Margaret: Your particular family, the Mowatts, this is an old Hudson's Bay family, isn't it?

Mr. Mowatt: No, this is not, no. That is another Mowatts. From Warren Landing, you mean?

Margaret: Yeah.

Mr. Mowatt: They are different altogether.

Margaret: Where did your people come from?
Mr. Mowatt: Well, we come from a farm west of Selkirk, you know, originally. And both of my grandfathers are from that district.

Margaret: Around the Little Britain and Middlechurch?

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, and Oak Hamlet(?), Lockport.

Margaret: Oh yes.

Mr. Mowatt: So it is a different Mowatt altogether, like the Hudson's Bay outfit.

Margaret: Where were you born yourself?

Mr. Mowatt: I was born at Lac Du Bonnet myself.

Margaret: So you would be travelling?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yeah, they moved around quite a bit. And then they settled on that farm there, west of Selkirk -- Oak Hamlet(?) -- stayed there till 1928 and then we moved out here.

Margaret: And how old would you be then?

Mr. Mowatt: I was about 14 when we come here. I am 52 now.

Margaret: Well, were there families here then?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yes.

Margaret: There are people who were born here and whose parents were born here?

Mr. Mowatt: There wasn't too many. There was the Settees and the Monkmans, Tiny is still here. And then Everetts, they were here then. And Walter Bennett, that is about all.

Margaret: I see.

Mr. Mowatt: When we first came.

Margaret: Well, I met Everetts over (inaudible). Is there a Mr. or Mrs. Whiteway here?

Mr. Mowatt: Yes, she is the old lady.

Margaret: Mr. Whiteway showed me all around Berens River and they gave me -- he used his own boat -- but he was with the Bay and they had him show me around. And he knew, of course, all the people here.

Mr. Mowatt: I think that Whiteway that's here, she is related to those Whiteways in Berens River in some way.
Margaret: Well now, I don't want this to seem impertinent, I don't mean that, but what has kept these families here?

Mr. Mowatt: Beg your pardon?

Margaret: What has kept these families here?

Mr. Mowatt: Just the fishing mostly.

Margaret: The fishing? And what about the wintertimes.

Mr. Mowatt: Well, it is pulp wood now, you know. Since this road was opened, you know, it is a big difference. One time you could just get out of here by boat and all the dogs in the winter and portaged. But it's just fishing and pulp wood.

Margaret: Where do they... They don't get pulp wood from the island?

Mr. Mowatt: No, it's cleaned off across on the other side there. Outside of that there is nothing, no farms.

Margaret: There is no farms?

Mr. Mowatt: You couldn't farm this land if you tried. It's too much rock, you know.

Margaret: This is part of the Laurentian Shield, isn't it?

Mr. Mowatt: It is, yes. It is all limestone. But in between, if you get a patch in between it is good soil though, you know.

Margaret: You still have a difficult time at spring break-up and freezing?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yes, there is always a few days, you know. It's not too many though. We can always cross here to Mary's though, you know. We are never stuck here. Like long ago, we were stuck as soon as the ice got weak. Well, we were here for a month before we could go anywhere.

Margaret: But you can get over there?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yes, because it always opens early there, you know, and it freezes late. You see, by the time the ice is weak here, we can cross over there with a boat. See, so we are never stuck. The same thing in the fall.

Margaret: Well what about... When I came up, I understood that there was a ferry across here just as it was at Hecla and I brought the car up. Are they going to build one?

Mr. Mowatt: No, I think that is all washed up. They were going to move the old ferry here, I heard one time, but they never. It's not enough for it, I guess, you know. Costs quite a bit to operate one of them things.
Margaret: Well, how many would be on the island altogether?

Mr. Mowatt: Altogether? Gee, I couldn't say right off. There must be pretty close to two hundred people altogether.

Margaret: And you yourself fish mostly?

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah.

Margaret: And you are connected with the fishing company down here?

Mr. Mowatt: No, we fish now for the Co-op. We were with the companies one time but we started on our own this spring.

Margaret: Generally a good idea. Where do you go mostly for your fishing?

Mr. Mowatt: Well, I figure on staying right here this fall but in the spring we go to Agan (?) which is about 20 miles north of here, or 18 miles north. Go and scatter around all over the place. The line is only 22 miles north of here. We can't go north of that.

Margaret: Well now, can you explain that to me?

Mr. Mowatt: Well, it's the Department's rules or regulations, you see. That is a whitefish line for a bigger mesh.

Margaret: Well, are there certain people who can go in certain areas, is that it?

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah. Whoever owns a whitefish license, they can fish anywhere from Berens River north, or from Pigeon Point.

Margaret: Could you get a whitefish license if you want it?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yes, if you want it, sure. But it costs plenty.

Margaret: Well, what fish do you get mostly then?

Mr. Mowatt: Here? Saugers mostly here.

Margaret: Oh, I had some over at Berens River.

Mr. Mowatt: It is pretty well all sauger fishing here now. Winter and summer.

Margaret: Well, do a group of you go out together in a bunch of boats?

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, we got our own boat to pick up the fish, you know. A big gas boat.
Margaret: And then what do you do? Do you cut wood over in the winter?

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, pulp wood, yeah.

Margaret: How is that paying now?

