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SASKATCHEWAN
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Connie: Mr. Medric McDougall on July 29?

Medric: Thirtith I think.

Connie: July 30. Okay general questions of schooling. Where
did your parents attend school?

Medric: Well, before the rebellion our parents attended
school west of St. Louis, this was called Lepine Settlement.
The teacher was (?) Senior and the class was held in Mr. (?)'s
house. My father did not have no schooling that is Alex
McDougall for the reason that there was no school at that time
at St. Louis, and he had no chance of attending school so he
had no education.

Connie: Where did you attend school, you and your wife attend
school?

Medric: Well, I attended school in St. Louis, and my wife
attended school in (?) district. The (?) district was named
after the, this was the same district as the Lepine Settlement
only that it was now called (?) School District.

Connie: Did your parents like school?

Medric: Well that is something that I can't say, because I never talked school to them very much in my young days so I wouldn't be able to say if they liked school. But if they were like most of the other children I suppose that they didn't care that much for school.

Connie: Did your parents speak another language?

Medric: Well my mother spoke French. And my wife's parents also spoke French, but my dad could talk French, Cree and English.

Connie: What did your parents do for a living?

Medric: Well, my father done some freighting, he done some bush work, and was also a foreman for a few years, done a little farm work. And my wife's parents were always on the farm, they used to make gardens and they reaped a little bit of grain, and kept a few cattle so this was their way of life.

Connie: What wages were available to your parents?

Medric: Well I'm sure that the wages of them days were very slim, and, because there was nothing that was of very much value in those days; so the wages must have been very small.

Connie: Where did your parents live to do their work?

Medric: Well in them days my parents and the wife's parents as well lived in log buildings that was the kind of buildings they had in them days; so that is where they lived was in log houses.

Connie: Do you know where your parents met?

Medric: Well, I would say that there was parties in them days so they must have met as social parties, and at church as well because they were church people.

Connie: How large was your family unit?

Medric: Oh well, in them days there was big families, there was my wife's parent's family was I would say around fourteen in the family, and my family was twelve; so there were big families in them days.

Connie: What kind of dances, songs, or games did your parents take part in?

Medric: Well, in, well what I hear in them olden days they had parties, old time dances, square, and drops of brandy, and red river jig and this kind of dances. And they took part in when they have these parties they would get in together and do some singing, they sang old western songs. And the games they played in them days was mostly football.

Connie: How was your entertainment and recreation supplied?

Medric: Well I would say that that was supplied by families getting together and having these parties, these house parties and things like that.

Connie: Were your parents affected by prejudism?

Medric: Well I wouldn't think that there was much of that in them days, because all the people in that neighbourhood were half breeds, and by that I would say that there was not much reason for discrimination.

Connie: How much influence did the church have on your parents?

Medric: Well, I would think that the church had quite an influence on the people of them days, because the people believed in the priest more than they do today. I think that their faith was much better, stonger and for that reason they believe in church and in the priest.

Connie: How did the church laws compare to today's laws?

Medric: Well, I would say that there isn't that much difference to people that want to follow up the, want to be, that want to follow the church laws. There isn't, there isn't really that much difference that people seem to not attend church and so for that reason people think that there is some different ruling about the church, but I don't think that there is that much difference it's just that the people don't attend the church laws (inaudible) olden days.

Connie: Did your parents attend shrines or retreats?

Medric: Oh I would say for sure, because they had great faith. So by having faith they attended shrines, because people that have faith still attend shrines and do these things. They would go to church and because they go to church they also keep up their faith and they still attend shrines, and pilgrimages and things like that.

Connie: Did your parents celebrate weddings and Christmas?

Medric: Oh well, that was the time of the past, but that's exactly what I hear that they used to do was get together and have Christmas parties and lets not forget New Years, because New Years was the half breeds biggest holiday, was New Years. And they also have great time weddings and thing like that was very common.

Connie: Okay, how did your parents get your food?

Medric: Oh well, in them days they had to go trapping and hunting, and they would make gardnes and by reaping a little bit of wheat they'd make a little mill and make this into flour. And they'd have a few head of cattle, kept a few pigs; so this is one way of getting the food.

Connie: How did your parents prepare the food?

Medric: Oh well, in them old days they used to do their own cooking so pretty well everybody would be able to do some cooking, so they'd do their own cooking.

Connie: How did they prepare their clothing?

Medric: Well the clothing, of course, I suppose that they used some furs for different things and leather. And they had to tan their own leather, but they made leather coats, and leather mitts and such things as that. They done their own sewing mostly, so that was the way that they made thier clothes.

