. Snell, *Grandmother's Grandchild*.
40. Influential leaders Robert Yellowtail and Max Big Man were writing by the first half of the twentieth century. Joseph Medicine Crow began publishing in 1939 and was still writing at the time this book was approaching press. Several Crow contributed to a study of French-Canadian/Cree photographer Richard Thros-

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sel (Albright, *Crow Indian Photographer*). Tribal members curated "Parading Through History: The Apsaalooke Nation," for the Western Heritage Center. Several faculty at Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency, have written educational materials for students.

41. For a useful, nuanced discussion of problems embedded in both speaking and not speaking for others, see Alcoff, "The Problem of Speaking for Others," 97–119.
42. Archie Phinney wrote these words in 1927 in a letter to Franz Boaz. The letter is housed in the American Philosophical Society Library in Philadelphia. See Ramsey, "From Mythic to Fictive," 26.
43. Frey, *The World of the Crow Indians*, 142.
44. Frey was the first to apply ethnopoetics to Crow oral literature. His book was published after this project began, so it did not directly influence our methodology, but became an inspiration later. See Frey, *Stories That Make the World*.
45. Frey (*The World of the Crow Indians*, 25) attributes pronoun confusion to the egalitarian nature of Crow society. Noting that men and women are "equally eligible for social recognition and spiritual attainment," he says that equality is "embedded in the Apsaalooke language. In the construction of a sentence containing third-person pronouns, ('he,' 'she,' or 'it'), the Apsaalooke do not distinguish the sex of the subject."

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