

## **Alex Allery Interview**

**Okay we will start off this interview with just as much Michif as you can. You can use a little English if you so choose. First, I am gonna ask you what's your name?**

Alex Allery.

**And your wife?**

Bertha Allery.

**Where were you born?**

Twelve miles south of Yorkton at a farm.

**What was the place called?**

Crescent Lake.

**You then where were you born?**

Boggy Creek.

**Where is that Boggy Creek?**

About fifty miles north of Yorkton. No, east, about ten miles north of Roblyn.

**Is it on the other side of St. Clara?**

Yes. St. Clara about five miles apart.

**But are they all the same kind of people?**

Yes. Same people.

**Were you related?**

Well no.

**Like your parents and that, were they?**

Yeh.

**We'll start again. What was your Dad's name and your Mom?**

Fred Allery was my Dad's name and my Mom, her maiden name, a Pelletier, Philomene Pelletier.

**Where were they born?**

They were all over the place. In the States and Canada. I think my Dad was born in the States. I am not sure and my Mom was born in Saskatchewan.

**Where was she born?**

Aah, in Crooked Lake. That's how you say Crooked Lake in Michif.

**What do you remember of your younger day when you're thinking of your Mom and Dad?**

Well it was tough. Those days were hard. My Dad was always working. He raised cattle. He sold hay. He sold wood and he had a garden. He had a lot of cattle and his horses. His machinery. He had all that, but it was still a lot of trouble, money eh. To try and get money was hard. Ah ah that the kind of work they did, my Dad.

**Is that what your Dad did?**

Yes.

**Did he own a farm?**

No. He rented the land and I have to say this too. When hard times came, they would go digging Seneca root. Yeh.

**Just like gypsies, eh? They would go away?**

Really, eh, for one week, for three days. They would bring home what they could get you know. The roots was worth a dollar a pound.

**Is that what they call Seneca root?**

Yes. Seneca root.

**Where did they sell this? Who bought it?**

There was some Jewish people here in Yorkton who use to buy.

**What did they make from this?**

Medicine. They use to make all kinds of medicine from this. They would buy (excuse me) and they would send it away to Toronto. That is where they

would make the medicine, the Englishmen. They'd make medicine from the roots.

**I imagine they made all kinds, eh? To treat sick people, eh?**

Yes, they made medicine for the doctors, yes, yes. That time, the roots, dry roots. You would have to dry it. The green, you'd sell. Dry roots some time \$100.00 a pound. Some time ten cents a pound. If green, they would have to dry them. Some time fifteen cents a pound. Some time fifty-five cents. It fluctuated; price went up and down. When it went up to a dollar a pound, that was good money in those days.

**When people went digging roots, was there a lot of families that did this? Did they go by wagon?**

Yes, by wagon. Sometime we were by ourselves.

**Did you move there?**

Yes, by wagon, with the tent.

**You would go and camp there?**

Yes. Sometime for two days. Sometime for a week.

**Where did you drink water, then?**

From the sloughs.

**From the sloughs?**

Yes, from the sloughs.

**Was they clean?**

Oh my, they were clean, them days. You could drink anywhere then. Was clean, clean, clean, yeh.

**Where you camped, did they use to make fires there?**

To cook food, they made fire. They use to take potatoes with them if they didn't have money. Rabbits, pheasants, partridges, yeh, yeh.

**They use to live off the land?**

Yeh. Off the land. There is no way you can buy meat. There was a lot you can get off the land. Ducks too, were plentiful. Lots of things, rabbits, ducks, sometime gophers. We would eat them of course. They were tasty. Ha. I wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for them. I would have starved to death.

**They were good, eh?**

Yes, in those days, it was clean, the rabbits, the water, in the sloughs, were all clean.

**They would do this now, do you think?**

Oh a lot. Today, I would never drink water from the slough. You would get poisoned. You would get poisoned. That what happened to one of her sisters. You see this guy worked at the mill, her brother-in-law. They ran out of water, this woman here so they went and got some from the slough. That same night, they had to take her to the hospital. The water poisoned her.

