



THE ORIGINAL 57—This is the white “57” that gave Hill 57 its name. Art Hinck, who built it with the help of friends and relatives in the late 1920’s, kept the “57” whitewashed for some time but over the years it

was torn apart by vandals and now only a few piles of sandstone remain at the site. The Great Falls Photo View Co. made this photo some time in the early 1930’s.

MHS Hill 57 vertical file #2

He Gave Hill 57 Its Name

By DON BARTSCH

Art Hinck of Great Falls didn’t realize he was creating a landmark and naming an area when he built a large “57” of sandstone on the side of a barren hill northwest of Great Falls in the late 1920s.

As any good salesman does, he was only trying to advertise his line, which was Heinz 57 Varieties of canned goods, pickles and condiments.

The whitewashed “57” (each letter was about 80 feet long and 35 feet wide) was visible for miles and became a landmark for aviators in the days when there were few navigation aids. Soon the band of Cree, Chippewa and other landless Indians who lived near the hill became known

no semblance of the original numerals. But the hill is still known as Hill 57 and the Indians still referred to as the Hill 57 band.

Hinck, now 76, built the “57” with the help of his wife, their relatives and friends.

“It wasn’t the company’s idea,” he explains. “It was mine. We’d have a little picnic on top of the hill and then everybody—kids and all—would work on the letters. It took us several months. We had to haul the water for the whitewash. It didn’t cost much—just the whitewash.”

Hinck, now retired and living at 917 2nd Ave. N., started his sales career in Minnesota, where he was born. He traveled for

for the H. J. Heinz Co. throughout Montana for many years and for a time operated a small store here. After the death of his wife in 1945, he went into the real estate business.

ART HINCK—Hill 57 at the northwest edge of Great Falls owes its name to Art Hinck, 76, who built a giant “57” on the hillside in the late 1920’s to advertise his company’s food products. Tribune photo.



Varieties of canned goods, pickles and condiments.

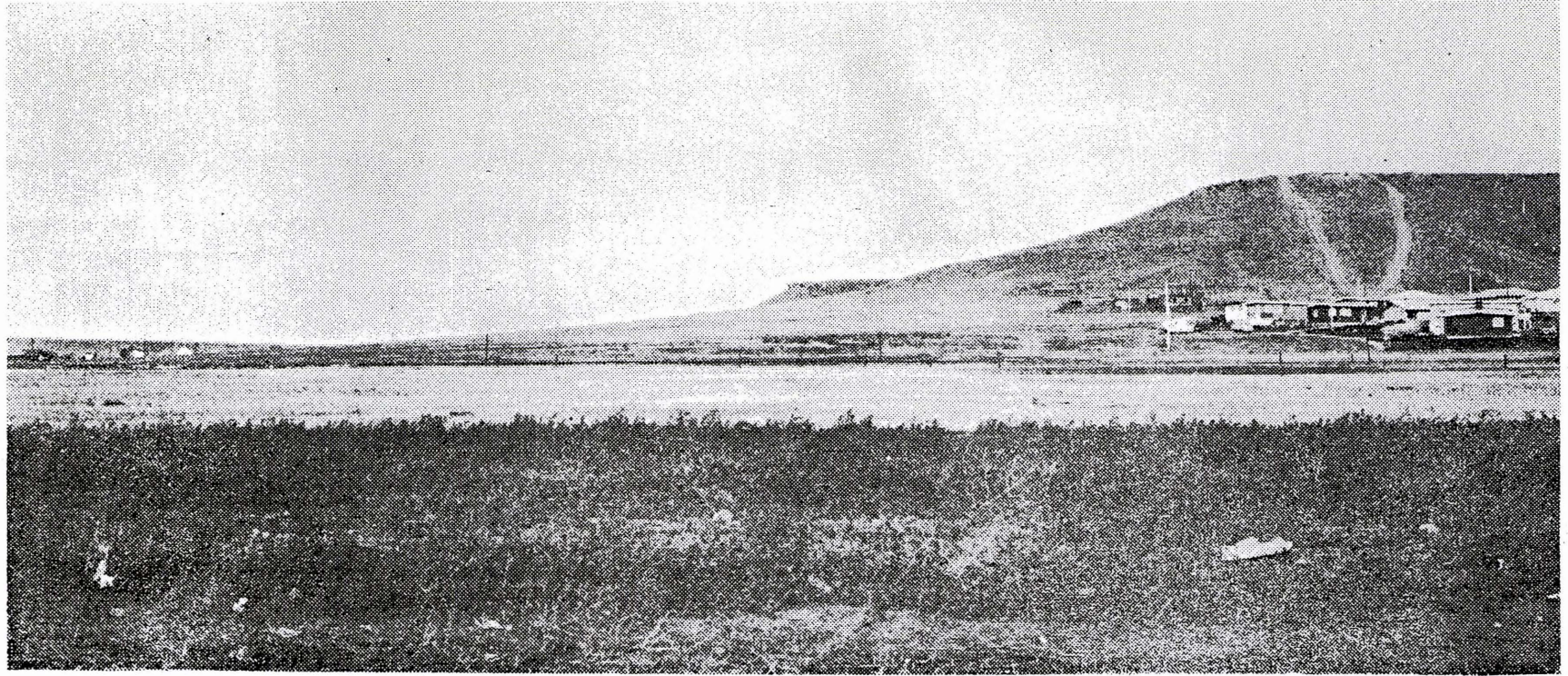
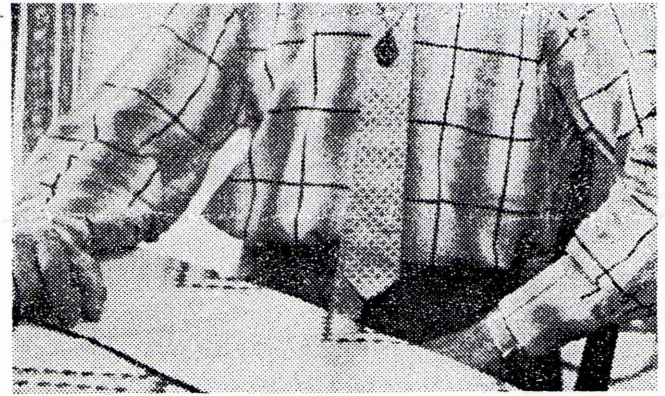
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The "57" has long gone. Scattered rocks at the site have

on top of the hill and then everybody—kids and all—would work on the letters. It took us several months. We had to haul the water for the whitewash. It didn't cost much—just the whitewash."

Hinck, now retired and living at 917 2nd Ave. N., started his sales career in Minnesota, where he was born. He traveled for various firms in Minnesota and the Dakotas before coming to Great Falls in 1918. He worked

ART HINCK—Hill 57 at the northwest edge of Great Falls owes its name to Art Hinck, 76, who built a giant "57" on the hillside in the late 1920's to advertise his company's food products. Tribune photo.



HILL 57 TODAY—This photo, taken from the 1400 block of Eighth Ave. NW., is from roughly the same angle as the early-day photo of Hill 57. A few of the Indian homes in the area are visible at left. At right is the western portion of the district of new homes in

Valley View addition. On the crest of the hill, at about the point where the "57" numerals were built by Art Hinck, there now is a white monument erected by the Montana Cowboys Association in 1949 to the memory of early-day range riders. Tribune photo.



RUBBLE AT SITE—Scattered, broken bits of sandstone, some with faint traces of whitewash, are all that remains at the old "57" location. At the base of the hill, new homes in Valley View Addition crowd close to shacks of the Indian settlement. Atop the hill in the background is the airport. Tribune photo.

WEP CO

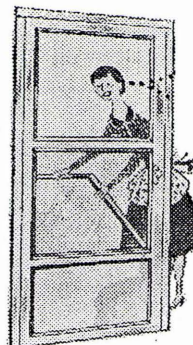
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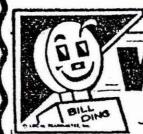
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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1963 GREAT FALLS TRIBUNE—9



TODAY'S MARKER —
 Although the old "57" is gone, Hill 57 today has a large sandstone marker, "GF" for Great Falls High School, on its east side. The site of the "57" is at the extreme left of this picture, where the Cowboy Association monument was erected. The monument is not visible here. The plaque was removed from the monument and taken to the Cowboy Museum on the West Side to protect it from vandalism. The monument has been badly defaced. Tribune photo.

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Bill Ding Says:

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MHS Hill 57 vertical file #2

Indians at Work

Feb 1 1937

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Geo. Oberst - 7/91

"HILL 57"

By D'Arcy McNickle

Administrative Assistant - Office Of Indian Affairs

People sometimes ask why one should devote thought and effort, particular thought and effort, to the "Indian problem." Meaning, of course, that the problems of poverty and social maladjustment are as broad as the modern world; and meaning, too, that these problems can't be treated in a vacuum; and meaning, finally, that the slum-dweller, whether of the Indian reservation or Manhattan variety, is enmeshed in a system which must be taken apart and put together again in a better socio-economic pattern, not palliated. All of which is true.

Leaving that question for the moment, let me bring into focus one picture of the "Indian problem."

The background is Great Falls, Montana, or rather, sharpening the focus, what is locally called "Hill 57" - - in dubious tribute to the enterprise of a pickle manufacturer. Let me sketch for you what you would have seen and felt if you had been with us in these first winter days.

The Missouri was frozen over. The thermometer stood at 14 degrees below zero and would go lower. A strong stinging wind blew down the river valley.

We left town, crossed the river and then went up the slope toward the bluffs which mark the river's ancient bank. There, scattered in the snow, were the flapping tents and patchwork shacks of some of Montana's homeless Indians. The situation is wholly exposed. It is windy, always windy, and treeless and grassless. Barren as a rock.

We knocked at many doors; were asked in. This is a composite picture, many focussings, of what we saw.

A woman - black hair, parted in the middle and hanging in braids; her face long and narrow and smiling; eyes blinking at us; her hands rubbing a piece of buckskin to soften it. Children playing quietly on a sagging bed, cutting out the chic women who pose in the slick magazines. Men asking questions, expressing doubt, looking their suspicion, eyes searching us to get at our deeper design. We remember having heard it remarked that these people are filthy and we looked for filth. What we see is that the rooms are unbearably crowded with boxes and bags of belongings, obtruding dilapidated furniture, cooking utensils and children - too many children. The floor is the prairie, overlaid with pieces of figured linoleum and old carpet. The stove is a gasoline drum with wood hole and bottom draft chiseled

out. And here people live on the thin edge of community tolerance. They are squatters. They are Indians who have no rights anywhere. For most part they are a legacy of the fur trade, the romantic fur trade of "singing voyageurs", which made fortunes for its gentlemen exploiters and left behind it, everywhere, problems of racial disintegration for pioneer society, coming of age, to solve. The gentlemen exploiters have never been concerned. Perhaps no one has called these things to their attention.

A century and more ago the ancestors of "Hill 57's" casuals were on Red River in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Red River was strategic in the trade. It was the food factory. Every year the "breeds", French-Cree-Chippewa, killed thousands of buffalo, stripped and dried the meat, pounded tallow into it and packed it in 90-pound rawhide sacks. This was the pemmican which was sent all over the Northland, as the chief dietary staple of the Company's employees. Red River also furnished guides and canoe men, laborers of all sorts, including the clever artisans who constructed, entirely of wood, the great two-wheel carts which carried, screeching, the traffic of the prairies where there were no rivers. And when the voyageur lost his suppleness and skill he usually went back to Red River to a little piece of ground on the river bank to spend his days en menage and wait for the long rest. Nobody gave him a paper saying he owned his piece of ground. In those times nobody but the Company could have given such a paper and the Company was not selling land.

In 1873 the northwest territory passed from the Company's jurisdiction to that of the Canadian government. The province of Manitoba was carved out first. The Queen's surveyor went out to Red River. Trouble, long brewing in a pot in which smallpox, famine and the encroaching white settlers were mixed together, broke out with the coming of the surveyor. He was going to take over the land for the Queen.

There was brief fighting but the Red River buffalo hunters and coureurs par excellence, wild and imprudent and full of song, never had a chance. When they fought Her Majesty's Red Coats they foolishly exposed themselves to flying lead to sing songs of the old days of daring. Quel bête!

And they had no paper for their land.