Mr. Mowatt: Well, I don't do it myself, you know. I think they get six dollars a cord in the bush. And then they get another dollar after it's out. I don't really know too much about that. And then I think it's four dollars for hauling it.

Margaret: Well, what do you do yourself then in the winter?

Mr. Mowatt: I trap mostly.

Margaret: Oh, where do you go?

Mr. Mowatt: Just up south here. We got a trap line too, a registered line.

Margaret: Oh I see. Well, apparently the trapping is really still pretty good around this region.

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yes, it is always good. It is all registered now, you know.

Margaret: That is what Mr. Everett over at Berens was telling me. He is a trapper.

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, it is all registered. Well, there is not too much in it either, you know, just a sideline.

Margaret: But enough to keep you busy?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh yeah.

Margaret: Will you go out for several weeks on a trapline?

Mr. Mowatt: No, no, just for a couple of days. I got a power toboggan now, you know. Before we used to camp out, you know, for a week, two weeks at a time. We stayed alone in the spring, two weeks about the longest.

Margaret: That must be quite a, or was quite a bit.

Mr. Mowatt: It is nice to get out.

Margaret: When you went that way, did you take tents with you or did you take...?

Mr. Mowatt: No, we got our camps up there.

Margaret: Oh, I see.

Mr. Mowatt: Just move in, yeah. Take enough groceries for a
couple of weeks.

Margaret: Well, which would you rather have, the snowmobile or the dog team?

Mr. Mowatt: I would sooner have the toboggan any day. It is faster and, you know, you don't have to feed it over the summer.

Margaret: And you don't have to feed it when it is out with you.

Mr. Mowatt: No, just make sure it is working.

Margaret: Is this another Mowatt?

Mr. Mowatt: That is a Mowatt, yeah. My nephew.

Margaret: We have a good summer day out.

Mr. Mowatt: Too warm.

(Inaudible conversation)

Margaret: Well, I have been walking along the edge of the water here and I found it pretty hot today.

Mr. Mowatt: Were you in to see that old lady that's the...?

Margaret: I went but she is away.

Mr. Mowatt: Oh, she is away.

Margaret: I was hoping to see her. That is old Mrs. Everett.

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, old Mrs. Everett.

Margaret: Yes, and I was so hoping to see her but she is away.

Mr. Mowatt: I think she is across the lake, eh?

Margaret: Well, the man who lives next door said that he'd seen them go and the place is all packed up. So...

Do you go fishing too? (To a third person - nephew.)

Mr. Mowatt: He works in the sheds, shed man.

Margaret: What sort of work is that?

Nephew: Well, you pack the (inaudible) and the fish come in and you pack it.

Margaret: When the boats come along and...

Mr. Mowatt: Yes.
Margaret: Do you have many boats come by here?

Mr. Mowatt: Well, they are still all from these stations north here but trucks haul our fish, transfer, you know.

Margaret: So you take it over to the mainland?

Mr. Mowatt: Take it to that new building across there. I guess they store it in there.

Margaret: Well, I hope they improve the roads a bit.

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, that is... You never run into no moose, did you?

Margaret: No, but I saw a little deer.

Mr. Mowatt: There was one fellow run into a moose there the night before last, three or four nights ago. Did his car $180 damage.

Margaret: I guess I should get home before dark.

Mr. Mowatt: Killed the moose.

Margaret: Good heavens.

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, that road, it's that big rock that's so bad.

Margaret: Oh it is. I had a flat.

Mr. Mowatt: They figure it'll be a good road when that get's packed down but whenever that's going to happen.

Margaret: Well, when your parents came here, what would they... They would be hunting and fishing too, would they?

Mr. Mowatt: They were fishing, yes. Well, he fished the first year and then it used to be steamboats them days, you know. So he got a job putting the wood down for them, you know. In the winter and getting it out of the bush in the winter and then putting it down for them in the summer. He had a year around job and he was all right then.

Margaret: And what was your mother's family.

Mr. Mowatt: She was a Jensen. They're from Oak Hamlet(?) too. He's right from the old country, her dad.

Margaret: Well, when I talked with Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Settee, she had been a Sutherland. She was brought up here too. Are there any Sutherlands left here now?

Mr. Mowatt: Not here, no. He's in Kelowna. She was a Sutherland and her grandmother was my grandmother's sister, you see. So, we are related somehow.
Margaret: This is one of the main impressions I've got all over. You talk to someone and he has a cousin over here or his wife is married to, or his wife's mother is related to whoever, you know.

Mr. Mowatt: There is a lot of that on the lake here.

Margaret: You feel as though it is just one huge community.

Mr. Mowatt: Through marriage too, you know. No real blood relation. I guess there is a lot of it, you know. But they are, that Grace there, Charlie's wife, she is related to us.

Margaret: Well, they have a very nice set up. The girls go up there in the summer and they have a nice summer holiday and then they come out in the wintertime.

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah, he lived here one time, you know.

Margaret: Yes, he said he lived most of his life here. It would be a close community. You'd know each other very well.

Mr. Mowatt: Yeah. Yes, everybody knows everybody, that's for sure.

Margaret: Do you have celebrations and stuff?

Mr. Mowatt: Oh, just the odd one, you know. Anything that is important we try and celebrate it a little bit.

Margaret: Is it a new community hall that is going up?

Mr. Mowatt: This here? No, it is an old community but it is getting more like a community all the time, you know. Some day....

(End of Interview)

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