

UFO STORIES OF THE NORTH WESTERN INDIANS

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THE UFO story began many centuries ago, perhaps even pre-dating the coming of man. We have accounts in the Bible, from the Egyptians, and in the pictorial writing of the Stone Age. And in the United States, we have the legends of the American Indian, from North to South, East to West.

I came across the following tales in a book published by the University of Oklahoma Press and written by the Professor Emeritus of English at Washington State University, Ella E. Clark. Entitled "Indian Legends of the Northern Rockies", it records the creation myths and ancient legends of the Indian tribes that lived in what are now the states of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Washington. Because of the number of legends that could be related to the UFO field, I have decided to concentrate mainly on those involving the "Little People"—creatures very similar to our modern-day "UFO-nauts". I would further point out that the author herself makes no attempt or suggestion at a connection, and that the concepts advanced in this article are my own.

The legends are from the storytellers of the following tribes: Group 1: the Nez Percés, the Flatheads, the Kalispels, and the

Coeur d'Alenes; Group 2: the Arapaho, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfeet, the Crow, the Assiniboine, and the Sioux; and Group 3: the Shoshoni, the Bannocks, and the Kutenais.

Group 1 were Plateau Indians, dwelling in the country of eastern Washington, Oregon, Montana, and much of Idaho; their staple food was the salmon; they lived in communal houses in winter, in simple lean-tos during summer.

Group 2 were the Plains Indians living from the Rockies eastward to the Mississippi and as far south as Texas. The buffalo was their staple diet and was also used for just about everything else, including clothing. The Indians of these tribes travelled by foot until the introduction of the horse during the first half of the 18th century, and since they were rovers, this meant that they were in fact a hardy people.

Group 3 were also Plains Indians. In addition, they were Plateau Indians, as they were representative of neither exclusively.

For our purposes, it must be noted that the tribes listed above are invariably described as composed of extremely intelligent and extremely honest individuals, with the possible exception of the warlike Blackfeet. Further, it should be noted that the Indian has a peculiarly

retentive memory, and of course, respect for their ancestors led to the careful preservation of the stories quoted.

Nearly every tribe in the Rockies had some legends about the "Little People". Most detailed and typical are those of the Nez Percés, who called these strange dwarfs "The Stick Indians", because they lived in deep forests. The legends usually went as follows.

The Stick Indians were about 3ft. in height, and formed very much like humans. They wore deer skins, and lived in the deep forests, although they roamed far and wide. Often at night they made strange sounds. They were reputed to be able to turn invisible by rubbing themselves with a certain type of grass. They could hoot exactly like owls or howl exactly like coyotes. They were possessed of incredible strength: an old white man told an Indian once that he had seen a dwarf walking off with a calf under each arm.

They had a habit of invading Indian homes and demanding food, with dire consequences for those who refused. On p. 50 of this reference book by Miss Clark, a story is related how one evening a hunting party was camped for the night, during which a storm blew up. The narrator's uncle ordered the

members of the party to cover themselves with blankets, for "A strange visitor is coming." The narrator's father peeked out and saw a little man with long hair, dressed in deer skins. The creature demanded food which was given him. The next day, however, the narrator's father wound up with a face swollen, presumably as punishment for having peeked at the little man. It is interesting to note the swelling feature, as it is often reported today by witnesses to close-range UFO sightings.

Another parallel is to be noted in the fact that the Stick People often kidnapped children. Once, during the last few decades, a party was huckleberrying in the hills. They locked a baby in the car for safe-keeping. While picking berries, the child was heard to cry. It was discovered that he had disappeared. When the cry was heard again, the child was found some distance away. Something had removed him from the locked car, and the Indians ascribed the act to the Little People.

The Flatheads described the Little People as about 3ft. tall, with very dark skins, apparently darker than the Indians' own skins. Strangely, the Little People were reputed to own herds of tiny horses less than 3ft. in height. These horses were not used for packing or riding, but in winter were killed for food.

