

Elder Interview of Georgine Morin (A:)
Place: Ile-a-la-Croose, Sask.
Date: July 3, 2001
Interviewed by: Lilah Morin (Q:)
Transcribe & translated by: Wayne Morin
Present at interview: Anna Ryding, Brenda MacDougal
Type of equipment used: 8mm-video recorder c/w cordless microphone

Time

00:01:34

Q: What is your name?

A: Ah! Georgina Morin.

Q: When were you born?

A: Ah! May the 10, 1924

00:02:01

Q: What is your Father's & Mother's names?

A: Edward and Aldina Caisse, so I was a Caisse before, before I got married.

Q: What do you remember about them?

A: Well, I don't remember much because I was just 2 years old when my dad past away so I don't know, I don't know my my Mother, my dad and my mom cause my grandmother raise me, and ah! When I was 12 years old my grandmother past away, since then I was alone, but I was not really alone Scotees (littlefire) kept me and Uh! I got married that's it. I wasn't hap, I didn't think about the future as I got married young and had children right away. I was 15 years old with a child. I was just a kid, I don't remember much.

Family

00:03:18

Q: No.

A: So I don't know anything about my father, but my dad along time ago those barges that traveled, they hauled, he work on there, he jump he got stabled in the throath (points at throath area) and that's what kill him. Yes!

Q: And your mom?

A: My mom had cancer, yes.

Q: Were they raised here?

A: Yes, yes (pause) I think so there from Ile-a-la-crosse, as far as I know, I don't know. Cause I don't know I was to young that time and da, My mom I know was old, (points) she raised my daughter, she took her away, I was only 15 years old when I had my daughter, she ended up taking her. She raised her. So, she was only 52 years when she died my mother. Yes!

00:04:42

Q: How many of you where in your family?

A: Ah! Louie, Hermaline, Myself, Aguschoo (nickname), 4 of us we lost 3 of them, 7 of us in the family. From my mother?

Q: Yes!

A: Yes!

Q: Which 3?

A: Them, I didn't even remember their names. They were small I was small to I didn't even remember what their names where, (pauses) I was 2 years old.

00:05:24

Q: Who did you marry?

A: Jamie Morin (laughs)

Q: When?

A: August Ah! On August the 15 when got married, but what year, Ah! 39, Yes!

00:05:45

Q: How many children did you have?

A: 8

Q: Who?

A: My daughter Thresa, than Edward, Jeffery, Frankie, Allan, and Dorothy, and I lost 1, 7 right?

Q: Yes!

A: Yes! Ah! the baby, I lost the baby, that's the baby, Dorothy sister, Yes!

Q: After Auntie Dorothy?

A: Yes, after, still born, not, yes!

00:06:41

Q: What did you do along time ago?

A: Like what?

Q: For hobbies?

A: To make something?

Q: Yes?

A: I beaded and sewed, I beaded, that's it I beaded, but I beaded a lot. Everything like that, jackets, moccasins everything, whatever I can do.

Sew/Bead

Q: Did they ever have feast, around here?

A: No, Not that I know, there was never the Indians in the past like today, and everything like that. There was nothing like that, that I can remember.

Q: Did you play cards?

A: Oh! Yes I played cards, poker, played lots. I still do. (Laughs) That all I do is play cards, today. Cards and BINGO, that's all.

00:08:01

Q: How did they say, ah! New years, Easter, Christmas, All Kings Day stuff like that?

A: Early Morning Prayer, Christmas and Kings Day, bosses day; Kissing day, New years and Easter, risen day.

Q: Easter?

A: Easter, yes, risen day, Yes!

Q: What did you do to celebrate?

A: We didn't do much, we went to church, they prayed a lot in the past, that's all we did. We didn't celebrate like today AH! They celebrate for Christmas and everything. Nothing like that, All we did was pray, that's all. (Pauses) We never did anything else.

Celebration

Q: What types of music or songs did you guys listen to, in the past?

