

# “The New Generation” Cooperative Education at the Day School on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, 1890-1910

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Article abstract

Modern research into Aboriginal education focuses on the de-culturation, physical, and emotional abuse that Indigenous students experienced at school. This focus results, in part, from an emphasis on sources written by settlers, which detail little of the lived experience of Indigenous students. Using a series of interviews conducted in Kenora, Ontario, with the Anishinabek woman Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, this paper examines that lived experience and concludes that Aboriginal education was more collaborative than has been described, particularly before the enforcement of aggressive civilization. This collaboration, however, occurred in the context of ongoing colonial incursions in to Aboriginal land and life, which gradually edged out Aboriginal forms of education.

# “The New Generation”

Cooperative Education at the Day School  
on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, 1890-1910<sup>1</sup>

by Brittany Luby and Kathryn Labelle

Original Interviews by George Beatty (1972)

Original Transcriptions by Dorothy Lavergne McLay (1987)

## Introduction: From One Generation to the Next

The written history of ‘Indigenous’<sup>2</sup> education is lopsided. Most sources were produced by settlers,<sup>3</sup> with government documents, Indian agent reports and church records forming the bulk of written records. Yet, there has been a concerted effort to incorporate accounts emphasizing Indigenous perspectives and experiences. Often these sources are not obvious, coming to light as a result of family or community ties and strict research protocols. One example of this is a series of interviews conducted in

Kenora, Ontario, with Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve.

In 1972, as the hot summer sun beat against the brick of Pinecrest Nursing Home, Ogimaamaashiik’s interview took place. Inside the nursing home, a spider dangled from an underused chair in the lobby. Further down the hall, in a room whose number has been forgotten, sat an Anishinabek enthusiast named George Beatty with a tape recorder.<sup>4</sup> He faced a toothless elder in a floral patterned dress,

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<sup>1</sup> This article has benefitted from the helpful insight of several people and organizations. The authors would like to thank the peer-reviewers of *Ontario History* for their careful reading and encouragement; Eva Prkachin for asking critical questions and identifying comma splices; and, the Lake of the Woods District Museum for providing images that help to bring Matilda and her family to life.

<sup>2</sup> This article employs the term “Indigenous” to represent the First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada, while recognizing that it is often viewed as synonymous with alternative labels such as Aboriginal and Native.

<sup>3</sup> This article uses the term “settler” to describe non-Indigenous actors who are often described as Euro-Canadians or colonizers.

<sup>4</sup> George Beatty was a journalist for the *Daily Miner and News* who interviewed Ogimaamaashiik to

polyester—which doesn't need to be pressed—who called herself Matilda Martin. Years before, as a child growing up on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, she was known as *Ogimaamaashiik*, “A Proud Beautiful Bird in Flight.” George pressed down on the button etched with the ‘record’ symbol. Matilda breathed deeply and began to speak in her broken English. Later, Matilda’s niece, Dorothy Lavergne McLay, would diligently transcribe the recordings allowing for greater access and preservation.<sup>5</sup>

Two decades passed before these documents came into the possession of Matilda’s great-great granddaughter, Brittany Luby, one of the authors of this article, through her father Al-

## Abstract

*Modern research into Aboriginal education focuses on the de-culturation, physical, and emotional abuse that Indigenous students experienced at school. This focus results, in part, from an emphasis on sources written by settlers, which detail little of the lived experience of Indigenous students. Using a series of interviews conducted in Kenora, Ontario, with the Anishinabek woman Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, this paper examines that lived experience and concludes that Aboriginal education was more collaborative than has been described, particularly before the enforcement of aggressive civilization. This collaboration, however, occurred in the context of ongoing colonial incursions in to Aboriginal land and life, which gradually edged out Aboriginal forms of education.*

*Résumé: La recherche récente sur l'éducation aborigène s'intéresse surtout à la déculturation et aux sévices physiques et psychologiques subis par les élèves autochtones à l'école. Cette orientation s'explique en partie par l'utilisation de sources écrites par des colons, qui donnent peu de détails sur le vécu réel des élèves indigènes. Cet article, basé sur des entrevues tenues à Kenora, Ontario, avec une femme anishinabek, Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin, de la Réserve Dalles 38C, examine cette expérience vécue et arrive à la conclusion que l'éducation aborigène était bien plus collaborative qu'on ne le pense généralement, surtout avant l'introduction d'une politique d'assimilation agressive. Cependant, cette collaboration doit être envisagée dans le contexte de la pénétration coloniale dans les terres et dans la vie des Aborigènes, qui peu à peu a exclu les formes aborigènes d'éducation.*

lan (Ogemah) Luby. It was through these written words that Luby came to know the woman her family called, “Grandma, Great-Grandma Martin.”<sup>6</sup> Subsequently

produce a series of articles on Anishinabek life in the Kenora area. He worked with a female assistant who is believed to be Jillian Torrie. Dorothy Lavergne McLay explains, “George Beatty did the question and answer manuscripts. When I found [out that] they were in existence—I found [out] when he was still living. And, I contacted him: ‘I heard you have this information.’ And, I asked ‘Is it free for everyone? Will you let me have it?’ He said [that] it was free for everyone. So, I made copies for everyone. For different people. Family” (Dorothy Lavergne McLay, telephone interview by Brittany Luby, Toronto, 2 October 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Dorothy Lavergne McLay is Ogiimaamaashiik Martin’s niece, the daughter of Ogiimaamaashiik’s half-brother. She is an Anishinabek woman from Dalles 38C (*Ochiichagwe’babigo’ining*). After a long teaching career, McLay has retired in Kenora.

<sup>6</sup> Allan (*Ogemah*) Luby of the Caribou (*atik*) clan was born and raised in Kenora. Allan acted as Councillor for Dalles 38C (*Ochiichagwe’babigo’ining*) for a total of ten years. He was re-elected to council six times after launching his political career in 1988. Allan also acted as chief for two terms. He now functions as a community advisor, having focused his energies in local development as executive director for Bimose Tribal Council ([www.bimose.ca](http://www.bimose.ca)).

she entrusted her friend and colleague Kathryn Labelle with these precious documents for research purposes. Their analysis, provided here, is an attempt to decipher these sources in order to better understand Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin's world. More specifically, Luby and Labelle believe that these documents deliver an important window into the history of education on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, in present-day Ontario, and early cooperative education models within Indigenous communities. Indeed, the broader narratives of colonialism and resistance were being played out in the field of education during Ogimaamaashiik's youth. Re-imagined through a child's eyes, re-imagined again through the eyes of the adult that child grew into, re-imagined yet again through the interviewer, translator, and finally through scholars, Ogimaamaashiik's interviews allow readers to better see the decline of Indigenous-settler partnerships through the schoolhouse.

## Anishinabek Education Narratives: An Alternative to "Aggressive Civilization"

Ogimaamaashiik's memoirs provide an interesting opportunity to explore Anishinabek educational goals at the day school on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, located across the Ontario border approximately 225 kilometres east of Winnipeg, Manitoba, at the turn of the twentieth century. Ogimaamaashiik attended day school at the same time that federally-employed Indian agents were establishing an educational policy known as "aggressive civilization." The principal feature of this educational policy was the residential school.<sup>7</sup> The residential school system separated Indigenous children from their families and communities.<sup>8</sup> Removed from the supposedly "insalubrious influences of home," Indigenous children were boarded and taught in federally-funded facilities.<sup>9</sup> Once there, they were to "acquire the habits and tastes...of

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Flood Davin qtd. in *We Were Taught Differently*, edited by Lori Nelson (Kenora, ON: Lake of the Woods District Museum) in association with NeChee Friendship Centre and Lake of the Woods Ojibway Cultural Centre. Published in conjunction with the exhibition *We Were Taught Differently* (2008), shown at the Lake of the Woods District Museum, 4.

