

GEORGE CATLIN AND THE PIPESTONE QUARRY: PARADISE OF THE RED GODS

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by  
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# GEORGE CATLIN AND THE PIPESTONE QUARRY: PARADISE OF THE RED GODS

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## ABSTRACT

George Catlin, pioneer, author, ethnographer, entrepreneur, was foremost an artist of exceptional talents. He made five difficult journeys westward from 1830-1836 to paint the Native Americans and their way of life. His artistic work comprised the first pictorial record of western Native Peoples. In Catlin's view, a visit to the sacred Pipestone Quarry, located in southwestern Minnesota, would be a fitting finale to his documentation of Native American tribes of the West. Catlin felt it necessary to subject the quarry to his presence, to extract stone for study, and to preserve the quarry through his painting. Everywhere the artist had gone in his travels, from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, and from the Canadian border into Mexican territory he had witnessed the smoking of the long-stemmed Indian pipe that was an important ritual in every phase of diplomacy, peace, and war. The quarry was the central site that over the millennia held hundreds of tribes in communication with each other. In Catlin's time, the quarry was guarded by the Santee Sioux, protecting their economic interest in this valuable substance, pipestone, as well as the sanctity of the resource from which they believed the Great Spirit had fashioned man. In Catlin's final pilgrimage to round out his western travels his goal was to view this sacred site.

## APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, have examined a dissertation titled, " George Catlin and the Pipestone Quarry: Paradise of the Red Gods," presented by Denise Louise Mundy, candidate for the Master of Arts degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Among those nineteenth-century artists who depicted the appearance and customs of Native American peoples, George Catlin (1796-1873) occupies a unique position. An author, pioneer and entrepreneur, he was foremost an artist of exceptional talents. From 1830 to 1836 he traveled among Native American tribes in the frontier beyond white settlements and created more first-hand portraits of Native American men, women, and children, along with scenes of Indian life than did any other artist of his time. To his pictorial record, Catlin added a significant ethnographic dimension by writing a narrative of his travels filled with observations of the Native Americans he met and their way of life. The more one studies George Catlin's remarkable career, the more one becomes impressed with his energy, his versatility, and his exceptional productivity. Catlin's ethnographic approach is exemplified in his painting *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairies* 1836 (Fig. 1), which is currently in the National Museum of American Art/Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. Catlin's complex role as ethnographer, artist, and intermediary made him successful at recording Native American life with the Pipestone Quarry at its center.

During his travels among numerous Native American tribes from 1830 to 1836, Catlin observed the smoking of the long-stemmed Indian pipe that was an important ritual in every phase of peace and war. Catlin observed that many chiefs and warriors preferred to own and to use pipes made of a richly colored, red stone. Catlin had inquired about the source of that stone, and he was repeatedly told of a single quarry near the dividing ridge between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, located in Southwestern Minnesota. The Pipestone Quarry was the site, where over the millennia, many tribes met in peace to quarry

the stone. Off limits to non-Indians, the quarry was the central location of Indian legend and myth. In Catlin's time, the quarry was guarded by the Santee Sioux, protecting their economic interest in this valuable substance as well as the sanctity of the resource, from which they believed the Great Spirit had created man. Repeated references to this Pipestone Quarry aroused Catlin's desire to see it. In his final 1836 pilgrimage to round out his western travels, his goal was to view this sacred site.

George Catlin saw it as his mission to document the beliefs and customs associated with the Pipestone Quarry and the Native peoples. His 1841 book *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians* contained the earliest printed description of the Pipestone Quarry and the Indian legends that surrounded it. This book is a narrative of Catlin's experiences among Indian tribes. In his book are three hundred twelve small engravings, most of which were based on oil paintings showing his Indian gallery. The people, the legends associated with the Indian pipes, along with the combination of Indian religion and illustrated scenery mirrored Catlin's view of the Native American way of life.

Summarizing his final pilgrimage of his western travels in the 1830s, Catlin unveiled a remarkably enlightened perspective of the Pipestone Quarry that was rich in geological information as well as Indian lore. Catlin not only admired the sacred site but wanted to expose to the scientific world. His painting *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau Prairies* captures both of these aspects. Catlin was the first artist known to have painted the site. He was also the first person to have samples of the red stone scientifically analyzed and identified. Dr. Charles Thomas Jackson, a noted Boston mineralogist, found the stone to be a new mineral substance which he named "catlinite" in the artist's honor. Catlin was also the first person to document and describe the quarry in a scientific journal. "Account of a

Journey to the Coteau des Prairies, with a Description of the Red Pipe Stone Quarry and Granite Boulders found there” was published in *The American Journal of Science and Arts*, Volume 38 (1839-1840).<sup>1</sup>

Southwestern Minnesota is the section of land that Catlin claimed to be “*classic ground*”<sup>2</sup> when he made his memorable trip to the Pipestone Quarry in 1836. While Minnesota straddles a transition zone between the eastern woodlands and western prairies of North America, southwestern Minnesota is completely prairie. The area between the Minnesota River and the Big Sioux Rivers is part of a region of low undulating hills known to earlier explorers as *Coteau des Prairies*. The name *Coteau des Prairies*, given to the area by the earliest French explorers, means Highland of the Prairies.<sup>3</sup> The *Coteau* or Highland begins in the eastern Dakotas and runs southeasterly on into Iowa. Mostly tall grass prairie, its 282 acres surrounds the quarry. The Pipestone Quarry is located on the *Coteau’s* western slope and is the dividing ridge between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. To the east of the square-mile area lies a red quartzite ledge, to the south an outcropping of flat red rock. Pipestone Creek and Lake Hiawatha border the northern edge. The façade of the quarry’s thin line of earth and rock faces to the west. The country in and around the quarry had impressed Catlin as having “sublime grandeur.”<sup>4</sup>

For Native Americans of the northern Great Plains region, the peace pipe has great cultural significance. The pipe is often referred to by the Indians as a calumet, from the

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<sup>1</sup>George Catlin, “Account of a Journey to the Coteau des Prairies, with a Description of the Red Pipestone quarry and Granite boulders found there.”In *The American Journal of Science and Arts 1839*, Vol. 38, No.1 138-146. Quoted in Alan Woolworth, *The Red Pipestone Quarry of Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Archeological Society, 1983), 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indian*. Vol. 2 (London 1844, New York: re-published Dover Publishers, 1973), 163.

<sup>3</sup>Theodore L. Nydahl, “The Pipestone Quarry and the Indians.” *Minnesota History*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (December, 1950), 193-208.

<sup>4</sup> George Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2,165.

French word *chalameau*, meaning long flute, which serves as an integral part of religious ceremonies and civil functions.<sup>5</sup> The calumet seems to have been venerated for centuries. The peace pipe was employed by ambassadors and travelers as a passport on their journeys into enemy country. It was used to make treaties or agreements more binding, to place strangers on a friendly basis, to insure safe passage through country held by other tribes, and most importantly to promote peace. This particular quarry was not only the place where the pipestone was found, but it was the only location known to the Indians where it existed in appreciable quantity and under religious sanction.

George Catlin traveled to this quarry on his last western pilgrimage in 1836. Along the way he was confronted by a group of Sioux Indians. He quoted the Sioux council member Te-o-kun as saying: “We know that no white man has even been to the Pipestone Quarry, and our chiefs have often decided in council that no white man shall ever go to it.”<sup>6</sup> Catlin insisted: “We have heard that the Red Pipestone Quarry was a great curiosity, we have started to go to it, and we will not be stopped.”<sup>7</sup> This pivotal moment as described by Catlin highlights the inherent conflict between cultural respect for the Sioux and their customs, as opposed to the desire for discovery and satisfying “curiosity.” George Catlin felt it was his right to satisfy his curiosity and to record the ethnographic details and geological facts about the Pipestone Quarry. In Catlin’s ideology, this last trip in 1836 defined him as an enterprising ethnographer. In his view, Catlin was to create historical record of the Native American life before the culture became extinct.

Even though Catlin considered himself first and foremost an artist, he went west thinking of himself as an ethnographer. He returned east after visiting the Pipestone Quarry

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<sup>5</sup> William Corbett, *A History of the Red Pipestone Quarry and Pipestone National Monument* (Vermillion: University of South Dakota, MA Thesis, 1976), 1-6.

<sup>6</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes* Vol. 2, 172.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

and went to Europe believing that his Indian Gallery had accomplished its historical task. He described his paintings as “a full pictorial history” and as documenting “the history and customs” of the Native Peoples. Catlin believed that “nothing short of the loss of my life shall prevent me from visiting their country and becoming their historian.”<sup>8</sup> The question at hand is how successful was this ethnographer- artist, who recorded in paint, at documenting the significance of the Native American life with the Pipestone Quarry at its center. George Catlin’s painting of the Pipestone Quarry in 1836 depicted his vision of the western landscape in southwestern Minnesota projecting a view of what was perceived as a rapidly vanishing way of Indian life.

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<sup>8</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2,163.

## CHAPTER II

### JOURNEY TO THE RED PIPESTONE QUARRY

George Catlin was perhaps the most prolific of all frontier illustrators of Indian life. He aspired to produce a complete pictorial record of American Indians and their culture before they were too greatly changed by contact with the white settlers. Catlin made his way to Fort Snelling, in the heart of Sioux country, in the summer of 1832. There he heard about the sacred quarry that was even farther to the west, where the Indians of many tribes went in safety to obtain the red stone from which they shaped their beautiful peace pipes. Supposedly no white man had seen this sacred ground. Catlin was determined to visit this unique spot. His sense of mission was fueled by his curiosity and ambition to depict the western landscape as untarnished Indian country, projecting a naturalistic, scientific, and view of a sacred site, the Pipestone Quarry.

Catlin's lifelong quest began in 1824, when he caught sight of a delegation of 'noble and dignified-looking' Indians from the far west visiting on a tour of the Eastern cities. Awestruck by their "classic beauty," the 28-year-old lawyer, turned portraitist, resolved to devote his life to the "production of a literal and graphic delineation of the living manners, customs, and character' of the Native American Indians."<sup>1</sup> Over a period of six years in the 1830s he visited forty eight Indian tribes on the Great Plains.<sup>2</sup> Catlin arrived in St. Louis in 1830 and accompanied Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Western tribes, William Clark, on several treaty-making trips up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers in the spring of

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<sup>1</sup> George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Conditions of the North American Indians* Vol. 1 (London 1841, New York: re-published Dover Publishers, 1973), 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

1831. He later set out on four major expeditions: up the Missouri to Fort Union in 1832, across the southern plains into Comanche country with the Dragoons in 1834, north to Fall of St. Anthony and south to New Orleans along the Mississippi in 1835, and throughout the north-eastern plains and the Great Lakes to the Pipestone Quarry in 1836.<sup>3</sup> As he traveled along the way, he made detailed ethnographical records and sketches which produced an impressive gallery of approximately 500 paintings, more than half of which were Indian portraits and the remainder “landscapes of the country they live in” and scenes of Indian life.<sup>4</sup>

George Catlin’s mission in the 1830s was to document and preserve the image of the vanishing Native American race. While cultural nationalism’s artistic and literary celebration of the American Indian provided the motivational structure for Catlin’s work, nineteenth century scientific research in Philadelphia provided an important framework for its production. Back during his days of self-apprenticeship in Philadelphia in the 1820s, Catlin was a regular visitor to Charles Wilson Peale’s spectacular art and science museum. A fantastic and exotic collection of natural history specimens, Indian curiosities, and portraits, Peale’s museum had earned national acclaim as a center of the enlightened scientific community in Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup> The Philadelphia scientific community stressed the importance of the principles of direct observation, detailed observation, detailed description and classification handed down by Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton.<sup>6</sup> Among members of Philadelphia’s Academy of Natural Sciences and American Philosophical Society, science

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<sup>3</sup> J.C. Ewers, *George Catlin: Painter of Indians of the West* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), 486-489.

<sup>4</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 1 4.

<sup>5</sup> William H. Truettner, *The Natural Man Observed: a study of Catlin’s Indian Gallery* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), 66-67.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

and art went hand and hand: the beauty of nature often inspired scientific endeavor while both were in search of ‘truth’.<sup>7</sup>

Catlin was very much influenced by this scientific approach to art. He wanted to examine and record the Native American population that was unknown to European-American culture before the latter expanded westward and forever altered their environments. According to art historian John Hausdoerffer, Catlin felt he could temper the full brutality of imminent conquest if he could keep the visual reality of Indian life from vanishing.<sup>8</sup> Catlin was as an advocate for Indian causes, especially if he saw them as “lost to the world” and doomed to perish.”<sup>9</sup> His desire to create a visualize record of the ‘vanishing race’ of North America was his strongest guide to seeking the truth. Catlin posed an independent vision not only as his source of inspiration but as an undeniable handle on ‘truth’... truth as it concerned the manners, customs, and character of the North American Indians. The artist’s journal states:

If I am here losing the benefit of the fleeting fashion of the day, and neglecting that elegant polish, which the world would say an artist should draw from a continual intercourse with the polite world, yet have I this consolation, that in this country, I am entirely divested of those dangerous steps and allurements which beset an artist in fashionable life; and have little to steal my thoughts away from the contemplation of the beautiful models that are about me. If, also, I have not here the benefit of that feeling of emulation, which is the life and spur to the arts, where artists are associates together; yet I am surrounded by living models of such elegance and beauty, that I feel an unceasing excitement of a much higher order...the certainty that I am drawing knowledge from the true source.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., See also B. Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting 1825-1875* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> John Hausdoerffer, *Catlin’s Lament* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 69.

<sup>9</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 1, 15-16.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 16.

William Truettner felt his paintings served as illustrations for the extensive notes he was taking which the result would be a full account of all he had observed and learned.<sup>11</sup>

Catlin's works fit into a growing body of images which records the culture of the Native American Indian way of life. These images became a popular theme in American art following the discovery of the New World. Sixteenth and seventeenth century artists who traveled with exploratory expeditions created images of the appearances and customs of the Native Americans they encountered that would satisfy the curiosity of stay-at-home Europeans. By the early nineteenth century, another motive began to encourage artists to travel westward and to paint Native Americans. There was a growing fear that the tribes who lived beyond the rapidly advancing frontier of white settlement would be destroyed by white men's diseases, wars, and liquor. Along with their traditional customs, the Indian nations would be altered before artists could compile visual records of their great leaders and their customs. George Catlin's mission was to preserve the image of this vanishing race.

