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James Willard Schultz and the Politics of Place Names in Glacier National Park

A fateful meeting took place on the edge of an empire in early September, 1885. On a clear fall day, famed author and naturalist George Bird Grinnell stepped off a stagecoach in the Montana foothills and met the man who would become a lifelong friend and a critical ally in his mission to establish Glacier National Park. Grinnell's contact was a well-spoken Montana fur trader, rancher, and author named James Willard Schultz. At the time, Grinnell had not met Schultz in person but was already a fan of his writing, having encountered Schultz's account of his life hunting buffalo with the Pikuni Blackfeet in the popular outdoor magazine *Forest and Stream.* Intrigued by Schultz's knowledge of the area that would become Glacier National Park, Grinnell hired Schultz and a few of his fellow mountain men to guide him through the mountainous terrain in order to create a map of the area that would facilitate the park's formation. Schultz's party eagerly accepted Grinnell's offer, and the group spent several weeks exploring the area and meeting the Blackfeet summering in what they considered Mistakis, the Backbone of the World.[1]

Staggered by the beauty of what he saw and enchanted by what he considered to be the simple but admirable lives of the Blackfeet he encountered, Grinnell spent the next two decades working tirelessly to preserve in perpetuity the natural beauty of the Blackfeet homeland. The

[1] George Bird Grinnell, "To The Walled In Lakes," *Forest and Stream*, December 10, 1885; Mark David Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 73. Note on Native names: I have chosen to, wherever possible, use Blackfeet names without italicization in order to center Native epistemology. In places where I translate names or give an English language name, I have done so because a translation is necessary to make my point, or because names in the Blackfeet language are not recorded. Though other groups like the Kootenai also had names for the places I discuss, I have used names in the Blackfeet language as the Pikuni were Schultz's adopted family and his world is the focus of this paper.

story of what happened to Montana Indians in that same period is well-documented. Historians like Mark Spence and Louis Warren have studied the ways in which oppressive game laws, deceitful treaty negotiations, and racist assumptions by officials from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the National Park Service led to an acrimonious relationship with the tribes residing on nearby reservations. These historians have also documented the ways in which American attitudes towards nature, manifested in the National Park ideal, contributed to the exclusion of actual Blackfeet people the Park even while their cultural legacy was warped and used as marketing to get visitors to ride the Great Northern Railroad to Glacier.[2]

Yet, despite the scholarly attention given to this time of dispossession and cultural appropriation, few have looked at James Willard Schultz for what his life and writings can tell us about the mythology and romanticism that made Glacier one of the most popular of the National Parks. Schultz, an accomplished author, made his career by telling and retelling stories of the half-decade he spent as a young buffalo hunter and fur trader among the Pikuni. With titles like *My Life as an Indian* and *Blackfeet and Buffalo: Memories of a Life Among the Indians*, Schultz's writings reflect the literary conventions and expectations of his time. Yet, scholars should not write off Schultz for the going native narrative he seems to embody. Clues about Schultz's complex relationship with the Pikuni as well as his mission in later life to replace Euro-American place names with those that honored Blackfeet lives and histories reveal, not just the life of a man living in a changing world, but also new directions in National Parks policy and scholarship.

By reexamining James Willard Schultz as a central character in Glacier National Park's painful but important legacy, this paper outlines a reinterpretation of the dispossession narrative

[2] Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*; Louis S. Warren, *The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists in Twentieth-Century America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

that informs national park history. Schultz's involvement in mapping and recording Blackfeet place names suggests that Glacier National Park can be the site of a more collaborative approach to interpreting American Indian history that acknowledges Native American usufruct rights and cultural sovereignty and highlights the compatibility of Euro-American and Native understandings of the landscapes that became Glacier.

James Willard Schultz Plays Indian

James Willard Schultz was born on August 26th, 1859 to a well-off family living in Booneville, New York. Schultz's father died early in his life, leaving Schultz in the care of his mother. Already a rebellious child, Schultz's father's death brought out a contrarian streak in the young boy that often manifested when his mother made him attend Sunday school at the local Presbyterian church. Schultz was fond of running away from home, and on more than one occasion hopped aboard passing trains or barges bound for nearby cities. At a loss for how to handle her rebellious child but recognizing his love for adventure, Schultz's mother packed him up when he was fifteen and sent him to Peekskill Military Academy in Peekskill, New York. Schultz excelled in English and history, but disliked the the academy's constraining atmosphere of militaristic discipline. Finding himself on an undesirable path towards West Point, Schultz was only too happy to accept his uncle's invitation to visit the hotel he managed in St. Louis.[3]

Once in St. Louis, Schultz found himself surrounded by unfamiliar people. Entranced by the stories of buffalo, bears, and Indians he overheard in the lobby, Schultz made up his mind to travel up the Missouri River to Fort Benton where he might get the chance to join a bison hunt.

