These were called a-yehkweu. It happened very seldom. But one of them was my own cousin. He was a very great doctor. When he talked his voice was like a man's and he looked like a man. But he always stayed among the women and dressed like a woman. He was a great gambler and when he would lose all his clothes he would make others for himself. He was a good worker and would go digging wild turnips with the women.

His father got sick and died. He cried a lot and said, "Although I knew I could save a life I was ashamed to doctor my father." Some time later his little brother got sick. He got someone to make two drums for him. He made his own rattle. Before it dried he put marks on it and then hung it up. He put nothing inside but four nights later it rattled in the wind. He took it down.
His brother was pretty weak and had fainted. He got someone to call the old men together to sing with him. They had a big tipi where there was a lot of wood along the river. Pretty soon you can smell the sweetgrass. You see a big fire, the sound of the rattle, smell the sweetgrass. You see a big fire, the sound of the rattle, and then you can hear his voice sounding awful loud as he is praying. The drums beat at the same time.

I was not inside the tipi but we could hear him get up. He stands on the fire. Then he starts to blow on his sick brother. His blowing makes a loud whistling noise. The young fellow starts to feel better -- pretty good. Then he sings and blows on him again. Then he sucks at the boy where he was sore, "This is what has been hurting you. You will be all right now." When he was finished he said, "I will have another name now. They will call me piecuwiskwew, "Thunder Woman." My brother's name will be piecnowasis, "Thunder Child." He doctored the boy for four nights and saved him.

We called the boy "Thunder Child" from then on but we called him a-yahkwew still for that's what he was. He had another name, oskas-ewis, "Clawed Woman." He wanted to be called piecuwiskwew, because Thunder is a name for a man and iskwew is a woman's name; half and half just like he was.

He never took a wife nor did he bother the women -- or the men. We never teased him or made fun of him. We were afraid to because he was a great doctor.

Once an old man brought him some clothes and a horse to doctor a boy who had fallen from a horse. He took them right away. He called for my father to sing with him. Again he made a big fire. He took his dress off, just wore a breechclout. I heard from the outside the sounds of him standing on the fire. He blows at the side man, calls for a wooden bowl. "He has got matter inside of him but not in his lungs." He sings again, he holds his hands over the sweetgrass and taps one atop the other. Suddenly you can see bear blaws sticking from his palm. He lays the boy on his belly. He sticks the bear claw in the boy's back. Then he sucks out a lot of matter and spits it into the bowl. Then he rubs his hands over the wound and though it was daylight we couldn't see any marks on the boy where he had been stuck. He vomits. "I've got pretty nearly all the matter out. But there is some left. I don't want to take it all for fear that I'll hurt the boy. I'll take the rest out this evening." In the evening he went back and took more out. He said, "After a while more matter will work out again. I want people who know medicine to take it and fix up something for the boy to drink." He saved that sick man.

He saved a lot of people. Sometimes he would doctor them only once and they would be well. He got lots of horses that way. Even those who had only one horse would give it to him so that he would doctor.

But he himself got sick and no doctor could save him. Once he
lost all his clothes gambling and he borrowed some to wear from a woman. She gave him a dress that was dirty, that she had worn while menstruating. My father knew that it would hurt him to wear those clothes but he did it anyway.

He got awful sick and asked someone to put up a kuca-pahtcigau. They finished it before sundown. Then they carried him out on a blanket atop a little hill some distance off. Two young fellows wrapped him in a buffalo hide and tied him all around. Then they lay him with his head toward the kuca-pahtcigau. My father starts to sing a-yehkweu's songs. It is getting night. As soon as the young men tie him they run to the kuca-pahtcigau as fast as they can. But before they get there, you can hear a sound in the booth. It is as if someone fell on a fire in there.

Then you can hear the different pawa-guu talking. An old man asks why a-yahkweu is sick. "You knew, a-yahkweu, that the dirty clothes you put on will hurt you. We try to do everything we can to save you but we can't. What you call pawa-guu, that's us. But we are afraid ourselves of what you have done."

Before he went into the kuca-pahtcigau he couldn't get up. But afterward he could move a little. He suffered for a long time before he died. He was not old when he died.

He had a dress with the picture of a flying porcupine done in quillwork on the back. He had made that himself and never gambled for it. They buried him in this dress.

When he fell in the booth the ropes he was tied with fell out.

Menstruating women do not sleep in an atayohkiu tipi nor with their husbands. Even today men do not sleep with menstruating wives.

I asked Fine Day about sexual confessions but he knew nothing of such a practice. Incidentally, the old boy seemed a little fidgety when I asked him about sex practices. He may be just a bit prudish.

Eagle Bonnets

Very few had them in the old days, only those who had been told to make them in dreams. Eagle feathers were put in the front. Down the back were goose feathers with bells attached.

War Clothes

Only the og., kih., uk. had them -- could afford them. They are carried along on raiding parties and put on just before an encounter. In winter they are put on over the other clothes. They are made according to dream revelations. At the Happy Dance the women put them on so that the people may see the clothes that won the war.
There were larger encampments in the summer than in the winter. Some families would stay by themselves all winter but this was not done on purpose. Only because they could not manage to store up enough food to go back to the big camp all winter.

