Name of Interviewer: Dianne Zieman

Date of Interview: Feb. 28, 1972

Interview:

Length of Interview: 2 hrs.

1. Mrs. & Mrs. Alexander Henderson Brown
2. Alen
3. Ruth Howard
4. Dawson Pt. Rd, New Liskeard
5. 64704167
6. Mr. Brown: 71 Mrs. Brown: 68
7. Hailburton, S. Ontario: Bracebridge, Ont.
8. His mother: somewhere in Ont
   His father: Toronto, Ontario
9. Scotland
10. Came in 1905 to New Liskeard; Mrs. Brown came to North Cobalt at the age of 11, so it must have been in 1914-15.
11. Train
12. From Hailburton
13. Four-his father, grandparents and himself--his mother had died earlier
14. When he first came, he attended school, later, his first job was clerking in a store
    His father worked as a delivery man for Brown Brothers store (Alex's uncles)
15. His mother was dead. Mrs. Alex Brown finished her schooling when she arrived and then, went to work for Northern Planing Limited in North Cobalt. That company burned down in the fire of 1922. Comment that people in this area tend to date events "before the fire", and "after the fire".
16. Retired now, although he was a clerk in Grill's Store; then worked for 23 yrs. at Northern Telephone and then 15 yrs. with three other phone companies moving from Laconia, Minnesota to London, Ontario. Last job was with Bell Telephone in London and Sudbury. Did everything except climbing the telephone pole.....ended up as a telephone executive.
17. Both retired

    Many men went from here to both wars. During WWII, diductions form pay cheques for Red Cross were taken by the larger companies. Sale of was bonds. Both Red Cross and war bond sales were well supported. Mrs. Brown: During WWI, she was very interested in the soldiers and used to attend dances in North Cobalt. The first time she ever went to a dance was during the war; met a soldier to whom she continued to write when he was overseas.

    The end of WWI in Cobalt resulted in "quite a celebration". The town lawyer was sitting on the front of a car "drunk as a skunk", holding onto the rad cap (Amas Pummel). Mrs. Brown also remembers that celebration. The end of WWI, Mr. Brown remembers the telephone switchboard went crazy. Mrs. Pettit was due to start at 12:00. She took one look at the switchboard, threw off her coat and went to work.

(Had an appointment to interview Mr. Brown, but his wife was present and added many comments. Have put the two answer sheets on the same report as I don't have complete information for her.)

18. He was too young to remember first impressions. Had lived on a farm before it was a change, rough area. He arrived the first year the railroad was up here; before that, all transportation was by water.

Mrs. Brown had visited in Haileybury before her family moved up. Had been brought up in a hotel and when they arrived in North Cobalt, complete with grandfather and an aunt plus the parents and four children, she thought their house was terribly crowded after all the space in the hotel. Her father worked for a lumber company.

19. Cobalt has always been a very colourful place without the paint--Mrs. Brown has always thought "what they could do to Cobalt with a carload of paint would be wonderful". Lang St. is the old trail out of Cobalt-houses are higgledy-piggledy everywhere.

Mr. Brown: this area is right in claybelt. The roads here were terrible for years. Bustling atmosphere much more so than in New Liskeard--many workmen and miners. A big tramway was suspended above the lake to carry the ore. In the early days, there were streetcars to New Liskeard from Cobalt. Mrs. Brown remembers a photographer waiting for four days to get a shot of the train and the streetcar passing at the same time at Argentit--one on the ground and the other on the overpass.

There used to be a lot of head offices of companies in New Liskeard, but no longer.

20. Mr. Brown had two uncles who had come to this area before 1900 and they needed someone to help in the shore, so this father came up here. His aunt was the first school teacher in town--there's a picture of her in the Public Library.

Mrs. Brown: Her father had been running a hotel in Gravenhurst and went bankrupt. They also had relatives up here so they came north. Had $500 and a family of eight to keep (eight includes parents, aunt and grandfather). There were a lot of people from Haliburton up here. Maud Groom's (the author of the Melting Years") parents came from there-they also lived in New Liskeard for a while. Alexander Niven, who surveyed up here, came from Haliburton, where the "only crop one could count on farming was rocks".

Mr. Brown used to play baseball on the shallow end of Wabi Bay--the water level would get low. To get the boats in to the dock, they would have to use a dredge to shift the sand bar in front of Benoit's.

21. Mr. Brown's father went unto the cartage business (after the store ceased operating because they'd extended too mush credit). he had the first commercial truck in town that is, truck for hire.

Employment at the time-mostly mill work as lumbering was the big industry. Most of the men from North Cobalt worked in the mines in Cobalt as there wasn't much other than the Northern Planing Co.

She worked for H.L.Slaught who was a lawyer in Haileybury; after the mill burned; then went to Sutcliffe's in New Liskeard.

22. Clerk: 8 to 6 Mon, Wed, and Fri; Tues, & Thur, 8 to 9 and Sat. 8 to 11.
23. Paid on a weekly basis of $8.00 a week. $25 per week was a big pay for a clerk Mrs. Brown made $40. a month; a new man came in as a bookkeeper-made an awful fuss about her salary in comparison to what she did. so her pay was raised to $75. per month. She never made any more than $125. a month.
24. First home is a rather disreputable looking building now. May St. has been appartments; all quite small; they fixed their apt. up quite prettily; that was 42 yrs. ago. Stayed there four years; one bedroom with no window.
25. First Christmas; they stayed in the apt. and had the family over. Mrs. Brown has never made such a good Christmas cake since.
26. Well in North Cobalt-Mrs. Brown- still have a well and outside plumbing (as well as indoor), in their new house
27. Mr. Brown: lamps, although there was electricity soon after. Pete Farr had the first electric plant. Mrs. Brown: coal oil lamps.
28. Wood in both their cases, although their first apt.
29. had an electric stove with a Quebec heater--could burn coal in it.
30. General stores, at least three drugstores and grocery stores, barber shop. In North Cobalt, a few grocery stores; barber shop and dry goods. Also, the head office of the Mipissing Central Railway, which ran the streetcars.
31. Entertainment; one show house and an ice cream parlour in New Liskeard, near where Schaeffers now is. Later an Opera House. Mr. Brown remembers being sicked out of the show one Sat. afternoon with all the other boys because some-one put tacks on the chairs.

