This Agency is the old stamping ground of Graham who was Indian Commissioner for many years. As a result it has better grounds and more buildings than most Agencies. Both the Agent, Mr. Dodds, and the clerk, Mr. White, have been extremely helpful. Mr. White especially; he has been here for fifteen years and in the course of conversation told me quite a few things.

Among the most interesting to me was the statement that there is a definite color preference in marriage among the Indians of this reserve. Those who are lighter in color are prized as good catches in direct proportion to the percentage of white blood in their veins, those of pure Indian stock are shelved or married at a later age, with a consequence of fewer progeny. This statement, of course, needs statistical verification, but it seems very plausible.

The birth rate also, according to White, among the Indians of pure blood, is extremely low. In the Little Black Bear band of fifty-six, there are perhaps three or four children. Very often there are no living survivors of the old people. Those with more white blood are more prolific.
Another factor in the selection marriage process is that when an Indian boy marries a white or breed girl, she comes in under the treaty provisions. But should an Indian girl marry an outsider, she goes off treaty. The latter almost never happens -- the former more and more frequently.

I also was given some information on the Colony which appears in the reports. Mr. Graham got the idea that if only he could get the young fellows off by themselves, away from the influence of the older people, they would become "good Indians." And so he picked out the land in the Pipikisis Reserve and went through the schools, picking out the likely boys and getting them into the Pipikisis band. Few of the boys were full-bloods. The Colony looked good on paper because a great deal of money was poured into it. But actually there were only three or four good farmers among all the graduates of the schools on the land. When money was not put in at as great a rate, the whole business sagged badly.

The [*] Mr. Graham was evidently the major force in the shaping of Indian policies for many years. He attained his position because he was a great publicist and "hail-fellow-well-met." At the same time, he was a very domineering person and well disliked by all the men in the department. His policy was to discourage all the aboriginal dances and practices and tried to stamp them out entirely.

In regard to this last matter, it seems to be the policy of the present administration to allow the Indians to have some of their dances. According to Dodds, it is the policy of the department "to discourage pagan rites," that is, they are not to stop them entirely. In regard to the Sundance, said Dodds, "I am in favor of stopping it and of stopping all of these dances, for that matter. The government spends thousands of dollars trying to make an Indian kid as near like a white as possible, and as soon as they see that damn dance, they're as bad as the old ones."

Note that the Department's efforts are all expended toward making the Indian a white. After 50 years of effort it still takes only the Sundance to put them back to where they started.

It always has been unclear to me as to how some of the Indians got along. I asked White about the boy who interpreted for me -- Jimmie Tuck. Jimmie had no crops under cultivation. He gets treaty money ($5), can always cut a load of wood in exchange for food from the neighboring farmers, and very occasionally works out. This seems to suffice for all his needs.

All Indian Department employees say that the Indian is an inveterate beggar. Dodds says that they are not cut out for farming and make very poor farmers. On this reserve there are just three or four out of 460 that are as good as white farmers.

As White and I were talking, an Indian piped up and pulled the
old lost ten tribes gag.

The day before I came was treaty and sports day. There were 22 tipis and between 50 and 60 tents. The night I arrived they held a big powwow (Round Dance) in Red Dog's village and the drums were going all night. When I arrived at the scene the next morning, the women were just pulling up the green boughs that formed the screen that is used. The grass was trampled down in a forty-foot circle. Two tents of Sioux were just breaking camp when I arrived. They had been visiting the Cree and had evidently participated in the Round Dance.

Red Dog is chief of the Star Blanket Reserve, and is about fifty, wore a green shirt, braces, trousers, moccasins. He has greying braids and wears spectacles.

The Star Blankets are part of the Katepwu-cipi-wiyiniwuk -- Calling River people. Red Dog's father was atcaxgoskotahgobit, Star Blanket -- his grandfather was wapimuctcusis -- White Calf. White Calf's father was pagacowiu -- "Soft (Something)"

whose other name was kapatc-skixt -- "Taking from the Pot." His father was itawuskijik -- "Janus Eye" who got his chieftainship recognized in the States. All these were ukimau, chiefs.

At this time askihkapimuxta-da, Walking Earth, who is a son of White Calf, walked in and did most of the talking.

This itawuskijik, according to a Moose Mountain informant, was half Assiniboine. This they all denied vehemently, saying that he merely had been fond of the Assiniboine, lived with them when he was young, but had been a full-blooded Cree.

I tried to get the relationship between this band and the Otcapowes straight but got all balled up. They evidently were closely related and the split up was largely a matter of chance at the time of the treaty. Pagacowiu was Otciiwama (Otsuama?) to kakiciweu. Kakiciweu's full name, they said, was piesu-kakiciweu -- "Thunder Bird Loud Voice" whose father was tcitce-mikatcis -- "Short Legs."


Of the Gros Ventre they said that they were the enemies of all and so were wiped out.

The band used to hunt from the File Hills region to Maple Creek and Wood Mountain, never as far as the Saskatchewan and only
lately this far north. Their territory was mostly up and down the Qu'Appelle Valley as far east as the Pelly River. In the days of Walking Earth's grandfather (pagacowiu) they used to hunt as far east as Winnipeg, but in his day Round Lake was as far east as they got. Itawuskijik used to hunt southward into the States, but not so in Walking Earth's day. They did go south to the Mussel Shell River, "ececcipi(?)."

Concerning horses he said that it was only just before treaty days that they had horses in any number. Before that he remembered the time when dogs were used for transport with travois. Buffalo Bull chimed in that he remembered when bows and arrows were used to fight with.

They got their horses from the Blackfeet, mostly in raids. They went off on foot. When they came back with horses they would give them away to their friends and relatives. I asked about the incentive for raids, whether it was to acquire a name or get many horses and they replied that it was one just as much as the other, since both came to the same thing.

Buffalo pounds were used only when buffalo were scarce. They said that a tree was left standing in the middle. One old fellow said that his uncle would climb the buffalo and spear them as they were milling around but it was very unusual for this took great strength. Buffalo would always run sunwise in the corral.

The Kanatcipahat "Gets them", would get up at dawn, take someone's horse, and go out to entice the buffalo into the pound. If successful, the owner of the horse would be entitled to the fattest buffalo. White Calf was a great buffalo lurer. (NOTE: Buffalo were also encircled, on foot mostly.)

The tipi was located in among a group of six in what is known as Red Dog's village. It was equipped with the usual wooden chests and quilts. An eagle feather was stuck behind one of the tipi poles. A strip of canvas was hung behind one of the beds. I sat behind the fire. On my left was a wooden chest on which was some dance regalia which evidently had been in use the night before. There was a broad leather band with three-inch hawk bills on it, a wide band of fine beadwork (Dodds tells me that Red Dog's wife had been buried in a dress that was literally covered with beadwork), there was applique work of some kind also. Next to these articles on the chest was a new alarm clock (I have not previously noticed these in any dwellings). The tent was elaborately decorated as were all the others.