

Mrs. Noel Moore

Before the white man came to America, Indians were in charge of the land that they themselves distributed among themselves. We have a map in the office which shows these land lots that were granted to families. It has the names of families who used to own these lots of land and the whole of Nova Scotia was divided up. A family had to stay in these designated areas and they would get their livelihood from this land.

- he got wood, animals, fish

- Lil - yes. He made his living from this land so when the white people came to this country they broke up this system. We were forced to move in to reservations. First the reservations we were given were big, eventually the land started to get smaller as more land was sold by the government or by encroachments from the nearby white settlers. Our way of life was broken up with the arrival of the white settlers. This is the compensation claim that we are making. This is the reason why my boss wants me to ask questions on how the Indians used their land. Indians were able to cure themselves - make their livelihood.

- They made axe handles.

- Lil - Yes. These are the line of questions he wants me to ask people. You know Indians didn't have to be operated on until recently?

- That's right. There were no doctors. It was hard to get a doctor. Indians didn't get to go to hospitals, government doctors weren't very good. He didn't know too much. He would give you a linament like white linament, nothing else. This was the Indian doctor that we had in Whycomagh.

So we used Indian medicine. When you sick with colds you boil Indian medicine then after a person recovers from a sickness you make a tonic for them. Tonic was (sa wop sa man) and (mun ska sa men akski) you boil the bark of these medicine. After this liquid is boiled you add molasses to it. You put this in a bottle and this is what you drink. This was the tonic. Today you ask for a tonic from a doctor after an illness. After a bout of flu?

Lil - At one time Indian women wouldn't be taken to the hospital by ambulance when she was having a baby.

- Yes there were grannys. A woman was taken care of at her house. There would be two or three on the reserve. If there were children in that house they would be taken out to a neighbor next door. They wouldn't be there when the mother gave birth. All the houses had upstairs. No matter how stormy it was the children had to be taken out. Granny's will be there until after the birth of the baby. And the mother wouldn't get up for 10 days. At first you don't give her nothing but toast.

Lil - What kind of medicine did they give her.

- Nothing at all. Just gin. Women always had gin for this purpose. This is what they used ever since I can remember. This is the oldest drink, it's been around before rum. Then, when a baby is born, you put a few drops of castor oil in water and this is what you give the baby. They burn a white cloth until it's slightly burned. They all had farmer's stove. They would put a piece of cloth on the stove, you might say this was the means of sterilizing it. It's burned till it's brown, then you put some castor oil on it and put it on the baby's navel, and oh yes, if a salve is required then they make it out of rhubarb root. You grind this till it is like powder, you mix this in the lard, this is good for healing wounds. They they make plaster out of pegoak.

- Do they use midi to make peg o ak.

- Yes and el mog geage amenakski.

(the old salve) they used to grind rhubarb root and they would use

lard or lamb fat. You mix this and it's very good.

And plaster, if one broke an arm or any broken bone, when you want to heal it one would boil el mog geage amenakski. You boil it till it's thick or molasses. It's black, then you put this on the plaster then you put it on the sore part this will mend the bone and heal it.

Lil - So is this hard when it's dry like a plaster?

- No, it's soft. The Indians made a cast one time. There were no casts at that time. They used sticks, these were held by bandage when the sticks were taken off this is when the plaster was put on. They made this, it was thick like molasses they dab this on a cloth they wore this until it's dry and when it's dry it comes off. Then when you have a cold gigwesosol, or pains in your chest-cramps. If one was spitting blood they used mug mig ga way and also yellow roots they boil these and drink and when you have a headache they use root (up pi gill o e mak a way) skunk plant. They grind it and sniff this, it makes you sneeze. It relieves your headache. (recently they made gel gi men ak ski) my sister Margaret's time.

- I am older than her. My father would use skunk plant for a headache. He would snuff that; afterwards he would say my headache is all gone.

Lil - I read, old books about Indians a lot. A white man was telling this story of the time he saw an Indian get sick with convulsions. He said an old Indian woman went in the woods and she brought back some roots and she steeped them and gave them to the sick man. Later on he went back again, eight years after and that man hasn't been sick ever since. He said I am sorry that I didn't write it and study what kind of medicine it was.

