

THE PLAINS CREE OF LITTLE FINE,  
CHANGE AND PERSISTENCE IN CULTURE CONTACT

BY LOYD STEVEN JULIUS GIBRODOVICH

1969

Theses  
Anthrop.

C. 13

THE PLAINS CREE OF LITTLE PINE:  
CHANGE AND PERSISTENCE IN CULTURE CONTACT

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
in the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology

by

Lloyd Steven Julius O'Brodovich  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



© Copyright, 1969. L.S.J. O'Brodovich

The author has agreed that the Library, University of Saskatchewan, may make this thesis freely available for inspection. Moreover, the author has agreed that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor or professors who supervised the thesis work herein, or in their absence, by the Head of the Department or the Dean of the College in which the thesis work was done. It is understood that due recognition will be given to the author of this thesis and to the University of Saskatchewan in any use of the material in this thesis. Copying or publication or any other use of the thesis for financial gain without approval by the University of Saskatchewan and the author's written permission is prohibited.

Requests for permission to copy or make other use of the material in this thesis in whole or in part should be addressed to:

Head of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology

University of Saskatchewan,

SASKATOON, Canada.

## ABSTRACT

This study is primarily concerned with the problems posed by the intensive culture contact between Europeans and Plains Cree. Two areas, economy and religion, are intimately related to the acculturation process and these are investigated in order to clarify the forces which operate on the one hand to change Plains Cree culture and on the other to preserve it.

The historical analysis of culture change among the Cree illustrates their transition from Woodland to Plains culture, and evaluates the results of the forced acculturation in the 19th Century.

Field work on a contemporary Reserve (Little Pine) investigated aspects of traditional religion and the economic potential in relation to the effects they have had on the maintenance of the reserve-culture of the Plains Cree today.

The findings of the study emphasize the need for cross-cultural understanding between the reserve and the surrounding society and the inadequacy of the economic situation of the Plains Cree. It is seen that although acculturative pressures (often in the form of negative sanctions) were applied to Plains Cree culture in order to change traditional patterns, the core elements still persist in religious and economic values which militate against assimilation and help to maintain a distinctively "Indian" culture. This Plains Cree "culture" is seen as a force which prevents the dysfunctional effects of White contact from achieving their full effect on the Little Pine people.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A scholarship from the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Saskatchewan has made it possible for me to conduct field research on Little Pine Reserve and to attend classes while preparing this thesis at the University of Saskatchewan. To supplement this financial support during the summer of 1968 I was employed on a farm in the Cut Knife district very near to Little Pine Reserve. My employer provided information and suggestions in relation to my field work and I thank him for the agreeable manner in which he allowed my project to continue.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Dr. L.F. Watson whose advice and judgement has been indispensable in the preparation of this thesis. Also I am grateful for the friendship and co-operation of several people who were my main informants--R. Bear, A. Bonaise, C. Bonaise, T. Favel, W. Frank and W. Freedy.

My wife Constance typed the manuscript and offered helpful criticism throughout the project.

The research would have been impossible without the assistance of those people named and of many others who contributed valuable information and assistance.

## PREFACE

The thesis is concerned with the study of Plains Cree acculturation. In addition to conventional library research, I spent the summer of 1968 (May 1-September 15) carrying out field work among the Plains Cree on Little Pine Reserve and made several field trips to the Reserve during the winter of 1968-69.

Had financial resources been available I am sure that more data could have been gathered by residence on the Reserve and full time concentration on the project. The commitment involved in my employment on the farm limited the amount of time available for field work while the close link with the surrounding White group restricted the freedom of participation in the activity of the reserve community. This latter restriction was not altogether a negative factor, since my role in the farming community sharpened my awareness of problems in cross-cultural relations and allowed the compilation of some data which illustrate the view of the predominantly rural society toward the reserve inhabitants.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Research Locality	1
1.2	Field Methods	3
1.3	Theoretical Frame of Reference	7
1.4	Problem and Scope of the Study	11
1.5	The Stereotyped "Indian"	16
CHAPTER 2	HISTORICAL ANALYSIS 1800-1885	19
2.1	The Establishment of Cree Culture in the Plains Area	19
2.2	Culture Contact in the 19th Century: Economic Implications	25
2.3	Culture Contact in the 19th Century: Ideological Implications	32
2.4	Origin of Plains Cree Unrest	36
2.5	Plains Cree Participation in the 1885 Rebellion	40
CHAPTER 3	LITTLE PINE TODAY: THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE	46
3.1	Geography and Demography	46
3.2	Economy	51
3.3	Survival of Traditional Belief	60
CHAPTER 4	NI·PA·KWE·SIMO·WIN: PLAINS CREE SUN DANCE, 1968	68
4.1	Definition and Motivation	68
4.2	Preliminary Ceremonies	75
4.3	Description of the Main Ceremony, June 27-30, 1968	84
4.4	Central Features of the Sun Dance	97
CHAPTER 5	MAJOR FEATURES OF THE ACCULTURATION PROCESS ON LITTLE PINE	100
5.1	Acculturation as Evidenced in the Sun Dance	100
5.2	Other Major Features of the Acculturation Process	111
CHAPTER 6	CONCLUSIONS	115
6.1	Summary of Conclusions	115
REFERENCES CITED		119
GENERAL REFERENCES		123

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 1.1	Map of Saskatchewan.	2
FIGURE 2.1	Approximate Range of the Plains Cree c. 1865.	20
FIGURE 2.2	Extermination of <u>Bison americanus</u> .	28
FIGURE 2.3	Northwest Territories 1885.	42
FIGURE 3.1	Present Day Reserves of the River People.	47
FIGURE 3.2	Little Pine Reserve.	49
FIGURE 3.3	Fish Basket on the Battle River	54
FIGURE 4.1	Alex and Caroline Bonaise, Plains Cree on Little Pine Reserve.	71
FIGURE 4.2	Preliminary Ceremony.	79
FIGURE 4.3	The Sun Dance Site.	85
FIGURE 4.4	Preparation Tipi.	89
FIGURE 4.5	Thirsting Lodge.	92
FIGURE 4.6	Pow-Wow on Poundmaker Reserve.	95

PRONUNCIATION KEY FOR PLAINS CREE TERMS

(after E. Todd)

Vowels--

a     but  
a.    far  
e.    ate  
i     pin  
i.    reed  
o     soon  
o.    oh  
a·y   light  
iw    few

Consonants--

ʃ     ʃhime  
h     aspirant  
k     unaspirated k  
m     more  
n     none  
p     unaspirated p  
ʃ     ʃhut  
s     sleep  
w     we

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Research Locality

The research was conducted in the province of Saskatchewan at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon campus, and at Little Pine and Lucky Man Indian Reserve. The people of Reserve No. 116 are commonly referred to as the Little Pine Cree and the land as Little Pine Reserve. This description will be followed in the presentation. Figure 1 shows the location of the Reserve on the Battle River, Battleford--the Agency headquarters, and the Saskatoon campus of the University.

Little Pine is at the northern boundary of the Plains culture area, and although there are Cree farther north in Saskatchewan they are primarily descendents of Wood Cree people. These two branches of Cree distinguish themselves in terms of language, religion, economic patterns and other cultural features. The Wood Cree are called sa.ka.wi.niwak or "bush people" by the Little Pine Cree while they refer to themselves as paskwa.wi.niwak or "prairie people".

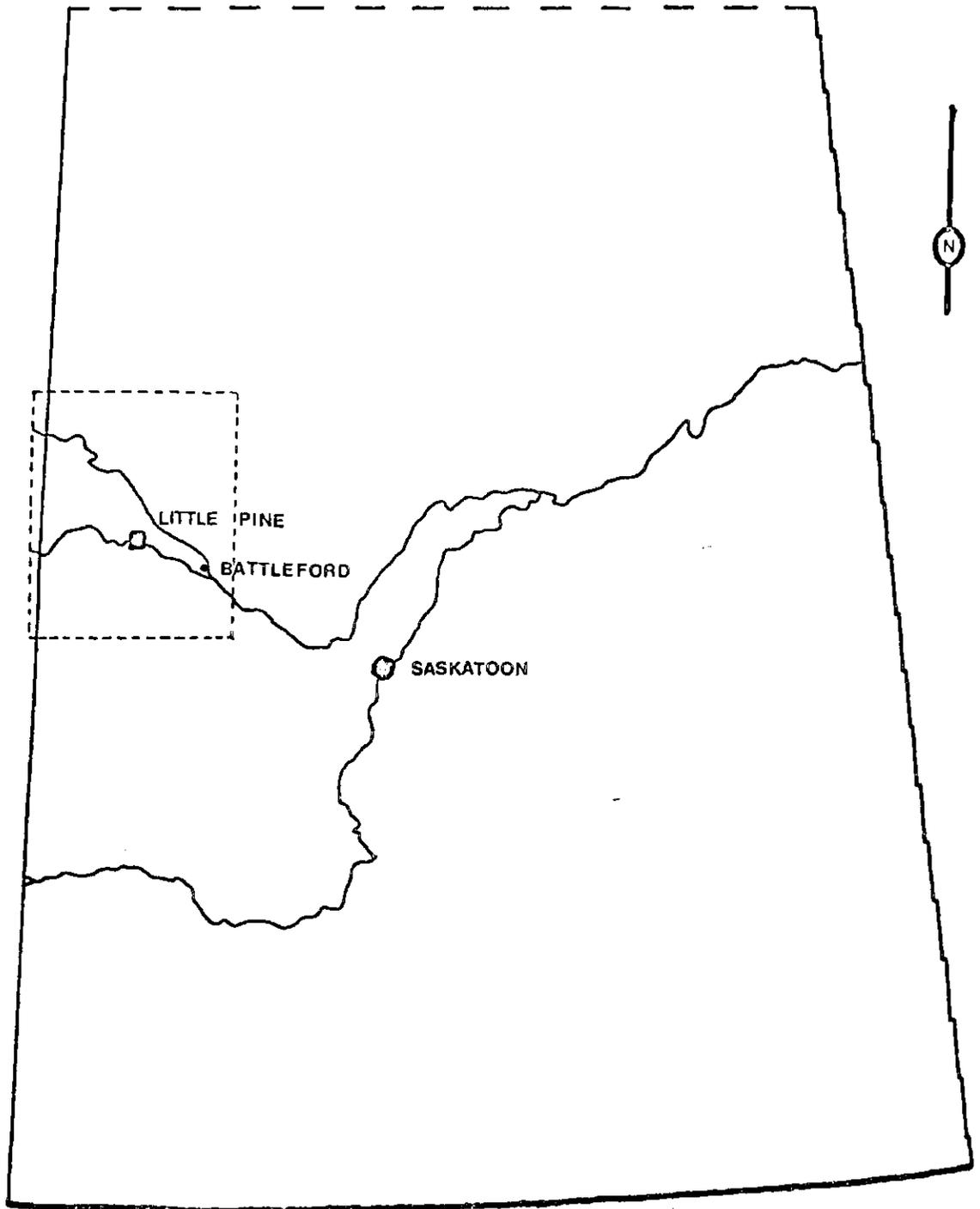


FIGURE 1.1 · Map of Saskatchewan showing the location of Little Pine Reserve on the Battle River, Battleford the agency headquarters, and Saskatoon the main campus of the University of Saskatchewan. The dotted inset is shown in Figure 3.1

## 1.2 Field Methods

When a field worker is living on the reserve he can abandon the rigid schedules of western society, adapt to the time concepts of the people and fluctuate with the daily routine. Under these conditions methodology does not have to be forced into a structured format as was the case in this study. The difference in temporal orientation was especially apparent in regard to appointments with informants. Moreover, I missed important data in several instances since the relatively inflexible environmental factors which affect a farming operation prevented me from being present at the opportune time.

Another disadvantage to being in the field only part time was that most of my conversations were limited to discussions with those people who were reasonably fluent in English. As a result, I have not become more familiar with the Cree language. I realize that a thorough study of their life style demands fluency in their language as Cree is spoken by all age levels, except when the speaker is talking to or for the benefit of non-Cree-speakers. Lowie, who was an experienced ethnographer, supports the view that the field worker should know the native language, but while he advocates use of the language he maintains that this does not dispense with the need for good interpreters:

Native languages are incredibly copious in vocabulary and abound in grammatical subtleties and idiomatic phrases so that adequate comprehension requires years of study. To do without interpreters . . . is accordingly a far more serious source of error than the rational use of interpreters. (1956:xviii)

During this project there were neither adequate funds to employ qualified interpreters nor sufficient time for the thorough study of the

Plains Cree language by the author. As a result, linguistic barriers have imposed some minor limitations on the study.

One compensation to living off the reserve while conducting research is that the investigator more easily maintains a comprehensive view of the acculturation situation. The reservation is in some ways an isolated part of society, but it has many vital relationships to the larger community and society in general. A position outside the reserve allows evaluation of data in a more complete context. There are examples of very successful case studies performed when the investigator has a role other than that of anthropologist. For instance, King during his study of The School at Mopass was in the full time position of teachers administrator.

In my relationship with the non-reservation community, I was able to gather information, informally in most instances, about the general attitude of the White people in the area toward their Indian neighbours. This position allowed the compilation of data about the stereotyped Indian which is an essential aspect in the analysis of the culture contact between the two groups. As a member of this society it was relatively easy to obtain and represent the views of the Whites about the Cree.

However, my non-Indian cultural background and physical features were barriers to gaining some information from reserve inhabitants. This was clearly illustrated in December of 1968 when one of my most responsive informants told me about Cree medicines. She halted her explanation of the remedy to jokingly inform me that I really should not have been told that much since I was not Cree. "It only works for Indians

and not all Indians, . . . they have to believe in it." In this situation my White background was a deterrent to further information. In one instance, during research with North American Indians, a non-White investigator thought he established better rapport because he had less chance of being identified as representative of the dominant culture. (Shimpo and Williamson 1965:13)

Rapport may be elusive but after a certain amount of trial and error it was established. The use of the tape recorder during interviews was discovered to render the responses stiff, formal and less informative. Some people whom I approached with the machine simply refused to use it. One old man said, "I have never used one in 83 years, and I don't want to start now. . . . Besides some others [Indians] might not like what I say if they hear me on that." A woman in her mid-forties ignored me when I suggested using the tape recorder; she would not even respond negatively. In both cases the people were very responsive on subsequent visits without the recorder. Thus it appears that although the tape recorder may provide an accurate record of what is said, it may also militate against the establishment of successful rapport with informants. The pledger of the Sun Dance, Alex Bonaise, was very explicit when he allowed my attendance at the ceremony only if I left my "machine and camera at home". As a result of such experiences I am convinced that response is better on an informal, conversational level when the investigator displays genuine personal interest in the information--an attitude which is difficult to achieve with formal recording devices which immediately put the interviewer's sincerity in doubt. In the words of a young informant,

"If we let you tape our prayers or take pictures of our ceremonies, maybe you'll sell them to the C.B.C."

Even the use of structured questions tended to make an informant less communicative. If these Plains Cree people want you to know something about their culture they will tell you; if they do not, they have very effective and polite means of avoiding direct inquiries. Questions will not force clear answers--only vague or non-committal responses. I arrived at these conclusions early in the field season and since that time have used formal techniques only with very willing informants. Spindler supports this view (1962:6), as does Dusenberry when he advises against the use of structured questionnaires which he feels would have been disadvantageous in his research among the Montana Cree. (1962:14) Spicer emphasizes the need for flexibility in interviewing techniques. He believes that an interview should be allowed to develop in mutual relation with the informant's desires and the interviewer's goal. (1952: 125-6)

Another factor that seemed to improve general rapport during initial contacts with informants was the use of a very old and battered pickup truck as a means of transportation. It made identification with their socio-economic status more compliant and served to contradict their stereotype of White affluence.

It is believed that when the current ethnographic data gathered during this field research is compared to previous accounts of the Plains Cree, some indication of the changes that have occurred within their culture may be established.

### 1.3 Theoretical Frame of Reference

Culture change is a continuous and complex process. However, the rate of change, the participant cultures, the environment, and the specific historical events vary the pattern and make each change situation unique. Acculturation is but one aspect of culture change; it has been recognized as a study of process and not as a static phenomenon. (Beals 1962:392) One of the first comprehensive definitions of acculturation to be accepted by the majority of American scholars was set out in A Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation:

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. (Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits 1936:149)

Herskovits has further restricted usage of the term acculturation to situations involving documentary evidence as a method of historic control. (1938:15) In reference to acculturation studies in the Northern Plains, Lewis emphasizes the absolute necessity for historical reconstruction using early documents. (1942:1-2) He maintains that the cultural patterns of aboriginal groups as recorded in the accounts of traders, missionaries and explorers, can be compared with later data to indicate developments in the acculturation process.

The accumulation of descriptive accounts in recent decades reveals an increased interest in acculturation studies, but it has been suggested that the body of theoretical ideas has not been so well developed:

Although the identification of processes is perhaps the ultimate theoretical objective of acculturation studies, relatively little empirical investigation which permits adequate generalizations has taken place.

Furthermore processual analysis does not seem adequately conceptualized. The majority of existing discussions of process are heavily psychological and essentially deal with the role of the individual in change, or the impact of change upon the individual. Few explanations in sociological or cultural terms have been developed. (Beals 1962: 389-90)

Beals' evaluation was originally presented in 1952. Since that time there has been both a refinement of the concept and further developments in theoretical orientation. While the definition may vary with individual scholars, the basic premises outlined by Redfield et al remain the same. A noteworthy theoretical dichotomy has been suggested by Edward Spicer. He defines two general types of acculturation processes which result from directed contact or non-directed contact.

[In] the non-directed type, although the innovations may derive directly from one culture, they are accepted and integrated into another culture in accordance with the cultural interests and principles of integration which obtain in the latter. . . . If definite sanctions, whether political, economic, supernatural, or even moral, are regularly brought to bear by members of one society on members of another one condition for directed contact is met. If, in addition, members of the society applying the sanctions are interested in bringing about changes in the cultural behavior of members of the other society, then both necessary conditions for directed contact exist. (1961: 521)

The literature reveals that most studies of the acculturation process involve a European or European-like culture in contact with a relatively unsophisticated (from a Eurocentric viewpoint) people and culture. When the cultures in question differ greatly in their degree of technological

development and sophistication, the technologically advanced culture usually infringes upon the lives and cultural patterns of the less technical and unmechanized group. In many cases this occurs as a result of pressures within the advanced culture which can only be relieved by the exploitation of the natural and (or) human resources of the technologically inferior people. These pressures are often institutionalized in the economic, political and religious structures of the domineering culture. This group rarely confines its judgement of the aboriginal culture to purely technological matters but often encompasses their entire cultural complex with the stigma of inferiority. Relegating the aboriginal culture to an inferior status serves two purposes--it justifies the exploitation of these people, and it vindicates the initiation of change in their behavior patterns. Misunderstanding, cultivated ignorance, and ethnocentric behavior contribute to the establishment of a discriminatory system of prejudice based on the justification of inferiority. Wagley and Harris maintain that the technologically inferior group is often confronted with economic domination. (1958:239) Ethnocentric behavior is a key concept in the understanding of such situations.

The belief that one's own customs, language, religion, and physical characteristics are better or more "natural" than those of others is termed ethnocentrism. . . . [Ethnocentric] evaluations are generally subjective rather than objective. . . . Minor and minute cultural and physical differences may often be given exclusive attention to prove the inferiority of another people. (Wagley and Harris 1958:258-9)

Since economic domination is often characterized by a clash in ethnocentric values between the two cultures it may, in some situations, lead

to a search for economic equality and social advancement by the underprivileged group.

In this conflict, the aspirations of the minority are pitted against the vested interests and value system of the majority group. Out of their conflict there arise on one hand, legal, political, economic, and social mechanisms and barriers set up by the majority to maintain its position and consolidate its advantages; and on the other, various kinds of adaptive reactions on the part of the minority aimed at minimizing or overcoming its disadvantages. (Wagley and Harris 1958:253)

It is within the boundaries of these theoretical statements that this study will investigate selected aspects of the acculturation process which affected the Plains Cree of Little Pine Reserve.

Contact with elements of European society sparked the florescence of Plains Cree culture but extensive intrusion of Europeans disrupted the social, political and economic basis of Plains life. The Treaties finalized the loss of their independence and were followed by nearly a century of sanctions aimed at assimilating the Plains Cree into Canadian Society. However, despite these pressures the Plains Cree have maintained a distinct culture and are a viable minority group.

#### 1.4 Problem and Scope of the Study

Acculturation of the Little Pine Cree may be viewed in terms of Spicer's second category--that of directed contact. This category best describes the contact process which occurred with the Plains Cree as well as with those peoples from other tribal groups, such as the Assiniboine and the Saulteaux, who also experienced a crucial period of intensive culture contact with Europeans during the 19th Century. The initial phase of this acculturation process culminated in the destruction of the economic base, the Treaties of the 1870's, the uprising in 1885, and the establishment of the constrictive reservation system which persists to the present. The second phase, aimed at assimilating the Plains Cree into Euro-Canadian society, has so far been unsuccessful in terms of the aboriginal people's complete acceptance of or adaptation to the cultural patterns of the majority. It has also been unsuccessful in terms of reciprocal acceptance of Indian customs by the White majority. This denotes to a further extent the degree of incompatibility of the two cultural systems. The change process in this instance is a one way process--if integration of the two societies is to take place it will be the Plains Cree who are forced to conform to the values of Euro-Canadian culture at the expense of sacrificing some of their own beliefs and practices.

The Plains Cree, like other tribal groups, are in a state of comparative isolation from the greater Canadian society. Their plight has been explicitly recognized by the government and by anthropologists in the Hawthorn Report where they are

concerned with the inadequate fulfilment of the proper and just aspirations of the Indians of Canada to material well being, to health, and to the knowledge that they live in equality and in dignity within the greater Canadian society. The Indians do not now have what they need in some of these matters and they cannot at present get what they want in others. (Hawthorn 1966:5)

In view of these conditions it is essential that further investigations of the Plains Cree--Euro-Canadian contact process be made in order to define specific problems and thus aid in the development of solutions to the present unsatisfactory reserve conditions.

Norman Chance, an anthropologist who studied acculturation among the Barter Island Eskimo, believes that the rate of culture change is related to the degree of harmonious assimilation of the cultures in contact. He substantiates in his study the hypothesis that

rapid acculturation may be more conducive to socio-cultural integration than slow or moderate change, if the newly desired goals are clearly perceived and capable of being integrated into existing social and cultural patterns. (1965:373)

However, in the specific case of Little Pine, although there was an accelerated rate of change during the latter half of the 19th Century, socio-cultural integration has not taken place. This contradicts the essential aim of official policy as stated by Hayter Reed, Indian Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

. . . it is clear that he [the Indian] must be amalgamated with the White population. . . . he must be imbued with the White Man's spirit and impregnated with his ideas. . . . No doubt the banding of Indians together on reservations militates against their conversion into citizens. (Sessional Papers 1890:165)

Nearly 80 years later a survey of the economic, political, and legal status

of Indians in Canada reveals that their conditions are very poor in relation to those in the dominant culture. (Hawthorn Report 1966:Vol I) Several factors are relevant here--not the least of which is the history of administrative policy.

In the North-West, however, while political and social assimilation or amalgamation remained the ultimate object of native policy, the Canadian government followed in the footsteps of the Johnson tradition by negotiating treaties with the Indians and by setting aside inalienable reserves for their use. (Stanley 1960:195)

By this action the government effectively isolated Indian societies, implicitly advocating slow or moderate change, while according to the 1890 policy statement of Indian Commissioner Reed cited above, officials clearly desired rapid change. Ultimately, this paradoxical implementation of policy has resulted in the persistence of a viable reserve culture sufficiently different from the larger Canadian culture to maintain its distinctiveness.