They had to run for it. Up to Duck Lake, in what was soon to be the Province of Saskatchewan. Again they squatted, laid out their Red River villages, narrow strips of land running side by side back from the river - the Saskatchewan, this time.

The same story again. In 1885 Her Majesty's surveyors caught up with them once more and again fighting broke out. The western prairie flamed for a few weeks. A general uprising of all the prairie Indians was feared. It had been expected for years. The Indians, however, faltered, backed down.

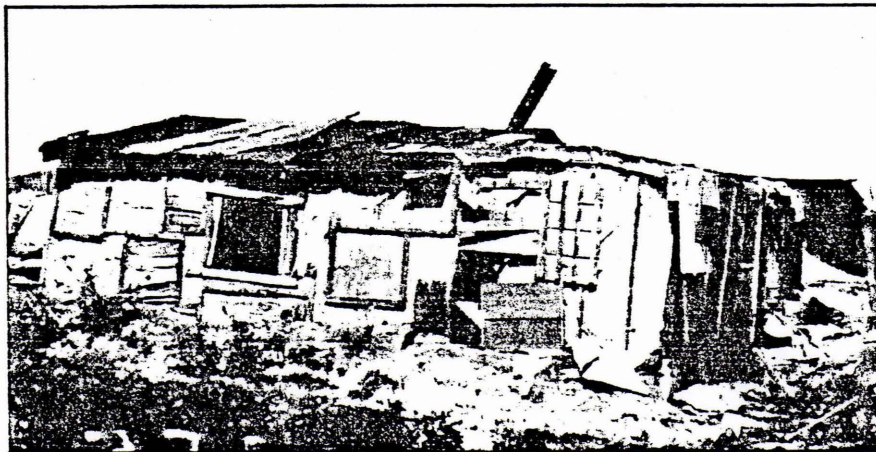
It was the old Red River people who caught the recoil and had to go on the run. This time to the United States, in whose territory many of them had actually been born. There they found asylum from the Red Coats, but no land. No recognition from Washington. They squatted wherever they could, at other reservations, on the edge of Montana's prairie towns, on "Hill 57."

That is a telegraphic account of the history of these people, now living so precariously on the edge of community tolerance. Such derelicts do not make good company for respectable towns. Their living nags at consciences. Their rags are an offense. No doubt they depreciate real estate values. No doubt many a community has secretly wished that the whole lot of them could be quietly lethalized in some humane way.

Sitting in a wind-drummed tent on "Hill 57", one thinks beyond these people to Indians everywhere and remembers what one has heard so many times -- "Poverty is everywhere in this world. Why be concerned about Indians?"

One can answer the interrogation, at least partly, if one recalls that in Mexico, in Spain, in Ireland, in every country where the land has been taken away from the peasants, from the only people to whom land really belongs, there has been, sooner or later, bloodshed, hanging and burning. Indians of the United States are too few and too broken in this latter day to attempt to take by force what is theirs, as the peasants of other countries have attempted, sometimes successfully. But theirs is the same need; theirs is the same hunger. The task is to understand that and to provide for it, wittingly. To that extent one's concern about Indians need be no mere special pleading; it can be a realistic approach to the future.

Give the Indians land, not land to sell, but land to use. In their ancient economy they understood production for use rather than for profit. Perhaps old memory will stir in them. Perhaps we will yet learn from them.



A Typical Home On "Hill 57"

11/5/19

June 27, 1994

woman brought a fox terrier in that had a chicken bone stuck in its throat and she wanted to know if he could take it out. He said, "Sure". We went into the operating area and his nurse, Frances Pike, and I held this dog while he tried to use ether on it and the dog was screamin'. You can't believe how strong a dog is. It was just like ... I can't describe it ... wire. His legs were ... oh, gosh! Anyway, he got in there with a long forcep and he dug that doggone bone out, and saved her dog. He had, what they called, diathermy machines. It was an electrical machine that put out a real short, electrical wave. That was supposed to cure everything. Rheumatism, ghout, and all these other good things. Anyway, that's just a sidelight.

At that point in time, when I started school, times were tough. About all people had was pride. For a lot of people, they had programs like WPA, etc. There was CCC for boys (Civilian Conservation Corp) and they would go to camps in the mountains and they would build roads and clear trees and do good things. Too bad they don't have something like that today.

At the same time I was in school, there were a lot of Metis boys and girls going to school. Now, no one used the name Metis then. I guess they never heard of the name Metis or Mitchif. But, these boys and girls were descendants of the way, way back voyageurs that came down into Montana at various times, and the large event was after the Riel Rebellion when they fled down here. They settled up in the foothills, in the jackpines, and in the quaken aspen groves, and wherever they could without being disturbed in the canyons. They were good people. The girls were pretty girls, and the boys were healthy, husky boys. They could take care of themselves, too. There seemed to be sort of a pecking order in those days. Everybody had to prove that they were somebody (maybe it is still that way), but they picked on each other.

ML: You mean kids in general?

BZ: Kids, in general, would pick on each other. The Metis boys, they could take care of themselves, and sometimes they would in self-defense. Two, three of them would get together to take care of themselves. They were good fighters. But, there again, was a sad era in a time where they were discriminated against, and it was a shame. Terrible shame. I feel guilty for that generation, not for any guilt that I had, but I feel guilty for the way some of them were treated. They would work on ranches, putting up hay, or plowing, or digging potatoes, or just any kind of farm or ranch

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work that needed to be done. They cut corral poles and hauled them down from the mountains. They cut firewood. They trapped, and a lot of them were good trappers. It was kind of a subsistence living. They did what they had to do to survive. I remember one pretty girl, her name was Florence St. Germaine, had one of the most beautiful voices I have ever heard in my life. That gal ... gee, she had a beautiful voice! I don't know what ever happened to her.

I got acquainted with quite a few of them. At that time, they had what they called a commodity distribution plan. What it was was surplus food ... beans, potatoes, rice, lard, fresh fruit, apples ... which they would buy off the farmers that were growing these things. The government would do this to help them, and they would turn around and distribute this, or give it away, to people in need. Not necessarily on relief, I wouldn't use that word because they weren't on relief, but they could use it. I remember Johnny Nordhagen was the commodity agent here in Choteau, this was back in the '30s, and he would load up his Model A Ford Fordor, sometimes I would go with him, and he'd go up in the hills and we'd visit these families, and distribute this excess food. At that time, his office was in the old dormitory, which sat right where the cafeteria for the grade school is. That was the first high school in Choteau, that old dormitory building. They tore it down when they built the new grade school. But he had his office in there and I would go in and visit with him and get a free orange once in awhile. (laugh) Which, when you bought it, was just a little bit expensive. But, my mother was a very kind person. We always had excess garden produce, and she would bring that to town and give it to people she felt needed it. Some of them were Metis, and some of them came out and helped out at the ranch there in the garden. She was a wonderful gardener.

I can't remember all the family names, but there were Laverdure (I think that means "the green" in French), Salois, Sangray, Bruno, LaRance, and Bushman. There were two brothers named Jocko, and I don't know if that was their real name or what, but they had a little log hut out on the Teton, south of Choteau, on the other side of where the bridge is (it goes to the packing plant), right on the curve of the river, built out of small poles, chinked with mud, and they trapped. They trapped beaver, muskrats, etc., and they lived there. Times were tough. They'd do what they could. There, again, you didn't see much money in those days, but they would work for maybe some beef. Maybe help somebody butcher, and they would get some beef.

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Through the years, I had the pleasure of knowing many of the older Metis, the generation ahead of mine. One of them in particular that I remember was Franklin Fellers. They lived behind us on main street, in a section house, a railroad house. Had a nice family. Big garden. He was really a nice man. He helped Johnny Peterson survey things. He'd run the rod and chain, the measuring line, and when we got our land up at the mountains where the cabin is now on the Teton, he helped Johnny Peterson survey that. Franklin wouldn't open up and talk unless he felt you were his friend. One day we were up there surveying and we sat down to have lunch, and just he and I were visiting by ourselves, and he said, "Right there in front of your cabin on the Teton" he said, "I'll never forget ... I was just a little boy, and the Teton was high from spring run off and my uncle started across the river on his horse, and the horse lost his footing, and over they went. Just rolled over and over and he drowned. We found his body down stream a couple of miles." He also said, "I walked every one of these mountains when I was a kid, barefooted. I know every one of these hills intimately." He was sure a nice guy!

Anyway, across from the cabin on the Teton, there was a Metis by the name of Big Bear. His french name was Albert Parenteau. He had a cabin and a little horse barn and he lived until 1928. Died, and is buried over in the South Fork cemetery. I think I have a faint recollection of him. I believe he had a real bushy beard. There were a lot of legends told about Big Bear. He escaped during the Riel Rebellion and came down there. At first, he built a dugout up on the side of the hill, facing east on the slope of Crab Butte, so he could see if anybody was coming. Legend had it, that he fled down here from Canada, after the Riel Rebellion, and that he got into one of the fights or shooting matches, and his wife was killed, he was wounded, and he had killed a soldier or a mouny. I wouldn't know, and I don't think anybody would know, if this was the truth or legend, or what.

ML: We could find out, I suppose.

BZ: It's possible. His name, as I said, was Albert Parenteau.

ML: I am going to interject here ... Do you know there is going to be a Parenteau family reunion this summer? We might find out more from them.

SUMMARY - HILL 57 CENSUS

from July 1, 1954 - June 30, 1955

by

Andree Deligdisch

Ethel LaRock

The Student Committee at College of Great Falls

Total number of residents for one year or more between the above dates..... 412

Total number of permanent Indian residents on Hill 57..... 305

Men: 53..... Women: 56.....Children: 196

Number of "complete" or father-mother-child families.....36

Number of "grandfather" families 8

Number of all-adult families 6

Number of one-parent families 5

Total number families 55

Total number of families, permanent, periodic, and temporary..... 79

Housing for Indian families:

(Inadequate)

Total number of houses..... 43

Total number of rooms..... 80

(usually 5 persons per room at peak load)

Employment:

(Average: 5 mo.)

Total number of men steadily employed -1954-1955... 3

Total number of men seasonally employed..... 37

Income - average yearly family income for 1954-1955..... \$300 to \$800

Welfare:

(Average: 6.1 mo.)

Persons receiving categorical services..... 161

(Federal-State-County funds)

Persons receiving county assistance..... 83

Persons receiving no assistance among total

residents of one month or more..... 146

Persons receiving Federal Indian aid..... 0

Education:

(National: 97%)

Children of school age (6 to 18(-1945-'55))..... 92

among permanent residents

Children of school age in school..... 50

Children of school age not in school..... 42

SUMMARY OF THE SUMMARY: It is estimated that the Indians of Hill 57 are less than 1% of the population; 10% of the County welfare load; 25% of the medical load.

There were 10 families of the Ah-On-To-Ways Chippewa, 22 of the enrolled Rocky Boy's Chippewa, and 19 of the Turtle Mt. No. Dakota Chippewa. There were only 7 base non-reservation Indian families.

A DIARY OF GOOD DEEDS

(The following tells of volunteer efforts on Hill 57 by members of the Boston Heights Church of God Missionary Society. The disguised names refer to residents of Hill 57)

Tuesday, July 9 - I bought ten dollars worth of groceries with a check received from Mrs. Geo. Servoss. Nobles donated potatoes, onions, and suet. Most of these things went to the destitute Henry J----- family. Mr. J----- is expecting to work in the hay fields soon. Milk as usual.

Wednesday, July 10 - Buttreys gave me 42 pkg. of frozen meat, mostly deer steaks, which I took to ten families, including the K----- family. Alfreda W----- Assisted with Grandma G-----'s lesson learning English. Grandma is very shy and afraid of saying the words wrong. But she says she will remember them. I worked with Billy & Chucky at K-----'s place in the old shed which is used mostly as a play house by the thirteen grandchildren there. Chucky was naughty and squirted the smaller ones with water, having them howling most of the time. He would not read.

Thursday, July 11 - Today I got about two bushels of potatoes and some over-ripe fruit and wilted vegetables from Safeways. All seemed glad to get them. Although he has bought a new car, Packy M----- says he needs help because his insurance money is not sufficient to buy the things for his family he bought while working. The two older B----- boys assisted with Grandma's lesson. They wanted Laubach's "Streamlined English" for their mother, Grandma's daughter; also one for Mrs. (Babe) Geo. G-----. Billy read nicely. I ignored Chucky, when he ran away, and left without having him read.