- When I was small and there was a sickness going around like measles or chicken pox etc. they would grind the roots of a pogosi when it's dry. She makes small cotton bags, then she fills this with the

powder and you wore these around our necks. We wouldn't get the sickness. It prevented us from catching sickness. There are a lot of pogosi today but nobody uses it anymore.

Lil - What do you call it in English. Is it water lilies.

- No, I don't think it's water lily because it doesn't grow in the water.

Lil - It's not submerged in the winter.

- no, it grows near the beach and mostly Indians grew them in their own back yards,

Lil - Have you ever heard of an Indian medicine called ka goo.

- yes, we used to eat them all the time. We would gather them all the time. They are very hot. We didn't use them for medicine, we just loved to eat them that's all.

Lil - Are they like potatoes?

- When we went in the woods we would gather them and eat them. We used to eat all kinds of things because at that time there were no candies and sweet stuff. There used to be a lot of them growing around the old school house in Whycocomagh. They grew in the ground with long roots, they are white.

- When they are green they are more delicious. At that time you ate anything. At that time when you were sick with the measles or pneumonia, Indians you know what they did was, you had to stay in bed and be kept warm and you weren't allowed to eat cold water, you were given warm water to drink. When you think about this, this wasn't such a good idea because you were kept warm, your temperature kept going up.

Lil - They used alder for fever for babies.

- Oh yes and if you had an awful headache you cut off the bark of alder and you put this on the person's head. This kills the fever, when your head is sore.

They used to boild (gin i quesh ich ek) they grow on the ground. You boil these, they are good for kidney trouble. Sometimes one mixes this with gin. I used to make this medicine for my father but medicine didn't help him because he had cancer.

Lil - I don't know if (gin i quesh ich ek) cured my brother but anyway what cured him was a miracle. He had T.B. in the stomach. My father took him out <sup>OF THE HOSPITAL,</sup> He said, we will stay with him until he dies. He made Dr. Archibald <sup>ANGRY,</sup> mad. My aunt made a lot of medicine for him. He mixed alumn in this liquid. Also my mother's very religious and she got some holy oil from St. Anne De Beaupre and she put this in the Indian medicine that my aunt made for my brother. This is what cured my brother.

- My son Davie was sick one time. A spot appeared in his lung, a gland set in and it broke up and it affected his lung. There was a T.B. annex here in Sydney but it was too full, no beds, so we took care of him at home. He was waiting for a bed. We kept him away from the other children. There was a couch outside. I would carry him to the couch. He would lie there all day. In the evening I took him inside. He slept on the couch in the living room. I would take him inside after all the children had gone upstairs. I stayed with him. He would say to me, mom say a prayer. I would pray. Sometimes he had a hard time breathing he would tell me to pray. He was depending on it. (prayers to help him) I would stay with him all night. One time Noel said, "I don't want him to be admitted in a T.B. hospital because those grown up people have strong germs and they might give him those germs." He made him a sun porch. We used to have a little veranda with a lot of windows (4) on it. He says I am going to call Bob

Paul to make medicine for him. Bob came and made him medicine. He used wine bottles to keep his medicine in. This was like syrup. He would cough. After he stopped coughing he made him another kind of medicine. This wasn't as thick as the other ones. I would put this in a wine glass. We continued giving him this medicine until finally he was cured. I took him to the doctor for checkups. Finally the doctor said, this boy is all cured he doesn't have to be admitted to an Annex. I told him that is because of Indian medicine. I showed him the medicine. He said, I hope it isn't too strong. I said, I don't give him too much. It doesn't contain any poison or dope. I said Indian medicine doesn't contain any poison. I would change his bed clothes everyday. I would boil these first and washed them afterwards. I let them hang on the clothes line until evening. His windows were open, he had a lot of bedclothes so he wouldn't be cold. I would take him to the hospital for X-rays. It showed that the spots were getting smaller and smaller as time went on until it cleared up. He stayed in the sun porch for 2 years.

