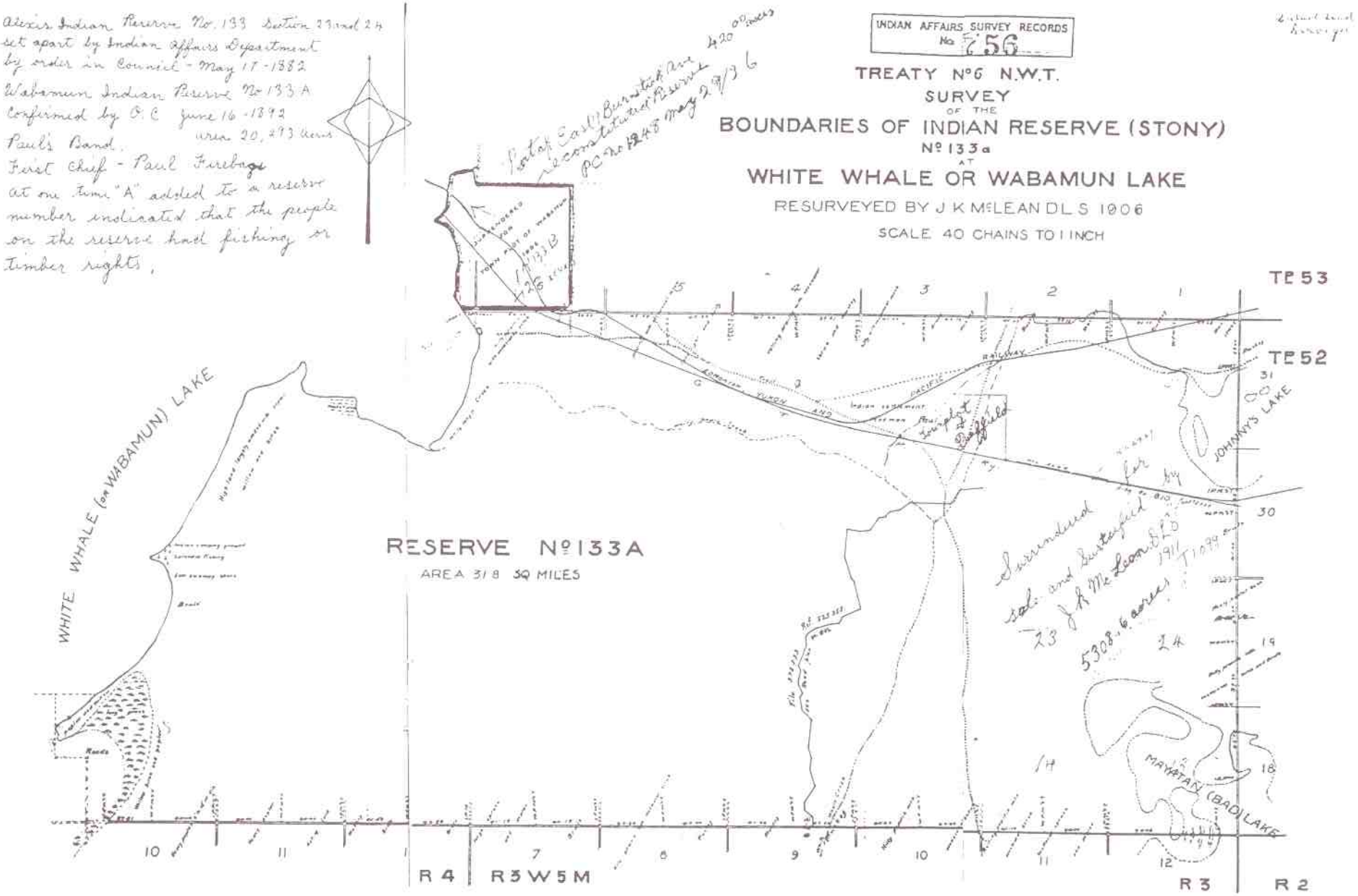
INDIAN LAND SURRENDER

On September 11, 1906, a surrender was executed in the presence of Mr. Gibbons and others by the Chief and Principal Men of the Paul Band Number 133A:

