

Tape #3
Crescent Lake Video Shoot
Maria Campbell and Gilbert Pelletier

That is good medicine. Just like what the doc gives you.

What about the stuff they called "La Beaum?"

Eh he. It grows all over by the sloughs. That's where you get it from. When we lived here, there use to be "La Beaum" here. You right away know, "Le Beaum. You could smell it. Here in the sloughs, here. There's a lot around here. You don't have to look far to find it. Long ago, as you're getting here, you could see houses all over there. All along there and after, they came and moved over here. That's where we all lived. That was long ago. We used to live here. If I was able to, I'd come and live here again.

What would happen?

I don't know. Some say nothing would happen if you built here. Some would like to come back here. Most of them would, even me. I'd like to come back. I am still gonna try. All the old people would like to come back here to try and move back here. We'd all like to build here. We don't live very far from here, but we still would like it here. Sometimes I am lonesome for this place. When we lived here and was going to school, we use to have a lot of fun here.

Is this where they were buried?

Eh he.

Do they still bury them here?

No. Not here. Over there in the reserve and us, over here in Yorkton. But we used to have our wakes here. Just in houses. Nowhere else, sometimes for three days, mostly two days, and over there was the Indians. That's where the reserve is, close to here. That's why, them too, they came to this school. Well, I am related to a lot of them that live in the reserve. I really, I am going to try to come and build here, because my Mom really wants to come back as pretty soon I don't have to work. We used to shoot ducks here. There used to be a lot of them here and lots of water. Medicine was plentiful here. You pick Le Beaum... is plentiful here, too. Lots of medicine here for anybody who knows it. You can get Le beaum here again when the sloughs dry up. That's when you find lots of Le beaum to pick. We used to drive through here with the water just about flowing in the wagon. When we'd come across here, this place was all water. No road like this. Just with the horses. We used to race with horses. Right here we used to race. Sometimes, we'd walk down here to go hunt rabbits. A little over two miles over there on foot. No roads, and if we killed any, we'd have to carry them.

We used to get played out. Not only once have I walked through here. I did a lot of walking through here.

Did you ever walk here in the dark?

Yeah, oh yeah. Sometimes we stay over there too long. So that by the time we got around here, it would be dark.

Were you afraid?

Sometimes, yeah. Sometimes, cause of when the old people used to tell stories of werewolves. When you're walking here in the dark, werewolves are on your mind. Everything you hear or see out of the ordinary makes your heart skip a beat. Just like your insides are jumping.

Have you ever seen one?

No. I have never seen it, never, but I've heard a lot of stories about werewolves. I'll tell you this. Me and my brother, I went with my brother once to go see his girlfriend. Now, he didn't want to come back with me from out there. I cut across and I was by myself too and that's all they ever talked about was werewolves. When I was walking alone, I was scared. An old horse just about scared the daylights out of me. A white horse, he was standing there by the cemetery. I didn't see it was a horse. When I seen it I thought, well someone is waiting there for me. I was so afraid, my heart was in my mouth. After I passed him, I ran with all I had. It came after me. He didn't know. It's an old horse. I startled him. He didn't know which way I was coming from; instead he chased me. Boy, did I run. There was a pile there about this high. I jumped over that like nothing. My godfather's horses used to roam there. That's where I caught the horse about a mile down. This here is the old road. There, over a mile I'd catch the horses and ride him. My godfather lived just right there, but his horses would go a long way down there. Then we'd have to go fetch them and of course we'd race back. Course in the morning he knew someone had tended to his horses. No way would I tell him. Most certainly he would have given me heck. I was afraid.

And at nights, did they ever tell legends?

Ah ha, yeah, my Mom then used to. Eh ha yeah. They used to talk about Little John a lot too and sometimes and others, too. Oh, they used to talk about a lot of things like that, but telling legends. The old people were really good telling stories. Not like today; they don't do that anymore. My Aunt Vitaline, she use to be able to, but now, she has forgotten how to anymore. She can't do it now. No one tell them anymore. Long ago they all used to tell a lot of legends. Eh ha, us kids used to sit in a circle and listen to the stories even when we'd get heck to go to bed. We liked the stories too much; we don't want to go to bed. Yeah. They sure used to tell a lot of

legends. Now, no more. Every old person was able to. Now, today, nobody does.

What about Nanabush?

