

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

LJSDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

CHIEF PLENTY COUPS HOME

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: CHIEF PLENTY COUPS (ALEK-CHEA-AHOOSH) HOME

Other Name/Site Number: CHIEF PLENTY COUPS STATE PARK

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 0.5 miles west of Pryor (at the intersection of BIA roads number 5 and number 8 (Edgar Road)

Not for publication:

City/Town: Pryor

Vicinity:

State: Montana

County: Big Horn

Code: 003

Zip Code:

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: ___

Public-Local: ___

Public-State: X

Public-Federal: ___

Category of Property

Building(s): ___

District: X

Site: ___

Structure: ___

Object: ___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>5</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 2

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: DOMESTIC
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE
GOVERNMENT
COMMERCE/TRADE
FUNERARY

Sub: single dwelling
agricultural field
capitol
department store
grave/burials

Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE
RECREATION AND CULTURE
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE

Sub: outdoor recreation
museum
agricultural field

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: OTHER: log cabin

Materials:

Foundation: STONE/sandstone

Walls: WOOD/log

Roof: WOOD/shake

Other:

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Setting

Plenty Coups' dwelling is a log house ... back from the road in a grove of cottonwoods. As we drove up the land and approached the rambling old house in its setting of cool dark shadows, I admit that I was deeply moved. This was the Home of a great and famous man, the ruler of a people, an avowed sovereign.

--Glendolin Damon Wagner, 1933¹

The Homestead of Chief Plenty Coups, one of the last and most celebrated traditional chiefs of the Crow Indians, is located about half a mile west of the small community of Pryor and twenty-three miles south-southwest of Billings, in western Big Horn County, Montana. The chief's one-and-a-half-story log dwelling is nestled in a grove of historic cottonwood trees in the tranquil valley of Pryor Creek.² Now designated as a Montana State park, the Homestead lies within the boundaries of the Crow Reservation near its western border. The surrounding area is sparsely populated, with land employed in such traditional agricultural pursuits as grazing, hay cultivation, and crop production. The historic resources comprising the Homestead are in good condition and possess excellent historic integrity.

The 195.4-acre site includes the house of Chief Plenty Coups and an adjacent one-story log store operated by the chief. About 150 feet north of the chief's house is the Plenty Coups Spring, a site of historic and cultural significance. The Plenty Coups family burial plot is part of a monument located northwest of the main house and is surrounded by open parkland with picnic facilities extending west to Pryor (or Arrow) Creek, which meanders through the property in a southwesterly to northeasterly direction. Some distance south of the historic buildings is the 1972 Chief Plenty Coups Museum, a mobile home occupied by the park manager, and a maintenance shop associated with park operations.

North and east of the house is a large hay meadow, which stretches eastward toward the road to Pryor, BIA Road No. 5. Remnants of a feeder ditch off the Lost Creek Ditch, which once watered the meadow, remain in the hay field. Road No. 5 runs atop the raised former roadbed of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, which was built through the area in the early 1900s. Southeast of the main house and divided from the rest of the Homestead by the road is another of the chief's fields, which is leased for cultivation. The two-thirds of the Homestead lying southeast of Pryor Creek is relatively flat, with a slight slope from southeast to northwest. The remainder of the Homestead lying northwest of the creek includes high bluffs. Roads and parking areas within the park are gaveled.

¹ Glendolin Damon Wagner and William A. Allen, *Blankets and Moccasins: Plenty Coups and His People the Crows* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1933), 276.

² Photographs are keyed to the Photographic Index Map.

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The Pryor (Arrowhead) Mountains, which dominate vistas south of the Homestead, hold great significance for the Crow people of the Pryor area as a traditional fasting place and are believed to be the Home of the Little People, spirits who assist humans. Northwest of Plenty Coups' house are sandstone ridges which have been used for centuries by the Crow as grave-sites. One of the ridges visible from the Homestead contains a spring with a small pool of water³ where pregnant women go to learn the sex of their unborn children.

The valley was a major encampment area and travel corridor for Native Americans before permanent settlement arrived. The juxtaposition of the natural setting important to the Crow for centuries with the historic resources which reflect the tribe's adaptation to the American culture embodies the significance of the Homestead of Chief Plenty Coups.

Contributing Resources

Contributing resources within the Chief Plenty Coups Homestead consist of two buildings (a house and a store) and three sites (a spring, a burial ground, and the Homestead grounds generally). Please refer to the Sketch Map and Photographic Index Map.

*Chief Plenty Coups House (Resource Number 1)*⁴

As a young man, Plenty Coups had a vision which foretold that he would live not in a traditional tipi, but in a log house where he would reach old age and become a great chief of his people. The vision indicated a sacred spring in the Pryor Valley where the dwelling should be built. Plenty Coups remembered: "Then I saw the spring down by those trees, this very house Just as it is, these trees which comfort us today, and a very old man sitting in the shade, alone."⁵ Erected for the chief in 1884 and enlarged in subsequent years, this house was the fulfillment of Plenty Coups' vision and his Home until his death in 1932. On his Homestead, Plenty Coups led his people by example through his assimilation of aspects of American culture combined with his preservation of many Crow traditions. As the most substantial residence in the Pryor area and the Home of a great chief, the building became a meeting place for tribal members, local ranchers, and distinguished visitors and the traveling public who sought out the renowned leader.

The chief's house is a one-and-a-half- story, L-shaped, log building constructed in three distinct stages. The original portion of the house is the central, one-and-a-half-story, rectangular (15'X 20') section, which was erected about 1884. The long axis of the house is oriented in a southwest-northeast direction, with the entrance of the house facing southeast.⁶ The original section of the house has a side gable, wood shingle clad roof with overhanging eaves, boxed

³ "Baakáatitshiwishe," or "Where There Are Children's Footprints."

⁴ Descriptions of the house and store include contributions by Rodd Wheaton, National Park Service Intermountain Support Office, Denver, Colorado.

⁵ Frank B. Linderman, *Plenty-Coups, Chief of the Crows* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1930, reprint 1962), 65.

⁶ Crow entrances traditionally faced east, toward the rising sun. See Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton, *Native American Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 156. Dimensions are approximate.

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soffits ornamented with shingle stop moldings on the narrow fascia, and a narrow brick chimney which breaks through the apex of the southwest gable.⁷ The walls of the original house are of square-notched, slightly dovetailed, hewn logs with visible ax marks and daubed joints; the southwest gable face is clad with clapboard siding. The house has a foundation of native stone.

The front (southeast) wall of the original portion of the house has a central four-panel door with narrow wood trim. The trim's headpiece extends over the jamb sections. Adjacent to the door toward the southwest is a horizontal window with paired four-light sliding sashes, which was added after the time of Plenty Coups.⁸ The window has narrow wood trim and head and sill pieces project beyond the jamb members. A shed roof open porch with wood post supports, which have slightly chamfered upper edges, extends across the front of original section of the house and an addition to the southwest. The porch floor is composed of wood planks. Centered above the entrance is a gabled, pedimented, through-the-cornice dormer with clapboard siding within narrow corner boards and with a one-over-one-light double-hung sash window. The pediment has widely overhanging verges and eaves. The window has plain board trim with a drip cap set at the head. The dormer was added at the time of the 1909 addition to the house and is of the same design as the dormers of the addition.

The rear (northwest) wall of the original portion of the house has a single, centered window on the first story. The window is one-over-one-light double-hung sash with narrow board trim at the jambs and a wide headpiece. The joists of the upper floor project through the exterior on the northwest wall in a row near the top of the window. The upper two logs of the rear wall are rounded, contrasting with the square hewn logs below, indicating that the roof was slightly raised at the time of the 1909 addition.⁹

About 1900, a one-story, gable roof, square (15' X 15') addition was added to the southwest wall of the original house. The addition is the same width as the original portion of the house. The roof has slightly overhanging eaves and is clad with wood shingles. The walls of the wing are constructed of hewn logs; logs of smaller girth than those of the original section of the house and have half lap square notching and daubed joints. The front (southeast) wall of the addition has a centered entrance facing the porch. The entrance has narrow wood trim with a headpiece that extends beyond the jambs and a paneled and glazed door with square light above three horizontal panels. A two-section screen door is in front of the paneled and glazed door. This door replaced what was originally a window (date of alteration unknown). The southwest wall (gable end) of the addition has a centered, tall, narrow, four-over-four-light window with narrow board trim, as does the rear wall.

The last part of the house to be completed was the one-and-a-half-story, rectangular (15' X 30') wing attached to the northeast wall of the original house in 1909. Many of the materials used for construction of the addition, including bricks, dormers, windows, doors, and interior pine siding,

⁷ This gable end originally had a window on the upper story, which was presumably eliminated when the addition was constructed.

⁸ Jeff Shelden, "Chief Plenty Coups Historic Structure Report," prepared for Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, (Lewistown, Montana: Prairie Wind Architecture, August 1992, revised November 1992), 5.

⁹ Ibid., 5.

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were salvaged from Fort Custer which was dismantled in 1903.¹⁰ The northwest wall of the addition is almost flush with the northwest wall of the original dwelling and the southeast wall of the addition projects beyond the front wall of the original dwelling, creating an L plan. The addition has a gable roof set perpendicular to the gable roof of the original portion of the house. The roof has wood shingles, overhanging eaves, boxed soffits ornamented with shingle stop molding, and two evenly spaced dormers on the northeast which are identical in design to that of the original portion of the house. The walls of the addition are constructed of rounded logs with square half lap notching and daubed joints atop a stone foundation and the gable faces are clad with clapboard siding.

The northeast wall of the 1909 addition is symmetrical in design, with a central entrance with four-paneled door with plain board trim and a two-section screen. Flanking the door are one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows with plain board trim. Centered above the windows are the dormers of the upper story. Extending across the first story is a full-width shed roof porch with wood post supports. The porch is a 1993 reconstruction of the original porch at this location. The porch has a wood deck atop stone piers.

The southeast gable end of the 1909 addition has a center window on the first story and a similar window on the upper story, which extends from the clapboard of the gable face into the lower log walls. The one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows have wide plain board trim with a drip cap on the upper head. The verges are boxed and have dropped fascias and moldings. Plain barge-boards are set flush with the clapboards and the gables have small returns. The northwest wall has no windows. A short brick chimney projects from the roof ridge. The house, which underwent exterior restoration in 1993, sits on a level site with the surrounding yard landscaped with grass as it was in the chief's time. Surrounding the house are historic broadleaf cottonwood trees planted by Plenty Coups. This variety of cottonwood is not native to the area, but was introduced by farmers and ranchers to provide shade. Crow people in southeastern Montana did not typically plant trees around their dwellings; this was a landscape element adopted by Plenty Coups in fulfillment of his vision of a log Home surrounded by cottonwood trees.

Interior

The first floor of the interior of the house is divided into three rooms corresponding to the three periods of construction of the house. The central room, the original core of the house, which was later used as the kitchen, has exposed log walls with visible ax marks, some portions of which are covered with wallboard. The room has linoleum clad floors and a horizontal board ceiling. The doors and windows have plain board trim and comer blocks with extensions except for the horizontal window, which is without blocks. The room originally had access to the upper story, which may have been removed at the time of the 1909 addition. After Plenty Coups' death, the ceiling of this room was raised and linoleum and wallboard were added.

¹⁰ Timothy P. McCleary, with contributions from Timothy Bernardis and Vida Falls Down, "The Chief Plenty Coups House and Sacred Spring" (Crow Agency Montana: Little Big Horn College, 1996), 26. McCleary notes that Crow Chiefs Two Leggings and Medicine Crow also included materials from Fort Custer in the construction of their houses. Crow Historian Howard Boggess gathered the *information on Fort Custer.

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The room to the southwest in the one-story addition was used as a dining room in the 1920s, and in the last years of the chief's life became his bedroom.¹¹ After Plenty Coups' death, the Kiwanis used the room for museum exhibits; display cases are still in place against the walls. The door and windows have plain board trim with slightly projecting headpieces. The room has a linoleum floor, a simple baseboard, and bead board on the ceiling. The ceiling is coved on the north and south. A stove flue is located between this room and the central room.

The third room on the first floor, which extends the length of the 1909 addition, was utilized as a living room and for gatherings such as meetings, dances, and councils. The walls are composed of exposed, smooth, rounded logs and wood flooring runs the length of the room, topped by a plain milled wood baseboard. The ceiling is clad with pine bead board siding and enclosed with a plain board cornice. The doors and windows are trimmed with plain boards with comer blocks. The head blocks have molded extensions. A four-paneled door leads to the center room. The northwest wall has a fireplace whose bricks were salvaged from Fort Custer. A brick firebox covered with stucco projects into the room. In front of the firebox is a stone hearth inscribed "Plenty Coos"¹² which projects slightly above the flooring. A stuccoed flue with a stove thimble extends above the firebox.

At the opposite end of the room is a stairway to the upper floor. The staircase rises several steps to winders, then has a long run to a small second floor room which provides access to a room in the 1909 wing and a room above the 1884 center section of the house. The stairway has a plain square section newel post with a simple cap set on the bottom step, two square section balusters per cap, and a simple molded hand rail. The carriage is open, with the tread ornamented with a scotia projecting beyond the stringer. The undercarriage is open, with the soffits being clad in bead board siding. The structure of the stairway is mortised and tenoned through the exterior log wall. The stair has an intermediate newel at the turn which receives the railings and a newel at the top of the staircase. Wall stringers extend up the run. A similar balustrade extends around the second floor stair well.

The rooms of the upper floor have interior partitions with pine siding with beaded boarding laid horizontally. The trim has comer blocks with extensions. The ceilings extend to the undersides of the collar beams and slope down to the lower walls accommodating the cant of the roof. In the 1909 addition, the ceilings have bead board siding. The rooms have wood floors with plain baseboards.

Above the original central part of the house was the chief's private room. The room corresponded in location and usage to the man's sleeping place in the rear west side of the tipi.¹³ During the chief's life the walls contained a variety of photographs and special possessions such as his medicine bundles, weapons, and letters from prominent men; these materials are now housed in the park museum. In this room, Plenty Coups performed ceremonials and slept before infirmities of old age rendered him unable to climb the stairs. The upper walls and ceiling of the

¹¹ McCleary, 25.

¹² Plenty Coos is a variant spelling of Plenty Coups which is often found in documents of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including congressional reports.

¹³ Nabokov and Easton, 156.

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room are covered with brightly printed wallpaper and the lower walls are covered in floral patterned fabric, which also relates to tipi design. According to historian Timothy McCleary

Aside from the many valuable photographs, papers, and native items that were once in this room, the cloth around the lower half of the room is of particular importance. This cloth is a representation of the dew-cloths or linings that are used for proper ventilation in a tipi, known in the Crow language as *bitáalasshia*. Besides the practical needs for a lining in a tipi, they also serve an aesthetic purpose. Before the end of inter-tribal warfare, a man's war record was often portrayed on these linings, and in fact this practice lasted into the early reservation period.... Photographs of the interiors of tipis in the early 1900s show Crow tipi linings to be made from colorful floral and striped patterned cloth. The practice of using colorful fabric for linings has continued to this day.¹⁴

Store (Resource Number 2)

A one-story log store erected in 1893 is located immediately south of the house. The chief established the store, which he called "the mess," when Crow laborers were employed in the construction of an extensive system of irrigation ditches in the Pryor area during the 1890s. The Chief sold products from his farm and other supplies as a means of teaching his fellow tribal members about the American system of commerce and trade.

The low, hewn log building faces northeast. The building has a shallow gable roof constructed of planks set over log purlins with chisel-pointed crowns, board fascia and verge boards, and a sod roof. The walls have half dovetail notching with slightly projecting crowns. The front (northeast) of the store has an entrance and a horizontal window. The entrance has broad trim and a vertical board door hinged to open inward. Two flat stepstones are in front of the door. The window has sliding sash with six lights. The opening is trimmed with a wide head piece and narrow jamb pieces. There is also a slightly off-center, one-over-one-light double-hung sash window with narrow board trim on the northwest wall facing the house. The southeast and southwest walls have no openings. The interior of the store has wide board flooring and exposed log walls and ceiling structure.

