Jim Panamick attended day school. Left at 14 years to help his father in the bush. Worked as wood cutter most of his life. Well-known locally in his younger days as a baseball player.

HIGHLIGHTS:
- Work in the lumber industry.
- Story of a Bear Walker curse and a medicine man.
- Medicines and medicine men.
- The finding of a whiskey cache.
- Description of the Indian Game, a game played with bat and ball.

Tony: March 31, 1984 and we're at the home of Jim Panamick in West Bay on Manitoulin Island. Jim, when we were having lunch today, you were telling us when you first started to work when you were a child. Can you tell us about that again?

Jim: Well, yes, I was about seven years old when I started cutting pulp wood. Not pulp wood but stove wood outside. There used to be poles, not like they do it today. We cut our wood in the bush today right to the stove length, you know, just ready to put into the stove. But in them days they used
to bring them in like poles and then cut them up as you want them, outside, the backyard. So I was seven years when I started that. Every day after school I'd be out there cutting wood. I had to do it. If I don't do it, why I might get the strap over there. The old man, our old man was pretty strict. Well, anyway he made me work as soon as I was able to push that saw. If I don't do it, well I get hell. So, I was about fourteen, yeah, I was fourteen years old. I was still going to school. And then he wanted me to go out with him, start cutting pulp wood. And I don't know what price - I think it was a dollar and a half a cord of pulp wood at that time. So, he used to cut. He was a pretty good man in the bush, too. He'd put up about three cords a day. So, as soon as I was with him, then he made a little more. Maybe four or five a day. So that made a little more money for the home, you know. That's why he took me out, to help. So from that day on I've been in pulp wood, all my life pretty near. Only this last while here, (Ojibway). I was getting a little... pulp wood was getting a little too heavy for me. I was getting along in my years.

Tony:  How old are you now?

Jim:  69.

Ernest:  I want to break in here to tell you. Do you realize how much heavy work that was? When you pile, say, three cords a day?

Jim:  Yeah.

Ernest:  Only the very top bushman could do that. And that entailed, you had to pick up blocks and put them on the pile. And that's twenty-four feet long, three times eight is twenty-four feet, four feet long, four feet high. And some people today can't even do that with a chain saw.

Jim:  No, no.

Ernest:  And that was a bucksaw.

Jim:  Yeah, I did that with a bucksaw. Sometimes if the going was good, I put up four and then some blocks. I never left a block in the bush. Like, that I couldn't pile. I put every block on the pile over there.

Ernest:  You had to have that piled.

Jim:  I had it then... well it was, in my days like... but it got too heavy for me. Oh, let's say about 55 years old. And then Jimmy Debassigae was the chief here and then he came over here one time and asked me if I'd work on the reserve. "Give you a job on the housing. It'll be much lighter for you." And by God that was a real welcome, so I could get away from all that heavy work.
Tony: Heavy work.

Jim: Yeah. So I went in and worked with the carpenters.

Ernest: I remember too when I was a kid, they didn't even have the steel frames for the bucksaw, eh. They had those wooden things.

Jim: Yeah, yeah we made our own wooden frames.

Ernest: Have you got any around?

Jim: No, I haven't any. I was thinking about that.

Ernest: Too bad you, somebody should make...

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Some homes would have...

Jim: I used to be able to make my own.

Ernest: Yeah, they were just fitted together with a string. What do you call those...?

Jim: Yeah, it would have a rope at the top and then twist that to get the saw tight.

Ernest: And they'd go to work and their packsack... they didn't even have those packsacks then.

Jim: No.

Ernest: Just a potato sack. And then that would just pull apart behind your blade. And those fellows could do that much work with those. Fantastic, you know. We're just not built that way today. I don't think anybody could do that, this generation. Like I say, even a chain saw.

Tony: Yes.

Ernest: They have trouble doing it.

Jim: Yeah, but the big thing is when you're cutting pulp wood, you had to have your tools in good shape. If you didn't, like a dull saw or saw too heavy, well that involves more work. If you can file your own saw, that's the main thing. Keep everything like your axe in good shape. I used to be able to do that. I really knew how to fix a saw. Yeah, like the Swede saw and then the crosscut saw too, I used to be able to...

Ernest: Just like cutting through butter.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: You know, if you couldn't do that, it would stick and it would go around.
Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: You just had to...

Jim: Anyone can file a saw but there is not too many that can make it work like it should.

Tony: Yeah.

Jim: Even you, if you could take a saw, well sure you'd be able to do it. But when you start cutting wood, it won't work too good because you didn't do it right.

Ernest: It's got to be the right angle and everything.

Jim: Got to be just perfect, every tool has got to be. And the rakers, they got to be just down and up so those cutters - this here raker will rake that sawdust.

Ernest: Sawdust out, take it out.

Jim: Yeah. And you got to have just enough set so that it won't bind. When you cut a tree about that long, it bent like that. And then you cut, that Swede saw will go down in there.

If you haven't got enough set to it, it'll bind. You won't be able to pull it back. But if you got it just right, it'll go just right down like that. You know, I knew how to fix it. I knew how to work in the bush. My father used to tell me that. "You got to look and see where you got to knock your trees down so they'll fall closer to the pile. If you just knock your tree over there and your pile way over there, that takes time to take that log over there and put it on your pile. But if you put it down this way, it'll make it that much closer to...."

Ernest: And his whole family is famous here in the reserve as very hard workers and great bushmen. All his brothers, they're all good workers, everyone.

Jim: Yeah, everyone could work.

Ernest: But Jim, like he mentioned today, he was older than anybody so he had to work to help support his younger brothers until they were old enough to make anything.

Tony: How many were in your family?

Jim: Oh, there was eleven of us. I was the oldest. Well, some have died. There is only, one, two, three, four, five of us now. Yeah, six have died.

Tony: So when you first went out working, your father was the only person that was supporting this family with eleven children in it?
Jim: Yeah, the old man was the only, yes. So when I was big enough to help, well that made it a little easier for him. Made a little more.

Tony: And he was getting a dollar and a half a cord?
Jim: Dollar and a half a cord. Like, four by eight a pile.
Tony: And he had to feed eleven children?
Jim: Yes, and he had to feed eleven children.
Tony: You went to school for a while though, eh?
Jim: Well, I went about - oh, I quit I was fourteen. I started pretty young. I must have been about six years old.
Tony: Was that a day school or residential school?
Jim: (Ojibway)
Ernest: Day school. No, Jim didn't go to residential school. Quite a few of us didn't go.

Jim: No, I didn't. And then in them days too, there was a French woman who was my teacher. She was a French woman, the teacher I had. And then there used to be a what they called inspector always come in once a year, maybe twice a year. But one time my desk wasn't far away from the teacher's desk. So, the inspector and the teacher were talking in low tones over there but I could hear a little bit what they were saying. And the Inspector said, "Don't push them too hard, just as long as they generate a little bit. That's enough for them. And then if they can figure up a little bit, well that's enough for them."

Ernest: That was official policy.
Jim: Yeah.
Tony: Not really to give you a good education.

Jim: No, no. They didn't push us to go up a little higher with our schooling.

