

Louis Luke Courchane and Viola Ashley

In the Pacific Northwest in 1892 and 1909

Chalk Courchane

This is the story of two Metis of Montana and then Washington, they lived through the times of the ending of the Wild West, the Great Depression and Two World Wars right up into the Space Age. They raised a large family in Wenatchee, Washington and have hundreds of grandchildren today. I told their story in my book, *From There to Here, A Wenatchee Family's Travels from the Last Best Place to the Apple Capital of the World* in 2003 but have updated it constantly and it has 21 chapters but for our purposes here we will only submit about 6 or so chapters.

Chapter 1 David Charles "Chalk" Courchane (2003) revisions 2009

This is the story of the Courchane family, descendants of Pierre Francois Foucault and his wife, Peronne Borde.

The Courchenes can be divided into at least two and maybe three distinct and unrelated families. Our line, which I refer to as Foucault dit Courchene, settled in Quebec in the 1600's. At the same time that they came over from France, so did the Brissets. The Brissets took the "dit" name Courchene as well. The Brissets are said to have went to France from Ireland, just after King Edward the 1st conquered Ireland. The two Courchene families no doubt crossed each other's paths many times in the last 300 years. Another family in Quebec in the 1600's was that of the Kiskonnas Indian, Jean Baptiste Courchene dit Person. This line may be related to the Brisset line as some of them used Brisset dit Courchene.

The six main branches of the Foucault dit Courchenes are: COURCHENE, COURCHESNE, COURCHANE, COURCHINE, COURCHAINED and CUSHING. Today they hardly realize that they are related! As a general rule in the past the COURCHENE and COURCHANE lines are usually residents of the western part of North America, and usually part-Indian; while the Courchesne are usually Easterners and Caucasian. The Courchained fall into both categories. But bear in mind that today's Courchenes (and etc.) will be just about any nationality or race.

Courchene is a French-Canadian surname brought over from France to be used in the New World. I have heard that the surname Courchene (and etc.) is not commonly used in France. It is a "dit" name, or nickname meaning "called".

The meaning of Courchane (etc.):

"This information comes from my Old French book that I used at the University of Kansas when I was studying for my Master's degree. It is entitled "Precis de Phonetique francaise," neuvieme edition. Jean Bourciez, author. C. Klincksieck, Paris.

The Celtic word for oak is cassanu. In the Celtic word, the stressed vowel is the "a" which is before the "s". The Old French is chasne. Notice the "s" that remained in the word. When you remove the "s", you get a circumflex over the letter before it. In the book, there is an upside-down curve, like a smile, over that "a." This is the noun for our entire name of "corcassanu." If the stressed vowel is elsewhere, the "cor" would mean "heart." However, since the stress is not elsewhere, the "cor" means "short." Our "cour" comes from the Old French "court" from the Latin "corte." So, I continue to maintain that our name means Short Oak." Dr. Pauline Courchesne, Phd.

The Foucault dit Courchene came from "Perigueux, capital of the department of Dordogne, on the Isle River, in southwestern France, 68 miles (110 km) northwest of Bordeaux. A market for cattle and farm produce, it is famous for truffles and pate de foie gras, and produces chemicals, cigarettes, and shoes." Collier's Encyclopedia, vol. 18, p580.

Roman ruins in the city include the Vesona Tower and amphitheater, on the site of which the Chateau Barriere was built in the 12th century. The museum is rich in antiquities. The tenth-century Church of St. Etienne and the eleventh century Church of St. Front in are in Roman Byzantine style. There are handsome cloisters, the remains of an old abbey, adjoining the Church of St. Front.

In Roman times Perigueux was an important settlement known as Vesuna. It was ravaged by the Saracens in 730 and the Normans in 844, and became the capital of the province of Perigord in the ninth century. In 1204 it became part of France, was taken by the English about 1356, and regained by France in 1454. A seat of Protestantism, Perigueux was damaged during the religious wars in the 16th century and again during the war of the Fronde...." Walter McElroy and J. Chardonnet.

Perigueux is situated in the "Dordogne, a department in southwestern France, with an area of 3,550 square miles (9,195 km), bounded by Charente and Haute-Vienne on the north, Correze and Lot on the east, Lot-et-Garonne on the south, and Gironde and Charente-Maritime on the west. The department is comprised of the plateau of Limousin, covered with forests and pastures, and, to the west, part of the plateau of Perigord, intersected by the valleys of the Dordogne River in the south and the Isle River in the north. The climate is humid and mild.

Agricultural produce includes cereals for local consumption, potatoes, tobacco, vegetables, sugar beets, hemp, fruit, chestnuts, walnuts, and Perigord truffles. Coal, lignite, lime, millstone, cement, peat, and fireclay are mined. Iron and steel foundries and wool and cotton mills are found in the department; there are chemical industries at Perigueux, Sallegourde, and Bergerac. Railroad equipment is manufactured at Perigueux, and distilleries are located at Souze-St. Front. Principal exports are minerals, preserved

food, rifle stocks, sheets of veneer, hides, and walnuts. Perigueux, the prefecture, was the capital of the old province of Perigord. The region has numerous pre-historic sites. There are also Roman ruins and Romanesque, medieval, and Renaissance buildings. Dordogne was created from the old province of Guyenne." -- Samuel Van Valkenburg and J. Chardonnet, Collier's Encyclopedia, vol. 8, p352.

Nine generations come down from France to Louis Luke Courchane. The progenitor of our family, Pierre Foucault, was born in the little village of St. Michel of Perigueux in the Perigord province of southern France. He was probably born in the year the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, 1620.

In succession, the lineage from Pierre Foucault down to Louis Luke Courchane is: Pierre's son, Jean Francois Foucault (about 1641-1700) born in Perigord, France, married Elisabeth LeProvost in Quebec in 1671 and died in 1700 at Trois Rivieres, Quebec. Elisabeth was from Rouen, Normandy, France and lived to be 79 years old.

Their son, Jean Baptiste Francois Foucault dit Courchene (1682-1750) was born at Trois Rivieres, Quebec, Canada and married Marie Marguerite Bergeron in 1708 at St. Maurice, Trois Rivieres. He was the first to use the surname Courchene and is called "the Father of the Courchene's". He lived on the St. Lawrence River by some short oak trees hence Courchesne (Short Oaks).

Their son was Louis Jean Baptiste Foucault dit Courchene (1728-?) born in La Baie du Febvre, Yamaska, Quebec, Canada and married at St. Antoine church in Baie du Febvre in 1755 Marie Anne Chevretil dit Belisle (whose twin sister married Louis' brother at the same ceremony). Their son was Jean Baptiste Joseph Courchene (1770-abt 1805) born in La Baie du Febvre married Marie Josephe Lionnais in 1795 at Baie du Febvre. He was a "terrien" and died at 34 years of age.

Their son was called Francois Courchene de la Baie du Febvre (1796-?) was born after his father's death and was the first of this family to leave Quebec for the West. He married twice, both times to Metisse women, first to Madeleine Moreau and then to Marie Françoise Beauchamp in 1825 at St. Boniface, Manitoba, Canada. This is where the Courchene Indian blood of our line starts.

The area that Francois Courchene de la Baie du Febvre settled in was later called the Red River Settlements, and was situated at the Forks of Red and Assiniboine rivers. The settlement was broken up into various parishes or villages, St. Boniface being one of them. On the east side of the river settled the Anglo-Metis and on the west settled the French-Metis. And both sides were either Cree or Chippewa. The French speaking Metis lived on the plains and followed the season's buffalo hunting, fur trading, fishing, maple sugaring and generally supplying goods and other articles to the Selkirk settlers and Hudson Bay posts such as Lower Fort Garry built in the 1830s on the west bank of the Red River north of the rapids. The Anglo Metis were usually farmers or stockmen. The Church of England and the Catholic Church both made appearances during the early periods of settlement. St. Boniface was built in 1818 and St. John's in about 1820. It was in the years following the

merger of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821 that most of the Metis poured in to settle the area, especially those of English ancestry. Those that were on what would become the American side of the settlements were allied and related to the Chippewa and those on the Canadian side were usually Cree, although sometimes their enemy the Sioux were in the mix. Many of the Chippewa Metis had emerged from the Lake Superior country.