The roof of the store has been repaired and the foundation has been slightly raised atop a clay tile foundation. The window and door on the front are not original and the wood floor of the interior has been added since the time of Plenty Coups. Historic photographs from the 1940s appear to indicate that the store is in its original location, but its orientation has changed slightly from facing north to facing northeast.¹⁵

Plenty Coups Spring (Resource Number 3)

Plenty Coups' vision told him that this spring was sacred and that he should build his house near it. The spring served both pragmatic and spiritual functions. It provided Plenty Coups and his

¹⁴ McCleary, 37.

¹⁵ Sheldon, 8.

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family with drinking water, which he credited with allowing his long life; it kept their food cool; and they used it for bathing. Springs are considered sacred to the Crow people and are believed to possess important powers.¹⁶ As was traditional among his tribe, Plenty Coups prayed about difficult decisions confronting his people while sitting by this spring.¹⁷ Located approximately 150 feet north-northeast of the house, the serene setting of the spring provides a magnificent view of the Pryor Mountains to the southeast. The small pool is fed by an underground aquifer, and flows from the roots of a tall cottonwood tree. The spring has a strong flow and remains unfrozen in the winter.

During Plenty Coups' life, the spring was enclosed with a small wooden structure that served as a spring house for storing perishable foods; the area of the sacred spring was fenced with wooden logs to keep out animals and access by individuals was controlled by Plenty Coups. Rancher caretakers of the site after Plenty Coups' death allowed the spring house to deteriorate and animals to damage the spring. In 1966, a special committee composed of Crow tribal members hired archaeologists to clean the spring. In the process, many beads, elk teeth, and other prayer offerings put there by Crows were found. The spring is still regarded as a sacred site that the tribe continues to use for ceremonies.¹⁸

Burial Ground (Resource Number 4)

Following Plenty Coups' death in 1932, his body was laid to rest in the family burial ground next to the existing graves of two of his wives and his stepdaughter.¹⁹ The gravesite lies about 550 feet northwest of the house and is enclosed with a heavy link chain and concrete post fence. Three graves are indicated by stone headstones: Plenty Coups is buried in the grave furthest south; Strikes the Iron, who died about 1931, in the middle; and Kills Together his companion of thirty years, who died in 1923, on the north. The grave of Mary, the stepdaughter, is not marked. In the distance to the west are traditional Crow burial ridges. In 1941, the Billings Kiwanis Club dedicated a monument honoring Plenty Coups at the gravesite. The memorial, designed by Billings artist LeRoy Greene consists of an eight-ton boulder embedded with a bronze plaque cast by Anaconda Copper Company inscribed "Plenty Coups Chief of the Crows 1848-1932."²⁰ A metal flagpole is adjacent to the boulder and both are atop a concrete base. The small sandstone gravestones were placed on the graves during the 1950s.²¹

Chief Plenty Coups Homestead Site (Resource Number 5)

The 195.4 acres of the Homestead site reflect the evolution of the landscape during Chief Plenty Coups' ownership. The site as a totality is significant for its representation of the federal government system, which divided reservation land among individual tribal members to encourage acculturation. The features within the site reflect both the chief's adaptation of the

¹⁶ McCleary, 49 and 56.

¹⁷ McCleary, 61-62. These offerings are now preserved in the Chief Plenty Coups Museum.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Park Manager Rich Pittsley notes that many Crow families have private cemeteries.

²⁰ *Billings Gazette*, 4 August 1940 and 29 June 1941.

²¹ Frederick C. Krieg, "Chief Plenty Coups: The Filial Dignity," *Montana* 16 (October 1966): 39.

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land to American farming practices and his efforts to preserve traditional Crow culture. To Plenty Coups, the site of his Homestead was of primary importance because its location had been shown to him in a vision, and he refused to live anywhere else.

Landscape features contributing to the significance of the site, in addition to the natural features discussed above, include: the grove of broadleaf cottonwood trees Plenty Coups planted surrounding his house; the agricultural fields where the chief raised hay, wheat, and oats; the remaining six apple trees of the chief's orchards; the remnants of the irrigation system erected by Crow laborers to water the chief's fields; and the road which follows the alignment of the nineteenth century Billings-Meetssetse road, which in the 1900s was the roadbed of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad and later became the paved automobile road to Pryor. Historic photographs indicate that the site also contained sheds, corrals, and other agricultural outbuildings which were allowed to deteriorate after the chief's death and were razed in 1965.²²

The natural setting evidences few other alterations during the past century. The valley was an important north-south and east-west crossroads and pathway for indigenous people and later travelers.²³ A memorial stone monument in the Park commemorates the nearby Bozeman Trail. An archaeological study in 1969 found pottery, lithics, and faunal remains in the area of the Homestead, while a 1978 survey recorded eighteen localities having remains of past cultural activity, including bone fragments, lithics, buried cultural strata, and graves. The precise age of these recorded archaeological sites has not yet been determined. These sites should be re-examined at a future date to determine which, if any, fall within the period of significance of the Chief Plenty Coups Homestead.²⁴

Noncontributing Resources

Three resources within the park (all buildings) are evaluated as noncontributing: the museum, the park manager's Home, and the maintenance shop. All were built after the State of Montana occupied the Homestead as a state park and date to the 1970s and 1980s. Smaller non-historic features, such as memorial markers, picnic tables, and two restrooms were not counted.

Chief Plenty Coups Museum (Resource 6)

²² Billings Gazette, 24 May 1951.

²³ McCleary states that several prehistoric and historic trails are located near, but not within, the boundaries of the Chief Plenty Coups Homestead.

²⁴ The 1978 study also identified the graves of Plenty Coups and his family and the Plenty Coups Spring, which are counted as contributing historic resources, and other historic Crow burials on the north edge of the property. When the sites recorded in 1978 were revisited in 1988, those along Pryor Creek were gradually being destroyed due to natural erosion and the historic burials (excluding those of the Plenty Coups family) had all been looted and scattered. See Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Cultural Resource Monitoring Form, site number 24BH657, 13 May 1988, in the files of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Helena, Montana. Information in the 1969 and 1978 studies was summarized from Sherri Deaver and Kevi Jon Kooistra, "Draft Ethnographic Nomination Form for Chief Plenty Coups State Park" (Billings, Montana: Ethnoscience, 30 September 1991), in the files of National Park Service, Intermountain Regional Office.

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This one-story building was erected in 1972 with tribal, state, and private funds to house the numerous personal items which Chief Plenty Coups directed should be maintained at the site after his death. Designed by Billings architect Eugene Padanyi-Gulyas, the circular concrete and native stone building with central skylight represents a Sun Dance lodge.

Park Manager's Mobile Home (Resource 7)

This mobile Home was placed on its site at the western edge of the park in 1989. The side gable roof building with projecting enclosed porch faces north and serves as the residence of the park's manager.

Park Shop (Resource 8)

The park shop building was constructed in the early 1970s along the western edge of the park. The east facing, shed roof building clad with vertical siding has two paneled and glazed overhead garage doors and a pedestrian entrance.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: ___ Locally: ___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B X C X D _

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A _ B _ C _ D _ E _ F _ G _

NHL Criteria: 1, 2, 4

NHL Criteria Exclusions: N/A

NHL Theme(s): III Expressing Cultural Values
6. Popular and Traditional Culture
IV Shaping the Political Landscape
4. Political Ideas, Cultures, and Theories
V Developing the American Economy
7. Governmental Policies and Practices

Areas of Significance: AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE/Native American
POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

Period(s) of Significance: 1884-1932

Significant Dates: 1884, 1893, 1900, 1909, 1928, 1932

Significant Person(s): Chief Plenty Coups (ALEK-CHEA-AHOOSH)

Cultural Affiliation: Crow

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Comparative Categories: I,D,5,a CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS: INDIGENOUS AMERICAN POPULATIONS: Ethnohistory of Indigenous American Populations, Becoming Native American, Treaties and Laws Formally Defining Native American Statuses and Relations

I,D,5,g CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS: INDIGENOUS AMERICAN POPULATIONS: Ethnohistory of Indigenous American Populations, Becoming Native American, Co-Existing Political Bodies: Chiefdoms, Monarchies, and Nations within the Nation

X,C,3 WESTWARD EXPANSION OF THE BRITISH COLONIES AND THE UNITED STATES, 1763-1898:

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Northern Plains

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Statement of Significance

Chief Plenty Coups Homestead is significant for its historical associations with the ethnic heritage, politics and government, and agricultural development of the western United States. It is also significant for its association with the prominent Crow Indian leader Chief Plenty Coups, and for its architecture, which is representative of the Homesteads of Indian leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Homestead is also significant under for its association with the history of indigenous peoples during the turbulent transitional period between the end of the buffalo days and the beginning of the modern reservation era. The property is representative of the movement of native people from the vast, unfenced plains to the legally defined and restrictive boundaries of the reservation and of their preservation of traditional lifestyles and beliefs within the context of the larger American culture. The Homestead reflects the impact of American governmental policies upon indigenous peoples, particularly those allied with the United States, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as the Native American response to those policies. The Homestead is associated with the federal policy of turning Indians into agrarians and with specific efforts to implement the policy. The Homestead is important in the political history of the Crow nation for it was here that one of its most influential leaders conferred, strategized, and planned responses to critical issues and shaped the future. The house was the de facto political capitol of the Crow during the early years of the reservation. Plenty Coups' desire that his Homestead become a museum and park for all people symbolizes his own recognition of the significance of the property and its history.

The Homestead is also significant for its association with the life of Chief Plenty Coups, who established the Homestead in 1884 and lived there until his death in 1932. The Homestead's strong association with Plenty Coups is bolstered by his provision for a museum housing his personal papers and artifacts which illuminate his connection to the site. Plenty Coups was one of the most important Native American leaders of the transitional period, and his political career of more than half a century was one of the longest of any chief.²⁵ During s early adult life, Plenty Coups demonstrated much bravery as a Crow warrior. Believing that his people's best interests were served by allying themselves with the United States, Plenty Coups was one of many Crow who assisted the U.S. Army and distinguished himself at the Battle of the Rosebud. Skilled in communication and negotiation, he evolved from being head of a localized band of followers to a leader of the entire tribe and was the first Crow chief to rise to prominence during the reservation era. The chief was an important ambassador and negotiator for the Crow, making numerous visits to Washington between 1880 and 1921, several times as a member of delegations which testified before Congress. He was also involved in every major negotiation regarding the tribe's landholdings from 1880 to 1919 and was influential in shaping its response to critical issues such as education, agriculture, and religious practices. In his personal life the chief set an example

²⁵ In 1928, Plenty Coups told Lmiderman, "Our lands are ours by treaty and not by chance gift. I have been told I am the only living chief who signed a treaty with the United States." See Linderman, 153.

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which influenced many through his courage, generosity, sense of justice, and respect for all peoples. He adopted aspects of American culture necessary to succeed on the reservation while maintaining traditional Crow religious beliefs and cultural values. Plenty Coups' national prominence was recognized by the United States when he was selected to represent all of the American Indian tribes at the ceremonies dedicating the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1921. According to Frederick Hoxie, historian of the Crow nation, the chief's life can be viewed as a metaphor for early twentieth century racial and ethnic relations experienced by Native Americans and other groups when they were:

confined to subordinate roles in the national tableau, and they too pushed at the limits of these assignments in an effort to become visible participants in a plural society. They too sought opportunities in an age of repression. Plenty Coups represents that larger struggle as well as his own.²⁶

Plenty Coups continues to be regarded as a figure of major importance by the Crow people, who honored him as their last traditional chief. A publication of the Crow Bilingual Materials Development Center summarizes his contribution to Crow history:

In the difficult period of adjustment to early reservation life, the leadership of Plenty Coups was demonstrated in three ways: in his advice to the people, in the personal example of his lifestyle, and in his political leadership and statesmanship There may be other chiefs who achieved more war deeds than Plenty Coups, but there was no match for him as a political leader and statesman.²⁷

The property is also significant its representation of Native American architecture during the transitional period on the reservation. Historian Peter Nabokov, co-author of *Native American Architecture*, calls the property "the most beautiful and dramatic" of the first native capitols.²⁸ The chief's Homestead represents what Nabokov and Robert Easton call the "blending of European and Indian elements as the foundation of a new 'traditional' identity."²⁹ On Plenty Coups' Homestead, assimilated American elements, such as the log house and store, the grove of trees and orchard, and the fields and irrigation system, are combined with features important to Native American life and utilized in a traditional Crow manner. The location of the farm in a valley surrounded by sites of special cultural significance, the orientation of the house, and the decoration of a special ceremonial room are evidence of this combination of cultures. The design of the house represents a collaboration of the architectural vision of the Indian Agency, and the Crow chief and both Native Americans and non-Indians worked on the construction. Like several other buildings on the reservation, including the Homes of other chiefs, portions of the house

²⁶ Frederick E. Home, *Parading Through History.- The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 348.

²⁷ Cited in C. Adrian Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study on the Life of Plenty Coups, Chief of the Crow Tribe," January 1997, 62, in the files of the National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, Denver.

²⁸ Peter Nabokov, "Presentation at 1996 Chief Plenty Coups Day," in the files of National Park Service, Intermountain Regional Office, Denver, Colorado.

²⁹ Nabokov and Easton, 50.

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were built using materials salvaged from Fort Custer, an army post dismantled in 1903, and portions utilized native materials. The house is significant as the only known extant example of a chief's dwelling of more than one story on the Crow reservation, signifying the importance of its owner and the consequence of events which took place there. Unlike the houses of other prominent chiefs of the transitional era from the Rocky Mountains and Northern Plains, Plenty Coups' house has not been demolished or allowed to deteriorate, and it is the only such dwelling still standing in its original setting. The store is also significant as one of the few examples of Native American commercial architecture dating from the nineteenth century. The lands associated with the buildings, conveyed by the chief as a park in 1928, represent the historic agricultural landscape which was developed during Plenty Coups' life.

The house and other historic resources which comprise the Homestead display high integrity of design, materials, location, craftsmanship, feeling, and association, and the surrounding lands continue in the same agricultural function which they had during Chief Plenty Coups' tenure, 1884—1932, which is also the Period of Significance for the property.

Historical Background

An Indian Warrior and Young Chief: The Early Life of Plenty Coups

Plenty Coups was born about 1848 near the present-day site of Billings, Montana.³⁰ He was a Mountain Crow and a member of the Sore Lip clan, one of ten clans of the Crow people.³¹ His parents, Otter Woman and Medicine Bird, died when he was a child. Plenty Coups was a descendent of the famous Crow chief Long Hair who signed the first treaty with the United States, and one of his grandfathers was a Shoshone. Plenty Coups married eleven or twelve times during his long life. His two children died at an early age and he adopted and cared for many poor children of his tribe.³² Plenty Coups was given his name by his grandfather, who saw in a dream that the boy would perform many acts of bravery (count many coups) and live to an old age. Plenty Coups reported that even as a child he hoped to become a chief and he attempted to excel over his playmates while treating them with fairness. He soon became a respected leader among his peers.³³

³⁰ Plenty Coups told Frank Linderman that he had been born "eighty snows ago" at the time of his interview in 1928. According to Lawrence Flat Lip, Pryor, Montana, Crow oral history states that Plenty Coups was born four or five years before 1848 because by 1868 he was an official chief and twenty-four years old in 1868 when the Fort Laramie Treaty was completed. Lawrence Flat Lip, Pryor, Montana, notes in the files of Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana; and Linderman, 6.