Catlin felt that he had to see the Pipestone Quarry for himself in order to round out his western travels, his journal notes and his curiosities. To do so, he set out by boat from Buffalo, strategically situated on the eastern end of Lake Erie. It took Catlin two days to navigate Lake Erie's waters, before entering into Lake Huron and "real" Indian country. He passed through Sault St. Marie and Mackinac Island at the entrances of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. He pressed on to Green Bay on the northwestern shore of Lake Michigan, from where Catlin began his trip on horseback across Wisconsin, then to Prairie du Chien, and arrived at Fort Snelling by August 17, 1836. (Fig. 2) His only companions on this trip

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<sup>11</sup> Truettner, *Natural Man Observed*, 67.

were Robert Serril Wood, a young Englishman and an Indian guide, O-Keep-Kee.<sup>12</sup> Catlin's family would receive no further news of his whereabouts until mid-November. The artist's journal states:

The reader... would follow me from St. Louis, and across the Alleghany mountains to my own state, where I deposited my collection, and from thence trace, as I did, the zigzag course of the lakes from Buffalo to Detroit, to the Sault St. Marie, to Mackinaw, to Green Bay; and thence the tortuous winding of the Fox and Ouisconsin (Wisconsin) rivers (600 miles) to the Fall of St. Anthony...<sup>13</sup>

The *Lawrence Taliaferro Papers*, the originals housed in the reference library of the Minnesota Historical Society, were in the handwriting of Major Lawrence Taliaferro, a successful Indian agent to Sioux tribes, gave the following account on Catlin's arrival at St. Peter's and his departure for the Pipestone Quarry on "Wednesday, the 17<sup>th</sup> August (1836).<sup>14</sup> "Mr. Catlin and Mr. Wood, the Englishman Gentleman, arrive and are greeted by a company of officers with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry, Col. Davenport and other officers were already expected from Prairie du Chien," also, "Sunday. 21<sup>st</sup> August...Catlin the painter and Mr. Wood an Englishman go off this day to the Pipestone Quarry."<sup>15</sup>

With his English companion Robert Wood, Catlin continued up the St. Peter's river as far as they could go in a canoe. They obtained horses to travel over land for the remainder of one 175 mile distance from Fort Snelling to the quarry. They made a brief stop at the small trading post of a French-Canadian by the name of Le Blanc, at Traverse des Sioux on the St. Peters River. A large party of Sioux Indians made an appearance and announced in

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<sup>12</sup> Lawrence Taliaferro, Journals 1836, 10<sup>th</sup> Volume *Daily Transactions and other Matters on Indian Affairs St. Peters Agency*, 152-153. *Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. 2 150.

<sup>13</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 160.

<sup>14</sup> Lawrence Taliaferro Journals, 1836, 10<sup>th</sup> Volume *Daily Transactions and other Matters on Indian Affairs, St. Peters Agency. Minnesota Historical Society*, 152-153.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

no uncertain terms that they had come to stop the two intruders from going any closer to the sacred Pipestone Quarry. The artist's journal states:

These copper-visaged advocates of their country's rights had assembled about us, (relates Catlin) and filled up every avenue of the cabin... The son of the local chief opened the council meeting with a speech that was as though it was for the final disposition of the whole country. 'We have been told that you are going to the Pipestone Quarry. We come now to ask what purpose you are going, and what business you have up there... We have seen always that the white people, when they see anything in our country that they want, send officers to value it, and then if they can't buy it, they will get it some other way... Brothers, I speak strong... the red pipe was given to the red man by the Great Spirit... it is part of our flesh, and it is great medicine... we know that no white man has ever been to the Pipestone Quarry, and our chiefs have often decided in council that no white man shall ever go. You have heard what I say, and you can go no farther, but you must turn about and go back.' After each statement that the spokesman made, all the others had vociferated approval with a loud '*How! How!*'

But I was interrupted by another of the Indians who shook his long shaggy locks as he rose, with his eyes fixed in direct hatred upon me, and his brandished expression within an inch of my face. 'Pale faces! You are our prisoners... no white man has been to the red pipe and none shall go!' Others made equally threatening speeches. But to all of this I insisted: We have started to go see it; and we cannot think of being stopped.<sup>16</sup>

The Sioux's resistance to his visit exposes an inconsistency in Catlin's position. While appreciative of their culture and sympathetic to the Native Americans, he felt compelled to record and publish what he had witnessed. Cultural tolerance and respect were rendered irrelevant in the name of discovery, art, and satisfying curiosity in Catlin's view. Adding further importance to Catlin's desire was to see, paint, and to preserve that which no other white man had witnessed. Good intentions or not, Catlin and Wood became part of that process of Indian degradation and dispossession that Catlin had so condemned.

Catlin and his companion reached the forbidden place without further adventure or interference. They acquired the service of a guide, Joseph La Framboise, a French Native

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<sup>16</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 172-177.

American trader for the American Fur Company, who escorted them to the quarry.<sup>17</sup> The Pipestone Quarry is located in what is today the southwest corner of the state of Minnesota, near the present town of Pipestone, in Pipestone County. This “fountain of the red pipe” was situated on a broad prairie pass, from which the tributaries of the great Mississippi river and the tributaries of the Missouri river flow westward. “This far have I strolled,” relates Catlin, “for the purpose of reaching the *classic ground*, their greatest medicine (mystery) place.”<sup>18</sup> According to Brian Dippie, Catlin had intended to visit the site earlier but his plans, fully formulated in 1835, were frustrated each time.<sup>19</sup> The quarry’s attraction remained irresistible to Catlin. It was the heart of Indian legend and myth, the dwelling place of the “Indian Muse.”<sup>20</sup>

In *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau Des Prairies*, 1836, seen in (Fig. 1). Catlin presents a panoramic painting of the Pipestone Quarry where naked human figures echo the color of the rocks. The figures are dwarfed by the landscape’s awe-inspiring sublimity. The canvas depicts human figures within a narrow foreground of space, observing, smoking, and digging in the ground, seen at the base of a perpendicular wall that runs horizontally from left to right. In the middle ground, is a section of green land interspersed with numerous red marks of diggings or excavations. Bisecting the stratified wall vertically is a stream of water which cascades over the wall, winds through the plain below and divides the painting symmetrically in the center. On the right of the water is a group of five round yellow- green boulders leaning against each other. The presence of a single figure is dwarfed by colossal five boulders. On the left of the blue vertical path of water is a triangular pyramidal mound

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Murray, *A History of Pipestone National Monument* (Pipestone: Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, 1965), 15.

<sup>18</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes* Vol. 2, 163.

<sup>19</sup> Brian W. Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries: The Politics of Patronage* (Lincoln: University Nebraska Press, 1990), 40.

<sup>20</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 163.

topped with a talon. This object is in balance to the naked figure who is walking toward the foreground of the picture plane. Throughout the painting Catlin includes human figures for scale, placing one man on the far right to show size of the five boulders and figures atop the cliff to show its height. Catlin has enhanced the interaction of the human activity and the landscape with an enriched palette. The foreground figures are in deep tones of red, orange and tans. The strong tones of the red-orange of the figures blending into the rocks attract the viewer's attention immediately. The rest of the landscape is flooded with soft tones of green that merge up to the two-toned reds, pinks and tans of the rock wall that divides the atmospheric, luminous, blue tones of the sky. There is a strong radiant glow of light over the pale blue stream that unifies the wall of rock to the foreground of human interaction. The figures, objects, and land appear to be in harmony which displays to the viewer an unspoiled paradise.

In Catlin's letter to Dr. Charles Jackson, the eminent Boston mineralogist, he wrote: "The Indians procure the red stone for their pipes by digging through the soil and several slate layers of the red stone to the depth of 4 or 5 feet."<sup>21</sup> In the letter, published in *The American Journal of Science and Arts* of 1839, Catlin describes the site with the eye of a geologist:

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<sup>21</sup> George Catlin, "Account of a Journey to the Coteau des Prairies, with a Description of the Red Pipestone Quarry and Granite boulders found there." In *The American Journal of Science and Arts* 1839, Vol. 38, No.1 138-146. Quoted in Alan Woolworth, *The Red Pipestone Quarry of Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Archeological Society, 1983), 1-9.

The principal and most striking feature of this place is a perpendicular wall of close grained, grained, compact quartz, of twenty five or thirty feet in elevation, running nearly north and south with its face to the west, exhibiting a front for nearly two miles in length. The depression of the brow of the ridge at this place has been caused by the wash of a little stream produced by several springs on the top of the ridge, which has gradually carried away the superincumbent earth, and having bared the wall for the distance of two miles, is now left to glide some distance over a perfect level surface of quartz rock, and then to leap from the top of the wall into a basin below, and then seek its course to the Missouri, forming the extreme source of a noted and powerful tributary, called the Big Sioux.<sup>22</sup>

Geology and natural history created the conditions that formed the layers of the soft clay stone used to make the famed peace pipe. Specifically, the advance and retreat of glaciers defined the topography of the *Coteau* region. The formation of the red pipestone deposits began about 1.2 billion years ago when sea water covered Minnesota.<sup>23</sup> Layers of clay and sand collected on the ocean's bottom were buried by other sedimentary material, accompanied by time, pressure, and chemical change turned the sand to quartzite and the clay to pipestone. Then, subterranean pressures forced these beds to fold and uplift much like an accordion that would expand and contract. The structure of the pipestone varied from 10 to 20 inches in thickness, the bands of pure, fine-grained material became suited for the manufacture of pipes seldom measuring more than three or four inches in thickness. The clay stone is a mineral and gets its rusty, reddish color from oxidized hematite which is an iron that has been exposed to oxygen for an extended period of time. It is very soft and measures 2.5 on the mohs scale of hardness, which is the same hardness as a human fingernail. It is this mineral which provides the unique softness for shaping of the bowls of the pipes. Through the different chemical processes that allows for the many periods of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>23</sup> National Park Service, *Pipestone a Pamphlet* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976) Quoted in William Corbett, *A History of the Red Pipestone Quarry and Pipestone National Monument* (Vermillion: University of South Dakota, MA Thesis, 1976), 3.

glaciations, the topography of the state, was left with rolling hills, contours, and the distinctive prairies.

These rock formations were shaped by the glacial periods. An example of this is the five boulders depicted in the right hand corner of Catlin's painting. (Fig. 3) The large boulders are of a substance that is unlike any rock formation in the vicinity. The boulders are composed of red coarse-grained granite, where the quarry is made up of almost in its entirety of red quartzite. According to geologist Newton Winchell, the boulders were at one time a single boulder, which was split later through the action of a frost.<sup>24</sup> The artist's journal states:

At the base of the wall, and within a few rods of it, and on the very ground where the Indians dig for the red stone, rests a group of five stupendous boulders of gneiss, leaning against each other...these blocks are composed chiefly of feldspar and mica, of an exceedingly coarse grain (the feldspar often occurring in crystals of an inch in diameter). The surface of these boulders is in every part covered with grey moss, which gives them an ancient and venerable appearance, and their sides and angles are rounded by attrition, to the shape and character of most erratic stones, which are found throughout the country. The surface of these boulders, are in every part unscratched by anything; wearing the moss everywhere unbroken, except when I applied the hammer, to obtain small specimens, which I shall bring away with me.<sup>25</sup>

The Quarry is a tract of land slightly over a mile square, situated just north of the city of Pipestone, being about seven miles east of the South Dakota line and about 30 miles north of the Iowa border. It is located on the highlands known as the Coteau des Prairies, which divide the Missouri and Mississippi basins. The country surrounding the Pipestone Quarry is comparatively flat and at the time of discovery by the white settlers was without trees of any

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<sup>24</sup>Newton Winchell, *Geology of Minnesota Survey*, Vol. 1, 69. Quoted in Theodore Nydahl, "The Pipestone Quarry and the Indian." *Minnesota History* Vol.31, No. 4 (December, 1950), 202.

<sup>25</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 202-203.

kind as far as the eye could see.<sup>26</sup> The quarry lies in the west central part of Pipestone County, on the Missouri slope of the Coteau des Prairies. The various objects of interest at the quarry are Winnewissa Falls, Inscription Rock, Leaping Rock, the Three Maidens, as well as the ancient and modern quarry sites. The artist's journal states:

The rock on which I sit to write, is the summit of a precipice thirty feet high extending two miles in length and much of the way polished, as if a liquid glaze had been poured on its surface. Not far from us, in the solid rock, are the deep impressed 'footsteps of the Great Spirit (in the form of the tracks of a large bird), where he formerly stood when the blood of the buffalos that he was devouring ran into the rocks and turned them red.' A few yards from us leaps a beautiful little stream from the top of the precipice, into a deep blue basin below. Here, amid rocks of the loveliest hues but wildest contour, is seen the poor Indian performing ablution; and a little distant beyond, on the plain, at the base of five huge granite boulders, he is humbly propitiating the spirits of the place, by the sacrifice of tobacco, entreating for permission to take away a small piece of the red stone for a pipe. Farther along, and over the extended plain are seen, like gopher hills, their excavations, ancient and recent, and on the surface of the rocks, various marks and their sculptured hieroglyphics...their *wakons*, totems and medicines...graves, mounds, and ancient fortifications...<sup>27</sup>

The color of the pipestone varied from a pale grayish-red to a dark blood-red (Fig. 4). When freshly quarried it was sufficiently soft to be readily carved into such shapes as desired with stone knives or stone hammers, and drilled with simple hand drills. As a final touch, the pipe carvers applied buffalo tallow to give the bowls a polished dark red finish. The structure of the pipestone varied from 10 to 20 inches in thickness, the bands of pure, fine-grained material best suited for the manufacture of pipes seldom measuring more than 3 or 4 inches in thickness. This layer was embedded between massive layers of compact quartzite. In early times, the process of working the quarry was a tedious one.

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<sup>26</sup> Donald Parker, ed., *The Recollections of Philander Prescott: Frontiersman of the Old Northwest 1819-1862* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 136-139.

<sup>27</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 165-166.

George Catlin collected samples of the red pipestone and made his own chemical analysis. After his return to New York, the artist sent some of the samples to Dr. Charles Thomas Jackson, the eminent Boston mineralogist, who made his own critical analysis and recognized it “a new mineral compound.” It was Dr. Jackson who gave the pipestone material the name by which it is commonly known today in the nomenclature of mineralogists and ethnologists: “*catlinite*”.<sup>28</sup> This was a lasting honor to Catlin who visited the sacred quarry of the Indians, and who brought the material to the attention of the civilized world.

