

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: VICTORINE GARDINER  
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: DUCK LAKE,  
SASKATCHEWAN  
INTERVIEW LOCATION: DUCK LAKE,  
SASKATCHEWAN  
TRIBE/NATION: METIS  
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: 04/16/84  
INTERVIEWER: BRENDA ARNAULT  
INTERPRETER:  
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER YAWORSKI  
SOURCE: SASKATOON NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOC.  
& BATOCHÉ CENTENARY CORP.  
TAPE NUMBER: #IH-SD.22  
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC #152  
PAGES: 22  
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.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- General account of her life

Brenda: April 16, 1984, and I'm doing an interview with  
Victorine Gardiner. Victorine, could you tell me what it was  
like growing up in St. Laurent, Magnolia? What do you recall  
about growing up? What were, what was it like in those days  
before you went to school?

Victorine: Well, we were happy to be on the farm with...  
There wasn't really too much money then, they were really hard  
times. We managed.

Brenda: How did the people eat in those days? Everybody had to go out hunting for their food?

Victorine: Well, some of them, they hunt, like, rabbits. And Dad would kill deers and he'd kill a cow in the fall and a pig, and we'd have all our vegetables, so...

Brenda: So times weren't... your dad, like, he didn't have to go... he had his cattle, your dad had cattle? He had a farm?

Victorine: Yeah, they had all that. Well, he'd seed, like wheat, and then bring it for flour like, you know.

Brenda: And you would have your, your dad he would take flour in to get it milled?

Victorine: Wheat, and we'd have flour for the winter.

Brenda: So you didn't struggle in that way?

Victorine: Not for food, but I mean for clothes, eh. But we managed.

Brenda: How do you mean, like I never heard that before from anybody else, getting clothing. Was there no stores close by?

Victorine: There was but there was no money to buy those clothes.

Brenda: Were the clothes expensive?

Victorine: Not really, but the money was so scarce.

Brenda: This would be in the late, or in the early... Let's see, you were born 1915, so that would be before 1930 that you remember that clothing was hard to get?

Victorine: I remember when I went to school I had to quit school because I was kind of short of clothes, eh. I had to go out and work.

Brenda: When you were 14 years old you quit school?

Victorine: I quit school to go and work so I could buy clothes. But I didn't get very much, maybe \$5 a month. That was a lot of money.

Brenda: The clothes were less expensive in those days? When you think about family life, when you think about your family in those days, do you remember it well? Do you have fond memories of those days?

Victorine: Oh yeah. And after I got old enough, oh, we had lots of fun while living on the farm, and friends.

Brenda: You had friends going over to visit you, were they school friends?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: And what do you remember about going to school?

Victorine: Oh, I know we had to walk. (laughs)

Brenda: How far did you have to walk?

Victorine: Oh gosh, it was maybe close to a mile. We didn't go to school in winter because there was no teachers would come there and stay -- too far out. We only went to school in the summer.

Brenda: Yeah, somebody else was saying that, that there was no school in the winter.

Victorine: (name) must have told you that.

Brenda: No school during the winter and there was school all during the summer. How about July and August, right through summer?

Victorine: Oh yeah, yeah. We start, like in April, I think it was, and sometimes we'd go till before Christmas if it was nice weather. And then no school for the...

Brenda: For January, February, March. The school that you went to, was it a one-room classroom?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: And from grade one to grade eight?

Victorine: One to seven.

Brenda: How about your teachers, describe your teachers, or did you have many teachers?

Victorine: Oh, there's only one. There's only English for English, because we talked only French at home, eh. Then when we went to school we had to talk English.

Brenda: What was your teacher's name?

Victorine: Ah, well we had different ones. We had Mrs. Archambeault (?) and we had different ones.

Brenda: What do you remember about your teachers? Were they good teachers?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: Did they treat students well?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: You had English classes because everybody spoke French?

Victorine: Yeah. We had to learn English. That's how we learned, I guess.

Brenda: That must have been fun learning another language, eh?

Victorine: Yeah. (laughs) Kind of hard, you know.

Brenda: Do you speak Cree?

Victorine: No, not really. I understand a few words.

Brenda: How about your brother Maxime, does he...

Victorine: Oh, something like me, I guess.

Brenda: What did you enjoy about school? What did you like about going to school?

Victorine: Oh, well, we used to go to school, then we used to play ball, eh. Used to play ball and then after that we'd go and play at different schools for the kids, you know. I used to like that.

