I began this day by inquiring again into property concepts of fish basket. Again I got no hint of private ownership or appropriation. It strikes me that this was essentially an economy of abundance, wherein a few workers could supply the needs of all.
"No matter who makes the basket, all encamped around get an equal share. Only when some fellows stay up all night at the basket they pick out the best (i.e. unusual) fish for themselves. The first night after the basket is built, three or four fellows are chosen or appointed (probably tacit consent). In the morning they distribute the catch equally among all. This first catch must be eaten all up. After that anybody is free to go and use the basket.

The men who are picked to stay up all night at the basket are generally those who are not stingy so that they don't take too much for themselves. These men haul the fish from the basket to the shore and also distribute it.

Sometimes we would build a basket in no time with a lot of men to divide this work, some cutting logs, some hauling them, some setting them in the river. At other times there would be only five or ten men and it would take time to build.

Yes, even the lazy men would get an equal share of the catch. And there were a lot of them who were lazy. Those lazy ones, their brother-in-law would grab them by the arm and say, "Come go and help build the basket." Brothers-in-law always made fun of each other and could do this. (Note: This is of the greatest importance as the one mechanism for economic endeavor.) There was no first fish rite.

In the old days and to this day, the first berries that are picked are not eaten. They cook them and make a ceremony. Askiwin was told that the first berries they pick they must boil. The juice then represents k:ce manito's blood and is a feast for all the atayohkanuk.

Yes, anybody can go out to pick the first berries -- man, woman or child. But they don't eat them. They bring them home and it's the women that always cooks the berries. In the old days a girl menstruating for the first time was not allowed to pick or eat the first berries lest all the others shrivel up on the branches. But such a girl can go along on a berrying trip and after the berries are cooked she can eat them.

No, they didn't go out in a bunch to pick the first berries. Each woman might go out alone and she would make a ceremony for her own family and invite a few others also so that there would be a group. After the berries are cooked they invite an old man to hold the bowl up in four directions. He thanks k:c: that they see the berries another year. After that he asks that anybody be allowed to go and pick the berries now -- even menstruating women.

The bowl is first held up at eye level for kicam. to see what he had put there on earth for the use of his people and to thank k. that he has spared the people once more to eat berries.

Then the bowl is lifted to p:c:m, the sun, and held toward the
sun wherever it is at the time. They ask the sun to do his work faithfully to ripen the berries for it was put there to do that work.

Next the bowl is held to Thunder, picu, and they ask him to send rain down so everything may grow which is useful to the people. The four thunders are pointed to, the four directions and up.

Next the bowl is lowered toward the earth and they ask the earth that she may bring forth her fruits and that the children may grow to be old for earth was put there to grow people.

Sometimes the berries were in such a big bowl that they couldn't hold it up, so they dipped sweetgrass in the bowl and held it up instead.

Before the berries are (?), as a rule the pipe goes first. This is pointed up first to kicem., then to chief of Thunders, then to four direction Thunders. Then oskapeus passes the berries around. Those that have cups use them or else they use shells for spoons.

Before the pipe is lit, they point it upward and say, "Our father of all look at this stem, this is what you taught us to do so that we may smoke with your children, the Thunders, the Sun, and all the atay." Then they light it and point in the five ways.

Since I have a mind I have never thought of any evil thing. But I am going to tell you something now because I don't know how long I have got to live. You know yourself nvuskwa at Little Pine. He will get mad -- very mad -- if you ask him over and over again. (This above was prompted by my repeated fire of questions, under which the old boy grew restive. Pooyak told me that when a man asks Fine Day a question when he tells a story, the old man cracks out, "Open your ears" and goes on.)

There is no special name for this ceremony. I am getting old now and when I see one lone berry I pick it and thank God that he has spared me and I eat it for my good health. Nobody taught me that but I remember all of a sudden to thank God for it.