Ernest: That's exactly what Johnny Manitowabi told me at Clara's funeral.
Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Yeah, he said there was a Father Desautel, I believe. He's mentioned there. And he was teaching when they had that residential school at Wikki (Wikwemikong) before they moved to Spanish. "And he used to visit my grandfather," he says. John Mcleod or Joe Mcleod. And he spoke French, this old Mcleod. "So Father Desautel when he was lonely, he liked to visit my grandfather and then they spoke French. And he used to tell my
grandfather, 'We have orders from the government not to teach, only the very bare essentials. It is forbidden to educate Indians.' This was official policy." And this was... they're trying, like Jim said. There was no grades; there was no report cards.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: You just went there. When you felt you were too old, you just... it was a trend. Go back, go in the bush. The girls, they'd go as domestics working for these families that could afford that kind of service in Toronto and that's all. They couldn't be taught, not supposed to be taught. And this was fairly recent. My generation was the same way.

Jim: The way I noticed it, when the... this last war. After the war, that's when they started, yeah, the Indians got a little more.

Ernest: After the war, yeah. Yeah, the Indians started complaining. People had gone out working, eh.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: And then when these people started drifting back, they realized. They saw things that they never noticed before. They'd gone out, they'd expanded their minds and then they saw what was really missing. So that's when these Indian organizations began to be formed. And that's the first thing they asked for. And I remember I was at the first meeting at the Union of Ontario Indians, at the formation in Garden River. And the first resolution, number one, before anything else, we demand nondenominational education. Not these different religious organizations fighting for our souls, we want an education. I remember that was the very first, in the sixties.

Tony: Where did you start pulping when you went out work with your dad, whereabouts was that?

Jim: Where did I go?

Tony: Yes.

Jim: Oh, we went all over. Like the west end over there, there used to be lots, lots of work. Like year around pretty near.

Tony: This was all on the island though?

Jim: Yeah, this is on the island. Well, there was a time we went to the shore. There used to be a German guy we worked for in Massey there one time. Well, it was back in Massey about sixty miles back. He had a big camp up there. About seventy or eighty men in the camp. And then they used to float that wood in the spring, soon as the break up, you know. I never
worked on that; I never liked that. It was too dangerous. Men have died.

Ernest: Drowned.

Jim: Yeah, drowned in the river. So I never... I tried it once but I never liked it. I'd sooner be in the bush with my saw.

Tony: This was back around 1930 then I guess when you started working was it? It must have been around then.

Jim: Oh no, quite a ways back. You see, I was born in 1914 and then I was fourteen years old when I first went out with my father. 1914, twenty-four, that would be about 1928, 1929 when I first started out. And then this here, the dirty thirties they called them, 1930, '31, '32.

Tony: Was there lots of work for pulping around? Even then? That time?

Jim: Oh yes, there was lots. Oh, lots. Well, there used to be different kind of wood they want. Like posts, fence posts. Another guy was hiring guys over there to cut cedar, like those posts, ties they call them.

Ernest: Railroad ties.

Jim: Railroad ties. They even made them in the bush. My father was pretty good at that, too.

Ernest: With a broad axe.

Jim: Yeah, with the broad axe. Anything, about eight inches at the top. And he would hew that on both sides and then you got a tie when you made it.

Ernest: (Ojibway), what kind of wood?

Jim: (Ojibway) No. No elm. There was no elm. Cedar.

Ernest: Oh, cedar.

Jim: White pine, any kind of pine like jack pine, white pine, and most of it was all pine, pine trees. And the cedar was the main species of wood they made into ties.

Ernest: Railroad ties.

Jim: Yeah, railroad ties. Five cents. You made one tie, you got five cents. (chuckles) You cut it and you hewed it on the sides, you made five, you got your five cents. You cut a post, maybe about two cents.

Ernest: That's about eight feet long eh, for...

Jim: Yeah, yeah.
Ernest: Four feet under you know, in the ground and...
Tony: You mean actually putting the posts in, you got...?
Ernest: No, no, just for cutting.
Tony: Cutting them. Cutting eight foot posts.
Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest: And peel, peel too. That was different, eh?

Jim: Well yeah, you pile that. They used to take them out in the bush, like to the shore along the beach where they could put them in the water and load them on the boat.

Ernest: How much were they?
Jim: A cent and a half to cut that.
Ernest: Post.

Jim: And then they peel that in the spring. They used to go by four inches at the top and then five inches. Five inch post, you got two cents. A four inch you got cent and half. And it takes a while to peel that post. Sometimes a good man will put up about three hundred a day. Some only two hundred.

Ernest: We were the northern version of the Mississippi slaves. (chuckles)

Tony: Could you live on what you made?

Jim: Well, in them days, yeah. In them days you could, yeah. Like a good pair of rubbers, they cost about $1.75 a pair then. But today you pay about $25, $25-30 a pair. And then in them days it was all good, good material. Like good rubber and good leather. Today it's synthetic rubber, most of the rubbers we have today.

And we went out, my uncle and I, we went out to the islands out there, picking blueberries. And then we went short; our grub was getting low. So we seen a few guys over there, they wanted to buy our berries. We sold them for $.50 a basket. I sold two baskets so I got a dollar. And my friend, he had more. I think he sold four baskets so he got two dollars. So between him and I, we got three dollars cash, money. So we went to Spanish to get some more grub. We got sugar, twenty-five cents you used to get a package about that much. I think it was five cents a pound in them days. Twenty-five cents, well you get a nice, a big bag. And then the flour was fifty-five cents, a twenty-four pound bag.

Ernest: Fifty pound bag, oh, twenty-four pounds.
Jim: Yeah, twenty-four pounds, fifty-five cents. And then we got a box of rolled oats for our morning cereal. We got quite a bit of stuff out of that three dollars. We came back, we took time. We didn't hurry on coming home. We had lots of flour, we had lots of tea, lard to cook our fish in.

Ernest: I think that's about fifteen dollars a basket now.

Jim: Oh, more than that, more than that.

Ernest: Maybe twenty dollars a basket.

Jim: Yeah, eighteen, twenty dollars a basket now.

Ernest: Blueberries.

Christine: Yeah.

Jim: Yeah. And then the flour, I think it's about forty dollars a bag now. That twenty pounds, I think it's twelve dollars now, today.

Ernest: Yeah.

Jim: In them days, fifty-five cents.

Tony: Yeah.

Jim: Maybe that's how, like as you say, could you live on that dollar and a half a day yet? Well, you could in them days. That's, yeah, I like this picture. That's the way...

Ernest: I used to cut everything he put out. He's still living this fellow, you know.

Jim: Those things, you'll never see again, it says.

Ernest: This Allen Dryburg in the home in Little Current. That would be an interesting person, too. Oh, this is the red mill, eh.

Jim: Yeah, Little Current. You see that Cutler Mill guy but I haven't got nothing on that. Same thing with Spanish Mills, I haven't got no pictures of that.

Tony: What was the story that you were going to tell us now?

Jim: Oh, well my father, I'll say my father. He's not supposed to be my father. I came along before they were married, my mother. So they got married and my father's mother didn't like the idea of her coming into the family. So after they got married, they lived close together, the house here and another house over there — maybe about from here to the band office. That's where we lived. (Ojibway)

Ernest: Your mother now.
Jim: Yeah, my mother.

Ernest: Oh, there was trouble began between his father's mother, she didn't want to accept his mother into the family because of Jim. So all this started and I guess this Bear Walk Curse come into play.

