

Moose Lake  
March 24, 1956

Mr. Foster Chalmers  
The Pas, Manitoba

Dear Foster:

Mrs. Lamb and I are down here for a couple of weeks visiting Jock and Carol. It is so restful and quiet compared to our busy Pas office, with two telephones ringing and travelers of all description in and out all day. I visit the cattle ranch every other day. Those forty calves and the hundred head of older stuff are much easier to look at at oat chop time than some of the impatient which men that storm around the office wanting to go to Noak Lake or Winisk or James Bay.

We thoroughly enjoyed the very pleasant evening spent at your house, even if Eric Law and Dr. Harwood did get into heated argument who has the best cottage at the lake.

I never get a chance to write any of my friends while in The Pas. In fact, this is the first letter I have ever written you. I have read all the magazines around here and at the Seven Bar L. Might get started on the Old Testament as we have only a bi-monthly mail here. Only having two winters schooling you will excuse the spelling and composition. If I had ever got out of grade three, I sure as hell would have been in grade four. Norman McKenzie also went to school here. My brother Eric says he remembers the day Norman went to school.

I must be getting better as I feel like doing something so will ramble along to you and call this letter "Land Marks in Memories".

I have the guest chair in the store, next to the big box stove and seated around every day are old timers all past sixty. How they love to talk of the past – York boat days to York Factory, steam boating to Prince Albert and Edmonton, the food they had, clothes, prices, how they buried their dead, prices of various fur, etc. etc. Edgar Buck is so proud of his blue card that the Blind Institute sent him. Jonah and Jacob freighted with Dad to Mafeking starting in 1902. Alex Sinclair reminds us every day he will be 90 years old in 1958. I think I would be getting a good deal if I could trade hearts with him right now. Talking their language better than I do English makes listening very interesting, especially when I remember many of the names of people Dad buried and smart Alex that he knocked hell out of. These stories always bring a hearty laugh, especially about Dad knocking hell out of a guy for stealing his grub box only to find out later he had the wrong man.

The fisherman are coming in from William Lake with stories that make my heart ache worse than ever – nearly a month and a half with over 200 nets to catch half the limit, 16 tons. They tell me they had small mesh nets in this whitefish lake. I wonder what pathologist or fisheries officer sanctioned this. I may be crazy, as Joe Nasecapow says, but I'm not stupid. They are also using small mesh nets in East Arm Narrows. That part of Moose Lake is a jumbo whitefish and trout lake, for God's sake let's keep it that way. One man from Winnipegosis fishes that part of the lake and throws away more fish than he ships for lack of proper transportation and ice.

Jock bought a little dog feed last winter for Harry Sanderson and others who have dogs. There are a few fish left kicking around, they showed me two whitefish and put them on the scales here in the store. One weighs 7½ ounces and the other weighs 8 ounces. I have these two fish a box outside. What will be left to spawn at the rate they are going?

Well Foster, I am getting away from “Land Marks in Memories”

Teddie Stevenson fished the East Arm in 1902. He had a camp three or four miles past the narrows toward Pine creek. He had ten nets and six men, he had 2250 winter boxes before Christmas, pay a visit to Teddie and he will verify this. Old Norman McKenzie had six nets a Bacons Island. Dad could not haul all the fish he caught one winter. Barney Anderson, Jimmie Olson, Dan McDonald and others hauled some 800 boxes of whitefish into the bush one winter at Olson’s Island, not enough teams on the road to clean up the lake. Jack Bacon and Joe St. Godard had a thousand boxes of large and jumbo white and trout before Christmas at Pickerel Channel one winter, now to catch a 7½ oz. whitefish is considered lucky. I fished William Lake from 1915 to around 1945 or thereabouts, I was the policeman on that lake and I would shoot anyone that slipped in anything smaller than 5 ¼ mesh. Well do I remember Albert taking me to one side and pleading for a 5 inch mesh, the fish would slip back into the basin hole as they were pulling the net, I would tell them that they would catch those fish next winter. This theory must have been right, we never took longer than a week to ten days to catch the limit. I will say we never had a limit on William Lake until the middle twenties, for ten years the limit was governed by how many teams of horses one could get and the severity of the winter. Some years we freighted this way to The Pas, then to Cormorant, then direct to Mile 55 H.B.Rly. I think I have cut as many roads as any man in Manitoba. The latest story is that the lake is short of fish feed. When you hear the story about the lake feed being depleted, beaver dams on William River, Fish dying off etc., I will go back to –

“Land Marks in Memories”

From 1902 until around 1910 or 1911, Dad had up to 52 teams of horses hauling frozen fish to Mafeking. Very coarse twin was used 15 and number 25 cotton, 5½ and 5¼ mesh. The first summer fishing was started in 1908. Captain Coffee built the first ice house at Moose Creek, several sail boats on the lake fishing right out here close to Moose Creek. Dad brought the first screw driven steam boat over the Grand Rapids in 1906. You can see the crown sheet of the boiler here in the bay in low water, also her two donkey engines. The Dispatch must have been a good boat. I can barely remember her but do remember Dad taking us boys for the odd trip to Cedar Lake and High Portage when he was freighting Sturgeon and caviar in ten gallon kegs. Sturgeon was five cents a pound and large dry caviar was ten cents a pound. George Asmus camped below the lower end of our Rat Ranch where he made caviar for Dad. The old S.S. Saskatchewan was a faster boat, stern wheeler she could deliver live sturgeon from Cumberland to High Portage – that’s quite a record.

I well remember Dad having two of his Honors T.A. Burrows, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, men out timber cruising one summer with the Dispatch. I was very small. Benny Dixon, who froze to death, was Dad’s engineer. We were at the Head River waiting for the timber cruisers that were looking at that big spruce bluff in the middle of my ranch. They used birch bark canoes inland, lovely timber, it burnt in 1928, Norman remembers when it burnt. Benny Dixon ran out of lub

oil and used beef tallow and sturgeon oil to lubricate the piston and rod guides. Dad said the lub oil those days was not much better than moose fat for oiling cold bearings.

T.A. Burrows was a crooked old chap, his men estimated over a hundred million feet of big spruce between here and The Pas, Traders Lake, Driftwood Lake, Laundry's Lake country, etc. The whole country was green those days, rabbits, lynx, etc. was the Indians bread and butter – never hungry. The greatest invention of all time was the rabbit snare. It kept our first Canadians in food from the beginning of time.

