

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: ALDINA MARIE STANGBY
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: BOX 170
DUCK LAKE, SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: DUCK LAKE,
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: METIS
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: 04/11/84
INTERVIEWER: BRENDA ARNAULT
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER YAWORSKI
SOURCE: SASKATOON NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOC.
& BATOCHÉ CENTENARY CORP.
TAPE NUMBER: #IH-SD.56
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC #161
PAGES: 6
RESTRICTIONS: THIS MATERIAL IS THE
PROPERTY OF THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF NATIVE STUDIES, AND
SHALL BE AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING, REPRODUCTION, QUOTATION,
CITATION AND ALL OTHER RESEARCH PURPOSES, INCLUDING
BROADCASTING RIGHTS WHERE APPLICABLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
REGULATIONS WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN OR WHICH MAY BE ESTABLISHED BY
THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF NATIVE STUDIES OR ITS
SUCCESSORS FOR THE USE OF MATERIALS IN ITS POSSESSION:
SUBJECT, HOWEVER TO SUCH RESTRICTIONS AS MAY BE SPECIFIED
BELOW.

Aldina: We were using wood and oil here. We had gas in '67
or '68 and we had natural gas. And after that, well, there was
no water so we got the sand point in. Sand point was on the
lake and as they passed the water here, well they build those

houses in '70.

Brenda: 1970 they built the water lines in here?

Aldina: Yeah, they built the water lines here so we can get water here. That's how come we got the toilet, otherwise outside. (laughs) Well, I didn't mind it, we were used to that. But if it would be today and I had to go outside now, well I think I'd think twice before I go. (laughs) In the winter -- in summer it's nothing but...

Brenda: In the winter it's cold. If you're a man, you'd freeze your buns off.

Aldina: Yeah, you freeze your bum, eh.

Brenda: When you look back at your life, how was your life when you look back? How was the whole experience?

Aldina: You mean my married life?

Brenda: All your years.

Aldina: All the years of 78? (laughs)

Brenda: What would you say about your life? Was it difficult, hard, interesting?

Aldina: Well we've had hard times at times and sometimes okay.

Brenda: What kept you going? Like when things got really hard what would keep you going? Would you pray or would you think about some member of your family, what would keep you going?

Aldina: Courage of living, I suppose. That's the only thing I can see. You had to go along then because that was your life, eh. Well I work hard my lifetime, I'm telling you. We were on the farm there, I had to help him. I had nobody -- the kids were too young to help him. I'd pitch hay and I made stacks and whatnot, and I cut wood, at the door, I didn't go... for my own use like, you know. When you had no time to do it, I had to do it. But after that, well, we haul the wood in the winter and saw it and then we had wood for a year like.

Brenda: And you helped your husband cut all this wood?

Aldina: Oh, I helped my husband all the time. All the time.

Brenda: You had a good marriage?

Aldina: Yeah. I can't complain about it. I had, it wasn't easy that, but, I mean, I was happy about it. Oh, sometimes it was rocky but you pass over it. (laughs) Because otherwise if your grouchy yourself, well, that don't work. Well one thing, my husband wasn't a drunkard. That's one thing that I thank

God for it, because if he would have been drinking and running around...

Brenda: Life would have been harder.

Aldina: It would have been harder. I wouldn't have stand it, I don't care what... But there's some that had -- my sisters had -- their husbands were drunkards and for three, four days they didn't know where they were and they were still drinking and they stood by...

Brenda: Her husband?

Aldina: Yeah. But I don't think I could have done it, no, because I hated the drunkards so darn much. Oh, I seen so darn many, eh. That's why today I can't, I got one here that used to drink but he doesn't drink any more. Well, I don't know how long he's done that. My son did. And I told him, I said, "When you're drinking," I said, "don't come and show your face at my place because I don't want to see you." When he's sick a little bit, feel a little bit better then he comes, but otherwise I don't see him. I told him, "I don't want to see you."

Brenda: Do you find that alcohol is ruining a lot of people's lives?

Aldina: Well I guess.

Brenda: They don't know how to handle alcohol.

Aldina: I guess that's the worst thing, that. Oh, I got so many broken marriages it's on account of alcohol. I don't care what you say, that's what I blame it on.

Brenda: (inaudible)?

Aldina: Well, where's their money goes? In booze, eh? And they don't care if their family has something to eat or not and they don't give a darn. They just take out their... They don't their... they don't sell their booze, that's all they think about. Oh hell, yeah, that's the worst thing, that. The mother of the vices is alcohol. Oh, you can drink but I mean to say I'm not against that. But being sociable and being a drunk and stuff like that, that's two different thing altogether. You can be sociable but you don't have to be a drunk, eh. And then I call, they can still work because an alcoholic wants the booze day after day. They don't get out of it. A drunk would go on a drunk and quit for three, four months and he'd go back on that. But those they go there, those alcoholics, they're there day in, day out. Half the time they don't know what they're doing. Their mind is blank half the time, so what do you expect out of a person like that? There's so many like that today. I don't care how high they put the liquor they still buy it. Well you take at the bar

