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SASKATCHEWAN
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GENERAL COMMENTS: Alexina was a very co-operative and eager
person. She knew a lot about the Metis history and what
happened. She told us that her father was a sort of politician
and she also told us that she stated organizing for a Metis
local near Debden.

Connie: July 20, 1982. My guest is Mrs. Alexina Newman a
resident of Prince Albert.

Alexina: And then I have to say like...

Connie: I'll ask you questions and you can answer.

Alexina: Okay.

Connie: Where did you attend school?

Alexina: Well I never been in school in my life to say, I was
just only for a little while at Duck Lake School. But sister
pass away in there, so my parents took me out from there. I
didn't have time to read and write.

Connie: Well, what grade did you take?

Alexina: Well I was taking grade two. So that's where, I know a little bit like, you know, I remember but not enough to keep on writing and read. (laughs)

Connie: So you can't write at all?

Alexina: No, I can't write.

Connie: Did you like school?

Alexina: I did like school, I couldn't talk English I learn myself in English. The first time they had readers years ago and I used to listen every day and they repeat and I learn myself from there, from the reader. I learn my school from radio. And then after that was the T.V. then I learned myself from the T.V. again. Then finally I could keep on talk good English. (laughs)

Connie: Do you wish you would have finished your school?

Alexina: I wish, I wish would have finished up to grade five. Today now some kids they make a mistake they don't want to attend their school. I wish their place them days, because them days that was hard to learn, very hard to learn. Now today's education not work, if you don't have education your going to starve. And the kids today they don't want to go to school, it's too bad for them they going to be good and sorry days coming for them. They should keep on going to school, learn everything because it's hard if you don't read and write it's hard.

Connie: You said you speak another language, when did you start to speak another language?

Alexina: Well, we was born with French and Cree.

Connie: Your parents both spoke French and Cree?

Alexina: Yeah. Then after that well I start to talk English mostly now. I mix up sometimes English and French, but still I could talk good French, could talk good Cree. I understand a little bit of Ukranian. (laughs)

Connie: Since you started school that's when you stated to speak English?

Alexina: Well I understand a few words like in English them days eh, then like little teens, you know, I started to understand. But from there I learn myself more from the radio. Because I used to listen years ago they used to have a real story years ago they used to have on the radio. They used to call that old (inaudible), you know, it was a story. Used to talk there, you know, in the morning the radio then they used to repeat in English and that's where I keep on learning, you

know, this old (?) I remember that. (laughs) He's talking French then they'd talk in English, you know, crazy words, you know, that's the way I keep on learning is that.

Connie: What did your parents do for a living?

Alexina: Hard work, they were digging seneca roots, cut brush. Them days old people still work big (inaudible) like their sitting in the bulldozer and the tractor, they were cutting brush and they were digging stumps, and they were digging rocks to make their living just for a dollar a day.

Connie: What kind of work did you do?

Alexina: Me? Oh I mostly when I was young I used to help mom like bake bannock outside, you know. And look after the tent, and they go and cut brush, and we dig seneca roots with little bags and little, you know, well we clean them up then we take them to town to sell. You have 100 pound of seneca roots you used to have about \$4. that was big money, \$4. then you buy the stuff and come home. You couldn't buy nothing much. Then help my mother make bread and wheat I learned (inaudible) used to call that (?) what you call that old (?) there (inaudible) rice soup. That's what we used to make to help my mother make the (?) berries dry them up for the winter, you put them like saskatoons, you dry them up in a big (?) and then we put them in a 100 flour bags. Then we used to squash them chokecherries with a rock to make our living, then we take them like you make little bannocks and you dried them, you put them in a bag. And then raspberries the same thing, there's no sealers them days. They'd cook them and daddy used to hunt and they used to make birch bush like, they put lard in there from, fat from the beef or moose meat, anything. Then we take a piece of dry meat you squash that and you put raisons on it, little sugar and make that pemmican. Yeah that's for the winter. That's what we used to do.

Connie: What kind of work did you do when you grew up, or what kind of jobs did you have when you when you grew up?

Alexina: Oh, the first time like I was growing up I do lots of sewing. Make (?) by hands. I would sew clothes, make blankets mostly on machine sewed blankets and you sell to the people maybe \$2., \$3. for a blanket. You sit there all night sewing by hand a blanket. Now today they got sewing machines, they don't even use it, they don't even wash clothes they just peel off, you know, and (inaudible) that's the way they do it and they take that off and throw it. Never again, throw it. How do expect to go home (inaudible) tell me that. Tell me how do you expect that? Every day they ruin clothes, I got this old dress, you see, I looked here what you call (?) from the farm. I left this old dress in there, you know how old this old dress is it's fifty years old and still I wash it, but it change color, it's alittle bit rotten, you know, I sew it. (inaudible) this old dress, how many dresses they have, \$25. now. Now you see why they go bankrupt. The rich people themselves they going bankrupt that's their doing it, okay I'll