From 1895 to 1905 Dad made his yearly pilgrimage to Prince Albert with a bark canoe for his yearly supplies. He would have so many mink, fisher, otter, silver fox and martin for Sam Sanderson, who had a saw mill at P.A. that was for lumber for a scow, then so much fur for Basil Nobel and Fillion, general merchants for other supplies. Dad made a record trip one summer, 4 days and 3 nights from Prince Albert to Moose Lake. That's how he brought down the first cow, first organ for the Church and one for Mothers, single and double barrel muzzle loader guns, caps, shot in 25 pound bags, green tubs of black powder, raspberry jam in 7 pound wood pails. He also brought down one oak keg of coal oil for himself, large tallow candles, three winter coats made from heavy blanket cloth with three large rosettes in front. With care, they lasted three winters, blue leggings, assumption belts made in Scotland, plenty of hatchets or small axes, never any axe handles, traps and dog bells, colored braid, kegs of long stick colored candies, run in ten gallon pudgons, Two dollars a gallon, gimlets and awls, two handled rip saw for whip sawing lumber, wood planes and all the musical boxes he could afford to buy, three hundred pounds of flour was enough for the whole year as like the far north, this was not a flour post like today.

When they pitched off in, in the fall, Dad would give the family two pounds of flour. They would mix the flour with whitefish roe making a good bannock. This was more to keep the kids from crying in the canoes than anything else. Jews harps and fish hooks were a steady seller, nigger twist tobacco, also a better grade in tubs wound up like a rope sold by the foot.

A careful hunter could strap a piece of birch board on one side of this 8 inch bastard file using only one side of the file until middle of the winter, when he would take off the board, having a brand new file for the balance of the winter. Abraham Buck, who generally has the chair next to me, remembers helping his grand dad heat round stones in a big fire, then wrapping a green split willow around them, run to the lake where it would melt down half a foot, scoop out the water with a birch cup, then another stone, etc. Finally the last stone would drop into the lake. Now you a nice round hole for fishing or bobbing, very few ice chisel those days. Every narrows or point was good jack and trout bobbing. If you didn't have a steel hook, you soon made one out of a dry limb from a spruce.

Edgar Buck, with his big walking stick, illustrates shooting geese with a flintlock. Sometimes all you would get was fizz the first couple of tries. You had a little powder horn to grab and drop a fresh sprinkling of powder on. The geese were so plentiful coming in long flocks; it didn't make any difference if the first bunch went by or not. The double barrel flintlocks were very awkward to handle. If it started to rain, you had a piece of birch bark to cover flint and pan.

I was one of Bill Taylor's pallbearers the other day. Bill was short a few years of ninety, he told Eric and I when we visited him at Christmas. What a great shoot he and Dad had when they tore down the steeple of the old Church at The Pas in 1895. He said the darn old steeple was full of bats; they had their muzzles loaders and had lots of fun wing shooting bats. The steeple was made by Lady Franklin's men that wintered at The Pas enroute looking for Sir John. They have had a minister in the party to take such an interest in church work. They were slightly off course from York Factory to King William Land. If there was enough powder and shot to last, everyone had a pile of smoked geese and ducks for the winter. Peter Ballantyne says they would get low in shot and could kill ducks with a seven shot load with their 28 gauge muzzleloaders.

Well do I remember Eric and I freezing in a birch bark canoe on Traders Lake shooting ducks and geese with muzzleloaders. We would hang them up in the trees and later haul them with dogs on first ice. I can still hear the thump, thump of the ramrods pounding down the powder and shot with shaved willow bark, which made the best wadding, it had a certain amount of sprint to it. We lived from 1900 to 1912 across the portage two miles from here. It was our job to attend to the net in Traders Lake in the summer time. We never could pack home all the goldeye we caught, always had a long string of dogs following us through the long grass around to Weanusk Point. There were ten time more dogs here than people. Gilbert Weanusk and others lived at his point at the edge of the Lake. He had two wives; the stone fireplaces are still showing. Dad never discouraged polygamy in those days all good hunters and providers had two wives. I kind of like the idea myself. It was the Ministers that messed things up in later years.

I remember Bishop Newman from Prince Albert baptizing three old men at one time; old Four Persons was one of them. He took the name of John Miles as he had some that was baptized Robert Miles at Cedar Lake. Miles was the name of some big H.B.Co. factor. Funny how they got names. York and Severn and down the coast where I freighted last summer, have such names as Carpenters, Blacksmith, Captain, etc. all names form men aboard ship. There are a couple of funny ones, David Visitor, I guess that chap just went ashore to look around. I think the best one is Peter Minister who has a large family. I wonder how in hell the Anglican Church explained that one. I had a big black Indian helping me roll gas drums down at Tavanni, three hundred miles north of Churchill. I paid him Two Dollars and asked him what his name was; he answered Murdock McLeod.

Too bad I did not have brains enough to save or preserve a York boat that was down in the bay here as far back as I can remember. Moose Lake, Norway House and Cumberland House were the posts that made York boats for the summer brigade to York. Sam Baptiste Dorion died around 1930. He told me many stories about York boat days. He made 30 trips to York. That would be 30 years, one trip a summer. You had to spend four years rowing with these 14 foot oars before you were capable to become a steersman. Portage LaLoch above Ile a La Crosse is where they met the McKenzie boats. Old Sam Baptiste told me so much about the route from my childhood days that I almost knew every portage. When I saw that muskeg creek from Peter Pond Lake then the long portage into the White water River from the plane, I could see old Sam portaging his nine hundred packets which the nine men had to pack that would make about four tons per boat. Sam said they had lots to eat. There was scoop net on a pole sticking up in every rapids where they would stop and dry whitefish, lots of salt pork in kegs from York for coming West, then bricks of Buffalo pemmican at Buffalo Narrows and other western points to travel east on, plus what they shot traveling.

Old Sam Baptiste was married four or five times. His last wife was Jonah Tobacco's old widow mother. He was a short, stubby, thickset old chap, was blind for years before he died. He was built to handle three hundred pound on any muskeg portage,. Always happy and smiling, stuttered a little, always willing to tell stories about the York boat days to anyone who would listen to him.

Dad would ask him to take down his pants and show any new arrival at Moose Lake the long scar across Sam's belly. Then he would tell how it happened. It was not one of Louis Riel's men but a damn interpreter for the Northwest Mounted Police, all over a keg of rum at Batoche, west of Prince Albert in 1885. I would like to write lots about Sam Baptiste or he should have written a book or a long letter to you instead of me. I think I already told you old Sam made 30 trips from Peter Pont lake to York Factory as steersman or in charge of a boat with eight or nine men He loved and spoke of the Hudson's Bay Company. I was hard for him to understand there were other companies beside the Hudson Bay Company. He had several son/ not counting several scrubs all the way form Athabaska Landing to York Factory. I think he has one living yet. There Pierre, Baptiste, Romulus, Louis, etc. I wish they would name one of my grandsons Romulus.

Sam had the honorable distinction of paddling Albert Edward, as Sam would call King Edward VII, around the Selkirk marshes in a bark canoe hunting ducks. That was only about forty years before we came to Moose Lake. Dad said Edward VII visited Canada and the states around 1860. Sam said the King was dandy shot and had a lovely gun. It goes without saying Sam and his sons had an abiding affection for John Barleycorn.