Oh yeah, we know Nanabush very well, for as many times we heard about him. Just like I personally knew Little John and Nanabush. Wesakachak. Have you ever heard of Wesakachak? They used to tell a lot. But they talked about Little John more than the others. Little John and Nanabush. When I think of long ago, I sure used to love their stories. Nowadays, now, it's all alcohol, the young ones. They don't understand and they can't speak it. They only speak English now. They taught them here at the old house how to speak. The little children are easier to teach. They try harder to learn than the bigger ones. I don't know if they are ashamed to speak. I don't know. The little ones try. My grandchildren, they are pretty good speaking in Cree. I teach them. They don't forget. Eh he. In Michif, the way we speak. Them too, I teach them. What did you call it? A bridge, wood chips. Eh ha. We use to gather this to start our fires. It burns right away, this. When its dry, it burns right away. We use to put it away neatly. When you get up in the morning, it's cold, so we'd cut wood. It was just with an axe, nothing else. Just with the axe to cut.

Did you used to eat this?

No, but the old people used to talk about eating it. Eh ha. I think you can find a lot to eat here, if you knew what. If you knew what's edible. The old ones all knew it. They used to make tea from some of these things here. Eh ha. When we first moved here, I heard about this, too. Lemaire, I think was his name and Dan Pelletier was one. Alex St. Pierre helped too. They all helped out here and I think there was a priest here, so I heard. I don't know how true this is. Yeah. They all made it. I think it was in '46 when they made it. I think it was in 1950 when I started school here. What? I really don't remember well. I think there were six school teachers here. One was called Mr. Hursh. He was the leader and his wife too. His wife had the small children in a small room here. Mr. Hursh was in the big room. They were teaching kids there. Eh a fairly long time. I can't remember how long. They were here quite a long time; then two others came. Mr. Dieduck was his name and with his wife and another came. His name was Mr. Tamachuk. He came alone. Mrs. Mayer was another who was here to teach children in the school. You then? Oh I use to sing and played a bit of violin, you know and I used to dance too. Oh yeah, a little. I used to play a little of that too. Even today, I play a little and I loved dancing. We used to do a lot of dancing all over here in Crescent Lake. Just about every night, and they used to have weddings here too. I can remember we sure used to have a lot of fun here. We danced just about every night. My brothers had to ask permission for me as I was not old enough to go to a dance, but I played violin so it had to be me to play eh. Here we use to have lots of fun. Oh yeah, lots, lots. We use to have concerts too. Yeah, we used to sing and

dance and just clown around. You know, just anything, we'd try, anyway. Oh for sure. For sure. Just out here by the slough, there used to be lots of gophers. I used to go set traps here. We surely used to eat them. Oh, yeah, yeah. Over there, old Marino so he was called, he lived over there. He had a slough out there. Oh, gophers were plentiful there, we'd go there for gophers. He'd give us two cents a tail for killing them. Here too, there were lots. They even used to go in the houses and the people even used to have house rats. We use to do all kinds of things here. I don't know when. This one knows when. She knows when they started that. No. No.

Edwin: My Dad's name was Shorty and my Mom Vitaline. He came from the States, the Turtle Mountain reserve. He came to Crooked Lake. They called it La Crush. Just out here. They had a little log house there. That's where I was born. We lived here for a long time in 1941. We moved here to about six miles there by wagon. My Dad used to have three or four horses. There was eight kids. Oh, that's for sure. Me or my dad? Mostly worked for farmers. I use to do a lot of brush cutting. My Dad cut wood in the green. We used to go stoking and digging roots for farmers. We used to pick rocks from fields. We used to live all over the place. When we were done field work, we would do a lot of moving around, digging roots and again, my Dad with his wagon, we'd go picking bones. During the war, they used them. They made glue during the war. We used to sell to Jewish people here in Yorkton on Betts Avenue. They bought anything iron. They made medicine. They used to send it away to have medicine made from it. Sometimes we'd dry them. They paid good for the dry ones, but that's lots of trouble to do that, eh. Out here, I think it was 1947 when we started school. My Grandpa lived over here. That's where we lived for the winter. He used to come and get us for. Dad used to come and get us on Friday nights and he'd bring us back on Sunday nights. We stayed at Grandpa's. Yeah, that's where we stayed. There wasn't very many schools then, so we'd stay here all winter. We lived about two miles from school. He would drive us by sleigh. Yeah, he he. They didn't go to town very often long ago, eh. We lived off the land. They would only go in for tobacco, tea and lard. Ah ah. Yeah. They used to chase them with dogs and horses in winter. Eh ha. There used to be a lot of them. Eh ha yeah. There used to be a lot of coyotes and foxes in them days eh. Oh, we used to play ball and cards. We used to come and visit at Grandpa's on Sundays. My deceased Dad and Mom used to play cards. My Grandpa was wise. He used to make play pens and teeter totters for his grandchildren. That's where we used to play on Sundays. What? Oh yeah. I used to help my uncle. He had four dogs. We used to go all over checking our snares. We snared everything, rabbits, weasels; that's what, and the rabbit skins were sold three cents a skin. Yeah. My deceased Dad used to take them in by the sack full to go sell. Long ago. Course we never seen the money. Dad would look after that and for the farmers. I used to look after the muttons. I was given twenty-five cents a night so coyotes won't get them. We use to have fun trying to ride the little muttons (baby sheep) while we watched over them with the dogs. That farmer had a lot of little muttons and again we used to sell gopher tails. There was too many