<sup>8</sup> In 1920, Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, required that Indigenous children from seven to fifteen years-old attend residential school. Should parents withhold their children from federal agents, penalties like jail-time could be enforced by the state. This change in federal legislation resulted in the forcible separation of many Indigenous youth from their families. It is important to note, however, that in some instances, families still voluntarily handed over their children in hopes that they would achieve a quality Western education. On Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, the vast majority of separations before 1950 were forced because a precedent for cooperative education had been established on-site with Kipling's day school. For more information on changing attendance policies, please see "Research Timeline," *We Are the Children*, <<http://wherearethekids.ca/timeline/research/>> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>9</sup> Mary-Ellen Kelm, "A 'scandalous procession': Residential Schooling and the Reformation of Aboriginal Bodies," in *Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia 1900-50* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1998), 57.

civilized peoples” under the tutelage of Christian administrators.<sup>10</sup>

In 1996, historian J.R. Miller provided the first comprehensive account of Canada’s residential school system.<sup>11</sup> He unveiled records of violent and sexual assaults, introducing the “misfits, perverts, and sadists” who claimed guardianship over their pupils.<sup>12</sup> Settler-written histories had long glossed over the violence engendered in Indigenous education—physical, emotional, and sexual violence that reinforced the broader violence of Indigenous disempowerment in Canada. But, Miller revealed federal failure on a massive scale to meaningfully educate Indigenous children. Shortly thereafter, John S. Milloy published *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986*. Milloy’s title aptly captures his condemnation of the residential school system, articulating a story of cultural genocide.<sup>13</sup> Combined, Miller and Milloy set the critical tone of Indigenous education scholarship for the following decades.<sup>14</sup>

Delving deeper into the implementation and personal experiences of participants of residential schools, scholar Hope MacLean has outlined that “revelations of abuse and incompetence in residential schools make the early history of Aboriginal education seem like an unmitigated experience of horror.” MacLean responded to preoccupations with the failure of federally-funded learning facilities by asking, “... was it always so?”<sup>15</sup> Her research suggests that there was a moment when Indigenous education could have developed along cooperative, rather than coercive, lines. An outlier in the historical narrative of Indigenous education, MacLean based her analysis upon experimental Methodist schools in Upper Canada (now Southern Ontario). Ogimaamaashiik’s memoirs encourage us to ask the same questions in Anishinabek territories north of Georgian Bay. Her testimony allows us to consider educational possibilities at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve prior to the establishment of the local residential schools of St. Mary’s Indian Residential School (1897) and Ce-

<sup>10</sup> Sir Hector Langevin qtd. in *We Were Taught Differently*, 4.

<sup>11</sup> J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> Brian Maracle, Review of J.R. Miller’s *Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*, in *Quill & Quire*, <<http://www.quillandquiere.com/review/shingwauk-s-vision-a-history-of-native-residential-schools/>> (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>13</sup> John Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> For examples of histories written post-Miller/Milloy see: Roland Chrisjohn and Sherri Young, *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience* (Theytus Books, 1997); Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010); Bernard Schissel and Terry Wotherspoon, *The Legacy of School for Aboriginal People: Education, Oppression, and Emancipation* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Hope MacLean, “A Positive Experiment in Aboriginal Education: The Methodist Ojibwa Day Schools in Upper Canada, 1824 – 1833,” *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 22:1 (2002), 24.

Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School (1902). A pivotal moment in both local and national Native-Newcomer relations, Ogimaamaashiik's student experience demonstrates her community's vision for Anishinabek education—one that hinged on cooperative knowledge building rather than the aggressive policies of assimilation that were eventually implemented by the Canadian government.

As seen through Ogimaamaashiik's life story, the Anishinabek vision gave way within one generation to rigid Western traditions and residential schools; its implementation was not a foregone conclusion when Ogimaamaashiik's grandfather, Chief Katiwasung, agreed to Treaty #3 in 1873.<sup>16</sup> Historians writing on education in the Treaty #3 District in north-western Ontario and southeastern Manitoba, much like Miller and Milloy, have associated Indigenous education with bureaucratic and, ultimately, physical and sexual violence. Published texts predominantly discuss administrative practices and student experience at Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School (Presbyterian)

and St. Mary's Indian Residential School (Catholic).<sup>17</sup> Ogimaamaashiik's personal reflections provide an alternative to settler-dominated studies that are heavily invested in creating the appearance that settler efforts to "civilize" Indigenous children were working and worthwhile and that Euro-colonial ways of educating, and living would inevitably dominate and wash out the ways of Indigenous life. From the 1890s to approximately 1906, a federally-funded day school opened its doors to Anishinabek youth. Under the tutelage of John Kipling Senior, a mixed-blood lay missionary, Ogimaamaashiik and her peers learned English in a cooperative environment. While it is critical to maintain sight of how the Crown failed (and still fails) to uphold its treaty education promise, Ogimaamaashiik's school memories allow us to imagine how that treaty promise may have been conceived by its Indigenous signatories and complicates the common contemporary claim that the Crown's education promise failed definitively in the Treaty #3 District.<sup>18</sup> Ogimaamaashiik's

<sup>16</sup> For further information about the differing interpretations of Treaty #3 held by Anishinabek treaty signatories and crown agents, please see Brittany Luby, "The Department is going back on these Promises': An examination of Anishina[bek] and Crown Understandings of Treaty" *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 30:2 (2010), 203-228.

<sup>17</sup> Victoria Freeman, *Distant Relations: How My Ancestors Colonized North America* (McClelland & Stewart, 2002); Freeman, "Voices of the Parents: The Shoal Lake Anishinabe and Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School, 1902 – 1929," in Jill Oakes, ed., *Native Voices in Research* (Winnipeg: Native Studies Press, University of Manitoba, 2003); *We Were Taught Differently; Residential Schools: The Red Lake Story* (Red Lake: Red Lake Heritage Centre), published in conjunction with the exhibition *Residential Schools: The Red Lake Story* (2006), shown at the Virtual Museum <[http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/histoires\\_de\\_chez\\_nous-community\\_memories/pm\\_v2.php?id=exhibit\\_home&fl=0&lg=English&ex=00000353&pg=2](http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/histoires_de_chez_nous-community_memories/pm_v2.php?id=exhibit_home&fl=0&lg=English&ex=00000353&pg=2)>

<sup>18</sup> For example, Grand Council Treaty #3 suggests that "Canada did not live up to its obligations.... Chiefs made numerous attempts during the 1870s and 1880s to correct government misinterpretations of [treaty] to no effect" (43). See Grand Council Treaty #3, "'We have kept our part of Treaty': The Anishinaabe Understanding of Treaty #3," (Kenora, Ontario, 3 October 2011), <<https://gct3.net/wp-content/>

school memories reveal that Indigenous ways of knowing *could* and *did* complement Western instructional methods in the classroom. Without her example, we risk obscuring an educational “middle ground” where children and educators alike brought their cultural baggage into the classroom and unpacked it (albeit on unequal terms) to learn together.

### Finding Ogimaamaashiik’s Voice: Sources and Methodology

Ogimaamaashiik’s oral testimony makes a significant contribution to the literature on Indigenous education by giving a firsthand account of the lived experience at Dalles 38C Reserve Day School. Although oral testimonies have been recognized as legitimate and useful historical sources in general, they are particularly beneficial in terms of understanding In-

digenous histories. Many First Nation communities record their history orally rather than through literary tradition.<sup>19</sup> In turn, the process of transcribing interviews requires specific protocols. This was one of the greatest challenges in terms of working with Ogimaamaashiik’s oral testimony as the ability to decipher the data in a respectful and ethical way remained a major preoccupation. Ultimately questions concerning translation, interpretation and presentation became the focus. In the original transcript, Ogimaamaashiik’s words are presented as prosaic blocks. Periods and commas are used; indentation is not. Large blocks of text are separated by headers: “Interviewer” and Beatty’s questions. McLay’s paragraphing subsumes Ogimaamaashiik’s thick Anishinaabe accent and the cadence of her speech. Pauses and emphases in the spoken word did not translate onto paper; therefore it was hard to

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uploads/2011/11/We-Have-Kept-Our-Part-Of-The-Treaty-Booklet.pdf> (accessed 14 November 2014).