Jimmy Settee was another old landmark along with John George Kennedy. They taught school and preached in the church, baptized and married Indians all over the north, Shoal Lake, Red Earth, Cumberland House, Moose Lake, Cedar Lake and North Arm Narrows on Moose Lake called the old Reserve. I think these two old cronies went to St. Johns College for a coupe of winters. They were possible picked up by the Rev. John Cochran. Quite a few old chaps at Moose Lake were baptized by Rev. John Cochran.. No wonder it is hard to make out their old age pension paper for them. Old Richard Ballantyne, who died in the early thirties said he well remember being baptized at the Pas by John Cochran. He said the Reverend baptized about thirty boys and girls at one time. I asked him could he give me any idea how old he was when was baptized. He said he was already shooting a gun and had bad ideas about young girls so that would make about fourteen. I entered all this verbatim in the long yellow application form and sent it in to Winnipeg. Very shortly, after that old Richard started receiving his pension cheque.

John George and Jimmy Setter were real good Wasakajak storytellers. Sometimes they would get all balled up in church like tangled fishnets; he said the evil spirit chased all the pike off the big hill into the red sea and they went "chimook". That is the noise the muskrat makes when he dives off a log. John George Kennedy was a big man, always smoked a big Peterson pipe about the size of a hen's egg, half chewing tobacco and half nigger twist. He was about the grandest storyteller I ever heard. Absolutely wonderful at a wake. Would say, now I can see this old man entering Heaven, etc. A good wake lasted three days in the wintertime and two days in the summer. They would take the body from one relation's house to the other – real good party.

John George would tell us about Rachel at the waterhole or other Bible stories. When Jimmy Setter left for Red Earth, John George had to wear his white surplus, which only came down to his fat belly. It was the only one between here and Prince Albert.

Mr. Lundy, a short little Londoner, with thick glasses was also a teacher and lay reader at Moose Lake. We have a lot to thank Mrs. Lundy for. She looked after us children when Hilda, one of my sisters, was born. I will always remember the big copper kettle of boiled rabbits she would feed us. She spoke pretty fair English always attired in a tartan shawl, a black velvet blouse and well made silk work moccasins. She had us in another house, tried to teach us to say Grace. I remember one day Mr. Lundy came across the portage to see Dad. He was in big trouble. The teamsters from Winnipegosis and Mafeking got him into a poker game and took eighteen dollars off him. This was the Church offering for the winter and the Bishop was coming down in July so Mr. Lundy was in one heck of a jam.

Grannie Pin'nan-ne-quaiio, might have been burnt at the stake had she lived in England. She was one of the doctors that would argue against white man's medicine. Whenever we could not find the horses, we went to Pinnanequaio with a pinch of tobacco or tea. She would cover up her head and mumble, then tell use where to find the broncs. I must confess that she really could tell us where to go, after looking several days for them. No one could beat her playing checkers until she went blind. Granny made or dressed up all the coffins at Moose Lake. The box would be covered with rosettes cut out of gaudy print and highly colored paper. The corners of the coffin would have bows of colored braid, the side covered with cut out design. People from all over would come to see the artistic work. She told Mother if ever she lost child that would really make a fancy job of the coffin.

When we had a weeks big wind and nets would wash up on the shore, people would go to her shack and bum cat tail roots which she always had a stored up supply. The center of the root is like fine flour or almost like a banana. You would strip off the outer material with your thumb, leaving this tender pure white inner fiber, darn good fired in fish oil all the same bannock. Granny was the basket maker. She would sell willow and birch bark baskets, also dandy mats made out of cattail reeds. No one ever left on a trip without giving Pin-nan-nequaio a little of something, even a worn out file for good-luck.

I remember Zaccheus buck and I leaving to kill moulting ducks and geese in August. "Kill them with a long stick" the old lady said she would give us a fair wind if I would give her a box of sulphur matches. I did not have any to spare. Zaccheus and I nearly drowned sailing our little canoe across the lake. A sudden squall blew up and we were both sorry that we did not fix the old woman up before we left. People would go to her for headaches. She would cut the temples of your head with a flint to make it bleed a little, immediately curing your headache. I remember by brother Laddie and I arriving at her camp at far end of Moose lake one winters night. I asked her if she could make laxative for us. She got out her medicine rogan, boiling up some kind of root, which tasted bitter. I was a little afraid of it so sipped it first, then took a bigger drink, then sipped it again, etc. Anyway in about an hour, I had to run to the nearest big spruce tree. That darn medicine acted exactly the same way as I took it.

Hearing about penicilyn, I have wondered if the old woman was close to it. In the spring the children would get scabies from possibly too much fat rat meat. She would grind up dry roots which made a salve as black as coal, I think one of the roots was from the poison wild carrot, however, she was famous for curing scabs around the kids ears. Love medicine has to made up in two lots tied up in a

small square of white deer skin. You had to get a piece of the victim's shawl or hair or get someone to steal a few beads from her basket. This all went into the concoction. The extreme tip of a perfectly formed and cemetricaly formed young spruce tree, a few burrs these burrs stick to the leg of your pants and are hard to get rid of, pieces of sweet root, etc. You had to drop one bunch of this concoction in front of the girl's teepee. When she found it, she would immediately know it was no use her trying to resist your magic any longer and the girl is yours. If a couple cannot have children, Granny could also look after this situation. One of the herbs she would grind up look something like a sweet potato with little arms and legs and miniature head on, along with mountain ash berries, etc. Take this every new moon, etc. If that does not work, someone gave them a baby, and right after that they would start having children of their own.

Grannie forecast all the storms, when the lake would freeze over and what week the Geese would arrive. These old people sure could tell the weather. Now that this Winnipeg bunch is handling the weather your never know what in hell it's going to do.

Pinnanequaio and other old women made all the rat stretchers out of willow. They had a little bar across the center to keep from spreading, a knife cut on each side held down the skin with inner willow bark string to hold down the tail and front part of the hide. They made them by the thousands. Fox and lynx stretchers and beaver stretchers all made out of willow. The fur dried very quickly, hanging up in long poles around their tents.

