

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: ANDREW HARRY WHITEFORD
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: SCOTT,
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: SCOTT,
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: METIS
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: 04/06/84
INTERVIEWER: VICTORIA R. RACETTE
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER YAWORSKI
SOURCE: SASKATOON NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOC.
& BATOCHÉ CENTENARY CORP.
TAPE NUMBER: #IH-SD.63
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC #164
PAGES: 30
RESTRICTIONS: THIS MATERIAL IS THE PROPERTY
OF THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF NATIVE STUDIES, AND SHALL BE
AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING, REPRODUCTION, QUOTATION, CITATION AND ALL
OTHER RESEARCH PURPOSES, INCLUDING BROADCASTING RIGHTS WHERE
APPLICABLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN
OR WHICH MAY BE ESTABLISHED BY THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF
NATIVE STUDIES OR ITS SUCCESSORS FOR THE USE OF MATERIALS IN ITS
POSSESSION: SUBJECT, HOWEVER TO SUCH RESTRICTIONS AS MAY BE
SPECIFIED BELOW.

Victoria: April 6, 1984. I'm interviewing Andrew Whiteford at
Scott, Saskatchewan. Where were you born, Andrew?

Andrew: Lac Pelletier.

Victoria: And did your father and that have a homestead there, or were they right in town?

Andrew: No, there was no town there. There was just a lake and they were living there.

Victoria: When did you move to this part of the country? About how old were you at the time?

Andrew: I remember when we left from Assiniboia there I was riding a horse, I know that, but I don't remember how old I was. It must be about what...

Victoria: Just approximately.

Andrew: ...7 years old, I guess, probably.

Victoria: Where did you move to? Did you move from Lac Pelletier to Assiniboia?

Andrew: Well, no. We was living at St. Victor at the time. Then we moved to Assiniboia. My dad, he was a butcher, that's where he was. Then we moved from there. But I can remember... that's all I can remember when we move away from Assiniboia, that's all.

Victoria: What kind of houses did you live in when you were growing up, were they a lumber house or were they logs?

Andrew: Well, after we got up north here it was mostly logs. We had to build our own houses with logs.

Victoria: When you moved up north, where was that that you moved to?

Andrew: Turtle Lake we moved.

Victoria: And about how many rooms did your house have in it there?

Andrew: There was no one -- just the one room.

Victoria: Just one big room, eh.

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: What did you heat your house with?

Andrew: With wood.

Victoria: Did you have electricity or running water?

Andrew: No.

Victoria: Did you have floors in the house?

Andrew: No, there was no floors: there was just dirt floors.

Victoria: What kind of furniture did you have? Was it store bought or did you have to make it yourselves?

Andrew: We had to make it ourselves with the round poles for beds. And there was no mattress, nothing, just made it with the hay. (laughs)

Victoria: Were the houses close together there? Was it a settlement? Was there a bunch of Metis people living there together?

Andrew: Yes there were quite a few, quite a few there.

Victoria: And were they close together or did they live some distance apart?

Andrew: Well, not too far apart.

Victoria: Did you have big yards?

Andrew: Oh yes, there was lots of big yards.

Victoria: So there was lots of room to play in, was there?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: What... like you say that the places were far apart, were they, were they land scrip or were they homesteads or...?

Andrew: No, there was no homestead in there. They were just... they were just... went and building there.

Victoria: You just went and moved in and...

Andrew: Yeah and build.

Victoria: Was there very many people outside of the community at Turtle Lake, was there other people settled around there?

Wife: There was about five families of white people came there after. Along Turtle Lake.

Victoria: So there was mostly just Metis people around then, eh?

Andrew: Mostly, I don't remember.

Victoria: Did you know of any road allowance people that used to live around there?

Andrew: There was no road allowance at the time. There were

just trails, wagon trails most of it.

Victoria: What kind of jobs did you have to do around your house as you were growing up, like when you were young? Like did everybody have their own jobs to do, or...

Andrew: Well, we had our own jobs just to haul some wood in after they chopped and we hauled some snow in for the house, like inside, like to melt the snow to make water. That's what they were using.

Victoria: Did you have any other jobs that you had to do? Did you have livestock and that?

Andrew: They had horses, yes, not too many horses though.

Victoria: So did you have to water and feed horses and that type of stuff?

Andrew: Yeah. They had the lake there to water their horses.

Victoria: Did you have chickens and ducks or anything like that, pigs?

Andrew: No, not at that time.

Victoria: Did your family do special things together, like did they go camping, or hunting, berry picking, or anything like that together?

Andrew: They would do a lot of fishing. That's all I know. I mean, well, as far as for berries they went and picked yes.

Victoria: The women, that was their job, was it?

Andrew: Well, man's too. They were helping their wives.

Victoria: Do you know of anybody that used to do any storytelling? Like some of the older people maybe in the community that told stories about, well, just anything, you know. They sort of kept the people entertained by telling stories.

Andrew: Well, yes, there's lots of it that was like that, yeah.

Victoria: You don't remember what any of the stories were about, do you?

