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PERSISTENT CEREMONIALISM: The Plains Cree And Saulteaux

KOOZMA J. TARASOFF



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ABSTRACT

The Rain Dance and the Sweat Bath Feast are among the most persistent cultural elements of the Plains Cree and Saulteaux. The medicine men and women of the Broadview area of Saskatchewan bear witness to this. Taped interviews, participant observations, and sketches and photographs in the mid-1960s tell the story of how the social group (and ritual elders in particular) contribute to the identity, stability, and survival of the Native culture.

RESUME

La danse "Rain" et la fête "Sweat Bath" sont des éléments culturels des plus vivaces chez les Cris des plaines et les Saulteaux; en témoignent les guérisseurs, hommes et femmes, de la région Broadview en Saskatchewan. Les entrevues enregistrées sur rubans, les observations des participants, et les croquis et photographies prises vers 1965, racontent de quelle manière le groupe social (surtout les aînés qui connaissent les coutumes) parvient à sauvegarder l'identité, la stabilité et la survivance de la culture autochtone.

Les personnes désireuses de recevoir en français de plus amples renseignements sur cette publication sont priées d'adresser leurs demandes à:

Service canadien d'Ethnologie
Musée national de l'Homme
Musées nationaux du Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A OM8

Cover Illustration: The moon and the thunderbird on the central post of the Rain Dance lodge. Based on a photograph by Koozma J. Tarasoff.

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The author wishes to express his gratitude to informants Felix Panipekeesick, Peter George, Alec Tanner, Mrs. Elizabeth Wasacase and Paul Whiteman who shared their experiences with me and invited me to their ceremonial gatherings. Without their cooperation and goodwill, this work would not have been possible.

To my former employer, the Research and Planning Branch, Saskatchewan Department of Welfare, I am indebted for allowing me to use my research data from the Broadview Rural Development Area Study Report. The 20-month period in the field provided me with the opportunity to acquire a rich source of information on the Indians and non-Indians in the greater Broadview area and at the same time to personally get to know many of the local people. Without this experience, much more time would have been required in establishing rapport and in familiarizing myself with the study area.

Professor David G. Mandelbaum's 1934 study of the *Plains Cree* was an invaluable source of data for that period. It provided many insights into what elements of the old Plains Cree (and to some extent, Saulteaux) culture remained to 1934.

Keith Best, Research Officer, Canada Department of Agriculture, Swift Current, Saskatchewan, enthusiastically shared his knowledge in identifying seven of the eight roots which fieldworker collected with the help of an Indian herbalist. Subsequently, Dr. Bill Baldwin, Dr. Ted Mosquin, and John Bassett, botanists at the National Museums of Canada and the Canadian Plant Research Institute, checked and re-checked the medicinal roots. Their technical knowledge is gratefully received.

Kenneth Peacock, musicologist with the Human History Branch, National Museums of Canada, provided the encouragement and assistance that only friends can. Through him this study was arranged. His *Practical Guide for Folk Music Collectors* proved useful in the field. And it was Kenneth Peacock who arranged with the Museum and Institute botanists a positive identification of the medicinal roots in this collection.

Dr. Carmen Roy of the Human History Branch, National Museums of Canada, saw the need to do a study with the Indians in the Broadview area of Saskatchewan. This is indeed timely, as many of the old Indian customs are quickly dying out.

Finally, I am very grateful to my wife Nadya for transcribing the tapes and for her creative editing, constructive criticisms, typing and encouragement in completing this project under continuing pressure. Her unceasing energy and patience deserve special thanks. Nadya's mother, Mrs. C.A. Konkin, provided assistance in looking after the housework and our two small children during the peak of the workload; her help was timely and gratefully received by all.

Koozma J. Tarasoff

PREFACE

The decision to accept the National Museum contract coincided with my recent socio-economic study of the Indians and non-Indians in the Broadview Rural Development area in southeastern Saskatchewan. Twenty months of residence in the area provided me with the opportunity of getting to know the local people, their problems, their hopes and aspirations. Consequently the invitation to do a study in an area where I already had some familiarity was indeed welcome.

In the following pages I have attempted to portray in words and photographs the persistence of indigenous ceremonialism among the 1,900 Crees and Saulteaux living on four reservations north of Broadview, Saskatchewan. Among the survivals of native culture that I describe were the Rain Dance, the Smoking Tepee, the Sweat Bath Feast, folk medicine, ritual practitioners, Indian songs, beliefs, etc.

Comprehensive tape-recorded interviews, participant observation in the field (including the taking of photographs) combined with a review of earlier anthropological field notes and research results provided the basic source of data for this report. David G. Mandelbaum's 1934 study of the *Plains Cree* provided a very useful comparative ethnography of the situation at that time. I am indebted to him.

For my audio and visual documentation I have used the following equipment and supplies: Asahi Pentax Spotmatic 35 mm single lens relfex camera with 55 mm, 28 mm, and 135 mm lenses, as well as a Honeywell Strobonar 65C electronic flash. Film used was Kodak Panatomic-X and Kodak Tri-X Pan. Most of the prints were processed by me. A 4000 Report L Portable Uher Tape Recorder was used. Approximately 6000 feet of 1 mil Mylar tape was recorded at $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches per second, for interviews and music.

Dedicated to the native elders
of the Broadview Area whose
hospitality, goodwill and
foresight made this
study possible.

CHAPTER ONE: THE LOCATION AND THE PEOPLE

With the exception of the Sweat Bath Feast ceremony near Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, this study is confined primarily to the southeastern part of Saskatchewan. In particular, the focus is on the four Crooked Lake Agency Indian reservations in the Broadview Rural Development Area. The latter area was formed in the early 1960s under the federal-provincial Rural Development Agreement of the Agricultural and Rural Development Act (ARDA).

The four reservations border the picturesque Qu'Appelle River Valley which stretches from the Manitoba border on the east to central Saskatchewan on the west. Likewise, the reserves border Crooked and Round Lakes in the Qu'Appelle Valley. Seven miles south is the town of Broadview, with a population of just over 1,000. The Town of Grenfell (1,300 pop.) is located 15 miles west of Broadview, while the Town of Whitewood (1,000 pop.) is located 15 miles east. Fifty miles to the east is the Manitoba border; 100 miles west is the provincial capital of Regina; 60 miles north is the city of Yorkton; and 80 miles south is the City of Estevan. The Town of Broadview is located on two transcontinental routes. Rail service is provided by the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway and highway travel is via the Trans-Canada Highway (see Diagram 1).

The total reserve area is 169 square miles or 108,328 acres. This may be compared to the balance of the Rural Development Area with 371 square miles or 237,272 acres of land and water. The total resident population of the designated area is approximately 3,730 people. Of this there are some 1,900 people of Indian ancestry. Three of the four reserves (namely, Cowessess, Kahkewistahaw, and Ochapowace) are mainly Plains Cree, while the fourth, Sakimay, is mostly Saulteaux[1] (Plains Ojibway).

The Plains Cree are relatively recent arrivals on the prairies, chiefly in the Park Belt, the transitional area between the forests and the plains. They have occupied this territory only since the beginning of the nineteenth century, for it was formerly inhabited by the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre in the eastern part and by the Blackfoot in the western Section (Mandelbaum 1940: 165). With the coming of the fur trade and the acquisition of the gun, the woodlands Crees from Ontario and Manitoba pushed westward in search of furs. As they pushed further inland, they encountered their great enemies of the Blackfoot confederacy which alternatively retreated and advanced on the western front according to the fortunes of battle. Nevertheless, just before the disappearance of the buffalo, the Crees were successful in extending the tribal lands from the Manitoba border across Saskatchewan into Alberta to the vicinity of Edmonton. The various bands of Plains Cree centered in the river basins of the Qu'Appelle, the lower North Saskatchewan, the lower South Saskatchewan, and the lower Battle rivers (Mandelbaum 1940:165).

The forests of the northern half of Saskatchewan are inhabited by Chipewyans (north of the Churchill River) and by the Woods Cree (south of the Churchill). Traditionally these people were known as the Forest People and were feared by the southern Plains Cree for their magical powers.

On the east were the Plains Ojibway or Saulteaux, as they are commonly called in western Canada. They were even later arrivals on the prairies than

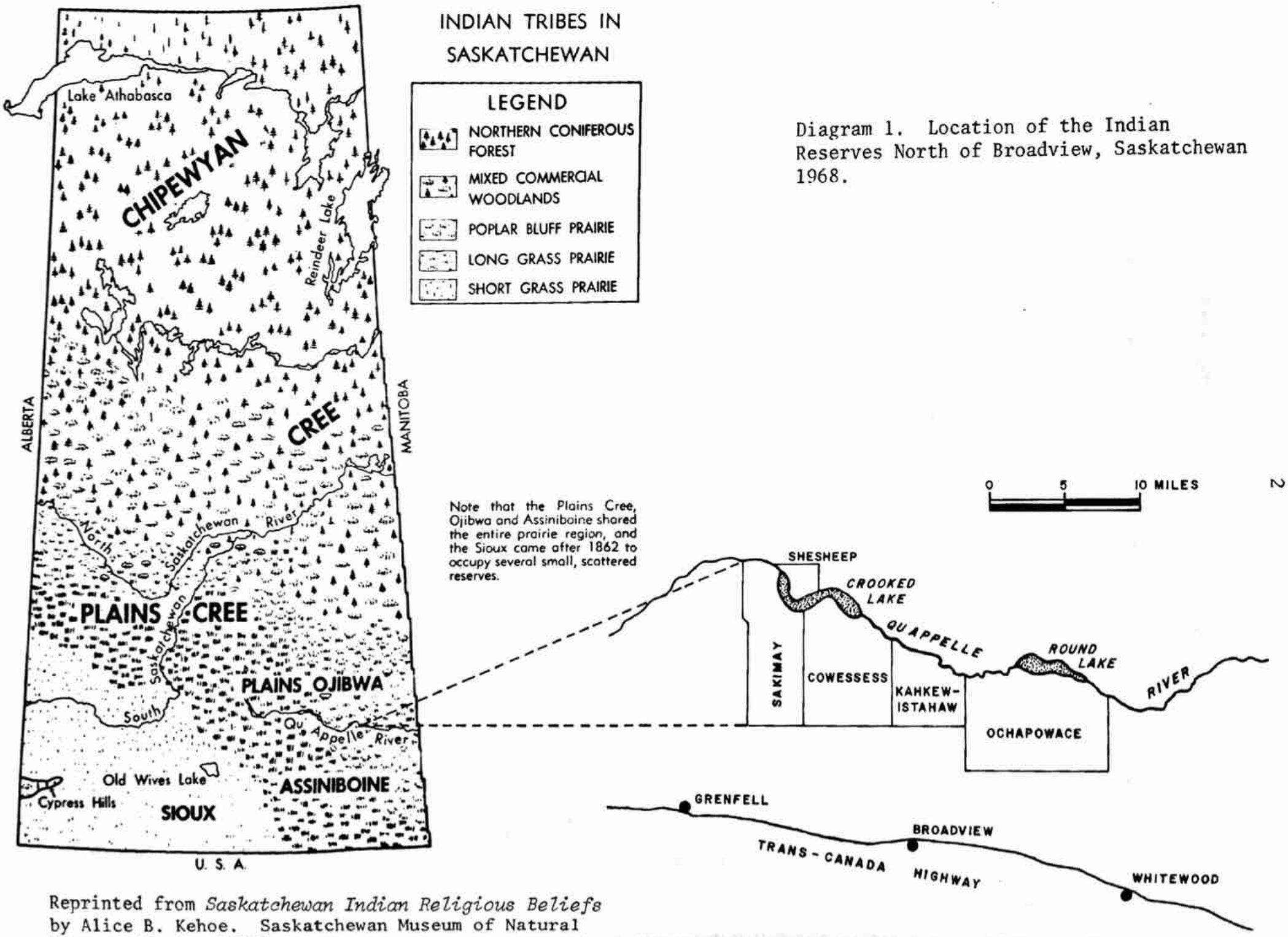


Diagram 1. Location of the Indian Reserves North of Broadview, Saskatchewan 1968.

Reprinted from *Saskatchewan Indian Religious Beliefs* by Alice B. Kehoe. Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History (Regina 1963).

the Crees and were culturally more strongly attached to the woodlands area. "They were friends and allies of the Plains Cree and exchanged their medicine, beadwork, and even their women for the horses of the Plains Cree [Mandelbaum 1940:165]."

To the south were the Assiniboine (Stoney Sioux) who, according to anthropologist Mandelbaum, "were cultural godfathers to the Plains Cree in introducing them to many of the manners of Plains life. They often camped together and were their allies in warfare [1940:165]."

Chipewyans speak an Athabascan language, in common with many tribes of the Northwest Territories; Crees and Saulteaux use Algonkian languages, spoken through central and eastern Canada and also by the Blackfoot; and the Assiniboines and Dakotas speak Sioux.

The settlements in the Crooked and Round Lakes area appear to have been founded some time during the early part of the 1800s. For it was only when the Hudson Bay Company established Fort Pelly and Fort Ellice and other posts to the west, that the Plains Cree completely abandoned their home territory of the Lake Winnipeg region. Most of the Crees, and later the Saulteaux who followed them, stayed close to the trading posts from which they dared not stray too far lest their supplies be cut off. The Saulteaux north of Broadview appear to have emanated from Fort Ellice. Informant Peter George says that Sakimay was founded by Old Man Sakimay who, with his family, walked from Fort Ellice westward to Crooked Lake. Here he camped and settled down to found a new settlement. Peter George also relates that the Plains Crees had already been settled at Round Lake.

While it lasted, the buffalo furnished the prairie Indians with most of their food, clothing, housing, and raw materials for tools. Extinction of the wild buffalo herds in 1883 forced the prairie tribes to, as anthropologist Alice Kehoe put it, "become dependent upon the Canadian Government, and these bands are still seeking to adjust their traditional ways to the complex demands of modern civilization [Kehoe 1963:3]."

Each of the six Indian tribes that makes its home in the province of Saskatchewan has many ceremonial customs that are unique, and others that it shares with groups related to it by language and past history, and yet others are typical of the region it inhabits. Thus, in the Rain Dance, the Plains Cree have special prayers said when they raise the central pole of the sacred lodge. Both the Plains Cree and the Plains Ojibway consider the bundle of brush fastened to the central pole at the top to be the nest of the Thunder-bird, but other tribes do not share this idea. The Rain Dance is an important ceremony for all the tribes of the prairie, but it is apparently unknown to the forest tribes. "The differences and similarities between the tribes reflect their histories, where they lived and with whom they have been allied, and at the same time demonstrate how in more recent times changing situations have affected them [Kehoe 1963:3]." The Broadview area reserves are no exception.

CHAPTER TWO: PRINCIPAL INFORMANTS

1. FELIX PANIPEKEESICK ("RAIN THUNDERBIRD")

Family Life

Born in 1887 on Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan, Felix was the second of a family of seven children. His Saulteaux parents were illiterate and practically knew no English. His mother lived to the age of 86, his father to the age of 104, and one of his grandfathers to 115. Informant went to the Lebret Indian Residential School near Fort Qu'Appelle and received his grade five; he was persuaded to quit at the age of 18 and go to work, first in a blacksmith shop for four years and then into farming, before going back to the reserve. In the course of time, he learned to speak English, Cree, Saulteaux and some Assiniboine.

Informant's wife died of tuberculosis in 1947, and widower Felix was left with two children (including one adopted boy). Four other children had died earlier. Felix did not remarry. Today he continues to live with his daughter and nine grandchildren in a small three-room house on Sakimay. Electricity reached his house in 1964 and informant and his daughter now have several appliances: a television set, electric kettle and iron, sewing machine and a transister radio. Felix has never owned or driven a car, but until the past several years has relied on horse-driven conveyance.

Felix's father once had six head of horses. Later, Felix acquired 14 horses and 23 head of cattle and until 15 years ago he used to farm 80 acres of land. Then, he decided to get his adopted son interested in farming and consequently gave him the horses, cattle and land, and at the same time purchased some farm machinery. The son was not interested and the whole project fell through; the land is now being farmed by non-Indians on a lease basis.

During the 12 year period from 1948 to 1960, Felix served as one of the Councillors in the official band structure of the reservation system. Since then he has not ran for office.

Recollections of the Past

Informant recalls the stories of his parents and grandparents about the hunting and fruit-gathering economy of the Indian people. With the coming of the fur trade and the introduction of the gun, the Crees of Ontario and Manitoba moved westward, eventually driving the Blackfoot Indians across Saskatchewan to the Alberta foothills. When the buffalo were gone in the 1880s, the Indians turned to other animals and some eventually resorted to fishing. Felix recalls growing potatoes and turnips every year until recently when relief was made available at the Indian Affairs Branch office in Broadview. Also he recalls living in a tepee in summer and then moving to a one-room mud shack by the lake in winter.

The story of the Thunderbird was told by informant's grandfather. Although a kind of mythical bird or Spirit, the Thunderbird pervades much of the Rain Dance and Sweat Bath ceremonies. The story (see Appendix A) begins with a 22-year-old boy going hunting for buffalo. When he climbs on a big stone

for a better view, he is grabbed from behind and carried to what might be called "heaven". He is led to a big Tepee. Inside he meets an old man with long braids who resembles a big eagle sitting - a Thunderbird. After staying there for ten days he returns to his people and tells them what the Thunderbird had taught him. From then on the people begin to make the Sweat Bath and the Rain Dance ceremonies; the Thunderbird becomes one of the powerful all-pervading forces which when respected can bring good health, fine weather and good fortune.

Another story recollected by Felix is that of the buffalo symbol, another important element of all the major ceremonial events among the Plains Cree and Saulteaux. Again, an Indian sat down to rest on some high place while looking for buffalo. When he saw a buffalo coming towards him, it suddenly stopped and was transformed into a man with horns and hoofs. The man came toward the hunter. "Well, my grandchild," he said. "I want to tell you something. Now, that your old man - your grandfather - is going to make a Rain Dance, tell him to put the mark of my head on the pole. See, that's all that I want." When the hunter returned, he told his people. From then on, the mark of the buffalo head appeared on the centre pole, and the buffalo skull was placed in the alter position of the Rain Dance, Smoking Tepee, and Sweat Bath Feast.

The need for placing a moon[2] design on the centre pole of the Rain Dance lodge was dreamt by an old man from Kahkewistahaw Reserve. Since then, the moon became kind of a spirit "because it's way up there - what God put up." Henceforth, this design, together with that of the buffalo head and the Thunderbird always appeared on the centre post. To disregard this detail is to invite bad luck, even death.

Participation in Ceremonialism

Since the age of 24 Felix has put on a total of 18 Rain Dances. He has put on one Smoking Tepee, in 1966, the first one in 41 years among the four Indian reserves north of Broadview, Saskatchewan. At the same time he has participated in a number of Sweat Bath Feasts, but has not actually initiated any himself. Added to this is his experience in curing many people, in trying to influence the weather, in searching for lost objects, and in giving Indian guardian spirit names to 44 children.

As a Rain Dance practitioner, Felix has gained the reputation of being a first class master in this art. Eighteen Rain Dances are no little feat, especially when you take into consideration that the initiator has to prepare for this occasion many months in advance: hold three sittings and feasts with those who have made a vow together with their families and friends; prepare the canvas for the Preliminary Tepee; send out bits of tobacco to elders of other reserves as an official invitation to attend; ensure that the ritual paraphernalia (drum, rattle, peace pipes, eagle-bone whistles, buffalo skull) are in good condition; prepare several dozen braids of Sweetgrass for ritual and gift function; mobilize supporting members towards united action in preparing the feast, etc.; and fast during the Dance itself, as well as making sure that the prescribed rituals are carried out in exactly the right manner. When Felix takes the rattle and begins the first song at the Rain Dance, one is immediately aware that he is witnessing a professional.

The Smoking Tepee is a specialized ceremony that Felix's father used to

put on on a regular basis; before he died, he taught his son how to do it. Consequently, in 1966 Felix held one Smoking Tepee at which time he trained one of the local middle-aged men in the mechanics of it. The knowledge was transmitted in the same manner as Felix had received his - namely, by being passed on from one's father or grandfather or other elderly practitioner.

One of the elders who signed the Treaty at Fort Qu'Appelle in 1874 was Kahechiway ("Loud Voice") of Ochapowace Reserve. Before he died, he taught Felix some Rain Dance songs; and when "Loud Voice" died, these songs became Felix's personal property. Grandfather Kwewich also taught Felix Rain Dance songs, as had his father with Smoking Tepee songs. The sum total of all of this inheritance is that Felix knows some 50 Rain Dance songs and another 20 or so other ritual songs. Since no one writes these down, they must be learned by memory and passed on to the next generation in a similar manner.

Some 15 years ago one Indian farmer from the neighboring reserve lost a team of horses. He could not find them for almost two weeks. So he went to Felix for help. In his own words Felix describes how he found the horses:

> ....I went outside and started to pray. As I prayed I started to talk, you know - started to know where these things are. I continued to pray - just like a soul....And somebody was standing there. But I didn't know who it was, and then he [the spirit] shows me where those horses are - and where a lost bag was. So I went back into the house. Next morning this fellow came...with a truck.
>
> "All right, we'll go," I told him. So we went down. Just on the other side of...the Valley, the second house - that's where his horses were, in a barn [Appendix A].

On another occasion Felix found a buckskin coat which a young fellow had lost.

In holding Rain Dances and the Smoking Tepee, Felix always gets close cooperation from Peter George. And when people come to get cured, Felix will often send them to Peter for medicine that he might not have himself. While Felix claims that he has healed many people in his lifetime, he admits that Peter George "is more of a medicine man" than he. At burials, Peter and Felix are both frequently present and one or both of them will publicly pray in Saulteaux. In actuality, Peter and Felix are the two ritual elders who still have the ability to perform the old Indian rituals on the four reserves north of Broadview.

Reflections About the Future

Felix predicts that within 20 years the Rain Dance songs will likely be lost for there will be no one to carry on the tradition. Only the Powwow songs will remain as a kind of recreational singing at a sports day. When asked if the Smoking Tepee ceremony will continue, Felix replied:

> Oh, I don't know. They might forget. Only the old people will remember, just like me and Peter George. When we pass away some day there won't be nothing done like this Smoking Tepee or Rain Dance. There'll be nothing....Unless Oliver

Sparvier, maybe, will carry it on, because I taught him. He knows how to do it. The same with Gordon Kaye - he got that from his father, I guess [Appendix A].

2. PETER GEORGE ("THUNDER-BORN")

Family Life

Peter George's parents were Saulteaux Indians from Manitoba who came to Shesheep (a part of Sakimay Reserve bordering part of the north shore of Crooked Lake) prior to the signing of the Treaty with the Canadian Government in 1874. Peter was born on Shesheep in 1888 as the fifth and youngest member of the family; all of the four brothers and sisters have since passed away. In 1915 his first wife died. Three of his four children died during illness, the fourth died in 1942 in an accident while riding a horse. In 1917, Peter remarried, choosing another Saulteaux wife, this time from Muskowpetung Reserve near Fort Qu'Appelle; the wedding took place in a Protestant Church. His wife had earlier spent three years at the Lebret Indian Residential School. Peter, on the other hand, was illiterate, as were his parents.

Peter George's father used to have a number of cattle in the 1920s. When he died at the age of 96, Peter took over and farmed for a short time and later gave this land to his son. When his son died in 1942, the horses and cattle were given away. Since then Peter has sought any work that he could pick up, including casual farm work and labor at the cottage sites on Crooked Lake. His most independent venture has been the preparation of picket fence posts for sale to the public. "In a good day I can make 200 posts," he says. They sell at 12 cents each.

Today Peter and his wife live in a small two-room (bedroom and kitchen) house near the north shore of Crooked Lake. They have no modern conveniences of any kind, with the exception of the transister radio. While electrical power lines pass their house, electricity has not yet been connected. At one time informant used to own an old car. Today he owns three horses and two wagons; these provide him with a means of conveyance mainly on the reserve and periodically to town. Peter says that he has never had to borrow money in his lifetime. If he needs money, he works and saves - "not like the others", he quickly adds. He showed cupboards stocked with canned food to prove his point and brought out his wallet to reveal some twenty $10 and $20 bills. This is in contrast to many of his neighbors who do not plan for the future.

From 1959 to 1961 Peter George served as chief of Sakimay Reserve. He ran for reelection but was defeated by an opponent who does not believe in the old ceremonialism. When asked if he voted at the last provincial and federal elections, he said, "No, it's against the Treaties."

In the home Peter speaks Saulteaux with his wife. Outside the home, he speaks Saulteaux, Cree and some Assiniboine and German, as well as English. Periodically, when needed, his wife helps him along with the English language. His wife is one of the few on the four reserves who has maintained the practice of making beaded work. During the 1967 Canadian Centennial year, she showed the other elders of Sakimay reserve how to make a traditional Indian tepee.

When fieldworker asked Peter what three wishes he would like to have fulfilled in his lifetime, he replied:

> I wish to know where the band lease money is going and I intend to find out. I wish there was a bridge across the river at the extreme west side of Sakimay. And I would like to see the men stay with their wives and families; likewise, the women should stay home [Community and Family Questionnaire Schedule No. 0507, May 11, 1966, p. 22].

Recollections of the Past

Peter George recalls the story of how Sakimay Reserve was founded. One day in 1853 Old Sakimay and his four sons (Shesheep - "Duck", Bunnie, Penney - "Partridge", and Ennennoosh - "Fatty") left their home at Fort Ellice, Manitoba and walked by foot westward. With them they took a gun, some shots and caps which they purchased at the Hudson Bay Company store in exchange for buffalo hide. They brought very little else except a pail, an axe, and some clothes. On the way they saw buffalo, deer, elk, and duck. As an animal was killed the Old Lady prepared the food for all. When they reached the south shore of Crooked Lake they decided to settle down. Later, when the Treaties were signed, Sakimay was officially founded.

As the buffalo disappeared during the mid-1880s, new sources of food had to be found or else the people starved. And over 100 people did starve, as Peter relates, on Kahkewistahaw Reserve. Not so with Sakimay and his sons; partly by luck and partly by ingenuity they adjusted to the situation by catching fish with a hook that they made from the handle of a pail. They cut a hole in the ice and got all the fish they needed, while their neighbors some 15 miles away starved. The Kahkewistahaw people were reported to be so desperate that they ate their dogs and their buffalo robes.

Peter recalls his parents telling him that the land they now occupy once belonged to the Blackfoot Indians and that these people were displaced with the coming of the Crees and Ojibways (Saulteaux) from Manitoba. The signing of the Treaty in 1874 was recalled in detail. Queen Victoria is said to have told her people to go west and stake out the land on a "lease" basis. Give the Natives so much each year. Her envoys arrived to sign the Treaty. At this point money was introduced and those signing had to ask how these green pieces of paper were to be used. Next a formal chief structure was established and the Indians were asked to pick the land that they wished to settle on. The were told that from this time on they were to quit fighting ("all the Indians need to learn to live in peace"), quit stealing horses, and be at peace with the non-Indians that were about to settle the West. At the same time the Queen's representative is supposed to have brought liquor for the people to make them "feel happy". To this Peter replied:

> ....Surely, I believe today there's too much happiness. Every day people kill each other - especially women. Fight her man. Take knife. Some take a gun. So there's too much happiness today. This is what White man has brought - his whiskey. And it's getting worse every day [Appendix D].

When asked what the early Indians ate, Peter George replied:

> We ate buffalo meat long ago. Also moose meat, elk meat, deer meat, antelope meat, bear, geese, cranes, swans, ducks, chickens, rabbits and partridge. I don't think he ate pelicans. Some of them ate fox. Some ate badger. Skunk meat - oh, boy, I wish I have some today. Skunk meat. You never get sick. "Oh," says White man, "oh he stinks."
>
> About 20 years ago I brought some 20 skunk hides to a fur buyer in a store. The buyer's wife grabbed the bag and said it smelled awful. "Go on outside," she said. So she sent me out. Well, all right, I took it to her husband. "You're not going to buy?" I asked. "Oh, mister," he said, "my wife doesn't like it." Well, I have to quit. No more skunks. Eat muskrat and gophers. Some eat minks. Indians don't eat weasel. We don't eat mice. We eat some squirrels but not all.

The strength and bravery of the early Indians was noted by Peter in several ways. Hunters used to chase buffalo into the coulees where traps awaited them. With only leggings, loin cloth, buffalo hide jacket, moccasins, mittens and leather caps they survived the subzero weather of the prairie winters. When out hunting and their hands got cold, they would bring down a buffalo or deer, cut it open and place their hands inside the warm body of the animal. As for women, they were hardy; only one day after giving birth to a child, they would be outside chopping wood for the household. Peter also noted that while they had no modern medical doctors, their people survived, sometimes with the help of Indian medicine.

Two stories that Peter told in detail related to the early 1800s when the Crees and Saulteaux were still raiding horses from their enemies, the Blackfoot Indians. The first story begins when a raiding party of 20 men stopped to camp. The headman decided it was time to smoke and went for his stone pipe, but found that it was not there. He forgot that he had no pocket and it probably dropped to the ground at the last stop some 60 miles away. An old man in the group started to pray and promised to get the pipe back. Before him was a coyote hide with the head on it. As he prayed, a coyote howled and simultaneously there was a "swish" through the air. To his surprise, the headman put his hand under the coyote skin and found the pipe that he had lost many miles away. "I believe it," says Peter.

The other story concerned a bear that attacked a man named "Try-to-make-noise". Instead of killing the man, the bear ate his pemican and then spoke to him about what he should tell his people. The bear then carried the man on his back to the edge of his camp and departed. A rider soon found the injured man and brought him to camp to recover. When he got well, he related the message. The people should set up a tent, get some cloth for offerings, and make a Smoking Tepee. This ceremony would help the sick get well and provide good luck for all - that's what the bear promised.

Participation in Ceremonialism

As a herbalist, Peter George has the reputation of being the best Indian

specialist in the area. In fact, some Indians from other reserves periodically visit him and seek a medicine to cure their maladies. By praying to the Great Spirit and mixing the right roots, Peter George says that he has cured "many people". He learned this skill from his mother's people.

While Peter George is noted for his "good" medicine several people in the area have suggested that he also has the ability to make "bad" medicine. One relatively acculturated woman on a neighboring reserve has her high school education, yet she fears that man to the extent that she will walk across the street to avoid meeting him if she should see him coming. When someone's face becomes twisted to the side, as with some strokes, it is often suspected to have been the work of "bad" medicine. However, Peter George has never indicated anything of the kind to the fieldworker. Nevertheless, Peter is feared by some and treated with great circumspection.

During the 1930s, Peter George held his first Rain Dance. Since that time he has held another 11, all on Sakimay Reserve. "Each time," says Peter, "it has rained." Peter has also participated in the Rain Dances initiated by Felix Panipekeesick and Felix, in turn, has reciprocated as a mutual ritual leader and friend.

When fieldworker discussed the possibility of recording the Rain Dance on film and tape, it was Peter George who strongly objected - not Felix Panipekeesick. In fact, Felix promised that an opportunity would be available to do this, but he hesitated to say when until Peter George had a say on the matter. Peter's answer was a definite "no". At the conclusion of the 1967 Rain Dance on Sakimay, Peter stood before fieldworker and publicly gave the reasons in Saulteaux why the fieldworker could not document the proceedings for the National Museum of Canada. An interpreter explained in English that Peter and the elders feared that something bad might happen if fieldworker was permitted to carry his plans through. "These things are sacred; they are not to be played with." The decision was final - a firm "no".

Local Saulteaux have come to Peter for help with their hunting expeditions. He has obliged by smoking a peace pipe, praying, singing Good Luck Songs and beating the drum. Following this ritual, one local hunter saw seven beaver, shot two and came home satisfied that he had a successful hunt. Peter had helped him.

Reflections about the Future

Respondent had little to say about the future of Indian ceremonialism. Instead, he pointed out that there were "too many lazy people on the reserve"; too many people quitting school before Grade 12; too much drinking and fighting on the reserve; and not enough energy put into working and saving money for one's future.

3. MRS. ELIZABETH WASACASE ("GIRL BIRD")

Family Life

Elizabeth Wasacase was born in 1907 in Elphinstone, Manitoba, the fourth child in the family; five other children followed. Her mother was Saulteaux

while her father was a French half-breed. When respondent was 12 years old, her mother died; consequently, she and her two sisters were sent to St. Boniface Orphanage in Manitoba where she stayed until the age of 16. The father then took the girls to Moosomin, Saskatchewan where they stayed at their aunt's place. While visiting another aunt at Ochapowace Reserve, respondent, at the age of 18, was induced into marrying a Cree-Saulteaux Indian, Hector Wasacase, from Kahkewistahaw Reserve. The marriage was solemnized in the United Church in 1924.

Life on Kahkewistahaw was both fruitful and disappointing. It was fruitful in that respondent gained much knowledge on Indian medicine from her mother-in-law who stayed with the family. However, it was disappointing on two counts. Of the six children that were born, five of these died at an early age due to diphteria and pneumonia, and lack of medical doctors to treat these. Secondly, the relationship with her husband became so strained that in 1965 she left him and moved into an old two-room house next to her sister's home in the Town of Broadview.

During her lifetime, Elizabeth has raised 25 foster children from infancy through grade school. And while she is getting old and still has no modern conveniences in her home (no electricity or running water), except a sewing machine, Elizabeth continues to look after two or three children. In her spare time she does beadwork, sews, makes clothes, and practices doctoring with Indian medicine. When transportation is available she attends Powwows and Rain Dances. During one of her visits to a Powwow in North Dakota, USA, respondent received a set of Powwow clothes from her sister before the latter passed away.

Respondent understands French, Cree and Saulteaux, but speaks English in the home. Her present source of income is from relief, family allowance and foster care payments.

She has voted in the 1963 and 1965 federal elections as well as the 1965 provincial election. As far as she is concerned, the franchise provides no threat to the Treaty rights.

"To make a good home" and "to make a good garden" are two wishes that Elizabeth would like to have fulfilled in her lifetime. When asked, "What do you fear most in life?", she replied: "Nothing [Community and Family Questionnaire Schedule, No. T903, May 16, 1966, p. 22]."

Recollections of the Past

Respondent recalls using an Indian cradle-board when she began raising her first boy. She obtained it from the Fringe Saulteaux on the reserves north of Kamsack, Saskatchewan. While this device is no longer used today by the Broadview area Indians, respondent still uses the swinging cradle for all her foster children up to one and one-half years old, the same as a number of people on the reserves north of town.

Participation in Ceremonialism

As an Indian herbalist, Elizabeth Wasacase has recorded that she has helped to cure many people with different ills. She first learned about the

roots from her mother-in-law in 1927. Also, her grandmother, Mrs. Kakewaset, from Ochapowace showed her other roots which form the ingredients for good medicine. Mrs. Wasacase did not want to learn what goes into "bad" medicine.

In he repertoire of cures, Elizabeth includes medicines for diarrhea, colds, hemorrhaging during pregnancy, heart trouble, fever, ulcers, headache, and nose bleeds. When an old Saulteaux Indian from Cowessess was recently taken to the hospital for surgery, his sons got frightened that this was to be the doom of their father. The mother got some medicine from Elizabeth. The old man began to take the medicine and after three days he was out of the hospital. The Indian medicine had helped, and so he quit taking the pills prescribed by the medical doctor. For this particular medicine, Elizabeth apparently mixed some 100 roots forming a kind of elixer for many ills.

Respondent has never used any drums or rattles in effecting her cures, unlike some old medicine men. Instead she relies on a prudent selection of roots and then prays as she smokes the peace pipe. In no cases can she use her own medicine to cure her personal ills; "it just will not work." On her trips to Carlyle and the USA, she takes medicine with her and exchanges it for other Indian medicines made elsewhere.

Unlike Peter George and Felix Panipekeesick, Elizabeth Wasacase claims that she neither has the knowledge nor the power to initiate a Rain Dance, Sweat Bath Feast or Smoking Tepee; nor can she give special Indian guardian names to infants. When asked why, she replied, "Oh, no. Because I don't know nothing about it [Appendix C]." She suggests that someone like Peter George and Felix Panipekeesick have the power to do this.

Reflections about the Future

According to the respondent, the old Indian ceremonial customs are on the way out. Only a few of the old people are left who have the knowledge and capability to carry on Rain Dances and the like. She contends that Peter George and Felix Panipekeesick are the only ones on the four reserves north of Broadview who are truly capable of handling the sacred ceremonies. Moreover, most young people no longer believe in Indian medicine, but rely on the modern Medical doctor. Consequently the old people are losing the respect that they once had in the days gone by.

When respondent passes on, there will be nobody to carry on her knowledge. Elizabeth says that her medicinal roots will be placed in "a clean place in the bush" where "nobody will bother it [Appendix C]."

4. ALEC TANNER ("THE LAST FEATHER FLYING HIGH")

Family Life

Respondent was born in 1886 at Cyrpus Hills, southwest of Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, but in 1901 the family moved to Cowessess Reserve. There were three children in the family, with Alec being the middle one. His father was Saulteaux, while his mother was Cree. Both apparently had little knowledge of the old culture; both knew no Indian songs so that none could be passed on to the son. Also, both parents were illiterate.

Respondent's wife had died in 1966. Two of their children had died in infancy, five had survived and continued to live on Cowessess. It was shortly after the interview with respondent that one of his sons died during a shooting following a fight on the reserve. Respondent passed away shortly after (July 16, 1967).

At the time of the interview, respondent was living in a three room house (with two bedrooms) on Cowessess Reserve. The household consisted of nine people, including one of the married sons and his family. Electricity had reached the home in 1964 and the house was soon equipped with an electric refrigerator, electric washing machine, electric kettle and iron, and a transister radio.

While his parents believed in the indigenous Indian ceremonialism, respondent contends that he does not. Instead he is affiliated to the United Church of Canada. He has never been a chief or councillor, nor has he ever aspired to it. He voted in the 1963 federal election as well as in the 1965 provincial election and saw no threat to his Treaty rights. Alec Tanner had a good understanding of Saulteaux and Cree, but spoke English at home.

Recollection of the Past

While living at Cyrpus Hills from 1886 to 1901, respondent recalls going with his uncle to steal horses from the Blackfoot Indians. The raid took place at night and a total of 18 horses were taken on that occasion.

During the early years, Alec Tanner recalls that the Indians used to wrap their dead in blankets and place them up on a horizontal wooden scaffold some six feet from the ground. Here the corpse stayed until the scaffold rotted away. Today, however, the dead are buried in the ground.

Participation in Ceremonialism

Respondent admits that he once believed in the past rituals, but "not nowadays". He has never put on any of the ceremonial gatherings; nor does he know any ceremonial songs. However, as a spectator, he has attended some of the Powwows at Fort Qu'Appelle and Whitebear Reserve in Saskatchewan as well as one in Poplar, Montana. Also, he has attended a Rain Dance at Whitebear in 1965. Back in 1901, however, he recalls hearing about a Sun Dance on Cowessess Reserve; here one dancer attached himself with skewers through his chest tied with a rope to the central post of the lodge. Non-Indians were not present at this event. Shortly after, the Sun Dance was banned by the Indian Department.

While respondent no longer believes in medicine men and doesn't rely on medicinal herbs, he does, however, respect good luck and bad luck signs. If a certain eagle or owl sits on his house, respondent smokes a pipe to counteract potential harm that might come to the household. If there's thunder and lightning outside, he will light a piece of Sweetgrass. And on some evenings when he is restless, he will get up and do the same.

Reflections about the Future

Alec Tanner has noted a gradual decrease of dancers at the Rain Dances during the past 50 years. He contends that young people have forgotten the past chiefs and the old medicine men. They're "not interested" any more. Consequently, he points to the gradual disappearance of much of the old ceremonialism.

CHAPTER THREE: PERSISTENCE OF INDIGENOUS CEREMONIALISM

1. DEFINITION

The term "persistence" applied to a cultural process can be misleading if we assume that elements of culture remain free from change. Culture in all its aspects involves constant change. Persistence implies a kind of change that allows certain elements to be recognized over a long period of time. Persistence in culture is basically related to isolation and to people's failure to perceive innovation or change as rewarding. Change, on the other hand, is generally rooted in exposure to the major elements of the wider society. It implies that people are rewarded for doing certain things in a different way or for adopting new elements of material culture and new ways of behavior.

"Indigenous" refers to cultural elements that have been born, produced or grown naturally in a local area or region. Another way to describe it is to speak of "native" elements that have survived over a fairly long period of time. The Rain Dance, the Sweat Bath Feast, and the Smoking Tepee are all examples of indigenous elements among the Indians of southeastern Saskatchewan.

"Ceremonialism" is generally defined as "an established system of rites or formal actions connected with an occasion, as in religion." Another way is to look at ceremonialism as group behavior characterized by an institutionalized pattern. Marriage, religion, feasting, games, celebrations, folk medical practices, folklore beliefs and burial of the dead are examples of patterned group behavior. Hence the persistence of indigenous ceremonialism refers to the native elements of culture which survive through time in various degrees within a patterned group setting.

2. SELECTED SURVIVALS OF CEREMONIALISM

Rain Dance

The Rain Dance is a major element of native ceremonialism on the Saskatchewan prairies that has persisted over a long period to time. Usually a crisis situation has motivated some people to sponsor a Rain Dance. A close relative may be sick and the treatment of a modern medical doctor may bring little or no relief. This, then, is a time to engage the ritual leader from Sakimay Reserve to come to one's help. The client usually promises that he will not drink for a certain period of time and that he will fast prior to and during the Rain Dance ceremony. Preparation usually starts in the fall and four singing meetings are held prior to the actual Rain Dance in June. Relatives and friends are invited from near and far to come and share in this old tribal ritual; the medicine man or leader sings songs of health and abundant life for the sick person and for all people; consequently, all people may share in the magical communion with the Great Spirit, *Kitchi Manitou*, the all pervading force of the universe.

However, there are growing indications that the Rain Dance ceremony in the Broadview area will probably cease within a 20 year period. The two

elder practitioners who have held some 30 Rain Dances between them and know some 160 private songs are both over 80 years old. Secondly, while two other ritual elders have the inherited authority to put on this ceremony, they are not of the same calibre as the present experts, nor is there any indication that they are likely to be. The possibility of someone else carrying on the tradition is quite remote. The special songs without which the Rain Dance ceremony cannot be carried out are learned by rote; none are recorded in writing. In order to acquire these songs and be able to perform the Dance a man has to acquire the right either in a vision, or by purchase, or through the common way of inheritance. This is not an easy transaction. All are in the indigenous language and fewer and fewer people are learning the Saulteaux or Cree languages. Moreover, young people are losing interest in this ceremony. During the past four Rain Dances on Sakimay, an average of four dancers came out, as compared to several dozen during the early years. Finally, with increased education and contact with the wider society as well as improvement of medical services to the Indian people, more and more people will rely on the modern way of solving their physical ills.

Smoking Tepee

Although officially ranking next to the Rain Dance in importance, the 1966 Smoking Tepee on Sakimay was the first one in 40 years among the four reserves north of Broadview. The carrier of this vowed ceremony is 80 years old while his pupil is 64. During the night-long session an average of ten people witnessed the rare event. Under the circumstances it is unlikely that this ceremony will persist much longer in this part of the country.

Sweat Bath Feast

Two types of sweat baths are identified. The first is used for cleansing one's skin and for health purposes. It appears that only one or two people out of 1,900 will make a lodge for this purpose. The river or lake, a washtub, or, for some, a modern bathtub, are more efficient ways of getting clean.

The second type is the ceremony which ranks third to the Rain Dance in importance. This is the Sweat Bath Feast which, although not common to all ceremonies, is very often utilized as an offering to a Spirit Power, or as ritualistic cleansing preliminary to any ceremony. The Sweat Bath lodge is built, stones are heated and passed inside. Sweetgrass is then burned inside and a pipe offered. Then the lodge is closed and water sprinkled on the hot stones. Next, a set of songs are sung and then the cover is lifted a little while the bathers rest. Then they sing a few more songs and come out of the lodge to cool off, after which a feast takes place.

The survival of this ceremony depends to a large extent on what happens to the Rain Dance and the Smoking Tepee. All three are dependent upon ritual elders - how many more years they will live, and if they can persuade the younger generation to follow their path. The increase of education and with it, the scientific orientation, are both factors working against the persistence of not only the Sweat Bath, but the other two major ceremonies as well.

"Good" and "Bad" Medicine

The use of folk medicine is still prevalent among the older generation Indians. However, today only a handful of older people know how to make and administer medicines. Inexperienced people, however, are discouraged from tampering with powerful herbs; to do so might lead to blindness or other disabilities. Again, as with the Rain Dance culture, people will seek help from a medicine man or woman only after the medical doctor has failed to cure some illness such as persistent pain in the stomach or as serious as the contageous tuberculosis. In any case, the transaction is considered to be a sacred one involving prayers, the smoking of the pipe, a gift exchange, and perhaps the singing of a ritual song with the accompaniment of a medicine drum.

For the four reserves north of Broadview, there are two known Medicine Men and three or four Medicine Women. All are over 60 years old. All have learned what roots to dig, when to dig, what herbs to mix for certain cures, and how to administer to the patient. All have relied on their parents, grandparents or other elders to pass this knowledge on. With the present generation, there are few if any young people who find any appeal in learning this profession - for in comparison to the modern medical doctor, there are only limited returns. In fact, one of the Cree Indians is very much interested in curing people - and so he is presently completing a seven-year university course for the medical profession. For him the profession of the Indian Medicine Man is "too primitive"; the modern way is more effective.

For the person who has not had the benefits of modern knowledge through the formal school system and exposure to the outside world, the situation is different. When an apparently unexplainable situation occurs - such as a twisted mouth (as happens with strokes) or a persistent impulse to carry out a certain action, such as seducing a woman - many of the old Saulteaux people (and much fewer Cree) will look to the supernatural for an explanation. Some evil person must be using "bad" medicine, they conclude. "I think it was a certain owl that brought this bad medicine to me yesterday," some say. Consequently, this person may seek the services of a more powerful medicine man or ritual person to help counteract the perceived evil; because there are only two such powerful persons on the four reserves, the choices are few unless they go outside to some distant reserve.

The fear of "bad" medicine is farily deep rooted - even those acculturated Cree Indians who are members of an organized church will often be very careful not "to offend" a known medicine man. Note the fear of Peter George by an acculturated Cree woman (see page 10). The woman's husband stated that he wore a magical pendant around his neck prior to attending a band meeting where he expected verbal conflict and received it during the discussions that followed; the pendant was supposed to help ward off "bad" medicine and at the same time help the holder achieve his aims. Because no harm came to the wearer, it was naturally concluded that the pendant performed its expected role. Faith in magic was thereby confirmed.

The "known" Medicine Man referred to above is generally feared as the "evil" one. His name is known across the four reserves in the study area. At the age of 80 now, he is not expected to live many more years. Once he has passed away, the feared practitioner will be no more and this, no doubt, will

alleviate the present anxiety for some.

Elsewhere is a list of medicinal roots that were dug in the Qu'Appelle Valley north of Broadview. These roots, when properly prepared, are said to provide cures for a number of ailments: fever, diarrhea, heart trouble, colds and hemorrhaging, and serve as an elixer[3] for any ills. Local people have also spoken of other cures: worms in the neck, double pneumonia, influenza, goiter, burns, toothache, pleurisy, measles, and swollen glands (see Appendix F, Question 1). The two respondents who claim that they were cured of tuberculosis state that the treatment was as follows:

> I drank something and went to the barn every day and inhaled fumes through the nose according to instructions of a medicine man [Appendix F, Question 1, Response No. 15].

> I was cured from T.B. after the ordinary doctor had no hopes for me - I was told I had one week to live. My father went and got the old fellow and he cured me at home over a six-month period; he gave me herb medicine. There was no singing, no massaging. My sister was also cured when she had T.B. [Appendix F, Question 1, Response No. 20].

Another informant reported that:

> My wife, at 16, was cured from double pneumonia by a medicine man from Balcarres, near Fort Qu'Appelle. He used a horn and pumped things out of her chest. The modern way is best, but I believe in the Indian way too [Appendix F, Question 1, Response No. 22].

A fourth informant received her medicine from Manitoba:

> An Indian woman in Berrans River, Manitoba gave me a package of roots for $1.00. I chewed it off and on and my goiter went away after a year [Appendix F, Question 1, Response No. 30].

Emmi Nemetz, public health nurse who has lived over a decade in the Yukon contends that "many individuals in Public Health believe that mankind would greatly benefit if a thorough investigation were made of the Indian medications and remedies [Nemetz 1968:15]." Why not? In her article on "Indian Medicine", Miss Nemetz states that Canadian Indians must have been aware of some methods of birth control by a remedy known as "cuts-it-off". In northern Saskatchewan one Indian woman reported that a certain root was brewed as tea. When this is taken it acts as a birth control measure. This old lady stated, however, that the younger generation[4] is unaware as to how this tea may be used effectively (Nemetz 1968:14). Fieldworker has heard of such a root in the Kamsack area of eastern Saskatchewan, but definite identification was not available.

The Medicine Man

Another name for medicine man is "shaman" (a Tungus word from Northeastern

Asia), i.e., a part-time religious practitioner found in hunting and food gathering societies not economically capable of supporting an organized religious institution and full-time priests. Two of the four principal informants in this study (Felix Panipekeesick and Peter George) fit the classical description of shamans:

(1) He derives his powers through family inheritance, from an older shaman who teaches him his arts, or through a vivid dream[5] such as a vision.

(2) He is believed to communicate with the supernatural and gain the powers of certain spirits which he puts to practical use when requested and when he performs the proper rituals. His most universal function is to try to cure disease. He may also try to influence the weather (such as seeking rain during a Rain Dance[6]), to influence hunting (as Peter George did in helping his neighbors find game), and to search for lost objects (as Felix did when he found a team of horses that were lost for two weeks). He may also use magic or "bad" medicine to weaken personal enemies or to steal and hide the souls of victims.

(3) To gain supernatural powers, the shaman is required to manipulate certain rituals.

(4) The shaman is always older and highly respected (as well as feared). Consequently, he may be treated with great circumspection (as with the acculturated Indian woman who walks across the street to avoid an encounter with Peter George).

(5) He acts only when he himself consents to aid a person who cannot control his difficulties without aid. He is paid for his services with ceremonial gifts; more recently, he is accepting money.

All five characteristics apply to Peter and Felix. When they pass away it is difficult to visualize how anyone else on these four reserves can fill their places, especially as movement between the reserve and the wider society increases. As people become more economically capable of supporting themselves, they are likely to see less and less need to rely on the indigenous practitioner.

Good and Bad Signs and Predictions

Many of the older people who attend Rain Dances consider that some misfortune will occur if one or more of the following takes place in the Rain Dance lodge: a menstruating woman walks into the lodge; someone carries a glowing cigarette or other light out of the lodge; some drunkard enters the lodge; or someone blows into the fire. The first of these is most severe. In fact, a menstruating woman must not touch any of the ritual paraphernalia, nor must she touch medicinal roots, or else "contamination" will occur and something bad will follow.