In 1902 the Hudson's Bay Co. and Dad paid four cents fro small rats, five cents for mediums and six cents for large. Lynx were from 75 cents to a dollar and a half for large. Mink up to Two Dollars for large prime pelts. Silver fox was the king of furs, up to \$250. In 1912, Bob Starrett, later of Hudson, Starrett Airways and others came through this country digging out silver fox pups, taking them down to Prince Edward Island which started the silver for farming. Dad generally had around a hundred thousand rats every spring, along with bales of fine fur. When he quit going to Prince Albert with his fur and outfitting for the winter there, Winnipegosis was where he freighted from. Birch bark canoes were line up with good packers and canoe men. Lower High Portage on Cedar Lake was a bad place, five miles of muskeg. Dad always had a little Morningstar on this trip he never wet a bale of fur. Moses Filkinstine bought Dad's rats one spring, paying him six cents average which was a good price right through for damaged shot, large, etc. The Mockingbird, Lotty S and other steam boats on Winnipegosis would come to the far end of Lake Winnipegosis, where Dad would load up, leaving his men at the portage 150 miles from up the lake. I think the Railroad passed Mafeking around 1899 or 1900. The town was named after Mafeking. The Boer War was on then, it lasted about a year, I think Colonel Baden-Powell was the boss over there.

Oats were 15 cents a bushel, good work shirt for fifty cents, whitefish three cents a pound delivered at Mafeking. They must have made money to have 52 teams of horses hauling 135 miles from Moose Lake. When the teams arrived or several dog teams with supplies, there was a good supply of Joe Seagram's Scotch Whiskey in wooden cases. They had sensible mickeys in those days in Manitoba, great big flat bottles.

As I said before, big John George was good story teller and lay reader. His deep voice always commanded attention. He knew more about the Boer War than anyone else. He had an inexhaustible line of Biblical sayings. When pouting him a drink in a tin cup he would say "My dear man, remember

the Lord love a cheerful giver". The next drink he would say "Thy cup shall be full and running over" according to the Scriptures, etc. Smoking his big Peterson pipe, he would tell us how bad the people were nowadays, why when Sally and me were married, I didn't know de man from de oman and Sally was de same.

I wish I could remember some of the ghost stories he told us, which I honestly think he believed himself. Upsetting in a rapids, his partner was drowned, they buried him on an island, for two nights they saw a man in a white gown walking over the rapids and along the shore about three feet above the ground. He told us "A lot of people don't believe dat, but it is true".

I never saw a train or fire sled until I was 12 years old. We boys couldn't figure out from John George's description, how they turned it around at The Pas. He came down the Saskatchewan River from P.A. one summer saying things looked bad. People were talking about local option in Saskatchewan and were singing a song around there that went something like this – It's a long way to Manitoba, where the brewery whistles blow – Goodbye Tome and Jerry, farewell Rock and Rye – It's a long way to Manitoba, when Saskatchewan goes dry. There was not such thing a home brew in those days, not until rat prices reached Two dollars. The halfbreeds came up here from the south and taught these people how to make a brew out of loose beans pim-ich-e-was-chan-e-suck, which means packing from the tie in the middle, that's what a bean would look like if it was big enough to pack on your back, moose-omany-e-suck was good name for prunes, they looked just like that if you spilled them on the snow. Some of the old white trappers I visit up north when flying there, make a good brew.

Old Jim Brooks at Barrington Lake always made a good brew, once in awhile he would get very sick, then he would pack his still down to the lake and throw it as far as he could, but I noticed he never threw it far enough that in a couple of months he would gather up the pieces and make another batch. Old Jim died a number of years ago on an island up there. He was found a couple of months later, he was in worse shape than Charley Playningshak who was dead in his cabin over a year before the Chipewyans found him. Charley's Lake is 150 air miles north of Brochet, which is over 300 miles north of The Pas.

Dick McDole was another chap that loved his drink. Dick was one of the co-discoverers of Sherritt-Gordon mines. He and Carl Sherritt trapped up there. Eldon Brown, manager of Sherritt Gordon Mines was always very good to these old trappers and prospectors. I think Dick got over Sixty Thousand Dollars cash payment from Eldon Brown, which did not last him very long. He went to Winnipeg but was back within the year, broke. Dick dropped dead shooting caribou, running too hard in the deep snow. I flew him out and had to break his ankles with an axe to get him in my plane, frozen stiff, we buried him in The Pas. Someone said he came from Oklahoma. I wish I had kept track of all the stiffs I have brought out of the bush and Barren Lands, some in good shape, some so bad you have to fly with the pilots window open, others just wrapped in brown paper.

Dick had a half breed girl friend at Sickle Lake camp. His shack was about a twelve by twelve. Clara had him off the lake and on poles off the snow outside, she had taken off his old greasy overalls and put a brand new pair on him. Bob Rathbone, Sargent in the RCMP, was with me. People said I traded overalls with Dick, but I blamed Bob. Anyway its rather a shame to burry a new pair of overalls. We had two stiffs in the plane that trip. Rev. Mr. Huty of Nelson House, who was trader and preacher



there for thirty years had one saved up for us, looked like murder. Nothing was ever done about it and everyone appeared happy over the verdict.

My dear Mother, fresh out from Portsmouth, England, must have found things very strange. She always talked of the good Indians, they never told a lie, had no occasion to do so, I guess. People cached their winter gear, such as snow shoes, traps, rat spear, dog harnesses and sleighs, etc. along the river banks, tucked up in a tree. No one ever touched a thing all summer. You cannot do that now. When Mother fed an old couple that would come across the portage to visit and trade, they would take any bannock, meat or sugar left over from the meal and wrap it up in their shawl. The custom was, if you placed that food in front of them, it meant that you gave it to them, so they took home what they could not eat, which was proper table manners not rejecting your offering.

One old couple had a half cup of prunes each, I guess it was the first time they saw prunes. The old man was littler nervous chap, he whispered to the old lady, they taste good, but I think there are stones mixed up in them. The old woman punched him in the ribs with elbow and whispered eat it, eat it, it's a gift so down went the prune stones.

They had already discontinued using the stick money when Dad was at Moose Lake in 1894. One Wataiee was about 50 cents. An Indian brought in his fur and was given so many sticks which represented so much value in trade. He would spread them out on a box or on the floor then start buying, so many sticks for a trap or knife, etc. This way they knew how far their fur went for barter. I remember when all money was 12 ½ cents, 25¢, 37 ½¢, 50¢, 62 ½¢, 75¢, 87 ½¢ and one dollar. Five dollars was called one great money. The old people today still call five dollars or ten dollars so many great moneys. I remember Dad questioning Oh-tag-go-moosis (christened Steersman) that he thought he had a little too much stuff and would have a hard time paying for it. The old chap said "Do not worry, Mr. Lamb, that's only a lynx and a marten and one small fisher.