Andrew: No I don't remember. At that time there when I was living there, because I was pretty young I didn't care for it, I guess. I didn't care to listen or something like that.
(laughs)

Victoria: Was there anybody in your family or even your freinds and that that you remember more than the others? There was Phoebe... that you liked better than the rest. Like maybe an older person an uncle or maybe an aunt, even your grandparents

was there one person that you liked better than the rest of them?

Andrew: Oh, not too much. There was one I used to go with lots. I used to go and stay with old Breier.

Victoria: Was he a relative of yours?

Andrew: I don't... No, I don't think so. Maybe from way far it could be. It was my dad was their friend so I used to go and stay with them. They were old people.

Victoria: Why did you like him especially better than...?

Andrew: Well, seems to me they were treating me real good in there. That's why I used to like to go.

Victoria: Did they have children of their own?

Andrew: They had children but they were quite older than me.

Victoria: You liked them, eh, and you just went and spent time with them.

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: Was your family a close family? Like, did they stick up for one another?

Andrew: Yes. Pretty close, yeah.

Victoria: What did your dad do mostly for a living? What kind of work did he do to make money?

Andrew: Well, at that time was after we left from... Well, in the summertime... like in the spring of the year more, after they, when they finished trapping like, you know, trapping rats, and they come south and they cut brush. Most of the time they were cutting brush, either for horses, or for cattle like, you know, to butcher. Most of the time, I remember that. He never had no steady job, never was no steady job by my dad.

Victoria: You said he done trapping. What was he trapping?

Andrew: Well, most of the time, that all you could trap that time was muskrats. There was nothing else in the spring of the year. That's all there is.

Victoria: And what did they do after they trapped them. Was there good money in them?

Andrew: Well, I don't know if it was good money but they were selling them anyway, making a living with it.

Victoria: How, what did they have to do with them? Was there a special way that they had to fix them before they could be sold?

Andrew: Yes. They had to skin them and stretch them, dry them, and they eat the meat. (laughs)

Victoria: So in two ways then, it was a help in both ways. They could use the hide and use the meat too, eh?

Andrew: Sure.

Victoria: Did your dad, or even you or your brothers and sisters, did they hunt for their own meat and that for the winter, or, well, for all summer, in fact? Did they do much hunting at all?

Andrew: Pretty well all summer, yeah. They were always something to kill like ducks. Make your living like that.

Victoria: How about fishing? Did you do fishing for family use?

Andrew: We didn't do too much fishing. Just in the wintertime they used to do that.

Victoria: Why in the winter? Were they selling the fish or...

Andrew: Well, there wasn't much to sell at that time too. Most of the time they were used in...

Victoria: Just what they can use for themselves, eh? What about cutting wood? Did they do any cutting firewood or cordwood?

Andrew: When we come more south here we done lots of that, yeah, cutting wood in the bush, and the farmers they come and buy it.

Victoria: Do you remember if your parents had a garden? Did they grow a garden at all?

Andrew: No, not too much about the garden, no, because in the spring of the year, well, they all, most of the time, they leave, you know. They leave there to go and work for the farmers, like cut brush, pick stones.

Victoria: So when they left, did the whole family move with them?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: What type of livestock did you have? Was it just horses?

Andrew: Just horses.

Victoria: Did your dad always have work, you know, even if it was seasonal? Was there a time when he didn't have any work at all or couldn't work?

Andrew: Oh yes, a lot of time he couldn't get a job. Then when he couldn't get a job, most of the time we'd go and dig seneca root. Then we make a living with that.

Victoria: Was it far to go and...

Andrew: Well no, seneca root was pretty well all over because there was prairie all over. It wasn't that much breaking yet at that time.

Victoria: Was it good money to go and dig seneca roots?

Andrew: That was good money at that time, maybe 10 cents a pound. That's all you get, but it was good.

Victoria: What did they use them for?

Andrew: I don't know. They dried them and they used to ship them. I don't know what they were used for.

Victoria: Where did they ship them to, do you know?

Andrew: Most of the time I heard them, they were talking about they were shipping to Winnipeg, as far as I know, at that time.

Victoria: What did the other Metis people in the community do for a living?

Andrew: Far as I know, I don't know. I mean, they must do the same what the rest of them the most of the time.

Victoria: Did you know of anybody that had a steady job at all?

Andrew: No. There was no steady jobs around the place, around the country at that time. Everybody was tried to make their living for... Well, I don't know, it was pretty tough to make a living. But seems to me they were doin' real good.

Victoria: You never went hungry.

Andrew: Never went hungry.

Victoria: What was your first paying job?

Andrew: Well, I don't know. Well, that's not working on the muskrat. That's my first money I made then trapping muskrats. We used to gathered lots and used to take them to Battleford and get some money there and buy clothes.

Victoria: About how old were you at that time, do you remember?

Andrew: At that time I think I was about, oh, about 12 years

old, I guess.

Victoria: Then what other work did you do? What are some of the other types of work that you've done in your lifetime? Did you do any threshing for farmers? Did you work for farmers?