Catlin recorded that the Quarry justified his every expectation: it was “truly an anomaly in nature.”<sup>29</sup> He depicted the Quarry, paying particular attention to the scientists, the “red pipe stone, I consider, will take its place amongst minerals, as an interesting subject of itself.”<sup>30</sup> Catlin acquired the specimens for study when he broke the stone with his hammer, “certainly bear as high a polish and luster on the surface, as a piece of melted glass,” and he was positive the red stone, “which differs from all known specimens of lava, is a new variety of *steatite*.”<sup>31</sup> Taking into account the discovery of *catlinite*, the topography and the Indian spirit, the quarry was all Catlin had wanted it to be.

After satisfying their curiosity at the source of the red pipe, Catlin and Wood left the quarry and made their way on horseback across the country toward the St. Peter’s river to return to Fort Snelling. Together Catlin and Wood contemplated the “splendid orrery of the heavens,” and man’s mortality foretold in “the swollen sun shoving down upon the mystic horizon.” As the travelers marched on, leaving behind “this shorn land, whose quiet and

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<sup>28</sup> Brian W. Dippie, “Green Fields and Red Men.” In *George Catlin and His Indian Gallery*, eds., George Gurney and Theresa Heyman (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2003), 204.

<sup>29</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 202.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-203.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 205-206.

silence are only broken by the winds and the thunders of Heaven,”<sup>32</sup> Catlin realized that his western travels were coming to a close and that life’s practical duties were upon him. He had to end the first phase and seriously begin the second phase of his life’s work; an undertaking which was unfortunately destined to be far less successful than his experiences among the Indian tribes of the west. The date of their return was recorded by Major Taliaferro in his *Daily Transactions* of the St. Peter’s Indian Agency: “Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September (1836). Mr. Catlin the artist and Mr. Wood an Englishman returned from their journey to the Pipe Stone Quarry beyond the Blue River. There was a further comment the following day; “Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September, At Travers des Sioux the Sioux are very much incensed at the determination of Catlin and Wood to visit and inspect the ‘Pipestone Quarry.’”<sup>33</sup>

Catlin and Wood were anxious to return back East so they refused to wait for the next river boat south and continued the journey in their dugout canoe. Catlin remarks in his *Letters and Notes*, “Sans steamer, we were obliged to trust our little tremulous craft to carry us through the windings of the mighty Mississippi and Lake Pippin, to Prairie du Chien, a distance of 400 miles, which I had traveled last summer.”<sup>34</sup> When Catlin heard the Sauk and Fox nations were gathered at Rock Island (Illinois), for the signing of an important treaty with Colonel Dodge, who had just been made Governor, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the newly created Territory of Wisconsin, he was determined not to delay their return trip further. Catlin and Wood, who had left Fort Snelling on the seventh of September, arrived in late September, time to witness the spectacle of a treaty council between Dodge and representatives of the Sacs and Foxes. According to Brian Dippie, on the 27th the Indians, as a token of their friendship to the United States, ceded their lands lying between

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>33</sup> *Taliaferro Journals*, 156.

<sup>34</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 208.

the state of Missouri and the Mississippi river (theirs by the treaty of Prairie du Chien six years before); on the 28th, the Indians gave another 256,000 acres on the Iowa River, that had been designated theirs because of a signed treaty four years earlier. The payment offered to the Indians was reasonable for the existing standards-about seventy-five cents an acre, one-fourth of which would go to the American Fur traders, who were always present at treaty councils to press their claims.<sup>35</sup> Catlin might have opposed how casually they gave up their land rights for the temporary pleasures money would bring. He stated in *Letters and Notes*, “The people have sold so much of their land lately, that they have the luxuries of life to a considerable degree, and may be considered rich; consequently they look elated and happy, carrying themselves much above the humbled manner of most of the semi-civilized tribes, whose heads are hanging and drooping in poverty and despair... After the treaty was signed and witnessed, Governor Dodge requested the chiefs and braves to move their families, and all their property from the tract, within one month, which time he would allow them to make room for the whites...”<sup>36</sup> The Native American way of life became the casualty, as the treaties of cession negotiated in the 1830s corroborate.

The return journey from the quarry was made all the more distressing by Catlin’s awareness of the doomed outlook for the future of the Native Americans. His successful ventures rested on the difference between the deceitful and the non-deceitful Indians, but everywhere Catlin traveled in 1836 the distinction was becoming unclear. The effect of land speculation was like fever that showed no signs of letting up. In 1800, about two-thirds of the United States, 5.3 million people, lived within fifty miles of the Atlantic coast and the west was the region stretching to the Mississippi. In 1803 the Louisiana Purchase added nearly a

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<sup>35</sup> Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 44.

<sup>36</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 209-216.

million square miles to the national region; suddenly America's West stretched to the headwaters of the rivers tributary to the Mississippi. Government sponsored explorations beginning with Lewis and Clark through 1804-06 fixed some boundaries on the map. The era of Manifest Destiny was beginning. Between 1810 and 1830, 2 million people pushed westward into the interior of the country. The Northwest ballooned in the 1830s, Indiana's population doubled, and Illinois tripled. By 1840, when Catlin left America to exhibit his Indian Gallery abroad, more than one-third of the nation's population, nearly 6.4 million people, lived west of the West of the Mississippi.<sup>37</sup> Catlin remarked in his *Letters and Notes*, "The West-not the 'Far West' for that is a phantom, travelling on its tireless wing: but the West, the simple West-the vast and vacant wilds which lie between the trodden haunts of present savage and civil life-the great and almost boundless garden-spot of earth!"<sup>38</sup>

Rounding out his final pilgrimage in the 1830s, Catlin unveiled a remarkably enlightened perspective of the Pipestone Quarry that was rich in geology as well as Indian lore. Catlin's position was one of respect for the sacred site along with a desire to expose it to the scientific world the treasured anomaly of nature. Curiosity was the defining catalyst in this final expedition to the *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairies*.

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<sup>37</sup> Henry Adams, *The United States in 1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955), 1-2; and Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *The Jacksonian Era, 1828-1848* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), 6.

<sup>38</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 155.

CHAPTER III  
PARADISE OF THE RED GODS

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow provided a romantic image of the Pipestone Quarry and the peace pipe when he relied upon the accounts of George Catlin's journey in 1836 to write his *Song of Hiawatha*:

On the Mountains of the Prairie  
On the great Red Pipestone  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
He the Master of Life, descending,  
On the red crags of the quarry  
Stood erect and called the nations,  
Called the tribes of men together...

When Longfellow wrote *Song of Hiawatha*, he captured the imagination of a country with his words. He immortalized one of America's best-known Indian sites-the Pipestone Quarry in southwestern Minnesota.

For the Native Americans of the northern Great Plains region, the peace pipe was a work of sculpture which has great cultural significance. According to Castle McLaughlin, pipe ceremonies were key mechanisms for building alliance within and between Native American groups, and they became equally essential for Indian-white diplomacy after the arrival of Europeans.<sup>1</sup> "The pipe," wrote William Clark "is the Semblance of peace with all."<sup>2</sup> Pipe symbolism was so well understood that often pipes were sent, rather than personally presented, for the purpose of forming alliances, declaring war, or initiating peace.<sup>3</sup> The quarry represented in Catlin's 1836 painting was not the only place where the pipestone

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<sup>1</sup> Castle McLaughlin, "The Language of Pipes." In *Arts of Diplomacy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 202.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

was found to create the pipe, but it was the only location known to the Indians where it existed in appreciable quantity or procured under religious sanction. His belief in the significance of the pipe as a work of sculpture and the desire to see the quarry was a fitting finale in 1836 to his documentation of the Native American tribes.

The practice of smoking was widespread among the tribes of Native American Indians. The bowl of the calumet, in which the tobacco was placed, was shaped from a hard substance, generally pipe stone. Attached to the bowl was a stem two to three feet long, made from young ash trees, then hollowed out with a wire.<sup>4</sup> Plains Indians were talented craftsmen that laboriously removed the quartzite layer to reach the clay stone known as pipestone and later termed *catlinite*. When freshly quarried they worked with stone hammers, flint knives, quartzite or sandstone grates, and stone pointed drills to make and decorate ceremonial smoking instruments. As a final touch the pipe carvers applied buffalo tallow to give the bowls a polished, dark red finish. Catlin's illustrates Indian pipes in an engraving seen in Plate 98 taken from his 1841 *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions, of North American Indians*. (Fig. 5) He shows linear outlines of eighteen tobacco pipes, eleven of which are fitted with pipe-stems. Nine of the pipes are effigy ones, and seven portray human figures. In the engraving Catlin marks the tobacco pipes "a, b, c". He describes the pipes marked b as "ordinary pipes, made and used for the luxury only of smoking; and for this purpose, every Indian designs and constructs his own pipe. The *calumet* or pipe of peace (Plate 98 a), ornamented with the war-eagle's quills, is a sacred pipe, and never allowed to be used on any occasion than that of peace making."<sup>5</sup> Catlin observes in his book of 1841 that, "there is no custom more uniformly in constant use amongst the Indians than that of

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<sup>4</sup> Samuel W. Pond, *The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They Were in 1834* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1986),123.

<sup>5</sup> Catlin, *Letter and Notes*, Vol.1, 235.

smoking, nor any other more highly valued; his pipe is his constant companion through life-his messenger of peace.”<sup>6</sup> The *calumet* seems to have been venerated for centuries.

Native American customs and traditions represented the Quarries as the sacred place of creation of the first pipe and the birth place of the first native peoples. There are variations of this genesis theme that were produced. Many of the Indian legends and myths were handed down orally from generation to generation; it is not surprising the stories varied from tribe to tribe. In the legends that have been handed down, the quarry was believed to be the center of creation, the birthplace of all Indians of the earth. Many of the legends focus upon the divine origin of the stone. Legends explaining the origin of pipestone, it its always blood which gave the stone its color-buffalo blood from animals slain by the Great Spirit for food, human blood from those who died in an ancient catastrophe.<sup>7</sup> A version known to the Indians of the upper Missouri relates that a great flood threatened to destroy all the nations of the world; “to escape the rising torrents, the tribes assembled on the Coteau des Prairies (Highland of the Prairies), striking geographical feature dividing the Mississippi river from that of the Missouri river. The water continued to rise, covering them and converting their flesh into red stone. Only one young woman was rescued from the flood by a war eagle, and her twins, fathered by the eagle, began to populate the earth. It was the Indians belief that the pipestone was created from the flesh of many Indian ancestors.”<sup>8</sup> Another legend, “there was warfare in the area, the bloodshed of which turned the surrounding stone red, or of the slaughter of buffalo that soaked the ground red with their blood and united there at the Pipestone Quarry and made the red rock, and that is the reason why the Indians value it.”<sup>9</sup> In Catlin’s *Letters and Notes*, he stated that “it was the Indians belief that the pipestone was

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>7</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 203.

<sup>8</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 168-169.

<sup>9</sup> The Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, *The Pipestone Indian Shrine* (Pipestone, Minnesota, 1933), 13.

created from the ancestors of many Indian nations and it was regarded sacred, a neutral area where all nations could mine the stone for their peace pipes.”<sup>10</sup> Catlin explained further, “The legend told was that soon after the creation of the Indian, the Great Spirit called all the Indian nations together at the quarry. Standing on a precipice, he broke a piece from it and made a huge pipe by turning the stone in his hands. He then smoked the pipe by turning the stone in his hands. He then smoked the pipe over the people, pointing it to the north, south, east, and west, telling them that the red stone was their flesh, and that they must use it for their pipes of peace. The neutral ground was regarded sacred where all native peoples could mine the red stone for peace pipe.”<sup>11</sup> The many variations, different or similar, the Great Spirit is said to have instructed the native peoples to revere the stone and its source, to create pipe from the stone, and to use it to settle their differences peacefully in a sacramental ceremony. Catlin embraced and embellished these themes, generalizing to make them culturally applicable for all tribes on the North American continent and readily making comparisons to his own cultural reference points in phrases such as “Indian Eden”.<sup>12</sup> Such descriptions of Indian lore made it clear the Pipestone quarry a sacred site to many Native American Indians.

The act of smoking was all-embracing among many Native American tribes. The Indian could and did enjoy smoking for the pleasure it afforded and the Indian was labeled “an inveterate smoker.”<sup>13</sup> According to Castle McLaughlin, the social symbolism of tobacco and smoking permeated both intertribal relations and Indian-white relations throughout the Woodlands and the Plains.<sup>14</sup> Tobacco has many meanings: it is used as an offering to the

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<sup>10</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 168.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>13</sup> Pond, *The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota*, 122.

<sup>14</sup> McLaughlin, *Arts of Diplomacy*, 206.

spirits, a purifying agent, and a sacramental substance, capable of transcending boundaries to unify peoples and spiritual powers.<sup>15</sup> Indians have smoked tobacco since ancient times. They smoked the dried bark of dogwood, mixed with Kinnikinic, tobacco, and sometimes other ingredients prepared under the direction of a man who was chosen to lead them, not for his rank or his bravery but because the community considered him to be an exceedingly good man.<sup>16</sup> The Indians carried their pipes when traveling or hunting and when they were together in groups they would pass their pipes around frequently. The bowls of the pipes were not very large, a single pipe-bowl served around ten or fifteen men and passed at short intervals.<sup>17</sup> It was the Native People's custom and tradition to accept the character of the rising smoke, its spirit-like quality, and his belief that the tobacco and the pipe were gifts from the Great Spirit.

The Pipestone Quarry was the site to which every Indian who desired the red-stone for their peace pipes, along with a spiritual blessing, made a regular pilgrimage. According to North American Indian tradition, the quarries were depicted as the sacred place in the creation of the first pipe and often, where the Great Spirit exercised his power. Catlin wrote: "Whether it has been an Indian Eden or not, or whether the thunderbolts of Indian Jupiter are actually forged here, it is nevertheless a place renowned in Indian heraldry and tradition..."<sup>18</sup> According to the *Pipestone Indian Shrine*: A 1933 booklet of forty-four pages compiled by the Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, contains Indian legends and historical fact regarding the red Pipestone Quarry, Winnewissa Falls and the Twin Maidens.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>16</sup> *The Pipestone Indian Shrine*, 2-3. (A booklet of forty-four pages compiled by the Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, contains "Indian Legends and Historical Fact regarding the Red Pipestone Quarry, Winnewissa Falls and the 'Twin Maidens.')

<sup>17</sup> Pond, *The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota*, 123.

<sup>18</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 164.

