

Transcription  
Dan Pelletier  
WWI & WWII Vet  
Tape 2

Ivan: They gave him an army disability pension after that.

Darcy: Too old he said. And here he is.

Ivan: He's not going back to work.

Dave: Too old.

Dan: (laugh)

Darcy: Too old, meanwhile he had a wife and seven kids.

Ivan: I wasn't educated. Me and him would go out getting jobs scrubbing bush. Watching cattle...(mumbling). Dad use to tell me stories of...All they use to do is look after horses. Go hunting for food in wintertime, when there's no sustenance like we have now.

Darcy: That's when they start work for the Federated College to eh, in the 70's. Then he went to work for the Federated College as an elder there. So they worked for the College for years. 12 - 13 years that he's been working as an elder for the Federated College.

Dave: Really. I went to the College from 80 - 84. Were you around then, or is that too...

Ivan: No, no.

Darcy: (mumbling) ...80 - 81.

Ivan: I think 83. 83 I think. When we got that big truck.

Darcy: Yeah. Now and again. Now and again they were called.

Ivan: Part-time work.

Darcy: Yeah, they worked for the College for about 13 years.

Dan: 2 boys that were with me, 2 Parisians.

Darcy and Ivan: Yeah, we went through that already.

Ivan: We talked about that already.

Darcy: It was that Stanley Durocher too in Ile-a-la-Crosse. Did you interview him too?

Dan: Yeah, Stanley Durocher.

Dave: No, I. He doesn't want to be interviewed.

Darcy: Oh really.

Dave: Yeah. I met him today.

Ivan: Stanley use to be the old man's...he was the instructor and that. He was corporal or sergeant at the time. I remember one time they come home on late Christmas. It was too far for Stanley to go home up North, so they spent it at home.

Darcy: They brought him to the house.

Ivan: I remember Stanley being there. He spent Christmas in our house. (mumbling)

Dave: So Dan never went overseas during World War II?

Ivan and Darcy: No.

Ivan: He's only got two service medals.

Dave: But even after doing World War I and World War II, you still couldn't get a land grant?

Darcy: No.

Dave: Same thing happened to Ed King. They didn't give him one either.

Darcy: These poor people got the raw deal. These treaty Indians. Some of them got, the ones that got land they gave them a spot of land on the reserve that was really there own land.

Dave: Yeah, they did.

Ivan: Lots of them.

Dave: There's a book called Forgotten Soldiers. It has the land allotments. It shows the land that was purchased from the reserves to be given back.

Ivan: Just like my uncle. Maybe he was with...John C\_\_\_\_\_.

Darcy: That was his wife's brother. He was in Italy that one. He went to Italy in the second World War.

Ivan: Got wounded there. All worked together. Do you know him?

Dave: Yeah, I met him.

Darcy: That's his brother-in-law.

Ivan: That was the same thing with him. When he went under the army, they got him started right on his homeplace when he left them. He said this place where I left from I got it back. This was my home right off the start. Now the army is giving it back for the work. More or less nothing that he got. I know some guys from Kamsack that were \_\_\_\_\_ in the second World War. Most of them went overseas. Younger guys. This one guy here, what do you call him, Brass, Tom Brass. Met him one time, and we were having a few beers, quite a few years back. I said let's go to the Army and Navy. He fought in the war, the second World War. I never go into that place. I said how come. I says how many medals do you got. He says I got about seven. Well I said, you got more rights than I have, and I'm a member. He went in there and they boot him out. I told the boss of the place I said you can't do that. Just because he's Indian he's not a member here. I said he's got more medals on his chest than \_\_\_\_\_ around here. Who made a big fuss? I did. So they got talking and they started interviewing the manager. So they signed him up free as a life-time member. They said first time they got an Indian on the list. And he's the only native who is a life-time member at the Legion now.

Darcy: I bet there's not too many left in Canada fought in both the first and second eh?

Dave: I don't think there are very many left at all. Just a handful.

Ivan: When he got home all them guys says to (mumbling)...17 or 18 in the picture there, he's just small. Now he's the last one that took Vimmy Ridge, that's still alive. I went and checked up on his age when he signed up. They had records.