Andrew: Oh yeah. After when I was old enough, yes. We done a lot of cuttin' pickets in the summertime, and cuttin' brush and that to make money. And after, when I was getting a little bit older, we pitch bundles and stook, a lot of stooking work.

Victoria: And was there other jobs that you've done when you were growing up? I think you had mentioned in your work history you had worked in a coal mine.

Andrew: Yeah. Well after, when I got old enough, yeah.

Victoria: What was it like, working in the coal mine? What did you have to do?

Andrew: Oh, we had to use the pick and hammer and chisels. Then we used powder to blow the coal.

Victoria: Was it underground?

Andrew: It was underground, yeah. It was more like a hill, the first place where I started to work. It was only four feet high that, the ceiling like.

Victoria: So was it pretty dangerous work?

Andrew: It was pretty dangerous, yeah.

Victoria: How old were you about then?

Andrew: Geez I,...

Wife: He'd be about 22.

Andrew: Yeah, be around... yeah, I was about 22 years old.

Victoria: Was there lots of times when you didn't have any work at all?

Andrew: Lots of times, yeah.

Victoria: What did you do then?

Andrew: Well, we stay home. Most the time we stay home and we didn't have nothing to do. When we was down south, there was not much trapping down south.

Victoria: Did you ever go looking for work though?

Andrew: Yes. I mean, at that time, yes, we did a lot of travelling to look for jobs.

Victoria: Where are some of the places that you went? And how did you go? Did you go on foot or...

Andrew: Well, most of the time no, most of the time we went with some different people. They had cars like, you know. We travel, get together and buy gas, and that time it was...

Wife: Box cars.

Andrew: That's after I left home.

Victoria: And then, what is the farthest place you ever went to go look for work?

Andrew: The farthest place I went to work? I mean, I... Well, when I left my dad and mom then, when they moved up north for the second time, well, I left by myself and that's the time I work at Moose Jaw. The Swift there -- what you call it?

Victoria: That's at the packing plant there?

Andrew: Packing plant in there, yes, working in there about a year, I guess. I think it was a year I work in there.

Victoria: What was you doing there? What did you have to do?

Andrew: Well, to begin with I had the job shaking hides...

Victoria: What do you do...

Andrew: We salt it and then we spread them, to pack them like, you know, to...

Victoria: Was that to keep them?

Andrew: Yeah. Cure like, you know, before they ship them. Then after when they cure, then we pick them up and we shake the salt off. Then we wrap them up and tie them. Then they ship them, I guess.

Victoria: That's for big companies, I suppose, is it?

Andrew: Yes, for the big companies.

Victoria: And where else, what else did you do?

Andrew: Then after that when I quit in there, I went to work for a farmer in there, in Moose Jaw, in between Moose Jaw and Regina. I stay there all winter. We was baling. We do some baling, big straw piles, with horses. We used the horses to bale. The horses they go around and you had to tie up the bale by hand.

Victoria: What about... did you do a lot of travelling when you were looking for work?

Andrew: Yes, I did. After I left from there, when I left

the

from there I come to Swift Current and I meet this old fellow from Onion Lake. And we left from there. We went to Winnipeg on the freight. We catch the freight; it was travelling in

freight, But after we got near to Winnipeg, well, we couldn't get no job. Well, we was looking for more like pitch bundles, and 'twas was in the fall. It was raining steady. We couldn't get no job at all, because we couldn't stay no place so we come back. Then we had to walk a long ways before we could catch a freight again because they were watching so close. Then we finally got it, catch the freight. Anyway, we come right through -- night and day we was travelling -- to Calgary. I was, we was at Calgary for a few days in there and then we got a job to pitch bundles south of Calgary, High River.

Victoria: When you're on a freight like that, does it travel straight through? Does it stop very many places?

Andrew: It was at that time they had stop for water, and mostly it was for water and for coal, like, to keep the motor going.

Victoria: They would be the old engines then, the old locomotives, eh?

Andrew: Yeah, the old locomotives. Yeah.

Victoria: What did you eat when you were on...

Andrew: Well, we always prepare for to eat something, you know, bread and... most of us had bread and baloney at that time on the freight.

Victoria: So you made sure you had enough along when you ...

Andrew: Oh yes.

Victoria: ...got on, eh. Were most the kids your age -- or at that time you would have been a kid or a young man -- were most of them doing the same thing as what you were doing at that time?

Andrew: There was lots at that time, yes. When we got off at Calgary that time I think there was about, oh, I think they told me there was about 60 in there. But at that time the brakeman, he was a brakeman there, he was smart, you know, he was, he was really good to us. This side of the river he told us to get off because they were going to stop right in the city, because that time they were pretty strict already. Maybe

you could get picked up and they search you. If you have a dollar, well, they take it away from you. Then we did get off, everyone of us got off, and we walked to town. Then at that time there was just rooming houses. They were cheap, I think it was \$1 for a room for a night, I think. Then meals were very cheap too.

Victoria: When he told you to get off, how...? Did you jump from the train?

