

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: LUCIA MONTGRAND  
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SASKATCHEWAN  
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SASKATCHEWAN  
TRIBE/NATION: CHIPEWYAN  
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INTERVIEWER: RAY MARNOCH/VIOLET HERMAN  
INTERPRETER:  
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- This document is a summary of the original interview in Chipewyan. The summarized sections are too short to be of value to researchers, and it will be necessary for them to refer to the original.

EARLY LIFE:

Born and raised in Dillon. Her father had a potato field, trapped beaver, hunted caribou and moose. There was a lot of meat then so she didn't eat fish. Everyone went to Ile-a-la-Crosse for 3 week mission in the summer. In 1915 the priest came to Dillon for mass. Some people from La Loche came to the mass also. One was Jean Janvier who asked her parents for Lucia. She was 2(?) years old. They were married and moved to West La Loche. Lucia has had 11 children.

The H.B.Co. store exploded. One man Bob Wood wanted the fur but Lucia thinks there were so many pelts he couldn't have taken them all. Lucia was sleeping when in the morning she heard popping sounds. There was no snow but sounded like someone walking on snow. It was the gas cans exploding in the store. There was a loud boom so Lucia got out of bed and saw the H.B.Co. store on fire. The two H.B.Co. managers just stood looking at the burning store from their house. People then moved across the lake to La Loche because the H.B.Co. moved there and a school was built by the mission.

Lucia's husband, Jean Janvier, died 1933. She was a widow for 11 years then married a man from La Loche so moved from West La Loche across the lake. There were only 7 houses at the site of La Loche then. Although people fish these days there is no fish like there once was. A long time ago there were forest fires like there are today. It is said that the smoke went into the water and that is how fish came into being.

#### WOMEN'S WORK:

Lucia never worked outside but when her husband died, she planted a garden. Her father-in-law grew barley. Mic and crows ate it. Lucia harvested it by cutting it with a scythe, bundling it, let it dry, then she hit it with a stick made for that purpose and it came apart. A big chest was filled with barley for winter. In fall Lucia picked berries and canned for the winter. She didn't eat food from the store at all. Her father bought her a sewing machine so she seldom sewed by hand. Made parkas and shoes from moose hide she tanned.

#### MAKING A TIPI:

Lucia never made a tipi but saw her mother make many. She tied long poles together at the top then laid the material (canvas or moose hide) on the poles on the ground. Cut both sides out. Two pieces for the door with stick in the middle then sewed all around. At the top where it opens, two pieces that look like mittens were made to hold the poles. A rack was built inside for drying meat above a central fireplace. Tipis were made in many different sizes.

Pilgrimage to Ste. Anne, Alberta. Lucia's mother had a broken leg so they carried her on canvas and wood stretcher all the way to Cold Lake then by horse to Ste. Anne. On the return trip she put her in horse-drawn wagon. Lucia has been to Ste. Anne 21 times.

Before there was a hospital and a woman was ready to have a baby, another woman helped. After it was born, the baby was put in a moss bag 'thatheth'. There was no medicine, the medicine was up in heaven. To get married, the man would ask the girl's parents for the woman he wanted, if they agreed the two went to the priest and were married.

Lucia speaks four languages -- Chipewyan, Cree, French, and English. She can read both Chip. And Cree syllabics and a little of English. Her mother had a breakdown so Lucia sent to French residential school at Ile-a-la-Crosse. She learned about Jesus. Wasn't lonely. There were a lot of kids her own age. She worked in the garden and did dishes for chores. Lucia quit soon after starting because nuns were mean. Her sister went to Beauval school for a long time. It burned once killing 19 kids and 1 nun, Sister Lea.

#### SURVEY PARTY:

She was hired on as a cook for Blanchette's survey crew. They left on 27 horses. She had a big chest of dishes and a steel

stove. Lucia nursed her baby on the trail. At the Clearwater it was difficult to get the horses across the river. Blanchette had a map showing where grass could be found for the horses so they camped at those places. Lucia got up and made breakfast then banged pot to call everyone to eat. Dishes washed and packed away. They cut a road as they went and 2 men went ahead to set up the tents. When reaching a big river, Blanchette put together a ready-made boat and made an oar. Soon after came to rapids but turned back because no grass for the horses. At one lake a Cree shot a giant fish and other smaller ones. Lucia cooked them up. Not having fresh food for

a long time, Blanchette really enjoyed it. Lucia and her husband also ate two porcupines. Three horses were lost. Along the main road on the Sask.-Alberta border it was partly corduroy but muskeg had grown over. Although Lucia's horse ran over it she didn't fall. They were gone for over a month. For both her and her husband they were paid \$5/day. With the money they bought 2 horses, a canoe, and garden tools.

#### MAKING BIRCH SYRUP:

In spring they chopped holes in birch trees. They put spouts in so the sap dripped into pails. The next morning they collected syrup. It was boiled in 10 big containers all day. In the evening, it turned yellow. Later water and syrup separated and it got thick. When finished Lucia yielded only a 10 lb. pail of syrup. Some people also put in sugar but not Lucia.

#### WOMEN'S CLOTHES:

Today people wear scarves and jackets but in older times only shawls were worn by women. Lucia made a finge for her shawl from 1 yd. of material at \$3/yd. Skirts were wide and long, had little pleats at the back, and were sewn in tight at the ribs and had balloon sleeves. They used velvet on the sleeves. White cotton was used for aprons with lace edges and wide tie strings. The women wore scarves on their heads and if they had a pearl choker or necklace it was worn with the dress. Lucia's silver and torquoise necklace cost \$100 20 years ago. She wears it to Ste. Anne. People dressed nicely then.

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