Friday, July 12 - I've taken milk every day this week (5 da.). Today there were 34 qts., which was about average. I took four qts. to K-----. Chucky and his cousins shared the milk right out of the cartons - three to a carton. Grandma G----- was not around - she went to town. The youngsters keep piling in my car as I drive around the "Hill". I have to be careful, as none of the parents seem to restrain the youngsters in any way. Because they can't all get into the car, the boys like to hang on or push. I talk to them very seriously about the danger of getting hurt, and they are doing better. They definitely are not "sassy". I seem to be winning Chucky. He read today. Mrs. M----- & Mrs. Pete G----- were salting and drying their deer steak. Mrs. G----- had her suet on the clothes line in the sun. At Sunday School (they call it that, even though it's Friday evening) we have flannel graph stories of Jesus, little prayers and songs. Chucky was one of the best behaved youngsters in the group. Last week he was a real nuisance and I had picked him up bodily and was going to take him home in my car, when he begged off. Today he wanted to take some of our fudge home to his grandma.

Monday, July 15 - We had 40 qts. of milk today. Ten qts. went to the families with lead poisoning. Pete G----- stopped in for a minute when I was teaching Grandma. To express his appreciation, he said he wanted to go to the different homes and collect money to pay for my gas while bringing out food all winter. I hardly expect this to materialize, but I deeply appreciated his idea. He said he wanted to help his mother with her lessons. I understand that he cannot read. Perhaps he is hoping to learn a little himself. He is too proud to admit he cannot read. I was short of time and did not work with Billy & Chucky, though I took them milk. Janey G----- (3) came home from the hospital after a siege of dysentery.

Tuesday, July 16 - 31 qts. of milk today. I got a nice big box of suet and ox tails from Nobles, which I gave to Henry J-----, M-----, and B-----. Henry J----- got a ranch job today. His wife asked me if I could pay for a prescription for her little boy with dysentery, which I did. She said she needed flour, oranges, and eggs. I had just received a few dollars from my son, Dale, which I used to get these items. I have been having a little siege of dysentery myself, and worked only briefly with Grandma.

Wednesday, July 17 - I felt better today and had a pretty good lesson with Grandma and also Chucky & Billy. Chucky came real close and told me, "They killed my dad. Joe P-----, was my dad. He's up in heaven". Then, after hesitating, he said, "He was stealin". I asked him how Joe was his dad when his name was Chucky G-----, and he said, "Joe was my real dad". I felt so sorry for Chucky I could cry a little type sinned against rather than sinning, a victim of circumstances and yet blamed by everyone for being naughty and I breathed a prayer for God to comfort his little heart. Mr. Rust was out when I called at the dairy, so the milk will wait until tomorrow. I had lots of meat from Buttreys, however, about 50 packages. Some were small but there must have been at least 80 lbs. of meat. Mr. Rinderknecht gave me a beautiful box of clothes (he is the man in Buttreys locker plant) from his wife. There were many children's things. I left them with Mrs. Pete G-----. She still has Mrs. Bear Walker from Blackfeet Reservation and her three little ones with her, besides her own five.

Thursday, July 18 - Today there were 48 qts. of milk. I also got fruit and vegetables from Safeway. How eagerly the youngsters grabbed for the partly spoiled peaches and canteloupes! They must be pretty healthy even to live through what they do. Packy M-----, Grandma G-----, and Mary V----- all expressed their appreciation to me today, in their own way. It was a tremendous reward for any discouragements. I went to the Indian meeting held with Sister Providencia at the college. After that I met with our new pastor and our missionary ladies. They were worried about the Indian work, since Rev. Burl Wright, who has been working on the "Hill", went back to California. Rev. Quam, the new pastor, hardly desired to take on the work, especially since it might take time on Sundays. All were relieved when I said I could carry on alone with any assistance they wanted to give and that I would conduct "Sunday" school on Friday evenings. I promised to see that the bread was picked up at the bakeries, which had been Rev. Wright's job.

Friday, July 19 - Today I had a 5 gallon can of low fat milk and 20 qts. of skim. I usually take the big can to the families with lead poisoning. Lessons as usual. Chucky read for me in the car - it was raining. Mr. Rust picked up bread at Eddy's. I got a large box of rye bread and wiener buns from Sally Ann's, which Mrs. Zimmerman (who assists in Sunday School) and I distributed in the evening. We almost had a major fracas at "Sunday School". James S----- (full blood) hit Chucky (mixed blood) a terrible blow with a big board and then ran off with Bruce L-----'s bicycle. There was some banging each other with brooms. We were able to retrieve the bicycle and restore order, but by that time all the "full blood" boys went home. Several "full blood" mothers and their children came after that and we had a nice time, though the "mixed Blood" children were hard to settle down. We gave out home-made candy again before they went home. Henry J----- came home with a pay check. They paid me for the medicine. Bob W----- said a friendly but bashful "hello" this evening. I had taken his mother to town and back the other day so that she could visit him when he was in the city jail.

Saturday, July 20 - Bronnie Stauffer, one of our ladies, got the wash house key from me today. She collected, washed, sorted, and mended five or six boxes of clothing for the Indians. She also took out bread from Eddy's bakery. A friend of hers took her to the "Hill" where she distributed most of the things personally, putting the rest in the wash house. The Indians like her because she is so free and friendly. She called me and said young Mrs. S----- was pretty desperate for food. Her husband was not working.

Sunday, July 21 - After church I took Rose Mary B----- from Mrs. Hjermstads to her Aunt Celia L-----.

Monday, July 22- I got canned milk for the baby, some navy beans, farina and 5 lbs. sugar for Mrs. S-----. She was very grateful. She was hoping her husband would go to work today. There were 50 qts. of fortified low fat milk today. The K----- group really went after it. Celia L----- told me they were moving back to the "Hill". Grandma G----- was not home. Skunky (her grandson) said she went to town. I was so happy to see Doris S----- back from Choteau. I told her how well she looked and she beamed and said she had lost 16 lbs. She has been very overweight. She said her husband had helped her some more with "Streamlined English", and she could read all but the last 15 pages. I promised to bring her the books of the same series on the second grade level. Mrs. W----- said to call that sister (Sister Providencia) to have someone haul water while Pete G----- was gone. Nobody would get water for them but L----- and they wanted cash on the line. I was a little amused at Doris when she told about her husband helping her read. She said, "He's an eighth grader"! with as much pride as if he had graduated from a university with a doctor's degree. I gave some soup bones and suet from Nobles to Doris and the B-----s. I found out from Doris that Pete G----- (her brother) can read, a little at least. He learned it out of her "Streamlined English".

Tuesday, July 23 - A little less milk today- 20 qts. low fat plus 3 half gallons homogenized. A Mrs. Reed gave me a baby crib and mattress, which I took Mrs. Henry J-----. Mrs. W----- had asked for thread to piece a quilt. I brought her 3 spools of white and a large tangle of odds and ends of embroidery thread. I ran over a cream can and was afraid to keep on driving because I might bend or break something under the car. One of the men came out and lifted my car with his hands while I pulled out the cream can. Grandma G----- and I had a nice lesson. I gave away six extra chairs out of the wash house. She indicated with her finger that she wanted three. When we finished our lesson only two were left. I don't know whether she got the other one back or not. I brought Doris the new books. I let the children look at some of Dean's "Golden Books" during our lesson. I had tried giving them some one day to be returned the next but they were absolutely "gone" or "lost" by the next day, so that I had to make a rule that they had to be put back in my car each day before I left the "Hill". They were real good about this but said, "Potato took one of your books". I found out that "Potato" was Doris' little girl. Billy read quite a number of pages. He is getting to understand phonics. Chucky kept out of sight.

Wednesday, July 24 - I had about 90 lbs. of meat from Buttrey's today and 38 qts. of milk from Pioneer. Mr. Rinderknecht also gave me two lovely boxes of clothes- one baby clothes. I gave both to Mrs. Henry J-----. I told her to keep what she can use and give her relatives what they want and return the rest to me tomorrow. Grandma G----- did not want to work in her books today because the doctor and nurse were giving "shots" in the wash house. Dorothy wanted to clean her house and she thought the children would bother in the car. Dean R----- gave me a letter to mail to relatives in Seattle. He told me, "A white man beat up that fat lady at Pete G-----s at 4 o'clock this morning". Upon inquiry I found that Pete had beat up the white man for coming home with Bob W----- and sleeping in Pete's tent. I asked if any women were in the tent and they said "Yes, the blind grandma". Marjory G----- was completely out of water and I helped her get a can. I was surprised that we had to go nearly to the Missouri River bridge, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Chucky read for me today instead of Billy. I was pressed for time. I was glad I had 8 qts. of milk and about 10 lbs. of meat for them. The milk added a lot to the K----- family's meal of macaroni and buns. Some of them had meat. There were no chairs in the K----- house. The youngsters stood around the table or carried a dish to some favorite spot. Celia and her children are with Grandma K----- while working on their house.

Thursday, July 25 - I have been thinking for some time that the Indian children, especially those who are to start school this fall, needed more of the literary experiences that the white children have in order to develop greater readiness. Today I took out four large books of "Mother Goose" rhymes and six small ones. I gave them to the different families to keep and asked the parents or older children to read them for the younger ones. I have been giving out a few of the "Golden Books". I asked to have them returned the next day without much success. They all love the books. Mrs. Bob G----- seemed to be especially appreciative of the one (Mother Goose) for Skunky. Grandma G----- went visiting to Highwood today--no lesson. Billy read, but Chucky was on the roof of the house. Besides milk, I had a few vegetables from Safeway.

Friday, July 26 - Grandma and I had a very good lesson today, even though none of the children interpreted. There were 38 qts. of milk. This evening before "Sunday School" I passed out two huge sacks of baked goods from Eddy's and a large box from Sally Ann. One of the sacks contained little cakes. I delivered to the homes, but the children all came running for the cakes. They were very "choosy" in regard to the kind they wanted.

Monday, July 29 - Today was "Commercial Day" but I got the milk from the Pioneer Dairy. Grandma was visiting on the "Hill" but since I was pressed for time I didn't try to find her. Billy read, but seemed tired and was easily distracted. There are so many little ones swarming around at K-----s'. I believe there are 22 children counting Celia's. Celia is eating with her folks while fixing up her little house. She had moved off the hill, but is moving back because the children like it there and she can save her rent.

Tuesday, July 30 - Today I bought ten cans of canned milk and a nine pound sack of oatmeal for young Mrs. S-----. I also had some suet and soup bones from Hobles which I gave to her and Doris S-----. Doris has been sick four days with dysentery. Grandma and I had a good lesson today. Two of her grandsons asked for me to pay them a little to translate regularly. I hardly felt I could do this. Even if I had the money, it would set a precedent. Chucky read today, for a wonder. His attitude is so much better, but he still has trouble settling down. 38 qts. of milk. Oh, yes, the M---s' little girls brought back six of my Golden Books. I praised them for this and told them I would bring out more for anybody that returned theirs. They are my boy Dean's books and I don't mind using them if they do some good and are not just lost or torn. Mr. S----- went to work today.

The valuable social document reproduced above is a commentary on the adaptation problems of Indians in the city fringe areas. It is but one of the documents in preparation for libraries. Others will be the minutes of the weekly meetings for the Workshop in Understanding at the College of Great Falls during the Summer Session, 1957.

College of Great Falls
Great Falls, Montana
August 3, 1957

College of Great Falls - Aug. 5, 1957

The Thursday sessions since June have revealed several points of agreement among the regular participants and the guest speakers. This report is made for the action meeting of group representatives at the home of Mrs. George Roberts.

POINTS OF AGREEMENT:

1. There is a time order of needs for the month of August, 1957 -

Fuel for the winter - especially in the homes that burned battery boxes.
Food for unemployed families
Water for the western village

2. The Hill people are unable to meet these needs without help.

Physical factors: distance from supplies, distance from jobs and job opportunities, physical debility.

Psychological factors: social isolation, defeatism, over-buying (lack of sales resistance which is especially strong in ethnic minorities), kin obligations, feuds on hill.

Agency factors: welfare disability and credit disability.

3. The city people so far have been unable to meet these needs on the hill.

Physical factor: lack of communication

Psychological factors: a closed mind on racial and employment reality; judgmental attitudes; expectations that are too high.