The government ward system with its restrictions, paternalistic overtones and segregationist laws is not the only deterrent to assimilation. The factors mentioned by Chance must also be considered. That is, are the new goals desirable, and if so, are they clearly perceived and capable of being integrated into the existing social and cultural patterns? I hope to demonstrate the difficulty of successfully integrating the two societies by investigating religion and economics as aspects of Plains Cree culture which have been greatly affected by culture contact.

Paul Radin has discussed the economic determinants of religious behavior, thereby supporting the selection of these abstract cultural

divisions for analysis.

Religious beliefs and attitudes were assuredly not created either by methods of food production or by some mechanism of exchange. But they did grow up together with them, and it was the economic system that made certain constituents and certain forms of religion relevant at one period and others relevant at another. (1957:40-1)

While the White society has sought to transform the economic patterns and to a lesser extent, religious behavior, these two features of Plains Cree life retain traditional elements as demonstrated by their persistence on Little Pine.

Although some traditional economic patterns and religious rituals are still viable on Little Pine, they are by no means accepted or practiced by all members of the reserve community. However, while many of the younger people are not participants, they are the product of an enculturation process which has functioned in part within a traditional milieu since many of the old people still practice traditional patterns. The old values and behavior patterns may not be observable for the total spectrum of the community but contemporary cultural adaptations to the change process may be better understood following an investigation of traditional value complexes. This statement is based on the assumption that the more superficial physical features of cultural behavior disappear before the value system which has reinforced this behavior ceases to function and exert influence. Hallowell's study of Ojibwa psychology endorses this assumption on the basis of data which illustrates individual behavior patterns in relation to the acculturation process. (1952:105-12)

Thus adaptation to a new situation may be understood in terms of old

values; these may be best discovered by examination of existing structures and behavior which display some traditional orientation. Since the older people on Little Pine perpetuate the old religious patterns, the attitudes they hold may have underlying significance for the interpretation of the behavior of the whole group. It follows that an investigation of surviving traditions is essential for future evaluation of the acculturation process.

This presentation must be restricted in scope to three areas--history, economy, and religion. History and economy will be summarized as will some aspects of religion; the Sun Dance will be investigated more thoroughly as a key illustration for the survival of traditional patterns in the Plains Cree culture on Little Pine Reserve. In fact, a major part of the thesis will be concerned with an ethnographic description of the contemporary Sun Dance on Little Pine. This emphasis is relevant to the broader and more general thesis topic since a detailed examination of one ceremony (especially an important one like the Sun Dance) may contribute more to an understanding of the acculturation process than would a condensed presentation of numerous other Plains Cree cultural traits that have changed since contact with Europeans.

As the next section indicates, there is a need for more concrete descriptive data to be gathered and made available to the European community where it could be used for educative purposes since few people really appreciate the significance of much of Plains Cree behavior.

### 1.5 The Stereotyped "Indian"

The views of the White community indicate the lack of successful assimilation of the two societies. Although the following statements are often erroneous they are nevertheless illustrative of cross-cultural attitudes of the White people in the area.

Yep, close it up at nine sharp. Can't have the place full of Indians. If just White folks used it, I wouldn't mind. (Janitor, public washrooms)

The Indians weren't figured to be equal--they were just someone to take advantage of. (Farmer)

Look what happens when the government builds them new houses. They won't fix them. The lazy beggars sit around and drink up the welfare cheques. (Businessman)

The only reason I wouldn't hire an Indian in preference to a White man is because most of them are so unreliable. When they are working they are good workers but if they leave and say they'll be back tomorrow they may not be back for a week. It isn't good when you're depending on them. (Farmer)

It's so lonely on the reserve. [another in the area] There are no women to be friends with. (Wife of a school teacher)

If only they'd keep themselves clean, it wouldn't be so bad. (Farm housewife)

I've seen them looking in the garbage behind the cafe. (Town housewife)

They're not really married--just stay together. Tomorrow they may be living with someone else. (Farm housewife)

Must have been Indians that siphoned that gas. (Farmer)

Laying drunk on the highway, eh? You should have run over him-- saved us a lot of trouble. (R.C.M.P.)

They won't save a thing; they live for the day. They spend their money on unnecessary things and then when they want a few dollars they haven't got it. (Farmer)

The government brought free power to the reserve, and now our tax money goes to pay the light bills. (Company employee)

These Hutterites have really adapted well to civilization; the Indians should be able to do something like this. They've been here longer. (Politician)

I just have no use for Indians. The government certainly doesn't give me any money. They have it better than we do. (Farm housewife)

These quotations were collected from people living in the communities surrounding Little Pine. They are indicative of some features of the Indian portrait. Not all non-Indians share these sentiments and some have very good relationships with the Cree. Some realize that there are historical and environmental factors, legal inequalities and administrative restrictions that aggravate the situation, but nearly everyone I talked with maintained that with ambition, motivation and hard work the Indian could pull himself out of his discreditable position. The opportunity was available; most Indians just disregarded it. Ultimately therefore, even those who understand the situation place the responsibility for improvement on the Indian alone.

The Cree are not regarded as positive assets to the community. They are liabilities, economically and culturally, who do not contribute to community life but derive a great deal from it. The reserve is a segregated part of society. It is not integrated and the people are not considered equal to their White neighbours.

The White people talk of other members of their own group in derogatory terms when customary behavior is not followed, yet they do not make generalizations about the whole of White society on the basis of the actions

of some members of that society as they do when speaking of Indians. They speak of Indians as if the people, society and culture were homogeneous. An Indian is dirty, immoral and lazy; he is considered a drunkard, a thief, and a burden to the community. He ruins the image of a town. He is ungrateful, unreliable, and irresponsible. He is an inferior human being.

There are some extremely successful Indian people who have come from the reserves into the surrounding community. However these people are only "Indians" when one identifies them as such by the Indian Act, skin color, or other such criteria. In reality these successful "Indians" are "White" in terms of cultural values. It is the Plains Cree cultural values that conflict with the values of the larger society and it is when an individual conforms to these values that he is branded an "Indian" and subjected to the pressures of an unfavorable stereotyped image. In the days of the wild American west a common statement was "the only good Indian is a dead one"; the modern equivalent seems to be "the only good Indian is an assimilated one."

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORICAL ANALYSIS 1800-1885

#### 2.1 The Establishment of Cree Culture in the Plains Area

Linguistically the Cree are classified in the Algonkian family.

Plains Cree is a localized dialect in the continuum of Cree dialects which stretched from Labrador to Alberta. It displays a close relationship to the Wood Cree and Swampy Cree dialects which are spoken by people who live north and east respectively of Plains Cree territory, indicating a recent separation of these groups. This evidence coincides with the historic accounts that suggest a progressive immigration westward of the Cree people in response to the fur trade.

The Plains Cree inhabit the northern-most region of the Plains culture area. (Lowie, 1954:3) Although they are culturally identified as a Plains tribe, they do not live on the high plains. Rather their habitat is further to the north in the parklands area which separates the high plains from the northern forest. The northern region of Plains Cree territory is heavily wooded; the southwestern region is more typically identified with the ecological zone of the short-grass prairie. However, in aboriginal times, as now, few Plains Cree lived in the southwestern region permanently and although the bands journeyed there for the summer hunt they returned for the winter months to the more sheltered northern locations which provided an adequate water and fuel supply. The Cree-Assiniboine or "prairie people" were the only band then living on the true plains. The extent of the territory controlled by the Plains Cree

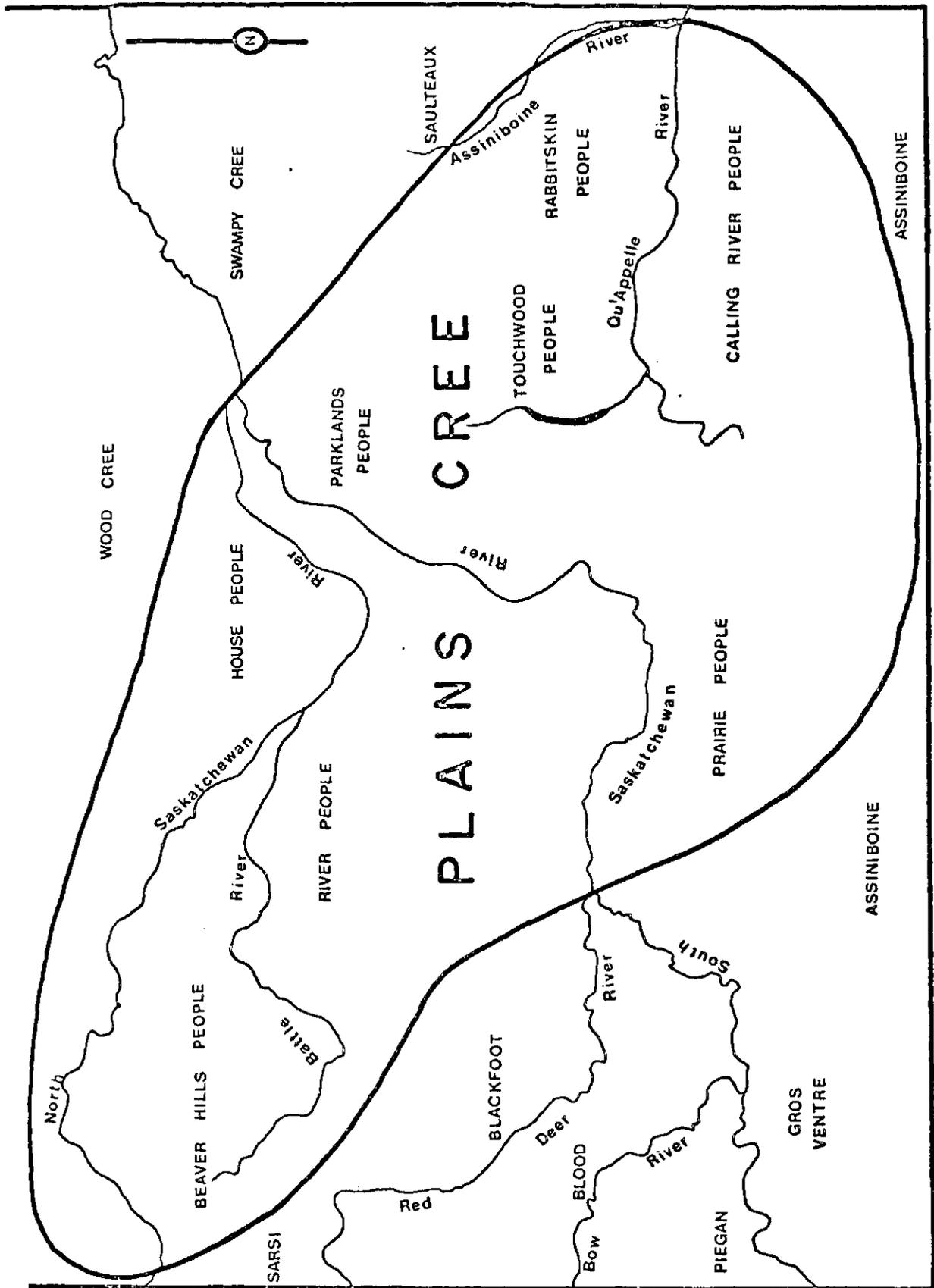


FIGURE 2.1 Approximate range of the Plains Cree c. 1865 (after Mandelbaum 1940:166)

circa 1865 is shown in Fig. 2.1.

In the illustration the Plains Cree have been divided into smaller sub-divisions or bands although there were no distinct boundaries between these groups at that time. Political, social and economic alliances were continually being made and broken.

The Cree are relatively recent immigrants to the Plains culture area. They have close ties with Woodlands cultures, having moved onto the plains only after White contact further east stimulated their western expansion. Mandelbaum describes in detail this western movement of Cree peoples subsequent to contact with European civilization. (1940: 169-187) His analysis leads him to conclude:

[The] historical narrative recorded in this section reveals the forest antecedents of the Plains Cree. . . . [Their] culture is wholly woodlands. There is no hint that they were reaching westward in the seventeenth century. . . . [From] 1740 to 1820 . . . some bands were out on the plains, but they had not completely severed themselves from the forest. (1940:187)

In Mandelbaum's estimation the Cree did not become an established Plains tribe until 1820, for at the turn of the century the Cree were just gaining a strong foothold on the plains. He explains their acquisition of territory:

The Gros Ventre, at one time, lived about the forks of the Saskatchewan. The Cree ousted them and pushed the Blackfoot farther west. . . . [The] Assiniboine who . . . occupied the valleys of the lower North Saskatchewan, lower South Saskatchewan and Qu'Appelle Rivers, moved down to the Missouri, . . . the Cree expanded into Assiniboine lands. (1940:183)

Lewis, in his study of early Blackfoot movements supports Mandelbaum's

thesis that the Cree are recent migrants to the plains. The two groups were avowed enemies during most of the 19th Century, but they had maintained a friendly alliance when the Cree lived in the fringe forest areas.

In 1730, the Blackfoot were the allies of the Assiniboine and Cree. . . . [Until] 1800, there is no evidence of Cree hostility [with the Blackfoot]. But as the Crees were pushed west with the exhaustion of the woodland food and fur supply, they forged out onto the Plains and encroached on Blackfoot territory. (Lewis 1942:14)

The Cree's adaptation to the culture style of the plains was facilitated by their alliance with the Assiniboine and the Blackfoot. The pact with the Assiniboine existed prior to 1800 and it has been asserted that these two groups, encouraged by French traders, were encroaching on Sioux territory in the late 18th Century. (Innis 1956:90-2) Lewis records that in 1733 the Cree and the Assiniboine aided the Blackfoot in the defeat of the Shoshone and the subsequent removal of this tribe from the northern plains. (1942:11) Other factors which stimulated the development of Plains culture traits among the Cree were the gun, obtained from the French traders, and the horse—both of which were used in the earliest stages of their migration to the plains. "To the east in contact with the Assiniboine were the Plains Cree and Plains Ojibwa. In 1776 Henry states that they had herds of horses like the Assiniboine." (Wissler 1914:4)

Although the Cree, according to Lewis and Mandelbaum, did not establish permanent claim to the prairies until after 1800, they were making summer

excursions onto the plains much earlier. Wissler states that "it appears that in 1730 a good part of the tribe was already out on the prairies." (1936:175) They learned to use the buffalo, follow the herds, and build pounds; they also absorbed many other culture traits characteristic of Plains tribes. A specific example is the Sun Dance which, according to Spier, they obtained from their allies the Assiniboine. (1921:496)

The Sun Dance of the Plains Cree is indicative of their recent migration to the plains. The ceremony operated primarily on the band level and Spier states that it was given simultaneously by several bands indicating that the small political unit also functioned as the ceremonial unit. (1921:459) Another Algonkian group, the Cheyenne, had migrated from the woodlands earlier; in this particular group the largest political unit functioned as the ceremonial unit and the ritual activity was a cohesive force which unified the tribe. (Hoebel 1960:7,9,17) The extinction of the bison and the Treaties, following so close to the initial adaptation of the Plains Cree to the Plains culture life style, abruptly halted their further growth and unification into a strong tribal political unit. Therefore the dates proposed by Mandelbaum and Lewis which establish the Cree as a distinctively Plains group for only 50 years prior to the Treaties are supported this ethnographic evidence.

As stated earlier, the Cree had pushed out onto the prairies in response to the needs of the fur trade which demanded the constant expansion of peoples into new territory with much game. A new cultural pattern had resulted when one section of the larger Cree group adapted their cultural behavior to meet the exigencies of a new environment. This change in cultural

behavior indicates that an acculturation situation is not always characterized by White--non-White contact, and further that it does not necessarily culminate in socio-cultural disintegration for one of the cultures in contact. While there was a gradual disappearance of the Woodland life style, this was replaced by the Plains life style which was more desirable to the Cree at this point in history. This change which was desired caused little of the long term disruption which characterizes the change process that occurred as a result of contact with Europeans.

An intensification of White contact with Plains groups did alter the Plains life style. Lewis has described the trader's influence in reference to Blackfoot people. He asserts that the horse and the gun were complementary but subsidiary factors in the development of those cultural patterns and institutions identified with the Northern Plains area. (1942:61-2) He maintains that

The key to the understanding of this expansion is the transition from an economy which produced for its own needs to one which produced for an ever-increasing market. Far from breaking down the existing Blackfoot institutions the fur trade acted as a stimulus to their development. (1942:34)

Lewis' conclusion about Blackfoot expansion may be regarded as explanatory for Cree development as a Plains tribe. While the stimulus of the fur trade was a positive factor in the initial expansion of Plains Cree culture the two major factors necessary for survival of this way of life--mobility and an abundant subsistence resource--were eventually destroyed by the establishment of a large sedentary population of Europeans in the northern plains.

## 2.2 Culture Contact in the 19th Century: Economic Implications

Prior to extensive agricultural settlement on the plains, white contact had affected Cree culture. Fur traders and explorers had introduced metal wares, woven cloth, firearms, liquor and diseases. (Innis 1956: The Fur Trade in Canada gives a detailed account of the European materials introduced to the northern plains in the 18th and 19th Centuries) Such innovations altered the Cree way of life and smallpox severely reduced the Cree population, but it was "the influx of white hunters and settlers that put an end to their aboriginal existence". (Mandelbaum 1940:187)

Innis states that between 1751 and 1754 forts and trading posts were established on the Carrot River, at the forks of the Saskatchewan and on the South Saskatchewan near Calgary. (1956:96) This expansion of trading posts into the Northwest Territories during the 18th Century motivated the Cree to seek the technological advantages and luxuries of Western civilization. This in turn prompted the Indians to abandon old arts, crafts and skills. Fur and hide garments, clay pottery, stone weapons, and bone tools began to be replaced by trade goods. The fur companies cultivated this transition because if the Indian became dependent on trade goods it would enable the trader to control the fur resources of a particular geographic area. Victor Barnouw, in his study of the Wisconsin Chippewa, illustrates how this policy affected a Woodland tribe.

The Indians were very willing to abandon the native arts and crafts

supplanted by new manufactures and to settle down in a relationship of dependency upon the white man. They camped about the trading center, which became the focal point of community activity. . . . If the trader moved, they followed him; . . . the Chippowa were bound to the trader by bonds of credit. Before a man set out to his hunting and trapping grounds, the trader customarily equipped him in advance with traps, ammunition, food, clothing, etc. When the Indian hunter brought back his furs later on in the season, this debt was canceled; and the hunter then assumed new debts for as much as the trader would allow. Thus, the relationship between the trader and the Indians was a symbiotic one. He needed their furs; and they had become dependent upon his trading goods. (1950:42)

This dependency cycle could not operate to the same extent among the Plains Cree because of the economic independence they achieved through utilization of the abundant bison herds. Although they did absorb some of the traders' wares, their economic independence prevented them from becoming so intimately associated with and dependent upon the trading post. White civilization could offer Woodland cultures economic advantage through fur trapping and subsequent exchange of pelts for European goods; it could not offer a satisfactory alternative to the bountiful subsistence base of the bison which was the most important ecological factor in Plains Cree life. (See chart on p. 27 for the economic importance of the bison to the Plains Indians)

Mass slaughter of the buffalo, Bison americanus, resulted in the near extinction of the species and the loss of the greatest economic resource of the Plains Indians. Millions of animals are reported to have roamed the plains in aboriginal times but indiscriminate exploitation decimated the herds to such an extent that by 1889 it was estimated that "the whole number of individuals of Bison americanus now living is 1,091. (Hornaday

ECONOMIC USES OF THE BISON (after Ewers 1955:149-151)FOOD

brains, kidneys, nose gristle, liver, eaten at kill site  
 meat--roasted, boiled, dried, or pounded for pemmican  
 intestines--sausage cases, containers  
 paunch liquid, amniotic fluid, milk from lactating cows--drunk  
 bones--smashed for marrow  
 blood--pemmican, sausage, boiled dishes  
 material scraped from under skin--boiled or used as flour when dried

SHELTER

calf skin--children's clothes, womens' pants, other soft clothing  
 soft skin--lodge lining, bedrolls  
 hairy skin--winter hats, mitts, overboots  
 hides--robes, teepees, strips of rawhide which had many uses  
 old smoked hides--shirts, leggings, breechclouts, mocassins

TOOLS AND UTENSILS

hide--bullhide shields, webbing for snowshoes, padsaddles, hide ropes,  
 hobbles, horse boots  
 horns--spoons, cups, ladles, weapons  
 glue--boil hooves, phallus and head cartilage  
 hair--stuffing padsaddles, balls etc., decorations  
 stomachs--water bags, storage containers, cooking containers  
 pericardial sac--container for tobacco, paint, dye  
 tail--ornament, fly swatter, knife scabbard  
 sinew--bow string, thread  
 bones--fleshers, hide scrapers, clubs, arrowheads, awls, needles  
 ribs--sled runners, knives, shaftstraightners (with holes), dice  
 scapula--hoe axe

CEREMONIAL

skull--Sun Dance  
 horn--headresses  
 skin of foetus--ceremonial sac for precious objects  
 soft skin--winding sheets for the dead  
 fresh blood--drunk at kill site by warriors to aid their battle activities

MISCELLANEOUS

dung, wastes, and some rawhide--fuel  
 greased skull--fire during rain storms  
 brains, fat--tanning leather  
 fat, aqueous humor--pipe polish  
 aorta--baby soother, teether  
 dewclaws--tent knocker, decoration, charm  
 grass from paunch--frostbite and infection remedy  
 toys, dolls, and other games made from various parts of the animal

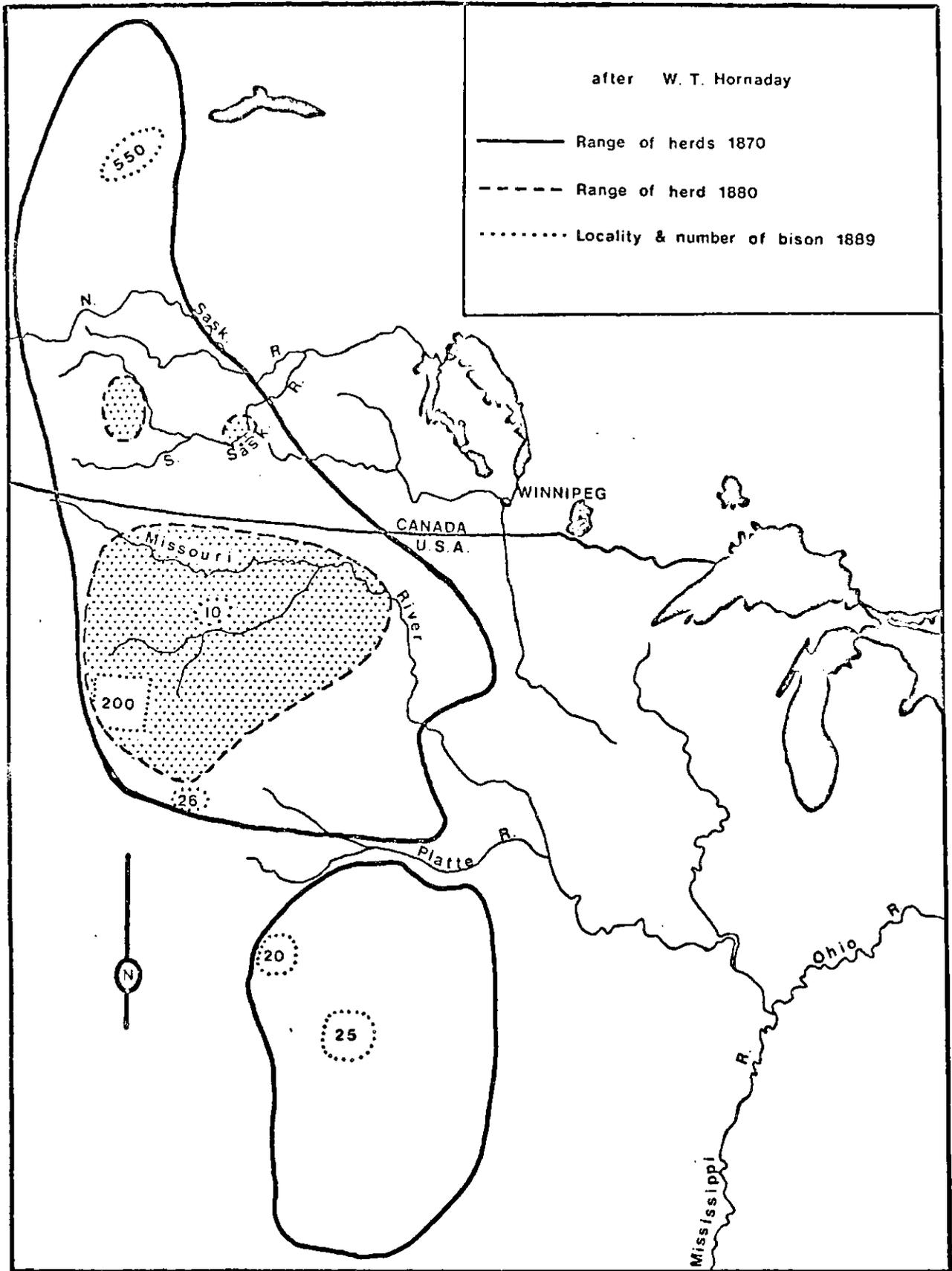


FIGURE 2.2 Extermination of Bison americanus.