> "Resident on our Reserve at White Whale Lake Reserves as 133A and B in the Province of Alberta and Dominion of Canada, for and acting on behalf of the whole people of our said Band in Council assembled, Do hereby release, remise, surrender, quit claim and yield up unto OUR SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING, His Heirs and Successors forever, ALL AND SINGULAR, that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the White Whale Lake Indian Reserve in the Province of Alberta containing by admeasurement six hundred and thirty five acres by the same more or less and being composed of all that portion of land situate at the North West corner of White Whale Lakes Indian Reserve aforesaid, known as Indian Reserve No. 133B, being composed of a part of projected Section Six Township Fifty-three, Range 3, and parts of projected Sections One and Twelve, Township Fifty-three, Range Four, all west of the Fifth Meridian, and was pursuant to the following terms and conditons:
>
> "TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same unto His said Majesty the King, his Heirs and Successors forever, in trust to sell the same to such person or persons, and upon such terms as the Goverment of the Dominion of Canada may deem most conducive to our welfare and that of our people.
>
> AND upon the further condition that all moneys received from the sale thereof, shall, after deducting the usual proportion of expenses of management be placed to our credit and the interest thereon paid to us and our descendants annually or semi-annually as to the Department of Indian Affairs may seem best in our interests.
>
> AND WE, the said Chief and Principal men of the said Paul's Band of Indians Number 133A do on behalf of our people and for ourselves, hereby ratify and confirm, and promise to ratify and confirm, whatever the said Government may do, or cause to be lawfully done, in connection with the sale of the said portion of land and disposition of the moneys arising therefrom."


Alexis Indian Reserve No. 133 Section 23 and 24
set apart by Indian Affairs Department
by order in Council - May 17 - 1882
Wabamun Indian Reserve No 133 A
Confirmed by O.C June 16 - 1892
Paul's Band. area 20,273 acres
First Chief - Paul Firebag
at one time "A" added to a reserve
number indicated that the people
on the reserve had fishing or
timber rights.
INDIAN AFFAIRS SURVEY RECORDS
No 756
TREATY No 6 N.W.T.
SURVEY
OF THE
BOUNDARIES OF INDIAN RESERVE (STONY)
No 133a
AT
WHITE WHALE OR WABAMUN LAKE
RESURVEYED BY J K McLEAN D.L.S 1906
SCALE 40 CHAINS TO 1 INCH
Portal East Burnstick Ave
reconstituted Reserve
PC No 1248 May 29/36
420.00 acres
TP 53
TP 52
WHITE WHALE (or WABAMUN) LAKE
JOHNNY'S LAKE
MAYATAN (BAD) LAKE
RESERVE No 133A
AREA 31.8 SQ MILES
Surrendered for sale and Sustained by J K McLean D.L.S 1911
5308.6 acres
R 4
R 3 W 5 M
R 3
R 2

NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS
Indian Land Sale Auction
May 11, 1910.

SALE OF INDIAN LANDS

At the Edmonton Opera House today at one o'clock, a sale of lands on the east end of "Wabamum" (sic) or White Whale Lake will be conducted by Robt. Smith. The Indian agent J. A. Markle, Red Deer, has arrived in the city and the sale will be under his supervision. The property consists of lots located at the east end of the lake which has a dry sandy shore and the locality is one which will soon become a popular summer resort. Mr. Smith has already this season conducted sales at the Alexander Michel and Stoney Indian reserves.

Edmonton Bulletin,
May 11, 1910.

SALE OF WABAMUM TOWNSITE

The sale of Wabamum townsite lots being disposed of by the Indian Department under the supervision of the Indian agent J. A. Markle, Red Deer, is in progress this afternoon at the Edmonton Opera House.

The sale is being conducted by Robert Smith of the Seton-Smith Co. and is progressing quietly with a fair demand for the property. Of the first bunch of 27 lots put up for sale, 15 were disposed of, all but four at the upset prices. The lots have a 66 foot frontage and range in size from 1.5 to 1.2 an acre. The prices are from $140 to $170 each. The total received for the first parcel was $2,256. Most of the purchasers this afternoon were local men. There are 161 lots in all to be sold.

161 LOTS WERE PUT UP
ABOUT 50 WERE SOLD

Sale of Townplot of Wabamun Conducted by Indian Agencies Inspector Markle Draw Fair Attendance and Upset Prices Were Obtained by Auctioneer Smith.