Technical factor: lack of coordination in helping activities

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

Make August a month for fuel supply.

Use the newly-formed teen-age club in the eastern village for TV and radio appeals to the City for tree-trimming; 2) to the construction companies for slashes, etc; 3) to the Great Northern; 4) to the farmers nearby for dead wood; 5) to Sand Coulee or Belt for coal.

Set up a distribution system for the woods:

telephone contact for donators
a distribution plan to the Hill (rotate trucks)
a distribution plan on the Hill (use teenagers)
-saws
-agreement between settlements or villages
-agreement among the families (cost?)
-agreement among the teenagers (reward?)
-volunteers rotating from the city to oversee distribution?

Let church groups, etc. have rummage sales on the Hill in preparation for school

Workshop in Understanding

Economic and Social Picture
for Hill 57 Families

WHY CAN'T THE HILL 57 PEOPLE SAVE FOR SCHOOL CLOTHES AND SUPPLIES?

The Workshop investigation during August 1957, revealed these reasons that pointed to factors beyond family control:

1. Low income from unskilled employment.
2. Unavoidable automobile expenses because of distance from the city, from places of employment, from utility services.
3. Abnormal and unavoidable hospitality demands by relatives and friends who live on reservations or the Buckskin Fringe of other towns.
4. Ineligibility for Federal Indian Bureau aid. No Federal money comes to the Hill, for Indians.
5. Ineligibility of employable fathers for State or County aid except for renewable 3-day food orders, from April to November.
6. Ineligibility of ward Indians for any kind of State or County aid at any season of the year.
7. Ineligibility for credit at stores, etc.

The Workshop prefers not to present an analysis of the investigation but to show the whole family picture in the thumbnail sketches which follow. These 11 families have incomes higher than most, speak English, have some education. Only one family has a father who is not at home and not trying to earn a living for his children. (Expenses below specifically ~~excluded~~ "money paid out for food".)

A DIGEST OF SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN ELEVEN FAMILIES DURING AUGUST, 1957

FAMILY A

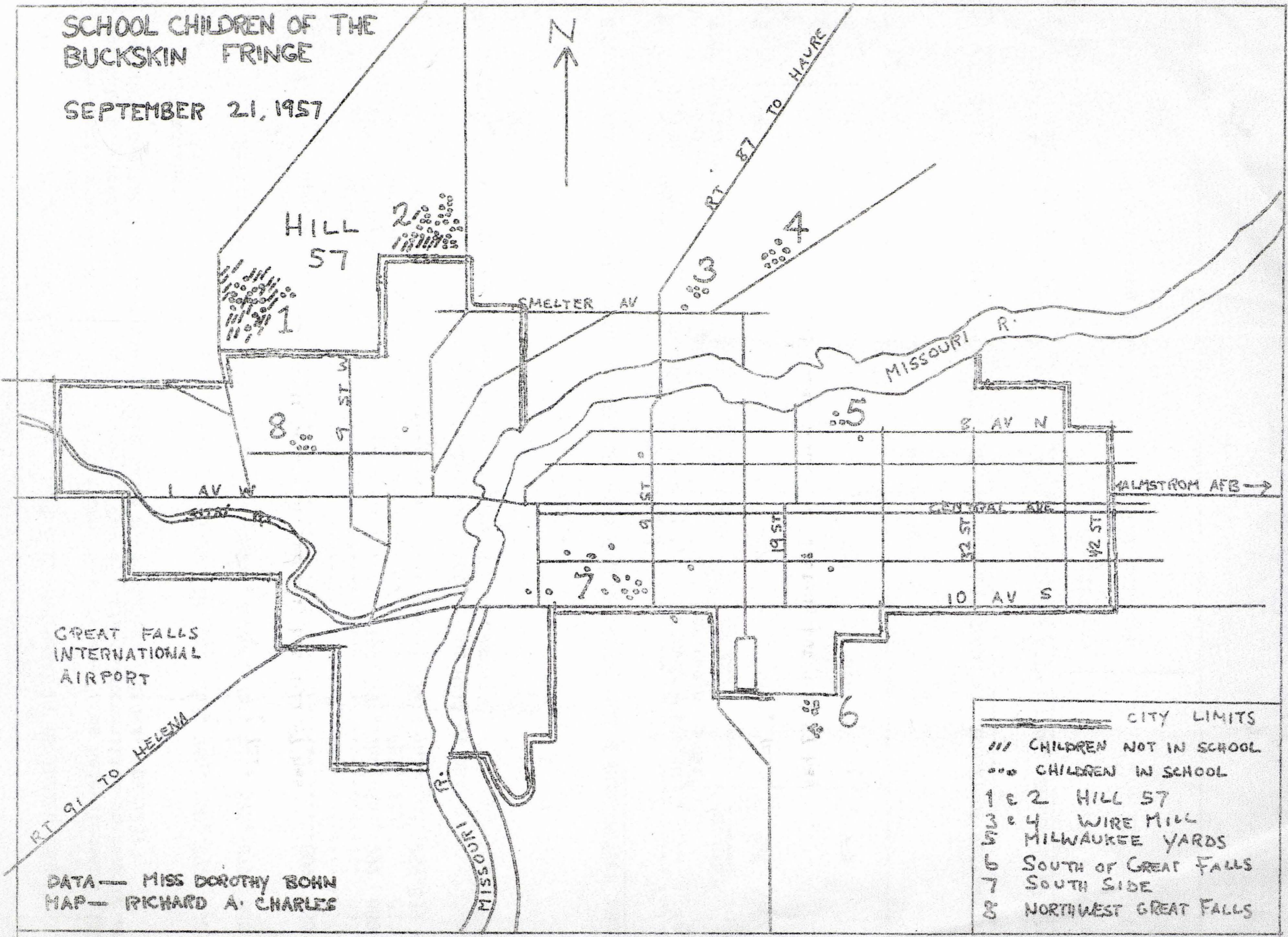
Two-room house
3 persons - 6 children
Income - Between \$25-50
Income spent - For fuel, travel, to work outside Great Falls, car repair, clothing.
Employment - harvesting, junking, cleaning box cars.
Public Welfare - One 3-day food order.
Other aid - friends.
Average amount of food -
Meat - once a day
Milk - Not every day
Fruit - not every day
Average 2 meals a day
Remarks: "Odd jobs are twice as hard to get this year."

FAMILY B

Small trailer
6 persons - 4 children
Income - Between \$175-200
Income spent - rent, fuel, car payments, other installments
Employment - common labor in a factory
Public welfare - One 3-day food order
Average Amount of Food:
Meat - once a day
Milk - Not every day
Fruit - Not every day
Average - 2 meals a day
Remarks: "Strikes set us back."

SCHOOL CHILDREN OF THE
BUCKSKIN FRINGE

SEPTEMBER 21, 1957



GREAT FALLS
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

MALMSTROM AFB →

DATA — MISS DOROTHY BONN
MAP — RICHARD A. CHARLES

- | | |
|-------|------------------------|
| ===== | CITY LIMITS |
| /// | CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL |
| ... | CHILDREN IN SCHOOL |
| 1 & 2 | HILL ST |
| 3 & 4 | WIRE MILL |
| 5 | MILWAUKEE YARDS |
| 6 | SOUTH OF GREAT FALLS |
| 7 | SOUTH SIDE |
| 8 | NORTHWEST GREAT FALLS |



Pat Damon's house, Hill 57

Hill 57 #1



Hill 57 F1

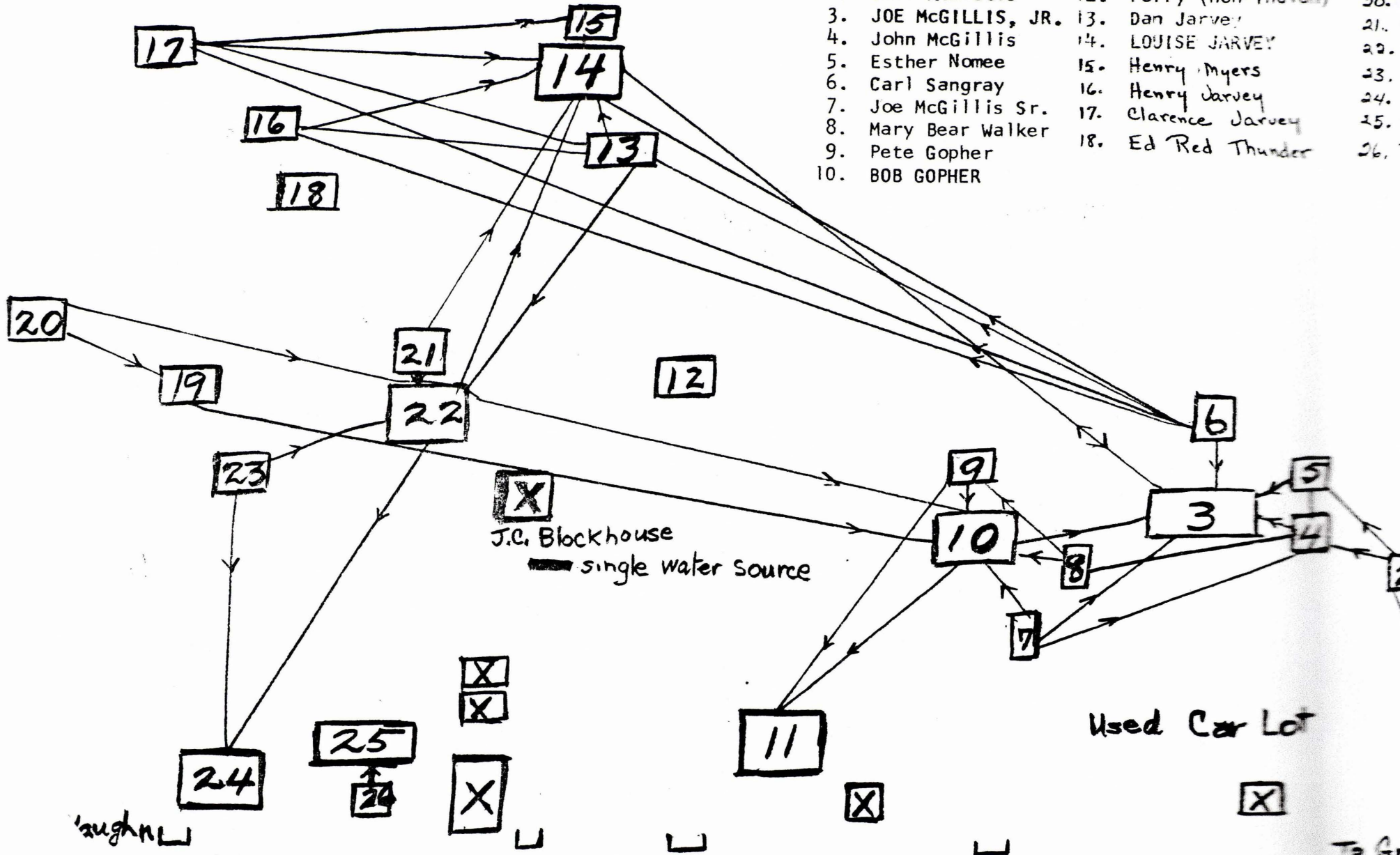
For Class in Social Problems
 College of Great Falls
 March, 1963
 SISTER PROVIDENCIA

MHS Hill 57 vertical file #2

Sociogram of HI
 Larger Squares are Power
 X marks empty buildings
 - Kin relationships

Households

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----|
| 1. Tom Komiotis, Jr. | 11. JOSEPHINE LAMERE | 19. |
| 2. Carl Komietis | 12. Perry (non-Indian) | 20. |
| 3. JOE MCGILLIS, JR. | 13. Dan Jarvey | 21. |
| 4. John McGillis | 14. LOUISE JARVEY | 22. |
| 5. Esther Nomee | 15. Henry Myers | 23. |
| 6. Carl Sangray | 16. Henry Jarvey | 24. |
| 7. Joe McGillis Sr. | 17. Clarence Jarvey | 25. |
| 8. Mary Bear Walker | 18. Ed Red Thunder | 26. |
| 9. Pete Gopher | | |
| 10. BOB GOPHER | | |



J.C. Blockhouse
 single water source

Used Car Lot

Laugh

To Gr

PUBLICITY

Another activity at Headquarters is that of securing publicity, in other words, of "telling the public our story of nursing." Since January 1928 Miss Virginia McCormick has served the association as publicity secretary. It is through her that we are interpreted intelligently, correctly and constructively to the public with the purpose of establishing mutual respect and understanding. Several interesting articles by Miss McCormick have appeared in the *American Journal of Nursing*.