Dad sold a double barrel muzzle loader for five great moneys, a single barrel, the kind that had the big clumsy hammer and wood reaching all the way up the barrel for three great moneys. Gun caps came in little round metal boxes of a hundred sold for 25¢. Black powder was 25¢ a pound. Powder was light and you got a lot for one pound. Shot was 12½ ¢ a pound and came in 25 pound canvas bags. Today pig lead in bars at the smelter is selling on New York market for 18¢ a pound with a lot of zinc thrown in. A powder horn, shot bag and your nap-peat bag was your outfit, always had a corkscrew affair that went on the end of the ramrod for unloading your gun in a hurry to reload with a ball and extra pinch of powder. If a caribou or moose trotted out of the timber into the swamp, a ball shot was quite accurate up to about 75 years, you could hear the ball hit a moose. Do not follow him, which made him scared and possibly run for miles. If left alone, he would lay down and stiffen up if undisturbed, bleeding from inside as they called it. You generally took off you moccasins going up wind as silent as a lynx walking in the bush. They always took out the ball and remoulded it again. Practically every particle of the Caribou and moose was eaten. All the intestines were carefully separated, mentioning each piece by its proper name. Horns in the velvet stage were boiled and eaten by sick people. This soup affair made you strong if the proper herbs were added to it. Bush caribou paunch boiled made good greens as it contains the leaves of baby birch, poplar, choke cherry, and pin cherry leaves about the same as our Swiss chard and Popeye spinach, it has a little better flavor. The cheek bones have marrow in them also the leg bones. The best fat is from broken up rib bones which makes a very fine texture fat by pounding partridge berries, cherries and raspberries with a stone hammer in a stone

basin. They would mix this powdered fruit with the pemmican, sewn up in raw hide, it would keep for years. Admiral Bird has pemmican with him right now at the South Pole. I gave Alex Cunningham two buffalo skulls when he first became Director of Game and Fisheries years ago. Deaf John Patchenose found buffalo skeleton in fair shape at Davidson Lake, five miles from William Lake. Henry Ross brought me a dandy big head he found in Red Rock Lake, old Sam told me buffalo wintered here in mild winters. There are many bones on the shores of Buffalo Lake which is close to Cedar Lake, not far from Moose Lake. Possibly here is where a bunch of them died during a bad winter like our jumpers and wild horses did this winter. Moose lake has lost 10 horse so far, these ten horses have been running wild for year but just could not survive such a winter.

In 1913 I got fifteen dollars a month driving four horses on the fish haul. A four line skinner always got Two Dollars a month more for driving four up. Dad had 17 teams. Our big job was to round them up in November and start shoeing them. I wish I had a dollar for every toe caulk I welded. It took a month to shoe the broncs and make the sleigh ready for the haul, as the word came in from all the fish camps as to how many boxes were on the ice so would DAD order more teams from the south. Those were the days I should have been going to St. John's College. However, we learned a lot about trading horses. I never had a horse for trade that was over six years old and always try to get then dollars to boot. Pretty hard to tell a horse's age after six years old. I know some of the horses that came up from Mafeking could have voted for John A. McDonald.

Art Winn came to work for us around 1914. He was a good horseman, frozen collars, worn out seat pads brought on plenty of sweeney's. Art would blister the shoulder blade to get air under the skin, etc. in readiness for a trade off, dock the tail and clip the mane and throw the oats into him and keep the horse locked up until the prospective buyer came around. Art was the champion liar on the lake next to Louis Bacon and Charley Rill – Art drove a team so big that had to raise the roof of the barn every night to get them inside. He told us if we would pack the fish with their heads facing The Pas, the load would pull easier.

Shortly after the first world war start, my brother and Art joined up. Eric went to Vladivostok and nearly starved to death in Siberia. Art more or less won the war. He would call the last war the kid's war, playing around with bombs from an airplane. When you had to wipe the blood form your bayonet all morning, that's fighting.

Art and Eric fished East Arm Narrows. Art said they took out so many trout one winter that the lake dropped three feet by spring. Art holds the record of shooting the biggest moose at the greatest distance one summer. The moose was so far away; he had to boil the kettle twice before he got to him and said it was pretty well fly blown by that time. He loved hunting and fishing. One fall he found thousands of ducks frozen in on Lenores Lake, big north wind and one shot from his trusty gun, the whole lake seemed to lift and away they went south. Later on he heard they ran into a warm wind and hailed out a section of fall rye at Winnipegosis.

Art was quite a carpenter, made coffins for anyone He said when I nail up, they stay nailed. He helped build our present house. Had about twenty Indian hauling away rock from the basement, etc. He saw Willie Knight who was nailing siding, reach in his pocket, pick out a nail and look at it, then throw it away. Art said "What in hell are you doing?" Willie said, "The head is on the wrong end of the nail" and Art said "You darn fool, that nail belongs to the other side of the house. A real English heavy fog

caught them when they were laying shingles. When the fog lifted, the Indians had shingled two feet past the end of the roof. Art never caught any small, rats, even the little ones graded double extra large. My six boys were pall bearers at his funeral, which he asked them to do. We miss hi poker game every night for two hours at his house. He would invite our three girls over for Sunday breakfast. Said he had three trunks full of medals he won making hot cakes.

Pickereel Channel country burnt in 1914, Egg Lake area about the same time. Lamb's Lake and Devil's River timber also went up in smoke. The whole country green, fires started when the first fire ranger came here offering Two Dollars a day for fire fighters. Hon. T., A. Burrows manufactured timber sales, the Canadian Bank of Commerce in Winnipeg sent out their own cruiser, Bill McNeil in 1926 and 1927 to find out how much timber they had leans on only to find out most of had burned fifteen years ago. I am sure enough timber burned to keep The Pas Lumber Companies mill going for a hundred years, however, if ever a railroad comes through here, they will not be short of jack pine ties.

Every Reserve had its own craftsmen. Two or three old chaps made birch bark canoes to suit the family. If you had one child, the canoe was so big, if you had several children, you had a large canoe.

Old George Beaver, the first Chief at Moose Lake (he was also in charge of the Cedar Lake Band) would paddle to Cedar Lake in August to meet Mr. Malatt, the Indian Agent. He would speak and plead for more salt pork and tea for the people there. Chief Beaver was a very tall Indian, looked more like an African than a Canadian Indian. His old wife brought three or four of my sisters into the world. She was a real old darling to us all and Mother's standby. She could not read the time on a clock's face or say the Lord's Prayer, but I am sure she is in Heaven with many others that did not have the sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Ne Moosom (Grandfather) who I saw being baptized by Bishop Newman, lived more less with us for 35 years. Dad never locked his store for years or until the odd white man started to move in. Moosom would sleep on the kitchen floor watching the fires and keeping an eye onus while dad would be away to Price Albert or Winnipeg. Moosom always had fresh fish every morning for us. White man says that Moose Lake whitefish have a parasite in them, funny thing, Dad and Mum raised five girls and six boys on these fish and we are all living today. I sure wish I had a seven pound jumbo for dinner today.