Brenda: Do you have any, were there any days that you were mistreated or...

Victorine: You mean at school?

Brenda: Yeah.

Victorine: Oh, well, sometimes when we didn't want to listen like we should, but...

Brenda: It was all right?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: So you don't have any regrets about going to school?

Victorine: Oh no. Maybe I was sorry that I didn't go to school, you know, longer than I did, you know. But (inaudible) go back.

Brenda: Did your parents encourage you to do well in school?

Victorine: Oh yeah, they'd make sure we had our lunch, and bring us to school like, you know.

Brenda: Your overall experience at school was good?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: What sticks in your mind about community life in Magnolia, like social activities, and did you have dances and fun times?

Victorine: Oh in homes, yeah, neighbors, like they make little parties.

Brenda: Did they have fiddle dances?

Victorine: They had fiddle, only fiddle then, eh, then sometimes a guitar but... (laughs)

Brenda: What languages were spoken in your home?

Victorine: French and a lot of Cree.

Brenda: Who would speak a bit of Cree?

Victorine: My mom and dad. Brenda: They knew the language, your parents spoke Cree?

Victorine: Oh yeah, yeah, they did.

Brenda: They spoke Cree fluently?

Victorine: Not all Cree, it was French and Cree. That's why I used to tell them all the time they shouldn't mix it up. I said, "Speak French or else Cree, eh." But they used to... (laughs)

Brenda: Did your parents think of themselves as Metis, they knew they were Metis?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: They were proud Metis?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: How about during Christmas and that, do you remember some of the traditional food that your mother would cook?

Victorine: Not Christmas, we don't celebrate Christmas.

Brenda: Why was that?

Victorine: I don't know. We used to come to church. Here we used to come to my grandma and then we'd go to church here, midnight mass. Then we'd stay at Grandma's for the next day, like we'd have a meal with her, then we'd go home. But New Year's we used to celebrate.

Brenda: Oh, New Year's was the big celebration?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: And that's when everybody would go...

Victorine: Well, even for New Year's we used to come. We used to come to our grandpa on the farm and then come and visit my grandma in town here, like John's mom too.

Brenda: They'd come to town here and this is where they would have their New Year's celebration?

Victorine: Well, New Year's we'd go to my grandpa's there for a meal, right after twelve like, you know. We'd go there for a meal, it wasn't too far from home. And then we'd go home and then we'd leave from there and we'd come up town and see Grandma here. That was my mom's mom, like.

Brenda: So the grandfather you went to see out there, that was on your dad's side?

Victorine: My dad's side.

Brenda: And then your grandma was on your mom's side?

Victorine: On my mom's side.

Brenda: How old were you when this was happening? Were you a teenager, or were you married already?

Victorine: Oh no. Oh no, after I got older, as I start working I really didn't...

Brenda: Stay around home.

Victorine: No, not too much.

Brenda: You were talking about going to school not too long ago, you took that upgrading.

Victorine: Oh, upgrading, yeah.

Brenda: Do you remember what grade it was?

Victorine: I'm trying to remember how old. I would say about nine years, because that my brother died seven years now, and he went to that school too.

Brenda: And you took upgrading?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: What did you think of it?

Victorine: Good.

Brenda: How was it after leaving school all those years and then to go back?

Victorine: Well it was hard, you know, but there's things that I could remember yet, you know, what I used to learn at school.

Brenda: What was the upgrading that you took, was it math, English, science?

Victorine: Yeah. Brenda: Were there any other classes that you took?

Victorine: No. Math I wasn't very good at. My brother George, he was good in math. He used to read a lot then.

Brenda: Did you go to school with your brother, he was going at the same time?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: Was he younger than you?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: How did he pass away?

Victorine: Oh, he had cancer of the throat. It's about seven years now that he passed away. It must have been about nine years.

Brenda: Who was president of the local...

Victorine: John. He was...

Brenda: Say about nine years ago?

Victorine: Well, he said he was president the same time as this guy here.

Brenda: Archie, when Archie Nicholas was president? He started in 1955, eh? And that's when your husband was secretary of Metis Local No. 10?

Victorine: Yeah, because he was selling the card, you had to buy our card, our Metis card, to go to that school. Everybody had to buy their card. And John had a card.

Brenda: The membership card?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: How much was the membership card?

Victorine: Oh, I think they were a dollar.

Brenda: You had to have that card first before you took the upgrading course? Did the church play an important role with your family?