A: Past?

Q: Yes!

A: The fiddle, mostly the fiddle things like that, so we dance. We danced a lot, that's all we had to have fun was dancing. We didn't drink we just danced, you know, there was no drinking in the past. Only the men drank not the women. They (men) would gather on Christmas, only the men drank, not, the women. Not like today, they (men) would drink secretly not around children. I don't remember this but I heard stories a long time ago. I don't remember that.

Music

00:10:28

Q: What about weddings, how did they do weddings?

A: Not much, they just got married, some had a dance. They dance at my wedding. No feast, like today, sometimes they would have a collection, not much happened.

Q: What did you wear?

A: When I got married?

Q: Yes!

A: Times were hard, just a plain dress, not like today, nothing fancy.

Q: No?

A: NO! Nothing, just a dress and moccasin didn't even have shoes.

Q: And grandfather?

A: Same with him nothing, just a plain shirt and pants.

Q: What about funerals?

A: They are about the same, same thing, along time ago they was no assistance like today, a wooded box was made, the casket, yes! And we wrapped the body with black cloth and white for the children. That's all! Not like today, everything is done for you.

00:12:21

Q: They had wakes?

A: Yes, but right at the house ah, not like today in a hall, Yes!

Q: Did you do the duck dance?

A: Duck Dance?

Q: Yes!

A: No!

Q: No?

A: No!

Q: Who use to play?

A: Like musicians?

Q: Yes!

A: A long time ago, August Durocher, Samuel Gerard, and a guy from across the lake, now what was his name, that old. In the past the wedding party would travel in sleighs to across the lake to dance, they would dance right in the house not in a hall. They would push all the furniture to the corner and dance right there. (Laughs)

00:13:46

Q: Did we have medicine men?

A: What?

Q: Medicine Men?

A: Boy, yes, yes, Mistado (nickname) was his name, He was really good that one, he was the good one. That's the only one that I remember, and there was other old man that lived at the river. Those are the only two medicine men, but they were good.

Q: Did you use horses, did you have horses?

A: Yes!, I told you that they would go across to go dance, all over. My mom they went to a wedding dance. They came home on Monday; next Sunday they went to church they all got throne out of the church because they went dancing. Even though it was a wedding. Yes! We had a priest that was mean.

Q: Who?

A: Rev. Russell (not sure), he would point at the people. (Laughs) He would point and say you work for the devil. At it was a wedding, it was not for the devil they were just having fun. (Laughs)

Q: Dogs?

A: Dogs to yes, yes dogs to for travel. Yes, horses and dogs, that's all. Those where are cars, we used them to date. (Laughs)

00:16:02

Q: What types of food did your family eat?

A: Well, we never had Junk like we eat today. We had fish, meat, potato things like that, you know, nothing fancy. Even on Christmas we had no turkey, ducks thing like that, meat moose meat ready prepare, dry meat was made, that's our Christmas. We had rice & raisin pudding for desert, no cake back than. Just like today we have all sorts of things. You were rich if you had rice & raisin pudding for Christmas. Even candies, we had a few to eat. We were

Religion

Music

Travel

Food

Giving 1,2 or 3 to eat we didn't waste anything. I remember my mom making candy, she would stretch it. They made candy.

00:17:41

Q: Did your Grandfather or grandmother or your mother or father ever tell you stories about?

A: That is what I mean I don't remember, I was too small and they all died. Only my grandmother she was always happy, she like the fiddle, that is how I remember August and Samuel, My grandmother like these two she like musicians. This is probably the reason why my own children are musicians. I still do me to. I don't remember my grandfather no, not one, not even my father or my mother I was to small, they all died.

Q: Besides here where else did you live?

A: No where, all my life I lived here, never anywhere else. I never went anywhere. Sometimes we would move with my own family, Jamie and I, But I was born here and I'm still here. Never go anyplace.

00:19:09

Q: Where did you live?