1889:525) In 1870 there had been four million animals south of the Platte and one and one-half million north of the Platte. (See Fig. 2.2) Most of the slaughter took place in the United States where White hunters with Sharps rifles hunted the bison for their robes and for the hairless summer hides; the meat was often left to rot. Hornaday describes one element which allowed such rapid extermination;

In 1882 there were . . . no fewer than five thousand white hunters and skinners on the northern range [of the U.S.]

. . . . .  
 The most famous hunter in Montana killed one hundred and seven buffaloes in one "stand," in about one hour's time, and without shifting his point of attack. Where buffaloes were at all plentiful, every man who called himself a hunter was expected to kill between one and two thousand during the hunting season—from November to February. (1889:509-10)

In addition to this it was calculated that the Indians on the American northern plains killed 75,000 animals a year for personal use and for the sale of hides and robes. A further factor leading to the extinction of the bison was the pointless slaughter of hundreds of animals on organized sport hunts.

These great massacres in the United States prevented the migration of the herds and thus grossly affected the continental distribution of the bison. "The great herd that 'went north' (75,000 in 1883) was utterly extinguished by the White hunters along the Missouri River and the Indians living north of it." (Hornaday 1889:512) While organized slaughter of the herds was taking place in the southern plains mainly by White hunters, the Indians and Metis in Canada were also indiscriminately exploiting the bison for their robes and hides in response to the eastern markets.

Because the natural migration cycle of the bison had been disrupted by the hunts in the south the people of the northern plains who depended on these migrations to replenish the herds in Canada soon killed the thousands of bison that were in Canadian territory.

The half-breeds of Manitoba, the Plains Crees of Qu'Appelle, and the Blackfeet of the South Saskatchewan country swept bare a great belt of country stretching east and west between the Rocky Mountains and Manitoba. . . . The buffalo had disappeared from that entire region before 1879. . . . A few thousand buffaloes still remained in the country around the headwaters of the Battle River, between the North and South Saskatchewan, but they were surrounded and attacked from all sides and their numbers diminished very rapidly until all were killed. (Hornaday 1889:504)

Ultimately this destruction of the bison was a great boon to the settlers, for once the economic basis for Plains culture was eliminated the Plains Cree were no longer independent and therefore could not control their territory. The land which they had controlled was now available for agricultural use and because the tribe was weakened economically, decimated by European diseases, and eventually outnumbered, it was relatively easy to persuade them to sign the Treaties which confined them to small plots of land where they would not pose a threat to the Whites.

The establishment of reserves was a necessary step on the part of the administration which held the interests of the settlers as first priority. To facilitate efficient use of the land for agricultural purposes the once nomadic bands had to be confined to a relatively small geographic area. Although they knew nothing about farming techniques and did not even share the White man's values about land, the government nevertheless sought to solve the economic dilemma of the Plains Cree in terms of the

predominant economic pattern in White society. When it was evident that the Indians could not attain economic independence by farming, they became subject to criticism from the dominant society for their dependence on the taxpayer.

In connection with the last point it is noteworthy that in Iowa where the Fox tribe sold their ponies to buy land in 1854, as tax-paying farmers they were respected by the Whites and therefore less subject to their criticism than those Indians who were more dependent government wards. (Joffe 1940:261, 289, 199)

Criticism of the Plains Cree based on the ideas of inferiority allowed the Whites to deprive the Indians of their land with a relatively clear conscience. The administration, the clergy, and the settlers based their criticism on the ostensible inferiority of the Plains Cree value system, their different religion, their lack of appreciation for agriculture, and their resistance to the work ethic.

The primal importance of work in White culture contrasts with the attitude toward work held by the Plains Cree. Goodenough maintains that idleness is sinful by Euro-American (Canadian) standards and that work is often valued as an end in itself. He contrasts this attitude with that held in other societies (such as the Plains Cree) where work is not seen as an end but rather only as a means to an end. (1963:484-5)

Religion is another area in which the Whites presumed superiority. In addition to the chaos in their economy, contact with Christianity became a source of confusion and cultural disintegration for the Plains Cree.

### 2.3 Culture Contact in the 19th Century: Ideological Implications

The religion of a people is intimately associated with their entire life-style. When Euro-Canadians attempted to impose their Christian religion on the Plains Cree, an inevitable clash of values occurred.

The Plains Cree believed in a single all-powerful Creator which was so far removed from man that direct communication was impossible. Unlike the Christian God, this Power was impersonal and its will was known or its aid sought through the medium of lesser spirit powers which abided in all of nature. (Mandelbaum 1940:251) Among the most powerful of the spirits were the Four Thunders and the Sweetgrass Man. In addition to those spirits from which anyone could solicit aid, Plains Cree men sought the supernatural sanction of a personal spirit power by means of an individual vision quest. Spirit powers helped the individual to cope with secular problems. In order to accept the new Christian God, the Plains Cree had to abandon belief in spirit powers which were so influential in his relationship with his environment. Thus in times of crisis the Plains Cree had to rely upon an unfamiliar and inadequate replacement for their old religion. One reaction to this conflict of religious ideals is shown in a statement by Poundmaker, a spokesman of the River People:

Of old, the Indian trusted in his God and his faith was not in vain. He was fed, clothed and free from sickness. Along came the white man and persuaded the Indian that this God was not able to keep up the care. The Indian took the white man's word and deserted to the new God. Hunger followed and disease and death. (Jefferson 1929:12506)

Mandelbaum states that the Plains Cree believed in a soul and in a place

called The Green Grass World which was the eternal home for souls. (1940: 251-2) The aboriginal Cree believed this to be the only possible destination for the soul; access to The Green Grass World did not depend on the individual's behavior during his life on earth. In the words of Abel Watetch, a Plains Cree from the Qu'Appelle Valley, "[The Cree religion] has never been a religion of fear. It has no hell. Belief in an afterlife is general." (1959:59)

This is not to infer that behavior on earth was unregulated by ideological beliefs; however, any rules were enforced by social pressure and the threat of misfortune during one's lifetime. Supernatural control was in terms of the immediate---not the future.

The missionaries were promoting a monotheistic faith; the God (which was personified) was White. The idea of an anthropomorphic White God contrasted with the Plains Cree conception of the Supernatural. One current example of this difference in religious outlook is illustrated in the remark of a young informant: "We can't see Christ with a beard."

The proponents of White civilization also attempted to destroy secondary elements of Cree religion: the Sun Dance was abhorred because of the torture involved, the powers of amulets and bundles were ridiculed, youths were discouraged from making vision quests and offerings to minor spirit powers were regarded with disfavor.

In addition to the confusions and disruptions which resulted from religious contradictions, there were other principles in the ethical fabric of Christian dogma which were contrary to Plains Cree values.

Preoccupation with schedules and rigid adherence to the clock conflicted

with the temporal orientation of the Plains Cree who traditionally regulated their movements and behavior in terms of natural phenomena. In reference to White culture Hallowell states, "We moderns are habituated to a uniquely elaborated scheme of temporal norms that impinge upon our lives at every point." (1955:217) The manifestations of this conflict are still evident today especially in terms of employer-employee relationships between Whites and Indians.

A further ideological contradiction was evident between the European tradition's idea of in-group competition and accumulation of personal goods for future security and the Plains Cree tradition of sharing goods and services with their fellows. The Cree engaged in collective effort to obtain food and other commodities so that all people, not just those who participated in the work, could share the fruits of the labor. (Mandelbaum 1940:204) No one member of the group suffered the lack of basic needs. When surpluses were accumulated by an individual they were given away to needy people. In addition to distributing economic benefits to all members of the group, this was also a method of gaining social prestige. Esther Goldfrank has analyzed the effect that contact had upon this particular institution in another Plains tribe, the Blood:

The substitution of an impersonal government agency for a freely chosen band leader offered a more certain security on the material level, but reduced the need for mutual help and joint responsibility among the members of the tribe. The new economies, however, made community action even less necessary. . . . Generosity, which in most cases was little more than a means of winning support and keeping it, now operates within an increasingly restricted circle and with increasing rarity. (1945:70)

The ideological implications of contact were not as immediately disruptive of Cree culture as the economic and political factors which caused the great unrest prior to the 1885 Rebellion. Details of the Plains Cree grievances are described in the following section.

#### 2.4 Origins of Plains Cree Unrest

The major problem confronting the Canadian government following the establishment of the reserves was to "integrate the Indian into a society which was predominantly agricultural and based on the institution of private property." (Gov't. of Sask. 1960:3) The Plains Cree, who had been nomadic hunters, were ignorant of agricultural methods and the tables in the 1881-1886 Sessional Papers reveal that many groups, including the Indians on Little Pine, were unable to supply their needs by farming. In 1884 (the first crop year on Little Pine) the harvest yielded only two bushels of grain per seeded acre, barely returning the original seed since grain crops are planted  $1\frac{1}{2}$  - 2 bushels to the acre. Even the White settlers who were familiar with agricultural methods had not yet adjusted to the rigors of the environment and to such hazards as rust and drought. When one considers that the Indians were attempting to farm without sufficient land, equipment, and knowledge, it is not surprising that they failed.

The Indians were desperate for food, clothing and shelter. Their own method of providing these essentials had been eliminated with the extinction of the bison and the Indian Affairs Department failed to meet this deficiency in Plains Cree economy. Robert Jefferson, who for several decades was a teacher and farming instructor in the Battleford agency, has outlined aspects of the faulty administration: short rations, unreasonable work quotas, inadequate facilities and personnel, the needless use of force by officials, and a general misunderstanding of the Indian predicament. (1929:34-9, 120, 126) In reference to these problems an investigation of

the administration on Little Pine is noteworthy.

Jefferson presents the following view of Little Pine's farming instructor Craig, who sparked the near revolt of the Cree in 1884, and later in 1885 was one of the White looters who ransacked Battleford while the authorities blamed the Cree and the Assiniboine. "Craig had a fixed idea that it was not intended that the Indian should become self supporting. He was only to be kept quiet till the country filled up when his ill will could be ignored." (1929:126)

Craig realized that the Indians on Little Pine were discontent. However, it is indicative of the Whiteman's values that he sought to solve the problem by forcing the Indians to conform to the work ethic. In a letter to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs dated Nov. 1, 1884, Craig writes:

The band being new and in a dissatisfied state from the first and not inclined to work . . . I remained and told them that the only way was to come where I am and help me work and they would be fed. . . . The people are in need of clothing; for some of them are almost naked, and it is impossible for them to work out and stand the cold. Most have bought what they could with treaty money but not sufficient to clothe them. (Sessional Papers 1885:165, emphasis mine)

Father Louis Cochin, O.M.I. who worked in the Battleford area at this time describes the results of the government's failure to aid the Indians on Poundmaker and Little Pine during the extremely difficult years of 1883 and 1884:

The severe winter from 1883 to 1884 brought misery. Famine was felt amongst the Indians, in spite of their allowances which were distributed weekly by their farm-instructors. After the disappearance of the buffalo, the bacon and the cakes made with some bad flour

did not satisfy the appetite of the Indians. I saw the gaunt children, dying of hunger, come to my place to be instructed. Although it was thirty to forty degrees below zero their bodies were scarcely covered with torn rags. These poor children came to catechism and to school. It was a pity to see them. The hope of having a little morsel of good dry cake was the incentive which drove them to this cruel exposure each day, more, no doubt, than the desire of educating themselves. The privation made many die. (1927:26)

The 1886 report of E. Dewdney, Indian Commissioner for the Northwest Territories, indicates that control of food supplies was part of the official government policy designed to make the Indians work harder and save the Department money.

The present system that obtains is to extract as much work as possible for the food given them. . . . If the Department established a regular system of feeding . . . it would . . . require an annual expenditure of about \$1,329,507.75 instead of the \$450,000 at present. (Sessional Papers 1886:145)

The former figure is arrived at by calculating 1 lb. flour, 3/4 lb. bacon, 1 oz. tea, and 1 oz. tobacco for each of 12,717 Indians per day for a year. Jefferson describes how Hayter Reed, Dewdney's assistant, implemented this policy by giving rations only to those male adults who performed a certain quota of work each day:

[He] had calculated to a nicety how much work a yoke of oxen and a plow were capable of performing in a given time and the Indian fell a good deal short of this. He had figured out how little food it was possible to get along with and the Indian was always hungry. (1929:126)

This method was employed to force the Indians to hunt more while the same Sessional Papers record the annual decrease of both small and large game in the Northwest Territories.

As a result of the growing dissatisfaction, in 1884 over 2000 Plains Cree and Assiniboine from various bands (Poundmaker, Little Pine, Lucky Man, Big Bear, Moosomin, Thunderchild, Red Pheasant, Strike-him-on-the-Back, Grizzly Bear's Head, Lean Man and Mosquito) gathered near the place where Poundmaker's reserve joins Little Pine's and held a Thirst Dance. This ceremony served the function of uniting the Indians in the area and had as one of its goals a conference of headmen. The leaders, especially Poundmaker and Big Bear, felt that such a large gathering of Indians would serve as a better negotiating force with the government since they were frustrated in their attempts to negotiate on the band level. (Innes 1926: 13-15)

During the gathering, two Cree warriors from Big Bear's group demanded supplies and were thrown out of the supply shed by Craig. Craig was assaulted with an axe handle and the police were called in to arrest the two Indians. Observers noted that since Craig suffered only a bruised elbow the confrontation with police was unnecessary. A full scale battle which would have eliminated the small police force was avoided. However, the incident not only indicates the dissatisfaction of the Indians but also shows their ability to organize for collective action independent of Metis stimulation or leadership.

The administration paid no heed to the signs of impending trouble. "If the authorities did entertain apprehension, they hid it carefully from those who held isolated positions on the reserves and were therefore nearer to danger." (Jefferson 1929:123)

The authorities took no positive action until the unrest resulted in the armed revolt in 1885.

## 2.5 Plains Cree Participation in the 1885 Rebellion

The Indians of the Northwest Territories have not been adequately recognized for their participation in the rebellion since historians emphasize Louis Riel, the Metis' problems and the military action at Batoche. (For example, see Anderson 1949 and Stanley 1960) The Indians had a major role in the rebellion--they greatly outnumbered the Metis in the rebel forces, they threatened a much larger geographic area, they had their own leaders and their list of grievances was longer and more justified.

People from seven tribal groups became directly involved in the rebellion: Plains Cree, Sioux, and Assiniboine carried arms and fought against the government troops; Wood Cree and Chipewyan, although they remained neutral, suffered legal persecution, theft of their furs and livestock, and military "pacification"; (Jefferson 1929 and Cameron 1926) there were a few Saulteaux warriors at Cut Knife Hill and Batoche; and the two Nez Perce involved died during the campaign against Poundmaker.

Of these tribes the Plains Cree were the most involved. At one time there were over 2,000 people in the amalgamated bands under Chief Poundmaker at Cut Knife Hill. Most of the 2,000 (with the exception of two small groups of Assiniboine, some Wood Cree and a few Metis) were Plains Cree. At Batoche there were two large bands of Plains Cree--those of Chief Beardy and Chief One Arrow. There was also a contingent of sixty Sioux warriors under Chief White Cap. The Plains Cree of Big Bear and Lucky Man dominated the action in the Fort Pitt area. The intimate association of the Plains Cree with the revolt is well illustrated by the two events which were the time boundaries of the militant action: an old man of Beardy's band died

with the first shot at Duck Lake on March 26, (Anderson 1949:281) and the revolt was officially over when the police captured Big Bear near Fort Carleton on July 2. (Stanley 1960:377)

The territories in and around Batoche, Battleford, and Fort Pitt were the three main areas of military action. (see Fig. 2.3) The Metis were active participants in only the Batoche area. The Metis in Poundmaker's camp refused to fight because they feared punishment if the rebellion collapsed; they fled when Lt. Col Otter attacked the encampment. (Jefferson 1929:134) The Metis in the Fort Pitt region also refused to take up arms with the rebels. In fact, it was only their intervention that on several occasions saved the White prisoners from bodily harm. (Cameron 1926) At Batoche—the only place where Metis did fight—the number of Indians equaled the number of Metis in Gabriel Dumont's forces. (Anderson 1949)

This is not intended to discredit the important role played by Louis Riel and the Metis in the 1885 Rebellion. Rather it is presented in order to establish the importance of Indian participation since numerically and geographically they, especially the Plains Cree, had a more prominent role in the rebellion than the Metis.

The Metis leaders had recognized the plight of the Indian population in the first clause of their petition to the federal government in 1884: "1. [The] Indians are so reduced that the settlers in many localities are compelled to furnish them with food, partly to prevent them from dying at their doors, partly to preserve the peace of the territory." (Archives of Canada, Department of Interior, File 83808)

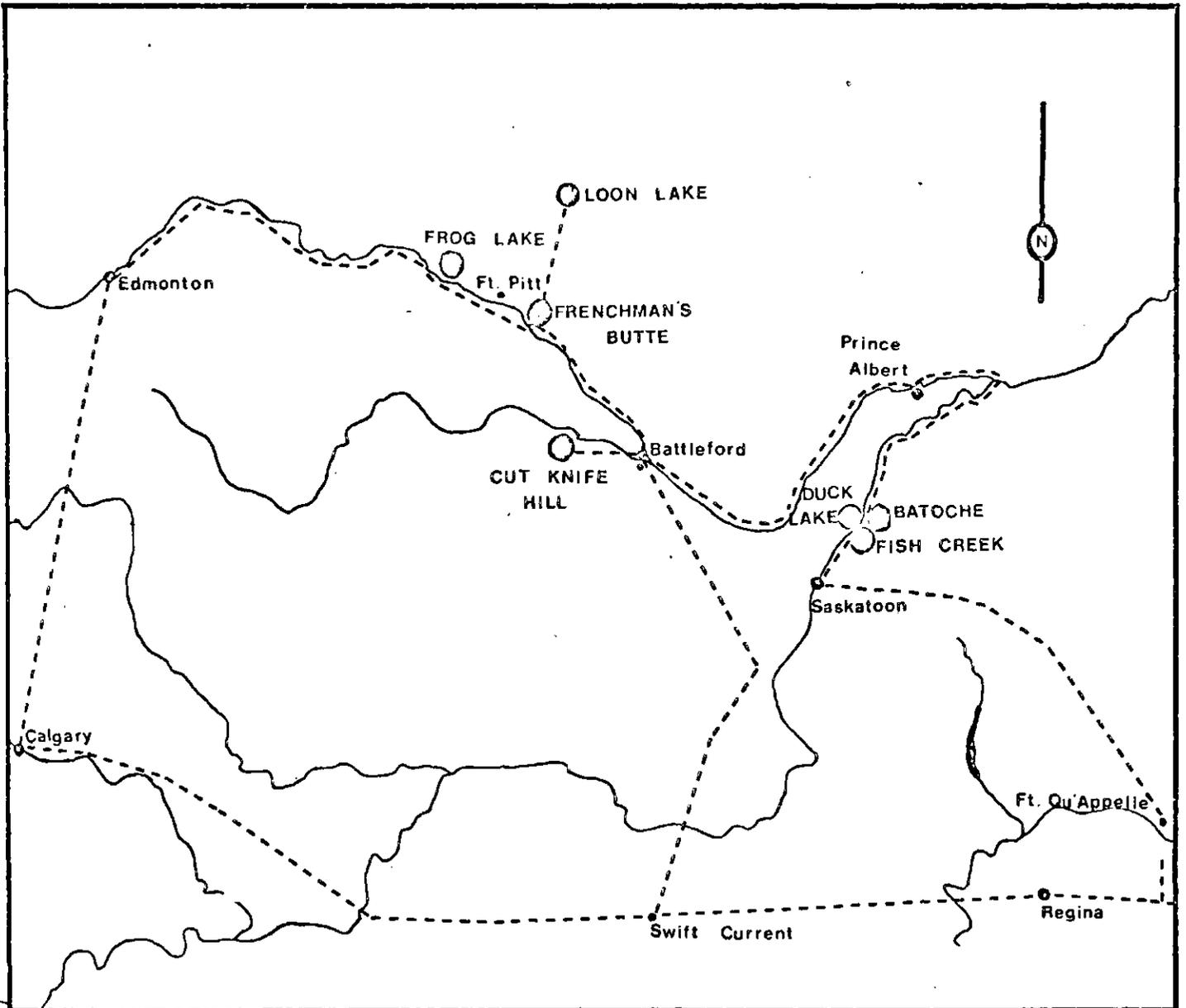


FIGURE 2.3 Northwest Territories 1885 showing battle areas and troop movements. The government forces were divided into three main groups: Middleton led the main column from Ft. Qu'Appelle to Batoche and defeated the forces of Riel and Dumont. Otter marched his troops from Swift Current to Battleford and was subsequently defeated by Poundmaker and Fine Day at the battle of Cut Knife Hill. Strange moved his column from Calgary to Frenchman's Butte where he fought a stalemate battle against the people in Big Bear's camp. Middleton later journeyed by boat to Battleford and Fort Pitt in order to assist Otter and Strange in their campaign against the Indians in that area.

However, the government failed to respond to the petition just as it had failed to respond to other grievances of the native peoples. It was only after a lack of response on the crucial issues facing the Indians and Metis that these people resorted to hostile action.

The three areas of military action did not become battlegrounds for the same specific reasons. The Frog Lake Massacre was the culmination of a series of disagreements between the Indians and the government agent, Mr. Quinn, (Cameron 1926:2-20) and the subsequent battles resulted from the government's use of militia to punish the Indians for the murders. The Battle of Cut Knife Hill resulted from Otter's unwarranted attack on the Indian encampment. (Jefferson 1929:141-3) In the Batoche area, Louis Riel had organized the Metis and Indians and sent emissaries to incite other tribes including Little Pine's and Poundmaker's. (Jefferson 1929:133-4 and Stanley 1960:334-5) The military action in this area began after Louis Riel had established the Provisional Government.

