

Transcription  
Roderick Bear  
(Lawrence Sayese)  
Tape 2

- Interviewed March 9, 1993 -

Roderick: I tried my best to get overseas but I just couldn't make it.

Dave: So what we should maybe backtrack again so I've got the vital statistics here. When were you born?

Roderick: November 20, 1924.

Dave: Whereabouts?

Roderick: Glenmary. Same place. Horseshoe Bend. My dad had a couple of quarters there. I guess when he got out of the first World War he got the quarters. I went to school there with Charlie Umpherville.

Dave: Now, was your dad in the first World War?

Roderick: Yeah, Douglas Bear.

Dave: Just make sure I got that down. Yeah right, Douglas Bear. Originally from Muskepay?

Roderick: No, Horseshoe Bend. But I guess he would have been raised from Muskepay if his dad didn't get out treaty. He didn't get out, he went teaching and for some reason when he tried to come back, I don't know, he just never got back to it and he couldn't get his treaty.

Dave: So that's your grandfather?

Roderick: Yeah.

Dave: Who had gone teaching and then came back and they wouldn't let him in as a member.

Roderick: That's what I heard anyways, but they said he lost his rights, but I don't know. That was years ago. So what do you call this here, when they started this

Dave: Bill C-31.

Roderick: Yeah, so they start checking back. My brother worked on that from, my brother's wife worked on that from Vancouver. And they found out my grandfather still belonged to Muskepay. So we all applied for our treaty rights and we got it. In the meantime though, my wife is from there, Muskepay. That's how that works. Now I'm in there now. I was still working up north there when my wife got her treaty rights in 87 or 88 I guess. I come back there and I didn't know she put her name in there for the house. I come back, I had a house in town. I come back there from work and she says we got a house there on the reserve. (laughing) So I sold my house in P.A. and we moved in there.

Dave: Great.

Roderick: But my boy, he's still working, he's working for the mines too, he's at Cluff Lake. And my youngest boy he's teaching school.

Dave: What are your children's names?

Roderick: Earl Bear, and Barry and I had one girl, Marilyn. She's working for the Indian department in Saskatoon there.

Dave: So, I'll ask you the same question I asked Lawrence, what sort of motivated you to go and join up?

Roderick: At that time we were pretty young. I think a lot of them are looking for excitement too. And then, like he said too, we were thinking about the war there and we were hard up too for jobs, there was no jobs then either. I think that was most of the guys joined up for that.

Dave: That's what most of them have told me.

Roderick: There was no work. Like he said we were working for \$1 a day or \$2. I know my uncle had no job and he went there, Stanley Bear. Just getting odd jobs stooking and that. But when a guy is that young too you don't realize that what you're suppose to do is kill them, and when you're training. A couple of guys were, didn't want to train at all. He didn't figure it was right to train to kill. Well you get some guys there who don't know either, but they have the right idea. A lot of time when you're training you don't even think of that, that you're suppose to go and kill over there.

Dave: Yeah, I think they try to keep that out of your mind right up until you go to the front, from what I've heard. They keep you in the dark right until the moment where you're suppose to go in and do the work.

Roderick: You know them bags, they use to have that \_\_\_\_\_ training. Remember we use to go to that \_\_\_\_\_ training, where we go stab the sandbags.

Lawrence: Oh yeah.

Roderick: Well some guys wouldn't do that, you know. Didn't like that training to go and kill. They never think of that.

Lawrence: That was what we were trained for.

Roderick: Yeah, but when you're young, when you're just 17-18 you don't think of that.

Lawrence: Hardly.

Roderick: So how old were you when you joined up. You must have been about 20?

Lawrence: Yeah, I was 22 years old.

Roderick: Yeah, I was only 17. I think \_\_\_\_\_ was younger than me.

Dave: He was, yeah he was. I think either that or about the same age. He was younger when he enlisted but he couldn't get in. Sort of the usual story a lot of guys tell. They were young and they couldn't get in, but they waited until they were 18.