³¹ The Crow call themselves "*Apsáalooke*," sometimes translated as "Children of the Large Beaked Bird." The Crow are traditionally divided into three local subgroups: the River Crow and two Mountain Crow groups; see Robert H. Lowie, *The Crow Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1935, reprint 1983), 4.

³² U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Indian Affairs, "Hearings Before the Committee on Indian Affairs, U.S. Senate on S. 2087, to Incorporate a Company for Breeding Horses on the Crow Indian Reservation, Montana, and for other purposes and on S. 2963 for the Survey and Allotment of Indian Lands Now Embraced Within the Limits of the Crow Indian Reservation, In the State of Montana, and the Sale and Disposal of All Surplus Lands After Allotment," *Senate Document 445*, 60th Congress, 1st Session, 197 (hereafter cited as 1908 Hearings); and McCleary, 10-11.

³³ McCleary, 10; and Linderman, 6 and 27.

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At the time of Plenty Coups' birth, the land claimed by the Crow, centered in south central Montana and northern Wyoming, was among the richest in natural resources important to Native Americans, especially buffalo. During Plenty Coups' childhood, other tribes, some much better armed, were being pushed out of their traditional territories by the growing population of non-Indian settlers, discoveries of gold in western Montana in 1862, the westward expansion of roads and railroads, and shrinking hunting grounds. Groups such as the Sioux and Cheyenne on the east and south and Blackfeet and Assinboine to the north challenged the Crow for their land. As Plenty Coups recalled, "Our country is the most beautiful of all. Its rivers and plains, its mountains and timber lands, where there was always plenty of meats and berries, attracted other tribes, and they wished to possess it for their own."³⁴

This intertribal warfare was a constant threat to the Crow, whose military situation was among the most desperate of any Upper Missouri tribe.³⁵ Warriors were trained from childhood in martial skills. Young men fasted and prayed alone in isolated settings to receive visions which would provide guidance. As a young man at age twenty, Plenty Coups had an important vision in the Crazy Mountains which foretold the disappearance of the buffalo and the proliferation of cattle, revealed his future life as an old man in a house located near a spring in the Pryor Valley, and showed him the course of events which would forever change the lives of his people. As Plenty Coups recounted to his biographer, Frank B. Linderman:

... I saw only a dark forest. A fierce storm was coming fast. The sky was black with streaks of mad color through it. I saw the Four Winds gathering to strike the forest, and held my breath. Pity was hot in my heart for the beautiful trees. I felt pity for all things that lived in that forest, but was powerless to stand with them against the Four Winds that together were making war. I shielded my own face with my arm when they charged! I heard the Thunders calling out in the storm, saw beautiful trees twist like blades of grass and fall in tangled piles where the forest had been. Bending low, I heard the Four Winds rush past me as though they were not yet satisfied, and then I looked at the destruction they had left behind them.

Only one tree, tall and straight was left standing where the great forest had stood. The Four Winds that always make war alone had this time struck together, riding down every tree in the forest but *one*. Standing there alone among its dead tribesmen, I thought it looked sad. 'What does this mean?' I whispered in my dream.

'Listen, Plenty-coups,' said a voice. 'In that tree is the lodge of the Chickadee. He is least in strength but strongest of mind among his kind. He is willing to work for wisdom. The Chickadee-person is a good listener. Nothing escapes his ears, which he has sharpened by constant use.... But in all his listening he tends to his own business. He never intrudes, never speaks in strange company, and yet never misses a chance to learn from others. He gains success and avoids failure by learning how others succeeded or failed, and without great trouble to himself . . .'

³⁴Linderman, 47; and Coli G. Calloway, "Army Allies or Tribal Survival?" in Charles E. Rankin, editor, *Legacy: New Perspectives on the Battle on the Little Bighorn* (Helena, Mont.: Montana Historical Society Press, 1996), 71.

³⁵Peter Nabokov, *Two Leggings.- The Making of a Crow Warrior* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1967), vii.

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The lodges of countless Bird-people were 'in that forest when the Four Winds charged it. Only one is left unharmed, the lodge of the Chickadee-person. Develop your body, but do not neglect your mind, Plenty-coups. It is the mind that leads a man to power, not strength of body.³⁶

When Plenty Coups returned to his village, the elders of the council interpreted his dream. The dream revealed that in his lifetime the white men would take over their country. The chickadee was symbolic of the Crow tribe. Plenty Coups was instructed to think for himself, learn from the experiences of others, and develop both his body and his mind. The tribesmen believed the dream was a warning: "The tribes who have fought the white man have all been beaten, wiped out. By listening as the Chickadee listens we may escape this and keep our lands."³⁷

Earlier Crow warriors had also had visions about the arrival of the white men which told them to accommodate and assist the newcomers, as well as visions of cattle herds, trains, and even airplanes long before these things became a reality in Montana. These powerful visions would guide the Crow in the years ahead and prepare them for many of the changes that would dramatically alter their lives. Threatened on all sides by other tribes, weakened by diseases contracted from the newcomers, and faced with the demise of traditional hunting grounds, the Crow determined that their wisest course lay in allying themselves with the Americans in order to preserve as much of their Homeland as possible. As early as 1825, the tribe had pledged its friendship to the United States.³⁸ Plenty Coups' dream was well known within the tribe and was viewed as another indication that the Crow had chosen the proper course. As Coyote Runs recalled, "We traveled by that dream, . . . The men who sat in that lodge when Plenty-coups told what he had seen and heard knew a heap better than he did that it was time the Crows turned their faces another way. They saw it was best to do something to prove their friendship to white men. . . ."³⁹

Before the age of thirty, Plenty Coups had four times performed each of the traditional acts of bravery necessary to gain respect and following as a Crow chief. A warrior could count coup in four ways, including: striking an armed enemy; taking an enemy's weapon while he was still alive; capturing a tethered horse from an enemy camp; and leading a successful war party. Plenty Coups was initiated into the Fox Warrior Society, a group of young men who fought and hunted together and policed and protected the village. He also displayed the Crow ideals of generosity and loyalty which were required of a leader.

Like many warriors, Plenty Coups had also proven his courage in assisting the American government. As part of a group of 176 Crow warriors he fought with the U.S. Army under Brig. Gen. George Crook at the Battle of the Rosebud in June 1876. Plenty Coups was a leader of the scouts during the battle, saved the life of Capt. Guy V. Henry, and narrowly escaped death, twice

³⁶ Linderman, 65-67. 361bid, 73.

³⁷ Ibid, 73.

³⁸ McCleary, 11; Deunis W. Harcey, Brian R. Croone, and Joe Medicine Crow, *White-Man-Runs-Him: Crow Scout With Custer* (Evanston, 11.: Evanston Publishing Co., 1995), 79; Hoxie, 66; and Calloway, 76.

³⁹ Linderman, 75.

having horses shot from under him. Together with Shoshoni scouts led by Chief Washakie, the Crow warriors helped Crook avert the military disaster that befell Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer a week later at the Little Big Horn.⁴⁰ Plenty Coups stated that the chiefs believed that they would become the white man's friend by helping him fight tribes which were Crow enemies. He noted that the decision was made to help the army "because we plainly saw that this course was the only one which might save our beautiful country for us."⁴¹ Although Plenty Coups was a warrior of undisputed courage, it was not until he began his half-century struggle to protect his Homeland through firm negotiation with non-Indians that he was recognized as a preeminent leader of his people.⁴²

Plenty Coups Becomes an Important Crow Leader and Statesman

In 1851, Crow country had been defined for the first time as a specific area of approximately thirty eight million acres in present-day southern Montana and northern Wyoming, extending from the Powder River on the east to the Yellowstone River on the west, and between the Missouri and Musselshell rivers on the north and the Wind River Mountains on the south. This agreement, which established the federal government's right to build military posts and roads and included distribution of treaty goods, initiated the government policy of concentration and acculturation of the tribe.⁴³ In the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the Crow accepted a substantial reduction in territory and creation of an "agricultural reservation" in realization that opposition to the agreement might result in the loss of all their land.⁴⁴ That treaty identified the Big Horn Valley as the tribe's domain confining them to about eight million acres of land in Montana south of the Yellowstone River, and reconfirmed the friendship between the United States and Crow. It also provided for an Indian agent and agency complex, initially located at Mission Creek near present-day Livingston, Montana⁴⁵ and authorized distribution of land and agricultural supplies to individuals who wished to farm; and provided for establishment of schools.

Gold discoveries at Clark's Fork on the Yellowstone River and the projected route of the Northern Pacific Railroad through the Yellowstone Valley brought new calls for removal of the Crow. As a thirty-two -year-old member of a delegation of six sent to Washington, D.C., to discuss these issues in 1880, young Plenty Coups first came to national attention as a Crow leader. According to the chief, he was the first member of the 1880 delegation to Washington to be selected, along with older leaders such as Pretty Eagle and other young men such as Medicine Crow.⁴⁶ The delegation met with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and President Rutherford B. Hayes. To impress the tribal leaders with the strength of the United States, they were escorted to landmarks in the vicinity of the capital. Plenty Coups was particularly impressed with Mount Vernon and sent his thoughts to George Washington: "As you helped your people, help me now,

⁴⁰ Calloway, 73.

⁴¹ Linderman, 154; and Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 13.

⁴² Hoxie, *Parading*, 108.

⁴³ Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 5.

⁴⁴ Hoxie, *Parading*, 63. Most of the River Crow refused to sign this treaty.

⁴⁵ In 1875, the agency was moved to the Stillwater Valley near Absaroka, Montana. In 1884, Crow Agency was established in the Little Bighorn Valley.

⁴⁶ Hoxie, *Parading*, 118.

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an Absarokee chief, to lead my people to peace. I, too, have a little country to save for my children."⁴⁷

C. Adrian Heidenreich states that such tours of Washington were common practice in the late nineteenth century and "were designed as much to impress Indian leaders with the size, wealth and power of the white nation as to negotiate particular land deals." The government kept the Crow group in the capital for more than a month, pressing them to sell the western part of their reservation and to make concessions concerning road, railroad, and telegraph access.⁴⁸ The President suggested that the Crow accept a new hunting ground in North Dakota, but Plenty Coups replied that they did not wish to leave their established homeland and "wanted to live where the mountains are high and where there are many springs of fresh water."⁴⁹ Eventually, the leaders agreed to sell 1.5 million acres in the western portion of their reservation. The Crow later granted the Northern Pacific Railroad a 400-foot-wide right-of-way along the southern bank of the Yellowstone River.

By the early 1880s, the last of the buffalo had disappeared from the Yellowstone Valley. The late 1880s were very difficult years for the Crow due to the elimination of the buffalo, widespread illness, summer droughts, and severe winters which brought starvation to many. The federal government encouraged the Crow to adopt agricultural lifestyles by allocating lands, constructing homes, and providing supplies and advice.⁵⁰ The 1887 General Allotment Act provided for Indians to become self-sufficient farmers on individually owned tracts of land (allotments). In 1889, Montana became a state and the number of non-Indian settlers continued to increase while the Crow population declined; many feared that the tribe faced eventual extinction. Leaders such as Plenty Coups believed that raising crops and cattle might provide the only viable alternative to hunting. As Frederick Hoxie states, "ambitious young chiefs sought to make the best of what probably was an inevitable chain of events."⁵¹ In the coming years, diplomatic leaders such as Plenty Coups sought to preserve as much as possible of the Crow culture and their political freedom while coping with the economic dependence and bureaucratic control which accompanied reservation life.

By 1885, a Billings newspaper described Plenty Coups as "the most influential chief among the Crows."⁵² A census of the tribe in 1886 showed that Plenty Coups had the largest following of any chief: 294 persons in 47 lodges out of a total tribal population of 3,123.⁵³ Plenty Coups lost the support of some warriors following the Sword Bearer incident in 1887, when a small group of young men led a brief rebellion against the constraints of the reservation. The chief failed to appear until the abortive insurrection was over, stating that he had been in the mountains grieving

⁴⁷Linderman, 240.

⁴⁸ C. Adrian Heidenreich, "The Crow Indian Delegation to Washington, D.C., 'in 1880," *Montana* 31 (1981): 55 and 61.

⁴⁹ Peter Nabokov, *Native American Testimony* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1991), 143.

⁵⁰ McCleary, 20-21.

⁵¹ Hoxie, *Parading*, 26.

⁵² Frederick C. Krieg, "Chief Plenty Coups: The Final Dignity," *Montana* 15 (October 1966): 34, quoting an unnamed Billings, Montana, newspaper of 19 February 1885.

⁵³ "Ibid., 36; and Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 18.

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the death of his wife.⁵⁴ According to Frederick Krieg, the federal government recognized Plenty Coups as the preeminent Crow chief as early as 1890; however, Timothy Bernardis points out that Plenty Coups may not have been generally acknowledged by the Crows as principal chief until the death of Pretty Eagle in 1903.⁵⁵

Plenty Coups' influence came from his great skill as an orator in tribal councils and the respect he engendered among government officials and other non-Indians. William Allen, who knew the chief during his early manhood, stated that "there was something about him that inspired confidence."⁵⁶ School teacher Janette Woodruff found Plenty Coups to be "a commanding figure, and every inch a chieftain."⁵⁷ Superintendent S.G. Reynolds wrote "he [Plenty Coups] and I get along splendidly, and we are very warm friends. Almost every proposition that comes up on the reservation we talk over carefully together."⁵⁸

Plenty Coups was a strong negotiator for tribal interests. He unified his people through his awareness of differing opinions and his ability as a mediator and represented their position in numerous letters, petitions, and agreements.⁵⁹ In 1882, he played an important role in negotiations with the Northern Pacific Railroad over a right-of-way across the reservation along the southern bank of the Yellowstone River. The railroad ultimately paid the Crows \$20,000 for the right to cross the reservation. Plenty Coups also assisted in reversing an 1884-85 agreement to lease the entire reservation for cattle grazing to a Colorado syndicate for a nominal amount that he and other tribal chiefs had initially approved. The chief claimed that he had been deceived into signing the pact. In the early 1900s, Plenty Coups also negotiated with the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad which sought a right-of-way across the reservation.⁶⁰

Appearing before the Senate Indian Affairs Committee in 1916, Plenty Coups was questioned as to the nature of his chieftainship. He replied that:

I am the head chief of the Crow Tribe. I look after their affairs. I am recognized as the head of all, so that when a matter comes up they always call me to it. I am not only chief at Pryor but chief of the whole Crow Tribe and speak for them.⁶¹

Robert Yellowtail, one of the chief's translators and a college-educated Crow lawyer, elaborated that Plenty Coups did not have the power to issue an edict but that "there is a tendency to

⁵⁴ *Billings Gazette*, 5 March 1932; *Hardin Tribune-Herald*, 27 September 1929; and Hoxie, 154-164.

⁵⁵ Krieg, 36; and Timothy Bernardis, "Plenty Coups," in Sharon Malinowski, *Notable Native Americans* (New York: Gale Research, 1995).

⁵⁶ Wagner and Allen, 161.

⁵⁷ Janette Woodruff, as told to Cecil Dryden, *Indian Oasis* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1939), 87.

⁵⁸ S.G. Reynolds to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 October 1909, Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Crow Indian Agency, Federal Archives and Records Center, Denver.

⁵⁹ Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 30.

⁶⁰ Krieg, 33-34 and Norman B. Wiltsey, "Plenty Coups: Statesman Chief of the Crows," *Montana* 13 (1963): 36.

⁶¹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Indian Affairs, "Hearings Before the Committee on Indian Affairs, U.S. Senate on S. 2378, A Bill for the Opening and Settlement of a Part of the Crow Indian Reservation, Montana," 64th Congress, 1st Session, 117 (hereafter cited as "Hearings 1916").

