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MRS. BEATRICE NIGHTRAVELLER
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LITTLE PINE RESERVE, SASK.
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HIGHLIGHTS:
-Beatrice Nightraveller, daughter of Josie Cuthand, was born on the Little Pine Reserve, Sask. Brought up in log house, attended day school on reserve. After school and before marriage worked for wages in area in and around reserve (1930s).
Married at 16 years and had five children.
-story of white baby girl abducted and raised by Indians in the Prince Albert, Sask., district.
-Riel Rebellion (1885) accounts, especially aftermath in North Battleford district.
-philosophies of child-rearing
-loss of portions of Little Pine Reserve
-death of Little Pine
*story of her father, Josie Cuthand - how he was orphaned at the age of eight, fled to Montana after the Rebellion of 1885, survived as a mascot working for the U.S. Army, and returned to Canada with a group of Indians under U.S. Army and N.W.M.P., protection. (p. 18-23)

Christine: This is July 15, 1983, and I am speaking with Mrs. Beatrice Nightraveller and Mrs. Ada Ladue and Mrs. Maryanne Thomas at Waterhen Lake.
Beatrice: It happened quite some time ago, the story that I am going to tell you. It is when the white people came to our country. Like, they were travelling in. They were, some of them were travelling as a group of people, they were travelling. And they so happened to camp over where that tall man is. There used to be one elevator east of North Battleford, the P.A. road. Tall Man it used to be called. It used to be one elevator. But since now it has disappeared. And that is where that took place. It is all kind of sloughs there, lakes and everything. Willows all around the lakes and those white people were camping there I guess. Stopping for something anyway, they were stopping there and camping and cooking and stuff like that. And they didn't know there was Indians around. I guess they must have been hiding away from them. And they went wandering around, just walking around I guess and there were some Indians there were hiding in that bushes eh. And they stole that baby that was sleeping left alone. They stole that baby girl. And they kept her mouth shut like this and they ran away and they went and hid around somewhere in the bushes. They ran away from there. And then those white people gradually came back to their, where they were camping or their, whatever they were doing. They were having cooked meals I guess eh. They lost their little baby there. They kept wandering all over there and they couldn't find because those Indians ran away from there with that baby. But what happened, how come they knew later on, that girl, the girl was raised in the Indians, around the P.A. district. Somewhere there, I don't know where it is. Finally, she got married and raised her own family. She had kids of three, three kids in her family. She didn't even know she was a white girl. She talked the Indian language and everything. She was raised like an Indian.

Christine: Did that happen very much? That children from other tribes or white children would be raised that way?

Beatrice: Yeah, there used to be stories like that. Even woman, I heard a woman was raised in there. She was sort of captured. She was even scared to go out of her tent eh. But that was quite a while ago, further on, later on. I heard of that before. There is different stories attached to them eh.

And this girl grew up and had three kids when finally there was a minister that came to the reserve eh, whatever it was, it was a minister that was working around among the Indians. And then he came from the States. I wonder if he was looking for the baby or else, we don't know. Because what happened to that baby, she had a burn on her shoulders here, all up to the neck. She had a scar there. And that minister was going around, making home visits eh. And that is where she found out that, I guess she knew that girl was different from the Indians. That girl didn't know if she was a white or not. And from there that minister got, knew, he asked her if she had something and that girl told him, "I have a scar here." That's when they really found out who she was. And those people in the States, that minister knew that they lost a baby, a baby girl. And
that is the only way they could identify is that burn on the neck. And later on, that woman, that minister reported her, thinking she was the one that they lost and she wrote to those parents. They were getting old now, getting old in their life, and she wrote to them. And then they sent her to go and visit her parents, her real parents. But she had to go along with all the little kids. And she had braids and everything. She went home to visit her real mother. But here you see, herself, they didn't think it was true. She didn't believe that those were her parents. So, she finally had to come back to whoever she was living with and her parents, where she was raised. She thought those were her real parents. She finally came back and those people over there cried for her when she left. They knew it was her daughter, their daughter. But she couldn't adjust to their way of living eh. She didn't want to. Maybe she did but she would rather come back. She came back.

There was more, the way they told her that, those Indians were hiding and hiding. (laughs) In those days, it was very particular, they had to hide eh. They kept her mouth closed so she didn't have to be heard because she was crying.

Christine: Why did they take that baby?

Beatrice: I don't know. Because the white people took a lot of Indian kids away from the parents like that.

Ada: Take them home too. You see there was a slough, the ravine there, a slough, that woman was washing their clothes there and I guess about five year old girl you know, she sent her up to go and pick up some laundry soap. And then that kid never showed up so that woman went back to the house, they tracked horses around the house and they lost that little girl. They don't know what, and there was wagon tracks there. They lived close to the road. Wagon tracks and the horse tracks, you know, some of them must have been riding or something you know. They tracked the horses around the house and they couldn't find that kid still. That was years ago. They figure maybe gypsies, they used to go back and forth you know. Or else, these few Indians, they used to go back and forth you know. They were taken by, that kid was taken you know. They never found where that kid was. And then ...

Christine: I just want to move this closer to you. Maybe just pin it to your collar. With all the trucks going by.

Beatrice: Did you count?

Christine: Put it on this side.

Ada: So they lost this girl and that woman went and told her neighbors if that little girl went to that house. No, they didn't see her but there was lots of people passing on that road with wagons, covered wagons, there was some white people they said you know. Gypsies that used to go back and forth and there was a few Indians went by. So they didn't know who
picked her up. That kid was lost completely. They never find her or trace her. And her relations are still living. They are in our reserve, Drevers.

Christine: Which reserve is that?
Ada: Mistawasis. Mistawasis Reserve. And the Drevers are still living there.

Christine: Are you from Mistawasis reserve originally?
Ada: Yes.

Christine: You were telling us a little bit this morning in the tipi about the role of women and raising families and so on. How were you told that it was done in the old days, before the white people came? What was the role of women in the raising of their families and so on?