The Red River Metis were plains-hunters and made two main buffalo hunts a year. A summer hunt and a fall or winter hunt. In the winter, the buffalo's hair was the thickest, the robes were tanned with the hair on. Buffalo robes became the new money trade after the early 1840s when the beaver trade failed. "When the organized buffalo hunt out of Red River began to replace more individualized hunting in the 1820s, the Metis of Red River used to rendezvous at Pembina to make a unified expedition or approach into Sioux Territory to the west where most of the buffalo herds were concentrated. As the size of these hunts increased, paralleling the population increase of the Red River Settlement in the 1820s and 1830s, the single hunt split into two parties. There was the "main river party" encompassing the parishes along the Red River including Pembina, and a second "White Horse Plains Party," incorporating the Metis who had settled on the Assiniboine River at St. François Xavier and St. Charles.

This second group or party increasingly took a separate route to the buffalo plains to the southwest. Instead of heading south to Pembina, the St. François Xavier Metis followed the Yellow Quill trail which skirted the Assiniboine River on its north side. They followed this trail through the Sand Hills to the mouth of the Souris, where they crossed the Assiniboine and headed south. Here, on the Souris Plains where there was an abundance of grass, water, game, and the convenience of Grant's and Desjarlais' forts, they made plans for their summer buffalo hunt." "The Dispersal and Resettlement of the Oak Lake Metis to 1900" by Gerhard J. Ens, <http://www.ecclectica.ca/issues/2003/2/ens.asp>

Our family usually traveled with the main party out of Pembina.

Louis Luke Courchane's great-great-grandmother Lizette Ma-na-e-cha was half Chippewa and lived on White Horse Plains near St. Francois Xavier parish. She was born in 1775 and no doubt had a French-Canadian father who would have been in that area very early. Her husband, Joseph Azure (1767-1832) came from Sorel in Quebec. He was on the Assiniboine River during the season of 1793-1794 and worked for the North West Company and was with Charles McKenzie's Outfit in 1804 when he worked out of the Red River country as a guide and a voyageur. His brother was probably the Antoine Azure that was there at that time also.

Information taken from *The Journal of Francois Larocque*; by Francois Larocque; Ye Galleon Press; Fairfield, Washington; c. 1981.

Joseph Azure "He was a member of Francois Antoine Larocque's Missouri expedition to the Mandan villages which left Fort Assiniboine on November 11, 1804. They were sent out by NWC superiors to trade with that tribe. Five others accompanied them; Charles McKenzie, Baptiste LaFrance, William Morrison, Baptiste Turenne, and Alexis McKay.

"At the Mandan villages of the chiefs The Black Cat and The Grand, Azure and his companions met Captains Lewis and Clark and their Corps of Discovery, on November 25, 1804. Although the meeting of the two parties was almost casual, journals kept by Lewis and Clark, and by Larocque took note of it.

"Joseph Azure was put in charge of the North West Company equipment at The Grand's village. By November 27th, he had traded the Mandans out of 250 skins. Francois Larocque returned to Fort Assiniboine in February of 1805, Joseph Azure is lost track after that. The department that he worked in was the Upper Red River or Assiniboine Department, under the charge of Charles J.B. Chaboillez. While in the Upper Red River he served with others who may be ancestors: Antoine Azure (probably his brother), Francois Dagenais, Pierre Falcon, Francois Lariviere, and Louis St. Pierre (probably the brother of Francois St. Pierre)." He settled in Red River where his place had from half an acre to four acres under cultivation during the years 1829 to 1832. He owned at least one canoe, a house with stable, cattle, pigs and oxen. He died there in 1832. His ancestor goes back to Sieur Francois Hazeur du Marais of Brouage, Saintes, Saintonge, France. His son Leonard Hazeur dit Desonneaux was the first to come to the New World before 1681. He came of farmer stock. A Francois Hazeur was reported at Detroit by 1712.

On the vast American prairies the Metis camp of our ancestor was hit by a terrible thunder and lightning storm in July of 1840. Two horses, two dogs, an Indian family and a Canadian named "Courchaine" were all struck by the lightning and killed. The lightning came through his tepee and struck his rifle melting it in several pieces. I think this may be our grandfather. He was a farmer and plains hunter, traveling with the Chippewa Indians and Metis to hunt buffalo on the plains.

His son, Francois Courchene (1834-?) born at St. Boniface, Manitoba, was our first Metis Courchene, he married Marie Louise St. Pierre in 1860 at St. Joseph Church, Pembina, Dakota Territory. The St. Pierre ancestor's of Marie Louise go back in the fur trade history of North America to its earliest days. Francois was a farmer, Hudson's Bay employee and plains hunter. Our Lake Superior Chippewa blood comes from the St. Pierre's.

Francois Courchene's third cousin once removed, Thomas Courchene (aka Thomas Cushing) was born March 18, 1850 in Baie du Febvre, Quebec, Canada. I doubt that they knew each other, but both witnessed the events of the Great Sioux War. Thomas scouted for the United States Army after coming out West. He scouted first for General Custer out of Fort Abraham Lincoln in 1875, and then General Miles in 1876-1878.

Their son, Jean Louis "John" Courchene (1862-abt 1929) was born in Pembina, Dakota Territory and married Marie Alphosine Azure at St. Peter's Mission near Augusta, Montana in 1882. He was a plains hunter, wolfer and employee of the U.S. Army. His family was closely knitted to the Sioux bands, and family tradition says he was "arrested" with about 500 other Metis after the Battle of the Little Big Horn and detained at Lewistown, Montana for some time with no explanation ever given for the arrest. The Courchene family was camped near Gall's Sioux on January 2, 1881 and witnessed the

battle of Poplar River between Gall's forces and the U.S. Army. This brings us to Louis Luke Courchane (1893-1968).

The Courchane (etc.) family in all likelihood participated in the last buffalo hunt of the Pembina Chippewa/Metis. The following appeared in the St. Paul Globe, St. Paul, Minnesota, on Sunday, August 17, 1890 on page 5, received on Brenda Snider's Metis Cousins:

