

Albert Gardiner

21 AUG 1999

Tape #2 - Interview #1 - Ile a La Crosse/ Sandy Point

Michef Translations

Tape 64 minutes

Q 2:00:57 ... tell me what your name is and how old you are.

Q What's your name?

A Albert Gardiner

Q How old are you?

A 66, I was born June 9th, 1933

Q You were born here?

A Ile-a-La-Crosse

Q You grew up here?

A Yes, I was brought up here

Q Sandy Point?

A Yuh!

Q 2:01:17 Would you tell us how you made a living and what you did here when you were young

A 2:01:20 Well, I'll tell you, what as far as I can remember, as I got bigger, we re-ried on my dad,

To make a living they were doing wild life, this and that, old time making a living, I used to see what they did, when I was getting a little bit bigger, when I was sixteen years old ... then I started to do my own .. what they showed me to do ... trapping, fishing, you know, everything, wildlife and whatever ...
2:02:05 today.. I still got all that, I don't think I'll ever give up ... till ... I'm old enough to get out.

Q That strength really helped you

A 2:02:16 Yes, yes a long time ago everything was easy, today now ... that time is gone ... everything is getting so expensive ... high priced ...

2:02:36 ... we still look back at the old day prices ... and we still think of those prices ... now ... today ... you got to have money to buy things ... today ... not like a long time ago ... a hundred bucks you could buy a lot of stuff with a hundred dollars ... a long time ago .. today you can't buy very much.

2:02:55 Today now people over look that, the can't see where we came from, with this new generation when you try to tell them how it was they don't believe you. Because they never seen that kind of life.

They were raised in a good easy life. Our grandchildren, our nephews and nieces they don't believe us.

2:03:18 That's why today I bring them here and explain things to them ... where I was raised, how I was raised, how I made a living ... what I done in my life ... just like how to make a fire outside in winter time, about wildlife... this and that ... I would show them just about everything so they can learn ..

2:03:40 maybe someday in the future they'll know what to do ... how to snare rabbits, fishing, in the winter time, summertime . . .

2:03:52 ... all kinds of things. I just keep on doing them things, I take them out of school on weekends sometimes ... when their off I bring them over here or take them to my cabin , there I keep them one or two nights, just show them ... what kind of living I done in my life .. then they get to know from there.

Q 2:04:10 By living off the land and learning from the land ... does it help them when they move to the cities?

A 2:04:20 Yes, they understand good, they don't doubt what I say, like they believe me ... even if they didn't see it. Me I taught them, One of these days they'll believe what I was talking about and what I was telling them to do in there life ...

2:04:45 ... that's what I taught my children ... just like in the fire ... when I go to the fire (Forest Fires) ... a lot of these young guys ... anyplace ... these young guys ... these young guys they don't even know how to fight fire .. they don't even know what a fire line means ... Me, when I used to work for resources

2:05:04 ... sometimes I take four guys with me .. I show them the fire line, I get them mad all the time, cause I walk to fast, they don't want to go with a caribou they tell me (laughs) ...

Q 2:05:20 There's a lot of times people say the way he was raised on the land and from the things that he did he learned to be stronger which helped go through life

A 2:05:33 Yes, that's very true... the land that's my life

Q 2:05:36 A person comes a long way in learning to live on this land, getting strength from it he will carry it throughout as he gets older ...can you tell us why you like the land so much?

A 2:6:56 Well, I'll tell you, my dad had told me, like this land here where we used to live, we'll never lose that, that's why I like it, that's your life and I believe that.

2:7:14 That's why I never left it, my dad had told me, he used to show me, how to make a living, I used to go with him since I was 16 or 17 years old, out on the trap line I used to follow him then, we'd stay in a tent, never through the land this way, you've got to have it, it's a living and everything else..

2:7:42 (ka-kee-taw-pwas, ta-pwao) soon, finally old age was given to me, I never was poor, (2:7:51) when I go trapping 2:7:53 .. ___? ___. He showed me how to walk fast, he was a fast walker, my grandfather, ten minutes he'd leave you, you got to run to catch up to him (2:8:05) when we used to walk around, he used to walk fast, not slow

Q 2:8:17 That, like at Sandy Point here, tell us how they made a living here in the fall, winter spring and summer.