put four eggs in here one will red, one will be blue, one will be pink, one will be green; okay I put the price, this one \$100., this one \$50., this one \$60., this one \$10., this one \$1. Okay, but I won't (inaudible) I'll hide it. Okay, you'll have to force yourself to buy this thing for \$100., okay, you know, that's why the peoples they can't buy anything they broke themselves because they (inaudible) for the money they (inaudible) their pushing themselves deep in the river. Instead bring it up. Okay sell this here for a dollar (inaudible) customers I have, ten, twenty. This egg be rotten in there just like meat in the freezer it's rotten in there, nobody buys it because the people they got no money, and the rich sit there with a glass of beer and he wants you, a big fat rat. Come on, bit fat car come on you pay that, you have to pay that, he's haggling for your money but he don't give you that little piece of meat for twenty-five cents a pound he let it rotten. That's just what has happening today, they're going to starve theirself. A poor person (inaudible). We going to (inaudible). But the rich people your going to see their going to fight each other.

Connie: What could your wages back then buy you?

Alexina: A dollar a day what amounts (inaudible) from seven o'clock to farming buying the boys clothes and rent. Then you get just a dollar, then you go home you walk three miles to go home, feed your little kids for a dollar. My little man their grandpa used to work cut a cord of wood for a pound of butter all day long. You guys have never seen nothing hard time. That was hard time. We never had shoes. Today I look \$100. for a pair of shoes they buy, not going in the second hand stores the men's shoes they're \$2., \$3. (inaudible) for \$100., but that \$100. it's the rich they get not the poor. We don't get nothing.

Connie: Where did you work, when you said you worked on farms sometimes?

Alexina: Yeah, Metis I work for (?).

Connie: That's near Debden?

Alexina: Yeah. We cut brush in there. We cut about five of brush one time for a cow. For that cow cut (inaudible) me and my old man for a cow, and a skinny cow because to feed the kids. I wouldn't have nothing, no plow, no horses, we had a little shack it was leaking. You know, where the fire had been burning meadows, like what you call that, you know, fire...

Connie: (inaudible).

Alexina: Yeah. Well, you know, we take that we clean it up and we shovel it, turn it over and fill that with potatoes. You should see the lovely garden we have. Today now the lawn they got, well the government don't allow (inaudible) he hasn't got nothing. Today hasn't got nothing. All them head mans they don't belong then even the farmer, who owns the land, tell

me who is it? You don't know? It's God he own the land. He put the land in here for everybody not for one person.

Connie: Did you have a piece of land for yourself that you guys had?

Alexina: Yeah we had a piece of land, we had a little (?) right in (?) here first time. And my daddy was a farmer in (?) there, we had a farm there. I used to chase hawks, you know hawks? Take the (?) and my mother was holding the shovel, the what you call plow and we were always chasing the hawks with (inaudible) to try and make a crop.

Connie: Oh, oxen.

Alexina: Ox, you know, that's the way we make our living. Then my dad he used to go in the bush cut willows, bring with the team of horses how much he got for a willow maybe two willows for ten cents, today they're paying, look how much they pay for posts today. Still they don't want to work, you know, today there's too many welfare babies. That's right. They just sit there with their little short pants a bunch of kids in here and here their going to push the food in their mouths, see. Eat, make more kids. Them kids ten years from now or fifteen years from now is going to be like over there in the old country their starving, but them poor litttle kids their going to starve because the mommy is going to go, the rich is going to get it and they going to starve.

Connie: Where did your parents meet?

Alexina: Pardon.

Connie: Where did your parents meet?

Alexina: I don't know, they wouldn't... My dad come from Winnipeg and my mther come from States.

Connie: Where did you and your husband meet?

Alexina: We meet in what you call Lease in the dance, old dance. Them old dances that's where we met.

Connie: What kind of dances and songs did you guys used to...

Alexina: Oh there used to be good dances, not the twist... They are crooked today, now their seat is this way and all over because this they twist so much and they got no head, watch them they go like this because they shake their (inaudible) that's how they are today. Them days it was like jig and real square dances, polkas. Not today they have no, today they got nothing. Watch what they got (inaudible) their legs their crooked, their seat is this way and this way, their shoulder because miss so much. They haven't got no dance today, they think they is but no way you look at them.

Connie: What kind of songs and games did your parents take

part in?

Alexina: Oh, they used to play, what you call, like, you know, they used to sit in a bunch eh and they used to play, they'll take a little stick like and okay they'll shake that and, okay where's that hand your holding. Yeah they used to call that (?), you know, in French. Okay, what side? Well this one, this one see that's the way they used to bet them cards, and checkers, you know, and horseshoes, we play horseshoes that's what it is.

Connie: Who supplied the entertainment and food and that at the dances?