<p>LAST BUFFALO HUNT. It Took Place Twenty-Five Years Ago Near Turtle Mountain. Pilot Mound Sentinel: The last great buffalo hunt ever enjoyed in this portion of the Northwest, took place about twenty-five years ago and nearly all the half-breed population of Manitoba were engaged in the chase. A considerable number of those who took part in that wild raid on the buffalo are now settled along the Pembina and near the lakes, and delight to recall the remembrance of the great hunt with the various scenes, incidents and adventures connected with the occasion, the like of which can never again take place. That fall the buffaloes had congregated in immense numbers south and west of the Turtle mountains, about two or three days' drive from this place. The hunting party was very large, and consisted of men, women and children, with eight hundred carts and many hundred horses. As the hostile Sioux were abroad the party had to keep well together, while the outriders were stationed at different points on the plain for the double purpose of watching the movements of the Buffalo herds and to give notice if danger should appear, for, though the Sioux would not attack a very strong party, yet if a few hunters should chance to become separated in the chase they were liable to be cut off and destroyed. The buffalo hunter of the plains possessed peculiar and distinct character; he was a bold and skillful rider, a good</p>	<p>shot, hardy, strong, watchful, and like a brave man he was courageous; he usually rode a horse possessed of speed, strength and wind; like his master, the horse fully enjoyed the excitement of the chase, and in the attack needed no urging and no guidance, but would strain every nerve to bring his master alongside of the buffalo, and as soon as the shot was delivered would instantly sheer off to escape the expected charge of the infuriated monster of the plains. In those days the buffalo hunter was usually armed with a smoothbore flint lock gun, his supply of powder was contained in a horn that hung from the shoulders by a strap; the hunter kept several bullets in his mouth for the sake of expedition in loading. When a drove of buffalo were to be approached the advance was made by hunters in the greatest silence, the leader of the party a little in advance. His chief duty was that of restraining the impetuosity of the more impatient of the hunters and get his band as near the buffaloes as possible before the herd would become alarmed. This near approach was absolutely necessary in order that the horses would not be out of wind when the game was reached. The horses were always as eager as the men and frantic for the race, each having to be held in by main strength. At length, when the buffaloes commenced to move, the uneasiness would increase, and as the herd started, the leader would shout, now then, away! and in a moment every horse would spring forward with the wildest impetuosity. All had to start, for no horse could be restrained, bridles were let go, reins were</p>	<p>brought into position, and the wild cavalcade hore down on the flying herd. After the first shots had been delivered, the buffalo hunter loaded his gun while his horse was at full speed; the gun was first primed and the pan drawn back to its place, then a quantity of powder was transferred from the hand to the gun barrel and the bullet permitted to roll down. In firing, care was taken not to raise the breech higher than the muzzle, lest the ball should roll out, but as the rider was generally only a few feet from the animal that he wished to shoot, there was no necessity to raise the gun to the shoulder and the buffalo was usually as high as the horse. Sometimes a single hunter would shoot four or five buffaloes during a single chase made on a good herd. The larger the drove the better chance there was for the hunter, as the animals in advance in some degree retard the progress of those in the rear, where the attack was taking place. Cows and young heifers were the animals mostly sought for in the fall of the year. Calves and old bulls were not killed unless by accident or when game was scarce. The fat on the back of a good buffalo was two or three inches thick and of delicious flavor. On the occasion of the great hunt 800 carts were loaded with pemican, tongues and choice pieces of meat and the skins of buffalo. When the hunter had dropped a buffalo at some distance from his companions, or from the camp, the horse was tied to the head of the animal and generally continued to move in a circle, watching lest an enemy should approach while its master had his attention engaged in skinning the beast that had been captured.</p>	<p>Twelve or fifteen years ago, many of these old buffalo-hunting horses had been purchased by the white settlers who were then commencing to occupy the country, and it was amusing to notice with what horror and excitement one of these experienced animals would get the scent of an Indian. During the continuance of the great hunt, which lasted many weeks, the food of the hunters was meat and nothing else, the only change was in the manner of cooking. The next season the buffalo herds had moved far to the west and never again returned in such numbers so near the Red river, and even yet the wandering people of the plains look upon the loss of their buffaloes as the greatest calamity that ever befell their race.</p>
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St Paul Daily Globe
St Paul, Minn.
Sunday, Aug. 17, 1890
Page 5

Nicholas Vrooman author of the new book on the Metis "One Robe" commented on the article:

"The 25 year date from the 1890 of the article is 1865. That is the exact time, very clearly documented (1865-70) that is called the Red River exodus, where and when the RR Breeds and most Indians still in the eastern side of the Plains, moved into Montana and the Saskatchewan country. This created immense friction with the tribes already in the area (even though the Red River Pembina people had long been traveling into Montana and wintered over, and there were many established communities, now there was a new mass migration that came to live fulltime), as the buffalo were dwindling everywhere."

Nicholas Vrooman - Jan 19, 2013, Metis Cousins, Brenda Snider.

Again, I tell the story in a conversational style, and once more I am the chief story teller. In this book, I will tell my experiences and observations as I lived with my parents and their extended family. As I remember them. The basis of this book was started from stories I was told by my parents and my siblings, which were written down by me years ago in other genealogical projects. These stories were gleaned from those old books and added with some small revisions to this work. With the memories of my sisters, Sassy and Darlene, and my brother-in-law, O. A. Jones and some 1st cousins, nephews and nieces, even more anecdotes were included. The four of us (Sassy, Darlene, Chalk and O.A.), are all that is left of Momma's and Daddy's large family of the 1940's/1950's. (Darlene passed away December 4, 2004. Sassy passed away May 20, 2017). Some of the 21 original grandchildren have added a story here and there from their memories of life in those "Golden" times.

The story starts out with Louis Luke Courchane's birth and life to the time he meets Viola Ashley in Montana, in the middle of the Roaring Twenties. The book then turns to Viola's birth and early life until she meets Louis L. Courchane. After their marriage, it is the story of the Courchane family until about 1970. This story spans the history of America too, and Daddy lived through the administrations of the U.S. presidents from Grover Cleveland to Richard Nixon, and his children up to George Bush the Second. Newspaper articles, census records, school records, tribal records, military records, civil records, and church records were all used in researching this book. Photographs are used profusely as I feel as I my friend, Kathie Donahue of Spokane, when she once said photographs "flesh out the story."

In this book, I will refer to my father, Louis Luke Courchane, as Daddy, because to his children, that was his name. I know calling one's male parent "Daddy" is not in vogue today and I thought of referring to him as "Dad". But I remembered that we did not call him anything except "Daddy", and my older sisters still remember him as Daddy. And I never called him anything but Daddy as a child either. And none of us kids ever called him "the old man", Father, or Papa, and the same with my mother, Viola Ashley, we called her Mom or Momma, never "old lady", Mommy, or Mother. So, Daddy and Momma it is in this book.

The photographs used in this book are from my collection [which includes the collections Momma, Daddy, and Jimmy(courtesy of Dick, Joe and Steve Courchane), Sassy's collection (courtesy of Lilly R. Jones), Aunt Rosie William's collection (courtesy of Leonard Williams), Dona Courchane Baylor's collection (courtesy of Diane Courchane), Rainsey Courchane Zaste's collection, Gary Kitzke's collection (courtesy of Reggie Kitzke), Bob Scanlon's collection, Darlene Courchane Matt's collection and our cousins Dorothy Courchene Smith's and Louise "Joni" Courchene's collections, and Aunt Jennie Allison's collection through the courtesy of Lloyd "Gunny" Allison. And just recently I was able to select some very nice photographs from the very large collection of Diane "Sister" Courchane Richey. The Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center allowed me to scan some old post cards and photographs of Wenatchee into the book, through the courtesy of its curator, Mark Behler. Every photograph that I came across that was taken at the various residences of Momma and Daddy was used. They are of all types, taken by old Brownies, early Polaroid's, 127 Instamatics, 620's, 35mms, slides, studio (and even some digital photographs are used). "Anthropologists claim that everyone on this planet is a 40th cousin."

Chapter 1

Louis Luke Courchane

By the year 1880, the large Courchene and Azure clan was already living in the Sun River District of western Montana. Louis Riel, the famed Metis leader, was there too. Daddy's parents, Jean Louis (John) Courchene and Marie Alphosine Azure were married at St. Peter's Mission in 1882. They settled near St. Peter's Mission and the town of Augusta, Montana, where Louis Riel taught grade school. Jean Louis Courchene was always

referred to as John by the family and his youngest brother, William John Courchene was always remembered as Johnny.

The lifestyle of the western Metis was completely changed by four events: the Red River Rebellion in 1869, when they beat the British and Canadians and caused the formation of Manitoba; the Great Sioux War of 1876; the 1885 Northwest Rebellion in Saskatchewan (in both Metis Rebellions the leader was Louis Riel, Jr.), and the selling out of their birth rights in North Dakota in 1892 by the Chippewa's.

