

White men who resided or travelled in the territory of the Blood and North Blackfoot tribes recorded information of the same general tenor. Thus John McLean (1896, p. 579) during visits to Fort McLeod in 1880 came across "medicine wheels" in that region. He comments upon the Indians' use of stone markers to commemorate important events:

Several great battles were fought, and these cairns were placed there to commemorate these events, and probably to mark the spot where some of their greatest warriors died. When a great chief or warrior died a lodge was placed over him, and when this was thrown down by the wind, the body of the deceased was laid upon the ground, and a cairn of stones erected over it. There is a cairn called by the Indians the "Gambler's Cairn," near the store of I. G. Baker, in the town of Macleod. Several years ago a Piegan camp of Indians located on this spot was attacked by small-pox, and the disease proved so fatal that fifty dead lodges were left standing. Among those who died was Aikûtce; i.e., the Gambler, head chief of the Piegan tribe. His people placed a lodge over him, and when that had been blown down by the western winds, he was reverently laid upon the ground, and the cairn of stones erected. The original cairn was three or four feet in diameter, with rows of stones between forty and fifty feet each in length, leading to the cairn. Only one row of stones remains, and the cairn is worn nearly level with the street. This simple monument is of little interest to the passing stranger; but the Indian riding past will turn to his comrade and say, "Aikûtce."

McLean (p.580) came across other stone figures in this region but was unable to learn their history from his Indian companions:

Upon the summit of a limestone hill on Moose Mountain, Assiniboia, there is a group of cairns. The central cairn is composed of loose stones, and measures about thirty feet in diameter and four feet high.

This is surrounded by a heart-shaped figure of stones, having its apex toward the east, and from this radiate six rows of stones, each terminating in a small cairn. Four of these radiating lines nearly correspond with the points of the compass, and each of the lines of different lengths terminate in a smaller cairn. The Indians know nothing of the origin of these lines and cairns, but state that they were made by the spirit of the winds.

George M. Dawson (1885, p. 280), while engaged in field work for the Canadian Geological Survey in 1882-83-84, encountered a medicine wheel in the High River area of Alberta.<sup>2</sup> He remarks that:

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<sup>2</sup>I am indebted to Hugh Dempsey, of Edmonton, Alberta, for this reference.

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A point of note to the Indians in this region (the High River area) is that called Sun-dial Hill by Mr. Nelson. There is here a cairn with concentric circles of stones and radiating lines. I have not seen it, and therefore cannot describe it in detail. It is named "Onoka-katzi" and regarded with much reverence.