


**From:** maps maps@ucalgary.ca   
**Subject:** RE: Research Query - Metis History in central Alberta  
**Date:** December 1, 2020 at 6:58 PM  
**To:** Sydney Lancaster sydney.lancaster@gmail.com  
**Cc:** maps maps@ucalgary.ca

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Hello Sydney,

Thank you very much for the detailed description of what you are researching and what you need. Unfortunately, with regards to the maps, we don't really have anything showing pre-homestead assignments that show extent of occupation by the Metis and Indigenous peoples. What we do have are the Dominion Land Survey (DLS) Township Plans which I have scanned and uploaded for you along with a sheet from the 1918 Cummins Rural Directory showing your township of interest (T58-R18-W4M) and the adjoining township to the east which shows Victoria settlement, the Hudson Bay Company post, and the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Claim; you can download the zipped folder containing these from [https://uofc-my.sharepoint.com/:u:/g/personal/ppeller\\_ucalgary\\_ca/EZk2m-VkEgRAoiYE6BZdDulBr5h9ZPg-g\\_1E17VQfogdhg?e=Ef1DPR](https://uofc-my.sharepoint.com/:u:/g/personal/ppeller_ucalgary_ca/EZk2m-VkEgRAoiYE6BZdDulBr5h9ZPg-g_1E17VQfogdhg?e=Ef1DPR). As you surmised, the river lots do pre-date the DLS system and were originally Metis land; in fact, the river lots in that area have remained as such to the present day and were never subdivided into quarter sections. The first Metis immigrants actually arrived in that area in 1865 well before the post-rebellion period. This information was garnered from the following publication:

***The Victoria Settlement, 1862-1922***

<https://cdm22007.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p22007coll8/id/967693/rec/6>.

In addition there might be some useful information in a couple of other digitized local histories in our collection:

***Between River and Lake*** by the Warspite Victoria Trail Historical Society -

<https://cdm22007.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p22007coll8/id/261028> (I believe this is the publication you used)

***By River and Trail: The History of Waskatenau and Districts***, Volumes 1 & 2 -

<https://cdm22007.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p22007coll8/id/118767> &

<https://cdm22007.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p22007coll8/id/348679>

I also located an item of interest with some interesting general historical information regarding your area of interest:

From the Alberta Government's Heritage division, a brief history of the Victoria Settlement:

<https://albertahistoricplaces.com/2011/09/13/albertas-victoria-settlement-still-a-special-place-after-150-years-2/>. I have also attached an Alberta Recreation and Parks booklet on the Victoria Trail which has some interesting information on the Metis settlers.

Here is a link to Taranko's record in the Land Grants of Western Canada database:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=330826&>

Otherwise, the historical photos and documentation information that you seek are outside our area of expertise. I would recommend that you contact our Archives and Special Collections group to see if they can help you with that. Their email is [archives@ucalgary.ca](mailto:archives@ucalgary.ca).

The maps that I provided are no longer under copyright protection and may be used for any

purpose and without any cost.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best regards,  
Peter

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**From:** Sydney Lancaster <sydney.lancaster@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** November 30, 2020 4:35 PM  
**To:** maps <maps@ucalgary.ca>  
**Cc:** Sydney Lancaster <sydney.lancaster@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Research Query - Metis History in central Alberta

[ΔEXTERNAL]

Hello!!

I am doing some research on the history of Metis movement and settlement along the North Saskatchewan River, along the Victoria Trail, near Metis Crossing.  
The allotments along the river appear to predate the Dominion Land Survey, and I believe they were originally Metis land, but I am not sure.

What I am really looking to find are:

- maps indicating pre-homestead assignments, or more generalized maps that show the extent of occupation but the Metis and Indigenous peoples (so that I can correlate those maps with the maps of the homesteads that I already have)
- any pertinent historical photos or drawings etc (of people, of Metis domiciles, "Road Allowance" people from that part of Alberta, and pre-1900 settlements along the river after the dispersal of the Metis post-Rebellion).
- documentation of any sort (including visual) of interactions between Indigenous and Metis people in the area and the Eastern European settlers in the early part of the 20th Century, when the homesteads were staked.