Andrew: No. He told us he was going to slow down, to really slow down, you know, when he gets close to, right to the town, close to the edge of the city when he would slow down in there and jump off then.

Victoria: So you had some good travelling experiences then when you were young.

Andrew: Oh yeah. Yeah, I was travelling in a freight I guess I was only that... well, not only (inaudible) half-breed. There was still quite a few of them, they were travelling. But at that time I can remember there was only two of us, a little Indian and me.

Victoria: What language did you speak in the home when you were growing up?

Andrew: When we left at St. Victor the first time, it was mostly French. Very little Cree we talked till we got up north here and then we learned Cree. I could not hardly understand. Mostly French my dad was talking to us.

Victoria: What language did you learn to talk first?

Andrew: Cree. I learned Cree, well, after we got up here now, north, and they start to meet people and they was talking Cree, so we learned.

Victoria: Did you always think of yourselves as being Metis or half-breeds? Did you always know what you were?

Andrew: Well, in French they always used to say Metis, you know. Metis, if that's what they call it in French. Then after we was down south, (inaudible) over here quite a bit, well, then they call us half-breed.

Victoria: But you always knew what you were eh?

Andrew: Oh yeah.

Victoria: Were the people in the community and your parents, were they proud of what they were?

Andrew: Yes they were proud. (inaudible) they were Metis and we were proud, at that time. Well, after when I start understanding, well that's all I could heard. They said there was Indian and Metis. Yhat's all I know.

Victoria: No other nationality?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: Was there anybody, any of the older people that you

knew, your grandparents or anybody in your community that talked about Metis history? Like, I think about what they used to do, you know, about travelling in the old days and some things that they done, the old half-breeds, you know, what they did, their type of history that they had went through.

Andrew: Well, not too much that I can remember, you know. I can remember the time when we was down south. They had to haul freight -- it was a long ways from Moose Jaw to Willowbunch and St. Victor, like. They had to haul freight. They had to travel more than a hundred miles, I guess, at that time, to go with horses and come back with the freight from Moose Jaw.

Victoria: When you were young did Metis families in your community, did they have parties or different things that everybody attended?

Andrew: Oh yes, they had lots of that, yeah. They go, house parties and fiddled. They were good dancers, and mostly it was square dance and waltz and jigs. There was a lot of jigging going.

Victoria: Did you learn how to jig?

Andrew: No, I never was. (laughs)

Victoria: Anybody in your family do any jigging?

Andrew: Not that I know, no. There was mostly... they were shy, the ones that were... (laughs) My dad, he was one to call the square dance.

Victoria: Oh, he was the caller, was he? Was there anybody in your family that played the fiddle?

Andrew: No, there was nobody.

Victoria: Nobody in your family, eh. Was Christmas celebrated very much?

Andrew: Yes, there was quite a bit, I mean, for candies and stuff like that. But they never celebrate nothing for this, just amongst the family like, you know, for their family like. Mostly it was... no toys or anything, it was just candy and apples and stuff like that.

Victoria: What about New Year's, was it...?

Andrew: Yeah, it was a big celebration on that. They cook, everybody cooks then. They go house to house.

Victoria: And what else did they have to do?

Andrew: Well, when they come in the evening they start to dance and they celebrate the New Year's.

Victoria: Was there a lot of eating going on? Eating and

drinking.

Andrew: Well, there wasn't that much drinking but there was a lot to eat. Yes, there was a lot to eat then. They eat lots of boulettes.

Victoria: Do you remember if your dad or any of your relations wore any Metis sashes or, you know, traditional Metis clothing?

Andrew: Yeah, my dad used to wear lots of that, yeah. He was wearing moccasins pretty well all the time, him.

Victoria: What about a sash? Do you know if he had a sash? That's those big wide belts, you know.

Andrew: Yeah, he had one all the time but he didn't wear it too much, but he had one. (interviewer interrupts and talks at the same time as the interviewee) I can remember when he goes someplace like, you know, like in town, like when he goes he used to put it on. I can remember that.

Victoria: How about your mom? What type of dress did she... what did she wear?

Andrew: My mom, she wear a long skirt all the time, black skirt. That's all I can remember that she wear a black blouse and a big black skirt, long skirt.

Victoria: How about moccasins did she wear moccasins or a different kind of shoes?

Andrew: Yes, she was wearing moccasins too quite a bit, yeah.

Victoria: The moccasins that they had, were they short or the long wraparound ones?

Andrew: The wrap ones, yeah.

Victoria: Did your mom do beadwork?

Andrew: No. No, she never done beadwork.

Victoria: How about your grandma, did she do any, or do you remember your grandma?

Andrew: No, I don't remember my grandma.

Victoria: How about any of the rest of your grandparents?

Andrew: Well, I don't remember too much of his sister, They might have do a lot of that, because there were some in Montana, there was one in Montana anyway, she...

Victoria: So most of your grandparents originated from the States then, eh?

Andrew: Mostly, I think it was from Manitoba most of them.

Victoria: Manitoba some of them?