The uprising was suppressed partly because the government had greater financial resources, many more troops and superior weapons. The weapons alone were a significant advantage: 8 cannon, 2 gatling guns, 594 Winchesters, 2,738 Sniders and 347 revolvers. (Jackson 1885:8-18) Other factors influenced the government victory--the unorganized resistance of the rebels, their lack of arms and ammunition and the restraint practiced by their leaders. This last factor is very important as their restraint, in part, defeated them.

Riel prevented Dumont from ambushing Middleton's column during the march from Ft. Qu'Appelle. (Stanley 1960:355) Dumont felt that a series

of attacks on Middleton's men marching in formation would have routed the green troops. Riel vetoed plans to scourge the country side, maintaining his desire for political reconciliation rather than terrorism. He made no attempt to stop the army column by intercepting the supply trains at the rear which were easy targets, and he allowed the telegraph lines to remain functional thus permitting communication between the government forces. Poundmaker prevented his War Chief, Fine Day, from completely annihilating Otter's column of 325 men at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill. (Jefferson 1929:143) He also voluntarily surrendered to Middleton even after his warriors had captured Otter's supply train. His extremely large force of Indians, well supplied, had the potential to wage a destructive guerilla war for months had they desired to do so.

The native forces in all three battle areas had the advantages of a superior ability to stalk and ambush, familiarity with the terrain, and the mobility of a totally mounted force, all of which negated to some extent the militia's advantage in firepower and number of fighting men. It must be realized that the rebellion was not defeated because of the direct efforts of Middleton and his men (as history says) but also because the native leaders preferred not to take advantage of militarily advantageous circumstances, even when hostile action was initiated by direct government attack or administrative inaction.

After the rebellion several Indians were hanged. Poundmaker and Big Bear were jailed as were many other Indians, some of whom were innocent of any violent act. The Indians were confined within the boundaries of their specific reservation, their horses and guns were confiscated and annuity payments were discontinued for five years. Sun Dances were

prohibited by the department until the 1930's because of their function in promoting group unity which was in opposition to the departmental policy of splitting the tribes into small geographically separated bands which were easier to control . As an example of administrative control the agent of the Fishing and Nut Lake Bands arrested a Sun Dance pledger for breaking the peace in 1895. (Sessional Papers 1896:67-8) In 1922 Constable Kerr rode out from Battleford and with a hand axe, cut down the centre pole of the Sun Dance lodge on Red Pheasant's Reserve. (Hasse 1969:54-5)

In Jefferson's words, "The Indian Department . . . recognized no responsibility for the rebellion, for the Indians had broken the treaty and were subjected to the most severe discipline." (1929:59) The great gap in communications which existed between the Indians and the administration is evident. The Indian had not experienced such problems of domination and outside control in the initial stages of culture contact since the traders characteristically had a good relationship with the Indians and were able to diplomatically handle any difficulties that arose. (Stanley: 1960:197) It is significant that Cameron, the only White male survivor of the Frog Lake Massacre, was an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. The men who were killed were the agent, the priests and the settlers. (No women or children were killed.) Apparently the Indians at Frog Lake identified their problems with these groups. This corroborates the assertion that it was only with the influx of settlers and administrators to Plains Cree territory that the difficulties and the hostilities developed to serious proportions.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITTLE PINE TODAY: THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

#### 3.1 Geography and Demography

The official census compiled by the Indian Affairs Branch for April 1, 1967 shows a total of 548 people registered in the combined bands of Little Pine and Lucky Man. Of this number, 108 are recorded as living off the Reserve and 440 are living on the Reserve lands. The band of Lucky Man is much smaller than that of Little Pine. It numbers just over 30 people. As stated on page 1, Reserve 116 will be referred to as Little Pine and the people as the Little Pine Cree.

Figure 3.1 shows the relationship of Little Pine Reserve to other reserves in the Battleford area. Many of the reserves illustrated belong to descendants of the "River People" described by Mandelbaum. (1940:167)

The Reserve is five miles square, encompassing 25 sections of land, (one section for each family of five in the original treaty) or a total of 16,000 acres. This is now equivalent to 29 acres of land for each individual registered on the band rolls. This means that a family of five would theoretically have the use of 145 acres. This is less than a quarter section—a fraction of the acreage needed to provide economic independence for a family. The minimum acreage of successful farms in the surrounding community is at least four times as large. If the land could be distributed to only those people living on the Reserve, a family of five would have access to 181.5 acres. This would still be less than one third the size of the smallest farms in the surrounding agricultural community.

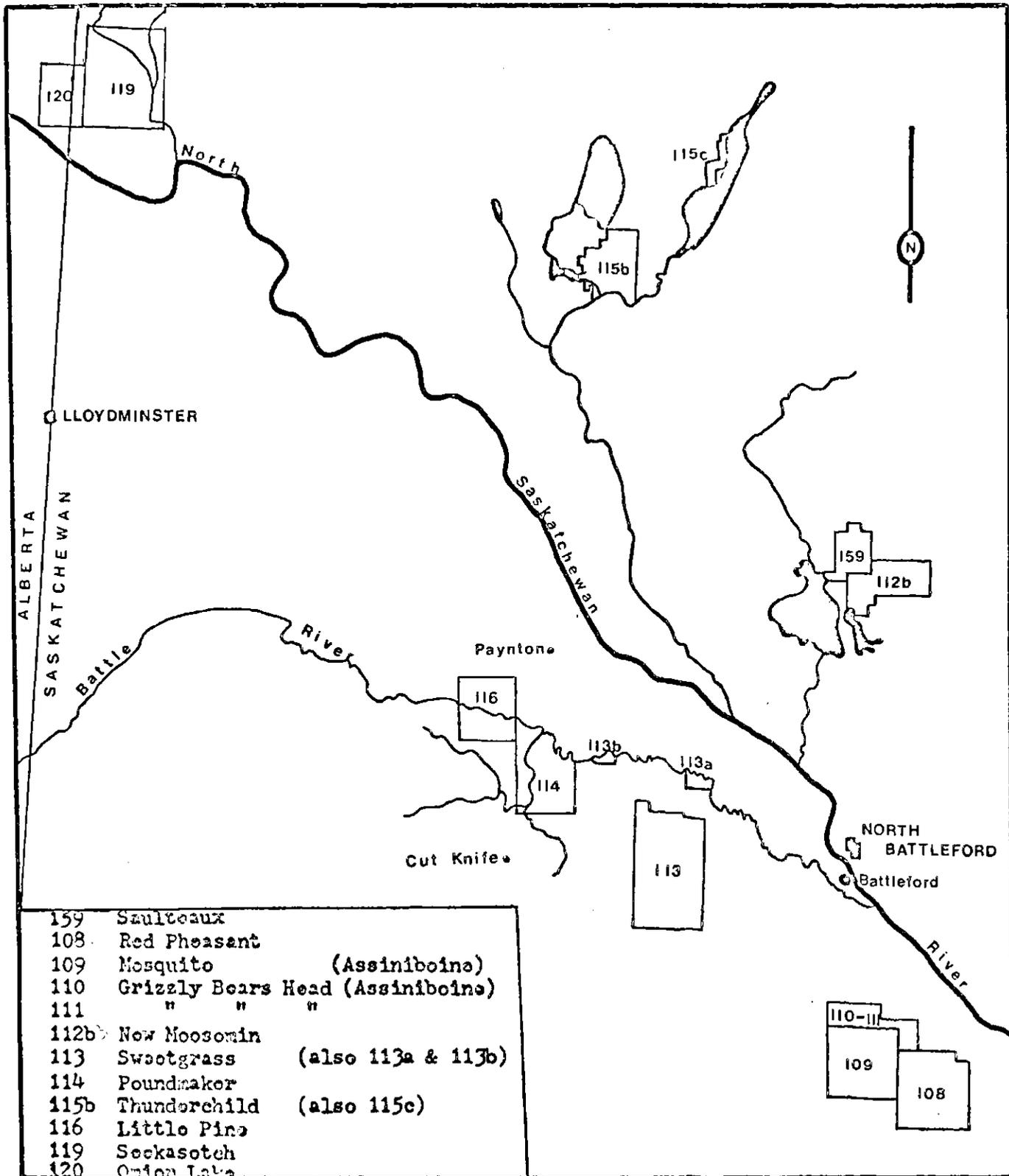


FIGURE 3.1 Present day reserves of the River People. The towns and cities indicated serve the needs of the people on Little Pine. Scale 1" equals 12 miles.

Although there are 5,820 acres of good farming land within the Reserve boundaries, much of this could not be utilized without the great initial expense involved in clearing the aspen and the willow trees from the land. The remainder of the Reserve lands are either too alkaline, sandy or rugged to allow any use other than as forage and pasture. (Stonehouse and Turchenek 1969:5, 6, 10) Thus there are only 66 acres of good agricultural land for each family of five living on the Reserve. This theoretical allotment would be reduced to fifty acres per family if the band members living off the Reserve are included in the distribution. There is no reason to be optimistic in regard to the feasibility of economic independence for the population in terms of future agricultural development.

The Battle River bisects the Reserve. (see Fig. 3.2) The northern half is nearly all bush with the exception of the steep southern slope of Maskwa Hill. The soil in the northeastern region is very light and the topography rough. Although it is utilized as summer range for a limited number of livestock, the entire area north of the river is unsatisfactory for agricultural use.

The houses are all located south of the river--most of them within a mile of the grid road which runs down the length of the valley. The exceptions to this pattern are the houses near the municipal grid road which crosses the southeast corner of the Reserve. (see Fig. 3.2) Thus the majority of the population lives in an area  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles wide giving an approximate population density of 65 people per square mile. This type of population distribution indicates the desire of the Plains Cree to live near a good road, to have their

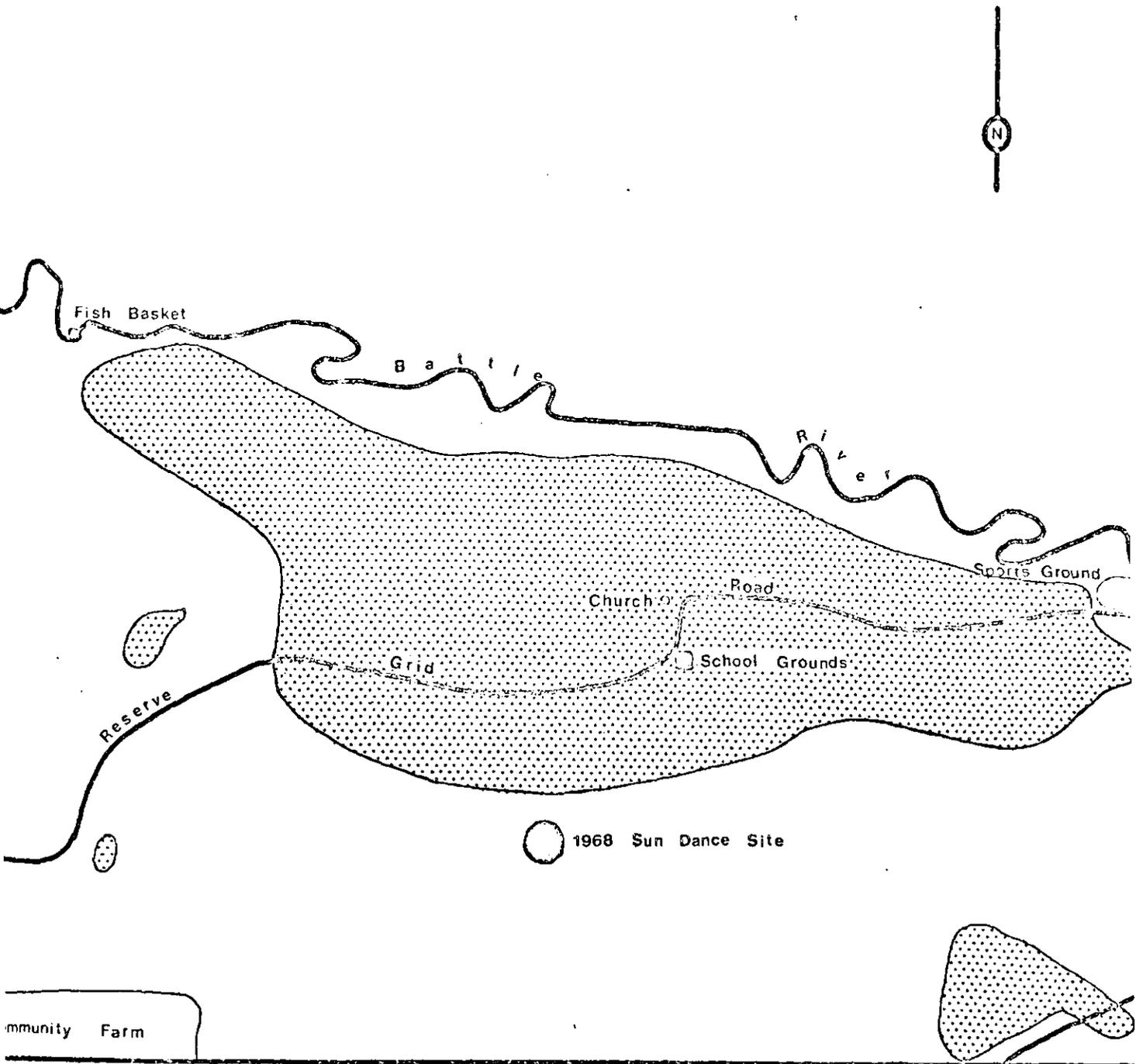


FIGURE 3.2 Little Pine Reserve. The shaded areas represent those parts of the reserve that are populated. Scale 1" equals .63 miles.

house situated in the natural protection of the valley, and to live close to other members of the group. There are, within this general population distribution, localized subdivisions in which a few houses are clustered very close together. Often when an adult male marries and establishes a household he lives within a few hundred yards of his father's house. I am acquainted with seven such examples of patrilocality which may be an indication of the traditional settlement patterns when co-operative units of related males were advantageous in economic pursuits.

Two additional factors which affect population distribution are proximity to the school and, within the last two years, to the power lines.

The towns which serve the commercial needs of the Little Pine people are Cut Knife, nine miles south of the Reserve boundary and Paynton, nine miles north of the Reserve grid road. (see Fig. 3.1) Some of the school-age children from the Reserve attend integrated schools at both towns since at the Reserve school, facilities are inadequate for all the children who live on Little Pine.

### 3.2 Economy

A recent study of the agricultural potential of Little Pine states that of the total 16,000 acres there is

an area of about 320 acres of Class 2 soil which has only moderate limitations and is well suited to the production of annually seeded crops. . . . Class 3 soils which cover about 5,500 acres, have moderately severe limitations due to the sandy nature of the soils and/or adverse topography which makes them poorer soils agriculturally, however, they still have a potential for agriculture. (Stonehouse and Turchenek 1969:8-9)

The study also indicates that the remaining 10,180 acres are unsuitable for grain production.

Much of the 5,820 acres of arable land has been cleared. One field of 250 acres is in the southwest corner of the Reserve. This land was cleared several years ago by band members and was originally planned as a community farm to be operated by Indians for the benefit of the Indian community. Today this farm provides some income for the band; however, since the band council now rents the land to a White farmer the Indians receive only one third of the returns from the crop.

Some of the Cree control fields of land in the valley; a few farm themselves with very small and outdated machinery but most rent their land to White farmers. The Indian will often perform the initial tasks of clearing the bush and breaking the sod but since most of the fields are small and no Indian controls a large acreage, it is difficult for an individual to realize a profit. That the maintenance of small farms is becoming obsolete can be observed in the surrounding White community where the number of small farming operations is decreasing and giving way to the

establishment of large farming enterprises. Large farms allow the purchase of modern machinery and hence the use of sophisticated methods which increase the profit margin. This type of mechanization is, however, beyond the financial capabilities of the small land owner.

Similarly, the small farmer on the Reserve cannot afford more than a tractor, a set of harrows and perhaps a one-way disc with seeder box. Two brothers who farm together on Little Pine provide a specific example; although they have pooled resources they cannot afford to buy a swather, combine, auger, large truck, press drill or a deep tillage cultivator. Therefore, they must work long hours with inadequate machinery for a slight financial return. Also, because they are Indians, they cannot borrow money from banks or finance companies to buy better machinery on credit since in their status under law they are not liable for suit in case of forfeit in payments.

Most Indian farmers have found a practical solution to these problems. They rent the land to a White farmer who owns the necessary machinery and obtain one third of the crop. This arrangement leaves the Indian free to seek seasonal employment.

While the Indian is often criticized by the White community for his lack of independence, it seems that in agriculture he has adapted to the pressures of a foreign economic system and restrictive legal status to the best of his ability.

Similar to the change in agricultural techniques which have occurred since the 19th Century, the economic potential of other Reserve resources have also been altered. The original surveyor of the Little Pine Reserve

lands stated in 1887 that:

On the southerly side of the Battle River there are hay meadows, rich soil, plenty of good water, and a variety of wild berry patches. On the northerly side of the river there is an abundance of poplar timber, but the soil is light. There is good fishing in the river. (Surveyors Reports 1889:119-20)

The "good fishing" is the only resource of those mentioned that is still utilized with any degree of success. Even this is by no means sufficient for commercial purposes; however, it does supplement the people's diet during the spring and early summer. Later in the summer the Battle River is low and the only fish caught are white suckers which are inedible. (see Fig. 3.3 for description of the fish trap)

The "hay meadows, rich soil, plenty of good water, . . . a variety of wild berry patches, and . . . an abundance of good poplar timber", also have economic limitations today. For example, although a few Indian women pick berries for their own use and also sell some in town, this is of very meagre economic benefit.

Years ago, a significant cash return was gained from the sale of dead wood to people in the White community. Dry poplar made good fuel for cooking food and heating the house. With the advent of electricity there followed the almost complete disappearance of wood stoves and furnaces from the White community and hence the sale of dead wood as a source of revenue was deleted. Now the Cree haul wood for their own stoves only. Green poplar trees were also valuable until very recently. In fact, the Cree still treat poplar posts with bluestone for use in fence construction, but the market has become insecure because farmers and stockmen



FIGURE 3.3 Fish basket on the Battle River. The river is a meandering stream which at the site of the fish basket loops to the south, turns north and then straightens out to the east. On the north leg of the loop there is a shallow rapids and upstream from the rapids a small pool. Stones were piled to form a funnel shaped dam pointing downstream. At the apex there is an opening and water rushes through at a much faster rate than the normal river flow. At the opening there is a trough of green poles set so that the upstream end of the trough is in the water but the downstream end is above the water level. The water escapes through the spaces between the poles in the bottom of the trough but the fish cannot pass through these spaces and fall into a willow basket at the end of the trough. The force of the water flowing through the narrow opening in the dam prevents the fish from turning back and they are swept into the basket which is clear of the water. The fish can then be easily picked up by the Indians. Anyone may use fish caught in the basket even though they may not have helped to build it. Goldeye, northern pike, pickerel, and suckers are caught in the basket. (Photograph May 1968)

now buy commercially treated posts which are preserved by a pressure treating process. Although these are more expensive than the locally treated posts, they last much longer and are of superior quality.

Until a few years ago, hay gathered on the Reserve was in great demand on either the load or contract basis. However, the recent widespread use of silage by cattlemen has affected the Reserve economy by eliminating the demand for loose hay. Silage is not only a more nutritious food for cattle but it also simplifies storage and feeding procedures. Besides decreasing the market for hay, the change to silage has reduced the need for laborers in the hay fields.

The many seasonal jobs which were once available to the Indian are rapidly decreasing in number with the increasing mechanization and the sophistication of farming techniques. For example, stooking and threshing crews no longer operate; whereas 30 years ago a farmer might have hired a dozen men in harvest he now needs only one to drive the truck or operate the combine. Mechanical stonepickers, hydraulic post mauls, grain augers and power-operated water pumps are among the modern innovations which have nearly eliminated the need for casual labor. There are a few jobs available in the district and some of the Indian men do work for farmers, especially in the busy seasons. I am aware of three family heads who have been employed on farms in the district from April to October, but in general the number of available jobs is rapidly decreasing while the number of Indian men in the labor force is rapidly increasing.

There is an administrative factor which makes short term work inexpedient for the Indian. Unless he can obtain employment for at least two weeks

the money he loses by being removed from relief is more than he can earn by working for only a few days. One family head was employed for three days during the winter of 1968 and was subsequently deprived of welfare for two weeks.

Operating a school bus (a half ton truck with a plywood enclosure on the back) has become a reliable source of income for a few Indians. The use of such small vehicles instead of the larger conventional school buses enables more men to be employed as drivers. Several women make moccasins and other beaded objects but since they have no retail sales outlet, most sales occur by chance. Income from this source is almost negligible. Some families keep chickens, pigs, milkcows or even several head of livestock. Many grow gardens during the summer and this together with the game they hunt, helps to reduce the cost of living.

In addition to the economic pursuits mentioned above which reflect post-contact assimilation of culture traits evident in Western society-- wage labor, horticulture and domestication of animals--there are evidences of traditional economic behavior on Little Pine. An example is the communal fish trap. (see Fig. 3.3) Many people participate in the construction of the dam and the fish basket, aska.nan, and once it is in operation anyone may share in the catch.

The custom of sharing in the returns of a hunt is also practiced to some extent by the contemporary Plains Cree. I know of only one man who, in addition to providing for his family's needs, hunts frequently for communal benefit but he has told me that other Indians also give game to old people, to women living alone, and to anyone who is sick. Surplus meat

may be sold to Indians who have jobs or are on relief. The white-tailed deer is the only large game animal in the region which is plentiful enough to provide satisfactory hunting. (the men still use the cooperative drive and surround methods) but Little Pine people also hunt smaller game such as porcupine, rabbit, duck and upland fowl.

It is obvious from this that the economic resources on the Reserve are inadequate. Because the people do not have other stable sources of income they rely greatly on government cheques—old age pension, family allowance and relief. However, the total income is below average Canadian standards. In the 1967 Housing Survey on Little Pine, 40 of the 84 families had an income of less than \$1000.00. Of the remaining 44 families, 33 had an income of between \$1001-2000 and 11 had an income between \$2001 and \$3000. 87% of the families therefore had an income of less than \$2000. There are methods whereby the government seeks to improve the economic standard of the people. One of the most substantial is the housing program largely subsidized through welfare allotments which on Little Pine in 1967 totalled \$168,100.00 or about \$2000.00 per family. Still the Indians are unable to gain the status of self-sufficiency which is highly valued by the White community.

Although there is some manifestation of traditionally patterned forms of economic behavior, these are not adequate to cope with the economic problems confronting the contemporary Cree on Little Pine. The population density, the amount of arable land, the type of natural resources and the availability of local full-time employment indicate that economic independence for the Little Pine Cree cannot be established at the local level.

Some alternatives to local economic independence should be considered: the first is continued dependence on relief and other governmental aid; second is the development of industry on or near the Reserve, and the third is rapid migration from the Reserve to urban communities where permanent employment may be found. The third alternative implies the need for more comprehensive educational training and ultimate assimilation of the Indian into large scale White society with a resulting loss of his cultural identity. The first alternative (which is in operation at present) does not provide adequate care for the Indian people of Little Pine; an expansion of this program would simply solidify the dependent relationship. In addition, it would further irritate the White population-- many of whom already consider the Indian to be a freeloader on the rest of society. (see above p. 16-18) In reference to Indians living in farming areas of Canada, the Hawthorn report recommends that the third alternative should be pursued and that the second alternative should be given only secondary consideration. (1966:182, 189) In their report the authors advise the expenditure of several millions of dollars to accelerate the assimilation and the urbanization of Canada's Indian population.