Oh yes, occasionally when a man killed the first ducks he would make a feast for the departed spirits. It would take five or six ducks to make a feast. There has got to be a pipe. They fill the pipe. Before they light it they ask kicem. to see the stem. Then they put some duck meat on a plate. Then light the pipe and point it south for ahtcak departed spirit. Then point it straight upward, then point it twice to the north and then down to the ground.

Straight up is for es:n:, "Stone"; to north for tcakhapewata-yohkan, "Touching atay" and his sister notogwewatayohkan, "Old Woman atay". When they point south they name the one that
keeps the departed spirits, kiceyucayin, "Old Man". When they point to the ground it is for tcepaiyucini, "Ghost Stone".

First the pipe is pointed. Then the plate is held up in the same directions.

Then the osh. serve around the food. The people don't eat yet. Then the old man asks that everything be well and that there be no sickness around. Then he says, "You can eat." He doesn't call on the names of the departed at all. There is no special name for this -- just a feast.

When a person died they make a feast which is provisions for him. When all is over kiceyucayin looks after the spirit now and the sun as well.

There is a ceremony called "Night Singing Tipi", nanapawnik-amowikamik, that is inviting all the spirits to come and have a feast with human beings. We will have one on the sixth of July.

I had a dream of that tipi. Only they don't circle round. I won't sing those songs now because I am afraid of the spirits. Nowadays this dance is called wasagame cimuwin.

In the (?) feast, after the pipe is lit they name the departed and say, "Here is a smoke for you."

The work of tcahkapatowatoyhan is to keep the spirit in the bundle (?). He is now looking after the spirit of that woman who died. When a lock of hair is taken from the corpse and put in the nayah tcigan (bundle), tcah. tells the ahtcak to be in that bundle and whenever there is a feast you will be there to eat.

That old lady who died is still around. She will be until after the feast. Then "Old Woman at." will tell her not to look back but to go straight on to where she is wanted. When the feast is over, noto. will tell tc:p. to take the spirit to where it should go. There are oskapeus there to open the door for the spirit to enter.

When the stem is pointed up it may be to the stone above, not in heaven. His job is to tell the departed spirit not to look back, not to try and coax his friends to go with him. That is what was shown to me. If a spirit should look back, one of his relatives is bound to die.

They go to oskaskos:.wask: "Green Grass World". Everything is always green there. It is never night, always day. There is only enjoyment there. Men, women, and children all go to the same place. It is a big city (settlement). Long ago people that were dead came alive and told of this place.

There is a man in the east whose father died and then came alive again. He was dead for two days and came to life just
before they were going to bury him on the third day. He was stiff for a long time and couldn't move at all. The only way they could tell that he was alive was by his eyes moving. He was a Soto called Kaneukas. Kwetew "Walks on his toe nails". His son told me this story.

The old man was a lay reader in the church before he died. Before that he had been one of the Lead men in the mide. But when he became a Christian he threw all his medicines away. But when he came to life again he went back to the old Indian ways. If it is a lie he who told it to me, n:htawk:wasiu "Born from Stone", is responsible for it. He is dead now.

The old man was sick for a long time. He was nothing but skin and bones. He died at last. When he died he didn't know where to go and wandered around. At last he found a road, a big wide road. He followed it running. He saw a hill quite a distance off. When he got to the top of it he saw the road fork. There was a man standing alongside the right fork. But he followed the left fork. The man stopped him, saying, "That is not the road you wanted. Come and follow me. The other road is not ours. This is the road that belongs to us."

So he came back to the fork. He didn't cross over but followed the road back to the fork and then went up the other one. They both went along the right fork. When they had gone a little way he could hear a drum beating. He had died in winter but at the place where he first heard the drums there was sweetgrass growing. They got to the door of a big sapoh. They went in. There were a lot of people sitting around. All had bowls made of wood (as they used to have in the old days - B.P.). Some had plates not made of iron; he didn't know what they were made of. They got to the middle. The one who met him was oskapeus in the sapoh.

On the north side -- a sap. is generally built north and south -- there was a nice looking, clean one sitting a little to one side. When he saw this well dressed one he thought, "This is kiceayciyin." Kiceay knew what he was thinking and in turn thought, "I am." The man knew what kiceay was thinking also.