The Coeur d'Alenes report that many dwarfs lived around Rosebud Lake which was surrounded by dense brush. They had the odd habit of beating sticks against the trunks of trees. Some were dressed in squirrel skins, and some were described as being users of the bow and arrow. They had a habit of shouting when they saw strangers, thus drawing hunters on to wild-goose chases, much like the strange lights that today hover over roads and deserted areas across the country, luring police and others away from such places.

The Shoshoni and the Bannocks had many legends about the Ninnimbe, the "Little Demons". These were supposed to haunt the areas near the sources of Muddy Creek, Wyoming. They, like the others, were between 2 and 3ft. tall, very strong, and dressed in goatskin clothing. They were expert stalkers

and hunters, and were described as fearless. Very interesting is the concept of the invisible poison arrows with which they killed game and many a Shoshoni. They were reputed to have done the carvings on the rocks in the Wind River country. The Indians had a curious defence, which consisted of putting on a great deal of paint, for the Little People were supposedly afraid of paint.

One of the Little People allegedly still survives. He, too, is called Ninnimbe. He is described as an old man, sturdily built, dressed in brightly-painted skins. His nose, like Rudolph's, is red. He lives in the mountains, appearing and disappearing at will. Stone darts have been found which have been attributed to him.

The dwarfs are reported to be cannibalistic in the legends of the Shoshoni and the Bannocks. The descriptions are the same, as well as the reported great physical strength. But the creatures had the disconcerting and somewhat gruesome habit of eating children and their mothers. The Little Man would seize a child, devour it, then perfectly imitate the cry of the child to lure its parent. When the Indian woman was seized, her screams usually frightened the being off, but the women usually died before morning. The Little Men also would creep up on a party of children, hide their tails by wrapping them around their bodies, and request to play with the children. They would then seize a child, perch him on their tails, and run off, never to be seen again. Curiously enough, these cannibals would never eat men. Instead, they would invite them into their homes and offer *them* food.

The Little People of the Arapaho, Gros Ventres, and Blackfeet were again 3ft. high, with black skins and big stomachs, powerfully built. They were versed in a crude sign language and reportedly carved the rock houses in the deep canyons in Wyoming, North-east Minnesota, and Montana. Some houses and skeletons remain in these areas, according to the Indians. The creatures were also far fleet runners than the swiftest Indian, as well as being incredibly strong, and, here too, cannibalistic. These tribes

tried to kill off the Little People, but arrows had no effect, so they were forced to herd the enemy into a deep gorge, drive them to the trees, and set fire to them, destroying them all.

Then there is the story of the Medicine Wheel, a photograph of which is included in the book. This strange construction, located in the Big Horn Mountains west of Sheridan, Wyoming, is composed of thousands of limestone slabs laid in a wheel form 245ft. in diameter. There are 28 or 29 spokes radiating from it. On some of the slabs, buffalo skulls look to the east.

A story told about Red Plume, a famous Crow Indian chief, goes to the effect that he once went to the Medicine Wheel and stayed there four nights and four days. On the fourth night, he was visited by three little men and a little woman. They conducted him to a hidden underground passage beneath the Medicine Wheel. He remained with them for three days and three nights, learning the arts of war and how to be a good leader. This story backs up the belief that the Indians tell: that the Little People lived once in the rock shelters to be found near the strange monument.

The above stories are the majority to be found in Miss Clark's book, but by no means all. It is interesting to note the strange relationships these tales have with the ones heard today from the sober lips of businessmen, police officers, and others who have encountered these strange creatures—or ones like them.

For instance, it is a fact that quite a few stories of "babies crying" have been reported to have occurred in cemeteries, supposedly haunted houses, etc. And here we have the Shoshoni telling us that this is a technique to lure small children from their mothers, to be devoured.

The incredible strength has been reported by several South American witnesses, as has the apparent invulnerability to simple weapons like knives.