**When you use to camp there and the old people would cook, did you ever eat pulldo eggs?**

Oh yeh. Duck eggs. Partridge eggs. Things like that. (laugh). Thieves. (laugh a lot). All kinds of things like that. It had to be to survive. No town. The towns were far apart and again they carried lots of salt pork, also smoked pork. They would cook with potatoes. Boy that was good, real good. I still make salt pork, me. First they would boil the fat. You see, you have to use a lot of salt.

**Do you have to put le goh?**

No, but when you made leg soup, then you'd have to put le goh or some bacon, eh, that's it. It use to taste so good as our main food and well that's the only way we stayed alive. They would make bannock outside. Well, my mom, the women would cook outside in a frying pan in an open fire.

**The old ladies sure use to cook very good, eh?**

Yes. Today it's impossible for them to cook this way. Me, I can still live like we did long ago.

**Yeh?**

You bet, you boy. I don't need electricity for me to stay alive. I have a wood stove, a lamp, a grease lamp. Have you heard of the grease lamp?

**Is that the one they call the bitch lamp?**

Yeh, the bitch lamp. Times were tight, but it was cheap. Twenty cents, ten cents a gallon of oil, kerosene some time. And I used kerosene. One gallon would last me two months or one and a half months.

**They didn't use the lamp much. Only when it was really dark, eh?**

Yes, only when its really dark out, but we use the stove a lot. We would use wood in the stove and leave the little door open to give us light in the house. See they didn't do any reading.

**There was no paper?**

Nothing. If you wanted to, you could hold your paper by the fire. They use to play rummy. King Pedro. La barrush.

**La barrush, yous too? You use to play?**

Yeh oh yeh, but long ago, we didn't have la barrush. If I remember correctly, it came out in 1931. It flew in from Manitoba and we caught it here as it flew by. (Laugh) Yes.

**When you were little, in your family, you were given a chore to do, what was it? What kind of work did you do?**

I use to have to look after the cattle. I'd feed the cattle, did have to with the calves. We use to milk the cows too and we use to feed the pigs. We tended to wood too.

**What kind of wood? Fire wood or pickets?**

We would get a load of wood of sorts and bring it to town here to sell some time, firewood by wagon.

**How did you sell it?**

By the wagon full for one and a half dollars and by the cord there too for a dollar and a half. Sometime two dollars.

**How did you bring the wood in?**

By sleigh or by wagon, or some time just the horses. They use to sell a lot of wood here, eh, for money. I was small then.

**Yeh, they had to make a living long ago and we use to bring hay too, eh, hay too?**

Yeh, my Dad use to sell. They would also sell eggs here in Yorkton and some time cream and some butter. When you'd bring cream in the wagon, it was hot days, by the time you got it to Yorkton, it would already start to turn into butter. No use trying to sell this. They would buy salt for five cents and they'd put the salt in the cream for their own use and eggs we got fifty cents a dozen. Yes.

**That is how you made a living, eh?**

Yes, that is how we made our living, eh, ha.

**When you were little, did you have brothers and sisters?**

Yes.

**How many?**

Two brothers. Five sisters.

**Are they still alive?**

No. Two of my brothers died and two of my sisters. One little girl at age three died. Her heart killed her (heart attack) and one of my brother. Had his own farm and me too, my little farm. We were coming home from his farm in my truck. That is where he died while we were traveling.

**From what?**

His heart. My oldest brother. Yeh. If he was still alive, he would have been forty-eight years old now.

**Are you talking of long ago?**

No. It was twenty years ago when my brother died and my one brother he died on New Year 's Day. Him, he died of cancer. And long ago when someone died, the people valued this with great respect when they'd sit at wakes.