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[3] Warren Leonard Hanna, *Life and Times of James Willard Schultz* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986). This book represents the most accurate narrative of James Willard Schultz's life, though much of it is drawn from Schultz's autobiographical writings. While many of Schultz's recollections have been verified as accurate, the total veracity of some of Schultz's stories is difficult to ascertain. That being said, the contours of his autobiography are generally considered to be true, and this is the information I have used to reconstruct these early days of his life.

Supplied with letters of introduction from his uncle and funds from his mother, Schultz left St. Louis bound for Fort Benton, high up on the Missouri river in what is now Montana. It was there in June 1877 that Schultz met Joseph Kipp. Kipp was the grandson of Mahtotopa of the Mandan, a central figure in George Catlin's writings on American Indians. Through Kipp, Schultz was introduced to several members of the Pikuni who were leaving for a summer bison hunting expedition. Seeing this as the path towards adventure among the Indians, Schultz eagerly joined the party and headed out on his first hunt.[4]

According to Schultz's account, 1877 was a good year to be a buffalo hunter, and Schultz recalls having many adventures. In his autobiography, *My Life as an Indian: The Story of a Red Woman and a White Man in the Lodges of the Blackfeet,* Schultz writes of his participation in a raid against nearby Gros Ventres, the purpose of which was to steal away a woman with whom Schultz's Pikuni friend, Iś-sis-tsi, had struck up a forbidden relationship. Finding himself a welcome participant in the hunts following the raid, Schultz began to learthe Blackfeet language and tells his readers that he continued making friends among the Pikuni and selling the bison robes he collected to his friend Joseph Kipp. Over the next five years, between 1877 and 1882, Schultz would participate in dozens of buffalo hunts and daring raids against the Assiniboine and Cree peoples. In this time, Schultz reports that he was welcomed into the Pikuni tribe, given the Pikuni name Apikuni (which Schultz translates as Far-Off-White-Robe), and was married to a Pikuni woman named Mutsi-Awotan-Ahki. Schultz reports that these were the happiest years of his life.[5]

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[4] Ibid., 25–31; James Willard Schultz, *My Life as an Indian: The Story of a Red Woman and a White Man in the Lodges of the Blackfeet*, Second Edition (New York: Dover Publications, 2011), 26–30.
[5] Schultz, *My Life as an Indian: The Story of a Red Woman and a White Man in the Lodges of the Blackfeet*.

Yet by 1882, as the railroad crept into Blackfeet territory, the bison on which the Blackfeet economy depended began to die out. Though the Blackfeet had been living on what was technically reservation land since an 1855 treaty with the U.S. government, the tribes were coming under mounting pressure to cede even more of their homeland to Euro-American settlers. By 1885, disease, famine, and war had decimated the Blackfeet population, leaving just two-thousand people to experience the trauma of being forced into semi-permanent communities on reservations along the eastern foothills of Montana's Rocky Mountains. The 1888 and 1895 treaties between the Blackfeet and the U.S. government further reduced the size of the reservation and brought about yet more changes to the Blackfeet way of life, as they required tribes to cede their claims to the mountain areas on the reservation's west side. Notably, however, the Blackfeet retained usufruct rights to the ceded lands and continued hunting and fishing there until the United States Congress created Glacier National Park in 1910.[6]

These land cessions and the rapid decline in bison numbers in the 1880s forced James Willard Schultz to relocate his wife and infant son to a tract of reservation land Mutsi-Awotan-Ahki was allotted in treaty negotiations with the U.S. government. The land was perfect for grazing cattle, and Schultz was delighted by his new home's proximity to the snow-capped peaks that would become Glacier National Park. Schultz would act as a wilderness guide in the park for the next twenty years, and it was while living in the shadows of Glacier's peaks that Schultz began publishing his memoirs in the popular quarterly digest *Forest and Stream*. His first publication was entitled "Life Among the Blackfeet," a serial publication that would eventually become Schultz's autobiography.[7]

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[6] Grinnell, "To The Walled In Lakes."