The presence of an owl on one's house is looked upon as a bad omen, according to several Cree and Saulteaux informants. "You might get some evil or you might lose someone from your house." In response to this Felix, the Medicine Man, said that he was not afraid of owls. "I never have bad luck in

my life," he added. Peter George, however, contends that some owls on the roof at night are a bad omen. "Somebody put it there to make a noise at night."

Apart from those two beliefs, there is little consensus as to what constitutes "good luck" and "bad luck" and predictions. Here is a list of beliefs by Felix:

> "Swallows running on the wire means that a big rain or storm is coming."
>
> "When an owl makes a noise in the morning, it means a windy day."
>
> "A whirlwind in the field means dry weather."
>
> "If cranes fly low, there will be good winter - not cold. But if they make two circles, then cold winter [will follow]."
>
> "When crows fly low, it's going to be a cold winter, deep snow."
>
> "A moon dog at night in winter...is a sign that it's going to be very cold - frost like."
>
> "Rainbow means the end of the rain."
>
> "In winter when a star dipper drags its tail there's going to be northern lights."

An elderly Cree informant gave this:

> "When there's a new moon and the light of it hits your left side, that's a good sign. If it hits on the right, then it is no good."

To ward off bad luck, one middle-aged Cree informant from Cowessess Reserve states that some people wear a charm around their neck. The charm may consist of a dried lizard or snake wrapped in a pouch made of tanned deerhide. Others may purchase rosaries or other religious objects for providing a similar function.[7] When asked if he wears any good luck charm, Felix replied, "Some people wear it, but I don't need that."

Indian Names

Among the Saulteaux of Sakimay Reserve, there is still a number of old people who take their children and grandchildren to the ritual person or medicine man to endow them with an Indian name. Peter George has given 60 such names, while Felix has "baptized" 44. This brief ceremony may be done during a Rain Dance or it may be done at a feast in a home. The name then remains as a secret name. The name, often associated with thunder or birds, then serves as a kind of guardian spirit which is supposed to help the

recipient in his life's journey. Thus Felix's name means "Rain Thunderbird"; Alec Tanner's is "The Last Feather Flying High". Should the holder of a particular name get sick, he may at a future date seek the services of another medicine man so that he may obtain a better and more powerful protective name. Generally, the older people will tell you, the families who have joined formal churches are the ones most apt to drop the custom of seeking sacred names and cease following the Rain Dance culture.

Marriage Ceremonies

Fieldworker and his wife attended three weddings on Cowessess Reserve, but have found them practically the same as those outside. The only exception is the noise ritual that accompanies the bride and groom when they travel from the church to the home. Namely, a .22 calibre rifle was fired from the back of the truck during the procession. Several informants, when asked, said there was no particular meaning to this custom. "It was just a celebration." Another informant suggested that it might be related to the hunting days of early Indians. Still another informant said that this custom was taken over from the German neighbors.

Funerals and Burials

When relatives and close friends come to share their sorrow with the bereaved at a "sit-up" (wake) it is customary to bring some food with them. This is the highly respectful thing to do. Thus one Cree family on Cowessess brought seven dressed chickens with them when they attended their best friend's funeral. These were later cooked and, along with other food, served to all those present.

If a priest or minister is present there is usually some hymn singing. If not, the people pass their time by sitting around talking and playing cards. If Medicine Men Peter or Felix are present, they will offer a prayer in Saulteaux. Speaking for the Saulteaux elders on Sakimay, Felix says that they pray at the sit-ups at night, but do not sing - "not like the Catholics and Presbyterians who pray and sing."

One ceremony that appears to be a rather isolated occurrence on the four Broadview area reserves is the use of a drum and song during the "sit-up" in 1965. This occurred on Kahkewistahaw Reserve, when a teen-aged Cree boy hung himself. When the United Church minister was present, a singing and sermon service was held. When he left, several people played cards (poker, for money) for three hours. Then, around four o'clock in the morning, the chief of the band and three councillors and friends brought a bass drum and for one hour sang several Powwow type songs. When asked for a comment, Felix stated that this was the first that he has ever heard of such a ceremony during a funeral.

Traditional burials are within the recollection of some of the elders. One form of burial was the five-foot grave covered with horizontal poles and earth. Another was the use of the raised platform some six feet above ground on which was tied the corpse covered in a blanket. Within their personal experience, however, is the small gable-roofed board houses over some of the

graves on Sakimay. This custom apparently died out several years ago, although at least one dozen such houses still remain. Mandelbaum records in 1934 that the "Calling River People" now on the Crooked Lake Reserves (Mandelbaum 1940:248) use such a practice. No doubt this referred to the Saulteaux people on Sakimay. Today, however, all that is past history and the contemporary burial pattern is followed.

Powwow Dance

The dance locally known as the Powwow is in Cree called *A-ni-mikt*, meaning dancing (or dancing gathering).[8] One version is the widespread Cree Grass Dance. Its origin is somewhat uncertain. Some informants consider it to be an adoption from the Assiniboine and Sioux Indians of the northern United States. Others contend that the Powwow is a carry over of the Indian war dances of the 18th and 19th centuries, when the warriors celebrated following a successful raid.

"At the present time the Powwow is frequently held, has supplanted much of the religious ceremonialism, and provides the most common social activity of reservation life [Mandelbaum 1940:280]." This was the situation for the Plains Cree in 1934, as described by anthropologist David Mandelbaum. This is certainly the situation today with the prairie Indians in Saskatchewan.

There appear to be two kinds of Powwows. One, the secular kind; the other has religious overtones. The annual Powwows at the Sioux Standing Buffalo Reserve near Fort Qu'Appelle and the Whitebear Powwow near Carlyle, Saskatchewan are examples of the first kind. The opening of the Kahkewistahaw village in 1965 and the holding of a three-day Centennial Powwow on Cowessess Reserve in 1967 are further examples of same. The Powwow held on Sakimay in 1967 to commemorate the two-year anniversary of the death of one of its young men who was killed in a family quarrel is an example of a dance with religious overtones; the initiator of the dance was the father of the deceased who had earlier made a vow to hold this gathering in respect to his son.

The secular Powwows at Standing Buffalo Reserve and Whitebear Reserve have a circus and sports day atmosphere: the use of a "big top" tent, the presence of concession booths, the admission at the gate, the use of special dance costumes and dancing competitions as well as special performances. At the conclusion of these dances gifts are usually distributed by the initiator to visitors and old people. These usually include blankets, cloth, shirts, and money. "This is the Indian way," as one Cree put it. The giving away of wealth in his behalf by his parents and relatives usually results in social prestige for the initiator and his group.

Camping around the dancing site is still carried on, somewhat similar to the encampments of days gone by. At the Powwow on Whitebear Reserve in 1965, there were almost 150 tents with seven of these being tepees, several camper cars, and a few trailers. Many people slept in cars for one, two, or three nights. There were a number of cars from North Dakota, Montana, and several from California and Washington. The majority were Crees (including a number from the Broadview reserves 60 miles away) and Assiniboines, others were Saulteaux, Sarcee (from Alberta), and Crow Indians from the States.

A cultural survival of the past is the provision of food for the tenters at the Powwow. This is an obligation of the sponsoring band or individuals.

In the early days, according to a Sioux informant from Kahkewistahaw, the Powwow was connected with many rituals performed by the medicine man. The ritual leader would walk around the dance smoking his peace pipe. He would stop at the tents of the dancers to incense their clothing over a Sweetgrass smudge. However, there is no evidence that this practice persists today.

Other Dances

Local informants recall a number of Indian dances that were held 25 to 35 years ago, but no longer take place in the Broadview area. These include the Horse Dance, the Bear Dance, Medicine Dance, Chicken Dance, and the Give Away Dance.[9]

One dance that reappeared is the Masked Dance. It was held during the Rain Dance on Sakimay in June 1967. According to Mandelbaum, this dance has "a cannabalistic character in the folklore of the Wood Cree [Mandelbaum 1940: 275]." The pledgers and five other dancers were dressed in material made of brown sacking and ragged clothing, with masks made of similar material. The pledger carried a staff with deer hooves attached. He and the group went from tent to tent and from car to car where owners had placed food (usually a loaf of bread) upon the car hood. The dancers stalked the food as though it were an animal, and suddenly one of them shot an arrow into it, and ran off, yelling, when he hit the target. Having made the round, the group entered the Rain Dance lodge while a ceremony was in progress. Drumming continued as usual. The dancers stayed a few minutes, then left into the bush with a collection of food. They were not seen again. When fieldworker inquired who these masked dancers were, no one seemed to know. Indeed, my principal informants never mentioned having any knowledge of this dance.

The Elements of Ritualism

The basic elements of indigenous ritualism as described by Mandelbaum in 1934 (see Mandelbaum 1940:288-293) remain essentially the same in 1967. These include:

(1) The peace pipe is lighted whenever the spirit powers are summoned. First, however, the filled pipe is held over Sweetgrass incense and handed to the man who is to do the praying. The receiver takes the pipe and swings the mouthpiece around clockwise to the point of the compass where the Spirit Power is to be addressed. Moreover, tobacco is sent with every invitation and important message.

(2) Material offerings of cloth are made whenever the Spirit Powers are asked to exert their influence toward some particular end. These are consecrated with the smoking of the pipe before being given.

(3) Every important ceremonial activity includes the use of revealed songs. These songs were owned by one person and could not be sung without permission from the owner. Secular songs, however, could be sung by anyone.

(4) The major portion of every ceremony is devoted to speaking to the supernaturals.

(5) The vow or promise is an accepted manner of contracting for assistance with the supernatural. A father whose son is sick might go to the medicine man (shaman type) for assistance. The medicine man might promise to hold a Rain Dance or other sacred ceremony, while the father, the pledger, is obliged to fast for a considerable time. Moreover, the giving of a ceremony entails a considerable outlay of food, offerings, and gifts.

(6) Food is served at ceremonial occasions. This usually includes buckets of soup, many loaves of bread, crackers, and raisins and rice. Each person is expected to bring his own utensils.

(7) Two men are usually chosen as "servers" to carry out the manual tasks involved in the ceremonies. These many include keeping the fire going, building the Sweat Bath lodge, or serving food during the feasts.

(8) The Sweetgrass smudge remains as the universal component of all ceremonial practices discussed in this report. The grass (*Savastana odorata*) was gathered when long and plaited into braids. When a bit of the dried grass is placed onto live coals, the resultant smoke provides a purifying quality and an odor which is pleasing to the supernaturals.

(9) All movements are in clockwise direction when the pipe is passed, food served, or when the dancers move.

(10) The ceremonial number four[10] was repeatedly used. As Mandelbaum put it, "Thus four smudges were built, four songs sung, four offerings made, four preliminary rituals held, four puffs taken upon lighting a pipe, and so on through each part of every ritual [Mandelbaum 1940:292]."

(11) The Thunder Spirit Power is frequently called upon, and it is conceived as being multiple, residing in four directions.

3. AN OVERVIEW OF CEREMONIALISM AND THE SUPERNATURAL

One of the important components of a people's culture is the complex of their beliefs about the nature of man, of nature itself, of man to his fellowmen, and of man to those supernatural powers which he recognizes as controlling his universe. These beliefs are embedded in their philosophy, their ethics, and their religion. Their understanding about life and death, health and illness as well as accidents is an integral part of this complex. Widespread in many belief systems is the view that illness and premature death are a punishment for failure to carry out certain prescribed and proper rituals or for infringing an ethnical code which that society considers important. Some African tribes believe that when a warrior is wounded in battle his wounds would not heal unless his wife at home was observing strict sexual abstinence. Other people will not venture out of a house during a day when they get a "bad" dream for they feel some misfortune will come to them.

The clearest account of the survivals of early Indian ceremonialism in the area north of Broadview can be obtained by talking to some of the old

medicine men and women from the Saulteaux tribe. They will tell you that practically all of the young Cree people (75 percent of the 1,900 Indian population in area) and many of the Saulteaux young people have failed to acquire any knowledge of Rain Dances and related rituals. For many old people, however, the Rain Dance remains a sacred ritual - as important as any Roman Catholic mass or United Church service. For these few the Rain Dance serves as a renewal of faith in their future and a reinforcement of their sense of peoplehood.

Old medicine men will tell you that the Rain Dance is no different from the Christian church. The forked centre post with a bundle of brush fastened to the top and considered to be the "nest" of the Thunderbird, is no other than the symbolic Jesus when he was on the cross, wearing a crown of thorns. The red streamers symbolize his blood. And those gathered in the Rain Dance lodge are people who come to pay tribute to their prophet. The smoking of tobacco and the burning of Sweetgrass is said to be no different from the incense that burns in many churches. Likewise, the giving of Indian names to young children is said to have a parallel to the baptism ritual of the Roman Catholic church. Finally, the feast which follows the Rain Dance, a wake, or a Sweat Bath is no other (according to the story of some old men) than that of the communion that people share in church or that which the early Christians shared at the table with Jesus. The self-torture that certain fasters at Rain Dances used to endure (see Appendix I) was interpreted as no other than the Christian custom of suffering as the Biblical Jesus had done several hundred years ago.

The point of all this reinterpretation is to show the relationship of a modern Christian church to that of indigenous Indian religion. Although the early missionaries (and the present ones to some extent) had the central purpose to "Christianize the pagans", their modernizations in the form of Christian ritual were in many ways no different in structural pattern from that of the old Indian ceremonies.

Today there are several religious groups competing for converts on the four Broadview area Indian reserves. Under this pressure, Indians may readily adopt the new creed without endangering survivals of their old ways. Why? This is because both the modern version and the old are rooted in the same supernatural base. Both rely on the unknown force which pervades all and which is expected to affect one's life path. To disregard this force is to endanger one's life path. Here there is an impulse to observe certain non-scientific rituals, to baptize one's child, to respect the old ritual leaders, and to rely on faith in some Spirit (whether that spirit be God or *Manitou*). Since the base is the same and both rely on prescribed ritual, there is really no difference in function between the various forms of Christian religion and that of indigenous Indian ceremonialism.

As the religious groups cater to the same Spirit or God and seek the welfare of human beings, several informants have questioned the fierce competition between these groups. Many Indian informants have told bitter stories of their early church-run residential school days; the alien religious discipline was so overwhelming that many of them quit going to church. "I had enough of religion," as one person put it. Usually, marriage, baptism and death are the only other times that such persons will attend church.

For others, however, the annual Rain Dance or the weekly ritual of going to church provides a sense of comfort from the troubles of the world, and serves as a sense of stability in a world of rapid change. By seeing old faces, by following old established customs and by repeating the same prayers he attains a sense of comfort and security. And by sharing the feeling that he is communicating with the supernatural, he gains a feeling of hope and guidance for this life's journey. Should he do something wrong, he may feel guilty that he will be punished at some future date; consequently, if he is a Roman Catholic, he may relieve himself by way of confession; for the Protestant, he may attend church and take communion. And for the young person who has been brought up in a traditional Saulteaux setting, he may participate in the Rain Dance in order to intercede with the spirits and ask for help and forgiveness.[11]

When we compare the revival camp meeting in Grenfell with the Rain Dance ceremony on Sakimay Reserve some 16 miles away, there are some striking similarities. In Grenfell the travelling group of evangelists brings forth a team of faith-healing ritual persons who are anxious to cater to the needs of the ill and the afflicted. Like the Saulteaux Medicine Man, the revivalistic faith-healers use the voice and music (the drum in one case, the organ and guitar in the other) to communicate with the supernatural spirit in an attempt to affect a cure. These practices are closely related to a kind of psychotherapy. Both try to cure disease and both attempt to influence the attitude of people so that they may have faith in the supernatural power and therefore faith in themselves.

PHOTOGRAPHS

PLATES 1 TO 31

The Rain Dance on the Ghost Lake Site,

Sakimay Reserve, northwest of Broadview, Saskatchewan,

23 - 25 June 1967



Plate 1. Preliminary Tepee (1965). The wagon was used to haul the trees and branches for the ceremonial lodge.



Plate 2. Preliminary Tepee and encampment on camping day (1967).

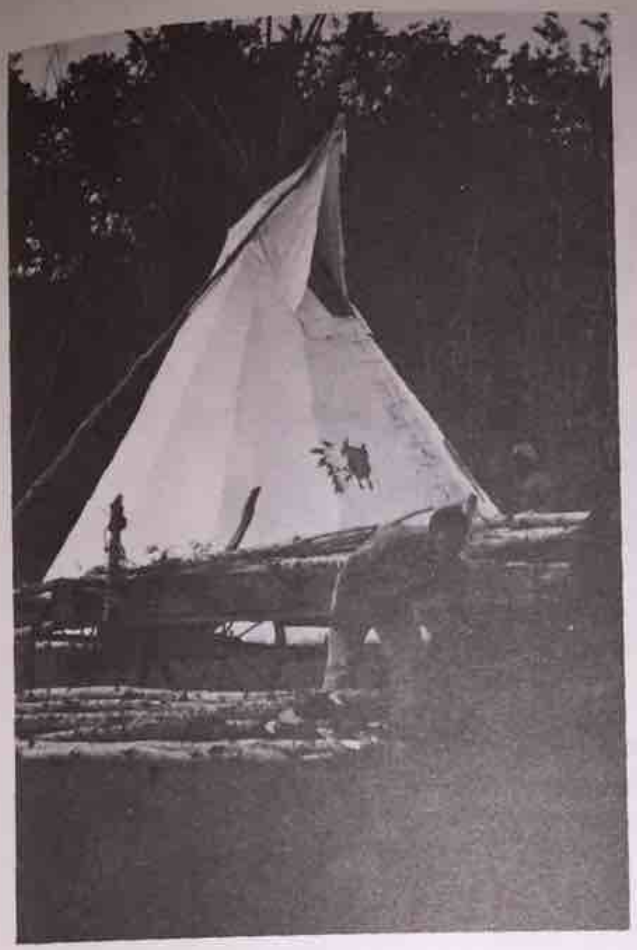


Plate 3. Preliminary Tepee on camping day (1967). Initiator of the Rain Dance was Felix Panipekeesick.



Plate 4. Preparing the central post for the Medicine Man's knife.



Plate 5. Medicine Man Felix Panipekeesick carves a buffalo head figure on the central post of the Rain Dance lodge.

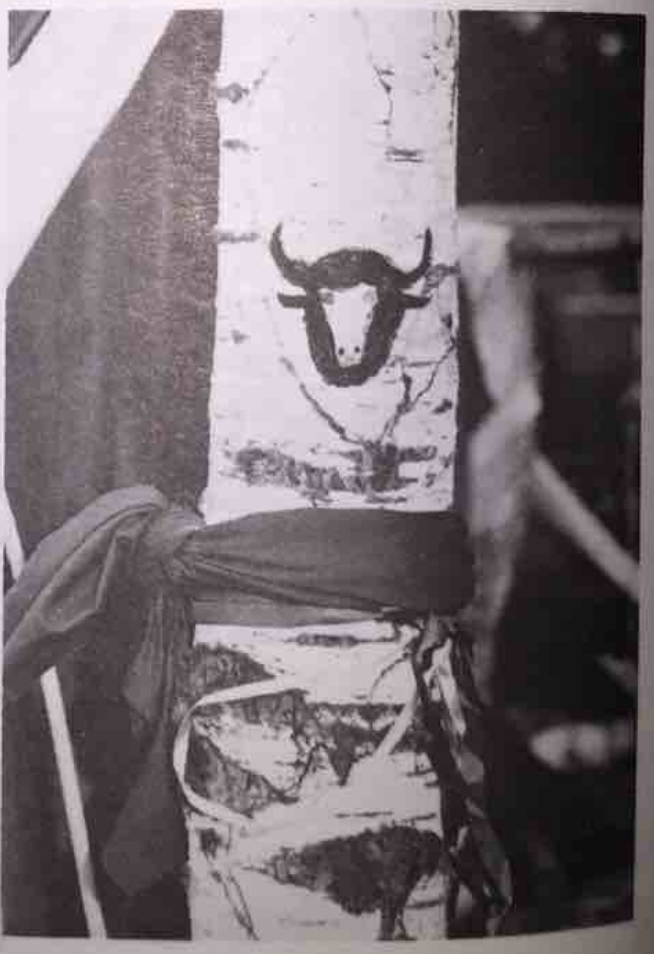


Plate 6. The buffalo had vanished from the prairies by the late 1880s. However, the spirit of the buffalo remained as one of the blazed figures on the central post of the Rain Dance lodge.

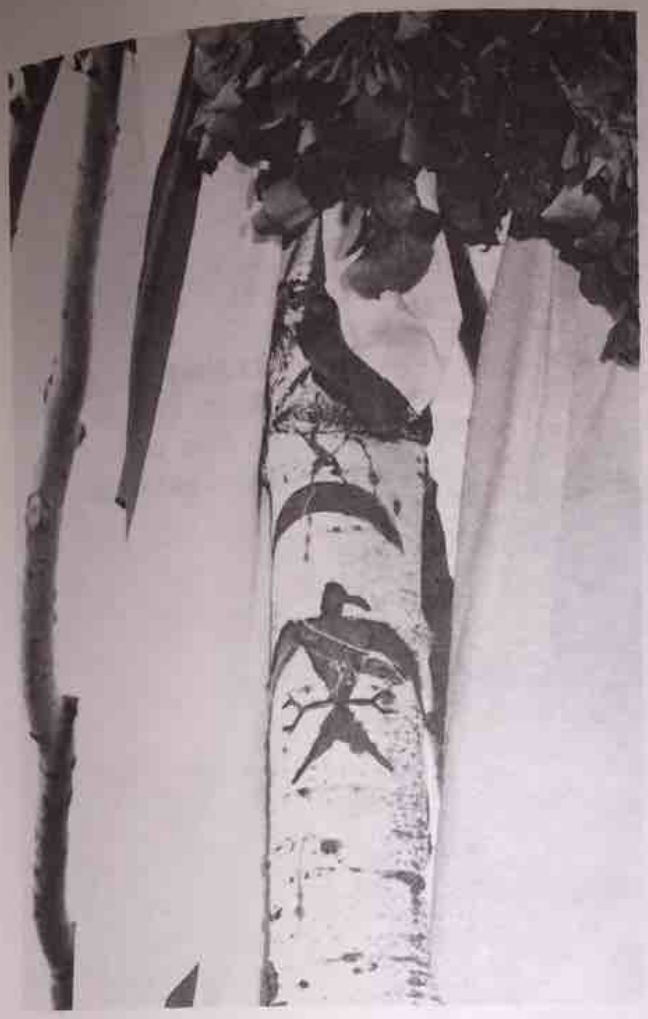


Plate 7. Carved moon and Thunderbird near the top of the central post.

Plate 8. Branches of the lodge meet on the top of the central post forming a Thunderbird nest.

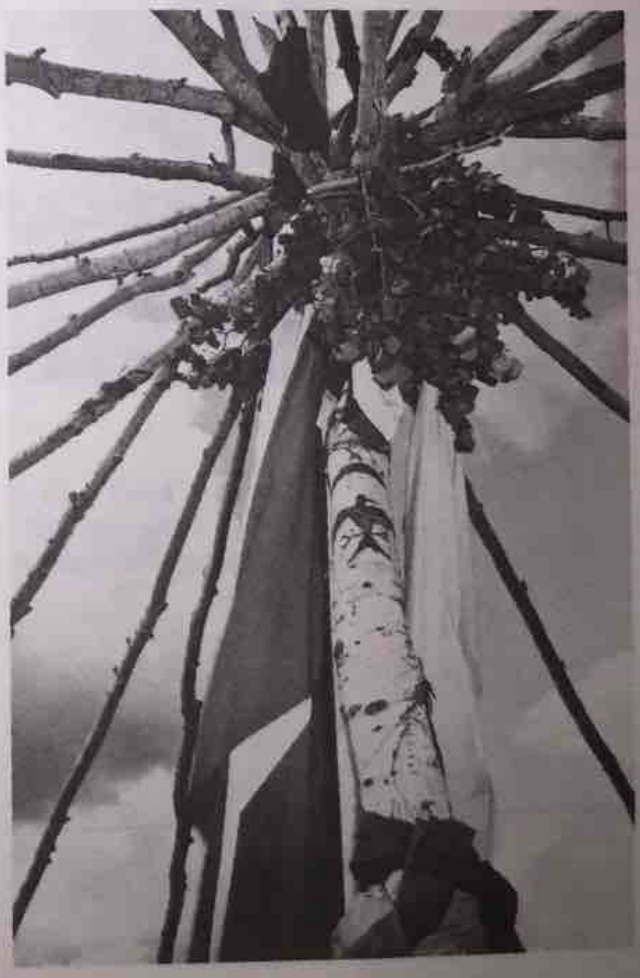




Plate 9. Everyone pitches in to erect the Rain Dance lodge while the old Medicine Man looks on.

Plate 10. Constructing the lodge.



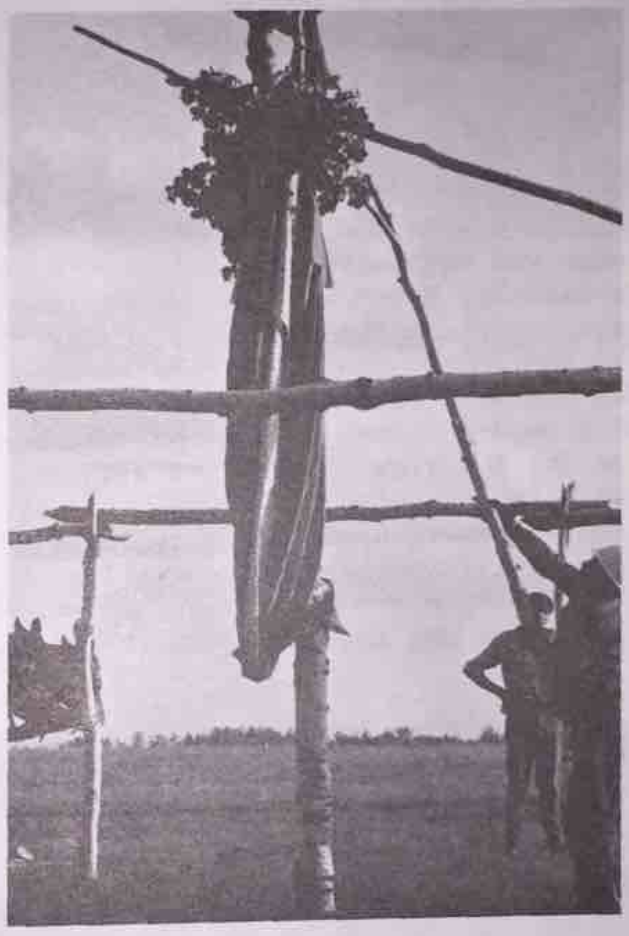


Plate 11. Placing the roof poles on the forked arms of the Thunderbird nest.



Plate 12. When the lodge was completed, the altar paraphernalia was brought from the Preliminary Tepee into the dance lodge. The pledger and his assistant deposited their burdens at the altar located on the north end of the lodge. Note (left to right): box seat with coat on it; white bag with Sweetgrass braids; rain coat; can of tabacco; 2 pipes and 2 wooden stems; rattle; mirror; buffalo head with cloth offerings on it; 4 willow sticks bent with eagle feathers attached to tips; the altar pit with Sweetgrass smudge in centre and willow sticks at the 4 corners symbolizing the 4 Thunders (one in each cardinal direction); another cloth offering; 40 sticks for use at the finale of the Rain Dance; and, a box containing an eagle bone whistle. The altar was screened from the view of the spectators.

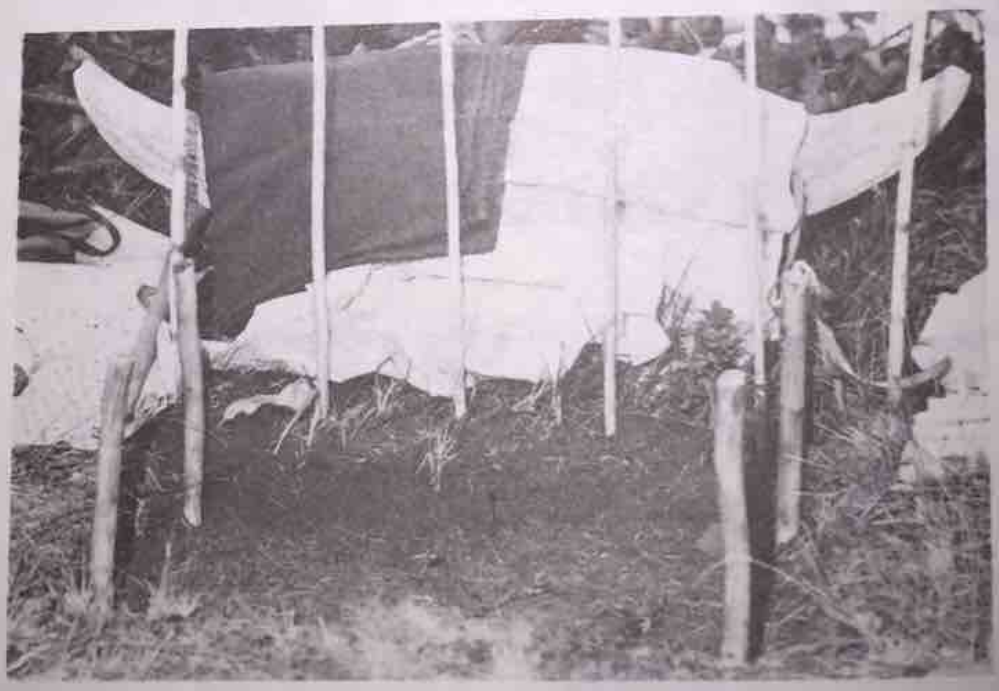


Plate 13. Close-up of buffalo skull at the altar pit.



Plate 14. Sweetgrass smudge at the base of the centre post, placed at the four cardinal directions.



Plate 15. The Rain Dance lodge on the traditional grounds, called Ghost Lake, Sakimay Reserve.



Plate 16. Back view of Rain Dance lodge. Note the canvas (from Preliminary Tepee) shielding the north side of the ceremonial lodge (1966).



Plate 17. Distant visitors and local participants bring their tents.



Plate 18. The outdoor camp fire is still in use.



Plate 19. One of the youthful onlookers in the camp.



Plate 20. An assistant guards the lodge during a break for supper. Although the pledger, dancers and singers still cannot eat, they use this pause to rest.



Plate 21. Medicine man and pledger of the 1967 Rain Dance, Felix Panipekeesick, rests during intermission, while fieldworker takes pictures. Note the cloth offerings.



Plate 22. Old Felix rests during intermission. Note the bough partitions behind which the dancers dance and recline. Men sit around the western arc of the fence; women on the eastern arc.



Plate 23. Willow wands and drum sticks on the left, together with Sweetgrass braids and tobacco conveniently located several feet southwest of the altar.



Plate 24. Old Felix looks on during intermission as fieldworker takes a photograph of the inside of the lodge.



Plate 25. The domain of the singer-drummers and their instruments: rawhide upon which they beat their willow wands, a rattle (used by the leader of each song), a deerhide drum and a large bass drum.



Plate 26. The dance concluded with the singing of one song 20 times; as each round was sung, an assistant placed two sticks at the base of the central tree, until all the 40 sticks had been used. During this finale, everyone stood up, spectators included, and danced or stood facing the centre tree.

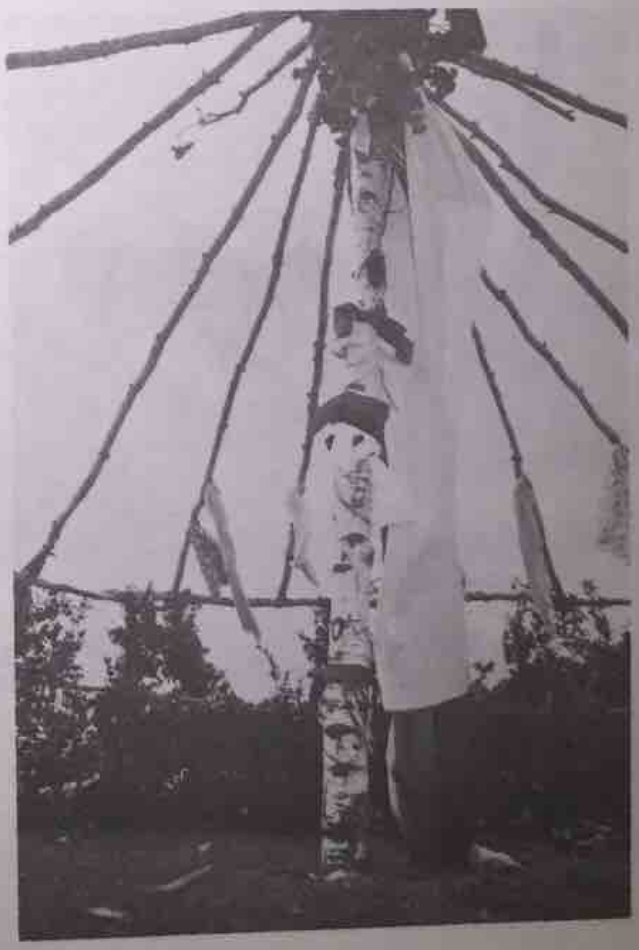


Plate 27. Soon after the dance was over, the pledger and his assistant gathered up most of the cloth offerings and carried them deep into the bush where they would not be stolen or disturbed. A few of the offerings remained tied to the lodge.



Plate 28. The Rain Dance is over but a long cloth at the centre has to be wound around the post and tied securely. After this the lodge is not to be tampered with.



Plate 29. At an old lodge nearby, Old Felix chases away a youngster who was playing on sacred territory.

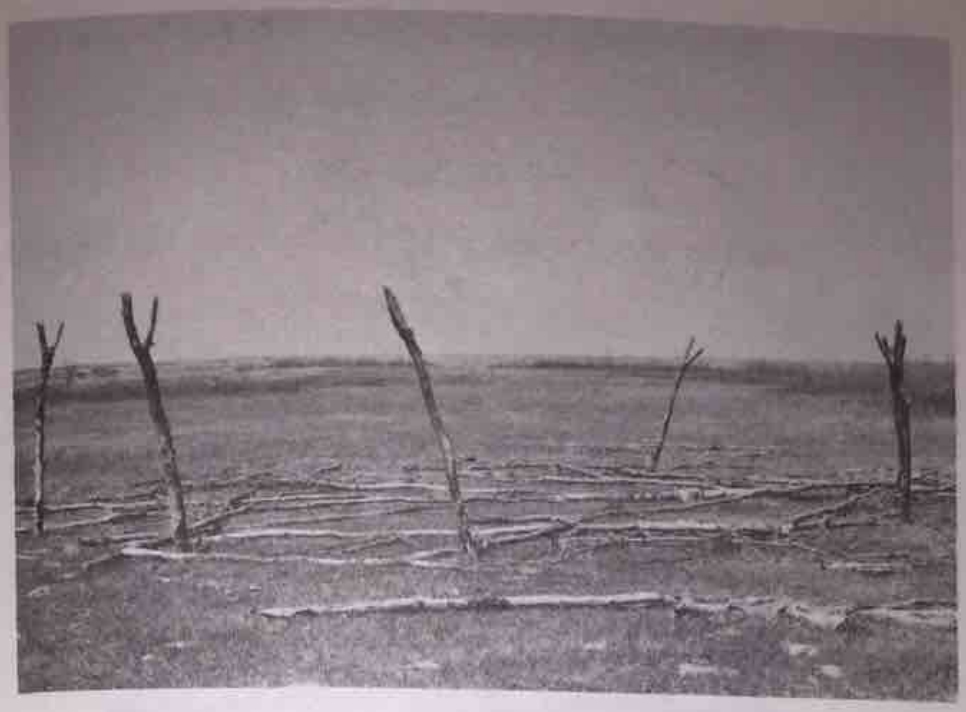


Plate 30. The lodges break down through the years, but the elders do not disturb the remains.



Plate 31. Even many of the younger generation, such as Joe Crowe, former Chief of the Kahkewistahaw reserve say that they are reluctant to use any of the lodge materials for firewood.

PLATES 32 TO 36

The Smoking Tepee held on Sakimay Reserve,

northwest of Broadview, Saskatchewan,

14 June 1966

(Photos were taken before and after the event)



Plate 32. Ceremonial "tools" and materials as they appeared eight hours after the conclusion of the Smoking Tepee ceremony on Sakimay Reserve, 15 June 1966. Note: centre pit with burnt coals; flattened wooden sticks used in carrying hot coals to burn Sweetgrass for cleansing purposes; Sweetgrass in the form of braids; 4 peace pipes; rattle lying on 2 cloth offerings attached to sticks; eagle feather for fanning the flame; tobacco, papers and matches; and, plate, cup and spoon for partaking of the feast during the ceremony.

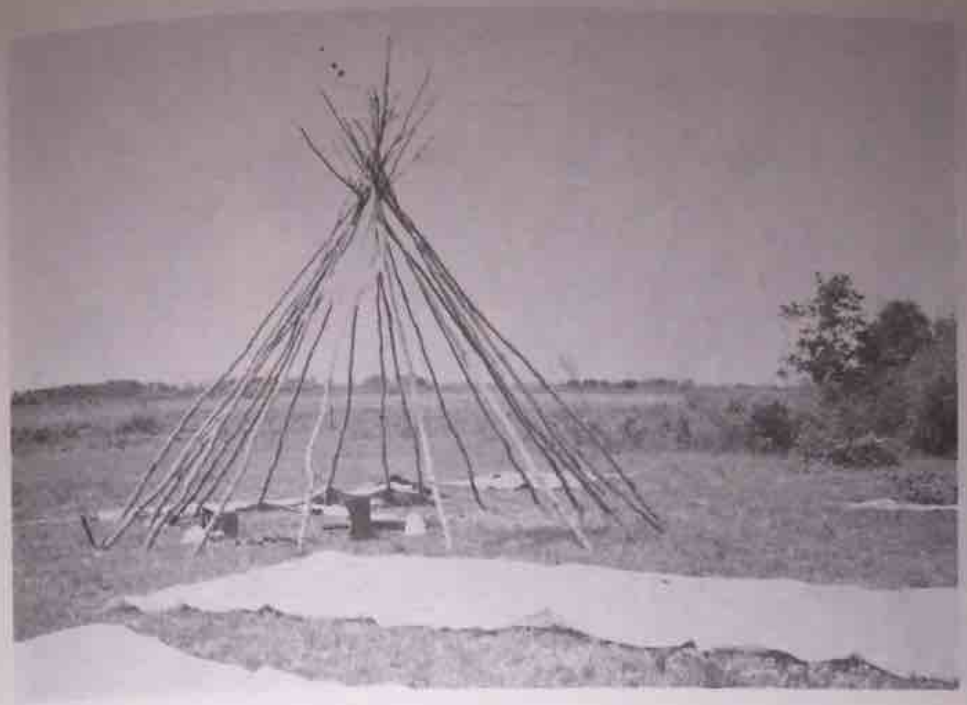


Plate 33. Ranking next in importance to the Rain Dance among the sacred ceremonies is the Smoking Tepee.

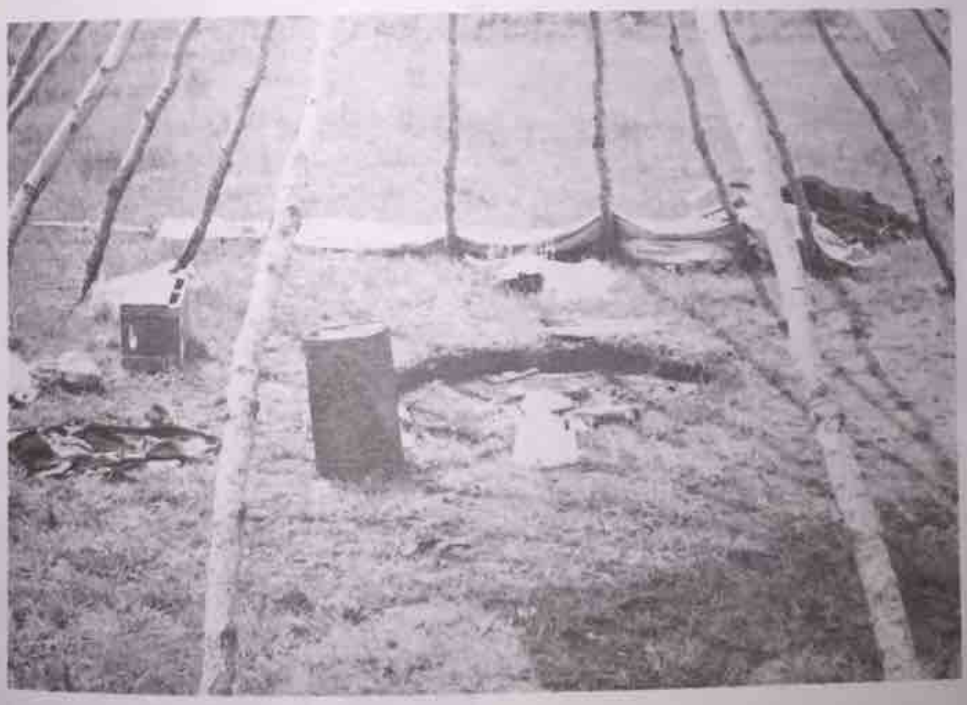


Plate 34. The aftermath of the Smoking Tepee. Note the round altar in the centre, where a fire had been burning during the night-long singing session.



Plate 35. Sweat Bath lodge used as ritualistic cleansing preliminary to the Smoking Tepee. Note draped buffalo skull with mirror on it.



Plate 36. Cloth offerings fastened to trees were used in conjunction with the Sweat Bath and the Smoking Tepee.

PLATES 37 TO 80

The Sweat Bath Feast held at

the Standing Buffalo (Sioux) Reserve,

near Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan,

4 June 1967

Initiators: Paul Whiteman and Bob Obey



Plate 37. The ceremonial Sweat Bath Feast begins with a vow or promise to do something. Preparation for it begins in the Preliminary Tent.



Plate 38. The setting - in the Qu'Appelle Valley.

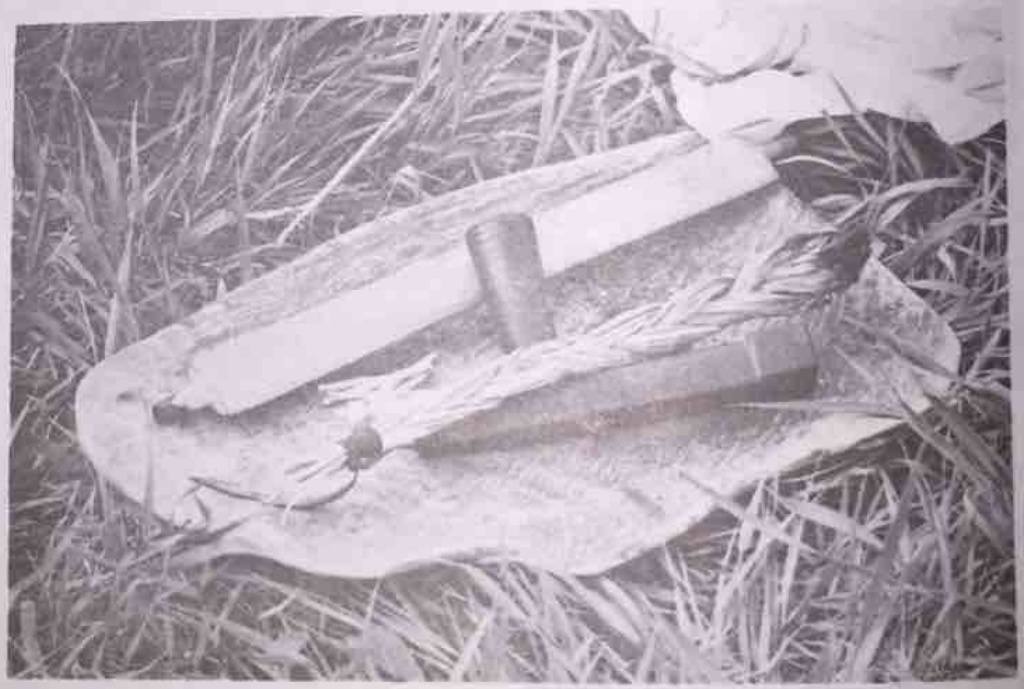


Plate 39. Coarse tobacco and bark bits are placed on this moose horn board and mixed. The pipe is filled, ritually cleansed over a Sweet-grass smudge and passed around in the tent. Later in the day this pipe is used in the Sweat Bath Lodge.

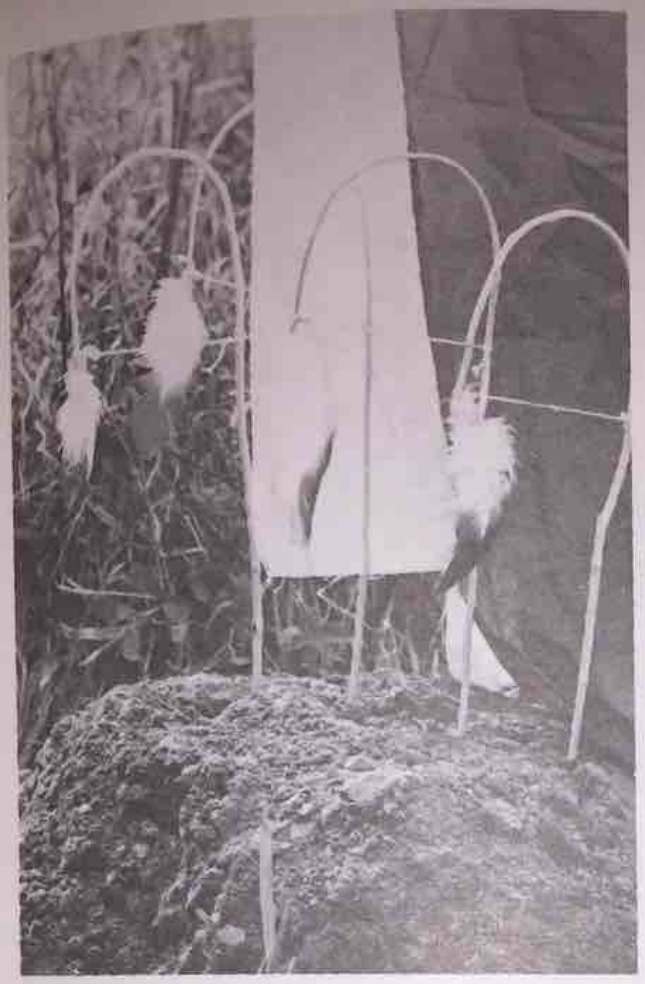


Plate 40. Four eagle feather offerings are made in the tent and latter placed at the back of the Sweat Bath lodge.



Plate 41. The manual tasks involved in carrying on the ceremonies were entrusted to two men as "servers". Here they draw a circle (about seven feet in diameter) on the ground before beginning the construction of the lodge.



Plate 42. Construction of the Sweat Bath lodge begins.



Plate 43. Nearby, several men watch the proceedings. Here Peter George (right), a Saulteaux Indian medicine man from Sakimay Reserve, shares experiences with his brother-in-law from another reserve. Two other men look on.



Plate 44. Willows are pushed into the ground.



Plate 45. Construction continues.



Plate 46. The willows are interwoven to form a dome shape about four feet high and six to eight feet in diameter.



Plate 47. The servers help one another as they arch the willows and intertwine them with opposite pairs.



Plate 48. Bob Obey's lodge goes up. In the background are two former lodges which were used the previous year. Once used, they cannot be used again for ritual purposes.



Plate 49. Paul Whiteman looks on as servers prepare the wood for the fire.



Plate 50. A specified number of stones are required for the ceremony.



Plate 51. Two sets of stones and two fires are needed because two Sweat Bath lodges are constructed - one for Bob Obey and the other for Paul Whiteman.



Plate 52. Paul Whiteman inspects the fire.



Plate 53. The Preliminary Tent is dismantled and the canvas is taken to the Sweat Bath lodges.



Plate 54. Once the Sweat Bath lodge is built and the stones are heated, it is time to cover the dome with blankets, robes and the canvas from the dismantled tent.

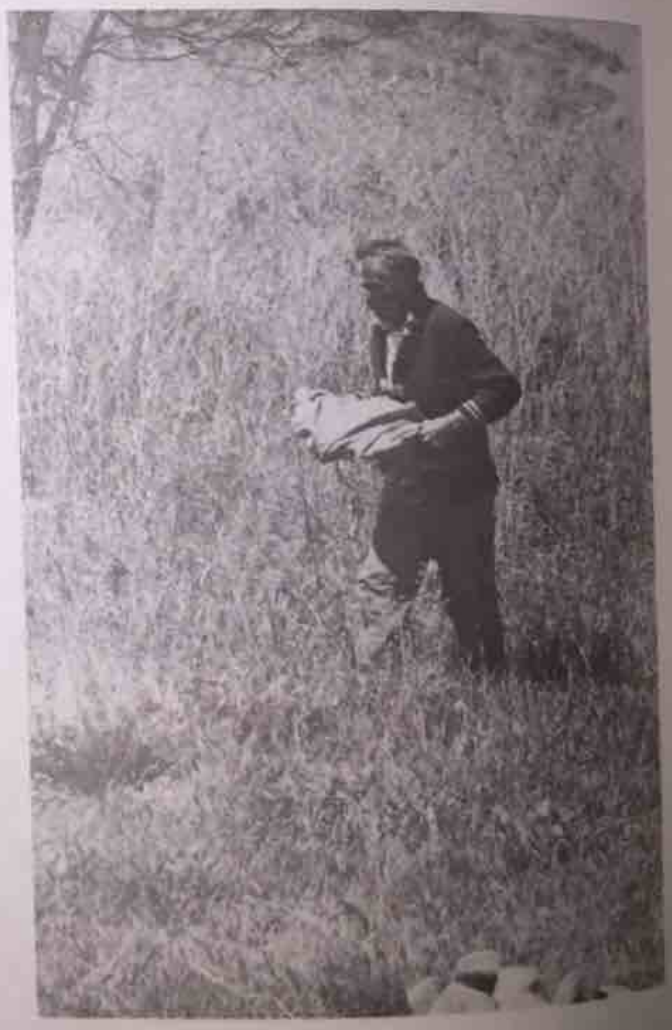


Plate 55. The initiator (Paul Whiteman) brings his sacred bundle with buffalo skull, pipe, Sweetgrass and tobacco.



Plate 56. It's time to undress and put on the loin cloth.