Jim: Yeah, yeah. That's it.

Ernest: So Jim will explain.

Jim: And then we had to move out. We went to Spanish Mills. We stayed there, I don't know how long. Maybe about a year. He worked for that lumber company, my father did. He was a lumber piler.

Tony: At the red mill?

Jim: No, in Spanish Mills.

Tony: Spanish River.

Jim: Spanish River. And then we moved on to Cutler, another big sawmill there. Well, that was the same company, Spanish Mills and the one at Cutler. This company had two saw mills. So, my father was moved over to that other big mill in Cutler. So we lived there for, oh, maybe four or five years. And so this one winter - my father's been working there like year around pretty near, the mill - they quit before freezing time so that the logs were all cut up and everything finished for the year. My father used to get year around jobs in the wintertime. He was a pretty good man like, good lumber piler, so they kept him working all the time, pretty near. And about, oh, the middle of November, my father started to get a sore arm in here. So he tried everything. Like he seen the doctor and the doctor never knew what was wrong with him.

So one day another woman came in there and my mother told that woman, "He's been sick and the doctor don't even know what's wrong with him." "Oh, you better go and see another lady over here, she'll know. She's got all kinds of medicines. Maybe there is a bear walking. A Bear Walker put a curse on him."

So, she went over to this lady and she gave him a plaster, medicine to put on there. "And if it's a Bear Walker doing anything, you won't be able to stand this medicine very long. Then you'll know that it's a Bear Walker's deed. Why he is sick." So they put this medicine on him before he went to bed and about two hours, he couldn't stand it. There was something in there moving just like, maybe bugs or something like that. He had a feeling in there like, if there was a bunch of bugs crawling in around it. So they had to take it. They looked at the medicine, there was no bugs there. But it felt something like it.

So, another day they went back to this woman again and then
they told him there was a man here, a medicine man. "Maybe you could go and see him there." So my mother went over to see him and then once she got in the house there, the old man, he said, "I knew you were coming. Last night I knew you would be here tonight." And he seems to know too, why she wanted to see him. "Well, my husband is sick for about a month now and he's getting worse all the time. So I came to see if you could come. We need help." And he says, "All right, I'll be over tomorrow night." "Well, could you not come tonight?" "No, no. I'll be over tomorrow night." So he just came over the next night and asked him how he was and they told him what was wrong with him. They didn't know what was wrong with him, they just told him he was sick. "So, tomorrow night," he says, "I'll be here again and then we'll start our...(Ojibway).

Ernest: We'll start the ceremony.

Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest: I guess the healing there, or to find out what's happening.

Jim: Yeah. So the next night he was over. But we had to have a bottle of whiskey and some tobacco and some red cloth.

Ernest: That's what he asked for.

Jim: So that's what he had to have. So my mother, the next day, she went to the store and got this red whatever it was, cloth, and this tobacco. And there was no way she could get whiskey; it wasn't sold in the stores like we have today.

Ernest: It couldn't be sold to Indians either.

Jim: No, no. So the neighbor next door, she went over there and she told them what they were going to do. And the lady just happened to have a bottle of whiskey. "Oh," she says, "I got a bottle of whiskey, I'll let you have that." And it had to be ...(Ojibway). It had to be fresh stuff, never used for anything, you know.

Ernest: Yeah, it had to be, open it himself. It couldn't have been used for...

Tony: I see. It had to be a brand new bottle of whiskey.

Jim: Yeah, yeah. Brand new and opened by him. So the next night, I was just a little kid then. I remember pretty well though. I was old enough. The lights was turned down so me and the kids, we were sitting over in the corner. I was there listening. So this man, he poured some whiskey in the cup and started talking to his...(Ojibway).

Tony: Spirit helpers?
Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Yeah, yeah.

Jim: Yeah, spirit helper, yeah, his...

Ernest: Doden.

Jim: Doden, yeah. Yeah, he started talking to him and then he took a drink and he took another drink for his helper, Nindoden. What he was going to do, what he was here for. And then he started talking about why this started. And he knew where she lived. That old guy never was here on the island all his life but still he knew where that old lady was. "And there is rock over there. There is a mountain up there. The cliff and that's where the house is." He knew all that but yet, he never was here. That just shows you this old lady, this Mukwabinasse, the Bear Walker, that's where he got a little piece of stone up there. And then he planted it in. That's what made him sick. That little piece of rock over there, he planted that in his arm, in his armpit. That's what made him sick. So, after a while, after he finished talking and then he started singing a song. I don't know how it went. And then

my father was laying on his side there and then this old man, he lifted up his arm and then he blew whatever it was in there. When he blows in there, like this, there is supposed to be a light like that. Sometimes it's a small, low light. Sometimes, if he's going to win, then the light would be brighter and bigger.

Ernest: He had the power, the powers are fighting, the evil and his power. If he was winning, it was a brighter light, you see.

Jim: Yeah. He said if he's not going to win, it's a very low light. So he said, "Gosh, I don't know. That old lady, that Bear Walker, she's so powerful, too. She's got the strongest dope. Whatever it was." And this old man, he was almost powerless to put it over her. This one night he was finished and "I'll be back again tomorrow night." So he had to be, three times he had to do this. So the next night he came back and there was a little more. "I think we're getting someplace," he said after he did this. It had to be another bottle of whiskey, everything. Like a new plug of tobacco, everything start over again. Well, that's the second time. "Well, I think we're, she's pretty powerful, that old Bear Walker." So, they were just on even keel there, he's not getting too far with this, what you call it. (Ojibway)

Ernest: His power, his...

Tony: With his cure.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: I think he mentioned too, you told me, that it was the
Jim: Yeah. This old lady Bear Walker, she was pretty powerful, too. (Ojibway)

Ernest: I want to interrupt here. He were watching this from up above, through the...

Jim: Yeah, I was upstairs the next night watching the same thing over there. Like, the bed was here. That's where my father laid. And the stairway came up there. And me, I was peeking over there from the top over there and watching what was going on. There was three of us kids then, a sister and a brother. So we were all looking down there and listening what was going on. So the next morning... they didn't get too far this night. So the next morning, that was going to be the last time. So, that morning about five o'clock, well we get up, too. Me and the kids, we stick our heads out there again, listening. So he started singing and drinking.

Ernest: (Ojibway)

Jim: Yeah, (Ojibway) After he sang whatever song it was, singing this song to...(Ojibway) his helper, the spirit or whatever it is, he lifted up his arm again and then he blows in there. Then after he blew in there and then he gave out a yell. "Whoooo," he says. "Now we got him." And then he jumped up. "There never was anybody that could beat me yet," he says. "If anybody asks me to help somebody, I always...." He always beats them.

Ernest: Oh Jim, when you told me this before, you said before the last trip, while he was sleeping he had the door open. (Ojibway) This happened during this, eh? (Ojibway)

Jim: It was a few days after that.

Ernest: Oh, that was after.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Oh, oh, oh. Well, okay finish your...(Ojibway).