<sup>19</sup> This is not to downplay Anishinabek forms of writing in the Treaty #3 District. Archeologist Grace Rajnovich has studied regional pictographs as a form of “picture writing” rather than “rock art.” For more information on “picture writing,” please see Grace, Rajnovich, *Reading Rock Art: Interpreting the Indian Rock Paintings of the Canadian Shield* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2002). Birch bark scrolls also existed in the Treaty #3 District. Birch bark scrolls were etched with picture symbols and used as teaching devices. To learn more about this form of Anishinabek writing please see Selwyn Dewdney, *The Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibway* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975). See also Joan M. Vastokas, “Ojibwa Pictograph: The Origin of Writing and the Rise of Social Complexity,” *Ontario Archaeology* 75 (2003), 3-16. As indicated, however, oral testimony was the dominant form of history-keeping in the Treaty #3 District. For more on the methodology of oral history and its importance to Indigenous history see: Sophie McCall, “Amplified Voices: Rebecca Belmore’s Reinvention of Recording Technologies in the Transmission of Aboriginal Oral Traditions,” in Renee Hulan and Renate Eigenbrod, eds., *Aboriginal Oral Traditions: Theory, Practice and Ethics* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2008), 99-112; Lenora Ledwon, “Native American Life Stories and ‘Authorship’: Legal and Ethical Issues,” *American Indian Quarterly*, 21:4 (1997), 579-93; Julie Cruikshank, “Oral Tradition and Oral History,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 75:3 (1994), 403-418; Drew Mildon, “A Bad Connection: First Nations Oral Histories in the Canadian Courts,” in Hulan and Eigenbrod, eds. *Aboriginal Oral Traditions*, 79-98; Jennifer S.H. Brown, “Doing Aboriginal History: A View from Winnipeg,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 84:4 (2003), 33-44; Steven High, *Oral History at the Crossroads: Sharing Life Stories of Survival and Displacement* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).

hear Ogimaamaashiik while reading her memoirs. Julie Cruikshank has identified similar formatting issues when working with Athapaskan and Tlingit Elders in what is now known as Yukon Territory.<sup>20</sup> When reflecting on her grandmother's original transcripts, Carol Lawson (nee Carol Kipling) suggested "there seemed to be some hesitancy in grandmas [sic] answers" – a deviation from the "interesting, sharp, and alert" woman that Carol "found her to be."<sup>21</sup> The transcripts seemed a physical embodiment of scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith's critique of history as a totalizing discourse.<sup>22</sup> Ogimaamaashiik's voice was blocked in by one-inch margins, and by Western conventions of history-writing as prose. Her identity as an *Anishinaabemowin* -speaker and story-teller was lost. While the authors of this article never knew Ogimaamaashiik, they restructured her memoirs to capture an accent that is more reflective of Ogimaamaashiik's culture. Inspired by Métis scholar and writer Maria Campbell, Brittany Luby "wrote it as I heard it."<sup>23</sup> This meant deconstructing the written words of Ogimaamaashiik to reflect the familiar language of her Anishinabek community. This was based on Luby's own experiences whether it was going to

school, selling a loaf of bread, pumping gas, or sitting down for tea. Luby worked to recreate the *tone* and *feel* of her great-grandmother's speech. By restructuring prosaic blocks into poetic stanzas, print became "a medium through which oral ways of knowing [could] be preserved and expressed."<sup>24</sup>

Ultimately the authors edited Ogimaamaashiik's transcripts to produce three thematic poems. An ellipsis (...) indicates where a word (or words) have been cut because they are deemed to interrupt narrative flow. A four-period ellipsis (....), by contrast, means that a large section of the interview has been cut—usually a reference to earlier material or the beginning of a new story. Square brackets ([]) are used to draw attention to inserted words, correct verb tense or clarify sentences—material contained in the square brackets is of our own making, not Ogimaamaashiik's. An asterisk (\*) indicates that material from elsewhere in the interview record has been inserted into the piece.

Book-ending oral testimony, that has been relayed in stanzas with essay-format analyses, as has been done in this article, has its shortcomings. Separating "analysis" from "testimony," positions the "edi-

<sup>20</sup> Julie Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990), 18.

<sup>21</sup> Carol Lawson, e-mail message to author, 3 October 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books Ltd., 1999), 33.

<sup>23</sup> As a story collector and translator, Campbell opted to format Metis stories, where appropriate, as verse to stylistically imitate speech patterns. For further reading, please see Maria Campbell, *Stories of the Road Allowance People* (Penticton: Theytus Press, 1995).

<sup>24</sup> Warren Cariou, "We Use Dah Membering': Oral Memory in Metis Short Stories," in Marta Dvorák and W.H. New, eds., *Tropes and Territories: Short Fiction, Postcolonial Readings, Canadian Writings in Context* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 201.



tor” as “expert” and reduces informants to larynges: informants become more like organs involved in sound production than “experts” in their own right. Despite these dangers, the authors maintain that poetic structure is the best mode of transmission for oral testimonies—primarily because stanzas dissociate readers from the process of academic reading and, perhaps more importantly, editing. Luby consciously rearranged Ogimaamaashiik’s words into poetic form to reproduce her speech pattern. And, in so doing, Luby selected a structure that readers may more readily associate with “creative writing” and, by extension, “creative reading.” Given that McLay based Ogimaamaashiik’s memoirs on audio recordings, grammatical errors that Ogimaamaashiik may have identified in writing were amplified. Poetic structure allowed us to break rules of punctuation, thus decreasing the risk of readers conflating Ogimaamaashiik’s quality of speech with form. The non-semantic (rhythm and structure) now helps readers to grasp the semantic (meaning) by challenging their expectation of what the written word *ought* to look like. Readers are encouraged to focus on Ogimaamaashiik’s words, not her sentence structure. Words become “precious in themselves,” forcing the reader “to move more deeply into the world [that] they refer to.”<sup>25</sup> Consequently, what follows are three poems based on Ogimaamaashiik’s oral testimony, with an analysis that seeks to clarify our understanding of Anishina-

bek education history. This article will explore the educational “middle ground,” highlighting the establishment of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve’s day school and the enrollment of Anishinabek youth, as well as the unique model of cooperative education that developed (albeit temporarily) at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve—but first we must meet the Ogimaamaashiik herself.

## Matilda Josephine

### Lavergne Kipling Martin:

### Ogimaamaashiik

On 29 April 1885, Ogimaamaashiik was borne to Benjamin Lavergne, a French woodsman from Three Rivers, Manitoba, and Mary Lindsay, an Anishinabek woman from Dalles 38C Indian Reserve (now *Ochiichagwe’babigo’ining* Ojibwa Nation), Ontario, a reservation on the Winnipeg River. On 22 June 1885, Reverend Jean-Baptiste Baudin, an Oblate priest at Notre-Dame-du-Portage in Kenora, Ontario, baptized Ogimaamaashiik as “Josephine Lavergne.”<sup>26</sup>

Ogimaamaashiik’s mother died while she was still an infant and so Ogimaamaashiik was left in the care of Chief Thomas (*Katiwasung*) Lindsay and Jane Lindsay, her maternal grandparents. Benjamin Lavergne’s whereabouts is unknown and she did not include them in any of her interviews. Ogimaamaashiik’s explanation of her parents’ encounter follows a pattern of what scholars view

<sup>25</sup> Terry Eagleton, *How to Read a Poem* (Toronto: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 69.

<sup>26</sup> “Birth and Baptism Record: Ogimaamaashiik Martin,” 1885, Church of Notre-Dame-du-Portage, Kenora.



Figure 1: Chief Katiwasung Lindsay and his wife, Jane Lindsay, of Dalles 38C<sup>30</sup> From left to right: Katiwasung, Jane, and an unidentified man

as “interracial unions” that were “normal adjuncts to fur trade social life.”<sup>27</sup> Indeed, interracial unions were so common among Hudson’s Bay and North-West Company traders that by 1821, and as Ogimaamaashiik explains, “There were no white women in Kenora. So, the white men in Kenora had to marry Indian girls and that’s what my father did.”<sup>28</sup> Given traders’ frequent abandonment of their Indian families, it seems likely that Benjamin Lavergne adhered to the cultural norm of the region.<sup>29</sup>

Ogimaamaashiik’s childhood, unlike her birth, challenged cultural patterns especially in terms of her education. A little short of a decade before her birth, Nicholas Flood Davin submitted his 1879 *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* to Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald. Davin recommended that children — like Ogimaamaashiik — be “kept constantly within the circle of civilized conditions,” spurring the establishment of residential schools across Canada in the 1880s.<sup>31</sup> Yet, Ogimaamaashiik was raised on-reserve at Dalles 38C and attended day school. Her life was shaped by this experience on multiple levels. At nineteen, Ogimaamaashiik married the “half-breed”<sup>32</sup> school master, John Ki-

<sup>27</sup> Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), 51.

<sup>28</sup> Ogimaamaashiik Martin, interview by George Beatty, Kenora, ON, circa June 1972.

