

Julia “Tchikitchiwanokwe” Sayer (1786-1883)

Julia Sayer was the daughter of John Sayer¹ a North West Company partner who traded in the west Lake Superior area. Her mother was Obemaunoqua (Marguerite), the daughter Mamongazida (Big Foot) an Ojibway.² The United States government made a treaty with the Ojibway of the Fond du Lac region in 1826. It is known as Treaty #133 - Treaty of Fond du Lac of Lake Superior with the Chippewa, August 5, 1826.

Article #4 was written to provide for the Métis members of the tribe and the names of those implicated are listed at the end. The list mentions Obemaunoqua and two of her children:

- To Henry Sayer and John Sayer, sons of Obemaunoqua, each one section.

Sometime before 1810 Julia married "White Crane" Waub-uj-e-jauk, the son of Maidosagee, they had one son Joseph Nabenaigoching or Webonaanway Sayer born in 1810.³ White Crane's name is sometimes written Wabadidjak or Wa-ba-che-chake. He died fighting in November 1813 in the fight on the battle field on the Raisin River, Ontario in the War of 1812-14.

Julie then remarried with Adolphus Nolan before 1818 and started her second family of Nolins. Adolphus, also Métis, was born in 1780, the son of Fur Trader Jean Baptiste Nolin and Marie Angelique Couvert. He died before 1846 and she raised the smallest children in her own house at Sault Ste. Marie in 1846. Later she moved in with her son François Nolin as is shown in the census of 1861. The children of Adolphus and Julie Nolin were:

- François Nolin
- Louis Nolin
- Michel Nolin
- Marguerite Nolin

¹ In the fall of 1804, John Sayer, a partner of the North West Company and his crew departed from Fort St. Louis, near modern-day Superior, Wisconsin. Sayer originally intended to build a post near Cross Lake, but the location for his wintering operations changed to a site two miles up the Snake River, after he conferred with local Ojibway leaders. The exact period of the post's operation remains a mystery, but recent research indicates the post saw several seasons of operation. Sometime after the post was abandoned it was destroyed by fire. Today, the North West Company Fur Post, a reconstruction of John Sayer's post, is owned and operated by the Minnesota Historical Society. The site consists of approximately 93 acres on the north and south sides of the Snake River, with the historic reconstruction on the south side.

² Big Foot aka Loon's Foot Mamongazida was born around 1727 in Lapointe. His father was No-ka or Nokay and his Ojibwa mother (unnamed) had previously been married to Snow Mountain Wabasha (a Dakota). Mamongazida often travelled to Quebec and had fought against the British with Montcalm at the Plains of Abraham in 1759.

³ A document preserved in the Sayer or Nebenagoching family reads: "In consequence of Wa-ba-che-chake, a Chipewa of the Sault St. Mary's having been killed in the battle during the late war with the Americans at Fort George, his title and marks of distinction thereby falling to his son Ne-ban-a-aw-bay, a boy of eight years of age, we the subscribers do hereby with the advice and consent of his tribe assembled, invest the said Ne-ban-a-aw-bay with the title and marks of distinction belonging to his late father. Drummond Island, the 29th day of June, 1819. Joe Maramette Major commanding W. McKay Sup. Indian Affairs, D.J."

- Suzanne Nolin



LOUIS RIEL INSTITUTE
Knowledge • Culture • Heritage

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