A 2:8:32 Well, that's what it's about here, long ago, wildlife, trapping in the fall and in the spring still trap for muskrats, beaver and in summer fishing, and that's it, just keep on wildlife year round, 2:8:58 that's why all the people here, like Willie Morin (???), they liked it and it meant a lot to him, and he was sick all the time to, he didn't come that much.

Q 2:08: ? Did they grow gardens?

A 2:10:?? Oh yes, they used to grow gardens, potatoes in the gardens - That's where Grandfather used to have a big garden - potatoes he used to plant (2:9:21) Then over there to ___? __ they had horses, cows, 2:9:26) There was big barns over there by the lake.

2:9:32 and that was making a living, and they picked berries the old ladies, in the summer time, they'd can the and garden stuff, the vegetables in a sealer they canned it, (2:9:50) they'd put it away for the winter ... in the winter time then we'd eat them. (2:9:58) nothing we'd be short of potatoes, they never buy potatoes in a store, get them from here only, that's how we lived a long time ago, Harry, he knew, but Harry he was getting bigger, finally most of the time his was in Green Lake, us we stayed here, my dad, (2:10:30) then finally he married, had a little house over here by the lake, he moved there, That's it, that's our life us, that's why we're always here (2:10:48)

2:10:44 We like our country, this is where we lived, we can't forget it, That's all right we stay in town 2, 3, 4 days ...(very soft) . Johnny's the same way, same thing with Johnny.

2:11:00 All his traps and all his gets on life, fishing in winter time, then in summer time some times we stay here (2:11:13) The kids they have to go to school, ... long ago there was a convent, that's why long ago everybody was here

2:11:22 The kids used to be in the convent year round, no break, September when you go in September you'd get out in the end of June, nothing, there was no holidays for kids long ago, just straight

2:11:43) The teachers long ago, they weren't that good, mostly nuns, French, like that French man ... today now, everything is different, that's why everyone moves to town now, (2:11:57) the kids, there is no more convent now, the Government shut that off, that's why everyone moves to town, keep these kids in school you see.

Q 2:12:11 Your guys are older now, you see all the kids and what it was like on the land you loved so much, how do you see these kids after being in town now that your getting old?

A 2:12:41 Well, you still won't forget that anyway, you'll still have that in here (points at his head) it's okay if you go away and you can't come down, you still have that in here, I guess that's the way your going to die.

2:12:56 When somethings on your head, it's there till you die, , that's just like me, like grandfather, old George, he was traveling, he used to come by boat, finally he got sick, so they took him to Ile a La Crosse, he didn't want to leave the boat, about a week after he ended up in a hospital it was too much thinking (2:13:22) Its the land, that's why, I'd probably be the same thing .. happen to any one of us, I'd die... me any way, because I really love the land, that's why I always clean our yard where we live .. the house ... always clean .. just like where I live there, it took me two days some times to cut the

grass, but I want the yard to be clean, I respect my yard, (2:13:53) my land... like right there .. that's where old Abraham Morin (2:14:00) Where I am where my house is, after he died, then I bought that lease, I move out from here, I went over there, Johnny was still here that time I left, but after that he built a house, over this side himself, (2:14:18) and I guess your dad they went to Beaver River them, we were all separated, us, me and Johnny we stayed here in the ___ (sue-wak) (2:14:27) but it's because of the land, it's like your really rich, I think about them lots, it helps me to think about my land (2:14:50) I got more power, I think nothing of it, as long as I'm at where I was born, where I grew, started my life (2:15:09) I never started doing my own life till I was 16, I used to go with my dad trapping show me how too ... he used to leave me in the tent over night ..

2:15:22 I had to be there, I used to be scared like that, I didn't want to sleep there all night, but I had no choice It was scary. He had to test me, He'd try me out, after 1 or 2 nights, than I didn't mind, finally I got used to it

2:15:47 Today I'm always alone, when I go to my cabin, sometimes I'm over there about a week, two weeks, I like it, I go fishing, hunting ducks and rabbits, I eat everything than I bring them to Ile a La Crosse and cook them and I sell some (laughs)

Q 2:16:08 Do you want to say any more?