Their pilgrimage to the site of the quarry, the selected group of Native Americans lay down their weapons and war-clubs and the strictest peace was observed by all. They divide: women and children make up camp on the prairie, and the men who were chosen worthy proceeded to site of the red stone. The men bathe in the stream, then walk slowly toward the south, and pause near the Wa-root-ka, (Fig) (Three Maiden boulders), while the Shaman advances. The shaman lays offerings of kinnikinic and such other valuables as they possess, upon the re-rock circle, (Fig) and offers prayers and thanksgivings and then retires. The group spends the night on the prairie, hoping to learn whether or not their prayers and offerings are acceptable. Usually in the silence of deepest night they do hear tapings on the rocks...So they know the Wa-root-ka are engraving an answer in the stone.

At sunrise, they approach the shrine, and find their offerings gone, and their totem is traced in outline on the stone. If the first morning the outline was incomplete, they would repeat their offerings, sometimes three days. Then they would be at liberty to approach the quarry itself.

Dressed in ceremonial robes and chanting in slow measure, they choose the place for digging. The shaman scatters the sacrificial tobacco and kinnikinic through the air, sprinkles it on the spot they have chosen, and points his lighted pipe to heaven and to the four cardinal points of the compass. The soil is cleared away with instruments of buffalo horn and stone. The hard rock layer is exposed. With incantations and rhythmic counting, he raises the stone and swings it four times, and drops it. Great care must be taken in counting, swinging, and dropping the stone. If any among them had been insincere in his prayers, they believed, the Great Spirit hardened the rock, and this a great disgrace. If the Great Spirit was pleased with them, he would permit the hard red rock to break, and then the soft pipestone beneath could be taken out. After the vein of the pipestone had opened, word was sent back to the waiting camp, and all the women and children hurried down to watch the men dig out the pieces of pipe stone. The hard re rock breaks naturally into blocks, which are pried and lifted out, and their lies the beautiful mottled pink or purple stone, with its soft, velvety feel.

Shamans and chiefs used to pitch their tepees close by the quarry on the grassy slope between the quartzite ledge and the line of the pipestone quarry and id the season was favorable spend many months there...At the close of the season, an extra supply of pipestone was taken, the quarry covered over, lest the wound in the soft pink rock bleed, and the Indian race die. The extra pipe stone was meant for the people who had remained at home. Upon the pilgrims' return to their native village, a great feast was prepared, and he who had had the privilege of carrying the pipestone home, filled his pipe with kinnikinic, and before lighting it, offered up a prayer, and pointed his pipe heavenward, offering thanks, for it was believed the whole tribe would benefit by having this treasure.<sup>19</sup>

This preparation ritual was observed at the quarry as late as the 1880s.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Pipestone Indian Shrine*, 2-4.

Catlin's painting of 1836, *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau Des Prairies*, includes a cluster of boulders known as the Three Maidens, appearing in the right corner. According to Native American traditions, the Three Maidens are the guardian spirits of the Pipestone Quarry. The Sioux believed that after the Great Spirit appeared before his people at the quarry, some Indian maids disappeared beneath these boulders, where their spirits remained. It was their belief that a manifestation of the Great Spirit occurred; two great ovens were opened beneath the earth and two women entered them in a blaze of fire. Their spirits reside there to answer invocations. Offerings of tobacco by the Native Americans were placed around the boulders if one is to hope for good quarrying.<sup>20</sup> A concentration on Indian lore is seen in the numerous pictographs (Fig. 6) found in the quartzite surrounding the boulders. Due to the hardness of the stone, the simple drawings have endured; among them representations of the bear, turtle, elk, buffalo, and the human form. Catlin remarked, "The thousands of inscriptions and paintings on the rocks at this place, as well as the ancient diggings for the pipestone, will afford amusement for the world who will visit it."<sup>21</sup>

The Three Maiden boulders are unlike any other rocks in the region. These rock formations were shaped by glacial periods. These large boulders are of a substance totally different than any rock formation in the vicinity. They are composed of red coarse-grained granite, whereas the quarry is made up of almost in its entirety of red quartzite. According to geologist Newton Winchell the boulders were at one time a single boulder, which was split later through the action of a frost.<sup>22</sup> The original boulder, he feels, might have been carried by ice sheets and dropped in the quarry valley when the glacier melted. Each boulder is about

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<sup>20</sup> Theodore Nydahl, "The Pipestone Quarry and the Indians." *Minnesota History*, Vol.31, No. 4 (Dec., 1950), 201-202.

<sup>21</sup> Catlin, *North American Indian*, Vol. 2, 168.

<sup>22</sup> Newton Winchell, *Geology of Minnesota Survey*, Vol.1, 69. Quoted in Theodore L. Nydahl, Theodore, "The Pipestone Quarry and the Indians." *Minnesota History*, Vol.31, No. 4 (December, 1950), 202.

twelve by twenty feet. The original boulder has been estimated by many to have been fifty to sixty feet in diameter possibly, making it the largest ice-transported block in Minnesota. Rocks like these are called erratic. Smaller erratics of granite and other types of rock are found all over the National Park at Pipestone. Winchell defines it as “the hardest stone in the state, or in the United States, that can be stated to have been used for the purpose of building.”<sup>23</sup> According to Theodore Nydahl, catlinite is a softer stone made of fine clay which has been subjected to heat and pressure, and appears in a thin layer, two to four inches thick.<sup>24</sup> As seen in the foreground of Catlin’s painting, *The Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairie*, 1836, the Indians appear to be quarrying the stone closest to the surface. The more pipestone that was removed, the deeper the Indians had to quarry for it. The task of removing the superincumbent layer of quartzite became increasingly difficult. In quarry pits now being worked, the catlinite layer is found at a depth of approximately six feet.<sup>25</sup>

Indian mythology concerning the Three Maidens is evidence indicating the wealth of legends surrounding the Pipestone Quarry. Still to be discussed is Leaping Rock, a stone column twenty-three feet high, standing alone seven feet from the nearest ledge. In Catlin’s *Letters and Notes on the manners and Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians*, he reported that Indian youth sometimes attempted to leap to this rock, “and those who have successfully done it are allowed to boast of it all their lives.”<sup>26</sup> According to Theodore Nydahl, “Leaping Rock” (Fig. 7) was testing point where a young brave might demonstrate the sincerity of his love for a maiden by risking death from a high ledge to a solitary pillar of stone.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>25</sup> Nydahl, *The Pipestone Quarry and the Indians*, 202.

<sup>26</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes* Vol. 2, 170.

<sup>27</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 203.

Catlin's painting also depicts a waterfall that divides the quartzite ridge known today as Winnewissa Falls, which means "Jealous Maiden" in the Dakota language.<sup>28</sup> According to one American Indian legend, the Great Spirit called the feuding nations together in the valley of the pipestone. There he cautioned them to lay down their arms and live like brothers. As the legend states, while he was speaking, water poured from the rocks nearby, forming the falls.<sup>29</sup>

Catlin had a longstanding interest in the study of one of the oldest and most widely practiced of the arts among the Native American Indians—the making of tobacco pipes of stone and clay. According to John Ewers, Catlin was the first student of Indian sculpture and was prepared to accept these effigy pipes as works of art "designed and carved with much taste and skill."<sup>30</sup> During a time when most other Americans looked upon Indian relics as mere curiosities, items of trade, or as worthless creations from savages, Catlin recognized them as works of art worthy of preservation and serious study. In his book, Catlin referred to tobacco pipes:

As smoking is a luxury so highly valued by the Indians, they have bestowed much pains, and not a little ingenuity to the construction of their pipes. Of these I have procured a collection of several hundreds and in Plate 98, have given facsimile outlines of a number of the most curious. The bowls of these are generally made of red steatite, or "pipe-stone" (as it is most familiarly called in this country), and many of them designed and carved with much taste and skill, with figures and groups in *alto rilievo*, standing or reclining upon them.<sup>31</sup>

As a small boy growing up in New York State, Catlin became interested in Indians when he discovered arrowheads, pipes, and other relics on his family farm in the

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<sup>28</sup> Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, *Circle Trail* (Pipestone, Minnesota 1933), 19.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>30</sup> John Ewers, *Plains Indian Sculpture* (Washington D.C. Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986), 14.

<sup>31</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, 1, 242.

Susquehanna River Valley.<sup>32</sup> During his travels in the 1830s to Indian tribes in the Eastern Woodlands and on the Great Plains, he was eager to learn more about the materials Indians used and the skills they used in making pipes. William Clark, who was Superintendent of Indian affairs for western tribes during the time, highly respected by the Indians, showed Catlin his collection of pipes which held in his Indian Museum in St. Louis. According to Sally Southwick, Clark provided information to Catlin about the quarries as the source of the pipestone and authorized him to tell the world about this important place.<sup>33</sup> The artist became interested in the great variety of shapes into which Indian pipes were made, as well their uses by Indians for smoking, their social relations, and their religious ceremonies. Catlin consciously cultivated his image as an expert and believed that the pipestone was symbolic to many tribes for countless generations.

During his travels among numerous Indian tribes in the early 1830s, Catlin observed that many chiefs and warriors preferred to own and to use pipes made of a richly colored red stone. More than a dozen prominent chiefs of tribes on the Missouri held their tobacco pipes when they posed for Catlin. One was the war chief of the small Missouri tribe, He Who Kills the Osages, who had a pipe of red stone with a carved bear standing on its shank (Fig. 8).<sup>34</sup> Another pipe-holder was Buffalo's Back Fat, a handsome head chief of the warlike Blood tribe of the Blackfoot (Fig. 9).<sup>35</sup> Catlin's portrait of the chief shows that the long-wood stem of his pipe was elaborately and colorfully decorated with porcupine quills. Repeated references to the significance of the peace pipe and the Pipestone Quarry stimulated Catlin's desire to see it. He recorded three hundred and twelve engravings, most of which were based on the oil paintings shown in his Indian gallery in his 1841 book. According to Ewers, "at

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<sup>32</sup> Ewers, *Indian Art in Pipestone*, 7.

<sup>33</sup> Sally Southwick, *Building on A Borrowed Past* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 20.

<sup>34</sup> Ewers, *Indian Art in Pipestone*, 10.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

least half of these illustrations show tobacco pipes; held by Indian Chiefs or prominent warriors when they sat for their portraits, or pipes used in ceremonies or religious rituals.”<sup>36</sup> As noted previously, the most outstanding engraving is Plate 98, which displays the eighteen tobacco pipes. Catlin’s plates offer proof of the great number of pipe sculptures made by Indians during the decade of the 1830s.

Catlin not contented with his initial references to the effigy pipes in his book of 1841, Catlin produced a more detailed and better illustrated monographic study of tobacco pipes of the North American Indians in subsequent years. The finished monograph is preserved in the collections of the Ethnography Department of the British Museum in London. It is a bound book with a page size of 17 1/2 inches high by 22 1/2 inches wide. It contains twenty-three plates of oil paintings on cardboard, picturing more than one hundred shapes of North American Indian pipes (Fig. 10). The majority of these images of pipes, which Catlin identified by tribe of origin, were the creations of Plains Indians. In this monograph he illustrated again the pipes he had featured in 1841, but with their tribal identifications added.<sup>37</sup> There is one plate (plate #3) that depicts the Pipestone Quarry near present day Pipestone, Minnesota, as Catlin pictured it in 1836. This illustration is a simplified version of the oil painting in the original collection in the Smithsonian in Washington D.C. Both paintings appear to exaggerate the height of the quartzite ledge in the background (Fig. 11). In addition, there is one plate of “barrow pipes” made by the prehistoric Indian Mound builders of eastern United States, and another plate of intricately carved black pipes made by the Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands on the Northwest Coast. There are seven plates of pipes made by the tribes of the Great Lakes and Plains Indians. An illustration of how

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>37</sup> Ewers, *Plains Indian Sculpture*, 14.

Indians drilled pipe bowls provides a context for the pipes. Catlin further illustrated elaborately decorated pipe stems, as well as the pipes and smoking equipment owned and used during his travels of the early 1830s. He also depicted his copies of two painted buffalo robes which interpreted Indian uses of pipes and tobacco. On the pages opposite of the plates, Catlin wrote a brief description of each pipe or related items pictured. Catlin reveals that as early as the 1830s some Plains Indian sculptors had achieved a high degree of skill in carving effigy pipes and they presented a wide variety of styles and subjects.

Catlin's monograph on tobacco pipes in the British Museum was part of a collection of materials of ethnographical interests bought by William Bragg, who at the time was a noted English collector of objects and information from all parts of the world relating to the uses of tobacco. Bragg began collecting writings and artifacts relating to the history and use of tobacco as a hobby about the year 1860. According to John Ewers, there were many items relating to American Indians in Bragg's collection. It included a number of finely carved effigy pipes, some of catlinitite, in addition the Catlin monograph.<sup>38</sup> Ewers believes that Catlin completed the work for Bragg during the 1860s but there is evidence that Catlin had created and described nearly half of the plates as early as 1852 for some unknown patron.<sup>39</sup>

In the early 1850s, Catlin was at his most vulnerable period and suffered from serious financial difficulties. It was at this time that he began to prepare a more detailed, better classified, illustrated monographic study of North American Indian tobacco pipes. The Arents Collection of the New York Public Library contains a large leather bound manuscript titled, "The North Americans; Catlin Pipes." It includes a large number of pencil drawings that depict Indian tobacco pipes. The pencil drawings of pipes depict them on a much

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<sup>38</sup> Ewers, *Indian Art in Pipestone*, 15.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

smaller scale in Catlin's 1841 book.<sup>40</sup> There is no doubt that Catlin drew these Indian pipes as part of his development of a major work on Indian tobacco pipes. According to Ewers, many of the pipes are grouped on large pages in the same way as they are composed on the colored plates of his pipes monograph.<sup>41</sup> These drawings must have served to perfect Catlin's plate layouts for the finished monograph in the Ethnography Department of British Museum.

Catlin's work on Indian tobacco pipes, preserved in the British Museum, is based on material he gathered during his travels among the Indians in the 1830s. Catlin's plates offer proof of the great number of pipe forms made by Indian sculptors he observed on his travels. He further reveals that by the mid-1830s, a large number of the carved effigy pipes were already in the possession of white men, some of them government officials highly respected by the Indians. One of them was William Clark, famous co-leader of the first United States exploring expedition in 1804-1806. In 1816 Clark established an Indian Museum in Saint Louis, which his collections of Indian artifacts appeared and also served as a conference room where he met important Indian delegations in his official capacity as superintendent for the western tribes.<sup>42</sup> Toussaint Charbonneau, who was an interpreter for Lewis and Clark, and in Catlin's time still served as the official interpreter for the Hidasta Indians on the Missouri, was another proud owner of the effigy pipes. A third collector was Lawrence Taliaferro, who had been a successful agent to the Sioux and Ojibwa tribes on the Upper Mississippi for many years.<sup>43</sup> An interesting area for further study would be to investigate the extent to which Plains Indian sculptors may have been attempting certain themes in their pipe carvings to please their white patron, even as early as 1830s.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>42</sup> McLaughlin, *Arts of Diplomacy*, 130-131.