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consider his opinion seriously."⁶² Yellowtail summarized Plenty Coups' influence in the later years of his leadership when he wrote to the chief in 1919: ". . . the Secretary [of the Interior] knows you personally and what you say has great weight with him--also the long haired Indians consider you their leader and are usually willing to abide by any thing that you might do."⁶³

Plenty Coups gained national prominence and made many friendships for the tribe during his frequent trips to Washington, D.C., as leader of Crow delegations sent to lobby Congress and the executive branch. During the 1880-1916 period, he made six trips to the nation's capital as a representative of the tribe.⁶⁴ The delegations met presidents, presented requests and grievances to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, discussed issues with tribal attorneys, and maintained contact with sympathetic interest groups. Frederick E. Hoxie judges Plenty Coups' contacts in Washington to have been better than those of the local Indian agents. He understood the policy process and perceived that alliances with political opponents of a hostile congressman or government official could be effective strategy.⁶⁵

Plenty Coups often appeared before congressional committees to testify on issues affecting his people. The most critical threats to the tribe in the first two decades of the twentieth century were efforts to further reduce the size of their reservation. The Crow had been forced to sell parts of their preserve on three previous occasions during the era of Plenty Coups' leadership: 1.3 million acres in 1882; 1.2 million acres in 1892; and 1.5 million acres in 1904.⁶⁶ Plenty Coups' Home on Pryor Creek, which had originally occupied a fairly central location on the reservation, was finally near the western boundary. Beginning in 1908, Montana interests, led by the state's congressional delegation, sought to open most of the remaining 2.3 million acres of the Crow reservation to white settlement.

These proposals were met by virtually unanimous and unwavering opposition from the tribe. Plenty Coups, who had been strongly against the 1892 land cession, played an important leadership role in rallying opposition and speaking out against any further loss of territory. He bluntly stated "I do not want to bargain with the Government or anyone else to dispose of our lands. The land is mine and I do not want to sell it at all."⁶⁷ The tribe demonstrated that it had learned much from previous negotiations by presenting a United front and engaging professionals in Washington to look after its interests. To assist in the fight, the Crows retained the Washington law firm of Kappler and Merrilat to represent them in the dispute, in spite of the Indian Office's refusal to approve a contract with the attorneys. In the process of defending their land, the Crow created a new form of leadership based on widespread support and negotiating skills rather than personal prestige.⁶⁸

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 36.

⁶⁴ "Hearings 1916," 64.

⁶⁵ Frederick Hoxie, *The Crow*, (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989), 105-06.

⁶⁶ "Hearings 1916", 88.

⁶⁷ Hoxie, *Parading*, 248.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 249.

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The most intense drive to open the reservation took place in the 1915-17 period, with Montana Senator Timothy J. Walsh leading the effort. Testifying before the Senate Indian Affairs Committee in June 1916, Plenty Coups noted the long history of friendly relations between his tribe and the United States. He also reminded the senators of the military aid Crows rendered in the Northern Plains conflicts of the 1870s, including his own service at the Battle of the Rosebud:

My young men endured hardships with the soldiers when the soldiers were out there. . . . Whenever a soldier endured hardships, right along side of him was a Crow Indian enduring the same hardships, and when the horses' feet wore out our horses' feet were worn out also, and if they experienced many discomforts, the Crow Indian was in the same condition.⁶⁹

The chief concluded his remarks with an eloquent plea for the preservation of the Crow Homeland:

The only place I have to go, my only resource, is my own Home, where I want to stay, on the reservation. I ask not only the committee but the public in general that my people be allowed to stay there.... The Crows have been the friends of the white man, and for the past assistance that I extended to the white man I ask that my reservation be left alone to the Indians, so that they can enjoy the benefits of it.⁷⁰

Hearings on the proposal to open the reservation were held again in 1917. The Crow delegates who journeyed to Washington employed centuries old tradition and newly acquired tactics in their fight against the bill. The chiefs had brought sweet grass and nez perce roots with them and collected buffalo chips from the Washington zoo. As the Crows sat on the floor of their hotel room, wood chips were used to bum the items and each chief sang his war song. After conducting the war medicine ceremony for strength in battle, Plenty Coups asserted his leadership and demanded solidarity, instructing the delegates that Robert Yellowtail would "reply to Senator Walsh tomorrow and I don't want any of the rest of you to interrupt as we are staking our all on what he will say and do tomorrow."⁷¹ At the hearing, Plenty Coups touched Senator Walsh with his cane, symbolically scoring a coup and "a perfect symbolic union of the old and the new Crow ways was achieved in the midst of the white man's center of power."⁷²

The attempts to reduce the Crow Reservation were unsuccessful and in 1920 Congress passed the Crow Act, which divided reservation lands among individual members and contained protections for the tribe (such as retention of mineral rights and tribal participation in the implementation of the measure). Plenty Coups, who had initially opposed any changes to the structure of land ownership on the reservation eventually backed the compromise, but let younger men such as Yellowtail advocate its adoption in Washington in 1919, symbolically opening the door to a new

⁶⁹ "Hearings 1916," 88.

⁷⁰ "Hearings 1916," 64 and 115-16.

⁷¹ Harcey, 177.

⁷² Heidenreich, "Historical Perspectives Study," 36.

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generation of leaders.⁷³ The efforts of Plenty Coups and other leaders of the transitional era had ensured that the Crow would continue to possess their heartland, preserve Crow culture, and operate an autonomous government within the limits established by the federal government.

Plenty Coups' efforts for his people during the 1880-1920 period were of inestimable importance in defending the tribe's rights, welfare, and Homeland. However, in discussing his life with Frank Linderman, Plenty Coups focussed almost exclusively on the earlier, happier part of his life, saying "when the buffalo went away the hearts of my people fell to the ground and they could not lift them up again. After this nothing happened. There was little singing anywhere."⁷⁴ The depth of Plenty Coups' feeling about the days before the reservation can perhaps be gauged by his reaction to an exhibit of buffalo he viewed at the Bronx Zoo on a 1913 trip to the East.⁷⁵ The chief reportedly watched the buffalo for at least half an hour and "stared without saying a word even when asked for his thoughts."⁷⁶

Plenty Coups as an "Ordinary Farmer" Developing a Homestead and a Keeper of Crow Tradition

Plenty Coups' life at Pryor and his Homestead on the reservation were representative of Crow efforts to balance forced assimilation of American ideas with the preservation of traditional family structure, language, religion, and culture. The chief was one of the first Crow leaders to try farming on the reservation. In 1880-81, he plowed and harvested hay along with chiefs Medicine Crow and Pretty Eagle at the second Crow agency in the Stillwater Valley.⁷⁷ He told a visiting special committee of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee in 1883 that "we want houses and farms along the creeks and if the Great Father will give us cattle we will raise them, and kill a calf once in a while and eat it with potatoes."⁷⁸ In late summer 1883, a newspaper article reported that Plenty Coups and his wife Magpie were picking squash. Some would be dried for winter use along with other fruits and vegetables.⁷⁹ In the same year, the Crow Agent reported that two crews directed by Plenty Coups and Pretty Eagle had earned \$150 cutting hay for the agency.⁸⁰

Although willing to take up farming, Plenty Coups and others disagreed with the government suggestion that all Indians should locate near the agency and become dependent upon its handouts.⁸¹ The chief wanted his people to settle near water sources throughout the reservation to claim as much of the reserve as possible.⁸² He and his followers would maintain as much

⁷³ Hoxie, *Parading*, 263.

⁷⁴ Linderman, 311.

⁷⁵ Plenty Coups, Medicine Crow, White Man Runs Him, and representatives of other tribes were in the East for the dedication of the planned Wanamaker Memorial to the American Indian in New York harbor in 1913. The memorial was never built.

⁷⁶ Harcey, 158.

⁷⁷ Heidenreich, *Historic Perspectives Study*, 19.

⁷⁸ Krieg, 32 citing Senate Report 283, 48th Congress.

⁷⁹ Krieg, 33-34, citing the *Southern Workman* (Hampton, Virginia), 3 August 1883.

⁸⁰ Hoxie, *Parading*, 85.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁸² Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 18.

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autonomy as possible by living some distance from the agency; about 150 members of his band settled along upper Pryor Creek, where his vision as a young man had indicated his Home would be.⁸³ As Crow Agent H.J. Armstrong wrote in June 1883:

The young and influential chief Plenty Coos says he is now able to manage a farm--he has about three acres of oats and the same in garden this year and is anxious to locate on a ranch of his own, but wants to settle down on Pryor's Creek. . . . I have asked him to look around and select some nice place nearer to the agency, but he says it is no use for him to do so; that he is well acquainted with every part of his country and that there is no other place where he wants to live and have his Home.⁸⁴

In August Armstrong wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs requesting permission to hire two carpenters to help Plenty Coups construct cabins along Pryor Creek for his band. Armstrong explained that "the location is said to be very superior, with a considerable body of excellent bottom land which is easily irrigated, and an abundance of fine timber close by."⁸⁵

Plenty Coups' original log house was completed by 1884 and several cabins were also erected for his followers.⁸⁶ The chief recalled that he donated four horses to be used in the construction.⁸⁷ His land consisted of about 320 acres in Sections 5 and 6, Township 5 South, Range 26 East and other acreage to the west. His wife Kills Together received a forty-acre allotment adjacent to the chief's on the south.

In the fall of 1885, a Billings newspaper reported that:

the monster potatoes the chief brought with him to town show that he has had some measure of success. He has fourteen log houses, one story, and one and a half, and four wagons that he purchased with his own money, besides the one he received from the agency, and the Camp Bros. have just sold the ambitious aborigine a forty dollar cook stove. He shows with pride the marks of labor on his hands, and wants his people to adopt the ways of the whites.⁸⁸

Plenty Coups' settlement was labeled as "Plenty-Coos Village" on the 1887 General Land Office survey plot of Township 5 South, Range 26 East. The map shows a building in the approximate location of the chief's house, two corrals, the spring, and a number of cabins in an arc to the south. The Billings-Mee-tse-tse road passed through the settlement east of the chief's house on a

⁸³ As Frederick Hoxie notes, "Crows divided into five major self-contained communities, which began as camps gathered around an important leader or groups of leaders." Hoxie, *Parading*, 175.

⁸⁴ H. J. Armstrong, Agent, Crow Reservation, Montana, to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 June 1882, in the files of Bureau of Indian Affairs, Crow Indian Agency, Record Group 75, Federal Archives and Records Center, Denver, Colorado.

⁸⁵ H. J. Armstrong, Agent, Crow Reservation, Montana, to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 6 August 1883, Plenty Coups Museum, Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana.

⁸⁶ McCleary, 24.

⁸⁷ Nabokov, *Native American Testimony*, 144.

⁸⁸ Krieg, 34, citing an undated and unnamed Billings newspaper article.

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northeast-southwest alignment.⁸⁹ Pryor, named in honor of Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor of the Lewis and Clark Expedition who came through the area looking for lost horses in 1806, developed as a small supply and service center for the surrounding community following the completion of Plenty Coups' Home and the dwellings of his followers. Eventually, Pryor became the site of a subagency.⁹⁰

In 1909, Superintendent S.G. Reynolds, calling Plenty Coups "the most progressive Indian on this reservation," described the chief's home in detail:

His old house was built of logs and was about the most attractive of any on the reservation, although it was too small for his accommodation. He has nice shade trees and keeps a lawn mower and has his yard mowed once or twice a week. A few rods from his house a fine mountain spring comes out of the bank, which forms a beautiful trout stream that flows into Pryor Creek. Close to his house he has a nice orchard that was planted in 1903 ... the trees are now bearing fruit. This season we figured out an addition for his house, and we made it into one large room, with a large, old-fashioned fireplace in the end, and a big, open stairway leading to the chamber above.... On the front of this upright we are now building a large, wide porch which overlooks his meadows and fields and the very beautiful valley of Pryor Creek. The house is built of large, straight, peeled, pine logs, and looks very attractive.⁹¹

Many of the construction materials for the 1909 addition came from Fort Custer, a military installation located near present-day Hardin, Montana, which had been abandoned in 1898. More than one hundred houses and many barns and sheds on the reservation were built using materials salvaged from the fort. The local community helped with the construction of the chief's addition, including cutting the logs and laying the fireplace.⁹²

When the addition was completed, Plenty Coups' house became one of the most important buildings on the Crow Reservation. Peter Nabokov asserts that the residence "was the Crow White House in exile-, Here it was that Plenty Coups planned his trips to Washington, ... here it was a Chiefly residence where he played host to visiting dignitaries, but then again we might think of this rather as the Crow's Capitol Hill."⁹³ In addition to sheltering his extended family and frequent guests, The house provided Plenty Coups with a setting for studying and thinking about critical issues, planning and strategizing with other tribesmen, and negotiating with white ranchers and government officials. On his farm the chief was able to adopt the trappings of the culture the government felt that he should assimilate while also preserving and honoring much of Crow tradition. In the later years of the chief's life, Indian and non-Indian visitors approached the

⁸⁹ U.S. General Land Office, Original survey plat, Township 5 South, Range 26 East, surveyed 17-22 September 1887, in the files of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Montana State Office, Billings, Montana.

⁹⁰ Pittsley, 10 October 1997.

⁹¹ S.G. Reynolds to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 6 September 1909, Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Crow Indian Agency, Federal Archives and Records Center, Denver.

⁹² McCleary, 26-27.

⁹³ Peter Nabokov, "Presentation at 1996 Chief Plenty Coups Day," in files of National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, Denver.

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Homestead with respect for its owner and awareness of the site's significance in regional and Crow history.

Frank Linderman wrote of being guided through Plenty Coups' Home when he interviewed him in 1928:

The Chief's dwelling place has two rather large rooms on the ground floor, and I think three rooms upstairs. The living room is also a sleeping apartment and kitchen, having two or three iron beds, a cookstove, a table, and cupboards. The other room on the first floor has a fine fireplace but is otherwise unfurnished and bare.... There were no curtains, no pictures, no floor coverings; and there was not much light on a dark day. Upstairs the rooms were ceiled with pine, except for an iron bedstead with bare springs, unfurnished as though just finished. The Chief's was the only two-story house in that country.

Plenty-coups unlocked a door and let me enter his private room where in boxes he has stored his keepsakes of the years. Pictures, photographs, Crow finery, a weapon or two, letters from prominent men he has met, including a President of the United States, generals, and statesmen—little enough, and yet so precious that they are kept under lock and key....

...And my thoughts kept reminding me that here in all this apparent poverty, dwelt the Chief of the Crows in the only two-story log house owned by an Indian so far as I know--an example to his people.⁹⁴

This description and others by Plenty Coups' contemporaries make it clear that although the chief wielded great influence and had received many honors, he followed a simple lifestyle which combined American and Indian elements. Janette Woodruff stated that "although he was a chief, he had no more of this world's goods than his fellow men. His house was bare, as judged by the white man's standards, and his tepee was as smoky and drafty as any of the others."⁹⁵ In his 1909 report, Superintendent Reynolds noted that during the summer many Crow preferred to live in tipis adjoining their houses. Historic photographs indicate that this was true of Plenty Coups' family.

Reynolds also stated that in the spring of 1903 about five thousand shade trees had been planted around Crow Homes, as well as several hundred fruit trees. Ninety percent of these trees were dead by 1909, but those of Plenty Coups flourished.⁹⁶ The chief's orchards, planted northwest and northeast of his house, included four or five different kinds of apples and other small fruit such as currants.⁹⁷ Some of the fruit produced was used by his family and some was sold in the small store which Plenty Coups operated. As the role model for his followers, Plenty Coups tried to show them successful agricultural practices. In Washington, he testified, "I am chief of the

⁹⁴Linderman, 113-114.

⁹⁵Woodruff, 88.

⁹⁶S.G. Reynolds to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 6 September 1909, Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Crow Indian Agency, Federal Archives and Records Center, Denver.

⁹⁷"1908 Hearings," 196.