Alexina: Oh, we, all the people. If you was the dance at the hall we going to make a dance you'd make a cake, a cake and you stuck a nickle in there, then that goes around and the one that got the nickle in his mouth that's the one whose going to make a dance again, but everybody help. Everybody help, everybody take a piece of cake and make a lunch and take it, everybody that's the way all the peoples they would get along.

Connie: Was there one place that you had most of your dances?

Alexina: All over.

Connie: They moved around?

Alexina: Yeah, they moved around. The one that got the nickle in his mouth he'll have it in his house that's the way, but there was no, like today oh my gosh you go there and you got nowhere to sit. They don't even have music. It's (inaudible) you walk in the hall it's no music (noises) it's still (inaudible). That's all.

Connie: Sometimes you need a mike in there.

Alexina: Yeah. That's the way it goes. There working their head so much now today they don't know what their doing.

Connie: Who provided the music like was there special...

Alexina: Oh, special old people violin, that's the violin.

Connie: The same ones over and over?

Alexina: The same ones over and over they used to park their feet on the floor and that's the way all the time. Oh maybe two, three fiddlers like, you know, take over but the same ones.

Connie: Was there any special name of a family that did most of the music?

Alexina: No. They just call this one so and so, come in like today now, well today now they just want to deprive thereself one be calling a different name, you know, this and that and

pretty soon there be a Ben Joker there, they don't have it pretty soon. Watch and see.

Connie: No, but I mean was there any family that did most of the, that played most of the music?

Alexina: Oh yeah. Yeah I remember there's old (?) he was a violin player, and a few young people I don't remember their names.

Connie: What about in your family, there was a few fiddle players even in your family?

Alexina: Oh just my daddy was playing violin. A brother Jerry (inaudible) good players, you know. But a lot to shake (inaudible).

Connie: You got some of your boys...

Alexina: Well the boys always do is good. And I'll sit and watch that they were good, really good the two cousins of Alex and Alisa. Then his son start, but he died. So...

Connie: Did family live with each other, one family live with another family?

Alexina: No, no.

Connie: How large was the family unit like were the grandparents, did the grandparents live in the home, or did the kids after they get married did they sometimes live at home too?

Alexina: No after, like my mother they got married they got, we had out place up north here. We never used to crowd like go to my grandpa to my grandmother. Them days you might, you might. Okay that's your wife you go and make your living, I'm not keeping you. That's the way, but your not going to suffer if they see your real stuck they going to help you but your not going to be (?) every day, no way. That's the way the old peoples in them days you think your going to get the girl in the house you have to ask the dad and you have to bring her home at eleven o'clock at night. You have to go and ask the dad can I take your daughter to dance. If he says yes okay, but bring her home eleven o'clock, if you don't come eleven o'clock you'll never step in that house again.

Connie: How old were you when you started to go out?

Alexina: Oh fourteen. Going to dances.

Connie: How old were you when you first got married?

Alexina: I was seventeen.

Connie: I think you told me once that that was quite young for that time was it?

Alexina: Well that was quite young like fourteen years old that was really young, but you don't by yourself you go to dance you go with your mother. You go with mother you think your going to go alone, but that's they start to take you out to go to dance see the public.

Connie: How long before you could go by yourself?

Alexina: Oh, seventeen years old then. Yeah and some of the boys they used to get twenty years old before they get out. From their dad twenty years old.

Connie: Who looked after the older folks in the family like your grandparents, or the grandparents did they live at home with the children?

Alexina: My grandparents?

Connie: Yeah.

Alexina: No, no they, well they had...

Connie: When people started to get older did they come back and live with their children?

Alexina: No, no they live on their own. No way. Yeah my grandmother she died she was 107 same age as mom, she died but we kept mom, you see, because the life is start to change them days. (inaudible) but them like my grandmother they living (inaudible) the house nobody ever bothered them. Just very seldom we go and visit them. (inaudible) same thing they were living in Winnipeg, I never seen my grandfather and my grandmother in Winnipeg, my daddy went and my mom we stayed here the grandmother keep us because they couldn't report, they go by, they used to be a freighter my dad from Winnipeg to Green Lake to Buffalo Narrows. How many dads they took going back and forth. And then momma used to catch a ride go and see his father-in-law, mother-in-law in Winnipeg. And then my grandmother used to keep us in here, I'm telling you she used to keep us with a grip.

Connie: Were you affected by prijudice people?

Alexina: Eh?

Connie: Were you affected by prejudice people? Was there much prejudism in your community, like did people look down on you in your community?

Alexina: Never. Never.

Connie: Everybody was in the same...

Alexina: Everybody was the same. Now today they look you down. If you don't have a nice dress on, you know, nobody look at you if you don't have your clothes nobody going to say I

love you, but I don't care. I don't have to go and pay a beauty parlour \$30. to fix my hair, go and put my head the way they look it is going to stay like that, the dye he put in my hair is going to stay like that. If it turn grey it turn grey. Today they got red head, you see them they're pitch blond, pitch red, but look in here okay your's is natural blond eh. Take another one who dyes his hair blond put them together and look on top, what is there black roots, hair is blond but no that's not the way. (inaudible) red heads and everything like that.