Lil - that long?

- He had T.B., he stayed in bed for two years with no exercise. He was separated from the children for 2 years.

Lil - I wonder what kind of Indian medicine he used.

- Bob didn't made the medicine. His mother-in-law made it.

Seems like if you are cured by Indian medicine you are much healthier. When Davie was fully recovered he was very skinny. Another time he got sick very suddenly. They had been in the woods that day. I guess he ate something that poisoned him. They went picking berries, and he got sick. It was hard to get a doctor that time. I called the doctor. Indian medicine didn't cure him that time. It was religion that helped him. Ste. Anne cured him. The doctors didn't give him any hope. They didn't expect him to live through the night. I prayed all that night asking St. Ann for help. In

the morning 7 o'clock I had a lot of boarders staying at my house. They were working at Point Edward. They didn't want to go to work until they had heard how Davie was. I called the hospital. They told me, he was improved. He was in the hospital.

- He was unconscious when he was taken to the hospital. He got the last rites. I pinned a St. Ann's medal on his pajamas. I prayed for him. The doctor's were amazed to see him live through the night. They didn't know it was religion that had cured him. I went to see him in the afternoon. He turned over on his side. He said I woke up this morning but I couldn't move. He said they sprayed something in my veins after I was unable to move. His hands were crippled. He couldn't stretch his hands for two months. It was just prayer that helped him but Indian medicine helped him when he had T.B. and he hasn't been sick with ever since.

- Indian medicine is good. What I remember of my father the way he used the <sup>LAND</sup> ~~Lead~~ was we made our living from it. We grow our hay for the animals. We all worked. We planted in the spring we planted potatoes, turnips, carrots and all kinds of vegetables, and beaver. This was enough. We stored this food after harvest in the fall. We took it in. We shelled the beans, peas and corn. We put them away. We ate these all winter. In the fall my father hunted. He sold the fur. He bought flour to last us all winter, corn meal and oat meal. My mother would collect butter, he put this in the tubs and kept it in the cellar.

Lil - She made her own butter.

- Yes. She made enough for the winter. Then she made jams and pickles. The children and I went berry picking in the summer. We got all kinds of berries and my mother made preserves. Then my father fished. He caught cod fish. He then salted them he pickled them. He also fished for eels and he pickled them and also salmon he caught them in the fall and he pickled them. Then also he would slaughter a pig, he pickled this. At that time you couldn't freeze the food. He also butchered a cow and then

he salted it. Then after that there wasn't too much that we wanted. Not too much money, only to get essentials like tea or tobacco. He made tubs and axe handles then he would go away selling. That's the only way he made a living. There was no other income. At that time there were no wash tubs (galvanized) so he made wash tubs and he sold them.

Lil - Did he also make butter tubs.

- Yes and wash tubs and churns that was all so we ate what we grew and my father fished and butchered animals for meat. This lasted us all winter. When my father butchered a cow my mother made lard from the fat. She didn't buy lard at all. She also got her lard from the cow. We use it to fry the fresh fish that we cooked. So what money my father made went towards things like tea or molasses, tobacco for my father. We only had one big meal during the day. This was usually supper for us. My mother cooked the beans that she grew and also soup. She also prepared the corn that she grew, she used to use wood ashes to make the corn softer. She soaked them in water in which wood ashes was added. She used this water to soak the corn in to make them softer. This is what is called (top kan asik ah i way)

Lil - Is this what they did to corn or did they do this to other kinds of food.

- Just corn, beans they just cooked in plain water over night. Then she used to wash and rinse out the beans many times in clean water. We weren't hungry and we didn't have to buy meat. My mother made her own bacon and kind legs she made ham.

Lil - Do you know any more Indian cooking. I know dop kan asik aw way is really Indian cooking.

- Yes it's Indian. One time we planted and we had cows and some time Indians went from place to place, they would live in the woods this is how they made a living.

Lil - they made a living this way?

- Yes. They would hunt and fish.