    In North Cobalt people went to Coblat which had a dance every Saturday night in the old town hall where it was quite permissible for the girls to go alone; it was quitBox Socials where the girls decorated a lunch box which was then auctioned off--Church affairs--church was the centre of community life.
32. Baseball. Mrs. Brown remembers that she and some of the other kids in the area would throw stones at the boys from New Liskeard when the came to play baseball in North Cobalt.

    Mr. Brown has a picture of his teammates of 50 yrs. ago. Only three of them are still alive today.
33. Mr. Brown: New Liskeard Public School; Mrs. Brown: North Cobalt Public School and Haileybury High School
34. Mr. Brown about 8 yrs. of schooling; started work at 14. Mrs. Brown 13 yrs. She started at age six. Had her commercial training at Haileybury High.
35. Shank's pony; railway between trains; steamships on lake; bus ran, at one time, from the hotels to the station. Walked in the mud, loads of it. Had to put gravel by the loads onto the roads.

36. Dr. A. G. Fisher; Mrs. Brown Dr. Creaser

37. Best hospital facilities in the north in New Liskeard none in Haileybury at that time. There was one in Cobalt when Mrs. Brown came here.

28. No children

39. and 40. Don't apply

41. Wildcats; many hopeful mines were opened up and stock sold to the public. some had no assets at the time, although there were a lot of good mines around Cobalt. New Liskeard citizens had the honour of finding the Noranda Mines and profited greatly. Fifteen or 20 men Ed Horne and Ed Miller we re members--formed the Lake Tremoje Mining Syndicate

42. Didn't know enough about them to comment

43. New Liskeard's interests were farming and woodworking.

44. Meat and potatoes and vegetables; desserts, both of their families had desserts. There was always food on the table.

45. Sunday clothes gone bad

46. Best one could get hold of Mr. Brown was selling dry goods, so he had an advantage. Average townsfolk were well-dressed. Didn't find too many people better dressed than their neighbours. Haileybury was the only place one would find rich people. Slacks for women weren't really accepted. If they wore them, they'd probably be cast-off overalls of their brothers. One of Mr. Brown's sisters was a real tomboy, she was one of the first women to put on slacks in New Liskeard.

47. Had to be pretty circumspect, didn't do any work that could be done the day before. Mrs. Brown's mother had been presbyterian and they didn't believe in doing anything on Sundays other than an absolute necessity. They still say "grace" before meals.

48. Mr. Brown has kept pictures; a watch that belonged to his uncle. Mrs. Brown; her mother's ring and her mother in laws braclet. They also have anold shelf clock that is 70 yrs. old.

49. Likes the fact that they have friends in the area; that is really why they came back to retire here. They always appreciated the lake but didn't recognize its beauty until they came back to live here in 1965.

51. Changes roads and stores have been improved in the town, there were no trees here in the early days, although this has been changed. They are too old to appreciate changes in the entertainment world.

52.

53. Winters are long and cold; things seem a little out of the way when they go out must go by car. In N. Ontario, distance between centres are great.

54.

55. No. Would like to see some nice boats running up and down the lake. They used to have a band on board and there would be dancing. Probalby no liquor as parts of this area were dry. There used to be concerts down at the beach-a bandshell. New Liskeard was once quite a musical centre.

56.

57. Fall a relief after the really hot weather. Used to enjoy winter when they were younger and could skate and go to hockey games. Remembers the day he caught the puck just as it was coming towards her head.

58. Enjoy cards, have a hi-fi set. Nottelevision fans. Like having company; travelling and a good meal.

59. Woodworking; photography; hunting. Mrs. Brown likes reading, playing bridge and being lazy.

60. Large companies used to have their head offices in New Liskeard but this has changed with the trend towards multi corporations. This change has meant lesser employment in New Liskeard. Decline in lumber and the use of it. Companies have been gobbled up. Less family enterprise than there used to be. Liskeard was a distributing centre. 35 to 40 travellers working out of here. Little opportunity for smaller companies to start these days.

Shipping out the finished goods is a problem-expensive. Most products must be sold out of the area at markets down south. Have to keep up with current trends. Plastics or wood mfg.

Local people will stay here if you bring in men form the south, four out of five will go back.

61. People visiting area offers some very good recreational facilites. good place to loaf in lots of fishing and hunting in the area; good ski-dooing and boating.

62. Could take people to Ville Marie to see the grotto. Visitors like to see the French and English way of life as we are close enough to the border.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Mr. Brown remembers burning of the Meteor started to burn one fall night. It was pushed away from the Haileybury dock as it burned they were afraid that the boilers would go.

Mr. Brown has a book, published by Senator Roebuck and J.H.Brown no relative entitled "Agricultural Temiskaming" issued by the Temiskaming Board of Trade in 1910. Contains several pictures. eg. Springs that fed the town wooden pipes that ran along the lake from Mick's and Rheault's on Dawson Pt. Rd.

Lady Minto Hospital-most northerly hospital in Ontario

A.E.Shephenson, whose father was the founder of the Liskeard Speaker.

Perrin Shocker-1910-put the wheat into shocks.

Both of the Browns commented on the fact that people in Toronto seem to think there is nothing north of North Bay and how this area needs some publicity.