[7] Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*, 75; *Blackfeet Treaty of Fort Benton*, 1885; Curt Sholar, "Glacier National Park and the Blackfoot Nation's Reserved Rights: Does a Valid Tribal Co-Management Authority Exist?," *American Indian Law Review* 29, no. 1 (2004): 152,

Though Schultz only spent five years living among the Pikuni, his time there had an outsized impact on the trajectory of his life. In writing about these years, Schultz established a pattern of storytelling and autobiography relying on his fictive kinship with the Pikuni Blackfeet emphasizing the popular tropes casting Indians as a noble-but-vanishing people whose customs offered an alluring vision of life free from the strictures and demands of an industrializing America. These features made Schultz an exceptionally popular author, bringing him a dedicated following from subscribers to the popular outdoor magazine *Forest and Stream* as well as a long professional relationship with George Bird Grinnell and Houghton Mifflin publishers.[8]

James Willard Schultz Makes a Career as a Writer

James Willard Schultz's prolific career as a writer really took off with those accounts of life living among the Blackfeet published in *Forest and Stream.* With harrowing tales of bison hunts and Indian raids, Schultz's autobiographical serial spoke to an American public itching for tales of adventure on the frontier and yearning to know more about the ways of Indian people who were thought to live in better harmony with nature than their Euro-American counterparts. Although Schultz's writings are classic examples of a going native narrative and of the pernicious trend towards salvage ethnography that early anthropologist and author Lewis Henry Morgan helped to popularize in the late nineteenth century, they provide a useful clue about the ways that Americans were thinking about the lands and peoples they had conquered.

One of Schultz's earliest articles in *Forest and Stream*, "The 'Pis-Kan'of the Blackfeet," records an elderly Pikuni man naemd Po-kah-yah-yi telling the story of how his people

[8] Hanna, *Life and Times of James Willard Schultz*, 95.

constructed a piskan (buffalo jump) before horses and guns changed Blackfeet hunting practices. Schultz goes on to describe the rituals that governed the jump's usage, noting that

> "The medicine man who was going to call the buffalo put on a buffalo robe, hair side out, and sitting down smoked one pipe to the Sun. Then he spoke to his wives and all the women of his lodge, saying, 'You must not go outside until I return. You must not look out of the doorway or any hole. Take this sweet grass,' giving it to his head wife, 'and every little while burn a small part of it so that the Sun will be glad. Pray that we will have good luck.'"[9]

This story is typical of Schultz's accounts of Blackfeet customs which often focus on the natural and super-natural beliefs that gave form to Native spiritual life. While it is impossible to verify that Schultz's recording of this conversation is completely accurate, Schultz's attention to these elements of Blackfoot life reveals that his readers were expecting to learn about Blackfeet spiritualism and especially about their relationship to nature.

As Philip J. Deloria explains in his survey *Playing Indian,* white Americans' obsession with Native spiritualism was a product of emerging anxiety over the dawn of the modern era and the demise of the frontier. For some American intellectuals, this anxiety drove an impulse to re-evaluate the fundamental assumptions of modernity, and as Deloria puts it, "question progress when they saw their fellow citizens defined as cogs in an industrial machines rather than independent yeomen."[10] Casting un-assimilated Indian peoples as the antithesis to the degraded American worker who had been corrupted and alienated by urbanization and modernity, Schultz's readers gained mechanism of escape from their difficult industrial lives. In this way, stories about Indians who prayed to the sun or who hunted buffalo without guns became avatars

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[9] James Willard Schultz, ""The 'Pis-Kan' of the Blackfeet," *Forest and Stream*, June 1882, 332.
[10] Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press, 1998), 99.

of a better time in which the crushing demands of modern life did not exist. For Schultz's readers, his decision to forego the trappings of modernity and live like an Indian lent him some of his Native friends' romantic nobility. Living far from the confines of civilized society, Schultz had entered what seemed to his readers a primitive world in which child-like Indians could live in unlimited freedom.

But even as Schultz's stories about mythic Indians living a timelessly noble life on the plains offered a reprieve from the demands of modern life, the actual people about whom Schultz was writing were in danger of being permanently relegated to the realm of the American imagination. By the time Schultz's first book was published in 1907, the Blackfeet had ceded much of their reservation on eastern side of what became Glacier National Park. Confined to this relatively tiny area, victimized by inept or corrupt Indians agents, and ravaged by hunger and diseases, living Blackfeet people were being erased from the landscape while they were coming to occupy an outsized position as symbols of wilderness and freedom in the American mind.[11] This real and fictional process of vanishing the Indians further popularized and shaped Schultz's writings. Tapping into the rich notion that Indian culture had to be preserved before it was too late, Schultz's work fed Americans' interest in learning more about the people who preceded them on the continent. As a result, many of Schultz's stories focus on the daily life of the Blackfeet or recount hunts and raids against nearby Native groups. Schultz's continual reassurances to his readers that his stories were re-told as accurately as his memory would allow made his readers feel like they were the heirs to a pure and ancient tradition binding them to the lands they had just begun to colonize.

