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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Discusses her life in the United States.
- Premonition of the death of her son.

Jamie: This is tape JL 82.6. My name is Jamie Lee and I am interviewing Mrs. Eliza Kneller. The date is July 28, 1982.

Jamie: ...last week about, or was it the, I guess it was the week before, about going to Buffalo and getting lost there. But you didn't tell me what you were doing there. You said you went to find work.

Eliza: Yeah, that's right. I was working.

Jamie: You were working.

Eliza: I was working, and I had never been in the city before. And I got this job, and it was like an afternoon day off, it must have been Sunday, you know. It had to be Sunday because you worked -- in those days you worked right up until Saturday, you know. And so I decided to go out for a walk -- it was a nice day -- and then it started to shower, you know. And so I thought I had better run on home, but I didn't know, I

hadn't taken the address of the place I was staying. So I had to run around all over, oh I didn't run, I mean walking. And so finally I decided I better go into the restaurant while it was raining and have a light lunch, or a sandwich and milk or something, which I did. And then when it stopped raining I started out again, and I thought, "Now, I better get my brains together and remember where it was that I was staying." So I walked around and finally I was walking and I finally saw this Franklin Street, you know, it's called Franklin and I said, "Well, this is the street." So I finally walked down there and I walked. And then I said, "There's another street." I had to turn west, or north or whatever it was. So I saw this street and I, I finally, anyways I finally found the place, you know.

And I come in and the lady that was there she saw that I was wet she said, "Oh, good heavens, what happened?" She says, "What a downpour you must have been in," you know. (laughing) And I said, "it wasn't so much the downpour," I said, "I was walking to find this place." "Oh," she says, "oh, my poor dear," she says, "I'll write the address down for you and everything." So she gave me a card, you know. So she says, "You don't want to get lost again and there's the phone numbers," she says, "and you just call me and I'll come and pick you up if you're lost someplace." She was quite concerned after that, you know, being a young girl, you know. So however, everything turned out right and after that I sort of watched the streets and got to know the city like, you know, so that didn't turn out too bad, you know. The storm was the bad part of it, you know, getting soaked to the skin in the summer time, you know, it was a summer shower -- excuse yourself, Brian.

And so that, that's all that happened, you know, just being off the reserve, you know, everything was all strange. And I used to, when I first came into the city -- my sister brought me in, and her and my brother-in-law -- and I used to see those neon lights, you know, which I'd never seen before, you know. And I used to stare at them. I was... they had an Overland car at that time -- that was the brand name of the car was Overland -- they don't make them anymore, you know, it used to be a big touring car where you put the, button up the curtains on the car, you know, they didn't have the glass or anything. So, and I passed Sunnyside and I used to see all those lights, you know, and I wondered why, to me they used to sound like they were blinking, you know. And I never said anything, you know, I was sitting in the back of the car. And finally a couple of days later I said to my sister, "Why are there so many lights?" you know. She says, "Well, when you live in the big city they have to have them, and a lot of people advertise their shops and etc.," you know. And she explained to me, you know. So I

got used to it after a week or so -- the things in the city, you know. But I never stayed out late, because I still was hesitant about the city, you know. If I went any place to the show... And it was my first time going to the show too, and it was twenty-five cents to get in, they used to have a theatre

downtown called Pantages(?) -- they don't have that anymore either. So I went in there and twenty-five cents, or thirty cents, or fifteen cents, something like that to get into a theatre; and then you saw Vaudeville as well, all that one same price that you saw the Vaudeville and then the show would go on. And finally later on, a month or I don't know how long back after, then they changed it from Vaudeville -- they no longer had the Vaudeville, and I always used to like to go to Pantages(?), or Lowe's Theatre(?) -- it was called Lowe's(?) on Yonge Street, I don't know whether it is still is or not. But then they, then they'd have singsongs, you know. On this screen would come the songs all, you know, and they'd let you sing -- everybody would sing in the the theatre, you know. And I always liked that because it seemed to be an enjoyable time, you know. You just read it off the screen, and you just read the words, and you had to read it pretty fast too, because it would just come on and off, you know. But mostly everybody knew the songs, you know, it was old songs. So those, that was my entertainment in my, when I was in the city, was going to the show and seeing the songs being sung in the theatre, and, and the Vaudeville. Of course Vaudeville finally went out, you know, so you just saw the shows then, you know.

And there was really nothing else much to do, you know, excepting theatre. And they didn't have Indian clubs in those days -- no one ever thought of them. So we used to meet in homes now. Like my sister had friends -- she was a little bit older -- and they used to meet at different places and they'd have square dances. You know, they'd lift up the rug and roll it right back, you know. It was always someplace downtown, because most of the native people lived in the area of

downtown, you know. And so they'd go and have a square dance, they'd all get in there and if there was no rug on the floor well, somebody would bring the music anyways. And then there was no radios or televisions and you had to make your own entertainment. So, which was very nice too, because it seemed everybody just showed whatever talent they had, and they just grouped them together. You know, they got together and if one played the violin, and the other one played his mouth organ, harmonicas, you know. And you might find an odd one that played the banjo, you know; but they come from various parts of the reserve. And so we had to create our own amusement, so, which was nice. And at that time they didn't sell beer and all that stuff so, so you didn't have that. So you had just as good a time without that. Today it seems to be the thing that you have to have it, but in our time we didn't, you know, so... So you had your own music, and you had your own, you created your own fun, which was very nice, you know.

Jamie: Was it mostly Six Nations people that you...?

Eliza: Mostly. And then there was others. After they heard about it they would come, you know, Curve Lake, and one's that I would remember -- Curve Lake and some other reserve around Chatham area or London, or something, Moravians, or whatever they call it, I forgot, from Moraviantown, I guess. There were

Indians from there. Well, they were scattered from all over, that was working in the city at that time, so I wouldn't recall how many reserves were, were there, you know. But they always seemed to, you could always tell an Indian as you walked down the street, you know, you could never miss them. So then when they finally start gathering, it was nice. You got to know more people like, you know, they would come over to your home and whoever's home it was. They'd come and make their daily

visit, you know. And that's about all. It was mostly they made their own fun, you know. There was always quite a few there for the square dances, because they'd be eight to a couple, if I recall, you know, couples. And so they'd have, if it's a big enough place, they'd have three or four sets. Finally they got one place down on, it wasn't on Parliament it was near Saxville Street, or Shoemac(?). They found a place there and then that's where they used to congregate every once in a while for these dances. And that petered out after several months. They moved away, you know, different areas, and some of them went back home to the reserves, and others stayed, you know. They had really nothing down on the reserve, well, they'd stay and keep their jobs that they had.

Jamie: What sort of jobs would they have then?

Eliza: Well, it depended on the person. Whatever training he may have had. You see, at that time they didn't -- they still don't, I don't think -- train Indians on the reserve. I was always in favor of training them on their own reserves, whatever type of jobs they had. But I've always was one of them wanted to endorse that before leaving the reserve -- put up shops and stuff, but I never, we never, it never amounted to anything, because there wasn't enough behind it. You have to, it wasn't, you didn't have to have funding, it was just getting together, and getting the movement started. But, you know, most of them returned to farming, you know, if they were farming. Well, there's a lot, most of them are farmers on our reserve. The young people, of course, they go to Buffalo, they work in the steel mills over there, and they stay over there and they come home, like summers, and holidays, and pageants, and whatever. You know, they usually, we always go back...