<sup>29</sup> Perhaps one of the greatest indicators of the widespread abandonment of Indigenous families by Euro-originated fur traders is the formation of Red River Colony in 1812. As Alexander Ross (1856) explained, “Lord Selkirk [intended to] form a society of the indigenous and the Company’s old servants, together with their half-breed descendants” (qtd. in Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, vi) to provide an alternative to family dissolution upon completion of an HBC contract. Prior to its formation, geography largely prevented lifelong relationships. That stated social custom also facilitated Euro-originated traders’ abandonment of their Indigenous wives. Discussing the practice of Nor’Westers prior to 1821, Van Kirk notes that “[t]hey did not view marriage as a lifetime contract.... On the contrary, observers from both companies reported that an Indian woman who had lived with and borne children to a white man could expect a hearty welcome back into her tribe” (46). Christine Welsh explores the family scars left by abandonment in the film *Women in the Shadows*; see: Norma Bailey, Director, *Women in the Shadows*, 1991. See also Brown, *Strangers in Blood*; Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980).

<sup>30</sup> Unknown, 976.29.120 *Old-Timers*, Lake of the Woods Museum, Kenora, ON.

<sup>31</sup> Nicholas Flood Davin, “Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds,” Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project, <[www.canadianshakespeares.ca/multimedia/pdf/davin\\_report.pdf](http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/multimedia/pdf/davin_report.pdf)> (accessed 20 August 2014).

<sup>32</sup> Ogimaamaashiik referred to her first husband, John Kipling Sr., as a “half-breed” from Selkirk,

pling, who worked at Dalles 38C. Her grandfather, Chief Katiwasung, arranged the marriage, but allowed Ogimaamaashiik to affirm his choice. She explains, “My grandfather chose the man for me to marry and it took me a whole year to make up my mind.... I never had any boyfriends.”<sup>33</sup> After her marriage, Ogimaamaashiik worked alongside her husband in the day school. The Department of Indian Affairs transferred neither teacher nor student to work in the recently established residential schools in the Kenora District.<sup>34</sup> In May 1905, Ogimaamaashiik gave birth to her first son, John Kipling Jr. Within a year, John Kipling Sr. died of pneumonia.<sup>35</sup> Ogimaamaashiik and her son “went back to the old people [her grandparents] then.”<sup>36</sup>

When John Kipling Jr. reached three years of age, Ogimaamaashiik remarried. Her second husband, Edward Martin, “looked like a real White man.”<sup>37</sup> He

fished and trapped fifty-six kilometres outside of Kenora at Sandy Lake. Her grandparents disapproved of the marriage, stating, “You don’t know what you [are] marrying, you know, marrying [a] White man.”<sup>38</sup> They had hoped Ogimaamaashiik would marry Charlie Savage, an Anishinabek widower from the Treaty #3 District. Her family’s disapproval culminated in an attempt to dissuade the minister from marrying the couple. Unfortunately, Ogimaamaashiik had eloped by the time her grandparents reached the chapel. The next twenty-five years was a constant struggle with an abusive husband—Ogimaamaashiik nearly lost her life to hæmorrhaging more than once. Despite her dissatisfaction with the union, she raised four daughters—Ann, Harriet, Hazel, and Mary—and two sons—Ben and Edward Jr.—with Martin.<sup>39</sup> While Ogimaamaashiik may have liked to raise John Kipling Jr. with her

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Manitoba. She explains, “Those Kiplings from Selkirk, they were same like, they were [S]cotch and halfbreeds like. I think their father was Englishman.... Their mother then was an Indian.” Please see Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, interview III by George Beatty, transcriptions by Dorothy Lavergne McLay (1987), Kenora, 11 July 1972.

<sup>33</sup> Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>34</sup> In 1897, the Oblate Order of Mary Immaculate founded St. Mary’s Indian Residential School adjacent to Rat Portage Reserve, Ontario. This learning facility was located approximately three kilometres south of Kenora. In 1902, Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School was opened at Shoal Lake Reserve #39. The Women’s Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church managed the school at the time of its opening. In 1929, the Department of Indian Affairs opened an off-reservation facility, transferring existing students to town. The new facility was established on the north shore of Round Lake near Kenora. For more information, please see: *We Were Taught Differently*.

<sup>35</sup> Death Record: John Kipling, 3 February 1906, Diocese of Keewatin, Kenora, Ontario.

<sup>36</sup> Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, interview V by George Beatty, transcriptions by Dorothy Lavergne McLay (1987), Kenora, circa 1972.

<sup>37</sup> Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>38</sup> Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, interview III by George Beatty, Kenora, 11 July 1972.

<sup>39</sup> Ogiimaamaashiik’s dissatisfaction with her marriage to Martin is implied throughout the transcripts. For example, when reflecting on her grandparents’ warnings—that she “[didn’t] know what [she was] marrying” or if Martin would “be mean to that boy [John Kipling Jr.]—she stated, “well, I find out then for myself.” Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, interview III by George Beatty, Kenora, 11 July 1972.



Figure 2: Ogiimaamaashiik with her second husband, Edward Martin, and her children<sup>40</sup> From left to right, top row: Benjamin Martin, John Kipling Jr., Edward Martin Jr. Middle row: Mary Martin. From left to right, bottom row: Annie Martin, Ogiimaamaashiik Martin, Hazel Martin, Edward Martin Sr., Harriet (Hattie) Martin

## From Prose to Poetics: New Transcriptions by Descendant B. Luby

### 1. The Importance of Speaking English

other children, he was sent to Cecilia Jeffery Residential School in Kenora.

Notwithstanding the trials of her personal and family life, by the time of her death on 10 February 1974, Ogiimaamaashiik had become a local celebrity, famed for her craftwork and storytelling. During the early 1970s, Kenora's local newspaper, *The Daily Miner and News*, published a series of articles on her life. The editor justified the series by the fact that "The memory of the early local history, particularly with regard to the Indian heritage, is fast fading away. Mrs. Mathilda Martin, 10 Sultana Ave is one resident who cherishes the knowledge of the early customs and culture that prevailed in this part of the country in her childhood."<sup>41</sup> The series concluded with Ogiimaamaashiik's aptly titled obituary "Well Known Resident Dies."<sup>42</sup>

My father married my mother and  
my mother was an Indian.

...

[T]hose white men [trappers], they have to,  
you know [,] marry them Indian girls.

...

When [my father] came to Kenora, he never see  
One  
White  
Woman.

...

My father married my mother and  
my mother was an Indian.

...

My old people [parental guardians] talk[ed] in  
Indian all the time.

...

[My grandfather] thought, I guess,  
"It's too bad if [you] didn't even learn...to  
talk in English or anything"

[because] my father was a white man.

<sup>40</sup> Unknown, Matilda (Ogiimaamaashiik) Martin with her Second Husband, Edward Martin, and her Children, circa 1930, property of author.

<sup>41</sup> Unknown, "Log School Built For Granddaughter," *Daily Miner and News*, c. 1972, 7.

<sup>42</sup> Unknown, "Well Known Resident Dies," *Daily Miner and News*, 13 February 1974, 3.

...

[And] my father married...an Indian.<sup>43</sup>

## 2. Ogimaamaashiik's Schoolhouse, A Place for Learning

I was about six, I guess [when] he built a school... a big log school...for me to go [learn English].

My grandfather went [to] see that Indian Agent, [see] if he could...get an Indian teacher.

[Grandfather got home and said:]

"If he [is going] to give me a teacher...I'm [going] to have to [build a school]."

And then...he took all [those] logs and he made...

One room [, a] big room....

\*[with] logs...hewn...with a broad axe

\*[and] mud[ded] with clay.

....

Then...he fix[ed] the school [with whitewash].

He made...a kind of bench [of white ash to sit on].

He made [slates] to write our studies.

\*Then he [built] another building...close

...That's where the teacher [John Kipling Senior] lived.

\*They used to call it Mission Home.

We didn't go anywhere that summer [to harvest berries] because [Grandfather] wanted to finish that school.

\*My grandfather...

was a good worker.<sup>44</sup>

## 3. John Kipling's Classroom

We didn't learn no grades,

[no] first grade

[no] second grade.

We just had first book,

Second book,

Third book, and

Fourth book.

We went to school for [a] long time.

...

Me and Margaret Savage went to school pretty regular.

\*Her people were old too...

didn't go anywhere to trap.

...

The other Indians...they take their children

\*away in the fall [to trap] and

they don't come home [until] Christmas.