**Yes. Talk about that a little.**

Just like the time my Dad died; he was seventy-nine. That was young. I miss my Dad very much, okay. He died at the house. He died with cancer. That's what killed him and when he died, they put him on boards. They put a sheet on the boards so that he would stiffen up straight. That why they have board, see the corpse gets stiff quickly and this way you just lift it this way and put it in the coffin.

**Who took care of you Dad's body?**

My brother, my mother and my uncle.

**They had to clean him?**

Yeh, all that. They shaved him. You know the time my brother gave him a shave and two days later. You see they use to keep a body for three days, usually we would have to have the wake for two days. The third day we brought him here to Yorkton to bury him. My uncle had a little truck. That's where they put the coffin and us we came by wagon to Yorkton to come to the funeral.

**The thing you were going to talk about when your brother gave him a shave?**

Yes my brother shaved him. You know two days later and this is no lie. This really happens. Just like his beard was grown out again. The skin doesn't die right away and that why and the beard forces its way out a little, but not too long you know. It was clearly visible. Yeh. You can see it.

**What about the prayers and the prayer beads?**

Yeh. That's long ago.

**Today, they don't know much about church mass or prayer beads?**

No. You see they'll hear this.

You had ask me what kind of work I had done. I did a lot of work with my wagon and my horses and I worked at the mill for ten years.

**Talk about what you were gonna say.**

What's that?

**When someone dies, you can't startle anyone, you said?**

Oh, yeh, yeh. You go to Crescent Lake and people there will ask you, "How are the people back at your home doing?" What we use to say is he's been covered with dirt is what we used to answer. That way you don't startle the person you talking to. They know right away what that means. He been buried, but this way, you don't startle them. You don't say he died. The word died is sometime too much to handle. That's like the way you say in English "a shock." That's it, yes, yes.

**So it's a better way of telling the people the bad news?**

That's right. That a way of respect. People in those days had a lot of respect for one another. Yes. He he. That's how it went.

**You sure lost a lot when yous lost your Dad.**

Yeh.

**Talk about that. You lost a lot.**

He was the boss of the house such as when to cut hay, when to bring in the cattle, when to saw wood with a saw and a little engine. He had his machine. He had his own outfit. After he died, now, there was only us, my Mom and the kids. I was the oldest. Three had already left home, two of my sisters and my brother and there was four at home. I was in the middle. The brother next oldest to me was a lot of years difference.

**Oh, just like two families?**

Yeh, just like that, eh he. But we all had the same mother and father. That's how it was. But me and my sister is six years apart. One of my older sister. Yes.

**So you started another family?**

Yes, that when my father died. We had to with Mom. Have like meetings. Family talks. Preparing what to do for the winter. That's when it was hard. Oh, it was hard.

**But you were able?**

Oh yeh, we were able. Yeh. We were able. My mother, she was pretty cranky too. Just me, I didn't go to school. I never went to school, but I took night classes when I was grown up. All my older siblings went to school, but about five or six miles. I was just a little boy and I couldn't go never school, but I was able to survive by working all over.

**What kind of work did you do when you were grown?**

I worked for farmers, stacking and grain, made granaries. We use to thrash, what the Métis call it, thrashing grain with machines and forks and thrashing machines is what they called it, all the people.

**Did you use steam machines?**

No, gas machines were already in use. Steamer were already the past. My father and brother use to use them.

**Did you go thrashing with your team?**

Yes, my rack, my wagon, my team.

**So did they pay you?**

Yeh, they paid me money. It was \$1.35 per day for your team, your wagon, your rack and yourself.

**Was that good pay then?**

It was not too bad.

**They fed your horses, didn't they?**

Yes, they fed the horses and we also were fed.

**Where did you sleep?**

In the barn or in the stable under the rack.

**Did you ever sleep in the granary?**

Yes we did, but the granaries were starting to fill. We had to sleep outside or in the stables with the horses.

**The straw was clean?**

Yes, the straw was clean and our towels and cardboard under us and things like that.

**Did you have blankets?**

Yes, we had blankets.

