

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: D.G. MANDELBAUM
OBSERVATIONS AT SUNDANCE
ENCAMPMENT
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: NORTH BATTLEFORD
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: NORTH BATTLEFORD
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: CREE
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: JULY 9, 1966
INTERVIEWER: D.G. MANDELBAUM
INTERPRETER:
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We came up to the encampment in the morning to find a good many more tents pitched than there had been the previous day. In the traditional pattern they are being pitched in a circle with the preliminary medicine lodge of the Sundance in the centre. Later in the morning the framework of the Sundance lodge was put up. First the centre pole was brought up -- I did not see

this. Later young men on horses came at intervals dragging long poles on thongs. Five or six men were doing most of the work of setting up the frame. The man in charge of policing the encampment was also in charge of setting up the framework.

We were told that the giver of this Sundance, Favel, had vowed to give four, of which this was the third. During that time he had to conduct himself in an exemplary manner which means that he could not drink or do anything else which was not proper. I did not talk to him on this day, although I saw him going into the medicine lodge in the morning. Singing began shortly thereafter and went on until we left in the afternoon.

John Fine Day, the eldest son of Sam Fine Day and brother of Sydney Fine Day, was with me in the the first part of the morning. He has a job as an ambulance driver. He was living with his grandfather when I was working with Fine Day. He identified a good many of the men on the photographs I had with me, and recalled various incidents of my previous visit. He especially recalled my working with his grandfather in the grove of maples near the old village. As I was talking with him, two other sons of old friends came up. One was Solomon Pooyak, son of Baptiste Pooyak, who interpreted for me. The other was named Frank. Later in the day I had a talk with Mrs. John Fine Day. She told me that she had thirty-two grandchildren. She is originally from the Rocky Boy reserve in Montana. Her mother was Soto and her father was a mixture of halfbreed and Soto. She met Sam Fine Day at some occasion in Regina. Her English is excellent and she began telling me how the life of the young people is not to her liking at all and that it is not as good as the old way of life. She said that she still uses Indian medicines and while some of the young people don't take to them, a great many do. She acts as midwife for all her daughters and just delivered one of her daughter's babies not many days ago.

As we were talking, more and more people began setting up their tents in the camp circle. The women were doing the work, as is traditional in setting up of tipis and tents. A good many of the younger women wore their hair in colors and as before radios were to be heard through the encampment.

A squad car with two RCMPs in it drove up. I talked with them briefly. Then they drove over to the medicine lodge and conducted a fairly lengthy conversation there.

In the evening we had dinner with Mrs. Waters and her son Sydney Waters came after dinner. We also visited River Lodge where Mrs. Waters wanted me to meet a Mrs. Whitten who had worked on the local newspaper and was interested in Indians.