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SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: CHIPEWYAN
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
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INTERVIEWER: RAY MARNOCH
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD
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NOTE: This has been copied from the summary of the interviews because the material on the tapes is too disjointed to be useful. An index is not required.

INTRODUCTION:

Magloire Maurice of Ile-a-la-Crosse bought furs from people. He was a crooked guy who while working for the H.B.Co. travelled to Patuanak and north. His sister, Couronne Maurice was Joe's wife's aunt. Joe's father, Alec Bag, stayed at Clear Lake (Churchill Lake) where used to be church and lots of houses. Many died from sickness so kids left for Turnor Lake. Baptiste and Jacques Sylvestre, Louis Morin, and Leon Maurice came but Joe Bag and Gilbert Darcier first to live at site. Previously there were 30 families at Clear Lake, the ones who died stay across the lake at the graveyard. The priest at Clear Lake was Father Clement who stayed there 11 years; when he got sick spent time in Saskatoon, then returned to Ile-a-la-Crosse. Father Morrow lived and died at Patuanak.

MAN EATEN BY BEAR

A man who had a cabin on the Clearwater R. found gold. In the fall he came from Big R. by canoe and truck to Ile-a-la-Crosse then used little canoe to Buffalo where he asked 2 men to help him. They helped him to the portage at Wasekamio Lake. He travelled to his Clearwater R. shack from there alone. Not long after a plane brought his grub.

He stayed 3 years alone. Every spring he'd take his gold to McMurray and Edmonton. One year never showed so McMurray R.C.M.P. radioed the R.C.M.P. in Ile-a-la-Crosse so police contacted Joe for information. No one had seen that man so Joe agreed to go with policeman to search for him.

They took a big boat full of grub to the portage then portaged a small canoe over to the Clearwater R. They both put on moccasins for the bush, took a little tent and a pack. Soon the policeman yelled, "Wait Joe". His feet were sore because of moccasins so he put his boots back on.

The R.C.M.P. was afraid of the small canoe in the water. So Joe told him how to sit. They went down river 1 mile from portage to rapids but couldn't find the man's cabin even though he told Joe once that he lived there. They looked all over.

One time the R.C.M.P. mistook an otter road for a man's path. Soon Joe saw some cut jackpine and a canoe-stand but no canoe. They thought he had drowned in the rapids but went to look for his house anyway. After R.C.M.P. gave Joe a revolver and made him a policeman too, they walked up the path 1 mile. The R.C.M.P. figured it was too far from the river but mile further on Joe found man's shack.

The R.C.M.P. knocked then went in. Came out and looked all around. Then called Joe to come in. They found a blanket down by the shore so Joe thought bear pulled the man down there. In the blanket Joe found one bone and knew that's what happened. In the cabin there was an earth floor, bed and table. The man's clothes were covering the sand and in a big pile on floor. Joe figured he died and smelt so the bear broke in the shack and hauled the body out. One time a white man died and left a book (diary) so Joe wanted to look for that there. By using a shovel Joe discovered a little black book in which the man had written everything.

He wrote of his trip from Meadow L. to Buffalo Narrows including where he camped and the number of days. He recorded the furs he caught and where. The policeman read it to Joe. The man wrote that in April he began to get sick.

That man had the flu. He tried boiling birch root and drinking it but it didn't help. That was a Cree medicine he learned. When the snow left he went to the river with his tent so people going by could see him but the next day he was too weak to go down. Got sicker every day. After 25 days he couldn't get up. Then his writing became poor because he couldn't move his fingers. The next day he died. Nobody saw him so he died of sickness; no one killed him. Then the bear took him outside.

Previously he wrote he had money inside his blue shirt pocket and the first person who finds him could have that and the \$15,000 in the bank. Joe looked where the bear tracks were all over, and the blue shirt with \$300 in the pocket along with a bank card was there. The policeman thought he was crazy to

have all that money and live alone in the bush. The diary said he made his money on the gold he found. Because this man had no relations the policeman said that Joe and him could split the money.

Joe went back to the shore and got a big box and collected all the bones he could find. (Tells a joke about finding the man's ass intact.) Joe buried the man's remains and the R.C.M.P. made a cross that was crooked. That officer took the diaries and gave Joe the man's new boots, socks and his furs, etc. in a bag. On the way back, they camped on the portage to Wasekamio Lake because of being weary. The R.C.M.P. wanted to read all the diaries but Joe just fell asleep. When it was dark the policeman heard footsteps so he took his revolver but found no one. At 1 a.m. he heard someone come again so couldn't go back to sleep. Joe woke at 7 a.m. but saw nothing. Made tea and coffee, picked berries until the policeman awoke. He told Joe he heard someone come to him at night. Joe replied because the

R.C.M.P. made a crooked cross the dead couldn't stay in his grave. Had he made a good cross, there would be no trouble.

After the two of them returned the R.C.M.P. took sick because of the bad smell and disease at that cabin.

The policeman, who's name was McLeod, promised Joe that he would withdraw the man's money from the bank and square up with him later. Upon returning from up north Joe found that McLeod had quit the R.C.M.P. and bought a store at Buffalo Narrows. McLeod promised to give Joe his half of the money when he came in at Christmas and for the time being allowed him to take all his grub free. Frank Norstrum freighted all that grub for Joe in Waite's snowbug.

Frank was going to Big Birch Lake (Careen Lake) where Joe had his cabin, to buy fish for Len Waite. Waite paid Joe \$30 to cut a winter road from Turnor Lake to Big Birch Lake with his cat. Waite didn't pay the fishermen much until 'Gook' Clark came to compete, then the price went up.