gophers. Oh yeah, we used to drown them. Yeah, we used to eat muskrats. Yeah rabbits and we used to look for prairie chicken's eggs. We use to make the prairie chickens mad. Everything. Also duck eggs. I did a lot of berry picking. Strawberries. There was lots, eh. Yes, we use to sell strawberries in town too. We, two cents a pound and we used to sell Saskatoon berries too. That's how we made money. It was nice long ago, eh, and we used to dry chokecherries. Oh yeah. Hm hm. We use to pick a lot of chokecherries. Oh my, did we ever. Well when we lived just out here, a woman who lived there, died. She had a piece of land. She told my Dad (she was alone) if anything happens to me, I want you to move in here. We used to have a little log house nearby, but it got drowned out so we moved in to that house. So that's where we lived. That old man used to put in a big garden and us too. Boy my Dad used to have a good garden. We used to help him. Potatoes by the wagonful. We would fill the cellar right up. No. He used to give some away. Ah ha. Rabbits too. We used to give a lot away, when we lived over there. Gee, there sure was a lot of them, eh. He give rabbits to Grandpa or anyone that was not able to get them for themselves. We also used to dry deer meat too. My Dad used to killed them. They'd hunt anytime; then, there was no police. Oh, around August. He sure used to kill a lot. When the little deers were big. Oh so good. They would dry the meat. Put in boxes and stored under the beds. After, when need, they'd boil the meat and cook it, eh. Oh yeah. I remember in the spring we use to get the wagon ready and go to Round Lake to stay for two months setting traps for muskrats. Muskrats tasted good that time, one dollar, two dollar. Eh he. Oh they used to sell everything, bones, iron, hides, everything. What? Yeah. They did all around here. My Dad, them, used to come to dances here. They'd come here by wagon and Grandpa, he used to play fiddle good, my Grandpa. He used to make dances. Yes. The whole family played, either the violin or guitar. They all played. I remember my deceased Grandpa, the time we stayed with him, at night he'd make a fire with wood in the stove. He'd blow out the lamp. He'd sit in front of the stove and play violin while us kids listened and he'd be just a stamping his feet. Oh yeah. Today now, you don't see anyone who plays stamping their feet to the beat. Yeah now they stand while playing. Oh they used to have lots of fun with house dances. See too, in them times, people got along with one another real good, eh. When you had something going everybody would pitch in to help. Today is so different. Yeah, eh he. Well when we came in 1947, when we came to live here, the school was not here then. I was not in school and in 1954 when I joined the army, when I came home in 1960, most of the houses were gone. I don't know if they burnt them down or tore them down. I don't know. They used to blame the priest, Father Day. He was the one who sent the people away from here, oh yea. They truly worshipped the priests. They took him as a God, yeah. Over here too, he used to come for us to go to confession. Oh yeah, long ago, a priest was a great value. Yes, they really listened to what the priest said. I think this priest was sent away. I think it was because of what he did to our Métis. No, all the houses were torn down or burnt. So they lost out.

Would you like to move back here?

I sometimes think about that. Yes. If the people still lived here, I would, but not alone. I don't know what a people would do for what, what they call running water. See long ago, we used to get water anywhere. At dugouts, at sloughs. You can't do that today. Yes, you'd probably get poisoned. Just like the rabbits, deer, pheasants, partridge; they don't taste good today and ducks, too much poison. Oh boy, they tasted real good, long ago. Oh, my, the ducks were so good. So was the deer. Eh eh. Someday again. Wow.