Victorine: A what?                      Brenda:        A church, did they play an important role in your family's life?

Victorine: Not really, no.

Brenda:        Your family didn't go to church every Sunday?

Victorine: Well, see they didn't come to church here, they went, there was a church at St. Laurent. That's where they went... used to... well, not every Sunday.

Brenda:        Are you a strong, are you Catholic?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda:        Are you a strong Catholic?

Victorine: Not really.

Brenda:        Did politicians ever use the church to get Metis people to vote their way?

Victorine: Never bothered me.

Brenda:        Nobody ever come to visit you, to tell you, try to get your vote?

Victorine: No, I've never listened to them anyway.

Brenda:        You always voted your own way?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda:        Was the church influential then? Did the church carry a lot of weight with the people when you were a young girl?

Victorine: I really don't know too much. They had a church here, but I used to go to church with Grandma but not... I was kind of young then, you know.

Brenda:        Did the church ever go and visit your family?

Victorine: Well, we had a priest that used to come and visit us all the time, that's Father Touchette. He's the one that married us. Yeah, he used to walk here and visit.

Brenda:        What did you think of him?

Victorine: Oh, he was nice.                      Brenda:        You liked him. Did everyone else like him too?

Victorine: Oh yeah, he stayed here for over 25 years.

Brenda:        Did your family ever have to go to the church for help?



Victorine: No, I don't think so.

Brenda: When you were growing up did your family fit into the community? Like, I suppose they were, where you grew up, they were all Metis families?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: Was there ever any discrimination shown to you?

Victorine: You mean because we're...

Brenda: Because you were Metis. People, like white people, did they ever say things to you?

Victorine: No, not really. But we used to tease sometimes. The French people were, you know, you just didn't care to go out with them because they were French and we were Metis. That's the way we used to feel then.

Brenda: Did they give you that feeling too, that you were different from the French people?

Victorine: Oh yes. Because we were Metis, yes.

Brenda: Did they make that difference themselves, or...

Victorine: Well, some of them did. (phone rings)

Brenda: What party did your family vote for?

Victorine: Liberal.

Brenda: Was there ever any pressure put on your family to vote Liberal by the church?

Victorine: I don't know.

Brenda: Did you ever hear your brothers, or your uncles, or your dad talking about people trying to influence your family to vote in that way?

Victorine: That's all I know, that they used to vote, go and vote Liberal, really. You know, when you're young you don't...

Brenda: You see what's happening but then you don't really pay attention.

Victorine: No.

Brenda: Do you know if the church was involved in politics?

Victorine: Well, if you were a Catholic you're supposed to vote Liberal.

Brenda: You got that feeling?

Victorine: Well that's, yeah.

Brenda: You got the feeling that that was the way you should vote.

Victorine: One time me and my grandma vote, you know. She would always come and pick me up, "You come with me. We're going to go and vote." So I'd go with her. Of course she wants to vote Liberal, eh. But then they had the CCF. So we went and we voted anyway; she voted Liberal. After we went back to the house and I said, "You know what you voted Grandma?" I said, "CCF." Oh, she was so mad. (laughs) She even won't have her cup of tea at the house, she want to go back home. "No," I says, "I'm just teasing you." I'll never forget that.

Brenda: She didn't agree with CCF?

Victorine: No. But that Liberal, I don't know. People had such a hard time and yet they had to vote for Liberal. I don't know.

Brenda: What did you see the Liberal party as? Did they make promises to the people?

Victorine: Promises. But people, see they were so poor and they still voted Liberal, you know. I don't know.

Brenda: Were the other people in Duck Lake, and Metis people around Duck Lake area, Batoche, were they ever influenced by anybody else to vote Liberal?

Victorine: I don't know.

Brenda: Was it something that people talked about a lot, politics?

Victorine: Oh yeah, in town here I remember there's lots of people they vote Liberal. Brenda: What were some of the promises that they used?

Victorine: Oh, now I don't remember.

Brenda: That would probably go back to the '40s, around there, '40s and '50s? Did you ever take an active role in Metis politics? Were you involved with the Metis Local here in Duck Lake?

Victorine: Not really.

Brenda: Not even to take little programs like they had in handicraft shops. Or did you ever take any other class?

Victorine: Oh, I took, yeah.

Brenda: You took classes?

Victorine: I took that ceramics and bead work and moccasins.

Brenda: Who was the president when you'd go in, when you were taking these classes, ceramic classes and the other courses?