The Metis troubles in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and the Sioux War in eastern Montana made western Montana very inviting to our Metis ancestors. Our Azure kinfolk were associated with Louis Riel and were undoubtedly caught up in the turbulent times following Louis Riel's 1885 Rebellion against Canadian authorities in Saskatchewan. In those days there was a lot of moving from place to place among our Metis people. Hundreds of refugee Cree, Chippewa, and Metis were evading the Canadian military and seeking sanctuary at various American Indian reservations. Some Metis families were just looking for a place to live as they were forced out of the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota by unscrupulous people, in 1892. It seems that when they got back from a buffalo hunt one day they were met by Agents and tribal leaders and told they no longer belonged there. These Metis (including many of our ancestors) allied themselves with Cree and Chippewa bands that were also on the move.

Two of these Metis bands were that of Chief Thomas Little Shell and Chief Rocky Boy. Another band usually linked to them was that of Big Bear, who settled in Canada. The Metis wandered into the Flathead Reservation, and other places in western Montana.

After traveling hundreds of miles and spending weeks on the trail, a dirty, hungry and destitute band of Chippewa and Cree, crossed over the mountains into Flathead country. Two of the groups to reach the Flathead's were part of the Chief Thomas Little Shell band, and a party under the leadership of Pierre Boucher. Which of the Metis groups the Courchene family later allied with isn't known with any certainty. As they were already in Montana by the 1890's they must have been joined by the newcomers. But it is known for sure that they were on the Flathead Reservation in 1893, when Louis was baptized at St. Ignatius. How long they stayed isn't known.

The refugees were rudely welcomed by the Flathead chiefs, who thought that they would bring trouble to the reservation. But the poor people found a benefactor in the person of the Flathead Indian agent, Major Peter Ronan. Major Ronan was a kind man who would not turn out the hungry people. He allowed them to stay and work on local farms and ranches; so they could recuperate from the hard journey. This also let them get back on their feet economically.

The progenitor of this branch of the Courchene/Courchane family was Louis Luke Courchane, who was born, April 19, 1893, on the trail near a body of water called Black Lake. According to his own words, his mother stopped by the side of the trail just long enough to give him birth, then hurried on to rejoin the others of the party. His parents were

on their way to the St. Ignatius Mission on the Flathead Indian Reservation. They had camped at Black Lake because it was a regular “stopping off” place for the Metis and others. The Courchene family was traveling with a group of Metis and they were looking for a place to rest and recoup. Although he was born on April 19th, he was never to remember that date. Later he picked the 15th as his birthday's anniversary. Mainly because he had remembered his birth had been in the middle of April. Also this particular date was the birthday of his future daughter-in-law, Melba (Shell) Courchane.

By 1894 the Flatheads adamantly refused to let the intruders stay any longer. After many discussions and demands, the U.S. Army was called in to remove the Cree and Chippewa from the Flathead lands. The rejected people were then escorted by a command under Lt. John J. Pershing to the Canadian border. Once the Chippewa were no longer watched by Pershing, they slipped back over the international line to find refuge with different American Indian tribes. Most of them ended up on the Blackfoot Reservation, the Rocky Boy's Reservation and Fort Belknap Reservation, in Montana. Some ended up near Helena at Hill 57.



Black Lake on the Flathead Reservation, Montana

Black Lake was called “Senpcatkwton” the tail of a skunk spraying in the lake by the Flatheads. Taken by Chalk Courchane, about 1999.

From Baptism Register - St. Ignatius Mission, St. Ignatius, Montana

Die secunda Maii 1893, ego H. Daste S.J. baptiza- 40
 i puellam Mariam Papin ex tribu Cree natam a maria
 utriusque manibus ex Henrico Papin et infideli facinorosa illegi- Papin
 tris coniugio. Sponsor Mary McDonnell, esse eadem tribu, et L.P.
 Thimoteus Du Mont ex eadem tribu quidam horum a parte A. S. S. S. S. S.

Die vigesima prima Maii 1893, Pater A. Kauspalkolt S.J. 41
 baptizavit puerum Aloysium Courchene natum die 19 aprilis Aloysius
 ex Joanne Courchene et Maria. Sponsus Peter Falcon Courchene
 et Maria Falcon ejusdem soror LOUIS L. COURCHANE

Die quarta Junii 1893, ego H. Daste S.J. baptizavi 42
 Albertum Clair natum a tribus mensibus ex Joanne et Albert
 Christiano. Sponsus Joannes Petit Couture, Veronica Feyan. Clair
 Eadem die, ego H. Daste S.J. baptizavi Joannem 43
 Couture natum ex illegitimo coniugio die 14 aprilis ex Joseph
 Michele Couture et Clara Raymond. Sponsus Petrus Couture
 L.P.

Copy of actual baptism entry.

Louis Courchane's Baptism:

St. Ignatius Mission, Montana; page 139; # 41 of the Baptism Book:

"On the 21st day of May 1893, Father Antoine Kolk, S.J. baptized a boy, Aloysius Courchene, born the 19th day of April to John and Mary Courchene. The sponsors were Peter Falcon and Mary Falcon."



Jean Louis "John"
 Courchene
 Daddy's Father



Frank and John Louis
 Courchene
 Daddy's Uncle and Brother



FORD FAMILY
 Back Row: Left to Right
 Flora, Henry (seated), Sam, Adèle, Mary
 Courchene Ford, and Daniel
 Front Row: Left to Right
 Joe, Corbett, Jim (on Mary's lap) and Helen

Henry and Mary St. Ann Ford
 Family
 Daddy's Aunt and Uncle

Daddy's father, John Louis Courchene, and his family once again settled in the Sun River area near St. Peter's Mission. His family would remain in that area until his older children began to settle on their own. John Courchene may have died on the Rocky Boy's Reservation and his wife, Alphosine, died on the prairie east of Glasgow, Montana in 1898. John Courchene's death date is not known, but was sometime around 1929. All of the old-timers I corresponded with remember attending the funeral in different towns!

Daddy had eight brothers and sisters: Phillip, Antoine, Rebecca, John Louis, Elvina, an unnamed girl who died at a year old, Alex who died at age four, and Bernard died at 3 weeks old.



Daddy and his brothers and sister: Phillip, Rebecca, Louis (Daddy) and John Louis Courchene

After Alphosine (Azure) Courchene died in 1898, Daddy, only five year's old, and his brothers and sisters, were left in the care of their aunt, Mary St. Ann (Courchene) Ford, the wife of Henry "McCulloch" Ford. John Courchene was away most of the time; thus they were raised by the Fords at their ranch near Augusta, Montana. French was spoken fluently in the Ford household, permitting the Ford and Courchene children to learn that language easily. Aunt Mary Courchene Ford's middle name St. Anne is pronounced in French as Satan, and because of this the kids thought her middle name meant the Devil. Ford, Montana was named after this family.

Daddy and his 1st cousin, Dan Ford, were very good friends, and many years later he would remember Dan Ford as his best friend. The two were always into some misadventure, the kind that young boys can easily stir up. Usually John Louis would tag along and doubtlessly so would the other Ford children. One tale Daddy would recall, was when they all sneaked into a dairy building. It seems that they had found the dairy stocked with cottage cheese. They realized that they had stumbled into a feast, and the youngsters immediately "went to town" eating the cottage cheese. Daddy would later say that they ate as fast as they could because they feared detection, and made themselves sick. For the fifty or so years that passed after the "cottage cheese feast", he refrained from eating that particular dairy product. He always said that he had eaten enough of it!

A cousin, Joy A. King, wrote about Henry and Mary Ann Ford in the book "In the Shadows of the Rockies," pages 188-199, in 1978. In it she writes about the Courchane children's arrival at the Ford Ranch. Also how Mary St. Ann Courchene and Henry Ford met. Here are parts of her story of her Grandma (Mary St. Ann Courchene Ford).

