

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: ISABELLE BEADS
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: 218 - 27th STREET WEST
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: 218 - 27TH STREET WEST
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: METIS
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: 04/18/84
INTERVIEWER: JUDY M. THIBODEAU
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER YAWORSKI
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Isabelle Beads does not elaborate when responding to the interviewer's questions. Consequently this interview does not require indexing.

Judy: Today is April 18, 1984, and I am speaking to Mrs. Isabelle Beads. Mrs. Beads, could you tell me about the house that you grew up in? Could you tell me what it was like?

Isabelle: I don't know what kind of house we had. An old house, no floor in it.

Judy: Did it have any electricity?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: How about running water?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: Where was the house at?

Isabelle: Meadow Lake, north of Meadow Lake, across the river. Oh, we didn't have no water running, nothing.

Judy: How about furniture, what did you have for furniture?

Isabelle: Not very much. Just beds I guess, that's all.

Judy: What do you remember about your mother and father?

Isabelle: Father died. I don't remember him.

Judy: You don't remember too much about him?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: How about your mother?

Isabelle: I don't know. He was doing good, I guess, working for us, went down just to drink, drink lots.

Judy: What do you remember about your mother?

Isabelle: Well, used to work, I guess making a living when Daddy used to leave them. Running around I guess when Dad's drinking. We was poor, well making out a living. Mom couldn't send us to school. We never went to school, me and my sisters.

Judy: So you never had any schooling at all?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: How old were you when your mother and father died?

Isabelle: Oh, I was married already.

Judy: Oh, you were married already. At what age did you get married at?

Isabelle: Nineteen, I guess.

Judy: And you have how many children now?

Isabelle: Five.

Judy: Do you remember ever hearing the words "road allowance"?

Isabelle: Oh yeah, yeah.

Judy: Could you tell me what that means?

Isabelle: No, I don't really know.

Judy: But you did hear about it?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: What do you remember your chores at home being when you lived in Meadow Lake?

Isabelle: Well, we didn't like it. Just played around I guess, like my brother and sisters.

Judy: Are there any other family members that you remember really good?

Isabelle: No, no.

Judy: Do you remember what type of work your father used to do?

Isabelle: No, I didn't remember that what my father used to do.

Judy: Did your family ever own any livestock?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: Have you ever had any jobs? Just that one part-time here, the rest of the time you were a homemaker?

Isabelle: Home... yeah.

Judy: What do you remember about the town of Meadow Lake when you were growing up?

Isabelle: Well, I guess my sister used to work at, my step-sister used to work there in a restaurant, I guess she used to work there. My brother used to stook. My sister used to tell me that.

Judy: Do you remember if there was any discrimination? Your family got along good with the other people?

Isabelle: Yeah. Yeah that's what I've been telling today, young boys how they drink, smoking marijuana, how they get hurt. You used to, you would never see that before.

Judy: What language do you remember being taught?

Isabelle: French.

Judy: And then you learned English later?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: How old were you when you learned English?

Isabelle: I guess fifteen. My sister used to show off how to talk English.

Judy: What do you first remember realizing that you were Metis?

Isabelle: Well, when I come here to Saskatoon they ask me who I am and the kids said I was a Metis.

Judy: When did you move to Saskatoon?

Isabelle: I don't know how many years I moved to Saskatoon, when my mom died and my dad died. I used to stay in Meadow..., P.A. and I move here.

Judy: Do you remember anything about your grandparents?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: Do you remember the people in Meadow Lake ever getting together, the Metis people, and celebrating holidays?

Isabelle: That's what my sister used to say. They used to do that.

Judy: How about New Year's, did they used to celebrate New Year's?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you remember how they used to?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: What would they do?

Isabelle: Well, they invite you and you make big supper, they invite you for supper, dinner.

Judy: And you'd go around visiting other people's homes?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: How about Christmas?

Isabelle: Christmas too.

Judy: Any other holidays, like Easter, or...?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Did your family used to go to church a lot?

Isabelle: Oh yeah.

Judy: To the Catholic Church?

Isabelle: Yeah, we belong to the Catholic Church. I guess my

mom used to go -- doesn't matter how far, we used to walk to church.

Judy: Do you remember your mother dressing in Metis style clothing, like the long dresses?

Isabelle: Oh yeah. I got my mother this picture how she was dressed up, I'll bring it, I might go to Meadow Lake for Easter and I'll show you it. I'll bring it because my son has got it. I guess how they dress up long dresses, and here the color.

Judy: Do you remember your dad ever wearing a Metis sash?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: He used to wear one of those?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you remember what it looked like?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: No, just big piece of leather belt with beadwork on it?

