



*Medicine Man*

oil, 1908, courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

## BLACKFEET IN THE JUDITH BASIN

Russell's own words best describe this image.

*“The Medicine Man’ I consider one of the best pieces of my work and these few words may give you some idea of the meaning of the picture. The medicine man among the plains Indians often had more to do with the movements of his people than the Chief and is supposed to have the power to speak with spirits and animals. This painting represents a band of Blackfeet Indians with their Medicine Man in the foreground. The landscape was taken from a sketch I made on Soan Tree creek (Lone Tree Creek near Geyser) in the Judith Basin and I remember when this was a game country. The mountain range in the background is the Highwood with Haystack (Round Butte) and Steamboat Butte (Square Butte) to the right.”*

The Blackfeet once claimed all the country from the Saskatchewan south to the Yellowstone and one of their favorite hunting grounds was the Judith Basin. This country today is fenced and settled by ranch men and farmers with nothing but a few deep worn trails where the buffalo once walked.\*

\*(Charles M. Russell, *Paper Talk*, Charlie Russell's American West, Knopf Publishing, 1979, p. 81.)