Andrew: Yeah. That's my dad's...

Victoria: Your dad's...

Andrew: I think my mom too was from Manitoba more than anything.

Victoria: Oh, she was maybe from the Red River Valley then, eh? That's where most of the... The breeds that came over from there was from the Red River Valley.

Andrew: I don't remember, no it was nothing from the States, no, not in our... It was from Manitoba.

Victoria: Do you know if any of them tanned any hides and that?

Andrew: I don't remember that. They had to be, I guess, somebody, I guess, because they were wearing moccasins.

Victoria: But sometimes in the communities there used to be just one special person and then they used to trade stuff, or get them to, to... well, they'd make them for the other families and then they'd trade stuff in return for them making them. So you don't think she done any tanning hides, eh?

Andrew: No, not my mother.

Victoria: Were there very many white people that lived in the community?

Andrew: Well, there were quite a few, yes. There was quite a few, and since I remember from Assiniboia, there was quite a few white people in there, but the town was a fairly good size already.

Victoria: Did they get along good with the Metis people though?

Andrew: They were really good, far as I know they were really good.

Victoria: No discrimination?

Andrew: No. They were really good as far as I...

Victoria: Then there was never any problems with the police, or judges, or anything in those days, do you remember?

Andrew: No, not that I remember.

Victoria: And the town treated the people good. They didn't try to get them to move away or anything?

Andrew: No. They were pretty good.

Victoria: Do you know if anyone in your family that used Indian medicine?

Andrew: No. Well, they were using some medicine, yeah, for the kids like, you know, when they were sick.

Victoria: That they made themselves?

Andrew: They made themselves: they pick it up themselves. That's all you had to use because there was hardly a doctor around. If there was a doctor it was just a horse doctor anyway -- they didn't know nothing.

Victoria: What about sweat lodges? Did you ever hear of a sweat lodge?

Andrew: No. Not me.

Victoria: Do you know about any of these... you know, did they have any serious illnesses that you can remember when you were growing up, or that your mom or dad might have talked about?

Andrew: No, just the time with the flu, that's all I can remember. That flu, they claimed quite a few. I never had the flu myself at that time, it was only when I was running around. And Dad, he was looking after the patient more to feed them like, you know, from the town. He was a scout that time. He was looking after the patient till he got sick, too, like, he got sick, kind of, not really bad though. He didn't get it bad.

Victoria: Who was he a scout for?

Andrew: For the Red Coats and for the town and whatever.

Victoria: So that would be the North West Mounted Police then, would it be?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: What all did he have to do when he was working for them?

Andrew: He had to do lots of riding around to... like more or less (inaudible) around, you know, ride the hills, I guess, and see where's the...

Victoria: What was it? Just to see that somebody wasn't breaking the law or...?

Andrew: Well, there was lots at that time, you know. And that's what the time... the time there was (inaudible) going,

like Jessie James was around at that time with a gang. Well, not exactly at that time, but there was maybe (inaudible). They were left from the States like, you know. There were lots of them come from...

Victoria: So they were coming over into Canada, eh?

Andrew: Yes, coming from Montana. They come to Saskatchewan like, you know. Stealing horses and stuff like that.

Victoria: Crooks and that?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: Was there much... Was there anyone in your family that was in the Rebellion?

Andrew: My mother's side, yes, and my mother's brothers. One is in Batoche. He's laying there now.

Victoria: Oh, he fought at Batoche then, eh?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: What was his last name?

Andrew: That I don't know, well, he was a MacGuinness.

Victoria: A MacGuinness, eh.

Andrew: So my mother's a MacGuinnesss.

Victoria: You don't know his first name at all?

Andrew: First name, I never know that till...

Victoria: Have you tried looking it up in the...

Andrew: No, we never did. Too late, that time he was telling me. So next time I go, I'm going to go and look.

Victoria: You don't know what he did at all during the Rebellion?

Andrew: No, not at that time.

Victoria: You don't have any idea what, you know... Were you ever discriminated against because you were a Metis, like were you ever denied a job?

Andrew: I don't understand that.

Wife: Did anybody ever tell you you couldn't get a job because you was Metis? Nobody ever refused you?

Andrew: No. They were all pretty good to me the place where

I work.

Victoria: You never had any bad dealings with the police, or the government, or anything like that?

Andrew: No.

Victoria: And you never worked anywhere, you know, like with a white person and that, and you got less money for working?

Andrew: The time I work in Lloyminster here I work for Pool Construction there all winter for \$1.25 an hour, so I was well satisfied I was making good.

Victoria: So you don't feel that you were discriminated against on a job, eh?

Andrew: They were treating me real good.

Victoria: And the town people always treated you good? They didn't try to chase any of the breed people out of town?

Andrew: Oh, a lot of breed people, they was chased out of town a lot of places. Yeah, I can remember that, but I was never chased out of anyplace as far as I know.

Victoria: Do you know any reason why they made them leave town?

Andrew: No, not that I know, for what. I didn't... I didn't go near them to find out.

Victoria: You didn't really pay that much attention to it back then?

