

## “Sam” Sinclair. (1926-2005)

Samuel John Jeremiah Sinclair was born at Slave Lake on November 22, 1926, the son of Alfred Sinclair and Agathe Courteoreille. Agathe’s mother was Isabelle Courteoreille nee Cardinal.<sup>1</sup> His paternal grandparents were Donald Sinclair and Madeleine Hamelin.<sup>2</sup> Sam was married to Edna Pierce from Drift Pile Reserve.

Sam lived at Slave Lake for the first 16 years of his life. From there, he joined the Canadian Army, where he served for 38 months. While in the Army, he was very active, not only in duty, where he travelled from England to Belgium and then to Holland, but he was also very involved in sports. Mr. Sinclair was Track and Field Champion in the 2nd Division in Holland, where he was competing against athletes that were in the British Empire Games and trained by persons who were in the Olympics. While in Holland, Mr. Sinclair earned the title of Middleweight Champion in boxing, and to this day, he and his son are the only Aboriginal persons to be inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame. Sam Sinclair returned to Canada, and began to serve the Métis Nation. He became president of the Métis Nation of Alberta in 1979, where he served for 8 years, and during this time he sat on the board of the Native Council of Canada. In addition to this, Sam worked for 25 years for the Alberta government, where his main focus was Aboriginal issues. Mr. Sinclair also sat on the board for the World Council for Indigenous Peoples, where he continued to travel to various third world countries such as Peru and Panama.

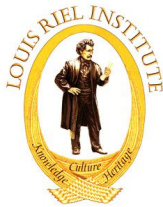


<sup>1</sup> Isabelle was born in 1862, the daughter of John Cardinal and Cecile Labonne. Isabelle married Michel Courteoreille who took Metis scrip in 1899. Scrip application reads “Courteoreille, Michel; address: Big Point, Lesser Slave Lake; claim no. 203; born: May, 1860 at Lac la Nun, Alberta; father: Alexis Courteoreille (Métis); mother: LaLouise Charle (Métis); married: November, 1874 at Lesser Slave Lake to Isabelle Cardinal, deceased; children living: 5; children deceased: 4; Michel Courteoreille, scrip cert. no. 426A; Harriet, scrip cert. no. 427A; Agatha, scrip cert. no. 428A; Henry, scrip cert. no. 429A; Colin, scrip cert. no. 558A; Julienne, scrip cert. no. 557A = Courteoreille, Michel; résidence: Big Point, Petit lac des Esclaves; no de réclamation 203; né: en mai, 1860 au lac la Nun, Alberta; père: Alexis Courteoreille (Métis); mère: LaLouise Charle (Métisse); marié: en novembre 1874 à Petit lac des Esclaves à Isabelle Cardinal, décédée; enfants vivants: 5; enfants décédés: 4; Michel Courteoreille, no de certificat 426A; Harriet, no de certificat 427A; Agatha, no de certificat 428A; Henry, no de certificat 429A; Colin, no de certificat 558A; Julienne, no de certificat.”

<sup>2</sup> Scrip application reads: “Sinclair, Donald; for his children; address: Lesser Slave Lake; born: October 1867 at Lac la Biche; father: John Sinclair (Métis); mother: Flora Hope (Métis); married: November 1884 at Lesser Slave Lake to Madeleine Hamelin; children living: Émile, Samuel, James, Marie Rose and Betsy; Madeleine Sinclair; address: Lesser Slave Lake; born: 1857 at Lesser Slave Lake; father: Baptiste Hamelin (Métis); mother: Suzanne Naywootahetohaywisk (Métis); married: November, 1884 at Lesser Slave Lake to Donald Sinclair; Madeleine Sinclair, scrip cert. no. 305A; Émile Sinclair, scrip cert. no. 306A; Samuel Sinclair, scrip cert. no. 307A; James Sinclair, scrip cert. no. 308A; Marie Rose Sinclair, scrip cert. no. 309A; Betsy Sinclair, scrip cert. no. 310A; claim no. 129.”

Sam Sinclair and Edna Pierce, his wife of 57 years had 6 children, 17 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

On December 5, 2005 Sam Sinclair from Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta, former President of the Metis Nation of Alberta and of the National Aboriginal Veterans Association, passed away in Edmonton Alberta at age 79. In 2004, Sam Sinclair was recognized with the Order of the Métis Nation in honour of his role in building and furthering the Métis Nation. Samuel John Jeremiah Sinclair was a track and field champion during his overseas service in Holland, and later a Middleweight Champion in boxing. Sam and his son Gordy are the only father-son duo, and the only Metis, in the Canadian Boxing Hall of Fame.



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell  
Coordinator of Metis Heritage and History Research  
Louis Riel Institute