David: Was there a name for when a couple were engaged?

Hilda: (Indian).

David: Can you say that again?

Hilda: (Indian). I think it really means courting. You mean (Indian)?

David: Yeah, (Indian).

Hilda: (Indian) means yes, (Indian) means to give to the person you're going to marry, some gifts, and it's called (Indian).

David: And this would be done by the groom to the bride's family, would it?
Hilda: Yes. Or if the bride is higher than the man then I think she does it.

David: Oh, I see. It works the other way.

Hilda: Yeah. I think so.

David: What was that word you used for courting again?

Hilda: Courting? (Indian).

David: Do you have a name then for the marriage ceremony itself?

Hilda: (Indian). Either one.

David: Say that again, please.

Hilda: (Indian). That's the word I used for courting.

David: Is there a special name for the wedding feast, feast to celebrate the wedding?

Hilda: I don't know. There must be a word but I just can't think of it now. Must have something to do with (Indian).

David: Is there a term used for what we were talking about earlier, buying yourself out?

Hilda: (Indian).

David: And that would be where the bride pays back what was originally paid plus a hundred percent?

Hilda: Yeah. That's a real high class. (laughs) (Indian) to me. That was what my mother'd say but I can't really know what it meant. The only word I know is (Indian). That means the parents could go to the other parents, (Indian) was their daughter.

David: Is there a term for when the husband and wife are living together?

Hilda: Husband and wife living together? (laughs) Don't they live...?

David: When you say you're married, how would you say that?

Hilda: (Indian), you mean I've been married?

David: Yeah.

Hilda: (Indian), that means... And the other, (Indian), that's another term of saying we get married or (Indian), they are married.
David: (Indian)?

Hilda: Yeah.

David: Yeah. Could you describe that, what's that all about?

Hilda: I've never really seen it or really understood what it meant, but my brother was in it once. He thought that all the boys were supposed to make that climb, but they were just supposed to fool around and pretend to go. He lives over here. Louie Walker was supposed to have done it for his wife. They got married in Indian way. And my brother thought, "Oh gee, this is easy. I'm going to climb over that." And here he wasn't supposed to. That's what they meant I guess.

David: What happens in that case where these suitors makes it and you're not supposed to make it?

Hilda: I guess you just had to make an exception, explain it. (Indian).

David: When a couple separates.

Hilda: Yeah. My oldest sister, Patsy, they made an arrangement for her to be married to a chief, although he had a wife already.

David: I see. And this was so that the chief would what, get access to what, titles or rank?

Hilda: I really don't know what was, what it was for. But it built up my sister-in-law.

David: Oh I see. It was to her advantage?

Hilda: It must have been. I know my mother had to (Indian) from Albert Harry, he was the chief of that. And his wife used to pretend to be jealous, insanely jealous, of my sister, and she was just a little girl.

David: How would your sister have been at that time?

Hilda: Gee, I don't know. I think she was supposed to have been still married to him ten years before she actually married Norman Johnson.

David: Would that Norman's first wife then?

Hilda: Yeah.

David: Oh, I see.

Hilda: That's all... those are my nephews and nieces...

David: When she would marry Norman, then, would that have
been... What kind of a marriage would that have been?
Hilda: Well, I think she was a lot higher than him.

David: And so what would her relation be to the first marriage if she got married again? Her first marriage was arranged...
Hilda: Yeah.

David: ...and she was just a child.
Hilda: Yeah.

David: Now in order for her to marry, like for real, would she have buy herself out?
Hilda: Yes, she did.

David: Oh, I see. She did that, and she's then free to make another marriage?
Hilda: Yes.

David: I see, and that was Norman's first wife?
Hilda: Yeah.

David: And did they have any children?
Hilda: Yes, they had eight, seven.

David: Who were they?
Hilda: There's Cecil, Jimmy, Patsy, Sharon, Babs, and my sister had one before she was married. She lives over here right now, older niece.

David: Okay, the term you would use for twins?
Hilda: (Indian).

David: Were twins considered lucky, special?
Hilda: Yes. Especially if you're born someplace, you know, along the coast. If there was twins born maybe around here there'd be lots of fish out here in the summertime.

David: What does that refer to then, (Indian)? Would that be a song, any special song?
Hilda: Yeah, (Indian) is a lament that you sing. Whenever you can make it, because a feast or potlatch will have to go out with it.

David: Oh, I see.
Hilda: You see, that's what that Dorothy and them are doing, going to be doing this spring. See, they don't (Indian) right away, they (Indian) later on.