Ecological Indians and the National Park Ideal

[11] Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*, 78.

Though Schultz's readership was certainly looking for stories about Native people that reaffirmed their assumptions about Indians, they were also part of a larger national endeavor to protect the American landscape from the same corrosive forces of modernity that had caused the Indians to vanish. Starting in the 1870s, Americans' concerns over the pace of national expansion and the ecological price of progress gave rise to the idea that the nation's most special landscapes needed to be preserved. Heeding calls from famous authors like John Muir, American preservationists began lobbying Congress to create what we know of as the National Parks in order to serve as a mechanism for preserving areas of particular natural or scenic beauty. In much the same way as salvage ethnography was based in the romantic appeal of a fading way of life, National Parks were established so that Americans could rejuvenate themselves by experiencing the primitive wildness that shaped the American spirit. Yet, as historians like Mark Spence have pointed out, the notion of wilderness as an unpeopled landscape was at odds with the ongoing presence of actual Native peoples. So while primitive nature and the Indians dwelling in it shaped the American character, the actual presence of Native peoples inside national parks was unacceptable. After all, hunting and gathering for subsistence were the pursuits of savages, and these practices not only stood at odds with the principles of modern, scientific environmental management, but also threatened the wild and untamed landscapes National Parks were meant to preserve.[12]

Living as he did in the liminal space between Indigenous and American worlds, James Willard Schultz saw and lived out the implications of these intellectual trends. Yet, because he was Euro-American and not Blackfeet by birth, Schultz found himself in the enviable position of being able to profit from these lines of thought. Between 1882 and 1907, Schultz mainly made

[12] Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*.

his living as a rancher while writing short stores for *Forest and Stream* on the side. But Schultz also found lucrative work as a wilderness guide for wealthy tourists looking to escape the confines of modern American society, and it was in this capacity that Schultz came to know George Bird Grinnell, one of Glacier National Park's most influential founding fathers.

Grinnell was the son of a wealthy New York family, and was a product of the kind of thinking that put Indian presence in National Parks at odds with the wilderness ideal. Trained in zoology but with a keen interest in anthropology and history, Grinnell was also the editor of *Forest and Stream* and an advocate for Indian policy reform. Through his editorship, Grinnell had run across Schultz's writings on the Blackfeet while looking for contributors to the magazine's "Natural History" section. After meeting Schultz in 1885, Grinnell hired Apikuni to guide a mapping expedition in what Grinnell hoped would become the nation's next national park.[13]

Over the next several summers, Grinnell and Schultz traversed the park mapping features and recording adventures for publication in *Forest and Stream*. Published in 1888 under the title "The Rock Climbers," Grinnell's account of the pair's encounters with Pikuni and Kootenai peoples thrilled readers. Meanwhile, Grinnell reveled in the experience of finding a place that bore no mark of human habitation. Of course, Grinnell and Shultz had frequent encounters with the Indian peoples living in the area. But for Grinnell, the absence of buildings and roads marked the area as a wilderness- a socially constructed idea that has historically depended on wilfully ignoring the presence and rights of Indian peoples. The pair's final trip into the area that would become Glacier National Park included a flurry of place-naming that drew on Native and Euro-

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[13] Ibid., 75; Hanna, *Life and Times of James Willard Schultz*, 133; George Bird Grinnell, *The Passing of the Great West: Selected Papers of George Bird Grinnell*, ed. John F. Reiger (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 2.

American languages and names for inspiration. These maps and Grinnell's accounts of his time in the Rocky Mountains with Schultz were crucial to the lobbying effort that would eventually lead to the creation of Glacier National Park in 1910, but would also lay the groundwork for future claims to the park's history and the way we think about Indians and wilderness in the twenty-first century.[14]

Grinnell's willful ignorance of Native peoples' enduring presence in the park is indicative of Americans' ethnocentric assumptions about anti-modern Indians as well as the necessary conditions of wilderness. And yet, despite these assumptions, Grinnell is also responsible for helping to preserve important knowledge in the form of Indigenous place names for various features within Glacier National Park. None of this would have been possible without the expertise and persistence of James Willard Schultz, who not only proposed Blackfeet names for features within the park, but whose book *Signposts of Adventure: Glacier National Park as the Indians Knew It* helped to preserve these stories in a way that was accessible to non-natives. While Schultz's role as amanuensis should be understood within the context of the ongoing colonial project, it is important to consider the role he played in translating, preserving, and legitimizing indigenous epistemology even though much of that knowledge was subsequently made to serve Euro-American interests.[15]