Jim: And then...(Ojibway), and after, "You're going to get well. Maybe let's say ten days," he says. "The boss will be along. He'll come along and ask you how you are. Maybe you'll be able to work, maybe." You used to harvest ice, the company used to. And my father used to work there. This was around the first part of January, this incident. And sure enough, after this when this old man performed this, it was ten days after, the boss came along and asked my father, "How are you feeling? Will you be able to work?" "Well, not too good yet." "Well, you come over anyway. We're going to start Monday. We'll give you an easy job so you won't have to work like you used to. We'll give you an easy job. Just like little jobs, light ones." So he went over and started working the day that
the old man said he would.

And then about three or four days after, this old lady, the Bear Walker, she was pretty mad that she couldn't get what she wanted to do over there. She wanted to do. So one night when this old man was sleeping, he seen this old woman coming towards his bed. There were two of them, two old ladies. And one of them was so darn mad she wanted to pound him on the bed. Then this guy, he said he never slept with a knife under his pillow. So before this old lady could do anything to him, he just lift up his pillow and there was a knife there and then he threw it at the old lady. He hit her on the leg someplace. And then she fell down and then she crawled away. But the other lady, she didn't come too close. So when her partner fell down, they both went away. And that was the last they seen.

And the next day this old man came over to our place and told my mother but my dad was already.... And this old man came in and he told my folks what he had seen last night, these old ladies. And then, "In about three days you're going to get a letter. That old lady is going to die or she'll be crippled all her life. Well, she's pretty powerful, too. She might come out of it." And sure enough, there was a letter come. My mother got a letter from one of her pen pals over here that the old lady was very sick, "I think she's going to die." But she didn't die, she got herself out of it but she never walked again the rest of her life. She had a chair to get around the house. And then this old man, he started talking about he'll be around here for oh, maybe a few years yet. And then the time was coming, "You have to go home. And then you're going to lose another boy or girl when you get home." So that was my brother, he died when we got home here. He was sixteen years old.

Ernest: Johnny.

Jim: Yeah, Johnny.

Ernest: I remember.

Jim: (Ojibway)...that old man, everything he said, it came, like a fortune teller. A fortune teller will tell you, "Well, you're going to die in about six months."

Ernest: His name was Tahwop. That's the bow, you know.

Jim: Yeah, the bow that you shoot with an arrow, Tahwop.

Ernest: And would you mention what he said to you, (Ojibway)? I want you to tell them.

Jim: Oh yes, (Ojibway) you could see the place from here when you go down to the lake here.

Ernest: You said you went there years later and (Ojibway).
Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest: Yeah, tell where is, yeah.

Jim: Me and this other, we went picking berries over there one time. Well, that old man... I'll start from here. "When I die," he says. He never was baptized. Like, we're Catholic. But still he went to the church sometimes. He says, "I go to church sometimes. I believe in there."

Ernest: Somebody, a spirit.

Jim: Yeah, somebody up there. "The Creator, well He created us. He created him too and then He created, that's what his helper, like the spirit. Everything was made by God," he says. "And then when I die, I'm not going to heaven. My spirit, he lives over there in them rocks up there. In mountains up there. And that's where I'm going after I die," he said. So one summer quite a while after that, me and my uncle, we went picking blueberries and we went up to that mountain. We were picking berries and then we heard this sound on the rock just like as if (knocks). Not like that but somebody pounding, like a sledge hammer from inside the rock over there. That's the way it sounded to us. I looked at my friend over there and he looks at me, too. So I didn't say anything, I kept on. And then all of a sudden here, we hear the same sound. Something like pounding inside that rock. And then I looked at my friend over there again and he looks at me. "Did you hear that?" he says. "Yes, I heard it. I think we're not wanted here." So we started away. That must be the old man that you said. I guess he's still living there in them rocks. He said he wasn't going to heaven when he died.

Ernest: And then you told me somebody....(Ojibway).

Jim: Oh, that's another place.

Ernest: (Ojibway), that's a different place.

Jim: Yeah, that's a different place.

Ernest: Oh, I thought that was the same.

Jim: That's in Benjamin Islands. It's that high mountain up there. Him and his parents, they were... well, he must have been about twelve, fifteen years old.

Tony: Who was that?

Jim: Yeah, this other guy I'm talking about. And they heard the same thing. It was on the side of a mountain where they were picking berries and then the same sound. There was somebody in that rock over there, pounding like a sledge hammer. So he looked at his father over there and the old man,
he turned around and looking to see if there was somebody there. So they went on picking berries. And they heard, the second time they heard the same thing. So this old man, he gets up, "Get out of here. I guess we're not supposed to be here; we're not wanted here. Let's go. There's somebody living in that mountain." That's another story.

Tony: Jim, you said somebody Bear Walked, this woman Bear Walked your father. What is Bear Walking? Can you tell me? Describe what it is?

(Ojibway)

(End of Side A)

(Side B)

Jim: ...and go to this house over there. He's going to do something to a person over there. So he changes his images. Maybe into a dog...

Ernest: Or a bird.

Jim: Or a bird. An owl, a crow, something. Any bird at all they want to. Or even a pig. You might even walk in the night; you might see a pig. You'd never know that was the Bear Walker going by there. But how they started, this Bear Walking, I don't know much about it.

Ernest: There was a story a few years back, after the war when this was still very strong. The forestries, before they called it MNR, they called it lands and forests. And they put up those signs all over the north for, I guess mostly for tourists. And they had the Smoky the Bear, walking. Not to start fires, Smoky the Bear is giving the message. They found up north that they had thrown those off the - the Indians - because that was bad. Whenever you see a bear standing up, even in the nature, that's a bad sign. They don't want them to stand; they don't want them standing up. They don't like to see them standing up. So when they saw that picture, they ripped them all over the north. The Indians pulled, pulled that off. Until the forestry found out that it was a very bad omen.

Christine: When you said that your father threw the knife at the old lady, the Bear Walker...

Jim: No, that's not my father, that was the...

Tony: The old man.

Jim: The old man, yes.

Ernest: It was the old man.

Jim: The medicine man.

Tony: The old medicine man.
Christine: The medicine man, ahhh, okay.

Jim: Yeah.

Christine: The medicine man threw the knife at the old lady. What form was she in when he did that?

Ernest: In her form, I thought it was a dog?

Jim: No, she was just in her...

Ernest: It was some old lady. You couldn't tell, just some old ladies.

Jim: This old man, he seen this old lady coming in. And then right straight for him. She was going to... pound him into... trying to kill him. She was with a friend. Another old lady came in, but this other old lady, she was standing back over there just watching what - well, if she was winning, maybe she could jump in, too. Maybe help her through it. But she lost. This old man, he just reached into his pillow and then there was a knife there. So he picked it up and threw it at her.

Ernest: It just happened to be there.

Jim: It just happened to be there. He never had a knife.

Ernest: But it was there.

Jim: Yeah.

Christine: Ahhhh.

Jim: That's what he hit her with, that knife, and he got her.

Tony: But what was the Bear Walking? Who could be a Bear Walker?

Jim: Well, anybody that could (inaudible), you know.

Ernest: (Ojibway)

Jim: (Ojibway) No, this old lady I'm talking about. She learned, she got that medicine from a person in Wikki (Wikwemikong).

Ernest: Oh.

Jim: (Ojibway)

Ernest: She got it from the Soumit family, (Ojibway).

Jim: Yeah, she was related to this old guy in Wikki (Wikwemikong) over there and this old...(Ojibway).

