

KUTENAI PLACE NAMES

of the

Flathead Lake Region In Northwestern Montana

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Kutenai place names of the Flathead Lake region in northwestern Montana is a limited list of names used by the local Kutenai.

Many of the names here have changed and their meanings are unknown by even some of the older informants. Some of the names have been retained by the white men but only a very very small percentage. Of course, many of the present names have been translated from Kutenai to English or from Flathead to English. One of the main reasons names have changed from Kutenai to English or rather completely changed is the difficulty of speaking the Kutenai language.

Naturally the coming of the whites established areas and places that had no name or importance to the Kutenai. Consequently they had no name and that is also true with the English language in this area.

There are areas and places that have no name, yet the Kutenai informants admit it had a name, yet they themselves have completely forgotten what it was or what it meant. Many of them do agree that they had heard the older generation talk about it or had heard about it.

Generally speaking the Kutenai lived and roamed a large area in northern Idaho, southeastern British Columbia and northwestern Montana. Especially prior to the establishment of the Flathead Indian Reservation. At the present time there are only a few Kutenai on the northern edge of the Flathead Reservation. About one half of the south portion of Flathead Lake is on the reservation. These Kutenai are known as the Flathead Lake Band. They have been here since about the time of

the Stevens treaty.¹

This band of Kutenai actually lined north of the present reservation in the upper portion of Flathead valley north of Flathead Lake.

Upon the division of The United States and Canada the line split the Kutenai Nation in two bands. The upper band which is in southeastern British Columbia and the lower band in the extreme northern and northwestern Idaho and Montana.

Archaeologists and anthropologists agree that about 150 to 200 years prior to the coming of the white traders the Kutenai lived adjacent to the plains area northwest of Calgary. From there they migrated west over the Continental Divide into the upper Columbia River drainages.

This paper does not cover all place names but does contain important names used by the Kutenai, especially in the upper Flathead region.

Many of these words have appeared in other papers by the author so there are some repetitions.

¹The Stevens Treaty.- July 9 to 16 called the Flathead Treaty Council 1855 held at Council Grove, $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles northwest of Missoula. There were very few Kutenai at this council.

KUTENAI WORDS

AH-KD-KOLIGI- A camp on Wolf Creek, Lincoln County.

AHKENOKIMIK - South of Holt meaning a broken up camp. This is where the Blackfeet Indians made a raid and killed many Kutenai. One Kutenai child was hid under some fir boughs but the raiders found him. They raised him and as a young man, he returned to the Swan Lake Area and died an old man there about 1900. His name was Nasoquat which means Swan Lake and its outlet near Bigfork. This raid occurred about 1840 or possibly earlier. See Montana magazine of History No. 2 Vol. II P.P. 6 Early Kutenai History by C. I. Malouf.

AHKINMOKOPMALL- A camas hill about two miles N.W. of Lone Pine Montana.

AHKILLS KA-Fish trap at Dayton Creek, Dayton Montana.

AHKILKALXONOOKMIKNOO- A broken up chain of small lakes about two miles east of McCaffery Lookout.

AHKOOKNOOKNAND - A little lake at Marion, Montana.

AKMILKONOOK- Head of Flathead Lake.

AKNISSAL- A portion of Flathead River above Coram which adjoins west portion of Glacier National Park.

ALLKANLLAPAMKO- A camp on Wolf Creek, Lincoln County.

ALK-NO-KINIS (Mouth of Deep Creek) about two miles N.W. of Fortine, Montana. It is a camp.

HILLTOOKK- one antelope, a camp.

MATEETH- Whitefish Lake.

MAIIOWLSKE- Camp on McGregor Lake on the north shore.

NASSUKOAT- A camp $\frac{1}{2}$ way up the north shore of Swan Lake.

NEAL-XAM-YOU-WATH- A small lake.

NILVAMYUWATH- A snail lake this is Bitterroot Lake.

OHPTH- A certain fish at the mouth of Flathead river at the upper end
of Flathead river.

KOCOO- The abbreviation for old old campground.

KAH-A-WA-KI-MI-TOOK- Pincher Creek, Canada.

KALASMI- Named after a Kutenai man. The head of Pleasant Valley Creek.

KANOOKLONMITOOK- White creek. Fish Hatchery Creek (Hatchery bay)

KAPOWSQTS KNOOK NANA- Big Arm Montana or a little bay.

KAPAWZTSTNOOK-Elmo Montana or named after an old Kutenai Indian his
name was white mans version Elemo or big bay in Flathead Lake.

KA-POKE-KANAN-NITOOK- Mouth of Ashley Creek or used as a winter camp.

KILOON-KAN-KITSI-KA- Lower fish traps or a camp used in spring about
two miled west of Elk Mt. in Lincoln County.

KINTAN-KITSIKA- Upper fish trap 2 or 3 miles west of the mouth of
Truman Creek.

KIWATAKNOOK- Outlet bay on Polson bay. South end of Flathead Lake.

KIWALOUKPONOOK- North end of the Chinese Wall where the old Indian
trail crosses the Continental Divide. It means long rocky ledge.

KOOKLSUKNOOKNANA- A camp on North side of McGregor Lake.

KTS- NAXAA- A group of Kutenai People living near (Pincher Creek
Canada) in days of long long ago.

KWALITLEAHLTOVALEAIT- Long point or Finley Point in Flathead Lake.

KWEALKANKI MI- Big Island or Wild Horse Island in Flathead Lake.

KYAH-HAWAHCLUENAM-Center camp or a Kutenai expression having references
to Kalispell, Montana.

KATOONWAKAH- Across river from Columbia Falls, a camp.

KY-MAL-KAOO-WOOK- a double grove of willow or cottonwood trees near the old Ashley Creek Store. South West edge of Kalispell.

PAPOOSE ISLAND- Cromwell Island in Flathead Lake.

AUNOVONOAK- Foreys Creek or the top creek.

SALUM- Aching head or Crescent bay.

SKINKOOTS- Coyote also means a medicine rock on old Indian trail in Sec. 18 T 25 N R20W or closer to NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of S18.

WATONOOKLLIT- Patotoe Parier on Wolf Creek Lincoln County this truly should be camas.

YAKAKMOINKI- Camp on south end of Island Lake, Pleasant Valley.

YAKANMOKALLEAVONIYAMIKI- Wood bay or (Antlers Rest Bay to the Kutenai.)

YAKIL-HA-KO-KANHI- A great cotton wood grove one mile west of Little Bitterroot Lake at the head of Dahl Creek.

YAKILAHKWIILNAMKI- Belton (West Glacier) or a good place to Dance.

YAKILHALOOKMIKI- Thundering spot Electric Storms. On the divide on the old Indian trail west of Angel point. Sec 29 and 32 T26N-R20W. This area is noted for lightening strikes as the author owns Sec. 32 and sometimes it is rather snappy during electric storms.

YAKILKOOKTSIKI-MAAS-MAAS- A sweet parsmip camp at the mouth of Truman Creek.

YAKILLIOYMKKOOKPO- A camp about 6 miles N of Hubbard Dam above the reservoir (where tough slough grass grows).

YES XA KI NOOKI- Upper end of Flathead Lake including Demersville and Kalispell.

Some important places that informants couldn't remember the Kutenai names. Kutenai Burial ground about 2 miles southeast of McCaffery Look-out.

In Pleasant Valley south end, an old Kutenai man is buried. He was over 100 years old when he died there about 1895. It is near the head of Pleasant Valley Creek.