Grinnell and Schultz made their last trip to the area that would become Glacier National Park in 1891. It was during this trip that the pair got down to the business of formally recording names for the various physical features that they hoped would be incorporated into a new national park. Though Grinnell and another of his white associates named several features for

[14] George Bird Grinnell, "Climbing Blackfoot," *Forest and Stream*, March 1888; Grinnell, *The Passing of the Great West*; Hanna, *Life and Times of James Willard Schultz*, 141.
[15] James Willard Schultz, *Signposts of Adventure: Glacier National Park as the Indians Know It* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1926).

various friends and notable figures, the group largely relied on Schultz's knowledge of Blackfeet place names and stories. On that trip, Schultz named several features for his Blackfeet friends, and other features named for their resemblance to other features like Kaiyakawalin Kalaxi (Hand Mountain) or were recorded in either the Blackfeet or Kootenai language on the 1891 expedition.[16]

Grinnell and Schultz went their separate ways after 1891, but maintained cordial relationship. Schultz stayed in Montana, but after his wife's demise from disease in 1902, the former trader quit the ranching business and spent most of his time leading tourists on hunting trips. In what would turn out to be a fateful encounter, Schultz took famous New York journalist Joseph Pulitzer out to shoot bighorn sheep in 1903. The sheep were not in season, but Schultz told Pulitzer that state game officials were unlikely to find out about the illegal poaching of one or two sheep. Unfortunately, the authorities did find out, and Schultz and Pulitzer were arrested. Schultz was freed almost immediately, but upon hearing word that he was wanted in connection with Pulitzer's poaching, Schultz fled to Helena and then via train to Seattle. Though it turned out that he was only wanted to serve as a witness in the poaching case, Schultz remained in self-imposed exile until 1915 when the Great Northern Railway invited Schultz to return to Glacier to endorse the railroad's new role in bringing people to the park. It was on this return journey that Schultz was first approached by the Blackfeet to put together the place names and stories that would become *Signposts of Adventure.*[17]

Upon his return to Montana in 1915, Schultz was horrified to learn that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names and the National Park Service had erased much of the hard work he and

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[16] James Willard Schultz, *Signposts of Adventure: Glacier National Park as the Indians Know It*, 1ST edition (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1926).
[17] Hanna, *Life and Times of James Willard Schultz*, 197.

Grinnell had done in the 1880s and 90s naming places in the park. Instead of the meaningful Native place names Schultz and Grinnell wrote down, many of the Park's most significant sites had been rechristened to honor white passers by. For Schultz's Pikuni friend Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill, the renaming campaign was simply "the most recent wrong the whites have put upon us."[18] According to Schultz, Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill acknowledged the Euro-American right to sell Blackfeet lands, but not the right to erase Blackfeet history. Schultz's introduction to *Signposts of Adventure* further recounts Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill's frustration with the situation in a transcription of a speech given one evening in 1915 at a Pikuni hunting camp:

> "It is true that, nineteen winters ago, we sold to the whites this Backbone-of-the-World portion of our reservation. But did we at the time sell to them the names that we – and our fathers before us – had given to these mountains, lakes, and streams? No! We did not sell them! And now the whites have wiped them out and upon the map of the country have put their own names; foolish names of no meaning whatever! Our names, for the region were, in a way, the history of our people to far-back times. My friends, the whites' names should at once be wiped out and our names restored to the maps of the region, that our children who come after us may be reminded of the bravery, the dignity, the in-every-way fine character of their once powerful ancestors, and so be ever proud of the blood in their veins!"[19]

Though it is unlikely that Schultz's account of Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill's speech is entirely accurate to the Pikuni elder's precise wording, it does reveal anxiety and resentment towards Americans' efforts to erase Native history and refashion the area into a playground for

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[18] Schultz, *Signposts of Adventure*, 4. I use the English language translation here because Schultz never recorded his friend's name in the Pikuni language.
[19] Ibid., 4–5.

whites. This message must have been particularly important to Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill for him to take such a strong stance on the issue as his people were being systematically robbed of their treaty-guaranteed rights to hunt and gather traditional medicines inside Glacier National Park. Furthermore, this passage reveals the Pikuni's refusal to silently accept cultural erasure. When considered in the context of Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill's recognition of the power of maps to shape reality, we see Pikuni resilience in the face of cultural imperialism as well as Schultz's commitment to preserving his friends' heritage.[20]