Connie: Were native people, when you grew up were native people looked down upon by the other people in the community?

Alexina: Never. They would get along pretty good old peoples years ago all the Metis peoples they get along very good. Today now they fight, they fight today.

Connie: Did you get along with the whites settlers?

Alexina: Oh yeah, yeah we did get along that's for sure. They used to come to there and Metis Society they used to come dance, and they used to sleep (inaudible) they put them to sleep is a white man or a Indian is a white man going to sleep. Today you can't do it they'll kick you out because you are black. And they'll kick a white man out because he's white that's the way today.

Connie: Did the church have much influence over the people?

Alexina: No, never not in our church. And still not me I never have trouble in my church. I'm a Catholic. I never have trouble. All the sisters and the priests they still love me, they like me and I like them. Oh yeah.

Connie: Has the church changed a lot over the years?

Alexina: Oh well they change a lot because they have to (inaudible), they took the priests there like the way they used to dress and the sisters they want them to be (?) If they don't do it they'll cut their neck off. And they don't follow the religion the way they want they'll do something. So they just keep on going with them, but that's not their belief, that's not their belief but we have to follow that.

Connie: What religion did you follow mostly?

Alexina: Catholic. I'll die in Catholic, I'm a Catholic and I'll die on it.

Connie: That's what most of the community was?

Alexina: Yeah. My mother she was a strong Catholic, my father; so I am one.

Connie: Did the church like now days collect money off of people all the time?

Alexina: Anybody collect money. You see what they're doing, we like our Catholic the priest collect the money we didn't use that that goes to the poor people all over. You go to the Catholic church right now you go and tell the priest my kids they're starving, they're hungry. Can I borrow money from you? He'll give you. And still he'll give you food to eat, why we have (inaudible) at Regina, we feed them all them bums in there, them drunkards, no good for nothing. Even the rich they come and eat there because I used to help and (inaudible) to go and cook, you know. (inaudible) I see a guy with a big (inaudible) a rich man he come and eat in there three times a day. I know what they do with us, we can't say no. They (inaudible) church and the only (inaudible) churches. The Protestant no, you know why? Because they want to put the Catholic religion down. Their no good, but no. Jesus the time we left and this lady give the key to St. Peter he'd be just one church still defending the world, and that's what we use. We don't care, they could make (inaudible) they could do anything to our church we won't go and fight back. But still what they come for help we help them.

Connie: Did they collect though, when you were younger did they collect?

Alexina: All the time, all the time. But like the other ones they won't do it, you know why they won't do it (inaudible) he's a Catholic but he's falling (inaudible). He's sitting in the money and you look at him in the T.V. he don't look like a pocket gopher. I don't care if he heard this that's true. He look like a pocket gopher because he hasn't got no room to shovel that money his cheek (inaudible).

Connie: Did you attend shrines or retreats?

Alexina: Oh yeah. I go to church.

Connie: Where did you go to shrines?

Alexina: Here at Duck Lake.

Connie: How often?

Alexina: Well, fifteen years I don't go because I was sick all the time I was in Regina. And now in this year I went, but now that's why I move in here.

Connie: When you were younger did you go to retreats?

Alexina: Oh yeah, we used to walk from Duck Lake Reserve, I had my aunt was in there I remember I was ten years old we used to walk from there for (?) up to St. Lawrence. All the old people walk on a hot day that's for that punishment. And come back again. We done that four times, you could still, still my cousins they're doing it at Duck Lake they call that a Laying. You know, they never... Yeah, they still doing it today, they done it this St. Lawrence for four days my cousins they done

it. You'll see them and it be went at night praying and then come back to Duck Lake for punishment. That's what they did they still doing it today.

Connie: For sacrificing?

Alexina: Yeah, sacrifice.

Connie: When there was weddings did everybody celebrate or just the family?

Alexina: Oh no everybody come. If there's a wedding them days it's a big wedding, everybody knows, everybody knows. And them days there was no cars, maybe they'll be 100 team of horses, all the (inaudible) they call all colors they used to paint the warriors and decorate horses, and they go and shotguns, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. Then the old people they'll be waiting and hear the bride come and everybody eat on the big table. And there will be one talking, and they talk. Not like today they do it and everybody was welcome, everybody. Oh you could see peoples from all over they come. And all the neighbors be helping each other, they weren't scared to butcher a cow for a wedding, no way.

Connie: Who supplied the money for the wedding then to pay for, like who supplied all the stuff?

Alexina: Oh them days it was hard for money that's mostly working hands like food,...

Connie: Everybody pitched in?

Alexina: Food they ate like canned stuff, vegetables not from the store from the meat from little farmers they all helped each other. Just when you see money what they take the bride to shoe walk around maybe make a \$100. you know that's all we see the money.

Connie: How did you celebrate other events like Christmas and that?