Lawrence: Last time I seen him was at Batoche.

Roderick: See him there every year.

Lawrence: Have quite a conversation. Him and that other guy from Kamsack. Sit there and bullshit.

Roderick: Yeah, I often think about them guys. Even from Winnipeg. I'd like to go to Winnipeg and look for them guys. Maybe if I went to the legion there I'd find them. I'd see pictures or something like that. And the reason why we didn't have too many pictures either like Lawrence said, a lot of young

fellows had no money to buy pictures. Like Ed King has one big picture of us. He found one he said. He's going to send me that picture. A lot of pictures there, but when the house burnt down.

Lawrence: They all belong to \_\_\_\_\_ for 27 years now.

Roderick: I was in there for 14 years but I gave it up when I moved out of Manitoba.

Lawrence: I just keep on going, keep on. And the army and navy, just about 5 years now.

Roderick: Well, I belong to army and navy too. That must have been since 75 I guess. Instead of joining the legion I went to army and navy. I'm still going there.

Lawrence: I'm going to both branches now.

Dave: So when you were doing the basic training thing, how was that experience? Did you find it sort of toughen you up a bit?

Roderick: Tough, you said tough?

Dave: Yeah, did it sort of, some guys say that it taught them about discipline and that sort of thing. Did you find that?

Roderick: Oh yeah, but I liked it. I like the training, because we were young there. Especially for P.T., I liked that. I was energetic there for sports. I think nothing of that there, I liked that training. Too bad I didn't go right through to Camp Shallow there. That's what I wanted to do, go through. But then right away there's two of us there.

Dave: That's another letter is it? I'll take a look at that in a minute. That looks like the original one from Don?

Lawrence: You want to take that one as well?

Dave: Yep, sure. Great, thank you. Ed was telling me that in basic training, there were actually casualties and that sort of thing. Guys getting hurt, and so on and so forth. Did you encounter any of that, or was it sort of not that kind of training?

Roderick: Yeah we had that. I was with him all the time, all through. I don't remember anybody getting hurt. Maybe he's right.

Dave: I think he was talking when they used live ammunition and things like that. Bullets would ricochet and this.

Lawrence: (laughing)

Dave: (laughing) That's a hell of a way to train.

Lawrence: We used live ammunition 10 miles out of Ottawa. The biggest range for Canada at that time.

Roderick: Yeah, and then when I got to Camp Shallow there, they set me to Ortuna camp. I didn't even want to hang around there. Either get discharged or send me out of there. So I went in there and they were going to send me out. And then no he said, you're not. You're going to get discharged. And then they kept me there another 6 months. I don't know, I didn't ask for artillery camp there. But they sent me over there and they put me through the doctor there. And I went back.

Dave: Yeah, I wouldn't think artillery camp would be a great place for somebody with your problems?

Roderick: Well yeah. That's what I couldn't figure. And I didn't ask for that either.

Dave: You were in infantry?

Roderick: I was with the infantry. I was in there for a little bit in training, but not very long and then they put us to engineers. From there we had 3 officers \_\_\_\_\_. We got a team there, with the ball. Most of that 46, no 45, I played ball there most of the summer there. We went to tournaments all over there. I had a hell of a good time there. We didn't know when we were going to take off. I enjoyed that. I was in Camp Shallow and then I went to Brandon, and I was still in the ball team there too.

Dave: So they kept you around because you were good at ball?

Roderick: Yeah. Oh yes. And when I got out of the army that's when I got into ball right away. I did a lot of pitching. I pitched with the left and throw with the right.

Dave: That's pretty good.

Roderick: You never see anyone pitch like that.

Dave: So when were you discharged again?

Roderick: May 15 I think it was in 46. I think I joined up near the 10th that time. I should phone down and see if my number is on.

Dave: Yeah, if you can get that. If not just leave me your phone number and address. (end of tape)