We'd go back for our bread and cheese day too. The government, the Queen's Exchequer allows the Six Nation, from Queen Victoria's time... You see the Mohawks done quite a bit of wars for the English back then, and so then she allotted them on her birthday, which is 24th of May, bread and cheese -- so that was always free. So that was always a big event, and we would just go whether we wanted the cheese or not, just to keep up the tradition, which is still goes on today. They have, but of course the cheese has got smaller (laughs). In those days it was a great big hunk of cheese, you know, of course cheese was cheaper then. But today they give you a little piece, but you can line up again and get another piece if you want, you know. They usually send the youngsters, if it's a big family, go back and get some more cheese -- and they'd line up and they'd hand

them the cheese, and they'd go. And so when I was at the Mohawk, which was the Indian residence school, sometimes if we were out for that particular day we'd have to back again at night, you know, go back in residence. So we'd always cart our cheese back with us to this school. And so they used to have a great big furnace, if it was in the wintertime, or anything. We'd take it on a piece of bread and open the furnace doors and put it on a little thing then and toast our bread, and it would melt the cheese right in the furnace. So everybody did that, you know, so that was always our Sunday treat, was having our melted cheese on our toast, it would toast it and everything, you know. And this part of the furnace, we used to go up in the senior room...

So I don't know, we had an Indian teacher that had been there, went to school there and, Miss Hardy, and she'd been there until she, oh till she was quite old -- she lived to be ninety-nine. So she saw many scholars go through, and turned out some very good students, you know. She was always insistent that they learn, they must learn. But as you say, as I say -- you can take some horse to water, but they don't have to drink. Well, with some of them it's the same thing today.

But she was a great one for stressing that point. Education, you know, but some took the advice, and some fooled around, which is the usual thing.

Jamie: What was the job you were doing in Buffalo?

Eliza: Oh, various different things. I didn't do very much, because I wasn't trained for anything, but I'd always talk myself into a job. You know, if I thought they weren't going to hire me, I was a little smart in some ways you know, but dumb in other things too. I used to say, well, they'd say, "Well, I'll call you like on today or Tuesday, or Wednesday," or whatever it was. I'd say, "Oh, the old story, eh -- don't call me I'll call you." "Oh," they'd say, "Oh, for heavens sakes, we're hiring new people on certain days, the new week starts." And they would say to me, "We were going to hire you." I said, "That's what you tell me now," I says. But I'd always speak up, you know. As they'd say, "Well, we'll call you." And I said, "The old routine -- don't call me, I'll call you." (laughs) And I would always hand them that line. But I was always hired no matter what job I applied to, you know, whether it was factory work, or doing just simple things in the office; stuffing envelopes, or something. It was money -- it was honest money, it was the honest money. (She speaks to her grandson) Listen, out. Go put your shoes on and get out. Don't interrupt, eh.

So then it was always, I was never out of a job and I always stuck to my job. I always, my grandfather used to always tell me, "When you have a job stay with it whether you like or not, until you put your money aside," you know. Your money will work for you. He used to always say, "If you have a dollar, if you have one cent in your pocket," he says, "You're not broke,

you're rich." So I, I always, all my side of the family always stuck to that, and we never squandered our money. Where I saw other young people do, you know, but I never did, I always

remembered what my grandfather said, that your dollar worked for you. So if I had a dollar I hung onto it, you know, first thing I knew I had more dollars, and then I got kind of greedy, I got more, I would never go out and spend it. You know, even when I got paid, sometimes I wouldn't even go out to spend it. I was just saving, and now I always have. I always remembered his words, "Your dollar is your best friend in the world. All others can forsake you when you are broke, they forsake you, but your dollar is right with you -- keep it right with you." You know, I never...

And then one time, that was when I was in Chicago working, I was always afraid they'd knock your head off for a dollar. And they tell you that to this day, because I made a trip to Chicago last year -- a relative of ours died, on my side of the family -- so my daughter and I, her and I and my son was alive then and we all went. And first thing we knew we went someplace and the first words they said to us, "Don't show your money." Today in 1981 and '82 they still tell you that, because Chicago is a very, very bad place and it's just covered with blacks. It's like a checker game -- more blacks than there is whites, and it never was that way. But they don't mind their own blacks that was born there, it's the blacks coming in from the south, they're very, very bold and very rude, you know. And they're the ones that do these things, because they were kept down for so many years out south. So when they land in the northern part of Chicago, well then they get quite bold. And that's the first thing they told us when we went to the funeral.

Jamie: Who told you that?

Eliza: White people.

Jamie: But friends of yours or just...

Eliza: No, strangers. When they knew, they see the license on the car, they look at it, you know. Because we went with Ontario license, Canadian license. So when we were getting off they said, they said to us, "A word of advice -- don't show your money." Because we were going to Blue Island, a suburb called Blue Island, and you had to pass that, you had to pass the colored district to go, to go to Blue Island for the funeral. So that's why, they tell you that anyways, because they're very bold.

Jamie: Did you experience any, any violence?

Eliza: Oh no, no. No I didn't, we didn't see anything, we didn't see anything.

Jamie: So do you think it was true what they told you?

Eliza: I believe it. I believe it because it is a big city, and every man for himself and if they haven't got it they'll take it from you. You know, and I've known a family that still lives in Chicago. The mother and I were friends, and she had three sons; Leo, Joe, and Harry. So each one they'd leave the farm in Wisconsin. Well, when they get into the city, they only had so much money to get into Chicago to work, see, to find work, where they were on the farm. So they used to put their money, they had ten dollars or twenty dollars, whatever it was, and they'd put it in their sock, and put it in their shoe. And sometimes they'd have a long ways to walk wherever, when they arrived in the city, they had no relatives or nothing at that time. So when they'd put their money in their sock, of course, through the walking it pulverized, pulverized to nothing, you know. So when he went to get his money he saw

what it was, so he got a piece of newspaper and laid it down and shook his sock, and got everything out of it and put it in this. And he wrote a letter to Washington, to the Mint company in Washington. He got a new bill for his, that crumbled up in his sock, in his feet, that he walked looking for a job. And today they're one of the three wealthiest men in Chicago, I can go there anytime, in (inaudible) I can go to their home and they'd accept me, you know, they'd give me a bed to stay in and visit them, you know, if I so chose. But those were the three boys, but they're all rich now, very wealthy people, you know, and... because they persevered, because they were poor once themselves. And they, too, believe that your money works for you, which they did of the three brothers, you know. So one's in Washington, one's in New York, and one lives in Chicago -- no, not New York, San Francisco -- they have three factories. You know, one...

Jamie: What did they make?