However, some do not desire to assimilate because assimilation would involve sacrificing their Indian culture and its values; some are prevented from assimilation by prejudicial and discriminatory treatment, poor education and unequal opportunity. If an individual is successful in assimilating even to a limited extent, he may have severed cultural ties with the Reserve society which are not replaced by adequate substitutes in White society; the Indian is not yet fully accepted in equal status

by the White society. The Indian people on Little Pine are caught in the same situation as other groups in Canada--unable to survive by the old way of life, culture bound to remain in it, and prevented from smooth acceptance as members of the total society. Their plight is complicated further because at present the majority of Indians are unaware of any satisfactory alternative to reliance on governmental assistance.

An investigation of traditional religious practices which Shimpo and Williamson interpret as "core culture" (1965:10) indicates that this aspect of Plains Cree culture is still viable and in some respects militates against cultural disintegration or movement toward total assimilation. "Core culture" operates as a force which tends to maintain a distinct Cree culture separate from that of the Whites.

### 3.4 Survival of Traditional Belief

The Sun Dance is a noteworthy aspect of traditional belief still evident on Little Pine. It is the most sacred of all religious practices and will be examined in detail in the following chapter. Other evidences of traditional belief will be included below as evidence of the viability and the wide variability in traditional religious observances on Little Pine.

The first indication of the survival of traditional belief is the use of sweet grass by the people on Little Pine. This member of the grass family, wi-kaskwa, grows locally. It is gathered in the summer and plaited into braids  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and 15-18 inches long which are later used on various ceremonial occasions. When prayers are being offered to Kisi-manto (translated as God by the Plains Cree) the medium of sweet grass smoke is needed to facilitate the communication. The aromatic smoke is produced by shredding bits of the dried grass over glowing coals.

Since the Montana Cree believe so definitely that the spirits are the messengers of their Creator, they constantly make offerings to them as they pray. Prayers are said to the spirits because their leader is Sweetgrass Man. He is the spirit who is always with the Creator and the one who takes care of prayers which are offered. When one applies live charcoal to the braided sweet grass, the smoke that arises goes directly to the Sweetgrass Man. He is always clean and pure and kindly disposed to the people on this earth. (Dusenberry 1962:110-11)

Sweet grass is intimately associated with religious prayer and its use suggests that a traditional ceremony is in operation. On Little Pine it is always used at the Sun Dance, during special feasts and during other traditionally oriented ceremonies. Mandelbaum states that sweet grass is also used by individuals taking a sweat bath whether for pleasure, for

ritual cleansing, or as an offering to a Spirit Power. (1940:292-3)

There are at least five people who use the sweathouse, nitasan, on Little Pine. On this Reserve sweat baths are restricted to males, most often as individuals, but there is also a group ritual where a maximum of six men may take a communal sweat bath. This group ritual usually occurs in May when the first leaves begin to show. In 1968 the ritual was related to purification for the Sun Dance ceremony which was held later in the season.

One informant had two willow sweat houses in his yard and special blankets in the house which he used to cover the structure when he sweated. He said that he took the sweat bath for relief of his arthritis and rheumatism. However the physical aspect is only one part of the rationale which justifies the sweat bath, for during this curative process he prays to his Creator for the good fortune of all men. Sweat baths are taken weekly, usually on Sunday. Sometimes they are taken during the week in addition to the Sunday bath. The procedure is a combination of practical and ritual elements. Briefly, it is as follows:

The one preparing the sweat bath makes a big fire and heats several stones which are about the size of a child's head. Once hot they are placed in a shallow circular hole in the sweat house. The special old blankets are draped over the dome and he then enters the sweat house carrying a pail with an inch of water in it. A small amount of sweet grass is shredded into the water and then the mixture is splashed, a little at a time, on the hot rocks to make steam. Once there is sufficient steam to make the occupant perspire, a little sweet grass is mixed with

the tobacco in the bowl of the pipe and the stem is lifted toward the sky. He then asks God's blessing and prays, "for everybody, everybody, . . . Whiteman, Indians, all the children . . . pray for all people all the same." (personal communication Alex Bonaise July 6, 1968)

Dusenberry notes that this is an important ceremony among the Montana Cree. It is used in connection with the Sun Dance for purification and curing. It is also a group ritual with even women participating sometimes, although they sweat separately from the men. (1962:119) Dusenberry also makes the point that this particular ritual is the oldest of Cree ceremonial rituals.

It was noted above in connection with this ceremony that both sweet grass and a pipe were used during the prayer. I established earlier the importance of sweet grass in the identification of traditional religious practices; this is complemented by the use of a pipe. Ritual smoking with a pipe is also an indication of traditional religious practices. Tobacco in a pipe is a sacred thing while tobacco in a cigarette is for pleasure. (Dusenberry 1962:118) Each informant I asked supported this statement.

I observed a structure on the Reserve which is almost identical to the skeletal framework of the Smoking Lodge shown in Plate IX of The Montana Cree. (Dusenberry 1962) Dusenberry describes the Smoking Lodge as a main religious ceremony; Mandelbaum ranks the Smoking Tipi next to the Sun Dance in the important sacred ceremonies of the Plains Cree; (1940:272) Cadzow describes the ritual as follows:

Among the most important ancient ceremonies still performed by these people is that held quadrennially in the Smoking Tipi erected to the Powers of the four cardinal directions in the fulfilment of a vow

made when a member of the family was ill and had recovered or for the purpose of invoking the Powers to guard someone who was absent on a dangerous mission. (1927:271-2)

When I asked one of my informants about the poles piled in this way he replied that some Indians were merely drying wood. In this instance I believe that my informant was evading my question for I am sure that this manner of piling poles is not a conventional method of drying wood on the Reserve. Since the structure so closely resembled that described by Dusenberry I believe this to be another indication of traditional religion on Little Pine, although I was unable to verify it. Jefferson indicated that this ceremony was one of the most serious of Indian observances and "the only one conducted without any foolery or skylarking of the younger and lighter-minded of the community. . . . Only the serious and mature males are allowed to participate." (1929:85) If such an attitude still exists, it would explain my informant's reluctance to discuss the Smoking Lodge.

I was unable to attend one religious ceremony because it occurred when I was absent from the Reserve. This was the Prairie Chicken Dance, pe·hi·wa·simo·win, which was held in the late fall of 1968. I was able to obtain information about the performance of this Prairie Chicken Dance later in the winter from the wife of the sponsor. The individual who initiated the dance had been sick for many years and had pledged to give there ceremony after a recent stay in the hospital. There was a co-pledger in this case—a man from the Onion Lake Reserve. The pledger will assist this man in a similar dance which is to be held at Onion Lake

in the Spring.

This ceremony was held on a Saturday night in the home of the pledger. (In previous days a special lodge was constructed.) (Mandelbaum 1940:276) My informant told me that in the old days the dance used to last all night but "this time we stopped at midnight because we did not want it to be spoiled by drinkers". They feared that people returning to the Reserve after the beverage rooms closed in Cut Knife and Maidstone at 11:30 would not respect the serious meaning of the dance.

Only men and older boys dance but the women have a definite role in the ceremony. They sit around the dance floor and give presents to the men of their choice who are imitating the courting dance of the Sharp Tailed Grouse. The quality of the dancing usually decides the distribution of gifts—most of them are given to the best dancer. Mandelbaum has indicated that in addition to the women giving gifts, a man had to give a gift the first time he performed in such a dance in order to gain the right to participate.

Food is served to all those in attendance by the pledger's family. Before and after the ceremony the pipes are offered to the Spirits and then smoked by the men. Prayers are said, some of which are specifically for the benefit of the pledger's health.

Health seems to play an important role in ceremonial activity; questions of health motivated the pledges for both the 1968 and 1969 Sun Dances. The pledger of the 1968 Prairie Chicken Dance would not attend the preliminary ceremony for the Sun Dance on March 4, 1969 because he was still sick. He believed that his sickness might have an adverse effect on the

ceremony.

There is also a manifestation of traditional belief observable in the annual ceremonial ritual for deceased band members. Each year in May, one day is set aside for graveyard clean-up; the weeds and rubbish which have accumulated through the year are cleaned out. It is not just a secular clean-up but a ceremonial ritual called a.ka.na.ticki.iktima.skwani. which in rough translation means "the graveyard cleanup for poor people". (The reference to "poor" does not mean poverty in the material sense, but signifies poorness of spirit.) During the day, sweet grass smudges are lit, the pipes are passed around and people pray for the spirits of the dead. The prayers are said to be similar to those offered at a ritual feast which was held in February of 1969 to ward off misfortune that had continually affected one family on the Reserve. (personal communication Winona Frank, Feb. 27, 1969)

This latter feast, ne.awe.kohtok, was at the home of a family who had not previously been followers of traditional religious practices. It was the first ceremony ever pledged by this man. Among the misfortunes that had troubled his family in recent years were the accidental fatal shooting of a young son and a fire which destroyed the family dwelling along with most of their personal belongings. The family was very discouraged and several of the older people on the Reserve advised the man to pledge a feast inviting the active participants in the traditional religious practices. Accordingly, he pledged the feast so that the old people might come and pray for him.

During the ritual the older people prayed for supernatural aid to help

the family. The guests all sat in a circle on the floor, sweet grass was burned, pipes were smoked, prayers were said and then the food was distributed. (The food that is served in most ritual ceremonies will be described in detail in Chapter 4.) The food signified to some degree a material sacrifice on the part of the host, who supplies more than can be eaten at the feast and gives the remainder to the guests to take home with them. That this is a special feast is indicated by the terminology. If a person wants to invite some people for a social dinner or feast he says a•we•mitsak which simply means "come to eat".

Another indication of traditional beliefs in practice is the use of old medicinal cures for common ailments. Several unidentified mixtures of flowers and herbs are brewed like tea and taken for various internal discomforts. The flowers of the mountain sneezweed, Helenium autumnale, are dried and powdered. When the dust is inhaled the resulting sneeze will relieve colds and respiratory ailments. Rat Root (a rhizome growing in northern marshes) is chewed to relieve colds and coughing. If enough is consumed it may act as a hallucinogenic drug. A common remedy for diarrhea is to drink the broth of willow tips, Salix sp., boiled in water. The inner bark of the maple, Acer negundo interius, and a species of poplar, Populus balsamifera, may be applied to cuts and sores causing them to heal more quickly. A bracket fungus, (precise botanical identity not ascertained) is imported from Rocky Boy Reserve in Montana and eaten as a cure for heart disease. In addition to these medicinal uses some native species are used for deodorizers and incense.

The importance of sweet grass, Hierochloa odorata, has been noted above

in relation to religious ceremonies. Another plant which grows in the district is often used in the pipe tobacco at ceremonies. The leaves of the Bear Berry, Arctostaphylos Uva-ursi, are dried and a little is mixed with bits of sweet grass and pipe tobacco. Juniper needles, Juniperus horizontalis, and sage (species undetermined) are used as air fresheners and deodorizers. A little will be sprinkled in the fire or put on top of the stove when it is hot. Sweet grass does not seem to be used for this purpose but is reserved for ceremonial occasions.

My investigation of traditional belief is still incomplete, but it is evident that much of the traditional pattern of religious life is still in use on Little Pine. The next chapter will contain a description of the central feature of traditional behavior on Little Pine. This particular aspect of Plains Cree religion was chosen for detailed investigation because it is most illustrative of many related features of religious practice and is considered by the people to be the most important ceremonial event in their religious life.

## CHAPTER 4

### NI·PA·KWE·SIMO·WIN: PLAINS CREE SUN DANCE, 1968

#### 4.1 Definition and Motivation

The term 'Sun Dance' has been adopted by the people on this Reserve as the English equivalent of the Plains Cree term, ni·pa·kwe·simo·win.

Dusenberry has provided a literal translation of this term into English-- "beseeching-for-water-to-allay-the-thirst-dance". (1962:186) Although 'Sun Dance' is the common English usage among the Little Pine people, when they refer in English to the big lodge they say "thirsting lodge". This linguistic evidence indicates that the term 'Sun Dance' is a recent incorporation into the culture of the Plains Cree.

This important Cree ceremony still occurs on Little Pine although there are only a few old people left who are able to perform the key roles in the ritual. According to Alex Bonaise (the pledger of the Sun Dance which I attended) there is only one other person still living on Little Pine who is able "to make the Sun Dance". (personal communication, Alex Bonaise June 20, 1968) Bonaise believes that within 35 years there will be no Sun Dances on the Reserve.

There have been several Sun Dance ceremonies in the Battleford agency in recent years. In 1963 Alex's older brother Sam made the Sun Dance on Little Pine. Alex Bonaise made the Sun Dance in 1966 and in 1968; he has pledged to make another in 1969. (The poles of these old Sun Dance lodges are still at the site of the dances. They have not been moved to make way for land cultivation which has taken place all around them.)

In 1967 a Sun Dance was held on Sweet Grass Reserve and in 1968 there was one on the Mosquito-Stoney Reserve south of Battleford. Bonaise has pledged a dance for this summer and a member of Poundmaker's band will be making a Sun Dance on Poundmaker Reserve shortly after Bonaise's ceremony. It would seem reasonable to conclude that these ceremonies are occurring too frequently to substantiate completely Bonaise's pessimism in regard to the survival of this ceremony. It may not remain with all procedural details unchanged, but the performance of the dances in recent years will be a stimulus for their continuance.

Although the pledger initiates the Sun Dance and is the focus of attention during the lengthy series of events which compose the ritual, much of the responsibility for the direction of activities lies with the four attendants or assistants. (The assistants in the 1968 Sun Dance were Robert Bear, Alex Sapp, Napachit and Charlie Bear) Of these, one assumes the major role in guiding the procedures. He is Robert Bear, the son of Maskwa, and one of the most knowledgeable persons in the district in matters relating to the Sun Dance. He received this knowledge from his father, whom Mandelbaum has recorded as one co-pledger of the Sun Dance held on Little Pine in 1935. (1940:268) Although Robert Bear has never pledged a Sun Dance he has been the central organizational figure in all the recent Sun Dances on Little Pine and in the one held at Sweet Grass in 1967. He has described the rationale for the Sun Dance:

The Sun Dance is pretty difficult to describe, but it was God who gave this to the Indian people. A long time ago our forefathers asked for life and it is still going. People give thanks with the Sun Dance. When people see this going on they see it as God's

wish. This was also the same with all the other kinds of dances. There used to be quite a few of these dances but now some of them have been lost. Some of them are still being held. These dances that are still being held are like branches from the Sun Dance. The Sun Dance is the most sacred dance.

God and all his followers run this earth. The four directions are like disciples, He gave them a lot of power and a lot of understanding. He also gave them life. These disciples are asked for life at the Sun Dance. Therefore an Indian never asks for money; anyone can go and ask for something nice like health or long life.

At this Sun Dance there is a lot of sympathy and understanding with God. If God listens to the Indian but the Indian does not listen to God's wishes he will be poor [in a spiritual sense]. The Indian will be poor like the flags [cloth offerings] if God doesn't listen to him.

Nobody should ever be embarrassed to talk to God in a straight way. (personal communication February 23, 1969)

Concern for health motivated the pledge which resulted in the 1968 Sun Dance. Alex Bonaise made his vow because his brother Sam had been ill (he died before spring) and also

partly for the baby that we have there in the next room. He [the baby] wasn't sick but he [the pledger] makes the sacrifice so the baby will be healthy and have a good life. (personal communication, Caroline Bonaise, wife of pledger and grandmother of child, June 17, 1968)

Jefferson's account of Sun Dances in the Battleford Agency prior to 1886 gives historical validity to the persistence of this traditional motivation for the vow:

The Dance is projected during the fall or winter months previous and is the result of a promise made in sickness or trouble; or maybe, in endeavor to secure some favor from the Powers Unknown. The same idea actuates the dancers. (1929:42)

Similar circumstances motivated Fine Day to pledge a Sun Dance shortly



**FIGURE 4.1** Alex and Caroline Bonaise, Plains Cree on Little Pine Reserve. He was the pledger of the Sun Dance attended in 1968. He is holding one of the ceremonial pipes and a braid of sweetgrass in his hand. (Photograph October 1968)

after the 1885 rebellion in spite of federal prohibition of the ceremony at that time. Fine Day believed his son to be dying and promised to make the Sun Dance; his son recovered and later Fine Day successfully fulfilled his pledge. (Mandelbaum 1940: 315-16)

Bonaise made his pledge during the winter of 1967-68 and the main ceremony took place from June 27-30, 1968. In May 1968 Mrs. Bonaise was very sick and in the hospital. Alex vowed a Sun Dance if she could be given help to recover. (As noted above, this pledge will be fulfilled in the summer of 1969.) She is now in good health. Although the first pledge had not yet been fulfilled, my informant made a second vow. Also, it is significant that he did not incorporate this pledge into the ceremony already planned for the summer of 1968 but promised to make an additional ni.pa.kwe.simo in 1969.

After the pledger vows the ceremony he must obtain the approval of the four assistants whom Bonaise calls ahne.kahna.pe.wak; the assistants are men who have had previous experience in the Sun Dance. The pledger

wraps a little tobacco and a little sweet grass in a packet and sends it to the special old people before the Sun Dance. Just a little wee package is sent to them, and the ones it is sent to-- they just have to go and accompany him. (personal communication Caroline Bonaise, June 17, 1968)

In addition to the four main assistants, there are two tobacco cutters, o.kaskikotci.kaniki.wak, two firetenders or servants, askwe.kaspaka.wak, and two camp guards, kana.witsiko. All these people are responsible for the organization and performance of special duties. For example the pledger, a tobacco cutter, a firetender and one assistant will be praying

and purifying and dedicating offerings while the other assistants are constructing the altar in the thirsting lodge. The camp guards delegate duties to individuals who are performing the physical task of building the lodge; one of the firetenders gathers necessary materials such as sage for the altar and any one of the other people constructs flags to be hung from the rafters of the thirst lodge. (personal observation 7:30 - 8:00 p.m. June 28 1968)

Throughout the central four day ceremony the pledger did not eat or drink (with the exception of drinking the rain water as it fell) and in addition to donating food and cloth offerings, he prayed for all other people and dedicated their offerings to the Supernatural. When his wife spoke of sacrifice (see p. 69) she meant two things: first the material sacrifice of goods, and second, the physical sacrifice involved in depriving the body of food and water for nearly 96 hours. This was the pledger's second Sun Dance; the 1969 ceremony will bring his total to three, allowing him to make only one more Sun Dance.

While the Sun Dance is initiated by one individual and the procedures are directed by a small group, it is a ritual in which the whole community may participate. Anyone can give an offering, promise to fast, help in the construction of the lodge, sing, dance, or perform any number of participatory roles. The Sun Dance, in addition to fulfilling promises made to the Supernatural by many community members, serves to promote a sense of tribal unity and to remind the people of their Indian heritage and customs. Of the Plains Cree Sun Dance Abel Watetch says;

The Indians never try to convert anyone to their religion. They never quarrel about religion. It is an intensely personal matter and indeed its community efficacy depends upon the individual's sincerity. The chief aim of their religion is to express the individual's gratitude for what he receives in this life. Life itself and its chief end is the unity of the Indian group, expressed in the reiterated injunction, "love one another."  
(1959:40)

Some people come only as spectators to watch the beauty and movement of the ceremony, children play, young people court and old people visit and gossip. It serves as a gathering point for distant relatives and friends. There were people from Montana and Alberta at the 1968 Sun Dance. Since it is a focal point of "Indian" culture it becomes a force for social solidarity of the Plains Cree.

#### 4.2 Preliminary Ceremonies

An Indian's pledge to make a Sun Dance includes the promise to perform activities in addition to the four day fast and ritual ceremony held in mid-summer. The pledger must fast, pray and make offerings at four preliminary ceremonies just as he does during the main ritual in the summer. In addition to these days of fasting and prayer the pledger must be "a good man" [from the time he has made the vow until its fulfilment]. "It's hard to make the Sun Dance. You can't get mad, fight, drink or anything for a long time before the Sun Dance." (personal communication Alex Bonaise, June 24, 1968) Also, Mandelbaum has recorded that a pledger did not have sexual intercourse from the time he made the vow until the Sun Dance was completed. (1940:270) Thus, in addition to the sacrifices he makes at the preliminary ceremonies, Bonaise has had to observe these general principles of behavior for more than 18 consecutive months. It is obvious from this evidence that the Sun Dance pledge is regarded very seriously and that only committed and dedicated individuals would have the strength to complete the requirements of the vow.

The most significant of these additional commitments are the four preliminary ceremonies, i-nikimahnî-pa-kwe-simo-win. I-nikimahn is the Cree word which indicates the action of singing and hence the term i-nikimahnî-pa-kwe-simo-win means "the singing rehearsals for the Sun Dance".

Mandelbaum fails to describe these key rituals in sufficient detail; he merely states that there are four singing rehearsals held on the nights of a new moon. (1940:265) Today these ceremonies are held at the full

moon—a minor discordance with Mandelbaum's data.

The four assistants meet with the pledger early in the new year to approve the pledge for the dance. If they approve, they decide on the time and place for the first two preliminary ceremonies. In regard to the most recent pledge, the first meeting between the pledger and his assistants took place during the second week of January, 1969. At this meeting it was decided to hold the first preliminary ceremony on Sunday, February 2—the night of the full moon. The second preliminary ceremony (which I attended) took place at the pledger's house on March 4—again the night of the full moon. Following the completion of ceremonial activities (which lasted from 6:30 - 1:30 a.m.) there was a meeting to discuss when and where the other ceremonies would be held. It was agreed that the third ceremony would be held in a tent near Bonaises' house on May 2 in conjunction with the full moon and the appearance of the new spring buds on the trees. The final preliminary ceremony in the series will take place at the Sun Dance site on the evening of July 3, the first day of the main ceremony. This fourth ceremony is incorporated into the four day main ceremony of the Sun Dance.

The i-niki-mahni-pa-kwe-simo-win that I attended on March 4, 1969 was indeed a singing rehearsal but there were other activities that neither Dusenberry nor Mandelbaum have mentioned. Both of these authorities on the Plains Cree describe the preliminary ceremonies as relatively minor events which involve the pledger, his assistants and very few other people. (Dusenberry 1962:187, Mandelbaum 1940:265) On Little Pine today these ceremonies are an important part of the pledge and involve more people

than these two scholars have previously stated.

There were over 40 people present at the home of the pledger for the March 4 ceremony. In addition to the singing and prayers there was also a special feast, a business meeting and social intercourse among the guests. All of these activities occurred between the ritual blessing of the four pipes which started and ended the ceremony. While much of the ceremony was conducted in a very sacred atmosphere, at other times the mood was festive.

The four empty pipes were unwrapped and blessed when the full moon rose above the horizon. They were subsequently filled and one was given to each of the four assistants who lit the pipe, said a prayer and passed the pipe around the room. All men participated in the ritual smoking of the four pipes. This series of prayers was completed with a long prayer said by the pledger and then the feast began. The food was distributed by the two servants who were also the firetenders. Everyone had brought his own eating utensils and bowls because more food was served than could be eaten at the time and much of what was left was put into their containers to be taken home by the guests. This distribution of food among members of the community is customary at all special feasts, not only at those held in conjunction with the preliminary ceremony of the Sun Dance.

The food served at this ceremony consisted of a thick soup of rice and meat, bread spread with lard, assorted cakes, cookies and candy, preserved fruit and tea. Alcoholic beverages are never allowed at religious ceremonies. While the food was being eaten, the pledger's bowls were passed through sweet grass smoke and blessed with a short prayer said by the head assistant.

The servant then took the two bowls and gave everyone in the room a sip of water from the first and a small spoon of rendered grease from the second. The first bowl had a small blade of sweet grass floating on the water. After this was completed the pledger filled his bowls with food and joined in the feast. He had been fasting all day and this ritual distribution of water and fat served the dual purpose of reminding the people of his fast on the days of the preliminary ceremony, and recognizing the end of his fast thus allowing his participation in the feast. After the feast the large containers of food were removed from the center of the floor and the ceremonial prayer continued.