<sup>43</sup> Ewers, *Plains Indian Sculptors*, 15.

In 1836, Catlin completed his painting *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairies* provided the first visual representation of both the place and the tribal activity there, intimately associating landscape and human tradition. He demonstrated a remarkably enlightened perspective on the Pipestone Quarry that was rich in geology as well as Indian lore. Catlin's views of the Native American mirrored the spirituality of the people associated in landscape painting. He described the ground itself as majestic and inspiring awe, possessing "a sublime grandeur" that, "without the aid of traditional fame, would be appropriately denominated a paradise."<sup>44</sup> Making clear the importance of his visit, he hastened to note that he was "encamped on and writing from the very rock where the Great Spirit stood when he consecrated the pipe of peace" and this tone of authority permeated both of his letters about his experiences on the Coteau.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 165.

<sup>45</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 163-168.

## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICS OF DISCOVERY

Recognition to be the first white man to visit the Pipestone Quarry contributed to Catlin's desire to see, paint and hence to record that which no other white man had seen. The Sioux, resistant to his visit of the quarry in 1836, exposed an inconsistency in Catlin's position. He was passionate about their culture and sympathetic to the Native Americans, however he felt compelled to publish their Indian Eden, the Pipestone Quarry. That was the mission on his last pilgrimage westward in 1836. George Catlin became part of the process of degradation and dispossession of the Native American that he had so condemned.

Throughout the 19th century, a series of explorers, ethnographers, and scientists visited the Pipestone Quarry and described the area in journals and published essays before and after Catlin's 1836 journey. Like Catlin, who fashioned himself an artist, explorer, and ethnographer, individuals in these three groups sought to position themselves as authorities with unique knowledge. These groups used a descriptive language that reinforced certain images of the quarry. Their writings and illustrations helped make the Indian site into a nationally known place and influenced how successive generations of Americans perceived the Pipestone Quarry. Their literary and visual images served as a foundation on which later inhabitants of the area built, using local residence as the basis of authority to adapt and to promote perceptions of the place and to convey its heritage as part of America's developing national identity. In his *Letters and Notes on the Manners and Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians*, Catlin wrote: "Whether it has been an Indian Eden or not, or whether the thunderbolts of Indian Jupiter are actually forged here, it is there for a place renowned in Indian heraldry and tradition, which I hope may be able to fathom and

chronicle, as explanatory of many of my anecdotes and traditionary superstitions of Indian history, which I have given, and am giving, to the world.”<sup>1</sup>

Since the time of early contact with East Coast tribes, European settlers had known of the prevalence of pipe ceremonies in many tribal cultures. No records survive to prove who discovered the Pipestone Quarry, but archaeological investigations indicate that the quarry may have been in use as early as 900 A.D. and almost certainly by 1200 A.D.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the Pipestone Creek’s eroding soil exposed an outcropping of the soft red stone, or maybe migrating buffalo unearthed it. Whatever the cause of exposure, the Native Americans regarded the quarry as sacred, and members of various Indian tribes continued to gather pipestone with the understanding that they did so without fear of attack by hostile, neighboring tribesman.<sup>3</sup> Unrestricted access to the quarry resulted in the distribution of red pipestone artifacts throughout North America. Pipes were transported either by men who manufactured them or by men who traded them as materials. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Sioux were in control of the quarry site when non-Indians first came to the *Coteau des Prairies*. Catlin states that the red pipestone pipes were found in almost every tribe of Indians on the continent and that in former years the quarries had been held and owned in common as neutral ground. He states:

I have often conversed with General Clarke, of St. Louis, on the subject, and he told me explicitly, and authorized me to say to the world, that every tribe on the Missouri told him that the Great Spirit kept peace amongst his red children on that ground, where they had smoked with their enemies.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indian*, Vol. 2 (London: 1844, New York: re-published Dover Publications, 1973), 164.

<sup>2</sup> Hal Rothman, *Managing the Sacred and the Secular: An Administrative History of Pipestone National Monument* (Henderson, NV: Hal K. Rothman and Associates, 1992), 10.

<sup>3</sup> Edward D. Neil, *The History of Minnesota from the Earliest French Exploration to the Present Time* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Company, 1985), 514.

<sup>4</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 2, 186-191.

Several prominent explorers had knowledge of the Pipestone Quarry largely through the word of mouth by trappers, traders, and the Indians themselves. In the 17th century, Father Louis Hennepin, a Belgian-born Franciscan priest, who had been captured by and lived for a time among the Dakota Indians, wrote of the importance of the calumet to the Plains Indian culture.<sup>5</sup> He described the pipe bowls made from soft, red stone, and recorded his experiences in using a pipe to help protect him and his associates from danger. During the 18th century, Pierre Charles LeSueur and Charlevoix, French explorers, and two English adventurers, Peter Pond and Jonathan Carver, made specific references to the Pipestone Quarry. LeSueur most likely first explored the Mississippi in 1685, and spoke of “the village of the Dakotas at the red stone quarry.”<sup>6</sup> Charlevoix, who visited the Mississippi Valley in 1721, wrote of the Indian’s pipe of peace in his *History of New France*, “It is ordinarily made of a species of red marble, very easily worked and found beyond the Ioways.”<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Carver ascended the Minnesota River in 1766 and spent the following winter at the mouth of the Cottonwood River near the present city of New Ulm, wrote: “Near the branch which is termed the Marble River, is a mountain, from which the Indians get a sort of red stone, out of which they hew the bowls of their pipes.”<sup>8</sup> Carver set a pattern that later explorers followed. He made note of the physical setting of the quarries on the Coteau des Prairies, southwest of the Minnesota River and northeast of the Missouri, and he exaggerated the site’s attributes. More ethnographically, he commented on the reputation of the site as a place of peace among tribes. Carver states, “Even those who hold perpetual wars in all other parts meet here in

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<sup>5</sup> Louis Hennepin, *A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America* Vol. 1 (Chicago: A.C. McClung and Company, 1903),125.

<sup>6</sup> Neil, *History of Minnesota*, 514.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 514.

<sup>8</sup>Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, *The Pipestone Indian Shrine* (Pipestone, Minnesota 1933), 9.

peace.”<sup>9</sup> A firsthand portrayal of the role of the calumet appears in the narrative journal of Peter Pond, a Yankee fur trader from Connecticut who was on the Minnesota frontier from 1773-1775, even before American independence had been won. He quotes: “I Perseaved five Parsons from the red men camp Approaching. They all Seat By me Except the one who Held the Pipe. They Ordered the Pipe Lit With a Grate dele of Sarremoney. After Smokeing a fue Whifs the Stem was Pinted East and West-then North and South-then upward to the Skies-then to ye Earth after which we all Smoked in turn and Apeard Verey Frenedlye.”<sup>10</sup> Peter Pond, whose Minnesota travels followed Carver’s by eight years, referred to a calumet “made of the red stone of St. Peter’s River so much esteemed among the Eastern Southern Nations.”<sup>11</sup>

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, the first U.S. citizens to explore the region officially, were influenced by these first explorers initial focus on the legends surrounding the quarries, and Lewis and Clark included the early explorers in their Corp of Discovery journals. Although Lewis and Clark did not actually visit the site on their way up the Missouri in 1804 and 1805, their status as government representatives who interacted with local tribes gave their descriptions unquestioned authority. Lewis and Clark’s travels contributed to the emerging national identity that was tied to exploring the untarnished wilderness across the continent and possessing a new landscape. The words they used defined new territory and also created a lasting impression of the quarries. Claiming an interpreter from the Dakota tribe as his informational source, Lewis referred to the Coteau

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<sup>9</sup> John Parker, ed., *The Journal of Jonathan Carver and Related Documents* (1766-1770), 126, 138. Quoted in Sally Southwick, *Building on a Borrowed Past; Place and Identity in Pipestone, Minnesota* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 15.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Pond’s “Journal” first published in *Connecticut Magazine* (April, May, June, 1906) 10: 235-259. Quoted in Theodore L. Nydahl, “The Pipestone Quarry and the Indians.” *Minnesota History*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (December, 1950), 195.

<sup>11</sup> Neil, *History of Minnesota*, 514.

area as a “remarkable for furnishing a red stone, of which savages make their most esteemed pipes,” a place where “all nations are at peace with each other.”<sup>12</sup>

Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, U.S. Indian Agent of the tribes of the Lake Superior region (1822-1841) and later appointed official Indian Historian to Congress, traveled up the Mississippi River in an 1820 expedition.<sup>13</sup> He succumbed to the attraction of the pipestone and expanded on what he had heard of its source. He never visited the quarries, but he believed in its significance. During his travels Schoolcraft obtained a sample of the stone and reported on its softness and its difference in polish from marble. He was also the first to assert, erroneously, that the stone hardened on exposure to air, a description often repeated by those who had not quarried it.<sup>14</sup> Noting the quarries location on the distant prairie and recording what he had heard about the strata of rock there, in his *Narrative Journal of Travels from Detroit Northwest through the Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in 1820*, Schoolcraft states, “The Indians go once a year to procure supplies, and as it has been resorted to for a very long period, the excavations are said to be extensive.”<sup>15</sup> Through such descriptions Schoolcraft suggested not only that the Pipestone Quarry was unique within U. S. territory but also that what archaeological evidence was known suggested that the tribes had a prehistoric presence at the site.

Not until the third decade of the 19th century does documentation of the Pipestone Quarry take place. According to Theodore Nydahl, in all the above mentioned cases there is

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<sup>12</sup> Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of Lewis and Clark Expedition, August 25, 1804-April 6, 1805*, Vol. 3 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 355.

<sup>13</sup> Southwick, *Building on a Borrowed Past*, 16.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels from Detroit Northwest through the Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in the Year 1820* (Albany, New York: E. and E. Hosford, 1821), 299. Quoted in Southwick, *Building on a Borrowed Past*, 16.

only one brief reference to the Pipestone locale.<sup>16</sup> Four persons visited the Pipestone Quarry during the 1830s and documented their findings: Prescott and Catlin were independent adventures: Nicollet and Fremont were government explorers on the same expedition.<sup>17</sup>

Philander Prescott, a fur trader who had lived many years among the Dakotas, visited the quarry and became the first white man and U.S. citizen to record his trip there. According to Theodore Nydahl, at the time of his visit to the quarry in 1831, he was a fur trader working out of Mendota and that the Indians were in his company and that he worked with them in quarrying the stone.<sup>18</sup> Mendota was a trading post on the Big Sioux, a branch of the Missouri River, where Prescott wintered and traded. Traveling from Mendota, Prescott stopped at the quarry not only to observe, but to also work it.<sup>19</sup> Prescott's style of writing, like Peter Pond's was rough but descriptive. His Journey westward, which most likely took place in the September of 1831, is recorded in his manuscript, "Reminiscenes," wrote, "We camped and dug pipe stone one whole day we got out a considerable quantity but a goodeal of it was shaley and full of seams So we got only about 20 good pipes after working the rock all day." Prescott goes on to describe the methods used by the natives in working the quarry: "the Indians have labored here very hard with hoes and axes thy only tools they have except large stones which they use for breaking rock...the Sioux are of the dirt then get stones as large as two Indians can lift and throw it down as hard as they can and in this way break or crack the rock so they can get their hoes and axes in the cracks and pry outr piec after piec it is very laborious and tedious."<sup>20</sup> Prescott waited two decades before writing his findings in his book "Reminiscenes" and it remained unpublished for about a century.

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<sup>16</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 196.

<sup>17</sup> Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, *The Pipestone Indian Shrine* (Pipestone, Minnesota, 1933), 9-15.

<sup>18</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 196.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>20</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 196-197.

Catlin was the first to conduct an extensive geological survey of the area which contained the red clay stone that Dr. Charles T. Jackson, a Boston chemist and mineralogist, named *catlinite* in his honor. Lewis and Clark, as well as Schoolcraft had obtained carved stone earlier, but they had never submitted it for analysis. Catlin was the first white man and U.S. citizen of record to visit to the quarry. He was well-known even then, having gained attention on a national scale as a painter and writer. His one passion was to study the American Indian, whose lives he honored and respected. Completed in 1837, his painting *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairies* provided the first visual representation of the site and the Indian activity there, intimately associating landscape and Indian tradition. The painting made the quarry appear as a remarkable landscape. The painting toured with his Indian Gallery in the mid-19th century throughout the United States and Europe before becoming part of the Smithsonian Institution's collection in the late 1870s, shortly after his death. During his first years of travels among the American Indian tribes he comments in his *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians*, that he heard frequent mention of the spot near the Coteau des Prairies where various tribes of Indians said they obtained the red stone for their pipes. In Catlin's own words, "I had long ago heard many descriptions of this spot given by the Indians and had contracted the most impatient desire to visit it."<sup>21</sup> When Charles Jackson's analysis of pipestone, or catlinite, as a "new compound" appeared in the *American Journal of Science* in 1839, his report about the stone immediately enhanced Catlin's reputation as "the celebrated traveler in the West and

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<sup>21</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes* Vol. 2, 160.

the successful painter of Indians,” and it confirmed statements about the Pipestone Quarries uniqueness on the North American continent.<sup>22</sup>

With his prolific art and writing, Catlin hoped to receive official recognition and to become the congressionally favored Indian expert, which would ensure both funding and stability. However, an ability to offend powerful men in the territories and a decided lack of political insight in Washington combined to deny him the official sponsorship he needed. The knowledgeable public embraced his works as authentic and based their impressions of tribal cultures on his representations.<sup>23</sup> Catlin’s works provided images of an exotic but peaceful natural Eden and its inhabitants that appealed particularly to East Coast urban residents who had never traveled west.

There were rival artists, scientists, and fur traders who felt that Catlin allowed his enthusiasm to lead him to exaggeration. Brian Dippie, author of *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, states that Catlin admitted as much in the preface to *Letters and Notes* when he begged his readers’ indulgence: “If some few of my narrations should seem a little too highly colored, I trust the world will be ready to extend to me pardon...”<sup>24</sup> Catlin continually exaggerated the misleading impression that he overstayed his visit to the Pipestone region. He claimed to have dedicated eight months to visiting the Quarry in 1836, even though his return trip to Buffalo New York took only half that time. According to Dippie, such an exaggeration, perhaps forgivable in a popular narrative like *Letters and Notes*, was inexcusable in the scientific journal, *The American Journal of Science and Arts of 1839*, in which he originally published his findings, casting doubt upon other claims, including one

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<sup>22</sup> George Catlin, “An Account of a Journey to the Coteau des Prairies, with a Description of the Red Pipestone Quarry and Granite Boulders.” In *The American Journal of Science and Arts*, Vol. 38, No.11839, 138-146. Quoted in Alan Woolworth, *The Red Pipestone Quarry of Minnesota: Archaeological and Historical Reports*, (St. Paul: Minnesota Archaeological Society, 1983), 1-9.