Darcy: Well he said he made himself older to get into the first World War. That's what he says.

Ivan: What he's registered at the Legion is what I got.

Darcy: Yeah, it's not right. They got it registered after his mom died. They got him born after his mom had died. That's not right. That's the same year they got Moshum's \_\_\_\_\_, but it's not right.

Ivan: He died in 1942.

Darcy: On Moshum's they got 1898.

Ivan: 1897.

Darcy: Or 1897. His mom died in 1895.

Ivan: More or less we really don't know how old he is from 1891 to now. He should be 102 or 101 now.

Darcy: He'd be 101 now. He'd be 102, he was born June 16. That's his birthdate. So he should be coming 102 or 103.

Ivan: This is what they told me on the telephone so I don't know what it is.

Darcy: Hard time trying to find his records. I suppose my mom's been searching since 1985. They didn't have records back then, very good records. And the way they were born. Sometimes they were born in Manitoba and registered all over the place.

Ivan: Yeah, the old man's mind is slipping. He forgets things sometimes. He would bach more or less. We have a housekeeper that comes out once a week now \_\_\_\_\_ (mumbling). Wakes me up at 2:00 in the morning sometimes and says let's go. I said where are you going. Let's go home, cause I'm tired of this place. I said go home, and then I'd get up and have coffee, sit around and then go back to bed.

Darcy: Times they would say how old are you now. Oh he said, I'm 91. He said, gees Dan, you've been 91 for the last 10 years.

Dan: Them Parisians are good soldiers. William John and his brother Modess. That Modess was a crazy bugger.

Ivan: There's one guy, one guy should know quite a bit more about the second World War, what do you call him, Billy Keith.

Darcy: Billy Keith.

Ivan: That was his \_\_\_\_\_

Darcy: Oh yeah.

Ivan: But that guy too his mind is slipping. All he talks about is his home and his horses.

Darcy: Uncle John is a \_\_\_\_\_ (mumbling)

Ivan: No, he was with some armoured unit. He was a driver in some armoured unit. When they got hit, they got wounded. The shot hit his truck and killed his partner (mumbling).

Darcy: I remember him saying that .....at that monster.

Ivan: You hear different, some good stories from ...

Dave: Yeah, I've sure heard a few.

Ivan: Makes a guy think, eh.

Dave: Oh yeah.

Darcy: Ile-a-la-Crosse they got a monument there of all the vets there. Did you see that?

Dave: Yeah.

Darcy: The vets from there area. That monument. There's lots.

Dave: Incredible.

Darcy: All Metis, Indian vets.

Dave: Yeah, they've got about from World War I and II and Korea, I, there are now about 270 and it's climbing. There were hundreds and hundreds of Metis, and I'm not even looking at status Indians. Ile-a-la-Crosse and Cumberland, there's huge groups of men left the community and a lot of them because they were poor, you know. It wasn't so much....

Ivan: Well they're taught, while there's work, there's money coming in. I got to go get something to eat from there and keep it going.

Dave: That's right. A Wilfred Henry in P.A. was saying that he was making fifty cents a day hauling wood into P.A. and as a soldier he could get \$1.25, so he went. He was at Normandy...

Darcy: Moshum, were you at Normandy?

Ivan: No, that was the second World War.

Darcy: No, that was the second World War.

Dave: He got hit, actually a shell landed near him and he got buried alive.

Darcy: Oh my God!

Dave: Yeah. And he was wounded from I guess the repercussions eh, the blast. It wasn't an external injury, but it was internal, it was a really serious concussion. And he has alzheimer's now, and he's at 69 I think. He was telling me the story, he remembers that story really well, but, and then he was telling me another story after he had, some guy came along and saw his hand, and that was it eh, just saw the hand moving and so they uncovered him and recessitated him and he went inland a bit and all of a sudden the shells started to land around him and he went crazy, he just wanted to find a place to hide. And he saw a clump of trees and he went running to this clump of trees and all of a sudden a plane came over and started shooting at him, and he saw the bullets hitting the dirt beside him. He tripped and he fell, and the plane took off, obviously thinking that he killed the guy. And it turned out that, that was one of his allies shooting at him. And this guy, he had met him at a reunion about 20 years later, and all this time this guy had thought that he had killed one of his own men, and he found out at that time that he hadn't.