I am attaching a hand-drawn map from a local history book showing the homestead I am working on (and the date and name of the person who settled there first), and a brief account of the Metis provided therein.

I am a visual artist, working on a site-specific installation on land that was homesteaded in the area, and want to honour the Metis and Indigenous presence and history of the area in my work. I am hoping to derive a series of hand drawn maps and print works from my research, as the basis for taking this project to gallery environments.

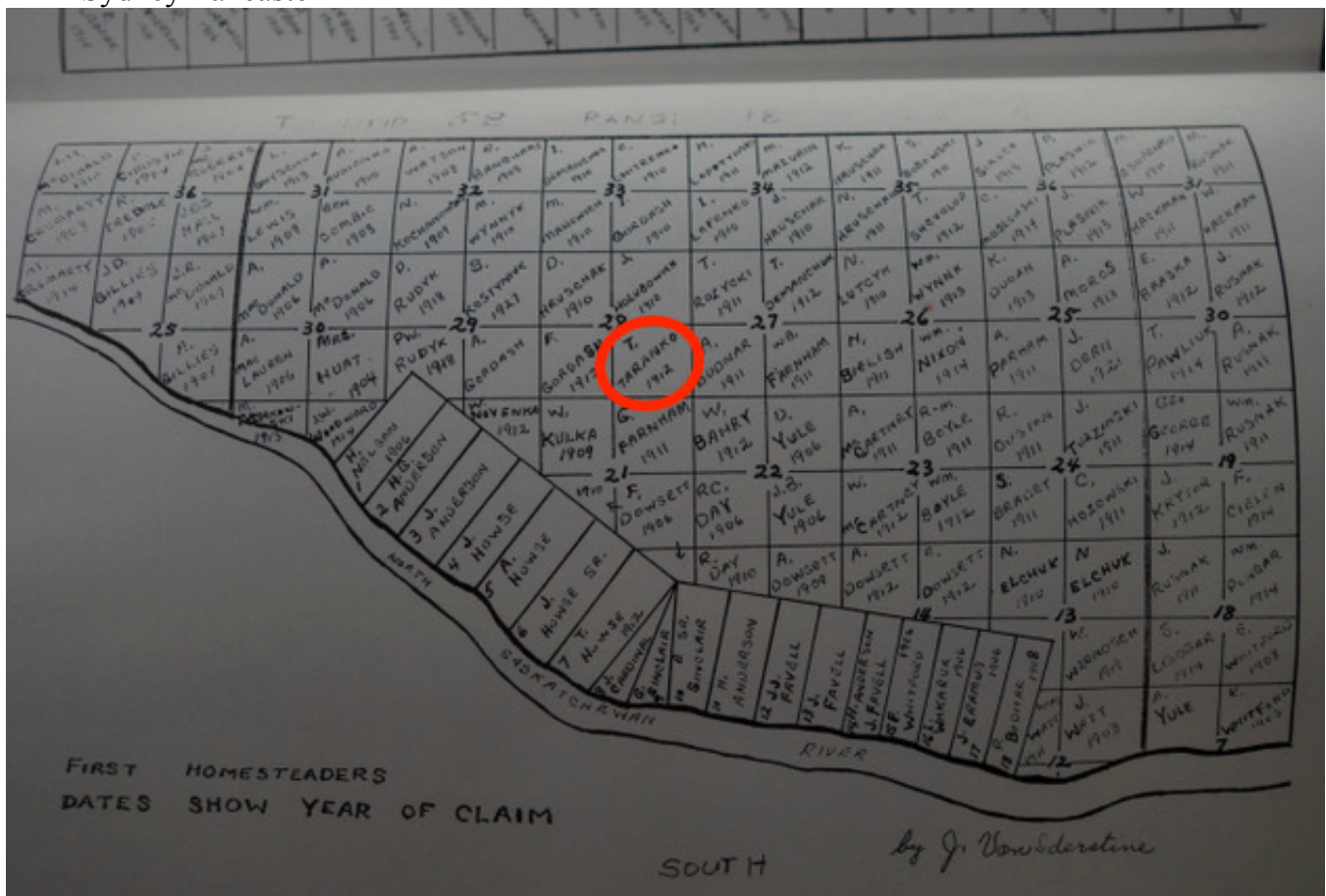
I would also like information regarding the costs for obtaining any materials that I might be able to use (non commercial purposes).