Ernest: (Ojibway)
Jim: Well, the Indians way back, they were given... like God created everything. When they created an Indian, they gave him everything like medicine. This medicine was given to the Indians for the...

Ernest: To do good.

Jim: To do good. But the Indian, he learned to use it, turn around and use it for evil purposes.

Ernest: It's like the garden of Eden, you know. You misuse, the evil creeps in.

Tony: Yeah.

Jim: (Ojibway) This old lady, she learned from that. She had a relative and that's where she got the medicine. That old man over there, that medicine man, he was that big. He cupped his hands like that, that's how big her medicine is and it's the strongest that there was. Bear Walking medicine, (Ojibway).

Tony: And what would she do, she'd take this medicine herself?

Jim: Oh yes, yeah. She kept it in, maybe she had a little bag or skin, whatever you call those, hide. Deer hide.

Ernest: Leather pouch or....

Jim: Yeah, leather pouch.

Tony: What would she do with the medicine?

Jim: Well, I don't know what she did with it but this medicine is supposed to be so powerful that that's what they used to Bear Walk. It could change you into a... like if you went out to Bear Walk.

Tony: Bear Walking was putting a curse on people?

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: (Ojibway) Even today, they say if you throw that in front of a person, a (Ojibway), where he is going to walk, eh.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: If you want to do him harm. And after a while, I don't know, maybe there was a lot of, what's the word used, charlatans? Maybe they used it to fool people just to (Ojibway). Like Charlie Nelson, when he gave that talk, he says, "I was buying all kinds of stuff when I was young. I would keep it in here and I'd get drunk and I'd forget. It would be washed away and it would be in here." He says, "I had medicine for everything. I had a medicine to get woman."
These people would sell stuff, Kwewshk. We had that medicine.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Some people used to sell that Kwewshk. If you wanted a woman, you could maybe throw it where she is going and then she'd come to you. And he says, "I even had medicine to get white women," he said.

(All chuckle)

Jim: (Ojibway) That medicine, as he said there, if he wanted a woman, why the same thing with women. There is a... the same stuff.

Ernest: Oh, for if you want a man, too.

Jim: Yeah, if the woman would like to get that man over there. Like, if she'd like to marry that guy over there and then she... that guy might not... she'd be pretty hard to get. And then that woman will use this medicine to get him. And that's what...

Ernest: Simon Meeg once told me a medicine. It'll be coming around pretty soon. I'll try it. You know the trillium, (Ojibway), the Indian word for bug something. So I got it written down someplace, this trillium. (Ojibway) The root of that is the medicine to get woman. (Ojibway) That root.

Jim: You see, I heard that, too.

Ernest: Yeah, that root. I don't know what you do with the root. I should ask Simon.

Tony: You probably, if it's big enough, you hit them over the head when they're not looking. But anyway.

Ernest: It's also a medicine. It's also a supposed medicine but it could be used for that.

Jim: We had it one time, too. This is a different thing. We used to be, my father and I, we used to go out fishing out on them islands over there, about this time, February, March. And then if you had this little medicine, you'd keep it in your pocket. All the fish would come in. Maybe you had some other friends, they would be sitting. Another guy would be fishing over there. He'll get nothing. You're the only one that's hauling them out. Just because you got that...

Tony: Medicine in your pocket.

Jim: That medicine in your pocket. It pulls in.

Ernest: Agnes Meewos(?) was telling me. When she was young, she used to go with her father, Dave Meewos, go fishing, you know. That was still exchanging something in order to get
something. She'd always throw, if he didn't have tobacco, he'd ask me for a cigarette, he'd throw the cigarette in the water before he started to fish because you have to pay the spirit or whatever before you get something. There is always that exchange. (Ojibway)

Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Tony: Come back to the...

Jim: Oh, it's just like if you wanted to buy something. Like I'll buy this battery off you, I'll give you.... The same thing with that medicine.

Ernest: You could never get it for nothing or else it would not work. It didn't work.

Jim: Yeah, you got to give something.

Ernest: Unless you gave something. You were going to ask...?

Tony: I was going to go back and ask, when this medicine man was curing your father and he had the tobacco and the whiskey and the red cloth...

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: What did he do with each of those things? What did he do with the tobacco and the whiskey and the cloth?

Jim: Well, I don't know what he did with the cloth. But he had to have that anyway. Oh, it was maybe a yard, not very much. It would only be about that size when you fold it up. And then, this whiskey, he opened it up before he started the ceremony, like to perform his... He drank some himself and then he took another drink for his...

Ernest: For Doden, his spirit.

Jim: Yeah, his helper. The same thing with that plug of tobacco. He'd cut a piece off it and then he'd put it in the stove, let it burn in there. That's for his helper.

Tony: Did he put the whiskey in the stove too or did he drink the whiskey?

Jim: No, he drank it, he drank the whiskey.

Ernest: He's not that crazy. He's not that crazy.

Tony: I didn't think he was going to put the whiskey in the stove for his helper.

(all chuckle)

Ernest: You know, the Indian winos around Chicago and this cheap wine. They go in an alley and before they open it,
especially the Sioux .... We didn't know that; we'd forgotten that. But over there, "Oh, just a minute. You've got to give some." So they pour a little bit on the ground. Oh, very little though. And then they start.

Tony: Then drink it.

Ernest: That's what...

Jim: Oh, there's lots of things. And one old lady told me there was just about every kind of medicine, (Ojibway).

Like the white man today, we got doctors. They got just about every medicine for every...

Ernest: Every disease or every...

Jim: Yeah, every disease or ailment. That was the same way with the Indians. They got every... like roots, flower seeds, and oh, whatever. Even bark from some kind of a tree. If you had a headache, well you get this little weed over there and boil it and then you drink the stuff so you're headache will go away.

Ernest: Dan Pine said he was going to tell you a lot of those stories yesterday he says. Just before I left, he talked about Nanotick (?), the maple.

Jim: Yes.

Ernest: And he said the sap is very beneficial, even for a diabetic. You'd think there'd be sugar, but he advises people to drink that, a lot of sap. (Ojibway) Just drink it.

And then he talked about what caused a lot of problems on this earth. He says it was our Nanabush. Because he said this big bird, I guess it's the eagle, he was told to clean up the bad things on this earth. And so he grabbed these snakes, a bunch of them I guess, and throw them. I don't know - to kill them or grab them but.... So this eagle would come down and grab all this, all these dirty things from this earth. Nanabush was trying to shoot something, not at the eagle, but somebody hit his arm and he accidentally killed the eagle. So all the bad things remained and that's why we have so much trouble. Because of Nanabush (Ojibway). Things like that he says he'll tell you.

Jim: Forty years old when I saw my dad last. So I never paid much attention.

Tony: From the time that you started working, how did you spend your time apart from that? How many hours in a day did you work out in the bush?

Jim: Oh, we used to go out in a camp. We built our own shack and that's where we stayed. We started work right from the break of daylight sometimes and right until dark. Oh,
sometimes when I feel like it, well, we just take off five. We don't go out after supper.

Ernest: A thing I'd like to mention too and Jim will tell you, unlike the north shore where they had big camps, where these timber companies leased crown land and had big camps, most of the work on the island was for farmers that worked bush lots. You know, they had big bush lots.

Jim: Yeah, farmers that'll take a little, yeah.