Moosom never did make canoes but was the official open fire place or chimney maker for the band. Some camps had a double fireplace where two families could cook from each side. Dad would not import stove, always said they were more healthy with open fireplaces. I liked camping with them, the floors were spread with fresh smelling balsum bows, the sky light in the roof was always open unless it was raining or snowing. The women would gather up the floor every so often and lay down fresh green boughs. Ducks, meat and fish were roasted on a stick in front of the open fireplaces. These hearths were a very convenient place to have a good healthy spit. The Indian are right when they would tell the Indian Agent that board floors were hard to keep clean.

Windows in the wall let in the light but did not let in fresh air like an open sky light. When you visit an Indian house today, just keep your eyes open and soon you will see one of them carefully spit down a knot hole in the floor. Rain falling on the large birch bark tents soon would put us boys to sleep. The little fire burning in the centre of the teepee when we woke up was so welcome. The pot of fish and copper tea kettle would be hanging down from a stick. The old folks always wakened us up when

the tea kettle started to boil. These fireplaces were always wiped and cleaned out when the ashes started to sneak around the small stones which were placed around the fire. We were always curious to see what the old man had in those big birch rogans, however, you could pretty well guess what they contained, possibly a broken knife blade, a couple of spare flint and steels, a chunk of touchwood, part of a broken flint lock, three or four little bags of different roots for various ailments, always two or three awls for punching holes in canoes and snowshoes, a couple of small birch bark boxes for holding gun powder. I have one at our Pas house. The old ladies' baskets would have needles, various sizes of moose sinew for sewing, pieces of leather, beads and old buttons, etc. The Bible and Rosary were kept in a separate birch bark rogan. They accepted both the Roman Priest and Anglican missionaries teachings, taking tea and biscuits from both parties with equal favour. However, when the time came to play the drum and hum to the evil spirits, they very carefully listed the good book and beads outside until the ceremony was over, then bring the white man's new fangled gadgets back inside the tent, no harm done to anybody.

Even today, they are more or less at a loss as to what to do. We have an Anglican Minister here plus a visiting R.C.Priest, plus three lady missionaries from Brandon. This summer they will have another church and minister. I think they call themselves the Holy Gospel Light House Mission or something like that.

Harold Wells will remember old Moses Martin. He was blind for many years and must have been over a hundred years old. Moses told me many times he just could not figure out what was the best thing to do so rather than take a chance, he died a heathen. We would play around the pitch pot that the old women were making to pitch bark canoes. It was good chewing and held the spruce flavor a long time. They would spear the bark from big spruce trees, boil everything in water, then scrape off the floating bark with a tennis racket affair, leaving pure pitch when the water boiled away. When the water became very cold and ice forming, they mixed goose oil or moose fat in the pitch to prevent it cracking.

We lived twelve years across the portage two miles from here. Dad floated his scow right across that hay swamp to the old place. He had several buildings, all had spruce bark shingles which were peeled from big spruce, making a shingle some five feet by seven feet. Some of the later buildings were thatched with grass and mud, absolutely rain proof. Henry Ross and Magnus Martin say they see such a shortage of birds compared to long ago. It was nice to hear the Ma-Ma hollering early in the morning. These big pileated woodpeckers nested in old trees about 40 feet from the ground, lovely bird. They went when the timber burned. Red wing blackbirds were here by the thousands. There was an owl's nest very half mile. We killed many a blue bird with our bows and arrows, now you never see one. There are many kinds of wading birds which I do not see anymore. We had boxes of blown partridge eggs, owl eggs and various kind of ducks eggs. Always easy to snare a spruce partridge with a pole and snare. Old Moosom would paddle us around in the swamp gathering mudhen's eggs. When we have all the canoe could carry, we head home to boil them and hand them down the old well.

We would have a moccasin lace tied around our waist and see who could fill it up first by tucking the birds heads under the string, young tammerack made the best bows. We always had a few barb arrows for chicken and rabbits and shooting at owls around their nests. No wonder Mother would say we were lust like a bunch of savages cooking squirrels and groundhogs. We would make a fire in the bush

and eat everything we killed, including loons and owls. We never got sick apart from a cut foot or hand. If we gorged ourselves eating berries or fat meat and had the belly ache, it only lasted a little while until everything passed away.

I remember when Malcolm Buck was born in a large birch bark tent. His mother died a couple days after he was born. No canned milk or baby nipples in those days – they made paunch of boiled goldeye and dropped the fish juice into his mouth. Later he got boiled rabbit brains which was angel food very soft and good for babies. Once Malcolm reached six months you could not kill him with a club.

The midwives found out that black pepper was good thing for a woman in childbirth. A little put in her nostrils made her sneeze to beat hell. The baby came quicker that way. The babies were carried around in a Te-ka-na-gun or pack board. They could be leaned up against a tree or rock tipped upside down, etc. without hurting the baby, who was well laced in the moss bag that fitted inside the u shaped piece sewn on the board. It was the grandfathers' privilege to make Te-ka-na-guns for his grandchildren. We loved going into the heavy timber with the old Indian looking for a big spruce tree suitable to his liking. Quite a job to fell a three or four foot timber with those little H.B. axes. How much easier a cross-cut saw would have been. The old gent would be a week at this tree. After he had the cradle board cut and hewed into a board, he would cut the tree again paddle length, then more splitting with wedges would be done. Sometimes he would also make a pemmican trough for pounding dry meat and sun dried fish. If he felt like working he would carve out a coupe of bowls and shallow pans. These were for dumping in boiled fish, berries, meat and used as we use a dinner plate. They snare rabbits twelve months of the year. I remember getting five baby foxes in my rabbit snares one June. Occasionally we would snare a baby lynx in our rabbit snares. Lynx meat tastes just like chicken.

When Dad brought down the first organ I remember all the Indians coming over the portage on Sunday to listen to Mother play hymns. They would move the organ outside under a shade made of poplar and birch leaves. They couldn't figure out how Mother could play just by looking at a book.

Many wonderful things were happening around the turn of the century. Dad brought an Edison gramophone to Moose Lake. It had large cylinder records, the large horn was held up with an iron tripod. When they finished doing their trading in the store Dad would take them into the house and play records for them. They would sit around cross-legged on the kitchen floor with their shirts hanging out with bunches of tea, black powder, tobacco, etc tied in little bunches. Sugar was sold by the cup. Dad would not hold the cup by the handle but put his thumb well inside the cup when scooping it out of the bag – no Government scale inspectors around. The yearly supplies for our family were kept in a building apart from the store. They called dried apples Wus-o-qua-chose-suck; they do look like dry toadstools or mushroom. Topocoa is sturgeon roe. Jelly came in large flakes. They called it "the shakey stuff" ka-osto-toue-o-punit. The store never saw any of these delicacies. Dad traded anything with them that could be turned into cash at Prince Albert. He shipped moose hair one year, said they used it to make chair seats.