**Did your blankets some time blow off you?**

You have to hang on or you would freeze.

**Was it cold?**

It sure was cold, boy.

**When you'd get up real early, what would you have to do?**

As soon as we'd get up, we go to the stable, comb the horses and brush them and feed them. You get things ready to go to work. When you're done, you go to the house and have breakfast. When your done breakfast, seven, seven-thirty, you have to get the things you need for thrashing right away. Yeh. Right now, yes, and for dinner at 1:00 o'clock we come and eat. The horses eat. After dinner when time was up again, we go to work and when we were just about done one farmer. We would work at night too with lanterns, yes, lanterns. Out in the field, we didn't need the lanterns to see the sheaves. We knew where they were. Sometime with the help of the

moon. Only when you brought your load to the machine that when we'd use the lanterns so you can see how far from the machine you are, and to see you don't run over anything and when we're done thrashing, we would pick every up from under the feeder where the grain has fallen. That's when you need the lanterns. Sometime at 9:30 at night.

**Did you bag this grain you picked up?**

No. In the granaries, right away, the machine would take it there. Sometime we'd thrash till six or seven o'clock to finish this farmer. In the morning, you'd go to another farmer and there again, we'd work all day.

**Do you do this for a month or what?**

To my recollection, I thrashed here in Saskatchewan for fourteen days and fourteen days in Alberta. I went by freight train to Alberta. I didn't know anybody so it was just as well I go away. I hopped the train on Betts Avenue here in Yorkton and when I got to Calgary, hungry and poor. I think so, yeh. When I got to Calgary, I didn't now anything. No and it was a big city to us then, already. We've never seen a big city before you. So the time I got to Calgary, so I went thrashing there for a farmer for fourteen days at eight dollars a day. Oh boy that was very good. See I had money as I worked here for fourteen days just before I left.

**What use did you make of your money? Did you put it in the bank or in your wallet?**

Right here. I put it here (laugh) and some in here. I bought myself some clothes. Me here from Saskatchewan. The first guy to get cowboy boot to wear at that time. I still wear them.

**You walk better in them?**

Oh, wow, yes and again when I ride horses. I feel safe in them. No they were like this long ago. Some were made of pig skin and I bought myself some clothes.

**The kind you wanted?**

Yes. When I got here. When I got home, all the people looked at me of how well I was dressed. I was proud, eh.

**They didn't like that because you were dressed too nice or what? Like a big shot?**

Yes. Oh you too, you know what that is, eh. Yeh. But no, they looked at you from the corner of their eye and talked about you, cause I was proud. I was not proud. I was glad to be all dressed up. I use to like that.

**Maybe they were a little jealous?**

Yeh. You can say that.

**That is suffering us today, eh?**

That's it. That's the most awful thing today. Also tobacco. I remember when you smoke, when you make cigarettes, five cents a pack with papers. Five cents a pack and cigarette papers were there. Arthur was the name.

**What about McDonald?**

Yeh. McDonald was there too.

**What about Vogue?**

No. Vogue came in around the forties. You could have did some chewing of tobacco. (laugh) They use to call that snuff here my would have burned off (Joke) (laugh).

**What about what they use to call Little Knife? Did they smoke that too?**

No. No. they use to have what they call the plug tobacco. We are talking about the plug tobacco. Do you remember? My Grandpa use to smoke that. Yes. My Grandpa. My Mom's dad. He use to chew that chewing tobacco. They'd be doing a lot of spitting, eh? (laugh) Bunch of pigs. (joke, laugh again) And my Dad he use to smoke the plug. The plug was about this long, this wide and this thick. It was called McDonald.

**Where and how did he smoke this?**

He would shave a bit off this block. Then he'd crush it here like chewing tobacco and put it in his pipe and he'd smoke this.

**Did they ever smoke what they call red willow?**

Yes.

**And how did they prepare this red wood?**

Yes. They used red wood.