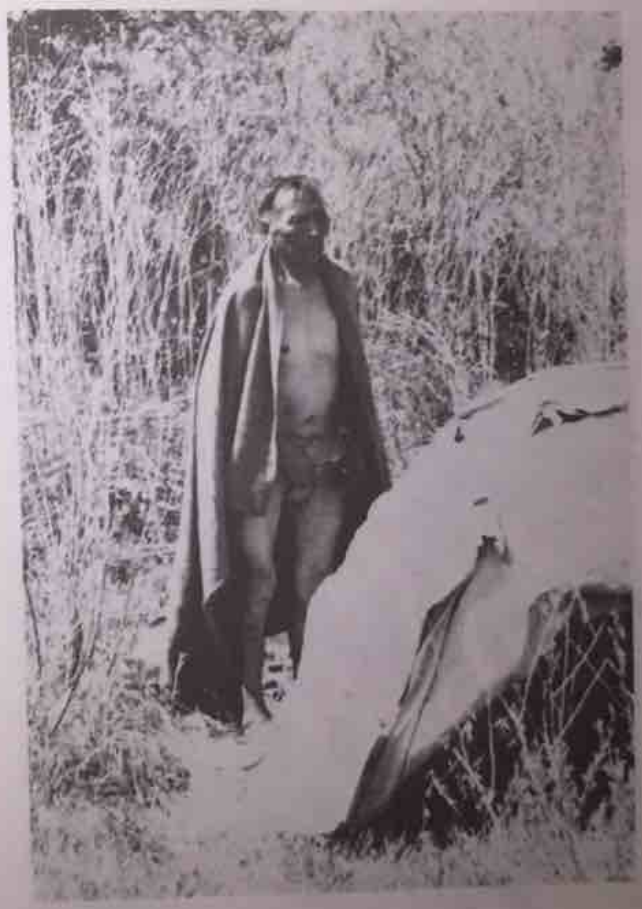


Plate 57. Paul Whiteman, wearing loin cloth and blanket, waits for his two partners to get ready.



Plate 58. The men walk clockwise around the lodge and pray in Sioux. In their arms they carry cloth offerings, a pipe and tobacco, Sweetgrass and a buffalo skull draped in red cloth.



Plate 59. The covers are lifted to gain entrance. Once inside the men burn Sweetgrass and pass a pipe around.



Plate 60. Heated stones are carried and placed into a hole dug inside the lodge to receive them. Note pot of water outside which will later be placed inside and sprinkled on the hot stones to produce steam.



Plate 61. A willow branch, cut part way in the centre and bent over provides a handy vise-like grip for the stone.

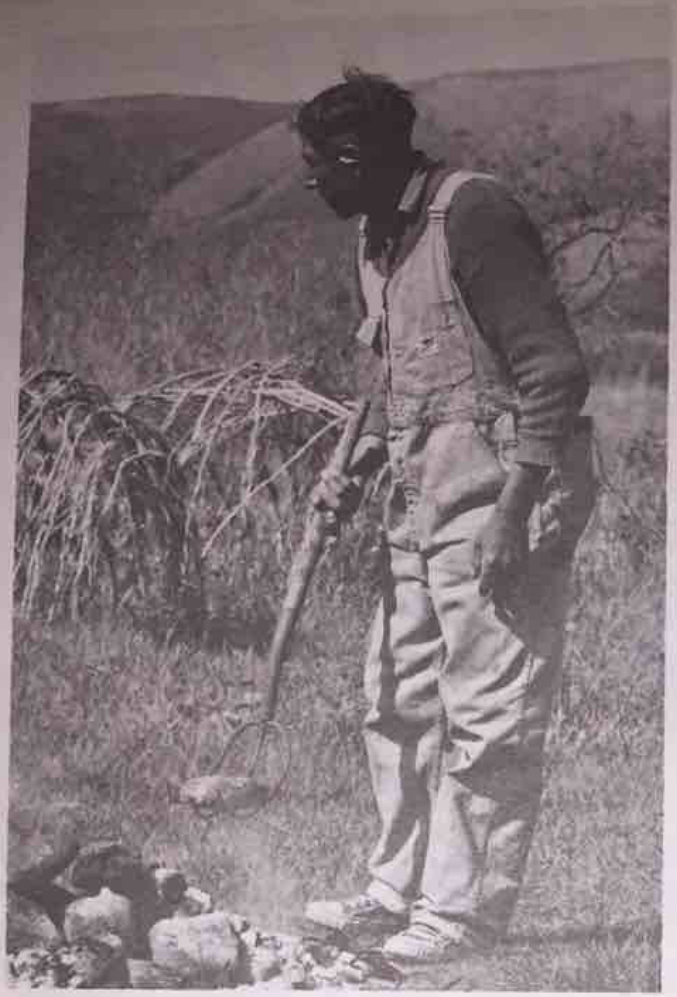


Plate 62. A bent fork provides another tool for carrying the hot stones into the lodges.



Plate 63. Once all the stones have been carried in, the lodge is closed. Steam rises as water is sprinkled on hot stones. A set of four songs are sung and then the covers are lifted a little and the participants rest. The server waits outside.



Plate 64. They sing one or two more sets of songs and then come out of the lodge.



Plate 65. Then they sit or lie on the ground to cool off. A cup of water quenches the thirst.



Plate 66. Women and children join their husbands and fathers at the conclusion of the Sweat Bath. They sit down in a rough semi-circle in front of the ceremonial elders.



Plate 67. The elders sit in a place of honour in front of two Sweat Bath lodges. Before they partake of the food, the pipe is passed around. Left to right: Paul Whiteman, Felix Panipekeesick, Peter George, Max Cappo, Herbert Sparvier and Bob Obey.



Plate 68. When the food is offered it is first held up to the Spirit Powers above and a prayer is said. Herbert Sparvier of Kahkewistahaw Reserve does the honours.

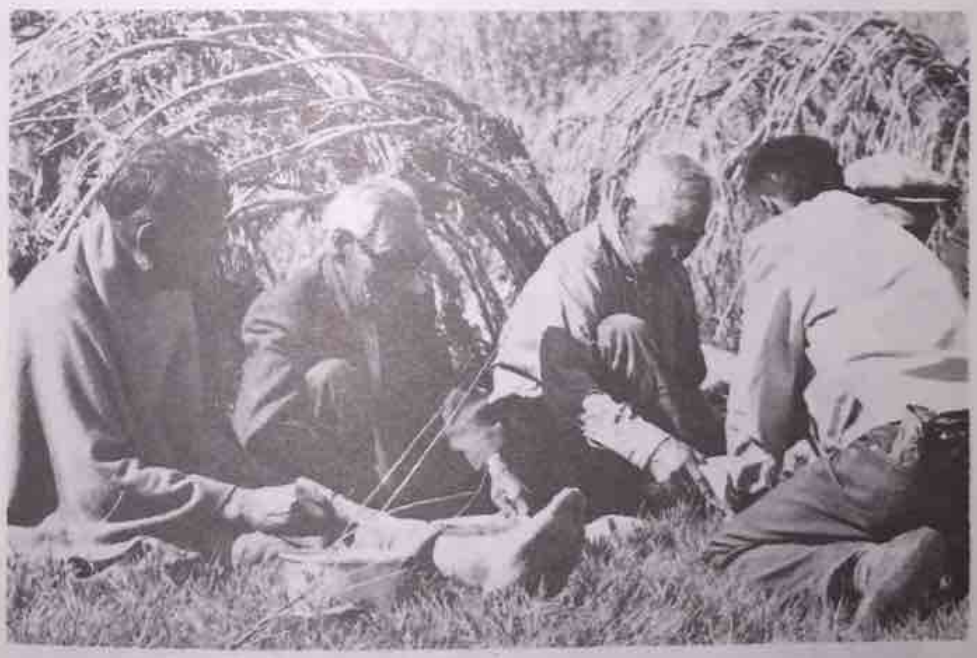


Plate 69. The ceremonial elders are served first.



Plate 70. Jimmy Knudson, from Sakimay Reserve area, helps to serve. Local people and relatives are expected to bring their own utensils.



Plate 71. The feast included meat and rice soup, noodles in fat, crackers, thick slices of bread, tea, cubed sugar, sweet dessert of boiled raisins and sugar and some homemade pastry.

PLATES 72 TO 80

Felix Panipekeesick (Informant),

Saulteaux Medicine Man,

Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan



Plate 72. "Rain Thunderbird" poses for photograph. Note the deerskin drum which informant was making for fieldworker. A homemade wooden adze was used to scrape the hair from the deer hide.



Plate 73. Felix with his drum.

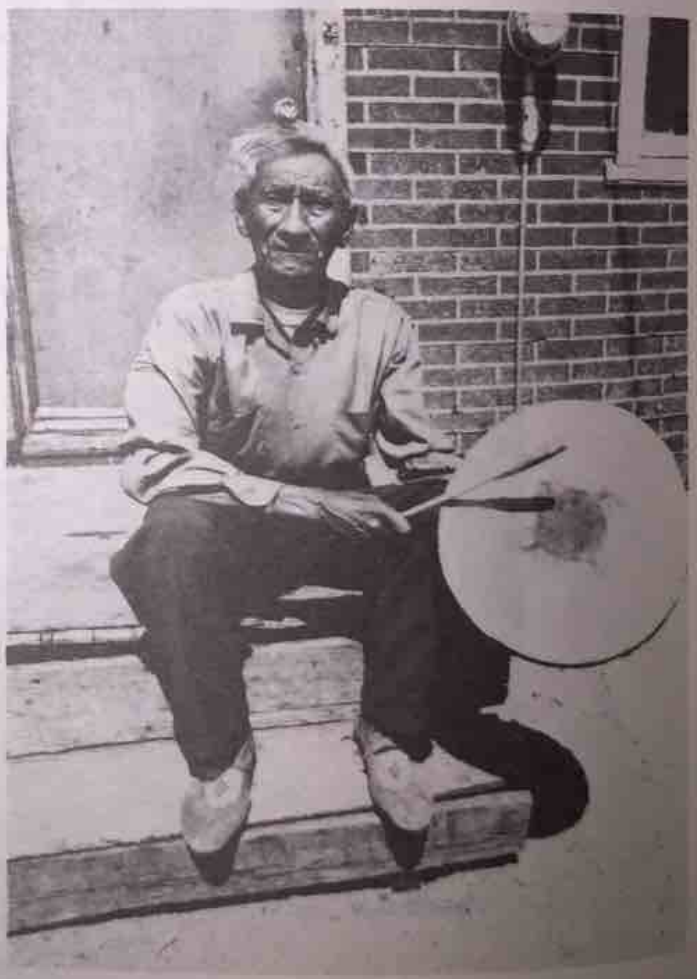


Plate 74. Another view of Felix and his deer hide drum.



Plate 75. A third view of Felix with his drum.

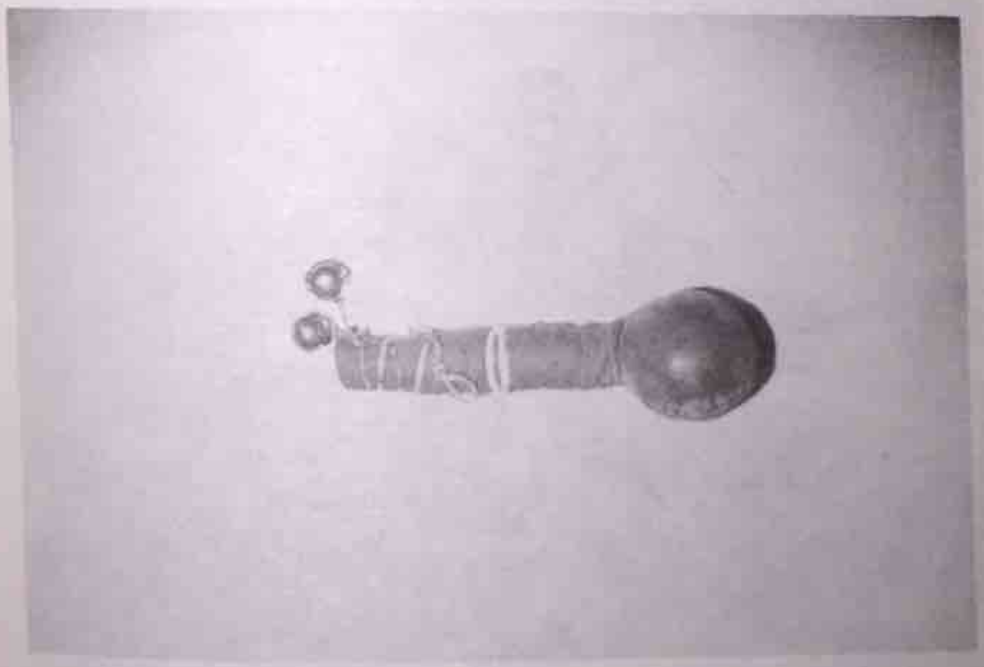


Plate 76. Ceremonial rattle used by Felix Panipekeesick at the Rain Dance in 1966. The rattle is estimated to be 160 years old. Earlier the rattle belonged to the informant's grandfather and then his father. (In the most recent interview however, Felix claims this rattle is 80 - 90 years old and that he received it from his grandfather's stepson.



Plate 77. Bear-claw necklace used by Felix for ceremonial occasions during the Rain Dances. Estimated to be about 200 years old. Components include bear-claws, commercial beads and leather thong.



Plate 78. Stone peace pipe and wooden stem used by Felix Panipekeesick in the Rain Dance, Sweat Bath Feasts, Smoking Tepee and other ceremonial occasions during the past 26 years. Felix received the pipe as a gift from an 82 year old chief of Touchwood Agency (Saskatchewan) during a Rain Dance on Sakimay Reserve. The pipe and stem are estimated to be 100-110 years old.



Plate 79. Eagle bone whistle covered with porcupine quills and attached to beaded neck string, used by Felix in the Rain Dance ceremony. Felix received this whistle in 1951 from Dan Kennedy, an Assiniboine Indian from Sintaluta Carry-the-Kettle Reserve. The whistle is estimated to be 50 years old.



Plate 80. Old Felix at home with his daughter and grandchildren on Sakimay Reserve.

PLATES 81 TO 82

Peter George (Informant),

Saulteaux Medicine Man,

Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

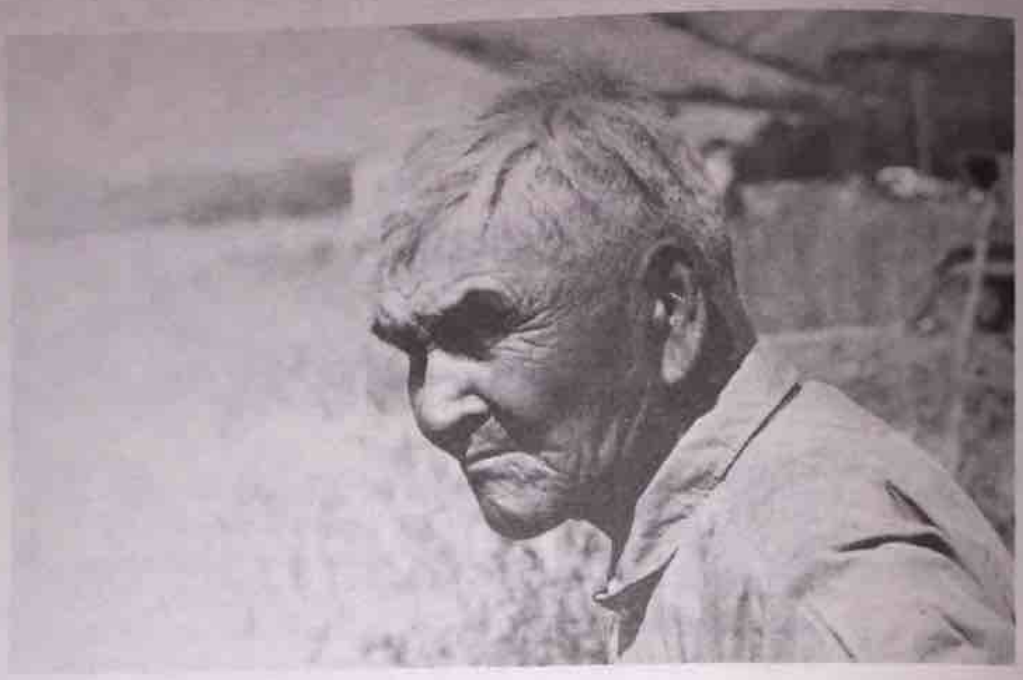


Plate 81. Peter George, the Medicine Man. His Saulteaux name means "Thunder-born".



Plate 82. Telling a story with hands and words.

PLATES 83 TO 85

Mrs. Hector (Elizabeth) Wasacase (Informant),

Saulteaux Herbalist,

Broadview, Saskatchewan



Plate 83. Mrs. Wasacase with two of her foster children in the town of Broadview. Note the method of carrying toddler on back.



Plate 84. Digging for roots in the Qu'Appelle Valley.



Plate 85. Digging for roots on the side of the hill north of Round Lake, Saskatchewan.

PLATE 86

Alec Tanner (Informant),

A Cree Indian,

Cowessess Reserve, Saskatchewan



Plate 86. Informant Alec Tanner (on left) with an old friend, attending a Sports Day on Cowessess Reserve, 23 August 1965.

PLATES 87 TO 92

Miscellaneous Photos Depicting Persistence of the Old Culture



Plate 87. Old Jerry Ochapowace of Ochapowace Reserve holds the only known medicine drum on the four reserves north of Broadview, Saskatchewan. Note his braids - he is the only one wearing them among the local Indian population of 2,000.



Plate 88. Saulteaux woman wearing moccasins comes to collect her annual Treaty money of $5.00.

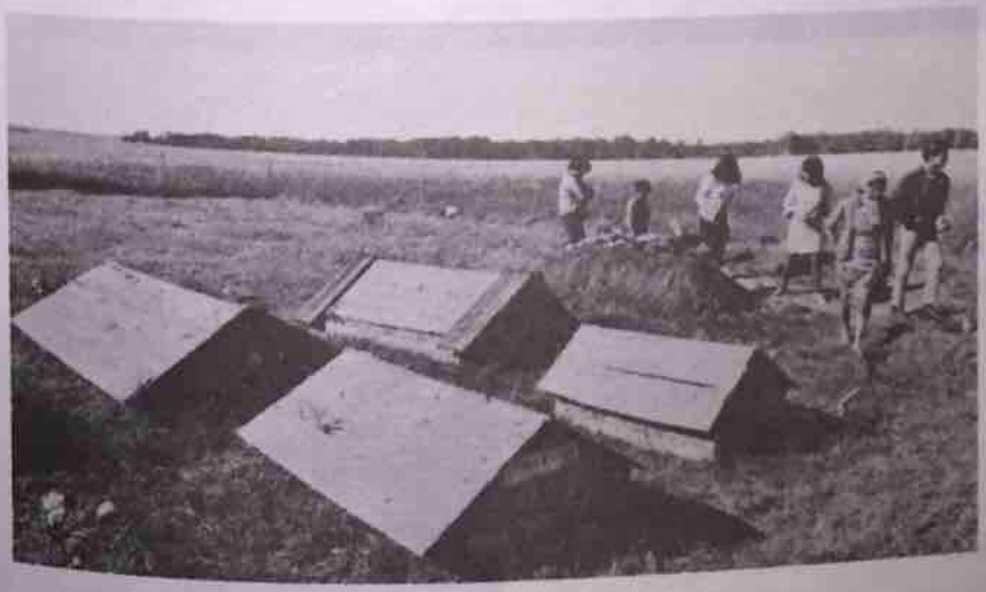


Plate 89. Gable-roofed board houses over some of the Saulteaux graves on Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan. These are no longer made.

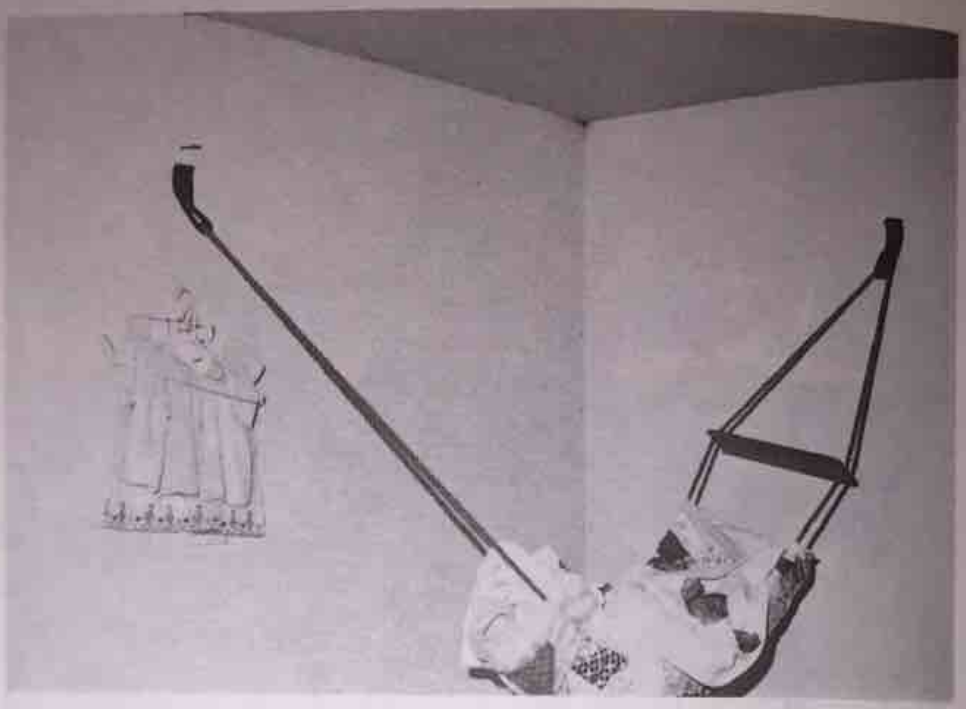


Plate 90. The Swinging cradle is used in some of the reserve homes.

Plate 91. Dancing the Powwow during the opening of the Kahkewistahaw Village in 1965.

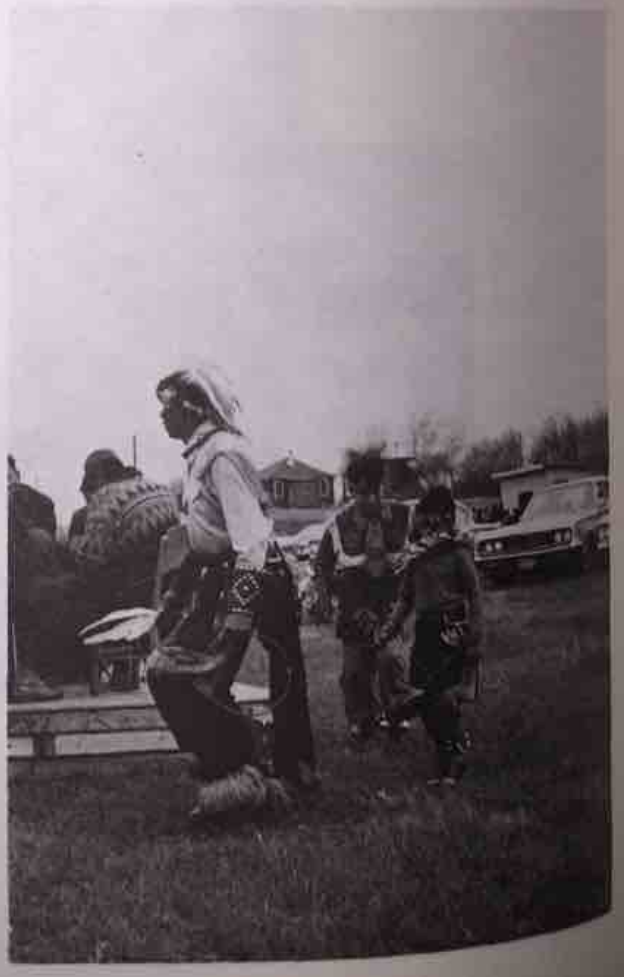




Plate 92. Sixty miles up the Qu'Appelle Valley is Standing Buffalo Reserve, located near Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. Here, during the 1950s and 1960s the Sioux Indians held their annual Powwow. This one was held 13-15 August 1965, when some 10,000 visitors witnessed the secular event. Many of the Indians from the Broadview area attend and a few participate as dancers and singers.

APPENDIX A

Abridged Transcription of Tape-recorded interviews[12] with Felix Panipekeesick, an 83-year-old Saulteaux Indian Medicine Man from Sakimay Reserve, north of Broadview, Saskatchewan, by Koozma J. Tarasoff

Interview No. 1[13]
Grenfell, Sask.
May 13, 1967

KT: How old are you now Felix?

FP: Eighty-three.

KT: Where were you born?

FP: I was born right in Sakimay Reserve.

KT: Was your mother a Saulteaux?

FP: Yes.

KT: Your father?

FP: Yes, a Saulteaux.

KT: How many children did your parents have?

FP: They had two boys, two girls and me.

KT: Are you the oldest?

FP: No, my brother was the oldest. I'm second oldest.

KT: Are all the children living right now?

FP: No, I'm just the only one.

KT: How old was your father when he died, and how old was your mother?

FP: My father was 104, and my mother was 86.

KT: Do you remember where they were born? Were they born out here on these reserves or did they come from some place else?

FP: I don't know. I don't think they were born here. Some place else in Saskatchewan.

KT: Do you recall your father and mother telling you where the Saulteaux Indians came from to this area? Did they ever tell you how they got here?

FP: Well, they never said anything to me about that.

KT: Do you have any idea where the Saulteaux people came from yourself?

FP: I guess, you know, some place right in Saskatchewan. I remember my grandfather - my daddy's grandfather was 115 years of age when he died. Our grandfather never said anything about where they were born and where'd they come from. [Nor] did my father tell me anything about that - but some place around in Saskatchewan any way.

KT: In your early life, did you live in a house or a tepee?

FP: In the summertime we lived in a tepee, but in the wintertime, you know, we used to build a one-room mud shack.

KT: Did you do a lot of travelling in the early days, say to other Rain Dances or Sun Dances?

FP: Not very much. Just down to Piapot, near Fort Qu'Appelle.[14] You know, at Piapot - I believe that was the only place they used to have Rain Dances then, as well as down at Ochapowace,[15] you know.

KT: Did your father take you and the rest of the children on these trips?

FP: Yes. He used to take us with his team of horses, in a wagon, you know. This was every year, more or less. And when they used to have Rain Dances down at Ochapowace, you know, there's a fellow that used to come there with tobacco and a pipe, and he'd go up to my daddy. That fellow and my daddy would call the old people into the tepee. Then they would start talking and the man who brought the tobacco would invite us. Whenever we're invited, we have to go to the Rain Dances.

KT: How did they send this tobacco?

FP: They used to put it in a kind of cloth or leather bag. They had no paper then, you know. Just a little bit [of tobacco], you know; they'd send it over. They used the same thing at Piapot.

KT: Just as they do now?

FP: Yes, but we use paper now. This is an invitation for us to attend.

KT: What happens if you don't attend?

FP: Well, nothing would happen.

KT: Would you feel bad about it?

FP: No.

KT: How did your father make a living? Did he hunt for food himself or did he do any farming?

FP: Well, they had no farming here. They put in garden with potatoes and turnips. Then they used to go out and hunt for wild meat, like deer, elk, moose, bear, ducks or cranes.

KT: Do you remember buffalo in your days?

FP: No [chuckles]. I don't remember. My grandfather used to talk about buffaloes a lot of times. He used to kill buffalo and use the meat. Oh God, they'd leave nothing. When they killed a moose or a buffalo, the women would tan the hides and make tepees out of it. This was before my days, you know, but our grandfather used to tell us. We never heard of those canvases...we used the hide, maybe moose hides or elk hides, or buffalo hides. The old women would tan them and make the tepee. They'd take about five or six hides, you know, to make a big tepee. Well, it's funny. They'd tan those, you see. I don't know how they make them. Supposing that they have a big rain, the hide gets wet, but it doesn't get hard as with canvas. It's funny, I don't know how they make it like this.

KT: Did they put any designs on the tepees?

FP: Oh yea, all kinds of designs. Just like what they had at the Sioux Powwow[16] near Fort Qu'Appelle. It's just the same.

KT: When did they stop making tepees on Sakimay?

FP: Once the old people had gone, these were put away.

KT: Traditionally, did men help to make the tepees?

FP: No, this was a woman's job.

KT: Did the early people do a lot of berry-picking?

FP: Oh, yes. Lots, you know - especially in the fall. The old people used to pick a lot of chokecherries. Then they'd crush them, put them in a pot and cook them. Next they'd add some fat and very soft ground meat. Then they stirred the mixture and put it in a hide - maybe a deer hide.

KT: The inside part?

FP: Yes. They'd take all the hair off, you know. They'd make a little bag like that (about 15 inches or so, square). This would then last all winter.

KT: Did they dry this mixture?

FP: They dried the meat and they dried the cherries, and put lots of fat grease in it and mixed it. It tasted good.

KT: Is this what they called pemican?

FP: Something like that. We call it *pe-mi-kay-ghun*.

KT: Do you still make this?

FP: No. We stopped making it since the old people are gone. I remember in the early days when you would take those blueberries - they'd pick a lot of them. Oh, it might be a bag full, you know. They dried them, and put them away for the winter.

And you take another thing. In the prairie they call it wild turnips, you see. Oh they dig them out as much as they could, and they cook them. Then they take the bark out of that and cut the rest into pieces and dry them. They put that away. Well, when they kill an elk or a deer or a bear, they cook the meat, boil it, and make soup.

KT: Do you still make this now?

FP: Not any more, but I remember when my mother used to go out in the middle of July or August and dig some up and make soup. That's what they used through the winter here. Also, they dug lots of potatoes and stored them in the ground. First they would dig round hole and make a big fire in it for maybe two days, you know. Then they took all the ashes out, put hay in there, then the potatoes, and covered them up. You see, if they don't do that, the ground gets frozen. But when they make fire the mud dries up and they don't freeze. They stay all winter there. By the springtime the potatoes are just as good as anything.

KT: Did you do a lot of fishing on Crooked Lake?

FP: Oh yea. We do a lot of fishing. Jack and pickerel, mostly. It was the same in the early days, except they made their own hooks in them days. Then, when the hooks came in, they bought them.

KT: I guess they don't use the bow and arrow any more?

FP: No, no, they don't use it. It all died out. In the early days I remember my father used to have one and my grandfather used to make arrows for me to hunt birds, squirrels, gophers or rabbits. But to kill deer I used a gun.

KT: Did you ever eat squirrels and gophers in the early days?

FP: No, I never, but the old people did. I know my grandfather used to make a string out of a sinew and give it to me. "Ah, my grandson," he used to say, "go and try to catch a gopher." Well, I used to go out, you know. I'd see a gopher run into a hole and then I'd make a loop and when it came out I'd pull and catch it. Sometimes I used to kill four or five, you know. I started bringing them to my grandfather and grandmother. Ah, gad, they started to cook them, you know. But I never ate one.

KT: What about plants in the early days? Did you ever use any vegetables of some kinds?

FP: No.

KT: Was meat the main food?

FP: Yes, meat and berries like chokecherries, raspberries and strawberries. That's what they used to pick and make jam out of it.

KT: Did you have any horses in the early days?

FP: Oh yea, they used to have a lot of horses. My Dad had about six head of horses.

KT: What did you use these for mostly?

FP: Oh, with halter when they wanted to go some place, or with a wagon. In wintertime by home-made sleigh.

KT: Did you have any cattle?

FP: Oh yes, my Dad had cattle and I had some myself. I don't have any now. That was six years ago. You know, at one time I had 14 head of horses and 23 head of cattle. Then I thought of helping my son Harry start farming. I sold all but four horses and bought a tractor and some implements to use. Bought everything for him from Schlamps in Grenfell. Harry and another boy, Jimmy, started to work, you know. They were working with a tractor and plough for about one year. After that they quit. Of course, you know how these young boys are - they want to travel all the time and like that, so we sold all the implements that he had.

KT: How many acres did you farm?

FP: Well, they used to work about 75 or 60 acres before they quit.

KT: How many children did you have all together?

FP: Well, I had [two] and I lost four. So I'd had six all together. That's my own children.

KT: What did the four children die of?

FP: They just got sick and died. I don't really know what happened. They were all about 14 and 15.

KT: Is your wife still living?

FP: No, she died at the Fort[17] on the sixth of August 1947.

KT: Was she Saulteaux?

FP: Yes.

KT: Are you presently living alone?

FP: No. With my daughter and her children - three girls and three boys. Her husband does not live here.

KT: Tell me about your Sweat Bath experiences in the early days.

FP: Oh, yes, I remember it lots. Every summer they had Sweat Baths all over this reserve, you know.

KT: Just on the Saulteaux reserve or also on the Cree reserves?

FP: Yes, the Cree reserves and the Saulteaux.

KT: How many times a year would you have a Sweat Bath on your own reserve?

FP: Once a year.

KT: Has there been any change from the early time to the present in the Sweat Baths?

FP: No, no. None that I know of. They used branches and heated stones - the same as you've seen at Paul Whiteman's place. There's been no change.

KT: Do you smoke a pipe inside the Sweat Bath lodge?

FP: Ah yes.

KT: How many people usually went inside the lodge during the early days?

FP: Oh, as much as you can. They don't mind if they are full, you know. It doesn't matter. Anyone can go in.

KT: What is the purpose of a Sweat Bath now? How do you look upon a Sweat Bath?

FP: Well, let's see. Some of these people promise to do something, you know. Just like I do in Rain Dances. Once you promise you have to do it - just like in a church, you know. Just like that. Supposing maybe my daughter or my son or my grandchild gets sick. Well, I promise that he should get well. And sometimes they get better, so we have to make a Sweat Bath. It's just like a promise to God, you know.

KT: Can anybody make a Sweat Bath or just certain people?

FP: No, no. You see there's only the two who make Sweat Baths - Peter George and Gordon Kaye.[18]

KT: And yourself?

FP: Well, I can't. I don't make very much like that anymore. Just only the Rain Dances.

KT: Why is it that only these two people can make the Sweat Bath and nobody else on this reserve?

FP: Well, with Peter George, his old Dad used to make that Sweat Bath and the Rain Dance, you know. Well, before the old man died, he left [the secrets] to his son, Peter George. Just the same with Gordon, you see. His Dad died, and his old Dad teach him how to do this. That's why Gordon makes that, you see.

KT: That's the one that made the Rain Dance last year.

FP: Yea, yea. That's why he made that.

KT: Do you always use a Sweat Bath before a Rain Dance?

FP: No, it's not necessary.

KT: Was the Sweat Bath Feast[19] that I attended with you near Fort Qu'Appelle put on so that someone might get well? Do you remember?

FP: Oh yes. They [Paul Whiteman and Bob Obey] promised to make one, you see. That Pauline who's married to Paul Whiteman is my sister. She got sick, and so Paul made a promise to make a Sweat Bath.

KT: Did your sister get well?

FP: Oh yes, she's living now.

KT: Was she there at that time?

FP: Yea, she was there.

KT: Did she have to do anything special?

FP: Oh no. She just had to cook there, that's all. Make soup.

KT: Have many people got well by the same way on Sakimay, too?

FP: Oh, yea.

KT: What about outside people? Have any outside people ever participated in a Sweat Bath?

FP: No, only the local people.

KT: Let's now turn our attention to the Rain Dance. Is the Rain Dance the same as the Sun Dance?

FP: No, no. They're different, you see. You see, they had one up in United States. Well, that's the Sun Dance, you know. They got one pole like that. Well, that's the sun, you see. That's the Sun Dance, that one. Well, all the people, the ones that have fasted (they gotta fast, you know), build a lodge, but not exactly the same as our Rain Dance lodge. Just only that pole, you know. Well, they might stand here and the singers they'll be singing. See. They start a dance. They go up to that pole, you know. They dance back again. And again and again they keep dancing that way all day. Until they stop, they never see the other side of the post. Well, that's the Sun Dance, you see. They look at it [the centre post] up there.

KT: I notice in the Rain Dance they also look up when they dance.

FP: Yea, about from here but they don't look up there. It's all different, you see. That's what you call Sun Dance. Where they hold that dance, they don't build a lodge like what we build here.

KT: Which Indians hold the Sun Dance?

FP: I don't know what they're called.

KT: Have you ever held a Sun Dance here?

FP: No, no. This is a different one, you see. Rain Dances are different than Sun Dances.

KT: Did you ever hold Sun Dances among the Saulteaux here?

FP: No.

KT: Turning to the Rain Dance, what is its basic purpose?

FP: Well, like last night, at my place we had a get-together, because I was intending to make a Rain Dance. Lots of fellows came from Ochapowace, Kahkewistahaw, Kamsack[20] and the Pasquas[21] and made a promise and a request that I make a Rain Dance. Once they promise they have to come. So they buy these prints[22] you know. So I have to make it, you see.

KT: Are you the oldest one of the group?

FP: Yes. The people come to me.

KT: You're kind of the senior person?

FP: Yes.

KT: What do you call this gathering, yesterday?

FP: We call it a feast, you know. In Saulteaux we say *Sagaswayitum*.

KT: How many of these feasts would you hold in a year?

FP: Early in the fall we start to gather and make a feast. We got to make that three times from the fall to the spring. I've made these three already.

KT: When did you hold the first one?

FP: Before Christmas, any way. Then I made another one after New Years. And this is the last one I'll make. [Finally] on camping day[23] I gotta put a tepee there and make another feast. That's the fourth one, then - and the last one. Then, on Saturday or Friday - they'll put up the lodge. That's how we do.

KT: Who calls these feasts?

FP: I have to call them by inviting them beforehand. We start at suppertime and go till evening. We have to smoke a pipe at least once. We sing and pound the drum and the hide.

KT: How many people sing?

FP: Just guys like me. I sing, and Edward Wahpoosewyan [born 1897], Peter George [born 1888], Billy Whitehat [born 1883], Oliver Sparvier [born 1905], and Gordon Kequahtooway [born 1907].

KT: What do you sing?

FP: Well, just like the hymns when you go to church. We gotta sing our Rain Dance songs.

KT: Do they ask for health? Do they ask for the Great Spirit to help you?

FP: Ah, yes.

KT: Do you ask for something else?

FP: Ah, yes. Any time we ask for rain, we get something. Otherwise, if the land is dry, we don't get anything out of it. So in dry weather maybe we have to ask for rain so the ground would be wet - so plants could grow.

KT: Is each song different?

FP: Yes. Just like when you go to church, there's different hymns there. Well, the hymns there are by numbers. We're just the same. See, I sing one song. Later I'll sing another song. So on, like that, you know. All in Saulteaux.

KT: How many songs would be sung, say, like last night? Would there be five, ten or fifteen?

FP: As much as you can. At this time I sung eight songs. After I finished it was somebody else's turn. I gave the pipe to Peter George and this meant he had to sing. He sang about five or eight different songs, different hymns. So on, like that, you see. And then he'd pass the pipe on to the next person.

KT: Does the person have to take a puff of this pipe before he starts singing?

FP: Oh sure, he's got to do it.

KT: Is it just tobacco that you use?

FP: Tobacco and *kanikinik*. *Kanikinik* is the scrapings from the red bark next to the tree. You scrape it out and mix it with tobacco. Then you put it in the pipe.

KT: Do you use Sweetgrass for the pipe?

FP: Ah, yea. We have to use it. We can't use the pipe like that. We got to use Sweetgrass and smoke that stem, you know.

KT: Do you always point the pipe in a particular direction before you start?

FP: Oh, sure, you gotta do it, you know. You have to.

KT: Which direction do you have to point it?

FP: Up, east or west or south. Any place [wherever the Good Spirit was to be addressed].

KT: What do you call the Good Spirit in your language?

FP: *Aht-soo-can.*

KT: What does the Great Spirit mean? Is it all the world? Is it the spirit in all the animals and all the people?

FP: Well, you know how a Father God put everything on because he made the world. And he got the idea to put different, like you call it, these thunderbirds. He put one on the southside, maybe on the northside, maybe on west, like that. Well we have to point that pipe-stem in the four directions. That's what it means.

KT: Is there only one Great Spirit in the world?

FP: I couldn't say. Maybe more than one.

KT: Would the Saulteaux people have several of these Great Spirits?

FP: Yes.

KT: Do you have such a thing as a "bad" spirit?

FP: No. None that I know. We just have the Great Spirit.

KT: Are you able to talk to the "dead spirit"?

FP: Oh, yes. I could talk. Suppose a person died, I've got to talk then - just as do the Catholic or Presbyterian ministers when they bury the dead.

KT: Are you able to talk to the spirits of your father or great grandfather?

FP: Oh, yea.

KT: And Peter George, too?

FP: Oh, yea, he could.

KT: But not just anybody?

FP: No.

KT: How many times have you talked with the spirit of your father?

FP: Oh-h, maybe four times.

KT: And with your grandfather?

FP: Just the same.

KT: Would this be when you were alone or would you go off someplace?

FP: Well, I would go in the bush and talk so nobody would see me.

KT: What things would you talk to such a person as your father?

FP: Say all, like I was sorry what happened to him. Like that you know.

KT: Would he talk to you?

FP: No.

KT: Can you actually see his face?

FP: No. I'd talk just like I saw his shadow - 'cause he died, you know [chuckle].

KT: Did you have to fast before you spoke to him?

FP: No.

KT: Why did you speak with your father only four times?

FP: Well, that's all I could talk to him.

KT: Why if you went five, what would happen?

FP: Well, I wouldn't know.

KT: Would something happen if you spoke to your father five or six times?

FP: Maybe, yea. My grandfather said you could talk to a spirit but you can't see him. He said: "Supposing if I die, well, I'll go someplace. You'll call my name, and I'll want to talk to you myself although I'll be dead. But you won't see me. You'll just see my shadow." [Ha, ha, ha.]

KT: When did your grandfather say this?

FP: When my father died I went out, you know. I went out in the bush and started to talk. All at once I saw a shadow there. That was my father's shadow.

KT: Would this be at night or in the daytime?

FP: In the daytime.

KT: Can people like Peter George do the same thing?

FP: Oh yea, just the same thing.

KT: Does everyone have this power to communicate with the dead?

FP: No, they don't.

KT: In someplaces in the world, people go out in the bush when they are young and stay hungry for awhile and fast and wait to see a Guardian Spirit - a spirit that's going to help them. Have you done this when you were young?

FP: No, I've never done this. Maybe in the early days they might have done it - but not today.

KT: When I was at the last two Rain Dances in 1965 and 1966 I noticed that you wore a necklace of bearclaws around the neck - the necklace I have now.[24] What is the history and meaning of these bearclaws?

FP: Well, my grandfather had these in his day, and before he died he gave it to my dad. Then when my dad died I took those bearclaws, you know. This makes the bearclaws over a hundred years old. As for the meaning of it, when I make a Rain Dance I have to wear it.

KT: And if you don't wear the bearclaws, what happens?

FP: Oh, nothing, although that's the proper way. Just like the Catholics, you see, they've got beads; when they pray, they take some of them in their fingers. Well, it's just the same here.

KT: What about the history of the rattle that you gave me?

FP: Well, the old people had that while they sang. Well, now these days, maybe they use a piano, you know. Drums, too, are just the same thing.

KT: How old is that particular rattle?

FP: It must be about 80 or 90 years old. I got that one from my grandfather's stepson.[25] When he died, they sent it to me to keep it as much as I can - to take care of it like that.

KT: What is that rattle made out of?

FP: Well, that's from a buffalo forehead. They skin it and make it round. Now these days we got no buffalo. When I made one for myself to use this summer, I bought a steer-head from Melville. Then I made it.

KT: What do you put inside for the rattle?

FP: Oh, any kind of stones or buck-shot, so it rings.

KT: Where did you get the eagle-bone whistle that I got from you?

FP: Well, you have to use that just like the rattle in a Rain Dance. It just doesn't mean anything but you have to use it. I got that one from Dan Kennedy[26] of Sintaluta.

KT: Felix, tell me something about the Thunderbird. How did this come about? Is this something that your father and grandfather told you about? Is this some kind of a big bird?

FP: My grandfather used to tell me: "There's a Thunderbird - it's something like a big bird." He then told me the story of his brother - not his real brother, but his cousin - who went up a hill one day. This fellow was about 20 or 22 years of age at that time. He went out hunting for buffalo with a musket loaded gun. When he saw a big stone on a very level ground he stopped and climbed on it. He wanted to see if he could find any buffalos. Well, as he was standing there, all at once somebody grabbed him but he didn't see who it was. Then both went up - to heaven, I guess. He tried to look around, but he didn't know where he was. There was green grass all over. Soon he saw a fellow coming towards him, just like a man, he said. This fellow said: "Come here, my grandchild. You're wanted over there." This fellow started to walk and he followed. They came to a big tepee and went inside. That's just the place he wanted to come. An old man, with long braids, was sitting there. He had never seen this old man before. And this old man said to the fellow: "Well, my grandchild, I want you to come and visit me. I'm not just the same as you. I'm not. I'm a Thunderbird. You see how I look now, just like a big eagle, sitting. That's a Thunderbird."

So this fellow stayed there for ten days, and this old man taught him everything - how to do it, what to do. He got that Thunderbird to teach him everything, you know - to make Rain Dances and Sweat Baths. "Well," he says, "when you go down to your place, you make a steam bath party."

Well, he done it this way. He returned, but didn't know where he had come from. It was just like somebody was leading him and somebody following. When he got home the people at first couldn't recognize him. He was so poor - he had nothing to eat at all for ten days up there.

Grandfather asked his brother [cousin], "Who are you?" When that fellow started to look at him, grandfather recognized him. "My God," he said, "that's the fellow that was lost for ten days. That's the man." The fellow couldn't talk. They started to give him a little buffalo broth. They gave it to him by a little bit. His tongue was way out, you know; that's why he couldn't talk.

When his tongue got better he started to talk. Well, he started to eat and he was alright. Now, he told maybe his dad or his brother to get some sticks, about 48 - and 40 stones. Well, these fellows do this and they start to build a Sweat Bath - the same as Peter George builds. Well, he called all of the old people together, gave them a pipe, and told them where he had been. He told them that as soon as they got into the Sweat Bath there'd be thunders coming. "That's what the Thunderbird told me," he said. "That's why I'm making this Sweat Bath." So this fellow and this old man started to pray and they all went in. No sooner

had they come inside, the thunder came and with it a big rain.

I'll tell you there's another thing. My father made a Smoke Tepee - just like I made last summer.[27] Well, the people gathered and sang all night. There were big clouds and then a thunderstorm. This took place about a half-mile south from where my house is today, by an old road. Many people, including Peter George's daddy came to the Smoking Tepee there. You know that night the Thunderbird must have laid on the grass, for there were his burnt marks on the ground. It was just like a bird, you know.

KT: Did you personally see the Thunderbird?

FP: No, I saw the burnt grass where the Thunderbird landed - just like when you make a prairie fire, you know. The marks on the ground were 15 to 16 feet across.

KT: Have there been other occasions when you've seen some evidence of a Thunderbird?

FP: Yes, one early morning, as I do every fall, I was getting ready to cut hay. As I followed a road with horse, all at once I saw a stone about that big [indicating about 15 inches in diameter]. It was right beside the road - but I had never seen it before. I looked around and saw the hay and little trees were all down, and the mud in the slough was kind of white. I thought to myself, "I don't know what's the matter." I said to myself, "The Thunderbird must have been here." So I went back and told my wife, "Come and see." A bunch of us went there and saw the stone, as if somebody had pushed it. That stone is still there yet.

KT: Was this in the 1940?

FP: Yes. Someplace there.

KT: Where there any other times that you remember seeing some evidence of the Thunderbird?

FP: No.

KT: What about other people?

FP: Well, I think that Peter George has had [similar experience]. One time he asked me, "Did you see those clouds?" "When," I asked. "That dark cloud over there is just like a Thunderbird," he said. You ask Peter George about that - he knows it better.

KT: If today you saw a cloud that looked like a Thunderbird, would this scare you? Would there be any meaning for you?

FP: No.

KT: Are there any other animals that are important in the Indian tradition besides the Thunderbird?

FP: No. Not that I know of.

KT: Has anyone actually seen the Thunderbird?

FP: Yes. There's a lot of fellows - the older people, you know. They have seen the Thunderbirds. Some are red; others are white and black. They're all kinds of colors, they say. Well, they said they're great big birds, with wings 15 to 16 feet across.

KT: What about eagles? Are Indians afraid of eagles?

FP: Oh, no.

KT: I think someone told me once that if an eagle sits on your roof or on a tree or something, it's a bad sign. Have you heard of something like that here?

FP: No, I've never heard.

KT: What special significance has the buffalo skull in the Indian tradition?

FP: Well, there was an Indian, you know, long ago. He was sitting out on a hill, and he saw a buffalo coming. Well, he was waiting on the hill. And then about a quarter of a mile that buffalo started to get mad; it was digging its feet into the ground. So when it come up close, maybe 50 or 60 yards, he saw a man coming with the horns on and with hoofs. Everything was in the shape of a buffalo, but it was like a man's body. This fellow said, "Well, my grandchild. I want to tell you something. Now, that your old man - your grandfather - is going to make a rain Dance, tell him to put the mark of my head on the pole. See, that's all that I want."

This fellow wasn't scared. When he turned around, this man was gone, and instead the buffalo was walking backwards. So this fellow went straight to his grandfather. Well, he told all about what that buffalo said.

"Well," this old man said, "I never noticed that." From then on he started to make this pole with the buffalo head cut in it. "Now," this old man said, "everytime when our young people or old people are going to make a Rain Dance, they have to put the buffalo head there." See, that's why we put a buffalo head on the centre pole all the time.

KT: Could you make a Rain Dance without a buffalo head?

FP: No, we can't. If we don't put that it's a kind of a bad sign. Maybe something will happen. That's why we always put it. And you've got to put the moon up there too, as well as the Thunderbird. The moon is placed right next to the nest.

KT: How did the moon tradition come about? Is there a story connected with this?

FP: Well, there was an old man on Kahkewistahaw Reserved called Kahkisheway. I guess he must have had a dream one day. Oh, he was a poor man, but he knew everything. You know, he used to dream like that about Rain Dances. And that's where we got that from. You know the moon is a kind of a spirit because it's way up there - what God put up. And so, as with the design of the Thunderbird and the buffalo head, so also the moon design has to be put up. If you don't put it, maybe something will happen - even in death.

KT: Is the moon a kind of a "good" spirit, too?

FP: Oh, it's good. They're all good.

KT: What about the Sweetgrass? What's the story on that? I know you use Sweetgrass in almost everything.

FP: Oh yea, we gotta use that. We gotta use it, especially when the thunder comes around. When you think it's going to be a big storm, you gotta put that Sweetgrass where you are, whether in a modern house or maybe in a tent or tepee. This will prevent lightning from striking your house and burning it down or perhaps killing someone.

KT: Was Sweetgrass used by your grandfather as far as you can remember?

FP: Oh yea. In everything. He used to make cigarettes out of it.

KT: When you send tobacco as an invitation to people, do you send Sweetgrass too?

FP: Ah, yes, we gotta send it. You see, last night I gave Jimmy Knudson[28] some tobacco plugs and asked him to cut them up into little pieces and put some Sweetgrass with each piece. Then I told him to send these pieces to Sintaluta, Moose Mountain, Manitoba, and other places, as an invitation for people to come to the Rain Dance.

KT: Is that on June the 22nd?

FP: Yes. Camping day is on the 22nd.

KT: Who's putting on this Rain Dance?

FP: I'm putting it on.

KT: You said earlier that a Rain Dance is often put on to help somebody who is sick. Are there some people who are sick now?

FP: Oh yea. There's an old man that's passed here awhile ago - Edward Rabbitskin.[29] He's not very good. His wife wished that her husband should get better. So she said, "I'll starve for two days so that he can get better."

KT: When will she begin to fast?

FP: Well, just as soon as they find the lodge for the Rain Dance, and when they finish it, she will be fasting and will dance inside.

KT: Does she have to do anything else in the meantime?

FP: No. She's gotta do what she promised.

KT: Can she drink now?

