- This 97 year old man describes the promises made in Treaty #8 and how he feels they have been broken.

Inter: This person that is going to talk to us is Samuel Giroux from Drift Pile. He is 97 years old and his wife is also going to speak. Elsie Giroux is her name. She is 93 years old on the 5th of May.

Mrs. Giroux: I am 93 years old on the 5th of May.

Inter: And you grandpa?

Samuel: 97

Inter: What month? I should have brought you some tobacco, but I did not remember 'cause I don't smoke, but here is something for you to buy tobacco with.

Mrs. Giroux: You were born in July. I was first married to another man, not him. My first husband and I had five children. After I was a widow, Samuel admired me and married me.

Samuel: That is what she likes to talk about.
Mrs. Giroux: I don't know what beauty he saw in a widow with five children.

Inter: Yes, that's the kind that are loveable, these old ladies. That's been seen in many places. One of you speak. Would you care to speak, grandma?

Mrs. Giroux: My memory is not as good as my husband's.

Inter: What is your understanding when we first got out treaty? What was promised to the people? One thing I will mention that might refreshen your memory, if oil were to be discovered in the ground, would it be given to us or not? And if discovered on white man's land or if discovered within the reservation which would we be entitled to?

Samuel: Only on the reservation would we succeed in that. At first...

Inter: Wait, don't mention that just yet. Ready? Okay, now you can begin to tell your story, grandpa.

Samuel: One of the first to be mentioned when we first got treaty was land. Land was said to be owned by the Indian as long as he wants it. There was no mention of acreage. They just walked as far as they could. After it was dark they returned. These were the surveyors. The King's representative was there. He was with the group. He cautioned the Indians once. The Indians were then going to do something to him. He ran away from there. From there they made their own arrangements which they thought would be best, but there were arguments because there was animosity amongst the people. Some people hardly knew what to do for themselves, argued with the people who owned some possessions, including their homes that looked nice. The people that come from elsewhere, they tried to fight them right away because they thought too much of it. It wasn't their money they were using. This was known. It was the King's money they were using. He was the one who ran the reservations. There he was going to have all the people. That was written, that he was willing until death, he said he would stand by the Indian. This was the first King. He was respected a lot. Very much he was respected. And then it happened about these treaties, broke. The treaties that were promised were broken. After he cried. Later someone else arrived from overseas. He stayed with the Indians for a long time. He loved the people. He even went with them when they went shooting ducks while they were flying. He also carried a gun so the Indians won't lose what they owned. He was a good man. Later on when the fighting began, the Indians kicked him out. From there he stayed for a while, but then the fighting began again. The King was beaten. From there he ran away to where he is now, overseas. This is where he ran to, knowing the Indians were not going to have mercy on him.

For 16 years, the King stayed away at his home, where he sheltered at, for he knew that the Indians carried guns and he
like living. He ran away to shelter. Then he stopped and thought things over on how the Indians would like him. This he concentrated on. Eventually he won. This is presently the law. He governed two places; we, the Indians here and also overseas, but a lot of his promises are missing. This I know. He has lost a lot.

Inter: Do you remember what all was promised regarding wild game, fish, medicine and hospitalization?

Samuel: Yes, hospitalization. He promised the Indians that he would govern them, he would give them reservations, he would give them food, how to improve their land. For a long time, the Indians managed to get along. Later he decided what to do. What you have said about the Queen and we know she is not fulfilling her promises. All over, we are aware of this. When they decided upon the hunting rights, he went hunting along with the Indians and he also carried a gun. Maybe he carried a gun so that the Indians would be scared of him. When treaty was first made, I will tell, I was there when treaty was first made and the land was surveyed. I was the guide. At that time, I was considered a good hunter. Where he stood, I would just call him. When we came to a river, I would wade into the water. There, he suffered a lot. He wasn't able to keep up with the Indians more than two Sundays, from there he went back to where he was born. That was the first agent.