I remember the dry sturgeon flakes hanging on the rafters. There is a piece of the insides that makes very good glue. Sturgeon skin bottles filled with sturgeon oil held about two gallons. They skinned

the sturgeon then sewed it up, tying a plug at one end, then filled the wet bag with dry sand. When the skin is dry and hard you pulled the plug and sifted out the sand.

Moose bladders full of rendered fat, dry meat as hard as boards, beaver castors, dog whips, moccasins, leather, also a few smoked dried bush caribou and moose tongues was all the produce they had from May until November. They had one long holiday all summer long sitting outside the bark teepees waiting for the next fellow to paddle his bark canoe ashore with another load of meat or fish. White man comes along and gets mad at them because they will not accept the eight or ten hour work day. We want to transform them into our way or living, all in fifty or sixty years.

Hard-tack biscuits came in large barrels, always a little pink mould on them. However, soak them over night then fry them in fish oil or moose fat and they were delicious (if you kept the spruce needles out of the pan). Tea came in fifty pound or a hundred pound chests lined with lead foil. This lining was always melted down and poured into a lead mould which made round balls for the muzzle loaders to kill moose, caribou and bear. Early May was bear hunting season, right after they finished trapping rats and beaver. Large black bears were worth up to Fifty Dollars. Dad said they were all shipped to London to make busbies for the Cold Stream Guards. Dad's old regiment. He served his time in that noble regiment. Every man was over six feet strict discipline right up to the eyebrows. They still speak of Dad as hard, tough and honest. Seven o'clock was seven o'clock and not half-past seven.

This is written in the past tense as I arrived into this world too late to see the Trumpeter swan and Whooping Crane go into the pot. However, I will tell you how they killed these largest birds in the world. Old Zakoo, Nemagets and Noah Umpherville were the official swan hunters. They were meat getters for the H.B.Co. Post here that had to build so many York boats a summer. Noah told me he would visit the inland little lakes on foot to see a pair of Trumpeter Swan with their two or three little ones. He would go up wind and make a smudge. Immediately the swans would take their young into the grass and willows. Being moulting time it was easy to kill them all with a stick before they could reach the lake and safety. Noah would dry the meat and on to the next little lake.

My favorite grandfather, Ne Moosom, would tell us if you saw white cranes stamping around, take a white Hudson Bay blanket on a stick over your head, carefully come out into the open and back again. Very soon they would start calling then take off, flying a few feet over you head. He would tell us how wicked they were if winged, you had to run away and reload your trusty flint-lock. He said they could run faster than a moose.

I do remember the poplar trees along the banks of Sturgeon Creek where our cattle ranch is today, loaded with blue herons. We would poke the young down and even chopped down some tees to kill the young, which were very good eating.

The following are some of the names Dad had in his books: Beardy, Dorion, Nasecapow, Buck, Umpherville, Martin, Mink, Beaver, Badger, Moose, Dogman, Southwind, Northwind, Fishnetstick, Sturgeonhead, Fox, Ieatacapoo, Quaskecapoo, Weanusk (Groundhog) and many others. The Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, or I should say the Gentlemen Traders of Hudson Bay, could not have changed managers very often here. Posts nearer the coast have named like, McNab, McDougall,

McKenzie, McDairmaid, McLeod, and many other smoked Scotsmen or Improved Scotch as an Englishman would call them.

Feather robes were unknown. I think the reason was print or lining was too valuable and hard to get. Everyone had a robe or a lynx paw robe. It took 110 rabbit skins to make a 6 by 6 rabbit robe. They would cut the green skin around in circles from bottom up to the neck making a strip about five or six feet long a quarter of an inch wide. These strips were put on a pole, the wind blowing away any cut hairs. The robes were knitted or lace together. I well remember the Indian wearing rabbit skin pants and rabbit hats, which were very warm fitted like a granney's bonnet. Jonah Tobacco says he remembers when that was all the clothes he had when he was boy. A rabbit coat was very quiet hunting moose in the thick bush, not like our present-day parkies.

There are number of graves at the Two Islands: Opiskow, Devil's Lake and on my muskrat ranch, etc. In the winter time they were placed on top of the ground with split spruce boards covering them. They always buried his gun, knife, axed and what other possessions he had. These were to be used in that other hunting ground. Jeremiah Patchinose told me that his grandfather, who is buried at the Two Islands, told them to sit around his grave for three nights and he would beat his drum for them. Old Jeremiah said Grandfather lied to them, they did exactly what he asked them to do but they never heard the drum beat once. They all moved over to Opiskow after that.

It is interesting to hear them tell how they killed beaver, fishier, martin, moose, etc. without a gun. Nets were made from willow bark, the women would paddle a moose down in the summer then throw a rabbit robe over its head, splash water on the robe. It only takes a few minutes until the moose upends and is drowned. Great rejoicing towing it to shore.

Two calves arrived at the ranch last night so must take a ramble over there. Vick and Doreen are quite happy over the first arrivals. They should start to come fast and furious from now on.

Moose Lake was a meeting or gathering place. Every summer the big pow-wow was held on this point. Canoes came from Red Earth, Cross Lake, Cumberland, Grand Rapids, etc. The people here would start gathering and storing pemmican, dry meat and pounded fish when the leaves started to come out. The people or visitors left far-off settlements when the leaves were in bud. Not a bad calendar at that. Dried fish and pemmican was put into large birch bark rogans, sturgeon hung in long strips from stages. This summer visit must have been quite an affair. Visiting canoes or families traded off daughters and sons. Cross Lake boys took back Shoal Lake girls etc. The next year old folks here must have food and new canoes ready to give away to the new grandchildren that should arrive shortly after the leaves come out.

There are plenty of stories about the different dances and cungering tents and general high stories about life that went on for a couple of weeks. A long, narrow affair was built or shaded in with birch and polar saplings. Two old drummers sat cross-legged at far ends facing the door, a rawhide string stretched from post to post down the middle. Wing feathers from every bird were stuck into this string; geese, cranes, swans, pelicans, eagles, bitterns, and every duck that flies and small birds. As the braves or merrymakers danced from the door down around the two gents, they would sing and tap the feather rope which kept bobbing up and down like mad. The dog-hide drums kept beating out the welcome of the arrival of the birds of the air. Too bad our ministers and priests put a stop to this

galliard affair. They did not carry out the gruesome act of lancing a brave's chest, putting a rawhide string through the skin then trying to lift the man off the ground, such as a Plains Indian did. My father saw this around Touchwood Hills when he was there before coming to Moose Lake.

This mixing up of the species is something like me, importing three new bulls from Brandon this spring. Ches Russel, Post Manager at Eskimo Point told me the Eskimo do more or less the same thing at Ogelock every summer for two weeks only the Eskimo goes one better. The married men change wives for two weeks every summer. This is to prevent jealousy. A lot of white men do this only they do it on the sly.

