

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: TOM KAQUITTS
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: STONEY BAND

INTERVIEW LOCATION: MORLEY

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Mr. Kaquitts has been involved in politics on the Stoney Reserve for 25 years. He is a former councillor and chief.
- Detailed description of the happenings at Blackfoot Crossing when Treaty #7 was negotiated.
This is Wilfred Fox interviewing Tom Kaquitts at his house in Morley.

Q. I am going to interview Tom Kaquitts at his house on the Morley Reserve. Tom is former chief and councillor and has participated in political affairs on this reserve for twenty-five years. He is going to talk about Treaty No. 7, the coming of the missionaries, the Calgary Power deal, and the Canadian Pacific Railway right-of-way deal.

A. The first time that John McDougall came to Chiniki Village area, he told the people there to start making travois. He said, "You are going to Blackfoot Crossing to sign a treaty with the government." John McDougall approached Chiniki here at the village and told him to tell his people that they can start making travois, "For you are going to the Blackfoot country. The government is going to give you money." That is what he said to them at that time. And all that summer the people built travois and when they completed their work, John McDougall told them, "The government will give you money. No more hard times; the sun, river, so long as they shine and flow, he will look after you. He will build you a bridge, provide you with food as long as you live, you will not go hungry. There will be a train coming west from Calgary, do not ask for

payment for it. It will go right through your reserve. The train will serve your people hauling food you will get free of charge. The train belongs to you." George McDougall (who froze to death at Painted Rock) was John's father. They were the first missionaries to this country.

Well, from there the Stoneys took the trip to the east and came to Blackfoot Crossing. That was where all the tribes met. There were five different tribes there; Blackfoot, Bloods, Peigans, Sarcees and Stoneys. The commissioner with the North West Mounted Police sat down to talk with the Indian people. It is in the records now. They were paid either \$12.00 a head or \$15.00 at that time. It is easy to find out now because it is in the book. "The money will keep coming as long as the sun shine, water flows," said the commissioner. The commissioner said, "This country is not rich but we will keep paying you. When this country North America is fully developed, we will pay far more than what we will pay now. We will pay the councillors \$25.00 per head and the chiefs \$50.00 per head. All these we will look after; you will not go hungry." Then Chief Crowfoot of Blackfoot cut in and told the commissioner

that you might not keep your word. The government said "Do not have any doubts like that, Crowfoot." At the same time, John McDougall kept saying, "Take the agreement. They will look after you. They will build bridges for you, school, roads too. They will build churches where you want them to be built. If anyone of you is sick, we, the white people will look after you." This was according to my father's story.

All this time Chief Crowfoot sat listening to the discussion that was going on. Again Crowfoot spoke up and said, "You will not keep your promises." "No, said the government spokesman, "Have faith in me for I will keep my promises." He said, "You people (Indian) cannot write or read, but there is that sun and the river we can depend on for proof of the agreement. As for the land, you Indian people will get three-quarters of a mile square for each person here. No white man or anybody will interfere with you on your land. This will be your property. Nobody shall bother you on your land. As for the gold and silver that is below the surface of the land, I will work at it to get it out and we shall split fifty-fifty for whatever I dig up. You can hunt for game all your life. I will do the work, for I know how to dig it out but you don't know how." Again Crowfoot spoke out and said, "I think you will not keep your promises. I do not believe what you are saying." "No," said the government spokesman, "I am telling you the truth. You will not go hungry, you shall live in prosperity and so will your grandchildren. In the future, they too will never suffer, as long this country remains the same." At this time one of the North West Mounted Police spoke and said "If the Indians do not agree to our offer, it is better for us to wipe them out now." But John McDougall intervened and said "God will punish us if we do that. I, myself, do not agree with the idea."

