

## **Eli “Isinamakan” Guardipee (Gariepy) (1857-1942)**

Elie Gariepy was born on May 31, 1857 at Turtle Mountain, the son of Jean Baptiste Gariepy (b. 1832) and Judith Cardinal. Elie is a grandson of Louis Gariepy (b. 1771) and Josephte Ducharme, a St. Francois Xavier Metis family.<sup>1</sup> Elie married Antonia Kataitsipitsaki, the daughter of Matusohn and Auetsipiaki on December 5, 1885 at Badger Creek Agency, St. Peter’s Mission, Montana. He was subsequently married to Sadimina, “Saddie”. They lived on the Pikuni Blackfoot reserve in Teton County, Montana. Eli was a tall blue-eyed Michif man. His Blackfoot name was “Takes Gun Ahead”. In the 1800 census he is shown living at North Bank, Upper Teton River, Choteau, with wife Mary Guardipee, sons John and unnamed Guardipee. In the 1904 census he is shown as: Eli L Guardipee / male / Head / age 47 / listed with wife Sadie Guardipee, sons Frank, Charles and William Joseph Guardipee, daughters Josephine, Louise and Agnes Guardipee. In the 1910 census he is living at Blackfeet Indian Reservation, Teton County, with wife Sadie Guardipee, daughters Louisa and Agnes Guardipee, son William Guardipee.



Isinamakan

(# 271, James W. Schultz Photograph Collection, Montana State University)

James Willard Schultz describes Eli in his book “My Life as an Indian”

The Pikunis and a few lodges of Bloods arrived soon after we completed the post, and came, too, one who was to become and always remain a close friend of mine, Eli

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Gariepy was a voyageur with the North West Company (1804, 1811-1820) and the Hudson’s Bay Company (1821-1824). In 1824 he retired to St. Francois Xavier where he worked as a blacksmith.

Guardipee, named by the Pikunis Isinamakan, "Takes Gun Ahead." He was of that family for which so many places in the north are named, as, for instance, the Guardipee Crossing of Bow River. He was but a year older than I; tall, slender, very intelligent, kind of heart, brave to a fault; and the most successful hunter, the surest shot that I have ever known.



Isinamakan, at centre.

(# 159, James W. Schultz Photograph Collection, Montana State University)

In 1878, Elie and the other Metis buffalo hunters at Cypress Hills wrote a petition asking for a special Metis reserve of land.<sup>2</sup>



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<sup>2</sup> Requesting a re-opening of the buffalo hunt between November 14<sup>th</sup> and February 15<sup>th</sup> each year and the granting of Metis "reserve" land (A strip of land 150 miles long along the American border beginning where the Pembina River crosses the border. This strip was to be fifty miles from south to north.