

Mrs. Michael Gould
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--My father didn't have too much education but my mother knew how to read the Indian prayer book. My father made a livelihood by making butter tubes and axe handles, and he didn't have a horse or a car. He carried his load on his shoulders, and in the winter time he used a sled. When he had made enough butter tubes or axe handles he would load up his sled and go selling. When he came back his sled was loaded up with all kinds of food. His return was a time of great joy for us although he wouldn't buy any fancy food, it was just simple food. We had a cellarful of potatoes. In the fall he started to get his winter supply of flour and corn meal. A meal cake was what cake would mean to you. When we didn't have a meal cake for a certain length of time we craved for it.

One kept a cow that is how you get your milk for your tea. There was no sugar, we used molasses in our tea. Indians were poor at that time. A woman would make baskets. She would carry these baskets on her back. When she went selling she would carry these baskets on her back. When she went selling she would walk great distances. She would carry whatever she got in exchange for her baskets. She didn't get paid in money. She was paid in food. Today that isn't done. And then there were religious instructions three times a week, children were taught how to read hyroglyphics. Children were instructed, and the one who were teaching them explained the meaning of the hyroglyphics in Micmac.

I was 22 when I got married, but I was never permitted to go out after dark. My father would say, "don't go out at night or you'll meet up with the devil". The symbol of the devil in the hyroglyphics is a very hard looking character. You can be sure I obeyed my father because whoever would want to meet up with anybody like that. After we came home from school my mother would sit down with her book and she would instruct us.

Lil--But did they teach you in the ways of making a livelihood?

--Yes. After I got married I started making baskets, right away to help my husband. He would go out to get the supply of wood. We got along good.

Lil--So your husband had already been taught how to get the different varieties of wood and the operations necessary to get that wood for making baskets.

--Yes, when my grand son's Fred and Gaberial received their first communion I instructed them myself. I taught them the Indian catechism. Fred is a smart man I don't know why he can't get a good job. He's got grade X11 education.

Lil--Indians didn't take much when they went in the woods. They didn't take any cooking utensils with them.

--No, they used birchbark to make their utensils.

Lil--Indians used to leave the reserve at certain times of the year to make a living like fishing and trapping for awhile. What was the place the Barra Head Indians mostly frequented?

--You make a living in your own community you didn't go to other reserves. They didn't bother the other Indians. Barra Head people stayed in their own area, mostly they got their wood from the white people in the area. White people are not allowed to be stingy with their land.

Lil--I've often heard stories where the Indians been chased away from white people's land when they cut the trees of some white man's property.

--My father told me this. They used to go to West Bay and all those places. My brother Tom and Michael couldn't be chased away. They almost killed Michael Hay Cove in MacNabs Cove one time. He tried to chase them away from his land. Michael Hay Cove came to my house to tell my father of the charges that he was going to press on my brothers. Well, he was told, it is your own fault what almost happened to you. If your were killed there is no law that could prosecute the Indians. This is what my father told him. Indians own all of Canada.

Lil--Indians here at one time divided their land. Tracts of land were allotted to families at their Council meetings. So whatever land you were given you had to make your livelihood from this piece of land and it's

resources. Hunting and trapping.

--Yes, fishing for eels. All kinds of game. You could cook an eel in many ways. You dry an eel for a couple of days and it is like steak. This is breakfast food. This is the Indian's steak. They salted the eels too.

Lil--Did they stock up on the supply of food for the winter.

--Yes. They stock up on food in the fall. People at that time respected food. Nowadays people don't care. People don't even make the sign of the cross after they have eaten.

Lil--That is true.

--When a child stepped on some game that the father had brought, this meant that the father wouldn't be able to get anything from hunting the next day. (Taboo)

Lil--Do you know any Indian medicine?

--Yes. I don't recall too many of them. There's pul-bem-wip-quel and mag-mig go-way.

Lil--What do you know of the history of Chapel Island. For instance I have heard stories of what the Indians used to call que-dull-ok da-dim. Do you remember hearing stories about it.

--Yes, but it happened so long ago and I don't remember the stories that I heard about it very much.

Lil--Who were those people that they greeted Mohawks : or Micmacs?

--They were Mohawks.

Mohawks were not allowed to come here but the Kwed dull dat dim was something like a Peace Treaty. Men would wade out from their canoes to greet them.

Lil--Mrs. Mary Bernard recalls a little bit of this ceremony. She says that the men had long poles and they had a mock fight on the shore and they made lots of noise.