Responding to the pleas of his Blackfeet friends to do something about this cultural erasure, Schultz fashioned himself into both mediator and preserver by creating an alternative map of the park that restored some Indigenous place names to Glacier's most notable geographic features. As historian Blanca Tovías has pointed out, the Blackfeet have a long history of harnessing Euro-American means of representation to preserve cultural knowledge and pass that knowledge along to future generations. Schultz and his book *Signposts of Adventure* fit squarely within this tradition, but importantly, represent an evolution of the value the Blackfeet placed on preserving knowledge by harnessing the ways Euro-Americans think about and represent space and time. By asking Schultz to make a map of the Glacier area that included place names in Native languages, Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill was guaranteeing the continuation of Blackfeet history while blending his way of representing time and space with Euro-American mechanisms for recording that same thing.

Signposts of Adventure was not published until 1925, but for Schultz, this project was a vindication of the intrinsic validity he saw in Native cultures as well as the power of Indigenous knowledge. As Schultz saw it, physically preserving his adopted peoples' most sacred sites and

[20] Louis S. Warren, *The Hunter's Game*, 127.

traditions was meaningless without also preserving the stories that made those places special. As Schultz recognized, Indigenous cultural knowledge depends on landscapes, and is expressed in the stories that animate those place names. For the Blackfeet, the Backbone of the World was home to important spirits like Wind-Maker, Cold-Maker, and Thunder, but bureaucracy was threatening to dislodge these important figures, leaving the Blackfeet without a spiritual anchor.[21]

In order to correct this grievous situation, Schultz spent several summers between 1915 and 1925 interviewing Blackfeet and Kootenai elders and recording meaningful place names and stories in Glacier National Park. Some of the place names Schultz recorded, like Ninástaki were important religious sites. In fact, Ninástaki was considered the home of Thunder Bird and Wind spirits, and it is likely that Blackfeet, Kootenai, Cree, and Salish peoples all visited the mountain to, as Schultz put it, "fast, pray, and by a vision – dream – obtain a sacred helper, a protector along the dangerous trail of life."[22] For many of Schultz's readers, the mythic stories about Ninástaki may have amounted simply to cultural texture, but Schultz's actions in collecting and recording the stories behind the place names reveals that he took Indian peoples oral traditions seriously and wanted his white readers to take those stories seriously as well.[23]

Though many of the names Schultz recorded in *Signposts of Adventure* seem to accurately represent the beliefs and stories of his adopted culture, not every Native place name in Glacier has a rich history stretching far into the past. Take, for example, one of Glacier National Park's most striking (and most photographed) features: Nâtos' Ai'tupo Istûkî (Going to the Sun

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[21] See Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996); Jack Holterman, *Place Names of Glacier National Park* (Helena: Riverbend Publishing, 2006), 9.

[22] Schultz, *Signposts of Adventure*, 181.

[23] Blanca Tovías, *Colonialism on the Prairies: Blackfoot Settlement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920* (Apollo Books, 2011), 116; Louis S. Warren, *The Hunter's Game*, 132; Holterman, *Place Names of Glacier National Park*, 52.

Mountain). Though the mountain already had a Blackfoot name when he arrived in Montana, Schultz felt as though the mountain's prominence called out for a more auspicious title. As Schultz tells the story, "In 1885, when hunting with my old friend, Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill, I suggested that we give it a more appropriate name, Sun Going-to Mountain."[24] Schultz records Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill's reaction as one of satisfaction, and tells his readers that his friend agreed that this would be a fittingly sacred name. Though it is impossible to authenticate Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill's reaction to Schultz's bold rechristening, Schultz surely included this reaction in *Signposts of Adventure* to lend authenticity to his fabrication. For most of Schultz's readers, what mattered was that the place name gave a sense of deep time and vested spiritual significance – something that Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-The-Hill's assent would certainly have affirmed. Whether the place names Schultz recorded were really connected to Blackfeet oral histories or if they were made-up names that sounded plausibly Native, the act of recording the names on maps and the stories in a book was what lent the place names permanence and authenticity – two factors that would be crucial in branding Glacier National Park.

