

## ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

"F" Division  
Prince Albert

Cut Knife Detachment  
July 6, 1928

## CRIME REPORT

re

Little Pine Reserve Indians...Alleged Sun Dance

P.C.R.

1st

On the evening of the 3rd inst, Chief Blackman, John Turus, Joe Cuthand and Robert Bear, Treaty indians of the Little Pine Reserve called at this Detachment stating they had just come from Battleford and had interviewed the Indian agent Mr. MacDonald regarding having a Sun Dance in the near future, and that Mr. MacDonald said they could have same if I sanctioned it and no indians came from other reserves.

I through an interpreter James Warden told the indians that I had not the authority to sanction this, that I would get in touch with Mr. MacDonald and if he told me they could have this dance I would not stop same.

On the 4th inst I got in touch with Mr. MacDonald and he stated over the long distance telephone that he had given no such permission.

On the 5th inst I was informed the indians on the Little Pine Reserve were preparing for said dance, I immediately patrolled by auto livery to said reserve and informed the indians they could not hold same.

The indians are very keen on having this dance and I am afraid in spite of the fact that I have told them not to hold it [they] will do so in some off corner of the Reserve. They inform me this is a religious ceremony, fasting and a secret rite with a pipe, there is no mutilation of the body or the giving away or paying back money goods or articles of any sort, to prove their statement any police officer can be present and see that the law is not violated in any shape or form, in view of this it would appear that the Indian Act would not be violated and I would like some definite instructions as to what course of action to pursue in the event of this dance at a future date being held, as there appears to be no provisions under the Indian Act that would cover same if dance is held under circumstances stated.

Pending

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Constable

W. Kingston. Reg. No. 5765  
I/C. Detachment.

## ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

"G" Division  
Edmonton

Hobbema Detachment,  
20th July 1929

Officer Commanding,  
R.C. Mounted Police,  
Edmonton, Alberta

Re; Indian Sun Dance  
Rocky Mountain House District, Alberta

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Sir,

In accordance with the instructions contained in your memorandum of the 16th inst, I have the honour to report that I have made numerous inquiries regarding the nature of the Indian Sun Dance which was celebrated in the vicinity of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, and which lasted for a period of four days commencing on the 15th of June last.

The Indians who were concerned in the observance of this Sun Dance are all non-treaty Indians and Half-breeds, and have been accustomed to hold these ceremonies for quite a number of years past. Many of these non-treaty Indians were formerly members of the various bands who still occupy the Indian Reserve at Hobbema, but after a time these persons were found by the Indian Agent to be an undesirable [sic] class of people. They were frequently making trouble for themselves, and others on the Reserve, and as a result authority was obtained for their removal, after which they formed a sort of settlement in the neighbourhood of Rocky Mountain House.

According to the information which I have received from the Indian Agent at Hobbema it would appear that nothing unusual happened at this particular Sun Dance, and that the entire proceedings were simply a repetition of what has actually been practised in former years.

I have interviewed some of the Indians from this Reserve who were amongst the gathering who were taking part in the ceremony. These Indians have informed me that the Sun Dance was conducted on a small scale in comparison to some which they have seen. There were no cases of drunkenness, and no rowdyism, and the old time forms of torture were not indulged in.

As far as I can ascertain it would appear that the story told by the aged Scotch squaw-man, John Bremner, regarding his previous experiences and associations with Indians of note, cannot be relied upon, as far as the local press reports are concerned.

The account of the routine observed throughout the whole proceedings is apparently correct, as stated in the press, but it has been rather exaggerated by the persons who supplied the information to the newspaper authorities.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the gathering dispersed in the same orderly manner as that which marked their assembly, and there was nothing of

## ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

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importance to excite public attention to any greater extent than on former occasions.

The reason why this Indian Sun Dance received rather more than the usual amount of publicity was owing to the fact that a few white people were extended the privilege of being allowed to attend as spectators and these persons freely circulated a somewhat magnified report of the proceedings.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

signed:

A.H. McCormack, Cst.  
Reg. No. 10317  
I/C Detachment.