<sup>23</sup> Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 63-67.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*,188.

that he was the first white man ever to visit the Quarry.<sup>25</sup> By his own admission, Catlin had himself to blame for the controversy that surrounded the 1836 Pipestone landscape painting.

Two years after Catlin's visit, the Pipestone Quarry was visited by an exploratory group of government employees. In 1838 Joseph N. Nicollet, a French scientist, was commissioned by the United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers to explore and survey the region between the upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Nicollet had just completed a map of the Mississippi Valley, which was not only the first reliable map of the region, but was recognized as a singular contribution to American geography.<sup>26</sup> Lieutenant John C. Fremont was assigned as Nicollet's assistant. The exploring party of six men arrived at the Pipestone Quarry in July, 1838, having traveled much of the same route which had been followed by Catlin. La Framboise, who had led Catlin to the Quarry, was a member of the party. Nicollet observed Indians extracting pipestone, and he noted the unnatural beauty of the site. He referred especially to the high rock cliff that marked the eastern point of the Quarry, Leaping Rock, and also referred to the waterfall that had spilled over the rock face, Winnewissa Falls. The party remained at the Quarry three days. Nicollet's party assisted the Sioux who were encountering difficulty in removing the tough top layer of red quartzite, a necessary first step before they could get to the thin layer of catlinite below. They did this by blasting the top layer of the hard stone with gun powder. Nicollet and his associate "pathfinder" John C. Fremont carved their initials and the date in the hard quartzite that can still be seen today<sup>27</sup>(Fig. 12). In 1925, the Catlinite Chapter of D.A.R. dedicated a bronze marker, commemorating the visit of the Nicollet expedition to the quarries.<sup>28</sup> It is significant to note that Nicollet and his explorers were observant to the ceremonial attitude which the

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 188.

<sup>26</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 200.

<sup>27</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 201.

<sup>28</sup> Pipestone Indian Shrine Association, *The Pipestone Indian Shrine* (Pipestone, Minnesota, 1933), 15.

Indians held toward the Quarry. It was recorded by Nicollet that the grass surrounding the “The Three Maidens” had been killed so offerings of tobacco and food that were placed by the Indians before these boulders as ceremonial offerings to bless their quarrying.<sup>29</sup> It is not too much to say that the Pipestone Quarry was the most important single locality in aboriginal geography and traditions to the pioneer expeditions of the 1830’s. The early explores, Nicollet and his team, learned of the existence of the quarries and the site for tracing narratives and routes before the days of systematic explorations.

Questions were raised by Catlin’s contemporaries about the authenticity of his claim that he was the first white man to visit the Pipestone Quarry. Spearheaded by the attack of Henry Sibley, Catlin came under fire from the Missouri and Mississippi River traders. In his 1841 book, *Letters and Notes*, Catlin made an enemy of the American Fur Company by blaming the company for its role in the Indians’ decline. The popularity of Catlin’s Indian Gallery suffered as a result of the accusations. Aware that his book was about to appear in the United States, the Missouri and Mississippi River traders contested Catlin’s claim to have discovered the Red Pipestone Quarry. Catlin charged back that the fur trade led directly to Indian decline: “White men-whiskey-tomahawks-scalping knives-guns, powder ball-small pox-debauchery-extermination.”<sup>30</sup> According to Brian Dippie, Catlin remarked that the Indians, meeting no white men but traders, applied “to us all, indiscriminately, the epithet of ‘liars.’”<sup>31</sup> Catlin knew the end result was fur-trade abuse and blamed the government that licensed the companies to also be a contributor to the crimes. Catlin made enemies among the fur traders by accepting their hospitality and then reprimanding their business practices. The fur traders lashed back. The companies had their opinions based on the knowledge of

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<sup>29</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 201.

<sup>30</sup> Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 186.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

Indians due to their daily dealings of them. In the fur trader's view, Catlin's reputation had been based on a romantic ideal that was sheltered from frontier reality. Catlin accused them of speaking falsely and dealing in distortion. This was evident when Catlin declared that he was the first outsider to visit and record the Pipestone Quarry. The Missouri and Mississippi Fur traders, some of whom had recognized and personally examined the Quarry, doubted Catlin's pretensions. According to John Hausdoerffer, Catlin's opinion in lectures and published letters about trade practices alienated the American Fur Company, which had provided him with transport in his earlier trips.<sup>32</sup>

Henry Sibley, an American Fur trader in charge of the Northern Department of American Fur Company when he met Catlin in 1835, also challenged Catlin's authenticity.<sup>33</sup> Catlin's finger-pointing at the American Fur Company began in the summer of 1836 when he sought supplies for his trip to the Pipestone Quarry. "Your friend Catlin the Painter," the trader at Prairie du Chien reported to Sibley with sarcastic emphasis, "goes up with this conveyance...there is an English man (Wood) who accompanies him...they rely on you for horses &c-I gave no encouragement, and told them I knew it to be utterly out of your power to assist them in that way."<sup>34</sup> Sibley's opinion was of importance because he was a powerful figure in Minnesota. In addition to being a seasoned fur trader, he became a territorial delegate to Congress and the first governor of the state. According to Brian Dippie, Sibley threw his support behind the artist Seth Eastman in 1849.<sup>35</sup> Catlin's long-term goal was to sell his Indian Gallery to the U.S. Government. Sibley intentionally damaged Catlin's appeal to the U.S. Congress to purchase his Indian Gallery. Significantly, Sibley challenged

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<sup>32</sup> John Hausdoerffer, *Catlin's Lament* (Lincoln: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 16.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>34</sup> Hercules S. Dousman to Henry H. Sibley, August 9, 1836, Sibley Papers: 1. Quoted in Dippie, Brian, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 187.

<sup>35</sup> Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 188.

Catlin's declaration of claim to be the first white man to visit the Pipestone Quarry, and in so doing, undermined his credibility. Thus, Catlin's hope of selling his Gallery to Congress was spoiled by the political machinations of contemporaries such as Sibley.

After he read Catlin's *Letters and Notes*, Henry Sibley continued the charge that Catlin's reputation amongst the America Fur Traders was tarnished and that he was "inveterate foe of the fur trade who must be exposed."<sup>36</sup> In September 1849, Sibley persuaded the territorial council of Minnesota to forego the usage "catlinite" when it shipped a slab of pipestone to Washington D.C. as its contribution to the Washington Monument.<sup>37</sup> Sibley considered pipestone symbolic of Minnesota and useful for promotion. He opposed naming the stone after Catlin, whom he considered a fraud, saying that: "It is notorious that many whites had been there and examined the Quarry long before he came to the country."<sup>38</sup> Regarding the use of the term *catlinite* as "improper and unjust," Sibley instead proposed classifying it by the Dakota term, *eyanskah* or *inya sa*, which would be consistent with the territory's Dakota-derived name and would identify the stone with its source, rather than Catlin.<sup>39</sup>

Benjamin Silliman, professor of Chemistry and Natural History at Yale from 1802 to 1853, also challenged Catlin's authenticity about the documentation of the Pipestone Quarry. According to Brian Dippie, Silliman at first discredited Catlin's geological report that was published in *The American Journal of Science and Arts* in 1839.<sup>40</sup> Word of criticism from the Missouri and Mississippi fur traders discrediting Catlin about his visit to the Quarry had

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<sup>36</sup> H.L. Dousman to Henry H. Sibley, June 20, 1842, Sibley Papers: 3. Quoted in Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 191.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>38</sup> Henry H. Sibley, letter to the Legislative Council of Minnesota Territory, September 11, 1849, 30-31. Quoted Edward D. Neil, *The History of Minnesota from the Earliest French Exploration to the Present Time* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1985), 513-514.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 513-514.

<sup>40</sup> Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 189.

shifted to the scientific circles back East. Silliman a “revered scientific eminence in America,” was disturbed to learn in 1841 from a former student that Catlin’s geographical report on the Pipestone Quarry, published in his own *American Journal of Science and Art* two years before, was a “tissue of lies.”<sup>41</sup> With Silliman’s own reputation on the line, he set out to publically defame Catlin. Catlin was angered and sent Silliman detailed explanation about his journey to the Pipestone Quarry. The false accusations brought against Catlin were so “ignorant and peuril” that Catlin doubted Silliman’s informant had even been to visit the Quarry.<sup>42</sup> He submitted to Silliman from the unnamed informant that “no, the pipestone was not dug up in a soft state and dried under leaves to prevent cracking in the sun. That was an outright fabrication.”<sup>43</sup> The charge of extensive misrepresentation was motivated by jealousy and spite. Catlin was sure that Henry Sibley was behind Silliman’s unnamed informant. Catlin wrote, “I hope your young friend has a more harmless and less malignant motive for impeaching me...and hope also that he has got something better to stand on than hearsay...”<sup>44</sup>

After reading Catlin’s *Letters and Notes*, with his description of his journey to the Pipestone Quarry, Silliman was convinced. Silliman had received his complimentary copy of *Letters and Notes*, and gave full credit May 9, 1842 to everything Catlin had defended in conversation and writing. He concluded that his informant, “an ardent youth having little experience in the journey of life,” had been deceived.<sup>45</sup> Silliman notified Catlin of the accusations against him not because he believed them, but because Catlin had the right to know, stating: “Consider yourself therefore as in no way or degree injured in my estimation.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>44</sup> Henry Rowe Schoolcraft Papers 66; George Catlin to Benjamin Silliman, October 20, 1841. Quoted in Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 190.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 191.

I repose full confidence in all you state as to matters of fact and if you have a good trace of enthusiasm it is no more than belongs to an artist.”<sup>46</sup>

Another principal antagonist, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, was a contemporary ethnographer who competed against Catlin for government sponsorship, endorsing Catlin’s analysis and recordings of the quarry in 1836. Married to an Ojibwe woman, as stated earlier, Schoolcraft served as an Indian agent in the upper Great Lakes region throughout the 1820s and 1830s and he claimed credibility from both his sources and his personnel experiences. By the 1840s, his writings and his ability to acquire political favor earned him the reputation of an expert on Native American cultures. Federal backing for his multivolume *History, Condition, and Prospect of the Indian Tribes* 1855, his previous explorations, along with the artistic assistance of Seth Eastman, compensated for his lack of extensive travels west of the Mississippi.<sup>47</sup> In his works, he exhibited a fascination with Indian legends Schoolcraft was a more self-professed realist than the romantic idealist Catlin. *The Detroit* and *Daily Advertiser* linked them in a review published on June 17, 1839, and *The Detroit Free Press* a few days later, wrote: “Catlin may be called the red man’s painter; Schoolcraft his poetical historian... They have done much which, without them, would, perhaps, have remained undone, and become extinct with the Indian race.”<sup>48</sup>

Catlin met Schoolcraft in 1836, and initially, their common concerns-fair treatment for the Indian, the almost missionary zeal with which they approached the task of recording the native cultures in paint and words-overshadowed their differences.<sup>49</sup> They met in Detroit where Schoolcraft, who just been titled Superintendent of Indian affairs in Michigan, and at

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<sup>46</sup> Benjamin Silliman to George Catlin May 9, 1842. *Archives of American Art*, 2136. (Numbers refer to microfilm roll). Quoted in Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 191.

<sup>47</sup> Richard Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft* (Mount Pleasant, MI: Clarke Historical Library Sesquicentennial Publication, 1987).

<sup>48</sup> Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 54.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-53.

the time Catlin shared his specimens of red pipestone that had intrigued Schoolcraft both as a mineralogist and as ethnologist.<sup>50</sup> On November 12, 1836 he wrote a friendly letter emphasizing the scientific importance of Catlin's discoveries:

I have been highly gratified with the portraits, costumes and sketches of Indians made by you during your recent visit to the Coteau des Prairies, and with a cursory inspection of the specimens brought by you, illustrating the geology of the formation of the Grand Pipestone quarry, which exists on the summit of that hitherto unexplored elevation. You have rendered a service to science by this enterprise, as well as the Indian race, whose personal features and dress you have perpetuated in your paintings and designs.<sup>51</sup>

Schoolcraft approved and endorsed Catlin's testimony as one of the certificates of authenticity that appeared in Catlin's *Letters and Notes*;

It gives me great pleasure in being enabled to add my name to the list of those who have spontaneously expressed their approbation of Mr. Catlin's Collection of Indian paintings. His collection of material place it in his power to throw much light on the Indian character, and his portraits, so far as I have seen them, are drawn with great fidelity as the character and likeness. H. Schoolcraft, Indian Agent for Wisconsin Territory.<sup>52</sup>

Even though their relationship appeared friendly in 1836 when Schoolcraft designated Catlin as the first actual explorer to visit the Pipestone Quarry, they had opposing views when they were promoting their work for congressional patronage. Schoolcraft continued to conduct an on-going campaign of innuendo whereby he denouncing the work of tourists, a group in which he included Catlin. The ambitious Schoolcraft exhibited a peculiar malice that no doubt stemmed from acute jealousy of Catlin's achievements within his own field of expertise.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>51</sup> Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to George Catlin, November 12, 1836, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft Papers: 26. Quoted in Dippie, *Catlin and His Contemporaries*, 52.

<sup>52</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 1,12.