So the discussion continued for another three days. Again the government spoke about the buffalo that were roaming the

prairies. They said the buffalo was a dangerous animal, "They might kill people, so we will get rid of them. Capture them and take them somewhere so they will not bother anyone. Maybe we will take them down east near the Atlantic Ocean, but in its place we shall give you cattle. They are much tamer animals. Each family will get seven head of cows; the bulls we will place in the hands of the chiefs and councillors. And in the summer you shall turn the bulls loose with the cows. There you go, I am placing money in your hands. In the future these cows will be worth a lot of money." Still Chief Crowfoot was not convinced, for he was not interested in cattle or money. Furthermore he did not like the taste of beef. He preferred

buffalo meat. Again the government spokesman said "The money will be valuable as each year goes by and so will your treaty money." The government decided that they will let the Indians keep the buffalo but on certain conditions. He said, "You shall kill only the old cows and the bull buffalo for food only." At this point Chief Crowfoot was very disturbed and jumped up saying "No - No," and pointed his finger directly in front of the commissioner's face. He almost touched the eyes of the commissioner. Crowfoot said, "Under these conditions you and I must die here for my braves are just wishing for a war. We will die but I know you are going to defeat us because you are many, many white people. You have to defeat us first though, then you can use the land the way you want to use it." So the government spokesman gave in to the wishes of the Indians on the subject. The subject had been the traditional hunting rights. Today the Indian people can kill game for food; this was the efforts of Chief Crowfoot.

Now they asked the Stoney chief, Bearspaw, about the agreement. He said he agreed with what the Blackfoot chief earlier stated. "If you do not agree with us, you will have to line us up on the prairies and shoot us with the cannon. Kill us, then take the land. For you have no respect for us people. You know this is not your land but still you came upon it." This is the statement he made according to my father. The government spokesman said, "That is not the way to deal." Chief Bearspaw said in return, "I do not trust you. You know why I do not trust you? You have the cannons aimed at our tipis, children, woman, and still negotiate for peace. If you want a settlement, take down your cannons or point them the other way. Only then we can talk for settlement. If you do not agree with me, we are willing to fight you now. You have only a few soldiers here today, we will wipe them out in no time." So the soldiers turned their cannons around and discussion resumed. One of the soldiers got up and pulled out a large trunk, full of beads, trinkets, as well as clothing for chiefs and councillors. The coats had brass buttons on with red stripes on the pants. Chief Bearspaw spoke out and said, "What is this coat with brass buttons for?" The government spokesman said, "This coat is for a purpose. When you wear it and have meetings and whatever you say, you will be recognized." "Yes," said Chief Bearspaw, "this I will wait and see if it happens in the future." That is how it came to be brass buttons, yellow stripe coats for chiefs.

"Peigan Indians and the rest of Treaty No. 7 Indians" I have seen the debate document; the Blood Indians have it on their reserve. At that time they would debate on the land, but I understand this was talked about in later years. That is all I heard.

Oh! Another subject on horses at the time of the signing of the treaty. There was a horse dealer from the United States who had brought up a whole herd of horses to sell at Blackfoot Crossing. After the people got their money, they started to bargain for the horses. The chiefs were the first ones to make their choices of horses, after about four days passed, then old Tom Twoyoungmen got his chance to buy a horse. There were two straight bay horses which he had in mind, one of them was a big horse, the other was a small horse. So when the horse dealer asked him which horses he wanted, he pointed to the big bay horse, but the horse dealer refused to sell that particular horse. It happened that one of the soldiers was there, so he spoke on behalf of this Indian fellow and argued with the horse dealer for quite some time. One of the remarks made by the soldier was, "You take all of the Indian land and refuse to sell whatever the Indian wanted to buy." He finally persuaded the horse dealer to sell this horse to Old Twoyoungmen. The horse dealer was shaking his head and stomping on the ground saying, "Which tribe does this small Indian belong to anyway he is small but sure has brain to judge a fast horse. I was going to take the horse to California to put him on the race track down there." So the soldier told old Twoyoungmen to come at once to see how much money he had. Old Twoyoungmen handed over all he had. They counted \$80.00 with which to pay for the horse and gave \$20.00 back to old Twoyoungmen. At that time the old timers figured to chase buffalo with these horses they bought. The horse dealer said "This Indian who lives in the mountains bought one of the fastest horses around here today." Old Crow Chest who heard the horse dealer remark about the horse being so fast said to Old Twoyoungmen, "From what I gather you have just bought yourself a real fast horse." Old Twoyoungmen said, "If he had not sold me this horse, I would have settled for that smaller bay one. He is a fast one too, I know." On returning home to the west, one day Old Twoyoungmen sold that horse to David McDougall, who in turn took the horse to California to race him in the race track down there.