The four pipes were again passed around the room and preparations were made for the singing to begin. The head assistant removed two bundles from their position near the rack of cloth offerings, we-pina-son. (see Fig. 4.2) These bundles were purified in the sweet grass smoke and then opened by the servants. One bundle had two single-head drums with batons and the other contained a scraped hide from a two-year-old steer. The hide was unfolded and inside there were several peeled willow wands about 18 inches long and a hide rattle made from the scrotal sac of the same animal. The pledger then took a whistle which was attached to a necklace of beads from his pipe bundle, purified it in the sweet grass and hung it around his neck. The whistle was about four inches long, completely covered with beads and had a large downy feather attached to one end. At intervals throughout the singing ceremony the pledger would blow a series of shrill notes on the whistle.

The singing rehearsal followed the same procedure all evening. One

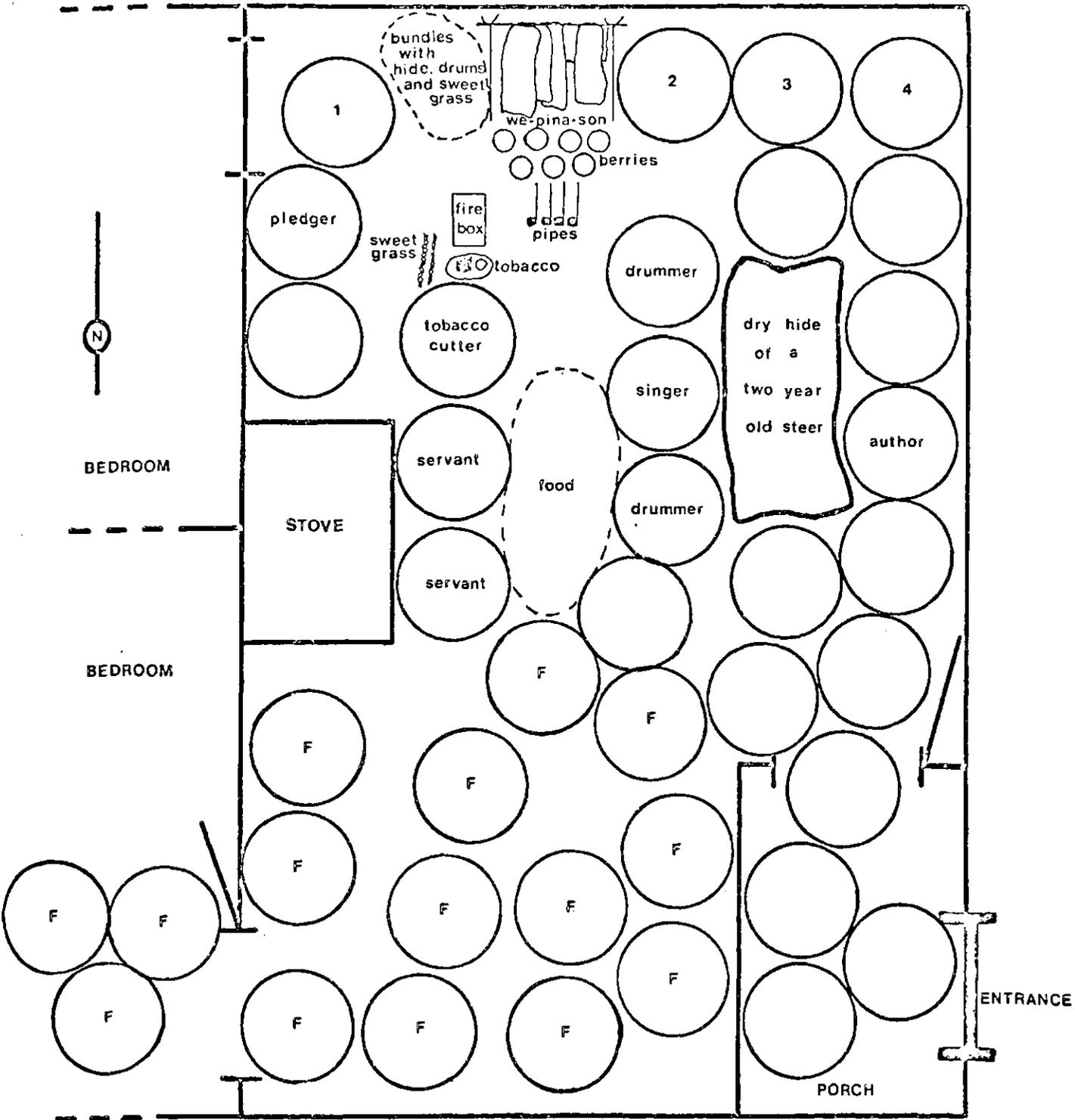


FIGURE 4.2 Preliminary Ceremony. Arrangement of participants during the singing rehearsal on March 4, 1969. All furniture and pictures had been removed from the main room. Only adults are represented in the diagram although there were several children present. They stayed in the area occupied by the women. Circles with 'F' represent women, all others represent men. Dotted lines indicate unstable spacial positions. When people moved for some activity they would return to their original places.

person would take the rattle, say a prayer and begin to sing, accompanying himself with the rattle. The two drummers and the men beating the hide with the peeled wands would then join in and keep time with the rattle. This sequence of prayers and songs continued for several hours, beginning with the pledger as singer and going in rotation through all the assistants and helpers (with the exception of the tobacco cutter, who did not change position until the end of the evening). After this, other men present took the singer's position. Throughout this part of the ceremony the drummers and beaters changed places frequently, always in conjunction with the appearance of a new lead singer. The change in singers was signalled by the ritual smoking of the pipes. When the pipes were to be offered, either the pledger, tobacco-cutter or the head assistant indicated to the firetender who should be given the pipe. A pipe given to a man indicated that it was his turn to say a prayer and be the lead singer. Each man is said to have his own prayers and songs. When the designated person received the pipe the firetender held the match to light it. After the tobacco was burning the pipe was rotated clockwise 180 degrees and a prayer was said. Then the pipe would be rotated again before being passed to the man on the left. That man would take a few puffs and pass the pipe to the man on his left without rotating it. Some of the more important men would rotate the pipe several times after the prayer, stopping it in each of the four directions of the thunders. Mandelbaum explains the ritual use of the pipe:

Whenever there was occasion to call on supernatural forces, a pipe was lighted and the spirit powers were summoned to have a smoke.

. . . The mouthpiece was swung around clockwise to the point on the compass where dwelt the Spirit Power who was to be addressed. (1940:288)

Although women were not allowed to smoke the sacred tobacco in the pipes, they were given cigarettes several times throughout the ceremony. In addition some of the women accompanied the singing whenever the men beating the hide joined the lead singer in a chant.

At various intervals during a prayer some of the men in the room would exclaim, ha-y, which seemed to signify approval of that particular part of the prayer. This is the ceremonial word for thanks. (Mandelbaum:1940: 280)

The night of singing ended with the pledger and two of his assistants each saying a prayer and leading the singing for the second time that evening. The hide was folded up with the rattle and wands enclosed; it was then purified, blessed and placed with the other bundles behind the head assistant. Another round of ritual smoking followed and food was served again.

This time there was no food served ceremonially from the pledger's bowls, but after the main courses were eaten seven dishes of saskatoon berries, which had been left in front of the offering rack during the entire evening, were served to all the men present. Dusenberry found this practice to be in recognition of the bear spirit who is very central in Cree ceremonies and is said to feed on the berries. (1962:222) On Little Pine they are prepared and served without sugar which seems to indicate that the same rationale might apply here. Each of the bowls was given to an important man--the pledger, his assistants and two men from Sweet Grass Reserve who

were in attendance. After sweet grass had been burned one braid of sweet grass was laid across each bowl. After a prayer, one end of the braid was unwrapped, shredded and dipped in the berry juice. The braid was then lifted out and shaken as if to offer the bear spirit some of the berries before humans ate them. Then each of the men would take four spoonsful and pass the bowl and spoon to the man on his left. Each of the seven bowls of berries made two clockwise rotations of the room before they were all eaten. After another round of pipesmoking the business meeting began.

Each man had the opportunity to give his opinion about the time and the place of the main ceremony. Two women were also asked to give their opinions. Finally the head assistant announced the decision which had been reached by concensus after some discussion. After the decision was announced, the pipes were smoked and passed around once more, purified in the incense, and given to the second assistant who held them bowl down and blessed them. They were returned to the pledger who put them in the bundle. This signified the end of the ceremony.

After everyone had gone home the pledger wrapped all the sacred paraphernalia in canvas and then in heavy plastic. The objects composed three large bundles and it was part of the ritual that they be carried in one trip to the back of the house were they were hung from a tripod. We returned to the front door by walking around the other side of the house since in ritual ceremonies all movements are circular and in a clockwise direction (with the sun).

It is apparent from these data that the Sun Dance ceremony, so often

represented in the literature as a summer ceremonial among Plains tribes, is, to the Plains Cree of Little Pine, much more comprehensive in scope and ritual meaning. The pledger undertakes a promise to fast--in this instance a total of seven days; he must also make the material sacrifices of the cloth offerings to the spirits and the food that is distributed to the people. The preliminary ceremonies are a significant element of the Sun Dance ritual and involve a relatively large number of people in the community. There are a variety of ways in which the people participate: they may share in the ritual feasts, have a voice in the decisions, offer prayers, share in the singing, make sacrifices by fasting or donating offerings and finally they may attend the main summer ceremony where they may function in various roles.

#### 4.3 Description of the Main Ceremony, June 27-30, 1968

The pledger, as we have seen, is the focal point of the entire Sun Dance ceremony. This was again evidenced by his arrival at the Sun Dance site (see Fig. 4.2) early on Thursday morning while many of the other people did not come until later.

The preparation teepee, wo-wahtakwa-kan, was erected on the first day by the pledger, the assistants and members of the pledger's family. The teepee is similar to the structure that is used during the May preliminary ceremonies. On the first night, (June 27) the final singing practice took place; some of the younger men sang until dawn.

Shortly after dawn on the second day coyote yells and whoops were heard in the bush surrounding the Sun Dance site. Soon the 'scouting party' returned, weaving in and out of the dense bush south of the meadow and finally pausing at the edge of the clearing. These men had located and cut down the center pole for the thirsting lodge. The pledger left the teepee carrying tobacco, sweet grass and a pipe. He walked toward the group which then cautiously advanced into the clearing. They met the pledger, sat down, smoked, exchanged conversation with him and then followed him back to the preparation teepee. Most of them were wearing blankets and they all had aspen twigs and branches in their garments. No further activity in relation to lodge construction occurred until about 4:00 p.m. when the center pole was brought to the site and the lodge built. It was completed after sunset that evening.

Men and boys of all ages helped to erect the lodge. The pledger remained in the preparation teepee while most of the work was taking place. There

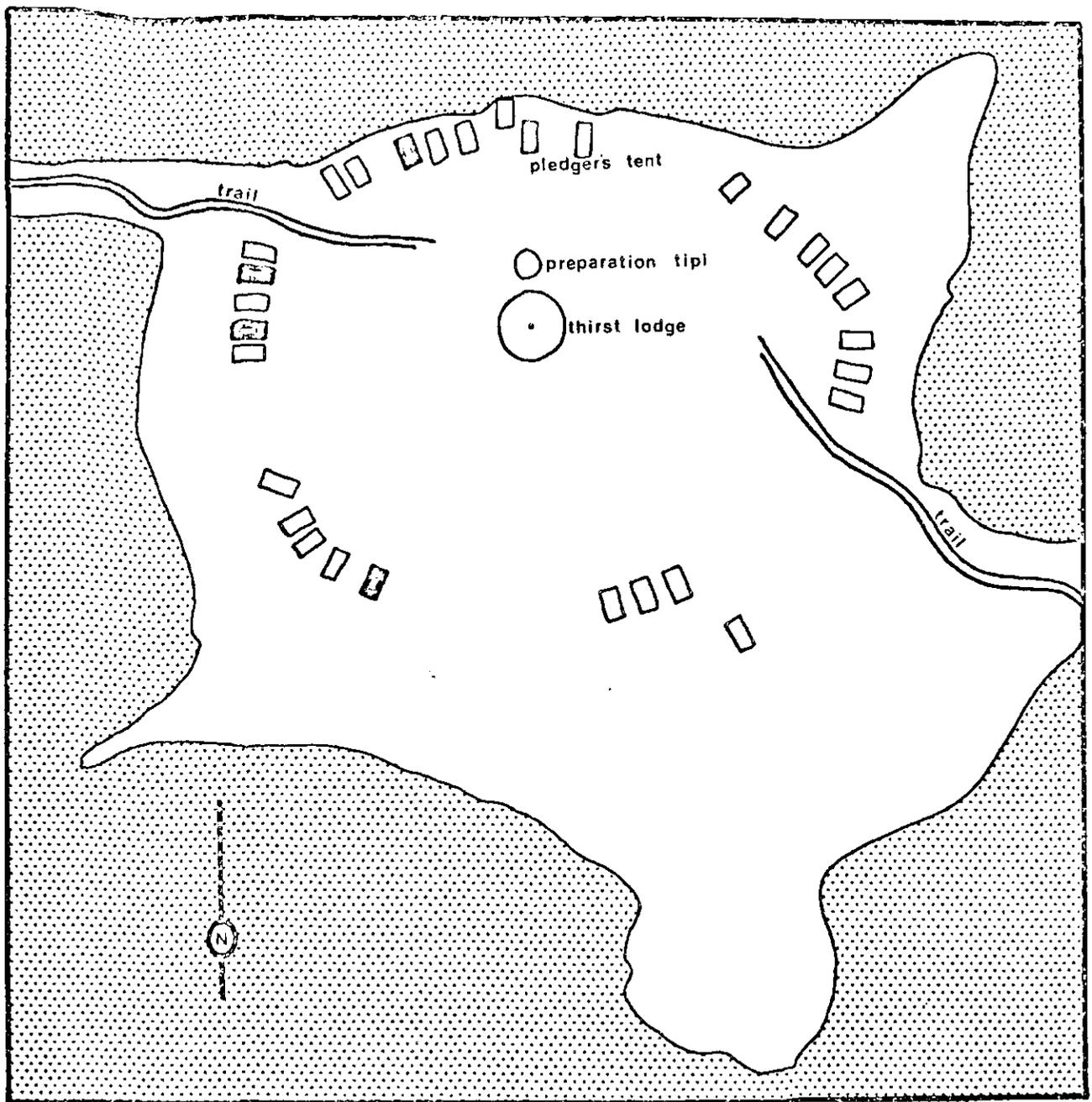


FIGURE 4.3 The Sun Dance Site. The tents are pitched in a small meadow which is surrounded by poplar, willow and berry bushes. The pledger's tent is at the north of the large circle. The four tents with dark outlines represent the tents of the assistants to the pledger. There were no tipis in the camp circle which was made up of 30 canvas tents and two campers on small trucks. Sketched June 28, 1968.

was a happy atmosphere among the workers as they trimmed branches from trees, dug post holes and hauled loads of freshly cut aspen to the site. The entire lodge was made from the native species of poplar or aspen, Populus tremuloides.

The workers first dug the hole for the center pole. Once this was ready two rafters were lashed to the tree which was to become the center pole, o·kana·hnitik. At the point near the top of the center pole where the two rafters had been attached, the head assistant and the pledger wove several leafy branches to form the nest, stama·kan into which the pledger subsequently tied a ribbon while saying a short prayer. Then the other assistants fastened some very long cloth offerings to the center pole and it was propped in place. The 14 rafters and 14 side posts were lashed together completing the skeletal framework and the walls were formed by leaning small trees, butt end up, against the frame. (The framework is similar to that pictured in Skinner's description of the Round Lake Sun Dance lodge. 1919:188-9)

While the camp guards and the pledger's son directed the construction of the walls and the enclosures for the dancers, the head assistant aided by two other assistants were busy constructing what has been termed "the main part of the Sun Dance, the ki·skatsikan." (personal communication Robert Bear, February 23, 1969) This is a square hole which is dug in the ground to the north of the center pole. (see Fig. 4.5) Each side of the hole is the distance from the clenched fist to the elbow of the assistant. (about 15 inches) The hole is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 inches deep and is measured by the breadth of a man's palm. (At the Sun Dance in 1884 the hole

was 16 inches deep. Innes 1926:15) A wooden peg is driven into the middle of the square with the top of the peg remaining flush with ground level. A similar procedure is followed for each of the four pegs driven into the corners. Although I have been unable to obtain confirmation by my informants, it may be assumed that these pegs are representative of Kisi-manto (translated "God" by the Little Pine Cree) and his four "disciples" which are undoubtedly the four Thunders. (It should be noted that while Jefferson, Mandelbaum and Dusenberry all indicate that these powers dwell in the cardinal directions, the stakes which represent them are placed in the corners of the square. Also during the preliminary ceremony the pipes were often offered to the intermediate points of the compass-NE, SE, SW, NW.) Fine Day stated that the pipe would be offered to the corners first and then to the cardinal points of the compass. (Innes 1926:15)

After the lodge was completed the ritual paraphernalia was transferred to it from the preparation teepee. The canvas cover of the teepee became part of the north wall of the thirsting lodge. The skeleton of the preparation teepee remained until the ceremony was finished; then it was taken down.

As noted above, the pledger remained in the preparation teepee while most of the manual work of constructing the lodge was being done although he came out occasionally to direct or offer advice in some activity. His central function during the second day was to accept, bless and dedicate the offerings which new arrivals brought to the site. These material sacrifices must be worthy of the prayers and the ceremony. "The print

[cloth] has to be the newest and the best." (personal communication Caroline Bonaise, July 16, 1968) This does not restrict poor people from giving because the word 'best' is interpreted as the best a person can afford. However, one should not give a donation that is much below his means since this is looked upon with disfavor by the special old people and probably by the Supernatural as well. Many of the cloth offerings were very long--in fact, some of the bolts which were tied to the top of the 20 foot center pole reached the ground even after being wrapped around the pole all the way down. The pole was completely covered with brightly coloured cloth.

My advisor, my employer and I, upon the pledger's invitation, entered the preparation teepee. We presented Alex Bonaise with some tobacco and cloth offerings. He indicated that we should sit near the entrance of the tent. (see Fid. 4.3) We stayed in the teepee and watched the proceedings for about an hour and a half. Several other donors, all Cree, brought offerings while we were present and informed the pledger of the reason for the offering. If asked, the pledger will say a special prayer for the benefit of the donor; if not, he will say a general prayer of thanks recognizing the donation of that particular family. When the Cree people presented their offerings they remained kneeling on the mat while the prayers were said, but after we gave our offerings we were invited to sit near the door while the prayers were being said.

There was a separate prayer for each of our cloth and ribbon offerings while both tobacco offerings were dedicated in the same prayer. When the pledger first received the offering from the donor he passed it to the

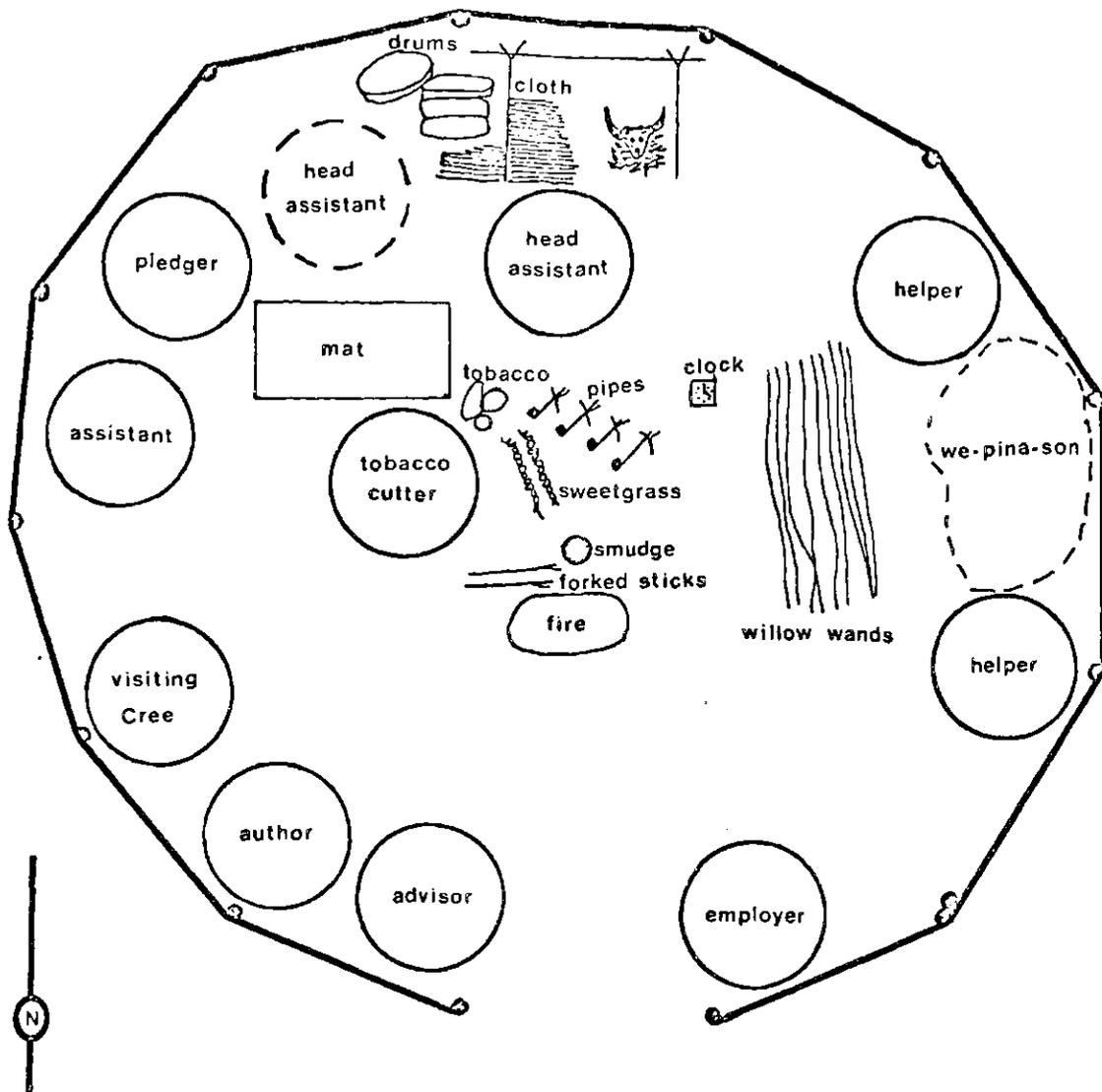


FIGURE 4.4 Preparation Tipi. Spatial arrangement of goods and people during the afternoon of June 28, 1968. The three white people present are seated in the traditional position of deference, near the doorway. Unlike the preparation tipi described by Dusenberry, this one had only one entrance, at the south. There was no entrance on Rocky Boy and people entered the tipi by crawling under the sides which were slightly raised from the ground. One of the two poles shown at the left of the entrance is permanently attached to the tipi cover and used to transfer the cover to the rear of the main lodge.

tobacco cutter who took one of the forked sticks and placed a coal from the hearth on a small twist of sweet grass. The offering was then passed through the incense from right to left and the tobacco cutter turned and gave the offering back to the pledger. From the time the offering was given to the tobacco cutter until he returned it to the pledger it made one complete 360 degree revolution with the sun. As the pledger received each article from the tobacco cutter he lifted it upwards and held it there while he gave the prayer in a soft but clearly audible voice. Following the prayer the cloth and ribbon offerings were placed in a pile beside the skull. Once the tobacco had been blessed it was passed back to the tobacco cutter who opened each can or pouch and removed a pinch which he placed in a plastic bag kept near him. The pouches and cans were resealed and placed in a pile west of the pipe racks.