Andrew: No.

Victoria: What about the church? Was it important in your parents' life?

Andrew: Yes, they really important for them. Yeah. I was too.

Victoria: It was for your life too, eh?

Andrew: Yeah. Catholic, yeah.

Victoria: Did the priest ever come to visit in your home?

Andrew: At that time, yes. A long time ago the priests there, they visit you in the camps, you know. They always come around. Even in the house after in the wintertime they'd come and find you, yes.

Victoria: What did he talk about, do you remember?

Andrew: Well, I don't know really, because I didn't listen too much. They come and visit with Dad and Mom like, you know, and we had to sit quiet and we didn't listen, I guess, too much so I can't remember.

Victoria: Did you always go to church the same way? Do you still go the same way as you did back in the old days?

Andrew: No, I don't go to church now, at all now, for a long time now, since I was on my own and I left the church.

Victoria: Was there any special reason why you quit going?

Andrew: Yeah. There was a lot of reason, but I wouldn't say for what.

Victoria: Do you think the church had more influence over the people back in the old days? Do you think that the people listened more to what the church had to say back then?

Andrew: At that time they would listen a lot, the old people.

Victoria: Do you think the church helped Metis people though, you know, if they had problems?

Andrew: They would help a lot if they want to help, yes. But they don't, not now. They used to.

Victoria: They used to help, you think?

Andrew: Lot of it they used to help. But some, like for the Metis Society now, I don't think they'll help. If they want to, they would have the power to say something.

Victoria: You never went to school at all, eh?

Andrew: No.

Victoria: Do you miss not going to school?

Andrew: Yes, I should. I sure miss it, all right. It would be nice if I had a little bit, even a little bit of education. That would be a great help.

Victoria: Was it because your parents moved around so much that you...

Andrew: That was so much. We was on the road, living on the road allowance lots, and here and there. There was no school.

Victoria: So you think your life would have been a lot different if you would have went to school, eh?

Andrew: Oh yes, a little bit of education, it would help right now.

Victoria: Do you remember if when you were young, did your parents vote?

Andrew: Yes, they vote. Yes.

Victoria: Do you remember what party they voted for?

Andrew: Most of the time they would vote Liberal, because they were, why they vote, it was Catholics, you see. Protestant was, it was communist like, they call it. I think I can remember that. I wasn't votin' at that time.

Victoria: Did they ever get involved in the campaigns?

Andrew: Well, not the Metis, as far as I know. I didn't notice, not too much. They only just to vote. That's all they was... they come to votin' time.

Victoria: Why do you think they voted Liberal?

Andrew: Well, I guess that's all they... They were scared at that time, i can... since I remember, they were scared of the war again, you see. And then if you didn't vote Liberal, well, they'd have the war again, see. But it didn't make any difference anyway. It was Liberal declared the war, the last war.

Victoria: Do you think that the church was involved in politics in those days?

Andrew: Yes. There was lots, but I wouldn't want to say.

Victoria: It's okay, just what you think. It doesn't matter if you say it on here at all. It's whatever you think. Do you think that voting or politics was important to people in those days, to Metis people? Or do you think it was just because, like you said, that they were afraid of war and the church too?

Andrew: Yeah, just... the church. They would listen to the priest, you know, preachers. Then they believe him what...

Victoria: Do you remember if the politicians ever came to visit at your house when you were young?

Andrew: Not too much, no. Not too much. They just... like they, well, they let them know... I mean, not much to talk about, as far as I can remember.

Victoria: Do you vote the same way as your parents did?

Andrew: Well, I wasn't voting that time. I was young.

Victoria: How about now?

Andrew: Well, no, I vote just what...

Victoria: You vote for your own party?

Andrew: Yes.

Victoria: Do you get involved in campaigning?

Andrew: No, because I got no education. I can't...

Victoria: You don't go around to the Metis people though and try to get them to vote a certain way?

Andrew: No, no. No I don't.

Victoria: A guy could get killed doing that, eh. (laughs)
None of your friends get active in campaigning though, do they?
They don't go around...

Andrew: Oh (inaudible aside to wife).

Victoria: Do you think that the Metis people, though, voted for the people who spoke up for them, who sort of talked for them in government? Or do you think that back in those days they didn't...?

Andrew: Oh, at that time, no. There were just nothing about the Metis that time. They didn't know what there was a Metis Society at that time. They didn't expect nothing to... They lost their land and then they just left it, their land. A lot of it belongs to them like that, you know. They were just starved out of there. They had to go someplace where they can make their living.

Victoria: Have your parents ever, did they ever have any land, any homestead or any scrip land?

Andrew: They had some scrip land, yes.

Victoria: Where was that?

Andrew: Around St. Victor. My dad had land there too. And there was quite a few around from there.

Victoria: What did they do with it?

Andrew: Well, they just left it, left, and they just come and left it, that's all.

Victoria: Why did they leave it, do you know?

Andrew: Well, seems to me the same, like they were... I mean, they starve out of it there too, you know. Some of them, they're doin' all right because they had a lot of horses.