GRADING COMMITTEE

As a report of the work of the Grading committee is to be given to you by Miss Anna C. Jammé, I shall not discuss this activity further than to state that the complete findings of the present study will no doubt offer just as direct and inspiring a challenge as that offered by the previous study of supply and demand. Also the effectiveness of the study will no doubt depend to a very great extent upon what we as members of the nursing profession do with the findings as they are presented to us.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Some of the time of your staff at National Headquarters during the current year is to be devoted to:

- 1. The assembling of information concerning each of the state nurses' asso-

ciations belonging to the American Nurses' Association.

- 2. The institution of a card file of A. N. A. membership. This will require a uniform method of reporting membership from the state associations to the national association.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- 1. Membership campaign. This campaign is to be educational in character and for the purpose of stimulating professional consciousness. Its object will be to strengthen professional pride, to further the understanding of professional opportunities and to emphasize the value of A. N. A. membership.
2. Legislative program. This program is to include a study of legislation as it affects nursing. Assistance in attempting to solve legislative problems found in the several states, will no doubt follow.

In presenting these activities I have been constantly impressed with the realization that we have in our association a marvelous and far-reaching power for good and that it is necessary to think of nursing not in types of service but in terms of community welfare. Is it not imperative therefore that we endeavor to sink ourselves and all credit for our achievements in our one desire to be of service. This is to be accomplished through better professional preparation and more whole hearted participation in the activities of our American Nurses' Association.

Mrs Laverne Fitzgerald Kelly R. N.

NURSING EARLY AMERICANS

By LA VERNE FITZGERALD, R. N.

IT WAS a warm sunny morning in late September when the Hill County doctor and I drove out to the Poor Farm. The road to the farm winds over a hill and through a very pretty coulee. Sunflowers and goldenrod were growing by the roadside and nearby in a few old cottonwood trees magpies were chattering. Seated beside a creek, whose banks were covered with sagebrush, was an old man fishing.

Driving up the lane leading to the buildings, we could hear the meadowlarks singing in the stubble of the past sum-

mer's wheat field. The morning air seemed to foretell of adventure and with curiosity I reached my destination. I had travelled over two hundred miles to nurse two little Indian children.

We approached a little square gray house, situated several hundred feet from the main buildings. The house, having been unoccupied for ten years, was to be the emergency detention hospital for these county cases.

On entering the house we saw lying on a bed-spring a very sick papoose, by whom was seated an old toothless Indian

Reproduction from... September



Th... squaw we... She p... and of... over... Dr. Burke... had... our... the Indian... Miss Ki... case... year... I was... twenty... stayed... This hot... rooms... ing had... hornet... I sw... day I... In... and... pieces... holder... I never... I learn... out... hands... Th... stove... old... county... furnish... were...

(U.S. Code)

never exclaimed or acted surprised over anything, although I knew she was. The first time we ate together at the table I noticed she pushed away the cloth and silverware and began to eat with her fingers. After she once used a napkin she never forgot to put one by her plate.

Mary only had one red gingham dress and of course it had to be washed nightly. One evening she began crying as if her heart would break.

"Mary, what is the matter?" I asked. "You will wash my dress away," was the answer.

My mirror and powder box were a source of interest. I would watch her gazing at herself for many minutes in the glass, and if I went outside her face on my return resembled a flour sack, it was so white.

She tried to do everything I did, if possible, even to drinking soda bicarbonate in a glass of water. She saw me put soda in a glass, so in a few minutes she emptied half a box in her glass. In a few minutes I found her coughing and sputtering—a very surprised little girl.

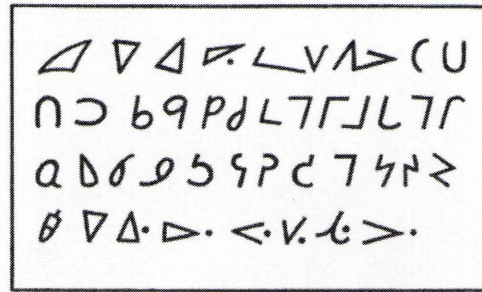
Evenings we would sit on the steps by the door watching the stars come out or the moon rise over the hills. I would tell her the story of Hiawatha's childhood, until Miss Kincaid called me "Nokomis." When the coyotes howled on the ridges or the screech owl hooted, Mary would huddle close to me, as she was afraid.

A little doll with a papoose in its arms is one of the many Mary drew and cut out to play with.

Albert was unconscious for over eight days. Daily for a few days we thought he would die. The Indians as a whole were very concerned over the children, and would ride over daily on horseback.

One evening the children's father, with tears in his eyes, said to me: "White man likes his baby—Indian likes his papoose. Likes to see them playing around the tepee—well—"

The Cree Indians are Canadian Indians, but have lived for many years in Montana. The Rocky Boy reservation is shared by the Chippewa and Cree Indians. The Cree Indians are noted for their Sundance. This year at the Rocky Boy reservation, near Box Elder, it was held the



Cree alphabet written by Young Boy, a Cree Indian

last week in June. There were thirty-five Indian dancers who danced in a large circle formed by a hundred tepees, in the center of which was a main lodge.

The annual religious ceremony began on Monday when the tribal members gathered from many places, including Canada. The opening ceremony began with the coyote hunt, in which the old men of the tribe came down from the hills as if attacking the camp. When they arrived in the camp the remaining men and boys rushed at them and tried to remove the wreaths of leaves which they wore, just as the Indians a few years ago would have scalped camp invaders. Indians lucky enough to get a wreath are favored with long life, they believe.

The Sun-dance began Tuesday. They danced up and down two days to the beating of tom-toms and whistles. The dance is a religious one and is given as a penance or for a fulfillment of a vow made at the bedside of a sick friend or relative.

Accompanying this is the copy of the Cree alphabet written by Young Boy (Mo-see Ma-Ma-Mos), a Cree Indian. He was a friend of my father's, and when my father was sick he came to see him. I answered the door, and said he could not see him as he was sleeping. Later in the afternoon my brother met him and asked if he saw father. Young Boy answered: "Young squaw say 'No see him.'" I was the "young squaw" he meant.

When I left the case, Albert had sufficiently recovered to be taken to a local hospital for further observation and treatment. Mary returned home to the tepee—fat and happy.



The author with twins, a rarity of Indian Motherhood

squaw, wearing moccasins and blankets. She proved to be the child's grandmother, and on our entrance swung the sick child over her shoulder and prepared to leave. Dr. Burke told her in sign language we had come to help, so she left the child in our care and went over the hill to where the Indians were encamped.

Miss Kincaid, the other nurse on the case, drove up in a taxi, bringing the five-year-old sister to the two-year-old boy. I was in quarantine with the children twenty-seven days, and Miss Kincaid stayed only eight days.

This house consisted of four plastered rooms. In one of the rooms the plastering had fallen from the ceiling and hornets' nests were built among the laths. I swatted and chased hornets until the day I left.

In cleaning the house we found dust and cobwebs, but not any early American pieces of furniture. Our pewter candle holders were kerosene lamps, whose wicks I never learned to trim correctly, nor did I learn to clean the glass chimneys without having the lampblack all over my hands. The fireplace was an old army stove with a broken grate, obtained from old Fort Assiniboine about 1898. The county supplied us with all new household furnishings, so after a day or two we were quite comfortable.

Albert, aged 2, and Mary, aged 5, are Cree Indians, and belong to the Indian family. Albert had tubercular meningitis, but Mary had the epidemic type. Indian children are very quiet and not communicative. Albert never spoke to me except when he gritted his teeth together and said "No" very emphatically. He always spoke to his sister in Cree, but both could speak English.

Albert was a real problem child in regard to his diet. Although we had plenty of fresh cream and milk all he would drink was "Tin Can Milk" as Mary called condensed milk. The first time he was able to eat a little white meat of chicken I brought him some. He reached eagerly for the meat, tasted it, and then threw it away, saying "No" with gritted teeth. I could not understand why he refused broth as well as meat, until Mary said: "Mamma always snares gophers for us to eat."

Mary was well before Albert, so the county commissioners allowed me to keep her for company as long as I stayed at the Poor Farm. Mary had never seen a bed before as she lived in a tepee and slept on the earthen floor in robes. The old stove was of unusual interest to her. I was kept busy watching her so she wouldn't set fire to herself. When I would remove the clinkers she would squat on her little haunches and watch me.

I thoroughly enjoyed watching her react to the ways of civilization. She



Blackfeet Indian on horse to be given in sacrifice to the Dead ^{offer as} honor of

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PRESENT TRENDS IN THE BUREAU OF NURSING SERVICE *

By JANE W. SMITH, R. N.

CONTEMPLATION of the first half of 1929 and prediction for the other half brings comparisons of those years previous. With the urgent needs of the special duty nurse claiming precedence over all other considerations, one remedy has been sought, that of requiring membership in the district as a basis of enrollment in the Bureau of Nursing Service.

cern for the one-sidedness of association facilities in the bureau. Institutional positions too often require immediate response when vacancies are occurring, little notice is given and there is little likelihood that positions will remain listed until membership can be debated. The seeker after a position facing a limited number of institutions as her field usually



than general duty and general duty relief which is particularly within the field of the special duty nurse. That the need which called forth the limitation placed by membership enrollment was expedient, is unquestioned; the entire association has been unhesitating in the move to protect the special duty nurse.

There has been provided for the special duty nurse a center from which she can direct her professional services, discuss her personal affairs pertaining to her professional business and under which she benefits from protection authorized by the association. The decrease in placement for those who desire institutional positions is viewed with con-

The solution probably does not rest with the district association, for the need invades all territories outside of the district and is not a matter which would seem readily reconcilable with immediate district membership. State Headquarters would seem a logical point for finding and directing what may be done in the way of institutional contacts throughout the state and in institutional demand and supply.

There is a commendably healthy and active curiosity in the private duty nurse to see and know how the "wheels" of the organization "go 'round." Charts graphically picturing the progress of the Bureau give in readily recognizable form the outstanding figures without the burden of dry statistics. The records for District Nine of the California State

* Read before the Special Duty Section, Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, C. S. N. A., Sacramento, June 18, 1929.

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Hill
57

Montana Mag of Western History, Summer 1993

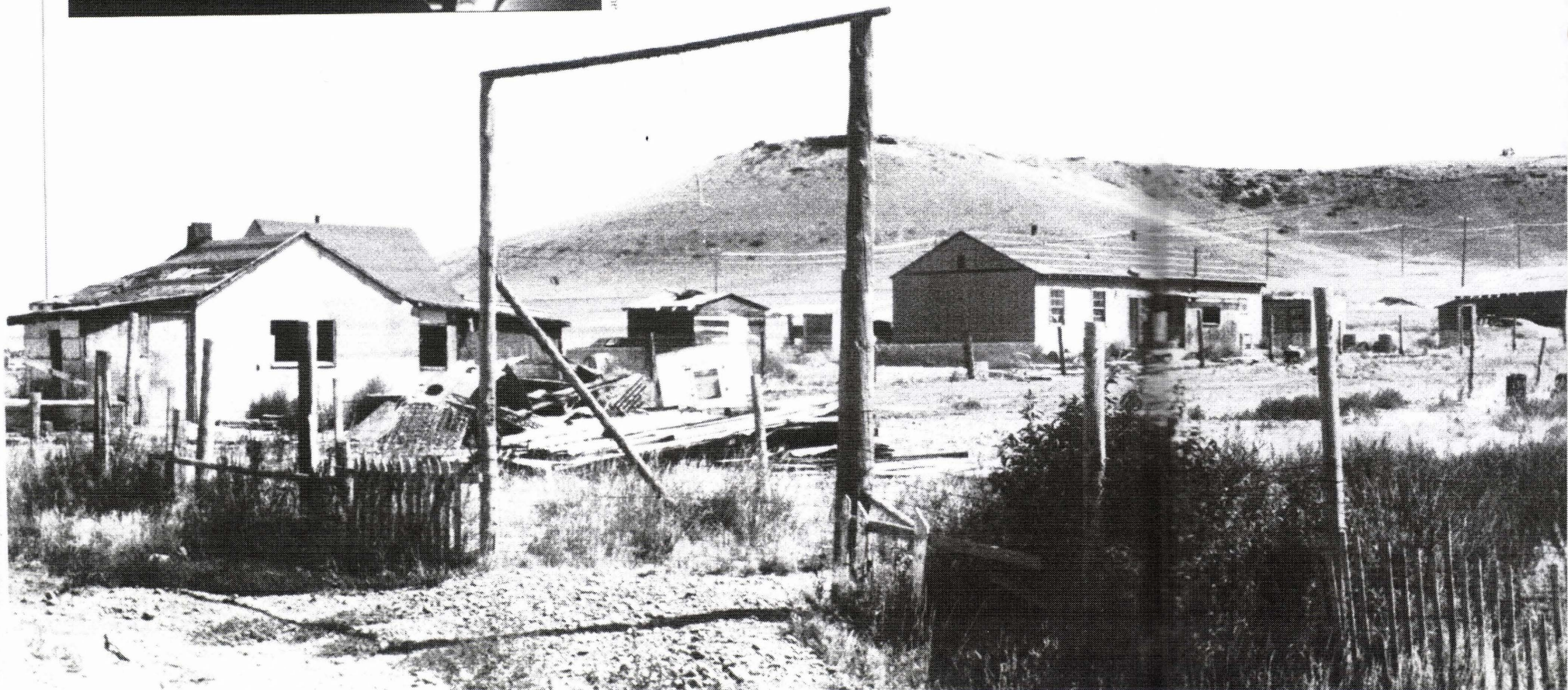


Archives, Sisters of Charity of Providence, Spokane

From Hill 57 to Capitol Hill: 'M

Sister Providencia Tolan's Drive on Behalf of M
Off-Reservation Indians, 1950-1970