Like a lot of early national parks, Glacier relied on private companies to build and operate tourist accommodations within the park. Lodging and railroad companies saw an opportunity to use Glacier's Native past for commercial gain, and everything from their advertisements to the décor in the hotel lobbies played on the notion of the vanishing Indian to lure visitors. The Great Northern Railroad made particular use of Glacier National Park's Indian history in order to establish it as a place of timelessness and primitive wilderness to help the over civilized American visitor escape the alienating demands of modern life. Exploiting Native

[24] Schultz, *Signposts of Adventure*, 118.

peoples' history while denying them access to the Park to exercise treaty rights was par for the course, and the Blackfeet were left on the margins as park contractors exploited their grief for financial gain.

Yet, even as railroad executives and national park promoters appropriated Indian culture to heighten the experience of being in a primitive wilderness, the National Park Service began renaming several sites within Glacier to reflect its Native past. In the 1930s, Dr. George C. Ruhle began a quiet campaign to rename significant locations in the park to reflect the information Schultz gathered in *Signposts of Adventure.* Many sites named for white men were re-christened to honor the Park's original inhabitants and the meaningful stories they left behind. What's more, Ruhle paid attention to the problems of translating Blackfeet names for places into English. Many of the place names Schultz recorded – like Sacred Dancing Cascade - were little more than descriptions of what the Blackfeet did at various places. Yet Ruhle, backed by a U.S. Board on Geographic Names with new interest in expressing place-names in the local Indian dialect, attempted to preserve these place names and was instrumental in getting the Park Service to adopt Native place names all over Glacier. Many of the places in Glacier still bear faux-Native language names as well as the names of famous white Americans like Teddy Roosevelt and George Bird Grinnell. But because of Schultz and Ruhle, the park also stands as an enduring challenge to take Native oral histories seriously and to remember that they come from a people whose lives and cultures are indelibly linked to a place over which they have very little direct control.[25]

Conclusion

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[25] Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*, 86–87; Holterman, *Place Names of Glacier National Park*, 9,177; Tovías, *Colonialism on the Prairies*, 148.

James Willard Schultz was a man who thrived in the liminal space between two competing cultures and who continues to defy easy categorization. On the edge of empire in the Backbone of the World, Schultz experienced the final days of a crumbling way of life. He was able to do so because the Blackfeet world before 1885 was defined by a complex intermixing of peoples that allowed Schultz to transcend the strict codes of social conduct he chafed under as a child. But despite his attempts to transcend cultural boundaries and adapt to new social landscapes, Schultz was still a product of an expanding empire bent on subjugating Indian peoples while appropriating their heritage to justify conquest. Seen from this angle, Schultz is yet another in a long line of Euro-American authors looking to profit from over-determined narratives of vanishing Indians. But while Schultz certainly is guilty of perpetuating Eurocentric assumptions about Indian peoples, the notion that he was a willing or even an unwitting participant in this process is an overly simplistic view of a complex man. The lifelong friendships he made while living with the Pikuni, as well as his adoption into the tribe and the son he had with Mutsi-Awotan-Ahki, bound Schultz's fate to that of the people he came to see as his true family. Thus, it is imperative to understand Schultz for the important role he played as amanuensis for a people whose history and heritage are bound up in an ongoing story of cultural appropriation and exclusion.

While it would be easy to dismiss *Signposts of Adventure* as an exploitative exercise (for even the name reflects a romantic vision of Glacier National Park) doing so would be a mistake. In capturing the stories behind the places, Schultz thought he was doing a service for his friends. Packaging all of these stories together in a book sold at the Glacier National Park gift shop certainly did damage to the full richness of Blackfeet stories. But *Signposts of Adventure* makes a powerful argument for the enduring importance of Native oral history as well as the legal rights

the Blackfeet maintain over the interpretation of their own cultural property. What's more, the place names Schultz recorded should remind visitors that Indian people have a distinct way of knowing the world that is forever bound to the landscapes and ecosystems white Americans have come to venerate as bastions of unpeopled nature. In this way, *Signposts of Adventure* reveals a path towards revising America's relationship with wilderness – one that does not rely on the abrogation of guaranteed rights in the service of maintaining an illusory sense that wilderness is supposed to be "untrammeled by man."[26]

James Willard Schultz also represents an opportunity and an avenue for reevaluating Park Service interpretive programs dealing with Native history. Blackfeet interpreters do now work in Glacier National Park, though most interpretation of Native cultural sights and Native history is done by seasonal staff who receive only limited training. But looking back in time and engaging with Schultz's legacy reveals that modern-day tensions over the proper interpretation of the past are not new and are certainly not intractable. Schultz, as a person who defied boundaries as well as the categorization as a salvage ethnographer, did so by establishing a long-lasting relationship with the people he was writing about. Considering himself Blackfoot by marriage and by adoption, Schultz put down deep roots and so communicated his intention to honor Blackfeet ways of knowing and representing space and history. *Signposts of Adventure* points to a means of taking seriously the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples by integrating Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges into official maps of important public places. As Margaret Wickens Pearce and Renee Pualani Louis have pointed out, "Maps are now fundamental to Indigenous self- determination and perceived to be essential tools for portraying