About fifty lots in the townplot of Wabamun on the east shore of the lake bearing the same name about thirty miles west of Edmonton, were sold yesterday afternoon by auction under the direction of the Department of Indian Affairs. The Edmonton Opera House was the scene of the sale and Robert Smith, the well-known auctioneer, wielded the hammer. The number of lots put up for sale was 161. The majority went at the upset prices which were considered to be rather high. But there was some keen bidding for choice corners, and, in one instance the reserve price was raised 100 per cent before the hammer fell.

Auctioneer Smith was in good form and depicted in glowing terms the beauties of Wabamun, the coming summer resort on the bay "where all the fishes congregate."

The terms of the sale require the erection of a building to cost at least $300 on each parcel sold within one year from May 11th, the date of sale. This means that at least fifty residences and summer cottages go up at Wabamun in the next twelve months.

The sale was in charge of J. A. Markle of Red Deer, Inspector of Indian Agencies. Between sixty and seventy interested parties attended the sale which lasted the greater part of the afternoon.

Edmonton Newspaper
May 12, 1910.

HAZY RECOLLECTIONS

Queenie Palmer

"Because this deep lake is very clear and blue, it shall be entered on the map as White Lake." (Hills of Hope, page 16) So said the members of Captain John Palliser's Expeditionary Party as they mapped their way to the Rockies in the early 1860s. It became more commonly known by early settlers and surveyors as White Whale Lake due to the great numbers of large white fish found in its waters. The Indian name, "Wabamun," originating from the Cree word, "wapamon," means either "looking glass" or "mirror" and is interpreted by some to mean "white fish" as well. Newspaper articles of early days fairly glow with the same reflective descriptions expressed by those of the Palliser Party.

When the Indians of Paul's Band living on the White Whale Lake Reserves agreed to sell their land in 1906, they did so envisioning a townsite and resort development. After the surveyors plotted the east shore of the lake and the advent of the railway made this area more accessible, the lots were sold at Indian land sale auctions--the first being held on May 11, 1910.

My father, Fred Watson, bought his lot some time after that date; but it was not until July, 1913, when the family was renting the Hamilton cottage at Seba Beach that he first came to view it. He crossed the lake from Seba on the Lady Belle, a motor launch which not only ran excursions around the lake but also ferried Seba cottagers to and from the train station at Fallis--the only way to reach their beach.

I was with him on such a trip when the Lady Belle put us ashore in front of his lot. The lovely stretch of white shiny sand was such a contrast to that found on Seba's beach it made a very favourable impression. The lot itself had a hill in front, not too high, which we tramped up to find a well-wooded site. He decided to return in the summer of 1914 to tent on it.

As early as our first sighting of the beach in 1913, there was a summer colony here. As the Lady Belle approached, four cottages in a row were visible at the north end of the lake -George Stevenson's (Jones'), the Goulds' (Dr. Schweda's rental cottage), Joe Philps' (Bob Wilkins'), and the Websters' (Innes'). Their beaches were cleared of reeds, the lots cleared of trees, and the railway grade was clearly visible at the back. They had obviously been there for several summers and had a well-settled look. There were no other buildings between these and my father's lot--just tangles of bush and trees.

On this first visit, we decided to walk along the top of the hill to find the Magoons' (Draffins') cottage. Of course, we could have walked quite easily on the winding Indian trail at the back, which was very clearly marked, but it was more like exploring to follow along the hilltop overlooking the lake and push our way through the scratchy brush. We came across the Harmers, who were settling into their new cottage (Edwards'); then found the Bank Clerks' awninged-cabin (Moffats'); and George Scott's new cottage.

This was followed by more dense bush which we had to push through after passing the raspberry patch on the hill where my present cottage now stands. Finally, we came to another cluster of cottages. The first was a small one-room cabin which belonged to Mrs. Chadwick (Onysko); two lots over was Hepburns' one-room cabin (Mustards'); then, a lovely neat prim cottage with a proper wire fence and gate which belonged to a young couple, the Frank Goods (Butlers'). Judge Boyle's cottage (Kochs') was just being built that summer. The last in this row of cottages was Magoons' (Draffins'), where we stopped for a short visit.