There are some graves on our muskrat ranch that are very old. Makastootin (Big Hat) is buried at Opopack. He was the champion goose caller. William McNab told me he could even call geese down that were flying high in the form of a V heading south. There are lots of other stories about Ma-Ka-sto-h-tin. Misse Thomas (big Thomas) Umpherville. A white man from England is buried at Ka-ne-ask-qua-ack at Moselles' camp on the Head River. He is Robert buck's mother's father. I remember Robert's mother. She raised 9 sons and not one of them on cow's milk. Robert, Moses, John, Zaccheus, Thomas and all the rest of the Bucks that I knew did not remember their white Grandfather Umpherville. They say he was the granddaddy of all the Umphervilles from here to Fort la Corn. I wonder if he was deserted by some early expedition or was left standing on the bank of some river after a row with Henry Kelsey. In any case what a lonely place to die of old age. However, Ka-na-ask-qua-ack is on of the nice places on the ranch – big green timber, nice sloping banks with some stone. The campsite faces the setting sun. It is just as nice in winter, protected from the north wind. I would like to dig up Misse Thomas and examine his flint lock gun, axe and copper kettles, possibly a few stone knives and a ring or two but Misse Thomas has big birch and five inch choke cherry trees hold him down. It would not be a good thing to anyway while his great-grandchildren are alive.

If I only had a canoe load of scotch and a steno that could take shorthand as fast as I could talk, I think I might be able to record lot about We-s-ka-jak by fall. He is the old chap comparable to Noah in the Bible. He made the world from a bit of mud that the muskrat brought up when they were floating around on a raft. Wesakajak first asked the otter to dive, then the beaver, etc. None of them could make it, even the loon came up hollering for breath. Finally Wesakajak tied two caribou hides on the rat's tail. I would say a large caribou hide cut the same as they would made dog whips, about ¼ inch wide would be possibly six or seven hundred feet long, but this is just a guess. Wesakajak was determined the rat should deliver a little piece of mud. The rat had to be pulled up with the babiche string. He had a bit of mud between his paws but was dead. Wesakajak true to his promise got busy and blew into the rat's nostrils. I think our Lord did the same thing by blowing the breath of life into someone's rib, either Job's or Zaccheus'. This was a warmer country those days. Bulrushes were ten feet between the stops, not like now only five or six inches like the honey suckle tree they use for pipe stems. Wesakajak kept blowing with his long reed, and making the earth grow with every blow. Finally he thought the world was big enough and sent the caribou away with a gallot to see if he could reach the end of the world, only to return before sunset saying it was not big enough. Well Old Gabe kept blowing his reed a few more days then sent out the moose who kept up a steady trot for a long time, coming back the next day with the same story, not big enough.

I have to leave out a lot of the story – what Wesakajak kept saying to the animals and plenty of grunts and groans, etc. However, when he sent the timber work out he never came back. A wolf can travel



and roams around a month without eating so he must have traveled a long way. Wesakajak walked this earth for thousands of years. One could not write the story verbatim. Parts of it are too dirty to print. He gave the moose big flat horns that the cows mating call would strike the horns and enter his big ears. How the rabbit's hind feet got burnt – he saw the kingfisher crying with a broken bill which he sharpened with a stone knife. There is nothing classy about a mudhen and he knows it always hiding in the bulrushes. Never arrives from the south in the daytime too ashamed to travel with the pretty spoonbills and perky mallards. So Wesakajak made him a little lantern on top of his bill which is red, showing him the way at night. Why the weasel is brown in the summer and white in winter, why the black tip of his tail never changes colour, how Wesakajak was buried under a big stone for a thousand years. Once in a while he would do something very foolish like racing a big boulder down hill. He walked all over this earth; you can see his tracks in the rocks at Foot Print Lake at Nelson House. He left signs below Pelican Narrows; there is a big round flat stone half way across the portage with a hole in the center of it. Wesakajak was experimenting how long he could hold his water. He listened too long to the wind whistling through the trees, thought it was young girl whistling at him. It is wonderful how the story never changes. I was at Pickle Crow down east one summer talking to some Indians, they had the same stories. Talking to old Indians at the Calgary Stampede, I would pass the odd remark about Wesakajak and they would laugh and say the rest of it. The late Henry McKay at Grand Rapids started to write it but never finished the story. It takes two winters to tell it.

Camping in a teepee or wooden tent always started an old man telling stories, providing you gave him a bit of tobacco. After you all exchanged what news each one had there was nothing left to tell except a Wesakajak story. When all the children fell asleep you could hear the old chap say, "That's enough now, no one is listening to me anyway." Then he would give himself one more good scratching and curl up like a husky dog, pulling his rabbit robe over him. Poplar wood was always used in the tent and wooden tents. It does not throw sparks like spruce or tamarack wood but burns quietly as they say.

Radio just said Donnie arrived in Winnipeg okay. Two hours twenty minutes from The Pas. Dougie just landed here enroute from James Bay. We have not seen him since he left the dinner table at the house on New Year's Day. He has to leave again tomorrow, taking his wheels with him, changing over on the ice up north then non stop to Clearwater Airport. Greg is also down there somewhere with a Norseman. Jackie is anxious to get flying but we think it best he drive tractor a little more to toughen up his hands, arms and legs. He can just about close his left hand now. Dennie is leaving Carl Agar and coming back to take my place flying. Connie is getting on okay at school and looking forward to June 18<sup>th</sup> when school closes in Seattle. We have six airplanes in the air. I do a little flying every time I can get hold of a plane. I guess I will have to buy another plane and keep it strictly for myself. It's hard to lay off flying after thirty years of it. I guess I had so many shocks and scares this past thirty years it helped to bring on this heart condition. It is Jackie's birthday on April 12<sup>th</sup>. I had quite a scare that day. Lovely spring morning Fanny Buck and old Lucy were upstairs with Mrs. Lamb. I had the three girls and Greg and the twins down on the lake shore at six- o'clock in the morning listening to the the geese calling at Moose Creek. They were flying all over the bay and lighting on the ice. Finally Fanny came down stairs all smiles. I ran up to her and said. "Well, what have we got this time?" The old mut smiled all over and said, "You have four boys." Those kind of scares are hard on your heart. Well Foster I have never written a letter like this in my before.

One doctor told me that I could drop dead any minute. If I do, that's' it. If I start flying again I won't have time to write. Jennie just came into the room and told me to tell you to mail this letter back to her

at once. I guess she wants to put it away in her Cedar Chest after sending it around to the girls to read. If I just had a nice blond that could take shorthand I am sure she could tell quite a story by fall.

Two calves were born on the ranch last night. They will start to come fast and furious from now on. Vick and Doreen will be pretty busy unless we get warm weather. We expect 70 or 80 calves this spring.

Have to leave for the ranch in the morning so will wind up "Land Marks in Memories"

Yours very sincerely,

TOM LAMB