

THE OBSERVER

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THE OBSERVER - BURNS LAKE, B.C. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st 1932

SINGLE

SURVIVOR OF CUSTER MASSACRE DIES IN BURNS LAKE HOSPITAL

H. (James) Atkinson Served as Scout Under Col. Custer and Col. Reno and Was Friend of Buffalo Bill and Other Pioneers

Concluding seventy-six years of active life, most of which had been spent on the frontier and in pioneer districts, H. Atkinson (known to most of his friends as James Atkinson), of Francois Lake breathed his last in the Burns Lake Hospital on Sunday August 28. He had been in a very critical state of health for two months and his illness extended over a period of two years.

Mr. Atkinson was born in the State of Michigan, and he has been a pioneer all his life. He had many a fight with the Indians in the central States during his early youth and manhood and he was for many years a scout with Marcus A. Reno, later promoted Colonel U.S.A. and Brigadier General U.S.V. Mr. Atkinson was at Colonel G. A. Custer's last stand when he fought Sitting Bull's band of Sioux, some 9,000 strong, at the Little Big Horn, Montana, when the colonel was slain and his force of 1,100 practically wiped out. In 1888 when "Colonel" W. F. Cody (better known as Buffalo Bill) was making the preliminary organization for his well-known wild west show, he offered Mr. Atkinson a half-interest in the undertaking. They had been

scouts together for many years, but the partnership in this venture was not consummated.

As a souvenir of his years of scouting and fighting Mr. Atkinson carried the marks of several arrow wounds and nine bullet wounds in his body.

In 1923 Mr. Atkinson married Pauline Lafort, who was living east of Winnipeg, and shortly afterward they made their residence in Montana. In 1904 the family emigrated to Saskatchewan and homesteaded fourteen miles west of Swift Current and in 1915 they came to Francois Lake where they have since resided.

Immediately surviving relatives are Mr. Atkinson's widow, three sons, James, of Brewster, Wash., Elmer, of Munson, Ariz., and Everett, Burnaby, B.C., three daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Tibbits of Grand Forks, B.C., Mrs. A. W. Douglas, Tacoma, Wash., and Mrs. J. L. Frank of Terrace, B.C., also nine grandchildren.

The funeral services were conducted in St. John's Church (Anglican), Burns Lake, and at the Burns Lake Cemetery by Rev. C. A. Nicholls. A large number of friends and mourners were present and many floral remembrances covered the bier.

The deceased was widely known and greatly respected, in the Lakes District and other points where he had previously resided.