Eliza: They manufactures... they were the first ones to manufacture rayon. See, one of the brothers, Joe, he got on to this idea -- he was fooling around one day with something with the threads and stuff, and he was running it on the sewing machine, or some kind of a machine. I don't know, I never saw, but that's his story. And he finally developed this rayon that they make ladies' things out of. And he experimented more, and more, and more and he finally got material, then he got somebody else, his other brother, Harry, I think, there's three brothers, and one of them came in and saw. He says, "Good heavens," he says, "we've got something here." And they only had a couple of hundred dollars, so now they had to find five hundred dollars to make it, to start up their shop for the rents and stuff, and so forth. And now they didn't know what to do, where are they going to get their five -- "Go and get

dressed, eh" -- so they had to go and find out where they could get the five hundred dollars to, to open up the rest of the shop and get their, whatever they, to do. So they had to figure that out. Finally they found their five hundred dollars. Well, now they were in business, so now they're big

shots. They started from small beginnings, because the three of them grouped together, see. One was a salesman, the best talker was the road, he went on the road selling his merchandise; and that was a new thing then -- the rayon.

Jamie: When was that?

Eliza: Oh, I imagine that was around in the '20s or '25 then, maybe '30s, because rayon wasn't always in ladies' underwear stuff, you know. But he, they're the ones that got the material, see, and then of course it went like hot cakes, you know, sold like hot cakes. And all these factories and stuff they made it, you know, made it, made whatever they had to make -- ladies' shirts and underwear, and petticoats, and night gowns, and dressing gowns out of that. They even made, in the States, the men even wear silk underwear made from that material -- a little shirt, you know, instead of wearing a heavy cotton shirt, of course, some of them make fun; but all the rich people do, you know. They don't make fun of them because they don't know what they're wearing anyways; but only if you're with them you know they're wearing it, you know.

And I worked at this place, I got this job and I had my room and board. See, to have room and board, and to work in the factory, I switched from working in the factory, I could have worked in his factory but I never asked, and...

Jamie: And this was in Chicago?

Eliza: Oh this was all in Chicago. And oh, I worked in Buffalo too, but I didn't like Buffalo. I was adventurous and I thought I had better see the world, so I'd save my money, you see, I always followed my grandfather's advice, "Your money is your best friend." Which it is today. And so I would save my money -- I would never go out. I might go to the theatre in the afternoon and be home by eight, you know. I was never one to run around, of course, I hadn't learned that yet, see. Being off of the reserve and I didn't run wild like some do, you know, I wasn't, I wasn't that type, you know. Well, maybe I missed out a lot, I don't know. (laughs) So I'd always think about my money, you know, the money part I always, my grandpa was always in my mind when I had money, you know, if I want this well no, no, I'd go back, now I wouldn't spend it. I might spend myself a supper if I was out, you know, meals were cheap in those days. So maybe I stayed for supper, and if I wanted to be tight I'd go home for supper, you know, and go out again afterwards, you know.

But, but I always felt I was in a strange town. My grandpa says, "Your money is your best friend. Never grovel, never grovel to anyone, and always be upright and be on your own. If you're on your own, be on your own, but your money be your pocket, never be without money. Always have it in your pocket. Even if you're broke and have one cent, look in your purse. Always take the change and put one cent here and one cent there, so when you open your purse you're broke -- 'ah, I'm not

broke, I have one penny.'" (laughs) He used to, they used to call it, he used to call it 'copper' never pennies, that's all we used to call it was coppers. And because, anyways, coppers in our day, in my early times were great big coppers. I still have some, you know, I put them away. And I keep different coins, even the smallest dime, really it would slip through your finger, the dimes used to be very, very small. And, but I always had him back of my mind, the things he used to tell us, you know, it was always logical too.

And same with my other sister, we were the only two that knew my grandfather was my sister, the one that is up there, Minny and myself. We lived with him most of the time and as I told you, he was a medicine man. He used to make all these herbs and stuff, and she was always more interested... Well, my husband can go out too, and treat horses, too, when he was on the farm. He used to always be always on the reserve; and that was when my sister was alive. Oh, we still can go, but he's older now and... He always worked out there, you know, helping, he'd get two weeks holidays and as the years went on they got three, and now that he's pensioned off now they get six weeks -- he never got into that, but that's how the holidays are now. They get six weeks, providing the amount of years you've worked, you get six weeks holidays. But he was eligible for six weeks, you know, but he was getting on pension then. So how he worked it out he took it out, he took his holidays just the last day of, to receive these, to automatically get pension, so he took he took his six weeks holidays, so he never got gypped out of them. That's how he worked it, you know, so he's still got his six weeks holiday pay just, just when he was leaving the job, so it worked out all right.

And, but the Chicago business -- I liked it there, because main thing is I liked it best was the wages were very, very, high. You could do just a little bit of work and you got good money, you know, that was my objective, you know, money-bag used to, I used to like the higher the wages. I never stayed where they only paid here twelve dollars; teachers were only getting twenty-five dollars a week, you know. So then, and then the workers themselves... Maybe if you worked Saturdays you might be lucky to get two dollars for the day, so it was really like two dollars a day, you know.

Jamie: What jobs did you hold?

Eliza: Oh, oh, like packaging, you know. And as I say, I had no training, so when I first come, come into the city I had to get something, I mean I didn't care what it was...

(Talks to her grandson) Here, get dressed and go outside. Come on, go see what the men done in the tent. The hydro men were back there. Go put your shoes on. Go on. Put your shoes on.

And, well, I don't know I always thought of... When you're in

the city and you're alone, and if you didn't know anybody... I stayed at the, first of all I stayed at the hotel, which ate a lot of my money, you know, because you have to pay so much a day -- you never got weekly, it was straight day. And so then I would stay there and then every day I would get up in the morning and I'd have them call me, you know, by phone. They'd wake me up at whatever time, six o'clock or something. They'd ring my, the phone and I'd get up and I'd thank them, and I'd get up and dressed and go out. I'd buy the newspaper, you know, and look through there, whatever jobs, and sometimes I'd look at it and I'd wonder whether I should do this type of job, or that type of job. I was a little afraid, too, you know. So I would, well, in the big city, my grandfather used to always say, you know, "Your money is your friend." It was expensive living there when I come to think of it then even in those days, but... Just a minute, Brian. Brian.

Brian: Yeah?

Eliza: Have you had breakfast?

Brian: Yeah.

Eliza: Jason have you had breakfast? Okay, get your shoes on and get out.

Brian: It's three o'clock in the afternoon.

Eliza: Yeah, go on out. Now. It's nice, go on. Come on I'm talking -- Vic, will you have them, get them outside.

Victor: It isn't raining at all.

Eliza: Go on get your shoes on, tell them to get outside. Oh, isn't that ducky, going to get his feet wet, isn't that just too bad, clean his...

Brian: Where do I go?

Eliza: Just play in the tent, there's a tent out there, go play in the tent.

Victor: I've been out and I didn't get wet.

Eliza: Take your toys out there and go and play in the tent.

Brian: Okay.

Eliza: You don't need to worry about the rain, the tent is up.

Victor: Did you have your cereal today?

Brian: Yeah.

Eliza: So then, oh and then I met these people and that's

where I got this job, and I applied and she took me right away. The woman's name was Frances. That was her brothers that owned this company, those were her three brothers -- that's how I got to know them was through her. So I got a job there and I got thirty dollars a week and that was a lot of

money. I didn't have to pay no room and board, see. I got my room and board and so we talked and they liked me, you know. So that's when they, when we used to manufacture these things and I used to get a lot of that stuff, you know, pajamas, you know, and different things they would give me on different occasions, you know. And they'd give it to this sister and they'd say that would be for me, you know, and they'd give... Well, they knew I was working hard, and they knew I was nice with the family. And they were Catholics, very strict Catholics and I wasn't a Catholic then.

