Yellow Quill, Fishing Lake and Nut Lake
Touchwood Hills Agency

The history of this band is not clear. Since it is listed as both Cree and Ojibway it appears in association with the bands
of Short Bear and White Mud. Apparently these bands were associated and Yellow Quill regarded as the head chief.

1875 - p. 41

Apparently these bands were supposed to have joined in treaty #1 though they did not sign at that time. A band spoken of as White Mud seems to have been farming for several years at the mouth of White Mud River. They have separated from the main body and held out for a separate reservation.

1876 - p. XXV

These three bands were called in together at Long Plain about 500 persons. Many of them were supplied with carts. Yellow Quill insisted on a reserve for all, the other two wished separate reserves. All three bands finally signed the treaty, each to receive a separate reserve.

1878 - p. 52

All three are now settled on reserves. Yellow Quill at Swan Lake. However, this band is not dissatisfied and refused to settle down. Short Bear's band has a reserve north of the Assiniboine River and the other band at Lake Manitoba.

1878 - p. 65

Yellow Quill band is said to be selecting a reserve at Nut Lake.

1879 - p. 60

Yellow Quill has not settled at Swan Lake. Most all of his band living by hunting.

1885 - p. 218

Touchwood Hills and Yellow Quill is listed for bands #89 and 90 at Fishing and Nut Lake respectively. At this time they seem to be regarded as one band.

Yellow Quill Band

1881 - (p. 130) A reserve for this band was located at Fishing Lake and the survey made in 1881. At the time Yellow Quill band was uncertain as to the location, but were persuaded to permit the survey. The location is good providing some farming land, plenty of good timber and adjoining lake filled with fish. A map of the reserve is given on page 144.

1880 - (p. 104) These are reported as Plains Cree and total ignorant of farming or of any kind of work except hunting buffalo. For 7 years they have received their annuities at this agency. They were reported as even ignorant of fishing with nets. However, this year these Indians remained in camp at the Lakes, called frequently for relief, and seemed quite bewildered. Should they return to the Plains starvation was sure and their horses likely to be stolen. Accordingly they were willing to consider the selection of reserves. These remarks apply to the whole group of bands listed under treaty
1882 - (p. 201) Yellow Quill band is reported at Nut Lake. 257 persons all on the reserve. However, in the text (p. 204) they are reported as living at Fishing Lake. This band seems to have supported themselves during the winter by hunting and so not willing to give much attention to farming.

1883 - (p. 69) No mention seems to be made of this band except that it contained 360 individuals, whereas in the census table they are listed at 298.

1885 - (p. 219) This band is listed as residing on Duck Lake and Fishing Lake, now under the Touchwood Hills Agency. Population 311.

1886 - (p. 115) A special report for this band indicates they lived in two divisions, one Nut Lake, one at Fishing Lake. They had little farming merely raising few potatoes. In the main they are self-supporting depending upon hunting and trapping, there being the Hudson's Bay Post near the reserve.

1887 - (p. 72) These Indians are hunters and require little supervision.

1888 - (p. 60) No reports.

1889 - (p. 54) No reports.

1890 - (p. 38) While other bands under this agency raise wheat, barley, etc., Yellow Quill had but 10 acres under cultivation. Apparently the agent rarely visits them.

(p. 206) Number given as 334, of which 44 are absent hunting.

1891 - (p. 52) No report.

1892 - (p. 148) No report.

1893 - (p. 54) The Nut Lake band killed many bear. The farming Indians lost their crops.

1894 - (p. 67) All Indians in this reserve live in tents most of the year.

1895 - (p. 67) Reported as Fishing and Nut Lake bands live principally by hunting and fishing. Sold $6,000 worth of furs during the year. Get practically no assistance from the government. 10 head of cattle were owned. They are credited with having observed the annual Sundance ever since settling on the reserve, but this year the agent forcibly stopped the ceremony, arresting the leaders. The population is given as 363. All pagans excepting 8 Catholics.
1896 - (p. 211)  Two reserves Fishing Lake and Nut Lake were organized as a single band. Fish and game plenty. Reported now this band as Salteaux. They lived most by fishing and hunting producing $12,000 worth of furs, the greatest amount so far. It was impossible to get this band to settle down while game holds out. The only time of the year they come together is when annuities are paid. They refuse to be vaccinated, but are a healthy lot. Live in tents the whole year around. There are neither churches or schools in the district. All are pagans and refuse to send their children to school. No attempt to hold the Sundance nor did any of the Indians leave the reserve to attend at other agencies. Apparently a Sundance was held on another reserve, but whether under this agency is not clear.

