

Chief Picheito Tanner. (b.c. 1802 - d. 1872)

Picheito Tanner (dit Thomas DeCorby Tanner) was the eldest son of John Shawshaw-wabanaase “Falcon” Tanner (The White Indian) and his Saulteaux wife, Red Sky of the Morning¹. John Falcon Tanner worked for the American Fur Company and in the 1820s was employed as an interpreter at Mackinac and then Sault Sainte Marie. Picheito was born circa 1800 at Red Lake, Minnesota Territory. There were two daughters as well, but nothing is known of them.

Picheito was the Saulteaux chief of the Portage la Prairie Band. Archdeacon Cochran states that when he arrived in Portage la Prairie in the early 1850s both Picheito (Image) and Atakawinin (Gambler) were living there as permanent residents (Garrioch, 1923: 94).

The historical record indicates that Chief Picheito Tanner moved west into the Assiniboine River valley, from Portage La Prairie very soon after his half-brother Rev. James Tanner was killed in 1870. Picheito was known at various times as Little Pheasant, Pheasant Tail or Rump, Le Croup de Pheasant and Nahawananan.

Picheito married Marie Jane Ledoux, the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Ledoux and Madeleine Wehnashk in 1836 at Turtle Mountain near what is now Belcourt, North Dakota. Marie was born in 1820 at Turtle Mountain.² Their children were:

- Alexander “Pa-ma-na-way-a-shuway” Tanner born circa 1840. Alexander Tanner (b. 1840) son of Pecheto and Ne-jo-te-kwe, he entered treaty with Yellow Quill’s Band and was paid as Band No. 125, Gambler’s Band. He was living in Rolla, Rolette Co., North Dakota when he applied for discharge from treaty, he lists himself as a laborer and hunter. With his Cree wife, Carioline Bone, he lists children Joseph (17), Isabel (16) and Angélique (4) and with wife Sarah Hines, he lists Charles (16), Moise (15), La gla--- (4) and Jeremiah (1) Thirteen deceased children by both wives are listed. Jean Baptiste Davis and Miskopinais (Red Thunder) M. J. Rolette sign his application. Wife Sarah Tanner applies too.
- Gambler “Atakawinin” Tanner born circa 1842. Gambler Tanner was also known as, Atakawinin or Otahaoman or possibly James. Hugh McKay, former Chief at

¹ John Falcon Tanner was also married to Theresa Lavallee about 1805. Theresa was born about 1780/1790. They had the following children:

- Rev. James Tanner was born about 1811. He died on 10 December 1870.
- Joseph "Ke-she-sha-way" Tanner" was born about 1805/1815.
- Martha Ann Tanner was born about 1808 in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.

² Ledoux, Marie; address: Sandy Bay, Westbourne; claim no. 1434; born: 1820 at Turtle Mountain; father: (Métis); mother: Wehwashk (Indian); married: 1836 at Turtle Mountain to Tanner Pettitoo, then to Pettokahan and then in 1862 to Nahwahtchewekapow, deceased; children living: Alexis Tanner; Basile Tanner, Marie Tanner; Angélique Tanner, Jean Tanner, François Desmarais or Pettokahan and Augustin Starr; children deceased: 1; scrip for \$160.00.

Waywaysecappo, says that the correct spelling of Gambler's Indian name is Odit-ta-gay-win-nin.

- Edward “Ahchechakoonce” Tanner (c. 1849-1917), adopted by Picheito, was actually the son of Kaybayway and Nahgaunahquahumo. He left Manitoba in the 1870s and settled at White Earth Reservation in Minnesota. He married Nowegwance (b. 1845) and had children George (c. 1890), Lizzie (c. 1892), John (c. 1895), Neshwubequance (c. 1897), Mary (c. 1898) and Mark.



George Walters, Edward Tanner, Kah-gon-daush and Nashota, circa 1900 a Chippewa/Ojibway Delegation to Washington

- Bazile: Bazil and his wife Elizabeth had children; Sadie Tanner and Marie Tanner, born 1872 at St. Francois Xavier.