Brian: Grandma, can we bring all this stuff and put it in the tent?

Eliza: There are some stuff already. Don't take my stuff take your own stuff.

Brian: There's nothing out there.

Eliza: Well, just take a chair or something out there.

Brian: A chair?

Eliza: Well, I don't know.

Brian: There's nothing inside the tent.

Eliza: Well, you want the room to play in. What do you want, what do you want to sit on? It's not wet.

Brian: No, we're going to be sleeping inside there tonight.

Eliza: Not now -- tonight, you go and play in there right now. You're not sleeping now, you just got up (laughs) you're wasting your life away.

So then that's how I got to know them and that's when I got to know her three brothers, that's when they manufactured, that's when I knew more of the family then. And she was nice to me. I could go there and I could stay overnight, or if I was staying there in Chicago -- if she were still alive, you know. But she had eight children, Catholics, you know, they were very strict Catholics and they didn't believe in abortions, so she had the eight children, you know. And they were nice and they were really good to me. (Speaks to her grandson) Now look, enough of this, eh. It's not union station.

Brian: I'm going upstairs to get my sweater.

Eliza: Okay, I don't think you need it, but go ahead. So don't make it a union station, eh, or a subway. You go out the front door. You can, you know, or you can go through there.

But... Oh, I think they liked me too, because I was Indian, I was treated very nice. Some of the white folks they always claimed they were one-eighth, or three-quarters, whatever it was... Or whether they wanted to make me feel at home or something, I never knew. And I never, I never questioned it, I just believed them, you know. I just maybe believed they weren't talking with a forked tongue, they must be honest, you know. And so they would, they always had some tales to tell me, you know -- my great-grandfather and 'blah, blah, blah,' I don't remember all of it. But I think maybe most of the time could have been true.

Jamie: And did this woman claim to be, have Indian blood in her?

Eliza: Oh yeah. Oh yeah, but when I looked at the grandmother I could see she was Irish. You know, to me she was pure Irish. I couldn't see anything on her side, you know.

But who knows? You never know, because in the olden days, I don't think they mixed blood so much, not too much, you know. Of course, I don't know -- that was Americans, I don't know, it could have been. Everybody wants to claim to they're American Indians, you know, or whatever. They always talked about, it could have been, you know, but I was never, I was never... how would you say it? When I worked in the States everybody looked up to Indians no matter who it was. They always thought it was something marvelous even to meet you, because you were Indian. They were always so interested in... they always wanted to draw you out as to where you were born, and your families. I think they really were interested, and I think the American more so than Canadians. They always, they even had... Listen, I said. What do you want?

Brian: I have to get my brother.

Eliza: He's coming down. You wait for him, get your shoes on.

They were always interested in, and they themselves always claimed they had so much especially when they had this, with Hoover, he was an Indian as vice-president. That's the first time in history they ever had an Indian man as vice-president. I can't think of his name. He ran with Hoover and, he ran on the same ticket; so when Hoover got in he got in. So I don't know if he was full-blooded, but, oh yeah, it was well known all over the States that he... I don't know whether he was half and half now, that's been a long time ago. But anyways it was quite an honor for him to be his vice-president, but unfortunately he died, he didn't do the full term. And I don't think Hoover was very popular, either, he was a very bad president, you know, he wasn't popular. But there was nothing wrong with the vice-president. Everybody thought it was marvelous to think that an Indian, I don't know what part of it, but it was, it was quite the thing. It was something, you

know, a lot of Americans looked up to him because he was half Indian, or quarter, or whatever it was. I just really forgot that and I lived there at that time too.

So I, and I enjoyed working there. I liked it because of the wages. And then, and then some more from our Six Nation came up, we wrote to them and told them the good money making here. (laughs) So then they climbed aboard the, the train and they came, and they got jobs, too, mostly amongst the people we were working with, you know. So first thing you know they all had jobs and making good money. And then we'd all get the same time off.

I didn't like the factory work, so I didn't like it at all. And it seemed to me like I was making money and handing it out, I never got ahead like that. I think the wages at that time, school teachers over here were making twenty-five to thirty dollars a week, and I think over there if you worked you made about forty, you know, which was a little more than Canadian wages. But still you had to pay for your room and you had to eat, and you had to pay for your car fare, and the elevated train, there's the elevated train, and there's the subway, and there's the other things, you know, bus, or whatever, streetcars, whatever you want to ride, whatever is the quickest. You had all kinds of transportation, you know. And besides taxis, but no one ever rode a taxi, too much money, you know, unless it was late at night and you had to walk quite a ways from the elevated train to where ever you were staying, you know. So you always made sure you were home early enough, because it is a big city, you know. So in the...

But they always seemed to like me too, because I was Indian, you know. And they always seemed to be interested, you know, and they would never talk about anything that they had had at school for fear it would offend me. Well, you know, in the history about the scalping and all this stuff, you know. And sometimes their grandchildren were coming from school and talk

what they had for history, you know, and soon as, "shhh," you know. You know, things like that -- it didn't bother me for heaven's sakes, you know. So finally I said to Mrs. Riley, "I don't know why you people are always so 'shhh, shhh'." I says, "You know those things are history," I said, "it doesn't bother me." I said, "What has happened, happened," I said. I said, "The Indians were only defending what they thought was rightfully theirs." I says, "They lived here first," and I said, "they only done things and then besides they were lied to, and broken treaties and all that sort of stuff." I said, "They promised them so many things," I says, "even in the States." I says, "It was their land first," I says.

But even if they had leaders... I mean today even I always believed in -- we had leaders, but they made their mistakes -- sold a lot of our land to the whites, even down at the Six Nations. You look across the river -- Joseph Brant sold all that for little favors that he received, you know. They were all, well, they were all, I think the same as whites in nature.

I think everybody has a little arson in their soul lets put it that way, larson [larceny], or whatever you call it. And I truly believe that, and I think they had, some of them had a lot of it for little favors done to them by other nationalities, in his time even, in Joseph Brant's time, he done a lot of things. He was good in some things, like meeting the Queens and the League of Nations, and we had that on our reserve too.

We had an Indian fellow by the name of Dicotty(?) go to England and go here, and well he didn't get anywhere, you know. The die was already set, you can't change it, you know. Anything else he'd try to bring out -- what could he, he tried, but he didn't get, I mean they all tried, but you can't... the government is too... all different names, but they're like this, that's how I look at it. Yeah, they're all different names, but they're come under one, rule of the one man. Oh, I've had big

government people here interview me on various different things, oh yeah. But with some of them I had to think twice before I answered.

Jamie: What sort of things did they want to know?

Eliza: Oh, a lot of things, you know. You know, sometimes they'd ask you, "What are the Indians going to do?" I said, "I can't answer for them, I can't speak for them. You ask them." If I knew I'd never tell them anyways. Some things you say and some things you don't, you know. And they know themselves what they're talking about, why should they just bother me about it, you know. They have the answers. I'm not going to add any more to it, they already know. You know, they, oh yeah, even from the Indian Affairs, just sat on his butt over here... and he's retired now, but he was always...