[26] See Kristen A. Carpenter, Sonia K. Katyal, and Angela R. Riley, "Clarifying Cultural Property," *International Journal of Cultural Property* 17, no. 03 (August 2010): 581–98; Tovías, *Colonialism on the Prairies*; *The Wilderness Act*, 1964.

Indigenous environmental, political, cultural, and socioeconomic landscapes."[27] With National Parks representing some of the most iconic and meaningful places on the continent, this mission of centering and valuing Indigenous cartography gains particular importance.[28]

Furthermore, by thinking of the Park Service as an institution with a mixed track record in terms of confronting pernicious stereotypes about American Indian peoples, Park Service personnel have an opportunity to acknowledge past wrongs and relinquish claims to interpretive authority over Indian cultural heritage. Drawing on Schultz's example, new relationships would have to be forged with the mission of recognizing, not only the cultural sovereignty of Native peoples, but also their deep history in the area. Using the preserved place names that Schultz recorded was a great first step, and the National Park Service continues to explore methods of collaboration and inclusion in Glacier National Park. But emulating James Willard Schultz and his life-long relationship with the Blackfeet might not only heal wounds, but would constitute an important next step in the effort to decolonize Indigenous knowledge and recognize that any sharing of this knowledge in the future would be an act of magnanimous generosity and not cultural appropriation for financial gain.

Finally, careful attention to the ways James Willard Schultz went about making sure Glacier National Park retained some vestiges of Indigenous oral traditions can help historians move beyond the important, but one-dimensional, dispossession narrative. To date, most historians who have taken up the task of evaluating the National Park Service's relationship with American Indians have focused on the removal of Indian peoples from their homelands, abrogation of hunting rights, and the commercialization of Indian culture. Yet this formulation

[27] Margaret Wickens Pearce and Renee Pualani Louis, "Mapping Indigenous Depth of Place," November 2008, 108, https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/6897.
[28] Sholar, "Glacier National Park and the Blackfoot Nation's Reserved Rights."

takes a snapshot of a moment in time and projects it into the twentieth century without acknowledging that Park Service personnel began interpreting (and misinterpreting) Indian cultural knowledge for the public as soon as each newly-minted park opened its gates. As one of the primary sites of contact between the American public and what they imagined to be Native American culture, the Park Service has shaped and re-shaped the way generations of white Americans and foreign visitors think about Indian peoples. Park Service maps are –and have always been – co-productions of Native and non-native ways of knowing the world, and re-examining them in this light will help historians develop a new narrative revealing how the National Parks shaped America's understanding of Indian peoples in the twentieth century.

James Willard Schultz continued writing about his glory days hunting bison with the Pikuni in Montana for the rest of his life. All in all, Schultz spent nearly fifty years living on-and-off with the Blackfeet, during which time he wrote 37 books and several dozen articles about his life with the Pikuni. Shultz, through George Bird Grinnell, also played a critical role in the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924, and led a successful relief campaign to help Blackfeet families whose livestock had been devastated by a horrendous drought in 1919. But Schultz was a man who suffered a fair share of woe in his own life. He spent his last thirty years in ill health suffering from recurring lung infections and bouts of rheumatism that sometimes kept him bedridden for weeks at a time. Schultz's chronic illnesses, repeated injuries, money woes, and constant trips to Montana to visit his Pikuni friends destroyed his second marriage to a woman named Celia Belle Hawkins who he met by publishing a personal ad in 1907. Schultz found some happiness towards the end of his life when he married Jessica Donaldson, an anthropology professor at Montana State College, in 1931. The pair collaborated happily on Donaldson's research and Schultz's writing projects, traveling between Denver and the Wind

Rivers Reservation where his Pikuni friends had been relocated. James Willard Schultz died of a heart attack in June, 1947. He was buried next to his first wife on the Blackfeet reservation in Montana, where his gravestone serves as a monument to painful historical legacies, but also as a reminder that it is possible to transcend boundaries through mutual understanding and a shared admiration for the continent's most special places.[29]

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[29] Hanna, *Life and Times of James Willard Schultz*, 221, 318.

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