The entire area of the creatures' interest in children today leads to gruesome conjectures when related to the cannibal stories of yesterday. And the disappearances of young men and teenagers—is there reason to believe that we are little more

than a stockyard for sub-human races? I think this latter answer is too limited, but we must consider the possibility that some few missing children may have indeed been murdered, and that others may have narrowly escaped this fate and lived to describe their meetings with these "abominable little men".

I would like to suggest in conclusion that an effort be made to investigate the areas described by

the Northern Rockies Indian tribes as abodes of the Little People. It may be that remains might be found indicating the fate of these beings over the years. It might also be reasonable to quietly find out what is happening in these areas with regard to the UFO phenomenon itself.

I suggest that researchers in the North-west take the time to visit the Medicine Wheel, the Owyhee

Range, the Salmon and Wind River countries, and investigate the occurrences there, particularly the incidence of "cattle rustling", or kidnappings, as well as straight UFO and contactee reports. It may be that the little creatures that plagued the Ancient Indian are even now plaguing modern man, using far more advanced techniques and perhaps under the auspices of a new master—the "Alien".

DISC DRAWS WATER

On the sunny July morning in 1965 that John Hembling, geologist and exploration manager for a mining company, and a companion geologist stepped from a helicopter atop a mountain ridge in north-central British Columbia they expected it would be another routine day of reconnaissance and survey.

For several weeks they had been studying this mineral-rich terrain about 70 miles north of Hazelton. Working above the timberline they had a sweeping view of the country's rocky peaks, some of which already bore the mark of mining development. Soon they would submit their report on the feasibility of further development.

But on this particular day they were to have the unexpected opportunity of making a study of a much different sort.

"It was about 10 o'clock and we had just set up our equipment after the helicopter left," Hembling told us, "when we saw a silvery object, shining in the sun, appear over a small ridge below us. It had a flattened-out look and our first reaction was that it was some kind of delta-wing aircraft. We soon realised it was not."

Facing west away from the sun, with the object below them about half a mile away, they had a clear view of what was happening.

"The object was about 50ft. in diameter," he said. "On top of its dome there was a little knob, and around the base of the dome there were circular markings. They might

have been some kind of riveting, or even windows. They were a bit too small to tell.

"Below these, on the face of the disc itself, there were larger rectangular markings which could have been glass or metallic. Our impression was that they were windows. As far as we could see, there were three of them."

As the two men watched in astonishment, the object moved slowly across the ridge until it was above a small glacial lake, barely more than a pond. Hovering there an instant, it then descended to less than 50ft. above the water. Again it hovered and, to the men's further amazement, lowered a pipe-like instrument from its underside into the water.

"At first we thought it was something like a rope-ladder," Hembling said, "but it didn't just drop down. It came out smoothly and steadily as if under mechanical control."

During this procedure the observers were conscious of a humming sound from the object "like a quiet electric motor." With its appendage in the lake, the disc then rotated slowly like a water-borne top until its "windows" faced the two men.

"We had a distinct feeling it knew we were there," Hembling said.

After remaining in that position for about eight minutes—as the men judged it—the object withdrew its "pipe" as carefully as it had lowered it.

"It climbed slowly, then all of a sudden it was off," Hembling said. "It

shot over the ridge, made a sharp turn without skidding and was out of sight in about 20 seconds. We figured it had gone 20 or 25 miles by the time it disappeared."

That would give it a speed of at least 3,600 m.p.h.

So extraordinary was their experience that the two men discussed it for the rest of the day, comparing observations and impressions. They also wondered how the pictures would turn out, for a meaningful part of the whole incident was that Hembling's companion carried a camera and took numerous shots of the sighting. But, for Hembling at least, that part of the incident was to lead to disappointment.

"I never heard from him again," he said of his companion. "He returned to the States before he had a chance to get the pictures developed, and that was the end of it. I wrote him twice asking about the pictures but he didn't reply. I don't know what happened."

Somewhere, as a result, there is a UFO witness who may have some of the most remarkable camera shots of this phenomenon ever recorded. Perhaps, as had happened before, he submitted them for official scrutiny and, after being bound to silence, failed to have them returned.

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