"When Henry was twenty-two years old he was elected captain of the roundup with J. B. Hogan and Company. While captain of the round up he and several other cowboys drove a herd of cattle to Fort Benton. The cowboys made camp near old St. Peter's Mission and there he met his wife to be, Mary Ann Courchene.

She was born at Devil's Lake, North Dakota in 1867. Her parents and four brothers and three sisters migrated to Montana with Chief Little Shell's band of the Pembina Indians. She didn't speak English, just French and some Indian.

Her family settled near St. Peter's Mission where Grandma worked for the priests and nuns doing whatever she was told to do, but most of all she liked to work in the gardens. She was sixteen years old, small, slim, and had never worn a pair of shoes.

My grandmother, Mary Ann, often told us the story of her romance and marriage to Henry Ford.

The cowboys decided to have stew for supper and needed onions. The cook insisted Henry should go and buy some from the young girl working in the garden. After much persuasion, he rode over and asked her in English if he could buy some onions, but, not being able to understand him, she fled to the priest and told him about a stranger. The priest went out and talked to Grandpa. He came back and told Grandma to give them whatever vegetables they needed for their stew. Grandma went out and picked some onions and carrots and, keeping her eyes downcast, looking only at the horse's feet, she handed the vegetables up to Grandpa. He immediately began courting her, always in the presence of her parents. She said he was tall and handsome with gray eyes and a red beard. A date was set for the wedding and banns were posted. The cowboys left and went back to Augusta. The nuns made her wedding dress and Grandpa came back to claim his bride.

They were married there at St. Peter's Mission. Grandma had bought a beautiful plum-colored dress and cloak to travel in and also a pair of shoes. It was wintertime. They bid good-bye to her family, the priests and nuns, and left in a beautiful horse and buggy for the Sam Ford Ranch on the Sun River.

On the journey to the ranch Grandma stole a look now and then at her new husband. Despite his kind and gentle face and reassuring look, she began to feel cold and lonesome for her family. Most of all, her feet hurt in the new shoes and soon became cold and numb. Even the warm robe she had covering her lap and legs did not comfort her. I do not know how long the journey took but it was late at night when Grandpa showed her the lights from a big house and told her that was his father's home.

When they entered the room people were dancing, fiddlers were playing and everyone started milling around the bride and groom, laughing, talking and joking.

Clemence, the only mother Henry knew, rushed over and took Grandma by the hand and led her into another room where a fire was burning cheery and warm and made her sit by the heater and took off her shoes and rubbed her cold feet. She made her drink a cup of hot tea and then they both cried a little. After awhile she took Grandma back out to meet the guests. That was the beginning of the Henry Fords settling in the Augusta area.

Around this time, Grandma's sister died and they raised three of her children. There was Arthur, Rebecca, and the other one's name I am not sure of. They also raised Grandma's youngest brother, little Johnnie Courchene. Joy is mistaken here as it was her brother, John Louis' wife who died not her sister, and his children were Phillip, Rebecca, Louis, Luke and John Louis). Johnny was William John Courchene, Mary Ann's youngest brother. As far as I can be determined Arthur was actually Daddy.

Once when Grandpa was driving some of his and Joe's children to Fort Shaw, he stopped in Augusta and gave them each twenty-five cents to buy whatever kind of goodies they desired. My mother (Flora Ford) loved lemons and bought lemons and candy. Each one bought what they wanted and when they began to compare their goodies, Rebecca (Courchene) had bought twenty-five cents worth of big, red, ripe tomatoes. None of them had ever eaten a fresh tomato. Most of the food was either canned or dried. Rebecca had a huge sack full of tomatoes. She bit into one and made a wry face and said, "My goodness, this is spoiled." She tried another and said, "Well, all of this fruit is spoiled." The others agreed and they began throwing tomatoes at trees and rocks while they shared their good stuff with Rebecca.

Their home was a seven-room, two-story house. They butchered their own beef, pork and chickens. When they got hungry for fish, my mother, Flora, was the fisherman. She said she caught a big trout in Willow Creek and the pan-size ones in Ford Creek. They churned all their own butter and had all the milk and eggs they needed for their own use. They would go on long trips to pick berries. They canned huckleberries, juneberries, thimbleberries, and made chokecherry syrup. They used kerosene lamps and lanterns. Sometimes it was so windy they could not keep the fire burning. The wind blew the smoke back down the chimney. In the fall grandpa bought enough supplies to last them through bad winters and blizzards. Grandma insisted on this because shortly after she got married, her father froze to death trying to make it back home in a blizzard."



Henry Ford's ranch house, north of Augusta, Montana. The Families in front are those of Henry and Mary Courchene Ford and of Joseph and Annie Ford. See the man on the far right posing with two large photographs. I wonder who they are? And where are the photographs now?



Sam Ford, standing, Arthur Courchene, a nephew my grandparents raised.

From "In the Shadows of the Rockies", 1978, "Henry and Mary Ann Ford by Joy A. King, pages 188-199. Which of these is Arthur? I think my Dad.

According to his niece, Joni Courchene, Daddy went to elementary school in Augusta, and played football there. This must be St. Peter's Mission.

Noticed in School records of Fort Shaw, Montana in 1910 is a census:

LAND POPULATION		CIRCULAR NO. 448		ANNUAL CENSUS		Page 3
Male	Female	Name	Age	Family Relationship	Tribes	Residence
		Bushman, Mary	14	No Record	Chippewa	Elizabeth, Mont.
		do. Mabel	11	"	"	"
		do. Grace	11	"	"	"
		Crow Dick	19	"	Sioux	Poplar, Mont.
		Chamberlain, Frank	14	"	Gros Ventre	Harlem, Mont.
		Carr, Arthur	12	"	Chippewa	St. Falls, Mont.
		Chase, John	11	Father, J. Chase	Sioux	Wolf Point, Mont.
		do. Florence	15	do.	do.	do.
		do. Ebebe	9	"	"	"
		Collins, Mabel	14	"	Chippewa	DuPuyer, Mont.
		do. Susie	12	"	"	"
		do. Alice	7	"	"	"
		Courchene, John	11	Father, J. Courchene	Sioux	Augusta, Mont.
		do. Jas.	9	do.	"	do.
		do. Louis	17	Brother, Philip Courchene	"	Wolf Point, Mont.
		do. Rebecca	19	do. do.	"	do.
		do. Helen	8	"	"	Augusta, Mont.
		do. Alvina	13	"	"	"
		Courville, Roy	9	Father, Mr. G. Courville	Flathead	St. Ignatious, Mont.
		do. John Br.	10	do.	do.	do.
		do. Mollie	10	"	"	"
		do. August	13	No Record	"	"
		do. Willie	14	do.	"	"
		do. Alfonse	10	"	"	"
		do. Albert	9	"	"	"
		Culbertson, Maggie	17	"	Sioux	Poplar, Mont.
		do. Bertha	10	"	Piegan	Browning, Mont.
		do. Frances	11	"	do.	do.
		Copple, Judith	16	"	Shoshone	Rosefork, Idaho.
		Crawford, Ellen	16	"	Piegan	DuPuyer, Mont.
		Cook, Isabel	16	Father, G. C. Cook	"	Browning, Mont.
		do. Laura	14	do.	"	do.
		Docta, Fred	16	No Record	Chippewa	Malta, Montana.

He was confirmed on 20 June 1906 at Fort Shaw Indian School, Montana:
Louis Crouchane (Courchene) sponsor: Paul Sleeping Bear

Fort Shaw Indian School was opened in 1892 by Dr. William Winslow. The abandoned military post had been the home of the Buffalo soldiers of the 25th Regiment until that unit was moved out in 1891 and the fort closed down. The place was in great disrepair and it took some work to get it cleaned up and in good repair. Also books and other school supplies, desks, blackboards and other things needed to open a boarding school had to be ordered. It was to be an industrial school. In December of 1892 and early in 1893 the first Indian students had arrived, they were Assiniboine from Fort Peck in eastern Montana and Piegian Blackfeet from the Blackfeet Reservation. Later students from the Fort Belknap, Flathead, Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Wind River, Coeur d'Alene, Lemhi, Fort Hall, Spokane and Colville reservations would be sent there.