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tribe and as such I tell the younger men, 'Come, follow me,' and raise the crop for my own support and I teach the young men what I know myself"⁹⁸

Plenty Coups stated that he tried "to do exactly what the ordinary farmer would do."⁹⁹ On his farm, he raised cattle and horses, a variety of grains and hay, orchard fruits, and vegetables. The chief was the first entry in the Pryor Creek District in the 1889 "Roundup Book." His brand was a "P" inside of a "C". The 1900 "Beef Book" for the reservation showed a number of cattle transactions for Plenty Coups¹⁰⁰. In 1908, he told the Senate Indian Affairs Committee that he personally owned about 36 head of cattle and 250 horses. He kept some of the cattle for his own family's consumption and sold some cows and some horses to raise money. The chief also reported growing wheat, oats, and hay, selling some grain to raise money for other groceries, and keeping part for his own animals. In 1908, his farm produced 54 tons of hay, 250 bushels of wheat, and 280 bushels of oats.¹⁰¹

In 1893-94, the Pryor and Lost Creek irrigation ditches were constructed in the Pryor area. The ditches were part of an extensive irrigation system for the Crow reservation to boost agricultural production. The systems, designed and planned by government engineers, were built with Crow money (income from land sales and leases) and labor. In 1908, Plenty Coups reported that he had eighty acres under irrigation.

The ditch construction was the impetus for Plenty Coups establishing a small store in 1893. The store, which he referred to as "the mess," was a one-story, sod-roofed building immediately south of his house. Plenty Coups sold food products from his farm and supplies obtained at Edgar, Montana, to irrigation workers and the local community. At one point the chief lamented "I would rather hunt buffalo for a living, but we cannot. So I have opened a grocery store."¹⁰²

Julia M. Seton went with artist E.A. Burbank to visit the chief's store when it was in operation and described it as "the real thing." Plenty Coups extended credit to customers and kept track of about fifty accounts on a cardboard strip from a shoe box. Each person conducting business with him was represented by his totem. "Under that was a stroke for each dollar the man owed the chief, with a long stroke for the tenth dollar. When the account was settled, Plenty-Coups took an ink eraser and wiped it out."¹⁰³ By the time Linderman interviewed Plenty Coups in 1928, the store had closed. Linderman described the hewn log building as looking gray and deserted: "'Completely out of business,' it seemed to say, 'but when the Chief was merchant here there was much going on. His customers were in no hurry and told stories of war across my counters.'"¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ *Outlook*, 12 December 1921, 555; and Roundup Record Book, 1889, Pryor Creek District, and Beef Book, 1899, Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Crow Indian Agency, Federal Archives and records Center, Denver.

¹⁰¹ "1908 Hearings," 197.

¹⁰² Julia M. Seton, *The Pulse of the Pueblo.- Personal Glimpses of Indian Life* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Seton Village Press, 1939), 159; and McCleary, 46.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 159.

¹⁰⁴ Linderman, 150-151.

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On the road south of the chief's house was the St. Charles Catholic Church and School. In 1890, Plenty Coups had requested that Jesuit missionaries be allowed to establish a school and church at Pryor. This would eliminate the necessity of sending local children sixty miles away to boarding school at Crow Agency, a practice that displeased most families. Plenty Coups and his relative Cut Turnip donated the land with the proviso that a school be built on the site, which was southwest of the chief's homestead. The church started construction in 1891 and the school opened in March 1892. The facility operated until 1898, when the federal government withdrew financial support. The buildings were bought by the government in 1901 and functioned as the Pryor Boarding School from 1903 to 1920. Plenty Coups was a strong believer in the importance of educating the tribe's children. He realized that his inability to speak, read, or write English was a handicap in negotiating with white authorities and businessmen although he was proud of preserving the Crow language. The chief exhorted Crow boys and girls to pursue schooling:

Education is your most powerful weapon. *With* education you are the white man's equal; without education you are his victim and so shall remain all your lives. Study, learn, help one another always. Remember there is only poverty and misery in idleness and dreams--but in work there is self-respect and independence.¹⁰⁵

Like many Crow people in the transitional era, Plenty Coups became a Catholic while also maintaining Native American spiritual beliefs. He kept a bedroom in his Home for visiting missionary fathers and also created a Crow ceremonial room. A Catholic priest married Plenty Coups and Kills Together and the chief was baptized and confirmed in the Catholic Church at St. Xavier. At the same time, Plenty Coups wished to preserve Crow spiritual beliefs, encouraging young men to seek visions as he had: "Cling to the memories of your fathers, I would have you still go up onto the mountains and see visions so that your hearts may be clear and strong...."¹⁰⁶ He continued his participation in the Tobacco Society, which engaged in ritual planting and harvesting of a rare variety of tobacco, and requested that the Crow be allowed to continue the Tobacco Dance. In 1917, on the night before a critical Congressional hearing, Plenty Coups led a Crow delegation in a traditional war medicine ceremony and stated: "This is not a sham of medicine; aid-asking rituals were always engaged in just before charging into the enemy. Right now we are preparing to fight a different kind of fight."¹⁰⁷ A sweat lodge, located near the spring, was an important component of his Homestead. In 1923, he was described as "one of the greatest advocates of the Indian medicine stuff" by the Pryor subagent.¹⁰⁸

Plenty Coups as Elder Statesman and Creation of a Park for All People

By the 1920s, Plenty Coups, then in his seventies, was an elder statesman, often called upon for ceremonial appearances and still working for the good of his people. Plenty Coups' greatest national prominence came in 1921, when he was chosen by the War Department to represent "the Indians of America" at the burial of the unknown soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. The

¹⁰⁵ Monica Weldon and Committee, *Trails and Tales* (n.p., 1983), 596; J. Brock Lee, *Cornerstones of Knowledge: A Country School Portrayal* (n.p., c. 1982), 60; and Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 46.

¹⁰⁶ New York Times, 5 March 1932; McCleary, 15; and Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 50.

¹⁰⁷ Harcey, 176—177.

¹⁰⁸ Hoxie, *Parading*, 213.

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chief was received by President Warren G. Harding at the White House and stood with World War I military leaders such as Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France, Gen. Armando V. Diaz of Italy, and American Gen. John J. Pershing at the ceremonies.¹⁰⁹

During World War I, Plenty Coups had exhorted young Crow men to enlist in the army as a modern means of becoming warriors. The chief reportedly took a keen interest in the fighting and followed developments on a large map of France at his Home.¹¹⁰ Although he had been instructed to remain silent during his part of the ceremony, after Plenty Coups placed his warbonnet and coup stick on the grave, he turned to the gathering and delivered the following remarks:

I feel it an honor to the red man that he takes part in this great event, because it shows that the thousands of Indians who fought in the great war are appreciated by the white man. I am glad to represent all the Indians of the United States in placing on the grave of this noble warrior this coup stick and war bonnet, every eagle feather of which represents a deed of valor by my race. I hope that the Great Spirit will grant that these noble warriors have not given up their lives in vain and that there will be peace to all men hereafter. This is the Indians' hope and prayer.¹¹¹

Not content to follow a scripted subordinate role, Plenty Coups enlarged his part of the ceremony to visibly participate in a manner meaningful to him.¹¹² The chief's oratory drew widespread attention and was covered in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Herald*. The *Public Ledger* called his participation "easily one of the most striking picturesque features of the entire Unknown Dead ceremony."¹¹³

On 4 May 1928, as a memorial to his people and a reminder of the friendship between races, Plenty Coups and his wife, Strikes the Iron, executed a trust deed which provided that upon their deaths 189.76 acres were to be given in trust to the County Commissioners of Big Horn County. The land was "to be definitely set apart as a park and recreation ground" for all people. The Department of the Interior approved the deed on 23 July 1928.¹¹⁴ Forty acres including the house and spring were to be set aside as park land, while the remaining ranch land was included in the donation to provide funds to maintain the park.¹¹⁵ The deed specified that one room of the house should be set aside for articles of historical value collected by the Chief so that they could be made available for study by the public.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ *New York Times*, 5 March 1932; McCleary, 15; and Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 50.

¹¹⁰ Harcey, 176-77.

¹¹¹ *New York Times*, 12 November 1921, 2.

¹¹² Hoxie, *Parading*, 346-48.

¹¹³ *Public Ledger*, 12 November 1921, in the files of Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana.

¹¹⁴ Noncompetent Indian Trust Deed, 4 May 1928, Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana.

¹¹⁵ *Billings Times*, 9 August 1928.

¹¹⁶ *Billings Gazette*, 28 June 1941.

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The inspiration for Plenty Coups' gesture dated to his first trip to Washington in 1880 and his visit to Mount Vernon. The Crow leader had been greatly impressed by the legacy of George Washington and the reverence in which he was held, as well as the solemnity of visitors to Mount Vernon. It is evident that the old chief regarded his Home as having historical significance for its ability to teach future generations about his life and his people, just as the Home of the first white chief did. Plenty Coups stated:

... Mount Vernon is very beautiful. People travel far to see it. I planned then to leave my house and some land around it, as a park for my people.... I have spent my life here. This spot was shown me in my great medicine-dream, and I want my people to possess it forever, just as white men own and keep the Home of their great Chief, George Washington.¹¹⁷

On 8 August 1928, a dedication ceremony for the park was held. In attendance were government dignitaries, an array of chiefs, and interested Indian and non-Indians totaling more than one thousand people. A dance initiated the festivities, followed by a ceremony in which the chief used his thumb mark to sign the deed.¹¹⁸ World War I hero Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord of New York acknowledged Plenty Coups' donation on behalf of the people.

Plenty Coups, dressed in full chieftain regalia, stated,

Today, I who have been called the chief of chiefs among red men, present to all the children of our Great White Father this land, where the snows of more than fifty winters have fallen on my tepee.... This park is not be a memorial to me, but to the Crow nation. It is given as a token of my friendship for all people, red and white.¹¹⁹

Toward the end of his long life, the chief was plagued by infirmities and was nearly blind. He had achieved some fame as a result of his many visits to Washington and many people came to visit him at his Home in Pryor, including Marshall Ferdinand Foch of France and Vice President Charles Curtis.¹²⁰ He was generally held in great respect and treated with dignity by the younger members of the tribe who were aware that he had guided the Crow through its most difficult period of adjustment. Although he was proud of the accomplishments of his people, Plenty Coups was sad about what they had lost, remarking that "nothing the white man has given can make up for the happy life when vast plains were unfenced."¹²¹ In one of his last official statements in November 1931, the Chief spoke of his continued concern for the future well-being of his people.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Linderman, 240.

¹¹⁸ McCleary, 3.

¹¹⁹ *Billings Times*, 9 August 1928.

¹²⁰ *Meagher Republican*, c. 1921, in newspaper scrapbook in the files of Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana.

¹²¹ Wagner and Allen, 85 and 298.

¹²² McCleary, 19.

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Plenty Coups died on 3 March 1932. Obituaries referred to him as "one of the last of the great North American Indian chiefs and statesmen."¹²³ The *New York Times* noted that he was "a chieftain particularly skillful in negotiations with the Government . . . As a chief he was active politically in his tribe, and his eloquence swayed many votes. He was successful in business, both for himself and for the tribe."¹²⁴ Montana Congressman Scott Leavitt eulogized Plenty Coups on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives on 5 March 1932. Leavitt stated that it was customary in Congress to note the death only of private citizens who had achieved distinctions of the first order and given great service to their county:

Recalling that standard, I have chosen to announce the passing of one who has graced the history of my State of Montana.... [Plenty Coups'] life was in truth a symbol of the absorption of the American Indian into the citizenship of the United States. His was one of the finest characters I have ever known.... His heart and voice were ever for the good of his people.... He was a man of such caliber and such high character, and his service was so outstanding, that it is entirely fitting that the American Congress should pause for a moment to do him reverence.¹²⁵

At the St. Charles Catholic Church a solemn high mass was celebrated for the deceased leader. Snow covered the ground on the day of the funeral and a sleigh was used to transport the chief's body back to his farm for burial.¹²⁶ The funeral cortege stopped at the log house and from there the pallbearers carried the casket past the sacred spring and across the wide meadow, to a bench above the bottom lands where the graves of two of the chief's wives and his stepdaughter lay. Among those in attendance were representatives of the army and Superintendent James G. Hyde, who stated that "the Crow tribe has lost a great statesman, the community and state a great friend, and the government a loyal supporter." Reverend John Frost, who was the first Crow to be ordained as a minister and had served as translator for the chief on many occasions, observed, "Many moons will pass and many snows will come and go but we shall not see his like again."¹²⁷

The legacy of Plenty Coups continues to be significant to his people. After his death, the Crow Tribe voted that he would be honored as the last traditional tribal chief.¹²⁸ His protégé Robert Yellowtail became the first Indian superintendent of his own reservation in 1934. Plenty Coups' name was passed on to honor World War II hero Andrew Bird In Ground and was later given to decorated Vietnam veteran Kenneth Old Coyote. Students in Pryor proposed that their high school be named after the chief. Crow elder Philip Beaumont, Sr., stated that "he was an idol for all students, especially through his influence on our parents, and we all tried to emulate him.... Plenty Coups influenced in our minds how to be good leaders."¹²⁹

¹²³ *Casper Tribune-Herald*, 8 March 1932.

¹²⁴ *New York Times*, 5 March 1932.

¹²⁵ U. S. Congress, Senate, Representative Scott Leavitt, "Eulogy of Chief Plenty Coos of the Crows," *Congressional Record* (5 March 1932).

¹²⁶ Cartie Goes Ahead, interview by authors, 10 October 1997, Pryor, Montana.

¹²⁷ *Billings Times*, 16 August 1928 and *Billings Gazette*, 9 March 1932.

¹²⁸ Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 59.

¹²⁹ Heidenreich, "Historic Perspectives Study," 63.

The Park After Plenty Coups' Death and His Lasting Legacy

The trusteeship of the property was originally vested in the County Commissioners of Big Horn County. A committee of Pryor residents was formed to plan a museum and a caretaker was hired and proceeds from the farm were used to maintain the buildings.¹³⁰ On 28 June 1941, the Kiwanis Club of Billings erected a monument dedicated to Plenty Coups. The monument consisted of a bronze plaque designed by Billings artist LeRoy Greene embedded in an eight-ton rock placed at the grave site of the Plenty Coups family. To protect the site, a low fence of heavy chain and cement posts encircled the graves and monument. More than one thousand Native Americans, Kiwanians, and other interested individuals attended the dedication ceremonies.¹³¹

Chief Plenty Coups had been made an honorary member of the Billings Kiwanis chapter in 1924 and, in return he adopted a local Kiwanis leader into the Crow tribe. In 1951, the Kiwanis Club became trustees of the park.¹³² The Kiwanians converted the room in the southwest 1900 addition on the lower floor of the house into a small museum for displaying the late chief's papers and artifacts. As one newspaper article noted, the "old Chief never threw anything away."¹³³ The club also placed small sandstone markers on the graves of Plenty Coups and his wives and erected a sign at the property's entrance.

On 24 November 1961, the State Parks Division of the Montana Highway Commission replaced the Billings Kiwanis Club as the trustee for the Chief Plenty Coups Homestead. Steps were taken to remove dilapidated outbuildings and improve accessibility. In about 1970, a small parcel of land was acquired adjoining the west-central edge of the site to permit a southern access from Edgar Road.

The tract was part of the land originally assigned to Plenty Coups' wife, Kills Together, who left it to the chief at the time of her death in 1923. The graveled access road, with branches west and northeast, was built from Edgar Road to the picnic area along Pryor Creek, where parking was constructed. The older access road from the east was then closed. In 1972, a museum designed by Billings architect Eugene Padanyi-Gulyas was constructed in the southern end of the park.

Chief Plenty Coups State Park is the only developed park facility capable of accommodating large groups in the vicinity of Pryor. The park is heavily used by the Native American community during its May-September season. An average of 34,000 people visit the park yearly, enjoying the serenity of the Pryor Valley and reflecting on the inspiring life of Chief Plenty Coups.¹³⁴

Comparative Properties

¹³⁰ Lawrence Flat Lip, Pryor, Montana, notes in files of Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana.