To conclude, Catlin's entire collection of western landscapes, Indian portraits, and artifacts constitutes an astonishing spectacle of early nineteenth century Native American life west of the Mississippi. Rounding out his final pilgrimage of his western travels in the 1830s, Catlin unveiled a remarkably enlightened perspective of the Pipestone Quarry that was rich in geology as well as Indian lore. Catlin's position was not only to admire the sacred site but he was also determined to reveal to the scientific world a treasured anomaly of nature. What then, was Catlin's real motivation in visiting the Pipestone Quarry in 1836? Do his actions suggest that he was an ethnographic artist devoted to tapping into a unique Indian site or did he consciously calculate his motives for financial and congressional patronage? After examining the evidence, it is clear that Catlin was motivated to preserve and record the site of the Pipestone Quarry for the sake of scientific knowledge and posterity. Along the way, however, he developed a desire to serve audiences' expectations and seek profit. In his *Letters and Notes*, Catlin saw the Indians as a vanishing race, and it is fair to view him as an advocate for Indian causes, especially since he saw them as "lost to the world" and "doomed to perish."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Catlin, *Letters and Notes*, Vol. 1, 15-16.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The life and works of George Catlin intersects so many elements of 19th-century American culture that it is impossible to identify him with only one historical contribution. After his 1836 visit to the Pipestone Quarry, George Catlin's artistic and literary representations of the site made the area famous. Catlin believed his purpose was to create historical as well as a scientific record of Native American life in general and the Pipestone Quarry, before the culture became extinct. His ethnographic approach was manifested in his painting, *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairies* 1836. Catlin's work reflected his idea of the western landscape in southwestern Minnesota, recording an image of what was a rapidly vanishing way of Indian life. Catlin's hope was that audiences would be convinced of the need to establish "a *nation's park* containing man and beast, in all the wild and freshness of their beauty."<sup>1</sup> Catlin states in his *Letters and Notes*: "I would ask no other monument to my memory, nor any other enrolment of my name among the famous dead, than the reputation of having been the founder of such an institution."<sup>2</sup> It came a century after the visits to the Quarry of Prescott, Catlin, Nicollet, and Fremont. In August 1937, Congress established Pipestone National Monument.

In the 1850s Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poetic interpretations of Indian mythology offered a romantic depiction of the quarries as a unique place which appealed to the industrializing east to migrate westward. During the 19th-century, the Indian history, along with natural beauty of the quarries, infiltrated public awareness in the United States,

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<sup>1</sup> George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians*, Vol. 2 (London, 1844, New York: Dover Publications, 1973), 261-262.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 2, 262.

culminating in 1874 with the founding of the town of Pipestone near the site.<sup>3</sup> When the territory of Minnesota was established in 1849, most of southern Minnesota was occupied by the Sioux Indians.<sup>4</sup> The Sioux who had claimed the quarry and the rights to the red pipestone could hardly have been expected to relinquish their control of the area without a protest to the federal government. Shortly after came the development of the treaties of 1851 and the sale to the federal government of southern Minnesota. Congress appropriated twenty-one thousand dollars for payment to the Sioux, hoping they would accept.<sup>5</sup> The Sioux refused to accept the money due to another motive they were after which developed in the treaty of 1858. According to Theodore L. Nydahl, the 1858 treaty was for South Dakotans what the treaty of Traverse des Sioux was for Minnesotans.<sup>6</sup> The white settlers benefited as well as the Indians. It took the endurance of sixteen chiefs and five months of negotiations for the terms of the treaty to be agreed upon. Article 8 states: “The said Yankton Indians shall be secured in the free and unrestricted use of the Red Pipestone Quarry.”<sup>7</sup> In the provisions of the article, the federal government reserved six hundred and forty eight acres for a reservation immediately north of the present city of Pipestone. With the exception of a small grant of land for a railroad, the reservation is today the same as it was in 1858.

In 1875 D.C. Whitehead, one of the pioneer settlers in the region suggested to build an Indian school on the reservation.<sup>8</sup> He felt it would increase settlement in the area as well as a benefit to the Indians. Through the support of Congressman John Lind, an act was

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<sup>3</sup> Sally Southwick, *Building on a Borrowed Past* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 2.

<sup>4</sup> Pipestone Association, “The Pipestone Indian Reservation” In *The Pipestone Indian Shrine* (Pipestone, Minnesota, 1933), 21.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>6</sup> Theodore Nydahl, “The Pipestone Quarry and the Indians.” *Minnesota History*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (December, 1950), 204.

<sup>7</sup> *The Pipestone Indian Shrine*, 21-24.

<sup>8</sup> John Davis, *A History of the Pipestone Reservation* (Boulder: University of Colorado, MA Thesis, 1934), 70-79.

passed in 1891 which established seven Indian schools over the country and one was erected in 1892 on the Pipestone Indian Reservation.<sup>9</sup> The debate was raised by the Sioux complaining that the decision to build their school was made by Congress alone, without informing the Indians. They were fearful that this action represented an attempt by the government to revoke their rights to this property. In evaluating this concern, the title to the reservation continued in controversy, the Indians claiming absolute title while the government took the view that the Indians had only a right in the nature of an easement.<sup>10</sup> After difficult litigations, the court found in favor of the Indians and the Court of Claims awarded the Sioux \$100,000.00 plus interest since 1891 for a total of \$328,558.90 while the title to the reservation passed to the United States.<sup>11</sup> This was truly a pivotal financial reward to the Sioux.

Passionate settlers promoted the sacredness of the quarry and convinced Congress to establish The Pipestone National Monument in 1937. The land acquired was located in the southern part of the reservation and was made up of one hundred and fifteen acres from the original six hundred and forty eight acres.<sup>12</sup> The law established that the rights be reserved exclusively to all Indian tribes that chose to quarry the red stone. The land surrounding the monument is a part of the national park system and open to the public year round. It is Minnesota's only national monument and established to honor America's first citizens.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>10</sup> *The Pipestone Indian Shrine*, 24.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 24-27.

<sup>12</sup> Nydahl, *Minnesota History*, 207.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1  
George Catlin, *Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau Des Prairies*. 1836-37  
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison Jr.  
Oil on Canvas, 19 ½ x 27 ¼ in.

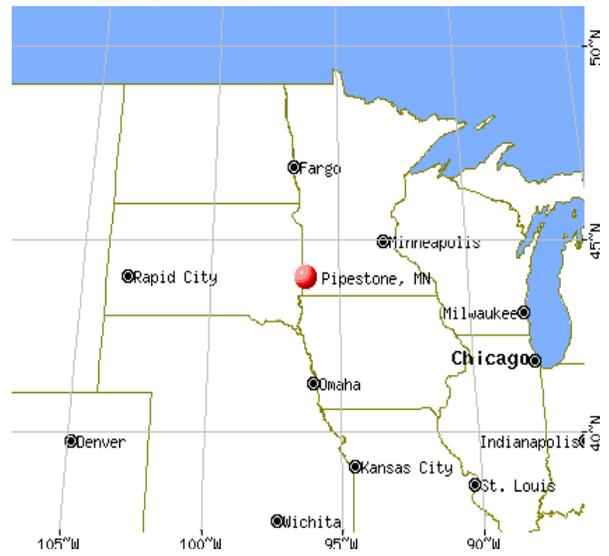
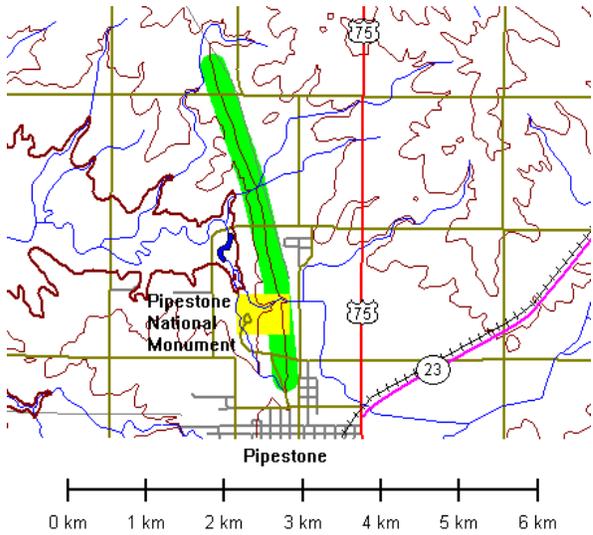
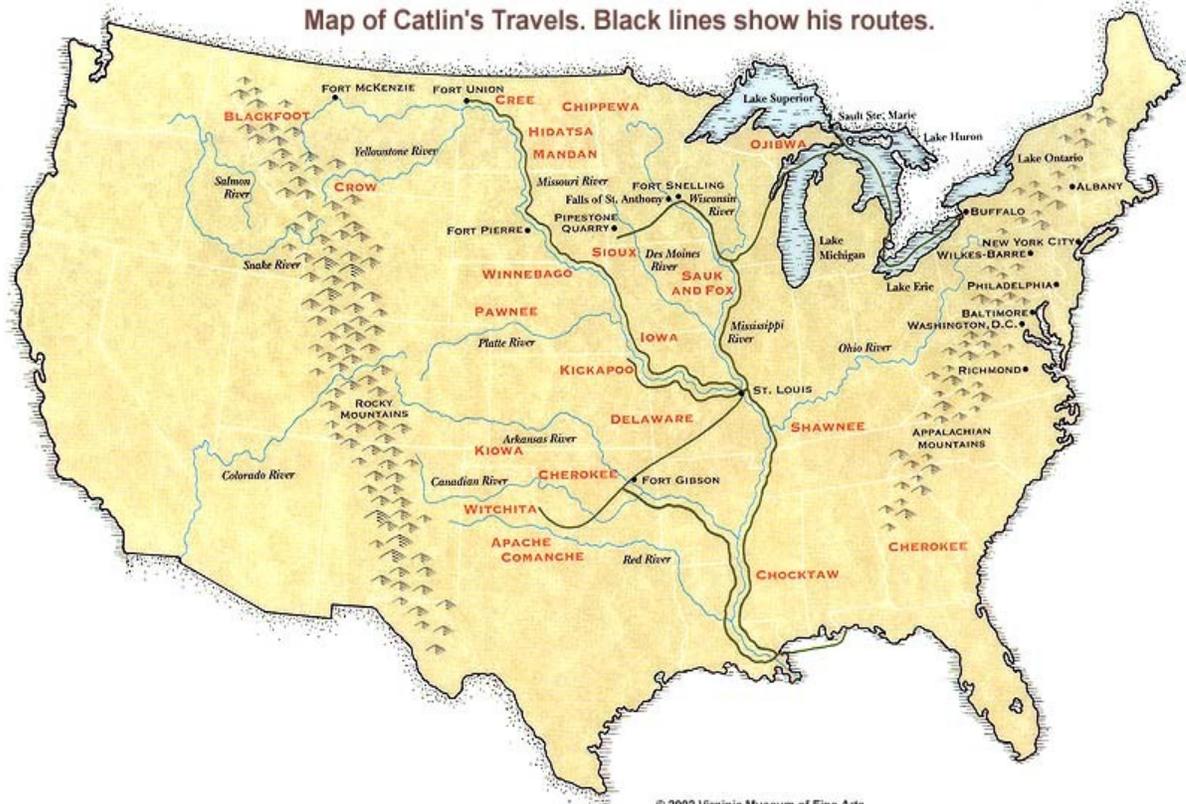


Figure 2  
 Map of George Catlin's Travels in the 1830s  
 Pipestone Quarry, Pipestone, Minnesota

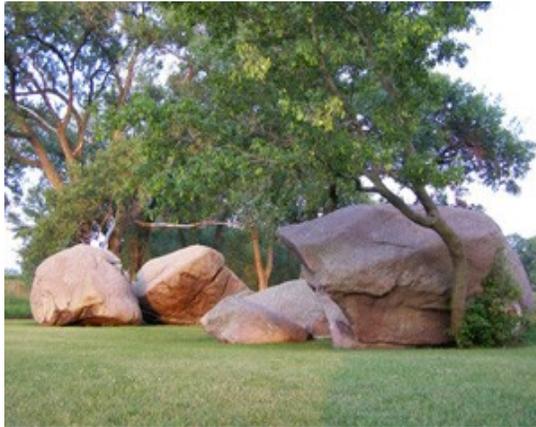


Figure 3  
The Three Maidens  
Pipestone Quarry, Pipestone, Minnesota

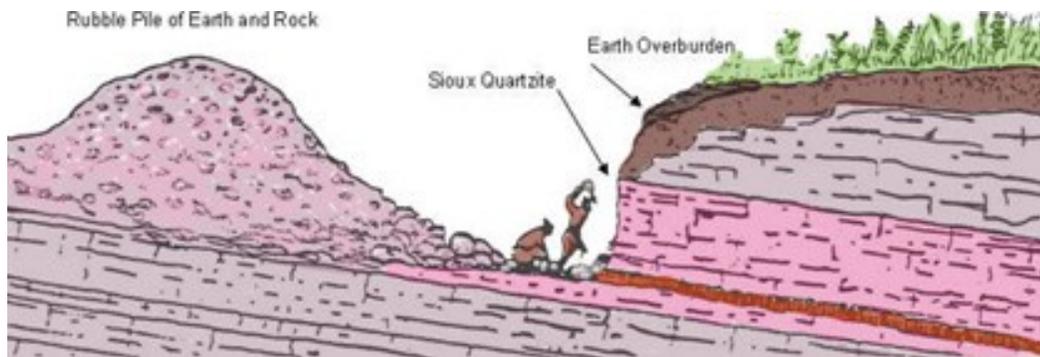


Figure 4  
Geology of Pipestone

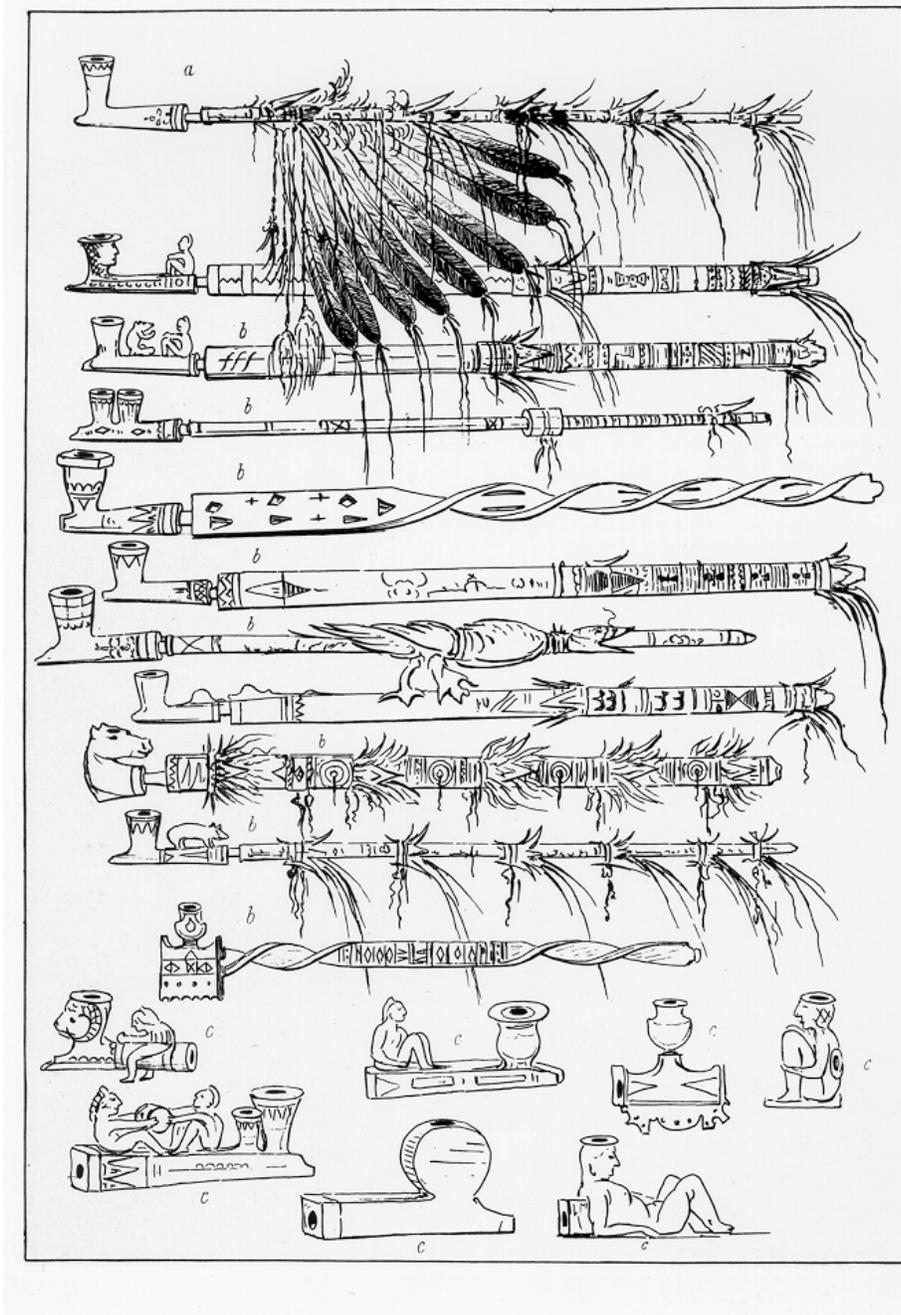


Figure 5  
 George Catlin, *Plate 98 Indian Pipes*  
*Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians*  
 Ink on Paper

