

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: SARAH BALLANTYNE
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: LA RONGE, SASK.

INTERVIEW LOCATION: LA RONGE, SASK.

TRIBE/NATION: CREE
LANGUAGE: CREE
DATE OF INTERVIEW: AUGUST 12, 1981
INTERVIEWER: JANET R. FIETZ
INTERPRETER:
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Memories of her childhood.

Sarah Ballantyne interviewed by Janet R. Fietz, 12 August 1981, La Ronge, Saskatchewan, for the Oral History Project, Indian and Metis Elders of La Ronge. (Partial transcript and translation from Cree)

The La Ronge she remembers was quiet as there were only a few people at that time. She came from Little Hills to attend school in La Ronge when she was seven years old. She used to stay with her grandmother. There were three of them, Lizzie Roberts, Bella Halkett and herself. They came by dog team.

At school, they slept on the floor as there were no beds. The school wasn't even finished yet.

James Brown was the carpenter/missionary who helped to build the school. He looked after them. There was a saw mill that made the boards for the school.

They did their own washing by hand.

She got married to a farmer named Andrew Ballantyne and lived on a farm for a long time, planting potatoes and other things. He helped other farmers cut their wheat. When they left the farm and moved to Moose Point, he worked for Gordon

and Dick Hall, fishing. John Bird also worked there.

Describes travelling with several other women by dog team across Lac La Ronge to visit her grandmother who was sick.

In the summer they used to dry meat and fish so it wouldn't spoil. They used to pound it into small pieces and it kept a long time that way too.

They tanned moose hides which they used for making jackets and moccasins. They used to use quills and silk thread for fancy work.

She remembers that there used to be lots of fur. She caught a red fox at that time.

Her father, Joseph Halkett, used to help plant potatoes and other things at the school. There were three stores in La Ronge then.

The very old people got welfare. They got tea, salt pork and flour. They weren't given money at that time.

Horse teams brought beds up for the school.

There are many differences between the children of today and of years ago.

With the old age pension, there is easier living today. There are homes and other things provided for the older people. Many people used to trap successfully even when they were old.

Describes a fire in the 1920s that came close to the school. Charlie Hives was in charge of the school.

Her father nearly died from the flu in 1919 when he was trapping and fishing at Besnard Lake. Charlie Halkett found him and took him home.

She lived in Little Hills with her grandmother and recalls one day when her grandmother was washing clothes and Sarah saw something in the sky. Her grandmother said it was the sign Noah was given when he was told there would be no more flooding to cover the earth. Recalls people who first told about the Bible. There was a Catholic church beside the Montreal River. The Anglican Church is where it always has been. Speaks of the churches today.

(End of Interview)

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