FP: Oh, she could drink now, but when we start the Rain Dance and as soon as she goes in, she will have to quit drinking and eating. On Sunday afternoon, when we quit, she can start eating and drinking.

KT: In the Rain Dances, also, you use a lot of cloth. What's the meaning of the different colors?

FP: Maybe you buy some cloth, you have to give it to me. It is just the same as when God [Jesus] was suffering on the cross with some cloth around him. That's the meaning of the cloth.

KT: Is there any meaning say for red?

FP: Oh, it doesn't matter whether it is red, black or some other color.

KT: What material do you use mostly?

FP: Oh, any kind of material.

KT: What is the usual size?

FP: As much as you want - usually two yards or so - whatever you want to put up there.

KT: When is this cloth bought?

FP: Some was bought last fall and some yesterday - and all of this I have to keep and take to the Rain Dance. The wife of that old man who is sick gave me four yards of cloth. When she goes to the Rain Dance, I've got to give it to her.

KT: I notice, too, at the Rain Dance, there are times that a woman brings in a baby at the back of the lodge, in the area called the "altar". Is this done to give a name to the child?

FP: Yes, to name them.

KT: Has this been done all the time in the past?

FP: Oh, no, whenever they want it. The same thing happened in older days as it happens today. It's the same with the Roman Catholics - when they have a child they go to the priest to baptize the child and give him a name. Well, that's just the same with us.

KT: Would you personally give the name?

FP: Yes. I'll give the name.

KT: Would this be a Saulteaux name?

FP: Yes, in our language, you know. The same with the Crees, too. Sometime they come to me in my home to give their child a name. Well, I give them a name. Well, that's just the same thing, you know.

KT: What does the name "Felix" mean?

FP: Well, my Saulteaux name is *Kim-vua-ni-pi-nas*. This means Rain Thunder Bird.

KT: Who gave you this name?

FP: Well, I wouldn't know. I was a baby at the time. I guess one of the old people gave me the name at a Rain Dance. But my father never told me who really gave me the name, you know [laughter]. That was probably my godfather, I guess - 'cause he give me the name. [chuckles]

KT: What other kinds of Indian names are there?

FP: Oh, all the Thunderbirds, like Low Cloud or Dark Cloud.

KT: Suppose last year somebody brought you a baby. How do you decide what name to give him? Do you look at the clouds or do you look at something else?

FP: Oh no. I've got to pray and then I know. It's the same as one goes to a Catholic church - the priest gives him a name and baptizes him. The same with us. I baptize the kid and I give him a name. Maybe I'll call him "Red Cloud" or "Dark Cloud" or "Blue Cloud" or "Young Thunderbird". Like that, you know.

KT: Is this name kept secret?

FP: Oh, yea, they keep it. They don't use them when they go to school, but use their modern English name like Peter or Irene.

KT: When would they use their Indian name?

FP: Oh, anytime at all.

KT: When a parent brings you the child, do you smoke a pipe as part of the ceremony?

FP: No. I pray and then give the name when I'm finished praying.

KT: Do you touch the child?

FP: Oh yes, you gotta baptize him, you know.

KT: Do you use water in your ceremony?

FP: No. You take some lipstick, maybe, or anything that's red, and put it on the forehead, just like a priest who uses holy water. Well, that's just the same thing. There's no difference.

KT: How many children do you think you've baptized in this way during your lifetime?

FP: Well, I got 44 - mostly from my reserve, three from Kahkewistahaw, one from Cowessess, two from Piapot [in the Qu'Appelle Valley], and one from an Assiniboine band. That's seven of them from different reserves that I baptized and gave a name.

KT: Do they usually give you a gift in return when you baptize?

FP: No, not always. At times they bring some tobacco. And when I want to make a feast they bring some soup, make a cake or a pie. Just to help me out, you know.

KT: Do you always end your Rain Dances with a feast?

FP: Yes. You gotta do it all the time, including those meetings before the Rain Dance. Everybody donates for a feast by bringing lots of food.

KT: In the early days - say, in the time of your father and earlier - what sort of food did you have at a feast?

FP: They mainly used Saskatoon berries and beans, and they drank tea made from roots.

KT: Last year at a Rain Dance on Sakimay put on by Gordon Kaye [Kequahtooway], I recall a teenaged boy participated as a dancer. He was the one who a couple of weeks earlier had been involved in some shooting during a family argument. Is this the reason why he participated in the Rain Dance?

FP: Yea, he promised not to make anymore trouble - and he's kept his promise. But he also promised to really dance so his sister might get better. She was up in Regina. When you promise you gotta do it. [At this point the woman whose husband is sick and who promised to fast at the next Rain Dance, came to the car and handed Felix a dollar bill and a package of cigarettes.]

That's a gift. Ha. They think very much of me for making the feast last night. Now I could smoke. I was wanting to smoke, you know. I don't know why these young people like me. You know often these young people come to my place. And they don't do that to other people. I don't know why they like me.

KT: Well, you must be some special person.

FP: Maybe. [chuckles]

KT: Nobody has a bad word to say about you.

FP: No, that's the main thing. I never want to say anything [bad] to young people, you know.

KT: So they respect you?

FP: Yea.

KT: That's very nice.

FP: You see there's some fellows last night [at the third pre-Rain Dance feast] that came from Pasqua Reserve. They formed the singing party. They asked my cousin's son to come. He brought two color prints for me. This fellow was in jail, you know, and he said to me, "Well, my uncle, I brought these two cloths for you. When I was up at Prince Albert I was sleeping," he said. "Oh, it was about the middle of the night. I started to dream just like somebody was talking to me, 'Now, you go to your uncle. You go and give him a cloth - a red and a blue and tobacco. He's going to make a feast some time. Your father will let you know.'"

Now, that fellow was supposed to be a year in jail. There were three of them. "'Now you go to your dad and your uncle. In 20 days you'll be out of jail.' Oh, I dreamed that day," he said. "So that's when I got up and kept thinking and thinking," he said. "I started to count," he said. "And I went to my brother. He was in the other cell," he said. "'On Sunday we'll go to the church,'" he said, "'down in Prince Albert.'"

"So I met my brother," he said. "So I gotta tell him what I dreamed," he said. "'I wonder if that's true that our uncle is going to make a singing party. I gotta be there. I gotta buy two color cloths and I gotta bring a package of tobacco. And in 21 days time you'll be out of this place. That's how I dreamed.' I told that to my brother. 'Well, brother, that's pretty near the same thing what I dreamed too.'"

"'So what did you dream?' I asked. 'Well, as soon as our uncle is going to make that Rain Dance, I'm going up there. I'm going to go and build that lodge for him. I'll be out of jail.' I wondered if that's true. Next Sunday again we talked, 'I wonder if that's going to be true.' Well, I started to count," he said. "Well, that was on Thursday. Then the guard came in to see me."

"'Well, boy, you're going out today. Go and get your clothes.'"

"I went out and got dressed. My, God, I was glad," he said. "And the other boy he was out just a week later," he said. Last night they were all here. That fellow brought two color cloths. The other one didn't bring nothing; he's just going to make a lodge. "Oh," he said, "I want to do this. I'll be there before you're going to make that lodge. I'll come and help you."

KT: How many Rain Dances have you put on yourself?

FP: Oh, maybe about 39 or 40. I used to make them every year. I remember the dry years of 1938 or 1939, I guess. The local farmers helped me out

to make a Rain Dance - so as to make rain. They used to collect money from farmers around here, and would give me $35 or $40 to make a Dance. They used to help me a lot.

KT: Did rain come?

FP: Oh yea, it helped. Everytime, you know, when I make a Rain Dance a big rain usually comes in the next day or two.

KT: When do you usually hold the Rain Dance - is it after certain flowers come out? Or how do you know?

FP: Oh, you leave it to the time when the leaves are out.

KT: Is it always in June?

FP: Yes.

KT: Why was it picked in June? Do you know why this came about in the early days?

FP: Well, that's the best time to make a Rain Dance, in June, you know. Maybe the days are too hot in July and August. In June we need some rain, you know.

KT: I noticed that you helped Oliver Sparvier[30] last year.

FP: Oh yea, I teach him.

KT: You taught him how to put on a Rain Dance. If you didn't teach him, could he have put it on?

FP: No.

KT: So you're the teacher then?

FP: Yes, just like the priests, you know, they go to college in order to learn.

KT: This is a kind of college.

FP: Yea, just the same thing. Gotta teach them, you know, what to do, and this and that.

KT: How do you teach him?

FP: I would call him sometime during the night and tell him what to do and how to pray. Oh, we teach him, just the same thing.

KT: Now, when you pray is this different from singing?

FP: Well, they're just the same thing. You've got to pray and sing, you know.

KT: How many different prayers would you know altogether?

FP: Maybe about 60 or 70.

KT: Would you know more than most people know?

FP: Oh yes. I had to teach Oliver how to pray. When he wanted to make a Rain Dance, I had to teach him how to pray. I teach him how and he knows it now.

KT: Why did you happen to choose Oliver instead of somebody else?

FP: Well, you got to choose a fellow that is kind of young - like 40 or 42.[31] You've go to remember that when you take young people, you have to teach them, for they don't follow very good. So you've got to teach them everything.

KT: Have you taught many people in your lifetime?

FP: No.

KT: Was this the first one?

FP: I wouldn't do it, you know.

There's an old fellow I know in Moose Jaw. When we went there two years ago he said, "See, I want to show you your pictures. The last time you came here we took your picture," he said. So he took me downtown and took out his pictures of me. Well, there I was standing, wearing my braids. When my friend noticed that I had no braids on, he said I looked different.

Next we went into his office where he asked some questions. "What is your Indian name?" he asked. "Well, my name is Rain Thunder Bird," I replied. "Oh, is that you," he said, "shake hands with me. Come here," he said. "Now take your choice of clothes that I have in my office." I took a blue colored suit which was worth about $40 or $45. "Now," he said, "I won't ever forget you."

So that day I got home. My son Harry came and took the suit of clothes away from me. [chuckle] I no longer had a suit.

Next summer we went up there again, but that fellow had died. I guess we're going up there this summer, too. We're going to have a big Powwow down there. Well, a truck comes down and gets us.

KT: What is the difference between a Powwow and a Rain Dance? Is one for entertainment and the other one for a serious purpose?

FP: Oh, yea.

KT: Regarding the Smoking Tepee you held last year, you once said that this was the first time that this ceremony was held in this area since your father had one about 40 years ago. Is that correct?

FP: Yes. I was a councillor in those days and I used to write things down. One day I went to the hospital for a couple of months. Then, when I came back, my books were destroyed. The kids, you know, they broke it up and I lost everything.

KT: Why did your father hold his last Smoking Tepee? Was this to teach you how to make one, too? Was this when you started to make Rain Dances?

FP: My father never put up a Rain Dance. But he used to put that Smoking Tepee, you know, every year. That's where I learned from, you see.

KT: What's the Indian name for this Smoking Tepee?

FP: *Pi-tal-go-mik.*

KT: Why wasn't there any Smoking Tepees here in the last 40 years until last year?

FP: Well, I don't know.

KT: Are you the only one that can put them up?

FP: Yes - in this part of the country.

KT: What about in other parts of Saskatchewan, have they held Smoking Tepees?

FP: Oh yea, they do, you know. Pretty near every reserve, I guess. Now they always have one down at Kamsack[32] and at Nut Lake.[32] Also, they hold it at Fishing Lake and at Duck Lake. Now, up here, on this side, they don't make it so much.

KT: Did Peter George help with the Smoking Tepee last year?

FP: Oh yes, I help him and then he helps me.

KT: Do you have to have the two?

FP: You have to have the two, you see.

KT: Now, it was interesting the way you put up that tepee - the women raised it up.

FP: Oh yes, they always do that. For a Smoking Tepee we use the women to tie the poles, because they know how to tie them. There was four of them.

KT: Was this held for one day only?

FP: Oh yea, just the one. We set it up, covered it, and when the sun was getting down we started to pray and then sing. We prayed all night and sang all night.

KT: How many of you did this?

FP: Well, let's see. There was Peter George and Edward Whitehat; Oliver Sparvier and there was a fellow from the Cree reserve there, called Wilfred Isaac. There was only five of us singing, and myself. Six altogether.

KT: In the morning - what happened?

FP: Nothing. We just stopped - just quit altogether.

KT: When did you have your feast?

FP: In the morning [?] before we had the Smoking Tepee.

KT: What's the main difference in purpose between a Rain Dance and a Smoking Tepee?

FP: Well, I tell you, they're pretty near the same. The lodge of that Rain Dance and that Smoking Tepee are pretty near alike. Well, supposing I'm going to make a Rain Dance, but the boys don't want me to make that. Then I've got to make that Smoking Tepee. They're just about the same, you know. We pray, just the same way. The only difference is there's dancing in the Rain Dance, and there's none in the Smoking Tepee. Also, we sing two different kinds of songs in the Smoking Tent. But we always pray just the same in both. And if a fella doesn't know the songs, he could sing the Rain Dance songs. They're just pretty near the same.

KT: What's the difference in the message? Do you say somewhat different things in the two? I mean, do you also pray for some Spirit in both?

FP: Oh yes. There's no difference, you know. They're just the same.

KT: Now is this the time also that Oliver Sparvier began to learn how to make a Rain Dance? Were you passing your training on to him?

FP: Oh yes. I was trying to teach him how to make it, you know. Tell him how to pray. Tell him how to start the singing there. I tell him everything what is, and what's got to be done. Well, he knows it now.

KT: After this Smoking Tepee was over, does this mean that Oliver has officially learned his ceremonies? Just like he's passed his schooling?

FP: Oh yes.

KT: Is he given a title?

FP: Oh yes, sure, he's got to.

KT: Who gave him the title?

FP: I give it to him. He knows it now.

KT: So you kind of passed on your training to him at that time. So this is the reason for the Smoking Tepee.

FP: You know, I tell you. He would have made it [Rain Dance] this year but he didn't want it. He wanted me to make it. But I told him, "I don't know if I can - whatever you boys are going to say. If you want me to make it, well then I'll make it." That's what I told him. Now the boys they want me to make it, you know. I told them I'm getting old, you know, like that. There's a lot of work on that, you know, lot of work. You gotta go ahead and go and camp there for a few days and you gotta pray there when you're going to make it. It's hard, you know.

KT: Did you pass on your teaching to Oliver because you feel you're getting kind of old?

FP: Yes, that's right.

KT: And the Smoking Tepee kind of made this official then, did it?

FP: No, I didn't. I didn't teach him that, you know. I just teach him that for the Rain Dance.

KT: Why then, was the Smoking Tepee held?

FP: You know, you take the swallows - where they got their eggs, you know, and the little birds. As soon as they have these young - the little ones - they carry them away. Well, after that, when these little ones can fly, they fly around with mother and father. They might land on that wire there and they'll sit down together. And you'll see them running lightly on the wire. Well, that means there's going to be a big storm or a big rain. But I don't know. You don't see them often.

KT: Do you know of other stories in which you predict things?

FP: You take a coyote, during the wintertime. Well, he'll howl - he'll howl. In two day's time it will start to snow.

Just the same with an owl. He makes noise in the morning [evening] when it's getting dark. But in the morning if an owl makes noise, it's going to be a windy day.

And you take another thing. A little whirlwind, you know, you see it very often, going around there and there in the field. That's going to be dry weather.

KT: Where did you learn all these stories?

FP: Well, my grandfather told me. And you take the cranes, if they fly low, there's going to be a good winter, not very cold. And if they fly way up in the sky and make a round circle around and they start again making one, there's going to be a cold winter. That's what my grandfather told me.

KT: Have these predictions always come true?

FP: Oh, yes. Sometimes it's true, you know. Sometimes it's true. And you take these crows. I'll say the same thing. When they fly low, there's

going to be a cold winter, deep snow.

My grandfather used to tell us all these things. And sometimes I study these. It's true, you know, especially like these coyotes. And you take at night in wintertime, supposing you see a moon just like fire, a kind of a dog. That's a kind of sign, you know, that's going to be very cold - frost like.

Supposing that we have a very big rain now. When it's finished, you see a rainbow. Well that means the rain has quit.

KT: Do you know any other stories like this?

FP: Oh, there's lots of stories we've got. My grandfather used to tell me, "Now you take the star dipper - it turns and turns in a circle, you know. Well, supposing in the wintertime it comes down the other way and drags his tail, there's going to be northern lights. Well, I study that; I look at it one time here, about two or three years ago. I told my daughter, "I'm going to watch. I'm going to sit outside. I want to make sure. Let's see what my grandfather said." You know, it was just getting dark and you could see the stars and the moon coming out. Well, he [the Big Dipper] did turn the other way. All at once, not even 15 minutes later, the northern lights came out. See.

There's all kinds of stories about it. My grandfather once said, "Some day you'll go out someplace in a bush or any place, and you see one star that doesn't move. Well, you know what direction you're going. You're going north or east or south or west. You keep track of that star," he said. "These other stars they move," he said, "but one star doesn't move. One star doesn't move. A big star - a very bright star," he said. "So you keep looking at that, you'll go right. That'll bring you home where your tent or house is - that'll bring you home," he said. But I don't know. I've never tried to find my way by the stars.

KT: Have you ever found, say, some lost horses with the help of some signs or predictions?

FP: Oh yes, I've found them. A fellow once came to my place and told me about losing a team of horses. I went outside and started to pray. As I prayed, I started to talk, you know - started to know where these things are. I continued to pray - just like a soul - when we were talking about the spirit, you know. And somebody was standing there. But I didn't know who it was, and then he [the spirit] shows me where those horses are - where a lost bag was. So I went back into the house. Next morning this fellow came to me. He lives at Cowessess Reserve [the reserve immediately east of Sakimay]; they call him J.N. Gordan Lerat. That's the one that lost his horses. He came with a truck.

"All right, we'll go," I told him. So we went down. Just other side of Eliceborg [?] in the Valley, the second house - that's where his horses were, in a barn.

KT: And you led him to the place?

FP: I told him. Yes, I lead him to the place.

KT: Did some kind of a spirit tell you where it was?

FP: Yes the spirit. Oh, all those fellows got it, you see. They all got it.

A young fellow once lost his buckskin coat which he sewed himself. He sold that buckskin to a farmer for five dollars. So I told him what place to go - the house and the farmer. He went and got a coat.

KT: What kind of spirit would this be that would tell you these things? Does everybody have a spirit? Does every person have his own spirit?

FP: No.

KT: Which people have spirits?

FP: I wouldn't know. Maybe Peter George would have it. I guess he's got it.

KT: Only certain people have spirits.

FP: Well, just about only two of us here.

KT: So it was your spirit that told you where to find those horses. It wasn't J.N. Lerat's spirit?

FP: That's right. If you see J.N. Lerat then you could ask him. He'll tell you.

KT: How many years ago was this?

FP: Oh, that might be about 14 or 16 years ago. Quite awhile ago. He lost his horses for two weeks. Looking for them all around, but couldn't find them anywhere. So I went with him on a truck and showed him where to get his horses. We brought his horses home on a truck.

You know, the time when your wife lost her watch[33] you should have come to me.

KT: I didn't know at that time. Do you think you would have found it then?

FP: Oh yes, I'd find it. She might have lost it in the bush there some place, you know. Maybe it's covered now.

KT: Do you think you could still find it?

FP: I don't think so. It's too late now.

There's one thing I'm afraid, you see. Like these fellows, Indians, you know, who do wrong, like killing each other. Three times they come to me and the last time I remember that's about 20 years ago. There was a woman got killed down at the east end [Ochapowace Reserve] over there. This fellow came to me and tried to get me to tell him who killed his wife.

"No," I told him. I didn't want to do it. It's bad for me. I know it. I might get in trouble. I told him there'd be the cops here. The law is funny, you see.

KT: Who killed his wife?

FP: I don't know - I didn't take it. I told him "No."

KT: Did you say that about three people in your lifetime have asked you to help find the killers?

FP: Yes, but I would never take that. The law is funny. Maybe if I'd showed him the fellow you know, maybe I'd get hooked [prosecuted] for that.

KT: Do you mean to say that you actually have the power to find such people but you wouldn't do it?

FP: No, I wouldn't do it. It's a different thing if a fellow lost something - that's all right.

Long ago a White guy was killed right on the reserve. I don't know what happened. One old lady had two boys who played cards well and could find everything with cards. So the old lady went to town and told the cops: "Why, it's easy. My boys could find who killed him or where he's lying down."

"How would they know?" the cops asked.

"They do it by cards," she said. "You buy some new cards and go up to my boys." So these cops went in the store and bought new cards. Then they went to the reserve.

"Well, boys, there's new cards," he said to them. "I want you to tell us where that dead man is lying down, and who the killer is." Well, the boys started to play with cards and they learned where that man was lying down. So these boys went with the cops. When they got there they found the man - he was dead - killed. So the cops took those boys in jail and charged them with killing that man. They were tried and hung. You know, the law is funny.

KT: Has anyone ever asked you to find lost people?

FP: No, I won't take that. You see, there was one time, Old Walter of Ochapowace came to see me about finding his boy who had run away from school. Dan Ochapowace, his brother came to my place, but I wouldn't take it. Well, that boy that ran away got caught in a big storm. It drifted, you know. Just about two miles and a half from their place that boy got played out and froze to death.

Interview No. 2[34]
Sakimay Reserve,
May 14, 1967

KT: Why are some people holding a Powwow on Sakimay, near the Rain Dance site, today?

FP: When the old man [William Whitehat] was up in the hospital, he and his wife promised to make a Powwow. This was on account of their boy being shot to death about two years ago.[35] Now that's the reason the old lady [Mrs. William Whitehat] wants to make a Powwow today. That boy used to go to Powwows and dance Powwow. Well, that's the reason she's making that Powwow today. It's kind of in his respect.

KT: Does she invite people from other reserves?

FP: Oh, all over, you know. There's some from Fort Qu'Appelle and the Sioux Reserve, and the Crees from Moose Mountain.

KT: How does she invite them?

FP: Oh, they just send a letter to them.

KT: With tobacco?

FP: No, no tobacco. That's just for the Rain Dance. They invite them to come and eat; they gotta have a lot of soup there, you know.

KT: Who prepares the food?

FP: Oh, like Jimmy Knudson and Wilfred Kaye [Kaypayoosaton][36] - there's two that serves around, you know.

KT: I see. Are these relatives to Whitehats?

FP: No. That's their job, you see. If something is going on like a feast, you know, they got to be there. They got to serve the grub, you know, to the people. That's their job.

KT: On this reserve only?

FP: That's their job. Well, they could go to some other places, you know, because they're well known that this is their job.

KT: When did they get this job?

FP: Jimmy Knudson - oh, he's been working for about four or five years, I guess.

KT: Was there a special ceremony when they started?

FP: No. They were just asked.

KT: Is the Powwow an Indian custom or is it something that was introduced after the European people came down here? Do you know?

FP: No, I don't.

KT: When you were a little boy, did they have Powwows?

FP: Oh, yes. They had a different kind of a dance, you know. Well, they used to call it, just like a Chicken Dance. That was long ago. They had this Powwow when the Sioux[37] first got here, at Fort Qu'Appelle. These Sioux came from the States, and they started to Powwow. The old people went there and the Sioux told them that they could hold a Powwow any place, on any reserve. Well, that's where it started from - (the Sioux Reserve) - but that's years and years ago, you know.

KT: Were there any Powwows during the early days of your grandfather's time?

FP: No. They used to dance on the ground like what they would do up here, see. They used to do a Round Dance and the women and men mixed. The singers would sit down in the middle, and they would use little drums, maybe three or four of them. In them days they didn't use the big drums[38] like today.

KT: What kind of hide was used for the little homemade drums?

FP: They were made out of deerhide, moosehide or elkhide.

KT: What does the Chicken Dance mean?

FP: It's just like a Powwow. Men and women dance together.

KT: What other dances did you have in the past?

FP: According to my old dad these old people had another dance. They called it the Medicine Dance, but I've never seen that one. I don't know how they did it. This was years and years ago. Peter George might know it. They used to have one across [Crooked Lake] maybe once or twice. Peter George was there as a young boy and I wonder if he could remember that. You ask him, he might know it.

KT: What other dances did you have in the past?

FP: There's another dance called the Giving Away Dance. This was usually held during the winter, but I've seen that only once. They used to have a leader. Well, they sang different songs, too, just like in a Rain Dance. These were not like those sang at the Powwow Dance or at the Chicken Dance. They sang about five or six songs - the same songs all the time. Now, supposing we sitting right here. Well, it would be full of Indian people. One of these fellows starts to sing with one drum. He stands up. Then one of those Indians will stand up too, and he might come towards me. I'd have to stand up too. He'd come and might give me a shirt or moccasins or something else. So, I've gotta dance in one place - not long, about five or six minutes. When this fellow stops, it's my turn to give a present - a shirt or whatever I want to give him.

KT: Have you ever held any Giving Away Dances here on your reserve?

FP: No, not on the hill here. They used to have it down across [Crooked Lake] where Peter George lives. There was an old man there who used to make that Giving Away Dance. That was old Shesheep. Well, I was in school at that time, living at Pasqua Reserve[39] for five years there. Then we came and moved to this side [on Sakimay]. Oh, they must have a couple of dances during the winter, maybe once or twice.

KT: Was this during a Powwow?

FP: No. That's separate altogether. They held the Giving Away Dance just in wintertime - not in summer.

KT: Do you know any other dances?

FP: No, I don't. Only those three dances that I told you.

KT: What dances remain today on your reserve?

FP: Just the Powwow and the Rain Dance.

KT: Regarding the Powwow that's being held on Sakimay today, will there be drums? Will they serve food after the dancing?

FP: Oh well, they have to. They must have a drum for that Powwow. During the Powwow they give soup or anything. That's all, you know. They feed the people any way.

KT: Felix, tell me something about how the old people used to cure the sick.

FP: Well, they used to pray when a person was sick.

KT: Supposing in those days I was sick, what would I do?

FP: Well, the Indians at that time had maybe one or two people who were just like doctors. If I'm sick and I'll call that fellow that is called the medicine man; he'll come and start to pray for me. He might give something and then he'll hold a rattle and sing. You don't have to tell him what's wrong with you. When he has finished singing, he'll tell you where you're sore, where something is bothering your body. He'll send for a medicine man that's just like a doctor - knows everything.

KT: What do you call a medicine man in Saulteaux?

FP: A medicine man is just like a doctor. We call him *mas-ka-key*. Well, this fellow will tell you what's wrong. And this Indian knows. He calls the medicine man, you know. He knows what medicine to give this fellow to drink. And then he starts to make this medicine. Well, the fellow drinks that, you see. Well, in about a week or ten days time, he's all right. The medicine did him good - that's what they do.

KT: Where do these medicine men learn?

FP: Well, I don't know. Long ago, when the Indians worked with this, they passed it on from one medicine man to another.

KT: It's like a kind of a doctor passing his knowledge on to another doctor during the training period.

FP: Yes. Well, supposing I'm a medicine man - yes, I'm a medicine man. Well, maybe I'll teach my grandchildren or my daughter, you know, what kind of root to dig - 'cause they dig roots all over. So on like that they teach each other, see.

KT: Would you choose one person or would you choose several?

FP: Just one person. Anyone at all.

KT: Would you choose someone that you liked?

FP: Yes, the one I like. You see this Peter George - he's got a lot of medicine. He used to explain good. If you ask him this, he'll explain very good, because he knows it and he's got a lot of medicine. You know, early in the fall, before the leaves fall, that's the time he digs around for roots. From these roots he makes medicine.

KT: Do you consider yourself a medicine man?

FP: Yes.

KT: In the same way as Peter? You also have medicine too, yourself?

FP: Oh well, sometimes, you know. I get it from Peter George.

KT: Is Peter more of a medicine man?

FP: Yes, he's more of a medicine man [than I am]. Well, supposing somebody comes here and asks me to doctor him or to do something to him. This person will tell me where he's got his pain. Then I have to go to Peter George and ask him for that medicine because he knows all about the medicine.

KT: Do you know as much as Peter?

FP: Well, I know some of it.

KT: Have you personally cured many people in your lifetime?

FP: Oh yes, quite a bit. Maybe about 20 or 30, someplace there.

KT: What kind of illnesses would you cure?

FP: Well, it's just the same way I tell you. I got to use medicine, you see - I got to medicine him, you know - what to drink. Supposing you get burned someplace with a fire. Well, that's a root for it. So I'll go and dig that and I'll chew it. Then I'll put that on your hand or wherever you got burnt. Wrap it, you know. In about a week's time

you're all right, you see.

KT: What other things do roots cure?

FP: Well, supposing a fellow gets a nose bleed. Well, there's a medicine for that. I'll go around and find something just like mushrooms. I'll take that and burn it. Then I'll make kind of a brown colored [mixture] just like ashes. Well, I'll put that in his nose - that will likely stop the bleeding. That the ones I know.

There's a fellow that chopped himself with an axe. Well, you get what they call a "rat root". There's a very strong luck [?] in it. Well, that fellow comes; maybe he cut his foot, maybe someplace on the leg. We'll chew that rat root and put that right where he cut himself. It stops the blood again, that one.

KT: Have quite a few people had bleeding stopped this way?

FP: No. Not very much. That's only down at Kamsack[40], where we get that rat root.

KT: Could you cure tuberculosis?

FP: Oh yes. There's a medicine for that. A medicine man knows all about that. I don't know, but Peter George might. You better ask Peter George because he knows more than I do. He's a medicine man. He was taught by an evil [?] old man and his dad you know.

I got a medicine here for toothache or a sore tooth. If there's a kind of a hole in your tooth, you chew that, fill it up, and that stops the pain.

KT: Do your grandchildren use it at times?

FP: Oh yes, sometimes, even my daughter. It's just like a tooth drop - just the same.

KT: Does it always work?

FP: Oh yes, it works. There's another thing - for rheumatism there's a medicine. You could drink that, but it's a very strong stuff. [At this time Felix's grandchildren were playing noisily around the car. Felix said: "Say, get down there, get down. Get down from that car there. Get down."] Well, you drink that about three or four tablespoons. Then you go to bed and roll yourself in a sheet and covers. In about ten minutes you start to sweat. After you have finished sweating you get up and notice yellow stuff all over your white sheet. [This is the evidence] that the drink helped to carry your rheumatism out.

KT: Is there a medicine for a person with pneumonia?

FP: Oh yes. No matter what sickness you have, they got medicine for that.

KT: With some of the sicknesses do you have to use a Sweat Bath before you use medicine?

FP: No. Just the medicine.

KT: Do you use a rattle in curing people?

FP: No.

KT: Didn't some of the early men use rattles?

FP: [Pause]. There's another thing. You should have come and asked this Peter George. Two fellows came from Saskatoon about two years ago and wanted to buy some old-fashioned Indian things. Well, I went with them to Peter's place. When they learned that Peter had a medicine drum, they were interested and bought it. Oh, that must be about a hundred years old. Oh, when they come here, they asked me if I got something. No, I didn't tell them. I didn't want to tell them. ["Don't. You'll bust that. Don't hit that." Remarks aimed at Felix's grandchildren playing outside.] Too bad you didn't come ahead of them, you'd have bought that medicine drum.

KT: Does Peter George have any more of those medicine drums?

FP: No. But he's got all kinds of medicine there.

KT: When people seek this service and get the medicine, do they usually give some gift of tobacco, food, money, or something else to the medicine man?

FP: Oh, they have to give something - maybe money, maybe five or ten dollars or some kind of a new blanket or tobacco.

KT: Before they start or after?

FP: Before they start.

KT: In the early days, during the time of your father and grandfather, what sort of gifts did they give then?

FP: Well, that's just the same thing.

KT: How would you keep these medicines? Do you keep them in the house or do you keep them outside?

FP: Oh, you could keep them in a bag in a house, you know, or outside - any place where you could have them as long as they don't get wet or dry up.

KT: How many different medicine roots would you know of?

FP: Oh, I don't know. Quite a bit, any way.

There's also an Indian fellow down at Kahkewistahaw[41] who will go around like today and take every root on the ground, like hay. Perhaps a hundred roots. He'll boil them for medicine - just like making maple

sugar. When it's done, the medicine is kind of dark color - just like a gum. Well, he makes that, you know. Now, supposing if he makes it well, we'll go there and he gives us a little piece. Well, that medicine you have to drink it. Supposing you're sore any place in your body, you gotta drink that. No matter what kind of sickness you got, you got to drink that. I had some here, but a fellow came from Winnipeg - he was sore for about two years, so I gave him that medicine to drink once a day. I don't have any. Maybe Peter George has some.

KT: Does this medicine always work?

FP: Oh well, sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't - just like the doctor, you know. You can't always help a sick person.

KT: I've read that the early Saulteaux people had some kind of "love potion" or love medicine. Do you know anything about this?

FP: No, I don't. That's long ago. They had that sometimes. Yes, I understand you, but not around here.

KT: Love medicine. And they said that the Saulteaux people especially used to have this.

FP: Oh, every Indian would like to use it, but that's long ago.

KT: Do they use it now?

FP: No, they don't.

KT: Has anybody come to you to ask for love medicine?

FP: No. Because if somebody comes here I wouldn't know about it any way - unless he goes to the medicine man.

KT: There are some people also, who wear an amulet or something around their neck. Do you wear things around your neck, like some good luck charm?

FP: No. That's supposed to be a good luck whenever they wanted to go some place. Of course I don't need that, you see.

KT: Do some people wear good luck amulets?

FP: Oh sure. They used to do that, you know, long ago.

KT: What about blood-letting? In some places in the world a medicine man might cut the blood vessel open, say from the back, and let the blood leak out to cure people for something. Do you use this practice here?

FP: No, I don't. I've never used it. Long ago, I guess the old-timers used it. I know what you're talking about. I understand. Well, they done that long ago. Supposing I chased a buffalo. Maybe I got thrown off. Maybe I got thrown off from a horse. ["Oh, look at that fellow[42], throwing that little baby there. God, if he drops that baby!" An interjection of concern by Felix about his neighbor's baby.] Supposing I

start to spit blood. Well, there's a certain fellow that cures that. Not the medicine man. It's another fellow. Well, he'd tie my arm here with a string or something, and take a needle - pointed thing - and prick one of my blood veins. That blood comes out from there. You take about a full saucer. And my blood is just dark, you know, just dark. After that I don't spit blood.

KT: Have you seen this done in the early days?

FP: I've seen it twice. Once when we were living down by that Day School at the east end - there's a lake there. My dad used to stay over there.

KT: On Sakimay Reserve?

FP: Yes. An old Indian had that. I seen him take the blood out twice. Maybe you're sore in the back; or maybe you bust your vein. Take some blood out and after that you're all right. That was quite awhile ago. This old man went down to the States about 50 or 60 years ago and he died over there.

KT: What was his name?

FP: *Na-a-be-ko-a-mish.*

KT: What does that mean in English?

FP: I don't know.

KT: What about the practice of sucking blood out of patients? In some places in the world - with some Indians too - the medicine man will suck something that's maybe bothering a person, then he will spit it out. Is this practice used by medicine men here?

FP: No. Maybe in the older days, I don't know - long ago, maybe 80 or 90 years ago. Maybe somebody else might know that.

KT: Have you ever seen a medicine man suck something out of a person?

FP: I've never seen that.

KT: What would happen if someone broke a rib? Is there medicine for that, too?

FP: Oh yes, there's a medicine for that.

KT: Do you have people that are able to reset broken bones out here? Can you reset bones yourself?

FP: Not me. Long ago I guess they must have done that, you know. Now I don't know of anybody who could do that.

KT: Suppose a person is bitten by a dog or a wolf - is there a medicine for that?

FP: Oh well, the medicine man knows what kind of a medicine to use.

KT: What about in wintertime when people freeze their hands and cheeks, what do you use to help heal them?

FP: Peter George, he'll tell you. I wouldn't know. Peter knows more about medicine than I do. You ask him what this is for. He'll tell you. I don't know some of it. That's all. Not much.

KT: During the Rain Dance I noticed that you have a kind of a "crier" or a "shouter" - a person who goes around and announces things.

FP: Oh yes. This is Billy Whitehat.[43] That's his job, you see. That's his job.

KT: What do you call his position in Saulteaux?

FP: He's just an announcer - *Pi-pa-git-am-ag-ate*. He goes round and round and calls the people to come into the lodge. That's all. That's their job.

KT: Does he go clockwise?

FP: No. Anywhere at all. It doesn't matter. Just outside, you know, where the tents are.

KT: Does it matter if he walks from left to right or right to left?

FP: Outside it doesn't matter. But in the lodge you've got to go around to the right [clockwise].

KT: Why is the direction so important inside the lodge? What would happen if you went the other way?

FP: Nothing would happen.

KT: Might there be bad luck?

FP: No. But it's always been one way.

KT: I notice that women who have menstrual periods are not supposed to go inside the Rain Dance lodge.

FP: No. They are not. Oh, they could look into the lodge from about here to that pole [50 or 100 feet] but they can't come in.

KT: Do you know why this is so?

FP: Well, you see, if a woman is like that and she comes in, then she will spoil everything. Supposing I was singing and she came in; in about five minutes I couldn't sing. I'd choke. That's why we don't let them come in. And all those dancers, you know, they'll just drop. All those that fast, you know.

KT: Does this mean that the woman has some kind of a power when she has her menstrual periods?

FP: No. She has no power at all. She can't come in there or else she'll spoil everything.

KT: Can a woman enter the lodge if she doesn't have her periods?

FP: Yes.

KT: Has a woman ever spoiled your Rain Dance?

FP: No. It never happened. We tell these women not to come. Bill Whitehat makes the announcement.

KT: I see. Then people know not to come in. Where do the women sit when they enter the lodge from the south?

FP: Well, the women sit on the right [southeast quadrant of the enclosure] and the men on the left [the western arc of the fence].

KT: Has this always been the way?

FP: It's always like that. In there you don't change anything.

KT: Has it ever changed from the past?

FP: No, never. If you go to any Rain Dance, they'll do just the same thing. There's no difference, whether in Manitoba or in Kamsack - except in Kamsack they got two doors.

KT: Do the Indians in the Kamsack area have a different lodge?

FP: It's the same except they have two doors - one on the north for the men, the other on the south for the women.

KT: Why do the Indians from the Kamsack area build a different lodge?

FP: I don't know. We just have one door. That's all. I don't know how they got a different lodge with two doors - but they're just the same. They're Saulteaux, just like us here.

KT: But you don't know how the difference came about?

FP: No, I don't.

KT: I noticed at the last Rain Dance on Sakimay last year that this Billy Whitehat and others wore some kind of a feather on here [lapel]. What does that mean?

FP: Well, it shows the old man Whitehat is the announcer. They gotta know him, you know. [Grandchild speaks to Felix from outside the car: "*Mushim*" (Grandfather), they're bothering that little thing inside." Felix replied: "Well, tell them to get up."] Just like when there's a

sports day, you see some people wearing a ribbon. It's the same with us, except we use an eagle feather.

KT: Did you use eagle feathers in the early days during your father's day?

FP: Oh yes. [Interruption by Felix's grandchild: "*Mushim*, they don't want to get out of the car." To which Felix replied: "Tell them to get away. Go on, tell them to get off from there."]

KT: In the early days do you remember if the Indians used to paint their faces for certain dances?

FP: Oh yes, I remember that - just like that design there.[44] Just like the Thunderbird. You see, when you name a child, you've got to use that or maybe just like you baptize him. The other designs I don't know. Just only that one I know [i.e., the one with Thunderbirds]. That's for the Rain Dance. Maybe the others are for Powwows.

KT: Have Indians used this design during your time?

FP: Oh yes, you could use them, you know. Some of these people dance. First, they don't eat for a day or two. Then they look at that pole about two feet or three feet from the top. They don't have to look around, but they've got to watch that. Well, sometimes it's just like you see a fixture there - a man or a bird or a Thunderbird. Well, when a fellow sees that, he could paint that [design] on his face. That's how it goes.

KT: Have you personally painted some design on your face in the early days?

FP: No, I never. But I don't know about those fellows who dance.

KT: Do some dancers paint their faces?

FP: Oh yes. Quite awhile ago.

KT: Do they do this any more today?

FP: They don't use it right now. They don't use it.

KT: When a person looks at that centre post in the Rain Dance lodge what is he supposed to think about?

FP: Oh no. You don't have to think of anything. You just have to look only in one place. We don't think of anything. Well, supposing I look at that post. Well, it's just like a picture - you see maybe some kind of a bird or Thunderbird or lightning, like that, you know. Supposing when we look at him [Thunderbird] we might see [something] like a picture of lightning. Well, the fellow who sees that, he's got to paint himself like lightning.

KT: When these dancers fast, do they drink anything?

FP: No, no. No water. Some fast for one day; others for two.

KT: When do they start to fast?

FP: Well, in the morning when they start to build that lodge. Supposing now they'll make the lodge on Friday. Well, they'll finish that, you see. On Saturday morning they have to come in there. Give them about a cupful of water. That's all. That's on Saturday morning. They wouldn't eat also until it's all finished. They've promised that - some for one day and some for two.

KT: Could they smoke a pipe or something like this?

FP: Yes, if they want to, they could.

KT: What about designs on tepees? Do you remember making designs yourself or did some special people do this?

FP: Oh, there's a special man that does that, you see. Not around here but down at Moose Mountain.[45] I don't know if he's still living. Oh, I forgot that old Indian's name. He must be about 82. But nobody makes this on these reserves [i.e., the four reserves north of Broadview].

KT: What sort of designs have they made?

FP: All kind of designs - whatever you want to put on.

KT: Did you see any with the Thunderbird behind[46] or something like that?

FP: Oh yes - like you see. Also that one there with the sun or the moon[46] in front, above the door. And that's a rainbow in front and back.

KT: Do you remember the Masked Dance?

FP: No, I don't.

KT: What about the Bear Dance? Do you remember that?

FP: Oh yes, I danced that once. [chuckles] I don't know very much about that; I don't know how they work it. It must have been about 20 or 25 years ago that I danced it.

KT: Was that on Sakimay here?

FP: No, no. Down the next reserve - on Kahkewistahaw. There was an Indian there who used to make the Bear Dance every summer, you know. Oh, the men and girls would go in there.

KT: Was this the same as a Powwow?

FP: No, that was a Bear Dance.

KT: Was there a tepee there?

FP: Yes.

KT: Did they wear anything special?

FP: No. Just ordinary clothes - whatever they want to wear.

KT: What was the purpose of the Bear Dance?

FP: I don't remember. You ask Peter George. He'll tell you.

KT: What about the Elk Dance? Do you remember that?

FP: No, I don't.

KT: Horse dance?

FP: I've seen it once, you know, down at Jim Bunny's place on Sakimay - his father used to make a Horse Dance. That was across the Lake [Crooked Lake] on Shesheep Reserve [now part of Sakimay].

KT: Do you know what was the purpose of that dance?

FP: No, I don't. I never asked, you know.

KT: Have you heard of the Mite-winin Dance?

FP: No, I don't know that one.

KT: Do you know about the Pipestem Bundle Dance?

FP: No, I don't. I've never seen them. Maybe in the older days, you know.

KT: In your day do you recall people, say a boy, going out someplace in the woods and staying overnight or so and seeking a spirit or a vision? Some people have called it the "vision quest". Maybe he fasts for awhile and then he goes someplace in a bush or someplace in a high place and then waits until he hears a spirit maybe or he sees something like this. Then he keeps this secret as his personal good luck spirit, and talks to him. Do people do this today?

FP: No, not today. They used to do that. My grandfather used to tell me about it, but I've never seen it.

KT: I've heard some of the Cree Indians around here speak of the *Pawakan*, a kind of a personal spirit helper. Do you have something like this among the Saulteaux too?

FP: Oh yes. We call it *Awamoot*.

KT: Is this your own personal spirit?

FP: Well no. Supposing, like when they make that Smoking Tepee, maybe three or four Indians will want to fast for one day. Well, they'll go in there. They tell who is going to fast for one day. After they sing at night these fellows go and sleep in the bush. They sleep all day. When the sun is about going down, that's the time they come in. Now,

KT: When do they start to fast?

FP: Well, in the morning when they start to build that lodge. Supposing now they'll make the lodge on Friday. Well, they'll finish that, you see. On Saturday morning they have to come in there. Give them about a cupful of water. That's all. That's on Saturday morning. They wouldn't eat also until it's all finished. They've promised that - some for one day and some for two.

KT: Could they smoke a pipe or something like this?

FP: Yes, if they want to, they could.

KT: What about designs on tepees? Do you remember making designs yourself or did some special people do this?

FP: Oh, there's a special man that does that, you see. Not around here but down at Moose Mountain.[45] I don't know if he's still living. Oh, I forgot that old Indian's name. He must be about 82. But nobody makes this on these reserves [i.e., the four reserves north of Broadview].

KT: What sort of designs have they made?

FP: All kind of designs - whatever you want to put on.

KT: Did you see any with the Thunderbird behind[46] or something like that?

FP: Oh yes - like you see. Also that one there with the sun or the moon[46] in front, above the door. And that's a rainbow in front and back.

KT: Do you remember the Masked Dance?

FP: No, I don't.

KT: What about the Bear Dance? Do you remember that?

FP: Oh yes, I danced that once. [chuckles] I don't know very much about that; I don't know how they work it. It must have been about 20 or 25 years ago that I danced it.

KT: Was that on Sakimay here?

FP: No, no. Down the next reserve - on Kahkewistahaw. There was an Indian there who used to make the Bear Dance every summer, you know. Oh, the men and girls would go in there.

KT: Was this the same as a Powwow?

FP: No, that was a Bear Dance.

KT: Was there a tepee there?

FP: Yes.

KT: Did they wear anything special?

FP: No. Just ordinary clothes - whatever they want to wear.

KT: What was the purpose of the Bear Dance?

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KT: Horse dance?

FP: I've seen it once, you know, down at Jim Bunny's place on Sakimay - his father used to make a Horse Dance. That was across the Lake [Crooked Lake] on Shesheep Reserve [now part of Sakimay].

KT: Do you know what was the purpose of that dance?

FP: No, I don't. I never asked, you know.

KT: Have you heard of the Mite-winin Dance?

FP: No, I don't know that one.

KT: Do you know about the Pipestem Bundle Dance?

FP: No, I don't. I've never seen them. Maybe in the older days, you know.

KT: In your day do you recall people, say a boy, going out someplace in the woods and staying overnight or so and seeking a spirit or a vision? Some people have called it the "vision quest". Maybe he fasts for awhile and then he goes someplace in a bush or someplace in a high place and then waits until he hears a spirit maybe or he sees something like this. Then he keeps this secret as his personal good luck spirit, and talks to him. Do people do this today?

FP: No, not today. They used to do that. My grandfather used to tell me about it, but I've never seen it.

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FP: Oh yes. We call it *Awamoot*.

KT: Is this your own personal spirit?

FP: Well no. Supposing, like when they make that Smoking Tepee, maybe three or four Indians will want to fast for one day. Well, they'll go in there. They tell who is going to fast for one day. After they sing at night these fellows go and sleep in the bush. They sleep all day. When the sun is about going down, that's the time they come in. Now,

supposing I go and sleep. Maybe I dream something. I might dream of a Thunderbird - that's where you get your spirit from, you see. That's how far I know.

KT: What sorts of things would you dream?

FP: Oh, a Thunderbird or any kind of a cloud - like that. Dark clouds or lightning or wind, you know. That's what they do.

KT: And then, do you tell this to the people when you return to the Smoking Tepee?

FP: No. You keep it to yourself. You don't have to tell, you see.

KT: Does this protect you in some way?

FP: Yes, that protects you.

KT: When you had a Smoking Tepee last year and before you set up this tepee, did you do this?

FP: Yes. I didn't drink all day.

KT: And you slept outside?

FP: No, I just slept in the tent there.

KT: Did some people sleep outside?

FP: Oh, some people went out, you know; but those who are going to fast for one day, they go out and sleep in the bush.

KT: Where do they sleep in the bush?

FP: Oh, any place at all where they want to sleep. Like here, any place they could go and sleep or any place around here they could sleep. They take a blanket along.

I think those fellows broke my window there. See what they done there. [In reference to his grandchildren playing rather destructively around the house.]

KT: I notice that some of the young children don't listen to you. Do you tell them that the spirit will get them if they don't behave?

FP: No, no. [chuckles] No, not that here.

KT: Do you just shout at them or something?

FP: Yes.

KT: Do you remember how Indians in the early days used to bury their dead on the reserve? When you were a small child, did they bury them in the ground or did they still bury them on top?

FP: The Assiniboines used to bury them on top. They would bring them to the hill, you know, and put them on the ground. But us here we have to dig and bury them in the ground.

KT: Did you ever see anyone bury them on top, say six feet above ground?

FP: No. Not around here. Down in the States, that's what they do.

KT: Did your grandfather ever tell you that they used to do this?

FP: Oh yes, we know it, you know. They used to do it.

KT: What was the reason for the burial above ground?

FP: I don't know.

KT: What is the general belief of the people here, say when a person dies? Does his spirit leave him? What do you believe?

FP: Well, I wouldn't know, you see. I wouldn't, because when a person dies, his soul goes someplace. I don't know where the soul goes to. It might go to heaven. I don't know where.

KT: Is the soul some kind of a spirit?

FP: Yes, it's like a spirit.

KT: Would a medicine man be able to talk to a soul?

FP: No.

KT: Would a baby who was just born pick up a soul from somebody else?

FP: Just take these priests or ministers. If they want to bury that body, they've got to pray there. Well, the Indian is just the same. When they're going to bury an Indian, the Indian's got to pray. Maybe I'll pray; maybe Peter George will pray or sing. Somehow like that. Just like the priests or the ministers, you know; they've got to pray before they bury the body. Well, before they bury the body, they gotta have a service in the house. Well we're just the same like that. The old people long years ago were the same. There's no difference, you see.

KT: What about those small burial houses on top of the hill on Shesheep Reserve by Peter George's place?

FP: Well, that's where the grave is. So they won't get wet and so the water would not cave into there. That's why they put those houses there. It doesn't mean anything at all.

KT: When somebody dies now do you still make little houses on top?

FP: Oh no.

KT: Do you hold special ceremonies at the graves every so many weeks or every year? Do you bring tobacco or food offerings there?

FP: Oh yes. Maybe pretty soon; some place in August we have to go there. We call it a "flower day" now. We've got to fix the graves there and put flowers in there. Well, they bring the grub there. See, a fellow's got to pray there. Those people that died used to like to eat when they lived; that's why they bring that grub there.

KT: Do you place a little bit of tobacco on the grave?

FP: Oh no.

KT: Is this an Indian custom or is this a custom of the church?

FP: It's a modern custom of the church.

KT: In the early days when an Indian died, did they bury some of his personal property with him - like his drum or his rattle or his moccasins?

FP: Only his clothes. They put his clothes on, but they never buried a rattle or anything else.

KT: When they "sit-up" at night, do they pray?

FP: Oh yes.

KT: Do they use a drum?

FP: Not on this reserve today. Maybe way back before. Right now, if a person dies, we have to go and sit there all night and pray.

KT: Do you sing during these "sit-ups"?

FP: No. We just pray. We're not like the Catholics or Presbyterians when they go there they pray and they sing. And us, we don't. We just pray for the body, you know, for the soul.