Alexina: Oh that was a good one Christmas and New Years. Two or three weeks before the Christmas like there would be one lady going to make some (?) they call that, you know, and the other one would be making pies and the other one would be making cakes. And then they going to have like three o'clock in the morning the people would be ready at night. A big table. Then about three o'clock in the morning right after midnight New Years you head the guns, shotguns coming. Everybody coming with a big howling and Happy New Years and (inaudible), you know, everybody up and everybody, and they used to make meatballs. Like you know with onions you called that (?) that's in French, you know, and be around that big pots boy and that's good. And they used to take a cup and big dishes you eat much as you want to eat, you leave that house the same house over there the same thing, the same thing. Then at night there would be a dance there for one week, you see they start

from New Years till they call that close day (inaudible) as you like Christmas eh, they start at Christmas. New Years then six days after like the Ukranian Christmas well then they finish that's what we call (inaudible). That's where they finished New Years.

Connie: How did you get your food?

Alexina: Well we got our food from the stores like sugar, you know, they buy that, but mostly work. Butter they make old ladies, they made their own dry meat, they made their just a flour like they get, you know, the old (?) that's one thing, but the men they go thrashing time they'll buy flour for the winter maybe twenty bags or maybe forty bags of flour that's all stacked up.

Connie: What kind of food did you buy from the store then like the sugar, flour?

Alexina: Sugar and flour...

(END OF SIDE A)

Connie: Okay so you made most of your food from...

Alexina: Food from the work.

Connie: From the cattle and from the garden?

Alexina: From the garden, and from the cattle, and from the rabbits...

Connie: What about at Christmas time or something did you buy oranges or anything like that?

Alexina: Oh well that we buy always apples them days, you know, some of them they have on (inaudible). But this cases of apples in these big boxes that what we have, and candies. And some of them didn't buy candies they used to make like with brown sugar mom used to make that and they cut that in chunks (inaudible). Yeah, and used to big patties of that. That was, then in the old days it was (inaudible) the old mothers working, and we worked. Not like today, today they won't cook, just the canned meat and they go to the store okay they buy. They don't do nothing today, you know what they're doing the young peoples today? Junk food it's not only that, they be sitting on the couch with a cigarette and what does he eat and the leg up in the air with a (?). That's they're living today, they won't even wash clothes, they won't even patch, they don't know how to sew, they don't know how to can. Then these old people they even they don't know how to can now they got fridges, they could put food in there like me I'm old eh, I don't see my kids. All the stuff is (inaudible) everything little berries (inaudible) and my fridge is full just when around they hungry and you know what I don't need my fridge is

over full. But really cold weather comes I take all my (inaudible) food I could set it outside in a box, it's food in the winter time. Then I tell my kids today (inaudible). But I don't use that, but it's full, what it's full I doing to the outside bunch of rhubarb, turnips I grew that I cooked from the, I saved this one. Then what I'm going to do I'll take a bunch again that's what I do. And today you see the rhubarbs waste in the town here, my gosh rhubarb hardly wasted and that's really good. You take bananas, bananas they are a little spoiled you boil that, the rhubarb and they good jam, that make good jam. I'm telling you like now he's getting married but he's got a good little homemaker, she knows how to work the can. You let Marge here, okay you watch her (inaudible) she's a nice looking girl, but you watch she's bad now. If you see nothing in the fridge, nothing this mother don't go with her, he's got a home because he comes from the farm he knows what to get. But if you pick this (inaudible) oh my gosh that's all your going to have my boy. Then you could be chewing you finger right up to the bone.

Connie: For meat back then did your husband or your parents go hunting deer or something?

Alexina: Oh yeah my daddy used to go and my old man he go for rabbits, and deers, even (inaudible). Today you hungry and you can't trust to buy food today. You know what they do the stores? The meat is green eh, I see that myself. They cut that green meat and they wrap over again it looks fresh. I see that, I see that doing it.

Connie: Did they make clothing out of the hides?

Alexina: Oh yeah, my mom used to tan hides to make moccasins, coats, pants, leather pants. I could make that, I seen her make that.

Connie: What kind of clothing did you make for your children?

Alexina: Oh my children everything, they used to call them (?) school they were hard up that time. You know, we didn't have dye and I used to take old overalls they were like scraps eh, and pockets I used to dye them from willow wheat in the bush to I don't know what you call, red willows you put that in the barrel with water and that water turn orange and I used to dye them pockets and I sewed them together. And sometimes we had that for Raymond because he (inaudible) white one like that he used to laugh at you, because the rich people they used to laugh at them because (inaudible) that's how my boys got this name. (inaudible) you got all kinds of clothes now, all kinds of clothes they wear today and you know what they used to do, poor people used to take old ladies that came on horses you didn't need to (inaudible) follow the highway and kids did hear about it. (inaudible) with orange, rotten orange or rotten potatoes the old ladies. He you Indians. You stink. Okay we don't have the medium we don't have a chance to pick a (inaudible), you see them rich people they couldn't care about us.