by Joan Bisho





Archives, Sisters of Charity of Providence, Spokane

From Hill 57 to

Sister Providencia Tolan's

Off-Reservation



Capitol Hill: 'Making the Sparks Fly'

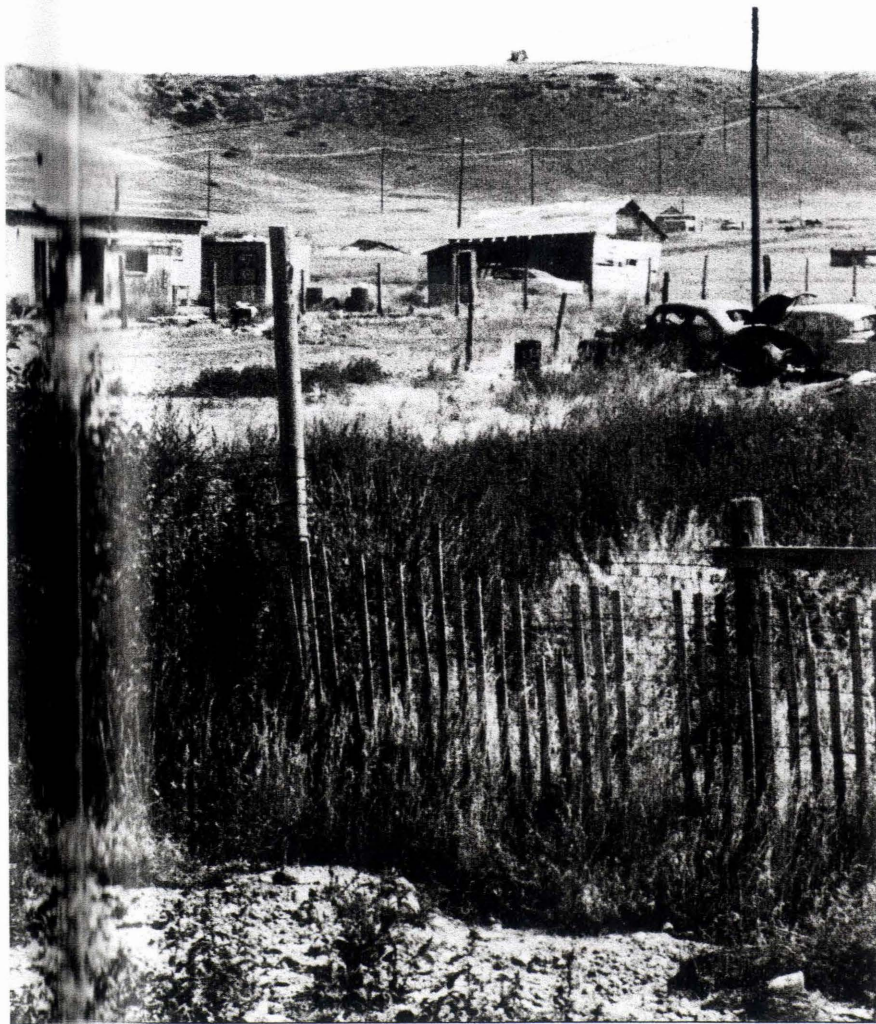
Drive on Behalf of Montana's Indians, 1950-1970

by Joan Bishop

On a fall day in 1957 a car pulled up at Hill 57, the off-reservation Indian settlement located on a windswept slope several miles northwest of Great Falls, Montana. Before Lois Murray, a new Great Falls *Tribune* staff reporter, could get out of the car, several of the Chippewa-Cree residents met her and firmly closed the car door. Later Murray asked *Tribune* editor William James how she could meet the Indians. Only through Sister Providencia, he told her.¹

For more than two decades Sister Providencia Tolan, a sociology professor at the College of Great Falls, lobbied on behalf of America's Indians. Initially, in the early 1950s, the plight of off-reservation Chippewa-Cree groups living on Hill 57 and other areas near Great Falls triggered her drive to energize "an impressive cross-section of the Great Falls community," many of whom "had resorted to an ostrich-like attitude when the local Indian problem proved too difficult to solve." During the mid-1950s Sister Providencia worked with members of the Montana Inter-tribal Policy Board, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and the National Congress of American Indians. By the late 1960s she had also served as tribal consultant for six of Montana's seven Indian reservations.²

Subsequently, Sister Providencia transformed the grass roots movement she had formed into a campaign directed at Michael J. (Mike) Mansfield, Lee Metcalf, and James J. Murray, three of Montana's Democratic politicians in Washington, D.C. Because of seniority, committee appointments, and party stature, these three men had the power to influence federal Indian affairs. Sister Providencia often acted as intermediary between local activists and community leaders in Great Falls and bureaucrats and politicians in Washington, D.C., where leaders recognized her "keen sense of political organization." In 1959 Dr. Catherine Nutterville, Sister Providencia's College of Great Falls mentor, wrote that "Montana in these last few years has become more aware of the plight of the Indians, thanks first of all to the work of Sister Buckskin—Sister Providencia." Rocky Boy tribal leader Edward Eagleman described her as a "fearless, and eloquent sister, and probably one of the best informed persons in the United States on the Indians' economic problem."³



Sister Providencia Tolan and Florence Standing Rock of Rocky Boy's Reservation (upper left) at a 1966 Democratic meeting in Great Falls, Hill 57 homes in 1986 (above)

By the mid-1960s, during the Lyndon B. Johnson administration, Sister Providencia and her coalition of community and Indian leaders and state politicians in Washington, D.C., influenced federal Indian policy with increased appropriations through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of Economic Opportunity for Indians on or off the reservations.

Ultimately Sister Providencia helped prompt a rethinking of federal Indian policy and contributed to substantive changes in those policies concerned with termination and relocation. She believed that Indian values and pride could only be perpetuated on the reservations. "As a sociologist," she explained in 1958, "I must insist that the tribe, a sub-group, is a strength and a real resource to the wider group."⁴

Sometimes critics viewed her as domineering and paternalistic—the Catholic sister who dictated what was best for the Indian population. "That Nun," some called her. Others considered her activity ill-advised. Yet, in the balance, Sister Providencia, with the help of lawmakers and citizens' groups, elevated an off-reservation community with the unusual name of Hill 57 to a national symbol of urban Indian poverty. The plight and fate of Hill 57 residents became the case in microcosm for all Indians and contributed to major federal reform in Indian policy.⁵

Christened Denise Hortense Tolan, Sister Providencia was born in Anaconda, Montana, February 24, 1909, to former Deer Lodge County attorney John Tolan and Alma Deschamps Tolan. Denise's maternal grandparents, a pioneering merchant and ranching family in Missoula, influenced her as a child. She absorbed her grandfather's tales of Montana's early days, frequently laced with accounts of settlers' depredations to the Indians. Of her grandmother, she wrote "Church' is a word I associate with Grandmother Deschamps. One day when the lilacs were blooming, mother drove Grandma, my brother Jack, and me to the St. Ignatius Mission in the Flathead valley." For the rest of her life Denise remembered that visit, seeing the impressive interior paintings and especially watching the black-robed Sisters of Charity, who "let her play with their large black rosary beads."⁶



In 1914 Denise moved with her parents to Oakland, California, where she attended Lakeview Elementary School and graduated from Holy Names Academy in 1927. That summer she returned to Montana to be with her cousins at their grandparents' Grass Valley Ranch near Flathead Lake. At one point, alone with grandmother Deschamps, Denise confided that she wanted to become a nun and teach the Indians. "Never," my grandmother said calmly, "You like boys too much." Good psychology," commented Sister Providencia in 1976. "This was the challenge I needed."⁷

After two years of study at Holy Names College in Oakland, Denise took her professional vows as a Sister of Charity of Providence in Seattle, Washington, in 1930. Over the next decade she taught at Providence elementary schools in Moxee, Seattle, Yakima, and Tacoma, Washington; De Smet, Idaho; and Des Plaines, Illinois. Sister Providencia also spent several summers earning college credits from Washington and Oregon universities toward a bachelor's degree in sociology, which she received from the College of Great Falls in 1944. At the same time, she received a less formal but no less important education in politics by follow-

1. Lois Murray, S.P., conversation with author, October 11, 1990, Great Falls.

2. Victor O. Reinemer (hereafter Vic Reinemer) to Max Gubatayo, January 5, 1959, James E. Murray Collection (hereafter Murray Collection), Toole Archives, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, Missoula (hereafter UM); Lois Murray, S.P., *Good News Sisters of Providence St. Ignatius Province*, 1 (October 1990), insert, n.p.

3. Vic Reinemer, conversation with author, September 18, 1990, Helena; Catherine Nutterville to Robert McCormick, February 2, 1959, Murray Collection; Great Falls *Tribune*, May 7, 1964.

4. Sister Providencia to Frank Morrow, February 21, 1958, Cascade County Community Council Records (hereafter Cascade Council Records), Montana Historical Society Archives, Helena (hereafter MHS).

5. Great Falls *Tribune*, August 5, 1979.

6. Sister Providencia, conversation with author, April 13, 1983, Spokane, Washington; Sister Providencia, "Biographical Information," n.d., and Sister Providencia to her family, "Christmas Greetings," 1976, Sister Providencia Tolan Papers (hereafter S. Providencia Papers), Sisters of Charity of Providence Archives, Mt. St. Joseph, Spokane, Washington.

Sister Providencia, christened Denise Hortense, stood with arms around her siblings when photographed (left) c. 1917 with her father, John Tolan, Sr.; mother, Alma Deschamps Tolan; and grandmother Tolan. Denise posed again in Missoula at age five playing the grand lady (below) and as a young woman in 1928 (right).

(All photos, Archives, Sisters of Charity of Providence, Spokane)



ing the career of her father, John Tolan, who, beginning in 1934, was elected to six terms in the United States House of Representatives from California's Seventh Congressional District centered in Alameda. Tolan chaired the House Committee Investigating Dust Bowl Migration during the 1930s and in 1941 testified as amicus curiae before the United States Supreme Court in opposition to a California ruling that sought to halt immigration. Neither Tolan's dedication to politics nor his efforts on behalf of disadvantaged migrants was lost on Sister Providencia, and decades later, after she had lobbied effectively on behalf of off-reservation Indians, journalists pointed to her father's influence on her. Yet Sister Providencia also seems to have inherited some of her drive from her mother, who managed her

7. Arthur Deschamps, Jr., telephone conversation with author, August 8, 1988; *Great Falls Tribune*, August 5, 1979.

8. *Catholic Review*, February 7, 1941.

9. *Great Falls Tribune*, August 5, 1979.