KT: On Kahkewistahaw Reserve last year, after somebody died, the local people sang all night and used a drum for several hours. Has that ever been done here?

FP: No, never. That's first time I've heard of that. I don't know why.

KT: It must have been some local custom or something. They also played cards. Do you play cards?

FP: Oh yes, we play cards all night 'til morning.

KT: What about liquor?

FP: No. They don't drink.

KT: Do they eat food, or just drink coffee, or something else?

FP: Yes, sure.

KT: What happens to the property of a person who dies? Does the wife keep it? Does she give it to some of his relatives? Or is the property distributed?

FP: They've got to do that, you know. The wife of the husband who died gives the clothes to close relatives. She doesn't want to burn it or throw it away. The same with a man when his wife dies; this man gives a shawl, maybe, a dress or maybe a suitcase of what this woman owned - he's got to give it to the old people or old ladies.

Well, a lot of cars are coming now. There's another car coming over there. Maybe from Pasquas. Maybe from the Sioux [Standing Buffalo Reserve, Fort Qu'Appelle]. They're coming to the Powwow here. See, there's that car coming. Oh, there must be lotta people. Guess they'll have to start pretty soon.

KT: Do you have some sort of good luck signs - say, like an owl sitting on your house?

FP: If an owl comes and sits down on that tree over there and if he howls in the morning, there's going to be a storm - like a snow storm. You take a coyote; maybe he come and howl here in the evening, about seven or five o'clock - in two day's time a big storm will come - like a snow storm. That's how it'll work.

KT: What if an owl sits on your roof?

FP: Oh well, he could sit down there, anywhere. There's no bad luck. There's lot of times here when an owl comes and sits down there in the morning. And [it] never makes a noise. I'm not afraid of it.

KT: Are some people afraid of owls here?

FP: Well that's what they say, but I'm not.

KT: Do you know of any good luck signs?

FP: No, I don't.

KT: What about bad luck?

FP: Well, that's no good, you know. No good. Bad luck - I never have bad luck in my life. The old Indians long ago used to talk about bad luck. If a dog howls when it's getting dark, then sits down and again gets up and howls about twelve o'clock, in the morning that's going to be a bad luck. But it has never happened here to us, you know.

KT: Does anybody here believe in it now?

FP: Oh no. The people have forgotten.

KT: What about this matter of predicting something about the future by maybe burning the shoulder blade[47] of some animal and then looking at the cracks - is this done?

FP: This is the first time I've heard of it. I don't know. I've never seen it.

KT: I've heard that this used to happen amongst some Indians.

FP: Some Indians, I guess. I don't know. I've never done that.

KT: Well, this happened in quite a few places in the world.

FP: Maybe long ago, with some of the old people.

KT: Did your father ever tell you about this?

FP: My grandfather would know but my father wouldn't know.

KT: Do you remember any of the old Indian games that children and adults used to play?

FP: Oh yes, just only two, I guess. The women had one game they played. They would tie two deerskin bags about that long [30 inches], connected in the middle with a string and forming like a ball in each side. The women have long sticks, you see. And they have a goal there, just like when you're playing football. Well, the women catch this ball with their sticks. They swing it to each other, just like when you play lacrosse. That's the only game I know. Also, long ago they had foot races and horse races.

KT: Do the women still play that ball game which I believe is called the Testicle Game?[48]

FP: Oh no. Everything is dying down.

KT: Have you ever seen the game played?

FP: Never. The old-timers told us how they used to play it. They didn't have too many games long ago - not like today with so many different kinds of games.

Long ago when the Indians met each other, they'd all come together in a bunch. They used to run their horses to see which was the fastest. Also they had some foot races in the early days. Oh, yes, some times later they used to make checkers and play that.

KT: What did they play in winter?

FP: Nothing at all - even now they don't play anything.

KT: How many Rain Dance songs do you know?

FP: Maybe about 40 or 50 songs. And Peter George he knows quite a bit too. It's just like when you got to church - you know what number of hymn you gotta sing. Same thing with us. [Felix to his grandchildren outside the car: "Hey, boy. Get away from there. Go and throw stones someplace else. Go on."]

KT: Do you think I could record a few of these short songs when you have the time?

FP: Oh, yes. That'll be all right as long as I get little bit of money. [chuckles]

KT: I think this would be good for the future; when you're gone, maybe nobody else will ever sing these songs, and then it's lost for the future for anybody. This is what the National Museum is doing all over with different peoples across Canada. What about next week? I'm going to be down at the Lake with my family.

FP: All right.

Interview No. 3[49]
Sakimay Reserve,
May 28, 1967

[Felix begins this interview with a Rain Dance song, accompanied by a deer-skin drum. See Appendix E for translation of the song.]

KT: When did you first learn this number?

FP: When I was about 50 years of age. I'm 82 years old now.

KT: Where did you learn it?

FP: I learned it from my grandfather, Kwewich.

KT: What does that mean in English?

FP: Well, I wouldn't know what it means in English.

KT: Did your grandfather live on Sakimay?

FP: Yes. He was a Saulteaux.

KT: Do you know where he learned it from?

FP: I don't know. Maybe way back, you know, in the older days.

KT: Do many of your people know this song?

FP: Not many. I'd be the only one that knows this song on Sakimay.

KT: Would anyone know this song, say on Cote reserve, near Kamsack?

FP: No.

KT: Are you the only one in Saskatchewan who knows it?

FP: Yes.

KT: When would you sing this song?

FP: Well, when it's a Rain Dance.

KT: Do you use it at Powwows?

FP: No, not at Powwows. Just at Rain Dances. [At this point Felix sang another Rain Dance song with drum accompaniment. See Appendix E.]

KT: What would be the main difference between this song and the previous one?

FP: Well, they're just about the same.

KT: Would you have different words in the two songs?

FP: Yes, some words are different.

KT: When did you learn this last song?

FP: About the same time as the other one. My grandfather, Kakechiway or "Loud Voice", taught me that. That's his song, you know.

KT: Did he teach this song to anybody else?

FP: No.

KT: Would you consider this to be your song now?

FP: Yes.

KT: When would you sing this song - on the first day of the Rain Dance?

FP: It doesn't matter, first day or second day. You could sing it any time, you know, but you got to use it in the Rain Dances.

KT: Could you sing it in the Preliminary Tepee at the beginning of the Rain Dance ceremony?

FP: Oh yes. Just the same. You could build the lodge and sing it then. It doesn't matter, any time you could sing it.

KT: I suppose you've been singing this every year?

FP: Oh yes, every year.

KT: How did your grandfather teach you?

FP: Well, he'd sing the song, you know, and I'd learn.

KT: Did he use the drum, too?

FP: Yes. He used a drum or a rattle.

KT: Was he living at your place then?

FP: No, no. He lived on the other reserve - Ochapowace Reserve.

KT: Was he Saulteaux?

FP: He was a Cree.

KT: Was that your grandfather by your mother's side or father's side?

FP: No, no. That's different. My grandfather any way.

KT: You call him grandfather, but he's not necessarily from your mother's side or father's side. He's just a grandfather.

FP: Yes, just a grandfather.

KT: Well, how did you happen to meet him?

FP: Well, we used to go over there with my Dad. So this old man called me in his Tepee and told me, "I'm going to give you a song." "Maybe some day you might use it at Rain Dances - so you gotta sing that song. Only one thing, sing it about three or four times, you see." Then I pick that song up and I know the song. Every time I make a Rain Dance, I gotta sing that first of all. I gotta sing that song first, before I take the other songs.

KT: How old was this grandfather from Ochapowace?

FP: Oh, he was pretty old. He might be about 90 or more. He died about five years later.

KT: Did he hold Rain Dances in his day?

FP: He held it only once. Long ago, you know. At that time he was holding his Smoking Tepees there, like what we had last year.

KT: How many Smoking Tepees did he put up?

FP: Oh, that I couldn't remember. Quite a few, any way.

KT: Was he a chief of his reserve?

FP: Yes, he was the head.

KT: For a long time?

FP: Oh, yes, for a long time, you know. They know him all over as "Loud Voice", Kakechiway. You know, his name is up on that stone at Fort Qu'Appelle, when they signed the Treaties.

KT: Was he one of those who signed?

FP: Yes, he's one of them. His name must be written there. All the old-timers know him. Even at Regina, you go to that Parliament Building and see his picture there. They took his picture long ago.

KT: Do you use Rain Dance songs in a Smoking Tepee?

FP: Yes, you can use them. But we have different ones, too.

KT: Do you think you can sing a Smoking Tepee song for me?

FP: Well, I could sing it if you want me to sing one. [Felix sings one Smoking Tepee song. See Appendix E.]

KT: Where did you learn this one?

FP: Got that from my Dad.

KT: Is your Dad's name Panipekeesick too?

FP: Yes.

KT: When did you get this one from your Dad?

FP: Maybe 40 years ago.

KT: Do other people know this song?

FP: Oh, well, other people know it. When they hear me singing, they got to follow me, you see.

KT: But can they sing it?

FP: Oh, yes, they can sing it.

KT: Could they sing it alone?

FP: Oh, they could sing it, you know, if they know it.

KT: Felix, you once mentioned that some Saulteaux Indians from the White Bear Reserve, near Carlyle, Saskatchewan, know a Horse Dance.

FP: Yes, the Kekiway boys. They know it. They're half Crees and half Saulteaux.

KT: How would you say Horse Dance in your Saulteaux language?

FP: *Ka-ke-moo-shi-mo-yan.*

KT: Have you seen this Horse Dance on White Bear Reserve?

FP: I was up there about 35 years ago. Before that old man died, they had an Indian sports there. And there was a fellow announcing in the morning that they were going to have a Horse Dance. So about six or five o'clock, you see the horses and those Indians, all dressed up, you know. There was a big drum there. Soon, this old man started to sing those songs. I don't know how he hit them, you know. They had about six or seven horses in there, going around. And when he finished the song, these fellows all jumped off from the horseback and started to dance. When he finished the songs, they go on again on the horseback and gallop around. Nice to see them. There's different songs, you know.

KT: Have you ever seen the Horse Dance on any of the four reserves at Crooked and Round Lake?

FP: No, not here. Just at White Bear.

KT: Have you seen it on any other reserves?

FP: No, I never have. There's only that old man who used to make that dance - but those boys, they know how it's done and what kind of songs they use in it. I don't know those songs.

KT: Do you know any of the Chicken Dances?

FP: No, I don't. I don't know any of them songs. Even those Giving-Away Dance songs, I don't know them.

KT: Do you know the Powwow songs?

FP: I could follow.

KT: You've stated that your grandfather taught you a number of Rain Dance songs. Have you learned any songs from your father?

FP: Yes, that last song I sung here.

KT: Have you learned songs from other people besides your father and grandfather?

FP: No.

KT: What do you think is going to happen to all these Rain Dance songs, say 20 years from now?

FP: I don't think there'll be nothing around.

KT: Do you think the young people will carry on this tradition?

FP: No. There's no dancers, you know. Nothing will happen, you know. They will forget the Rain Dance songs.

KT: Will they remember the Powwow songs?

FP: Oh, yes, they'll remember them, sure.

KT: What about the Smoking Tepee - do you suppose many of them will forget it too?

FP: Oh, I don't know. They might forget. Only the old people remember, just like me and Peter George. When we pass away some day there won't be nothing done like this Smoking Tepee or Rain Dance. There'll be nothing.

KT: Nobody to carry these on?

FP: Unless Oliver Sparvier,[50] maybe will carry it on, because I taught him. He knows how to do it. The same with Gordon Kaye [Kequahtooway] - he got that from his father, I guess.

KT: When did his Dad pass away?

FP: Oh, about six years ago, I guess. His father was Jim Kequahtooway. He first lived at Moose Mountain (White Bear Reserve) before moving here to Sakimay, quite awhile ago.

KT: So there's really about four of you left here on these four reserves who know how to pass on the Smoking Tepee and Rain Dance.

FP: There's just four of us.

KT: How many feasts do you have to make in connection with the Rain Dance?

FP: Four feasts.

KT: What kind of songs do you sing there?

FP: Rain Dance songs. You see, I sing three times. Three times all winter, and then when I go to the camp [Preliminary Tepee] - you know when we put that Tepee up - well, I've got to sing that - that's four times. You'll see that on the 22nd.

KT: Of June?

FP: That would be camping day, you see. Here they'll camp. Well, that night I gotta sing there - I gotta sing. When we make Rain Dances, I gotta sing. Early in the morning they have to build that lodge. On Saturday morning we're going in there to start.

KT: When you make a drum, for example, like this one here, do you hold any ceremony before you use it?

FP: No, no. Just use it.

KT: Is that deer-hide on your drum?

FP: Yes.

KT: Is there any significance to that design of the buffalo head?

FP: Nothing. No, no.

KT: Did you use water colors to color it with?

FP: Yes. See, that's a buffalo head, and there should be hoofs all around.... I just use it for Rain Dances, you know. There's no meaning in that design. You could put anything there - a moon or anything like that. But you got to use it just for sake of a Rain Dance.

KT: Did the medicine drums have special designs on them?

FP: No, no.

KT: Have you ever had a medicine drum yourself?

FP: No, no. Peter George had one, you know. But those fellows from Saskatoon came and bought that from Peter. It was a big one.

KT: Are there any more medicine drums left on these four reserves?

FP: I don't know of any. Only Peter had that one.

KT: Felix, in those three songs that you sang earlier today - the two Rain Dance songs and the Smoking Tepee song - do these songs have verses? I mean, do you repeat things after so many lines or are all the words different?

FP: Well, they're different.

KT: Are they all pretty well the same size or do you have much longer songs than that?

FP: Oh, there's some longer songs, you know. If you want to make it short, well you make them short but you could sing it much longer. It's just the same like when you go to church - you sing a hymn and there are different verses.

KT: Do you have choruses in these Rain Dance Songs?

FP: Oh, yes. Sure we have.

KT: In the three that you sang, where there any choruses in those?

FP: No, no. Just only in the last one I sang - that Smoking Tepee.

APPENDIX B

Abridged Transcription of tape-recorded interview[51] with Alec Tanner, an elderly Cree Indian from Cowessess Reserve, north of Broadview, Saskatchewan, by Koozma J. Tarasoff

Interview[52] on
May 14, 1967

KT: How old are you?

AT: Eighty-one years old.

KT: Were both your father and mother Crees?

AT: Yes.

KT: How old was your father when he died?

AT: About 75.

KT: And your mother?

AT: About the same.

KT: Have you lived on Cowessess all your life?

AT: No, I was up west - south of Maple Creek - for awhile. My uncle used to live there - John Littlebird. I moved quite awhile ago, about 1901.

KT: 1901. What are some of the early stories that you remember from the old days?

AT: Well, I remember my uncle he went west to the Blackfoot Reserve. He went and got some horses there. He had to take them away while they were sleeping, you know. [chuckle]

KT: How many horses?

AT: Oh, about 18, I guess.

KT: And did you go with him, too?

AT: Yes, I went. You see, there's the Bow River there. There was a point with steep cut banks all around and they had to guard their horses there. They put them in that point. So we went down. The ice was frozen yet, and so we took all them horses across. That was long ago - about 1900.

KT: Did you attend any of the Rain Dances in the early years?

AT: Yes. But I did not dance at any of them - just looked on.

KT: What does a Rain Dance mean to you today?

AT: Well, it's much like a - the fall of rain every year; it makes the crops grow and berries and all that.

KT: What did it mean in the early days?

AT: Always my grandfather used to say so they'd have good luck for the future.

KT: Did you used to attend every year or just once in awhile?

AT: Just once in awhile when they happened to hold it close by.

KT: Where would you attend?

AT: On Ghost Lake,[53] Sakimay, Reserve.

KT: What about Sweat Baths? Have you ever taken any?

AT: Oh yea. Right between the two houses outside here.[54] [chuckles]

KT: Every year?

AT: No. It was quite awhile ago that I had one.

KT: Is it just for keeping yourself clean?

AT: Yes.

KT: Does it have any religious significance for you?

AT: No.

KT: How did you make it?

AT: They put sagebrush that high. Then they put very hot stones in there - about 10 or 12 of them. And when they go in there, they close this little hut. They even put water on the stones and the steam stays right there - enough steam there 'til those stones get cold.

KT: Do you use soap and water?

AT: No, just steam.

KT: Do you use it for health, too?

AT: Yes, just for health.

KT: More for health than for keeping yourself clean?

AT: Yes.

KT: When do you usually take it? When you have colds?

AT: No, when it's real hot.

KT: Do you smoke a peace pipe in there, too?

AT: Oh, yes. I smoke a pipe in there. [chuckles]

KT: Do you pray in there?

AT: No, we don't pray.

KT: Do you talk in there?

AT: Yes - and tell stories.

KT: At the Rain Dance you've probably seen the sign of the Thunderbird. What does the Thunderbird mean to you?

AT: Well, sometimes clouds form up like this, with an east wind. Every time they have a Sun Dance on west end [Sakimay], those two clouds just join together - and the people talk to this. They call it a Spirit, you know, this Thunderbird. When they come together, there's lightning and thunder real hard. So they believe in that, you see.

KT: Do you believe in it?

AT: No, I don't.

KT: But some people do?

AT: Mostly the older people like Peter George and Felix [Panipekeesick]. It's a spirit to them.

KT: What does the buffalo skull, as used in the Rain Dance, mean to them?

AT: Well, they tell the younger people that they'll see that again in the Happy Hunting Grounds - wherever they go after they leave this world.

KT: Well, what would be the Happy Hunting Grounds - a kind of heaven or something?

AT: Well, they call it the "Big Sandhills". [chuckles]

KT: What is the Great Spirit? Is that God? Do you have a word in your language that means the Great Spirit?

AT: Yes. *Man-i-tou*. Well, they call this *pinashi*, that's thunder.

KT: Is that a spirit too?

AT: Yes, that's the same thing.

KT: Do people talk to the Great Spirit, the *Kit-she-man-i-tou*?

AT: Yes. They kind of pray for good luck, long life, for the younger people.

KT: Do you have an Indian name yourself?

AT: Well, it was my Dad's name. It's *Qui-qui-ni-as*, which means "The last feather flying high."

KT: When were you given this name?

AT: When I was a baby.

KT: How do Indians name their children today? Do they take them to a priest? Do they take them to the medicine man, like Peter George or Felix?

AT: For some, they make a kind of feast, you know, and they have this baby there, and Peter George or Felix. He'd pray for it. And then they'd give a gift or something to Peter George or Felix. Then he would give an Indian name.

KT: When do you use this Indian name?

AT: You keep it all the time.

KT: Would you use it when a child goes to school?

AT: No. But they will mention the name in a Rain Dance.

KT: Have you ever been at a Sun Dance?

AT: Yes.

KT: Have you ever seen some dancers pass two skewers through their breasts and attach thongs from the skewers to the centre pole?

AT: No. It was quite awhile ago that I heard of one. We used to live in the Qu'Appelle Valley, then, at the bottom of a hill, beside a road. Here there used to be one of these Sun Dances. That was quite awhile ago.

KT: How many people had skewers through their chests and were tied with a line to the centre tree?

AT: One at a time.

KT: Why do you think they did this?

AT: Well, that's to pray for the younger people. Them fellows sacrifice themselves, you see. Whenever they promise to do something and whatever they ask for, they stay right to the end. And they know that when they enter the Sun Dance lodge, they go in on the south side. The men sit on the left side and the women sit on the right. You see, these women are not supposed to pass where the men are. They're supposed to go right in and sit amongst themselves. So this time there was the Sun Dance down here and some of these women just walked back and forth, you know. Of course, they were young people. They didn't know it until one man who was making the Sun Dance seen them, and he quickly sent them to their right road. [chuckles] And the fellow who was pierced here had some

bad luck on account of these women walking across the men's path. The women spoiled it. The fellow just couldn't stand it. So he tore the flesh right out. So the things that the man had promised he couldn't carry it out.

KT: It was kind of bad luck for women to go across, then?

AT: Yes, they shouldn't cross there.

KT: Has there been a big change from the early days in the Rain Dances to the present day?

AT: Yes, quite a big change.

AT: Well, now the younger people they go anywhere in the lodge - even on the left side. I've seen Peter George holding a Rain Dance on Sakimay when some white [non-Indian] ladies came there. They just had bathing suits on, you know. Peter George sent them away. "Put some clothes on before you come here," he said. So they left.

KT: Did many more people attend these gatherings in the past?

AT: Oh, yes. Quite a few. And more dancers, too. But the lodge was just the same - the centre tree and the branches. It was held three days then.

KT: Do they still hold Sun Dances in this area?

AT: Well, in westend[55] they generally have held it - and have watched it themselves.

KT: What sort of cures have medicine men made for your family on this reserve? Have you seen them cure people?

AT: Yes. There was one old medicine man here whose name was Wa-pa-ki-ni-wap. He used to have a rattlesnake skin which he placed beside whoever he was doctoring, whether on the floor or on the ground in a tepee in summertime. Well, he'd ask this patient to lay down and he'd sing to this rattlesnake. This rattlesnake was just like it was alive; he had no head, only a tail. And he'd start crawling. If he'd crawl over this person that's being doctored, this meant the patient would get well. He knew how to cure them. That really happened, all right - right here west of Cowessess. He died quite awhile ago.

KT: What was his English name?

AT: He didn't have any - just his Indian name. It means "White Flower", I think.

KT: Did this medicine man use herbs?

AT: Yes, he used to give all kinds of herbs - and he cured quite a few people.

KT: What sort of things did he cure?

AT: Well, the medical doctors couldn't cure venereal disease at that time. Well, this old man he boiled up some herbs and give that to the patient and that's all. That cured him.

KT: Would you know what kind of herbs he mixed?

AT: No, I wouldn't.

KT: Have you ever used herbs yourself?

AT: No.

KT: Do you know how to mix herbs?

AT: Oh, yes. Some, a little bit - not like those medicine men.

KT: Did this White Flower cure any other diseases?

AT: Yes. He cured this fellow's coughs a lot - pleurisy or something like that. He boiled herbs. Then he prayed and used the rattle - and when he was going to give this [medicine] to the person he sang then. He just asked the Spirit to get him back to his health.

KT: Did he use a drum?

AT: Yes.

KT: Did he have a helper?

AT: Oh yes, he had a helper who took the pipe, you know; put a fire in there and gave it to him.

KT: Did they use Sweetgrass and tobacco in the pipe?

AT: Yes. They put Sweetgrass in the fire.

KT: Why do they use Sweetgrass for many things? Has this got some special significance?

AT: Well, supposing there's something bothering around the house, you know - like those spirits which had died many years ago. When they burn this Sweetgrass in the house, well that scares them away; they don't bother any more.

KT: Do you do this yourself?

AT: Oh, sometimes, when I couldn't sleep at night in my house. Also, when there's thunder and lightning. Something up there. You could talk loud like this - and they come together. When they come close together they see something flame from one cloud to the other. As soon as they got to the other cloud, they see lightning go right through the cloud and hear a big clap of thunder.

KT: When you speak of "dead spirits", do you mean that when a person dies, he's got a spirit?

AT: Yes.

KT: Can anyone talk to a dead spirit?

AT: I can't, but these medicine men talk to them sometimes. Well, when these people who died years ago appear, the medicine man asks them why they came. Well, they make a feast then. They sit all around, you know, and eat just like this person would be there with these medicine men. And that spirit now cometh back to whoever it wishes to be seen or heard.

KT: What sort of things would a medicine man talk with a spirit?

AT: Well, he'd tell them that they're having a feast on account of him or her. So they'd eat with them so that spirit might never come back again.

One time I was in the Cypress Hills, southwest of Maple Creek, where my uncle used to live. There was a creek nearby and the Cypress Post Office. There were very heavy evergreen trees there, quite young at that time, and not very high. I was going through there one day, looking for horses in the pasture. In the summertime these horses would go in the bush where the flies are not as bad, you know. They were very thick trails and I was sure my uncle's horses would be there. That's about three miles from where my uncle lived. All at once I saw a big lodge made of poles with buffalo hides over it. The hides were tanned a little bit, with the fur off and just the rawhide left. The lodge was a big one, just about the width of the house and standing up about 20 feet or so. Well, in that lodge there used to be an old Cree Indian and when he died he was buried there. Every year on the date that he died some people would go and sit with him there, just like they were smoking with him. They would pass the pipe around. They call that place the "War Lodge Coulee".

KT: Do some people around here wear some amulet or something around their neck for good luck charms?

AT: I don't wear anything but maybe some people do.

KT: Do you have any good luck signs?

AT: When there's a new moon, and the light of the moon hits your left side that's a sign of good luck for you.

KT: And if it hits your right shoulder?

AT: That's not very good.

KT: What happens if an eagle or an owl sits on your house? Is this a good luck sign?

AT: No, it's a bad luck sign. You might get some evil or you might lose someone from your house.

KT: What do you do if an owl sits on your house?

AT: I'd smoke a pipe to try and counteract this force.

KT: Can you recall any stories of how the Indians got here?

AT: Well, they said that there was one old man that got these Indians together. One time four Indians went out to look for this man, someplace in the Rockies. They travelled just on foot, you know. It took them many days to get there. So, about four days before they got to that old fellow's cabin they heard far-off sound of drums beating. On the second day they came a little bit closer, then turned and watched. They were right there. There was a big lodge and they went in from the south side. This old fellow knew these four men, so he called them in. They all sat down beside him and soon got a meal.

This old fellow was sick. After their meal, they went and sat with him. This old man told them, "Why did you come for?"

"I", said the first one, "want to live a long time."

"All right," the old man said, "you'll get that," and made him sit on one side." Next he asked the other one, "What did you want?"

"Oh," he said, "I want medicine. When people get sick, what I should give them?" He received all kinds of herbs then. So he got what he wanted.

The third one asked for a long life, too. Well, he got it. And this fourth one wanted to be a good hunter; to get buffaloes.

"Get on a black horse," he told the fourth one.

KT: What else do medicine men like Peter George and Felix Panipekeesick do? Do they ever find lost horses or something like this?

AT: Yes. They use a looking glass and put it on their pillow when they go to bed. They learn where the horses were lost and they track them in there. Then they tell this fellow, "your horse is right there." And they go there in the morning, and they find them. [chuckles]

KT: Have you found horses this way yourself?

AT: No, I never.

KT: Has somebody on this reserve?

AT: No.

KT: What about J.N. Lerat, did he find horses once like this? Did he not ask Felix once to help him find horses?

AT: Yes, I think so.

KT: Can some of these old men make evil spirits, too?

AT: No. Only good spirits.

KT: What about singing? Do you know any songs yourself?

AT: No, I don't.

KT: Is it because you didn't learn any from your father and your grandfather or didn't you want to learn any songs?

AT: No, I didn't want to.

KT: Did your father teach you any songs?

AT: No, never.

KT: Did he know any songs himself?

AT: No, I don't think so.

I remember how old-timers used to go from here. With two pairs of moccasins they used to walk to a place southwest of Moose Jaw, called Old Wive's Lake. Today the white people call it Lake Johnson. Well, it's not a very big lake. There's an island in that lake, more closer to the south side. And they sit there at night, for three nights sometimes. All at once they would hear a woman singing on that island - this woman would sing what you call a thanksgiving song. Well, they knew then there was going to be luck in getting the horses from the Blackfoot Indians. [chuckles] So they would keep going. But should that woman cry sometimes, then they wouldn't go; it might be bad luck for them to hunt for horses.

KT: What happens when some people have their mouth turned to the side? What does this mean?

AT: There's some on account of their nerves, you know. They just have nerve shock, and it goes up their head and that's what makes that. On others it's on account of evil medicine men that makes them be that way.

KT: Have you seen this happen?

AT: No, I never seen it happen but I just heard about it.

KT: What do you think a medicine man does to make this man turn his mouth? Would someone hire him?

AT: Yes. He'll get the bark of birch and draw a little person on there. Whatever he wants to do with it - he can use bad medicine or good medicine. Well, he puts it on wherever it's needed - on the eyes or on the head, and then that person gets sick.

KT: Do many people believe this way?

AT: Not nowadays. But they used to believe more in the past.

KT: You say "good medicine" and "bad medicine". What's good medicine?

AT: Well good medicine heals a sick person.

KT: And bad medicine?

AT: Bad medicine makes him worse, I guess.

KT: Have you heard of "love medicine", love potion or something similar?

AT: Yes.

KT: Has this been used in the past?

AT: The women used to use it.

KT: Would the medicine man also use it?

AT: No, not now. They used to in the past.

KT: I think a couple of years ago here you had a boy up on the hill who had something wrong. You took him to a medicine man. Did he get cured?

AT: I don't know. I never heard of it.

KT: No. I forget who it was. Do you think very many of the young people today respect the medicine men?

AT: I guess they forget about them. Only some of the old people know.

KT: Have there been medicine women, too?

AT: Yes, there was some quite awhile ago.

KT: Do you have any today on your reserve?

AT: No, I don't think so.

KT: What would medicine women do? What sort or things would they do? Make herbs.

AT: Yes, the same as the medicine men. But she wouldn't make a Rain Dance.

KT: Can you remember any stories about the Riel Rebellion of the late 1800s?

AT: That's why these Indians are all scattered now. In 1895 most of us came from Cypress Hills, southwest of Maple Creek, at the time that the government thought there were too many Indians there. So the government moved us - some to Piapot Reserve, and some to the Grenfell and Broadview Reserves. They shipped them, including the Indian tents and horses.

KT: What did - do you know if the medicine men did anything at that time?

AT: No, I don't. I don't remember. I do remember when the [Roman Catholic] Mission moved down to the Qu'Appelle Valley. Earlier it used to be up on the hill, just west of "Butcher's"[56] place. They had to dig up all them graves there, and bring them down to the valley. One of these bodies was very heavy, so they opened it to see what it was. It was just like gravel in one place, for the body turned into stone-like. Well, they buried it down there. In all, there were about nine or ten graves.

KT: Have you seen any basic difference in the burial patterns of the Indians in the past and those of today?

AT: Today they have funeral mounds near the church, you know. In them olden days sometimes they didn't bury one another. They just build a stand like about as high as them posts there [about six feet]. And they would have cross pieces there and rails. Here they would put them up instead of burying them.

KT: Was this in your lifetime?

AT: Yes, I remember they'd wrap them up in a blanket, and then tie them up on the rails. There was one about one mile on this side of the old Agency.[57] That was there for many years.

KT: Wouldn't the coyotes or some other animals destroy these bodies?

AT: No, they never used to bother them. That old chief is buried way out south near that man they call General Ashburn.

KT: How was he buried?

AT: In the ground. Well, for many years they had him in the lodge, you know. They'd go and smoke with him at the time he had left this world; they'd smoke with him quite a few years, 30 years maybe. And you could see every time they went there, passing through that wagon trail, before the land surrendered. Just a little ways, about half a mile, I guess, you would see a big fire there. You'd see shadows move. And you'd go to that place there, and get so near his house, then nothing. [chuckles].

KT: What was your old chief's name?

AT: Well, that was old Cowessess, the first chief we had.

KT: What does Cowessess mean in English?

AT: Well, it means really "Little Boy". Cowessess had a brother here but he didn't get along here very well. So this brother moved to this side of Crescent Lake, south of Yorkton. That's where there was a small reserve there.

KT: Were there other medicine men besides Peter and Felix that you remember in your lifetime?

AT: No, just White Flower, which I told you about. That was way before Peter George and Felix.

KT: Was he pretty powerful?

AT: Yea, he was a small man, but powerful.

KT: How old did he live to?

AT: Oh, he lived to be quite old - at least 80.

KT: Was he married?

AT: Yes. I remember him.

KT: Did the people used to respect him?

AT: Yes.

KT: Were you afraid to offend him?

AT: Yes. I remember the doctor from Broadview used to allow him to have liquor to use as medicine.

KT: Do local people still make a lot of old Indian costumes and moccasins with beadwork?

AT: They don't make any. They don't need them now. [chuckles]

KT: It's all past history, then?

AT: Yes.

KT: Do young people ask very much about the past, about the old medicine men and about old chiefs?

AT: No, they forgot about them. They're not interested.

KT: Have you ever been in a Smoking Tepee?

AT: Yes.

KT: What kind of ceremony is it?

AT: Well, it's just like a feast. This old White Flower that I told you about tried one of them parties. He used to give a taste of this maple sugar[58] - just a little piece to everyone that was there.

KT: What was the purpose of these Smoking Tepees?

AT: Well, it's just to remember about old people, you know; and ask for good luck for the young people.

KT: Could anyone attend?

AT: Oh, anybody who's invited.

KT: That was in the old days. Did you have any Smoking Tepees say, in the last 40 years?

AT: No.

KT: In your younger days did you do any Indian dancing?

AT: No.

KT: What languages do you understand besides English?

AT: Both Cree and Saulteaux.

KT: Is there anybody on your reserve who knows many of the Cree or Saulteaux songs?

AT: Well, just Philip [Tanner][59] here, one of my boys - he sings songs quite a bit.

KT: Where did he learn his songs?

AT: He learned them from Sakimay [Reserve], on the west end here. He just learned them by listening to Powwows. He doesn't know any Rain Dance songs, though.

KT: Do you have separate songs for the Rain Dance?

AT: Oh yes, they're quite different from the Powwow which is a time for recreation.

KT: Is the Rain Dance more religious?

AT: Yes.

KT: Do you remember any other stories of the early days that your father used to tell you?

AT: One time my old grandfather told me one. "One afternoon," he told me, "all at once it got dark." "Oh," he said, "I was a little boy at that time. I remember they were in a tepee, and all at once the stars started falling. They'd roll down and when they hit the ground, they're out. Lots, just like rain," he told me.

KT; What time of the day was this?

AT: Oh, about five o'clock when the sun is about there.

KT: Did this have any good luck sign or bad luck sign?

AT: Well, they said they had good luck after that.

KT: Do you believe that Rain Dances will bring rain?

AT: Well, sometimes it does; sometimes it doesn't.

APPENDIX C

Abridged Transcription of tape-recorded interview[60] with Mrs. Hector (Elizabeth) Wasacase, an elderly Saulteaux woman, Broadview, Saskatchewan, by Koozma J. Tarasoff

Interview[61] on
May 21, 1967

KT: Mrs. Wasacase, tell me how old you are and where you were born.

EW: I was born in Elphinstone, Manitoba on February 18th, 1907. I was 60 on the 18th of February last.

KT: What were your parents - Cree or Saulteaux?

EW: My mother was a Saulteaux Indian. My father was a half-breed.

KT: What reserve was your mother from?

EW: She was at Elphinstone, Manitoba.

KT: How long did you stay in Manitoba? When did you come to Saskatchewan?

EW: We left Elphinstone when I was about six years old, at the time of the flu epidemic - around 1914. After that we stayed with our old people in Moosomin, Saskatchewan for quite awhile. My mother passed away when I was 12, and so I went to school in St. Boniface Orphanage, Manitoba. I stayed there until I was over 16. Then my two sisters and I came home to Moosomin in the fall, and went to Wawota in the winter. Here we helped my Daddy look for rats [muskrats] and then we came to Ochapowace Reserve.

At the place we stayed on Ochapowace they coaxed me to get married. I was not old enough - only 18. And you know how the Indians are - they try and scare you the first time you come on a reserve. You don't know no people or nothing like that and they tell me the cops will be after me if I'm not married because the old man he bought a license. They told a lie. They told it I was 21. I was only 18.

KT: Did someone try to persuade you to get married?

EW: Yes. See, we don't know nothing and we got scared. They'll talk about the police and all that and they coax me to get married.

KT: Why do you think they coaxed you to get married?

EW: Well, because I had no mother, I guess. They were trying to take me away from my Daddy and my sister.

KT: Why did you choose Ochapowace?

EW: Well, I had my Aunt Pauline's parents there. We were visiting them - the old people because we had never seen them since we were small kids and so my Dad brought us over there. And this was the place where that old fellow from Kahkewistahaw got me - Hector.[62]

KT: Now, how many were there in the family that you came from?

EW: There were four girls and five boys. We were nine of us. Only two of us are living now.

KT: I see. Were you the oldest?

EW: No. There was my brother Gilbert and Mary and my brother Joe and me; I'm the fourth oldest. There was my sister Liza who died. And we lost two little boys as babies. We had a little brother at the time my mother died, and this sister [Mrs. Sparvier next door], who was crawling around.

KT: What do you recall of your early years (up to age 12) before your mother died?

EW: When we moved to Saskatchewan we lived in a little wee shack about five miles east of Moosomin, close to the jailhouse. My daddy was working then.

KT: What do you recall about Elphinstone, Manitoba, before you moved to Saskatchewan?

EW: Well, we were living at my mother's parents' place on the reserve.

KT: Which reserve is this? Do you remember?

WE: No, I don't know the name of the reserve. Anyway, they had a big house. They have the upstairs where we were sleeping and the old people were downstairs. There weren't many of us, you know.

KT: What was your mother's name?

EW: Mary Anne Boyer [French name].

KT: How long did you live on Ochapowace Reserve?

EW: We never stayed on there. You see, we came there for Christmas and then they had the New Year's. After New Year's, on the sixth of March we got married. So quick, see, before we knew anybody. They scared me, you know, and my sister was only nine at that time.

KT: When did you move to Kahkewistahaw?

EW: That was in 1924 when I got married. That's the time I moved in to the reserve.

KT: Did you have any family with Hector?

EW: I should have six. Five died. Only Richard is living.

KT: Did they all die in their early ages?

EW: My oldest one died with double pneumonia. He was going three years old. The rest died younger. There was no hospital. Nothing. If there had been a hospital they surely should be living now. Doctors would have known what to do with double pneumonia and diphteria.

KT: When did you leave Hector and the reserve and move to Broadview?

EW: It'll be two years on August 18th; no 27th of August.

KT: How far did you get in school?

EW: Well, there were two languages. With French I went up to grade four; with English I just went up to grade two. This was in St. Boniface orphanage, just across the river from the City of Winnipeg.

KT: Did you learn to speak French at all up there?

EW: Oh yes. We learned mostly French and then English. But my mother was a Saulteaux Indian, so that today I can also talk Saulteaux and Cree, as well as some French.

KT: One of the interesting things about your own experience is your skill in making medicine. Where did you learn this skill?

EW: From my mother-in-law. That is Mrs. Wasacase, Hector's mother. She was an old blind lady who was still making medicine. She told me what kind of roots to dig for her and that's the place I learned.

KT: When did she first teach you?

EW: Oh, the first time I got married to the old man. I keep him at home and she stayed with me.

KT: I see. And she taught you while she was living with you. Did she teach other people too?

EW: Well, lots I guess. She showed the roots to everybody, before something happen to her; that's where I learned.

KT: When did she die?

EW: Oh, she died quite awhile ago. She was 70 anyway.

KT: Was she able to describe the roots to you and how to make the medicine even though she was blind? She taught you all this.

EW: Yes.

KT: How many roots would you say that she taught you to find altogether? Would you say about 30?

EW: Oh, more than that. We had to pick all the roots we could find - like raspberry, strawberry and all those chokecherry roots and saskatoon roots. All those roots you have to know how much to cut, how to cut them into pieces, and mix them all up together.

KT: During her lifetime did she cure a lot of people?

EW: Oh yes.

KT: Was it just on Kahkewistahaw Reserve?

EW: Everybody.

KT: Was she pretty well the only woman that did this sort of thing?

EW: Oh, there was lots of them that made medicine. There was lots of Indian doctors at that time. There was old Assiniboine, and old Tanich (?) and his brother, Watchkik, and Aunt Pauline and them. Aunt Pauline is married to my uncle now; before she was a Kenny.

KT: Who else do you remember that used to be old medicine women and men?

EW: There was my old grandmother and grandfather from Ochapowace; they were crippled and I kept them at home. They showed me quite a bit of roots after my mother-in-law died. They call that old man and the old lady, Payshekakeewashet. Well, I had them in the winter because the old lady was crippled and couldn't work.

KT: How did your grandparents learn this skill - perhaps from their grandfathers or in-laws?

EW: Yes.

KT: You've known how to make medicine since 1927. Would you say you've cured or helped quite a few people in your lifetime?

EW: Oh yes. Take that Billy Redwood, the old man from Cowessess. He had sugar diabetes and ulcers, and the doctors operated on him five times. He got sick here again recently and they rushed him to the Broadview Hospital. He was unconscious. Well, he started drinking this medicine and in three days he was out. I met his wife in town and she asked me for some more medicine. She said she was empty. "I should done that before, long ago," she said. Her husband felt "a lot better" she said. He quit taking the doctor pills and instead takes the Indian medicine.

KT: How old is this old man?

EW: Oh, he's about in his 80s or 90s.

KT: What was his sickness?

EW: Said he had ulcers.

KT: Did the old man just have ulcers?

EW: At first they never knew what's wrong with him. They only guessed. They give him an operation so many times, but he never knew what the operation was for. On the sixth time when he went to the hospital the boys cried; they told me about their father and didn't want him to take an operation because [they feared] he'd be coming home in a square box. So they came to me.

KT: Did the boys come to you?

EW: No, no. The old man. They came right here. They came and found me here and they asked me for help. Well, I had it [medicine] fresh and I gave him some to try. He tried and he said he felt a lot better.

KT: How much did he have to drink?

EW: He could make it in a five pound lard pail, you know. Boil it. He could drink that by whole days, in place of water and in the place of tea. He takes that. Any time. He has to get about a three-pound lard pail and put it in a sealer and boil those roots over again.

KT: How many days did he drink this, before he got better?

EW: Oh, he's still drinking it and he is feeling fairly well, so they say. He said he likes my medicine better than the doctor's drops which make him get dopey and weak.

I went like that. I've quit taking doctor's pills for three weeks now. When I was taking them I can't even do nothing. After I eat I just sit down and roll in bed. I won't hear nothing. So I quit taking them.

KT: What other kind of illnesses have you treated?

EW: The same medicine that they drink - it cures everything, you know, all kinds of diseases. We don't have to make another one for that and that, you know. They're all there together; they could drink that and they get cured with it.

KT: Are you saying that the medicine that you have is a general tonic for all kinds of illnesses?

EW: Yes, for all kinds of illnesses.

KT: How many different roots would you put into this general tonic?

EW: Oh, gee. There's so many of them. You can't finish counting them. There's a 100 roots, any way. You know, when you collect these roots and put them in a 25-pound bag, this will nearly fill the bag.

KT: When do you pick these roots?

EW: In the fall. Some people pick them in summer, but it's no good. The best time is in the fall - then they're just right.

KT: Once you've dug the roots, how do you prepare them?

EW: You just take the roots, scrape them and after you scrape them, just cut them where they're green. Then you cut them up into pieces and dry them by the sun. You dry and they won't get mouldy.

KT: Do you save the leaves or anything like this?

EW: No, just the roots. With some of them we'll take some of the branches and leaves and mix them with the medicine. There's one they call *na-pi-she-wat* - you could use the roots, the branches and the leaves together. It's better - stronger like that, you know.

KT: How long does it usually take to dry the cut-up roots?

EW: That depends how thick they are and how hot it's outside. You put them outside in the sun so the rain doesn't get at it. With a good sun it may take about a week to dry. Then you put them away into a bag and hang them up in a dry place.

KT: Once the roots are dry, how do you use them?

EW: They're all mixed and ready to cook. Just take how much you want to get - a handful or so, and stir it in a little pail. Then boil it with water a few inches from the top of the pail.

KT: How long do you boil the mixture?

EW: As it begins to boil it looks like tea. The leaves and the roots become soft. This should take at least one hour. Once it has cooled you can use it. But you can't drink it too strong. When it little bit too strong, well you add a little bit of water, to make it kind of weak like.

KT: Do you put the roots into cold water when you start to cook them?

EW: In warm or boiling water - it doesn't matter.

KT: Do you prepare a new batch each time somebody needs the medicine to get well? Say you prepared it today, could it stand for a couple of weeks and still be good?

EW: Oh yes.

KT: Does it spoil?

EW: No, no. Of course, before it gets spoiled, they drink it all up.

KT: If you prepared it today, would it spoil if it stayed for several weeks?

EW: Oh yes. It's like cow's milk, you know; if you kept it where it was little bit too hot and where it sat down too long, it gets sour and kind of mouldy.

KT: So you have to have it in a cold place or in a fridge?

EW: Oh yes. That's were it'll keep longest - that's in a fridge.

KT: Who taught you how to prepare this general tonic mixture?

EW: That's what my mother-in-law showed me. That's my mother-in-law's medicine. I've been making nearly every fall. What she showed me and those of my other grandmothers are all the same.

KT: Do you find it difficult to get all the roots you want?

EW: Oh, some of the barks, you know. You can't get them here. You have to go some place like in Alberta. There's some bark you need that's about a half an inch thick - it looks like gum between the layers. That's the only one I can't get. It's like pine tree bark.

KT: Can you pick up the rest in the Qu'Appelle Valley and around Broadview here?

EW: Oh yes. All over the place, around bushes and on the prairies.

KT: Was your mother-in-law Saulteaux?

EW: Cree and Saulteaux.

KT: So both Cree and Saulteaux people have this skill. You use the same thing.

EW: Oh yes.

KT: Is there any difference between the Cree and Saulteaux in their medicine?

EW: Oh, no. The same thing.

KT: Do you use flowers, too?

EW: Yes. For some medicine. There's some yellow flowers with big heads, and about three feet high or so. They're also blue or purple like. We pick those, cut them, and mix them with one another.

KT: Last year[63] you picked some roots in the Qu'Appelle Valley. One of these was for diarrhea medicine. What is the name of that one?

EW: *Pi-a-gu-chay-kik.*

KT: Have you used this for many people?

EW: Oh yes. There's quite a bit using that. That's the only medicine the old people used for diarrhea.

KT: How do you use this root - do you mix it with something else?

EW: There's just about two or three roots needed to mix that for the diarrhea medicine. I don't know the name of those other roots. I [only] know them to dig them.

KT: Do you just mix them together and boil them?

EW: Yes. And you drink it.

KT: Do you eat the piece of root?

EW: No, you just strain it and drink that juice. After you've drunk it all, you could boil the roots over again and drink that.

After you've finished with the roots, you put them in a little paper bag and put them away in a clean place. If they put them in a dirty place then some of those young girls who have their [menstrual] periods may go by and this would be no good. They'll spoil it, you know. Then the old fellow who drank the medicine from the roots that were [carelessly] thrown out, won't live long if that girl passes over those roots.

KT: Do you mean a woman who has had menstrual periods will kind of contaminate the medicine?

EW: Yes.

KT: Is this a belief of the old people?

EW: Oh yes. They believe it today. You have to keep the roots in a clean place. I never keep them in the house. I lock them in the granary and hang them up so nobody goes in there.

KT: How do the younger girls learn to keep away from the medicinal roots?

EW: The old people would tell the girls that if they have periods they should stay away from the roots and even the medicine that's inside of the house. Sometimes the girls are not told and they go in there - not even two or three hours, they're just a fluid(?).

KT: Why do you think a woman with periods affects the medicine and the health of the person taking this medicine?

EW: I don't know. That's the thing I'd always wanted to find out myself. I can't understand it. Well, there's something, I guess, in the old Indian ways, you know. They had nobody to tell them. They grew up in an Indian way. Nobody told them anything before. They had to have their own drugs; they know it by themselves, you know. Sometime they'll sing. Lots of time they learn like that.

KT: Is there any other places that a woman with periods doesn't go in?

EW: Even the Rain Dances. If a young girl steps right at the door [of the lodge] the singers can't sing. They go faint. Even the dancers go weak. They can't sing good because where there's a Rain Dance, where you promise you're going to be dancing, well, you quit everything - you quit your drinks, you quit your eat. You fast. It looks like Lent, you know. Sometime they used to talk about a Lent; well, that's their Lent. Where they've made a Rain Dance, they suffer themselves for God. You know how God suffered himself going on a cross and all that. Well, that's them, too. That's what they sing of it you know. They suffer themselves 'cause God suffered himself for us. Well, that's what they're thinking.

That's why they're doing those Rain Dances. Now, today it's all dying. Not many now of the old people. It's only Peter George and Felix Panipekeesick - that's the only two old men, I guess, now that could handle that Rain Dance. On this reserve [Kahkewistahaw] there's no old men no more.

KT: Beside Peter and Felix, why can't anyone else put on a Rain Dance on the four reserves north of here?

EW: They don't know enough. What they show them, you know, they don't do it right.

KT: Have you attended many Rain Dances in your life?

EW: Oh, since I was married I attended lots of times - and I've danced.

KT: Has the Rain Dance changed very much from the early days?

EW: Oh, lots of it.

KT: What sort of changes?

EW: See, sometimes you get very sick - like you, your mother and dad - they can't do nothing for you. Then they'll take the pipe and they'll go and find one of the Indian doctors and he starts doctoring the sick baby or child. He'll give him the medicine - and the child comes up from there. "I'll do that," they say, and they promise they're going to do that Rain Dance [so as to help] pull through this child.

KT: Would the Indian doctor make the promise?

EW: Yes. He'd promise to make a Rain Dance. Sometimes these old people have their grandchildren that are half-dying; so those people go and fill the pipe, pray for the child, and plan to get a cure, you know. They pay quite a bit for it.

KT: Do they give the medicine man a gift of some kind?

EW: Yes.

KT: What sort of gift would they give?

EW: Anything they could. First, it's tobacco and Sweetgrass. They go and kneel down with the baby there. Then they put a fire there and the Sweetgrass. Next they give him that tobacco. That old man will take the tobacco and he'll open it there and use that tobacco to doctor the child. They buy the medicine from him and they'll give him some money or some goods like that. And that medicine comes through.

KT: Does a child usually get well after a Rain Dance?

EW: Oh yes. Before that even. Before they have the Rain Dance, well, they pray for him to get better - and they promise they're going to do that for the grandchildren to raise up and to grow up and all that.

KT: What about your own children that died? Did you try to get any Rain Dances for your own five children that died?

EW: Oh well, you know, that was in the winter. It's hard to promise. I've never promised anything, you know. Some of the people they say that "I'll do that," way ahead of it. Sometime they do nothing. Sometime they'll just go. I never promised nothing, you know, and still I see it if I reach it. "Okay, I'll go." That's only the day I think to go. Well, I had it in my mind. I never told nobody. Just keep it for my ownself like.

KT: Have you seen many people get well because of the Rain Dance?

EW: Oh yes. Old people and young people and the babies and all different in their age.

KT: I notice that tobacco is used in the Rain Dance, in doctoring, and as a gift. Why is tobacco so special?

EW: Well, I guess they've found out themselves how to do that - what it goes ahead of them, you know. That's what I was thinking. They always show the tobacco go ahead, than(?) the Sweetgrass. And these they depend on the Thunderbirds. See, they pray for the Thunderbirds because they give the Indian names, you know. That's why when they have to give a gift to the old man, the tobacco goes ahead of it. Because they pray when they give an Indian name - the name of the child to get cured and everything.

KT: Does the Indian doctor give an Indian name to a child?

EW: Oh yes. That's the way the kids do it - they raise [grow] up.

KT: What's your Indian name?

EW: Tapeeashooshkoo in Cree. That's Girl-bird.

KT: Is this "Girl-bird" a kind of a spirit that looks after you?

EW: That's what they use towards a Thunderbird. That's a kind of a spirit.