¹³¹ *Billings Gazette*, 4 August 1940 and 29 June 1941.

¹³² McCleary, 5.

¹³³ *Billings Gazette*, 24 May 1951.

¹³⁴ Pittsley, 10 October 1997.

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In evaluating the national significance of the Chief Plenty Coups Homestead the appropriate range of comparable properties is similar Homesteads associated with other prominent chiefs of the same era and general geographic area. The temporal frame of reference is the transitional era, the period in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries during which western Native American tribes shifted from a traditional nomadic life to settlement on fixed reservations under the control of the United States. Warmaking skills became less important weapons in this period for tribal leaders than did a talent for negotiation, oratory, and the forming of political alliances in dealings with Congress, the Indian Office, and white business interests. Geographically, the comparison embraces the Great Plains and Rocky Mountain areas. Comparable chieftains had a similar leadership role and impact on their tribe to those of Plenty Coups on the Crow. Chiefs selected for comparison included: Washakie (Shoshoni); Quanah Parker (Comanche); Ouray (Ute); Red Cloud (Oglala Sioux); and Medicine Crow (Crow). A discussion of the selected comparable chieftains and their Homesteads follows.

Washakie. Shoshoni Chief Washakie (1802-1900) earned a reputation as a warrior, rose to chieftainship of a local band by the mid- 1840s, and emerged as "the most powerful leader of the migratory horse-owning tribe" by the late 1840s. A relatively small tribe, the Shoshoni engaged in tribal warfare with such traditional enemies as the Sioux, Cheyennes, Blackfeet, and Arapahos. The Shoshoni accepted a reservation in 1868 centered in the Wind River area of northwestern Wyoming. Washakie allied his tribesmen with the U.S. Army as scouts and warriors in the Northern Plains Indian wars of the 1870s. The chief led a group of Shoshoni warriors at the Battle of the Rosebud in support of Brig. Gen. George Crook. Washakie represented the Shoshonis in treaty negotiations with the U.S. government.¹³⁵ The chief's home was about a mile and a half from Fort Washakie and consisted of "a cabin on the north side of the South Fork of the Wind river, his wife living with him in this personally constructed one room log Home."¹³⁶ The Washakie Homestead was favorably compared to that of Plenty Coups' by Peter Nabokov who indicated that the property is no longer extant.¹³⁷

Quanah Parker. Quanah Parker (1852-1911) was the son of a Comanche chief and a white woman abducted in a raid on a Texas settlement. Although the Comanches accepted a reservation in what is present-day Oklahoma in 1867, the Quahadi band to which Parker belonged rejected the treaty, raided white settlements, and battled the U.S. Army for years until their eventual surrender in 1876. Parker bridged the gap from the life of a young, nomadic warrior to settlement on the reservation and rose to become the principal chief of Comanches in the vicinity of Fort Sill by the late 1870s. During the 1880s, Parker allied himself with cattle barons who grazed herds on the reservation. Parker was a strong proponent of formal education, the Peyote Cult, polygamy, and Comanche participation in the commercial life of the Indian Territory. He represented his tribe on twenty trips to Washington and entertained prominent guests at his

¹³⁵ Michael F. Turek, "Washakie", in Malmiowski, 449-50; Bruce E. Johansen and Donald A. Grinde, Jr., *The Encyclopedia of Native American Biography* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1997), 409-10.

¹³⁶ Grace Raymond Hebard, *Washakie. Chief of the Shoshones* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1995; originally published 1930), 277.

¹³⁷ Peter Nabokov, University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California, telephone interview by author, September 1997. Nabokov is author of a number of books on Native American topics including *Native American Architecture (With Robert Easton)* and *Native American Testimony*.

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reservation Home, including Theodore Roosevelt and the British Ambassador. He started his own cattle ranch on which his impressive "Star House" was built.¹³⁸

Parker erected the house, with the assistance of a number of prominent white cattlemen on the Comanche Reservation, in about 1890. "More mansion than house, it was two-stoned with a double porch, its metal roof was decorated with prominent white stars, and the interior was richly appointed in the manner of wealthy non-Indians of the day."¹³⁹ Parker's house stands in contrast to Plenty Coups' house, which, although larger than that of the average Crow, was sparsely furnished and displayed none of the trappings of wealth.

The Star House was originally located north of Cache, Oklahoma, and was moved into Cache in 1956 when nearby Fort Sill was expanded. The house was moved to its present location in about 1958, when transferred to the grounds of a private amusement park where it is displayed with a collection of other historic buildings. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 with a "local" level of significance recommended. While impressive architecturally, the building's moves and its present location in an amusement park have destroyed its integrity of setting.¹⁴⁰

Ouray. Ute leader Ouray (1833-1880) became chief of the Utes in 1860 upon the death of his father. Ouray was a noted warrior during his youth in intertribal conflicts with the Sioux and Kiowas. Born in northern New Mexico, he could speak English, Spanish, and a number of Indian languages. The Utes accepted a reservation in 1863, which came under pressure from white prospectors and settlers in growing Colorado Territory. Ouray was instrumental in restoring peace after the Meeker Massacre of 1879. Chief Ouray and his wife Chipeta had a house near Montrose, Colorado. According to the Ute Indian Museum in Montrose, the house is no longer extant; only the foundation remains.

Red Cloud. Red Cloud (1822-1909) was a prominent Oglala Sioux chieftain, who came to prominence as a warrior in intertribal battles with the Pawnee, Crows, Shoshonis, and Utes. He cemented the leadership of his band by killing a rival, Bull Bear. Fearful that the U.S. Army planned to seize control of the Bozeman Trail corridor, which ran through Oglala Sioux country, Red Cloud withdrew from treaty negotiations and conducted a three-year war (1866-68) that closed down the trail. Red Cloud eventually signed the Fort Laramie Treaty and reportedly argued for peace with whites during the Northern Plains Indian wars of the 1870s. He made a number of trips to Washington and other points in the East, arguing for better treatment for his tribesmen and improved quality of goods distributed. The Indian Agency for Red Cloud's tribe was moved a number of times, before finally locating at Pine Ridge in southwestern South

¹³⁸ Cynthia R. Kasee, "Quanah Parker," in Malinowski, 32 1; Editors of Time-Life Books, *The Mighty Chieftains, The American Indians* (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1993), 163-67; and Johansen and Grinde, 282-284 (which lists his birth year as 1845).

¹³⁹ Kasee, "Quanah Parker," in Malinowski, 321. See, Editors of Time-Life Books, *The Mighty, Chieftains, 164-65*, for a picture of the sprawling residence.

¹⁴⁰ "Quanah Parker's Star House," National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 29 September 1970, in the files of the Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

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Dakota. In the last decades of his life, Indian Office workers remembered the chief as the "once fierce warrior who was now at peace with the U.S. government."¹⁴¹

The Indian Office erected a "two-story frame house" for Red Cloud at Pine Ridge in 1879. The house, "the only two-story private residence on the Pine Ridge Reservation for many years, was the chief's simple, but comfortable, abode during the last decades of his long life."¹⁴² According to Brother C.M. Simon, S.J., of the Red Cloud Indian School and Heritage Center, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Red Cloud's house was demolished in the 1940s.¹⁴³

Medicine Crow. A contemporary of Plenty Coups and a fellow Crow chief, Medicine Crow (1848-1920) was a tribal leader in the Lodge Grass area of the Crow Reservation. Medicine Crow was a warrior in his youth and became a chief about 1870. He had visions foretelling the coming of railroads to the area and the replacement of the buffalo with cattle. The chief was a member of the Crow delegation to Washington in 1880, as well as several subsequent visits. Like Plenty Coups, Medicine Crow was one of the early Crow leaders to engage in farming and was a defender of traditional Crow religious beliefs and practices. Historian Frederick E. Hoxie concluded that Medicine Crow "seemed to lack Plenty Coups' ambition for tribal leadership, but he matched his contemporary from Pryor in his ability to unify the residents of his district."¹⁴⁴

As a young man, Medicine Crow had a vision that revealed his future home: "He saw a white-man's type of house with a large corral nearby, situated on the top of a hill overlooking the junction of the Little Big Horn River and Lodge Grass Creek." He erected a frame house northwest of Lodge Grass, Montana, on the Crow Reservation in about 1910, in the location specified by his vision.¹⁴⁵ The building, like Plenty Coups' Home, incorporated materials from Fort Custer. The one-story house is still standing but is abandoned and in deteriorating condition.

Conclusion

While the prominent transitional chiefs discussed above perhaps matched Plenty Coups in terms of stature and activities, Plenty Coups' Homestead is unique in terms of its high level of historic integrity. Homesteads of comparable Native American chieftains have fared poorly over the years. Plenty Coups' decision to deed his house and its surrounding lands as a park for public use upon his death in 1932 and the assumption of the trusteeship by the Billings Kiwanis Club in 1951 and the State of Montana in 1961 have been critical factors in the preservation of the property and its setting in a relatively unaltered state.

The homestead was associated with Plenty Coups for nearly half a century, from the completion of the house in 1884 until his death in 1932. The chief rose to prominence within the tribe in the traditional manner through martial accomplishments. He experienced important visions which

¹⁴¹ Karen P. Zimmerman, "Red Cloud," in Malinowski, 353-55; Johansen and Grinde, 311-13; and Robert W. Larson, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioiix* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 288.

¹⁴² Larson, 258 and 184.

¹⁴³ Brother C.M. Simon, S.J., Pine Ridge, South Dakota, telephone interview by author, 9 January 1998.

¹⁴⁴ Hoxie, *Parading*, 181.

¹⁴⁵ Joseph Medicine Crow, *From the Heart of Crow Country* (New York: Crown Trade paperbacks, 1992), 44.

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foretold the disappearance of the buffalo, the dominance of the white men,, and the necessity of adapting in order to survive. From the 1880s to the late 1920s, Plenty Coups was an important Crow leader and statesman whose decisions shaped the future of the Crow nation. The property represents the duality of the chief's efforts to adopt those elements of American culture necessary to succeed on the reservation while maintaining essential elements of Crow religion, language, and traditions. The Chief Plenty Coups Homestead has significance for the American people for its representation of an important period of development in United States history, for its association with a prominent and influential political leader, and for its architecture, which represents the best preserved remaining Homestead of a prominent chief of the transitional era in its original setting.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark. Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): _____

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References:	Point	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A	12	691380	5034190
	B	12	691780	5034200
	C	12	691790	5033800
	D	12	692010	5033810
	E	12	692060	5032620
	F	12	691840	5032600
	G	12	691820	5033120
	H	12	691620	5033110
	I	12	691610	5033400
	J	12	691410	5033400

The above UTM coordinates define the boundary of the nominated area and were computed from a digital aerial photograph of the project using a geographic information system. Coordinates were rounded to the nearest ten meters.

Acreage of Property: 195.4 acres

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the National Historic Landmark is coterminous with the present boundary of Chief Plenty Coups State Park. Within Township 5 South, Range 26 East, the nominated area includes: the east half of the northeast quarter and that part of the east half of the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter lying north of Edgar Road (BIA Road 8) of section 6; and the west half of the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter and the west half of the northwest quarter and the west half of the west half of the southwest quarter of section 5.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes all of the lands donated by Chief Plenty Coups and Strikes the Iron to public use by their 1928 trust deed (189.2 acres), as well as a small tract (6.2 acres) acquired by the State of Montana in about 1970 in the west central portion of the acreage, for access and park structures. The smaller tract was originally part of an allotment granted to Plenty Coups' wife Kills Together, which was inherited by the chief after her death. Plenty Coups' holdings under his allotment included substantially more land to the northwest, but these lands were not included in his public bequest and are now held by various private parties in agricultural uses.

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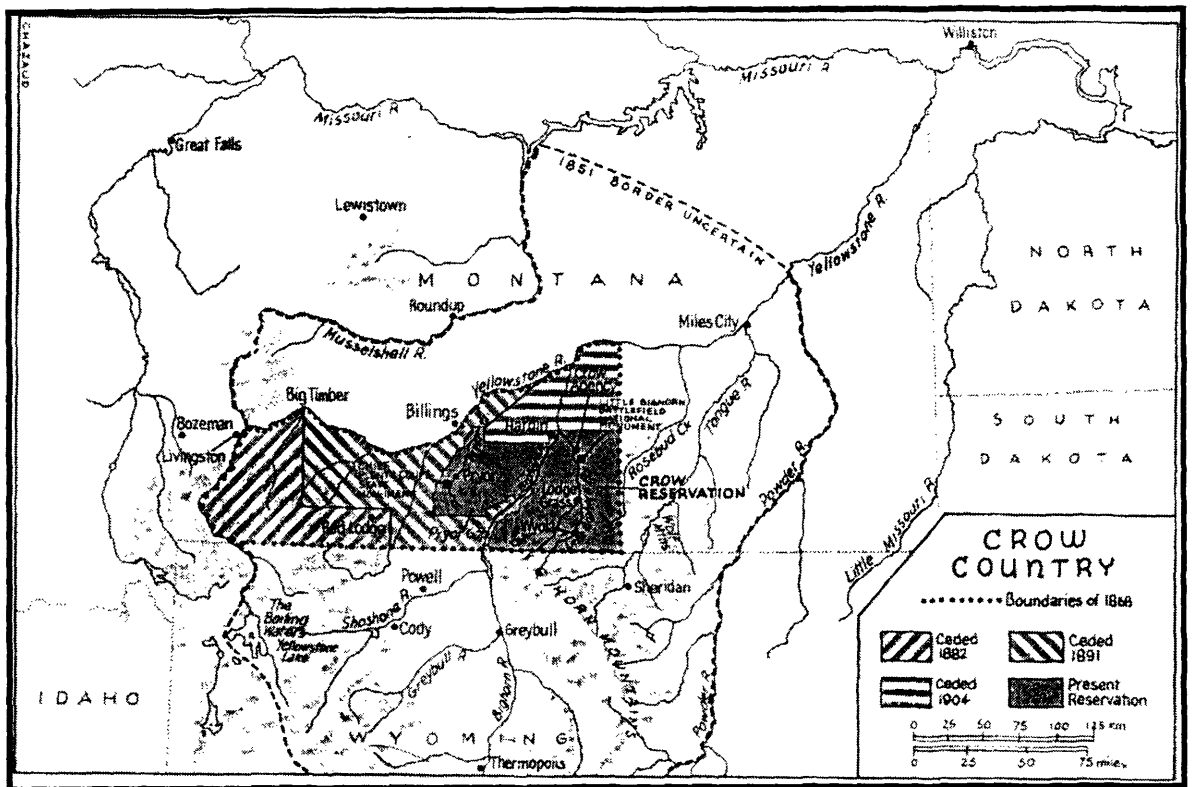


Figure 1. The location of the Chief Plenty Coups State Park and National Historic Landmark is indicated by a small box immediately southwest of Pryor, Montana, on this map of the northern Rocky Mountains. Also shown is the historic Crow homeland, the current Crow Reservation and land cessions which reduced the size of the original reservation. SOURCE: National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office files, Denver, Colorado.

