

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: MRS. EMMA MOULIN
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: DUCK LAKE
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: DUCK LAKE
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: METIS
LANGUAGE: FRENCH TRANSL INTO ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: JULY 12, 1973
INTERVIEWER: CAROL PEARLSTONE
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: J. GREENWOOD
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Born in 1890, Mrs. Moulin remembers Gabriel Dumont and heard a great deal about the 1885 Rebellion from her grandmother.
- What she remembers being told by her grandmother about the 1885 Rebellion and its leaders.

Carol: Okay, now, do you know something about the Rebellion here in 1885?

Emma: (translated) The battle happened around Batoche and the halfbreeds killed the animals, the animals of the halfbreeds. But the... They only killed the animals because they wanted to kill.

Carol: What about the fighting between the troops from the east and the Metis people?

Emma: (translated) Gabriel Dumont started the war and then he ran away. He was a coward. But then, Riel got hung for the things that Gabriel Dumont had started.

Carol: Well, when Gabriel Dumont - the way I understood is - when Gabriel Dumont, after they had lost already and they had already - it was a matter of either hung or run away. It was after they had already lost.

Emma: (translated) Gabriel Dumont ran away but he then picked up a bunch of medals from the dead bodies and then he would go around and say he had murdered these men. My grandmother used to always give him hell because she always told him that he was a liar, that he was just trying to build up his reputation.

Carol: Well, did Dumont play a big part in the fighting? Was he a big leader or...?

Emma: (translated) Gabriel kept saying he was going to start the war and her grandmother, Mrs. Garneau, told him, "If you start the war, you're going to be sorry."

Gabriel kept insisting that he was going to go to war and my grandmother told him there would be bad results and she said there was - because all their homes were burnt by the soldiers and their animals were killed. So what I am really bringing out is, after the war was over they were always telling him they had warned him ahead of time what was happening but he didn't listen to them.

My grandmother wasn't related to Gabriel but he often was at her place, my grandmother's. He wanted to clear up the problem of land with the government, that was his reason for wanting to fight.

Carol: Did anyone besides your grandmother tell you - does any of the information you have come from anyone besides your grandmother?

Emma: (translated) It was only my grandmother but she talked a lot about Gabriel.

Translator: I asked her if her grandmother like Gabriel and she said, "No, she was always giving him hell." (laughter)

Emma: (translated) To me, my grandmother wasn't Metis, she was Canadian. My grandfather was Metis though - grandmother's husband.

Carol: This grandmother's husband?

Emma: (translated) Yeah. Her husband.

Translator: I asked her if her grandmother maybe disliked Gabriel because she was not Metis and she said, "Oh, no, that is not the reason. Just because Gabriel Dumont did so many things, so many crooked things."

Carol: What about your grandfather, did he like him?

Emma: (translated) My grandfather, he didn't say anything. My

grandmother was a mean woman. (laughter)

After the battle when they saw they were defeated, Gabriel acted like a coward, even hid under the skirt of an old squaw so that nobody would know where he was. (laughter) Gabriel's uncle told me this.

Carol: Do you remember Gabriel?

Emma: (translated) Oh sure, I remember him. I saw him lots of times.

Carol: And what do you remember he was like?

Emma: (translated) Oh. He was a flirt and a stealer.

Carol: You must have been just a little girl.

Emma: (translated) Seven years old. I remember everything.

Carol: What sort of things would he do when he came to your house?

Emma: (translated) He came to brag. My grandmother kept telling him, "Stop bragging, you are just nothing but a coward." (laughter)

Carol: What about Riel? Do you remember your grandmother telling you anything about Riel?

Emma: (translated) Oh, yes, yes. Louis Riel, I remember yeah, hearing about him and that he had not started the war. So that when he saw they were going to be defeated, he went and gave himself up. After they were defeated, yeah. I feel from what I have heard that people felt that Riel was an honorable man - because once he was defeated he gave himself up because he did not want to cause any more trouble.

Carol: Was Dumont religious?

Emma: (translated) Gabriel was not a religious man. He was a good-for-nothing.

Carol: Well, he must have had a lot of influence because he was the president of the Council at St. Laurent for years and years before the - from 1874 to the beginning of the Rebellion.

Emma: (translated) He wasn't liked by the people. I don't know anything about him being elected, but that maybe before the war that the people didn't disapprove of him that much, I don't really know.

Carol: What do you think the reason was for the Rebellion?

Emma: (translated) It has to do with land. I don't know why

they wanted the land, if they had it before. I don't really know - but Gabriel Dumont was the cause of them losing everything.

Is that all you want?

Carol: ...if there were soldiers around, that's significant.

Emma: (translated) French soldiers though. They spoke to me in French.

Carol: From Quebec?

Emma: (translated) Several years after the war is when I saw this soldier and he spoke to me in French. The reason I knew he was a soldier is that he was dressed like one. He had come to my place. He was coming to question my grandmother but I don't know why.

Carol: This would have been, when, in the 1890s, after Gabriel Dumont came back from the States?

Emma: (translated) Oh, the worst part of the battle was at Fish Creek. Quite a few soldiers were killed at Fish Creek. But at Batoche there was only one soldier killed. And the real battle was near Fish Creek. And the soldiers left after the battle but this fellow came and talked to us. Some would remain behind.

Carol: But after ten years? How long would they remain behind?

Emma: (translated) I don't know how long they stayed, but to me, I was six years old when I saw that soldier come to visit my grandmother.

Carol: So that must have been if you were born in 1890...

Emma: (translated) It was about 1896.

Carol: That was the time Gabriel Dumont was back already.

Emma: (translated) Yes. They went back. (Not clear)

Carol: Okay.

(End of Side A)

(End of Interview)

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