Children of Picheito and Ap-pa-tus (b. 1832)

- Thomas “Ka-Kee-Way-como” Tanner (born May 1845). Tommy was admitted to Treaty with Yellow Quill’s Band. Then was No. 104 Gambler’s Band. He was the son of Pe-ch-to, and Ah-pa-tus (No. 92 Gambler’s Band), drew treaty payments at Winnipeg, 1875, then twice at Cypress Hills, the 1881-1893 at Maple Creek with Gambler’s Band. Married circa 1873 then formally in July 1890. He married Margaret Polette (b. January 1854). She was from Shoal River then Cote River,

the daughter of Joseph Polette (American) and Nay-qua-took. They drew payments at Cypress Hills in 1878, 1879 and 1881-1893 at Maple Creek. Thomas withdrew from Treaty on March 27, 1894. She withdrew from Treaty on April 18, 1894. Their son Joseph born 1875 was trained as a blacksmith at residential school. December 30, 1900 chief Astekeesic of Waywayseecappo requests that widow Thomas and family.

- Joseph “Kissoway” (Bright Star) Tanner, born 1822, was the son of Picheito Tanner and Ah-pa-tus (No. 92 Gambler’s Band). Kasheshaway (Kissoway) was a trader and freighter on the St. Paul-Pembina Winnipeg route, he was known to have as many as 200 Red River carts on the road at one time. Joseph first married Angélique Clermont and they had a daughter, Marie born in 1842 at Fort Ellice. Marie married Jean Nolin of St. Vital. Joseph Tanner then married Chief Yellow Quill's sister and was a member of Yellow Quill's band. They had one daughter, Julie, born in 1849 at Portage la Prairie. She married John Wells of St. François Xavier. After marriage Julie lived at the Dirt Hills.

Joseph died in 1897 at the Crooked Lake Reserve in what is now Saskatchewan.

Tanner, Julie; address: Battleford; born: 1849 at Portage la Prairie; father: Joseph Tanner or Ke-she-sha-way; (Métis); mother: sister of Chief Yellow Quill (Indian); married: Spring, 1869 at St. François Xavier; to John Wells Jr; children living: Salomon, John, Alexander and Isaac; children deceased: Abraham and Marie Athalia; scrip for \$160.00; claim no. 892.

Picheito and Marie Ledoux separated sometime before 1850, he was then married to Marie Angelique Nesko-te-koway Ledoux.

- Angelique, born 1850. She married Joseph Deschenaux in 1869 at St. Boniface.

Tanner, Angelique; address: Battle River Settlement; born: 1850 near Carlton; father: DeCorby Tanner alias Petitto (Métis); mother: Angelique Nesko-te-koway (Métis); married: 1869 at St. Boniface to Joseph Deschenaux; children living: Marie Anne, Patrice, Jean-Baptiste, Thomas, Beatrice and Salomon; children deceased: Angelique, Eliza, William John and Marie Adeline; scrip for \$160.00; claim no.162.

Signatory to Treaty 1

Picheito was a leader of his mother’s people, the Red Lake Saulteaux, who lived in the White Horse Plains, Portage la Prairie Delta area. Picheito lived in the largest house in Portage la Prairie, near the main road leading into the settlement (presently the corner of Crescent Ave. and Broadway). He had many souvenirs in his home, such as glass candlesticks and mechanical toys, which he brought back from his many trips to the United States. He was known as a man with a taste for elegance and comfort. He is thought to have been the Chief, *Nahawananan*, who signed Treaty No. 1 on August 3rd

1871. Sometime after this, he took his band to the Fort Qu'Appelle region and died there around 1872. His chieftanship thereby passed to his son Gambler Tanner.

During the 1870s, Picheito's other sons attached themselves to a group of their Métis relatives who were making a last attempt at the buffalo robe trade. They followed the buffalo robe trade west to the vicinity of Buffalo Lake Alberta, then south into Montana. They were eventually forced out of Montana by US troops (except for the Plains-Ojibway who remained on Rocky Boy's reserve). A number of these hunters then congregated at the Cypress Hills near Fort Walsh. A number of Tanners appear on the Treaty Annuity Paylists at Maple Creek Saskatchewan. The Tanners are reported to have moved from there to Silver Creek to join their brother Gambler in the early 1880s. Three other families also moved to Gambler Reserve from Maple Creek about the same time: namely, Jandrew, Kakaneeshik and Maqua (Black Bear). Cowessess and the balance of the Plains Ojibway were eventually persuaded to move from Cypress Hills to the Qu'Appelle Valley because the American government was pressuring Canadian authorities not to settle them along the US border.



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