Any help you may be able to offer is deeply appreciated!

Any help you may be able to offer is deeply appreciated.

Best Regards,

Sydney Lancaster



This book records their story.  
We share that legacy with you.

- Editor

## Before 1900 - Foreword

Submitted by Pauline Feniak

Evidence indicates that the first Metis or mixed-bloods arrived into the vicinity of the Victoria settlement around 1865. By 1873 **PETER ERASMUS** of Ft. Victoria recorded in his memos that people were settled along the



river as far as 12 miles upstream, to what later was known as the Lobstick settlement. These people were in effect squatters. Land surveying was yet to come.

In 1896 the area west of Victoria settlement was surveyed. Although the initial plan was to subdivide the land into the quarter section grid system, local opposition by the Metis, backed by the federal M.P. **FRANK OLIVER**, necessitated re-drafting the policy. The river lot system, the preferred form of land tenure that had been brought by the Metis from the Red River district was continued.

This system consisted of lots located at right angles to the river - long narrow strips, usually equivalent to a quarter section. By the 7th of November, 1896, **J.E. WOODS** completed the survey of the Lobstick settlement (18 river lots in Township 58, Range 18, west of the 4th Meridian).

These Metis of Scottish and British descent - **NORN, WHITFORD, HOWSE, FAVELL, CROMARTY, THOMPSON, ANDERSON, CARDINAL, NELSON** and **SINCLAIR** were among the first settlers of the Lobstick. They settled the southern portion of the river lots where access to the river was most convenient and

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where clearing the overgrowth presented the least problem.

By 1904 surveying of land beyond the river lots was completed. Here the grid system of quadrilateral Townships, containing thirty-six sections of one mile

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square in each, together with road allowances of one chain and fifty links in width, between all townships and sections was adopted. The sections were to be bound and numbered as shown in the following diagram.

Each section was further sub-divided into four equal portions of 160 acres each. This system provided a basic convenience in the disposition of land to its ultimate owner.

The Homestead Act, provision of the Federal government, entitled any person who was head of a family or had attained the age of 21 to be entered for a quarter section of land as a homestead for a fee of \$10.00. A residence clause stipulated that within a three year period a domicile was to be erected and fifteen acres were to be broken. Compliance with this clause granted the homesteader title to his land.

A massive propaganda was initiated in Canada and abroad. Glowing reports of splendid opportunities accompanied land agents' advertisements:

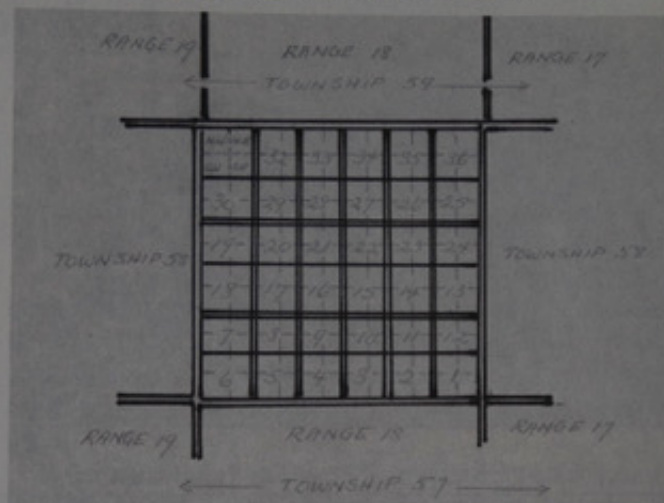
"We're sailing West. We're sailing West."

To prairie lands sunkissed and blest -

The crofter's trail to happiness."

These were adapted to the country they went to. Others intended to attract another people read: "a stal-

wart people, in sheepskin coats, born on the soil, whose forefathers had been farmers for generations."



The final requirements to make possible the