...

[Their children] couldn't go to school [regularly].

They were pretty slow learning \* first book,

Second book,

Third book, and

Fourth book.

....

I don't know how old I was when [Margaret and I] quit

[to] let the small children go to school.<sup>45</sup>

## Ogimaamaashiik's Oral Testimony and Anishinabek Education

Ogimaamaashiik's descriptions of her early education at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve offer a unique look into federally-funded instructional programming developed in response to Treaty #3's education promise. From her perspective we can come to better understand the desire of those living on her reserve to attain

<sup>43</sup> Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

English language training, as well as the initiatives of local leaders to engage with European style education and the curriculum delivered within the classroom. Signed in 1873, Treaty #3 established a formal relationship between the Crown and the “Saulteaux Tribe of the Ojibbeway Indians.”<sup>46</sup> Considerable debate surrounds the terms of the agreement. Treaty commissioners sought the transfer of land ownership from the “Ojibbeway Indians” to the Crown. Anishinabek representatives, by contrast, approached treaty as a land-sharing agreement—a guideline for future interactions between settler society and local Indigenous communities. What is clear, however, is that both Lieutenant Governor Alexander Morris and Anishinabek chiefs agreed upon the importance of Western education. Lieutenant-Governor Morris proclaimed, “I will also establish schools whenever any bands ask for them, so that your children may have the learning of the white man.”<sup>47</sup>

Morris identified formal (read: Western) training as a predictor of peaceable interactions between cultural groups, suggesting that the “learning of the white man” would help to ensure that “the white and red man will always be friends.”<sup>48</sup> Anishinabek children, Morris believed, could be trained as cultural interlocutors.

Chief Sakatcheway, representing what are now Grassy Narrows and Wabauskang First Nations, shared Morris’ vision for Anishinabek youth.<sup>49</sup> According to Morris’ notes, Sakatcheway committed to an educational exchange. He said, “I will lend you one of my daughters and one of my sons for you [Euro-Canadians] to teach what is good, and after they have learned, to teach us [Anishinabek].”<sup>50</sup> Overall it is the perspective of Grand Council Treaty #3 that the nature of the agreement was to develop an insider’s understanding of the outsider’s worldview and to build stronger relationships with acquired knowledge.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Crown of the United Kingdom, 4 October 1873, Treaty 3 Between Her Majesty the Queen and the Saulteaux Tribe of the Ojibbeway Indians at the Northwest Angle on the Lake of the Woods 1873.

<sup>47</sup> Lieutenant Governor Alexander Morris qtd. in Grand Council Treaty #3, “We have kept our part of the treaty,” 46.

<sup>48</sup> Commissioner Dawson qtd. in Grand Council Treaty #3, “We have kept our part of the treaty,” 46.

<sup>49</sup> This quotation is attributed to Chief Sakatcheway by Grand Council Treaty #3 in “We have kept our part of the treaty,” (reprint 2013). Grand Council Treaty #3 also associates the quotation with present-day Grassy Narrows and Wabauskang First Nations (47). However, in the short-hand reporter’s account, reproduced by Morris in *Treaties of Canada* (1880), no name is listed. This quotation is attributed instead to “CHIEF (of Lac Seule)” (63). The Dominion Government did not define the boundaries of Grassy Narrows and Wabauskang reservations, represented by Chief Sakatcheway, for almost a decade after treaty. After 1882, Chief Sakatcheway managed a federally-recognized territory that covered over 7,000 hectares. To learn more about the territories managed by Chief Sakatcheway refer to Anastasia M. Shkilnyk, *A Poison Stronger than Love: The Destruction of an Ojibwa Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 56-58.

<sup>50</sup> Morris, *Treaties of Canada*, 63. See also Chief Sakatcheway qtd. in Grand Council Treaty #3, “We have kept our part of the treaty,” 47.

<sup>51</sup> Tim Holzkamm and Leo Waisberg, “We Have Kept Our Part of the Treaty: The Anishinaabe Understanding of Treaty #3 (Kenora: Grand Council Treaty #3, 3 October 1998), 43.

One of the ways that Chief Katiwasung, Ogimaamaashiik's grandfather, suggested that treaty goals be met was through language education. Although his views are silent in the written records of Treaty #3 negotiations, Ogimaamaashiik's testimony reveals that he perceived English language training as a useful strategy to connect the Anishinabek community with newcomers. Ogimaamaashiik was at the forefront of this experiment. In many ways she was the ideal candidate. Although the product of a bi-cultural union, her father, Benjamin Lavergne, had purposefully left Ogimaamaashiik to be raised on-reservation, in *Anishinaabemowin*, by Katiwasung and Jane Lindsay, thus privileging her Indigenous ancestry. Still, Katiwasung considered it imperative that Ogimaamaashiik learn to speak a European language: "It's too bad if [you] didn't even learn... to talk in English or anything," he said.<sup>52</sup> Katiwasung believed that by learning a European language Ogimaamaashiik would be able to bridge cultural divides. This belief is also apparent in the chief's willingness to "lend" Ogimaamaashiik to a federally-appointed missionary to learn English, and "what is good," so that she could—at the most intimate level (home)—connect with a white man. In the end the language training seems to have paid off as Katiwasung successfully arranged the marriage of Ogimaamaashiik to the English-speaking

school master John Kipling. This marriage created a kinship bond and cultural ties for future generations.

Local initiatives to engage with government-run education systems also come to light through Ogimaamaashiik's testimony. During the Treaty #3 negotiations, Lt.-Governor Morris promised that learning facilities would be provided upon application by a band.<sup>53</sup> When Katiwasung applied for a school, however, he quickly discovered that Lieutenant Governor Morris' promise was provisional. The Department of Indian Affairs refused to fund construction at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve. Contrary to Morris' commitment to "establish schools whenever any bands ask for them," the version of Treaty #3 published by the Crown set the following conditions: schools would be federally funded if (1) the Dominion of Canada deemed the facility "advisable," (2) the "Indians of the reserve...desire[d] it," and (3) the school was established on reservation land.<sup>54</sup> Shortly after Treaty #3 was signed, David Laird, Minister of the Interior, revealed federal designs to reduce operating costs by refusing to fund school construction at Broken Head River First Nation—regardless of advisability or desirability. Laird explained, "[T]he Government is not bound under the Treaty to erect a schoolhouse on each Reserve, and that the Government consider their obligation in this respect discharged by

<sup>52</sup> Matilda (Ogimaamaashiik) Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>53</sup> Commissioner Dawson qtd. in Grand Council Treaty #3, "We have kept our part of the treaty," 46.

<sup>54</sup> Crown of the United Kingdom, 4 October 1873, Treaty 3 Between Her Majesty the Queen and the Saulteaux Tribe of the Ojibbeway Indians at the Northwest Angle on the Lake of the Woods 1873.

the payment of a school teacher on each reserve.”<sup>55</sup> Although Laird’s rejection concerns a Treaty #1 Reservation, it reflected a nationwide shift in the application of Indian policy. Anishinabek Chiefs felt this breach of treaty acutely. Treaty #3 signatory Chief Mawintoopinesse, for example, “died in 1890 without ever seeing a well-funded and efficient Day School built on his reserve” despite multiple requests for financial aid.<sup>56</sup>

Federal rejections of band applications for learning facilities reflect the declining political power of Anishinabek chiefs. Confederation (1867) complicated meaningful nation-to-nation negotiations as it identified Anishinabek chiefs as subjects of the state prior to treating with them.<sup>57</sup> Within a decade of the signing of Treaty #3, the Indian Act of 1876 further reduced Anishinabek power by redefining Anishinabek chiefs and their band members as legal wards of the state. The Act ratified a paternalistic relationship between Indigenous “wards” and settler “agents,” assigning the state veto power over band council’s education decisions. Section 63 read, “The chief or chiefs of any band in council may frame, subject to confirmation by the Governor

in Council, rules and regulations for... [t]he construction and repair of school houses [and the] locating of the land in their reserves.”<sup>58</sup> Federal officials here claimed authority to reject applications submitted by Anishinabek chiefs in the best interest of their wards.

