

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: PAUL POWDER
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: TROUT LAKE
ALBERTA
INTERVIEW LOCATION: TROUT LAKE
ALBERTA
TRIBE/NATION: CREE
LANGUAGE:
DATE OF INTERVIEW:
INTERVIEWER: ALFRED J. BEAVER
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: J. GREENWOOD
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Aged 71, non-treaty.
- Payment of money and goods to treaty Indians.
- Treaty promises.

Alfred: I want to ask you your name first. We are looking into the treaty agreement affecting the treaty Indian Membership. There were many treaty Indians that were involuntarily enfranchised approximately forty years ago. Also there were some that were classified as Metis and were admitted back into treaty membership only for a short time.

Paul: Yes.

Alfred: Not too many, but there's a few. This is why we would like to hear stories you might be able to tell us.

Paul: Yes.

Alfred: Now I will ask you to tell me your name.

Paul: Paul Powder.

Alfred: How old are you now?

Paul: Seventy-one years old, maybe more.

Alfred: Where were you born?

Paul: Wabasca.

Alfred: Have you lived here since then?

Paul: Later on, about forty-five years since I have been living here. My mother moved here, so we were here. Since then I've lived here and I'm still here. My mother died long ago. I had a stepfather, his name was Samuel Sinclair. He also died. He is buried close by here (grave site of his parents about 100 yards west from his house.)

Alfred: Where is the actual place where your parents are buried?

Paul: Close by here. The place where this man (neighbor) lives. At the place where the creek widens. (south of neighbor's house)

Alfred: And this is what's called Trout Lake, and where did your parents live? Do you remember?

Paul: You mean ever since we've moved here? We moved along the Whitefish Lake and we arrived here and we've been living here. We stayed in Wabasca and now we're living here (Trout Lake). The old people finally died here.

Alfred: Could you say where your parents were buried?

Paul: They're laying here just along the river. Our grandmother was staying here. She lived where I'm living now. I've built another house; that's where they were living. My grandmother had died and the old man, my grandfather, stayed with? That one too had died. Two of my uncles lived, his children. This place that's called the Narrows, there's a bridge there, that's where the men stayed after their mother had died. They had died too in Wabasca.

Alfred: What was those men's names, if you can remember?

Paul: Solomon O'Ar and Henry O'Ar.

Alfred: Are those the ones you're related to?

Paul: They're my uncles, my mother's brothers.

Alfred: I guess they too have been buried somewhere here.

Paul: Yes, the old woman was buried at the Narrows, and the old man where the river widens. He was our grandfather. He was a Merrier, Alex Merrier was his name.

Alfred: That was your grandfather?

Paul: Yes.

Alfred: And what about them, could you tell me whether they were treaty or were they Metis.

Paul: They were all non-treaty.

Alfred: Oh, yes.

Paul: That old man was a non-treaty too.

Alfred: Did they ever take those papers called scrip?

Paul: I'm telling you again, I don't know any of that.

Alfred: And you haven't heard any stories either?

Paul: No, if I had heard anything, I wouldn't know. My mother had taken that, she had told stories, didn't she?

His wife: Yes.

Paul: I guess it was in Wabasca they were given that (treaty payment). And about our grandmother and grandfather, they had stayed in Wabasca, but they had moved around, and finally arrived here, and they stayed here since.

Alfred: These people you call your grandmother and grandfather, what did you actually name them?

Paul: One of them was called Alex Merrier.

Alfred: That was one of them?

Paul: Yes, and what was my grandmother's name?

His wife: I don't know what her name was, I just don't know either, we used to hear her called in Cree only, that was Mee-squeese.

Alfred: Mee-squeese.

Paul: They used to call her - Mee-squeese, but I don't know her real name.

Alfred: Long time ago, about 90 years ago, no about 81 years, this treaty business went around with these white people did. Could you tell us or remember where the people used to live about 80 years ago?

Paul: What I'm about to tell you, this man died of old age, just outside where the store was located. My grandmother whom I've been telling you about, her father. He died of old age and was buried across the river from here.

Alfred: Here at the river?

Paul: Yes, here at the river not far. You can go look around, all of them, his old lady too.

Alfred: Oh?

Paul: Many years ago, over ten years.

Alfred: Yes.

Alfred: Have you ever heard stories how they used to go about when treaty was taken?

Paul: I can't recall anything. I don't have any story I can tell you about that, about the treaties and how they were

treated. The only thing I used to see was when the people were getting paid. They used to get grub, ammunition such as shells, etc. That's all I know, but I haven't heard any one to tell stories.

Alfred: The time you said when people were paid, and the grub they received.

Paul: Ammunition, shells such things like that, to do with guns. Fish nets I think they were given. Twine for fishnets I'm pretty sure they received.

Alfred: Were you certain if the treaties were paid once every year? Or how were they paid, do you remember?

Paul: No, I don't.