Ada: Well, they used to be sick at home. There was an Indian woman you know, she used to look after that. A mother, when the baby was going to be born, they didn't have to go to a doctor or a hospital. They all look after their babies, how they are born and fix up everything. So is the mother and then they used to stay with them for a few days till that woman gets a little better you know, stronger. Nobody ever, like me, I never went to the hospital with my kids. They are all looked after, the old ladies used to look after me. That was in 1936 to 1944. Yeah, I never have been in a hospital when I have kids. And they all seem to grow, they are all healthy. No vaccinations, nothing. Nothing at all. And then there is no pills or nothing in my family. They are all strong and healthy. If you are here Friday, maybe you will see them, how big they are. They are all over 300 pounds. (laughs) Yeah. They have never seen the doctor. So is my husband. He is 73 and never seen a doctor in his life. I am the only one that is sickly in there. I got actually.

Then, like, my kids, when they started growing up. I used to tell them in the mornings, "Get up, dress up, before the sun comes up. Face the sun and let's all say a prayer. Thank God we see the sun again that day." And they all ran to the window and they all repeated what I said. And towards evening too, before the sun go down, I used to tell them, "See the sun is going down now," I said. "It has been with us all day, the sun watching us." They used to go to the west window and we would say a little prayer so the sun will go down. And we used to tell them about sweetgrass too, how to respect the sweetgrass. And then at night they use that sweetgrass, even right now at home. We all use sweetgrass although we have another religion to follow but we go more on the sweetgrass. We burn that at night and my husband passes it around. Around our rooms and around my bed and then we say a little prayer there and we go to bed. Just like I give him a sleeping pill. We just go to sleep. We don't worry about anything. We don't have to be scared of anything, we just go to sleep. And in the
mornings when he gets up, that is the first thing he burns his sweetgrass. We all go to that sweetgrass and then we have breakfast. And when I had children coming, when my husband burned the sweetgrass, they all run over there. And there is one six year old, when he sees that burning, he goes there. He goes and smells that. "Now," he says, "I will be alright today. I won't get sick." Well, the others, they all know, they all follow their little sisters because they're brought up too.

Like the white people, you know, they are going to school. These schools, these town schools. I think they have a good sized town there you know, they have school there and high school. That is where some of them went. And there is some that went to Saskatoon. They are all out now. They are on their own working.

And then another thing is, if you want the kids to respect you, your kids, you have to start teaching them right from the start. Tell them, explain things to them and not to whip them as soon as they do something or not to whip them or spank them or put them in penance. But teach them, talk to them, right in there, to understand, to make them understand. Because they are young, they haven't got the mind like a grown up. Well, they catch on, they catch on, you know. Later, later, as they grow, they catch on everything. And they understand. But lots of kids, as soon as they do a little wrong, oh, they spank and they take a little switch and they whip them. That is no good. They make them more like, they don't understand, they don't follow, they don't respect their parents. And they drink too. These other women, they look after the kids or girls, while the kids they grow on their own. They don't understand anything if their parents are away. They hear a lot when a person is drunk in their places, they hear a lot and see a lot... in here. But if a woman behaves herself, she doesn't drink and look after the kids. She should raise a good family. That is how I know. I only had five, four boys and a girl and that is how I raised them. They respect us and we respect them because we never punished them when they were small.

And once, my husband told me, he said, "They are fighting, the two youngest ones are fighting." He said, "Why don't you get after them." "Tell them to come in," I said. Not to whip them or anything but I said, "Chase them in. They will come in," I said, "now talk to them. They are your kids too." I said. He never used to talk to them. I guess he was one to grab you know, the arms you know, to bring them in and one of them kind of dancing there. "Take it easy, Daddy, take it easy, Daddy." And my husband started to laugh. (laughs) So, he brought them in and I told them, I said, "You sit inside for awhile." I said, "I want to talk to you kids. You know, that is your own brother," I said, "You are older and he is younger. You shouldn't fight like that. Play," I said. "Play together, be, love one another," I said, "I know if one of you goes somewhere for a few days you will be lonesome because you are always together." I told them. And they sat there for awhile and then they said, "Come on, let's go out and play now." And
they went to they were okay. I didn't have to punish them. And they played all afternoon.

That is how you know, the kids, I don't know how I feel when I see a kid whipped. By dad or mom, I pity that kid. And when there is broken homes or when the police found kids home alone, he brings them at my place. I keep them until everything is settled. I take them and I have raised seven foster children too, homeless. No place to go so I took them and I put them all through high school. They are all over having their own jobs. And they still don't forget me. When there is holidays, they come and see me and they bring me something. Christmas, they all, we all gather just like I got a big family, all of them beside my grandchildren. And there is one that, no two of them that are married. One of them, the oldest one is a teacher. He has got two kids and he is married. He has been teaching six years now in Prince Albert, the Indian school there. And I am glad when I see them coming. I get lonesome for them because I had took them like my own. When we eat, that is the first ones I fed them first before me. I got long tables, I put them together, them long tables. I served them, they have their own places and my husband sits at one end and my, I got one son there staying with us. He is old you know, he is 45 now and never been married. He sits at the end and my husband sits at the other end and then they all sit like, and then I serve them. I help them first. And I told them not to play with their food. But if they want a second serving, to ask, not to get up. So I fed them and looked after them. I just go around and when they are finished eating, well I give them some dessert. Whatever they want, I ask them you know, what's prepared. So I give it to them and then after they wash their hands and then they go out in the shed or else watch TV. And school you know, eight o'clock they are picked up in the mornings and they are back by four o'clock. And when they come in, I give them some milk or else juice, little cookies and they sure helpless. I take them as my own. It hurts me when somebody calls them names. Or else gets after them, when somebody gets after my foster children, it hurts me just like my own kids you know. But I don't get after the person that gets after them. That is how I used to treat them, all the kids. And I always, with these other women don't look after the kids like that. And I was supposed to get some more kids you know and my husband won't let me. He said, "You have had enough. With all of these broken homes." One time, a car, somebody toot the horn outside and my husband says, "There is the police here tooting the horn." And then after .... (pause)

(Cree conversation between the ladies. A new arrival to the group.)

Ada: ... Yes. (laughs)

Christine: Tell me what his name was first.

