

HACKBERRIES AND CHITTAM TREE FRUITS

(Are there any hackberry trees around here? I wondered if Arapahoes ever ate the hackberries?)

They used to, but there ain't any. I never have seen any. And you know there's these--they used to call them chittam trees. They have kind of little black berries. They used to eat them. They look like little black beads. And the way they eat them, they used to just suck the skin out of them.

(Did they ever dry those?)

No. They didn't dry them. Just eat them whenever they run into them.

(What did they call those in Arapaho?)

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(What does that mean?)

That means "sharp berries."

(Any reason for calling them that?)

Well, you know because them chittam trees, they got thorns.

(Well, of all these wild things we've been talking about--what would be maybe their favorite things they would go after most?)

Plums and grapes. That was the main things they used to gather.

(What about these wild potatoes--would they make any special point of going after those?)

Not very often--just whenever they think about them and find some.

(Some irrelevant conversation.)

(Did the Arapahoes have any special prayers or ceremonies concerned with planting the corn or anything like that?)

No, they didn't have anything like that when we plant the corn.

(Or when they harvest it?)

No, they just go ahead and harvest it.

(I just wondered if any of these ceremonial leaders ever blessed the fields