Ernest: So they hired Indians to cut pulp. It was mostly that kind of work. There was no big lumber companies until Captain Ray and they bought big lots, you know. They were able to buy big lots and hire more men. But mostly it was just, say maybe just a few of you. A couple of...

Jim: Yeah, maybe four of us.

Ernest: Four of you worked for one farmer and just built a.... He'd have a little camp, eh, a little shack.

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: Up until what year were you working like that, working for the farmers?

Jim: Oh, that was just when I started to work. Like, I was fourteen years old when I started out. There used to be Monty Thorburn. He used to be quite an operator, cutting pulp wood. He'd hire a few, maybe a dozen men. We used to work for him quite a lot.

Ernest: Was that after he was Indian agent or before?

Jim: I don't remember when he was an agent but after that, and then he used to...

Ernest: I know a good story for you to tell when you mentioned Thorburn. And you're dad was involved. When they uncovered that rum runner's cache.

Jim: Oh, yeah, that whiskey.

Ernest: Green Island. That's a story that should be...

Jim: I guess a few guys, like the white guys over at Thessalon, in a yard over there maybe. So this boxcar, it was full of whiskey. So these three guys, three or four of them, they knew about it and they broke into this boxcar.

Ernest: Oh, I didn't know that part.

Jim: They took it out to the shore and they loaded it on a boat. So away they went with it and they came around here to the west end of this island. There is a little island out there
on the south shore of Manitoulin there.

Ernest: Green Island.

Jim: Green Island, it's name is. So that's where they hid this whiskey. And then we were working for Monty Thorburn. So on the island - on the mainland like, Manitoulin - that's where the pulp wood was. So we put this stuff in the water, and then we put it in a big raft like.

Ernest: I went there one summer with watered pulp wood.

Jim: Yes. And then they towed this raft over to the Green Island and there is a little bay there, so that's where they anchored their...

Ernest: The boat would come in.

Jim: Yeah. They anchored there, this wrapped up pulp wood. And then we got short. The boat didn't come when it was supposed to come. So we had to come back to Burnt Island in there. That was the first year I did my boatloading. And then I was really glad the next time they went out. Well, the boat was supposed to come the next day, so our old man, "Oh, you better stay home this time, you better not bother. I don't have to take you this time." And the second time they went to that island, that's when they found that whiskey. My father found it in the bush. He was the boom man and he went in and tied this boom onto the shore over there. So after he had untied this boom, he went into the bush and took a little walk around. And then he came onto this here pile.

Ernest: Cache.

Jim: Yeah. So he didn't know what it was. He couldn't read what the.... It was in bags of twenty-four bottles. So he takes out his knife and cut the bag to see what was in it and here he found whiskey. Oh, piles and piles of it. Like almost a box-car.

Ernest: And he started drinking, eh?

Jim: Yeah, he took a taste of it and he knew that it was whiskey. And then he went down and he told the boss, "I found something over there in the bush." (Ojibway) "Oh, that's whiskey, (Ojibway). Where is it?" So he went....

Ernest: He tried to claim it, I hear.

Jim: He tried to claim the whole thing but everybody ran over there and take up what they wanted. He wanted the whole works by himself.

Ernest: Yeah, totally.

Jim: Yeah.
Ernest: Indian agent and I'll tell you, he wasn't an agent.

Jim: No. And by God, everybody got drunk.

Ernest: They couldn't work either.

Jim: They couldn't work. Even the, what you call...

Ernest: The bosses, too?

Jim: No. (Ojibway)

Ernest: Oh, on the boat.

Jim: On the boat. Them guys on the boat, yeah, the boat gang, yeah. Everybody had a bottle. Well, anyway, they got the boat loaded. So this, when they got...

Tony: As well as themselves. (chuckles)

Jim: Yeah. I think even the wheelsman on that boat, why he was pretty well lit I guess when they pulled out. By God, was I ever glad they didn't take me along. Everybody was drunk.

Ernest: Yeah, my dad bought a lot of that stuff. They come in bags and what happened was.... I guess they were so afraid of Mounties. The Mounties would just come on the reserve. No warning, they just search. So I guess he must have bought a lot of that stuff and he dug a hole in the ground and buried it. And I guess, maybe he forgot about some. There may be even stuff buried around that place yet.

Jim: Yeah, around the place.

Ernest: So years later, - we were about twelve, thirteen, fourteen - he had a farm there, (Ojibway).

Jim: Oh yeah, back there up.

Ernest: So he said, "I want you guys to do some work. You go," he says, "I'm going to haul this sleeping shack over to the farm and you guys stay there." (Ojibway) We stayed there. He brought us food.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: So they jacked it up and put a dray, a stone boat. A team of horses - him and Bill Roy. So when they twisted that to move it out, they saw a bag sticking out. (chuckles) So they dug it up, pulled it out, and that's as far as they went. The horses stayed there. They were drunk for a week.

(all laugh)

Ernest: We got a week's reprieve. (laughs) We just put the horses away, you know. And I was told what brand, Log Cabin.
Jim: Log Cagin.

Ernest: And then one more.

Jim: Golden Wedding and (Ojibway). Robbie...

Ernest: Burns.

Jim: Robbie Burns. There were three kinds, Golden Wedding, Log Cabin and Robbie Burns.

Ernest: I was listening. I always thought that was a prohibition guy hiding there. But Jim says it was a railroad car robbery. But listening to one of these Elliot Ness episodes, they were stopping this prohibition and that's what they mentioned, Log Cabin. Like that was one of the big brands at that time. But if your dad had kept quiet....

Jim: Yeah, if he, he could have had it all by himself.

Ernest: He could have got it little bit by bit and got rich. But that was (chuckles).

Jim: There was quite a bit if whiskey alright.

Tony: He could have become a famous bootlegger.

Ernest: Yeah.

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: You were saying that you went out and worked on the boats. So you didn't work in the bush all the time?

Jim: Well, in the summertime, what wood we cut down last winter, well it's all along the shore. And then we used to put this in the water and then load it on a boat. Well, that's how pulp wood worked too, you know. Yeah.

Ernest: You'd make these big booms.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: And the tug would come in and when it was full, you'd tug. Lots of boats would come in here. And then there was a platform out there. There was a floating barge with a jackladder with hooks and then you feed it up there and that would throw them to the boat. And there would be a gang with those picks, pick those and stowing it in rows. So that's what happened, the wintertime would be cutting time.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: And then all winter they'd be hauling the wood and line it up, line it up. You know this whole bay, just to show you.... There is no wood here on the reserve. To show you how
much timber there used to be here, this whole bay used to be full of wood, the whole entire bay.

Jim: Oh, I remember when I was a boy, yeah.

Ernest: Right up, way up on the left side there.

Jim: Saw logs, hardwood, the very best of timber. This bay used to be all loaded up on both sides. This side and the other side and then finally the logs sort of ran out. And then the pulp wood would come in. They started cutting pulp wood and that was about the same thing. This bay used to be filled right up. That's the winter's work and then the boat would come in the springtime, take it away on a boat.

Christine: Did you stay out in the camp all winter long or did you come home once in a while?

Jim: Oh, we went back and forth. Like, sometimes we'd go for two weeks. On the weekend we'd come home. Monday morning, back we went again for another two or three weeks. Oh, sometimes a month we'd be away. Burnt Island was mostly where this pulp wood was. Well, it's all along, all the west end there. This big bay and all those bays along the south shore over there.