Beatrice: Masatamos(?) he was called. He was sort of a, what would you say, a leader? There was the chief and we had four
leaders at that time. In other words, your council today. You call this a council but at that time, he was a leader. And I don't know who started up that ride to Battleford but they were all camped around there. You know what happened? Indian Affairs were supposed, according to their treaty, they were supposed to feed them so much rations every day just for survival and they were not allowed to get off the band. Because what they used to do was go out to certain lakes, certain areas to hunt, certain camp parts for a certain time of the year. And they were not allowed to get out of the reserve at that time. When they got into the reserve and then that way they had nothing to eat. And then they came to the old town, they were camped around by the hills there, by the river. And that is where they camped and they tried to compromise with the Indian Affairs to help them because they did for a while eh. When they got the bands, they were helped. See they got so much rations and flour and stuff like that. But suddenly they cut them off and they had no way to look after themselves, to feed themselves, their kids and everthing. That is why they have the reason to come to the old town and try to compromise. Why did they cut them off and all that deal eh. Because they were camping all around and then the leaders got together. They were discussing why the Indian Affairs cut them off suddenly. And they, it is the old people that talked properly but it is the young teenagers that started with the riot. Because they didn't want to listen, they cut, there was one old man going back and forth on horseback trying to tell them not to do anything drastic. But those young teenagers got mad because they were hungry. And that is how come they rioted that old town. The first place they went was the Indian Affairs office. They grabbed everything, threw everything out the window. One sad thing about it, they had one interpreter, a halfbreed, but he was, he had, he was a guy that couldn't walk. He was in a wheelchair. He was the interpreter though in the office. And they didn't know he couldn't walk and that is the first guy they grabbed and threw him out the window.

And it was the second storey. They didn't know whether they killed him or not. They never heard about it. And then the riot took place in town. Broke the windows and stole food and everything.

Christine: This was right in the town?

Beatrice: In town, the old town, the people were running down the street. The women and the kids are just screaming and yelling and took off. But they didn't hurt anybody, they just broke windows and took out food from the stores. Or even cloth, anything. That is what they did.

Christine: So was your great-grandfather one of the teenagers?

Beatrice: No, he was told at that time to go to Hobbema. He got orders that he, it wasn't his own idea, he was told to do that. And then he took a horse and he rode off to Hobbema. But halfways down somewhere, his horse got tired and wouldn't
walk anymore or even to stop eh, so he grabbed another white man's horse there and rode off to Hobbema. And then that is where they got a ride. That is how come he got taken and put in the jail. (A little Cree) I think that he should have been in jail for five years but he never did the five years. He came out, sneaked out the last year anyway. And what he brought home, he was sick there eh. And my parents used to have those, what do you call those, stoves, in the wall stoves, that is the only stove they had in those days. Mud stoves, you had to make a fire inside there, in the chimney, that is the kind of stove they had and that is the only light.

Ada: They made clay out of that. Clay you know, then make stoves and the opening at the top, that is where they used to make fire.

Beatrice: Smoke and heat, that is what they had. And then they still had to eat on the floor. On the floor because that is where the light is. And then when he came home from the penitentiary, he was kind of sickly I guess. He must have brought TB home. And he went to the old town, and that guy, that halfbreed, they went and bought a table, a homemade table and then he was used to be the only one to eat on this table. That is the only thing he brought home with him from the penitentiary is to eat on the table. And the rest of the family eating on the floor. And then I still got that today, that table. I still have it, the one he brought from the ... but I don't know what that name of that guy is, the halfbreed. But he died of TB shortly after that, maybe two years. And he brought TB to our family. The oldest part of our family died of TB and the later ones, us, are the ones that are living. He brought TB to the family. And to this day, I don't know who that guy is that sold the furniture. I was going to take it to the, what do you call that, where they sell those antiques, that old town where they used to have that war, after that rebellion there was a lot of soldiers that got wounded eh, and that is where. And the Indians now were kept as, were used as slaves after that because they were told to haul wood for that, what do you call that place? Provincial building there ...

Christine: (Inaudible)

Beatrice: It is the antique provincial park or something. Where they have that. That is where they have the wounded soldiers that went, that had the rebellion Poundmakers, they were brought back and they were wounded and the Indians were told to come and help them out. They used to haul wood. But they were camping in open, in tents along by the river in the winter. Imagine how they survived during the winter.

Christine: Life was really hard then after that rebellion.

Beatrice: Yeah. It was hard for the Indians because their axes and their guns and their knives, whatever knives they had were taken away from them. They weren’t even allowed to have sharp knives. And they went around the camp taking off
everything. Anything, knives, anything they had sharp, they had taken away on them. And this one kid that was told to go and warn the other side of the people to hide their knives and axes and that is what they did. They hid their rifles, anything. And that is the only way they survived after that is they shared using those things after. Even knives, butcher knives, anything. They had to hide them.

Third Person: That is another thing they talk about. Anything you have, you share. If somebody else doesn't have it, you give it to them. If you are richer in one way than another is, it usually comes back to you anyway in another way. If you have extra food or something, you share with everybody around.

Beatrice: And like Little Pine at that time, he was the one that told them not to get into a riot eh. And Poundmaker, they were together, there was two chiefs from the two bands, they were always together. And they told the young guys not to go in a riot or something and not to get mad. And then after all, they didn't listen to them eh. And then he got a heart attack and there is two guys that brought them back to Poundmaker's. They all through the sweetgrass. They had to cut roads. They took them home and, I don't know, he was scared or something because he was laying down. He just was in a coma eh. And then he died on the way, in Poundmaker's. He just about made it back to Little Pine. He had a heart attack. That is how he died. And that is how come I think to this day, we have to be the ones, because we didn't have a leader eh, we lost half of our reserve, it got taken away on us.

Christine: Where did they get taken?

Beatrice: The south side of Little Pine. The reserve should have been towards, along the main highway. They were cutting into Wilbert. And the wall went and there is a little town there. That reserve part was taken away on us just because we didn't have a leader. I don't know what privileges they took. They didn't do anything to other bands eh. We were the only ones that lost part of our reserve, the best part of the reserve today. Because we are stuck to the river, the hills and everything. But the best farming land we lost. But you can still see the boundaries we see. We know where they are, the boundaries where they meet. The ground marks eh. In those days, we know where they are.

Christine: How was it lost? Did they just take it or ...?