KT: Does the spirit come from a Thunderbird?

EW: Yes it comes to watch [over me].

KT: Is it a kind of a guardian spirit like a mother looking after a child or you looking after foster-children, or something?

EW: Yes. She's just the same like. Sometimes the person will say it to the children, such as, "If you don't want to listen, the devil besides you." They'll be telling the children, "Well, you're good, well the little Injun is beside you, keeping you." See, that's the same thing.

KT: Do you usually keep these names secret?

EW: Oh, yes.

KT: You don't write them when you sign a cheque or something.

EW: Oh no. Just use your own name. What you got baptized you use those. It's only in the crowd, like in a Rain Dance that you use your Indian name. If they know your name, where they going to give you a gift, they call your Indian name. They don't use the English name. That's how they know you.

KT: In calling the Indian name, do they really call the helping spirit?

EW: Yes. That's how they run that. Some of them don't know the names, so you call them by their English names, because they may come from far away, like the States; the States' people don't know your name over there and they just call you by your own English name.

KT: In the early days did everyone have an Indian name?

EW: Oh yes. Lots of them.

KT: What about today?

EW: The young people don't have nothing now since the old people died. You have to have the old folks to give the names.

KT: Do you have the power to give names to somebody else?

EW: Oh no.

KT: Why?

EW: Because I don't know nothing about it.

KT: Do you have to have someone like Felix or Peter George?

EW: Yes. Well, some of them from the reserve take their little grandchildren over there [to Felix Panipekeesick and Peter George] to get Indian names.

KT: Is there a set time that they're supposed to get their Indian names?

EW: Any time. It could be if they're several years old.

KT: Can one person have several Indian names?

EW: Oh, some of them have four or five different names.

KT: Would this be because the first name didn't seem to help so that they went to another Indian doctor and got another Indian name?

EW: Yes. That's how they run it.

KT: Is there then the feeling that maybe the second Indian name is more powerful?

EW: Yes.

KT: Do you have more than one name?

EW: I have only one, "Girl-Bird". My Richard, however, has two names: one is "Walking from the Sun" or Igawakin, and the other is "Walking Bird" or Kalbyalkin.

KT: When did your son Richard get this first name?

EW: Oh, he was small and was always sickly and all that. So I took him to my old grandfather, Kahkewashit. He lived on Ochapowace. Well, he gave him the first name, but that didn't help him much. Well, the child got sick, so you have to take him to another doctor - an Indian doctor. There this doctor gave him a [new] Indian name, too, you know, to help him.

KT: Who was the second Indian doctor?

EW: It was Sam Belanger.

KT: Are these medicine men living?

EW: No, they all died.

KT: Were they known as "Indian doctors"?

EW: Oh yes. You see, these old men doctored the child, while the ladies who made the medicine handed the medicine to the old men. See, the old lady and the old man they helped each other.

KT: Would the old man give the name?

EW: Oh yes. Sometimes where the husband died, she will do it.

KT: And some of them have power to give this?

EW: They have to and some of them give the names, too.

KT: Do you give names?

EW: No. I'm not old enough. [chuckles]

KT: Do you mean that there's a set way of how to give Indian names to somebody?

EW: Oh, yes. They have to pray at night, you know. When it's getting dark, they dim the lights. They'll sing. You could hear the spirits talking like, you know; they tell them what to do and how the child is like. When they make the steam bath, some of those spirits go in there. You could hear them talking. You ask them what's wrong with you and all that. Well, the spirit will tell you if you did something wrong and that's why the child is suffering.

KT: Have you been in one of these sweat baths when the spirit has spoken?

EW: Oh yes. Many times.

KT: Did the spirit speak to you too?

EW: Well, I asked them, you know, what's wrong with my child and how to get better and all that. The spirit would tell that old man doctor who would be having his steam bath, while we'd be sitting outside. It's only those old people; the old men have their steam baths together, you know, all covered up.

KT: Would you hear the spirits or did the old man hear the spirits?

EW: We heard them plain from the outside. It looked like a picture show when you hear people talking. It's just the same.

KT: Is it possible that what you heard was the old man speaking in the sweat bath?

EW: No. That was the spirit; it sounded different.

KT: Did you say that these old men would dim the light in the house and then they would talk to the spirit?

EW: They also speak to the spirit when they sing and use little drums. The sound of this singing seems to bring the spirits closer in.

KT: Do they also smoke a pipe at this time?

EW: Yes. They smoke the pipe first - before they start to sing and pray. Then they sing and use the drum.

KT: Might they then hold a sweat bath?

EW: Yes. They go and have their sweat bath - even the spirits.

KT: How would you describe a spirit? Where does it come from?

EW: This I don't know. I always think of it, but they say you can't see them. Sometimes you could hear them at night - like something blowing "shshsh", like that. That's the spirit going in, but you can't see it.

KT: Is there only one type of spirit or are there many kinds of spirits?

EW: Oh, there's so many kinds of them - like all those thunderbirds, you know, different names and all that.

KT: Are there different kinds of thunderbirds?

EW: Yes.

KT: What are some names for the different thunderbirds?

EW: Well, I don't know enough about them. I can't understand it. It's hard to explain it because only those old people know much about them - like Felix Panipekeesick and Peter George. All these old men. They know everything.

KT: Would there be several thunderbird spirits?

EW: Yes.

KT: Would these be good spirits?

EW: Oh, yes.

KT: Would there also be any bad spirits?

EW: I don't think so.

KT: Well, would all spirits be something like animals or birds or things like that or would they be something else? Or would they have human form?

EW: See, I don't know. When they sing they just had the animal spirit, you know. I don't know how they look. The main thing - I can't explain it.

KT: Has it got any form in your opinion? Can someone draw a picture of a spirit?

EW: You know the people don't like that some of the people draw a thunderbird, like what Maurice Louison[64] done when he drew a thunderbird on a hide. And he paints some Rain Dances, too. Well, sometimes he can't paint things.

KT: Is this because he puts this down on paper?

EW: See, old people think a lot about the thunderbirds, where they have them in their tepees. No girl can go in that tepee - only men.

KT: Is this prohibition of girls true only when they prepare for a Rain Dance?

EW: No. Like me I could go there because I had them over [menstrual periods] and am back like a young child. Everything is clean now. When they're dirty they can't go in. If they go there, during the Rain Dance, where they use those tepees, they'll know right away. Sometimes the tepee blows away or other things happen. Well, that mean that somebody went in there dirty.

KT: You mean a lady went in there who was having menstrual periods?

EW: Yes. They know it right away. Even the singers will warn the girls to keep away if they see them coming. They know it right away.

KT: During the Rain Dance does the caller warn the ladies with menstrual periods not to go in there?

EW: Oh yes. There's a guy there - Billy Whitehat. He goes quite a ways around to the camps every morning, yelling out. He warns the girls that if they are not feeling good, keep away from the door of the Rain Dance lodge. You could go about two yards away from the door, if you want to watch.

KT: By "not feeling good", do you mean a person who is having menstrual periods?

EW: Yes. The girls. Sometimes you see during the Rain Dance some young girls walking on the prairies. Those are the ones they don't want around. That's why the girls go walking away. They've heard it already that they should keep away from the place. They want the place clean.

KT: Are all these spirits related to one another or are they different? Do they come from the same source?

EW: I can't say.

KT: Do you feel they come from one place? Or do you think they come from different places?

EW: Oh, I guess that they come from different places.

KT: How would they be related, say to God?

EW: I don't know. It's hard to say.

KT: Is there such a thing as a thunder spirit?

EW: Oh yea.

KT: Is there something besides a woman with periods that causes bad luck?

EW: The owls, they're really bad because some of the Indians long ago used to know bad medicine, you know, and they depended on a screech owl and those big ones. When the owl is singing the old man may take a little bit of your hair (two or three hairs), roll it up and put it in his pocket. Then he'll go back home. Now, if you make him mad and if I was bad, I'll take your hair and put it in a little wee leather [case] and put some medicine and your hair in it. When you're sitting, you'll suddenly think of something to do. You'll just get up and walk out and go where you want to go. Maybe some people want you to live with their daughter and you'll have that girl in your mind; you'll just walk out and go and find her where she is in no time. That's what they call "the dope" or "doping medicine". That's no good. I never learned that. They were going to show me but I said, "No."

KT: Are there many people like that?

EW: Not today. They're mostly dead. It's only in Manitoba, I guess that a few old people know this, but not on these reserves [north of Broadview].

KT: Is this a kind of bad medicine?

EW: Yes, that's what they call dope. Some of the doctors here sometimes can't cure the Indian. They don't know what's wrong with them, like that Mrs. Jack Bob.[65] Before that old lady's boy died, they give him a drink in a little glass of wine. They had something in there. The old lady said, "No, I don't want to take it. My boy died. I'm not going to

drink." "Aw, come on," they told him, "your boy liked to drink. He'll be glad to see you drink to his spirit." Well, they coaxed the old lady into drinking. A week after we have to rush that old lady down to Fort Qu'Appelle hospital.

KT: What happened to her?

EW: She was sore in her stomach and she heard a noise all the time. That stuff went to her head. She nearly went crazy.

KT: Is she still sick?

EW: Yes. I saw her yesterday. She looks very tough. She said she still has those pains.

KT: So you think this is due to dope?

EW: Not only I. Others too.

KT: Has she used any of your medicine?

EW: She was drinking my headache Indian medicine; it's all like powder. You put a little bit in the fire, and just smell that.

KT: Do you buy this powder in the drug store?

EW: Oh no. It's made from fine little seeds growing in the field. Oh, there's lots here on the hills. You mix it with a little Sweetgrass and some pine cones. It smells like peppermint in the slough. They could drink that and they could smell it, too. Well, you use something else in that for the headache - you cut it from the beaver bag and you dry that. That smells strong. They use that for headaches. I have some of it.

KT: Does it work?

EW: Oh yes. It works.

KT: Regarding Mrs. Jack Bob, why would someone have used dope medicine in her case?

EW: Because she was just guessing that somebody done that to her, you know.

KT: Doesn't she know for sure?

EW: Well, she knows it. Well, she doesn't know the person. I know she got doped. She know it. She doesn't know by whom.

She said, "Somebody gave me some wine and put something in there. After I drink," she said, "I'm like black-out," she said. "There's something beside me," she said, "like smoke, like," she said. "Already," she said, "my head was feeling funny. That's not much," she said, "I only drank about two mouthfuls." Well, she went in and she said she was having a headache.

KT: Did your medicine help her to counteract this?

EW: Well, she was using quite awhile. She tried to stop the noise that was bothering in her ears. There was noise all the time. I guess it went to her ears. She said, "I just hear that noise, even when I sleep. It sounds like a tractor," she said, "going on my head." And they took her to Esterhazy, Whitewood, Broadview and Fort Qu'Appelle.

KT: What did the doctors say?

EW: The doctors said they can't find anything. They say she's not sick. Yet she's feeling sick.

KT: Is she Cree?

EW: No, she's Saulteaux. Her husband Jack Bob is a Cree.

KT: In your early days, when somebody offered to teach you dope, why didn't you accept?

EW: Because it's no good to learn it. I don't want to.

KT: Does it harm people?

EW: Yes. They doped me.

KT: Somebody doped you once?

EW: Yes. That old fellow doped me. I said, "Okay, who's going to do something to me, well, he'll go ahead of me." And the old man died. That was Willy Smoker. I kept that old man's brother.

At the last Rain Dance I came to Ghost Lake [Sakimay Reserve]. They had sports down at Piapots. And I heard there was going to be a Rain Dance. I missed all the Rain Dances here because I was down at my Dad's for two months. After my operation the old man was too mean and wanted me to work but the doctor told me not to do it for six months after my operation. That was on the 14th of May that I went to see my Dad in Lebret. He was living that time.

The next year, on Mother's Day, my Dad died on the 10th of May. That was my Mother's Day, that time. Nobody told me until everything was over - not even the Indian Office. The telegram to the Indian Office arrived too late. I've never seen my Daddy where he got buried. The body is down at the graveyard down at Lebret. Even my sister here, she cried because we couldn't go. They never told us everything until it was over. They just covered it up.

Perhaps it was better that I didn't go. The old lady that he married was deaf, mean and stingy. I remember the time my Dad was already sick. I cut the wood for them and the old lady was stingy of his grub. I told Dad, "Find me a job. I'll help you pay your bill." I worked two months, and after that I came home. After I came home that fall my Dad went. He had a ruptured appendix. He always told them, "My

side it's sore." "Dad," I told him, "you go for an operation. Are you having an appendix?" "Naw," the old lady said. In the early morning she would come and say, "Get up. You have to go and work." My sister-in-law was there. That old lady had two boys and one of them he was married; the other was in the army. And there, I told my Dad, "I'm a married woman," I told him. "I know how I keep myself, Dad," I said. "Nobody'll bother me. I'm a married woman." I was working for one of my aunts. She has a big house there with upstairs, and she asked my Dad, "Can you lend me your daughter to clean the house. You see, I'm going to rent half of my house." Well, she rented that house. And I stayed there about a month, with my aunt - and cleaned up the house and everything. Scrubbed everything. They were French people, hauling gas with big trucks. There was two families in that house. When they get home in the morning, they slept all afternoon and in the evening there they went to work again. They went back and forth from Lebret to Winnipeg.

KT: When you were doped, how did you feel?

EW: Well, you see, I was dancing in the Rain Dance. And this fella got mad at me because he said, "I'll give you some medicine so your husband won't bother you." I had a feeling that was not right. I said, "Well, Grandpa, never mind. I don't want that kind of medicine. I can depend on God."

He lent me his clothes and everything. And I went a-riding' horseback with two young girls, before they had their periods. Richard was small at that time and he was on horseback too. They all dressed up those horses good and we had to dress up. It looked like we were having a parade. When we got home, they built a Rain Dance, and I quit drinking for three days because I missed my Rain Dance here in the reserve. And that's the last one.

Well, I had it on my mind that I would follow the old people to get the tree in the wagon and bring branches at the same time. They tried to make me laugh. My brother-in-laws joked - anything for a laugh. But I had it in my mind to pray for my grandchildren and for myself and my parents. It didn't matter that they stayed was far away and couldn't come to the Rain Dance. I prayed for them. After we finished that Rain Dance on Sunday about 10 o'clock, I sat down. I tried to get up but couldn't even move. My legs were just like this. I was just shaky through the whole body. I had that thing right here on the right leg near the ankle. It buned. I found there were little shotgun pellets in there. I got mad. "I'll just pray," I said. "I've done nothing bad. Nothing. Who's suffering' me, he'll go ahead of me." Sure. There was a man here, too.

Before I went to Lebret to see my Daddy I was down in Ochapowace with my Aunt, Solomon Still's mother and dad. I stayed there for two months. I left the old man four months. Well, I was going back and forth to my uncle's; I would sleep there at nights and go early in the morning to my Aunt to help her make deer-hides. In the evenings I would return. When I was staying over there some people came to get me - old Alex and his wife. I told them, "I don't know why. I'm well off here but you're just going to make me trouble, that's all." Well, the old man wanted me to stay with his wife while he was going to go to Rossburn,

Manitoba to his brother-in-law's place, Joe Francis. He said that he had to go and get Joe's wife. On Monday morning he made the trip and came home in the late afternoon. It was raining and he was kind of mad. His wife and I were home. I had been busy cleaning the house all day. The old man never bought anything that we needed - not even baking powder and laundry soaps.

The old lady and I walked to old Andrew's place down the valley. When we got home there was nobody in the house. He got mad. In the evening, about 10 o'clock he came and hit his wife.

It was dark and I was tired. "Okay," he said, "you get ready and get the hell out." "Sure, I'll go," I said. "Hurry up get your things upstairs," he said, "and get the hell out from my house before I shoot you on the head."

As I went to the stairs he followed with a loaded gun - a .22. "Okay," I told him, "okay, Willy, if you're a man enough, kill me." I put my hands behind my back and faced him. "Come on," I said, "if you're a man enough," I said, "promise me you're going to shoot me. You said you're going to split my head, okay. I'm alone any way. My parents are way down. My dad is way down and nobody likes me on the reserve any way. Go ahead, kill me." I kept coming forward and he kept backing away with his finger on the trigger. "Come on," I told him, "I'm not scared of the gun." His wife was yelling and screaming, "Don't do that Willy." When he reached the door, he put his gun away. "Okay," he said, "get all your clothes and get out." "Sure," I said, "I'll go out." I went upstairs and found my things in the light of the moonlight. With my little box I got out of the house and the bush that was all around and ran down the old summer road and against the hills. I never came back.

KT: Was he the one that gave you dope?

EW: Oh no. That's another one. It was Willy Alexson who was going to shoot me.

KT: Earlier you mentioned that some people used owls for bad medicine. How did they do this?

EW: Well, they sing the song of the owl, you know. And they take a feather of the owl and call the spirit of the owl to "go there and take that dope over there".

KT: How do they use the hair of the person?

EW: They put some bad medicine there, tie it together and they'll sing a song. Then they ask the spirit of the owl to take that dope over there. If at night you sat down outside and all of a sudden you felt something touch your hair and heard some "Whsssh", then this meant that they were dropping that dope on your head. You won't feel it. You just hear something, a noise like. Sometimes you see some White people go like that. The doctor can't do nothing. They say their face goes off on the side.

KT: When you see a person with his face turned to the side, do you suspect Indian dope?

EW: Oh yes.

KT: Is there anyway to counteract the dope?

EW: It's only a big person - the one who knows good medicine that could put that thing right. You have to be a stronger person.

KT: What makes them stronger?

EW: When they get older and know more on their Indian side, then they get strong. These young ones don't know much of it and they're not so strong as the old people.

KT: What else do these strong people do to be strong?

EW: They're stronger than the young person because they know more and they dream more about it. They dream about what to use and all that. If they want to know something well, they depend on the spirit; the spirit will tell them what kind of a root to dig, how to make the medicine, and what medicine to give to a sick person.

KT: When do these spirits come to them?

EW: Well, sometimes before they go to bed they'll sing a little song. Sometimes they smoke a pipe and pray. Sometimes they just lay and wait. After singing a song and going to sleep, they may see something in their dream that looks like a flower or a little stick. From this he will know what to dig for. That's how they learn their own good medicine.

KT: Have you learned any medicine this way yourself?

EW: No. Today it's nothing for the young people. They don't believe it now that the old people have died.

KT: Do young people go to a medicine man?

EW: No. They go more to a White doctor.

KT: Is this because their parents and grandparents have not taught them in the old way?

EW: All our old parents are dying and there's nobody to tell us anything; nobody to correct us and all that. There's nobody to tell us "Do that and fix that for yourself and do this and that." That's why they have a heck of a time, just now, you know. They can't follow the Indian way. They like to follow more of the White man's side now - like the liquor and broken homes. That's all lies.

KT: Do you think liquor has spoiled a lot of lives?

EW: Oh yes. Lots of it. Sometime the ladies are fighting; they half-kill

each other. It's no good. Before there was nothing of that. Since the liquor was opened to the Indians they fill the pub every day. I go once in awhile. Sure, when I'm sick and tired I'll go and have a few beers; but I'm not crazy for liquor. I'll go when I'm tired, take a few beers, come home, and do my work. If I stay there they'll call me "a boozer" - and I'm not. I'll be sitting there with two glasses about two hours on the table. I can't take it fast; I take my time and listen to them talking.

KT: Do you talk with people?

EW: That's something I don't do much of. I don't know how they could stand it. Sometimes they look like a bunch of crows. Just listen to them - the White people and the Indians - swearing at each other right there. Sometimes I find it really awful.

KT: Tell me something about the roots that you dug last year.[66]

EW: Well, there's one that looks like grass with a few hairs on it, and a little blue bell on top. Sometimes they're high and are found in bunches. We call it *pe-a-goo-chey-pehk*. It's good for diarrhea.

KT: What other roots do you know?

EW: There's *mas-kwi-kee-a-ken* or grass medicine. It just looks like a little hair. You mix this with *mas-kwas-she*, or hay medicine; the root that I dug up in the swamp part of the Qu'Appelle Valley; it has little bells on top. I saved Mrs. Whitequill with that. She was hemorrhaging when she was having her little girl. The doctor was going to give her an operation, but I gave her my medicine.

KT: What is this root that smells nice when broken?

EW: *Pi-shu-va-tik*. You mix it with cherry roots, raspberry, strawberry, and all that.

KT: What do you use this for?

EW: Colds. Anything at all.

KT: What is *ki-ni-ki-nik*?

EW: It's Indian tobacco. You dry the leaves and you mix it with the tobacco and fill your pipe. The tobacco won't be so strong.

KT: What is the diarrhea root found on the bald prairie on Ochapowace Reserve? It has root hairs on one side of the main root.

EW: Oh yes. It's *ka-na-pa-ni-she-kwa-yak*. That's the root they mix with the other diarrhea medicine - *pe-a-goo-chey-pehk*, the one that looks like horseradish and has many roots.

KT: What root do you use for heart trouble.

EW: *Whi-ti-hi-che-pihk.* That's the one that the roots look like little sticks, and it's the one that goes with strawberry and raspberry roots.

KT: Do you pick wild onions?

EW: Long ago the Indian had that for onions. But they don't use it any more. The Indian name is *mish-kwa-ta-vi-shi-ka-go-mesh.*

KT: Do you have a root or flower that you use for fever? I believe it's called Yarrows in English. We picked it on the north side of Qu'Appelle Valley.

EW: Yes.

KT: Are these the main types of medicine that you use?

EW: Yes, that's the main ones.

KT: Do you use seneca root for medicine?

EW: Yes, for anything. They use all the roots. Some say there are about two or three hundred roots; some of these come from the States. You have different sticks, you know. There's a black currant root on the hill. It's good medicine for children when mixed with another root.

KT: Are there any roots that you eat raw?

EW: It's only that white sweet root that we dig down the valley. The one with the big, thick roots, which we call *shee-wee-chia-pehk.* Quite a few people ask for that for sore backs, tired feeling, especially women who are carrying babies. It's like what the doctor gives people - pain killer tablets.

KT: Do you have to boil it before you eat it?

EW: Oh no. They just chew it like that. They swallow the spit. It doesn't have to be boiled. Some of them mix it with other medicine and boil it together. It's just the same.

KT: How many people on these four reserves north of Broadview would you say still know Indian medicine like yourself?

EW: My sister-in-laws know how to make it: one of these is Mrs. Louison.[67] She's older, you know, and she knows more than I do. These old people - her dad and her mother - have always stayed with her and she learned more medicine than I did.

There's also another sister-in-law who knows. She's staying with her son right in Broadview - Mrs. Hardy. She's blind. And her sister living down in Carlyle - Aggie Standingready - also knows. Yes, all three sisters know how to make medicine. The oldest and the youngest are blind while the third one is going blind as well. That's why I was scared to join them and learn all the different medicines.

KT: Do you feel that medicine would eventually affect you?

EW: Oh yes.

KT: Do you believe that the blindness of the three sisters was in some way connected with bad medicine?

EW: Yes. Sometimes somebody comes in a hurry and asks them for that kind of medicine. They're touching the medicines - and maybe the dust goes in their eyes and blinds them. That's why I don't like it like that. I never bothered.

KT: Would there be many more besides these three sisters and yourself that would know medicine?

EW: Oh, there's lots down in Sakimay, like old Peter George, Felix and those old ladies over there. There are many more old people over there who are still living.

KT: Are those sisters Saulteaux Indians?

EW: Yes.

KT: Is this medicine more of a Saulteaux custom than that of the Crees?

EW: Yes, mostly Saulteaux.

KT: Are there any Crees up here that know Indian medicine?

EW: No.

KT: So really it's still carried on by some of the Saulteaux people?

EW: Oh yes. The Crees have forgotten. In the early days there were many all over.

KT: It's no longer passed on as it used to be in the past. Is that right?

EW: They've almost quit.

KT: Why do you think they quit?

EW: Since the medical doctors came, they quit. People today don't want to believe in the old ways. They quit using Indian medicine. That's only that old man - old Billy Redwood[68] - a Saulteaux on Cowessess. He hasn't quit; he believes in it because his old parents passed it on.

KT: When you and your generation pass away, do you think many people will carry on your experience?

EW: Oh, sometimes I want to quit, you know, and again I don't know. When I start to make it, I think about my mother-in-law; she told me to stop. I just get enough, you know. But people come and buy it.

KT: When a person gets sick and comes to you, what is the procedure?

EW: He knocks on door, comes in and visits me. We'll be talking and visiting like this, you know.

KT: Does he bring you a gift? Do you take a pipe and smoke?

EW: Well, they'll come in. We start talking and I give them a cup of tea and after they eat, before they go, the lady goes and gets the gift from the car. She gives the parcel to her husband - Billy Redwood. She always calls me "Aunty", because they were cousins, I guess - Hector (my dad) and Billy Redwood's dad. "Well," they said, "we come and depend on you." "Oh, well," I said, "on what?" "Well," she said, "do you have any Indian medicine to give to drink?" "Oh," I said, "there's some of it." "Okay," she said, "this thing goes first." She hands me some tobacco. She said, "I like better to take my own Indian medicine than to pay for the White man's medicine." "Oh, there's some of it," I said. I go out and bring some in a paper bag. "This is the one you want," I told her.

KT: Do you discuss what the illness is or do they tell you what the illness is?

EW: Well, she said he has ulcers. She said that it's better to drink the Indian medicine than to take pills. The Indian medicine is just like you take cough mixture when you have a cold. You buy your cough mixture, drink it, and it will cure your cold. Well, just the same with Indian medicine.

KT: Do you drink it hot or cold?

EW: Just lukewarm. He drinks that and the medicine washes the sores inside and cures inside that sore. That's why they're taking the medicine.

KT: Doesn't the doctor's medicine do the same?

EW: I don't think so. Look at my boy, Richard. He doesn't believe in the Indian way. Now it's 15 years that he's suffered with ulcers. And he's fat - doesn't eat much. Drinks beer. Too much liquor. One day he went to Swift Current and stayed a week in the hospital. They let him go for a day. He come and skipped away from there, and he was here for a whole week drinking.

I said, "Son, you'll never get cured. Leave your liquor alone. Take Indian medicine. You'll be better cured." "It hurts me," he said. "Sure," I said, "that thing will look like it'll burn you a little bit because you had that sore. If you drink this medicine," I said, "that thing will make it just nice and clean."

KT: How old is your son, Richard?

EW: He'd be 38 or 39 in June.

KT: Why doesn't he believe in Indian medicine?

EW: I don't know. Can't say what way he doesn't believe it. And he got raised up with Indian medicine since he was a baby.

KT: He doesn't believe it?

EW: No. Because all those old doctors died and now he doesn't believe nothing.

KT: How far did he go in school?

EW: He was in grade eight, down at the old United Church Mission on Round Lake.[69]

KT: You think it's because of his education or because he has been brought up in the outside world? Did he work outside more and more?

EW: Oh yes. Sure, he was never home. He worked quite a bit outside. He never stayed too much on the reserve.

KT: At what age did he leave the reserve?

EW: Since he was 16 he's been working out. First on the George Klaus farm. From there he went and worked in Yorkton and then all over.

KT: Do you think if your son stayed on the reserve he would probably believe in Indian medicine?

EW: Oh yes. Even my old man [informant's husband] when he's sick he always asks me to make him medicine. I make. He drinks; well, he'll be all right. When I left him I have nothing to do with him any more.

KT: I've heard some people say there's such a thing as love medicine. Is this done amongst the Indians themselves?

EW: Oh, they know how to do that - those people down in Manitoba, at Lessare Point. Also, down at Kamsack,[70] there's some bad people there that make this. Some of the people go over there and give juice to that fellow and tell him, "That one make me mad. I want you to do that...". Well, he gets paid. They asked for it. Right away they send it over to the person, at night, you know.

KT: Would they use the owl?

EW: Oh, they'll use anything. They know what kind of a spirit to use. Not only the owl, you know.

KT: What other bad spirits are there?

EW: Even the bat. They're all different. Those that are really bad, they use that kind. If a bat bites you, he will kill you.

KT: Do they use birds apart from owls?

EW: Most of them use birds because the birds fly so fast. That's why they use more birds than anything else.

KT: When people get medicine from you do they usually give you a gift or pay you?

EW: Well, whatever they feel they could give. Sometimes they give some quilt; sometimes some dress goods or bedding; sometimes they'll pay about $15 or $10 when the medicine has cured quite a bit. Not too long ago, when we got rations and before we got relief, some gave their flour, tea or sugar as gifts. Today, when some of those people have too much groceries, sometimes they go and give a bag of flour or tea or lard for a gift.

KT: Have any non-Indians ever used Indian medicine in the Broadview area?

EW: Well, there's a few of them who have come to get some. They said they were sore inside. So I gave them that same medicine. Well, they drink it and it cures everything.

KT: Did it help them much?

EW: It helped them a lot. My sister-in-law here, last winter went through a stomach operation in Regina. They cut her up. They said that she had cancer all over. She went through two operations. But now she can't walk very good. She's scared to stretch. "I'm weak with that," she said. So she came and asked me for some medicine. I sent it over. She feels lot better now, she said.

KT: Is this lady an Indian?

EW: Yes. That's Mrs. Hardy, who is Mrs. Louison's sister. She's living in Broadview.

KT: Do you use drums when you cure somebody?

EW: Not me. I've never used one. I just use my pipe.

KT: Do you pray too?

EW: Yes. We have to pray. When you dig for medicine, they say that there's a lady's hair that you dig. You talk to the ground. That's why we put tobacco on the ground. It looks like that spirit could smoke that tobacco on the ground. And so we pray. If a person drinks that medicine to get cured tell the spirit that nothing wrong - nothing bad, just to get better and all that.

KT: So you pray at the time you start digging?

EW: Oh yes. And you put tobacco in there. Once you put tobacco there you could dig as much as you need of that root.

KT: Do you do this once a year?

EW: Yes.

KT: When you pray, do you feel that the earth is a living person or spirit?

EW: Oh yes. We call it *ash-kwi-noo-ta-vov-see* - that means the earth of the woman; the dust, like, you know.

KT: Is it like Mother Earth, or something like that?

EW: Yes.

KT: What does *kit-che-ma-ni-tou* mean to you?

EW: That's God. That's the same God we pray to in the church and to everything. In some churches they say they have three persons or three Gods; but there's only one God. If you go to the United Church, the Catholic Church, or some other church, somebody will tell you, "You're crazy going to the Presbyterian Church. You're crazy going that church." "Okay," I said, "I got married in the United Church and I was a Catholic. I could go any time in the United Church. There's not three Gods," I said. "There's only one God. That's the same we pray to."

KT: Is this the same one that the Indians pray to?

EW: The same one. "There's one Jesus," I said, "You pray to Jesus," I said, "and that's it. Never mind those other people," I said. "They think they're praying, like the Jehovah Witnesses." Lots of them go crazy with Jehovah Witnesses, I know. When they pray, they pray, they pray, they pray - they look more sick and pale. They believe in washing all the blood from the chicken when they kill it. They just wash all the blood off - it's just dry - even when they kill a deer. I saw lots like Mrs. Ivan Watson[71] and Peter Watson[72] who turned to Jehovah Witnesses. Peter Watson used to go [regularly] to the Round Lake United Church. He never missed. He was separated from his wife and was living with a crippled woman. Okay, they turned to the Jehovah Witnesses. His oldest daughter, Marybelle, talked to her Dad. She said, "Dad, you should not do that to change. You have your own church. You never got sick before. Now, today, you're crippled. You're going blind. Put your books away, that Jehovah Witnesses; that's no good for you. Pray to God," she said, "to Round Lake."

KT: Do you sometimes go to church yourself?

EW: Well, I'll have the radio going every Sunday - listen the hymns.

KT: Do you go to church regularly?

EW: Oh no. I go to church in my house.

KT: Where were you married?

EW: In the United Church. But I was brought up a Roman Catholic.

KT: You still believed your Indian religion?

EW: Oh yes. When I was sick I went to the hospital here in Broadview - it's Catholic, see. I told a sister I want to have my communion there. The priest comes in the morning and gives me communion.

KT: Why do you take a communion?

EW: Just to ask the health of God, to make me raise up again, to get up and to get better.

KT: Could you ask another medicine man to do this?

EW: Oh no.

KT: If another medicine man was available, would you ask him to do this?

EW: Oh yes. Because I have an Indian name. If I want to go and see somebody to help me to become stronger, he will.

KT: Would he give you another Indian name?

EW: No. They ask you if you have an Indian name. If you tell your Indian name, he'll talk to that spirit to help cure you.

KT: What Indian names do you recall?

EW: Oh, there's so many.

KT: What is Felix Panipekeesick's Indian name?

EW: Kim-vua-ni-pi-nas, they call him. Rain Thunderbird.

KT: Why do you go to the hospital?

EW: If I'm sick, I can't take my own medicine. It won't work on me. I have to get it from someplace else. If nobody else is around, well, then I go to the doctor. If somebody was around, I would try to get him. Lots of times I go back and forth for medicine between my sister-in-law's place in Carlyle and here. I could give my own medicine to my kid and my husband, but not to myself.

Two years ago when I was down to visit my sick cousin in Fort Ogden in the States I took some of that medicine with me; she wrote me to bring it. When I sent it over, I had to put "Indian tea" to get it across; and I had to put how much it costs. I sent her about three pounds. When I go there she gives me her medicine and she drinks mine. She said she always feels a lot better; says she has a sore kidney. Well, she drinks the medicine and it washes all her inside of the body; cleans them up.

KT: To learn Indian medicine, do you really have to pick it up from somebody else?

EW: Oh yes. You can't make it by yourself. Maybe you won't know what root to dig. There's some roots are no good - they're poison. You dig only those that they show you.

There are two kinds of sunflowers, for example. One is good; the other is poisonous. You see some of them have a kind of a sharp pointed flower. In the evening they close, in the morning they'll open. These heads are black and orange around. These are no good - they're poison. You have to watch this. There's some of these roots you dig and you have to watch them. That's why some of those old people are blind, you know. Maybe they dug some bad root by mistake. Some people they dope a person and don't know it; perhaps they dug so many little roots that nearly look the same. You have to watch how you dig. You have to be careful.

KT: What happens when you pass away. Who will carry on your experience?

EW: Nobody, I guess. They'll just put them away. They'll put it [medicinal roots] in a clean place in the bush. Nobody will bother it.

APPENDIX D

Abridged Transcription of tape-recorded interview[73] with Peter George, an elderly Saulteaux Indian medicine man from Sakimay Reserve, north of Broadview, Saskatchewan, by Koozma J. Tarasoff

Interview[74] on
May 22, 1967

KT: Peter, where were you born?

PG: Just on top of the hill here - part of Shesheep, Sakimay side. I was born in 1888. There wasn't much White people here then.

KT: Who was living here at that time?

PG: Everybody was living at that time - old people, old-timers, all living good. There were no specialists, no doctors at that time, and not much sickness. My father used to tell me about the old days. They eat meat, sometimes. Sometimes he got deer meat. Sometimes he got different kinds of meat. We had no trouble that time which was 1865, I believe. Before White man came in here, it was a good country. We didn't see much bad things.

"Some day," my father said, "White people come here. I don't know how they come. Some day he'll pass with wagons but no horses on it. So, that's one," he says. "Next thing you'll see White man flying across from east to the west coast. That's two," he says. "It's another thing, by and by you're going to see it. Somebody will talk from another country, like England, and you'll hear people talkin'. That's one that'll happen," he says. So, we believed Dad once.

You see, in 1853 there were not much White men at that time. So we asked one Shesheep, who was the same age as my father. He said, "Long ago, way down north of Moosomin, we lived up there. Me and my three brothers. The oldest boy was Winnienosh - an Indian name which means fatty. The next one was Pinay - that means partridge. Then, Shesheep, which is duck. And Bunny, that's four. Besides that there were two girls. Before the White man came here, these boys were born way down on the Manitoba side. Old man Sakimay was their father. They came away from Fort Ellice, about 40 miles north of Moosomin. The oldest boy was about 12 then.

One day Sakimay came alone by foot to have a look. When he got here he sit over this hill, on the north side of where my house is today. He filled his pipe and looked around. He looked way down to what's now called "Fish Trap". He could see all kinds of buffaloes. Of course, there were no White men in here at that time. There were all kinds of elk on the other side of the hill. There wasn't much bush at that time, I guess. You could see the elk walking up and down, and the antelope, too. "Boy," he thought. He filled his pipe and smoked. He got no

matches at that time - he rubbed sticks together. But he had rope tobacco from the Hudson's Bay store. When he finished smoking, "Oh," he thought, "that's a good place here to live." So he decided to make a reserve here. Well, that was to become his home here, with that special lake [Crooked Lake]. "Oh, there must be fishing here. Oh, my kids living at that time didn't eat fish." So he started back for home to Fort Ellice. He walked by Round Lake, then Tantallon, then home.

At home he told his wife, "Old lady, we find a place to live, I think. There's going to be nothing here. Well, we'll move from here to that long lake. That's where we're going to stop. We going to camp up there." "Oh," he says, "old lady, all right, let's move."

He went to the Hudson Bay store right there, long ago. He took powder. He had a gun - a muzzle loader. He took about two pounds of powder, some shots, and some caps. Next day he got ready. He had no money that time. He traded buffalo hides to the Hudson Bay Company; they used the hides to make buffalo robes. He traded them, but I don't think he got much. That's what he got any way - the powder, shots and caps. So he came - walking. He's got no horses. He's got no dog. Just the gun and six kids. So all had to walk by foot. The old man took the gun, rolled up the buffalo hide tepee, packed it up and put it on his back. Another boy took the axe. A second boy took a pail. A third carried an old blanket made from hides. The girls were too small. Sometimes they walked a little ways and then the old lady had to put them on her back. They walked quite a ways. They camped. Half ways they had dinner. Eat dry meat. No tea that time, just broth which the old lady cooked. He had no cups at that time. So he used birch and made his own cup. He made his own plate. He put it over here. It was pretty near the same things that we have today - round cups and flat plates. Put sticks around it. Not much trade that time. So in about three, four or five days time, he got there - this place where my house is, right here where the wagon is - that's where his camp was. There was no road here then, but some bushes. They come, walk way down the hillsides.

KT: Did he then have a name for what is now Crooked Lake?

PG: No. So, he moved here, and up there, maybe two or three times, set up his tent here. Once he go up that hill up there - from here about 400 yards - he moved again. It was right at the flat of this hill that he camped. There were stones around. He went up there west; sometimes he shot buffaloes. But I don't know how they carried the meat. He would take his old lady and they would bring all the meat, hide - everything what he had up there. The old lady would cut it up and dry it all summer. She put the sticks up cross ways.

It was getting into fall, about October. He went south for buffaloes at the end of the month but found not one buffalo. Everything had gone. So he kept looking - killed some deer and the old lady dried it.

With the dried meat they began to make pemican. They just pound it, dry it and roast it. For pounding they used a round stone with a handle on it; he made that long ago. They put hide on the ground and placed coarse dried meat on it. The old lady made a big bag from hides - one

big enough to put about a hundred pounds of dried meat in it. Maybe one buffalo gives enough dried meat to fill a hundred pound bag. But they gotta crush it fine. When they finish the crushing they have to cook it and put fat on it. Then they pack it together, and sew the bag with deer-hide lace. After that the old man chopped a tree and cut it in half, put some stones in there and placed the pemican in there for storage, covered with earth.

Then, at once, he's getting short of fresh meat. Sometimes he'd walk away and bring only one rabbit. Four boys, the two girls and old lady and Sakimay would eat the whole thing raw. So he want to save that dried meat as much as possible. He goes in the bush and digs one bag up, gets some meat and covers it up good so it doesn't get wet. So they have something to eat.

One time old Sakimay went down the east side, hunting for duck or something. He wanted to get some fresh meat. There was a south wind as he came to shore. All at once he saw something white floating in the water. He found a stick and walked into the water. He tried to catch that which was floating. So, he got it and brought it ashore. Soon it was dead. He picked it up - it was some kind of fish, maybe jackfish. So he took the fish home. "Old lady," he said, "we find some fish. There must be fish in this lake." "Oh," says the old lady, "good, good. But how are you going to catch it?" "I don't know," he said. He used to catch goldeyes up at Fort Ellice.

Oh, it was getting late in fall. "Well," old Sakimay said, "we'd better go before the cold gets us. We'll move down the hill on the west end. I'll try to make a house." Well, he moved all his things. They had no horses and no dog. So, they went about half a mile and camped down there. He found some trees and began to build at two little bushes in the coulees. He had an axe. Cutting the logs and hauling them took much time, of course. He had no pickaxe, no shovel, nothing. Just with sticks and logs. He started digging and found some light brown dirt. So his old lady started plastering. They had only one pail. The boys would carry the water in the pail. On the shore the boys found some dry weeds and carried these to the house for plastering. He make good job.

"How are you going to make a fire in here?" asked the old lady. "It'll be full of smoke in here." "No," he said, "I'll make a stove." And he made one out of mud. He tied it together with sticks. There were no nails, nothing. Sometimes they used hide which they tied to logs. When he finished the mud stove, he make two windows on the sides - one on the south side, the other on the east. He put in a door on the north side. The mud stove was right at the west end. He made a buffalo hide door and windows out of deer-hides. So he was finished. The family moved in.

It was getting cold and old Sakimay tried to find some way to catch the fish in the lake. He cut some dried chokecherry and saskatoon berry sticks and tried to catch the fish but got nothing. One time he said, "Old lady, you lend me that pail handle. Could I use it?" "What are you going to do?" she asked. "Oh, well, we're going to make something." Well, he took that handle off. He hit it with his axe and a flat stone.

He pounded the handle and made a sharp point. Even the old lady didn't know what he was going to make. Then he bent the sharp point like a hook. It was about a foot and a half handle, straightened out. He asked his wife, "Could you give me a little bit of deer-hide?" "Oh, here," the old lady said, "you can use it." So he made some lace. He had only one knife.

Well, one cold night the lake froze. "Well, I'll go and hunt," old Sakimay said. He went about a mile down one coulee. Tried to see a rabbit. No luck. As he was returning home he shot a partridge. He took the feathers off and cleaned it before coming home. That's what he's going to eat. Of course he's got meat hidden away, but he's saving that for winter. Well, the old lady cuts a little bit of meat from the chest of the partridge; the rest she cooks for soup. This was for four boys and two little girls, the old man and old lady. The old man has had nothing to eat all day.

The ice on the lake was now about two inches thick. Old Sakimay cut some sticks and ran down to the lake early one morning. He made a little hole in the ice, put a long stick down. It was only about five feet deep. So he goes a little way further. He cuts another hole - seven feet this time. He's satisfied and makes the hole bigger. He puts his little piece of partridge meat on his hook. Well, he says, "*Ki-ta-sha-mi-no-ko*"- that's "Grandmother, I feed you my grandmother with this meat." He puts his hook down and moves his stick up and down. All at once he gets a big tug. He pulls it out - oh, we'll say about a 10-pound jackfish - "*ki-no-zhe*, hurrah! That's good." He picks up the fish and takes it home right away, on the run. He knocks on the door [tap, tap, tap]. "Hey, old lady, *pah-kin-di-a-non*," he says. "Open the door." The old lady opens the door.

"Oh, a *ki-no-zhe*," she says, "fish". That's all they know. They don't know jackfish. "Well, all right. I'll go back again," he says. He cut open its guts and took this for bait. Then he ran down again. He told the old lady that as soon as the fish was cooked, he would come. "Hang something up and I'll come." "All right." Just as soon as he puts his hook in, he pulls out a fish. And he keeps on going. All at once he sees a buffalo robe hanging in front of his house. He picks up the fish and walks to the house. "Old lady," he says, "we kill lots." "Oh, that's good," she said.

They had no spoons in them days. So the boys went to the shore and got some clam shells. Also they got some birch for cups and plates. They had no salt. Eat that way. There was nothing more to eat, just fish. "Well, I'm getting ready to kill lots of fish. I'll bring them in. Put sticks this way and put it up there." Of course, no dogs to eat them up. So, he finished. Went fishing again. For supper he again had fish. The same for breakfast next morning. So on, all winter.

That's the time when lots of Indians were starving on the south side of Round Lake, what we call today Kahkewistahaw. They had big tepees down in the bush. They had nothing to eat. They even ate their dogs. And the buffalo robes - they put them on the fire and then ate them. They had no tea - just water. Nothing to eat. That's the time when

there used to be lots of Indians up there. In one place about 100 people died. Of course, when they died they put them inside. [The survivors] would leave that tent and move in with another family. As the people kept dying, more and more tents were abandoned. If these people had learned to fish like old Sakimay many of them wouldn't have died from hunger. But they didn't know nothing at that time.

KT: Were your father and mother both Saulteaux?

PG: Yes.

KT: Where did your father come from?

PG: He came way down from a reserve at Indian Springs, Manitoba.

KT: Where did your father's father come from?

PG: Same place.

KT: What about the father of your grandfather, where did he come from?

PG: Same place. This land that we got used to be Blackfoot country. Then the Crees and Ojibways came from Manitoba.

KT: Where did your mother come from?

PG: Way down in Manitoba.

KT: What about your father's mother?

PG: Same way.

KT: Do you remember any stories about the signing of the Treaties?

PG: Today I'm very sorry that many Indians don't know. One time a White man came here to Fort Qu'Appelle. "*Ki-pai-ka-nink*," he says. He calls you to Fort Qu'Appelle. He's gonna make an agreement. Everybody came here from way down west, north, and south. From here, too. Big camp. You see that flat at Fort Qu'Appelle - tents all over. That was in 1874.

At once the man came. He had money. "Well, you Indians, you found this place." Queen Bictoria [sic] has asked me: "Now, you look, go west. You find the people. You lease that land. We'll give him so much every year."

The first agreement was signed. Twelve dollars a head [household head?]. He promised to pay them with green paper. One man asked, "What are you going to do with this one?" Well, he had a store up there, called McDonald. "You could trade this for a Hudson Bay blanket. You give him this paper, and he gives you that blanket. Maybe some tea there." "Oh, oh," he says, "all right, I'll tell the people." Pay everybody.

"Now, who's going make chief? You gotta have one from each reserve.

pick this land. We give you so much a piece." But the Indian doesn't know what a "mile" means.

"You people gotta quit fighting," he says. "When you see those Blackfoot, Flathead Indians and Crow Indians, don't fight them. Shake hands with them. Make good friends. Now, there's even going to be White men in this country. He - you will lease that land. Now, we don't buy it. So you gotta quit this fighting."

"There's another thing," he said. "Don't steal, like you do with horses from the other people. Don't fight them. When you see another man, don't kill him. You don't do that. You gotta quit."

"We're gonna bring some stuff in here," he said. "It's good for you." "Oh, well, what's that?" "*Shkoo-dai-a-boo*" - means fire-water. "You drink it and you will feel good. Feel happy." So he said that. Surely, I believe today there's too much happiness. Every day people kill each other - especially woman. Fight her man. Take knife. Some take a gun. So there's too much happiness today. This is what White man has brought - his whiskey. And it's getting worse every day.

KT: What did the early Indians eat?

PG: We eat buffalo meat long ago. Also moose meat, elk meat, deer meat, antelope meat, bear, geese, cranes, swans, ducks, chickens, rabbits and partridge. I don't think he ate pelicans. Some of them ate fox. Some ate badger. Skunk meat - oh, boy. I wish I have some today. Skunk meat. You never get sick. "Oh," says White man, "oh, he stinks."

About 20 years ago I brought some 20 skunk hides to a fur-buyer in a store. The buyer's wife grabbed the bag and said it smelled awful. "Go on outside," she said. So she sent me out. Well, all right, I took it to her husband. "You're not going buy?" I asked. "Oh, mister," he said, "my wife doesn't like it." Well, I have to quit. No more skunks. Eat muskrat and gophers. Some eat minks. Indians don't eat weasel. We don't eat mice. We eat some squirrels but not all.

KT: What is your Indian name?

PG: Pinaeshe-kanas-towagit. It means Thunder-born. My old lady's name is Kishishi-kway; it means Sun-woman in Saulteaux.

KT: When did you get your Indian name?

PG: Somebody give me the name when I was one month old.

KT: Who was this somebody?

PG: An old man.

KT: Was he a medicine man?

PG: No. An old man.

KT: Was he a religious man?

PG: Yes.

KT: What do you use this Indian name for?

PG: Maybe I send you somewheres. Before you go, I'll pray for you. Maybe you wanna go to the coast. You're walking. We gonna pray for you so that nothing would happen on the way 'til you get over there.

KT: Does the Indian name kind of help the person in his life?

PG: Yes. Every little kid has a name.

KT: What's Gordon's[75] Indian name?

PG: Kamatooi-kweni-asimat. It means Make Noise Feather. Yea, it's all kind. Now - Felix [Panipekeesick] here - did he tell you what's his name?

KT: Yes - Rain Thunderbird.

PG: Yes, that's his name. Somebody spoils our names. Now ask these boys here, "Do you know *Ma-ni-tou*?" Maybe he says, "I don't know what that old man says." He doesn't know what *Ma-ni-tou* means. He tries to make me a White man. He takes away from me something that I've got. Tries to buy it. But I can't sell it. Can't give it away. Now, today we take that machine....Maybe going some place. Maybe big shots....That way they get mixed up....White man force me to do this. I don't want to do that. "Well, go ahead." Force me. I gotta do it. So on.

KT: Do many of the children today have Indian names?

PG: Oh yes. Some of them, but not all.

KT: Would this be mostly on Saulteaux reserves?

PG: Yes, on Saulteaux mostly. Some Crees. Everybody has "special" old people.

KT: Why do some get and others not get Indian names?

PG: Well, they don't want to. He doesn't know how to run those things. Sometimes you go to the hospital here. Well, I know it. I was there quite awhile every winter. When the nurses see a baby they say, "Hello Mary or Jean, Lucille" - all kind of names. If the baby has never had a name before, they soon give a name. That's why you spoil it. After they go back home, and I'm an old man, I give him name. You see.

KT: Have you yourself given many names to children?

PG: No, not everyone. Maybe about 60 names, in Saulteaux, to my friends.

KT: What do you do when you give names? Do you smoke a pipe?

PG: Sure. I smoke a peace pipe and I sing and pray.

KT: Do you touch the baby or the child?

PG: No, no. Just hold him, you know.

KT: Do you put any color spot or anything on the child?

PF: Yes, we pray. I make a wish. I say, "I wish this baby reaches a hundred years." That's what he said. But that's no good. I've seen a young man dying. "Don't try to get old," I say. Sometimes you can't work. That's what I say. White man has forced me to do these things. Well, I gotta work. If I don't work, what am I gonna eat. Now, I'm getting old; they have to get me some money from some place. I don't know which government. Well, use this money. Don't play with the money.

Oh, some of them are bad. When they have a little money, they go to Grenfell or any place. He get drink up there in the beer parlors. If he's cut off, he goes to another town and drinks over there.

There's another thing I want to say. I want to tell you the same thing maybe you seen. Now, your're supposed to drink whiskey, beer, or wine. Nothing else. You can't drink wood alcohol - that's poison. Now, I see lots of boys today get money - pension money. "What should I do to get blind?" Find something to drink. They start getting blind and get a pension. I've seen lots of Indian boys myself, drinking lemon extract or pure vanilla. Well, in two or three years time, they get blind. Sure, that's what he wants. He wants pension money. Now, today, some of them on Sakimay Reserve drink lemon extract and try to get Blind Pension. Sure he'll get it anytime now. He shouldn't do that. I tell this man, "Don't do that boy."