(END OF SIDE A)

(SIDE B)

Eliza: Oh yes he, he, he came over, gentleman came over and he had never been as, as long as he was in office, he had never been in an Indian home in the city. I guess he never felt that he should, should push himself, or whatever you might say. So one day he decided to call me. I used to have students here, see, going to universities, and going to high schools and they would board with me. And he was the one originally asked me, and I said, "Well I'd have room for one, or one or two." That was before my grandchildren. And so these students would come over and that's how I got to know him, you know, through working with these students; and they would either go to high school, or whatever, maybe university, maybe one at university and maybe one going through high school. So finally one time we got into a really discussion and I said, "You know, I really believe that some of the students should go home at their own

residence, at their own reserves, they should go from there." I said, "They'll be at home with their own, with their own

families and their own relatives, and go to school from there." Maybe if they have to go to Sudbury, or if they're not too far Spanolia, not Spanolia -- Spanish rather, and they could go to school from there, which would be closer to home. And I felt that some of them shouldn't be away from home, because the city and the city lights was beckoning to them and they could never put their minds to their work, especially if they were new in the city, you know.

So eventually, I think, that's how some of it has come around to that, you know. And I think they're happier anyways among their own reserves, you know, if they're living on their reserves, I think they're happy amongst their relatives and their own people. I know I always was when I was a youngster, I always, even when I worked in the city I always wanted to go home. Especially a certain time of the year I would always want to go home, maybe fair time, when they were having their fair, or just to be home in the summer. I always liked to go back in the bush and go with my mother and look around for, not evergreens, but wintergreens and stuff -- they grow wild. And we'd pick them and come home and make brew with them. We'd make tea out of it, just wintergreen, and we'd eat the red berries from it. And she would pick around with some roots, white radishes would grow, oh what do you call them? Vic, what do call those roots that we find in Hyde Park sometimes?

Victor: I don't know.

Eliza: Remember those little skinny white roots, they look like radishes only very, very thin?

Victor: Oh, no I don't know.

Eliza: You forgot too, so did I. Well, anyways we used to pick that up, and... pepper roots! They're pepper roots, yeah, they were pepper roots. I guess I'm not that slow yet! Pepper roots, and you'd come home and take them, a little salt and you'd have them, and you get two pieces of bread and butter and you put these pepper roots -- they grow wild in Hyde Park, in different places. I don't bother with that now, but I did years ago when I lived closer. And we'd pick a lot of the things that was wild, growing in the bush, you know. Then we'd take our pails, we'd always take our pails, or we'd take the berry boxes, the little that you buy berries with in the stores, little square boxes and you get your blueberries in there. Now they come in paper boxes, you know, little ones. But in the olden days it was always the little that they make six quart, even that's come in paper too, the little six quart baskets.

And then we'd get a string and tie it around here so our hands would be free, and we'd go around picking our berries in the bush, you know. And we'd come home and we'd put it in the six quart basket and then if we felt we looked at the sun and we'd figure... We never had watches so we had to tell time by the sun. So we'd figure, "Now it's time for lunch." We'd look at

the sun and the shadows on the ground -- you can always tell time by the shadows on the ground -- that's how we were taught. And I think in the olden days that's how Indians used to tell their time too, way back in the 1800s because they had no clocks, they had no watches; so they'd always tell the time by the sun. And if you were standing a certain way and the sun was shining at a certain, you knew it was twelve o'clock, or four o'clock, you know, and... That is, if it was clear day, you could always tell time.

So we used to have one clock bigger than that, only it was, my grandfather got that clock somewhere, and we used to always tell time by the sun, even on the reserve. If we looked in our front porch the way the sun would be slanting we knew when it

was seven o'clock, or twelve o'clock noon, we'd know when to put, just before high noon we used to know when to put the potatoes on for the farmers, for my brothers and my dad to come in for meals, you know. And we'd put the potatoes on and we'd make our old fashioned wood stove, you know. We had no coal, so we had to use wood all the time. It burns up pretty fast too, you know, you have to keep shovelling it in, you know, the wood and cook our meal. That's how we used to cook our meals three times a day; make a fire in the morning and the women always said, "If the man could never make a fire he'd make a very poor husband. Never marry a man that couldn't make fire." (laughs) That was the Indian way of saying, you know, always watch how he makes fire. If he makes a good fire he's going to be a provider, you know, but otherwise...

But us, when we'd make the fire, sometimes we wouldn't have enough wood, you know, we'd have to, every day we'd have to go in the bush and cut our own tree down. And well, you know, what kind of trees (laughs) we certainly wouldn't pick a big one. So us girls, you know, and they'd say, "Oh good heavens, those, they never left us any wood," you know. So then when they'd come in for dinner we'd tell them, "There's no wood on the wood pile, you'd better get some wood tonight," you know. You know, they always left that to us, you know. And so finally when we got a little bit smarter we told them they better get the wood the night before. And all they had to do was just go and chop a couple of trees and bring it up with the horses, you know, but they had the horses for work. And so we'd run around and pick up all the chips on the ground, every chip we could we could find, then we'd put newspapers and coal oil and everything, and throw the chips in and then we'd have our fire -- and it would go "pooff," you know. And well we had a quickie anyways, and then the first thing, you know, we'd always be using the oil can. So then they, so that's how we made our fire, and then, and then we'd have our meal ready by

the time they came in. And then we'd tell them about the wood, and they'd see there was nothing, the chips were picked up. I think that's why they did it, so we'd use the chips. And finally then we got two, three, they'd bring in two, three pieces of wood and they'd chop it up, you know, and they were good at chopping -- well, we were too. And when we were young

we were in the lumber camp with them too. We'd have to leave home and go to this lumber camp. And they'd be cutting these great big tall timbers, you know, and that was all done by hand, you know, they had none of these machines. The only machine they had was, was, looked like a big thresher, like a big threshing machine, and they used to feed that with all kinds of wood; and it had belts on it, you know, and that's how it used, you know, whatever they did.

Jamie: Where was this?

Eliza: Not far from the reserve.

Jamie: Was it that man's place in Springfield?

Eliza: That Mundy, yeah Mundy, yeah, his place. Well, that's where we'd be there for, for a while, and I don't know how, I told you, I think, it was six -- thirty-two, or thirty-six dollars a cord or something, you know. And they'd have to cut all that, but they had a lot of work, they had to cut down the trees, trim it, and saw. They had the two saws, they didn't have electric saws, two men, you know, pulling back and forth. And, oh, it was hard work, but we'd stay there for the winter and, oh, I don't know how, they got so much a cord so I don't know how many cords they'd cut through the week. I think one cord, or two cords. And my dad died. I don't remember, because we were just playing around with our bows and arrows.

Jamie: You and your sister?

Eliza: Yeah, my sister and I. We were just running around. They made bows and arrows for us so we'd be running around shooting, trying to get the squirrels, you know, and different things, birds, song birds too.

Jamie: Did your sister return to the reserve?

Eliza: Oh, yes, she returned, and she owned a shop up there, she opened up Min's Craft Shop up there. She passed away.

Jamie: What was it called?