Beatrice: They just took it away on us. The Indian Affairs or whoever it was, came and took it away on us. And nobody was the interpreter. Who was the interpreter to tell them. They didn't tell them in advance. They just travelled around and made signs where the river, where the reserve is eh. That is the saddest part of it. And now we're probably about seven hundred or eight hundred or something like that. The reserve is so small.
Christine: Is that where you were born? On that reserve?

Beatrice: Yes, on Little Pine.

Christine: Were both your parents from there?

Beatrice: Yes.

Beatrice: Why did we have to, why does our band have to lose that land when after, we weren't involved. Because obviously he took a stroke or something because he didn't like it, he didn't want to get involved. He tried to tell the young people that rioted eh, not to do anything harmful. And then they didn't listen to them and that is how come he had a heart attack. And then my grandfather that went to Hobbema, he was told to go that and then he was young eh. He had to listen to those other guys but who was it that told him to do that? We don't know to this day but he was told to go there. Was it why he did that to Hobbema to notify people over there or was that why we lost our reserve? We don't know.

But those white farmers know it is a reserve land eh. Some people had maps. There was a Justice of the Peace, there was a farmer, he showed my husband the map where the reserve should be. "We are making money on you guys. This is your land." he told my husband. He was sick already in bed. My husband should have asked him for that proof eh. And that is what we want today, some proof. We might get our land back someday but so far we can't have that proof. Because I was on the land entitlement committee. But here again, we can't find anything, no proof. That is the saddest part of it. Why did we have to lose our land? Because they were already starting to farm over there eh. They had little areas, like one family would be living on that area, our family was living towards Carruthers area. There would be another family. But there was two years there was no, not much grain those two years and the lakes went dry eh. And that is why they had to move down to the river.

Christine: What was the life like on that reserve then when you were a little girl, while you were growing up?

Beatrice: We used to have gardens and stuff like that. Milk cows. That is the only way we survived. The ones that were milking cows, it was around the people that lived, they shared it with them eh. And there would be, on the other side, there would be another farmer that was milking cows eh. And they shared it around, the neighbors around there. You had to share in those days to survive, in the thirties. Because there was nothing. Just the old people, the old age pensioners like in those days, got rations. That is about all. That was when they were giving rations. Not very much, they lasted about four days. If they have a large family.

Christine: So not everybody got rations?

Beatrice: No, not everybody.

Ada: Piece of bacon about that much. A little flour, rolled oats, rice, yeah. (Cree) Yeah, beans ...
Beatrice: We used to make little bags you know, the old age people used to make old bags and they used to take them and they used to hold it like this and the families, they used to count it. Oh, I don't like those days. See I used to work for the farm instructor after I quit school in 1938. And I was working for them and from there I know what kind of crooked farm instructors we had in those days. He would pick a small cup and he would measure it. And you know what, he ate those stuff when he was running short of the groceries too. They never bought sugar, that is what they used from there. They never bought their own sugar, no tea. Anything - they used all that stuff and sometimes when their relatives came, they would give them, sneak them a little bit to help them out. (laughs) That is what I see, that is what happened.

Ada: First time when I was out working, when I left school, I worked for a farm instructor too. Around our agency like. I used to milk cows. Before anybody gets up, I had to wash the floors and go and milk cows. By the time I come in, I prepare breakfast and make big fire in the cook stove and prepare breakfast for my boss and then after, the school children. And after the school children and clean up the place there till ten thirty at night. And I used to get only twelve dollars a month. Twelve dollars a month and after threshing time now, they going to raise my wages, fifteen dollars a month. That was ...

Beatrice: Boy, you were lucky. You know how much I got? Five dollars a month.

Ada: (laughs)

Christine: And you did the same thing?

Beatrice: A dollar and a quarter a week.

Christine: Gee. And you did all that work too?

Beatrice: And I didn't have to milk cows. I just did housework and did all the washing.

Ada: Wash clothes with the washboard. We didn't have no, they didn't have no washing machine or anything. Wash clothes. Thank you. I got one here but there is some milk inside. There is some, bring some milk.

Oh yes, today now, the kids, they want fifty dollars a day, fifty dollars an hour. (laughs) I used to work twelve dollars, fifteen dollars a month. And still I used to buy two pair of shoes.

Beatrice: What year was that?

Ada: Thirties. Thirties I was, oh I thought that was big wages. So the other farmer now, a doctor, he had a farm in town. He wanted me to go and work for him so I went, I went and worked. Eighteen dollars but I had to cook for the
threshing crew. And I had to milk cows at the same time. (laughs) But I didn't mind that. I thought that was big money. Now today, I am not satisfied at what I am getting. (laughs) Yeah.

Did you bring milk?

Third Person: Yeah.

Ada: Hey, it is safer here than to go with the girls! (laughs)

Oh, they all went and had a bath.

Man: Did you guys go for a shower? How was it? Cold? Was it wet?

(laughter)

Third Person: You have to get that guy to turn on the hot water for a change. I made a pair of wrap arounds. I am starting on another pair. Are you making this one?

Ada: I am starting for somebody.

(End of Side A, Tape IH-123)
(Side B, Tape IH-123)

Beatrice: There was a lot of confusion at that time because they were treated fairly good when they started as a band eh. There was so many people and the reserve was quite a bit larger than it is now. And they helped each other in various groups, like in family groups. You know, or they are related to, a certain one they will live in one area and the other family will live in another area. They helped each other out in groups. And then, and then the rebellion where they kept, I don't know, they were told not to go from one band to the other eh. They were sort of locked into one band. But there were certain people that were told to notify the other bands but they travelled by night. Because all of a sudden, whatever they called them at that time, Indian Affairs, they quit giving them their welfare assistance, like food supplies and stuff like that. All of a sudden they quit eh. And the people were confused because that is the only thing they could rely on. Because they weren't allowed to go off the reserve. They were more or less locked in. And that was the saddest part. They couldn't go out elsewhere. And that day, one or two would sneak out with the other bands and try and get the information from that band you see, what their problems are. The same thing happened all over. And that is how come they came to the old town, the North Battleford eh. They camped on the south side by the river and they had sort of a meeting, get together from other bands. They wondered why when the Indian Affairs all of a sudden quit giving them their supplies, what they promised them they would do eh, to keep them going. And then from there that is how come those elders were good. They were trying to organize, they would sit in groups. Sort of a group meeting but the youngsters, the young teenagers that was
starting up the riot. They rode on horseback all over the camp and urged the other guys to help them out. That is how come the riot started in the old town. They went to Indian Affairs first. They had the office upstairs in some building, big building and then that is where, when they broke in. And they, there was a halfbreed that was the interpreter in there but they didn't know he was on a wheelchair. But he was used as an interpreter within the office. And then they, so that was the first guy they grabbed and threw him out the window.