During the entire time we were in the teepee the tobacco cutter did not look up. He was wearing a wide brimmed hat and his face was always shielded. It has been noted that this is because he must not look upon women during the performance of his ceremonial duties. (Mandelbaum 1940:265-266) During the preliminary ceremony on March 4 he sat with his back to the women during the performance of his ceremonial duties and did not once turn around.

The head assistant, Robert Bear, said prayers as he arranged the old bison skull on its bed of sage. (The Little Pine Cree refer to sage as mastaswi-kaskwa, which means buffalo sweet grass. One of Dusenberry's informants said that sage had similar powers to sweet grass; it can be used as a purifier and as a prayer medium. 1962:118-119) Bear also

passed the cloth offerings to the two helpers who cut the cloth and tied it to the peeled willow wands with small strips of material which were always cut from the bolt of cloth used in that particular flag. (Attaching the cloth offering to the wand does not alter the nomenclature for the offerings--they are still we-pina-son.) In addition to these activities Bear had ordered young men and boys to fetch the sage and willow wands and on two occasions he left the teepee to direct the lodge construction outside. These actions were never carried out during any of the prayers involving the pledger; at these times Bear would sit quietly to the left of the pledger. It can be seen from this and the data mentioned earlier in this chapter that he plays a key role in the completion of the Sun Dance.

The time spent in the preparation lodge is not exclusively solemn. During periods when no ceremonial functions were being carried out there was talk about several unrelated topics. One helper, an old friend of my employer, spoke in English of crop conditions and the dry weather, as well as about elements of the Cree ceremony. At times there were fluent exchanges in Cree among several people, followed by smiles and quiet laughter. However, during any ritual activity general conversation halted in respect for the solemnity of the ritual.

The most spectacular--and best recorded--part of the Sun Dance occurs on the third and fourth days when singing, dancing and other ritual activities are being performed. In former times, these were the days when torture was practiced. (For a description of this torture see; Jefferson 1929:46, Cochin 1927:27-28, and Lane 1886:25) In the 1968 ceremony, it was on these days that other people at the Little Pine Sun Dance fulfilled

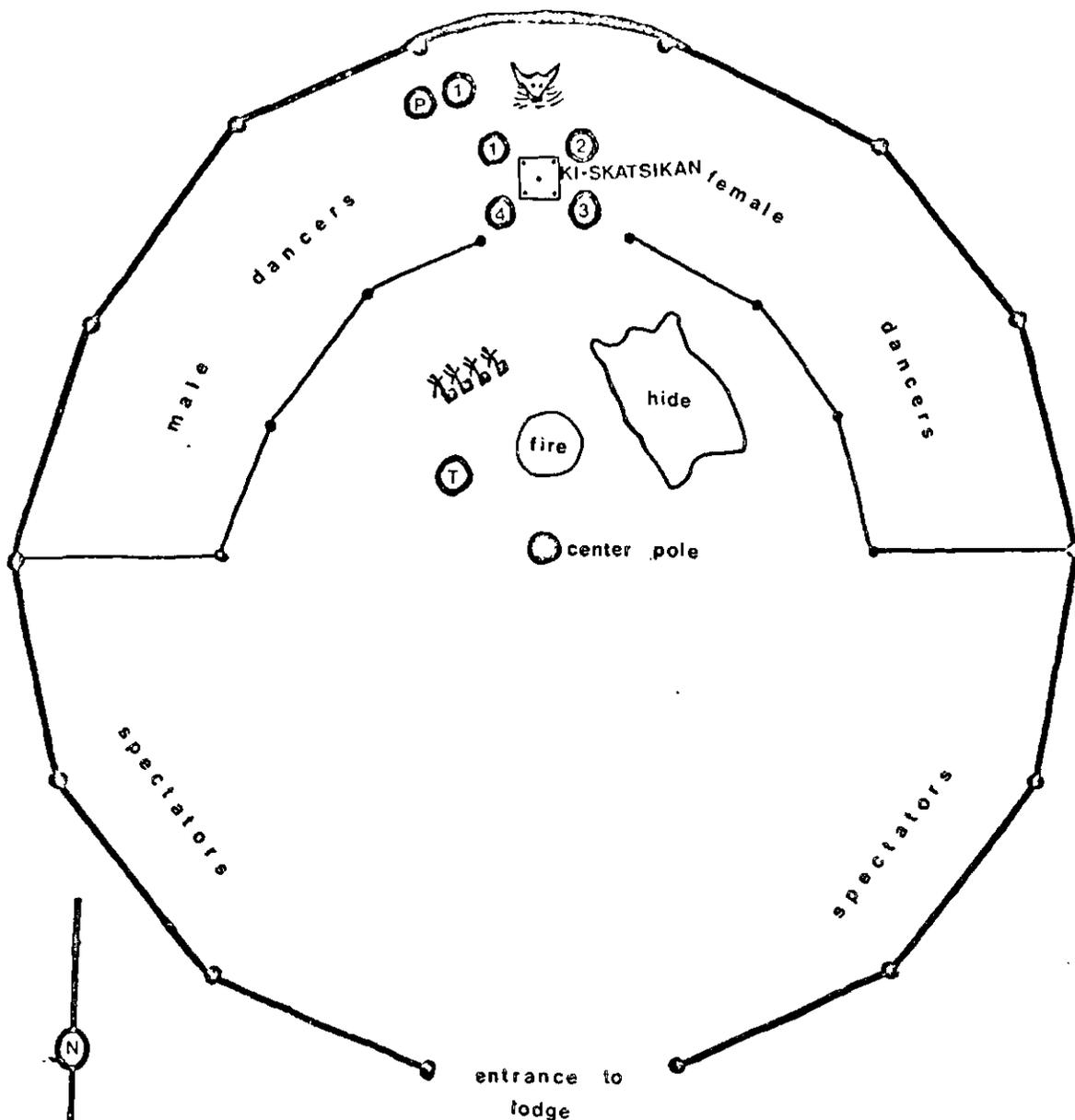


FIGURE 4.5 Thirsting Lodge. The diagram indicates where participants would have been if the lodge had been occupied. The lodge was deserted on the morning of June 29, 1968 -- the altar and buffalo skull were covered with a plastic sheet, and the smoldering fire was slowly being extinguished by the rainfall. The numerals indicate the position of the assistants during the ceremony, P indicates the plodger, and T the tobacco cutter.

their pledge to fast. A person may dance for one or both days while he fasts or he may choose not to dance but keep his vow to fast performing only normal activities in the camp. If he chooses not to dance he must however, on the fourth day, donate something very special to the pile of offerings that is to be distributed among the visiting people. These gifts must not be confused with the offerings to the Supernatural which are taken away by the pledger.

At 5:30 a.m. on the morning of the third day it began to rain very lightly and by 6:30 there was a steady rain. Upon arrival at the Sun Dance site we did not see anyone although there was smoke coming from all the camps. There was no one in the Thirsting Lodge but the fire was still smoldering and the pipes and other paraphernalia were still there. Sacred things such as sweet grass, the skull and the square hole were covered by plastic sheets. We went to Bonaise's tent and were informed by Mrs. Bonaise that the pledger was asleep inside. The people had sung and danced for less than a half hour that morning and were now all in their own tents or visiting with other people.

The heavy rain continued for over 36 hours and when the sky cleared late in the afternoon of the fourth day the walls of the lodge were taken down and the gifts distributed to those people who had come from other Reserves. The pledger took the offerings which had decorated the lodge and put them "in a clean place" away from dwellings but within the Reserve boundaries. (personal communication Alex Bonaise July 16, 1968) The offerings were put down in a thick clump of bush where they will not be exposed to contamination by humans but left to the Supernatural Powers.

It must be a clean place in the sense that it is a natural unaltered environment. Once the lodge was dismantled, (the main posts were left standing till they rot but the offerings and the walls were taken down) people packed up and prepared to go home. In this district a pow-wow is held after the Sun Dance. The younger people participate much more in this dance since, unlike the Sun Dance, it is a purely secular performance. (see Fig. 4.6)

The distinctive event that occurred during the 1968 Sun Dance was the heavy rainfall which halted some aspects of ritual activity. Although I have found references in the literature which say that participants could quench their thirst if it rained, I have found only two reports where the rainfall has been heavier than a slight shower and in one instance it was not indicated whether the rain caused the ceremony to stop.

It certainly was a most unfortunate coincidence that the year before, when rain was so badly needed and prayed for at the Sun Dance, it quickly came; and the medicine men have made the greatest scandal of this among the superstitious. (Reed, Indian Commissioner N.W.T. Sessional Papers 1890:172)

The other record of a down-pour at a Sun Dance has been discussed by Abel Watetch of Payepot Reserve. The ceremony took place in Montana with Plains Cree, Assiniboine, and Gros Ventre participating. This particular Sun Dance was held especially to end a long period of drought.

The song went on and on, and then suddenly the heavens seemed to open and a veritable cloudburst of rain fell upon the earth.

The Indians did not stop when the rains fell. They went on singing, dancing, beating their drums, blowing their whistles, shaking their rattles in a great burst of joyful gratitude.

Finally as the earth under their feet was churned into mud,



**FIGURE 4.6** Pow-Wow on Poundmaker Reserve, July 1967. A variety of dances are performed at a Pow-Wow. They include the Chicken Dance (which must not be confused with the Prairie Chicken Dance), the Grass Dance, and the Round Dance. It is this type of secular dance that the Whites in the area are most familiar with since the dancers often perform at sports days and exhibitions. These dancers are competitive and aspire to have the most colorful costume and be the best dancer.

the great Rain Dance ended. Drenched and happy, they at last sought shelter in the painted teepees. (1959:33)

Dusenberry notes that rain making is one function of the Sun Dance (1962:186) and Mandelbaum says that "prayers for rain are a salient feature of every Sun Dance." (1940:270) Skinner states that the Sun Dance "was a supplication of rain for the public benefit". (1919:287) In Cadzow's words:

the "thirsty dance", sometimes called the "sun dance", was a supplication to Manito that He might cause rain to fall and the earth to provide an abundance of fruit and plenty of buffalo. (1926:89)

The occurrence of rain appears to be an indication that the communication between man and the Supernatural has been successful. Once Bonaise had quenched his thirst he went to his family tent and slept although normally he would stay in the lodge throughout the ceremony.

It is interesting to note that in the district there had been an abnormal drought all spring. This was the first rain and it fell in direct conjunction with native ceremonies.

The suspension of ritual activity during the rain indicates that features of the ceremony which have previously been emphasized are secondary to the essential meaning of the Sun Dance today.

#### 4.4 Central Features of the Sun Dance

The vital part of the ritual seems to be the pledger's vow and his fast and sacrifice. This is substantiated by the suspension of all other activities during the rain. The ritual meaning and symbolism of this religious activity remained as long as Bonaise kept his fast for the four days. The dancing, singing and ritual prayer in the lodge and in front of the spectators are not essential, at least in this instance, to the function of the ceremony. These aesthetically pleasing aspects, which have occupied much of the ethnographic literature on the Sun Dance, are not seen as the central part of the ceremony.

Another indication of the importance of the pledge as an entity above the ceremonial procedures is the fact that while the rationale of the pledge has remained constant since Jefferson's experience in the area, (see page 68) details of the ritual may vary extensively among the Plains Cree. One example is the use of the bison skull at the altar. The skull which I observed was undecorated and rested on a bed of sage, but sweet grass braids may support the skull; (Mandelbaum 1940:265) it may be painted and have the eye sockets stuffed with grass; (Skinner 1919:290) it may be painted red; (Dusenberry 1962:191) and in another instance the skull rested on a red cloth and the eye sockets were stuffed with sage. (Goddard 1919:303) Other variances of ritual elements include a carved or uncarved center pole, the option of raising the pledger with the 'nest' during lodge construction and the re-use of buffalo skulls now that they are a scarce commodity.

The disposal of the offerings is a further illustration of a change in

physical procedures with the meaning of the vow maintaining its integrity. The offerings are given by individuals to their Creator through the medium of the pledger and his Sun Dance ceremony. The vow is still fulfilled so it has functional meaning to the individuals involved but the manner of its fulfilment has been altered.

Just the offerings on the ground are distributed. The ones that are up on the sides and on the pole have to go to a clean place. They take them down right after the Sun Dance. Years ago they used to leave them up until they were rotten, but nowadays some half-breeds and whitemen go there and pull them off. The Indians don't like that. (personal communication Caroline Bonaise Aug. 3, 1968)

In former times the cleanest place would have been on the rafters of the lodge. This change in disposal procedure seems to be common since P. Goddard mentions that a similar change was initiated in Alberta when two Catholic nuns used some of the cloth left on an old lodge. (1919: 306) Today the offerings are made in the traditional manner but they are left to the Supernatural in a different way. Therefore the actual mechanics change before the underlying ideal.

The ni-pa-kwo-simo is the culmination of a long series of events beginning with the crisis, the pledge and the sending of "little tobaccos". There is the initial meeting, the four preliminary ceremonies and fasts and finally the four day main ritual. Throughout this time the main participants are constantly aware of their vow and role. The dancers and other people, once they learn of the ceremony, may pledge to sacrifice both food and material goods. The vow and the ensuing sacrifice are the key factors.

These aspects of the Sun Dance serve to remind the Cree of man's subordinate position in nature, the importance of cooperation, the value of generosity, sharing and self-sacrifice and the unity of the band and kinship groups. Such ideas have been passed on through the oral tradition and because they are more meaningful than the physical manifestations, they have survived the vicissitudes of history more intact.

It is apparent that the traditional ceremonials still persist and have survived over a century of legal, military, religious and secular sanctions aimed at the discouragement and eventual elimination of the Sun Dance which is a main expression of traditional religion.

## CHAPTER 5

### MAJOR FEATURES OF THE ACCULTURATION PROCESS ON LITTLE PINE

#### 5.1 Acculturation as Evidenced in the Sun Dance

The designation 'Sun Dance' is itself indicative of the acculturation process. The sun is important in Plains Cree cosmology and regulates their pattern of living and movement but it is most certainly not the prime object of worship during the ritual as the English name of the ceremony suggests. This particular name is held to be a misnomer which was derived from the Dakota words meaning "sun gazing dance". (Spier 1921: 459) As other tribes which had similar religious ceremonies were encountered, the term 'Sun Dance' was applied without qualification. This cultural innovation introduced through the medium of the Whiteman's confusion is particularly noticeable in the case of the Plains Cree where the direct equivalent in English for the aboriginal term ni-pa-kwe-simo-win would be "Thirsting Dance".

The adoption of the Thirst Dance ceremony was just one aspect of the acculturation process which occurred during the transition of some Cree from a Woodlands to a Plains group. According to Spier's trait distribution analysis the Cree learned the ritual from the Assiniboine. Spier maintains that the diffusion of the Sun Dance through the entire Plains area resulted from a series of historical accidents, borrowings and personal innovations. (1921:521) Bennett has discussed the role of the individual in change with specific reference to Spier's study of the diffusion of the Sun Dance. He states that Spier's analysis and

underlying approach . . . are essentially cultural. Although the individual may have provided the impulse in a specific contact situation, Spier makes clear the subsequent incorporation of the trait is a group phenomenon.

. . . . .  
 As we have shown, Spier was really interested in the type of situation that has since been generally called acculturation: the way in which traits are received and modified by another culture under certain types of contact. (1944:168-169)

The cultural change involved in the adoption of the Sun Dance from the Assiniboine will not be analyzed here, but it is mentioned in order to indicate that acculturation in terms of the Sun Dance is not limited to those variations due to contact with European culture. A further indication of change not directly associated with White contact is the use of the term paskwa-wi-niwak by the Cree on Little Pine. In Mandelbaum's data from interviewing informants in 1934 their self-designation was "river people", not "prairie people". Historically the Cree of Little Pine are very closely related to the "prairie people" or Cree-Assiniboine and it would seem that a more complete identification with the plains has been proceeding in recent decades.

Of the various restrictive sanctions imposed on the Sun Dance, the most notable were the tactics employed by the government. \*(See p.45 on the Department of Indian Affairs and the Mounted Police). I could not find any specific orders which banned the Sun Dance but there were certainly official pressures on the Cree to stop the ritual. An example is the following statement by the Acting Agent at Frog Lake the fall before he was killed by the Plains Cree of Big Bear. "I have prevailed upon the Indians to forego their annual Thirst Dance and I am almost sure it is a thing of the past." (Quinn, Sessional Papers 1885:86) Hayter Reed,

Indian Commissioner of the Northwest Territories also opposed the ceremony:

The Sun Dances are going more and more out of fashion and becoming less objectionable in character. It is to be hoped . . . [with] the discouragement . . . of these objectionable dances they will not long survive. (Sessional Papers 1889:131)

At File Hills the Sun Dance was not permitted by the department and visiting Indians were removed from the reserve as trespassers. (Sessional Papers 1897:179) Robert Jefferson, an employee of Indian Affairs, was very explicit:

Until the year of the Rebellion, this was an annual affair, though objected to by the authorities, since it brought the Indians together, and increased the chances of massed insubordination. After the rising was quelled the dance was forbidden, ostensibly as cruel, although in answer to this reason the Indians "cut out" everything but the apparently innocent fasting and dancing. At the present day, when undertaken at all, the ceremony takes place where the unsympathetic eye of authority will not be offended. (1929:40)

This supports Mandelbaum's data which indicates that Fine Day experienced some difficulty in fulfilling his vow to give a Thirst Dance. (1940:316) Abel Watetch has described the imprisonment of Chief Payepot of the Qu'Appelle Valley Cree following the ritual torture of 20 youths on the Payepot Reserve in 1899. (1959:42-45) He also describes the attempt by Indian Commissioner Graham and the R.C.M.P. to prevent the bands from gathering at a Sun Dance on Payepot Reserve following the return of several W.W. I. veterans who were band members. (1959:46-47)

For more than a quarter century the government actively discouraged the Sun Dance for several reasons: the Whiteman judged the torture

ceremony to be inhumane; travelling to Sun Dances conflicted with the ideal of a sedentary agrarian economy; survival of traditional ceremonials would inhibit the conversion of Indians to Christianity and serve as a distracting influence on those Indians already missionized. Perhaps the most important reason was that of preventing the travel and subsequent gathering of great numbers of Indians in one location. It is much easier to control an underprivileged minority if they can be effectively fragmented into small geographically isolated units, prevented from coordinated action. The revival of the Sun Dance did not occur until the northwestern plains were completely settled, the Indians were ingrained in a relationship of dependence to the federal government and there was little threat of the Sun Dance becoming an organized focus for political action.

Today the Sun Dance is again becoming a focal point of identification for people of Indian ancestry. Its present day revival among the Montana Cree has been shown to be an integrating force for the Rocky Boy Cree, including those who normally live off the Reserve. In addition Dusenberry states that the ceremony on this particular Reserve has become a place of pilgrimage for other Indian tribes who no longer practice the Dance. (1962:230-31) On Little Pine there were people who had travelled over 200 miles to participate in the 1968 Sun Dance, some coming from Montana and others from Alberta. Modern transportation has increased the distance that people will travel specifically to attend a Sun Dance. Also, as in traditional times, the Cree and the Assiniboine in the Battlefords agency attend and participate in the Sun Dance of the other tribe.

A point is to be made in relation to the differential participation of

age groups in the ceremony and the implications of the acculturation process for this aspect of the Sun Dance. The elder men who are wise in the ways of the traditional religion almost exclusively conduct the ceremony and assume the important positions. Younger men have relatively minor roles and their duties are often delegated by the "special old people". One of the traditional roles for young men was in the torture element of the ceremony which no longer exists, since after the period of prohibition the dance was revived without this feature. (see quote from Jefferson, p. 101) The Plains Cree in adapting to the pressures of the larger society omitted the bona fide role of the young men who had submitted to the ritual torture which was thought to make them steadfast warriors. Also with the establishment of the reserve system, inter-tribal warfare was eliminated and therefore preparing the young men for war was no longer a function of the Sun Dance. Moreover, young men now commonly participate by giving cloth offerings which they have purchased whereas in the old days, bachelors who had no women to prepare hides and quilts to be offered often used torture in lieu of these material offerings to the Supernatural.

Although today the young man's role has been altered, this will not militate against the survival of the Sun Dance--it merely indicates that many individuals will not become actively involved in the Dance until a later age. The young men will not usurp the rights of the elders to perform the key roles and therefore to the casual observer it would seem that the tradition is being perpetuated by a few old people while neglected by the young. However I have observed young men participating in the prac-

tical (though perhaps ritually insignificant) roles in the Sun Dance. Also they are very observant of the ritual behavior of the elders. I would postulate that once this generation of old people is gone the next generation of old people will carry on the ritual. It will no doubt be modified from the ritual of a hundred years ago and from the ritual of today, but the elements that are important to the people will be perpetuated and the ceremony, however modified, will be recognizable as part of the Indian religion.

There has been some incorporation of Christian elements into the religion of the Plains Cree but these do not dominate the Sun Dance ceremony. Rather they have been incorporated without essential contradiction, and in those instances where incorporation has been impossible the Cree point out the difference in their belief and how it may be superior to White practices. (They always refer to "White religion"—never to Christianity.)

A distinct indication of European contact is revealed by the use of the term "God" in some instances. The following response illustrates that God may be visualized as equivalent to the Cree Kisi.manto.. I had questioned the pledger of the 1968 Sun Dance about the motivation for his vow; he replied:

That's when someone is sick or something and we promise God that we will build Him a Sun Dance, fast, sacrifice and all that . . . you know for God. We don't worship anything but God. I have heard people say that we worship something else, but we don't worship anything else, we worship God. (personal communication June 24, 1968)

While Bonaise has incorporated the idea of "God" from White man's religion it is conceptualized as an equivalent of something already present in Cree religion before contact with White culture.

The Sun Dance functions as a definite reminder of an Indian's heritage. Moreover, Bonaise has a well justified belief that Whites do not understand or respect Indian traditions. (see p. 97 regarding removal of offerings from thirst lodge) He is also hesitant to allow Whites to come to the Sun Dance:

Whites can go to the Sun Dance if they don't come too close. They must believe in what we do and not make fools of us. Some White people go there without permission and walk around to try and see what is going on. They shouldn't do this. There are two servants there, special people to stop them from doing that . . . Whites must not come close; no pictures, or that. [indicated tape-recorder] I don't like that kind of thing at the Sun Dance. At the Sun Dance one just calls on God. All people from different churches come to the Sun Dance. I ask God for everybody, I am like a minister. I just want to dance and pray and bless everyone, children, everybody. I asked the police to come and stop the Whites with their liquor. Some young guys you know have come and made lots of disturbance. (Alex Bonaise personal communication June 24, 1968)

(I later learned that a group of young people had come uninvited from Cut Knife to the May preliminary ceremony and created a disturbance. On June 28 Mrs. Bonaise asked the R.C.M.P. to prevent a similar occurrence at the main ceremony. However, this problem of White harassment did not arise.)