Connie: Yeah.

Alexina: They're the money today. What would they used to laugh at us they're the ones their (inaudible), not the poor we don't have a chance. You see them old ladies even right in front of the street they'll pick it up they push a little cart all the rich people.

Connie: Was there a doctor in the town?

Alexina: There was only a few doctors like in town, but them old ladies like my mother she was a doctor herself. Indian doctor they say like, you know, like if you cut yourself my mother was good with some kind of leaves to wash and put it in there. And for whooping cough the medicine you couldn't beat it, but today nobody would use it. Whooping cough and the (inaudible). Them days, you know, skunk they used to run a needle, you know, when you'd been in a skunk they run a needle in there and just listen to me, they'll put boiling water in a saucer maybe (inaudible) and they'd give the kids, that's kid's stuff that whooping cough (inaudible). And today needles shovel them with needles, pills this pill popping, their still coughing today.

Connie: Was there a midwife in the community?

Alexina: What is that?

Connie: Like a helper at birth.

Alexina: Oh yeah. Oh yeah all the old ladies they were all helped each other. My mother she was good at that and look after them.

Connie: Was there any special person in the community like a Shaman or somebody that did most of the did most of the medical help?

Alexina: Oh yeah. Mom was good for that my mother. And the other old ladies there (inaudible). They used to call her in Cree (name) they used to call that (name) that old lady. Maybe the people the remember from there, you know what that's called that (name)? Little dog heart. But that was her nickname, but maybe people didn't remember that old lady, she was (inaudible).

Connie: During the depression what kind of jobs were available?

Alexina: Just only cut brush, and dig seneca roots that's what they do. The men they would (inaudible). I seen my dad with the other guys put (inaudible) and pull trees. And the old ladies cut them. Today now they got a big cigarette a big pad, a big bulldozer they don't know hard work that's not hard work (inaudible). No hard work at all.

Connie: Was there enough food and clothing to go around?

Alexina: Oh yeah. For clothes you wear patches to patches, if they didn't have washing machines lots of people didn't own a washboard you know what they used to do? They used to go beside a river, a lake and they had a board eh and they'd cut that kind of rock and they use that old laved soap and you go there up to here and stuck your board in there and you wash in there. And the clothes they come clean, you think they do today with big machines. No way. No way.

Connie: If somebody was...

Alexina: And then after that they used to load them (?) they cut them in half, and they cut like what you call (?) boards like that long and the big (?) but, you know, they make it big so them boards stay, and small handle, and they throw what they call they used to boil ashes like, you know, they take that white ashes and they put it in there in the bark and they cut that homemade soap in pieces then you wash like this. Like a plunger, just with a pole and a little board. And the (inaudible) hand them up. And the willows and the fence they didn't have no clothesline, nothing, just (inaudible) clothesline the ones (inaudible) the people they were hard up. They were better off than today, because today (inaudible). They can't pay their food, their hungry because they don't know that's where the (inaudible) they don't know how the peoples to live today.

Connie: If there was somebody that was really hard up who would help them? Would everyone in the community or was it just...

Alexina: Oh yeah sure. See if somebody was hard up, really hard up (inaudible) like beginning a guy was going to get married eh. Before that boy get married like when your age they'll take that boy hunting, if he could kill a deer your allowed to get married, because you could make your living. Then they let him hunt from ten years old, hunt, cut brush, shoot. But today young people they don't do it, they don't know how to live. They can't even go and fish a pickeral in the river, they'll starve standing today because they don't know. Now makes worse for that little (inaudible). Oh yeah and they cut brush, girls they clean.

Connie: Was your community active in politics?

Alexina: Well, my dad was quite a bit maybe that's where I got ahold of it a little bit. I stick my nose quite a bit especially this last while. I was sitting (inaudible) and the farms nothing. Then I heard on the T.V. about this Metis Society and I come myself in Prince Albert I found (inaudible). And I started this (inaudible) Metis Society. Right from (inaudible) my own shack. And I suppose to get a house and that old shack is still the same and I started the Metis Society (inaudible) I start, I put him in there. And today he thinks his a king and his daughter (inaudible). That first job

my daughter she's suppose to have, she showed her daughter would (inaudible) to Regina that's suppose to be loose in her job. Look at Joyce she's still here, Joyce is (inaudible). (inaudible) now it is powerful because he's got all his parents and you used to sell, look what (inaudible). Okay, they gave him a new house. How many years I got my old shack still I could live in there. Okay, he sold that house now he said for ten years he was working to have a new house, now they gave him a new house again. What the, did he have to give that little bastard a house (inaudible). I'll say this would lie that's not true. I know them people that's why they don't like me because I'm not scared to tell them and face them. They never taught what I used to go to Batoche you'd never see Joe (?) talking in that meeting. And this here I never been and the people there tell me he was a big mouth in Batoche. But what I was there you never see that buggar talking. Because he knows darn well I would jump on his neck. Now today he says, why you didn't come, lots of people he told me he was talking all the bullshit he could. You see. Yeah they told me.