Alfred: Money, how much money was a person given?

Paul: They received five dollars. They still do, I guess they always will. Our grandchild was one too, the one who's living with us, this young woman. She receives five dollars every year.

Alfred: At the present time, where do they hold the treaty? Where do the people used to get their money?

Paul: Over at Long Lake, there's a place called Long Lake, past Bald Hill (Peerless Lake). It must be about ten miles more.

Alfred: Oh, I wonder what it's called in English?

Paul: Long Lake.

Alfred: Long Lake? Oh.

Paul: That's where the store was located.

Alfred: That's where they used to go and get it? (treaty payment).

Paul: Where the Hudson Bay was, Reviars (general store owned by Frenchmen). That's where they were.

Alfred: Oh!

Paul: Lately now when they have treaty they have it here at Trout Lake, where we came from.

Alfred: Do you remember or heard stories about the treaties or Metis to have been promised any land? A reserve or Metis colony?

Paul: I haven't heard anything, not a Metis colony anyway. I used to hear the treaties were supposed to get land over at the end of the lake, past Trout Lake. There are lakes located there finally reaching Long Lake. That's where this land was promised to the treaty Indians. All the treaties lived over there.

Alfred: And what was the name of the person could you remember? Who promised the land?

Paul: What was his name? Yes, I had seen this person, he wasn't a big man, the Indian agent. That was the time they had treaty, and he was making payments.

Alfred: How many years ago was that?

Paul: That was a long time ago. I don't know how many years.

Alfred; About fifty years or less?

Paul: Less than that. It must've been about twenty or forty years, or even less.

Alfred: Have they surveyed anything?

Paul: I don't know of that, if they had surveyed. They were only asked, (treaty Indians) and I don't know if they did lately, 'cause they lived over there, and us here.

Alfred: I wonder what had happened when that land was promised to them. Or were they being just told that because they were registered elsewhere.

Paul: Yes, I wonder, if they were boss of themselves when they lived here, 'cause there is no reserve here. Maybe they were registered in Wabasca.

Alfred: And what about the treaty people that lived at Long Lake, do you remember if there was somebody selected as their leader, even if he's not a chief?

Paul: Maybe they did long ago. I just don't know. All I recall is, when people used to get treaty money here. This person moved here lately from Wabasca, you must know his name is Colin (Colin Trindle). He used to be in charge, he was the leader then. He's here; I think I saw him yesterday. He came

here at Bald Hill (Peerless Lake). He's the leader, I wonder if he's a chief or a councillor.

Alfred: But you can't remember from long before that time?

Paul: Farther than that? I don't remember. He would know about the land that was promised (Colin Trindle).

Alfred: The time you lived in Wabasca, do you know who was the chief for the treaties was then? Would you remember his name?

Paul: I remember the chief's name and I had seen him too. Did he used to stay at Sandy Lake?

Alfred: That must be him.

Paul: He was a big man.

Alfred: I wonder what his name was?

Paul: I don't know exactly.

Alfred: Was it "Bigstone"?

Paul: Bigstone, that's him. I remember he was the chief, I used to see him. He used to dress in uniform on Treaty Day. I was just a child then.

Alfred: I'll relate a story about treaty and another thing I wanted to ask you because you are a Metis, did anybody from the government agency ever promise you any land?

Paul: Are you talking about long ago? That's right, I was promised, once, not long ago, about one year ago. But they haven't promised me anything again. Is that what you were talking about?

Alfred: Yes, anything like that.

Paul: This was promised to me (papers), I've got them here. I haven't used them yet.

Alfred: Were you supposed to renovate your house or what?

Paul: I guess I was supposed to or whatever I needed, for \$1,000.00. That's how much I was given.

Alfred: That must've been how much the elderly people were given.

Paul: That must've been it. I had received that and that's what I'm using to insulate my house, not this one, another one. That's what they brought me.

Alfred: This place you're living now, do you know of anyone who's Metis but previously have been treaty? Or any one who was struck out from treaty membership about forty years ago or less?

Paul: Around here, no, nobody.

Alfred: This is why I'm asking you to tell your story.

Paul: Yes, nobody, just my grandmother who used to live here, leaving this house that was torn down later.

Alfred: You only got paid once?

Paul: Yes, only once, I got paid from that small man (Indian agent). He wanted us to get paid so he finally persuaded us to get the money. That was the only time, the next time we went, we didn't get paid.

Alfred: And you were never told why you didn't get paid again?

Paul: No, they just wouldn't give us anything. It seemed like it had been given to us free, that was the only time.

Alfred: But they made arrangements for you to get paid.

Paul: He (Indian agent) made the arrangements, that's how we got the money.

Alfred: What was his name?

Paul: I wonder what? Some of the other people must've knew him.

Alfred: I appreciate, your telling me this. Would you like to show me where the old people were buried, so that this statement would be recorded on tape?

(End of Interview)

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