Christine: He was just unlucky to be there eh? (laughs)

Beatrice: That is what they, they were surprised later on when they knew he was a, you know, sort of a, unable to run away eh. But he did yelling and a lot of that at the time eh. They grabbed and then of course, the first guys all ran out of whatever. They took off. All the people were running down the street, women with kids and then they broke and busted into the windows of the stores and got what they wanted, supplies, food, anything. That is how it started. And then there was one guy, the oldest guy there, ran back and forth on horseback, trying to get them not to do any mischief eh.

Christine: Who was he?

Beatrice: I think he was Poundmaker. And our chief Little Pine, he must have been, I don't know what was wrong with him but he must have had a heart attack at that time. And they brought him home, he was, he fell down and then he, he didn't like what was going on eh. He fell down and then they had to bring him home on the one cow - ox cart. Two guys brought him back and then where it is now is that Poundmaker's there, that main road that comes from Cutknife down there? There used to be an open prairie there, that is where they had to stop and revive him on the way. He died there on the way back. And then they had to have, the women are left alone in the Little Pine eh. The women, not in the camp wherever they were by the river. And that is where the women looked after the funeral. The burying of Little Pine, the women had to be the one to bury him. Because all the men were in the old town. Boy, it is sad. And actually, we weren't actually involved in a way when our chief died. And then on the other hand, it looks like we had to personally be affected by that. By that deal there, they took over the old town. We lost half of our reserve, the best part of the reserve got taken away from us.

Christine: Why?

Beatrice: Why I don't know to this day. We don't know why.

Christine: Do you think it was because of the rebellion?

Beatrice: Because of the rebellion. Because we didn't have a leader to talk back or to talk for the band because he died on the way. He didn't like what the youngsters, the young guys were doing eh. And he had a heart attack over that. And why
did we have to pay for the loss of it. That is the saddest part of it. And we are affected by it today eh. Because the population figure is more than Poundmaker's and then we have a smaller reserve.

Christine: Did Poundmaker's band suffer too?

Beatrice: No, it was only Little Pine that suffered. We lost half of our reserve. We only got five by five miles now and the population is higher than Poundmaker's today. That is the saddest part of we ever been treated like. And the best part of the farming land is on the south of our place. It was taken over by white farmers all these years.

And there was a lot of the people that ran away. They didn't want to get involved with the revolution. Some of them left overnight, during the night to the States. They just took off to the States.

Christine: Whereabouts did they go in the States? Did they stay down there or did they ever come back?

Beatrice: Some of them came back. Some of them didn't, they stayed there. But there is an old lady that knew, they had some, one of those files they keep for when they get the band eh. There is an old lady that buried it along the way when she ran away with her, I don't know if she was related to Little Pine but she took off. And around Cypress Hills they said, she is still living today. She is a very old lady. She knew where her dad hid those files of paper. Around Cypress Hills, around that area. So we don't know. We feel bad about the whole thing because we were affected by the revolution and we are suffering over that today because there is a lot of confusion within our band because there is too much population for the amount of size of that band. Mind you, there is a lot of people leaving to the cities but still it is overpopulated eh.

Christine: I am just going to fix this. It is falling down a bit.

Were there other ways, was it passed on to you that there were any other ways in which the band was affected by that? Like after the rebellion, what happened to the people? How were they treated other than, you told me that the land was taken away. Were they treated differently afterwards than before?

Beatrice: Yes, there was the army guys that came to the band. To check over the bands. They took all the knives, the axes, whatever they ... you know, they usually camp around in a circle eh. And this, they started around in one area and some people told the kids to go and give emergency notice on the other side. And the kids ran over there and told them to hide their knives and axes or something. Or guns, and that is what the kids did. And over here they went around in a circle to take away all the butcher knives and the axes, or whatever
the sharp objects they had and the rifles. After that they suffered, they couldn't even cut anything or anything eh. But those other side, they hid it you know, to survive, they had to hide them. They went hiding them and then after that they had to borrow a knife or something. Whenever they wanted to do something, cook or anything. They kept their knives and borrowed around all over the neighborhood. One knife would serve a whole, three or four families or something like that. One knife. Oh, it was so pitiful the way they were treated after that. No wonder there is a lot of them left. A lot of them went way up north. A lot of them went to the States and some, even one councillor of Little Pine went to west and here he took another band in just south of Edmonton. This was my great grandfather. I don't know what you call that band. Do you know what band that was?

Christine: Yeah, I think so. At Winterburn there? Yeah, just outside of Edmonton?

Beatrice: Just on the south side of Edmonton.

Christine: Yeah, we've been out there.

(*Story of Josie Cuthand)
Beatrice: There was a space there. And then that is where he was a councillor of Little Pine but he took off over there. And he took another band. Well, he didn't want to get involved with the revolution. He didn't want to get involved. A lot of them, that is how come they left. A lot of them left some went up north. A lot of them went to the States. And the saddest part of it, my dad was only eight years old at the time. And then when these people took off to the States, he had to, oh, before that he was about three years old I guess, his mother took off. You know, in those days, there was weird things going on. There was a Blackfoot guy that used to come sneaking to our area eh, and then he, from there he kept looking at women eh. And my grandmother went out, somewhere she met this guy, Blackfoot guy, and then they they snuck off. She left her real husband. And that is how come my dad was left motherless. His mother took off with a guy, that Blackfoot guy. Those things happened in those days. Weird things, even though they were enemies in those days, but still he sneaked in. And my mother used, my dad used to say he cried and cried for his mom and he was half starved and he went around asking for a little bit of food from tent to tent but nobody was there to look after him eh. And then he was eight years old when the rebellion broke out. And the people went to the States and that is where he went along with them. He was hoping to find his mother at the same time. But they travelled by night. During the day, they slept in some bushes. They didn't want to be seen. And then they didn't want to make tracks eh. They travelled separately. You know, they didn't walk in one area. They travelled, sparingly, but they travelled the same way. And they got together wherever they were going to sleep in the bush.
Christine: And he remembered all of this?

