

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: DUCK LAKE AGENCY #1  
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: DUCK LAKE AGENCY

INTERVIEW LOCATION: DUCK LAKE AGENCY

TRIBE/NATION: CREE  
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: JULY 15, 1934  
INTERVIEWER: DR. D.G. MANDELBAUM  
INTERPRETER: BERNARD VENNE  
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER YAWORSKI  
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This day of my arrival was a fortunate and an unfortunate one. Fortunate because it was the day before the pilgrimage of St. Laurent, when all the Indians assemble from the reserves and unfortunate because they are then so busy and excited that it is hard getting them to talk.

The pilgrimage is to a shrine which I understand to be an imitation of the one at Lourdes in France. All the Catholic Cree for a hundred miles around come as well as the local French-Canadians, Germans, Poles, and Ruthenians. There must have been 250 tents of Indians and halfbreeds.

The agent, Mr. Smith (himself a prominent partaker in the pilgrimage) introduced me to Father Chevalier who told me (1) that this was originally Gros Ventre country, (2) that several entire bands were descended from one George Sutherland, and from a French trader. I hope to get more information from him when I can.

The informant I got, Bernard Venne, is a man of about 26, with a prolific vocabulary. He is a bit too wise however.

My impression is that these Cree have a great deal more white blood and have been in contact with whites for a longer period than the Crooked Lake or File Hills Cree. There was not a single tipi in the whole encampment.

Informant - Yayakikot -- "Turned Up Nose"

At the time of the treaty his ukimau was kamistsowesit, "Having a Little Beard" (Beardy).

This chief and okimasis, "The Prince"(?) were the only two chiefs of his people, the paskuxkupawiyiuiwuk, "Prairie Indians." (Bernard translated this term as Bald Prairie Indians, while a previous informant had said Parkland or Savannah Indians.) They hunted south of Saskatoon, mostly at the elbow of the South Sask. One Arrow's band -- kapeya-kwackonaht hunted with them and evidently was of the same people.

The Prairie Indians were also called nipicikhkupawiyiuiwuk, "Willow Indians." Their great-grandfather was a quarter breed who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company at Edmonton. He had three wives from whom he had nine sons and as many more daughters. All of his children lived to an old age and had large families.

This informant said that he was 82. He had hunted buffalo ever since he was able to handle a gun.

He was turning gray and had a little mustache. I note that the old men here are grayer than those at the other reserves and many have mustaches or beards. This seems a good index of a general admixture of white blood.

Other Cree he knew were muske-gowuh -- Swampy Cree, caka-wiyiniu -- Wood Cree.

Informants - Sam Wolf -- Joe Wolf "papamatewau" "the trader"

The former of these two is a treaty Indian who does not have a Cree name. The latter is one of the halfbreeds who withdrew from the treaty rolls to take scrip. Both are breeds and are related. They are between 70 and 80.

Their chief when the treaty was signed was uktuwehau -- "Sounding with Flying Wings," his English name was Alexander Cayen. He and his people were descended from the French halfbreeds near Carlton and were known as waskahigauinisuk, "People who Live in Houses."

Before the treaty they had but two chiefs, mistawasis, "Big Child" and atahkakop, "Star Blanket," some of whose people are

now at Sandy Lake. After the government, fearing rebellion, divided them up into groups of 12 tipis.

These "House People" were true buffalo hunters and only went into the bush when buffalo became very scarce. They were called "House People" because they lived in houses near pe-honau -- Waiting Place -- Carlton.

The hunting range of the "House People" was not very far east of Carlton and Duck Lake, not as far certainly as Prince Albert. They wintered where buffalo were plentiful, at the Elbow or at Mikicwatci "Eagle Hills" (north of Biggar). They went north as far as Turtle Lake "misgonaxksa-gahiguu" (Turtleford) and Tramping Lake, "tahkuckewinixk" and south of there to ma tcahatiuau "Bare Hills" and wa-kayucukaupaxtagit, "Where the Bear Killed the Man" (south of Red Deer River).

As buffalo got scarce they made trips down to Mauaxtigan, "Where they take Lodge Poles," to Cypress Hills and Medicine Hat.

The piskuxkupiuiwiyuiiwuk lived at Kamixkwawakatiuak, "Red Clay Hills" where Daudesu now is, in general they were southeast of the House People.

They enumerated the following list of chiefs:

Pixtiwac, "Smoker," at Meadow Lake, of the Sakawiyiua -- Wood People.

Kinumutaye-u, "Long Moose Goatee," now at Big River -- Wood Cree.

Muniau, "White Man," at Surgeon Lake (north of P.A.) -- House People.

John Smith -- Muskagowuk, S.E. of P.A.

James Smith -- at Ft. La Corne, S.E. of P.A.

Tcikaste-peciu, "His Shadow on the Water," now near McDowell -- Paskuxkupawiyuiiwuk -- Prairie People.

Kape-wasyouaxk -- "One Arrow," at Batoche -- Prairie People.

Ce-cwepiu -- "Sits Down with the Ring of a Bell," now at Batoche with One Arrow's people -- Paskuxkupawiyuiiwuk.

Piheu-kanixkwucit -- Red Pheasant, now north of Biggar -- House People

Kawaxkatco-pat, "Lean Stony," Assiniboine, now near Red Pheasant Reserve.

Sakimihopwat -- "Mosquito Sting," same place.

Wixkackokiceyiu, "Couch Grass Old Man," on Sweet Grass Reserve

-- House People.

Wau-kauihk ko-tamahoht, "Hit Him on the Back," now on Sweet Grass Reserve -- House People.

Pihtogohanapiwiyiu -- Poundmaker, Poundmaker Reserve, House People.

Miuahigosis -- Little Pine -- House People.

Musomiu -- "Moose Berry" -- House People.

Kap-tigo (some obscene word) or piecuowasis -- "Thunder Child", also of the House People.

These listed above are all at the Duck Lake, Carlton, or Battleford Agencies. He mentioned the following chiefs:

Sakas-kutc, "Hung Up By His Clothes," Onion Lake.

Pimigwayau -- "Crooked Neck," Onion Lake.

Mistahimaskwah -- "Big Bear," at Frog Lake.

Kocikohciwayaniu -- "Having an Ermine Skin," at Hobbema -- Little Bear Hills, "maskwacisixt."

Both these informants wore mustaches, jackets, trousers, shoes. Joe Wolf can speak English fairly well, says he was 13 when the treaty was signed. He says that he has been as far as the Flat Head country and all about the country. He is blind now and may prove an excellent informant. He is living with his cousin, Sam Wolf, on one of the Carlton Reserves.