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But the missionaries came to our reserve and raised funds to pay the teachers to teach us how to read and write. For that little education I had, I can buy myself a loaf of bread in the English language.

Q. Can you name some of the familiar names of the places, that is, the Indian names of places?

A. Do you mean like saying, Chiniquay Lake?

Q. Yes, but I want it's Indian name.

A. Indian name Rhubarb Plain, flat connected together. They named it in order to memorize the places. Bald Head Mountain,

Mountain with a Cap On.

Q. Then these stories you have told me, these were told to you by your grandfather or father or your mother?

A. My father told me the stories, about the reserve boundaries at Kootenay Plain and about the signing of the treaty. My grandfather also told me the stories. My dad's father told me one story and my mother's father told me one. So with two stories combined together, that is why I know the story.

In 1877, a group of Stoneys went to the Blackfoot Crossing where the signing of the treaty was to take place and my grandfather, Tom Twoyoungmen was one of the group from the Stoney Tribe. He could understand the Blackfoot language. At the signing of the treaty, he stood behind Chief Crowfoot. He understood all what Chief Crowfoot said in Blackfoot so he told his group what they were saying in Blackfoot. That is how the Stoney's keep track of what they were saying and what to do. Although my grandfather Tom Twoyoungmen was adopted by the Blackfoot when he was a lad, after the treaty had been signed, they all went back to their lands or reserves at that time. The tribe of Hobbema Indians had not signed the treaty yet. The missionaries came to Morley; they were the McDougalls. My grandfather, George Ear was a half Cree. The governor general came to the McDougalls and said, "The Hobbema Indians have not signed the treaty, there is still no peace there. I have lost so many North West Mounted Police. What can I do to save my Mounted Police? Can you give me some information of what to do? Because I have heard of you McDougalls, that you can speak Cree and understand what they are saying." McDougall said to this governor, "I have an interpreter here in my church who speaks the Cree language. Also he can read the Bible in

Cree words. His name is George Ear, if we can get him to help us, maybe we can do something." So that is how. I can carry on to tell you the story about the signing of the treaty at Hobbema.

Q. Did you know any white man who helped us with out problems here in our reserve?

A. You mean just white man to help Indians.

Q. Yes, do you know any?

A. One of our chiefs suggested that we should get some lawyers to find these problems. Of course, the government wants to find out the truth of treaty promises.

Q. This is the important question which I have asked to people. It is the last question. You have told me that your grandfather Tom Twoyoungmen was telling you about the Treaty Number Seven in 1877, and also you said your father's father has told you too. You can start any of them while I sit back and listen, this is about the Treaty Number Seven.