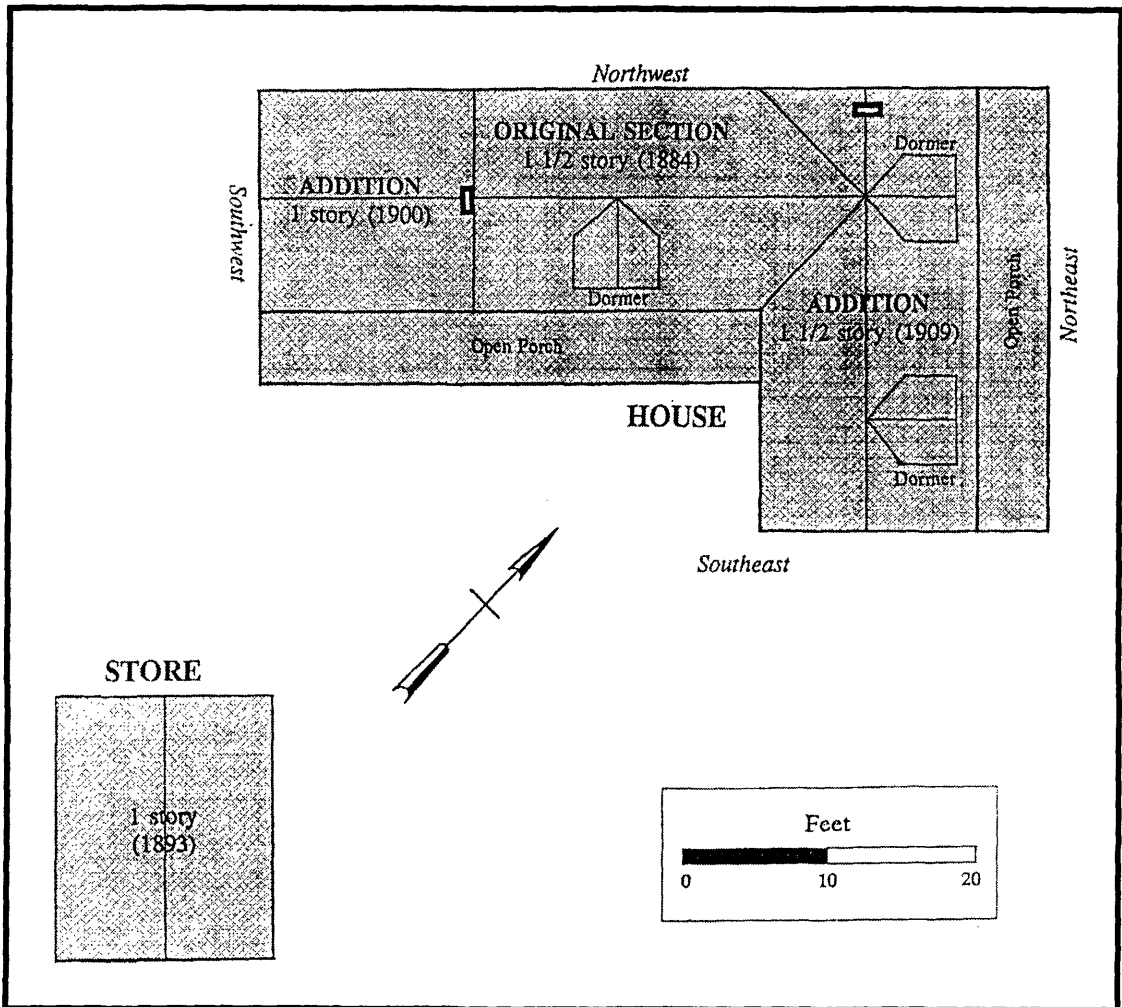


Figure 2. This detail map shows the vicinity and features of the house and store at Chief Plenty Coups Homestead. The map is provided for orientation purposes only; dimensions and relative positions are approximate.

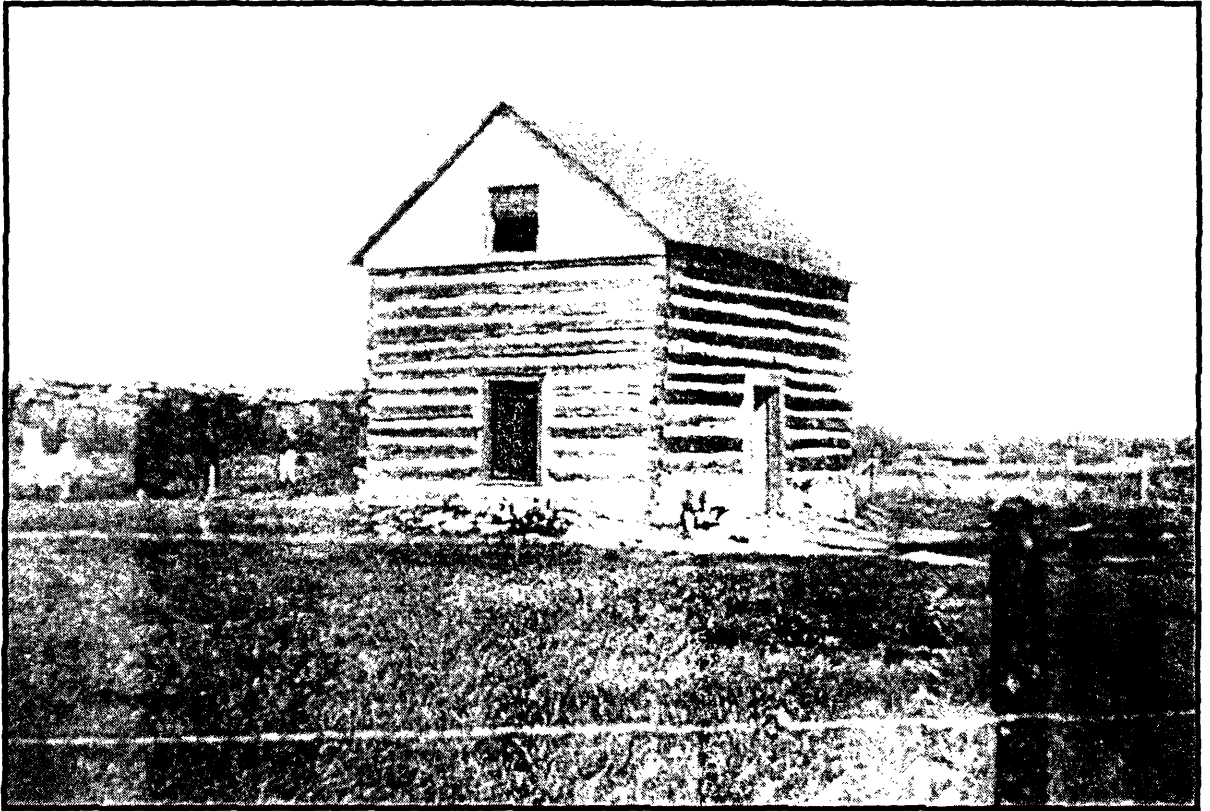


Figure 3. The original center section of Chief Plenty Coups House appears in this circa 1880s photograph (view north). SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Montana, Photographic Collection, image donated by Arthur R. Long.



Figure 4. Plenty Coups' house was substantially expanded in 1909 with a one-and-a-half-story section at the northeast end (view west). Note the one-story addition on the left. SOURCE: Richard Throssel collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming.

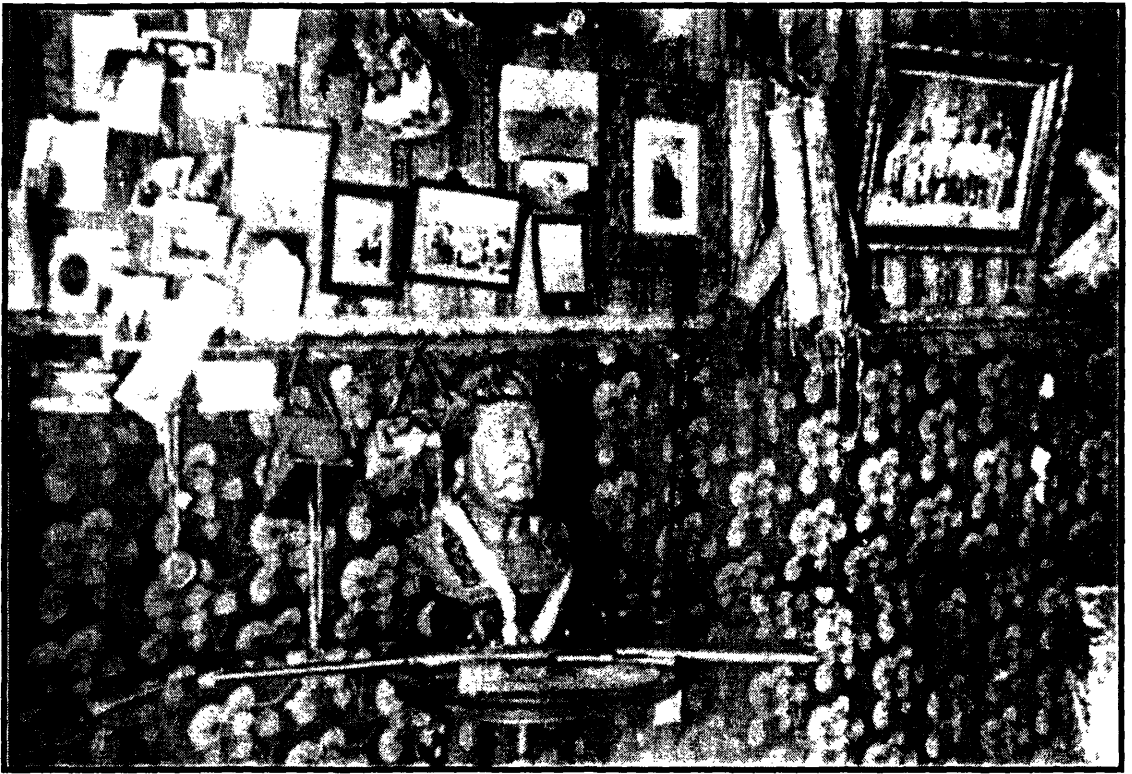


Figure 5. The upper room in the original part of Chief Plenty Coups' house held the Chief's special possessions, including the photographs and memorabilia on the southwest wall. The lower portion of the wall represents the lining found in a traditional tipi. This photograph was probably taken in the late 1940s or early 1950s. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, Image CP95.124.01a from a Dudley White image in the Montana Historical Society.

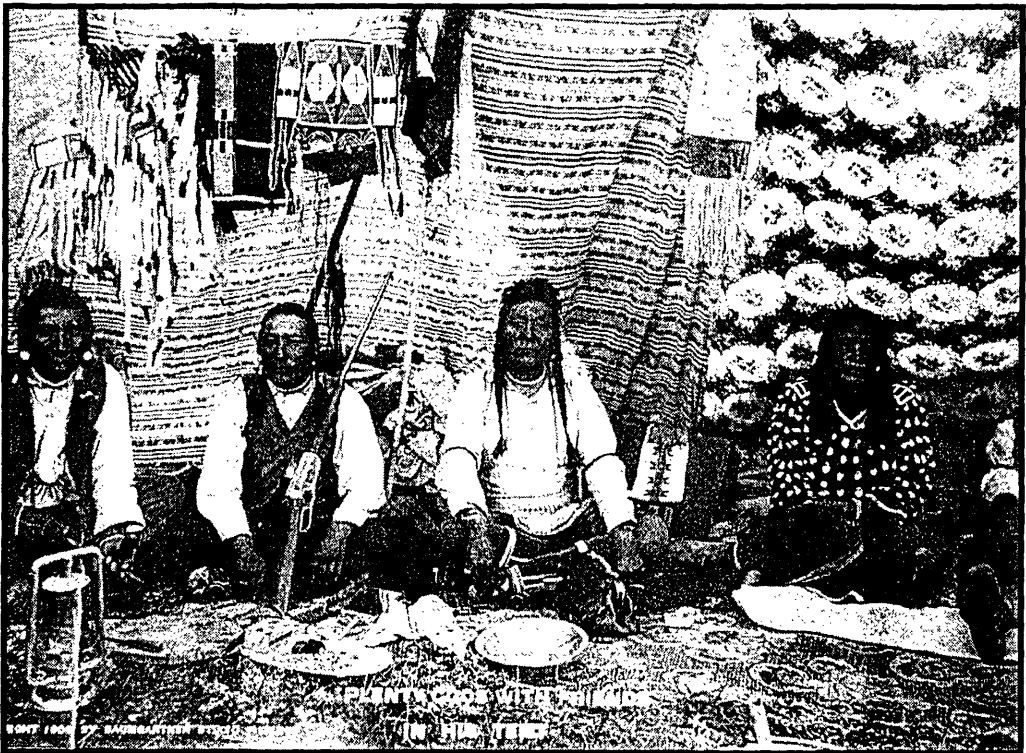


Figure 6. This circa 1909 photograph by Baumgartner Studio of Billings, Montana, is labeled “Plenty Coos with friends in his tent” and illustrates the use of brightly patterned fabrics to line the interiors of tents or tipis--a practice the chief extended to the upper room in his house. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection.

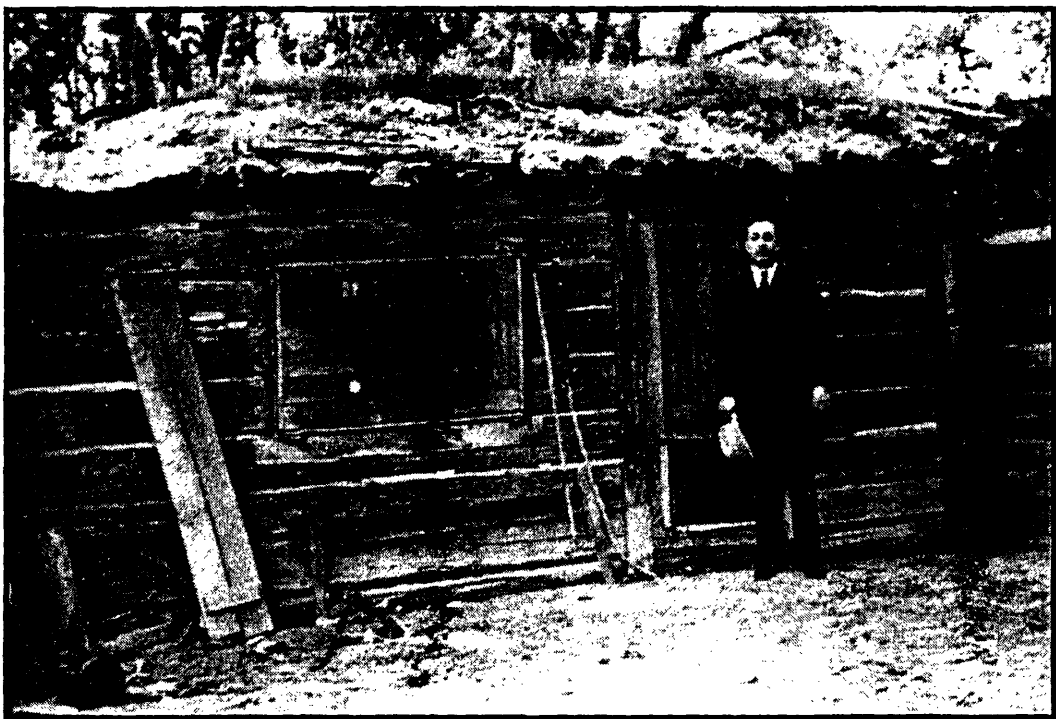


Figure 7. Peter Yegen, Jr.,s shown in front of Chief Plenty Coups' store in this undated photograph. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, Image CP95.125.01d.



Figure 8. The Chief Plenty Coups' house (partially hidden in the grove of trees) and various outbuildings are depicted in this oblique aerial photograph taken in 1963 (view west).
SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, image by Photomaps of Belleville, Kansas.



Figure 9. Chief Plenty Coups is shown as a young man in this photograph. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, Image CP190.1.e, from an image in the Smithsonian Institution.