One time this boy went to the Powwow at Fort Qu'Appelle. "Will you come along? You pay for the gas and I'll take you over there." "Well, all right." Well, this man went up there. He bought some lemon and vanilla extract and took some ginger ale. They went a little ways down the road when he opened the soft drink and mixed it with the lemon and vanilla. He drank that. When he got to Fort Qu'Appelle, he was drunk, you know. When he got over to the Powwow, he heard the drum going and tried to go over there. But he couldn't see nothing. Next day, he still couldn't see. He just heard the drum play and the bells ring. So he just sat like a blind man in the tent. He wrote me that he made a mistake drinking that stuff. That's why I said, "You shouldn't do that, boys."

KT: Could you tell me something about the Rain Dance? How did it start and what's the purpose of a Rain Dance?

PG: Yes. We've got lots of things to say. Suppose somebody's sick. A man will come to me and say he will promise something if I would put on a Rain Dance. "I'll go over there and dance one day," he says. "I'm not going to drink water, come that day. I'm not going to eat two days - nothing." Well, he gotta promise. He gotta keep his promise. Somebody hears when I'm talkin' here, but we don't see it.

Now, if a man is given a peace pipe, he has to talk. He points his pipe to the four sides - north, east, south, and west. He wishes everybody well. That's why he uses tobacco and Sweetgrass. He who made the world, gave the Indian Sweetgrass to use. If you put it in the fire and place your hands over the smudge, you pray. "Oh, Lords, you've seen it." You gotta say what you wish. "I wish that next year again, about this time my old lady [will be here]. I'm glad today. We see green grass grow. We see leaves coming up." Sometimes we sing home. Sometimes we cry, we pray in the morning, before sun-rise, "Thanks, O, Lord. Thanks very much. I wish to reach you again next year, about this time, same day." Well, reach, again - next year again.

Most of them they don't believe it. "Where are you goin?" Somebody says, "Oh, I'm going some place else." "You comin'?" "Oh, no." So they have a Rain Dance. Go to town. Like you've seen yourself here, last summer. Some of them get drunk. He shouldn't do that.

Now, like tomorrow, we gonna have some Rain Dance. Me and you, we take tobacco. We take cloths. We take Sweetgrass. Soon as he get over there, we're gonna meet a fellow who's going to town. "Well, where's the camp?" "Oh, over here." "Where you goin'?" "I'm goin' get some beer." See. "I'm going to have beer. Maybe tonight you have a good time." What means a "good time"? Those foolish people.

KT: How many Rain Dances have you made in your life-time?

PG: Oh, about eight times. Now I'm getting old. I can't do it. So, now we're going to have a Rain Dance this summer again. We pray, Indians. Now, like you White people, now, we live together like brothers. Some of them don't. Sure, we Indians don't like those things. We're scared every day about those people. I've got lots of grandchildren on this reserve. Now, if some Indian way down the coast passes away, and we hear of it, we go outside and pray. First we cry for them. Not only me. Everybody like this.

Now, you go to town and you have a bunch of small kids. Maybe four. When you return home and didn't buy anything, the kids would be disappointed. "Why don't you bring something?" a child asks and starts to cry. Same thing now friend. We ask my Father - there's only one God. We ask him. We cry some time. "I wish you give me good luck, my parents." So, that's why you hear crying by some of them Indians in the Rain Dance. Oh, some of them don't cry. "Oh, White man is coming here, maybe he laugh at me." I'm never ashamed, even if I cried in front of the White people. Of course, that's my business. He doesn't know I prayed for him, White people.

Now, as soon as a big black cloud comes here, there's a big thunderstorm coming. Everyone is purified. I go outside. Point it [pipe]. "Go easy, go easy, my people. Good luck, my grandchild. Maybe someday when I go to town, I'll bring something for you. I'll put it away." That's why you people do those things.

KT: Now, *Ma-ni-tou*, is this your God or the good spirit?

PG: Yes, that's right.

KT: Is there something like a bad spirit, or hell or something like this?

PG: That's different. Some of them are bad. I don't listen. So, if you want to go some place, you think I wish to go over there. I wish to see that thing, from my family, my children, my wife, my friends, my mother, my father. That's the main thing. Even the littlest baby says "Papa" - that's a good word. Now, some of them say "old man" or "old lady" - that's no good. [chuckles] I know we're getting old....

There's another thing. Long ago when we lived in the coulee, it was 40 or 50 below zero outside. In one of the tepees a child's born. Two days later the mother gets up to chop wood and carry it back. No sleigh at that time. Nothing. The man was away hunting for buffaloes.

When you go hunting for buffaloes, you've got to run, because the buffaloes are fast. Three to four men were in some kind of coulee. "Well, you go over there on one side." "All right." "We chase this way. You go over there. When the buffaloes have seen you, we're going to run them into this coulee." "All right." They went up there - the four boys and the man. The buffaloes began to run. He loaded his gun and shot. Then another man shot. Kill two. Get busy. Load it up again. Use your powder horn - just a little bit. He had this round bullet in his mouth. Put his barrel here. Fast. Shoot another one. Kill four. He's got enough. He cut it open and put his hands inside to get warm. Cut another one open and put his hands in there again. Another man comes - "Put your hands in there." "All right." They get warmed up.

Long ago the Indians had no underwear, no pants, just leather leggings and loin cloth. Buffalo hide jacket. Moccasins. Mitts. On his head he wore a leather cap - just like the one you see here which my wife sewed. That's all.

KT: When people got sick, how did they get cured?

PG: Next month you will see all kind flowers - pink, yellow, orange, red, and all kinds or roots. Well, that's all Indian medicine.

In town I once asked the doctor about an appendix operation. "Before you cut people, do you ask God to help you?" I asked. "Oh, no," he said. "I know he wouldn't," I thought to myself. "He's just greedy for money." So he just cuts it out. Some of them never get up, they die.

Indians were never sick. They just starved, that's all. He had nothing when he died. The old Indians had their own medicines - all kinds. There were no doctors, then.

KT: Have you helped a lot of people?

PG: Oh, sure.

KT: What type of sicknesses have you helped with your medicine?

PG: Any kinds. I use different roots.

KT: Where did you learn? Was it from your father and your grandfather?

PG: Yes. We learned.

KT: Was it from your mother's people or from your father's people?

PG: From my mother's people there was a good medicine man. If you asked him, "Have you got that thing?" he says, "No." You gotta pay him. If you don't pay him, he wouldn't give you nothing.

KT: Did the early medicine men have special powers?

PG: Yes. Some of them knew things ahead of time. One man said, "Don't go on this side. Don't go across here. If you go in here, something bad will happen." So if a fellow doesn't listen and goes on the wrong side, he gets killed. The same happens when you travel on bad roads. That man knows something will happen if he sees dark - that means no good.

KT: Is that in his dream?

PG: Yes. Not everyone knows this. Only some odd one.

There's a lot of things I could tell you. If you go to school and someone teaches you bad things, don't take it. If you go to church, don't laugh at the people. Don't laugh at God. Don't do that. Now, if it rains today and you can't go up the hill, don't use bad words there. Long time ago when I worked at a farmer's place, it rained one day. The farmer said, "Damn it, rain." See, he shouldn't say that. That's a bad word. That's God's business to put the rain.

KT: Does *Ma-ni-tou* hear?

PG: Yea, *Ma-ni-tou*. Now, we ask you, how does a cloud come here? About five miles wide rain. Big storm. Big noise up there - thunder. Rain pours. Hail-stones. Somebody carries that thing, you know. Maybe more rain up there. Who put the rain there? Who makes the wind? If you take the Sweetgrass, make a smudge any place outside, then blow on it - my gosh, in no time there's a big wind.

KT: Are you saying that you should not blow onto a Sweetgrass smudge?

PG: That's right. You can't put water on that thing. There's a lotta things to learn.

KT: What happens if an owl sits on your roof? Is this bad luck?

PG: Oh yes. Some of them. It's all right in the daytime, but at night it's different. Somebody put that there to make noise at night. Well, maybe somebody sent it from way over there. He may say something. He can talk.

KT: Can the owl talk?

PG: Sure, he can talk, if he wants to. Sometimes the owl is good - he'll walk and fly away.

KT: Suppose an owl sat here, at night, and started talking, what would you do? Would you take a pipe and smoke?

PG: No. I would just get up and leave him alone.

KT: Have you ever helped people go hunting to find game some place?

PG: Oh yes. We use pipe. Pray for the hunter - give him a pipe. Don't take too much, you know. Just take a little pipe and smoke it. He has it. All right, he sings now. Use medicine songs.

KT: Not Rain Dance songs?

PG: No. Use medicine songs. That's different kind. You sing about 10 to 12 songs. All right, they quit. All right, if you want to dance, take your gun. You gotta take your gun and knife in your hand. Then the man sings. Use a big wood drum with hides [about 13 inches high]. Use a special medicine dance.

KT: Do you still use these drums?

PG: Oh no. We sing. Sometimes the boys want to go hunting, we sing for good luck. We pray.

KT: Have you ever found things for people when they've lost something? You once told me the story of someone losing a pipe and you found it for him even though the pipe was lost 60 miles away.

PG: Oh yea, that old man. You see, he goes to hunt. He wants to fight up there in another country against the Crow Indians or the Blackfoot Indians. Well, he walks away.

"How many of you come with me. Let's go. Look for horses - steal horses." Well, about 20 of them walked away. They had a head boss - there gotta be one - so he carried the cloths. I don't know where he get cloths. Also he carried a prize peace pipe.

One night they stopped here and camped. "We smoke here," the head boss said. I guess they used flints or wood sticks to light their pipe. Another two boys were sitting on the other side. This man reached for his pouch and his pipe, but all he found was the stem.

"Well, I must have lost my pipe," he said. "Ah, I see, I forgot - no pockets - the pipe must have dropped on the ground."

"Well, he lost that pipe. All right. The old man was sitting and facing northwest. It was night. "I'm gonna sing twice," he says. "When I finish, you will hear the coyote howl." So he started to sing. In front of him lay a coyote skin with head on one side. When he was about to finish there was a "swish" through the air. The old man told that man who lost his pipe to look under the coyote hide. He did - and there was

the pipe that he lost about 60 miles away. The coyote had brought it back. You couldn't see him, only hear him. You see. Some of them couldn't believe it, but I believe it.

KT: How did he get this pipe?

PG: Well, I don't know. I guess he prayed.

Another thing - they called my grandfather Nooichee-waken, or friend. Well, one day he took his pipe and started to smoke. He walked away into the bush, on a kind of a hill. He smoked there in the daytime. All at once he looked back and saw a man chasing a bear. Then the bear stopped and attacked the man, bit his ankles and wrists, then left. The old man wondered what he could do. The man said, "Oh, you gotta leave me. I can't walk. You gotta leave me in the bush." Well, there was a little maple bush nearby, in a coulee. So the old man carried him over there. He made a little tent from bark and trees. Got a place for him to lie down - put the sticks this way. He loaded the guy's gun, gave him all the food he had - pemican, and tied a buffalo bag of water to him. The man couldn't shake hands on parting. Just kissed, like ladies. [chuckle]

By this time it was sundown. All at once, through the open door a bear came in. The man expected the bear to kill him, but no - he lay down and began to eat the pemican. It was good to eat. You know, the bear was talking now like a man. He reminded the man about when he was young [and their encounter then]. The bear told him how he waited for this time. He told the man that he would take him home. When the man got home, he was supposed to do what the bear told him.

When the bear finished eating he said, "I'll lay down here and you come and sit on my back, just like on a horse. Then I'll take you home." So during the night they travelled and in the day they rested. They came from some place south of Calgary to Long Lake north of Regina, to Punnichy. In three days time they came to a Cree Indian camp. Well, the man had to get off.

The bear said, "You do what I tell you." "All right," the man said and listened. After he was finished, the bear left.

Soon somebody came by horseback and found this man sitting on the ground. He got closer and asked, "Who are you? *A-wi-ni-kee-yuh*," he said. "*A-ni-ah* - that's me," he said. "Come here - *as-tam*." The man came close.

"I can't shake your hands," the man said, "because the bear bit me. Sit down." The man didn't believe him, so he showed him the bear tracks. After seeing the tracks the man jumped on his horse and returned to his camp; he told the people, "I found a man over there. Can't walk. He told me he got bit by a bear."

The name of that fellow who the bear bit was Kakakwi-quaywee-tak - Try to Make Noise.

There was no wagon at that time so the men got some poles together and carried him to the camp. They put him inside a tent - a clean place. Now the medicine man [forbid] him from seeing any women. "Don't give them a chance. If he sees a woman see him, he'll get worse. Maybe he'll get sick," he said. In about ten days time he got well. He could move his hand like this. Now he tells the old people, somebody came and told me, "You make a smoke tent."

KT: Do you mean Smoking Tepee?

PG: Smoking Tepee like, yes. Well, he told them to put up a tent and put some cloths on it. They used buffalo calf hides, small ones. They listened and then he helped them make it. In two days time that old man who was in the bush came home. The people told him about this man. "How did he come home?" the old man asked. "Well, the bear brought him in," they said. But lots of fellows didn't believe that....Anyway, the Smoking Tepee was made.

KT: Where did you learn this particular story of the bear and the Smoking Tepee?

PG: A fella by the name of Kooschikan told me this about 10 years ago. He's my uncle from File Hills near Fort Qu'Appelle.

KT: Where did your uncle learn it?

PG: He learned it from his father, Omekuanish of File Hills.

KT: Do you think you can sing one of your songs?

PG: Yes. You can stop while I get ready. [At this point Peter George went to his bedroom for a set of bells. Upon returning he sat down and began to sing an old Indian ceremonial song called *Kay-ka-ka-ti-pa-sik*, or Never Scared Song. See Appendix E for a translation of the song.]

KT: When do Indians sing this song?

PF: Just men sing and dance this song when they make a tepee. Not women.

KT: Do you still sing this song today?

PG: No, no. When my Dad passed away I quit that thing.

KT: Do other people sing this song?

PG: No. The boys don't know these songs.

KT: Do you know where this song came from?

PG: Somebody got it from a dream - that's the kind that looks like a tepee, with two poles on each side.

KT: Who dreamt the songs? Did your grandfather or father?

PG: Oh, long ago. I don't know who that was. It took place before I was born.

KT: Did the Crees sing this song, too?

PG: Yes, Crees, Saulteaux, Assiniboines, and Sioux.

KT: What's the name of the second song that you sang?

PG: The same thing. That's all we can give away.

KT: What is the second song called in Saulteaux?

PG: *Ke-va-ka-ti-pa-shi-we-shi-ma-way*. Never Scared Song. It's just an old song.

KT: Why can't the women sing this song?

PG: No, no....That thing woman had every month - can't come in to a sun dance or a rain dance. I can tell you lots of things - maybe one month. When I finish, you still wouldn't understand. You don't understand what this for. That's why I just tell you few things. I don't wanna say too much, now, but I got okay for it, you see.

APPENDIX E

Songs by Canadian Indians North of Broadview, Saskatchewan

NEVER SCARED SONG - Also called "DON'T RUN AWAY" - *Away-ka-ka-ta-ba-seek*

Note: Singer Peter George did not release the words to this song. Instead he explained the reason why, in a form of a prayer. Then, in a high-pitched voice, he carried the tune, accompanied by the rhythm of a set of bells held in his hands.

My God put us here.
My God put us here for us.
I sing the song for the one we cry for mercy.
I'm not naming the Lord's name, and I'm not using the words in the song.
This White man is going to keep these songs
So that he could sit down with these songs;
So that God won't look down upon him any different than He looks upon the Indians when He gave the song to the Indian [through a dream]
Our God, the Creator, gave everything to us to use for our religious ceremonies.
This is what I repeat over and over again -
The White man is trying to take everything away from us.
That is my doings today.
Once again I'm going to sing my God a song.

Data: This ceremonial song appears to be derived from the early historic period when the North American Indians were engaged in warfare with each other - prior to the coming of the European to this continent. It was used to obtain support from the Creator for good fortune or for good hunting. In modern times, it is used only rarely by the old Indians to provide good fortune for the hunter or trapper. Usually this takes place in the spring either inside the house, tent or little lodge. However, this song is not used at a Rain Dance. Only men are allowed to sing and dance; however, if women are present, they may join in the chorus.

The informant, a Saulteaux Indian medicine man, explained prior to his prayer that this song is an Indian gift to me; it is to be used not for pleasure, but as a record for the Museum.

Translator Noel Joe Williams explained later that he could personally sing this song only after he gives some tobacco to the owner of the song, Peter George.

Recorded by Koozma J. Tarasoff
May 22, 1967

Sung by Peter George
Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

Translated by Noel Joe Williams, Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

RAIN DANCE SONGS NUMBERS 1 and 2

Note: As with Peter George in his "Never Scared Song", informant Felix Panipekeesick did not release the words for his songs in this recording. Instead he carried a tune with drum accompaniment. When asked what were the names of these songs, he replied that they were simply "Rain Dance Songs".

Song No. 1 has one verse and respondent sang it twice. Normally, during a Rain Dance, the custom is to sing each song six times. The exception comes during the finale, when the "quitting song" is usually repeated 20 times (although the maximum allowed is 40 times).

Data: These Saulteaux Rain Dance songs are currently used during two occasions: (1) During each of the three sittings throughout the year in preparation for the Rain Dance, and (2) during the Rain Dance itself. These particular selections belong to the informant, Felix Panipekeesick; they had previously been passed on to him from other elders before him. Prior to singing Song No. 2, Felix said, in Saulteaux: "I'm going to sing another song that my grandfather left me. I'm asking the Maker-of-all-things (*Ka-ni-goo-ko-wee-ne-gi-tung*) to help all of us have a good future."

Translator Noel Joe Williams later told researcher that he and others could sit beside Felix and sing these songs. However, Felix, as owner, would have to lead them.

Recorded by Koozma J. Tarasoff
May 28, 1967

Sung by Felix Panipekeesick
Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

Translated by Noel Joe Williams, Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

SMOKING TEPEE SONG - (sung with drum accompaniment)

Note: Informant Felix Panipekeesick began his two verse song with a prayer in Saulteaux. He said:

"I'm going to sing a song today of the Smoking Tepee.
Also, I'm hoping that everything will go well with my grandchildren.
This White man is taking this song."

Then he began verse one, without words, but with a tune and drum accompaniment. Translator reported later that the essence of verse one is that this Thunderbird song was given to the singer in a dream and the wording followed (but not for recording). Next, verse two followed:

"I wonder
where on high
I will be flying (*Tipi-pepamis-sayan-ne-Quemay*)."

Quemay is the namesake of Old Loud Voice Kahkisheway, the previous owner of this song.

Data: As with all vowed ceremonies, the Smoking Tepee song is given in fulfillment of a pledge made to the supernaturals. In order to give it a man had to acquire the right either in a vision, or by purchase, or through inheritance. The Smoking Tepee consists of a night-long singing session during which many prayers are said, offerings given, and pipes ritually manipulated. It was usually held in the spring or early summer in an enlarged Tepee.

Recorded by Koozma J. Tarasoff
May 28, 1967

Sung by Felix Panipekeesick
Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

Translated by Noel Joe Williams, Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

POWWOW SONGS

Note: Several Powwow songs are included in this selection. All were recorded outdoors on Kahkewistahaw Reserve north of Broadview, Saskatchewan, during the official opening of a village site on the reserve. Some 200 Indians were present (mostly from the local reserves) plus another 60 people from the non-Indian communities of Broadview, Whitewood and Grenfell. Because it was a windy day, many people sat in cars which were parked in a circle around a small raised wooden stage in the centre. Here the drummer-singers (usually six or seven) sat. On the grass, around the stage, several dancers dressed in Indian costumes danced periodically. The event was held in the afternoon and concluded with a lunch for all visitors.

Joe Crowe, a Sioux Indian from Kahkewistahaw Reserve announces, "Everybody come and get lunch." Then he leads a love song, with Cree and English words mixed in. Apart from that, all the other Powwow songs were sung as plain tunes, rather than with words. The usual pattern was for one man to start singing, with the rest of the drummer-singers joining in.

Data: The Powwow song and dance is of secular character. At the present time this form of rhythmic expression has supplanted much of the religious ceremonialism of the past, and provides a fairly common social activity in reservation life. The origin, according to translator, Noel Joe Williams, stems from the reservations of north-central United States.

Recorded by Koozma J. Tarasoff
May 23, 1965

Sung by various singer-drummers at Kahkewistahaw Reserve, north of Broadview, Saskatchewan

Translation aided by Noel Joe Williams, Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan

FIDDLE DANCE MUSIC

Note: Three Fiddle Dance numbers are included in this recording. All were recorded in the home of Mr. and Mrs. George D. Lerat, Cree Indians from Cowessess Reserve, Saskatchewan. The occasion was a wedding reception and dance for Linda Lerat (their daughter) and Ronald Whiteman (a Sioux Indian from Standing Buffalo Reserve). Some 100 guests were present for the reception including relatives and friends (fieldworker and his wife were among them). Once the banquet was over, the table cleared and the gifts unwrapped, dancing began around 9:00 p.m. and lasted until 3:30 a.m. Local neighbors Sam Lavallee on the violin and Clifford Lerat on the guitar provided the music for the polkas, old-fashioned waltzes, and fox-trots.

Data: The Fiddle Dance is a common form of social recreation during wedding receptions, New Year's parties, special evenings, and dances in the Day Schools of the four reserves north of Broadview. Cree, Saulteaux, Sioux, Metis and frequently non-Indians participate. The name "Fiddle Dance" stems from the use of the violin or fiddle. Actually any dance whether polkas, waltzes or fox-trots are known as Fiddle Dances if the violin provides the dominant musical theme. These particular selections are adopted from the old-fashioned dances of the past two or three decades.

Recorded by Koozma J. Tarasoff
April 24, 1965

Music by Sam Lavallee on the violin and Clifford Lerat on the guitar. In the home of George D. Lerat, Cowessess Reserve, Saskatchewan

APPENDIX F

Abridged Responses[76] to Questions on Indian Medicine Men, Rain Dances, and Powwows from Interview Schedules[77]

Question 1: "Do you know of any illnesses in your family that were treated with Indian medicine and/or medicine men?"

Respondent

1. Sam's dad believed that his sight was destroyed by "bad medicine".

2. Tuberculosis. We bought it from an Indian woman on Cowessess Reserve - $8.00 for eight packages for one month. Took it for three months, ready mixed. I had to boil it. This woman is known to have cured many people. She died 15 years ago.

3. Herb medicine cured my husband of tuberculosis. We got the medicine from a man and woman on Cowessess around 1955. Both of them have since died. There might be one or two such people on Cowessess now, but they don't practice it because they're too old.

4. Probably an appendix.

5. Upset stomach and headache.

6. Colds and cuts - we learned to make these ourselves from our old folks.

7. Some cure cancer; some tuberculosis; and some colds.

8. We once believed in some herb medicines; we used them at one time, but no more. Used to cure diarrhea, but now we go to the doctor.

9. Diarrhea and fever.

10. Raspberry plant (stem) used in water as tea is a cure for diarrhea.

11. Had a twisted mouth and one eye closed. He (Peter George) helped. We use herb medicine very little.

12. Once, in 1960, I had pains in my stomach. I came to see a doctor, but he said there was nothing wrong. I went to Felix Panipekeesick of Sakimay and he told me what to take and as a result I've never been bothered since.

13. Yes, I still use herbs for my heart. I get it from this reserve (Sakimay).

14. I tried some on my wife this summer (1965) for arthritis, but it didn't help. The steam bath didn't help either.

15. [Respondent once had tuberculosis.] I drank something and went to the barn every day and inhaled fumes through the nose according to instructions of a medicine man.

16. I had worms in my neck. So I went to a doctor but he didn't help. Then I went to a medicine man and he rubbed something on my neck - soon he pulled out two or three worms and showed these to me in a saucer.

17. My hand got burnt when I lifted a red hot pail in a campfire. My mother hurriedly went in the bush, dug some roots and chewed them. She spit on my hand, then tied it up; next morning I was able to use my hand again.

18. One morning I found that I couldn't move my arm. So I went to the Broadview doctor and he said that a certain nerve was gone. Next I went to both doctors in Grenfell - they said the same thing. Next morning I went to see an Indian doctor. He rubbed me and said I was all right - and I was.

19. [Household head was physically disabled. His daughters contend that their father's disability was not due to natural causes.] Rather it was due to some hex by an evil person who was jealous. This may be accomplished by pulling out an opponent's hair and hexing it. Or it may be caused by the use of special herbs which are buried strategically in the ground. Frequently one's mouth may move to the side, or one may become disabled permanently - like daddy.

20. I was cured from tuberculosis after the ordinary doctor had no hopes for me - I was told I had one week to live. My father went and got the old fellow and he cured me at home over a six-month period; he gave me herb medicine. There was no singing, no massaging. My sister was also cured when she had tuberculosis.

21. I believe the Medicine Man's powers are strictly within mental circles (mental telepathy; ability to hypnotize). They provide a sense of security and the ability to overcome disease and sickness. They could have quite an effect on a simple person.

22. My wife, at 16, was cured from double pneumonia by a Medicine Man from Balcarres, near Fort Qu'Appelle. He used a horn and pumped things out of her chest. The modern way is best, but I believe in the Indian way too.

23. Yes, with herbs in 1958. In my youth we used to drink some stuff which made you throw up. This was good to get rid of colds and in general to clean out the body. We used Saskatoon tree bark, boiled it and drank the mixture as a tonic. No after effects.

24. Sore throat. Got medicine from my old mother.

25. I had special reasons to use medicine - I wanted to find out.

26. I swallowed a big red brooch (one inch) with pin at age six or seven; the old man did something on my chest and that's where it came out - not even a mark was left. It did not come out through my mouth. He started sucking me on the chest while his helper sang. All of a sudden he had

the brooch in his mouth and spit it out on a saucer. I recognized the brooch - it was the one I had swallowed.

27. Twelve summers ago I had heart trouble. The doctor said it's no use for me to go to the hospital for I was expected to drop dead. My Mrs. said, "Let's use Indian medicine." I did. After six months, I was all right. We made it from roots. No trouble with heart since.

28. My father wasn't completely healed, but he could walk. Medicine Man came several times and sang. He probably did some massaging but he told us not to watch (only my father and the Medicine Man were together). Medicine Man was from Sakimay.

29. Herb medicine has helped to relieve a bad heart, pneumonia, and influenza.

30. An Indian woman in Berrans River, Manitoba gave me a package of roots for $1.00. I chewed it off and on and my goiter went away after a year.

31. Back trouble was cured in 1963. Earlier, before I was married (1943), I got cured for headaches. The Medicine Man massaged me and sang when we were alone in one room. My dad was doctored by Peter George about 1962.

32. I was cured of pneumonia in the 1920s when a Medicine Man gave me something to drink (made out of some roots). Cowessess for past 30 years has had no Medicine men.

33. It seemed that I couldn't break away from them. I found a Medicine Man and this helped me. One of these men is dead now; the other one still lives. He hypnotized me.

34. We've used herbs for toothaches, sore throat, and sore mouth.

35. My wife was cured of tuberculosis when she was 13 years old. She used herbs for about one month.

36. For colds.

37. Wife was cured. Someone passed "dope" on her; we got someone to counteract it. This man performed some ritual over the body, sang, used rattle. The use of "dope" seems to be dying off now.

38. A Medicine Woman helped my wife when she had a swollen gland under her arm. Ointment couldn't cure it, but she put something on it. It helped.

39. One Medicine Man gave two bottles of something and it helped cure my measles.

Question 2: "What does the Rain Dance and Powwow mean to you today?"

1. Sam L: One and a half hours is enough Powwow for me. There's nothing in it for me. Mrs. L: It affects me in a strange way. I seem to get lonely.

2. It is a hindrance to the progress of the Indians. Keeps the Indians lazy and good for nothing. I say it without apology to anyone.

3. Rain Dance: Brings rain for farmers.
Powwow: Is just a common dance - just recreation and a pastime.

4. Powwow: Is just a dance.
Rain Dance: Means nothing to us.

5. They mean a great thing to all Indians and should be considered as such. It was done by grandfathers and great grandfathers. Purpose - it is something that renews one's traditions and reminds one of the past. Rain and Sun Dances are religious in nature.

6. It doesn't mean very much now. I don't understand it.

7. Powwow: An ordinary dance.
Rain Dance: Just a gathering.

8. Mostly a social gathering. The dance is more of an exhibition.

9. Rain Dance: It's just an old custom but it means nothing to us.
Powwow: It's just a big gathering where we meet friends.

10. Rain Dance: Nothing.
Powwow: Nothing. Just a big get together.

11. Rain Dance: I don't know.
Powwow: A celebration; meet people.

12. Rain Dance: There's nothing to it right now. Years ago it meant some things - rain and other things took place when they asked for it.
Powwow: It's just like a fiddle dance.

13. Rain Dance: It's just a church.
Powwow: It's entertainment.

14. Rain Dance: It's a begging for rain.
Powwow: A sports day.

15. Rain Dance: It's dying off. Doesn't mean much now.
Powwow: It's more or less as a visit or holiday.

16. Rain Dance: It doesn't mean anything to me; we've never been followers of that religion.

17. Rain Dance: I joined it mostly for fasting and praying to God.
Sun Dance: Just about the same.
Powwow: Is a social recreational gathering. Sometimes when I am worried about something, I sit down and pray and am relieved. I think I get help from the Great Creator.

18. Nothing - I don't understand it. A Powwow is more or less a general visit.

19. Strictly entertainment except for elder men. A place to meet friends. Time of camping and visiting. Very few who take part in it.

20. It is a social gathering to me.

21. Rain Dance: Is supposed to be our own Indian religion; our church.
Powwow: Is not religious - just a dance.

22. Rain Dance: Just a big picnic for Indians to get together.
Powwow: A gathering for Indians to enjoy themselves. Same as above.

23. Powwow: Is just another recreation of some sort. Long ago we used to have sports day on Cowesses Reserve and have seen Powwows. Don't go far from home.

24. Rain Dance: Don't mean anything.
Powwow: Attraction and recreation.

25. Rain Dance: Just a big gathering for the Indians.
Powwow: Same thing. Instead of having sports days they have Powwows.

26. I never dance anymore.

27. Rain Dance: Means nothing to us.
Powwow: Like recreation and sport.

28. Rain Dance: It's asking for rain - and usually you get it or a big wind.
Powwow: Just a dance.

29. Rain Dance: I just watch it. I don't go there to believe something.
Powwow: It's a kind of sports day.

30. Rain Dance: Doesn't mean anything.
Powwow: I just like to watch different tribal dancing. Doesn't mean anything.

31. Rain Dance: It's just an attraction.
Powwow: The same.

32. Rain Dance: It has never meant anything to me. But I was kind of scared of them anyway.
Powwow: A form of entertainment. Meet lots of people - see them in the evening.

33. Rain Dance: Means nothing at all.
Powwow: It's all right to watch. Go there more or less to visit people from far away.

34. Rain Dance: It doesn't mean anything to me. Mrs. M: It's the same as the Roman Catholic fast and sacrifice.
Powwow: Same as going to a sports day, twist party or fiddle dance.

35. Rain Dance: Means nothing now. Used to be a belief that rain could be made.
Powwow: Derived from years ago when Indians stole horses from their enemies. When they returned, there was a celebration (Powwow) and this was supposed to have brought good luck and many more horses.

36. Rain Dance: I still take it the same as I used to. It's a worship to the Lord as with Roman Catholics to God.
Powwow: It's just a dance.

37. Rain Dance: It means nothing to me.
Powwow: It's more or less a sports day.

38. Rain Dance: A sports day for us, but a religious act for participants.
Powwow: A kind of sports day.

39. Rain Dance: Big celebration.
Powwow: Big celebration.

40. Rain Dance: I went to one with my grandparents but I don't know the meaning of it.
Powwow: Like a sports day. It really means nothing; but I like to watch different kinds of costumes.

41. Rain Dance: I never joined them, but some people worship it.
Powwow: A kind of sports day. See people, one's relations - that's where we meet.

42. Powwow: A celebration.
Rain Dance: It's a celebration.

43. Rain Dance: It doesn't mean very much to me. Just a gathering.
Powwow: Same thing.

44. Go there on Saturdays and Sundays to pass the time away.

45. Rain Dance: It's calling the rain from the Lord.
Powwow: It has nothing to do with religion. It's the same as when people go dancing and jitter-bugging.

46. Rain Dance: It's a good thing. It does rain when we have Rain Dances. It's sort of religious.
Powwow: A sort of religious feast. If you have relatives that are dead they are with you in spirit. You can meditate on those gone by.

47. Rain Dance: It's a place to watch dancing, meet friends and have a picnic. We just go on a Sunday and come back. Don't camp out. In two hours time you get enough watching.
Powwow: Same thing.

48. Rain Dance: A call for rain.
Powwow: It's just a sports day.

49. Powwow: A place to meet relatives.

50. Rain Dance: Doesn't mean anything to me.
Powwow: I like watching a Powwow. It's a place to meet your friends.

51. Rain Dance: It's becoming an annual event, similar to the Powwow today. Old-timers 45 to 60 years old participate. Eventually it will become a show. Religion will be lost, but the show will remain. If religion tends to divide we are better off without religion.

52. Rain Dance: Nowadays Rain Dance is not sacred anymore, but just a show.
Powwow: It means nothing at all. I go there just to take the kids out.

53. Rain Dance: It's a gathering. See relatives from far away. This is the actual Indian religion.
Powwow: Just a dance.

54. Rain Dance: After I've seen it once, it looked like a fair to me. As a farmer, however, I always hoped for rain and was curious. At the first dance I went to it rained, hence I believe in it. Some White farmers give them money for food, etc. to help them along. Hence Medicine Men must have some power.
Powwow: Not interested in it. It's more of a church affair. A kind of Indian way of praying.

55. Rain Dance: Just entertainment.
Powwow: Good entertainment.

56. Rain Dance: It's an Indian way of worshipping God. I have great faith in it.
Powwow: It's a good celebration. You meet lots of friends and make new friends.

57. Rain Dance: It's a penance in itself for people doing it. It's a custom for some Indians who believe in it.
Powwow: It's a good gathering place.

58. Rain Dance: Just amusement.
Powwow: Amusement and sports. Years ago more dances and more costumes. At that time they never used to drink. Three days is usual length of Powwow.

59. Rain Dance: It's supposed to be some kind of religious observance.
Powwow: A kind of celebration, birthday, dance, etc.

60. Rain Dance: It is supposed to bring some luck in rain. But it's getting to be more of a picnic and gathering now.
Powwow: A gathering and picnic.

61. Rain Dance: It's an Indian's way of worshipping; like going to church. We take the offerings in the line of cloth instead of Whiteman's church where the plate is passed around. The person who puts on the Rain Dance does not benefit from it; he puts the cloth away in some virgin land four or five miles away perhaps and lets it rot away.
Powwow: At one time it was another way of worshipping. To me today it is a place where people meet people from far away. If you met some last year, you'll return with the intention of seeing them this year.

62. Rain Dance: It's a gathering.
Powwow: I like to see them dance.

63. Rain Dance: It's still used to get rain.
Powwow: It's a gathering for pleasure.

64. Rain Dance: It's a yearly form of worship for me.
Powwow: It's a recreation.

65. Rain Dance and Powwows mean nothing to me.

66. Rain Dance: It's like a church for old Indians.
Powwow: It's a dance too, but not religious.

67. Rain Dance: It isn't the same as it was years ago. My dad told me that people used to go there to pray - just like you and I go to church. Today people go there just as a crowd to a show. The devout people make sacrifices - they give material (cloth) away, ask forgiveness, ask for good weather, good crops and good health for their family. Years ago people did that altogether; now only two or three guys do it.
Powwow: It's all right for people who have time (three days usually for Powwow). That is the time a working person should be at home to look after his garden. It's all right for Sundays but not for three days and three nights. [e.g., Sioux Powwow occurs during the busy haying season.] It is possible for a person to go from Powwow to Powwow and be away all summer. In such cases domestic obligations are neglected.

68. Rain Dance: It's just the same as a church. Namely to ask God to give us help; to give rain; to give us water (otherwise nothing will grow); to make us be good and law abiding; and to ask for good health. We pray for the whole community.
Powwow: That's the same as a fiddle dance. It's not religious.

69. Rain Dance: Don't know.
Powwow: It's just nice to watch. It's nice to see their costumes.

70. Rain Dance: It's more of a social gathering for Indians.
Powwow: More of a social gathering.

71. Rain Dance: For my dad, it was like praying to God - a holy dance or something.
Powwow: It means nothing. I like to watch the costumes.

72. Just watch - know nothing about it.

73. Rain Dance: It's the same as going to church.
Powwow: It's the same as a fiddle dance.

74. Rain Dance: If it doesn't bring rain, you don't feel good.
Powwow: It's just an ordinary good time. It's a natural dance.

75. Rain Dance: I wouldn't know the difference between a Rain Dance, Sun Dance and Powwow. I don't take much interest in them. Because the crowd goes, I go.

76. Rain Dance: It's more or less a tradition for them. To me it's like a religion to the older people.
Powwow: It's like an ordinary fiddle dance. It's their way of dancing too.

77. The thing that I like about these gatherings is that you just make one visit and see all your friends there rather than have to make the rounds.

78. Rain Dance: It doesn't mean anything at all. It doesn't rain.
Powwow: The only reason I go there is to meet old friends I haven't seen for a long time.

79. Rain Dance: Lasts for three days, starts on Friday and ends on Sunday. It has something to do with the resurrection of Christ.
Powwow: Means nothing to me personally. But it's supposed to be a religious rite.

80. Rain Dance: It's supposed to call for rain. I know of a farmer who gave half a pound of tobacco to Indians in order to get rain. It seems older Indians had more Powwows than now.
Powwow: Like a dance or fiddle dance.

81. Rain Dance: It's purpose is to make some rain.
Powwow: Just a dance.

82. Rain Dance: A gathering, a place to meet people. I haven't seen it for many years.
Powwow: A place to meet people.

83. Rain Dance: As a sport. Same as Powwow [no experience].

84. Rain Dance: It means nothing to us.
Powwow: I don't like a Powwow. Too many people there and so dirty.

85. Rain Dance: That used to be the religion Indians had long ago. I don't want to think of it.
Powwow: No interest in it.

86. Rain Dance: It's more of a recreation for me today.
Powwow: It's just recreation.

87. Rain Dance: Nothing.
Powwow: Enjoyment.

88. Rain Dance: After 1906 (when Sun Dance was banned) we had a great deal of trouble to revive the dance as a Rain Dance. It's really praying. Years ago the Indians just about died off on Kahkewistahaw. But as the Rain Dance revived the people seemed to become revived as well - they prayed for increased population for everybody in this world and prayed for a good living; in fact they prayed for everything that is good. The population grew as a result.
Powwow: Means nothing to me; just fun.

89. Rain Dance: Means nothing to me now.
Powwow: A form of entertainment.

90. Rain Dance: Doesn't mean anything.
Powwow: A form of recreation or sport. Long ago it was a kind of religion.

91. Rain Dance: It's more of a gathering of people; they pray for good luck.
Powwow: Just a sports day.

92. Rain Dance: It's more or less like any other church. It's more of an Indian way of praising the Lord - just as with our Christian hymn books. The songs sang here are passed on by the old generation.
Powwow: It's more of a recreation.

93. Rain Dance: Just an old tradition.
Powwow: We're not much Powwow goers.

94. Rain Dance: Something like a sports day.
Powwow: Entertainment.

95. Rain Dance: Just a celebration.
Powwow: Just a celebration.

96. Rain Dance: It's just a belief of the older Indians.
Powwow: Means nothing but entertainment. I watched one Powwow.

97. Rain Dance: Means nothing.
Powwow: A celebration; no religious significance.

98. Rain Dance: I just go there to watch them, that's all.

99. Rain Dance: It's supposed to be some kind of Indian church.
Powwow: It's nothing actually. Entertainment.

100. Rain Dance: Means nothing, a social gathering.
Powwow: See friends.

101. Rain Dance: Means nothing. Just entertainment.
Powwow: Means nothing.

102. Rain Dance: Old people made Rain Dance for a purpose. If a child was sick, the parents brought Sweetgrass, tobacco and asked the Medicine Man to make a Rain Dance.
Powwow: Entertainment.

103. Rain Dance: It's a good place to visit friends and meet everybody. [Respondent is 82 years old.]

104. Rain Dance: Really it does no harm. But I don't know what good it does. It's a nice place to go for a change. But I don't know its purpose.
Powwow: It's a way to pass the time.

105. Rain Dance: It's a kind of religion of some kind. The people make a promise to do something and they fulfill their promise by participating in the Rain Dance.
Powwow: It's an enjoyment of some kind like Whiteman's dances in halls. A place to enjoy oneself.

106. Rain Dance: It's just a gathering. A place to meet people. A lot of people have a lot of booze at parties there.
Powwow: A little entertainment and a place to meet old friends and relatives from far away.

107. Rain Dance: It really doesn't mean anything to us. It's something like a prayer.
Powwow: Just a dance. Just like a twist today.

108. Rain Dance: It never meant anything. I just watch and meet friends.
Powwow: A place to meet friends.

109. Rain Dance: Something to watch.
Powwow: Something to watch.

110. Rain Dance: Religious gathering.
Powwow: A social gathering.

111. Rain Dance: I wouldn't know.
Powwow: Don't know. I guess it's just one of our old customs.

112. Rain Dance: Nothing.
Powwow: A gathering.

113. Rain Dance: I don't think it helps anything.
Powwow: It's just like going to a sports day.

114. Rain Dance: It never meant anything to me.
Powwow: A place to meet people.

115. Rain Dance: It's something to give health to people, or rain.
Powwow: It's enjoyment.

116. It's a place to meet people.

117. Rain Dance: I don't believe too much in it today. The old folks have died off.

APPENDIX G

Medicinal Roots Found North of Broadview, Saskatchewan[78]

No. 1: *Heuchera richardsonii* (Alumroot). [*Pe-a-goo-chey-pehk* (Cree)].

Found on the bald prairie south of Round Lake on Ochapowace Reserve, north of Broadview, Saskatchewan. This is medicine for diarrhea.

> Leaves coarse, basal, rounded cordate with broadly ovate teeth, 1 to 2½ inches across, dark green. Flowering stalks 12 to 18 inches high with a few glandular hairs, especially near the top. Petals purplish, a trifle longer than sepals. Scaly rootstocks of this plant chewed by Indians and early settlers as a cure for diarrhea. Very common on the prairie, especially in lower or moister places throughout entire southern portion of area [Budd and Best 1964:234].

No. 2: *Asclepias speciosa* (Showy Milkweed). [*Mas-kwas-she* (Cree)].

This root was found in the swampy flat south of the Qu'Appelle River on the northwest part of Kahkewistahaw Reserve north of Broadview. It is mixed with another root *Mas-kwi-kee-a-ken* (Cree Grass Medicine), and is used to help pregnant women prevent a miscarriage due to possible hemorrhaging.

> A stout, erect perennial 1 to 2½ feet high, usually found in large colonies. Leaves broad and oval, 3 to 6 inches long, rounded or somewhat heart-shaped at base, and with a whitish downiness. Flowers flesh-colored or pinkish purple, 1/3 to 1/2 inch across, in very dense, almost globular umbels 2 to 3 inches in diameter. Inflorescence has a strong sweet smell which may make a person sleepy. The nectar also appears to have a stupifying effect on insects, which may often be found in a drowsy condition below the plants. Seed pods, borne on recurved stalks, are 3 to 4 inches long, densely white wooly and covered with soft tubercles. The commonest milkweed, in moist places throughout southern portion [Budd and Best 1964:353].

No. 3: *Symphoricarpos occidentalis* (Western Snowberry). [*Pi-shu-va-tik* (Cree)].

Located near the top of a hill on the north side of Qu'Appelle Valley, north of Broadview. Used as a cure-all for various ailments such as colds. This root is mixed together with cherry roots, raspberry, strawberry, cranberry, and saskatoon, and some inner bark of white poplar and boiled in water.

A shrub 1 to 4 feet high, growing from creeping roots. Leaves oval, ovate, or almost round, somewhat soft hairy beneath, 1 to 3 inches long. Flowers pink and white, with styles and stamens conspicuously projecting from corolla, in rather dense terminal and axillary spikes. Fruits snow-white, waxy berries, often in large numbers. One of the most widespread and commonest shrubs. Dense stands are found on open prairie, in ravines and coulees, and throughout woodlands over the entire area [Budd and Best 1964:402-403].

No. 4: *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (Bearberry). [*Ki-ni-ki-nik* (Cree)].

Found near the top of the hill on the north side of Qu'Appelle Valley north of Broadview. Used as a mix for pipe tobacco when smoking the Indian peace pipe.

A prostrate, trailing shrub forming large mats on ground. Leaves spatulate, entire-margined, evergreen and shiny dark green, 1/2 to 1 inch long, usually with a number of brown or reddish leaves intermixed. Flowers pinkish white, urn-shaped, about 3/16 inch long, in short, few flowered racemes. Fruit a bright-red berry 1/4 to 3/8 inch in diameter. Common in woodlands on sandy hills and eroded slopes throughout [Budd and Best 1964:339].

No. 5: *Potentilla pensylvanica* (Prairie Cinquefoil). [*Whi-ti-che-pihk* (Cree)].

This root was located at the base of the hill on the road to Maple Grove Resort about one mile east of Springside Bridge, north of the Qu'Appelle River and immediately north of Kahkewistahaw Reserve. When boiled with raspberry and strawberry roots, it is used to relieve heart trouble.

A low growing, tufted species, the crown usually bearing the brown remains of previous stipules, 4 to 8 inches high. Four varieties of the species are found on the prairies.

1. var. *arida* Boivin, is the most plentiful of the varieties and is one of the earliest plants to show green leafage in the spring. Plentiful throughout the southern portion on dry prairies, hillsides and sandhills.
2. var. *atrovirens* (Rydb.) Th. Wolf., found on dry prairies in southern parts and in Cypress Hills.
3. var. *glabrata* (Hooker) Watson, is a mountain species occasionally found in the southwest.
4. var. *pensylvanica* Boivin, a species in which the upper leaves are often palmately divided, is occasionally found on prairies and in the Cypress Hills.

No. 6: *Geum triflorum* (Three-flowered Avens, Torchflower). [*Ka-na-pa-nish-kwa-yak* (Cree)].

Mrs. Wasacase located this root on gravelly soil of the bald prairie south of Round Lake on Ochapowace Reserve. This root is mixed with Alumroot (No. 1) to form a medicine for use in the treatment of diarrhea.

> Erect perennial herbs 6 to 18 inches high from a thick, coarse, almost black rootstock, with coarse black roots. The many basal leaves pinnate, with many wedge-shaped, lobed leaflets, often with smaller leaflets mixed with the larger ones. Flowering stem usually with a tuft of small leaves half way up and some thin leafy bracts at summit. Flowers usually 3, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch across, sepals purplish pink and petals pink, yellowish, or flesh-colored. Fruiting head bearing long, persistent, feathery styles 1 to 2 inches long. A very common spring flower on the prairies, the bright-green leaves being amongst the first new foliage to show in spring and the flowers among the very early spring blooms. Plentiful everywhere on open prairie. *Siversia triflora* (Pursh) R. Br. [Budd and Best 1964:244].

No. 7: *Allium textile* (Prairie Onion). [*Mish-kwa-ta-vi-shi-ka-go-mesh* (Cree)].

This onion was found near Springside Bridge, north of the Qu'Appelle River and immediately north of Kahkewistahaw Reserve. Indians used to use this onion for food in the early days.

> A low plant, from an onion-like bulb having a net-like coating and a very pungent odor. From 3 to 10 inches high, with umbels of white or pale-pink flowers which blossom early in season. Very common on dry prairie throughout entire south [Budd and Best 1964:132].

No. 8: *Achillea millefolium* (Yarrow).

Found in the semi-arid areas, on the north side of the Qu'Appelle Valley, north of Broadview. When dried and boiled, the flower is used for the treatment of fever. *Achillea millefolium* now includes the following species that were previously differentiated:

(1) *Achillea lanulosa* Nutt. (Wooly Yarrow)

> A perennial from shallow rootstocks, 6 inches to 2 feet high. Plant usually covered with silky hairs. Leaves $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 inches long, finely divided into segments. Flowers in a compact, round-topped cluster at head of stem, white, rarely pink, about 1/4 inch across. Involucral bracts with straw-colored margins. A common plant of prairie and roadsides throughout.

(2) *Achillea millefolium* L. (Yarrow, Milfoil)

A species similar to the preceding, but with wider and more spreading leaves and much less woolly or hairy. Inflorescence flat-topped, flowers varying from white to deep pink. Common throughout northern and eastern wooded parts of area [Budd and Best 1964: 428].

APPENDIX H

A Participant Observation Account of a Sweat Bath feast held at Standing Buffalo Sioux Reserve near Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, Sunday, June 4, 1967. By K. J. Tarasoff.

Circumstances

Felix Panipekeesick, a Saulteaux ritual elder from Sakimay Reserve (Broadview area reserve), told me earlier that he and Peter George (another ritual elder on Sakimay) as well as Gordon Kay received a piece of tobacco (wrapped in a piece of paper about 1" by 3/4") from Paul Whiteman of Standing Buffalo Reserve; this piece of tobacco is the traditional way of extending invitations. The tobacco was sent by way of Peter George who visited Standing Buffalo Reserve about three weeks earlier.

Felix hinted that he would have to hire someone to take him and Peter to the Sweat Bath feast. As I had attended a similar event (on June 5, 1966) on the same reserve and held by the same persons, I again offered to give Peter and Felix a free ride. Felix gladly accepted.

Relationship of Principal Participants

Seventy-three year old Paul Whiteman, a Sioux Indian, is married to Felix's sister (the latter is a Saulteaux). Felix and Paul were friends when they both attended the residential school at Lebret near Fort Qu'Appelle. Both received about grade five. While Peter George received no schooling, he nevertheless had close association with both men. Mrs. Peter George, also a Saulteaux, comes from Muskowpetung Reserve of the File Hills-Qu'Appelle Agency. Her brother, Max Cappo, was present today and invited fieldworker to attend his own Rain Dance at Muskowpetung beginning June 8th; he gave me a piece of tobacco in the traditional way. Felix Panipekeesick told me that when I get home I should smoke this tobacco in my peace pipe (again, according to the traditional custom following the receipt of such invitations).

Comparison to the June 5, 1966 Sweat Bath

As far as I could see there was no difference in the basic pattern. The event was held on the same site, 1,500 feet north of Paul Whiteman's place on Standing Buffalo Reserve (see Diagrams 2, 3 and 4). The two lodges were some 15 feet south of the former two lodges (which still stand quite intact from 1966). The Preliminary Tent was approximately on the same site as previously (i.e., about 30 feet east of the lodges).

In both instances, two initiators were involved (Paul Whiteman and 85-year-old Bob Obey, both Sioux Indians) and two Sweat Bath lodges were constructed.