Lil - They would go to certain places when the fish started to run



like salmon, and other species of fish.

- Yes at that time, you couldn't save the fish so they had to eat them when they were fresh, but they weren't hungry.

- I heard that they could dry the fish.

- Oh yes they did that right through. They dried the fish, but it wasn't us that just did that in Cape Breton, they did that in Nova Scotia. They got all their food when they went camping in the summer then they went home winter. They got all their food when they went camping in the summer then they went home enough for winter supply.

- I read old books, reading about the Indians way of life at the time the missionaries first came. They wrote about us. They said that the Indians preserved fish and means by way of drying.

- Yes they did. They dried their food like fish and meat.

Lil - Do you know if Indians used salt.

- I don't know about that.

- I know they used it for medicine. They called it mineral, but wherever you go, salt water in its way is good anyway. for e.g. if your feet are sore you soak them in salt water.

Lil - Another thing we governed ourselves at one time eg. we had leaders. Indians took care of each other just like what we call welfare today. Widows were helped and orphans and they taught their children you know they taught them how to make baskets etc.

- Yes, basket making was taught, they also taught them how to make axe handles and tubs. My father made tubs. He used a knife to smooth the stakes.

Lil - Did your mother make things like moccasins?

- No, but she made baskets and she went selling and we were busy farming. She didn't start making baskets nor go selling until recently but before she couldn't get around I still remember I used to go with her when she went selling. When my father was healthy she didn't go selling.

Lil - What about the Indians that weren't as well off as your family did they go away to places where they could make their livelihood for a time.

- Yes, they would work from place to place. Noel, I remember

when we used to go for rides in the country. He would point out the places that they lived in when he was growing up. They lived in certain places and they lived in wigwams.

Lil - I wish I could have interviewed Noel.

- Noel was brought up by his mother. I guess she worked by making baskets and selling them. This was her only means of making a livelihood.

Lil - I heard that when Indians went in the woods to go camping they didn't take pots and pans and stuff like that. They would make their utensils out of birchbark. They could even boil water using birchbark utensils.

- Yes, they used birchbark utensils to boil water. When they cooked meat they put it on a stick and cooked it over a fire. This is the way they cooked their food.

Lil - those birchbark containers - is this what they called witch qua o laken.

- Yes. They made their cups too out of birchbark, mostly Indians barbecued their food so he didn't use containers for this purpose. Mostly all Indians had pots made out of cast iron. They were big. This is where they made their bread. They didn't have ovens because they didn't have stoves. In the middle of the wigwam there would be a fire this is where they did their cooking but when they cooked bread they cooked it in an out door fire. There would be a stick over the fire a hook or wire was attached to the end of it. This is where you hang the pot when you are cooking. Their pots were made of cast iron.

Lil - How was the reserve run - did the people help each other.

- Oh yes. They helped each other. The government didn't build them welfare houses at that time. One would make his own house. He would cut logs and then he would take them to the mill to be sawed for lumber and he would build his own house. He didn't buy nails. They used to make their own nails, made of wood but eventually they started buying their nails. My father made two houses, the government didn't give one nail or one window. And then the Indians used to have what you call bla lik (frolic) When you were building your house a lot of men <sup>would</sup> come to <sup>your</sup> house to help you. You wouldn't have to pay them all you had to do

was feed them, that's all. When a person wanted to do something like planting he would have a blalik. Men would come to help you out. This was practiced until recently. When we had our house build, our yard here was full of rocks, we had a frolic. The men would come and help us out. They would crush the rocks, and fill up the holes in the ground to even out the ground. Then afterwards soil was laid on top of this. Now our yard is all man made because near our house the ground was slanted so it wal all rebuilt. It's not filled on one side just the front. We would have a bla lik from time to time. I would feed the men and also when a man was sick, men would go to his house and help him out. They would get his firewood and saw and split it up for him. And also when you knew somebody was sick, there was no welfare back then and even if you got welfare it was very little the most you got was \$ 4.00 a month. People would donate food to the sick person when he didn't have enough food. The neighbors would feed the family. They fed them until one was able to work again. This was done here until recently. Welfare was in effect not long. When Noel and I knew somebody was sick we would go to his house and take some food to them. We did this even in the winter time. We fed them with what we had. We didn't have too much food ourselves, most of us were poor. But when we got some money we bought our groceries when there was some left over we take some to the sick person when he can't work. Today people get welfare. All our children during their school years didn't get clothing by the government. Until Carol Marie. She got \$ 42.00 one time. My uncle Ben C. was the chief then and he got the clothing order for her. Carol Marie was so happy that she got a pair of socks for him