Chief Katiwasung appears to have recognized the tightening noose of state power. Cognizant of his declining power, Katiwasung made the decision to work with what he had and strategized to make the most of the limited treaty benefits. Katiwasung explained that “If he [the Indian Agent is going] to give me a teacher...I’m [going] to have to [build a school].” He proceeded to build a schoolhouse using locally harvested materials. Logs hewn on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve formed the walls. Clay collected from the banks of the Winnipeg River filled cracks between logs, insulating the one-room schoolhouse. Katiwasung then furnished the school in his attempts to secure an educator. He fashioned desks of white ash and slates for student use. Band members actively supported the project. Hazel Martin-McKeever, Chief Katiwasung’s great-granddaughter, explains that “An iron stove was put in that was made by

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<sup>55</sup> David Laird qtd. in Sheila Carr-Stewart, “A Treaty Right to Education,” *Canadian Journal of Education*, 26:2 (2001), 131.

<sup>56</sup> Grand Council Treaty #3, 49.

<sup>57</sup> Section 91(24) granted the Parliament of Canada, or federal government, “exclusive Legislative Authority [over] all Matters” concerning “Indians and lands reserved for the Indians.” This division of power problematically defined Indigenous treaty negotiators as *subjects* of the Dominion and thus subject to federal law. It failed to identify Indigenous treaty negotiators as representatives of *alternative* geopolitical territories. Please see Dominion of Canada, *British North America Act*, 1867, Section 91(24).

<sup>58</sup> Dominion of Canada, *An Act to amend and consolidate the laws respecting Indians [Indian Act of 1876]*, 1876, 39 Vict., c. 18.

<sup>59</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief’s Granddaughter*, 8.



one of Chief Katiwasung's friends."<sup>59</sup> Band members generally seem to have donated large homemade wax candles for classroom use.<sup>60</sup> This flurry of activity resulted in short-term economic loss for the chief and his family. Ogimaamaashiik explains, "We didn't go anywhere that summer [to harvest berries] because [Grandfather] wanted to finish that school."<sup>61</sup> Hazel Martin-McKeever, links financial sacrifice to increased state intervention: "The Chief wanted to get the building up, as he was anxious to meet the conditions imposed before the government changed its mind."<sup>62</sup> In the end, the school was built and little Ogimaamaashiik attained her classroom education.

Without the initiative of her grandfather this kind of opportunity would not have taken place. In this instance, government education was not imposed on the students of Dalles 38C Reserve, but was requested within the spirit of the Treaty #3 negotiations and the desire of local leaders to broaden their children's knowledge base. The curriculum and pedagogical approach to learning at the day school followed a cooperative model due in large part to the program set out by the schoolmaster. Upon the recommendation of First Bishop Lofthouse of the Church of England, the Department

of Indian Affairs hired John Kipling Sr., a lay missionary of mixed Native and European descent who had studied at St. John's College in Winnipeg, Manitoba, to teach at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve.<sup>63</sup> Ogimaamaashiik recalls that Kipling catered to youngsters living on-reserve (and likely nearby off-reservation lands). The teacher took special care to integrate his pupils by grouping them in relation to their performance abilities rather than age. Students worked through "first book, second book, third book, and fourth book."<sup>64</sup> Spelling, history, natural history as well as stories and poems filled these books (or readers).<sup>65</sup>

Skill-based groupings suggest that Kipling was responding to local circumstances. Ogimaamaashiik indicated that children with elderly parents or guardians attended school most regularly. While Kipling reported a roll call of twelve students, he had an average attendance of seven.<sup>66</sup> Regular attendance correlated positively with sedentarism, which helps to explain the family dynamics (i.e. elderly guardians) of his most frequent students. Children with youthful parents continued to participate in seasonal rounds, experiencing large breaks in their studies to help hunt and manage traps during the fall.<sup>67</sup> Given the mobility of

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Matilda (Ogiimaamaashiik) Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>62</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief's Granddaughter*, 7.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>64</sup> Matilda (Ogiimaamaashiik) Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>65</sup> Charles Levi, "What were the schoolbooks like?" *A Virtual Schoolhouse*, Library and Archives Canada, <<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/schoolhouse/008003-2300-e.html>> (accessed 1 August 2014).

<sup>66</sup> "Department of Indian Affairs Tabular Statements, 30 June 1898," *Schools - Residential* (folder), Kenora, Ontario, Lake of the Woods District Museum.

<sup>67</sup> Matilda (Ogiimaamaashiik) Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

Kipling's students, skill-based groupings allowed children to learn at their own place thus encouraging continued—albeit sporadic—in-class participation. Such flexibility may have been unique to Kipling's pedagogical style. At the Presbyterian residential school located on Shoal Lake Indian Reserve, parents had to negotiate holidays from the Reverend A.J. McKittrick and Principal J.C. Gandier. Three weeks of holiday was granted to Anishinabek attendees. However, parents had to decide which harvesting activities to maintain as a family; the 1902 agreement dictated that “during the berry season the larger children shall have at least three weeks holidays or part of this time may be given at rice harvest.”<sup>68</sup> Kipling reduced conflict for families eager to co-educate, allowing them to pass on *kagitiziiminaanik* (“traditional knowledge”) during the school year without the restrictions of Shoal Lake. Even Ogimaamaashiik, with her grandfather's keen support of the day school, received in-depth training outside the classroom in skills such as *manomin* (“wild rice”) cultivation, basket-weaving, and soap-making.<sup>69</sup>

While many schoolteachers divided their students by book instead of grade, Kipling's groupings may also have reflected Anishinabek influences over local

curriculum. Trial and error was (and is) a valued Anishinabek teaching method. Anishinabek educators attached considerable value to continued practice and hard work—such skills were essential to community survival. Kipling allowed his students to develop their English-speaking skills over time and through trial and error.<sup>70</sup> Overall, this kind of inclusivity and grouping system seems to have created a popular reputation among local students as indicated by the fact that Ogimaamaashiik left school not because she had completed all the schooling, but to make room for incoming students.

*Anishinaabemowin* also had a place in Kipling's schoolhouse. Few of the moral lessons occurred in English. It is important to note that moral instruction, although heavily associated with residential schools, was not uniquely tied to Indigenous education. According to historian Charles Levi, “one of the main concerns of early public education [was] the moral instruction of young people,” both Anishinabek and non-Anishinabek.<sup>71</sup> The clergy attained higher levels of education than the general public, and were trained specifically to disseminate moral knowledge in a schoolhouse setting. What is unique, in the case of Dalles 38C Reserve, is Kipling's decision to moralize in *Anishinaabemowin*. Carol

<sup>68</sup> Chief Red Sky et al., Cecilia Jeffery School Agreement, 14 January 1902, Cecilia Jeffery Residential School Collection, Lake of the Woods Museum, Kenora, Ontario.

<sup>69</sup> “Lake of the Woods Museum, “Many Skilled Tasks Performed at Dalles,” (newspaper clipping), 9 (c. 1972).

<sup>70</sup> Matilda (Ogiimaamaashiik) Martin, interview I by George Beatty, Kenora, circa June 1972.

<sup>71</sup> Charles Levi, “Why have schools?” *A Virtual Schoolhouse*, Library and Archives Canada, <<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/schoolhouse/008003-1100-e.html>> (accessed 1 August 2014).

Lawson, Kipling's great-granddaughter, inherited his teaching Bible. This Bible was written in *Anishinaabemowin* as were Kipling's margin notes.<sup>72</sup> According to family lore, Ogimaamaashiik and Kipling "went around to the Reserves, ministering the Word of God in [this translated] King James Version of the Bible."<sup>73</sup> Hymns were also translated from English for learning purposes. Children and mature students alike learned to praise the Christian God in *Anishinaabemowin*. By encouraging worship in *Anishinaabemowin*, Kipling fostered a direct communication link between his students, his parishioners, and the Lord thus challenging structural advantages that typically accrued to settlers. Band members retained primary responsibility for their spiritual practice; English translators need not be present to worship. Education here did not downplay Anishinabek spiritual power by pressuring Anishinabek learners to speak English before speaking to God. Nor did Kipling threaten with hellfire those children who continued to blend *Anishinaabemowin* with Christian practice—a recurring theme in residential school survivors' testimony.<sup>74</sup>

Rather, Kipling encouraged his students and parishioners to weave the Christian faith into their Anishinabek lives.