The young students were taught to march in squadrons the very first day and discipline was harsh. The boys and girls divided into different dormitories and the younger ones separated from the older ones. The school lessons for the boys besides the usual curriculum were carpentry, blacksmithing, how to plough, plant, till the soil, and harvest crops. Plus livestock tending of: cattle, horses, pigs, and chickens. Also how to milk a cow. The girls were taught domestic duties such as sewing, making butter, skimming cream and making cheese, how to cook, bake, and clean house. There was a band and many learned to play

musical instruments. At that time Metis were not usually allowed to attend the government schools as they were considered "British" Indians. Daddy and his sibling were sent as Assiniboines.

They all were introduced to sports, mainly baseball, basketball and football. Daddy, his brothers Phillip and John Louis, his sister Rebecca, several Courchene cousins and future sister-in-law, Sarah Mitchell and some of her sisters all attended the school. Joni Courchene remembered seeing a photograph of Daddy in his football uniform posing with the rest of the Fort Shaw football team. The same year that Fort Shaw became an Indian school James Naismith invented basketball and two years later, 1894, Senda Berenson developed it for girls. Josie Langley, was a Blackfeet student of Fort Shaw that went to Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania to attend classes for a short time. When she returned to Fort Shaw she brought back the game of basketball. Fort Shaw's Girl's basketball team played the first basketball game ever in Montana. Sarah Mitchell Courchene, was 14 years old when she first saw basketball played in 1903. It was when the Fort Shaw girl's basketball team visited Poplar, Montana a tour of northeastern Montana. In a year she was a basketball player for Fort Shaw and was one of the girls that went to the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 to win the world's championship. Her husband, Phillip Courchene (Daddy's brother), according to Bill Sansaver played football for Fort Shaw and in a game against the School of Mines threw the first forward pass in Montana.

According to Louise "Joni" Courchene, while at Fort Shaw Indian School Daddy gave his brother Phillip (who was a school monitor) such a "good" time of it that Phillip finally had to punish him in front of the class. Dad didn't think his older brother would do that and was both surprised and ashamed. They both laughed about the incident many years later.

"Hi Cousin Chalk,

thanks i will try this recipe someday. My mom didnt make fry bread very often. She made "la galette" or a little pan bread in a skillet in the oven. Kinda tasted like a biscuit, she would break off chunks of the bread. She would heat up the blueberries and add some flour and cornstarch and make a blueberry gravy. She said it reminded her of the warm chokecherrys in sauce that Grandma Sarah Courchene made." Therese Holden Sain



Fort Shaw girls' string orchestra, ca. 1907. Katie Snell and Sarah Mitchell are the two girls (with guitars) at the very right of the top row; Genevieve Healy (violin) is at the far right in the bottom row. The 1904 mandolin club that went to the world's fair featured four different stringed instruments: the mandolin, guitar, violin, and cello.

Bottom row second from left is Aunt Rebecca Courchane
Photo from "Full-Court Quest" Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith, University of Oklahoma Press, 2008, page 119.



Sarah Mitchell





The team in St. Louis. *Standing, left to right, Rose LaRose, Flora Lucero, Katie Snell, Minnie Burton, Genevieve Healy, Sarah Mitchell; seated, left to right, Emma Sansaver, Genie Butch, Belle Johnson, Nettie Wirth.*

1904 Fort Shaw Indian School Basketball Champions of the World at St. Louis Fair.



Fort Shaw Indian women's basketball team dressed in traditional buck-skin dresses: From left to right: Emma Sansaver, Nettie Wirth, Catherine Snell, Belle Roberts, Minnie Burton, Sarah Mitchell, Rose La Rosa, Genie Butch



Daddy attended Haskell Indian School in Lawrence, Kansas. He entered Haskell on August 23, 1910 at the age of 17. According to his records, his guardian was his older brother Phillip. The records also show that he was admitted at Haskell as a representative of the Assiniboine tribe, because Phillip lived on the Fort Peck Reservation, Montana. At the school one of his primary subjects was bakery. He remained at Haskell until June 24, 1913, when he went on leave. When he returned isn't shown. His records show that he had spent 56 months in attendance. This indicates that he was there until 1915 or 1916. His change of address was to Mount Pleasant, Michigan, where the Isabella Chippewa Indian Reservation was located and there was an Indian school. He always said that while he was in Kansas, he got his first taste of Mexican food, including his favorite chili con carne. He and a few of his friends were milling around in front of a café there, when the proprietor came out and asked them why they did not come in. On the big glass window of the café was a sign that said, "Whites Only!", and they pointed to it. The owner laughed and said, "That don't mean you boys!" "Come in and have a meal!" This was Daddy's first exposure to the "Jim Crow" laws. While at Haskell he saw the great Jim Thorpe run the track.

INDIAN SERIAL	NAME	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	SEX	AGE	COLORED FROM WHAT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	SPECIAL INQUIRIES RELATING TO INDIANS		EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	SCHOOL	TERM	AGE	MONTHS IN SCHOOL	SCHOOL	SCHOOL
							INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THIS SCHEDULE	EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION							
1	Ruben														
2	Wagon														
3	John														
4	Joseph														
5	Richard														
6	William														
7	Joseph														
8	Richard														
9	William														
10	Joseph														
11	Richard														
12	William														
13	Joseph														
14	Richard														
15	William														
16	Joseph														
17	Richard														
18	William														
19	Joseph														
20	Richard														
21	William														
22	Joseph														
23	Richard														
24	William														
25	Joseph														
26	Richard														
27	William														
28	Joseph														
29	Richard														
30	William														

SPECIAL INQUIRIES RELATING TO INDIANS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THIS SCHEDULE.

The following instructions apply to columns 22 to 30.

Column 22. If the Indian was born in this country answer should be entered. If possible, in column 23, and 14, relating to the state or territory of birth of the person and of his or her parents. In any case, enter particular points to cover the name of the state with which the person is connected. If the Indian is of mixed blood, enter the name in column 23, 24, and 25. If the Indian is of full blood, write "none" in column 23, and leave columns 24 and 25 blank. If the Indian is of mixed blood, write in column 24, 25, and 26 the fraction which shows the proportion of Indian and other blood, as column 24, Indian 1/2, column 25, White 1/2, and column 26, negro 1/4. For Indians of mixed blood all these columns should be filled, and the sum, in such cases, should equal 1 and 1/4, 1 1/2, 1 3/4, etc.

Column 27. Whenever possible, the statement that an Indian is of full blood should be verified by inquiry of the older members of the tribe, or of an Indian in possession of mixed blood without knowing it.

Column 28. Number of times married. - If the Indian is married, enter in this column the number of times he or she has been married, and enter in column 29 the date of the last marriage. - If the Indian man is living with more than one wife, write "Yes" in this column, otherwise, write "No".

Column 29. If living in polygamy, where the wives are obtained. - If the Indian man is living with more than one wife, and if his wives are natives, write "Yes" in this column. If his wives are not natives, write "No".

Column 30. Education from what educational institution. - If the Indian is a graduate of any educational institution, give the name and location of such institution.

Column 31. Is the Indian treated. - An Indian is to be considered "treated" if he or she is detached from his or her tribe and is living among white people as an individual, and as such is subject to taxation (whether he or she actually pays taxes or not), or if he or she is living with his or her tribe but has received an allotment of land, and thereby has acquired citizenship. In either of these two cases write "Yes" in this column. If the Indian is in a reservation, without an allotment, or occupying one unallotted territory, is considered "not treated" and for such Indians the answer to this inquiry is "No".

