

In Hollywood with Shirley Temple

*Told by Tom Many Guns
to Adolf Hungry-Wolf in August, 1976
Translated by Robert Many Guns in April, 2005*



Shirley Temple looks quite at ease with her elderly Pikunni friends, wearing a traditional buckskin dress made for her by one of their wives. Seated, from left: Albert Mad Plume, Yellow Kidney, and Little Blaze. Standing, from left: Eddie Big Beaver, Charlie Iron Breast, Turtle, Shirley Temple, Dan Bull Plume, and Tom Many Guns.

“I am going to tell a story about the time I traveled with some of the old timers to be in a movie with Shirley Temple. We gathered at the Browning depot from each district on the reservation. Everybody had braids—there was no one without braids. The interpreters were Eddie Big Beaver and myself.

We had our own car on the train, where we sat in the daytime and slept at night. We left Browning and traveled west all day through the mountains. At ten that night we got to Spokane. There, we all got off the train and went to a café to eat, while a newspaper man took pictures. We had to read the menu for the older people. Then we got back aboard and continued

towards the west coast. Those old people felt they were in a strange country, so they prayed hard to be protected and to get to their destination safely. Today I'm the only one from the group who is still living.

The people tried to sleep along the way, but it was hard because of all the noise—the sound of the wheels, and the locomotive whistle. Our car was up front, so we could hear it very loud. Sometimes when the brakes came on we all nearly fell down. The next morning we ate breakfast in the dining car—just hot cakes, and meat, nothing fancy. Then we got to Seattle. It doesn't have a name in our language. Later we got to Portland, which we call Flower Town. We

were headed down the coast towards Los Angeles. Somewhere along the way we made a sudden stop. The conductor came and told us not to panic, that we had hit an automobile that was trying to beat the train at a crossing. We dragged that car a long ways.

Finally the conductor came in and told us, “Alright, you're here, this is Los Angeles.” When Eddie Big Beaver interpreted this to the old people, he told them, “We are here, at 'Itat-sachpee-spumituppi,' Where-we-Lost-the-Angels. That's how he translated Los Angeles. Our guide told us to dress up and he would take us sightseeing. While traveling on the train we just wore our ordinary clothes, from the store. But