A. I am going to start with my grandfather Tom Twoyoungmen's

story. He said, "At the first signing of Treaty Number Seven, I was married and had some children. Every tribe of the southern Indians camped at Cluny: Peigans, Bloods, Sarcees, Stoneys and of course the Blackfoot. And on the other side, the governor general and his North West Mounted Police camped there to discuss, hoping to sign the treaty with the Indians. The governor general asked the Blackfoot chief if he would come over and sign the treaty. It seemed that a war would start any time because the Indians of various tribes were standing ready for the signal from their head chiefs to start fighting. If the chiefs and the governors failed to reach an agreement, there will be a war. They had an interpreter at that time, who spoke Blackfoot and English. This man was a Metis. He wore a smoked buckskin jacket. I asked my grandfather, "Was there a Metis at that time too?" He answered, "Yes, somehow there is always a Metis hanging around here, but on the other hand, he is an Indian too." So this is how they used this man. I only know his name in Indian his name was Jim-mie-jug. Anyways this Jim-mie-jug came to the Chief Crowfoot and said, "The governor wants you to come over to the centre of the camp, where the small platform is." The chief gave no answer to the interpreter, so he went back to the governor and told that the chief gave no answer. The governor sent back Jim-mie-jug again to ask the chief to come over, "We want to have peace with you and your fellow tribes." They saw that the white men had put down their guns. Chief Crowfoot went to the Stoney camp and asked Chief Bearspaw what he thought about the white man wanting a treaty with the Indians. The other tribes, the Bloods, Peigans, and Sarcees stood and listened as Crowfoot asked Bearspaw what he thinks about it. Bearspaw answered, "Well, there are two ways we can do now. One way is that we have to accept treaty, and the other not to accept the treaty. If we do not accept the treaty, what will happen to our younger generations and their future. There will be none left tomorrow if we do not accept it. If we accept the treaty, there will be no killing, no white man to scalp but there will be peace among us Indians and the white man." So Chief Bearspaw told Crowfoot that there were only two decisions to make. The decision was made; the chiefs of each tribe agreed to sign the treaty.

From that great moment, Chief Crowfoot walked to the centre of the small platform, where the governor general was sitting. So the warriors followed their chiefs to the platform and the North West Mounted Police were standing behind the governor general. The governor general shook hands with Chief Crowfoot, and the rest of the chiefs. He told Chief Crowfoot to sit down in the chair while we warriors stood behind our chiefs. The governor general said to the Chief Crowfoot, "I have come here in peace, I have come here to make peace with you Indian people. If we both agree to make peace or treaty this day, I will run your vast land because you do not know how to develop a land and I know how to operate the country."

They did not know what he was saying because we did not understand English, so Jim-mie-jug interpreted into Blackfoot. "What I want to ask you is this, do not misunderstand me, for I come here to help and develop this vast land of yours. I come

not to take it away from you. And I noticed that you have enemies too, you do not sleep at night for fear of your enemies. If we both agree to sign the treaty, this fear of your enemy will be over, you will sleep at night safely. If any enemy wants to fight you, you need not to fight back yourself, for I will take your place and fight for you. This is one of my pledges which I have made known to you. I will govern your land and make rules and regulations. The first rule or regulation is that you must not kill any cow buffalo and wild game and their fawn." Just as he finished his speech, Chief Crowfoot got out of his chair and stood right in front of the general, and nearly poked his eyes too. "Halt right there. You have misused your speeches. What you said about the animals, you will not govern my wild game. I will not surrender my wild game. If you want to govern the animals, you can do

it, but the only animal I give up for you to govern are the sheep, chickens, cows, and pigs. As long as I live, I will not give up my wild game." and he sat down. The governor general continued on "When we make the agreement to sign the treaty, you will use and wear what the white man uses. You will not hunt. You will have bullets, money, I will govern you as long as the moon and the rivers are rolling."

"What you have said in your speeches is sympathizing and sweet, but the moon and the river will linger on until the coming of the Christ our saviour, which is the end of the world. We do not know when the world will end, and that is a long time yet. I do not think you could govern me for that long. Besides you will be tired and forget what you have promised, as the decades go by." This is what the Chief Crowfoot had answered to the general. This is my grandfather's story about the signing of the Treaty Number Seven. He told me this story a couple of times. He also said, "We hunted wild game along the foothills of the Rockies and we thought this land belonged to us. We camped anywhere we wanted because he had said that he will not take our land away from us." I still remember the story he told me today.

Q. Could you tell me a short story about your grandfather Tom Twoyoungmen?

A. As I said before, My grandfather was married and had some children at the time, when the treaty had been signed.

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