Column 32. If the Indian has received allotment, give year of allotment. - If the Indian has received an allotment and the year is to be entered in this column.

Column 33. If the Indian lives on his or her own land, write "Yes" in this column. If the Indian lives on his or her own land, write "Yes" in this column. If the Indian lives in a house of civilized design, or in a dwelling of aboriginal design, as a tent, tepee, cliff dwelling, etc., write "Abn" in this column.

1910 United States Federal Census, Montana, Valley, School District 1, District 237

TRIBE: Assiniboin
 St. Peck Agency
 INDIAN BLOOD: 1/2
 CHURCH: Catholic
 PARENT GUARDIAN: Philip Courchane
 GRADE ENTERED: 5A
 NAME: Courchane, Louis
 ENTERED: 5-23-10
 DISTANCE FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL: 3 mi.
 POST OFFICE: Poplar, Mont.
 TERM: 3 yrs. AGE: 11
 MONTHS IN SCHOOL: 5
 SCHOOL:

1	16	11	Remains 5A
1	16	11	Bakery
6	1	11	Promoted to 6B
1	29	12	Promoted to 6A
6	13	12	Promoted to 7B
1	27	13	Remains 7B
6	20	13	Re-enrolled 8 yrs
6	19	13	Promoted to 7A
6	27	13	On Leave 9E

Haskell School Records

7-224.
TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES. B

State Montana }
County Cascade }
Township or other division of county _____
Name of incorporated city, town, or village, within the above-named division. _____

SCHEDULE No. 1.—POPULATION.

Superior's District No. _____
Enumeration District No. 217 Sheet No. 1

Name of Institution, Port Shaw Industrial School
Ward of city, _____

Enumerated by me on the 1 day of June, 1900. M. J. Pease Enumerator.

SEX	LOCATION	NAME	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION				NATIVITY			CITIZENSHIP	OCCUPATION, TRADE, OR PROFESSION		EDUCATION	SPEECH OF BIRTH	
				AGE	HAIR	EYES	COMPLEXION	Place of birth of this person.	Place of birth of father of this person.	Place of birth of mother of this person.		Occupation, trade, or profession.	Years of school.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		<u>Josephine John</u>														
		<u>Cozy Bill Allen</u>														

His niece, Louise Courchene, remembered in a letter: "When you mention Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, I remember my mother saying that Louis had a girlfriend named Majel who lived in Mt. Pleasant. This same girl married a cousin on my mother's side of the family. Because Majel said she was at Haskell the same years, Mom asked her if she knew Louis Courchane. She said she didn't remember the name, but we think she was the one. He could have visited her there."

All of the young Courchene kids, Phillip, Louis, Rebecca, and John Louis often rode horseback together and all were accomplished riders. Charles Courchene writes about his father, Phillip, "He mentioned that he and Louie worked for ranchers in the Great Falls-Augusta (MT) area. They were horse wranglers and worked on a horse and sheep ranch which may have been the big Campbell Company's outfit. I believe your father broke horses for the Cavalry." Some say that they even joined Pershing's U.S. cavalry in Mexico as horse wranglers, when that officer chased after Pancho Villa all over the Mexican terrain in 1916.

Louise Courchene remembered: "Your father was a baker by trade. I think he learned it at Haskell. When he went into the service, they asked him what trade he had. He told them baking; so they put him in the bakery. He didn't like that. He wanted to be out there fighting with his rifle. That's what he told Mom and Dad. He worked at the bakery at Wolf Point at one time. He used to bake bread for my Mom and make twisted rolls and put frosting on them. We kids loved it. He started out to go to California with a cousin of mine, but instead, he stopped in Western Montana and lumber-jacked."

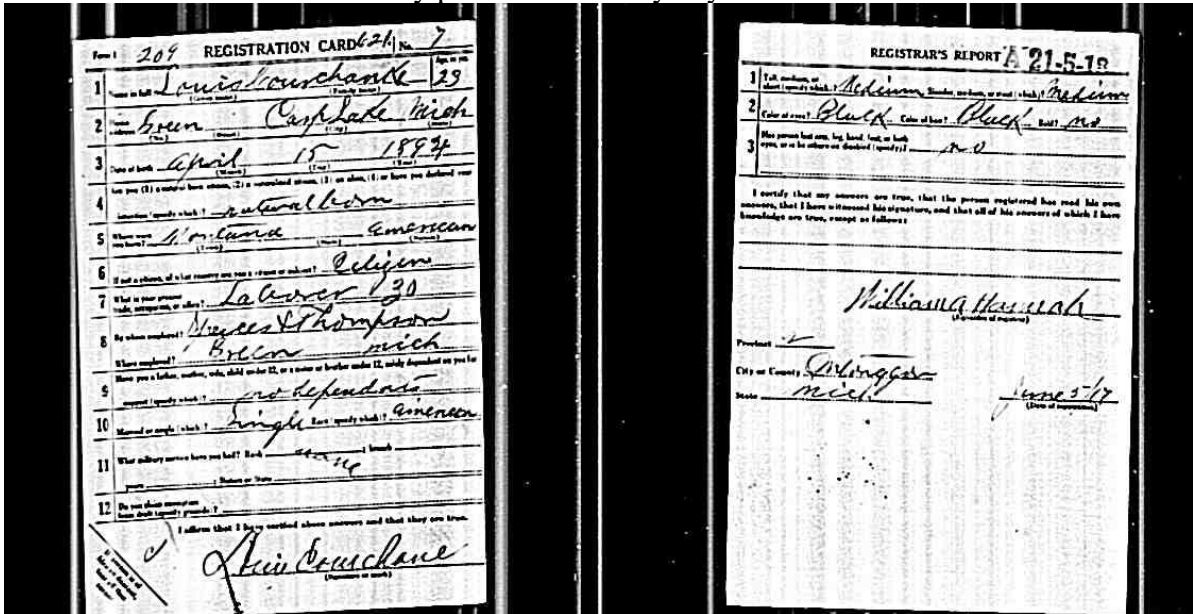
When the Courchene boys were old enough to move off on their own, Henry Ford, their uncle and benefactor, gave each of them a horse, saddle and the necessary gear to travel, as a parting gift. After leaving the Ford ranch, Daddy's experiences are little known. It is thought that he worked throughout the western states at any kind of employment that came his way. At times he toiled as a farm hand, lumberjack, laborer, and as a government packer. He did his share of drinking and "hell-raising" in the saloons and bars of the frontier towns of pre-World War I. As he would later tell his daughter Sassy Jones, "I used to have a passion for brightly colored and flashy shirts, the silk type. The flashier and gaudier, the better I liked them." He wore a Stetson hat all his life, light in color and usually gray or cream.

While packing “grub” on horse back into the mountains to US Forest Service lookout stations, he would often stop for lunch and study nature. He was always tickled to see the beaver, cub bears and deer. He said that the lookouts did not like certain foods or had too much of a certain kind and these were always given to him as a gift. He said in those days the white bread he packed up to them was in tin cans. He loved the life in the mountains!

Then there was the time his lumberjack buddy shoved a Johnny-sized apple into the mouth of a bully. It stuck so fast that it took a local doctor to delicately cut it out with a scalpel one piece at a time. The bully almost choked to death before the amazed lumberjacks got him to the doctor!

His early day pals were: Philip "Snooze" Falcon, Joe Falcon, Dan Ford, and his younger brother, John Louis Courchane.