10. Sister Providencia to Lee Metcalf, January 26, 1973, Lee Metcalf Papers, MHS (hereafter Metcalf Papers).

11. D'Arcy McNickle, "Hill 57," *Indians at Work*, February 1, 1937, 2.

12. Joseph Kinsey Howard, *Strange Empire, A Narrative of the Northwest* (New York: William Morrow, 1952), 588.



husband's six successful political campaigns and chaired several government war bond drives during World War II in addition to her duties as wife and mother.

The weaving of varied threads from such a background with Sister Providencia's special affinity for Native Americans was perhaps best illustrated by a newspaper article and photograph appearing in early 1941. During summer months in the 1930s, the sister organized several women's cooperative craft guilds on Idaho's Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation, and in 1939 arranged an exhibit of their work at the San Francisco World's Fair. In a *Catholic Review* article appearing February 7, 1941, Sister Providencia is shown displaying crafts from nine Northwest tribes at the House Indian Affairs Committee Room in the United States Capitol. Standing beside her is her father, Representative John Tolan, and on her other side is a smiling first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, looking down at the beaded moccasins and gloves. The newspaper caption reads: "First Lady of Land Lauds Work of Nun."⁸

Sister Providencia joined the faculty of the College of Great Falls, a Catholic coeducational liberal arts college, in 1948, as a lecturer in sociology.

13. Verne Dusenberry, "Montana's Displaced Persons: The Rocky Boy Indians," *Montana Magazine of History*, 4 (Winter 1954), 12, 13; Verne Dusenberry, "Waiting for a Day That Never Comes," *Montana Magazine of History*, 8 (Spring 1958), 37-38; Denton R. Bedford (as told by Mary Rego), "First Thunder of the Rocky Boys," *The Indian Historian*, 10 (Winter 1977) 37; Jeanne Marie Oyawin Eder, "Chief Little Shell's Tribe of Landless Chippewa Indians of Montana: A Question of Recognition" (master's thesis, Montana State University, Bozeman, 1983), 53; Sister Providencia, "People Without Place," n.d., S. Providencia Papers. See also Cascade County Community Council, "Inter-Group Committee Report on Landless Indians of Montana," 1952, Cascade Council Records.

She came to Great Falls, an agricultural center of approximately 39,000 residents, disappointed. "The whole idea behind my vocation as a sister," she said, was to work with the Indians at St. Ignatius Province. Nevertheless, with thoughts of the Flathead position behind her, Sister Providencia took on two jobs that fall, teaching and social work. Soon she became a familiar figure in downtown Great Falls. Jack Albanese, Jr., a well-known Great Falls resident who assumed the nickname "Father Jack," described her constant movement "from the hospital to the city jail, to the county jail, to the bars, to the lower south side, and to the west side in search of and on behalf of human beings in need." Frequently she befriended Indians who lived in the city or in fringe settlements on Wire Mill Road, Black Eagle, Mt. Royal, or Hill 57.⁹

Sister Providencia left Great Falls in 1951 for a study break in "the most exciting place in the world, Washington, D.C." By June 1952 she had earned a master's degree in sociology from the Catholic University of America.¹⁰

When she returned to her teaching duties at the College of Great Falls in September, she resumed her daily rounds in Great Falls and renewed her friendships with Indians, including those subsisting on nearby Hill 57. Art Hinck, a pickle salesman, named it in the late 1930s for his Heinz 57 product line, advertising it by writing the name in eight-foot-high numbers with white-washed boulders. The Indians had settled there in the late 1920s, after city officials ordered their tent camps along the Missouri River burned because they were camped near the westside sewer discharge. In 1937 D'Arcy McNickle, the novelist/administrator from Montana's Flathead Reservation, visited the Hill and described his first impressions. McNickle, then administrative assistant in the United States Office of Indian Affairs, wrote:

We left town, crossed the river and went up the slope toward the bluffs which mark the river's ancient bank. There, scattered in the snow, were the flapping tents and patchwork shacks of some of Montana's homeless Indians. The situation is wholly exposed. It is windy, always windy, and treeless and grassless. Barren as a rock.¹¹

Some Hill 57 residents belonged to one or another of Montana's Indian reservations but had

14. Joseph Cottrell, "Interview with James Parker Shield," sound cassette, 1984, Critical Writing Project, C. M. Russell High School, Great Falls; Daniel Jarvey, conversation with author, November 11, 1988, Great Falls; Mary Louise Jarvey, conversation with author, October 31, 1988, Great Falls; Edna McGillis, conversation with author, October 31, 1988, Great Falls. See also Milton Colvin, "Hill 57: The Problems of Off Reservation Indians," *Montana Opinion*, 1 (June 1957), 15-18; Great Falls *Tribune*, February 21, 1954; Sister Providencia, "The Indian Villages on Hill 57 at Great Falls, Montana, A Report for the Second Annual Northwest Regional Indian Youth Conference of Montana State University, May 1-3, 1964," Metcalf Papers.



Sister Providencia and Eleanor Roosevelt admire Indian beadwork in Washington, D.C., in 1941.

come to Great Falls to look for work because their home areas could not support them. Others, referred to as landless Indians, were of Cree and/or Chippewa descent. In the mid-1880s these bands had sometimes intermingled with the Canadian Métis (of Euro-Canadian and Indian ancestry) to hunt on the northern plains. Their Montana landless designation grew out of several migrations into the territory in the 1880s. Cree followers of Little Bear had first fled southward from Canada with some Métis in 1885, after the Riel Rebellion. Sister Providencia translated portions of their history from Latin and French texts in the mid-1940s for Great Falls writer Joseph Kinsey Howard, who was documenting their history for his book, *Strange Empire*. Also moving into Montana in the late nineteenth century were a Chippewa band led by Chief Rocky Boy (Sun Child) and Chief Little Shell's Chippewa group, disenfranchised from their North Dakota Turtle Mountain Reservation.¹²

From the 1880s to 1916 these Indians traveled over the state feeling "inferior and unwanted" by many Montanans, including other Indian tribes such as the Blackfeet with whom they had shared allotments temporarily. For these Chippewa and Cree tribes United States government officials

15. William D. James, conversation with author, January 12, 1990, Great Falls; Lois Murray S.P., conversation with author, October 11, 1990, Great Falls.

16. House Concurrent Resolution 108, *Congressional Record* (hereafter *Cong. Rec.*), 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953, 99, pt. 8:10815. See also Christine Bolt, *American Indian Policy and American Reform Case Studies of the Campaign to Assimilate the American Indians* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 132-33 and Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation, Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 33, 60, 98-101.

finally, in 1916, carved "a sterile reservation" of 56,035 acres called Rocky Boy's out of the old Fort Assiniboine Military Reservation in central Montana, one hundred miles northeast of Great Falls. With limited enrollment, however, not all applicants were accepted. Ultimately Rocky Boy's Chippewa and Chief Little Bear's Cree bands, allies in previous years, predominated, and the Little Shell group was again left off tribal enrollment records. This group represented some of the off-reservation "people without place," as Sister Providencia called them, who numbered several thousand in Montana in the late 1940s. Their plight would remain one of the sister's major concerns into the 1960s.¹³

In 1952 Sister Providencia met about two hundred residents who were crowded together in makeshift shelters. They grouped themselves according to earlier tribal affiliations, mainly Turtle Mountain Chippewa with some Great Lakes Chippewa, Rocky Boy's Chippewa and Cree. Many family groups lived a seminomadic life. Each spring they left Hill 57 hoping to get haying contracts near Fort Benton or Augusta or pick hops in Washington state. Everyone worked. James Parker Shield recalled driving a tractor when he was eight years old. Each fall they returned to the hill where as many as fourteen or fifteen people sometimes crowded into a room. As a child, Shield sold rags and metal scrap that he scavenged from a nearby dump. Residents shared one water pump. Without telephone or bus connections they were virtually isolated, even from the nearby community of Great Falls.¹⁴

With dispatch Sister Providencia planned ways to alleviate Hill 57's poverty, soliciting donations from friends, and urging volunteer groups, such as the Mother Gamelin Club of Columbus Hospital, to repair and donate clothing. William D. James, retired Great Falls *Tribune* editor, recalls providing firewood and receiving a follow-up call from Sister. The truck needed a new battery. Would he provide that also? James noted what others have corroborated: it was impossible to refuse Sister Providencia. One who tried was the Columbus Hospital cook, who took the common view that the

poor could find work and were only lazy. Over the cook's protest, however, Sister Providencia commandeered leftovers, filled coffee cans, and set up tables outside the hospital's back door for the needy. She continued her campaign to increase donations of food, clothing, and fuel, yet at best in the 1950s she knew that even major community volunteer efforts were merely palliative. Bureaucratic impediments exacerbated the economic void surrounding off-reservation groups. County officials denied aid ordinarily because they considered all Indians the responsibility of the federal government, while the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs refused assistance because the Indians lived off the reservations.¹⁵

Meanwhile two federal Indian policies of the early 1950s—termination and relocation—impelled Sister Providencia into the political arena. Through their implementation she envisioned even more disastrous consequences for Montana's Indian population.

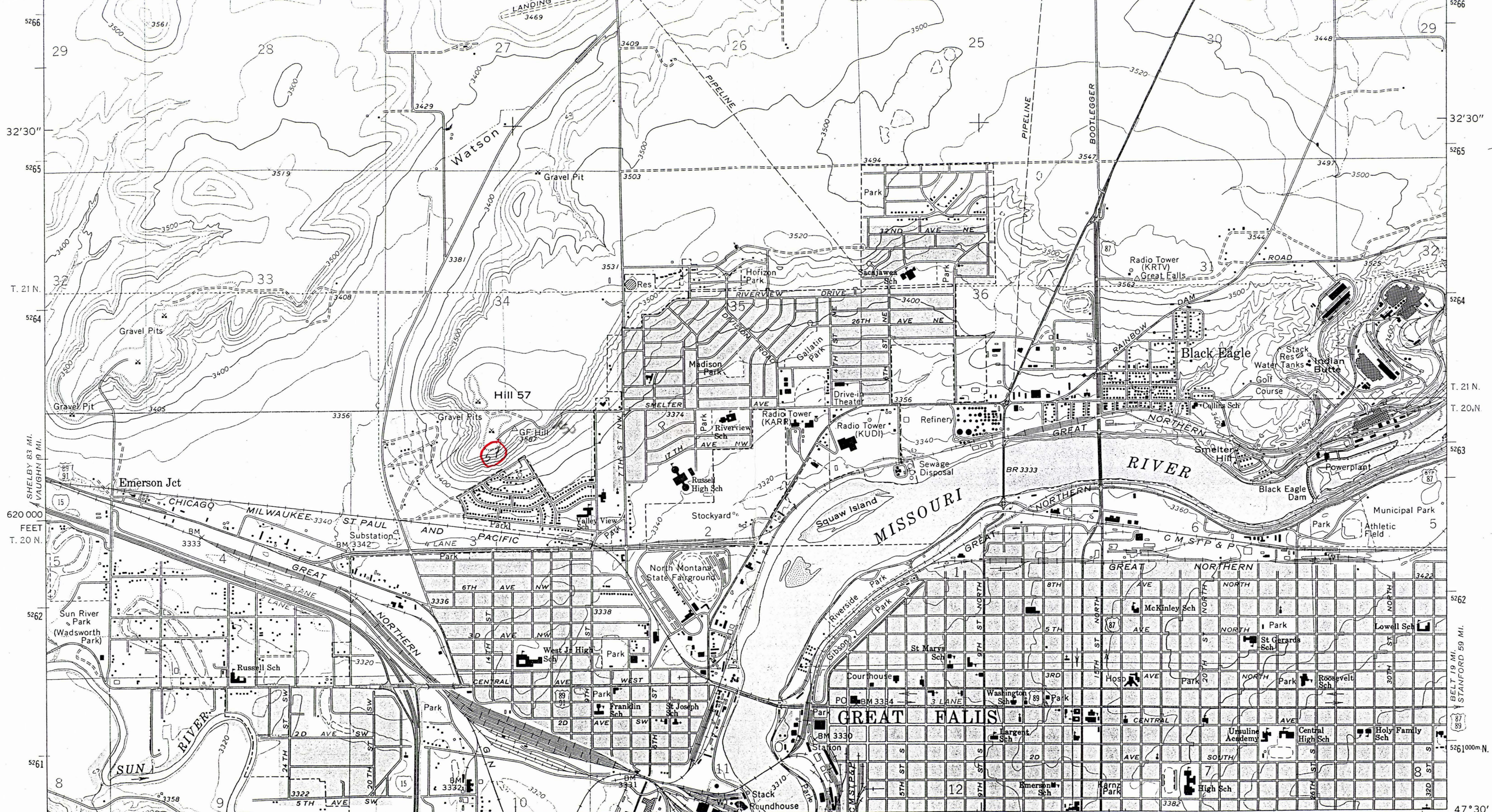
The federal termination policy originated with House Concurrent Resolution 108, passed by Congress on August 1, 1953. Related to earlier drives for Indian self-determination in New Deal legislation of the 1930s, Resolution 108 or the "Termination Resolution" sought federal withdrawal from Indian affairs. The resolution directed the secretary of the Interior to present to Congress by January 1, 1954, a list of tribes that could "as rapidly as possible end their status as wards of the United States." Congress would then pass individual tribal termination bills. Initially some tribal groups backed the measure. Yet when Interior officials and a nucleus of congressional leaders actually moved "as rapidly as possible," using outdated 1947 statistics, and pressured hesitant Indian leaders to comply, more tribes rallied together against termination legislation.¹⁶