Lil- Did you ever hear of Indians making pottery?

- I understand that they did. Do you know anything about that?

- Oh yes, no I've never seen anybody making it but I've heard about it. They used to use what we Indians call (up-kow) white clay. This is what they use when they made pottery. We washed our floors with - Indians used to make their own brooms, I remember my father used to split wood, he split it finely till it was fine

then he smoothed them with a knife. We also used them as scrubbing brushes because we had to wash our floor. We had hard wood floors. When we finished washing them they were very white. In the spring we used to go out to get white clay. We put this on our floors so our floors would be more whiter. And my mother didn't buy any soap. She made her own. She used gilette's lye and fat. When she made her lard and her tallow what was left over this is what she used to make her soap. She made two kinds of soap hard and soft soap. She didn't have to buy soap. So really money was no good to them. They would make whatever they needed or saved. And when we were children we all worked. We ploughed or we tilled the soil or helped out during the hay season. All of us worked. Lil - and you made your mattresses out of hay.

- No, we used straw. We made out mattresses using flour bags. Our mattresses were very comfortable. We didn't know what the real mattresses were like. In the winter time we put hardwood in the oven we put these in our bed at night. Our beds were nice and warm, because we didn't have furnaces and it was cold in the winter nights were cold.

Lil - When you were a child was there education like schools or were you taught religion.

- Yes, there was education. Sunday afternoons we went to church when we were small. There would be an old man to teach us religious instructions. Indian prayers were taught in hyroglyphics. This is what we used. We read. In the afternoon on Sundays sometimes we didn't go out and my mother would teach us catechism at home. She wouldn't let us play, we had to stay in for a couple of hours to study. Some went to church these were the ones who wanted to study the whole religion. Or we went to church on Sunday afternoons. And we couldn't have our first communion until we understood or know fully certain prayers. So we had to learn those designated prayers. Sometimes you were ten until you could receive your first communion. Nowadays the children couldn't even recite the Our Father and they receive their first communion. There is no such school today. Catechism isn't taught.

Lil - Where did you receive your first communion in Chapel Island?

- No, in Whycomomagh. We never used to go to Barra Head. We didn't start going there until recently. We would go just to stay for Sunday. One time I went I was eight. This was before I received my first communion. I went with my uncle the grand chief. We went by boat. We took along our lunch, a bag full of bread. My two cousins rowed the boat. We stopped and spent the night when we got halfway to Chapel Island.

Lil - How long did they have the mission.

- Ten days. One took a lunch with them they took a lot of flour. They made bread in the big cast iron pots and some cooked their bread in the sand. They baked their bread along the shore. They would build a fire on the shore. When the sand was hot they made a hole in the sand the stones were hot this is where they laid their bread and covered it over and build a fire over this. This is how they made their bread. They could make it anywhere. They never got stuck. There was stove on the island. They used to sell pilot biscuits by the barrels. These were big biscuits. Anyone who couldn't make bread or ran out of bread bought these biscuits.

Lil - What do you think is Indians most favourite food?

- Eels I think, because an Indian wouldn't say I crave for a salmon or cod fish. He would say, I crave for an feed of eels. When he didn't have an eel for a length of time he would crave for it.

Lil - and they used the eel for many different reasons this is what I found out. They used to make their shoe laces out of eel skin and ribbons and fish oil for medicinal purposes.