**How did they fix it?**

How? Well, you would have to make the red willow. You have to use red willow. You know redwood. Yes, it's got red bark. Okay you go and get a

piece. You chop it off. You only bring one stick, then you peel off all the red part. Just what's inside. You scrape this off. This is what's call red willow.

**Just inside?**

Yes, just what's inside. What's in between the red part and the stick. Then they would dry this red willow on top of the stove.

**In the oven?**

Yes. Some did.

**What did they put it in? Forks or what?**

They used plates to put the red willow in to dry it. I think they use to mix this with your tobacco. This way the tobacco doubled and lasted longer.

**What about the tobacco, Old Chum? Do you know this one?**

Yes. I use to hear old men talk about this. I still have Old Chum tobacco cans, but they're empty, eh. And they use to call it TORENT, oh yes the FLESH. All different things like that, but tobacco was getting expensive. Up to ten cents a pack is what they paid.

**When did that start, the cigarette smoking?**

Ah, the, all old men did smoke them. That was around the forties, around forties when I started smoking. Me too, we had cigarettes in boxes. I would buy, yes, the boxes were about this big. There was fifty cigarettes in there and your little box really look nice.

**How much did you pay?**

Fifty cents for this box, like one cent a cigarette.

**Did you like this package?**

I don't know. If you've had this package for a while and you didn't smoke much, your tobacco dried up, a lose it all, eh. And a box of cigarettes cost thirty-five cents, twenty-five cents for twenty-five cigarettes.

**I wanted to ask you, both of you, when you got married, where did you live? How many children do you have? How did you make a living when you married? Talk about this a bit. Yes. the two of you.**

When we got married, we had nothing. My Mom gave me a feather tick (quilt). That's the only thing that was given to me.

**Is that what they call a straw quilt?**

No. A straw blanket is different.

**You cover with it?**

No. It's sewn with four pieces, strips all around, than you stuff it with feathers, and then you cover with it. The feathers don't slip down.

**That's what was given to you?**

It's called the feathers put in a sack. It is made the same size as your mattress and you put it on top.

**Wasn't that what they use to use that time, eh?**

Yes, as a mattress. Straw. Hay. They would make a large bag out of gunny sacks sewn together and fill it with hay.

**Is that the kind of bags they used for grain?**

No. Some. The real bags for grain was canvas. Well a mattress made from straw. We could not afford to buy canvas. We had no money. We use gunny sacks. We sewed them together and filled it with hay for straw; that was your mattress. There you were warm. Warm sleep. Here you would cover with your feather tick. Oh yeh and I bought a little truck that time. A 1929 Chevelle converted to a truck. Oh I was proud.

**Oh, I bet.**

Oh, I use drive around. I use to go stoking that time and I had her and we had a little boy.

**How many years have yous been married?**

Fifty years.

**Fifty years?**

Yes.

**How many children do yous have?**

Seven.

**What ages are they?**

Forty-eight, the oldest. Yeh, forty-eight, forty-six. The twins are forty-four. A girl, forty and thirty-six and the youngest is twenty-eight years old. Three girls and four boys.

**Where do they live?**

Two live in St. Albert. They're working. One is the manager of Remco memorial. He's the manager of Remco in Prince Albert and the other one is working for his brother and one, the oldest is in Regina. CKRM, the radio. He doesn't talk, but he sell advertisement and the youngest runs a restaurant in Regina.

**Where did your children grow up? At the farm? Or where?**

They were all raised at the farm. Not one in the city. All at the farm. Yes.

**What about school? Did they go to any of these little schools?**

Well they were already close down.

**What they call public schools?**

Yes. Some of them came to Yorkton.

**Did they finish their school here?**

Well, four got done. The rest got done after. Was it in Esterhazy? Yeh, well it was closed so then we moved then and we bought a little land eh. That is where we are still living and that's where the children went to school. The three young ones went to high school in Esterhazy. Two boys and one of my girls. They went there to high school in Esterhazy.