I heard the Indian was promised, when the King first asked for his land, they shook hands and greeted one another, they promised one another, but the King made more promises. When he decided it wasn't right and was envious and gaining more power over the Indian, he cautioned them not to do that. He went somewhere else but not too far. His house could still be seen over there. He stayed there for a long time, not coming over to the reservation. The people could not do anything about what was promised to them. They were stopped. Later on, he got out of his promises. Now he governs everything. They way I see it, he has caused the Indian a lot of hardship. This is the way I see it. His promises have not been enough. His promises have not been upheld. I don't know if he would sooner be King, but he seldom saw the Indian, to appear anywhere, where there was a crowd. I don't know if he thought of himself too highly, but this is what was said of him when two other white men arrived. Poverty you will see, said those white men. This one, that is to be your King, "He doesn't hesitate to kill people," said one that stood there, closer in the room. "Watch out very carefully for your own lives. Everything that he has promised he must fulfill. He must not eliminate one. He has representatives that he can rely on to bring forth what was promised to the Indian." This is what the man said, that stood there and spoke to us. True, this is the way it should appear. This person backed away because he was scared. There were too many Indians and he was scared of them. He did not have that much courage. When an Indian decides to do something he won't hesitate for anything, especially if it's regarding something he owns. This started to die off, more and more and more. He
lived along the ocean shore, while his father was still living. This is where he fled to. He went and stayed there for about 19 years. He stayed there. In the meantime his father died, then he was successor up until now. He thinks he has full control, but the Indian is a hard person to deal with. He is not to be fooled. How many times has he scolded the Indian. Twice the Indian voted to fight back. The Indian won the argument, and was not to be mentioned again. From there they departed to return overseas. He stayed there for about 15 years, where his father was born but he had already died. There, is where he went. I don't know what he disliked, but he was there for quite some time. Later on he came back again, to stay forever.

Inter: What is your understanding about hunting and fishing?

Samuel: Ah, I understand all that. I know all of it. He made a promise to the Indian when he first gave them reserves that as long as he lives, the King, I will look after you, my people in this manner, and better if you respect me. I will look after your children and your wild game. Game will not be bought. Share with one another, said the chief as the agent stood beside him. Share with one another, equally, carefully, how to use your game, totally. When we have this, we will vote, then the Indian will own what game he chose for his consumption and use. This is what was decided about the moose. Moose is our main source of livelihood on this earth. Not like the white man, the King, he lived mainly on bread, he said. But the Indian lived on fish, ducks, anything. The King asked the Indian what he wanted for a livelihood. The Indian chose hunting and fishing not to be limited. As long as they live.

(Long pause)

This person took a gun. Not that he was expecting anything, but he always held a gun. He had two guns in case anything startled him. This was his appearance. So the Indians lost a lot of their men. Afterwards it was heard, this I did not see, the Indians left and fled, when they saw these guns they were scared. They stayed there for I don't know how many years. I don't know what they lived on, that time there was no bread. This was along the ocean shore. That is where the Indians went and stayed. That is where they were chased to. What he had promised them, nothing because of them. Their promises must have rotted in the meantime. It was hard, very hard. It was very hard for our friends. When our leaders came into being, as they grew more courageous, I will say, what the people desired, where they lived, and they too lived. This was called togetherness. When they got together, when they discussed the treaties. The Indians discussed these treaties and when their children got active later on, then they got together and spoke with one another and laughed.

They wrote down the treaties, while one person watched, these treaties of the King. The Indians did not make these promises to one another. These were the King's promises at first. These promises he has detoured, I have seen. What looks poor will
always remain poor. The so-called Indian will die that way. This I will only say, you will see it, because he has no faith in his people although they exist. They look like dogs without end, these Indians wherever they are. From there on, he doesn't remember what he has promised. Our people were very poor that were over here. The treaties looked very poor, and I think it will get worse in time, when I think about it. What would help is combining together. Choose people with courage, around four of them. If you are going to present anything or fight it, they will have to stand for you. Our fellow Indians. If we get so far, the King will pause, the way he is, he will hesitate. He won't just tell us to do this and do that, he has no business to say this. Indians own where he now stands. The Indian is taking the right path, and the so-called Indians owns everything. These were his promises. His father's promises. Even though he died but why does he not stand by his father's promises where the Indian should bring up his children. After he has promised he seems to have died more now, this our King. I don't know if his powers have lessened. I don't know. This is all I can tell you.

Inter: Oh, it has been very wonderful what you have mentioned about the King not following through with his promises. This is what we are searching for, through you elderly people. These are the ones we go around visiting. Maybe you would like to say a few words, grandma.

Samuel: You are to sit here and say a few words to our friends here who are travelling around, how you have seen things for yourself.

Mrs. Giroux: Yes, I have seen these things come to pass. What has been mentioned is exactly what has happened. There isn't anything else to say.

Samuel: When treaty was first made is the type of information that they want. When treaty was first made.

Mrs. Giroux: I was 15 years old then when the land was first sold. Everybody went to town and to the beach, when they talked about the land being sold, true, I have seen this. The King did a little that time by giving a few things. Since then I have seen nothing. The only thing that has been given to us are wood and shells. These are the only things that I have seen being given to us, that I am aware of. If anything else has been given to us, I have not seen it. The only things that I see is what we buy for ourselves. Old people to be looked after by the government, I have not seen.

(End of Interview)