He sat down to one side all alone. The osk. served around something yellow, about the size of an egg, a little piece to each person. The osk. took it from where the nice one was sitting. He served it around but did not use it all and put some back. Then the osk. took a little pail from the same place and served it around. But the little pail was still full. He thought, "They don't give any to one that just arrives." For they never gave him anything. Several other pails were served around but these were emptied. It seemed to him that the yellow food and whatever was in the little pail must be very sweet.

He thought of asking for some. The handsome one told him, "We can't feed you. You have been invited just to be told something." He pointed south. "Look this way". He saw a great white thing. "That is kicem.'s home. The one that lives there
told me to invite you and tell you that you didn't do anything right. As for myself, I never go to that place to visit him. I never see him. He speaks from there and I hear him. I speak from here and he hears me. You see this that is going on. That is what was given to us. The place you came from was given to you and you have seen this because it was given to you. Ever since I can remember he is there and this is my work. And when you saw these pails, that is what you make a feast with down below where you come from. This yellow stuff and that in the little pail -- you would like to eat it but you can't now. You will when you stay here. The bowl and the pail are small but they are rich and are never empty because it is fed by this spirit.

While you were down below you followed that which was not given to you. This is the right place for you, not the other. You didn't do the right thing to drop off the old ways. You were invited to come here to tell you this. Go back and take all the roots up again and start your medicines. Then I will not hide from you anything that I know. But I will first see if you do right or not. I will ask Him who lives in the white house if you do right or not. If you do right I will give you what I know.

When you go back I want you to do the things that you see done here. Have a small pail in front of you, lift it, and the food below will go up here. When you get back home take up all the roots that you knew for medicine. Let your hair grow. Something was given to you to follow down below and I want you to follow it for your own good."

At last he saw some people leaving with their plates full. They had been dancing before he got there. Some that had gone out earlier came back. "I looked around. Although the place was covered I could see smoke to the west. I thought that they were camped on a dusty place. The handsome man thought, 'Yes.' I knew his thought although he did not speak."

He went on, "Whatever you do when you get back, do what I tell you to do. I was told to invite you and to show and tell you all these things."

The people that were there were all well dressed. Those that had gone out to put their grub away came back. Another bunch of people came in also. They had no clothes on and were painted red all over their face and body. I thought, "These must be the ones that were killed in some way down below. The handsome one thinks, 'Yes.' I know his thoughts. I thought that they must come from the west where I saw that smoke. 'Yes,' he thinks, and I know it."

Then k:ceay. told tcip. to take me back. I didn't want to come back because I liked the place. But tc. told me 'Now go.' He just moved his hand in back of me and I couldn't help it -- I came running back. I can feel something behind. I turned and it was tc.
I saw a great big fire ahead. I stopped. Something pushed me and I felt arms throwing me on that fire. When he threw me I guess that is when I breathed. I opened my eyes but I didn't see anything. To. didn't tell me that the fire was my body but I think it was.

My son was sitting close to my body. His friend, a young man, was also there and looked at me every once in a while. He saw me breathing and pulled the handkerchief off my face. I saw my boy but I couldn't speak. The men who had gone to dig my grave had just come in. A team was waiting outside. The coffin was ready but I wasn't put in it yet. When my son pulled the blanket away from me I was well dressed. He took my arm and tried to straighten it. There was a loud crack but I didn't feel anything. They rubbed my arms. My breath was getting stronger. The hardest part was to move my jaws. It took quite a while before I could do so. They rubbed my forehead. The skin seemed to stick to my bones and they couldn't move it. But my eyesight was all right. My tongue was stiffened. They opened my mouth and squeezed it. At last I was able to move my tongue. They put some soap in my mouth to grease my throat.

I tried to speak but I could not move my tonsils (throat?). My son held his ear close to my mouth. He understood what I tried to say. I told him, 'I'll tell you what I have seen later.'