This kind of cooperation and blending of customs remained intact among band members long after the schoolhouse had closed. Ogimaamaashiik's grandmother, Jane Lindsay, for instance, insisted that Chief Katiwasung be buried, according to Anishinabek custom, with his Queen Victoria Treaty Medal in 1925.<sup>75</sup> Jane justified the act by stating that "He needed it [the Queen Victoria Medal] when he went above."<sup>76</sup> Thereafter, funeral attendees sang "Nearer My God to Thee."<sup>77</sup>

While the argument can and has been made that Christianity is a by-product of colonial dominance, simple binaries such as Anglo-Christian versus Anishinabek (and the inevitable "othering" that ensues) obscures collaborative attempts to share alternative spiritual truths. Children educated at day school on Dalles 38C Indian Reserve retained control over their religious affiliation and do not appear to have been forcibly baptized like pupils of the nearby Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School. During a chiefs'

<sup>72</sup> Carol (Kipling) Lawson, interview with Brittany Luby, Kenora, Ontario, 12 July 2012.

<sup>73</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief's Granddaughter*, 78.

<sup>74</sup> Aboriginal Healing Foundation, "Appendix B: General Discussion in Residential Schools at the Southwest Region Manitoba Metis Federation Regional Meeting, 24 June 2000," in *Metis History and Experience and Residential Schools in Canada* (Ottawa: published by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation Research Series, 2006), 89.

<sup>75</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief's Granddaughter*, 64. Conflicting evidence exists. The funeral record maintained by the Diocese of Keewatin indicates that Thomas Lindsay, Indian Chief, was buried at Lake of the Woods District Cemetery on 7 September. The year is not listed. Please see: "Funeral Record: Thomas Lindsay, Indian Chief" 7 September [?], Church of Notre-Dame-du-Portage, Kenora.

<sup>76</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief's Granddaughter*, 64.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

meeting in 1902, Chiefs Red Sky and Pagindawind demanded of the Reverend A.J. McKittrick and Principal J.C. Gandier that “while children are young and at [Cecilia Jeffrey] school they shall not be baptized without the consent of their parents.” Chiefs Red Sky and Pagindawind preferred that “if when they [students] reach years of understanding they wish to be baptized, relations and friends shall be invited to the baptism[.]”<sup>78</sup>

Records from the Diocese of Keewatin suggest that Kipling did not coerce his pupils into baptism. Ogimaamaashiik clearly remembered attending day school with Catherine Henry (b. ~1890).<sup>79</sup> Catherine was not baptized until July 1906, approximately five months *after* Kipling’s death. Further, Catherine required an interpreter during the ceremony. She did not have sufficient English to proceed without translation. Catherine’s Christian faith had developed in *Anishinaabemowin* and was solemnized outside of the schoolhouse. Records from the Diocese of Keewatin reveal that Catherine Henry married fellow student Alfred Lindsay. There is no written evidence that Alfred sought affiliation with the Anglican Church (despite his Anglican education) in the early 1900s. Baptism did not function as prerequisite to his enrolment. Alfred did agree to baptize many of his

children—John Jacob (b. 1913), Josephine (b. 1914), Alfred James (b.1917), Mary Margaret (b. 1919), Mary Sarah (b.1921)—in the church adopted by his wife, their mother.<sup>80</sup> Taken in relation with Ogimaamaashiik’s testimony these records indicate that Kipling was a culturally respectful educator who allowed his pupils more choice in adopting the Christian faith than “Indian” students enrolled at nearby residential schools. This is not surprising when looking at his overall conduct during his tenure at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve. Kipling consistently approached education with a flexible and inclusive pedagogy, reinforcing the cooperative nature of learning within the community.

### “The New Generation”

Ogimaamaashiik’s education was a success, especially in terms of her grandfather’s vision. Her role as a cultural mediator did not disappear with the death of her first husband and former schoolmaster, John Kipling Senior. Years later, due to her language and religious training, other opportunities arose. Ogimaamaashiik was able to act as an interpreter for the Church of England, and in particular clergyman John Page.<sup>81</sup> She likely translated ceremonial utterances and instructions for Christian living.

<sup>78</sup> Chief Red Sky et al., Cecilia Jeffrey School Agreement.

<sup>79</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief’s Granddaughter*, 9.

<sup>80</sup> Birth and Baptism Records: Church of Notre-Dame-du-Portage, Kenora: “John Jacob Lindsay,” 8 May 1916; “Josephine Lindsay,” 8 May 1916; “Alfred James Lindsay,” 31 May 1921; “Mary Margaret Lindsay,” 31 May 1921; “Mary Sarah Lindsay,” 31 May 1921.

<sup>81</sup> For example: Baptism Record: Catherine Henry, 1 July 1906, Location Not Listed, Diocese of Keewatin, Kenora, Ontario. See also: Baptism Record: Sarah Elizabeth Lindsay, 1 July 1906, Location Not Listed, Diocese of Keewatin, Kenora, Ontario.

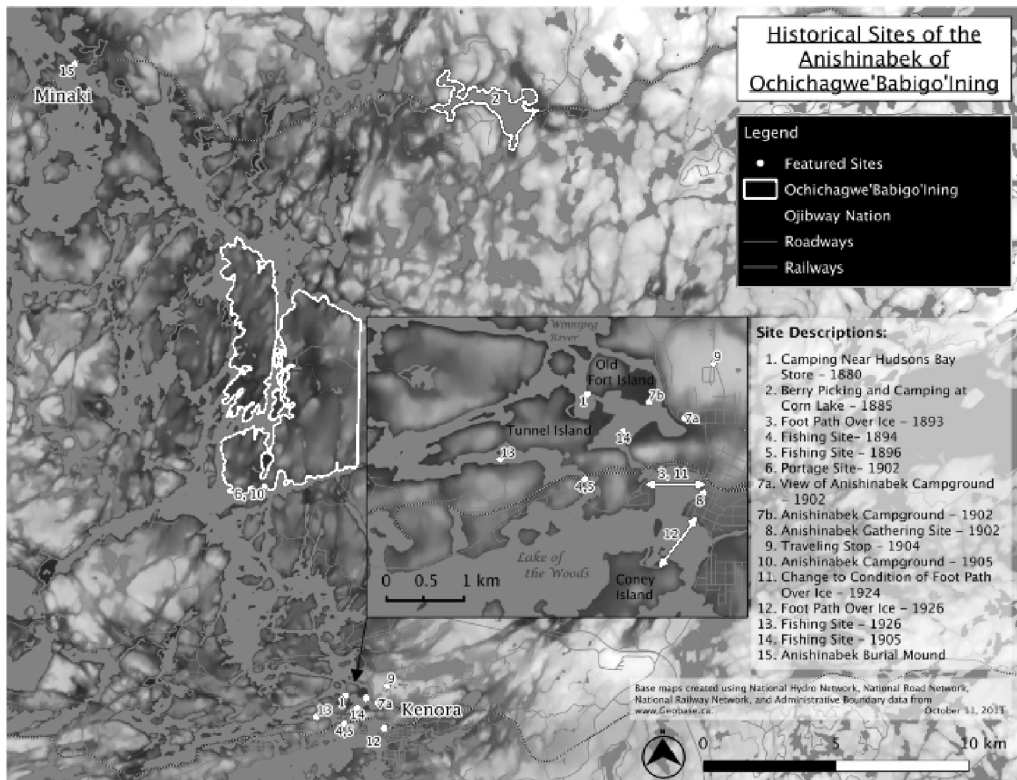


Figure 3: Map of Dalles 38C Active Territory, 1890 – 1930.<sup>84</sup> Produced by Sheldon Ratuski, Kenora, Ontario.

Ogimaamaashiik also used her English education to help communicate Anishinabek grievances to the Department of Indian Affairs. As early as 1904, Ogimaamaashiik began to accompany Chief Katiwasung on his summer rounds. Together, they travelled from Dalles 38C Indian Reserve to Rat Portage Indian Reserve. They likely visited active gathering sites (i.e. blueberry camps) in off-reservation territories along the way. On their journey, Chief Katiwasung and Ogimaamaashiik “paid attention to [Ani-

shinabek] concerns about each other and what was happening at their reserve.”<sup>82</sup> With Ogimaamaashiik at his aide, Chief Katiwasung promised to “get word to the Indian agent” in hopes of remedying local complaints.<sup>83</sup> Her English-speaking skills, developed in the classroom setting, thus became a tool in Chief Katiwasung’s negotiations with the Department of Indian Affairs. Education allowed band members of Dalles 38C to achieve one treaty education goal: dialogue across the linguistic and cultural divide.