Victorine: I don't know if it was Leonard then.

Brenda: Leonard Pambrun?

Victorine: Or else Archie. I really don't remember now.

Brenda: Was it within the last eleven years that you took these courses?

Victorine: About the same. Oh let's see now. We went to school (inaudible) all at the same time. It was about, you know, two winters I went to this upgrading, and this craft work. And then I quit and I went and work at (inaudible).

Brenda: Was Rose Fleury involved with that, with the handicraft ceramic classes?

Victorine: I don't know if she was on that. I think she was.

Brenda: Was she the president then?

Victorine: No.

Brenda: It must have been Leonard then.

Victorine: Must have been Leonard, yeah. Brenda: It was Leonard then that was president.

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: What about the CCF, what did they have to offer the people? More promises?

Victorine: Promises. (laughs)

Brenda: Did you ever live in a big city?

Victorine: No.

Brenda: You've always been in this area?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: Did you mom dress in the Metis dress, Metis fashion?

Victorine: Well, she'd wear a dress all the time.

Brenda: Did any elders in your family believe, or did they practise in some of the Indian herbs to cure illnesses?

Victorine: No.

Brenda: Do you know if other people, if other Metis people used Indian herbs, like Indian medicine, to get well?

Victorine: I know Grandma used a kind of a root. I don't know the name of that now. She used to dig that in the bush, then she'd boil that for medicine.

Brenda: Your grandma used some Indian medicine then?

Victorine: Yeah. Oh, I guess she was (inaudible), eh, to try that, I suppose.

Brenda: For colds and fever.

Victorine: Yeah, or else cure sores sometimes. Sore leg, she had a sore leg all the time and then she'd use that.

Brenda: Did it help her?

Victorine: I don't know. (laughs)

Brenda: Were there people that weren't relatives? Like, all the people that were Metis people, they were all related in Magnolia? Were they all related? Victorine: Oh no.

Brenda: The people that weren't related to the people where you grew up, what were they like?

Victorine: Well, they were nice.

Brenda: They treated you well?

Victorine: Oh yeah.

Brenda: They didn't show you any discrimination at all? When you were looking for work were you ever turned down a job because you were Metis? Were you refused a job because somebody said, well, "She's Metis and we can't hire her?"

Victorine: No, no.

Brenda: It was always fairly easy for you to find a job?

Victorine: Oh yeah, if you wanted to work, you find work.

(END OF SIDE A)

(SIDE B)

Brenda: Tell me about your children. You have three children? And what does your son do for a living?

Victorine: Now?

Brenda: Yes.

Victorine: Well, he works in the farm on, what you call that, corrals? He's got a big truck and he's got, what you call that, with... They go like with this manure, corral cleaning or something.

Brenda: And he's been doing that for how long?

Victorine: Oh, not too long. About two years, I suppose.

Brenda: And your daughters, what are your daughters doing? What does Marlene do?

Victorine: Oh, she works in a store. She's cashier in a store.

Brenda: That's the one you were telling me about. She worked at Dominion and she was the head cashier? Victorine:  
Yeah, head cashier.

Brenda: And she had control, she was boss over the other cashiers?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: And she didn't like that position?

Victorine: Not really, because she made friends with the girls, eh. Sometimes they were not satisfied, she had to fire them eh.

Brenda: And she didn't like doing that?

Victorine: No.

Brenda: And is she still working for Dominion?

Victorine: She's across the river now. She doesn't work at that place any more. They transfer her up there.

Brenda: In Saskatoon?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: She works across, up on 8th Street?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: At that Dominion store?

Victorine: I think so, yeah.

Brenda: Oh, she worked at the Midtown Plaza before and then she moved to another store.

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: The same company.

Victorine: Because they were supposed to sell that store and it's suppose to be an IGA store or something. But now I don't know if it's still... (inaudible)

Brenda: And your other daughter Maureen, what is she doing?

Victorine: Well, she works at the airport in the office there.

Brenda: At the airport?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: And is she a secretary over there?

Victorine: Well, she's in charge of about 50 men. Like, what you call that, John said...

Brenda: Flight control?

Victorine: Yeah.

Brenda: That must be an interesting job, eh.

Victorine: She likes it anyways.

Brenda: And before that you said she had worked for (inaudible)?

Victorine: Oh yeah, she worked there.

Brenda: She worked there fourteen years?

Victorine: And she was staying in town here.

Brenda: Why did she (inaudible)?

