Ishbinnaachitchish

Pretty Shield 1856 - 1944

APSÁALOOKE WOMAN OF INFLUENCE

Ishbinnaachitchish / Pretty Shield was born around 1856 on the Missouri River, near the mouth of Plum Creek, during the time "When the Ice Breaks" (early spring).

Pretty Shield's father was Crazy Sister-In-Law and her mother was Kills In The Night. She was a member of the Sore Lip clan.

She was born a Mountain Crow, but lived among the River Crows with her mother's sister, Strikes With An Axe.

Her father's father, Little Boy Strikes With A Lance, owned a magnificent shield. He believed it to be powerful and gave her the name Ishbinnaachitchish/Pretty Shield after this holy object.

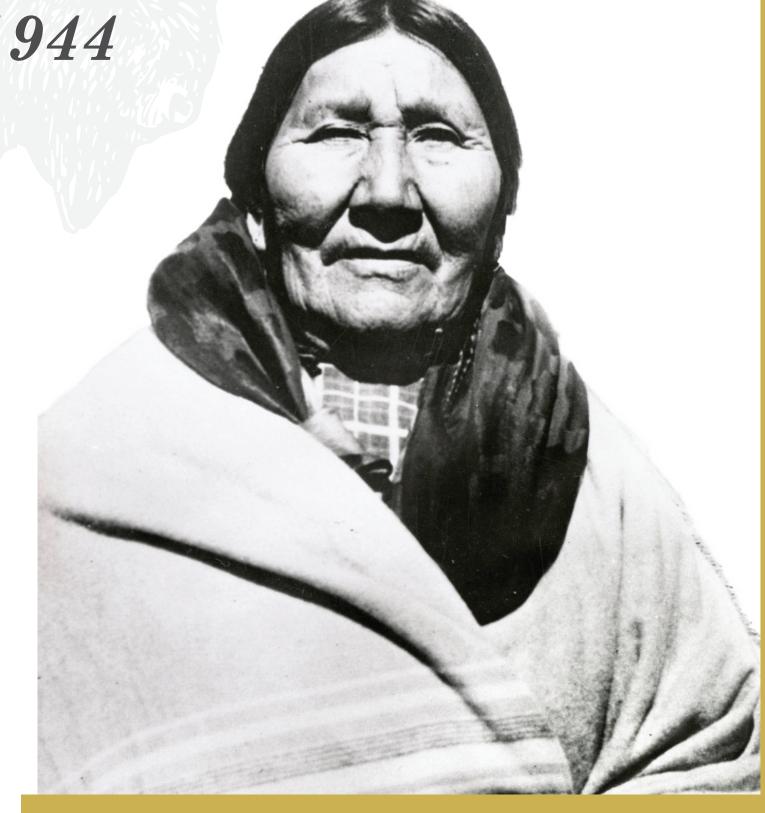
Pretty Shield married the famed Apsáalooke warrior Basseekosh/Goes Ahead, whom she affectionately called Bassaannash/The Leader. They had three children that lived to adulthood: daughters Pine Fire and Little Woman (Helen Goes Ahead) and son Good.

Pretty Shield was best known for her extensive knowledge of Apsáalooke lifeways and the cultural uses of plants. In 1932, Frank B. Linderman documented her life in the book *Red Mother*. The title was later changed to *Pretty Shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows*. Her story became paramount to understanding a woman's life on the plains before reservations, when the Apsáalooke followed the buffalo. Her story also documents the hardships of the early reservation period, a time that became known as "Living Between the Lines".

Pretty Shield was active in Apsáalooke ceremonial life. She was a member of the sacred Tobacco Society, holding the position of the Akbilishiile/The Water Mixer. Her role was the preparation of the sacred seeds for planting in the garden.

Pretty Shield was also a well-known midwife, and her sacred helpers are the Bimmuúnmaakoole/Water Creatures. She was often called upon to assist in the delivery of children.

She held the honor of naming many children, including her own grandchildren. These names were inspired and guided by her sacred medicine, the Red Ant People.



"The happiest days of my life were spent following the buffalo herds over our beautiful country. My mother and father and Goes Ahead, my man, were all kind, we were so happy. Then, when my children came, I believed I had everything that was good on this world."

- Ishbinnaachitchish / Pretty Shield,

n Pretty-shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows, by Frank B. Lindermar

During her life on the reservation, she lived in the Crow Agency and Nest Creek areas, where she raised many of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Pretty Shield moved to the Other Side Camp on April 30, 1944, surrounded by her family and grandchildren; she was laid to rest with her husband at the Little Bighorn Battlefield cemetery.

Pretty Shield's legacy is found in her descendants and tribe. She influenced countless individuals in the preservation of culture, the value of family, and the understanding of what life looked like before the reservation. Her descendants include educators, cultural leaders, elected officials, scholars, military veterans, artists, business owners, and philanthropists, who all draw upon her teachings as motivation and inspiration for their success.