- Eel oil is good when you have an ear ache. I used it when my children had ear aches. The last supply I had I gave it to Donald. He had a ear ache. When one had an ear ache you put a drop in one's ear, you warmed it up first. It's very clean. When you used other kind of oil like olive oil it tended to be gummy, eel oil wouldn't get like that your ear would get better. When were small we never used to buy our she laces. My father made our shoelaces. He would dry the eel skin and when it was dry he would cut it up in strips and when it was dry he would cut it up in strips the only set backs with eel skin laces was they loosened up when they got wet. We didn't wear rubbers or overshoes, anything like that. Your shoes would be made out of da mok sick gen but they didn't get wet. Eel skin is very slippery when it's wet and you

couldn't untie them. Also Indians made moccasins. They hunted for moose and they saved the skin they prepared the hide themselves and they used it to make their moccasins. They didn't wear shoes. They knew how to make them. They made long ones like boots.

Lil - Were they something like the mukluks today?

- Yes, they were like that. They made their moccasins. They didn't wear shoes they wore moccasins.

- Lil - They made their clothing out of animal skins.

- They prepared the furs. They made their dresses.

Lil - Indians at one time loved to tell legends. Is that true.

- Yes. You know that is one thing I regret. I am sorry that I didn't write out those legends at that time. My frandmother knew a lot of legends. At night we used to have those old fashioned stoves we would put mats on the floor around the stove and at night we would sit around the fire. My father or mother would sit down and tell us legends. No matter how long the legend was I could memorize all of it. I wouldn't even miss one word but let anybody teach me a prayer I would have a hard time memorizing it. But a legend if I hear it once I could memorize all of it. And I knew how to write in Indian. This is what I have regretted many times that I didn't write out those legends, and it was funny that on one else thought of doing it either. And everybody knew all of those legends. Today we would call those legends, fairy stories. They were very interesting this was the only entertainment at that time.

Lil - but some Indias write out those legends. There was a white man who went around the reserve writing those legends that he collected from the Indians in 1885. He interviewed Pierro and other Indians. These men (the white men) after hearing these stries they st died and analyzed them and they culd find out about our way of life in the past.

- Oh yes, yeah.

Lil - They were not all legends?

- No, they were stories.

Lil - but from the stories they were able to find out about our way of life in the past.

- This how it was in my time. Indians never used to use hot water to wash their faces. They say, you age faster if you use hot water to wash your face. They use cold water.

Lil - and they lived long lives.

- Yes, but sometimes they were sick for a long time. They had rheumatism it's still the same today. With rheumatism you are sick for a long time. It can't be cured.

Lil - and when that fellow was going around in 1885 Indians used to have a disease where your hands shake, the Indians explained to the man that this disease was caused by snow.

- Julie my sister she's now about 75, but she never had a relapse of reumatism. When she was young she had such a severe case of rheumatism that she couldn't get around.

The remedy they used was, they used this plant that grows in the swamp or woods. The leaves inside are like cotton or perhaps you have seen them yourself. The flowers on them are blue or purple the leaves on them are thick and inside are ka kik kal you boil these. When this was boiled you put this water in a big tub and the sick person puts his legs in this water and you cover the person up with a blanket at that time there was no plastic you sit in this <sup>STEAM.</sup> ~~stem.~~ When the water <sup>COOLED</sup> ~~cooked~~ off you add more hot water in the tub. It makes you sweat. They say this sickness gets out of your system in this way. This is how my sister was cured, her skin was all slimy after she was in the water. She was cured of reumatism. Indian medicine cured her. She didn't drink any medicine. When they used this method you were very hot but you had to put up with it in order to be cured. I remember this much although I was young at that time.

Lil - When was the last time the (besti ah wa<sup>1</sup> dak di ig) held on the reserve. \*Festivities between Xmas & Epiphany

- I guess they ended when the movement was made. When the Indians were relocated.

Lil - you mean centralization.

- Yes. When they started these festivities came to an end.

Indians started moving. When they got centralized there were too many of them and this is when it came to an end.

Lil - and of course, the Indians weren't that well acquainted.