Beatrice: He remembered. He used to tell me that because my brothers were both gone, I was the only one at home to tell me those stories. My brothers, Adam and Stanley, don't know very much because they were always out on the go. And I was the only one that he told those stories.

Christine: Well, he went down to the States then, he must have come back at some point. Back to Little Pine?

Beatrice: Yeah, back at some point. Yes, way later. He went out actually looking for his mom. But he couldn't find her. Because they moved to that place. It is a different place. Anyway, he ended up in Rocky Boy. He ended up to be a mascot for the army guys. He worked with the army guys as a little mascot because he had no place to go, nothing to do. They just took him while he was just running around there. And they were camping there. A lot of times he cried when he was hungry. He said he had no food, nothing. Somehow here, the army guys looked after him as a little mascot. He dressed up a little army guy.

Christine: Do you mean like the American Army, the white sector?

Beatrice: Yes. And in those days he said, they didn't have, they weren't allowed to buy liquor. And now, I don't know whatever, it is liquor anyway, they weren't allowed to. "I used to be holding liquor for them," he said. "They used to drag me," you know. But he was the one holding it. And one time this guy, he woke up looking around, I guess he didn't want anybody to see him, that army guy. "And then he pushed me so that I broke this thing. And it smashed on the street," he said. "So we carried on as if nothing was wrong, we kept on walking." he said. He used to tell me all funny stories of what happened. And he used to get paid for doing little odds and ends of little jobs, little errands and they would give him a little bit of change but he didn't know what that money was worth. He took it and put it in a little bag with a little string at the end to tie it up. He kept, he hauled wood in at the back side of the kitchen and there was a great big wood pile and he said, "I kept hiding that little bag there. Everytime he gave me, I would go and put it in there," he said. "Pretty soon, you know, that bag was almost full." he said. There was one guy that came. He used to hold on to a leather. He was different, he was a native anyway but he was in the, he talked a different language eh. And he had some kind of a weird due he said, he used to hold on to a rag wherever he went he said. He used to pray and everything he said. And one time he came to the back side of the kitchen, he wanted something. He didn't eat you know. He wanted something to be fed eh. He was hungry he said. And when he went out he saw this old man asking for food, he was hungry. "And I told him, come here. Come with me. I told him." And he went looking in that wood pile for that bag of money what he had been saving. He gave it to him, a bag full of change. He didn't know what it was
worth. And he gave it to him, that old man. "And then you know what he did?" he said. "He prayed for me and prayed up to the sky." But he gave him that bag of money, silver or whatever you call it today. To this day, he never knew how much he gave him. To this day, he told us it was just a bag full of silver, coins. "Boy, did he ever pray for me," he said. "He kept holding his hand on my head."

Christine: Why would he have had, your father, why would he have had to go with the army guys? Did the people not look after an orphan like he was? Like, did they not accept him in the camp? Is that why he had to go with the army guys?

Beatrice: Well, he said he didn't have enough clothes. He was walking around barefooted. And then he used to tramp around the dump grounds and then this was getting colder. I don't know how he got into this army but there he was treated good and that is where he stayed.

Christine: Oh. So how old would he have been then when he came back to Little Pine?

Beatrice: Well, he must have stayed there for quite a few years because he couldn't find his mom. He had no way. And there was another time he told us. The same time when he was in the army camp. He went, the army had to move and then he was left and then that is where he went into the Catholic church or something. He went in where you hold on to those things in the front there, what do you call them?

Christine: Altar boys?

Beatrice: Yeah. He was used like that. In order to survive he had to do something. Because they looked after him, to feed him and everything. That is the way he survived. But what church is that I don't know. Just that it was a Catholic church. He was - used to use that - hold that - on to the cane for the Catholic priest eh. He could be a Catholic, I don't know. He used to hold that cane or whatever it was, in church. And he sat in the front seat and looked after the silver, the coins there. Things like that. But he didn't stay too long on that. Surprising how he survived. That is the only way he had to survive. Because there was absolutely nobody looking after him.

Christine: He knew what band he was from then? He knew to go back there?

Beatrice: Yes, he knew he came back. You know how he came back? When they had that revolution with a group of Indians, what do you call that? Massacre or, in the south there? ...

Christine: Battle of the Little Bighorn? With Custer?

Beatrice: Yes, that is the one. He was here along with that group.
Christine:  That was the army that he was with?

Beatrice:  I don't know if that was the army but he was with the group of people there you know. He was holding onto certain group of people you know, just to survive eh. And then that is where he was. And then that is when the army guys, the Canadian Army guys went and caught them over there. They had a team of ox-cart and the army guys were over there and then they were waiting for him to cross the river somewhere because they were told to come back to Canada. That is when he came back. Those other guys, the United States, had a whole army of guys watching over a few guys to come back to Canada uh. And he was with those guys, Canadians. And there was only four or five of the Canadian army, police, on this side of the river. And those guys, great big army of guys for a certain amount of Indians eh. They were looking after them. And then there was a party, there was only about four police there looking after the Indians, the Canadian Indians on this side. But they had a whole supply of blankets. They were waiting for them to come and they crossed the river and here they ate and they got a whole bunch of blankets given to them and they were lined up. He had two blankets given to him. They just grabbed them and gave them as they were in the line up eh. And he got the very best color of a blanket, he said everybody looked at it. "Why did I get it?" And he kept doing it. And he went and stayed overnight with somebody anyway. "First thing you know, the next morning I lost track of my best blanket," he said. "The best looking blanket eh. It had color on it, designs on it or something." He, somebody traded him for another one. But he didn't mind. He was happy the way they were treated when they came back to Canada. And then they stayed somewhere and they would get food again eh, from that wagon, they had supplies. That is the way he came back. Surprising how pitiful, how he lived through all those years.

Christine:  He went through a lot of big changes eh?