Joe first fished for Waite about 50 years ago. Joe is 84 this year. When Len Waite's boy, Richard, was young, Joe used to fight him for fun but now he's too old to match Richard.

After McLeod sold his store in Buffalo Narrows, he went to McMurray then to Edmonton with his family. He took that \$15,300 and Joe never saw him again. Robbie Fontaine told the R.C.M.P. about Joe, a story which motivated them to try and find McLeod. Recently they found him in B.C. and questioned him. He refused to admit there was any money in the man's account or tell the R.C.M.P. what the man's name was. Joe figured McLeod took the money and gold jewelry. Nobody has gone to that since. Joe would like to go back and see if he could find anything.

Thinking back Joe remembered an old lady who told about when Germany and French fought. First time they fought with just

guns and knives for 5 years. Stopped for 25 years, then fought again with planes, guns, etc., and quit again. Joe didn't fight at that time. His family stayed with his grandfather at Clear Lake then.

That old woman told of when the R.C. priest, who used to have his back to the people, turned around to face the people during mass. After that happened people didn't care much for church. It used to be that at Christmas and Easter people came from far up north to pray. The church was always full but now it's not like that. That old woman she told that this would happen when the priest turned around.

WHEN THE FRENCHMEN CAME:

The Cree were the first to find the French coming up the river. The Cree asked for guns to kill bad people. They went and killed the Chipewyans, took their furs and sold them to the French for guns, shells, and knives. The Cree chief captured a Chipewyan woman and forced her to tell where her people were. They found the Chip. camp and killed them for their furs again.

When the Cree party was at the Frenchman's house, the Chip. woman snuck in the back door. When the Frenchman saw her, he asked what kind of woman she was. She told of how the Cree were killing the Chipewyans with guns. Being surprised he took the Chip. woman in and refused any more shells to the Cree. The Frenchman asked the woman to take him to the Chips. In the spring they found a lot of her people. As gifts for the Chipewyan, the Frenchman brought guns, shells, and everything for them.

When the Frenchman convinced the Chipewyans that he was their friend, they accepted his gifts of guns, powder, shot, axes and files. The Chips were taught how to sharpen axes and knives, load and fire the guns. It was like the Chip. people were in school. The Frenchman said for them to tell all their people that when he came again he'd bring supplies like these for everyone. At time there were only Chipewyans all over, no Cree. Soon the Frenchman's partner came and stayed amongst the Chip. people. He recorded how the people lived so they liked him a lot. In the spring, the Cree found the Chip. camp and killed them all including the Frenchman. Two children got away and arrived at the French trader's house after a long walk. After hearing their story, he went back and buried the Chip. people, bringing his partner home. Later on when the Cree arrived with the stolen Chipewyan fur, the Frenchman played along, giving them dinner and commending them on their good catch. Finally the trader asked the chief and councillor who killed his partner. They didn't know. When he threatened the chief's son he confessed his father, the chief, had done it. Suddenly, the councillor ran off, jumped in his canoe and punctured the other canoes. Getting a canoe from the warehouse, the Frenchman followed, caught up to the councillor and shot him. The chief was hung also right away. When the Cree tribe arrived, the French were ready for them but there was no fight. The Crees admitted their chief was bad. After

that the Cree quit fighting with the Chipewyan people. Before that everyone used to fight each other. The Frenchmen were good men. They stopped all the fighting all over the country.

They used to bring the furs from McMurray, past Ile-a-la-Crosse, Patuanak, La Ronge all the ways for the H.B.Co.

Then the Revillon company came but the country was too small for two companies so the Revillon stores all over were given to the Bay.

When those two companies were in this country, people placed their fur in the middle of a circle. The H.B.Co. would make a bid, then the Revillon buyer had a chance. The highest bidder got the fur.

One year, the caribou came to Ile-a-la-Crosse, covering the country to 80 miles north. Everyone had good meat then. They made pound meat by drying the meat then pounding it into flour, then grease and a little sugar was added to make a tasty food.

At treaty time the people were given line for fish nets. The women made nets with 5" openings because there were big fish then. The fish were put in a house in the fall, 10 on a stick. 1000 fish were put up for a year and covered with sticks and left to freeze. The people ate potatoes, carrots, fish, a little flour. No kids wanted sweet stuff at that time.

TREATY DAY AT ILE-A-LA-CROSSE:

The people came from all over that first treaty time. The treaty man picked a chief from each village to speak for their people. The chiefs were given a special suit of clothes. King George's man came to make a bargain with the people. Said treaty people would get \$5 a year but the halfbreeds got \$1000 just once. The halfbreeds bought lots of grub and used their money in one day. There was no whiskey then. Whiskey only came recently when the road came.

Treaty Party: there were lots of dances, canoe races, and money. Later there was lots of food for the 1000 to 2000 people from Patuanak, Canoe Lake, La Loche, Clear Lake, and Turnor Lake. It was a good holiday because everyone was given money.

The Chipewyans and the halfbreeds had a tug-of-war with the Chips. winning. There were other fun games of strength. The strongest man turned out to be Raphael Young from Clear Lake. Everybody had great fun watching the matches. The treaty man took grub from the Bay and gave the people 2 ft. long salt bacon and 50 lb. flour. The R.C.M.P. there wore a red coat and stetson hat. There was no trouble so the 5 R.C.M.P. just walked around. A doctor was also there and gave medicine to the sick. The treaty men gave these things to the people every spring after that.