A: Right where (points with lips) Jim Durocher's house is, yes. That is were Jamie build it.

Q: He made it?

A: Yes!

Q: What did he use?

A: Well, boards and logs.

Q: Logs?

A: Yes, trees I don't know what else to call them, I don't know, Logs in French.

00:19:56

Q: Do you ever here anybody talk about script?

A: No!

Q: No?

A: I heard the word but never heard what it actually is.

Q: No?

A: No!

Q: Can't remember?

A: No!

Q: What was the Metis way of life like in your community?

A: Me Metis?

Q: Yes.

A: Gee, probably the same as today, same as today, but they made a living didn't have welfare for help. In the past they trapped, hunted and everything like that. Today they don't do that, they depend on welfare too much. Children do nothing, too much welfare. Not like long ago, we. Jamie trapped and fished to feed the family.

Q: How about you?

A: I sewed, sometimes people would hire me and pay me, not with money but others things like clothes and things like that, that was my pay. (Pauses) I never work only Jamie did, all my children were small I stayed home to keep them. I never worked.

00:22:04

Q: How about berry picking where did you go?

A: We go around picking berries, I can them. Jamie would fish in the fall; I can the fish and the berries I picked. I would store them for food to last through winter. I canned everything, fish, duck, meat so nothing spoiled. We had no fridge along time ago. That's the only way we can store our food, ah! To boil it and can it in sealer. I made jams nothing was frozen. We planted vegetables, they were real a good quality. I canned those too, carrots, potatoes we never needed anything we had lots of food. Not a lot of variety, but things we needed. We lived the old Indian way.

Culture

00:23:25

Q: Seneca Root did they pick any around here?

A: What is that?

Q: I don't know?

A: I don't know too, ceneck root! (Laughter)

Q: What is that do you know?

A: What's that? (turns to audience)

Brenda: Seneca root is ah! Something that people from the south use to pick, it's mostly southern Saskatchewan I don't think it grows up here. And they, they sold it to ah American companies, processed it in some kind of food, but I don't know what it is and what it looks like.

Anna: It's a prairie thing.

Brenda: Yah it's a prairie thing, I'll be surprised if you picked it.

Q: I didn't, I don't know!

A: I don't know, I don't know what's that.

Q: When did you learn to speak michif?

A: Well, all my life, that's all I spoke, I never spoke English, I started when my children went to school, Allan use to sit a teach me. I didn't write, nothing at all. Allan use to sit and teach me to speak English, he's my teacher, yes, and to write. Today I can write at least my name, ah, a little bit, I read a little bit, and little bit I speak English, not to good, but at least ah.

Q: Is that all?

A: Yes, (pauses) I never went to school, no.

Language

00:25:10

Q: How about Rugaroo, did you hear stories about that?

A: What's that?

Q: Kind of like a a.

Brenda: Wetago.

Q: Yeah.

A: Oh, Whitikow?

Q: Yeah.

A: This one old lady use to tell stories, Latsinut (nickname) was her name, she told good stories of Whitikow, She never use to tell me, but she use to tell my kids use to go a visit. They use camp over because she would scare them to death telling stories of Whitikow; they would all sleep there with the old lady. (Laughs)

Q: Do you know the story about Big Island, that?

A: You mean the story of the evil bug that lives there?

Q: Yes!

A: No. But I use to hear a story but never, that's a long time ago, I never heard or saw anything since than. Dragon they call it, a dragon lived there, under.

00:26:34

Anna: Orphanage as well, like did they take in children?

A: Yes.

Anna: Yeah.

A: Yes, yes

Anna: Took care of them?

A: Took care of them and (clock chirps in the background), we've been here for a hour already. (Laughs)

Anna: So, do you every remember when you were little and if people that didn't belong to the that Catholic Church?

A: Ah, no I didn't, everybody was catholic, nothing else. Like right now new born again an nothing like that before, no. Just Catholics that's all.

