

Hubert Ledoux Interview by Norman Fleury – English Paraphrase

Alexander Hubert Ledoux (Kway-da)

Born St. Madeleine, 1927.

Father was Jimmy Ledoux

Mother was La Fii Tanner

Dad's parents came from St. Boniface, MB.

Dad born in St. Lazare, MB.

Grandparents Alexis and Therese Ledoux. I don't know Grandma's last name.

Grandpa Chi Jean Tanner. He was from the States. John Tanner was also his name. He was raised there. We lived mostly in St. Madeleine. Boucher's lived there also. The pasture was built in 1939. We were all thrown out of St. Madeleine. All the Métis were forced to leave. We went to Saskatchewan. People went and lived all over. We suffered to make a living. We sometimes had nothing to eat. My dad worked for farmers. No welfare in those days. At one time we had 7 head of cattle at St. Madeleine. We were forced to sell when we were thrown out of St. Madeleine. They burnt our house. Sometimes we played ball at Boucher's. In St. Madeleine there were Bouchers, us, Disirii, Mrs. Zelda. We were a lot of Michif people in St. Madeleine. My mother was born on the Gambler Reserve. My mother had two sisters. My mom's sister Vitaline married Jean Baptiste Desjarlais. Chi Pierre, Chi Jean, and Leon. Antoine Desjarlais' son was Jean Baptiste. We celebrated a lot on New Years Day. There was a lot to eat.

My dad, Louis Fleury, Chi Tom hauled wood for \$5.00 a load to make money before New Years. Everyone had a good meal. The baked cakes, lii boulette, deer. No one was invited. You visited all over to eat. This was the way. The table was set all day and everyone ate. We danced for 7 days at Willie Boucher's. From New Years to all Kings Day. The people got along well.

My grandmother Mrs. Ledoux spoke about Louis Riel. My grandmother lived at Battleford at the time. They left Battleford and came to St. Madeleine during the Resistance. My grandmother was a Fleury. My dad's father died. People made penance during lent. My dad was strict so during lent he made us kneel down and pray every night. You didn't talk at the table.

In New Years, Dad gave us the blessing and we knelt down in front of him. We then went visiting. We went to John Fleury, Gaspard, and ate, sang, and danced. The old people sat around and told us legends and stories. The people told legends about different things for entertainment. They spoke of giants and Chi Jean. Chi Jean worked for a king. He took care of cattle. This girl was to give Chi Jean dinner. Chi Jean liked the girl. She was a good looking girl.

Gaspard Boucher was a roogaroo. He'd leave at 9:00 and where he went I don't know and he'd come home at midnight during lent.

All King's Day was shaking hand day. When you met someone or visit someone they would give whatever they had, a cup, a saucer, or whatever. This was the Michif way of life.

We had picnics in Russell. They had merry go round rides, games, and race horses. People from Waywaysicappoo and the Métis gathered there. We would camp at the picnic grounds. The Métis were good trappers. I used to trap rats and beavers. The beaver pelts were \$55.00 Colin Hall bought the furs.

Mom went to school in Lebret, SK for 7 years. Dad went to school in St. Lazare I think. My dad's father came from the States, North Dakota, to St. Boniface and St. Madeleine. When mom got married to dad she had to leave the reserve. She married an outsider and was thrown out.

I travelled a lot. When my dad died I left home. Mom asked me where I was going. My first job was on the railroad and then I went to BC. I worked for a big rancher. This man was a Japanese person. I cleaned barns. I wanted another job. I went to Prince George and worked logging. There was a big camp. I was to fall logs. When I was sitting at the camp an old man asked me where I was from. I will fall logs beside you. Times were tough in winter but it was good in summer in St. Madeleine. We sold cord wood for 50 cents a cord when I was young. Every two weeks my dad went to Bébé Guays in St. Lazare to see how much wood he hauled and collect. He cut 10 cords a week.

When Mom got out of treaty, she was paid \$80. She bought us a lot of things. You could buy a lot in those days for \$80. She bought us toys and everything. Frank Fleury told me a lot about Batoche and Louis Riel. That was my Grandmother's brother. The Michif fought the English and the Red Coats. There was fighting in Batoche. My Grandma and family come away to escape the Resistance.

My grandfather John Tanner was a big farmer. He owned the whole reserve. He was very successful. He had cattle and horses. There isn't much happening on the Reserve now. I don't know where my Grandfather Tanner is from.