**Would you say you made a good job? What you said in French today, how you made a living?**

It was fair. Well fair of all the people. We knew the Métis, how poor they were, it was a fair living. Well because you have seen the hard life our old people had long ago. Now today, it's good. We were always working. Me, I work in the potash mine in Esterhazy for ten years and she worked for home care for seventeen years just like a nurse looking after sick people.

**Did you like doing that kind of work?**

Yeh. Taking care of old people. Oh yeh. It had to be done. If you don't like an old grouch, then don't work for them, because they want you be kind and speak to them nicely.

**And you then, did you like your job at the mine?**

Yeh. I liked it.

**How did you start working at the mine?**

Well I went and told a lie.

**How?**

I will tell it to you good. You want to know?

**Yes.**

One of my sons went to work in Quebec at an ore mine. He went to work there and he came home. He said, "Dad I want to go to work here at the mine. You too, you should try." There was big mines here then.

**Where is that?**

In Esterhazy. So I took him there. See he can speak French and English. In Quebec, they gave him a job right away although he did know French and English. But he use to talk with the French Canadians over there, they would speak to him in French. He'd answer them in English. So he started here in Esterhazy, but he didn't work there long. He said, "Dad you too, you should work over there. But you have to have grade 12," he said. I tried my best to learn at home of the plans of the mine. So I went to fill in an application form.

**You were prepared.**

No. I told a big lie and I filled the paper here. The doctor fill it. I did fill anything, me. I went and give it to the head people, eh. I came home. Two days later, the phone rang: "Well Mr. Allery come and fill in your application for work at the mine," they said. Oh for sure. I got in my truck and went to the mine. How am I going to lie? I can't write, I thought, so I went in to the office personnel, eh. I had my hand in here like this. I hid it so I went in the office like that and a girl was working there. The secretary said, "Well hello. How are you, Mr. Allery?" "I am fine," but in English. "Fill this paper up," she said. So I took the paper, but my hand is in here this way, my hand is sore. I told her I hurt my hand a little this morning and it's hurting bad. I can't write with it. I told her a big lie.

**That's what you call survival.**

That's right. "You fill it and I'll sign it," I said to her. She fill it all. All of it for me, grade twelve. She was top education. She filled it for me. I don't know what she wrote; she gives it to me. She hands me the paper. Now, I had to use my left hand to sign my name so she won't see my hand. So I

went home. You can come and start work the day after tomorrow. I'll see you day after tomorrow. Right away, boy.

**You had the job right away?**

Yes. A carpenter, eh. I didn't need blue prints. I knew how to do it. So we went to the city to buy a hard hat, boots and even a coverall. Your talk about little John. Yeh. That's it. So now I am working. I had to be brave. You see they kept looking at me. They kind of want to push you around, but they don't do that to me. I push back, eh. You know boy they test me but I test them right back. They gave me a few slaps, I give them a fist back. Yeh. So I worked there six months. Soon, to personnel came the big people. Head bosses came here. "Allery, come with us." Ah. I walked behind this guy, but I had an idea what this was all about. Then they asked, "How did you get here? How did you start working here? You did writed in the form? What did you do? How did you do it?" they asked. Oh, my hand was hurting that time I said. I asked her to fill it for me and I sign it. That's how it was filled. I had to tell them. That how come I am here. I worked there for ten years, but then I get pneumonia. Four times in those ten years. The fourth time, it was double pneumonia. I was in the hospital here for three weeks from that. So I had to quit. I cried when I had to quit. You see the money was good. I talking fourteen years ago. Pay was fourteen dollars an hour. That was good money and everybody on the job liked me. I don't know why.

**So you got into horseracing. How did you start this?**

I raced in Winnipeg, big horse race, the Métis called it.

**Yous had horses all the time?**

Yeh. We had horses always and work horses. My Dad, my brother had them too.

**Where did the horses race?**

Here in Yorkton. All over around here in Melville and that.