Figure 10. Chief Plenty Coups was about fifty-seven years old in this 1905 photograph. SOURCE: Hoxie, *The Crow*, 106, from an image in the National Anthropological Archives, negative number 3405, Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

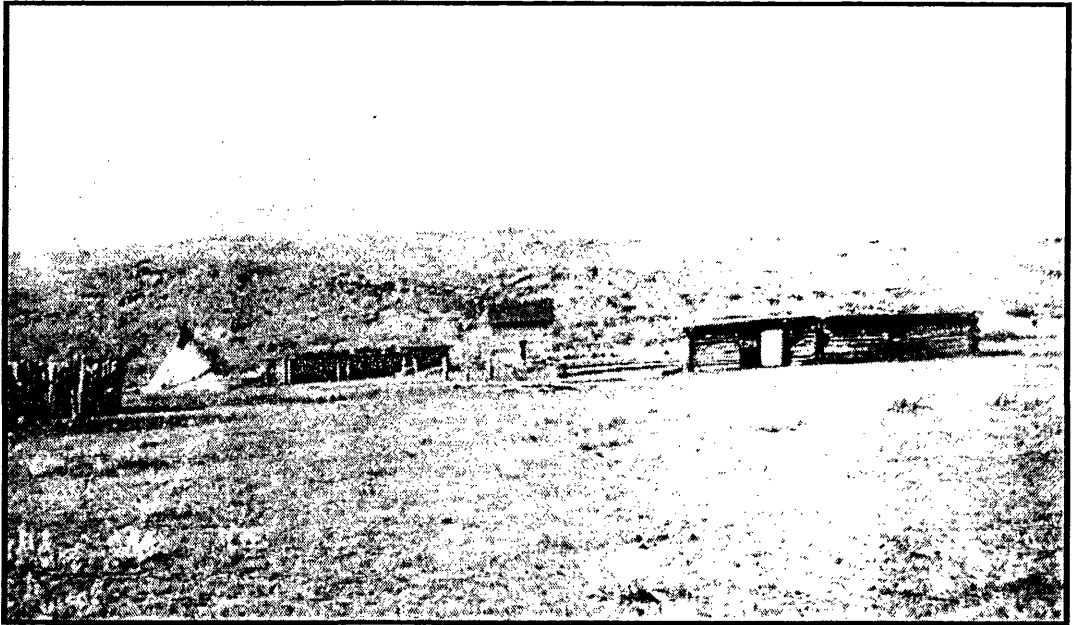


Figure 11. This view shows the original house (center), outbuildings, and a tipi in the 1880s (view northwest). SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, image donated by Arthur R. Long.

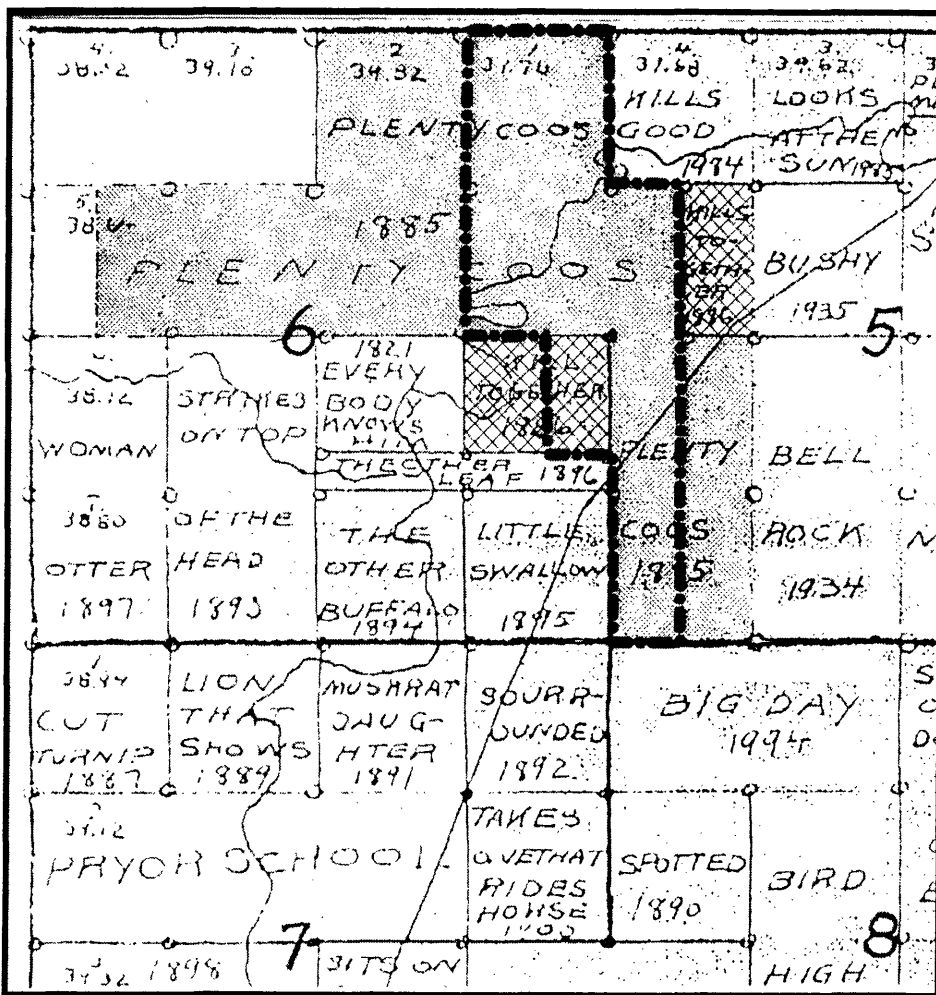


Figure 12. The land allotments of Plenty Coups (#1885, shaded) and his wife Kills Together (#1886, crosshatched) are shown on this extract of a plat map showing Indian land allotments in the northwest portion of Township 5 South, Range 26 East. The dotted and dashed line shows the present boundary of Chief Plenty Coups State Park, which is coterminous with the National Historic Landmark boundary. SOURCE: National Archives, Rocky Mountain Region, Denver, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Crow Indian Agency.

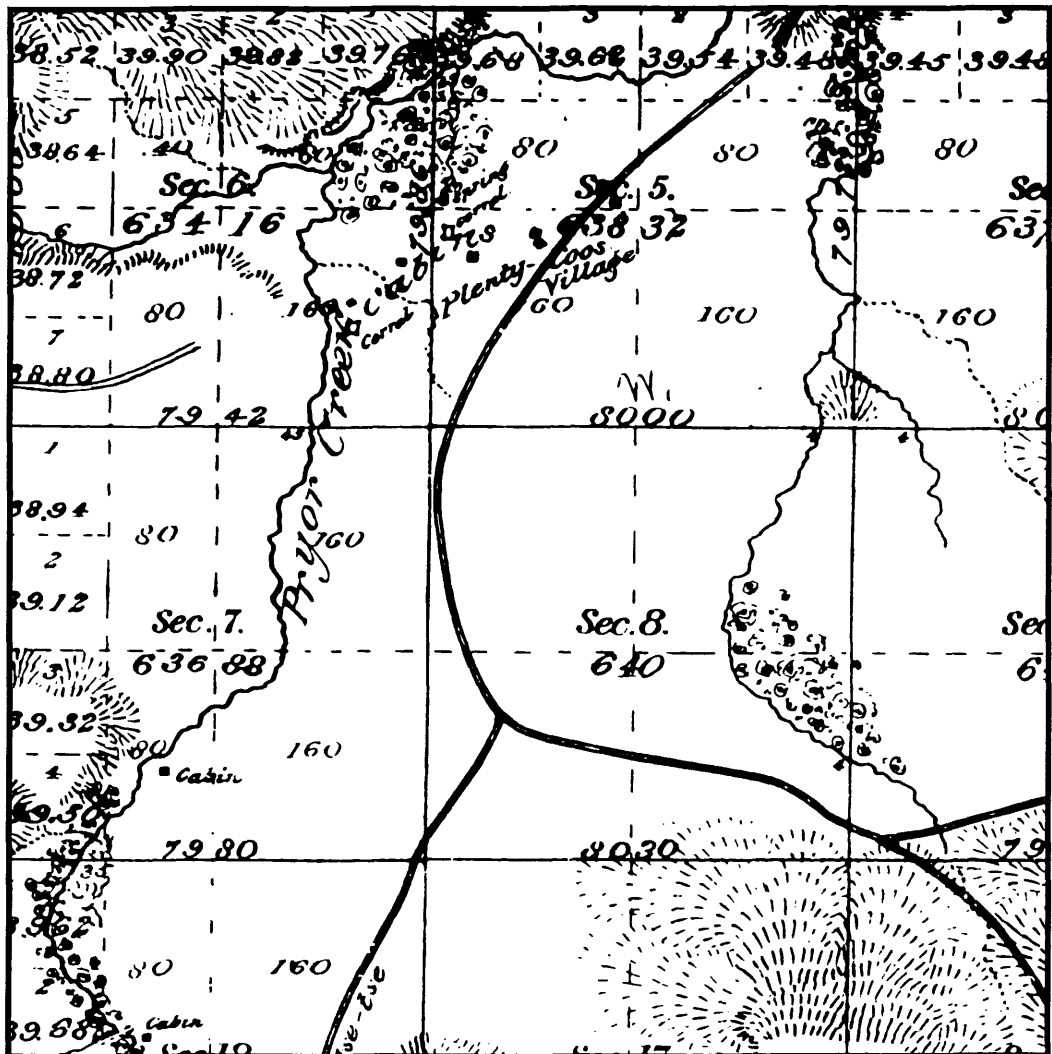


Figure 13. The 1887 General Land Office survey plat for Township 5 South, Range 26 East, depicted “Plenty-Coos Village” in sections 5 and 6. The chief’s house, the spring, two corrals, and several cabins are present. SOURCE: In the files of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Montana State Office, Billings, Montana.



Figure 14. A broader view looking west shows the expanded house with the store to the left in this undated photograph. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, Image CP95.123.01bc.

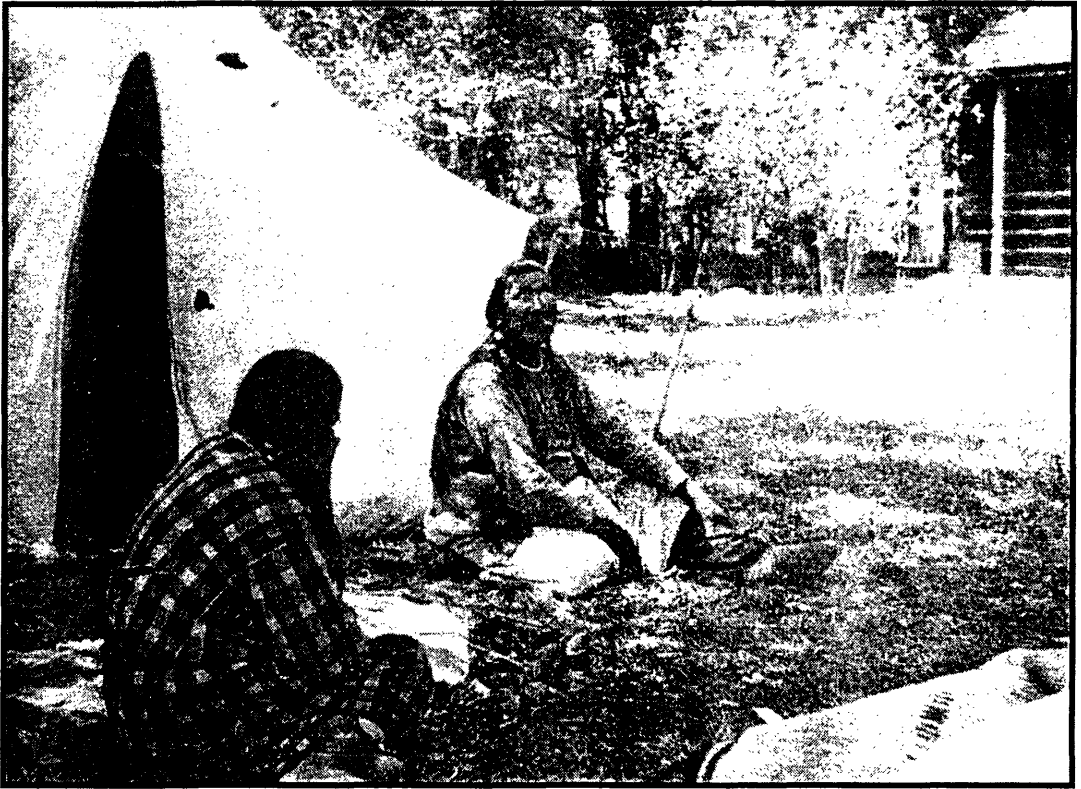


Figure 15. A tent is pitched in the grassy area between the store and Plenty Coups' house (right background) in this circa 1916 photograph. Plenty Coups sits on the right with an unidentified woman on the left. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, Image CP95.149.01.9, P-96 by Maxine Gibson.

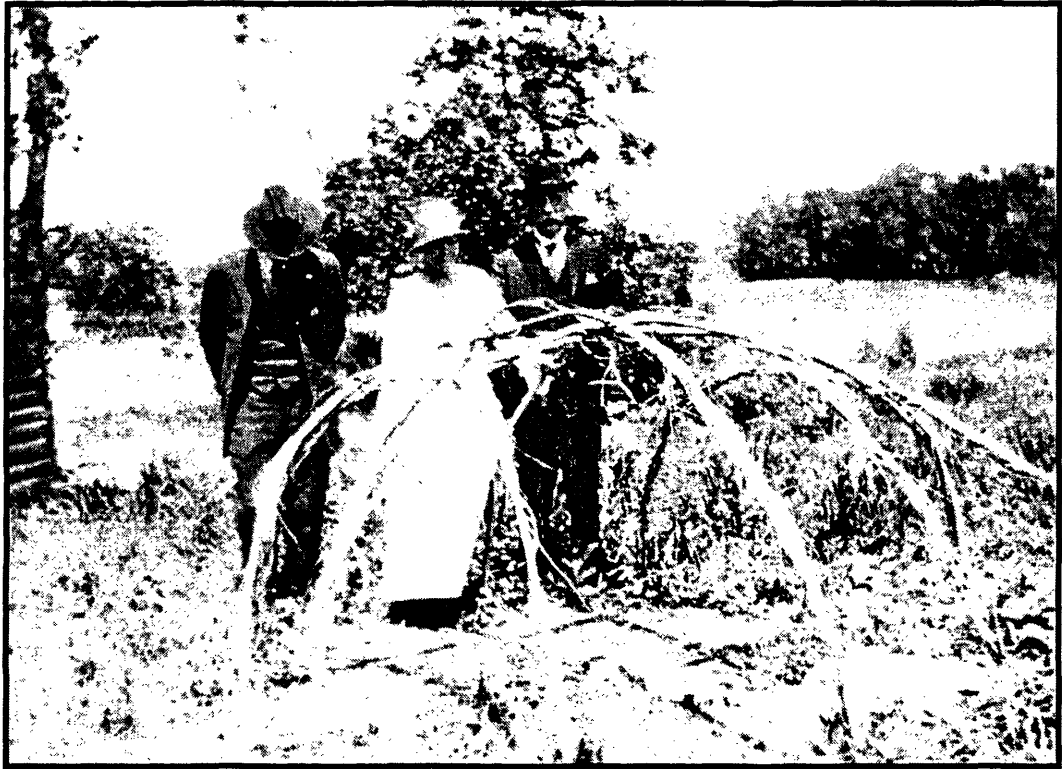


Figure 16. A frame for a sweat lodge near Plenty Coups' spring is being examined by visitors in this undated (circa 1920s) view. An edge of the small frame structure which covered the spring is shown at the extreme left. A caption on the back of the photograph reads: "A sweating bower for turkish baths, covered with mats, etc., steam from heated stones in the middle." SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection, Image PAc82-26, Scrapbook II, p. 49, from an image in the Montana Historical Society, Helena, Montana.



Figure 17. Marshall Ferdinand Foch of France (left) detoured his train to see Chief Plenty Coups on his home ground at Crow Agency, Montana, in late 1921. The two had met in November at the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. SOURCE: Chief Plenty Coups Museum, Chief Plenty Coups State Park, Pryor, Montana, Photographic Collection.