Victoria: Was the land good though? Was it good for farming?

Andrew: No. That time there was no farming at all, mostly it was ranch. Mostly ranchers, they called them. Mostly it was ranch.

Victoria: Was it good land though? Could it have been farmed?

Andrew: Well, they farming now, yeah. Lots of them, they're farming now. Lot of places they (inaudible)

Victoria: So they just left it. Do you know of anybody that sold theirs?

Andrew: No, not that I know. No. Now, after, later, I guess maybe they had sold, some of them there, so they were getting old. I guess they must have sold their land.

Victoria: So there was still some that stuck it out then and...

Andrew: Oh yeah. There was some that did.

Victoria: Were you ever involved in the old Metis, it was called the Saskatchewan Metis Society, in the '30s and '40s?

Andrew: I never was no...

(END OF SIDE A)

(SIDE B)

Victoria: Did they have a Local in your town, like? Was there somebody that was...

Andrew: No, there was no local. Most of it... No, there was no local at that time much. It could be some people they had, I mean, to do something about the Metis Society at that time but they wouldn't tell you anyway. They were just hiding it off of you. They were just for theirselves, the one that could read. They were some. But we went lot of meeting. Me and my dad, we went, even with the horses, at Cold Lake. They were from all over, from Saskatchewan and Alberta in there at that time.

Victoria: Where was that at?

Wife: Cold Lake.

Andrew: Cold Lake.

Victoria: Cold Lake?

Andrew: Yeah, just south of Cold Lake there was a place there. There was some people from Regina, they had pushed from Regina, they were there. But I was real young at that time I

didn't listen, really, what they were... That's the time they were getting some land like, you know, there was... in Alberta.

Victoria: So would it be the Metis people then from Alberta that were doing these... that were at these meetings?

Andrew: Yes. There was for Saskatchewan too, yes. Yeah, there was a lot of them there went from Saskatchewan.

Victoria: And you didn't have any... Where were you living at the time?

Andrew: We was living at Onion Lake at that time.

Victoria: And the people there, they didn't bring it out in the open about what they were doing and if they were trying to get land for the people?

Andrew: Yes, I guess they must have brought it out at that time but, I don't know, lots of them, they didn't... I guess probably they didn't... they were just sitting there and wait.

Victoria: So they didn't really get that involved in it?

Andrew: Yes. We got some land on Fishing Lake at that time. We was... we was... we went in there... a lot of Metis went in there but then that was all we... we took our quarter of land whatever they're suppose to take, and lots of them they stay but we starve out of there. We had to get out of there.

Victoria: So they did... the government granted you land then, eh?

Andrew: At that time. They still got that community in there, at Fishing Lake.

Victoria: Fishing Lake, eh.

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: About how much did the government give them, can you remember?

Andrew: No, I don't know what... No, I wouldn't...

Victoria: What year would that have been in?

Wife: 1932, '30?

Andrew: It's around... Must be early '40s. Yeah, that would be early '40s. No that would be in '30s.

Victoria: How much did your family get, like?

Andrew: Well, we was supposed to... the one that were old enough they were supposed to get a quarter each, like. Like my dad had a quarter and one of my brother.

Victoria: Which one would that be, which brother?

Andrew: Joe.

Victoria: How old did you have to be before you could get...

Andrew: You had to be 21.

Victoria: Oh, you had to be 21. So what was the land like? Was it... could you do anything with it?

Andrew: Well, they put little crop in. It was pretty rough. It was pretty, I mean, there was bush and a lot of stone in that country there. They put crops now. They got...

Victoria: So you had to clear the land first did you?

Andrew: Well they was suppose to get cleared up so much every year for you. I don't know how many acres; I don't remember.

Victoria: Oh, the government paid, like, to get it cleared for you.

Andrew: And some cattle beside, you know, like. They got it, you know, in Alberta.

Victoria: Well isn't Onion Lake in Saskatchewan though?

Andrew: No, it's in Alberta. Onion Lake, it's half Saskatchewan and half Alberta.

Victoria: Oh, I see. It's right along the border, eh?

Andrew: Yeah. It's right on that meridian, yeah.

Victoria: So when you guys got it, was yours in the Alberta part or the Saskatchewan part?

Andrew: No, it was in Alberta.

Victoria: It was the Alberta side, eh.

Andrew: Yeah, but they didn't make an addition (inaudible)

Victoria: Oh, whoever... Well then, they could have moved over then, you mean.

Andrew: Yeah, we could have stay right there if we want. Lots of them from Saskatchewan they stay there; most of them, I guess. Well, there was lots from Alberta, they stay. Still staying there lots of them.

Victoria: Well, what happened that they left it then, some of them left it?

Andrew: I think it just stays there. I guess somebody else,

I guess, takes it over like.

Victoria: Well, why couldn't some of them make a go? Like some of them, you said, stayed there and farmed it...

Andrew: Some of them did very good, yeah.

Victoria: And some of them didn't. Why do you think that some of them made it and some didn't?

