

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: JOE ALEXIS  
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: ALEXIS RESERVE  
ALBERTA  
INTERVIEW LOCATION: ALEXIS BAND OFFICE  
ALBERTA  
TRIBE/NATION: STONEY  
LANGUAGE:  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: JUNE 10, 1977  
INTERVIEWER: RICHARD LIGHTNING  
INTERPRETER: ROSE SADDLEBACK  
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD  
SOURCE: OFFICE OF SPECIFIC CLAIMS  
& RESEARCH  
WINTERBURN, ALBERTA  
TAPE NUMBER: IH-161  
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC 37  
PAGES: 6  
RESTRICTIONS: NONE

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Joe Alexis, aged 87, describes the establishment of reserves for the Alexis and Paul bands after the signing of Treaty #6.

Intro: My name is Richard Lightning and I am interviewing Joe Alexis at Alexis Reserve. I will be asking him questions pertaining to the history of the reserve, i.e. how the reserve was formed, information on treaty time - where the Stoney Indians received their payment and any other relevant information that I may obtain.

Today is June 10, 1977. I will just start asking Joe. Joe is the name. Joe, questions which...

Richard: What is your name?

Joe: Joe Alexis.

Richard: How old are you?

Joe: 87, according to the Indian agent who distributed the treaty payment just recently.

Richard: Do you know where you were born?

Joe: Here, on this reserve.

Richard: Here?

Joe: Yes.

Richard: Does he understand?

(P.S. There are 5 of us in the room. At this point, Richard was directing the question to Logan Alexis. It's difficult to follow the recording from here on as the old man has a tendency to respond back in Stoney language instead of Cree.)

Joe: I was baptized here on the reserve.

Richard: Baptized?

Joe: Yes, on this reserve.

Richard: Where did your parents originally come from? Your mother and father, parents? (Ask him where his parents came from - Richard is talking to Logan Alexis).

Joe: Alexis Aginas was my father's father. (i.e. grandfather is Alexi Aginas).

Richard: Alexi?

Joe: Yes.

Richard: Is Alexi your grandfather?

Joe: Yes.

Richard: Do you know where your past generation first established themselves as a band or groups of people? You were telling me a while ago that your people received treaty payment.

Joe: The first time they accepted treaty or received treaty payment was at Edmonton.

Richard: They went to that place?

Joe: Yes, they all went over there.

Richard: Were they already established as a band here?

Joe: Yes. They were given \$25 per head. In later years, they received \$5 per head.

Richard: Were your people ever located in the vicinity of Stony Plain? Did you establish yourselves here permanently?

Joe: Just my grandfather. Seestak - muskeg, houses, plenty of time for seeding, etc. One said, "We're not familiar with the lifestyle of farming." They were told to select a site where there is an abundance of food supply that will be readily available when in need. All the wildlife will be exploited. I

don't know what you call the animals that live on the mountains.

Richard: Mountain sheep (funny!).

Joe: (inaudible)

Richard: What are the priests' names or missionaries' names?

Joe: (inaudible)

(Logan: He said, the missionaries travelled amongst the Indians.)

Richard: You were mentioning that the people were located at Stony Plain area. Was that prior to the treaty payment?

Joe: ... to select a site to their preference so that a reserve could be set aside without limitation in area.

Richard: Your grandfather told you that?

Joe: My grandfather told us all. He had told us that as soon as the band made a request for a reserve, a survey would be conducted immediately.

Richard: Maybe you could ask him in Stoney (talking to Logan Alexis) how the bands, Alexis and Paul's, separated. Also the number of followers Ironhead had. Can you estimate precisely the year of the separation between these two groups?  
(Interpretation)

Joe: They both took payments in Edmonton. At Wabamun Lake - some remained there while the others left to come to this vicinity. Asinee - came here. An agent came here to visit them. He informed them that there is plenty of fowl i.e. ducks, and the scenery being beautiful. There was another agent at Wabamun. There were 2 councillors that stayed while 2 came here. Ironhead... (Stoney language - asking how you say Ironhead in Cree?)

Richard: Was he a councillor?

Joe: Yes. I don't know who the chief was at that time.  
(Interpreter: Logan Alexis - what he's trying to say is Ironhead was recognized as a chief. He was a councillor, the chief then was Tobacco Pouch.)

Richard: Okay, that's fine. We can sort that out.

Joe: To be recognized as a chief.

Richard: How many followers did he have? (Interpreter: He doesn't know)

Richard: Lots, many - a big bunch?

(Stoney.... Interpreter: He can't recall it, a few of them were with him.)

Richard: When the land surveyors came along, were there two separate bands in existence?

Joe: They were each given their own reserve.

Richard: What about the priests promises?

Joe: Food, fish. Two councillors came to see them. It was a beautiful site with plenty of food supply.

Richard: Maybe you could ask him the reason for the split?  
(Interpreter: People didn't want to go as this was a paradise for shooting ducks - right at the narrows. This Pouch guy stayed over there.)

(When the survey was done) Alexis had their survey completed first then moved to the Wabamun Lake area later on to survey the reserve for the Paul's band. They were known as one distinct group with a chief which was prior to taking the treaty. There were 2 councillors that stayed behind with Paul's band and two came with Alexis, the chief.

Richard: I wonder if you could get his story on the reserve boundaries. Maybe he could give us his version. What does he know about the boundaries? How far do they extend?

Joe: Over there (inaudible) Where the priest lived - on the other side of the lake - across the lake. Part of this lake (i.e. Lac Ste. Anne) is sitting on the reserve. The boundaries ran from the mission and across the lake. The inspector did not allow commercial fishing at one time since part of the lake was the property of the Alexis Band.

Richard: The middle of the lake is the N-S boundary. And the westward portion of the lake would all belong to the reserve?

(Interpreter: Logan Alexis - I heard him say on one occasion that someone had mentioned to him that the reserve was not surveyed accurately. This person wanted a resurvey. This same person was discouraged because the R.C. Mission had told him and being a strong believer of the religion that if he makes this demand the treaties would be lost including the reserve. For this reason he ignored to pursue the intentions he held previously. He knows that the reserve was not properly surveyed.)

Richard: Do you recall anyone ever mentioning a resurvey of this reserve or (it was at least supposed to have been conducted)?

Joe: (Interpreter: My father tried to have the reserve resurveyed. The priest was thoroughly opposed to such a request. They did not pursue it. His dad tried to get it resurveyed but the priest discouraged him from carrying out such action. It's stated in there that a piece of land may not

after all belong to us.)

Joe: On the other side of this lake which is about 40 acres.

Richard: Sturgeon - S.W. corner of the reserve. The settlers came in and when they discovered they were on a reserve land so they moved out.

(Interpreter: dialogue in Stoney.) Settlers. Shooting ducks: he saw a "No Trespassing" sign. They left it. Agent. Police and interpreter wrote the location of the sign. Since it was inside the reserve, guns were restricted.

Joe: Mis ta tin Wap pat. Horse Narrows.

Richard: He's talking about a stake that was removed?

(Interpreter: What he's saying was duck shooting inside the reserve was allowed. He went to the Indian Reserve to tell them that it was part of the reserve. He put up signs "No Trespassing" sign on portions of the lake lying on to the reserve.)

Richard: Min stik. Does he feel that the island belonged to the reserve?

Joe: The agent had told me that it belongs to the reserve. My grandfather had told me the same story.

(End of Interview)

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