- No. We used to have festivities in Whycocomagh. Sometimes they were many who were honored. There were a lot of Stevens or sometimes there were a lot of Noel's, a lot of John's and Levi's. We would go to a lot of houses and the others weren't an many. A flower would be made for each person, it was carved. This flower would be taken to each person. People would be fed and there would be a dance.

Lil - Was this dancing done in the Indian way.

- No. square sets and sometimes they did Indian dances. One time ago houses weren't portioned off into rooms. It was one big room.

Lil - The stove would be in the middle

- Or it would be near the door. There would be no carpets or oil cloth on the floor. We would start dancing right away when we entered a house.

Lil - What about on Epiphany did you celebrate it.

- Yes. We did. People would go to one house (party) One would be a doctor, one a devil, then a king and Queen. I don't think there was a she devil just a devil. They also had a dentist. A dentist would extract teeth.

Lil - This is all in fun and the doctor did operations. A patient's belly would be filled up and the doctor would cut him open. I remember when my brother Sandy was a doctor one time. We made all kinds of medicines and we filled up a little clutch bag. We fill it up with little bottles with all colors of dye and he wore a fur coat. I don't know where he got the old coat. He wore that. I didn't go to the dance because I was too young at the time but I remember it. My parents went and we children stayed home.

Lil - I heard that a devil was at the dance.

- Yes and he would be dressed up, he would have a tail. They celebrated Epiphany the last one was held in Truro. In 1928 I went and attended one in Truro which I believe was the last one held on the reserve. I was married then.

- Joe Julian was the one who was responsible for the activities.



Elders were responsible for that.

- Yes, the one I attended was held at Michael Thomas' house.

Lil - Do you think that this feast goes a long way back.

- It must be. Whycocomagh Indians were the first people to give it up and I don't know if they celebrated in Sydney. Then I went to Truro before I was married and they celebrated it in Truro but later gave it up.

- All Indians used to move to Chapel Island. They made wigwams out of birchbark. They were already made at home, they rolled them up, they saved them, they only used them once a year. Just the way we use the tents today. We put them away, store them until we need them again. We would go there by boat. The trip didn't take one day. You had to stay over night in one place. From Whycocomagh to Chapel Island and if it was stormy, or when it was rainy, it took longer. We would make camp in one place and cook out meals by the shore. The time I went we stayed over night in a place I don't remember what it was called. I think it was nol li gun ech. It was halfway to Chapel Island. When we woke up in the morn our boat was gone (slept under the boat) the Chief Gaberial had left early in the morning to go spearing for eels. Before we left for Barrahead we cooked potatoes. This was the first time I tasted bread cooked in the sand. The Glebe House was small it had an upstairs, this is where we moved in. They called this the Chief's house. The Chief's wife made the bread cooked in the sand. This is the first time I tasted it. We used to say when my mother was still living in Eskasoni. That one day we would go to the beach and let her make the bread cooked in the sand but before we could do this my mother came down with a stroke and died shortly afterwards. My sister Annie and I made it once. We couldn't eat it.

Lil - Why?

- We were so stupid. We didn't knead it hard enough and we put it in the sand. You are supposed to lay it on stones but sand sticks right to it. We tried to scrape away the sand and tried to eat it but it was no good. It was still full of sand. After we realized what we did wrong and I inquired more about it. The gravel is coarse, plus you are supposed to lay it on stones then afterwards all you had to do was knock off these stones. When it was cooked

but when we made it we put it right in the sand.

Lil - Oh you didn't cover the bread with paper.

- No.

Lil - I understand that you are supposed to wrap it in brown paper or birchbark.

- Yes. But we didn't know this at the time. We only heard about it.

- Mrs. Matthews told me about the time she cooked that kind of bread. She didn't cover it, but she laid it on stones and on gravel but she said sand didn't get into it only the stones stuck to it but these were easily brushed off because they are big.

- They say gravel doesn't stick to it but sand sticks.

Lil - I have been making inquiries about the old Indian religion whereby Indians used to pray to the sun.

- That could be so, one time Indians weren't christians, until Maillard came.