Anna: Was there ever people that didn't go to church?

A: No, everybody goes to church, yes.

Brenda: Even traditional people?

A: Yes.

Brenda: The medicine men?

Religion

A: Yes, religion was powerful a long time ago. Catholic Church was strong, Yes.

Anna: So what did the priests and the brothers do?

A: Like what?

Anna: Like the nuns worked in the hospital.

A: Yes, they both have houses, they were different houses.

Anna: Did the brothers teach in the school to?

A: No, no, no, no, not the priest no. Just, just pray I guess. (Laughs) well, they use to work like in the gardens and stuff like that ay and helping for kids go to school.

Anna: And did they travel like to Buffalo and?

A: I guess so, by boat, there was no highway yes, by boat, yes.

Brenda: Did the priest go hunting with people ever?

A: No, I guess so, I don't know, I don't know, but ah like somebody hunting they use to give them meat for the kids ah in school, convent, yes.

Anna: Like parents?

A: Yes, yes, like the fish, they set the nets and for the kids.

Anna: Did you go to the boarding school?

A: No, no, no.

Anna: You went to the?

A: I never go to school.

Anna: No?

A: No, when my grandma died than I stay with my auntie.

Anna: And that was, that was in Ile-a-la-crosse.

A: That's in Ile-a-la-crosse, yes.

Anna: Did the priest ever talk to your auntie about you not going to school?

A: No, there O.K, yes.

00:29:53

Anna: Did the, do know if the nuns ever went berry picking with the women and stuff?

A: Oh yeah, we use to go, yes, we use to go picken berries a bunch of kids, yes.

Anna: For the Nuns?

A: Yes

Anna: Did the nun's fish to?

A: No, no.

Anna: I seen a drawing somewhere of the nuns fishing, but.

A: Maybe, maybe they use to fish with those hooks.

Q: Grandma remember that factory they use to have over there down in the hospital?

A: I wasn't here that time.

Q: No?

A: No, I wasn't here.

Q: So you never worked there?

A: No, I never.

Q: What kind of patterns did they use for beadwork?

A: Like, like these ones here. We just just draw.

Q: Just draw any kind?

A: Yes, any, any flowers and we use to make them. Nothing, nothing like today, everything.

00:31:03

(Camera shot of moccasins she's wearing.)

Q: Like what, from cards?

A: Yes.

Q: how about midwives were there any midwives do you remember, when you had ah?

A: No, all me in the Hospital. I don't use to go those. But there were some, I know, like a, one is Mistado (nickname) and ah there was lots of them and

Educator

Traditional wear.

Kalvu wife what was her name? You mom is auntie. And your mom is grandmother your Great Grandmother. Those were mod-wives.

Q: Josephine?

A: Yes.

Q: Hah.

00:32:28

Q: What other languages do you speak?

A: Who me?

Q: Yes.

A: Just CREE and little bit English that's all. I understand in French little bit but I don't.

Q: Yes, did all your kids have nicknames, did you give them all nicknames?

A: (nods no)

Q: No?

A: No, just Potty, Jeffery is Okamow (boss), And Frankie Teetwits, the rest Ok Allan.

Q: Everything else we talked about, you never went to school?

A: No, never go to school.

Q: Everybody went to church?

Q: Did everybody take turns raising kids, like?

A: Like foster parent?

Q: All the kids how are they raised, different or all the same?

A: The same.

Q: Yeah?

A: They would take kids like they do today, like in the past my grandmother took me in to raise. The same thing, nothing different.

00:34:18

Q: What did you guys wear, a long time ago?

A: No, pant a long time ago just dresses, yes, that's all, socks and moccasins no shoes nothing.

Q: The kids to?

A: The same thing, yes. (Pauses) It was tough a long time ago.

Q: Yes?

A: Nothing.

Q: I believe that's it.

A: (Nods)

00:34:51

END OF INTERVIEW

Family

Family