Connie: Who did you look up to? Who were your native leaders around the time when you were growing up?

Alexina: The time I was growing up my dad he was pretty good. And old (?) we called him he was pretty good, and old (?) he was pretty good, and old (?) (inaudible). And one my Uncle (?) he was there long time ago. And I used to be nosy even I used to get a slap and I used to go behind the tent and listen what they were talking about, you know, and I used that (inaudible) I guess I was born to be nosy. (laughs)

Connie: Who did they battle with mostly? Who did your family dislike in politics, like who did they seem to always be...

Alexina: Well, my daddy was all the time he was strong like conservative, my dad. He was against liberal all the time. He was against Bennet them days years ago, there was a Bennet, all them people. They used to say the people who were fighting for this country, but he's going to be coming they going to beat anyway, well this truth of this whose beating, Trudeau, beating peoples.

Connie: Who is, any of your family or anybody you know involved in the rebellion?

Alexina: Yeah, my dad was involved. He was (inaudible) he was fighting.

Connie: Do you remember any stories or experiences about...

Alexina: Well, what I remember he was, you see my daddy was there I think and oh some old people like (inaudible) that I remember. And there was an Indian fellow that used to be Mighty Voice he was there and Gabriel Dumont like they were fighting there, and the old Charlette she used to haul flowers with the little white horse and my mother comes up there to cook for the rebellion. And today they don't even use it the

Mighty Voice's name that old lady and man. That's one thing I'm against that, that (?) died, he fought and we called, he put a lot on his shoulders and what do we short of the mission, he shot himself in the little bush in the hole where he dug, he was a man they never took him alive he shot himself there. And today they think they use oh Mighty Voice's name, no way. Just Dumont and Riel, why they don't put Mighty Voice because, you know why? Because he was a Metis person. That's why they don't want his name in there and he should be there too. Them three pictures they should be there. (inaudible) not only Riel and Dumont they're the three fighters in there, why one has to be down. That's not fair. Now I'm going to say that in Batoche there this summer, but I didn't go eh because I'm sorry now lots of people they told me they even, Paul (?) even...

Connie: There's been a lot more talk around Duck Lake about All Mighty Voice.

Alexina: Yeah. That Mighty Voice he was a man because, I don't know how many, and he was crowded in the little bush eh, and what has come the last time he took that bullet and he shot himself, they never took him alive he shot himself. And I believe that's where they even touched the (?) from that hole.

Connie: Do you think that things were better then or now? Like government and life.

Alexina: Well, before they start the Metis come and fight they were better, but now they come in there and working, and what they come in there you see there was an old man didn't know they were getting, they used to call him wolf, he was an old man he had a (?) back. That old man he want the people to be sent into, well Gabriel Dumont he brought his horse to us and it was, and that gees that old man (inaudible). And that old man he went to Gabriel, what he come already a week he finish (inaudible). And they promised (?) this country not to fight, they promised him they had a (inaudible) Canada and the British, they promised this land but no more fight. If they going to pay their not paying yet they still owe the (?) you know how much money they own (?)? They going to come States is going to have this country. They have to pay their bills. That's why they resigned now. The Queen even resigned even they got nothing to do with Canada that's why they know darn well what is coming. What they owe, never, never because they took this land like they done cross the sea there, what you call that land, they want to fight them poor peoples over there. You know the last one where they stopped the first war they started in the statue there, what you call that? You know, you heard that you see that in the T.V., you guys.

Connie: I'm not sure what you mean that. Oh that Isrealle.

Alexina: The other one.

Connie: Aphganastan.

Alexina: The other one.

Connie: Esalvadore.

Alexina: No. That word in the statutes. You didn't know that? Ask Grandpa he'll tell you. The same people they come and fight us in here for this country, they took it. The same thing they done in that place they took that land for (inaudible). But now they see they going to lose this land that's where the Queen she comes with the final, with Trudea she does nothing to do with Canada. He knows darn well he's going to lose it because States is going to get this country. I know, you mark my work in ten years whose going to own this country? Not in this statute nobody that's the States is going to own that.

Connie: Do you think he native people are stronger and wiser now because of...