After I could speak I told all about what I had seen. It was toward spring and we had lots of grub. Everybody cooked something for a feast. I had a little pail and some grease in a bowl beside it. I thought that yellow stuff was grease. I put saskatoon berries in the pail. All those at the feast took a little and there was enough to go around. All other pails served around were emptied just as I had seen above. Then I took the drum and sang the songs I had heard. All stood up and danced in their places."

After that you could see the old man going around the hill tops looking for the medicines he knew. He told the crowd, "All the men must let their hair grow." There were halfbreeds in the reserve who listened and also let their hair grow. They had mustache, beard, and long hair. It was funny to see them.

Twelve years ago I (Fine Day) went down east to that reserve. It is Poorman's reserve at Touchwood Hills. The son of the old man came and told me the story saying, "I know you keep the old ways -- that is why I tell it to you." He said that his father had been dead (for good) twelve years then.

His brother-in-law was there and, teasing him, he said, "You may as well finish your story. You are glad your father died so that you can be chief and sell the reserve."

The wife of Esk:w:you was Otawatak, "Hauler". She was made of a piece of flesh from the side of the man. (Just like Adam and Eve - B.P.)

No, I don't know of different kinds of Soto, only otcipweuh and
When I went to visit the neh:opwat at Piapot there are a lot of words I don't understand and I was brought up there. The chief of the nehiopwat was pai.pwat, "Stony With a Hole". These people were more Cree than they were Stony. Many Cree women married Stonies.

Pretty women would marry ugly men if the men were good workers and good natured.

If a Cree girl had a number of young men of different tribes after her, the parents would generally give her to one of their own tribe. Many a time I remember a pretty girl would have many young men after her -- all good workers. The first Cree that tried to talk to the girl will be chosen. For myself -- there was a big camp where there was a good looking Soto girl with lots of men after her. I used to stand behind for I am not a good looking man. She didn't like any of them. I went closer to see her. Her parents saw me and gave her to me.

The women always looked after the children until they were ready to get married.

When a young man took a little boy to show him how to shoot and everything, they would go around together everywhere. They call them owitcewa.gena (Going together). These two need not be related at all. Once I went out, when I was a youngster, with a young man to get buffalo. It was cold and I was pretty nearly frozen. He wrapped me in buffalo robes and put me on a dog travois. When we got to his place he said, "You better go in my partner and have something to eat before you go home." He told the story to my parents and they laughed at me. I was so cold that I couldn't even walk. His name was nio.co:. He was a Soto. He always talked Cree to me. He liked me because I was a good runner and could keep up with him. Sometimes I would go out with other men, but not often.

As a rule, the Soto are the best hunters. He taught me how to shoot buffalo, where to hit them with a bow and arrow. He didn't teach me very much about riding a horse. I taught myself later.

All the Soto and Cree were good riders. Just so long as they could tie a saganapi in a horse's mouth, they could ride the wildest ones bareback. Girls would have partners in the same way. Little boys would call each other partner also. Sometimes they would go together when small. They look for each other the first thing in the morning and play together. When they grow up and one marries, the other calls his partner's wife sister-in-law and she calls him brother-in-law. If this one marries too, the wives call each other nis:m and nimis, elder and younger sister. Many times I knew that to happen.

My first wife had a chum she called sister. My wife's mother called her daughter. I called her sister-in-law. The women
were not blood relatives. Her children call me nohtcawis. She called my mother-in-law. No, men friends would not call each other brother.

First Thunder Feast

After the saskatoon berries are dry and there are enough to put in a bag, a man grabs a handful and holding them up to Thunder says, "Next year when I hear you first I will have a drink of saskatoon juice with you. I don't care if I have only this many (one handful), it will be the same."

During the winter he buys a print now and then and promises the print to Thunder as well as the berries. Right after they hear the thunder in the spring they start to make a sweat bath. In case they hear the thunder at night they start the next day. Sometimes when there is a lot of work to finish they may put it off, but not more than two days.

I don't need to tell you that there must be a pipe. In everything there must be a pipe.