He had a scar near his navel that looked like a second navel. His story hungry young sons, Dale and Chalky and his grandchildren, Mike and Diane Courchane, once asked him, "Why do you have two belly-buttons?" He told the following story. "Back before I married your Mom, I was working in the woods as a lumberjack, and traveled all over with my friend (his name is now forgotten). One time we went into a town for a drink of beer and a free lunch. Before long we met trouble with some local ruffians and decided it was best to leave the saloon to avoid a fight. I was nearly out through the door as I looked back to see my friend being beaten by the toughs. Immediately I turned around to rush to his aid. As I started past the bartender, he stuck out his hand with an ice pick in it. Well, the bartender caught me in the stomach, and then shoved me to the door. With the ice pick sticking into me, I went out of the door and into the dusty street. As I fell into a cloud of dust, my beaten and battered buddy come flying out of the saloon to land near me. We made tracks out of that unfriendly place immediately!" yu



In a logging town, prior to World War I, Daddy and another friend first met each other. After partaking in merriment and drinks at a local saloon, he decided to seek out his

boarding house and bed down for the night. He was tired, and a bit intoxicated. There was no such thing as getting a single room back then. All the working class shared a bed. Sometimes as many as four men would sleep in one bed. When he left the saloon, Daddy took the back door out. Once in the alley, he was almost immediately attacked from behind, mugged and beaten; his eye blackened in the process. Having paid for his lodgings in advance, he retreated to them, hoping that tomorrow would bring better times. Naturally someone was already sleeping in his bed. This man was sleeping on his side and facing the wall. Thinking nothing of it, he climbed in and was soon snoozing. When he awoke in the morning, his sleeping partner woke at the same time. Both turned and looked at each other at the same instance and to each other's surprise they saw that they both had a big shiner. Comparing notes on each other's misfortunes of the night before, they came to realize that the same man was responsible for their shiners and had mugged both of them. That morning they had heard from others that they had been treated in the same way by the mugger. On learning that the man might still be in town, the two bunk mates went on a mission of revenge. Checking all of the saloons in town, they soon found who the culprit was. They soon had a group of mad lumberjacks and the town people joining their search. They finally found him. Their tempers up, some of the lumberjacks knocked the robber senseless after a good thrashing. Daddy later said, almost in awe, that "some of them even walked over him the full length of his body, including his head, with their corked boots (these had metal spikes on the soles). This seems cruel, but the robberies stopped in the area for a long while afterwards.

Daddy said that in those days free food, which included boiled eggs, bread, condiments (ketchup and mustard), cold cuts (sliced ham, headcheese, bologna, turkey, and beef) and dill pickles, were offered at the saloons and taverns when ever a beer was ordered. Beer was 5 cents a glass or mug. He said that the beer was drawn from a keg and many of the customers wanted a nice "head" of foam on the beer. He said he liked just a small head on his beer, but some guys like a big head of foam. If you didn't order a beer, no free food. He always managed to save 5 cents, so he could eat.

When World War I broke out, Daddy's 1st cousin, Dan Ford, joined the U.S. Marine Corps. Daddy tried to join too, and also tried to join the U.S. Navy, but a recent appendectomy scar kept him out of both services. Finally on June 15, 1918, he was able to join the U.S. Army. As Courchene was spelled Courchane both at Haskell and on his army papers, it isn't known when he dropped the first e in Courchene and replaced it with an a. It stayed Courchane for the rest of his life. He was assigned to the 10th U.S. Infantry Regiment or Division.

"During "The Great War," the 10th Infantry Regiment had the important mission of Canal Guard. This position allowed the 10th to regulate shipments to the front lines, and it provided a checkpoint for the Allies to control possible enemy shipments. In 1918, the 10th Infantry Regiment distributed its personnel to other regiments that fought on all fronts at the end of World War I. On 5 July 1918, the 10th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the 14th Infantry Division as the Regimental Colors refilled the depleted ranks with new personnel at Camp Custer, Michigan. From Camp Custer, the Regiment guarded munitions and industries until the war ended. The 10th soon reorganized as a

Training Center Regiment at Camp Knox, Kentucky, and assumed duty as the training center for V Corps. Then in 1922 the 10th reorganized to a combat Regiment, and moved (via road march) to Fort Thomas, Kentucky. It stayed at Fort Thomas until 3 December 1940." <http://www.wood.army.mil/2-10in/History.html>



10th Infantry Regiment

At Battle Creek he was able to tour the Nabisco Company and see how shredded wheat was made.

Dad was a cook and baker in the 10th U.S. Infantry. He always stressed to me and Dale “The 10th Infantry! Not the 10th Cavalry because that was a colored outfit!” So that must have come up sometime in his past.

He was honorably discharged on July 24, 1919, about six months after the 10th was demobilized on January 18, 1919.

Dan Ford was shipped overseas with the American Expeditionary Force under the command of Blackjack Pershing, the same man who had escorted his grandfather John Courchene’s family to the Canadian border from the Flathead country in 1894. Dan Ford died gallantly at the battle of Meuse-Argonne and is buried in Flanders Fields. Daddy always said that his medals were given to him to bring home to Dan Ford’s parents.

According to his nephew, Louis Jamison, Daddy was stationed at Camp Lewis, Washington, then at Camp Custer, North Dakota. He then served in Panama as a cook and guard. Louis Jamison clearly remembers that he received an Army bonus in 1930/1931, because of overseas duty.

After leaving the service, Daddy spent some time in Wolf Point, Montana; in DeSmet, Idaho; and most likely in Augusta, Montana. He and his brother John Louis spent one summer helping their older brother Phillip build a new home. In Idaho, while staying with his Uncle John Baptiste Falcon and his Aunt Cecelia (Courchene) Falcon, he and the Falcon boys would hunt ducks and after bagging a bunch brought them home to be cooked. The women-folk would cook the ducks over open fires through spits. All their friends and kinfolk would gather for the feast. Daddy said he and the others would eat two or three ducks apiece, and that the dining lasted throughout the night, with them playing wah-luks (monte) and smoking kinnickinick.

Dorothy (Courchene) Smith, his niece, stated in a letter of April, 1983, the following anecdote: "I remember you're Dad. When I was five or six, he came to visit. He was tall and good looking. He made me laugh and he talked to me a lot and was always smiling. We lived in a house up town on the corner by the school house. Some of Mama's relatives came over one night and they all played a game called "smut". If you lost the other players would cover your face with that black soot from the inside of a cook stove. Your Dad lost and he got his face blackened. I was watching him wash it off his face, and I felt sorry for him. (After that) I never saw him any more."


Daddy used to talk about attending the show houses of the day and seeing silent films. He saw Westerns starring such personages as Bronco Billy Anderson and William S. Hart. He laughed out loud as he remembered, "When the cowboy star shot at the "wild Indians" he'd kill about 4 or 5 with one shot! And when 4 or 5 "wild Indians" shot back at the cowboy they would all miss!" He loved films starring Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Laurel and Hardy. I don't know if he ever attended show houses to watch the "talkie" films. I never saw or heard of him ever going to the movies in Wenatchee.



Cecelia Courchene and her husband, John Baptiste Falcon, a Metis plains hunter and friend of Sitting Bull. His grandfather was a Metis poet (Pierre Falcon) and often called the "Bard of the Prairies." Daddy's aunt and uncle.



Sarah and Phillip Courchene, this portrait was taken at Fort Shaw Indian School, Montana when they were married.

United States of America

 Certification of
Military Service

This certifies that Louis L. Courchene 2 052 974
was a member of the United States Army
from June 15, 1918
to July 26, 1919
Service was terminated by Honorable Discharge
Last Grade, Rank, or Rating Cook
Active Service Dates Same as above
 Born in Wolf Point, Mont. When enlisted he was 27 years of age.

Given at St. Louis, Missouri, on May 2, 1975

National Personnel Records Center
 (Military Personnel Records)
 National Archives and Records Service
 General Services Administration

THE ADMINISTRATOR OF GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION IS THE CUSTODIAN OF THIS PERSON'S MILITARY RECORD.
 (This form not valid without official seal.)