Alexina: Well they're right, they going to fight back. They're wise they don't think and native people, you know why? Because (inaudible) went to hell. We never (inaudible) books, everything lies in education. We went to by good experience, hard, good memory, good thinking; not fast like a life. That's why we've got all the hardships and everything (inaudible) young peoples. This life was (inaudible). We tell them, but then they won't do it, if you do that with their kids you'd be less (inaudible) less raising people, kids. That's not the people, you see every (inaudible). (inaudible) it's a shame. I see people (inaudible) they won't help. I know a rich person come in there and just (inaudible) \$700. a month, plus he pays (inaudible). Okay I got one she's sick, he can't give her a house, he can't give her (inaudible), and she's sick. And doesn't help the person (inaudible) they got a big cheque and they buy them little sack of marijuana they smoke in their houses. You watch the T.V. and (inaudible). But a good person you couldn't get it, no way. That's what I say, because they're lying too much, they using (inaudible) and they never get nowhere. And how long they going to make it? In the long run you guys are going to make it, you see, working steady on it. Never mind what they're doing what all of you (inaudible) you going to make it. Never mind what we say this and that, sure they say you don't know like you young you don't know this. Bullshit them they don't know anything. They'll come tell you that I'm telling you what they did come and tell you that time, few words they can't even answer. I'm not scared to say, because that truth I know that truth what I can remember. I remember everything. I'm not childish yet (inaudible) what is coming to them, what is going to come to them now they're going to bugar themself so darn everything is going to be thankful. They going to (inaudible) everything what they going to do. Then they going to start fighting again and we might have big war here because they don't know what they're doing. They're crazy about money that pocket gopher there that's the one whose going to start everything. (inaudible) it's him he's going to start. (inaudible) look like a god darn pirate. What the heck he has to fight farmers and that, you know, that (?). You know what that would be, the Indians people that country

that's native people they belong in that country not (?). He belong in the park land that buggar that's where he comes from. He don't have to come in church because that's all native peoples like Blackfoot Indians all come (inaudible) live in that part of the country. Now they want to come and live come from Quebec he can't even run his country over there.

Connie: Do you think that because your hard life made you a stronger person?

Alexina: I think so. I think so. The more I think the more I got the power to tell you what I want to tell you. Even they have to take me I don't care, I'll tell them anyway. If that's true what I want to tell them, even now it's not trusted to believe in potatoes what they do with them. They put that chemical in the potatoe and, you know, where just about died here me and my little here buying potatoes, they were green. They put that chemical and then they made money. Oh the boy he got a shame the apples he eat now it's no good. And still they got their price it's still what poor person okay twenty-five cents a bag, a little bag, no he want that price because (inaudible) or the money. They let the food rotten and the law is going to punish them, there's going to be no food. Watch my word. One of these days well he's not going to raise anything. It start, he start to have little things where they go after, these foods a little bit where the (inaudible). They don't know it. And if it all in one take everything, it happened one time. It was dry year the peoples hungry China they have to move right north, you know, there nothing growing and if he wants he could make that table dry tomorrow if he wants. But they're not scared because they're too brave they got lots of money, money is nothing. Money is nothing it's their life they should think, but they don't think about it they think about money, they think about this, no way. They should keep on help the people raise, look how much country we have open in here. (inaudible) to be crowded in the city, but one farmer he want to own everything and he can't run it. The other one the same. And what the government money should go to give them, okay one quarter of land, help them a little bit, give them a good (inaudible), a little tractor, a little plow make your garden. With one quarter you could live, you put your potatoes, you put your garden give them about \$50. a month that's enough for his gas and he raise everything. Instead of dropping the people (inaudible). That's him doing it nobody else. He spoiled the peoples now there's so many peoples they going to start to fight together. He's not safe to stay in the house now and (inaudible). You think your going to stop them they going to go in your house for a piece of bread your going to get the hammer over the head any place, because them people they have to eat.

Connie: Do you know why the native people scattered after 1885? Like there was the red river settlement there was a lot of people there after things started to get tough people moved out and scattered around.

Alexina: Yes, I know the Metis moved, Metis Society.

Connie: Do you know when and why they left?

Alexina: Well, when the Metis Society, you see the Metis Society, we're all native like they call them half breeds, no we're all native. See the first time what they start the country going to go bankrupt the old people. I remember, I heard them people that's what I say used to go behind the tent and listen to them, I heard them old people they say okay, you take the reserve and I'll take the strip of the land. Our childrens they will use it, later come okay then we got rape from there, then the white man come he said, okay your not going to get treaty your going to get (?). Well the native peoples they say we want treaty, he give them, he thought he was smart what he told them I'm not giving you treaty. He thought he was smart but that just proves that he was smarter, he wanted script for the land. He got the script. Then (inaudible) reserve, he has to have treaty. That's where it come out, the Metis they got the land, still the natives they got the land that's their land and they have to give them the treaty, they have to get the welfare they have to feed them. You understand now? That's just what exactly working, the Metis start, all the Metis fight for the land, the native people like us the native people fight for that land. We got our land, they have to give us our treaty too, but now they want to fight they want to go fight the whites eh. And the whites they don't know they going to hang on if they don't keep on. They keep on going in their time because their the stronger themselves, they got maybe ten whites kids in the house, them ten white kids they going to fight the native in years come. And for the natives they don't rush for his land his treaty is going to be bare. It's time to change, jump over the fence, never mind follow your right and you going to have your rights all the time.

(END OF SIDE B)

(END OF TAPE)