First of all the sweat lodge is built. This is made by planting willow sticks 1 " thick into six inch holes in ground at outward angle. The holes are 10" apart. A large sweat lodge would have 100 sticks. The sticks are brought over at the top and tied together. There are no horizontal widths for support. Lodge may be covered with tipi cover, robes, or blankets.

In the centre of the lodge an excavation is made 2" x 1", six inches deep. A fire is built outside in which the stones are heated. Any kind of stone may be used but limestone, for that kind explodes. A sweetgrass smudge is made near the fire.

The old man who is going to make the sweat lodge goes in (hereafter referred to as HM -- head man). He has two short peeled sticks with which to handle the hot stones. The order of events is as follows:

Oskapeus brings in five hot stones and HM points to where he shall put them (see diagram). Then other hot stones are piled around.

HM builds sweetgrass smudge. Osk. passes filled pipe over sweetgrass smoke and hands it in to HM. Also hands in prints which are not passed over sweetgrass.

HM passes prints over sweetgrass smoke. Osk. brings in pan of berries. HM points pipe to kicemanito, "Look at this stem." HM light pipe -- puffs at it. HM points pipe to five thunders, then lays pipe down. Men begin to come in. HM takes prints and offers them up to five Thunders.

Then berries offered same as pipe.

Pipe handed to man on left or to man to the right of the door
(if pipe is still burning we are thankful).

Pipe is smoked out.

Pipe wrapped in prints and passed out clockwise.

Berries passed out clockwise. (Berries also first held up to kicim., "See these berries. That is what we promised to your children").

Osk. places pipe and prints on top of sweat lodge.

Pan of water with grass brush passed in.

Door closed.

HM takes brush, dips it in water, says, "Here is the sweat bath that we promised to you Thunder. I am going to give you a splash."

Each of the five Thunders gets a splash (sometimes two or even four splashes each). HM gives one of his two sticks to man on his left to beat time with and all begin to sing.

After one song splash for each Thunder again, "I am giving you another splash Thunder after I sing."

Four songs in all.

(It gets very hot. Men pat themselves).

Sometimes put heads to ground to cool. Then after water is emptied HM prays to be spared another year to hear the thunder next year. Also asks for long life, etc.

HM asks all to do the same thing. They all pray -- do not listen to each other but finish about the same time.

All cry. When they finish crying the door is opened and all come out. They lie on the ground cooling off. (They do not plunge into water or pour water over themselves). They are naked and some put grass about their privates, others just loll about so that one can see all their testes.

People come around to look and to eat the berries. When the men cool off a bit, the four pans of berries are passed around and eaten by all.

This is the end of the thing.

The man who promised the sweat lodge makes it. In the old days they were big, now they are small. Four songs are sung inside. The sweat lodge cannot be used twice. One old man used to make one every year but he gave it up to make the Sundance.

I had a sister who made it. But when the women make it they must have an old woman to be headman. Yes, there would
generally be some woman making it every year but it would not be the same woman making it year after year. If a woman promised to make it and couldn't, she would get her husband to make it for her. If she could not get an old woman she would get an old man to talk for them. But he would go out when the women came in. For the women went in stark naked too.

The covers were tipi covers or buffalo robes. They could be seen around every camp in the old days because the old men liked it.

A stone hammer for breaking bones is called takwah:gan ahagun, "Pounder". I was told that the groove used to be chipped out with another stone. I never saw anyone do this but in my day we would take broken H.B. files and tie them in a stick and work other stones with that. This was often made of the kind of stone called wi.noapisk -- Fat Stone. Bones were pounded against a flat stone. Chokecherries were also pounded with it. A willow was twisted and bent around the groove. It was fastened with green saganapi. When the hide dried it was very tight. The stone itself was never encased in hide.

Another kind of stone was used for pounding meat when it is cooked. It was 1" x 10" and had a long handle held by both hands. Used for pounding turnips also. Called :wah:ganapisk, "Pounding Stone". They took these along whenever they moved camp.

(See original for diagram)