A Huh?

Q Do you want to quit now or do you want to say more?

A 2:16:43 I want to tell about long ago what I seen, It was poor here, just like, we didn't have the modern things, like radios to find out what the weather is when you want to know (2:16:59) But the old people used to know which kind of weather its going to be, they'd look at the moon, grandfather anyway, you see the moon, the way it looks, it'll tell you which way the weather is going to be (2:17:06) you got to have that experience what he had,

2:17:11 just like the sun the way it is on the 11th of this month ... I looked at it.

Mu-uck-ooo-chin Still it be a nice day for a while, for maybe 3, 4 days and after that... don't know... full moon... a weather change ...

2:17:33 just half now ... little over half ...(a sliver of a moon)

2:17:38 that's what you got to know, my dad when I used to go with him, he used to tell me

2:17:48 If it sits like this (crooked) travels like this, on your finger here that's when it's going to be a bad day (2:17:56) if it travels (points up) straight up (2:18:00) that's going to be nice weather for a while, maybe 2 or 3 weeks, that's what he'd tell me and he'd know if it was going to be windy or if it was going to be cold ... they know it, they knew it, they'll tell you how it was going to snow, they used to read bee hives and other things that's the way it was 2:18:25 if the bee hives are hanging high, it's going to be deep snow mostly on the ground.

2:18:40 I've known when it's going to snow, for the last 4 or 5 years, it doesn't get cold now, long ago it would get 50, 60 below, you had to get up 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock in the morning, already they'd be hooking up the horses, away they'd go. 2:19:08 they'd set up the tent on the hay rack, ... they used to put a tent there, a little stove they put there for when it got cold when they're freighting 2:19:17 they'd go inside the tent and warm up. I don't see that now a days, only skidoos only, (laughs) I never seen a horse out on the lake for I don't know how many years. At least here in Ile a La Crosse, but dog teams for the last 2 years here, Jerry ... (2:19:45) had some, you had quite a few dogs huh?

Yes (background)

There good, that'll come back yet, them again, just like old times.

Maybe not right away

10 or 15 years it'll come back

Q 2:20:05 So, you thought a lot about how you lived here in Sandy Point, you had a real good life

A 2:20:18 Oh yes, I can't complain, when we used to live with our parents here, they were really moving, doing there lives the both of them were working, my mom and my dad, my mom was working inside the house my dad was working outside, and us we used to help our mom, haul water, wood and

everything, 2:20:47 we weren't poor or anything ... now, it's harder for people to survive, now I see hardships... not then

2:21:06 ... lot of times I was hungry, lot of times I feel sorry, specially in the spring, I start thinking, sometimes right here this area ... getting water.

I never seen anybody, sometimes I get lonesome and sad, just like everybody's gone from this land, everybody's out, but than school, lot of times I come here and stay I don't see anybody around here ... that's when I start to think...

Q 2:21:52 Maybe you were thinking about the land?

A 2:21:53 No, I don't think so, probably over school, the kids ... the kids and school ... I don't have kids now, now just the grandchildren that I keep once in a while, (2:22:07) that's there little wagon, the miss us too.

Q 2:22:17 And now, today, men, what do they do with the land?

A 2:22:22 Boy, that's one thing I'll tell you about this land, I don't know if they understand that way or not today, this new generation. It's all the kind of life they have, they got jobs all over, I don't know if they could understand just like us ... they come here and they camp here one night and all over the place, not like us, we were born here (nee-tow-kay-yak) over here (he points) I was born and I was bought up here.

2:22:05 We used to run around all over here and play since we were small, running around, we had a lot of fun, I remember that, we were well off, we were well off, but they were strict then, what ever we were told, we had to do it ... otherwise ... you got a licking, like today, you can't touch a kid now ... you'd go to jail now, huh? (laughs)

Q 2:23:40 Well, that's enough

A Okay

2:23:48