<sup>82</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief's Granddaughter*, 39.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

## The Day School Legacy: A Vision Denied

The long-term success of the day school was curtailed by Kipling's untimely death and the entrenchment of the policy of aggressive civilization proposed by Davin of which the residential school was a principal feature. In February 1906, Kipling took sick and died within a week.<sup>85</sup> Dalles 38C Indian Reserve lost its only salaried teacher and continued federal support for on-reserve instructional programming. The Department of Indian Affairs opted to transfer many Anishinabek pupils from day school at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve to either Cecilia Jeffrey or St. Mary's residential schools in Kenora. This move reflected federal fears that children who remained with kin "may know how to read and write, but... will still remain savages."<sup>86</sup> The Department of Indian Affairs, however, tied removal to spiritual emancipation (more accurately, the

forced adoption of Christianity) and improved economic opportunities for Anishinabek youth. The Department of Indian Affairs had elected to fund a day school at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve. It had transferred an educator from Selkirk, Manitoba, to the reservation. Enrolment did not demand any structural changes to the building. It was simpler, administratively, to maintain Kipling's resource allowance. However, when Kipling died, it became cost-effective to retrofit the education system. Students could be transferred to learning facilities more strongly aligned with the policy of aggressive civilization. By transferring students, the Department of Indian Affairs also reduced the cost of recruiting and relocating a replacement teacher. After Kipling's death, opportunities for cooperative education declined. Increased federal control over Anishinabek pupils' lives is evident in the spike in Presbyterian and Catholic baptisms and marriages and parallel decline in Anglican ceremonies.<sup>87</sup> Children

<sup>84</sup> This map reflects the active territory of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve as reconstructed from newspaper clippings. However, it does not accurately reflect the full extent of active territory described by elders at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve. Permission has not been granted to reproduce a detailed map of active territory that includes elder testimony. As such, this map should be seen as suggestive, rather than representative of Ogiimaamaashiik's summer voyage.

<sup>85</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief's Granddaughter*, 43.

<sup>86</sup> Sir Hector Langevin qtd. in *We Were Taught Differently*, 4.

<sup>87</sup> The earliest identified Anglican marriage at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve occurred "in the schoolhouse" in 1895 ("Marriage Record: George [widower] and Margaret [widow]," 4 October 1895, Schoolhouse in the Diocese of Rupert's Land in the County of Keewatin). In 1928, Bessie Begg (born at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve) married a non-Native man in the Anglican Church ("Marriage Record: Eric Larvarne and Bessie Begg," 18 August 1928, St. Alban's Church, Kenora). This is the last identified Anglican marriage with a Dalles band member. The earliest identified Catholic marriage was held by Nancy McLeod (born at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve), but was solemnized at St. Mary's Indian Residential School. Records indicate that she was baptized into the Catholic faith shortly thereafter ("Marriage Record: Nancy McLeod and Joseph Morriveau," 1909, Church of Notre-Dame-du-Portage, Kenora). Nancy McLeod is the first identified child to be born at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve and baptized by the Catholic Church. The last identified Anglican baptism of a child born at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve occurred on 31

of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve stopped exacting choice over their religious affiliation and the ability to blend Christian and Anishinabek practice. The treaty education goal of cultural interlocutors was replaced with the state goal to “destroy the Indian.”<sup>88</sup>

## Conclusion

The conclusions of this research did not come easily. The final analysis is the results of generations of knowledge building and preservation. Ogimaamaashiik’s education was the product of her grandfather’s investment in European systems of learning in order to provide language and cultural training for his descendants in the wake of colonial regimes. His initiative, supported by band members and the schoolmaster Kipling, allowed Ogimaamaashiik a unique position in her later years as a cultural interlocutor and knowledge keeper. Her interviews with George Beatty were possible in the 1970s because she had a command of the English language and an understanding of settler society. This made Dorothy Lavergne McLay’s job much easier as she diligently transcribed her aunt’s accounts. Still the testimony in its most authentic form remained obscured as the authors of this article, and in particular,

her great-great-granddaughter, grappled with the most efficient and ethical means to approach the information provided by Ogimaamaashiik. In the end, a poetic rendering gave voice to a perspective that had been lost to the living world with Ogimaamaashiik’s passing. Recovering that voice allowed for original perspectives concerning the historical reality of day schooling at the Dalles 38C Indian Reserve, providing an alternative model of cooperative education in the midst of an overflowing collection of overtly coercive experiences. Through this creative approach to Ogimaamaashiik’s words the authors were able to re-construct the day school and in some ways continue the work begun by Chief Katiwasung. This article has highlighted the legacy of his initiatives with the hope that the chief’s vision may again become a focus and a reminder of the viability and benefits of cooperative education.

In an ironic twist, Kipling and Ogimaamaashiik’s son, John Kipling Jr., was later enrolled at Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School.<sup>89</sup> Within one lifetime, members of Dalles 38C Indian Reserve (like Ogimaamaashiik herself) had lost the power to determine their children’s education. Educational goals also changed. Residential schools like Cecilia

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May 1921. The child was born to Alfred and Katherine Lindsay, who had been baptized in the Anglican Church over a decade earlier (“Birth and Baptism Record: Mary Sarah Lindsay,” 31 May 1921, Church of Notre-Dame-du-Portage, Kenora). On 24 April 1938, Carol Kipling (born to John Kipling Jr.) was baptized in the Anglican Church by her now-enfranchised father (“Birth and Baptism Record: Carol Kipling,” 24 April 1938, Church of Notre-Dame-du-Portage, Kenora). Given that no comparable record exists, it is likely that her brother Jack Kipling—like Nancy McLeod—was baptized by the Catholic Church given his enrolment at St. Mary’s Indian Residential School.

<sup>88</sup> Nicholas David Flood qtd. in *We Were Taught Differently*, 4.

<sup>89</sup> Martin-McKeever, *The Chief’s Granddaughter*, 62.

Jeffrey discouraged the practice and acceptance of Anishinabek skills, values, and ceremonies—gone were the days of cooperative curriculum where students could learn both the written word and *manomin* (wild rice) cultivation.

While Chief Katiwasung and John Kipling encouraged the training of cultural interlocutors through language training, residential school instructors sought to eliminate the use of *Anishinaabemowin*. John Kipling Jr. refused to speak *Anishinaabemowin* with his children—Jack, Ray, and Carol Kipling—in order to improve their educational performance at school. This son of a cultural interlocutor raised unilingual children despite his family’s historical investment in bilingual education. Whereas Ogimaamaashiik had used her English-speaking skills to establish communication channels between Chief Katiwasung and the Indian Agent, her son used his English-speaking skills to distance himself from Dalles 38C Indian Reserve and sought employment as a mill hand at the Ontario-Minnesota Pulp and Paper Company in town. Eventually John Kipling Jr. would opt for complete enfranchisement. Within a single generation, the possibilities of an Anishinabek school built upon a treaty promise evaporated.

The story of Chief Katiwasung, educator John Kipling Senior, and pupil Ogimaamaashiik is an important reminder of what Anishinabek education—developed in response to the Treaty #3 educa-

tion promise—could have been: inclusive of Anishinabek speech and pedagogical practices, supportive of Anishinabek economic activities, and accepting of spiritual exploration and cultural blending. It also allows to better understand Anishinabek educational goals. During the Treaty #3 negotiations, Lieutenant-Governor Alexander Morris claimed “The [new generation] could be trained in the habits and ways of civilized life—prepared to encounter the difficulties with which they will be surrounded, by the influx of settlers.”<sup>90</sup> Chief Katiwasung worked to achieve these goals by building a schoolhouse for his granddaughter, Ogimaamaashiik. Under Kipling’s tutelage, Ogimaamaashiik learned to speak English. She subsequently lived out the treaty promise, listening to the grievances of her fellow band members and reporting them to federal authorities under Chief Katiwasung’s direction. Such educational opportunities, however, existed only in the short-term. Book learning benefitted Ogimaamaashiik and her community for a few years, but as the Department of Indian Affairs’ commitment to “aggressive civilization” increased, Anishinabek opportunities to shape educational outcomes declined. John Kipling Junior’s enrolment at Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School offers a poignant marker as *his* generation departed from the day school cooperative model and faced the ushering in of Canada’s dark legacy of Indian residential schooling.

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<sup>90</sup> Morris, *Treaties of Canada*, 292.