Lil - This is what I want to find out. What about that rock on Chapel Island, do you know anything about that. I gathered some history on that rock myself, before Maillard came to Chapel Island this spot where the rock is now was known as gil sak a dek. This is where the Indians used to build a big fire and offer sacrifices. They would barbecue a lamb and throw in some possessions that they loved best in this fire as a sacrifice. The smoke going up had the same significance as the incense that we burn today in churches I suppose.

- Yes Indians used to do that from listening to old stories. But we weren't the only ones to do this, other races of people did the same this. In the year of 1700 that is a long time ago. Murial made a movie, she worked with a theatre group. She played the part of an Indian girl. I asked her how the Indians were dressed at that time. She said the women were topless and she argued with the producer because she wouldn't go topless for the part. She was the only Indian girl in the group, the other girls were white, they played the parts of Indian girls. She said when I didn't want to go topless the other girls didn't either.

Lil - you see pictures in museums and they show Indian women, they didn't wear anything on top.

- This is how they were dressed, but they wore dresses. She said our feet were cold because we were doing a winter scene. It was cold. It was in the wintertime and we only wore moccasins but she said we talked to the producers and he let us wear our winter boots inside our moccasins because our feet didn't show that much because our dresses were long. To they were not cold. And she said, we were dressed terribly because at that time Indians were on a fish diet. They only ate fish. They had to put on make-up to make them look like they had scabs on their faces. Murial said that they put make up on her to make her look like she had scabs on her face and at one time she acted out a fight. She got into a fight with somebody. I don't know if it was with a girl or with whom but anyway she said, she hit a girl too hard. In the movie you know they called for action but you weren't supposed to play act and not to hit anybody too hard. That movie has never been shown here but it was shown in Toronto and other areas.

Lil - The Indians had big wigwams back then.

- Yes. It all depended on the size of the family, and you break off boughs and you lay them out on the floor so thick then on top of this you lay mats on top of it, it's soft. There was a little fire in the middle, it kept the wigwam warm inside.

Lil - and in the books that you read, each place in the wigwam <sup>w</sup> has designated for each member of the family.

Yes - They had to sit in a circle but it held a lot of people and when you slept it could also hold a lot of people. Tents don't hold as many people because they are square. A wigwam could hold a lot of people even when it's small.

Lil - but I heard that Indian wigwams were so big, that some of them had 2-4 fires in each wigwam.

- But I wonder what were the shape of those wigwams.

Lil - yes, because the smoke has to go out and an opening is usually directly over the fire.

- But I guess the smoke goes out anyway even if there were 3-4 fires.

Lil - They must have been long. A man writes in one book that the Indians from Cape Breton called them "Big business wigwams".

- Oh , where they had their meetings. Those were long and square.

Lil - Another thing I have found out is that Indians are a superstitious people.

- Yes.

Lil - They could hardly get around because there were so many things you couldn't do.

- Yes, they believed in ghosts and they believed in poo in. I've heard stories where the Indians tell how they seen or heard stories concerning ghosts. Today they don't believe in ghosts.

Lil - also they believed in ges quam sol di gek.

- When something turned out right for themselves they would say they were (ges quam sit)

They believed in this.

Lil - When the white men came to this country in the 1600's and 1700's they wrote a lot about Micmacs. They watched them and wrote about the Indians but there isn't too much written about the Indians of the 1800's and early 1900's. That is why I am gathering stories to learn more about the ways of the Indians of this era.

- The elders of today, the ones who were mixed, the old people in their younger days. Did you go see William Herney.

- Yes. He's alright you have to keep on reminding him. He's getting very forgetful.

- He was brought up in Malagawatch. The ones who lived there lived in the traditional ways more so than other Indians brought up in other reservations, as us who are brought up in houses. The last people to live in wigwams were the Indians that lived in Malagawatch. But eventually they lived in houses. But I remember that time we stopped in Malagawatch on our way back from Chapel Island when I was with the Chief and his family. I remember old man sag Noel was living there at that time but I didn't remember any more Indians.