1897 - (p. 172)  No separate report. Population given as 103 men, 125 women, 138 children. 50 head of cattle. For the last 50 years, a small party of Indians belonging to the Yellow Quill band lived about 40 miles northwest of Nut Lake. They go by the name of Kinistino and show very different traits of character from the Indians around them. They do not attend medicine or other dances by the Indians given annually in this district. They planted gradually seeds purchased by themselves and now have 24 head of cattle obtained by the produce of furs sold. All this is done without any instructions or guidance from others. No explanation is given as to the separation of this group which by name is Cree. Report fur caps as $11,000. Indians on all these reserves are anxious to retain their scrub ponies holding them in higher regard than cattle. Object to oxen because they are too slow. None of the Indians at the agency take much interest in the church. No attempt at Sundance this year.

(p. 194) Population 351. Indians to be seen only at annuity payment and live entirely by hunting and fishing. Live in tents.

(p. 177)  Listed as Salteaux, but mention of the Kinistino family. Many children die young. Scrofula common. The old time medicine men still gets an occasional patient, but his treatment is chiefly vegetable medicine. Most of the reserves now depending upon cattle and farming for a living, except this band which produces $10,000 worth of furs. Indian ponies on the reserve do not amount to much. Apparently this band still pagan. In general, the agent doubts if these Indians will ever become Christians, but reports the Sundance as given up and the hanging of cloth on trees as offers to the spirits less common. Reports wide differences in families. Marriage still controlled by parents and native marriage regulations concealed from the agent. Apparently all the Indians live in villages or camps.

1900 - (p. 188)  Two reserves and Kinistino family registered as Salteaux. The latter about 150 persons and make very good progress. A new reserve was surveyed for them in
1899. They are well dressed, well behaved, operate as a single family, have more children than others.

(p. XXXII) A general statement advocating the suppression of the Sundance and other Indian ceremonies. Also comment upon the number of pagan Indians still resisting education.

(p. XXXVI) This reserve located northwest of Nut Lake.

1903 - (p. 193) 15 sq. mi. Kinistino reserve listed as Salteaux. This and Yellow Quill reserve more than 100 miles from the agency. A school house built at Fishing Lake expecting to be opened as a day school. Considers Nut Lake as having made no advancement.

1904 - (p. 183) Difficulty in persuading Indians to send children to school, but some have attended. Indians still pagan, but keep their ceremonies very quiet.

1905 - (p. 157) General health good. 121 head of cattle. 151 horses. Main occupation hunting. Fur and game were plentiful. In winter used log houses roofed with poles and mud. Day schools poorly attended. Take no interest in education. In general, not progressive, but game is failing except for the Nut Lake band. Kinistino band no. 76; self-supporting, from hunting, farming, etc. Houses have shingled roofs. No children in school.


1909 - (p. 142) Nut Lake - a few promise to take up farming; cutivate 70 acres. Hunting still profitable. Kinistino - most houses mud roofed. No school.

1911 - (p. 140) Nut Lake band - many young men now work for white farmers. Beginning to raise cattle as an occupation, but hunting still a leading industry.

1912 - (p. 149) Kinistino - many fish caught. Slowly adopting white ways. In general, all the Indians under this agency are actively engaged in hunting and trapping.
1913 - (p. 145) Nut Lake - The Indians who started farming are giving it up and returning to fishing and hunting. Kinistino - depend largely on fishing.

1914 - (p. 58) Indians under this agency are either Salteaux, Plains or Swampy Cree. Also some halfbreeds. Dig snake root and berries. Too far from market to live by farming. Smallpox at Nut Lake. Many Indians drinking.

1916 - (p. 63) The following bands are Plains Cree, Beardy, Oakemassis. Nut Lake and Kinistino chiefly trappers. Also dig snake root.

1918 - (p. 22) Population - Nut Lake - 263; Kinistino - 73; all pagan.