Mary is younger than me. She must have heard this story from somebody else.

Lil--Mohawks used to torment us by throwing stones at our wigwams one time.

--Those were the Maliseets.

Lil--One of those Ah wisko is buried in Chapel Island I heard.

--Yes, I think he's buried down the shore from where the old cross once stood in Chapel Island.

--Many people have told me that same story.

Lil--When was the last time you had festivities at Christmas?

--The last time was when the Indians arrived here. (Centralization) Noel, John, Stephen and Levi were honoured. New Years was _____ People went to these houses and presented a flower to each person. They were expected, a big meal was laid out for them. They did the Indian dancing first and then they ate. Then another flower would be made to get it ready for the next house. There wouldn't be any fights, or there was no swearing. These festivities were done in an orderly fashion. Today there would be a lot of things done. People knew how to enjoy themselves back then.

Lil--Indians treated each other with respect. They helped each other. When one was sick he was given food and firewood. They had frolics. My husband was sick with T.B. a lot. Once in awhile somebody would come to my house and he would tell me to start cooking. I would make dup-kon-asek-a way I usually had corn. And some one would give me eels. I would make an eel soup for them. The men would come and get the wood split it up for us. Today that isn't done. Nobody would work for you unless you paid them. A dollar isn't even enough today.

Lil--Even children, you have to pay them.

--When I go to town and I hire somebody to mind the baby, I have to pay 5.00, 3.00 isn't enough. Indians were good to one another at one time. Indians aren't like that today.

Lil--I think this was due to the religious training that they got as children plus the discipline from their parents. Things would change, if people worked hard to try and revive the old teachings. Children to be taught catechism in Indian and also their prayers. This is when the children will understand fully the lessons in catechism. This is where the people got their wisdom one time ago. Because you understand it more because it is taught to you in the language that you understand it more because it is taught to you in the language that you understand.

Lil--Do you know anything about dyes. They say Indians were able to make their own dyes?

--Yes, they say he made it from the trees. He boiled the wood.

Lil--Alder.

--Yes, they could even make orange but I don't remember what they used. Indians got their tea from a I can't think of the name of the right now but I know they also used pul-lum-wep-kil for tea.

Lil--What did they use for tobacco?

--They used little sticks that they called mog-gog-em-ke geage kel and also leaves. Those leaves grow close to the ground. This is what they used for tobacco. Children didn't smoke.

Lil--The late Mike Nicholas told me that Indians were so religious at one time that they used to say a prayer before they could put on new clothing.

--That is true.

Lil--He also told me that there wasn't so much drinking when he was young.

--That is true.

Lil--You are originally from Barra Head?

--Yes, I was born in Barra Head.

Lil--I heard that the Barra Head Indians used to go fishing in Canso?

--Yes; my father used to fish in Canso.

Lil--Did he have a boat?

--Yes. He would leave in the spring. He would get our clothes and whatever we needed for the St. Ann's mission. He would come home in July for the mission after St. Ann's we left with him. The purpose of this was to get our winter supply of food.

Lil--What is it he usually got?

--Flour, fish, codfish that he dried. We would take this home, we didn't exactly have bacon and eggs.

Lil--But people made their own butter.

--Yes, the people who had cows but not everybody in Barra Head had a cow.

Lil--The ones who went away on those seasonal fishing trips, they were unable to keep a cow.

--Yes, they had cows, one of the neighbors usually took care of your cow until you returned. Our cow was taken care by my Uncle Anthony he never used to go anywhere.

Lil--What about the people who planted. I suppose they were unable to leave their gardens.

--Oh yes, they did after cultivating their gardens they were alright from then on. In the fall when you came back you harvested your crops. After that we didn't go anywhere.

Lil--But the big farmers didn't go away.

--There weren't many who were big farmers in Barra Head. Their barns were made of logs, you don't say, that there were 10 cows in that barn.

--No.

Lil--A lot of things went on the reserves, games like waltzes were played a lot until the cent. started.

--Yes, today they don't play waltzes. Every family used to have a waltzes. That is why the young people stayed home at one time. Today they don't know the right way to lift the waltzes.

Lil--And women were good at doing bead work.

--Yes, and they knew how to use porcupine quills. My mother and your father's grandmother were very good at making quill work embroidery. My mother was also good at bead work and quill work. But I didn't learn anything from her although she used to teach me.