Andrew: Well, it's pretty hard to say. I don't know really what happened.

Victoria: Was some land better than the other, or was it all the same type?

Andrew: No, it was all the same type. Some of them I guess they didn't work at their land just the right way, the way it's supposed to be, you know, they're just...

Victoria: Well, did the '30s, the weather in the '30s, do you think had anything to do with it?

Andrew: Well, there was lots to do with it, because they didn't have nothing to eat there. But they tough it, lots of them, they tough it and they stayed there. That was about the same time as Green Lake. They got it, you see, at that time. There's lots of them them days starve out of there; they come back down south. See, the one, the leaders, they were doing okay. Same thing's right now. The leaders, they're 100 per-cent, but the ones, they got nothing now, they got nothing.

Victoria: Do you remember any of these names? Did they go around up there when there was meetings being held, like the guy named Joe LaRocque?

Andrew: I think Joe LaRocque was there at that time, at that meeting we went to at Cold Lake, because they come from all over at that time.

Victoria: What about a Joe Ross?

Andrew: I don't know. I don't remember the name or the, because I was fairly young, too, when I went in there. I didn't listen too much.

Victoria: Tom Major? You didn't hear of his name?

Andrew: I heard the names, but I don't know if I heard the names in there or not.

Victoria: There was a Joe McKenzie. And Solomon Pritchard.

Andrew: At that time Solomon, he didn't come, no.

Victoria: I think he worked quite a bit in the southern part of the province.

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: Do you think, you know... in all of your life, what kind of a life would you say it was? Was it interesting and were you satisfied with the way your life was?

Andrew: Well, you didn't have no choice. You had to be satisfied the way you was living. Lots of time you had to live in the road allowance when after the white people come squat. I mean the land like, they never bought no land when they first come in here, white people. I know that. They just come and they staked wherever they could build a house.

Victoria: Were you... Did your family live on the road allowance too?

Andrew: Yes.

Victoria: Where was that at, do you remember?

Andrew: Well, we live in the road allowance for a long time in Baljennie. And lots in Willowvale, that was on the road allowance where we was living. And north of Glaslyn there. We lived there in the road allowance lots.

Victoria: That was even after you were married, eh, was it?

Andrew: Yeah.

Victoria: You had a life of pretty hard work, eh?

Andrew: Yes. Had to use the muscle to make my living all the time.

Victoria: Do you think your life was better than your father's, or your grandfather's?

Andrew: No, I wouldn't say that. They had make good living, I guess too, at that time. I mean, there was long time ago and they live with the buffalos. I mean, they were really good.

Victoria: But you think that it was, your life was just as hard as what theirs were, or do you think that theirs was maybe easier than what yours was?

Andrew: I think their life, they were easier, a lot easier, because they didn't have to... they made their living, I mean really easy living, on their... Like us, well, we had to use the axe to make our living most of the time to...

Victoria: Do you think your life would have been different if you would have been born white or maybe a Treaty Indian?

Andrew: Well, I wouldn't say white, but I'd say Indian. If I was an Indian I'd have something today probably. (laughs)

Victoria: So you think that they're more fortunate than the Metis people?

Andrew: Well, they got more rights than the whites yet so far, I mean, as far as I could see.

Victoria: If you had a chance to be born all over again what would you do different?

Andrew: (laughs)

Victoria: Would you change your life? Do you think you would change it to be different than what it was?

Andrew: Oh, it would have to be changed, yes.

Victoria: What about it would you have changed?

Andrew: Well, I'd go for education first. Then from there on, well, I could be a Prime Minister, too, after that.
(laughs)

Victoria: Would you have liked to have been a woman though? If you could be born all over again, would you like to go back to being a man or would you have like to have changed and been a woman?

Andrew: I don't understand that. (laughs)

Victoria: Like, say, if you were born, if you could be born again, eh, would you still want to be a man? Like, if you could change everything about your life...

Andrew: Oh no, I would still be a man.

Victoria: You would still like to be a man, eh?

Andrew: Yeah. I would like to... if they have to born the same like... like me, if I was born over, I would like to meet the people again. First, the ones they're... the way they treat us right now. I'd like to meet them.

Victoria: Do you think that the future is going to be better for your children and your grandchildren?

Andrew: Well, it's a lot better than the way I've been living, as far as that goes. I mean, it's the education, that they got to be... The grandchildren now, they should do okay now. I mean, they're... the wages is so high and...

Victoria: You think they've got better, better ways of getting an education?

Andrew: Well, yeah. Education, well, there'll be lots. I mean, they... at least they wouldn't get stuck for anything, you know.

Victoria: Do you think that, you know, in the future native people are going to be better off in the... living in the country, or maybe way up north, or maybe they'll be better off in the cities?

Andrew: Well, maybe some, they would be a lot better for the north like, you know, the younger people; but us, the old

people now, they haven't got the chance now to make their living in the bush, to start, you know. But the young people probably that would do real nice, yes.

Victoria: Okay. I want to thank you very much for the interview.

(END OF SIDE B)

(END OF TAPE)