David: When the people used to go up the lake in the winter and you were trapping and so on, was that done... it was in the family, right, as families? But did they work together? Did the men get together and, say, log or trap?

Hilda: You mean where there's (inaudible) beside the river?

David: No, before.

Hilda: Before.

David: Yeah. I was wondering if they cooperated in any way with, like for hand logging or...

Hilda: Yeah, they did some hand logging but I don't know how it was. Fred Anderson, foreman Fred used to hand log with my dad. That's how my dad died, he got a snag through his knee and there was no way of getting him to a hospital. And he thought, "Oh, I'm strong enough, I'm young enough to beat it." But it turned to gangrene. By the time they finally got him to Bella Bella, with an old putt-putt of Fred Anderson's -- one of those things that you flip over and it just "putt-putt, putt-putt," and it would take a long time to get to Bella Bella. By the time he got there it was, well, pretty well into his leg. And Dr. Darby wanted to cut his leg off and he said, "No, I'd rather die whole." If that's courage, I don't know. If it was foolhardy, I don't know. But he made the arrangements for us kids before he died. Told my... Left my mother home because she was big with child, told her to stay home with us, "Kitty will come with me." That was his sister, my aunt. They told my aunt to take me so my mother wouldn't have too many little ones to look after, so that's how come I stayed with my aunt. And if my dad had taken his leg off maybe he would have been alive today.

David: Yeah.

Hilda: He was a young fellow when he died, twenty-four.

David: Really?

Hilda: Yeah. They had a lot of words, I think. As a matter of fact I think Dave was the first councillor.

David: He was?

Hilda: Yeah. Elected council, they never had, everything was done by what the chief said.

David: Yeah.
Hilda: Before that. But then with the white man's way coming in they had to change. And they elected someone who had some knowledge of white man's ways, as it were, which was Dave. He was quite qualified to be a spokesman for the people.

David: So when they started electing a council that posed some problems did it?

Hilda: Yeah. I guess you've heard there've been many of the religious where they say, "Oh, he's taking some money out of the village money and just using it on..." That's what they said about my stepfather because he had a bigger house than anybody else. And yet we just all pitched in and helped to make it bigger, make it bigger for the lumber, for the money to go further, than if the carpenter did it all himself.

David: So really, from the very first, the council... there were problems with the council?

Hilda: Yeah. With the people.

David: Yeah. And in the past most of those decisions would have been by the chief?

Hilda: Yeah.

David: He would make those decisions? Another thing I was going to ask you about is the saw mill across from R.I.C. Do you recall the saw mill at all?

Hilda: No.

David: Was it gone when you were a little girl?

Hilda: Part that... just the houses were there when I came to... As a matter of fact I have a picture of my aunt and Tommy (name) and I think my mother's brother in a picture with the saw mill in the background smoking.

David: Oh, you do have a picture, do you?

Hilda: Yeah.

David: Could I have a look at it?

Hilda: Yes.

David: So was the... When the saw mill started it had houses and a school?

Hilda: Yeah.

David: And the school was run by the Salvation Army?

Hilda: Salvation Army, yeah.

David: And then it all burned down?
Hilda: All burned down and that was end of my mother's education.

David: Oh, I see.

Hilda: She went there, her grandmother used to try and send her.

David: That would be quite a while ago then, eh?

Hilda: Oh yeah. I think (inaudible) (Indian) is across R.I.C., the little island.

David: What did you call it again?

Hilda: (Indian). That's the one that Danny was asking you for. Out of school. I didn't know that I was living on the reserve -- that was just home for me. Home was where we happened to be at the moment, which was quite a few different places. We used to move... You know where the houses are now along the river? That's where we were, (name). That was when the oolachans came. Everybody used to move, they used to have smokehouses along there. As a matter of fact I think there was two houses there, you know, with a stove and everything, smokehouses. And we used to all move up there, take what we need. Things like clothing, bedding, and whatever we needed for food. But we lived mostly on oolachans when they came. Never mind whatever, anything else we had on hand. My mother used to wake me up early in the morning when they first catch the first load of, canoe load of oolachans. She used to tell me to, "(Indian)." (Indian), means welcome. And we eat oolachans. They were my bacon and eggs, or mush, whatever.

David: You had them for breakfast, eh?

Hilda: Yeah. And that was, get up early in the morning, never mind waking up ten, twelve o'clock.

David: There were houses at Oolachan Town then, were there?

Hilda: Smokehouses, yeah.