Eliza: Min's Craft Shop. Yeah.

Jamie: Min's, short for Minnie?

Eliza: Yeah, that's her name. Yeah, she opened up, that was always her dream. She always said, "I'd like to own a shop," she says, "and when I go home to the reserve I'm going to open a craft shop," and she did. She carried out her dream, she died in '71. And my son died in '71 too. She always said that she would take him with her. She died October the 23rd -- he died October the 30th. He just went to her funeral and my son died -- he wasn't sick a day in his life, he just went like that. No one has the power to do anything like that, he just died. But I always thought of that, but I knew he was going to

die. He stood in that door one day -- he was there, and he wasn't there. He had a blue suit on -- I still got his little hat, little blue hat he wore, and he always wore this. He was never without a hat, you know, he always wore a fancy little hat. He was standing there and he had a gold watch. He was

winding it and then he appeared to me. He was there but he wasn't there, if you know what I mean. And he was winding that gold watch, railroad watch -- he worked on the railroad. He says, "Ma, my time is up." And he was winding that watch, and I didn't pay him no mind, because it was all in a dream. He said, "My time is up." He died a few days later. He was standing there fully clothed like he did come home from the railway, he worked on the C.P., he worked down near Agincourt, And that's how he was dressed, he had his little blue hat on, and his blue coat on, and his blue pants and he was winding his watch, "My time is up." He died a few days later. And it was like a premonition. I got my, as I say, I guess that's what you call it, premonition, because... And then my sister always said, "When I go I'll take him with me." And I said to her, "Why would you want to do that?" And she just said, "Oh, I feel sorry for him." I says, "Why?" She never answered me. So when she died October the 23rd, he died October the 30th, just before his birthday. His birthday was the first or the second of November. He died just before his thirtieth birthday. He wasn't sick, he just died. And then, yeah he was standing there and he said, "My time is up." And it was on a Saturday. I called the doctor and I says, "My son Brian." So he went right over, he was just down the corner, both of them did, both doctors come down. They put him in the ambulance, they called an ambulance, Dr. Wood called an ambulance; and he died, just died like that. He was only there one night, he died on Sunday, the next day.

Jamie: And what did they diagnose as the cause of death?

Eliza: They didn't say. He just died. I guess maybe heart failure, or something. Didn't say. I never asked because I didn't want to know. I figured, "He's gone, why ask now," you know. So they called me from the hospital, and the doctor

called me. He says, "You better go to the hospital, Mrs. Kneller." He says, "Brian is in pretty bad way," he says, "I think." So I left and I went in a taxi -- oh no, somebody came over and drove me -- so I went to the hospital and I called my brother, and he was an evangelistic minister, you know, at the time. So he rushed over too, and he said prayers, but Brian didn't hear him, he was going then, he was a few minutes too late. I came home here and I had company, see, and they came up to see Brian and I thought I better prepare supper, and the doctor says, "What are you preparing supper for? What are doing at home, you're supposed to be here?" I says, "Well, I went home to get..." "Forget it," he said, and he got mad at me, this doctor, he said I should have been there. "Don't worry about there, they're all right. Let them fend for themselves," you know. So I says, "It's too late now," you

know. He didn't know me when I got there. But they felt I shouldn't have left. Even the two doctors, they scolded me, you know. He says, "The living can look after themselves," and they figured they could look after themselves.

Jamie: You told me another story once about being on the reserve and discovering if your cousin has a little beaded(?) bird.

Eliza: Oh yeah, my cousin. She, they were evangelists, too. Yeah, she turned evangelist as she grew older. Her grandfather always had her singing Indian, Indian songs -- teaching her how to sing Indian songs. And she could play the organ, see, at the church. And she would play and he would sing Indian -- Mohawk. And it was always a hymn, like a certain hymn all the time. But everybody seemed to enjoy it, because not too many could sing in the Mohawk tongue.

Jamie: Do you know any yourself?

Eliza: Oh, I used to, I got away from it. I have no one to talk to, see, you get away from it. Oh yes, I could talk Mohawk, and Tuscarora at my time, and then when we'd get sent to the Mohawk Institute, in Brantford, we were deprived of our native language. They thought we were going to riot and uprising, or something if we could talk our own dialect. So they forbid us to talk our own languages there even amongst... A lot of them that were from our reserve that could talk in the same tongue, we were punished for that, if we did. So if anybody did, that's, so that's how you forgot your own language.

Jamie: Did you speak it at home when you returned for the summer?

Eliza: I didn't know any of it. And then they would say to me, "You're proud now, you're high toned." And I'd say, "Why do you say that?" "Because you're ashamed to talk the Indian." It wasn't because I was ashamed, it was because I didn't know, know how! They took that out of us. They deprived us of our languages. And most of the children could speak in their tongue, but we weren't allowed to. And we didn't have teachers that would understand the Indianness of us, you know. If we wanted to talk Indian we'd have to wait until we got home and then if we saw our mothers... And if they talked Indian we couldn't understand what they were saying, so they just discontinued and they never would say anything to us. But it was always other people, not, not our relatives -- they'd say we were ashamed of our Indianness, to talk Indian. It was because we had forgotten it. And they had always done that to the Indian children where we, I wasn't the only one. There was only two, they were called hen hawks(?), so they were the only two that kept up the Mohawk language between the two. They'd talk to themselves all the time, they'd, and they'd get far

away from other children so the other children couldn't hear what they were talking for fear they'd squeal on them.

Jamie: What would the punishment have been?

Eliza: Well, they'd put on a black apron on them, or something, and they'd make you walk the bull's ring.

Jamie: The bull's ring?

Eliza: Yeah. They called it the bull's ring. It was a long ring like a, like a baseball, like a baseball where you run to one, two, three and the -- only it was round, it was a round circle. It was, like, worn, because quite a few students or children had walked that beat. So if you'd done little things like smiling across the room at a boy at school you were punished, you couldn't do that. So that's why I always felt in my time, time -- was that it was something dreadful to smile, and that's why a lot of the old time Indians, their faces are always, what do you call it? There's a word for it, but however... That was, I think that's what happened, that's why they always felt Indians couldn't smile, or couldn't laugh, but they always had a lot of laughs amongst themselves. You know, they always enjoyed one another's company and togetherness, and they'd laugh and smile, and be happy, because they were happy in their own surroundings and amongst their own people, because no one deprived them to smile, or they didn't think it was wrong to look over here and smile at a guy at school. So...

At the school I think that they tried to regimentation, like we were little soldiers, little things like that, you know, or to keep us in line I suppose, or... And there were strange people, they were always in from England, they were never Canadian teachers at the Institute. And they were always

English teachers, I don't know why. The principal always had to be English, and him and his wife always ran, they were principals of the school and then whether they done the hiring, or not, I don't know, I think they did really. But that was the residence school, and... But we had some good times among, when we played amongst the children ourselves. We used to have to make up our own games such as baseball. We were always good baseball players, because we... And then some of the girls would be, pretend they were in the circus, and my sister there, she used to always give plays and she'd always charge one cent, or two cents, and nothing higher than three cents. If you had the three cents she'd take the three cents, eh. But she was always putting on plays, and she put on good plays. And so finally one day one of the teachers found, she was watching, and she finally decided to have it in the senior room and invited all the boys and girls to see the play, so it went off pretty good. So it must have been good. And they had to make their own costumes too, out of nothing. But they managed to make costumes for the play, you know. Out of what I don't know, but they got them from somewhere, they all worked together, see. All the ones that were in the play, and even

others that weren't in the play helped.