Beatrice:  Yes. And then the army guys over there were surprised there was only about four policemen, Canadian Mounted Police there waiting for them to cross the river. And there was a whole bunch of army from the States that looked after them. There was only about four. And they were happy too, to get back to Canada I guess. They were treated better with food and blankets and supplies.

Christine:  What was your Dad's name?

Beatrice:  Josie Cuthand. He was, in fact, in those days he felt sorry for himself. Has no relatives in Canada. He had nobody. He was a loner. All through his life he was like that. And at the end of his days when he was getting too weak to, he knew, he felt it again because nobody, "Nobody is here to come and see me, my own relatives." he said. "Because I have nobody." It was only on my mother's side there is quite a few, a large family.
Christine: Who was your mother's family? What is their name?

Beatrice: Uh, Khanacoty. Harriet Khanacoty was her name.

Christine: Did you have a lot of brothers and sisters?

Beatrice: I had Aaron, the oldest one, Adam, Stanley, and me and then we lost one younger brother than me. His name used to be Isaac. And the youngest adopted sister we used to have was Jean, Jean Cuthand. Today now she is Jean Goodwill. She married.

Christine: So how were you raised?

Beatrice: My mother was a good worker, my dad, he used to milk cows and he used to milk four or five cows in order to survive in the thirties eh. The twenties. He used to milk cows. But we shared it along with the neighborhood eh. We shared, there was one family, Medicine Child their name was. They had twins and we had to keep on milking for to help them to survive, their twins to survive. You see, you have to help them around the neighborhood. It happened all over like that in our reserve. There was Black One, Chief Black One, he was milking five or six cows too. And he helped around the neighborhood over there. And they helped if he was in need, the other families would help in the winter for hauling wood or something. The same with us you know. You have to help each other to survive in those days because just the old people got rations eh. Bacon, flour, a little bit of flour, but those kind of food only last a few days eh. They didn't last ...

Christine: How much did they get?

Beatrice: Let's see, a pound of tea maybe or a little pound of sugar. You know, they measured by cupfuls. Tea, baking powder, beans. Beans they didn't really care for, they just kept on keeping them, keeping them. But they gave them to other families.

Christine: What other kinds of work did the people do? Did they do much farming or was it ...?

Beatrice: They started in farming because they got help for farming eh. They got plows in those days to start them off. Walking plows, those we hold on to plow. That was the kind he got. To start off anyway. We had a little bit of help. But here again, it is the waterwell supply that wasn't very good in those days. That is how come they lived close to the river. In family groups like.

Christine: What kind of houses did you live in?

Beatrice: Log houses with sod roof. Some of them had fireplaces. And after the rebellion, my grandfather was the one that got taken to Stony Mountain Penitentiary. After that rebellion because he got involved. He was a young guy then, about fifteen, fourteen years old. I don't know how old he was.
He was involved in that revolution because he was told to go to Hobbema. He rode on horseback and then that horse got a little tired out halfways and then there was a bunch of horses on the farmyard there and he took that one horse and left his horse and rode on again to Hobbema. That is why they had the riot in Hobbema. He was the one that was told to go and notify the Indians over there. And that is how come he went to jail in Stony Mountain Penitentiary. You see about, they go to jail for five years, they came out, they sneak out the last year of that term. And it was in the spring they snuck out. Him, Poundmaker, and another guy. Three of them sneaked out. And the ice was still floating here and there, down, after the break eh. That is when they swammed across the river. I don't know which river it was. And then they came home. The only thing he brought with him is to eat on a table. (laughs) That is the only thing he brought home with him is to eat on a table because they used to eat on the floor because this light was there on what do you call those...

Christine: Stoves?

Beatrice: Those rock stoves they used to build on, against the wall. That is the only light they had in all, they had to eat on the floor in the winter time. And that is the only thing, he had to buy a little table, homemade table in the old town and he was the one that ate on that little table by himself. After he came from the penitentiary. (laughs)

Christine: All by himself he ate there?

Beatrice: All by himself he ate there. He had to sit on a chair or something, a log chair or something like that and eat on the table. That is the only thing he brought home with him. He had to eat on a table. We used to laugh at that. That was the only thing he brought home but he was sickly when he came. He brought home TB, tuberculosis. And that is how come we had it in our family. He spread it on to our family. We lost most of our older kids when they were small at that time and we are the ones that survived, the younger ones in the family. Yeah, it was sad. He didn't live too long after that. The same thing with Poundmaker, the same thing. He brought home tuberculosis and spread it to the family.

Christine: Those must have been very sad years.

Beatrice: Those were very sad years, yes. They had a hard time to struggle to make a living. Sad.

Christine: How did your parents teach you then when you were a little girl, when you were growing up, how did they train you to be a good person, a good woman?

Beatrice: Well, they lectured us before we go to bed. And we always had foster kids. My mom used to keep foster kids, motherless kids or something like that. And then our own relatives sides, some of them. They used to lecture us before we go to bed eh. Or sometimes early in the morning and that is how we got along with other people. We, they seemed to like
us. They seemed to come and visit regularly because we had a, sometimes my mother gave away cottage cheese, whatever she made eh, out of milk. And they liked it, they would give you a big thank you when you gave them something to eat to take home eh. That is the way we survived. We had to share everything. And then where you look after an old woman that has no offspring, that is one time my dad yelled for an old lady that hardly can be able to walk on the road. She must have been hungry and he seen her on the road. But my dad yelled down the road the way they yelled in the Sundance lodges today yet. And he walked around that way and he yelled, "Come and have a smoke," he told her. Well, if you give somebody a smoke, that means you have to feed them first and then smoke later. Boy was that old lady ever happy when she came. We fed her a nice breakfast like dried meat because my parents used to kill a cow for the summer in order to survive because in the winter you have a better living because all you do is hunt for food eh. But in the summer you want to do haying or anything like that, you can't hunt, you just have to survive for the rest of the, in order to do something else. Like haying, anything like that. Boy, was that old lady ever glad. Did she pray for our family and then my mother gave her a few bits of dried meat to take home to her own family. That is the way we lived in those days. I must have been a very small kid at that time, it must have been twenty-eight, twenty-nine. That is the way my parents were. They helped each other eh. They helped other families. They got help if they needed some. The other people helped too if you really needed something. That is the way we survived in those days because there was nothing, nothing at all. Just the old people got, the very old people are the ones that got assistance like food. But it wasn't much. No, it wasn't much.