We were not concerned about what the beach was called in those early days. Some of the first cottagers called the railway station stop "Websters' Crossing." I don't know where I got this information; perhaps, one of the Websters had told me so. Presumably, they were the first people to have summered at the beach -at least, the first at the north end near the railway crossing.

Officially, our train stop was listed on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway's schedule as East Wabamun and referred to by some as the eastern part of Wabamun Beach. However, as the similarity in names was somewhat bewildering to those railway passengers destined for the village of Wabamun, and as

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF WABAMUN

From a 1912 Newspaper Article

WABAMUN

Little over ten years ago Wabamun, the now popular summer resort--then called "Wapamoun," meaning Mirror Lake--was inhabited only by Indians placed there in a reserve on the south shore of the lake. These are a mixture of Stony, Cree, and Blackfoot Indians, and are called Paul's band so named after Paul Firebag, their first chief. Firebag had, during the time of the rebellion, proved very loyal and had rendered the government much valuable service, in recognition of which he was made chief, but latterly because of the frequency of cattle stealing by the Indians under his charge he was displaced. The government called for the election of another chief, giving the Indians to understand that Firebag would not be acceptable. David Bird was then nominated, but died after a short reign of two years. His successor was Joe Michel, the present chief. Previous to 1902, the only white man at this point west of Edmonton was W. G. Blewett, who lived on the reserve as farm instructor and missionary, doing much noble work among the Indians. After him came E. H. Lent as missionary, and A. E. Patterson -who was Edmonton's first chief of police. Mr. Patterson remained in the capacity of instructor for ten years, finally taking up a homestead near Wabamun, where his family now live.

....

In 1902, B. Woollard, the first white fisherman on Wabamun Lake came from Nipigon, Ontario, and the Edmonton market became, for the first time, acquainted with the excellent quality of white fish which is now so much sought after. In his footsteps came W. J. Kiel, followed by C. H. Dunn, who in the winter of 1905, shipped ten car loads of white fish to the States, besides supplying the Edmonton markets. The present extensive fish business is in the hands of Messrs. Menzie and Larson, who ship weekly four to five tons of fish to eastern markets. In fishing, a gill net, fifty feet long, and varying from 3 to 5 feet in depth, is used, weighted with leads along the bottom and fitted with floats to keep it erect. This net is lowered at night and taken up before sunrise. As many as a hundred large fish is no unusual catch, the net being strained to its uttermost capacity.

....

The history of Wabamun now just incorporated as a village, begins with the arrival of the G.T.P. steel, in 1908. It is the story of steady growth and progress. The village councillors Messrs. A. Root, G. Dixon, and W. Taylor, are men under whose able parentship the village may truly expect to "grow in wisdom and stature."

It is their intention to greatly improve the roads and sidewalks, to further the comfort of the permanent citizens and the throng of fashionable holiday makers.

Wabamun is the headquarters of the 19th Alberta Dragoons. It is rumored that an armoury costing $15,000 is to be built soon.

The Wabamun Hotel, Ltd., having received full license intending (sic) to spend $20,000 on the improvement of their property.

Wabamun is the centre of the Anglican mission west of Edmonton. The chief being the Rev. Huxtable, under the Rev. Mr. Boyd of Edmonton.

....

Lake Wabamun

Lake Wabamun, a beautiful sheet of water, about 11 miles long, and from 1 to 4 miles wide, is an ideal location for a summer resort, being only an hour and threequarters run from Edmonton.

The splendid mid-week and weekend service installed by the G.T.P. makes it easy access for the business man. Not only its near proximity to Edmonton makes it popular, however; one has only to take a trip round the lake on one of the numerous gasoline launches and see the number of cool, yet cozy little summer homes nestling mid avenues of spruce and poplar at Seba to understand why Edmonton's prominent business men look upon Wabamun Lake as their haven of rest. Here, with the cares of the week laid aside he goes back with his children to boyhood days. The merry hours pass all too soon and he views with just a touch of regret the last lingering ray of the setting sun, lighting the sweeping cup of sky overhead and touching with loving caress the serene surface of Wabamun Lake.

Copy: Edmonton Bulletin
Aug. 21, 1912, page 2.