Christine: What sort of things did you eat when you were in the camps?

Jim: Oh, scone. That's the big thing for an Indian at that time. Well, even today.

Ernest: And salt pork.

Jim: Salt pork, potatoes.

Ernest: Beans.

Jim: Beans, well maybe sometimes you'd take a big can of corn syrup, like ten pounds or even a big pail of twenty pounds.

Ernest: Every man was pretty good cook because when you went out, they took turns cooking.

Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest: So everybody was very good at scone. Almost anybody could make good scone.

Tony: Like a bannnock?

Ernest: Bannock, yeah.

Jim: Yeah, bannock, yeah.

Christine: You call it scone here, has it ever been bannock?
Ernest: We call it scone, scone. Yeah, we call it scone here.

Jim: Yeah, we call it scone here mostly. Sometimes I read about it where it's called bannock, yeah. Sometimes we'd catch a deer, well we'd have deer meat. Sometimes we'd catch a few partridges.

Tony: How would you catch them?

Jim: Huh?

Tony: How would you catch them or shoot them?

Jim: Oh, we had .22 rifle. And then I used to catch them with this here slingshot they used to call it. (Ojibway)

Ernest: Slingshot. Everybody was an expert at that slingshot.

Christine: Yeah.

Ernest: Yeah, you could take and kill a bird with that.

Jim: On the fridge over there. It's in that red dish there. Is it there?

Ernest: Or rabbits.

Unknown: What's that, a slingshot?

Jim: My slingshot.

Tony: We got one here.

Ernest: These kids around here.

Jim: Oh, yes.

Ernest: When our generation grew up, the young kids never played. It was called Indian Game. Maybe Kate saw it played. Indian Game. Did you remember seeing Indian Game played? What we call (Ojibway). Our generation, Indian Game.

Jim: Oh yeah, yeah.

Ernest: (chuckles) I remember when we were kids, we just called it Indian Game because nobody else played it. It was played at school, we used to play. There was a fence there; that was the safety thing.

Jim: Yes, like a base, like the first base in a baseball game.

Ernest: Then, here we just drew a line on the sand in front of the school. And then we'd play between these two. You could use fifty, hundred, two hundred or as many.... So you just divided up. Yeah, you just lined up and you, you know, shove
one here, this way. So (Ojibway).

Jim: Oh yes, they took a bat and...

Ernest: Yeah, who's going to bat.

Jim: Whoever the last one that takes a hold of the end of that bat.

Ernest: Yeah, who'll bat first, okay.

Tony: Put one hand on top of the other, eh?

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Whoever has the last full hand, you batted. So that one side went into the field. And the thing is, the guy didn't pitch the ball. He stood beside you and you flipped it and we had a piece of flat wood, not a bat. And if you hit it you tried to make it to the other side. But they hit you with that, the fielders. We used a sponge ball. We used to peel the top, make it rough because it wouldn't hurt that much. You know, they'd hit you and sometimes you didn't have to run. Then after your turn, you lined up. And sometimes there'd be a whole bunch waiting to go. And then somebody would hit it and then everybody would go, eh, try to get to the other side.

Christine: Oh, everybody would go?

Ernest: Yeah, and sometimes what would happen - like if everybody was at bat over there and you were all stuck over there, you were all over there - there was nobody to bring you in. So they had like a gauntlet. You picked your best runner in the middle. There is two guys stood and they'd throw the ball and ten, you counted.

Jim: Yeah, ten, you count.

Ernest: One, two, and this guy had to go through there and try and get over there without being hit. And some guys used to be real quick. You couldn't hit them.

Jim: Yeah, real quick for dodging.

Ernest: You'd be there but some guys used to be real quick. Cars would stop sometime and watch us. What the hell kind of a game are they playing?

Tony: Okay, let me just go back because I want to try and get a picture of this in my mind.

Ernest: And then I saw in True Magazine years later, there was a game in Russia exactly the same. They described it. They called it Lata or something. It must've, maybe some...

Tony: Somebody brought it over.
Ernest: From Europe, maybe continental Europe brought it over. Maybe a trader or somebody. I would like to find out the origins of that, yeah.

Tony: Maybe somebody took it to Russia from here. But let me get a picture of this in my mind. So you'd have, it didn't matter how many people there were, you'd choose sides.

Ernest: You'd choose sides, yeah.

Tony: There could be fifty on each side or whatever.

Ernest: Fifty, twenty or, yeah.

Tony: And did you bat in turn or...?

Ernest: Yeah, well...

Tony: One guy would have the bat.

Ernest: Yeah, he had the bat and if you...

Tony: Just a second. The guy on the other team would stand beside him?

Ernest: Yeah.

Tony: Just throw the ball up in the air.

Ernest: Just flip the ball, yeah. And...

Tony: And you'd have to hit it.

Ernest: You'd hit it and you could go right there and take your chances trying to get to the other side.

Tony: So it would, now the other side was from this fence to this line.

Ernest: Yeah.

Tony: All right, now when you hit the ball, you tried to run to the other side?

Ernest: Yeah, you tried.

Tony: And did your whole team run or did they...?

Ernest: Yeah, whatever. Maybe the first ten guys would be afraid to run so they'd line up. So if you made an attempt to run, maybe they'd take their chances and they'd run. But sometimes, if the guy that fielded the ball over there... sometimes it'd be too far away... you had a good chance, eh Jim, to get...

Jim: Yeah, to get to the other...
Tony: How did they stop you from getting there?
Ernest: Well, they hit you.
Tony: With the ball?
Ernest: With the ball.
Tony: They had to throw the ball at you?
Ernest: Yeah, the minute they hit you, then the fielders would be fair game. They would rush to get.... As long as they touched there, they were safe.
Tony: The guys who were trying to run across?
Ernest: Yeah.
Tony: They could get to the other side...
Ernest: Yeah, yeah.
Tony: Because they would be chasing one guy with the ball?
Ernest: Yeah, so then automatically we were the fielders then. It would change like that. And they'd bat. They just...
Tony: You didn't get the whole team out? You just got to get one person out?
Ernest: Yeah, just one person out.
Tony: And then you'd change over?
Ernest: Yeah, you change over. We'd change over.
Tony: But when you hit the ball, you didn't have to run?
Ernest: You didn't have to run.
Tony: You just sort of made up your mind.
Ernest: Yeah, maybe you could hit it that way and then you'd be running on this side so that guy had to have a long way to throw the ball. You usually could make it, yeah.
Tony: To throw it to somebody, it would be like...
Ernest: Yeah.
Tony: But the strategy of the game was to pick the time when you figured you could get across.
Ernest: Yeah.
Tony: Okay. And as long as somebody made a mistake and they ran and they got hit, you were all out?

Ernest: Yeah, they got hit. So you had to rush. The team that hit you, they're out in the field. If you got hit you could pick up the ball and hit the other guy before he reached the safety. They'd still be in there if you got back to the safety zones.

Tony: If you got one guy safe, you stayed in?

Ernest: Yeah, as long as one guy was safe, eh.

Tony: What happened then, if you had fifty guys on your side right, and you hit the ball and you all decide to run at once? It couldn't hit fifty of them.