And then they used to like to put biblical stories on, too. And they'd dress up and they'd have the shepherds, and the... Mary, and all that, you know. It was always very, very good. They were very talented about their theatre work. And being my sister, being the head one, I was always in the play. I was never out of a play -- she always shoved me in it with her, whether I could remember if three eggs in the nest, and all this sort of stuff. But I was never interested in that, but she always pushed me in there, into things like that so I was always, you know, play of some sort, you know. She always tried to get me oriented in this and that. It was fun, you know, it was fun, but I enjoyed it after I once got in, but I

used to always like to play outdoors instead, but this was always indoors in the play room, you know, in the dormitory where we were practicing. Then we'd also put bedspreads up and do shadow, shadow theatre, you know, that was always lots of fun. You'd put the lights on one side and darkness on the side, and then you'd go into your routine. Whatever it was, you know, and then make through all that.

And, but the reserve itself, we used to have to walk miles. One day I sent for something in Toronto -- this is when I was about Jason's age, about ten. I read this ad in there and it says you can make lots of money. Of course, I was hoodwinked into that myself, and you sent three dollars and ninety-five cents in and they sent you this box; and it had the scents in it, I think it's still sold today, little package of scents. So they sent me a big box and I was to sell that. So I walked miles, and miles. Early in the morning I got up and there was a sunrise, and I had my breakfast and I'd start walking -- I don't know how many miles. I covered that reserve, I went from houses to houses, and the houses were far apart, because it was farms, and farms, and farms. So I covered one concession and I turned around the other concession, I went to the house. And they'd, some of them would look at me (laughs), especially the old time women, I had this little package of scents, and it wasn't any bigger than that, you know, ten cents, you know. And one woman looked at me her name was, Mrs. Bombury. And she said, "My goodness," she said, "you walked for miles to sell this M.S." That's what she called it, that's what it looked like to her. She opened it, but she gave me ten cents for it, and then she ate it and started to laugh. She says, "That's what it looks like, like an M.S."

Jamie: An M.S.?

Eliza: Yeah. (laughs) And she paid me anyways and she, I guess she hadn't had anything good for a long time, like even those little black things, you know, those little things that run around, you set traps for. Field mice!

Jamie: Field mice?

Eliza: Yeah, only they come in the house they do a little thing like that, that's what she said it looked like M.S., you know.

Jamie: And these were, what were they really though, little candies?

Eliza: Oh yeah, they were breath sweeteners or something. So I covered many miles and I walked fast, and some of them would see me on the road and they'd say, "Where you going?" And I'd show them, you know. I wouldn't answer, I'd just show them. And then they'd laugh and they'd be in a wagon or something going down; but I covered, I covered quite a bit of that good earth, you know, with my feet and I walked fast, and I made about two dollars and some odd cents. See, it cost me three ninety-five, so I still had a lot more to sell and I was getting kind of tired, and I'd look at the sun -- coming sunset, you know, and I thought "Oh, I better walk home, hurry home." I didn't want to be on the roads at night if it got dark. They used to always tell us, "If you're on the roads at night," to the girls, "there was Ohnatcha(?)". I never knew what they meant, I guess it meant some witch running down the road, and they would say, they wouldn't say, they'd say, "Ohnatcha,"(?) and that meant... we were always afraid of "Ohnatcha,"(?) whatever it meant. I never did find... some day when I go home I'm going to ask somebody what that meant. I imagine there was some witch, or some ghost on the road, you know. And I used to hear people say they used to hear horse

and buggy, but nobody in the, on the roads there, somebody riding on the road, but they never see anybody -- they could hear it go by. That was the old time story. But what we used to do, I think you know that, I told you before. We used to lay on the ground. We'd come out of the long lane from my mother's -- she had quite a long lane, he can tell you -- and we'd open the gate, the long wooden gates. And we'd put our ears on the ground to see if there was anything coming. That was seemed to be an amusement for us, like something to do, you know. So we'd run down the road, you know, and open the gate and put our ears to the ground. And that's how the Indians in the olden days could tell if the bluecoats were coming, or the redcoats, whatever. They'd, you know, they'd know when the soldiers were coming. Or they could hear the hooves and they'd tell whoever was watching, or something, they would send word, you know. They had ways of sending their messages too, you know. And then they would tell then, then the women and children then would go and hide, because they would always have an idea that they'd slaughter the women and children, you know, which they truly did. So they tried to hide them, or try to hide. And they figured without the women there wouldn't be no Indians, you know, if they done away with them. But it was mostly American soldiers that did that, thank goodness they stayed over there, otherwise they... What is it you want?

Jason: The tent don't reach. The tent doesn't reach.

Eliza: I know it didn't, I looked at it.

Jamie: So what happened with your candies?

Eliza: The candies... Jason, Grandpa, send Jason out, eh.

Jamie: You had about two dollars left worth of candies that you had to still sell?

Eliza: It was scents then, the breath sweetener, they weren't candies they were just little black things, little wee tiny black things, and it was only just a small little package. So I was walking down the road and they'd always know I was doing something, because I, my grandfather always said you had to make money some way, so I used to try everything. I'd look in magazines and stuff, you know, whatever they were selling, I'd send for it, you know. And so finally after I sold about two dollars and some odd cents worth of that stuff, and then, you know, I had to, really, it cost me three ninety-five and I had to send them back for, I had to send them back the same amount of money that I paid for that stuff for, the little scents. And I saw one in the store one day and I had to smile when I saw this little package in the variety store, you know, it took me back, scents, and I said, "Holy cow," I thought to myself, "they still sell that, they still manufacture them," you know. And so I, after I got home and thinking about it the next day I said, "You know, ma, I walked many miles to have this little bit of money," I says, "and look what it cost me." I says, "You know," I says, "I earned that money just by walking," you know, walking covering all those miles. I says, "I'm not going to send them that back, I'll just send the remaining stuff, you know, that I'm not going to sell." She said, she looked at me for a long time, looking at me, she says, "Well, how far did you walk?" And I told her. She says, "Well, all I can say is let your conscience be your guide. Do whatever you feel you want to do," she says. "That's between you and them and those packages," (laughs) whatever you, I decided to do.

So I decided I'd keep the money and keep the rest of the scents and then that bothered me, see, keeping it. So I finally -- it

was just a few more left, you know -- and then I wrapped them up in a brown, I got a brown bag and cut it up, and took the address off of this package and, and I fixed it and I gave it to the mailman the next morning. He come around about the eleven, eleven o'clock with a horse and buggy; so I run down the long lane and I was standing there at the mail box waiting. And finally I saw the horse and buggy and Mr. Laforme coming. "Oh," I says, "I got a package for you and," I said, "I haven't got no stamps." I said, "Here's some money," I said. I says, "How much do you think it would cost?" He says, "Oh, about thirty-five, forty cents." So I gave him fifty cents. I said, "Will that be enough?" He says, "Oh, sure that would be enough." So he took my package and he has to go back to the post office anyways, so he mailed it back to Toronto for me.