Darcy: But he lived with that for years.

Dave: Yes, the guilt, that he had killed one of his own men.

Ivan: The guy, if he didn't trip they'd of...

Darcy: Maybe he would have killed him.

Dave: Yeah, yeah, that's right. He was also, he was buried alive twice at war.

Darcy: Holy smokes!

Dave: He went into Germany and there was an air attack, and so they were told to hit the dirt and he dove into a culvert and the rubble from the bomb blast buried him so his legs were sticking out at the end of the culvert. His body and his head was inside of it, and nobody knew where he was for about 6 or 7 hours, and he had a grenade sort of belt or whatever on him, and he was afraid to move for fear that they would come unpin. He was just screaming, and, imagine how terrified you'd be. He was just completely terrified and he saw this light at the end of this culvert and he couldn't move and when he was finally, after they finally dug him out of there and after the war, he would wake up at night and he would see that, he would see that hole and he would just be screaming. And I talked to his son and his daughter and they lived with that for 20-25 years. Just this man who relived that terror almost once a week or even sooner. He had to fight hard to get a disability pension, and when he finally got it, when he turned 65, they pro-rated it so he ended up, the combined money from the old age pension and the disability pension, was less than half of what he was getting from the disability pension. It's just incredible. He was like getting \$2000 a month inbetween 9 of them.

Darcy: Well yeah, and then we had that guy there they charged him, he was a Veterans Affairs there. He was swindling money.

Dave: Defrauding people.

Darcy: Yes. I hope, they should just take that guy and just shoot that sucker.

Dave: Yes.

Darcy: Honest to God I thought, imagine robbing these men who went, who went through hell literally, and he's robbing them. They should just kill him I figure, death would be too good. God, at least not appeal him. (mumbling)

Dave: Well you can't find a solitary sort of set of guidelines that these guys operate from when they make decisions about who gets money, who gets land, who gets what. You know, it's like, it's all arbitrary and there's no standard set of criteria they apply at everybody. And I'm sure that if you were Indian or

Metis there was a different set of rules there or things that were factored in. And, I mean the whole idea of buying reserve land just to give it back, I mean that's insane. Like, there's a lot of stuff that just never...and if you lived up North like Vital Morin and others, it was hard to communicate to people up there and so they didn't really realize there benefits. And also, some of them didn't read or write English. They were French or Cree, so there were lots of things that they missed out on for certain reasons and now.

Ivan: What I find like now, today, a young guy 18 - 19 join the army...When I come to age like the Korean War broke out. I think my dad went through that, I want to try it. I went and I signed up. Then one of the guys happened to know who I was and who my dad was. Okay Ivan he says we'll put you in the reserve list\_\_\_\_can turn active afterwards. After a year or two then you can get to read and write a little bit better. You know. Training. And then I done that for about a year and I left. I was in Winnipeg, they put me there for about 6 months, then I came back home then I went through three times. All I use to get was \$3.10 day. The more \_\_\_\_\_then there's more money for me on payday. After that they shipped me to Victoria. Then I spent 6 months there and then I started doing my training, and I was going to get into regulars from there. Okay he says, we'll put you in regulars, but you'll have to go back to the province that you joined from. So I says sure. So they sent me to Regina. 1951 already. Korean war was just about over. I got to Regina and I started \_\_\_\_\_they kept me there for 2 months straight. Meeting these different like \_\_\_\_\_ battalions came from Germany and some came back from Korea. And most of the guys I met there were Indians and Half-breeds, and lots of them just barely write there name. That was all. They didn't care who they took.

Darcy: They didn't care who they took.

Dave: Yeah.

Ivan: As long as you're a fit.

Darcy: Yeah, that was the main thing.

Ivan: Good eyesight, fire a gun, that was it.

Dave: Yeah, yeah.

Ivan: I was surprised. I didn't think at the time but afterwards as I grew older I found out that they didn't give a

damn about no one. Even if a war broke out right now, they'd get these older ones that are more experienced push them right away.

Dave: The more I think about it the more I think it's a war, the 2 World Wars were fought by (end of side 1 on tape)

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