Isabelle: Yeah. Oh yeah some, one of my aunties knows how to do beadwork.

Judy: Your aunt did the beadwork on it?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Did your mom and dad know how to jig?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you know how to jig?

Isabelle: Not me. (laughs) No. My daddy used to, my mom.

Judy: Did they jig a lot at the dances?

Isabelle: Yeah. My grandpa, my granny, my mom, my dad.

Judy: Did you have any fiddle players in the family?

Isabelle: Yeah, my dad, my brothers. They were good for that.

Judy: Did they ever play any old Metis songs?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you remember any of the names of them?

Isabelle: No, no way.

Judy: But they used to play that type of music?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Did anybody in your family believe in practise the Indian medicine?

Isabelle: Oh, no way, not my kids. I do.

Judy: You do? Can you give me any examples of Indian medicine, how it works?

Isabelle: Well, my daddy used to use that, hunting. I don't know how they sample it, I can't, they never show us.

Judy: Did they ever show you how if someone was sick in your family how they would mix roots and so on?

Isabelle: Yeah, my grandmother was a Sauteaux, used to give my mom medicine. And you boil that in the water, you use that.

Judy: Do you still do Indian medicine here in the city?

Isabelle: No. No, I wish I could because sometimes I'm sick. I wish I could use that.

Judy: Did you used to do it in Meadow Lake?

Isabelle: Yep. Yeah, we never see the doctor because my mom used to use Indian medicine.

Judy: When you were young did the white kids in town, did they ever call you names and so on because you were Metis?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Was it only the children, or did you have any problems with the older people?

Isabelle: No, just the children used to come up and call us names.

Judy: When you moved to the city did you feel comfortable when you went into the stores?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: No. Why is that?

Isabelle: Yeah, feel a stranger. I don't know, because we never went out. My dad he never let us go any place. Before when we grow up we used to see people, we used to run away -- we was scared.

Judy: You were very shy then?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Can you tell me about the times that you had to deal with welfare or unemployment?

Isabelle: Ah, that welfare makes me mad, yeah. I wish I could work, I wish I could read, then they don't help me much. Because me and my husband we parted because he drinks too much.

Judy: They give you a lot of problems though?

Isabelle: Yeah. They wanted me to work, they want my daughter to work. Well, my daughter can't work yet. She doesn't want to, she wants to finish school.

Judy: Did the priest ever come and visit your parents' home?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you remember what he used to talk about?

Isabelle: No, I don't remember what he used to talk about.

Judy: Do you think that the Catholic Church has helped Metis people face their problems?

Isabelle: I guess so, yeah. A lot.

Judy: You never attended school?

Isabelle: No. I wish I could. I tell you, I wouldn't bother with welfare.

Judy: Do you remember who your parents used to vote for?

Isabelle: Liberal.

Judy: Liberal?

Isabelle: Real strong, my mom and dad.

Judy: Do you remember if any politicians visited your mom and dad's house?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: No, they never came by?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: Do you think the church was ever involved in politics?

Isabelle: I don't know.

Judy: Do you vote the same way as your parents did?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you get involved, do you go out to the campaign; or do you just go down and vote?

Isabelle: Yeah, just... Sometime they come and pick me up.

Judy: Do you remember your mom or dad or perhaps even you being involved in the early Metis Society?

Isabelle: No.

Judy: No, in the 1930s you never were?

Isabelle: One of my nephews is working for the... in Big River.

Judy: Today?

Isabelle: Yeah, for the Metis Society. I used to have a card, I don't know where it is -- I lost it. They say I (inaudible) Society.

Judy: You belong to the organization there?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Do you remember any of these names during your mom and dad saying them; Joe LaRocque?

Isabelle: Oh yeah, yeah.

Judy: Was he involved in that Metis Society?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: What other things do you remember about him?

Isabelle: I don't know. They say he belong to the Metis Society.

Judy: How about Joe Ross?

Isabelle: I don't know him.

Judy: Tom Major?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Was he involved with the Metis Society also?

Isabelle: I guess so.

Judy: Joe McKenzie?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: He was involved with that?

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: How about Sol Pritchard?

Isabelle: I don't know him.

Judy: Sometimes they called him Sam Pritchard.

Isabelle: Could be.

Judy: Do you remember hearing anything about the Metis Society in those days?

Isabelle: No. Just now I heard them, my nephew he used to tell us what happened.

Judy: So you don't know too much background about where you were born at and...

Isabelle: No.

Judy: Well I would like to thank you very much for giving us this interview.

Isabelle: Yeah.

Judy: Thank you.

(END OF SIDE A)

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