

Chief Peguis and His Band:

Friends to the Selkirk Settlers

Part One:

Chief Peguis was an Ojibway leader. In 1808, Peguis and his band arrived at Red River from Sault Ste. Marie. Peguis and his people were the best friends that the Selkirk settlers had. Peguis was happy to have a settlement at Red River, and he helped the Selkirk settlers in many ways.

Part Two:

On many occasions, Peguis and his people brought meat, fish, and vegetables to the settlers. The Ojibway showed the newcomers how to hunt, fish, and trap. As early as 1821, Peguis and his band were settled at Netley Marsh, where they grew corn and made sugar from maple sap. They showed the Selkirk settlers how to get maple syrup.

Part Three:

When the settlers had to move out to Jack River after the NorWesters had destroyed their homes, Peguis and his men offered to protect them. The chief and his men escorted the colonists north until they were out of danger. Chief Peguis and his people also helped the settlers by giving them food and shelter during hard times.

Part Four:

In 1817, Peguis and three other chiefs signed a land treaty with Lord Selkirk. This is the first treaty we know about that was signed between the Aboriginal people and Europeans in Manitoba. This treaty was an agreement that the Selkirk Settlers could live on and use the land. Lord Selkirk would pay the Ojibway each year with tobacco.

Part Five:

In the 1830s, Peguis and his people settled at St. Peter's Reserve, across the river from Selkirk. Anglican missionaries built the first school and church for Aboriginal people in western Canada. Many years later, the people at St. Peter's moved to Hodgson, but the stone church (St. Peter's Dynevor) is still standing. Peguis became a Christian and took the name William King. His descendants adopted the surname Prince.

Part Six:

In 1924, the Lord Selkirk Association put up a statue to Chief Peguis in Kildonan Park, and dedicated a gravestone in St. Peter's churchyard. Recently, St. Peter's Church has been renovated so that services can be held once again. Each June the members of the Peguis band and their friends have a memorial service for Chief Peguis.

Friends to the Settlers

1. How did Chief Peguis and his people help the settlers?

2. What did the Aboriginal people teach the settlers?

3. How did the Aboriginal people protect the settlers?

4. How did the Aboriginal people change the lives of the Selkirk settlers?

5. How did the Selkirk settlers change the lives of Aboriginal people?
