

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: LOUIS AGNES
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: ALEXIS RESERVE
ALBERTA
INTERVIEW LOCATION: ALEXIS RESERVE
ALBERTA
TRIBE/NATION: STONEY
LANGUAGE:
DATE OF INTERVIEW: FEBRUARY 1, 1977
INTERVIEWER: ROSE SADDLEBACK
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD
SOURCE: OFFICE OF SPECIFIC CLAIMS
& RESEARCH
WINTERBURN, ALBERTA
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- At the age of 78, Louis Agnes tells of the history of the Alexis and Paul bands and the establishment of their reserves.

Rose: We came here to ask you to relate to us what you know about the historical background of your land.

Louis: This reserve?

Rose: Yes, you may have heard stories about the reserve's history from your parents or your grandparents. This is what we want to hear.

Louis: As revealed by the past generation when the negotiations initially began, the King has sent his representatives to give word to the effect, "Wherever the location or site is desired, that area selected is at your disposal and will be surveyed for you accordingly.

Upon completion of the survey, the land will be designated to you, set aside as a reserve to be rightfully yours. Only the land within the set boundaries will be yours permanently. The boundaries will protect you. All this land inside the boundaries (reserve) belongs to you. In essence, the land outside the reserve boundaries also belongs to you but to a degree."

They were told that they would have access to the land for the purpose of pursuing traditional way of life, (e.g. hunting, fishing, trapping).

N.B. This gentleman used the one word e.g. food. It would imply the provision of treaty rights mentioned above.

"The time will come when all your children will reach adulthood, seeing that you're aging more by the year. There will be other people coming to the nearby territory to settle. Do not retaliate physically or verbally with the homesteaders when they do arrive. If that stance is taken by the future generation, I will be very thankful," the Queen's representative had said. The upcoming homesteaders who will be in the vicinity will get equal treatment as the Indians.

"We will not ever purchase any land from you. It is to be utilized for your own benefit and survival. The total band membership will share the band land. You will not ever be in a destitute state," the Queen had told the forefathers.

"As population increases you will be requested to take up a reserve land. So adhere to it upon request. You could have as much land as you desire without any restrictions imposed.

"All the territory inside the boundary of the reserve belongs to you. The white people cannot trespass or encroach upon your reserve holding nor govern the Indian people once the reserve is established. The territory outside the reserve will have its own jurisdiction.

"Once a reserve is confirmed it will never be disposed of to other people.

Rose: At the time of survey, what was the size of the reserve?

Louis: It was around 12-14 square miles.

Rose: 14 miles?

Louis: Yes. Equal distance to east, west, south and north. I wouldn't know the total acreage.

After the surveyors finished staking the reserve boundaries, our grandfather went with the surveyors to inspect the place so he would know the exact location and amount of land they were allocated. According to him the reserve extended to east of Darwell and midpoint of Lac Ste. Anne on this side of the hill. (e.g. north side of the lake)

We have been thinking about our land for a long time. We should be making an effort to regain possession of that land or claim portions of that land. I have told the band members about this.

Rose: What do you know of Paul's Band and Alexis Band?

Louis: Paul was the chief of that band and hence the reserve was named after him. Alexis was our chief here.

Rose: Was there two reserves or one?

Louis: The survey was first conducted for the Wabamun (Paul's people). Upon completion there, the surveyors came across to stake out this reserve for the Alexis people.

My grandfather, upon realizing that the land allotment was much too small, decided to leave Paul's Band to look for land suitable to him. i.e. lake, forest, etc. He left prior to completion of the Paul's Band survey.

Rose: Who was he? What was his name?

Louis: I forgot his name. He seen a lake and thought of his future generation. e.g. plenty of fish and ducks.

Four other people accompanied the surveyors and it was through general consensus the site was selected. That was staked out as a reserve.

After the completion of the survey, they informed to the rest of the band members that there will never be a white intrusion. Surveyors went back to complete the documents.

As far as I am concerned, they shouldn't have built houses across the south end of the lake. They should know better that the land belongs to the reserve. They should be evicted.

Rose: On the other side of this lake? i.e. north side.

Louis: Yes. They stole our land. I don't think we will ever gain that back. If there is support by majority of the people here we could get that land back. This is a small reserve. Presently, the reserve is only 4 square miles, when it should contain 12 square miles.

Rose: Do you know why there are 2 bands? Paul's and Alexis?

Louis: Initially, one old man took land at Wabamun. Paul took more land. Alexis about 16 square miles.

Rose: Was there always one band or were you always here at Alexis?

Louis: Alexis. The old people used to say that they fled from the Louis Riel Rebellion and landed in this territory. "There were a lot of hardships during the Rebellion," they said.

Rose: Were the people ever occupying the same territory? i.e. one reserve.

Louis: There were always two distinct reserves.

Upon completion of Paul's Band survey, the Alexis Band survey began.

Rose: What do you remember about the survey?

Louis: It was staked out to be 12 square miles.

Rose: When was the survey conducted?

Louis: A long time ago. According to my father, he claimed that it took place prior to my birth. The people who were involved with the treaty are all deceased now.

Rose: Where were treaty payments taking place?

Louis: Edmonton. There were only two houses then.

Rose: Was that the only place treaty payments took place? Were the Paul's and Alexis Band ever paid jointly?

Louis: Yes. They both got paid at that same location.

Rose: When did they start getting paid separately?

Louis: Treaty payments began 20-25 years prior to my birth the folks would tell me.

A Fort Saskatchewan jail official told me that they received \$20. What happened to the balance of the payment, now only getting \$5/year. That jail official informed me then that "If anyone is interested to find this evidence, I would provide it," he had said.

Rose: What do you know about the Fishing Station?

Louis: Lac Ste. Anne was our fishing area.

Rose: Was that given to Alexis alone or what was the arrangement?

Louis: That was given to Alexis. Paul's was at Wabamun.

Rose: Where was it exactly?

Louis: This lake here, Lac St. Anne.

Rose: Were you born here?

Louis: Yes. Approximately 78 years ago.

(End of Tape)

(End of Interview)

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