

Jean Baptiste “Tchehasaso” LaFond. (1853-1916)

Jean Baptiste Jr. was born January 25, 1853 at St. Boniface, the son of Jean Baptiste Lafond Sr. and Therese Arcand. His mother’s half sister, Adelaide was married to Alexandre Cayen (Kitowehow), the first Chief of Muskeg Lake and a participant in the 1885 Resistance. On December 4, 1876 at St. Laurent N.W.T., Tchehasaso married Josette Meutekumah (Archibuk).¹ He succeeded his uncles (Kitowehow and Petequahey) as chief at Muskeg Lake Reserve (Saskatchewan) from 1900 to 1914. It is understood that Tchehasaso and the other Muskeg Lake Metis participated in the fighting at Duck Lake during the 1885 Northwest Resistance and were on the west side of the river during the fighting at Batoche. After the defeat at Batoche they escaped to the Laboucane Settlement where they had relatives.²

LaFond’s grandson, John B. LaFond gives the following account of the formation of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation Reserve:

When they formed the reserve that year, 1876 ...they were going to make the reserve, there were only nine families that they had. And my grandpa’s family (J.B. “Tchehasaso” La Fond and his wife Josette), that’s my dad (Jean Baptiste born May 20, 1878, later married to Julie Gladu), and them, old Andrew (Andre born August 2, 1880, later married to Madeleine Greyeyes) and Jeremy (Joseph Jeremie LaFond later married to Nancy Letendré) ... anyway, they had no place, they were Metis people. At that time they lived on the road allowance, you know. And they asked him if they wanted to be treaty Indian: “Mr. LaFond, do you want to be a treaty Indian? We need one family.” “By all means,” he says. So he signed, that’s how come we’re treaty, see we have French ancestry.³



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¹ Baptiste Lafond Jr. appears as Band Member #60 on the Muskeg Lake Annuity Paylist of 1884. RG 10, Annuity Paylists, 1883-1887.

² Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, “Chiefs of the Petequahey Reserve,” muskeglake.com, 1991, 1994.

³ Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, “History of the Petequahey Reserve,” muskeglake.com, 1991, 1994. . Jean Baptiste, Andre and Jeremie were all born at St. Laurent on the South Saskatchewan.