Although the word "God" seems to have an equivalent meaning for the Cree Kisi-manto and the pledger has compared himself to a minister, his wife was emphatic in distinguishing between "White" church practices and Indian belief:

In the churches they go and collect the offering, but he [the pledger] doesn't want anything as a collection. When someone brings something like a nice piece of print it is for the offering and they put it up like the Whites do money. He [the pledger]

doesn't use it himself like the Whites. After they sew them up [tie them in a bundle at the end of the Dance] he goes and puts what those people gave in a clean place in the bush. He keeps absolutely nothing. Whatever he keeps [that is, those offerings not distributed to visitors] he has to put in a clean place. Its up to the person who brings the offerings to say whether they should be distributed to the visitors or given to God. He [the pledger] doesn't distribute the tobacco and print to the guests. Special old people do that. (Caroline Bonaise June 24, 1968)

The head assistant reiterated this difference between White and Cree religion and also clarified the significance of the distinction:

When a person comes to the Sun Dance with an offering they [pledger and assistants] pray for him from here. [indicated heart] They keep nothing of the offering, not like the Whiteman who prays for money. When you [Whites] pray like that there is no good prayers to God. The prayer does not have the true meaning as the Indian who prays from the heart. (Robert Bear, February 27, 1968 personal communication)

It would appear that Bear regards the Whiteman's prayer as shallow and insincere. Dusenberry states that the Montana Cree believe the Whiteman to be incapable of the same religious sincerity as the Cree:

The Sun Dance is for everything--water, good grass, good health. We pray for all the Indians at the Sun Dance, too--not just our own Cree. We pray for the white man and for the crops they have put in the ground. We ask the spirits to help make the white man's crops grow. The white man is smarter in a lot of ways than we are. But they don't know how to ask the Creator for things and get them the way we do. That's why we ask for help for the white man at the Sun Dance. (1962:223)

Bonaise also asks God to bless the Whites. (see above p. 61) In fact he told me that he has asked God to help the Whites to be at peace with and understand the Indian people. Bonaise believes sincerely in his manner of worship and like the Montana Cree he feels that he knows how to ask

the Creator for things. In December of 1968 he told me: "Look at her [his wife]; see how much better she is now. It is from my vow to sacrifice. I must make the Sun Dance this summer."

Some aspects of the Whiteman's religion may be definitely advantageous to the Cree of Little Pine and some people have utilized these functional matters fully. I refer to the institution of the church as it relates to the larger institution of the state which ultimately controls so much of the Indians' lives. The government, in order to legitimize the distribution of various payments associated with old age pension, family allowance and relief, often requires proof of the birth, marriage and death of individuals. This proof can be provided through Church records. For example, just recently an informant had to rely on the minister's record of his marriage in order to apply for a pension, since this was the only available document acceptable to the authorities which would establish the individual's age.

While the Indians utilize the secular aspects of the Christian church there is evidence that they do not want the commercialism in our society to exploit their religion. Walter Bonaise explained the rationale behind his father's refusal to allow recording devices at religious ceremonies:

If we let you tape our prayers or take pictures of our ceremonies maybe you'll sell them to the C.B.C. Then we are not Indians any more—everyone has them [prayers and ceremonies]. Some Indians in Alberta who do this [the Sun Dance] for Whites no longer have the real Indian religion. It is no longer real because they have sinned by allowing their ceremony to be used for such purposes. It is just like me—I would not dare start singing at the ceremonies. If I did maybe I would get sick or one of my parents would die. It would be the same if we let Whites use our Sun Dance in that way. It is O.K. if you come and believe in what we do. It doesn't matter what church you go to—we all worship the same God. That is why the Indian feels that he can go to any church. But if you come

just to take pictures you are not there because you believe in what the Indian people do and want to understand them. You will take them back [to other Whites] and show them just what those Indians on the reserve do and they won't understand. (February 27, 1968)

While the central core of the Sun Dance has survived very well in spite of the sanctions applied against the performance of the ritual, many of the secondary features of the Sun Dance have been altered under the conditions of culture contact with the Europeans. Buffalo skulls which were traditionally used for only one Sun Dance are now so rare that the same one is used repeatedly. A steer hide has replaced the buffalo hide and new drums are no longer made for the Sun Dance. Museums and private collectors have bought sacred items from the Indians when they needed money. The offerings have also changed: "Years ago people used to put up hides, nice clean antelope hides." (Caroline Bonaise July 8, 1968) Mandelbaum notes that in the past an individual would offer a finger joint or a piece of their skin, (1940:269) but today the offerings are usually manufactured cloth and ribbon. One old man said that he missed the beauty and movement at the Sun Dance grounds. "There used to be fine horses, now few people ride. There used to be fine beadwork and the women looked nice in their beaded clothes. The horses would be decorated too." (Thomas Favel July 17, 1968) Now the young men bring cars into camp sounding the horns to attract the attention of the girls.

There are other secondary features which reflect the acculturation process. The main ceremony for 1969 will begin four days after the full moon. It is planned so that the last two days fall on Saturday and

Sunday. (The Dance last year was on a weekend as well.) This is an adjustment to the seven day week of the European culture which recognizes the week-end as a time when work is stopped. In addition, it was noted earlier that the pledger takes his purification in the sweat house regularly on Sunday--another indication of Christian influence. The Sun Dance is planned for that time in the summer when the children are out of school and the families will be free to move to the Sun Dance grounds. Several people told me that this was a major factor in deciding the date for the Dance this year. The full moon is on June 29, but the Dance does not begin until the following weekend. The increasing reliance on the Whiteman's mode of transportation (while allowing people to journey greater distances) demands that the Sun Dance site be in an easily accessible location. The Sun Dance will be held on Sweet Grass this year since there are good sites there which are also near the grid road. All the sites on Little Pine are difficult to reach by car during inclement weather.

There are innumerable examples of acculturation in the Sun Dance such as the use of plastic, keeping a clock in the lodge and the wearing of everyday dress by the participants. A complete description of all such aspects would be tedious and distract from the analysis of the more significant acculturative features in the Sun Dance.

## 5.2 Other Major Features of the Acculturation Process

The presentation has previously pointed out that the aim of the incoming European society was to convert the Plains Cree to an agricultural people. Very early in the reserve period, economic sanctions were used to confine the Indians to the land. Money and rations were received only in return for adherence to farm life and the fulfillment of work quotas. Following the Rebellion, horses and guns were seized, rations reduced, (Jefferson notes that no aid was given to the Indians for a year after the Rebellion. 1929:159) and annuity payments discontinued. The government used this method to punish the Indians, even those who were too young to know what happened during the Rebellion.

The withholding of annuity payments is a form of punishment which directly affects every man woman and child implicated in the rebellion and is brought home to them with peculiar force every time they witness the receipt of annuities by those of their neighbours who remained loyal. (Dewdney, Sessional Papers 1888:189)

Dewdney's successor, Reed, later speaks of the move to civilization by the Indians and the necessity for an increase in government expenditures:

[The] sense of pride in their independence which prosperity is engendering among industrious farming Indians causes them to be much more chary than in the days when communist ideas prevailed about sharing their substance with their inpecunious neighbors, which has the effect of compelling the reluctant to put themselves into the hands of the government, to be trained, and as a necessary consequence be supported during the process. (Sessional Papers 1887:161)

Government policy to convert the people to farmers has been unsuccessful for a number of factors, among which are the scarcity of good land for Indian use, the lack of motivation for the Cree to become farmers and the

restrictions on economic expansion which the Indian's unequal status subjects him to. Dan Beveridge has completed an analysis of four Dakota communities in Saskatchewan and has shown their increasing dependence on governmental aid. (1964:126-7) The Plains Cree, as mentioned in Chapter 3, also experience a relatively low degree of economic independence. Hallowell, in his Ojibwa studies, has concluded that this kind of situation may result from the acculturation process which does not fulfill the needs of the individual in terms of providing new values and behavior patterns.

In the course of acculturation their personality structure has been skewed in a nonintegrative direction, instead of being reconstituted. One of the reasons for this seems to lie in the fact that, despite many outward manifestations of acculturation, no substitute for the value system of the old culture is psychologically functional. (1955: 359)

This has been illustrated in the considerations of both economy and religion where the Plains Cree, in many cases, have alternate values to those in White society and thus cannot accept the total cultural system of that society. One informant said:

Most Indians want to live like an Indian and not like the Whites. The Whites won't accept the way the Indian wants to live. They won't understand it either. The Indians don't hate the Whites but they don't like them either. (personal communication Thomas Favel June 17, 1968)

A significant feature of the acculturation situation is the evidence of White prejudice as outlined to some extent in Chapter 1. In reference to this problem an informant (who wishes to remain anonymous) put forth the following interpretation:

It's mainly the White women who make trouble for the Indian people, especially for Indian women. They often laugh and point fingers at Indian women walking on the street in town. I don't know why they laugh at them, maybe it's their long dresses and braided hair--maybe it's because lots of Indian women are big--but whatever it is they still laugh at them and it's not nice. Except for the odd case Indian women don't like White women at all, and a lot of them don't like White men either, unless they're drunk.

This is common in other contact situations between European-like cultures and aboriginal peoples. When White women come to a frontier they immediately sharpen cultural differences and enforce negative stereotypes because they often see the female members of the other society as possible competitors and therefore as a threat to the integrity of the social, cultural and biological characteristics of their own group.

White prejudice is again illustrated in their treatment of the Indians as inferior people to be taken advantage of. This can be illustrated in terms of official policy of the Indian Affairs Department. Under the heading of "Every Economy Practiced" Hayter Reed Indian Commissioner N.W.T. stated, "the work of Indians for which lower wages are paid being largely substituted for that of White men at agencies and reserves [has cut expenses]." (Sessional Papers 1890:162) Settlers in the Cut Knife area have also taken advantage of the Indians, as illustrated in this conversation with a farmer who settled in the area in 1925:

In the early days [c. 1925-40] the Indians needed something more to eat than they do now. Lots of times the Indians were quite hungry and people in the district would take advantage of that fact. Instead of buying a load of wood from the Little Pine people of nine square feet for a dollar, they would maybe haul twenty square feet for the same price. If the Indian questioned them then the fellow just said, "I'll go to the next Indian. There is a lot of wood and lots of other woodcutters." Farmers used to over-charge Indians for their produce, like butter and eggs. Butter could

retail at fifteen cents a pound but the people would charge the Indian thirty-five cents. . . . I believe that the Indian thought he would be pretty smart if he could put something over the White man because he was so used to the White man putting something over him. People took advantage of the Indian in the early days. The Indians weren't figured to be equal--they were just someone to take advantage of. (Wilfred Freedy June 18, 1968)

Thus we see the development of the attitudes represented in Section 1.5 which, in the negative sense, have restricted the Indian's acceptance into White society and, in the positive sense, have maintained his Plains Cree society as a viable entity.

This study only establishes some fundamentals for an understanding of the acculturation of the Little Pine Cree. The most important areas to be investigated now is in the sphere of reserve-society relationships and the effects that differential participation in two opposing cultural systems might have on the Plains Cree people. While aspects of Plains Cree culture are rapidly changing and the pressures of society antique some traditional practices, the Cree will in all probability remain a discrete group with characteristic cultural traits that distinguish them from and prevent their assimilation into the cultural mosaic of White society.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.1 Summary of Conclusions

Some data presented in this study emphatically stresses the necessity for better cross-cultural relationships between the two peoples in contact, Cree and Euro-Canadian. This study has outlined some of the historical considerations that must be appreciated and some aspects of Cree culture change that should be emphasized in order to fully understand the implications of the contact process upon the development of the "Indian problem".

Cree people adopted Plains culture traits through the primary stimulus of four important factors; the economic pressure of the fur trade, the advent of the horse, the introduction of the gun, and the abundant bison herds. Through their allies, the Assiniboine, they obtained the knowledge necessary to live in the Plains life-style (including the Sun Dance). This transition to the plains indicates that acculturation is not always disruptive and that the Cree made the transition through self-determination, since they found Plains life to be quite congenial.

The arrival of large numbers of Whites on the plains resulted in the elimination of the bison, thus destroying the basis for economic independence of the Plains Cree. This, in addition to disease and the settler's desire for land made the confinement of Indians to reserves as government wards inevitable. Attempts to graft a foreign economic system on the culture of the Plains Cree failed, primarily because they did not have

a tradition of agricultural behavior, and secondly because instruction, facilities and resources to aid the Indian in his transition were inadequate. As a result of their condition (which bordered on starvation) and the government myopia in regard to their grievances, the 1885 Rebellion erupted, in which the Indians played a prominent role.

I have established the historic, geographic, and numerical priority of Plains Cree involvement in the uprising and their ability to act independent of Metis leadership. The Rebellion was quickly suppressed because the native leaders did not really desire full scale war and in several instances failed to follow up a strategic advantage. However, the uprising became a source of justification for the imposition of restrictive sanctions upon the Indian and his customs.

The Plains Cree culture has never recovered from the series of major disruptions caused by the encroaching White civilization. In the case of the Little Pine Cree, the economic potential of local resources or employment is very meagre and integration is to a great extent an undesirable alternative to the dependence on government agencies. The trend toward large farms in the surrounding community, the extreme financial requirements for private enterprise, legal barriers inherent in Indian status, lack of valuable resources and decreasing employment opportunities because of mechanization stimulate no optimism that economic independence for the population of Little Pine Reserve can be established on the local level. Assimilation is not desirable to many since it would mean sacrificing cultural ties with the reserve society--Euro-Canadian society could not accept the Indian unless he behaved in conformance with their value system.

Therefore the forces that function in part to maintain a distinctively Cree culture still exert a successful appeal and provide a source of identity for the people.

The traditional religion is still viable on Little Pine and the Sun Dance has been investigated in detail to illustrate its distinctively Indian composition and to provide further ethnographic clarification on this aspect of Plains Cree culture. For example, in reference to this last point the preliminary ceremonies are seen to be more complex and meaningful than previously recorded by authorities on the Plains Cree. The Sun Dance is seen to involve many individuals in various roles, and the rationale has remained unaltered while the more physical features of the ceremony, (which are also more susceptible to the forces of acculturation) have been changed.

The long rain caused the suspension of many activities in the Sun Dance and established the central features of the ceremony as very distinct from the observable physical manifestations of worship. The vow, the sacrifice, and communication with the Supernatural are the important elements--too often in the study of the Plains Sun Dance the details of how these aspects are carried out have been overemphasized.

The Sun Dance is itself indicative of the acculturation process involved in the transition of the Cree to Plains culture. Although in the subsequent acculturation situation with European culture there were restrictive sanctions against its performance, the ceremony has survived, keeping intact the underlying meaning of communication with the Spirits. The differential participation of age groups at first seems to indicate

that the Sun Dance will not survive much longer but it has been shown that, in spite of this, the ritual will continue, not unchanged but still recognizable as Cree religion, keeping those elements which are significant to the next generation. The ability to achieve true communication with the Supernatural, the absence of commercialism, the true material sacrifice, and the identification the ritual has with Cree culture will act to perpetuate the Sun Dance in some form on this Reserve. These factors would also militate against the successful establishment of White religion in the group.

I would conclude that the survival of traditional religion, the problem of economic independence and the existence of prejudice and discrimination will prevent the successful large scale assimilation of the Plains Cree into Euro-Canadian society. There will be a Plains Cree culture for many decades--it may not be the same as it was 100 years ago or as it is today, but it will be distinctively Indian.

#### REFERENCES CITED

- ANDERSON, FRANK W.  
1949 Louis Riel patriot and rebel. Unpublished manuscript, Shortt Library of Canadiana, University of Saskatchewan.
- BARNOUW, VICTOR  
1950 Acculturation and personality among the Wisconsin Chippewa. *American Anthropologist*, Memoir 72.
- BEALS, RALPH  
1962 Acculturation. *In* *Anthropology today: selections*. Sol Tax, ed. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- BENNETT, JOHN W.  
1944 The development of ethnological theory as illustrated by studies of the plains sun dance. *American Anthropologist* 46:162-181.
- BEVERIDGE, D.M.  
1964 The socio-ecological correlates of economic dependence in four Dakota (Sioux) communities in Saskatchewan. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan.
- CAMERON, WILLIAM B.  
1926 The war trail of Big Bear. Toronto, Ryerson Press.
- CADZOW, DONALD A.  
1926 Peace pipe of the Prairie Cree. New York, Heye Foundation, *Indian Notes Museum of the American Indian* 4:271-180.  
1927 Smoking tipi of Buffalo Bull the Cree. New York, Heye Foundation, *Indian Notes Museum of the American Indian* 4:271-280.
- CHANCE, NORMAN A.  
1965 Acculturation, self identification and personality adjustment. *American Anthropologist* 67:372-393.
- COCHIN, LOUIS REV. O.M.I.  
1927 Reminiscences. Battleford, Canadian North-West Historical Society Publications, Vol. 1, No. 2.
- DUSENBERRY, VERNE  
1962 The Montana Cree: a study in religious persistence. Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell.
- EWERS, JOHN C.  
1955 The horse in Blackfoot culture with comparative material from other western tribes. Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office.

## GODDARD, PLINNEY EARLE

- 1919 Notes on the sun dance of the Cree in Alberta. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 16:295-310.

## GOLDFRANK, ESTHER S.

- 1945 Changing configurations in the social organization of a Blackfoot tribe during the reserve period. Seattle, American Ethnological Society, Monograph 8.

## GOODENOUGH, WARD H.

- 1963 Cooperation in change. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

- 1879-1900 Sessional Papers. Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs. Ottawa, Queen's Printer.

- 1889 Descriptions and plans of certain Indian Reserves in Manitoba and the North West Territories 1889. Unpublished Surveyor's Reports, Saskatchewan Archives, University of Saskatchewan.

## GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

- 1960 Submission to the joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Indian Affairs. Regina.

## HALLOWELL, A. IRVING

- 1952 Ojibwa personality and acculturation. In Acculturation in the Americas, proceedings and selected essays of the XXIXth International Congress of Americanists, Sol Tax, Ed.

- 1955 Culture and experience. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.

## HASSE, F. R.

- 1969 Sun dance. In R.C.M.P. Quarterly, Vol 34 No 4 54-55.

## HAWTHORN, H. B. (ed)

- 1966 A survey of contemporary Indians of Canada. Ottawa, Queen's Printer.

## HERSKOVITS, MELVILLE J.

- 1938 Acculturation. Gloucester, Peter Smith.

## HOEBEL, E. ADAMSON

- 1960 The Cheyennes. San Francisco, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc.

## HORNADAY, WILLIAM T.

- 1889 The extermination of the American Bison. In The Report of the National Museum 1886-87. Washington, Government Printing Office.

## INNES, CAMPBELL (ed)

- 1926 The Cree rebellion of '84. Battleford, Battleford Historical Society Publications, Vol 1, No 1.

- INNIS, HAROLD A.  
1956 The fur trade in Canada, revised edition. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.
- JACKSON, W.H.  
1887 Report on matters in connection with the suppression of the rebellion in the North West Territories in 1885. Ottawa, McClean, Roger & Co.
- JEFFERSON, ROBERT  
1929 Fifty years on the Saskatchewan. Battleford, Canadian North-West Historical Society Publications, Vol. 1, No. 5.
- JOFFE, NATALIE F.  
1940 The Fox of Iowa. In Acculturation in seven American Indian tribes, Ralph Linton, ed. Gloucester, Peter Smith.
- KING, RICHARD A.  
1967 The school at Mopass: a problem of identity. San Francisco, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc.
- LANE, CAMPBELL  
1886 The sun dance of the Cree Indians. The Canadian Record of Science 2:22-26.
- LEWIS, OSCAR  
1942 The effects of White contact upon Blackfoot culture. Seattle, American Ethnological Society, Monograph 6.
- LOWIE, ROBERT H.  
1956 The Crow Indians. New York, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc.  
1963 Indians of the plains. New York, American Museum of Natural History.
- MANDELBAUM, DAVID G.  
1940 The Plains Cree. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 37:163-316.
- RADIN, PAUL  
1957 Primitive religion. New York, Dover Publications.
- REDFIELD, ROBERT, LINTON, RALPH, and HERSKOVITS, MELVILLE J.  
1936 Memorandum for the study of acculturation. American Anthropologist 38:149-152.
- SHIMPO, MITSURU, and WILLIAMSON, ROBERT  
1965 Socio-cultural disintegration among the fringe Saulteaux. Saskatoon, University of Saskatchewan Extension Division.

SPICER, EDWARD H. (ed.)

1952 Human problems in technological change. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.

1961 Perspectives in American Indian culture change. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

SPIER, LESLIE

1921 The sun dance of the Plains Indians: its development and diffusion. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 16:451-527.

SPINDLER, LOUISE S.

1962 Menomini women and culture change. American Anthropologist, Memoir 91.

STANLEY, GEORGE F.G.

1960 The birth of western Canada. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.

STONEHOUSE, H.B. and TURCHENEK, L.W.

1969 Soil survey of the Little Pine and Lucky Man Indian Reserve No. 116. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Institute of Pedology.

SKINNER, ALANSON

1919 The sun dance of the Plains Cree. Anthropological papers of the American Museum of Natural History 16:283-293.

WAGLEY, CHARLES, and HARRIS, MARVIN

1958 Minorities in the new world. New York, Columbia University Press.

WATETCH, ABEL

1959 Payepot and his people. Saskatoon, Modern Press.

WISSLER, CLARK

1914 The influence of the horse in the development of plains culture. American Anthropologist 16:1-25.

1936 Population changes among the northern plains Indians. Yale University Publications in Anthropology 1:1-20.

#### GENERAL REFERENCES

These additional sources, not specifically cited in the text, have also been consulted.

BARNETT, H.G.

1953 Innovation: the basis of cultural change. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc.

BLISS, J.M. (ed.)

1966 Canadian History in documents 1763-1966. Toronto, Ryerson Press.

BOULTON, MAJOR

1886 Reminiscences of the North West rebellions. Toronto, Grip Printing and Publishing Co.

BRODIE, NIEL

1932 Twelve days with the Indians. Battleford, The Saskatchewan Herald Printing Office.

BUDD, A.C.

1957 Wild plants of the Canadian prairies. Ottawa, Queen's Printer.

BUNGLER, ONE OF THE

1887 Reminiscences of a bungler. Toronto, Grip Printing and Publishing Co.

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

1886 Department of Militia and National Defense. Report upon the suppression of the rebellion in the North West Territories and matters in connection therewith in 1885. Ottawa, Queen's Printer.

1886 Department of Justice. Trial documents of matters concerning the North West rebellion of 1885. Ottawa, Queen's Printer.

GOWANLOCK, THERESA, and DELANEY, THERESA

1885 Two months in the camp of Big Bear. Parkdale, The Parkdale Times Printing and Publishing Office.

HOSPITAL STAFF CORPS MEMBERS

1886 The medical and surgical history of the Canadian North West rebellion of 1885. Montreal, John Lovell & Son.

INNES, CAMPBELL (ed.)

1931 Alberta field force of '85. Battleford, Canadian North West Historical Society Publications, Vol 1, No. 7.

- LAURIE, R.C.  
1935 Reminiscences of early days in Battleford and with Middleton's column. Battleford, The Saskatchewan Herald Printing Office.
- LAVIOLETTE, GONTRAN, REV. O.M.I.  
1944 The Sioux Indians in Canada. Regina, Marion Press.
- MASON, LEONARD  
1967 The Swampy Cree: a study in acculturation. National Museum of Canada Anthropology Papers 13.
- MIDDLETON, FRED  
1948 Suppression of the rebellion in the North West Territories of Canada in 1885. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.
- MORRIS, A.  
1880 Treaties of Canada with the Indians of the North West Territories. Toronto, Belford, Clarke & Co.
- NELSON, H.S.  
nd. Four month under arms. Nelson, The Nelson Daily News.
- PEESO, F.E.  
1912 The Cree Indians. The Museum Journal, University of Pennsylvania 3: 50-57.
- ROGERS, EDWARD S.  
1962 The Round Lake Ojibwa. Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum, Occasional Paper No. 5.
- SKINNER, ALANSON  
1914 Notes on the Plains Cree. American Anthropologist 16: 68-87.
- WALLACE, ANTHONY, F.C.  
1966 Religion: an anthropological view. New York, Random House.
- WATKINS, E.A. REV.  
1938 A dictionary of the Cree language. Toronto, Church of England.