David: How much time would you spend up there when the oolachans were running?

Hilda: Well, as long as it took for the grease to be done and all the smoking, salting was done. Drying, most of it was drying.

David: Did they use... What did they use to make the grease in the early days?

Hilda: (Indian). Evelyn and them have one made out of big planks of cedar.
David: Is it a box, cedar box?
Hilda: Yeah.
David: How big would it be?
Hilda: About so long from here to there and about so wide. Then you can put gallons of water and oolachans in there.
David: And then what do you do? Do you heat it and boil it?
Hilda: You can fry underneath it and it's made so that it wouldn't burn.

David: Yeah, that's what I'm curious about. How do you do that?
Hilda: I don't know how they did it a long time ago, but they have a galvanized piece that they tack onto the bottom and up to the sides a little bit. But you were never to let the fire flame up on each side because you might burn the, (inaudible) itself. It had to be through the...

David: Maybe we could have a look at the map.

(Break in Tape)

Hilda: Smoking, drying halibut.
David: (Indian name)?
Hilda: (Indian name).
David: There was a smokehouse there?
Hilda: Yeah. It's the one mother used to talk about.
David: That's right on Schooner Retreat, eh?
Hilda: Yeah.
David: What time of year would that be used?
Hilda: Oh, that would be around May, I think. When they finished doing the (Indian), that's in April. (Indian), that's Oolachan Town. When that's done they go out to the... out there for seaweed and drying halibut.

David: I see. How about (Indian)?

Hilda: (Indian), I think my mother used to mention that too. I think those places are for picking plants too.
David: Yeah.
Hilda: Oh, and the chief's sons were inside the whale, homemade whale and it had, you know, everything, fins and tails. And the only way they could make the whale come up and go down again in the water, in the lake, was for these, all these chief's sons went in it and they had rocks. Packed rocks from end to the other to make the whale come up and down. And somehow they couldn't go up again and one of the ups and downs it just sank with all those chief's sons. They never did get up.

David: No, I've never heard that story.

Hilda: I remember they often told me about it. I don't know if they've got a name, though, for that tragedy, I guess you'd call it.

David: Why would they be in the whale in the first place?

Hilda: Well, I guess they were... They must have been having a potlatch or something and they were doing the thing with the whale and somehow they couldn't get it back up to the other end and it sank. There was no way they could get them. They don't know how deep that is. It must be pretty deep.

David: Yeah, I imagine.

Hilda: I remember going through these narrows past that (Indian). The water used to be so low sometimes my stepfather used to get me to use one of those long poles -- oar -- and break the ice as we're going. It used to ice up. And then there's nothing to eat there, the snow had come down so far.

David: Yeah.

Hilda: I guess the reason why we moved up there is when it snows all the animals come down closer to the water line and that's when we did all kinds of... the trapping was good. Oh, it used to be cold.

David: Lots of snow?

Hilda: Lots of... too much snow. You know they don't seem to get much up there, unless I'm just not there to see it. (Laughs) As soon as he left school he joined the army and I guess he was in England for quite a while. As a matter of fact some of his words are very English. He'd talk very different from people over here when he came back.

David: What years would he have been in the army then?

Hilda: Must have been...

David: Was it during he War?

Hilda: During World War One. So he was over there towards the end of it, I guess. My brother has a picture of him in his
uniform, very tight, tight pants. I'm just wondering if my brother would remember some things -- William Bernard.

David: William, yeah. I was wondering if maybe I could see him.

Hilda: Somebody can dance (inaudible).

David: (Inaudible)?

Hilda: Yeah.

David: And Susan Johnson also had (Indian). And this is the name for Mary Walker. And another name for Captain Johnson was (Indian). Yeah, it was Queenie Hanuse.

Hilda: She was Norman Johnson's mother's sister.

David: Norman Johnson.

Hilda: She's Agnes Chamberlain's, Janet (name)'s mother. They used to call her Queenie because they didn't have no other name to give her.

David: And she was Queenie, but was she named after somebody else named Queen?

Hilda: I don't know. I thought that she was just her white name.

David: Oh, I see. Yeah, so did I until I saw it written down here.

Hilda: That was the grandmother of Queenie.

David: Oh, I see.

Hilda: Queenie's father was Charlie Walker. Evelyn doesn't know she's related to Agnes and them?

David: Oh yeah, I think so.

Hilda: I remember Lizzie calling her granddaughter. Found it was her granddaughter. (Indian) is girl. (Indian) is boy.

(END OF SIDE A)
(END OF TAPE)

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