One difference, however, was that no tepee was used this year. Why? Paul Whiteman says that he didn't have any poles. Consequently, he used a

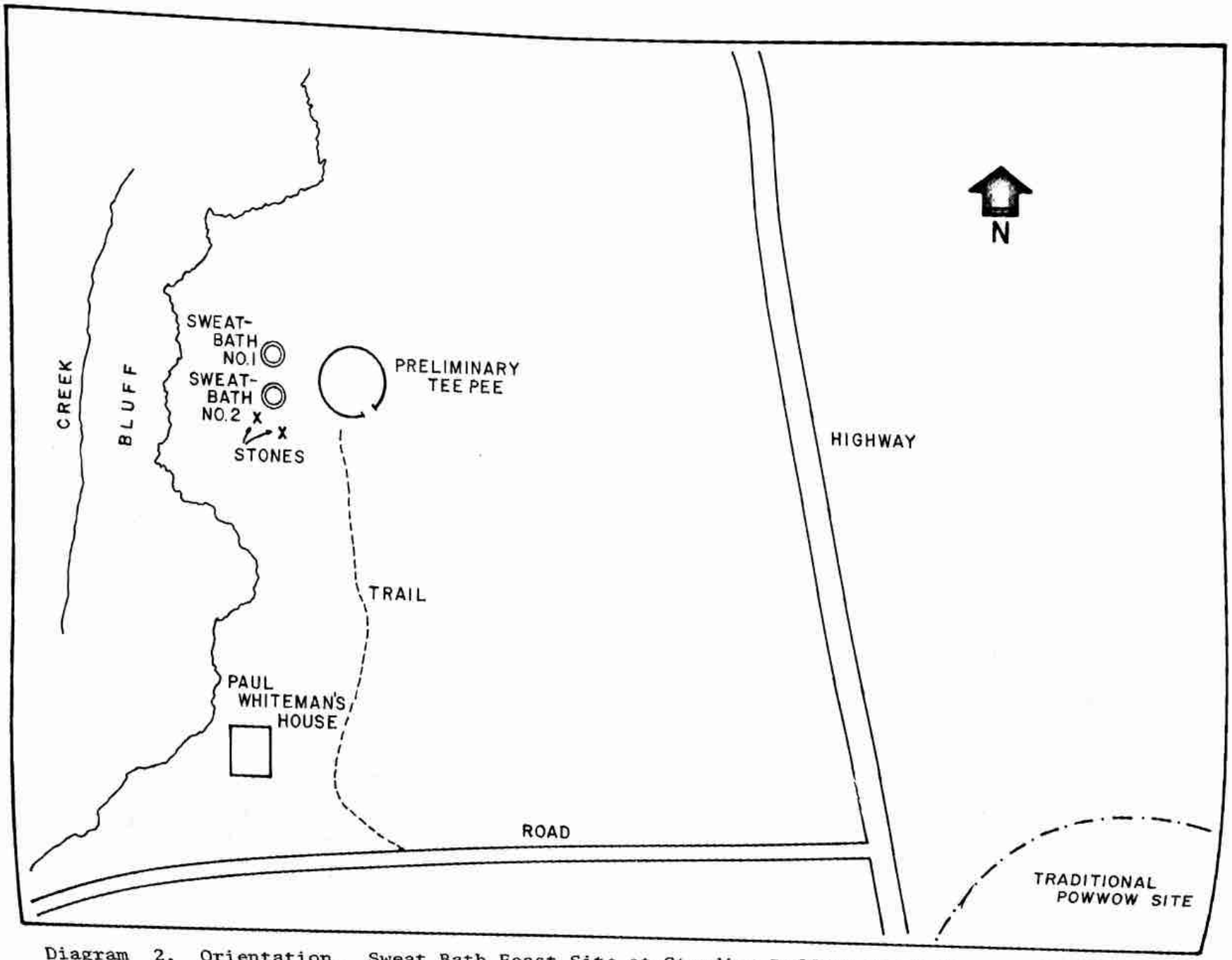


Diagram 2. Orientation. Sweat Bath Feast Site at Standing Buffalo Sioux Reserve, Sunday 5 June 1966.

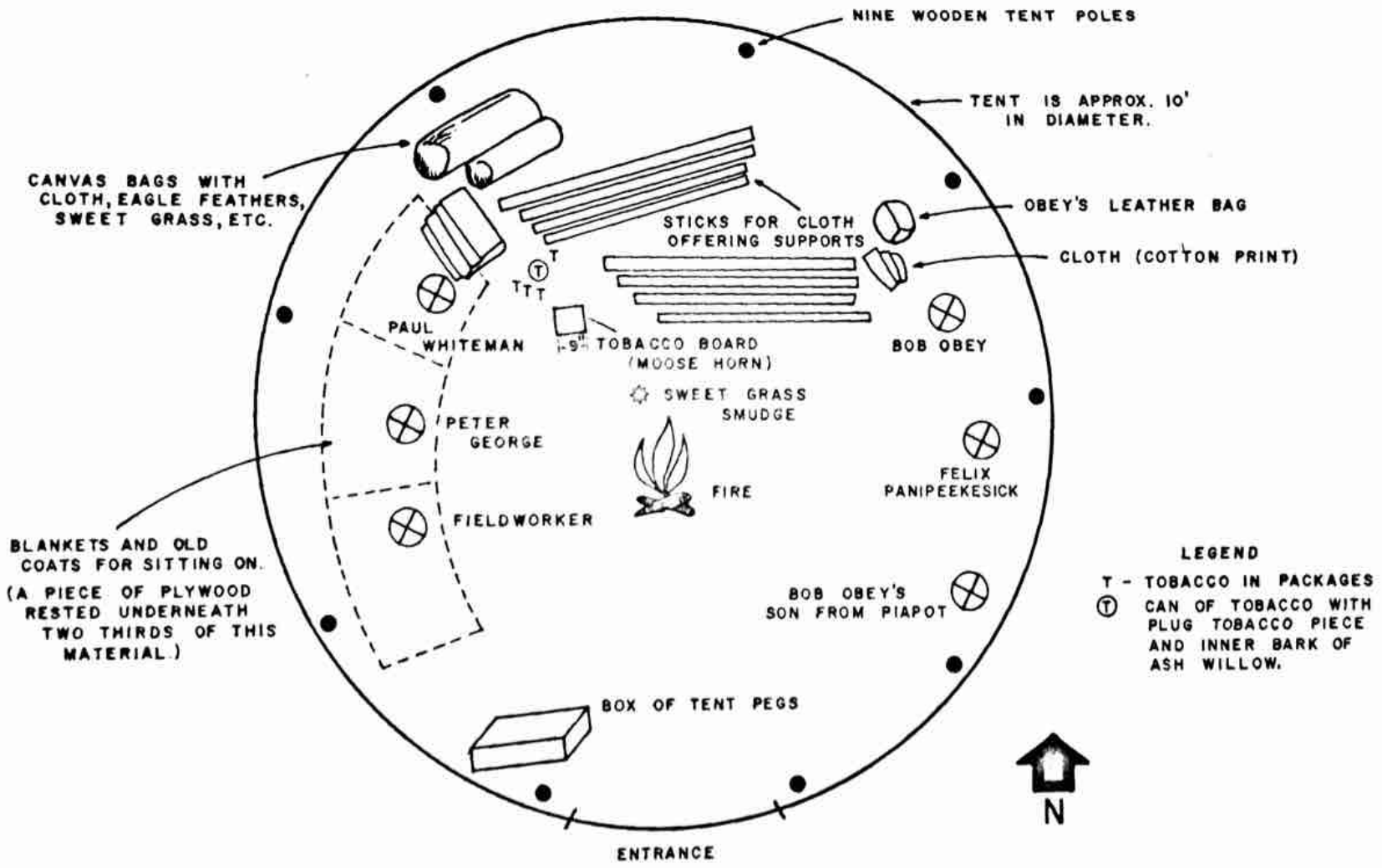


Diagram 3. Interior of Preliminary Teepee Prior to Sweat Bath Ceremony at Standing Buffalo Reserve, Sunday 5 June 1966.

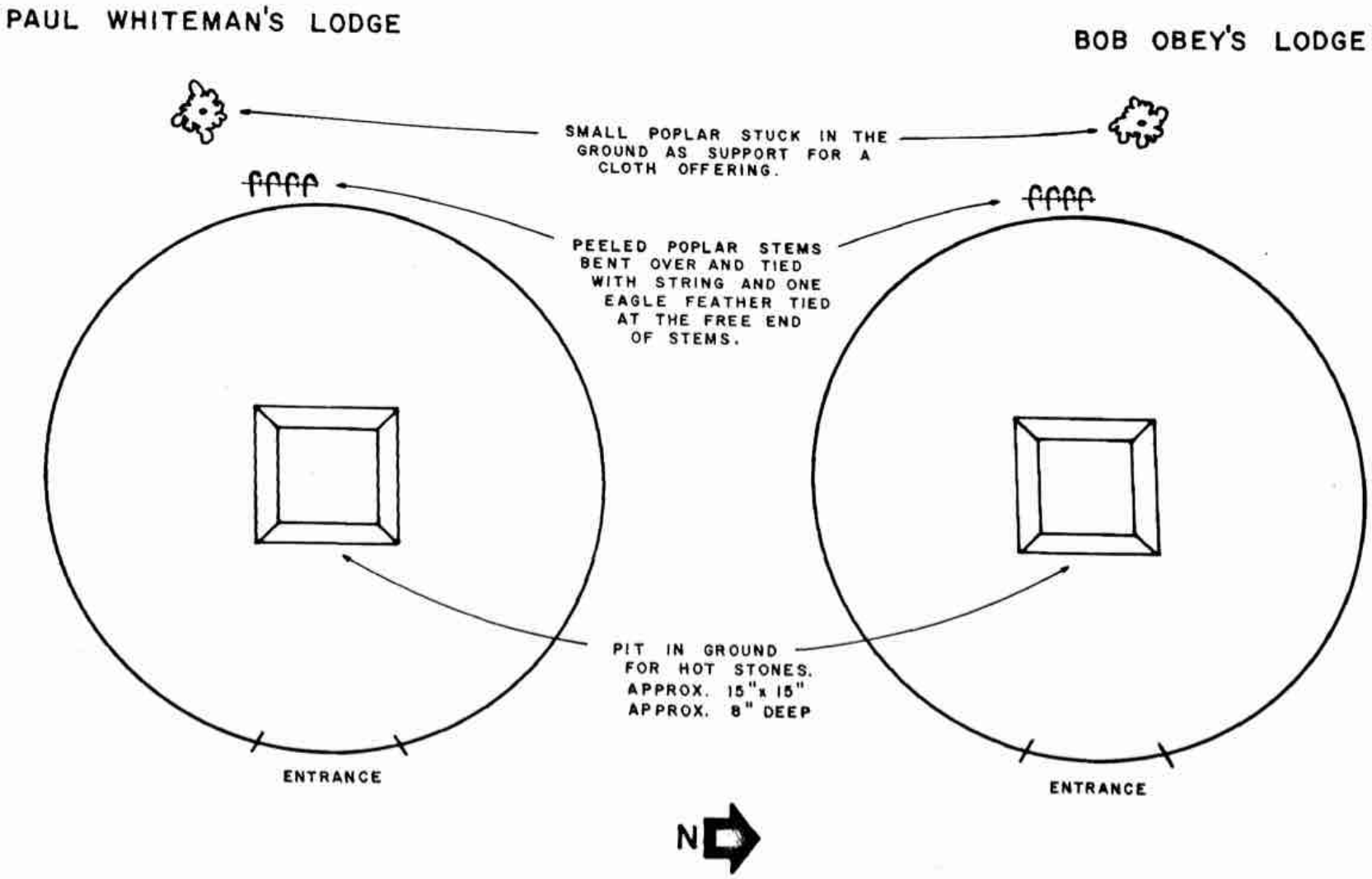


Diagram 4. Sweat Bath Lodges During Sweat Bath Feast Ceremony at Standing Buffalo Sioux Reserve, Sunday 5 June 1966.

homemade canvas camper's wall tent about six feet by eight feet.

The day was better (sunny and warm) than that of last year. However, there were fewer people present this year (about four cars and one truck, 1/2 ton) with about 50 men, women and children at feast time. In 1966 there were about a dozen cars and about 100 people in attendance.

We arrived at 12:30 p.m. and left at 5:30 p.m. when almost everyone had departed and when Paul Whiteman and his wife were packing everything away.

Approximate Schedule of Sweat Bath Feast

12:30 p.m.: We arrived at the ceremonial site. Only two other cars were present, both from Sakimay reserve (Noel Joe Williams and Jim Knudson). We were greeted by Paul Whiteman whom we picked up while he was walking from his home to his Preliminary Tent. There were handshakes with Peter, Felix and then fieldworker. Two men (head server and helper) were cutting poles for the Sweat Bath, but no other activity was evident; one of these men was Paul Whiteman's son, the other man was a relative from the same reserve.

12:35 p.m.: We entered the Preliminary Tent. Present were Bob Obey, Paul Whiteman, Felix Panipekeesick, Max Cappo, Peter George and fieldworker.

12:40 p.m.: We gave packages of tobacco as gifts. I gave one each to Paul and Bob, both elder men and initiators of this event.

12:40 - 1:40 p.m.: Talking and cleansing ritual in Preliminary Tent, using pipe, tobacco, Sweetgrass and prayers.

1:40 p.m.: Paul Whiteman walked outside to supervise the construction of the two Sweat Bath lodges (about 6-feet in diameter, dome-shaped) from flexible willow branches. First, however, a square hole was dug in the centre of each to later receive the hot stones. About this time, too, a designated number of stones (20) were placed in two piles some ten feet in front and to the east of the respective lodges. Construction of the two lodges was completed by 2:40 p.m.

2:40 p.m.: Four bent willow branches, peeled clean (about 15 inches long), were stuck into the ground, several inches apart, at the back of Paul Whiteman's lodge (the southern most one); at the tips of the bent willow ends, eagle feathers were attached. Also a pole was stuck in the ground and on it were tied four colored cloth offerings. Next, blankets were piled on this first lodge and finally the Preliminary Tent was dismantled and the canvas from it was placed over top of the blankets to form a kind of air-tight dome-shaped Sweat Bath lodge.

2:50 p.m.: Paul Whiteman, Bob Obey and Max Cappo undressed behind the lodges, put on canvas loin cloths, and covered themselves with blankets.

3:00 p.m.: All three began to walk clockwise around the first lodge, while carrying several cloth offerings, their clothes, and one buffalo head draped with red cloth. They were saying a prayer in Sioux (first Paul and then Bob). Then all three crawled into Whiteman's lodge. Two server-helpers then carried

hot stones into the lodge using a willow stick (cut part way in centre and bent over to form a kind of nut cracker) and a bent fork. (Metal parts, apparently, are not normally used in this ceremony.) One stone is carried at a time. When all stones were carried in, the main server passed a black stone pipe and wooden stem to Paul Whiteman at his request; also a piece of Sweetgrass and matches. Paul ritually cleansed his pipe, smoked it, and passed it on in clockwise direction. Prayers were said during the process. Clothes were ritually cleansed as well over the Sweetgrass smudge. When this ritual was completed, the clothes and pipe were passed outside to the head server who placed these at the back of the lodge. A pail of water was then passed to the elders and the lodge was closed. Water was promptly splashed on the hot stones and the three men were bathing in steam. For about ten minutes they sang and beat the side of the lodge with a stick. But as it got too hot the men hollered to lift up the blankets for some cool fresh air. This was done a total of four times.

3:30 p.m.: The three men came out, laid down on the ground near the first lodge and covered themselves with blankets. They rested. A fire was lit for heating the stones in front of Bob Obey's lodge. Blankets and tent sheets were transferred from Paul's lodge to that of Bob's.

3:50 p.m.: Paul and Bob prepared to go into the second lodge. Max Cappo refused to go in. A similar pattern followed to that with the first lodge. However, the two men stayed inside a shorter period of time.

4:15 p.m.: Paul and Bob came out of lodge two. With bundle in hand and pipe they walked around one of the lodges while Bob sang a very mournful cry, as if pleading for compassion.

4:30 p.m.: Head server and helper placed the tent canvas on the ground in front of the lodges as a place of honor for the initiators and elderly guests. Subsequently, the servers and several helpers, including a 10-year-old boy carried food from Whiteman's house. Pots of food and a couple of boxes of bread were placed before the elders. Many children (some in carriages), mothers, and several older people formed a semi-circle in front and sat down, waiting for the feast to begin.

When all was set, Paul Whiteman invited Felix Panipekeesick and Peter George of Sakimay and Herbert Sparvier of Kahkewistahaw (brother to Oliver Sparvier who in 1966 held his first Rain Dance at the instruction of Felix, on Sakimay reserve), his head server and helper, as well as Max Cappo and Bob Obey to join him.

Before the feast began, however, Paul cleansed his pipe ritually over Sweetgrass smoke and passed it on down the line for each to smoke. As each elder received the pipe, he turned it in the direction of the four cardinal points while simultaneously making a wish or a prayer. Next, each person in turn took some utensil with food, lifted it up or just held it and said some words. All the elders in the place of honor tasted the food and were served before the food was passed out to all the other people. All people were served according to custom in clockwise direction.

The food included two pails of rice and meat soup; two pails of noodles in fat, making a kind of soup; crackers; three-inch thick slices of white

bread; cubed sugar; tea; sweet dessert of boiled raisens and sugar; and home-made doughnut pastry. Each of those gathered (with some exceptions) brought their own utensils. Felix's grandson brought him a bowl and spoon. I brought mine this year; forgot it last year. Near the end of the feast Paul Whiteman gave out some 25 or 30 Sweetgrass braids to his chief server to hand out, first to his head "table" group, and then to selected persons including one to fieldworker. (I was the only non-Indian present.)

At the conclusion, around 5:15 p.m., Felix Panipekeesick said a few words in Saulteaux. Noel Joe Williams summarized the speech in English. The message went something like this:

> Today we are gathering in this World Day of Prayer - Whiteman as well as Indian. We pray for that Great Power above to give all of us good health and happiness. We thank all those guests who came from far away. May you have a safe journey.

That was all. Paul Whiteman and Bob Obey took their blankets, took off their loin cloths and put on their clothes. They folded their blankets and tent and together with empty food utensils walked to their homes. All had departed by then. Two teenaged girls helped carry the pots back.

Preparation for Feast

No special preparation was required for the visitors. Bob Obey and Paul Whiteman, however, fasted for two days and drank nothing. They slept in the Preliminary Tent Saturday night "to keep drunks out". Formerly, when Paul was younger, he used to fast for four days.

Paul said that he is passing on the tradition of the "Old People". This was the seventh year in a row - although he has been involved in this ceremony for 25 years.

Paul continued to explain in the Preliminary Tent. Actually, he said, he should not be speaking in English (according to the old Indian way); however, he has to speak in English so that others who are not Sioux may understand.

After his generation is gone, Paul predicts that there will be no more of this old Indian culture. On the Sioux reserve, with some 450 residents, only Paul and Bob have participated in this ritual for the past seven years. One other person knows how to put on the Sweat Bath Feast but he is no longer interested. Other elders are not interested in attending for fear that some drunkard may come in and upset the ceremony and consequently something bad may follow.

Paul illustrated this with an incident that occurred several years ago. One rather inexperienced elder from another reserve asked Paul to bring his tepee for a Rain Dance celebration that he was about to put on. Paul reluctantly obliged but found that the man had no tent of his own for the preliminary ceremony. Then, all of a sudden, a drunkard walked in and fell in the centre of the lodge. He had to be pulled out. Following this incident, Paul hurriedly left for home. No sooner had he arrived, a great wind came up and flattened everything - almost taking down the lodge. The wind was

interpreted as a punishment spirit for disturbing the traditional order of things (in this case, bringing a drunkard into the sacred lodge).

This morning, when Paul Whiteman woke up, there was a strong wind blowing outside. He came out of his tent, lit his ceremonial pipe and asked for a warm day. Consequently, according to Paul, his plea was heard and it was a warm day. (Note a belief in supernatural forces as the power governing nature as well as man.)

Function of Sweat Bath Feast

The Sweat Bath Feast is practically the same as the Rain Dance. Felix Panipekeesick reports that he has never made Sweat Bath Feasts, but has made plenty of Rain Dances. Paul Whiteman has never made Rain Dances, but he has made plenty of Sweat Bath Feasts. Felix says that almost the same songs were sung at this Sweat Bath as at Rain Dances.

Themes seem similar. A promise or vow to do something: to fast and make a Sweat Bath Feast. A renewal of old Indian ties. A call to the Great Spirit to help the sick. A meeting of friends and relatives, in ceremonial fashion. The establishment of status for Paul and Bob, elders of the group.

Peter George did not enter the Sweat Bath lodge either this year, nor last. Why? "I get sinus trouble," he said, "and difficulty in breathing when I enter." Felix Panipekeesick entered last year, but not this time.

Ritual in Preliminary Tent

After receiving gifts of tobacco from each of us (Peter, Felix, and fieldworker), Paul Whiteman lit the end of a Sweetgrass braid and passed the packages of tobacco over it. He said a few words of prayer while he held the tobacco up. Then he opened each package and placed a finger full from each unto the mixing board (moose horn, about nine inches wide). Also, he placed some coarse tobacco and bark bits onto the board, and mixed same with fingers. He picked up some of this tobacco mixture, filled his pipe, and ritually moved it over the Sweetgrass smoke. Then passed it onto Peter George. Peter accepted it, ritually turned it in clockwise direction, then lit it, puffed it, said a few words of prayer, and handed the pipe back. Paul then handed it to the next person who did likewise. Paul cleaned out the used tobacco with a wire and put a fresh batch in before putting the pipe back onto his mixing board.

APPENDIX I

A Participant Observation Account of Rain Dances on Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan - 1965-1967

The Rain Dance as the outstanding ceremonial event of the Plains Cree and Saulteaux Indians continues to be held at least annually on Sakimay Reserve. This is in contrast to the other three neighboring reserves where no ritual leaders are present to put one on; the last Rain Dance on these reserves was some 15 years ago. On Sakimay, Felix Panipekeesick and Peter George participate in all or most Rain Dances by virtue of their status as senior ritual practitioners of the old culture. Only two other Saulteaux on the same reserve (Gordon Kaye and Oliver Sparvier) have the authority to put on the Rain Dance - and both have put on one dance each. Three have inherited their right to this ceremony from their parents and grandparents, and the fourth (Oliver Sparvier) has received this right as a result of tutoring from Felix.

The present Rain Dance follows essentially the same pattern as David Mandelbaum described with the Sun Dance at Crooked Lake in 1934 (Mandelbaum 1940:265-271). However, there are some exceptions. Locally, the present ceremony is known as the Rain Dance. Many of the local elders recognize the two Dances as being essentially the same. By 1906 (when the Sun Dance was banned by the Indian Agent), the self-torture aspect of the Sun Dance was generally abandoned and the name was changed to a Rain Dance. From that time on the Rain Dance ceremony became a kind of respected Indian church.

The self-torture aspect of passing skewers through the breasts of certain dancers and attaching these with lines to the central post is no longer done publicly. Both Felix and Peter denied that this event has taken place in recent times. Yet, a Sioux informant reports that in the summer of 1961 the Sun Dance ceremony was held on Sakimay with three Saulteaux elders participating. The same informant recalls that before his father died (1928), he once dragged a buffalo skull along the ground three times around the lodge. The skull was dragged by two lines attached to two skewers which were passed through the breast of the carrier. This latter ceremony took place on the Sioux Standing Buffalo Reserve near Fort Qu'Appelle. Still a third informant claims that her father participated in the first of these skewer rituals as late as 1964; the event is reported to have been held in private deep in the bush prior to the actual public Rain Dance ceremony on the Ghost Lake site of Sakimay. Whether this special secret ceremony actually took place is difficult to determine - but for all practical purposes, it is non-existent for most of the Indians in the Broadview area.

Fieldworker has observed four Rain Dances on Sakimay Reserve during the 1965-1967 period. All were held during the latter part of June. Three of them took place on the Ghost Lake site; the other one took place on the south side of the reserve. Two of the dances were put on by Felix Panipekeesick; a third by Olvier Sparvier; the fourth by Gordon Kaye.

The procedure of the four Rain Dances on Sakimay was the same: the pledger, always a man, either had his own Rain Dance songs or else induced a man who did own such songs to lead in the singing.

The pledger held singing parties preceding the date set for the ceremony. The fourth and final preliminary singing took place in an enlarged Preliminary Tepee on the night before the dance.[79] The enlarged Tepee was set up adjoining the site of the Rain Dance lodge that was to be built the following day. The pledger brought in a buffalo skull draped in a cloth offering and carried it to the back of the Tepee. The acknowledged crier or Announcer for the ceremony, Bill Whitehat, as well as four male singers, sat around in a circle and beat a rawhide with willow sticks; two singers beat a drum; the man who led the singing shook a rattle. During the intervals when they were not singing, they prepared ceremonial paraphernalia for the following day. They braided loose Sweetgrass and attached cloth offerings to the sticks by which the cloths were hung. When these materials were ready, they were ritually cleansed over the Sweetgrass smudge in readiness for the big days ahead.

After the singing was over, it was decided who would go to fetch the central tree next day. Then the group dispersed. The pledger, however, remained in the Tepee all night. Next morning the pledger and the Announcer invited the singers to join them in the Tepee for final instructions. When all were inside the pipe was lit and passed around. After the pipe had been smoked and instructions given, a party of four (including the pledger and fieldworker) left for the woods. About one-quarter of a mile away they found a suitable tree for the centre pole. Four feet from the ground one of them tied a blue print cloth around the tree.

Next they built four Sweetgrass smudges at the base of the tree, one in each cardinal direction. As he stood on the north side, the pledger began a tune with his eagle bone whistle in mouth and rattle in hand, as his companions joined in for about five minutes. Then a pipe was lit and passed around.

At this point one of the men made a mark on the tree below the cloth, on the south side. Then he chopped the tree down without further ritual.[80] The tree was quickly cleared of branches while a fork was left at the top. The tree and the branches were then carried out of the bush to a clearing where a young teenager was waiting with a team of horses and a wagon. Once loaded on the wagon the tree and the branches were transported to the Rain Dance lodge site.

The pole was set up to the north of the hole which had been dug to receive it; the bottom end being a few inches from the edge of the hole, while the forked top was raised on a wooden tripod at a 30 degree angle. The pledger took out his pocket knife and began to carve three symbolic figures on the south side of the pole - buffalo head at the bottom and a Thunderbird and moon at the top (see Diagram 5). Meanwhile the "nest" was attached to the centre pole by one of those present. Bundles of brush were fastened in the fork of the pole.

Two lines were attached to the centre pole in preparation for raising it. The pledger (Felix Panipekeesick) said a few words of prayer in Saulteaux and signaled for the lift up. The pole steadily slid into its place. Construction of the lodge began, enlisting the cooperation of everyone present.

Two young men and one older person hauled poplar logs into the encampment.

The walls of the Rain Dance lodge were made by setting up forked poles, about eight feet high, in a circle some 35 to 40 feet in diameter. At the 1965 Rain Dance there were 12 of these poles. Beams were lashed across the forks with binder twine or heavy cord. Next, rafters were laid across the top of the lodge, resting on the wall beams and in the fork of the centre pole. Leafy branches and the Tepee covers enclosed the side walls. The Preliminary Tepee was stripped of its canvas cover which was then placed on the walls of the Rain Dance structure. A four foot fence, three feet in from the wall, was extended around the inside of the lodge, except in the front of the entrance and the altar. This was made by driving stakes into the group and twining leafy branches between them. The dancers sat behind this partition and grasped it while dancing.

On the north side of the lodge near the wall an altar was constructed. It consisted of an excavation 18 inches square and three inches deep. A short peeled peg was planted in each corner of the excavation. These pegs symbolized the four thunders, one in each cardinal direction. In the centre was a Sweetgrass smudge. Behind the excavation was a buffalo skull upon which lay cloth offerings and a mirror. Between the skull and the excavation four bent sticks were set up, with eagle feathers attached to the tips. When the altar was completed, it was screened from the view of the spectators.

As soon as the lodge was completed, the ritual paraphernalia, skull, cloths, Sweetgrass braids, tobacco, four pipes, eaglebone whistle, and rattle were all brought from the Preliminary Tepee into the dance lodge. Each was ritually cleansed over the Sweetgrass smudge.

When all was in readiness, the Announcer, Bill Whitehat, came out of the lodge and announced that they were about to start. The singers, some eight in number now, took their places to the northeast of the centre pole (see Diagram 5). They sat in a kind of circle around the rawhide and beat it with willow sticks. Also, there was a big bass drum beside the rawhide, as well as a little deerhide drum. The spectators entered and sat against the branch partitions behind which the dancers reclined. Men sat around the western arc of the enclosure, while women sat in the southeast quadrant. Female dancers were placed on the eastern side, the men dancers on the western. The pledger danced beside the altar.

At the start of the dance, however, the pledger sat among the singers, leading them in his own Rain Dance songs. When he finished a round, he was relieved by some other man who possessed songs, and so on, through the day, one song leader succeeding another. Each leader shook a rattle and was flanked by drummers on each side. The other singers beat on the hide. Before each leader began his songs, he said a short prayer, and described how and where he had acquired the songs he was about to sing.

Dancers rose as the music began and danced in place with bent knees, rhythmically bobbing up and down. Each blew an eaglebone whistle to the rhythm of the music, and kept his eyes steadfastly on the centre pole, so that he might have only the supernatural in mind when dancing.

Informants report that in the early days the dance lasted four days. However, in the four Rain Dances that fieldworker observed, dancing barely lasted two days. The approximate schedule for the June 17-20, 1965 Rain Dance

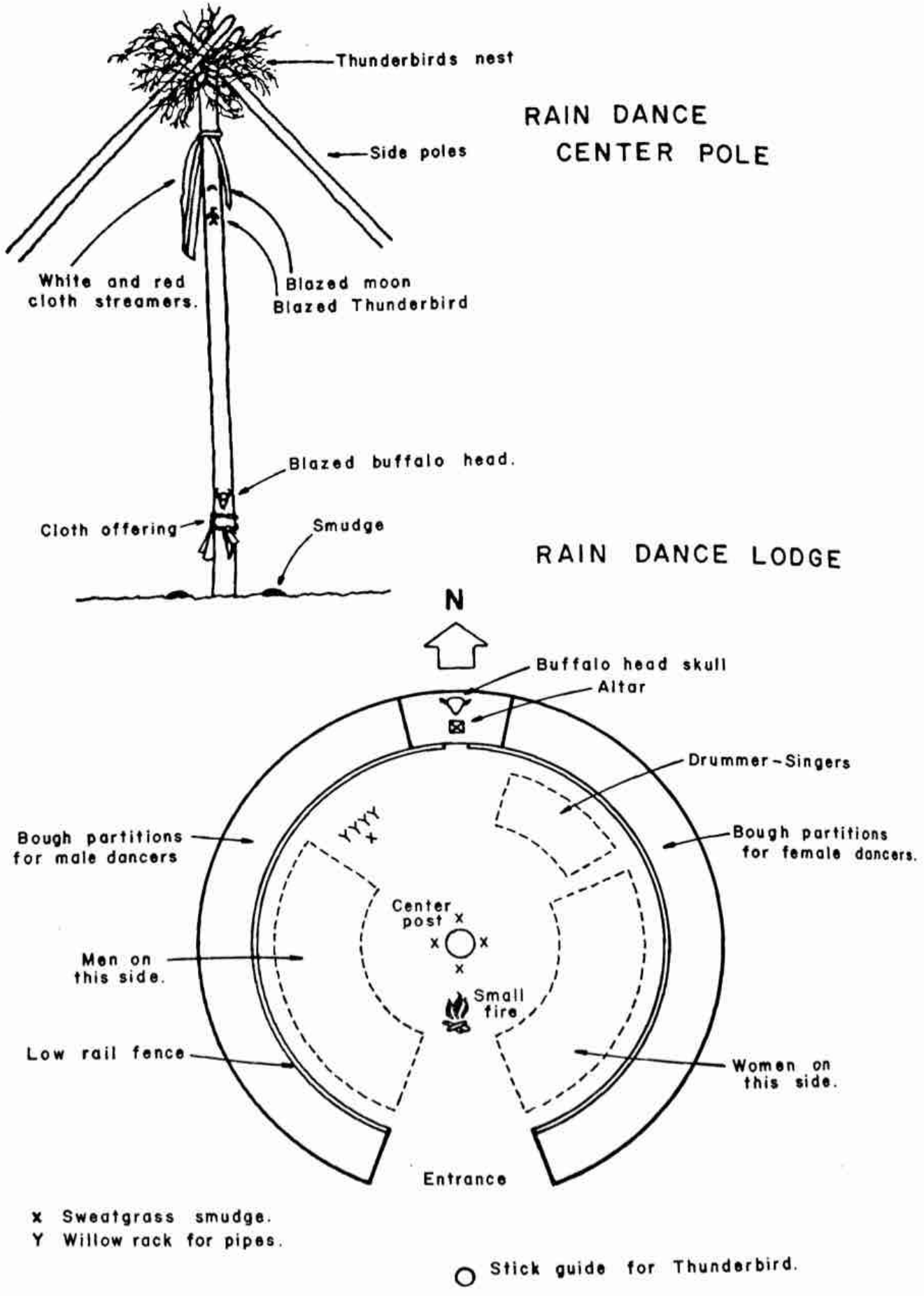


Diagram 5. Rain Dance Lodge and Center Pole at Ghost Lake Site, Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan, 24-25 June 1967.

on Sakimay was as follows:

Thursday night, June 17: Preliminary Tepee was set up and the singing party took place in the evening.

Friday, June 18: Centre post was in place and part of the lodge was built. Three tents were pitched for the night, all from Sakimay.

Saturday, June 19: Lodge was completed by noon.
3:45 p.m.: The dancing began and continued, except for 10 to 15 minute breaks between song leaders, until 8 p.m. when the participants broke for supper.

9:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.: Dancing continued. Drummers shifted to the west side of the lodge for shelter from the wind. By evening ten tents were up and there were approximately 150 people in the encampment. That evening the wind blew and it rained. During the early part of the evening, guards were posted to make sure that no drunks or other intruders might enter and spoil the sanctity of the place.

Sunday, June 20: No activity from midnight to 8 a.m.
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.: Breakfast in camp. Women carried water from a stream one-quarter mile away.

10:20 a.m.: Singing and drumming began.

11:15 a.m.: The first male dancer appeared. Three female dancers were already dancing. Felix Panipekeesick baptized one child and gave him an Indian name.

12:15 p.m.: Peter George brought in a white cloth banner three feet wide by four feet with a sun design; this he placed by the altar.

1:15 p.m.: Break for lunch. Dancers were allowed to smoke, but could not eat or drink.

2:00 p.m.: Dancing resumed. Some presents of tobacco, shirts, blankets and money were given out near the conclusion of the dance. Recipients were elderly folk as well as visitors from other bands. When all the presents were distributed, the dance continued.

6:45 p.m.: The windup. Fasters and their families and friends ate in the lodge. All took down their tents, except Peter George and his wife, who stayed for the night.

Monday, June 21: Some of the cloth offerings were wrapped up and taken deep into the bush by Peter George.

Before the dance began, a fire was built in the lodge, to the south of the centre pole, and kept smouldering to provide coals for the Sweetgrass smudges. The fire was tended by Jim Knudson, a middle-aged non-Treaty Saulteaux from Grenfell, Saskatchewan (his mother is a Treaty Indian on Sakimay); his role is that of a Server at Rain Dance, Smoking Tepee, and Sweat Bath Ceremonies.

The gift giving took place on the last day. The gifts given by the man were placed on the men's side near the entrance; the giver and his family came forth and danced beside their gifts. Then Peter George distributed the presents to select local people and visitors. While these gifts were officially regarded as offerings to the supernaturals, nevertheless they added prestige to the donor's name.

At the conclusion of the dance, everyone stood up, spectators included. A number of the people danced and a few stretched out their arms towards the centre post; the majority, however, just watched. One Rain Dance song was repeated 20 times. For each time an elder placed two sticks at the base of the centre pole until a total of 40 sticks were used. This signaled the end of the Rain Dance ceremony. When the song was over, the dancers and others filed out in random fashion, while pots and boxes of food were brought in for the concluding feast.

The Rain Dance lodge was left standing, but could not be used again. Most of the cloth offerings had been gathered and the next day carried deep into the bush where they would not be stolen or disturbed. Others were tied securely and left on the lodge to stay there until they rotted away.

Women who are menstruating are not allowed to enter the Rain Dance lodge. The Announcer made this clear during his rounds. Nor is a woman allowed to make the Rain Dance although she could persuade her husband to make the vow and get the help of the ritual leader to be the pledger.

APPENDIX J

An Account of the Smoking Tepee, Sakimay Reserve, Saskatchewan, June 15, 1966

Ranking next in importance to the Rain Dance among the sacred Plains Cree and Saulteaux Indian ceremonies, is the Smoking Tepee. It is given in fulfillment of a promise to the supernaturals. In order to give it a man had to acquire the right either by inheritance, by purchase or in a vision. Among the Broadview Indians the June 15th ceremony is believed to have been the first Smoking Tepee for the past 40 years. Felix Panipekeesick's father used to put it on regularly before he died. The techniques had been passed on to his son Felix, but it was only on this occasion that Felix made use of this skill.

This particular Smoking Tepee appears to have been prompted by Felix's old age (80 years old) and his desire to teach some younger man so that this ceremony would not be lost. In this case, Felix chose a middle-aged man from Sakimay, Oliver Sparvier.

Briefly, the ceremony consisted of a night-long singing session during which many prayers were sung, offerings were given, and pipes and rattles were ritualistically manipulated. The ceremony is preceded with a Preliminary Tepee and a Sweat Bath Feast. Fieldworker participated in the Preliminary Tepee, observed the construction of the enlarged ceremonial Tepee, and later was present some eight hours after the completion of the ceremony itself. From his observation and from discussion with Peter George and Felix Panipekeesick, the schedule of events approximated the following:

Tuesday, June 15, 1966: In the morning a Preliminary Tepee was set up several hundred yards south of Felix Panipekeesick's home, Sakimay Reserve. Here a singing session was held and ceremonial paraphernalia were ritually cleansed over Sweetgrass smudge and cloth offerings were prepared for later use. Next a Sweat Bath ceremony was performed, similar to that which took place at Standing Buffalo Reserve (see Appendix H). One Sweat Bath lodge was built, about four feet high and seven feet wide. It was put on by ritual elder, Peter George. Five men participated in the Sweat Bath, including Felix; Jim Knudson (server), a non-Treaty Saulteaux whose mother lives on Sakimay; Oliver Sparvier (the new initiate to whom Felix wished to pass on his Smoking Tepee ritual techniques); Russel Rabbitskin, elder, Sakimay Reserve; and Wilfred Isaac, elder from Kahkewistahaw Reserve. Peter George did not enter the lodge. At the conclusion, a feast was held with the women and their families joining in.

In the late afternoon, preparations began for the construction of the enlarged Tepee, 40 feet south of the Preliminary Tepee. This structure differed from the ordinary enlarged Tepee in that it was built on a four-pole foundation. The four poles were laid on the ground, one pointing to each of the cardinal directions, their tops touching each other. Three old women (who earlier spent about five minutes in the Preliminary Tepee, as part of the ceremony) lashed the top of the poles together. The Tepee was then set up by the men. Another 19 poles (in 25 foot lengths) were added, before the canvas from the Preliminary Tepee was taken down and placed on this one. An opening

for the door was on the east side.

In the center of the lodge a round altar was made by excavating the sod to a depth of about six inches and a diameter of four feet. Four pegs were planted in the altar flush with the surface, each pointing to the four cardinal directions and symbolizing the thunders. Beside these points Sweetgrass smudges were lit. A fire was built in the center of the altar. On the west side of the lodge was a buffalo skull; in front of the skull were four bent sticks with eagle feathers attached to the tips. Four pipes were on hand and two rattles. Five flat and peeled poplar sticks lay on the ground beside the altar for carrying hot coals from the fire to the Sweetgrass smudges.

6:30 p.m.: The lodge was completed. At this point fieldworker left for home, not knowing until later that this was to be a Smoking Tepee ceremony.

8:00 p.m. - 4:30 a.m.: At the Smoking Tepee ceremony five to 15 people participated during the night. Several cars with passengers came to the site off and on.

According to informants, the ceremony began with a pipe being passed around in clockwise direction. Next the pledger passed the pipe to someone which means that the receiver is obliged to sing a round of songs. Each was aided by a chorus of the other participants. While rattles are used, there were no drums in this ceremony. After each round the participants ate and drank some tea. In this manner the singing continued through the night. Mandelbaum, in 1934, cites other related rituals (Mandelbaum 1940:271-274), but fieldworker's informants did not elaborate further.

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NOTES

1. In anthropological writings the term "Plains Ojibway" is frequently used instead of Saulteaux. However, the term "Saulteaux" is used here because this is what the local people call themselves.

2. In an earlier interview of 1965, informant spoke of the sun instead of the moon.

3. Felix said that an elder on Kahkewistahaw mixes 100 roots for this medicine. Felix then added, "It works sometimes."

4. The study area has a 4.1 percent annual rate of population increase as compared to the wider Saskatchewan population increase of 0.8 percent per year. On a Canadian scale it is estimated that one-half of the Indian population across the country and under the age of 16, as compared to one-third for the remainder of Canada. In some settlements such as LaLoche in northern Saskatchewan, the birth rate approaches the rate experienced in the most rapidly expanding countries in Asia and Africa.

5. Dreams have long been considered as a kind of extra-sensory facility in forecasting the future. Psychologist Carl G. Jung states: "...There has long been a general belief that the chief function of dreams is prognostication of the future. In antiquity, and as late as the Middle Ages, dreams played their part in medical prognosis....In fact, the unconscious seems to be able to examine and to draw conclusions from facts, much as consciousness does. It can even use certain facts, and anticipate their possible results, just because we are *not* conscious of them [Jung 1964:78]."

6. However, when informant Alec Tanner was asked if Rain dances bring rain, he replied: "Well sometimes it does; sometimes it doesn't."

7. The priest at the local Indian Residential School reports that while there is a low rate of church attendance by the Indians, many of them purchase rosaries and visual lamps as a kind of magical investment for protection against evil spirits.

8. Mandelbaum in 1934 used a different word for Powwow in Cree; he used *pit-shit-shi-win*, Moving Slowly Dance (Mandelbaum 1940:280).

9. Each of these dances is described in detail by David Mandelbaum (Mandelbaum 1940:275-278). All dances were in use on the Broadview area reserves in 1934.

10. Psychologist Carl G. Jung contends that the number four has a basis in early religious history and mythology. He wrote: "Let us take the first dream of the God who really consists of four gods, coming from the 'four corners'....The quaternity (or element of 'fourness') itself is a strange idea, but one that plays a great role in many religions and philosophies. In the Christian religion, it has been superceded by the Trinity....It [a divine quaternity] is an idea that once was fairly familiar among students of the Hermetic philosophy in the Middle Ages, but it petered out with

the beginning of the 18th century, and it has been entirely obsolete for at least 20 years...[Jung 1964:73]."

11. The latter happened to one 17-year-old Saulteaux boy who during a fight with his brother, discharged a rifle in the house. Two weeks later, in late June 1966, the boy participated in a local Rain Dance as one of the fasting dancers. The ritual involves a promise - in this case, the boy was obliged to maintain peace with his brother.

12. Original tapes are deposited in the Human History Branch, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

13. The interview took place in fieldworker's car.

14. Piapot Reserve, Qu'Appelle Agency, some 40 miles away.

15. Ochapowace is one of the neighboring reserves, 15 miles east of Sakimay.

16. During the late 1950s and the 1960s, the Sioux Powwow has been the largest powwow in Saskatchewan. The 1967 Centennial event lasted five days and was a recognized tourist attraction.

17. Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, some 70 miles away. The Indian Hospital and a provincial tuberculosis sanitorium are located there.

18. Gordon Kaye (Kequahtooway - Indian name), born 1907, Sakimay Reserve.

19. Sweat Bath Feast at the Sioux Standing Buffalo Reserve, west of Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, Sunday, June 5, 1966.

20. Pelly Agency, near the Manitoba border, comprises mostly Fringe Saulteaux.

21. In Fort Qu'Appelle Agency.

22. Colored cloth in lengths of one yard or more.

23. Camping day takes place just prior to a Rain Dance.

24. The bearclaws were purchased by the researcher in 1966, together with an eagle-bone whistle, a rattle, a peace-pipe, and a drum.

25. When fieldworker acquired the rattle, respondent stated that the rattle was 160 years old and that he acquired it from his father when the latter died in 1947; his father had received it from his father.

26. Dan Kennedy is an elderly Indian from the Carry the Kettle Reserve, 50 miles west of Sakimay Reserve.

27. The Smoking Tepee was held several hundred yards from informant's home, Sakimay Reserve, June 14, 1966. It is believed that this was the first such ceremony on the Crooked Lake Agency since the informant's father put one up some 40 years earlier.

28. Jimmy Knudson is a non-Treaty Indian living in Grenfell, Saskatchewan; his mother is a Treaty Indian on Sakimay Reserve.

29. Edward Rabbitskin's real name is Edward Wahpoosewyan, Sakimay Reserve. He was born in 1897.

30. Oliver Sparvier, Sakimay Reserve, was born in 1905.

31. Oliver Sparvier was actually 60 years old, according to the Indian Affairs Branch registered list.

32. Largely Saulteaux.

33. The wrist watch was lost at the time researcher and family were camping at a Rain Dance on Sakimay in the summer of 1965.

34. The interview took place in fieldworker's car, outside Felix Panipekeesick's home, Sakimay Reserve.

35. The man was killed by his brother over a disagreement concening land.

36. Born in 1906.

37. Standing Buffalo Reserve, Fort Qu'Appelle.

38. Big drums are the manufactured kind used in musical bands.

39. Pasqua Reserve is near Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan.

40. Keys, Cote and Keeseekoose reserves (mostly fringe-Saulteaux) are located a few miles north of Kamsack, Saskatchewan.

41. Kahkewistahaw is one of the reserves in the Crooked Lake Agency, several miles east of Sakimay reserve.

42. A neighbor about a hundred yards away.

43. Born in 1883.

44. Fieldworker showed Figure 12 of David G. Mandelbaum's book *The Plains Cree* (New York: The American Museum of Natural History, 1940), p. 269, to Felix. Of the four face paintings of women participants in a Sun Dance at Crooked Lake, June 23, 1934, Felix recognized only design "a" (Thunderbird in black on each cheek).

45. White Bear Reserve, north of Carlyle, Saskatchewan.

46. See design in D. Mandelbaum, *The Plains Cree*, p. 287.

47. Scapulimancy, as used by some indigenous tribes, such as in Africa.

48. David Mandelbaum, *The Plains Cree*, p. 238.

49. This interview took place in informant's home, Sakimay Reserve. His daughter and several grandchildren were present.

50. Oliver Sparvier, Sakimay Reserve, born in 1905.

51. Original tapes are deposited in the Human History Branch, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

52. The interview took place in fieldworker's car, beside informant's home, Cowessess Reserve.

53. Ghost Lake is a misnomer. There's actually no lake, but rather it remains to date as the traditional Rain Dance site. Many remains of lodges may be seen today.

54. Beside informant's home.

55. By the "westend" the informant means Sakimay. However, fieldworker has found no definite evidence of Sun Dances being held there recently. One lady on Sakimay claims her father participated as dancer (using skewers) in a secret Sun Dance around 1964.

56. "Butcher" is the nickname for Victor Sparvier, current chief of Cowessess Reserve.

57. Up until the past eight years or so, the federal Indian Affairs Branch used to have one of its Agency headquarters on Cowessess Reserve. Some of these buildings are still standing and are in use by local people.

58. Maple syrup was once available in the Qu'Appelle Valley, in the present Marieval district on Cowessess Reserve. The maple trees have since deteriorated and no longer are used for syrup.

59. Philip Tanner, born 1919.

60. Original tapes are deposited in the Human History Branch, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

61. Interview took place in fieldworker's car beside Mrs. Wasacase's home in Broadview.

62. Hector Wasacase, born 1890. Mrs. Wasacase (my informant) is currently separated from her husband. She lives in the town of Broadview, while he lives on Kahkewistahaw Reserve.

63. On May 28, 1966, fieldworker and family took Mrs. Wasacase on an afternoon root-picking trip in the Qu'Appelle Valley, near and around Round Lake, some 12 miles north of Broadview.

64. Maurice Louison, born 1945, is a young artist from Kahkewistahaw Reserve who has lived away from the reserve since around 1965.

65. Mrs. Jack Bob, born in 1903, resides on Kahkewistahaw Reserve.

66. Samples of these roots collected on the May 28, 1966 field-trip are deposited in the Museum.

67. Gracie Louison, Kahkewistahaw Reserve, born 1882.

68. William Redwood, born in 1896.

69. This residential school closed down in the late 1950s.

70. Cote, Keeseekoose and Keys Reserves north of Kamsack, Saskatchewan.

71. Mrs. Ivan Watson, Ochapowace Reserve, born in 1920.

72. Peter Watson, Ochapowace Reserve, born in 1890.

73. Original tapes are deposited in the Human History Branch, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

74. Interview took place in informant's home on the north side of Crooked Lake - Shesheep side of Sakimay Reserve.

75. Gordon Kequahtooway (born in 1907) of Sakimay was present during the interview, as was Peter George's wife.

76. Of the 117 respondents, 39 indicated some use of medicinal herbs and medicine men and/or women. The remainder did not believe in it or ignored it altogether in favor of modern medicine.

77. From February 1965 to October 1966, fieldworker and family lived in Broadview, Saskatchewan. Here fieldworker served as research anthropologist for a study of the Broadview Rural Development Area and designated area under the federal-provincial Agricultural and Rural Development Agreement (ARDA). Much of the time was spent studying the 1,900 Indians on the four reservations north of town; the balance was spent on the surrounding 1,900 non-Indians. One of the research tools with Indian people was a comprehensive community and family questionnaire interview schedule applied to 117 household heads out of a total potential of 237 Indian households. The two questions in this Appendix are only two of over 200 separate questions asked in the interview schedule.

78. Saulteaux Indian herbalist Mrs. Hector (Elizabeth) Wasacase of Broadview, Saskatchewan, helped fieldworker May 28, 1966, in finding these roots in the vicinity of the Qu'Appelle Valley, north of Broadview. These roots are deposited in the National Museum of Canada. Positive identification has been provided by taxonomist Keith Best, and botanists Dr. Bill Baldwin, John Bassett, and Dr. Ted Mosquin.

79. For the 1965 Rain Dance the following singing parties took place: one in February, one in May, one in early June, and the final one took place on Thursday night, June 17th, just prior to the Rain Dance. In another Rain Dance in early June 1966, the singing parties took place in the fall of 1965, in January of 1966, in March, and prior to the Rain Dance proper.

80. The old practice of firing a gun in the air as the tree came down is no longer practiced in the Broadview area. This custom, which Mandelbaum had observed in 1934 (Mandelbaum 1940:267), has not been used for many years.