The authority of a chief is not dependent on the number of men under him but on his war record.

There was much intermarriage between the Cipiwiyiuiiwuk and the Nihicpwat. They are more Assiniboine than Cree.

If a kih. should show himself to be a coward his name would be cut down. But that rarely happened.

Raiding parties were strictly on foot. The spoils of a dead enemy belonged to the one who reached him first.

The reason I said, "Our father is dead and so we must go back and fight," was because there was no one to provide for us.

In the old days before a young man married he saw to it that he had a gun and a horse. He would prepare for a long time ahead so that he would be able to provide for his wife. Nowadays as long as they can roll a cigarette they get married.

There were about eight ogihtcitau among the Cipiwiyiuiiwuk. No matter how many ogihtcitau there were there always was one leader. The ogihtcitau is higher than a kihtco-ckinigiw. The ogihtcitau and kihtco-ckinigiw and ukimau would not hire their horses out. If a man didn't have a horse they would let them use theirs. He would not have to give them a gift.

There is less visiting now than there was in the old days. There is a difference in the visiting. Then a man would leave his wife at home when he went visiting. I think it was because the women had a lot of work to do. The men didn't have so much to do, just provide meat and care for the horses. Then again they didn't watch their wives as they do now.

Women could own horses. A man could use his wife's horse as though it were his own. But if his wife forbade him to take it, he wouldn't. I didn't see that happen very many times -- only if they were angry at each other.

The women never took care of the horses. That is man's work. The men cut out the saddle and harness and the women sew them up. But the harness really belongs to the man.

Standards of beauty varied with different people and so I can't tell you what kind of women the Indians thought most beautiful.

In my father's time they used to hunt along here but they would go east to Ft. La Corne. My father's relatives used to like to go to the east to hunt with the Katepweucipiwiyiuiiwuk and the Soto for these people were good hunters. They used to surround
the buffalo. The Cipiwiyiuiwuk never did that.

The name of the bowl game is pakece-wia-gau -- Shaking Game.

We would never breed horses in the old days. There were many stallions and they used to fight a lot in the spring. Sometimes we would castrate horses. Men would generally do it but I know of one woman who did. Horse is laid on side. Scrotum punched and piece cut out of scrotum. Testes squeezed through the hole and cords tied with sinew. Testes cut off and thrown away. Sinew left tied on and horse is run up and down fast. An American showed us a better way -- by clamping the cords with a forked stick instead of tying them.

The Nutimiwiyiuiwuk are now at Bear Hills, near Edmonton. (Hobbema?) There are many of them at Saddle Lake. At Turtleford there are Cipiwiyiuiwuk; at Red Pheasant, House people; at Jackfish, mostly Soto, a few Cipiwiyiuiwuk.

The Muskwatcawiuiwuk -- Bear Hills people -- and the Nutimiwiyiuiwuk are the same thing.

The way I heard about the first traders was this. Long ago the Indians had no guns, no kettles. Then the white men came and gave them these things. They had no use for furs, just kept the best to wear. The white men told the Indians to get furs to trade. When he showed them how to fire a gun they fell over backward and were afraid of it.

If a man loses all his things his relatives will soon furnish him with everything he needs again. If they can't then the kihtco-ckinigiu does. The man doesn't have to ask.

There were a great many lazy fellows long ago. There were some who never even killed one buffalo. No one would ever get after them and make them get to work. Their relatives would take care of them. And other Indians would pity them and give them provisions. That's why there were so many lazy fellows.

Some of them would have an old horse and saddle. When the young men went out to hunt they would saddle up and follow the hunters. Some young man would say, "Here, skin that one and take it."

There was one man from this reserve, pa-nina, who died not long ago. He lived up here in the sand hills and was awful lazy. One night he was telling a story about buffalo. One of his little granddaughters asked him, "Did you ever kill a buffalo, grandfather?" He said, "No, but I handled a lot of rich fat buffalo meat." The old man's wife said, "Yes, you did. You handled your testes every night. That was all the fat meat you handled."

No matter how lazy a man was, he and his family were never allowed to starve. If game was scarce and there was not enough
to go around, a lazy man would watch when a hunter came in with a kill and he would go and visit in the hunter's tipi. Even if there was not enough to fill up the hunter's hungry children, the visitor would not be turned away but would get his share.

Among the Cree a visitor is never turned away without a meal. Even today the lazy fellows do the same thing.

I have seen where there was a large camp and game was scarce. Hunters would bring in two or three deer and they would be cut into little pieces and distributed to every family.

Only once did I see people shifting for themselves alone. There was a great big camp west of here at a place called Pahpasa-skwea-u, "Clumps of Trees." Game was very scarce and there was hardly anything to eat. A hunter would bring in a deer and it wouldn't last a minute. People would go off to hunt in different directions but no one had any luck. Towards spring they dug up last year's buffalo heads and would boil them for the grease. They hunted for badger and gopher by pouring water down the holes and drowning them out -- they were too weak to run them down.