Victorine: That's when they fired her. So she decided to go...

Brenda: Go into a different line of work.

Victorine: And that was too hard there. They had too much to do anyway.

Brenda: What was it like raising your children when they were in their teens?

Victorine: Oh hard, especially if you're alone, eh. John used to be gone working all the time.

Brenda: What was difficult about raising teenagers?

Victorine: Pretty hard. And you have to let them go out, you just can't...

Brenda: What advice have you got for young mothers today? Have you got advice for them, so that they know how to handle their children or when they're in their teens? What should a mother do when their children get into their teens?

Victorine: Well, that's pretty hard. I figure though, kids, it doesn't help if you scold them. I think it's better to talk to them. Because I know from myself, when I used to talk to them, they listen more than if you, you know... Some they get mad and, you know...

Brenda: And when teenagers get mad like that, do you feel that they're going to walk out and not come back?

Victorine: Oh, if you're maybe too mean... That's what I figure anyways.

Brenda: It's better to talk to them?

Victorine: Talk to them and to listen. If you don't, well, watch out.

Brenda: What about punishment, is punishment good for teenagers? Say, you were out till three o'clock in the morning, I think you should stay home all week. Did you ever discipline your children in that sense?

Victorine: Well, there wasn't really too many places to go. We used to... like sometimes there was a dance, they used to like going to the dances. I would tell them I says, "You guys don't come home late, eh." Oh yeah, they'd come home.

Brenda: They were good children, eh?

Victorine: Oh yeah, they were not bad really, you see. There was some worse than that for sure. (laughs)

Brenda: Do you own land? Do you and your husband own land?

Victorine: Yeah. But now you have to say how much, I'm not too sure.

Husband: Well, I have one quarter. We had before, a couple of quarters before but we sold them. But now I lease twelve quarters from the DNR and I lease them from the agriculture. All together about 12, 13 quarters, with mine about 15.

Brenda: Is that a lot of land?

Husband: Well, I guess. That's 160 acres to the quarter.

Brenda: And you have cattle on there?

Husband: Yeah, over 100 head.

Brenda: Do you grow anything besides cattle, do you have pigs?

Husband: We used to but we sold that.

Brenda: And what you have right now is cattle?

Husband: Yeah.

Brenda: Only cattle?

Husband: Yeah, just only cattle now. Well the boy's got a few horses, but he runs his own and I run my own too.

Brenda: How about a garden, do you have a garden?

Husband: Oh well, we used to but we don't bother any more. It takes too little to feed us, the two of us, you know. It would all spoil, our cellar is a little too warm to have vegetables in there.

Brenda: So it's a lot cheaper for you to just buy your vegetables then?

Husband: Oh yes, a lot cheaper for the price they are now. We get them from the Hutterites. Hutterites are very reasonable.

Brenda: And Mr. Gardiner, you are 69 years old?

Husband: I am going on 69 years.

Brenda: Going on 69, and you're still farming.

Husband: Oh yes, still keeping cattle, yeah.

Brenda: Do you plan on farming for a long time then?

Husband: Well, as long as the health holds out. Sometimes I wonder, in the wintertime plowing that road there, I feel like quitting. But then again the summertime comes, well, forget all about it and carry on again till next winter. But I'm going to cut down in stock though. I'm going to maybe have 50 cows instead of 100.

Brenda: Is 100 too much for you?

Husband: Oh, right now. I had over 200, just a few years back.

Brenda: How did you manage? Did you hire help? Husband:  
Oh, I always hire help. I had to hire a guy here  
this afternoon to help me.

Brenda: How is it when you go to sell your cattle? Is the profit good?

Husband: Well, this last few years haven't been too good. But the years before I done really good. One year I took in \$65,000 alone.



Brenda: That's just from cattle?

Husband: Just from cattle alone. And the next year -- it's been falling ever since then. Of course I cut down on my stock too. But then the prices are fair again. Just right now they're a pretty good price. But then again I haven't got any for sale that's fit for sale. I suppose by the time I'm ready to sell them then the prices will be down all over again.

Brenda: Cattle prices are always changing.

Husband: Up and down, yeah, changing.

Brenda: Did you ever farm wheat?

Husband: Well, I farmed quite a bit one time. I used to farm on the lake before it flooded out here. We used to farm grain after the War. And then after we had the other place, (inaudible) springs with cattle. We were in cattle mostly. Well, the boy was with me for a few years.

Brenda: Your son?