here a bottle of beer is \$1, a dollar a bottle -- buy the case, can you imagine. Well I don't buy beer either because I hate it, but I don't mind to have a drink. When I go to a wedding or something like that I don't mind to be sociable but not to make a fool of myself. There's one of my... Marie's husband, that Frenchman there, he told me once that you can't have a good time when you go to a party like that, he said, a wedding or something like that. And I said, "What for?" "Well, you see, you don't drink." I said, "You don't have to drink to have a good time." I said, "When you get drunk, what the heck. One time," I said, "you know if you had a good time or not, the next day, 'Oh, I had a good time.' How the heck you know?" I said, "You were drunk." (laughs) Well that's right though. A person that gets drunk, what does he know what he did or what he said, what he saw, whatever -- he can't say anything about it. But he never told me that any more.

Brenda: Is there Indian blood in your family?

Aldina: Eh?

Brenda: Is there any Indian blood in your family?

Aldina: I think so anyway. I don't know any more than that.

Brenda: You're not being positive are you, because your grandparents are...

Aldina: Oh yeah, but there must be something there, there must be some Indian in there. I imagine anyway, because my grandmother from on Dad's side she comes from Winnipeg, Red

River or wherever, someplace around there. And I'm sure the Buskeys are part Indian, I'm sure. And even Deboyer, I'm sure there's some mixture in there because you can't help but having Indian blood in you. I don't care where you come from because when the foreigners came there was only Indians here. Well, who did they get married, they married the Indians. Well in every nationality there and there it's Indian blood in there, I don't care what you say. Do you think I'm right? I think I'm right, that's what I fight for all the time. But like I say, my husband came from Norway. Well, they're Norwegian, both his mom and dad were both Norwegian, but there again there's a mixture in their family like, you know. His sisters married two Swedes and stuff like that, but they don't know what Indians are, them people. Because in '77 that was 50 years that my husband had left Norway. Two of his sisters came from Norway in '77 but before that they had to ask him in a letter, which they write only in Norwegian, and they had to ask him if the Indians used to scalp people here.

Brenda: Up until 1977 there's...

Aldina: Oh yeah, they still had that in mind, yeah. And then what he said, "No," he said that he told them. He said there's nothing like that any more. Well, they were writing that in

the books, that's the way it was. Well, okay. And then there was... we came to town once, there was two French girls -- those Perots up there, they were riding horses and they had long hair, those two girls had long curly hair and they were facing the women. Their hair was growing like that, eh. And then one of them said... well I understood, even if she said in Norwegian, (?) that means Indians, eh. So I turned around I said, "They're not Indians." "Oh," she said. I said, "They're French girls." "Oh." Because they had long hair and riding horses they thought they were Indians. How stupid could you be? Well, they didn't know nothing about it, that's all. I imagine I would do the same thing if I go there to their country, eh? I wouldn't know the difference between a Swede and a Norwegian because they all talk the same thing, they look much alike. Well I would say the Swedes are bigger people than the Norwegians are, whatever I know of anyway. But it doesn't matter to me.

Brenda: But you yourself are Metis, eh? Both your parents are...

Aldina: Well, I consider myself Metis anyway. But my kids are half-breeds.

Brenda: They're half-breeds.

Aldina: Yeah.

Aldina: Yeah.

Brenda: So you know that, is there a distinction between Metis and half-breed? Like that's what I'm understanding, that French and Cree are Metis people and anybody else that has different kind of blood in them are half-breed?

Aldina: Well, two different nationality, that's half-breed. You can understand that.

Brenda: Yeah.

Aldina: Yeah, well that's it.

Brenda: There's also this definition of who...

Aldina: Yes, but you go for half-breed, because I went down to find out what my kids were. I said, "I consider myself as a Metis." The counsellor he said, "You consider yourself Metis?" I said, "Yes I do." I said, "and I'm not ashamed of it either, I don't care." I said, "My skin is worth just as much as anybody elses's skin. And regardless of what God thinks about me," I said, "I'm just as good as anybody else in the eyes of God anyway. That's the way I take it. But," I said, "what I want to know," I said, "I want to know what my kids are by government status. My kids are Norwegian. They go on their dad's nationality. But being... myself being a Metis and him a pure Norwegian that makes them a half-breed," I said. "That's

what it is," I said, "I want to know." They said, "Yes, they are." Not neither one, they are just half and half. It's just like a breed of cattle. If you breed two different kinds of cattle that's half-breed then. Well people are the same. On my side, I can mean on my side, on my family's side, but on my real family we are Metis, I don't care what you say. But I don't care what I am. I'm just as good as anybody else. Didn't bother nobody, didn't beg nobody to have anything to eat or nothing, so that stands there for myself like, you know.

(END OF SIDE A)
(END OF TAPE)

INDEX

INDEX TERM	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
ALCOHOL				
-abuse of	IH-SD.56	A. STANGBY	161	3,4
HALFBREED				
	IH-SD.56	A. STANGBY	161	4-6
METIS				
	IH-SD.56	A. STANGBY	161	4-6
WORK				
-shared	IH-SD.56	A. STANGBY	161	2,3