And, so when my mother said, "Let your conscience be your

guide," I figured I better send it back, but I did write in a note there -- I was only like Jason's age, about ten -- and I says "I'm keeping the rest of the money for the miles I covered on my, by walking," I said, "and I think I wore out my pair of shoes." Which I didn't, but I told them that anyways. I figured that you know from walking so much I wore the soles pretty thin. So I never heard from them no more, you know, they didn't care I guess for that amount. But anyways I never sold anything after that for going so many miles. But mind you everybody was good, you know, but they could have bought two, or three packages. But each one only had ten cents, or whatever, you know, whatever small change they had. In those days they never got pensions or anything, so they had to work hard for their money.

You know, farm work was very hard and you had to sell your goods at the market on Saturdays, and your eggs, and your berries whatever the season may be. Or whatever they made, they made baskets -- my mother made baskets but hers was mostly trade and barter. I told you that.

Jamie: Yeah, you told me.

Eliza: I told you already. And she made cornhusks, I told you, mats. Yeah, she'd sell those or trade those too, but it was never always for money, it was mostly trading. But I think they don't do that today, I think they sell most, they sell their wares. I mean if they have a basket they want the money for the basket, and they don't charge them easy, either, you know. For this type of basket you may pay fifteen dollars for it, you know. But they have to go to the woods and get that, that tree, you know, then that's what I told you what I done. I used to have to pound it for a long time, and then you had to skin it, you know. It comes up very thin and then your mother does this way, and then you paint it up and so forth, and so on.

Well, I guess any work that I done on the farm I find it didn't hurt me, it kept us out of mischief, we were never into trouble, we didn't know what trouble was. You know, if it wasn't working on that certain time of the year in the fall we'd be making baskets. But in the spring, summer it was always berry picking time, and haying time, or helping on the farm if they couldn't get any help; or farmers would go from one farm to the other threshing. And he used to like to got out there too, help with the threshing. And even the boys helped with the machine that throws the straw, you make a straw stack with the, you know, usually boys like that, they'd like to do that. And my son, Brian, was always on the farm, that boy. He was always on the farm in his younger days, and he used to like the New Year's day, which he'd call Newyah.

Jamie: Yeah, you told me about that.

Eliza: Yeah, it's like Halloween in the city, it's like that. And then they'd have plowing matches too. I think they

have that in the white people too. Some Indians from our reserve come and compete with the white man's plowing match too, you know. You have to make it straight, although you have to have the horses. I don't think they used tractors for that -- maybe they do today now I don't know. Last year when I was out it was, they still used horses for the plowing match. And that was always a big day too. But it was mostly young men that went there, but some of the women would take the food down there, you know. And if you wanted to tag along with your mother, fine.

And then if we had, we'd have farmer's picnic and that was the big time for all the farmers around. And the women would boil, would boil a big pot of corn, boiling water. And then you empty the water out and carry the big pot back to where the picnic was, in the picnic grove or something, or whoever's farm it was, they'd have it all fixed up for the picnic. And then you'd have to carry all these big pans of corn down there, you know. It'd smell so nice, too, as you were carrying it, you know. And I don't know how them women used to carry that. They never used to, I wouldn't carry it to that... But I mean we did in those days, they never, you know... They could have used the horses and put it in the wagon and pull it, but they never did. They done the hard labor, you know. It was always, it was always do, everything was done by hand like, you know, and you had, I guess it was light and all that... Wash it with cold water, Brian... And then in the winter time there, the men's sport was always snake shoes.

Jamie: Yeah, you told me before.

Eliza: Yeah. I'm just trying to think. And then for us we'd go for a hay rides, you know. Hay riding was always a

good thing. And some families had taffy pulling. They'd make a lot of brown sugar and whatever they had, cream, and they'd mix it, and then they'd beat it up, or with your hands, or some they'd butter your hands. Butter your hands with butter and then they'd, you'd have to whip this big can of thing and a lot of hands would be in there doing it. And then after it got to a certain way, like you're making frosting for a cake, then you get certain spot, and then you keep pulling it. And sometimes you'd have two people would get some and you'd pull together, and then you were making taffy like, you know. And you'd do it for a little while, you know, I don't know how long. It's a long time ago. And after you got a certain way of the way you wanted was then, then they roll it. I don't know I forgot how they, I don't know whether they done this way or they'd both done this way, you done that way, so it would go into a different way and then they'd set it. And then before it sets then they used to cut it. I don't know whether they cut them in little pieces or bigger pieces, I don't remember that part very well. But I just remember whipping it up with your hands with lots of butter on your hands, and everybody had their hands in this big pot making this candy stuff, candy making time, I guess. And it was fun.

You never ate any because you were mixing it up and you were have fun making it, and never thought of eating it, you know. Anything we made we never, never ate until after it was finished, you know, and then you laid it out on a big boards, usually bread boards, because everybody... We never bought baker's bread, as I told you, we make bread morning, noon, and night. And it was always, we got so we were good biscuit makers and then maybe once in a while we'd make bread from yeast, or something, but not that often. It depends. And the yeast at that time wasn't those little ones, they used to be round, little round cakes. It was same thing, I suppose, but it was the old fashioned yeast. But today they make it the

same thing but only different style of setting it out, I guess, or mixing it. But it was always homemade bread and churning our own butter too. If you got enough of sour cream you had those little things, and then you done this all day and whipped it up and then you get the buttermilk, and then you use the buttermilk for biscuits and, and if you had enough, well, you'd feed it to the pigs, you know. But you took enough out there to make your biscuits and then you always threw the rest out. A lot of people like to drink buttermilk, he did. Every time he came home to our home, my mother's home, he always had a nice cold glass of buttermilk, he loved that, you know. Because it was fresh, you know, it isn't like that you buy in the city where it sits for a week or so. And it was always little flakes of fresh butter in there too, because you couldn't always get all the butter out, you know. And then I had a dog, I used to, I told you about my dog.

Jamie: Prince.

Eliza: We used to harness him up, you know. And then my sister, the one that passed away, she had a trained chicken. You know, she could always hypnotize the chicken to do what she wants. Well, she used to tell me about it, so one day I says to her, "I don't believe you." I said, "You're telling me a story." "No," she says, "come, I'll show you." So she had a red hen, kind of a reddish hen, it was more like a blonde. They're bird brains anyways, (snickers). So anyways she got this chicken. She says, "Okay, watch me." She'd go like this way, some ways with her hands and fast like this, and the chicken would go like this, and then she'd go like this way, and that chicken would stay like that. (laughs) And that was her pet thing, that, my sister, Minnie. That's what she always did, you know, she always done that with the chicken, you know.

and she thought that was a great thing. Well it is, you know, because she was the only one that ever did that. I don't think that nobody else in the world ever did that. (laughing) Oh dear. We used to do a lot of little things together, her and I. She was always, she was a smart one too, you know, she was always smart. We'd do things together and we'd go back in the bush and, and take a bunch of newspapers and make houses back there. And we'd get those little thorn, thorn tree, that had

the little sharp needles like, they looked like, you know, they were sharp, we'd cut them off and use those for pins and...

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