Husband: Yeah, but he went in his own business, and he's got his own cattle, manure spreading and all that stuff. He does pretty good.

Brenda: Is there good money in that?

Husband: Oh yeah. He took in \$57,000 last year, in the summer.

Brenda: Pardon me, you...

Husband: I was town maintenance, town engineer. Right in here. I'll show you this.

Brenda: "Presented to John G. Gardiner in recognition of having served the municipality, town foreman and utilities engineer, 1965-1979." That's 15 years.

Husband: It's 14 years. But then I worked one year before that, but I just worked. I had a bunch of men working under me at the time. I had about 13 men -- they were all on welfare or relief or something at that time -- and I kept on going like that which... I didn't work... well I had intentions of quitting because I was trucking right along but my back was so sore at the time that I had to leave the truck alone. So this supervising, well, it wasn't too bad, eh. It's not like going ahead and work at all. I didn't have to work, just as long as I kept these men working.

Brenda: So you were a good foreman?

Husband: I think so, because I stuck with it.

Brenda: The men liked you?

Husband: Oh yeah. Well if they didn't they just got fired.

Brenda: The town recognized your employment with some... that's nice.

Husband: Oh they made a big dance, a big supper for me at the hall. They had about 150 people, they paid the whole thing. And they had a big dance after and paid for the orchestra, and they gave me a gold wristwatch. I put it away.

Brenda: Hard working man.

Husband: But I trucked before that too. I had my own truck before my back gave out, gravel trucks. Then I'd haul pulp all winter, yeah.

Brenda: That was your own trucking...

Husband: Yeah, that was my own. You see, I had a bunch of men working in the bush all summer, and I was hauling gravel. And she would go and measure all the cord wood every Saturday and pay all these men off. We had a bunch working in Horse Lake and a bunch in Macdowell, all over the place. So all that wood there, it was hundreds of cords in the fall, so it kept me hauling all winter.

Brenda: How many trucks did you have?

Husband: Well, I had one and then two, one and two. But mostly always one because it doesn't pay to have two because you hire other men and you break the truck down and then end up being in the hole there.

Brenda: It would have cost you more money.

lost Husband: But I haven't lost it, you'll notice I haven't the little trucks. (laughs)

Brenda: Was (inaudible)?

Husband: What's that, trucking?

Brenda: Was that before you became a town engineer?

Husband: That's right, before I became a town engineer. And I had a truck since...

Brenda: Was that the early part of your marriage?

Husband: Well, we got married before the War, you know, and I was four years in the forces.

Brenda: You were in the army? In the armed forces or...

Husband: In the armed forces. I was in England, Sicily, Italy, all over the place -- Germany, France.

Brenda: What was it like during the War for you, for Metis people during the War?

Husband: Oh, nobody recognized you. You couldn't even say that, there's no such thing as a Metis in the army. A lot of boys went. When they joined up they say, "What are you?" Metis, there's no such thing as a Metis, you're a Canadian. You know, you're French, English born, or Scotch or whatever, you were no such thing as a Metis.

Brenda: How about the Indian people?

Husband: Well, I guess they were...

Brenda: Did they put down their nationality as Indian?

Husband: Indian, yeah, Canadian Indian, whatever they was.

Brenda: And you had to write down Canadian?

Husband: Yeah, just Canadian, French Canadian.

Brenda: Canadian citizen.

Husband: French Canadian, Scotch Canadian. That's what I was.

Brenda: Did the army put the Indian and Metis men on the front line?

Husband: Same as the white, anybody, whatever nationality there they...

Brenda: They didn't show discrimination?

Husband: Oh no, no discrimination at all. When you're in the front lines you're, they're all brothers there.

Brenda: What do you, what do you think of those days?

Husband: Oh, it's okay. Well, you damn well had to join up because they made it so hard for us at the time, eh. All over, through Canada, most of the boys they joined up because it was such hard times. They couldn't find a job or make a dollar anywhere. of course, I always had a job but just the same I joined up because, well, you have to fight for your country in the first place. Next place, well, it was pretty rough because we had kids and everything here. And at that time they were paying me only 65 cents a day when I joined the army.

Brenda: And you had children already?

Husband: Oh yes. We had our three then.

Brenda: Did you worry about them about when you were gone?

Husband: Oh definitely, I was worried about them. But, you know, what can you do? Once you join the forces you come back

when they damn well tell you, not when you want to. (phone  
rings)

(END OF SIDE B)

(END OF TAPE)