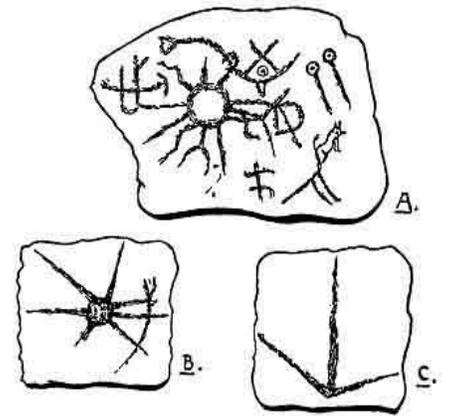
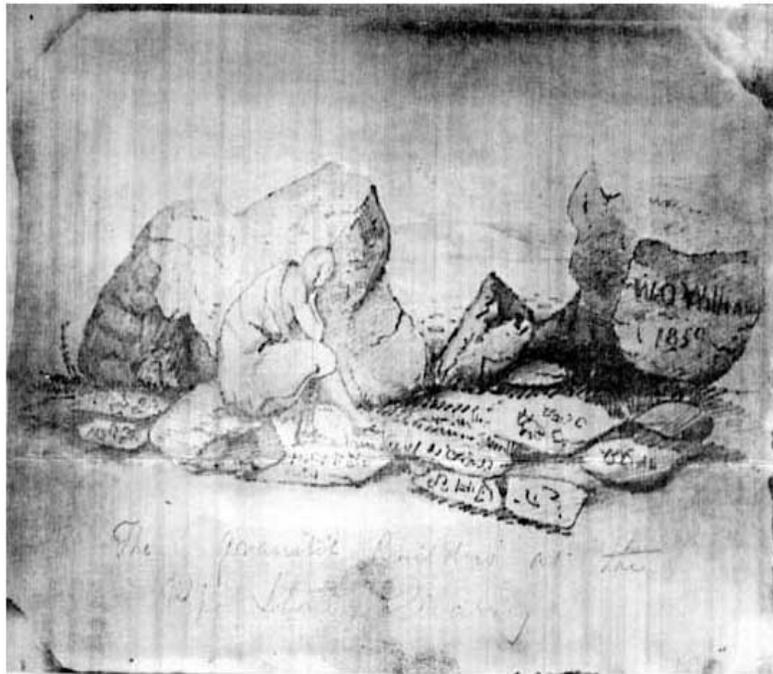


Figure 6  
 W. O. Williams, *First Drawings*, 1859  
 Pictographs surrounding The Three Maidens at the Pipestone Quarry  
 Pipestone, Minnesota



Figure 7  
Leaping Rock at the Pipestone Quarry  
Pipestone, Minnesota



Figure 8  
*Haw-Che-KE-Sug-GA, He Who Kills the Osages, Chief of Tribe.*  
*Missouri/Jiwere-Natachi, 1832*  
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison Jr.  
Oil on Canvas, 29 x 24 in.



Figure 9  
*Stu-Mick-O-Sucks, Buffalo Bulls Back Fat, Head Chief, Blood Tribe, Blackfoot/Kainai, 1832*  
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison, Jr.  
Oil on Canvas, 29 x 24 in.

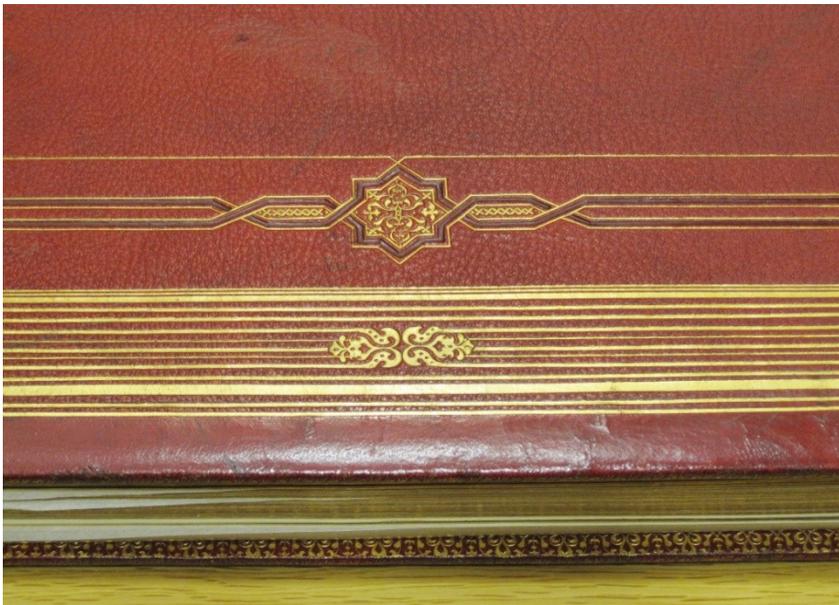


Figure 10  
George Catlin, Portfolio, *Indian Art in Pipestone*, 1864-6  
Department of Ethnography at British Museum, London, England

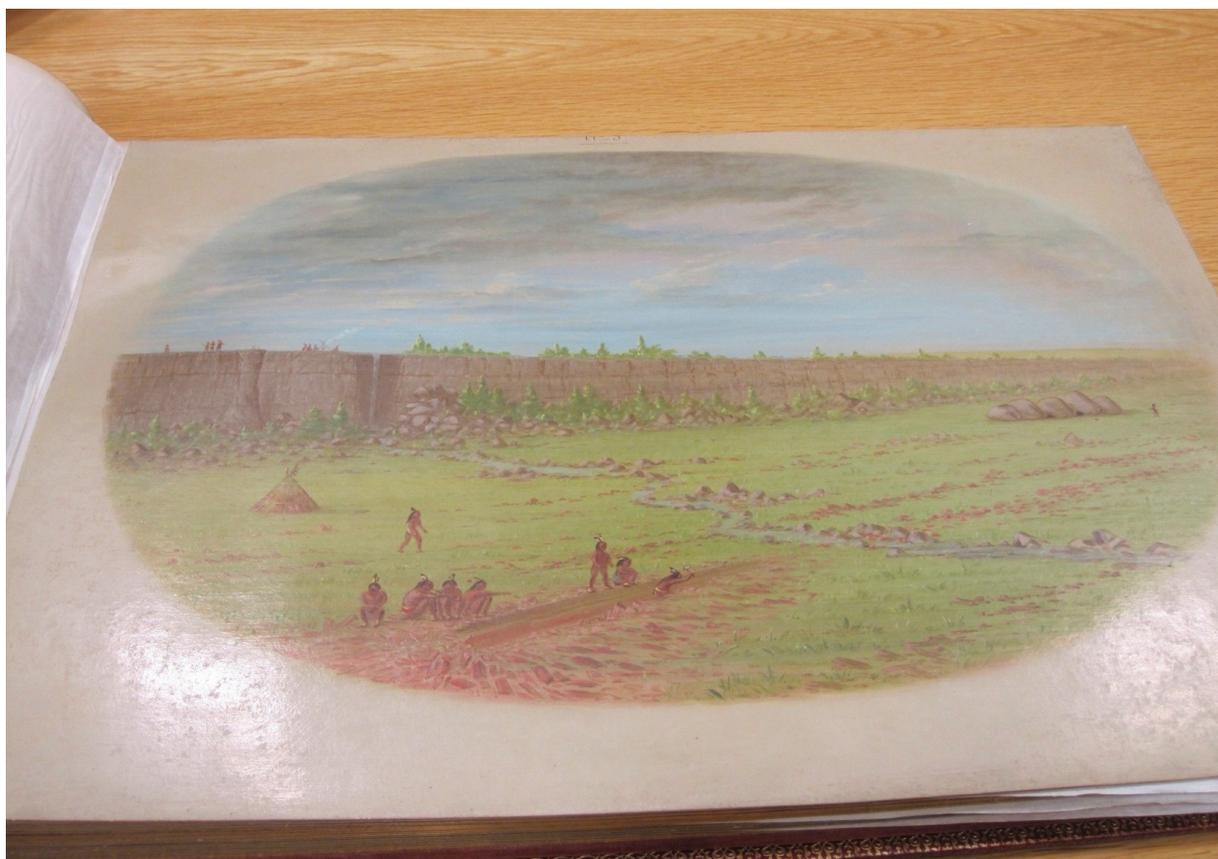


Figure 11  
George Catlin, *Plate No. 3 Red Pipestone Quarry Coteau des Prairies*, 1852  
Ethnography Department, British Museum, London, England  
Oil on Cardboard, 17 ½ x 22 ½ in.

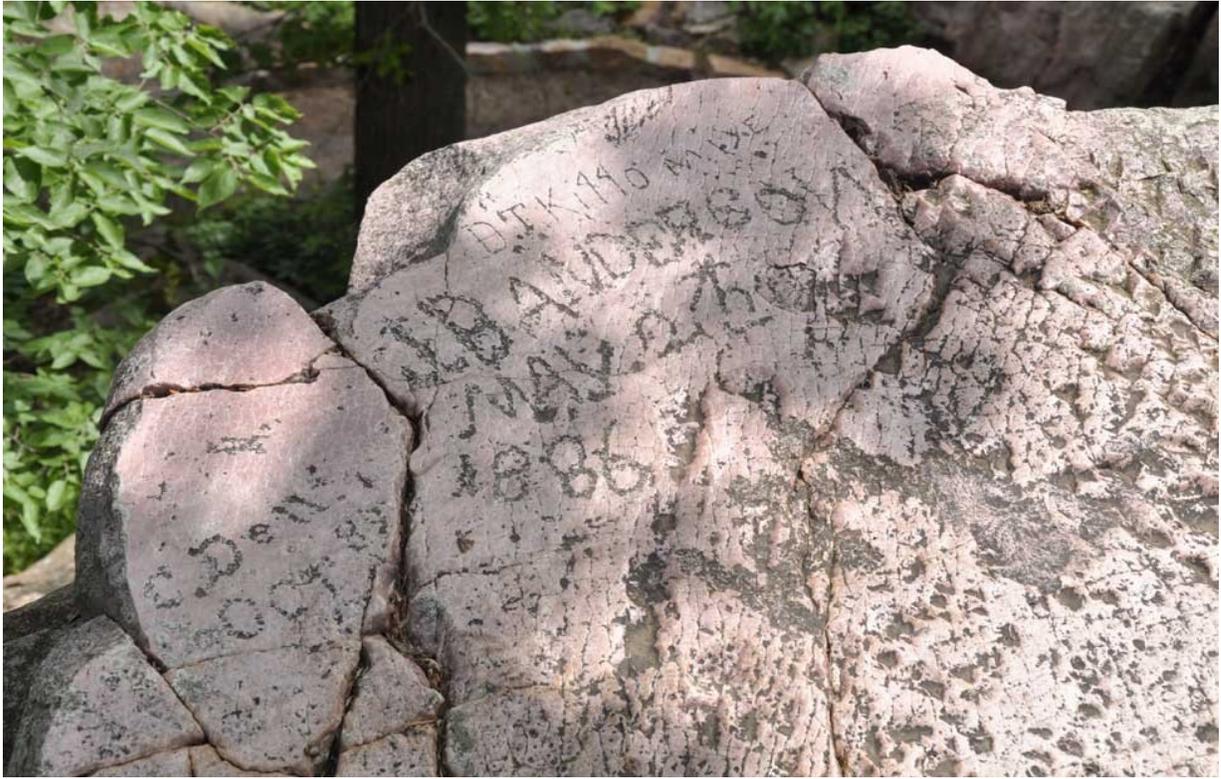


Figure 12  
Joseph Nicollet's Inscription at the Pipestone Quarry, 1838  
Minnesota State Historical Society

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## VITA

Denise Louise Mundy was born in Kansas City Missouri on February 1, 1955. She was raised in the Johnson County Kansas area. She attended Trailwood Elementary, Indian Creek middle School and graduated from Shawnee Mission South High School in 1973. She attended Kansas University from 1973-1975 and pre-nursing. After which, she attended St. Luke's Nursing School from 1976-1979 and obtained her RN. Ms. Mundy furthered her nursing education at Webster University from 1986 to 1988 and obtained her BSN. Her nursing career focused in the specialized field of Cardiovascular ICU from 1979 to 1988.

She spent those years raising three children: Nate, Joe and Charlie along with promoting her husband's career in the insurance field.

In 1996, Ms. Mundy was appointed as a Docent for the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. After completion of her Masters of Art degree, she plans to continue as a Docent and teach Art History on the High School level.