Ernest: That's how it used to look funny. The whole way and sometimes nobody would hit.

Jim: Yeah.

Tony: Nobody could get in?

Ernest: Oh yeah, sometimes they'd miss and the whole gang would be safe on that side. But you always had to have somebody there to bring you in.

Tony: How do you mean to bring you in?

Ernest: Like, that ball.

Jim: He'd have to bat the ball out, so the other side could...

Christine: Oh, to get you back again.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Yeah, to get you back.

Tony: Oh, so you'd all be over there and you'd have to get back again?

Ernest: Yeah, so sometimes if that.... Oh yeah, you'd have three chances, so there was a guy there to bring you in. And you're all ready to go and if you miss those three.... Sometimes a guy would do this too and try and pull back, sometimes the guy would get his...

Tony: Hand hit.

Ernest: But that wasn't supposed to be done.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: So, if he couldn't hit it in three attempts, so we
called it an Indian word kaboza (?). It's like being caught in a pot, eh, or a boiling pot and you couldn't get out, kaboza.

Jim: Yeah, once you got three strikes they don't make it then.

Ernest: So what happened then. He was stranded there and you're stranded. So this is when this gauntlet thing came out. The fielders, two of them would come. And you'd choose your best runner, what you think or somebody would volunteer, and he'd come and stand and they'd throw that ten times. One, two, and you'd try and break through and get to the other side.

Tony: You mean they'd form up, in other words they'd make a pack?

Ernest: Just two guys, just two fielders.

Christine: And he had to run between them.

Ernest: Yeah. And you'd wait and see if he would make it. So you'd make a dash for it. Well, it's pretty close. You'd usually get hit but sometimes they'd miss you. So then you'd get over to this side so they'd have you to try and bring these guys in.

Tony: I see.

Ernest: But you know, that was good for stamina, eh.

Jim: Oh yeah, they used to do a lot of running, yeah.

Ernest: We'd be out there at recess or Sundays. God, but that give you...

Christine: Did girls play this too or just boys?

Ernest: Oh, yeah, oh anybody.

Jim: Anybody, whoever wants to play. Girls or...

Ernest: You know, in those times, we couldn't play with girls. You know, they had a fence. That's how prudish they were. One time there I got the strap. The ball went over there on the girls side and I went over to get it. And that old Miss Wren saw me and I got the strap just going over to the girl's side. That was, they called it Indian Game. And when we quit playing, the kids, it was too much work, I guess. But I think that gave you stamina.

Tony: That's interesting. An interesting thing to visualize.

Jim: This is the weapon I used to....

Tony: Slingshot....
Jim: Get my partridge. You just take a little stone, put it in there and then you aim it right at my partridge sitting up there. Sometimes I'd miss, sometimes I'd get him. That's what you call a slingshot.

Ernest: Everybody carried one.

Jim: This is a store-bought one. We used to make our own from a car tube. You'd take strips of that rubber and tie it. You'd get a stick that has a cross like this and you tie your rubber on. And you make a little thing like this at the end. This is a store-bought.

Ernest: We didn't have an Indian name either. We just called it slingshotna.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: Somebody must have introduced it after the bow. I was telling Tony when Joe Ways, that's after you quit school, that Joe Ways used to think he was important. He came in and raided the school. You know, get the kids out. Usually we'd be in the school. He'd order us to be marched out and he'd search us. Everybody had one and he'd pile them up and burn them.

Jim: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest: But we'd have one made by that night.

Jim: Yeah. (chuckles)

Ernest: Just so it would be the law and order thing, you know. Kind of a funny guy. One time this story I heard. He caught a fellow drinking and the fellow says, "I'm going to arrest you for drinking." This fellow says, "No, this isn't whiskey, (Ojibway)." "Oh, yes." "Oh, try it." So he drank it. "No, it is." "No, no, it isn't. You think it is." Finally he got drunk himself. (chuckles)

Tony: Did you want to ask a question?

Christine: When we were having lunch over there at the tipi, you were telling us about your name Panamick and saying how you got that name.

Jim: Oh, well now let's see. My father and his father, there used to be three brothers at Sucker Creek. Their name was Madahbee. This old man, I guess he met a girl here in West Bay and married. So he came over and lived here and he even transferred to belong here. This old guy Madahbee, this is the guy, his name was Panamick. Whatever it was, how he got the name. Like we said, maybe he called something like a slingshot, maybe he called that when he was trying to talk.

Tony: When he was a baby?

Jim: When he was a baby he called that a Panamick so that's
how he got.... His real name was Madahbee. And then this Panamick just stuck to him, it stuck. Like my father, I think his name was Jonas, Jonas Madahbee. Instead of calling them Madahbee, this Panamick, it stuck. And then his boys, my father's name was Louis Panamick. This here nickname he got, it carried on like, on into the family.

Ernest: Just like the Francis family in Sagamok. They called them the Debassigaes but somehow, I don't know. And that was not even his name, this Debassigae. (Ojibway) The Sagamok people got a name for that old man. He was my granduncle. But they just use the name Francis now. But they're Debassigaes.

Jim: (Ojibway)

Ernest: Yeah, Isaac Francis.

Jim: Isaac Francis.

Ernest: Yeah.

Jim: Their father's name was Francis.

Ernest: Yeah, that happened quite a lot. The succeeding family, like the son would often take the name of his father, his christian name, and use it for a surname. That happened quite a bit. Because it was his son. Like that English son of John, Johnson.

Jim: Johnson, yeah.

Tony: Johnson.

Ernest: So that became his surname, that happened quite a bit.

Jim: It was the same thing with this Panamick. Our real name should have been Madahbee. And then it went on even into the books. Like in the band office here, our name is Panamick in there.

Ernest: But you'd still be registered in Ottawa and the treaty list as the Madahbee.

Jim: Yeah, way back like, yeah, Madahbee.

Ernest: I think it's still listed as that now.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: In the treaty lists.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: It's like the Foxes, Alec Fox. They're all listed in Ottawa as Assinewe.
Jim: Oh yes, that's another.

Ernest: Yeah, Wepcomwa too. Assinewe, they're Assinewe. They're right in there.

Christine: So then your ancestors would have been here right from the time that the treaty was signed? There was a Madahbee here who...?

Jim: No, they were not here. They came from...

Ernest: The north shore.

Jim: Yeah, no I don't know where they came from but...

Ernest: Well, with everybody else I guess.

Jim: Yeah.

Ernest: From around southern Ontario, that migration. Probably from the States to the Georgian Bay area and then up here. I think that almost everybody made that route. For the treaty, wherever the treaty distribution was. From Drummond into Penitang. So they naturally followed where the British presence was in order to stay with the garrison. And I guess they were kind of encouraged to do so because whenever the British needed them... because that was the reason for those presents. The military alliance.

Tony: Yes.

Ernest: This is why I think we've lost so much of our history. Like we don't know the names of our forefathers and our clans. I wish at least we had known our clans. Because we moved. If people are in one general area, they know pretty well. Like the Mohawks, even though they can't speak their language, they know their clans because they've been in one general area all the time. Here we've been forced out of the States because of our connection to the crown. So we lost our traditional homeland from this movement. And I think a lot of us were baptized in the Georgian Bay area. This is where they were first baptized I think, a lot of them.

(End of Side B)

(End of Interview)

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