In Montana Sister Providencia communicated with leaders of the Flathead, Blackfeet, and Rocky

17. Table 4.1 Tribal lists, Policy Statement, March 25, 1947, in Office File of Assistant Commissioner John H. Provinse, reprinted in Bolt, *American Indian Policy*, 133; Sister Providencia to Lee Metcalf, July 11, 1954, Metcalf Papers; Russell Gardipee testimony, "Joint Hearings Before Subcommittees of the Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs," 83d Cong., 2d sess., on S. 2750 and H.R. 7319, Part 7, Flathead Indians, Montana, February 25, 26, and 26, 1954, p. 947 (hereafter Flathead Hearings). Comments by tribal council chairman Walter McDonald are in Don Matt, "Tribal Government, How We Got To Where We are," (Flathead Reservation) *Char-Koosta* (Confederated Salish Pend' Orielles, and Kootenai Tribes newspaper), December 1, 1976; Earl Old Person, "Indians As Human Beings," *Integrated Education*, (April-May 1967), 18.

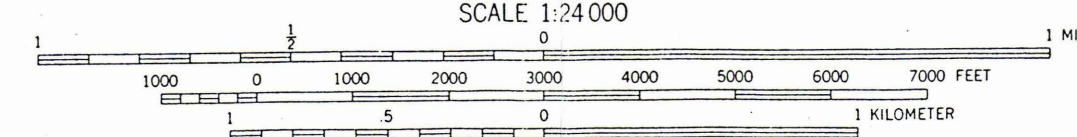
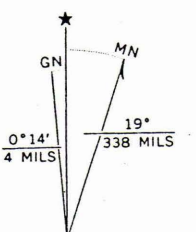
18. Kenneth R. Philip, "Stride toward Freedom: The Relocation of Indians to Cities, 1952-1960," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 16 (April 1985), 189; "Indian Project—Business and Professional Women's Club, 1956-1957," unpublished report, Cascade Council Records; Peter Red Horn in "Notes From Fifth Annual Institute of Indian Affairs-Montana State University," April 9-11, 1958, Murray Collection.

19. Dorothy Bohn, conversation with author, October 25, 1984, Great Falls; Great Falls *Tribune*, December 10, 1953, February 21, 1954. See also Dorothy Bohn, "Liberating the Indian, Euphemism for a Land Grab," *The Nation*, February 20, 1954, 150-51. Citizens Research Committee members were James J. Flaherty, Sister Providencia, Robert S. McCleery, LaVerne Kelly, Stanley Deck, Cleveland Hall, Catherine Nutterville, John Gedeon, Dorothy Bohn, named in Citizens Research Committee to James A. Haley, September 7, 1955, Metcalf Papers.



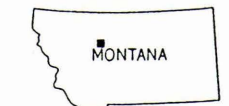
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Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and USC&GS
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1964. Field checked 1965
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Montana coordinate system, central zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 12, shown in blue
 Red tint indicates areas in which only



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
 DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 10-FOOT CONTOURS
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 Heavy-duty ————— Light-duty —————
 Medium-duty ————— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
 Interstate Route U.S. Route



NORTHWEST GREAT FALLS, MONT.

*MHS H4157
 vertical files*

Survey 1964

1: 10/19
Side B

June 27, 1994

This is Side B of the first tape of Bob Zion on the 27th of June, 1994. Bob is talking about the general history of the Metis.

BZ: As I mentioned, the Metis, generally speaking, a lot of them in this area, came down following the Riel Rebellion. They scattered. Some went down around Helena, around Augusta on the Sun River, up on the Teton, some down around Lewistown, some are in Havre. There was quite a group settled on what we called Hill 57 in Great Falls. As I mentioned before, they did the work they could find with whomever they could find. I know my brother, Scotty, hired as many as three and four, and they worked for him in house moving. Good workers. Real good workers. The conditions that some of them lived under, up there at Hill 57, was really pitiful because, unlike the Metis here around Choteau who had gardens and some had livestock, these people on Hill 57 had nothing to live on, other than what they could earn by working around Great Falls in various short-term jobs. Their life, I think, was a little more severe. It wasn't good, I know that.

ML: There was one pump for 50 families, I think I read.

BZ: Yes. This is a pitiful story. I remember one winter when they took old car batteries and took the lead out of them, sold it at Weissmans for lead (you know, the lead content) and took the battery cases, which were of hard rubber, and they would burn 'um in their cookstoves. Some of the little kids got lead poisoning. This was bad. Pitiful! I can't forget that!

I've mentioned family names. Franklin Fellers told me that his great grandfather was an Englishman from New York. That goes back quite a ways. Some of these people have a better lineage than, I would say, the so-called white elite. They can trace their families clear back to France, and who they were, and what they were. I think this is kind of unique.

ML: You know that there are direct descendents for instance, of Cuthbert, and his Scottish noble background. Plenty of those descendents had aristocratic backgrounds.

BZ: You bet they did. From my own lineage, I'm just

11/19
June 27, 1994

Heinz 57. (Laugh) Scotch, Irish, English, Welsh, German and French. The French connection goes clear back to Quebec.

ML: Really.

BZ: Yes, on my mother's side. There was this colony of French colonists and these dummies were trying to raise silkworms. They planted mulberry, and right off the bat it wasn't successful. Anyway, they had a stockaded settlement there, and this was in the mid-1700s when all the English, French, and Indians were having their big troubles. These two ancestors of mine, they were boys, I think one was 12 and one was 10, they went out into the woods this one afternoon to pick berries with their tutor. They were gone awhile, and as they came back, they saw smoke rising in the direction of the settlement and as they got closer, they could hear these screams. The Indians massacred the whole settlement and burned it down. So the tutor took the two boys and they had a terrible journey South, and they finally wound up in New York State. They hid in anything, a little cove or cave or whatever, ate what they could. That was one of my mother's forebears.

ML: When you said mid-1700s, do you know where in Quebec that was?

BZ: I have no idea. All I know is that it was up in Quebec.

ML: That information about the exact place didn't pass down, but that family's story did.

BZ: Yes. I've got the copy of it. It's too bad people didn't recount these things on paper, and give locations, and date, etc.

Speaking of lineage, these Metis people you could go either to the white side or the European side, and doggone it, it's a proud lineage. They had nothing to be ashamed of. Well, to continue this story, in 1895, the Montana people were getting very incensed about the Metis having their little encampments on the fringes of Helena, Great Falls, and whatever. They were really causing no trouble and in a way they were helping, working for people.

ML: They were providing a labor pool.

BZ: Yes, they were providing a labor pool, but word finally got back to Washington, D. C., "that we've got to do something". So, Pershing was a young lieutenant

June 27, 1994

1:12/19

up at Fort Assiniboine, and they gave him the commission to take a troop of 10th Cavalry, and start down in Helena (this was told to me by Jess Gleason), and gather these people up, wherever they could find them, and herd them back to Canada. Jess Gleason told me he was just a little boy, I think he was 5 years old, and when they came through Choteau, his older sister was holding him by the hand there on the corner where the old Citizens State Bank is, and here they came, single file, from clear out between Rattlesnake and Priest Butte, that's where the road was then. He said you could see the dust rising and pretty soon, here they came, single file. Wagons, red river carts, horses, dogs, kids, men, women, some of them riding, some of them walking. As they came through Choteau, some of them tried to escape and hid behind buildings on main street, and these black troops would spur their horses around and bring them back, and get them all lined up again.

He said, "Those troopers, their saddles and their brass work, just shone. Boy! They were really polished. I got so excited my nose started bleeding and I had a white sailor suit on, and my sister was so disgusted, as I got blood all over my little sailor suit. (Laugh)

That evening, they went out to the campground, out in the general area where Dr. Schwedhelm's house is now on Spring Creek, and they were camped out there. They had their cook fires, their tripods, and they were cooking supper out there. It was a quiet evening, and the smoke was going right straight up from the campfires. Little kids were running around. Just sort of a peaceful-evening atmosphere camping. The soldiers had camped. I'll never forget that as long as I live. It just sticks in my visual memory to have seen that."

Then they continued on up, and I believe this group, they put 'um on the train up at Blackfoot, east of Browning. Then they took them across the border at Sweet Grass. Some of them no sooner got up there, and they were back in Choteau. One of the nice young girls said that her great grandfather was back here before you knew it. She didn't tell me, I overheard it, the day we went up to the cemetery. She (the little gal that works in the city office) was talking to Nick Vrooman.

ML: Linda O'Loughlin?

BZ: I think it was Linda. I could be wrong. Maybe it was ... there were two of them there.

67 Trib Aug 10 '86

MHS vertical file #2
Hill 57

Landless

From 1-B

Joe and Edna McGilliss, current Hill 57 residents who were relocated as children with their families, place the eviction date as 1932.

Hill 57 — and the Indians who lived on its side — took the name in the late 1920s when Heinz 57 salesman Arthur Hink thought of an unusual way to advertise his line of canned goods, pickles and condiments.

With the help of family and friends, over the course of several picnics, Hink made a large "57" by whitewashing sandstone near the top of the barren hill. The numbers, about 80 feet long and 35 feet wide, have long since disappeared, and Hink died in 1972.

A large population of landless Indians lived in the hill communities from then on, with community groups intervening to help, particularly after calamities.

One such disaster was in 1941, when five Indian babies died in a short time of what one report called

dysentery and another labeled malnutrition. Another tragedy struck in the winter of 1957, when Indian boys picked up old battery boxes and burned them as fuel. One died of lead poisoning and several others were hospitalized.

In a detailed 1954 story, Great Falls Tribune writer William D. "Scotty" James wrote that Great Falls periodically tried to help the Indians living in poverty on the outskirts of town, but then buried its head like an ostrich when it realized the problems were too tough to resolve without federal help.

James, later Tribune editor and now retired, recalled that he received a lot of criticism from Great Falls business leaders who felt the story and photographs of Hill 57 conditions made the town look bad.

But conditions were bad. A 1960 Denver Post story said Hill 57 was "infamous" for its "shocking filth, poverty and degradation." Deligdisch's exhaustive 1964 report showed: many small homes were jammed with 15 or more people; most area Indians worked seasonal jobs at best; and most area children were doing poorly in school, in part because of high absenteeism.

Yet community groups were trying hard to help; Deligdisch listed 35 different community aid projects, most in the 1950s. They included extending electric and water lines and offering services ranging from religious classes and Campfire Girl story hours to health clinics and "sunshine barrels" left at local groceries for food contributions.

Montana's congressional delegation sought federal aid for Hill 57 and Mount Royal, largely without success. For example, in 1957 some Great Falls citizens offered to donate land on the hill if the federal government would agree to establish a Bureau of Indian Affairs office and an Indian Health Service clinic there, but the offer was refused.

Sparkplug to most community efforts was Sister Providencia, a dynamic College of Great Falls sociology professor who seemed to know everybody and urge every group to help.

By the mid-1960s, federal anti-poverty programs were in place. And Indians soon began heading some of the local programs, including Mary Kendall, the late founder of the Indian Education Center; Carl Gladue, former director of Opportunities Inc.; and Murton McCluskey, director of Indian education for the Great Falls school district.