**Was it wagon race?**

No. No, on horseback or chariot with two horses on the chariot.

**And on horseback too?**

Yes. On horseback too.

**Did you ever win?**

We use to win a lot. During the Depression, before the war started, I think one day we made \$420.00.

**Hard times that time.**

Oh yeh, Good money. Yes. Very good money. I was twenty years old when I started riding. After that, I went away. I went west of here. That where I went to live. I worked for the cowboys. They called in the west.

**Did you work for the ranchers?**

Yeh. I worked for registered cattle ranch, but I use to sneak off to go ride at races with the wagon. Oh yeh.

**Wagon race?**

Yeh, oh yeh. Then when I came home I got married, eh. I got thoroughbreds from the States. I had my own horses. Also I had small horses for wagon races. In fact, I still have them. I got lots of trophies from my pony wagons. And now well, I still have horses.

**Do you have palominos?**

No. My father use to have them work horses. Big black horses too. For the harrow. Things like that.

**I want to ask yous something. As we speak here in Michif, we say in Cree, eh? What do yous think about our tongue? Do yous think we'll be able to teach the younger people?**

Some.

**Some?**

Eh, he. I had two girls and one boy that loved speaking in Michif, but the other, we never spoke to them to see if they cared for the language for sure.

**Where did yous start speaking Michif or Cree?**

Well when I started school, I couldn't speak a word of English. When I'd say yes, I would nod my head like this. For no, I'd do this. For I don't know, I'd shrug my shoulder, that all. That was her English. That was my English.

**What about your Dad? Your Mom? Your Grandpas? Your Grandmas?**

Well they spoke in French after they got married, just in French. My Grandpa got angry, "Don't you ever throw away your language," he told them, "Speak in Michif, not in French."

**He was strong of his tongue?**

Yeh. So then they throw away their French and now they spoke only in Michif. We understood French, but when we went to school, they only spoke French and English there.

**What was you Godfather, Grandmother and Grandfather? Your Mom and Dad?**

Ah, my dad, George Paul, his parents, his father Solomon Paul his mom Mary Barsie.

**And your Mom?**

John Baptiste Langen. My Mom is Marie Langen her Dad John Baptiste Langen, and her Mom is Mary Ann Pelletier.

**Where did their parents come from?**

Well my Mom's parents come from the States. St. John, North Dakota, that's where they lived, but they came to visit in Manitoba. My Mom was born while on this visit in File Hills; that's where she was born. Her Mom died so her uncle raised her in Manitoba. She grow up there and that's where she met my Dad and got married. You have heard of the language, Michif Cree. You know what I mean eh?

**Yes.**

Well that's how we speak. Us too. We called it Michif. You speak it at home? Some time some time, when we fight we speak Michif. (laugh) That way nobody understands us. (joke) When I started school I couldn't speak in English. I didn't want that for my children.

**To have a hard time like you?**

Yes so we use to speak to them in English, just to prepare them. Now today, I guess their children speak in English eh? Yeh.

**Did you have a lot of grandchildren?**

Fourteen times.

**Do you have any great grandchildren?**

Yes seven and thirty grandchildren, or is it thirty-eight? I don't know, there's too many. (laugh) But great grandchildren, seven. I don't know how you say that, oh yeh, quite a large addition we've created.

**I guess that's just about all. I would like to thank you both.**

Yes, I thank you for having us here. I enjoyed telling a bunch of lies. (laugh, joke) No. I told the truth about our life. When I started at the mine, I lied when I put my hand here. So I guess I'll have to put my hand here again. Eh? Ha ha.

**Okay I have two more interviews.**

Geo.

I enjoyed being here. I had fun, but I ate too much chicken last night, (laugh) but I loved it. Thank you.

**[Closing prayer]**

Dear God we ask you to please help us as we all have a long way back home to their families. Help us to get home safe and again I ask you Lord see that we can all meet again. Help us to work good. You are the one that knows us. You own us....

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