I know of one man who killed a badger and sneaked off to cook and eat it for himself. Only then did families kill their dogs and horses for food and not share them. I myself was lucky and I went off and killed a couple of buffalo. This was a year before Sitting Bull fought with the Americans.

There was an opwisimu and his little boy who struck off to the south to join some of their relatives. On the way the man starved to death. This was in the winter. The next spring we went to the south to hunt and our men saw a little boy kneeling in the hollow of a boulder.

It was the little boy. He had scraped for roots and lived. All winter he had slept with his dead father. When we got him he stank. We washed him, gave him a little food. We called him kawihpe-mat, "Sleeps With Him," because he had slept with his dead father. The man who found him, wapimihkwau, raised him. Two years later the boy's relatives heard of it and came and offered wapimihkwau two horses for the boy. He said, "I don't want your horses. I have no children. When the boy grows up, if he wants to go to you, you can have him." When the boy got to be a young man he would go and visit his relatives sometimes but would always come back to wapimihkwau.

Years later when they got treaty at Indian Head, I went to visit there. In the tipi I saw a young man speaking Soto. I didn't know who it was. When the woman asked the young man to come out because she wanted to make his bed, I asked who it was. "That's kawihpe-mat." I hadn't recognized him.

During these hard times, two men went crazy from hunger. People never ate each other. That happens way up north. They eat their own lips as far as they can bite. I went up to
Meadow Lake a year ago and they told me stories of wihtigowuk but I didn't like it. "Tell me stories about hunting."

The reason the enemy was scalped outside the tipi was so that those in the tipi wouldn't save him. It had to be done in a great hurry.

The Wake Feast is called naya-htcigau kawitahkopitamihk. No meaning to it. (?)

Pillows were made in oblong shape, of rawhide filled with duck feathers. Aspiskwesimun -- Head Rest.

There were two dances given for returned warriors. E-wihkwihkwe-cimuuk, Round Dance. This was last given at the time of the rebellion. The men who did the brave deeds need not be present.

At the Happy Dance, however, the warriors were always present. There are two names for this dance, kamatciucimiwin and e-kumatciwicimo-k.

Yes, a man would often give presents to his wife. Sometimes he would give her his horse. She might buy a pretty dress with that horse. Lots and lots of times I gave my old lady presents that way. I did it just to make her glad and so that she will look pretty when she goes to a dance. I would give her a horse just so that she could own one herself. Women would often give presents to their husbands.

There is a taboo on naming the names of the dead. If they (the dead) are referred to, the appropriate relationship terms are used. But a famous ukimau or kihtco-ckiniu may be named after death.

It was not polite to ask a man what his name is.

The way the men beat their wives was to grab their hair and blacken their eyes with the fist.

When one man expressed admiration for something another man had, very often he would get it. Twice I myself gave away horses that way. But those who had admired the horse and to whom I gave it said, "I don't want it," and they gave it back to me. Even now this happens. I have seen many young fellows give away their silk neckerchiefs in this way. It is usual for the man who receives the gift to give one in return but this is not imperative.

I have seen my brothers give their wives away for good. The only reason for this was because they thought that another fellow is sparking with her. In those cases no gifts were given in return for the women.

I heard tell once of how one man killed another's wife accidentally. He thought about it and was very sorry. He gave
his wife to the other fellow.

When two men quarrelled, the kihtco-ckinigiwin would break in and put an end to their fight. But the kihtco-ckinigiwin would never give these men anything.

Once I saw two Soto fight. They had been drinking and were gambling. One accused the other of cheating and threw the bullets (with which they had been playing) in his face. That one drew his knife and stabbed the other. The wounded man drew his knife and stabbed his assailant. Both died. Only once did I see Cree quarrel violently. A kihtco-ckinigiwin and another man, who probably was jealous of him, were drunk. They quarrelled and the kihtco-ckinigiwin went into his tipi. The other fellow started firing into the tipi. The kihtco-ckinigiwin reached for his gun and started to go out. His mother said to him, "Don't go out, my son, you will get a bad name." He answered, "Never mind, mother, he has killed me already." He had been hit. He went out and the two walked toward each other, firing as they went. Both fell dead.

We used to play the hand game mostly. We would generally gamble for ammunition.

Long ago wild horses were captured and broken. But we would have a lot of trouble with them and in the end they usually would die. Then also they were hard to get because they were very shy.

Two women who were wives of the same man or who had been exchanged, one for the other, by their husbands, called each other n-ta-yim. Two men who had exchanged wives called each other n-goca-k.

A dance we had long ago was kickwepehtawin, "Playing Drunk" (Tea Dance). We would dance inside a tipi. Tea would be boiled in a kettle and drunk. The tea would be called whiskey. Everybody liked it. It was given just for fun. They would stand in one place and dance. Everybody, women too, joined in the singing. There were special songs for that dance. Drums were used. It was said that they put tobacco in the tea but I never saw it done.

Sometimes tea, tobacco, berries and chokecherries would be boiled together to make a drink called tcictemauwapwi, "Tobacco Water." It didn't taste very good.
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