Christine: Did you travel around a lot in the summertime? Was life in the summertime different?

Beatrice: A little different yeah. Sundance lodge was moved by horse team. Moved to that other band and stuff like that. But there was always the extra kids, we kept extra. My mother used to look after her brother's motherless kids eh. And then they, there is other people that have no homes, you ask them to come and eat with you when you have something to eat eh. You ask them to come and have something to eat even when you are camping out because you know who they are. How they are. You have to help each other in order to survive in those days. But they would work and haul wood for you and help you with something. They were really happy. They really help around. In another way they help you when you make them happy. Yeah, you had to help each other in those days in order to survive. Certain families that helped each other, that helped those guys. It happened all over I guess.

Christine: What are the biggest changes you've seen since the way it was then and the way it is now?

Beatrice: The way it is now within our band I think. There is something lacking there because you feel odd when you go in a
public place. In those days, everybody seemed to be happy. But today when you go in a public place, like there is some kind of a gathering, Treaty Day, nobody says anything to you eh. What is it? You feel different, you feel odd. I don't know if it's just on me but I can feel it. The other people say the same thing, the other older people that I talk to, why is it that our families are differently spaced?

Christine: You don't know why?

Beatrice: They are sort of separated in groups like, they seem to be the ones that exploit the other guys are the ones that, I don't know. There is like a weird feeling anyway, when you go to the band. When there is some kind of a group. There is some kind of a...I wouldn't want to use hating each other but it is something like that. It is something that affects the whole band. A lot of those band, that are living in the band don't belong there legally. They belong to maybe Thunderchild, maybe Red Pheasant, but they stick there. They, there is some, we have some from Piapot's legally but here they are staying in the band and then, it is getting all mixed up in there. It was, there is some things that make it, you feel odd in there eh. The population is going up but some of them don't belong to the band but it is affecting the other real band members. It is making them feel outcasts themselves, the ones that really belong to the band.

Christine: Did you go to school?

Beatrice: I went to the day school in Little Pine, yes, when Mrs. Cunningham was here. The principal, it was under the Anglican ministry that she came in. It was in those days, it was under the mission people, the mission church. In those days the schools were run by missions. By whoever the Anglican people were there, Anglicans. The next band, Poundmaker's, the Catholic priests looked over that band. And our band, and we kids, I mean we related to Favels and Poundmakers. Our mothers were sisters but they were strong Catholics and we were strong Anglicans and then we kids, we used to fight over our religion. To this day, I feel stupid. In those days we used to fight over religion. (laughs) The saddest part of it, today we don't do that. We don't do that no more.

Christine: Did you still keep your Indian religion with the Anglican religion?

Beatrice: They were, when the Anglican minister was okay. He was talking Cree and visiting around all over the neighborhood eh. But the teacher was so strict. Mrs. Cunningham was really strict. But I guess being a principal, she had to be on certain terms eh. We weren't allowed to talk Cree in school. And then when we went home we did the same thing. We tried to talk English at home and here, our parents didn't allow us to talk English in our home. "You are supposed to be at school. You talk English over there, not in our home. I want you guys
to stay with your language." they told us. "If you want to talk English, do it at school. Not at the house, not in our home." Sometimes we got confused there. Then you have the talking when you go back to school you talk Cree and then you get slapped eh. And I used to be, when I was getting up in the years, I used to be as a, oh, a slave within the school. I used to do handwashing for the teachers and everything. And I missed a certain amount of my school work eh. When you have 70s and the time came at the end of June, my teacher expected me to have higher marks. And here I had low marks because she was the one that was holding me back. Sometimes I washed all day on Fridays, by hand. Why didn't she hire somebody to do the washing. Why did a school kid have to do it?

Christine: So she didn't pay you to do that?

Beatrice: You know what I used to get? She didn't pay me. All I got was a little bag of rolled oats to take home with me. Boy, did I feel ashamed. I used to hide them in my pocket. How can it make you feel good? A little bag, a little one of those you put candies today in, a little brown paper bag. That was a bag full of rolled oats. That was the school supply food. It is not her spending. Boy, did I ever feel ashamed. I used to hide those in my pockets.

There was one time I wanted to throw it out but yet I didn't want to throw it out. "This much will make my mom happy," I thought, the bag with that much. So I took it home.

Christine: Did you give it to your mom?

Beatrice: Yes, she was happy to get that much. But that doesn't mean too much for me because I was the one that knew how much I worked for that. When I think of those things, I feel so sorry for that. How much I worked.

Christine: How far did you go in school?

Beatrice: I finished my grade 8 when I was 14. But I didn't have very high marks but I intended to have higher marks. There was one boy and three girls, four only in grade 8 at that time and I was in grade 8. So I used to be on the third basis, third in the classes. I made up my mind I was going to be higher at grade 8. So I turned up to be the second, behind that boy, the first boy. It used to be Lawrence Kennedy, used to be in the same group as me. So, I went up anyway.

Christine: What did you do when you finished school?

Beatrice: Oh, I went to work again for the farm instructor. I worked for a whole year for Mrs. Warden. Jimmy Warden was the instructor's name. His mom and dad used to be the farm instructor way back when it was, I don't know what years it was. Her dad and mom were farm instructors. Her dad anyway. But they lived on the farm and the reserve farm instructor they were called in those days. And that man used to talk Cree
because he grew up with the Indian kids. He talked Cree and he came back as the farm instructor when he had a family of three girls and one boy. And that is who I worked with, in his kitchen, Jimmy Warden. He talked Cree. He really expanded the band. That is when he started to work us farming. He was the one the started...

(End of Side B, Tape IH-123)

(Interview continued on Transcript Disc 7)
-loss of
LITTLE PINE RESERVE, SASK.
LADU/NTRVLR 6 11,12,16

LITTLE PINE RESERVE, SASK.
-loss of land
RIEL REBELLION (1885)
-accounts of
RIEL REBELLION (1885)
-aftermath of
RIEL REBELLION (1885)
-Cree Indians, role in
RIEL REBELLION (1885)
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