Connie: Can you describe any special feasts, or especially large shortages of food?

Medric: Well, the shortages of food I remember that in the 1930s them was dry years and there was not crop, and because there was no crops the gardens were poor and it was hard to get any kind of food really. So that was the time that I remember of the hardest times to get food was in the '30s.

Connie: Was there a doctor available to your parents?

Medric: Oh yes, there was doctors in them days. There was doctors that would treat people with, I just can't mention, but the doctor them days they used to use roots of different kinds and things like that. Herbs. So that was the way the doctors treated people in them days. They didn't have no operating system, I never heard of them talking about operating people in those days, but they seem to have had medicine that helped the people though because people survived through such sicknesses, gull stone and things like that. If somebody broke a leg well they bandage that leg, clamps and little sticks and tie that together and they seem to bring them around anyway. So the doctors were a great help.

Connie: Who brought the medicine to the people?

Medric: Well, the doctors were the ones that they used to treat the people. They made their own medicine, I suppose, and they brought, they were the ones that brought the medicine.

Connie: How was it used?

Medric: Well, in them days there I remember they used to make mustard plasters for pneumonia and things like that, and so they would try to make their own medicine and use it themselves. So the people them days that's the way they done it, they did the best they could.

Connie: Did your parents have any special people in the community who helped?

Medric: Well, in them days they had midwives and these ladies used to take care of the women, they didn't have no doctors hardly at any time, there was no hospital so the people had to depend on one another on their neighbors. And they always have some midwives around, so that was the way that the women of the days took care of one another.

Connie: During the depression what kind of jobs were available?

Medric: I would have to say that during the depression that there wasn't hardly no jobs around. We done a little bit of work such as, work cutting brush on road allowances, pay for welfare and things like that. I remember that we had a cord wood camp up west of St. Louis and people used to go in there and cut cord wood to pay for their welfare. And that was the way that they paid for what they got.

Connie: Was there enough food, and clothing and shelter available to your family?

Medric: Well it was a very scanty way of living. We hardly had anything to eat during them years, couple of years there was really hard times. We used to have a few potatoes and little bit of meat, and snare rabbits or try to kill the odd jumper, or do anything we could to get food.

Connie: How did the people help each other?

Medric: Well, in them days people were very neighborly. If there was person that was in trouble the neighbors all join in and go help and they used to call that making bees. And by doing that well the people would manage to survive, because the neighbors would see that they got help. That has changed, because today you can't seem to get nobody to help one another. People are very one way (?) it seems that they think of themselves and that's about it. They don't do much to help one another, which was so much different in them days, them days the people were always helping one another.

Connie: How active was your community?

Medric: Well, our community really was not that active, but in (?) party making picnics and having sports. There was, in them days there used to be what we called it the (?) sports and we had a picnic around Lepine Settlement around (?) that where the people used to have race horses, and people used to have foot races, and in this way of spending our time we used to have community picnics and things like that.

Connie: Your family was actively involved then?

Medric: Well, yes I would say that our family used to help and take part in preparing for these picnics, and they'd help as much as they could.

Connie: Who did your parents look up to?

Medric: Well I would say that in them days like I mentioned the priests were people that the people looked up to, because they had faith in their religion so they looked up to priests and senior people such as that that in them days the older people were very much respected, much more than they are today. And, so that way we younger generation looked up to these older people.

Connie: Who did your parents dislike?

Medric: Well, I wouldn't be able to say that they disliked anybody, because it seemed to be friendly atmosphere pretty well in them days, and I can't say that they disliked anybody.

Connie: Would you like to share some stories or experiences about native leaders?

Medric: Well, of course, native leaders in... In the days of 1885 we had some great leaders, Louis Riel was one of our leaders and Gabriel Dumont, and my grandfather, old Maxim Lepine was one that took part in the uprising of 1885; so these people were great leaders of that day. And they are still talked of having been some of the most important men in trying to do something for the good of our people. They tried to get land, and they tried to get justice for the people of them days, but they did not succeed so we are still in the same postion. And some of our leaders of today are talking of the same things, but it seems that there's not too much that can be done by the way things are going. So that is some of the leaders that I would say were of great importance of that day.

Connie: Do your parents think things are better then than they are now?

Medric: Well, I would say that people are much better off today in that way, in the way that they were in the olden days because in the olden days you did not get any help, you had to do all you could by yourself pretty well. And with the help of your neighbors. But today you get welfare, you get pensions so people are not really suffering today, the people are living I would say quite well.

Connie: Do you think that native people are stronger and wiser now because of their experiences?

Medric: Well I suppose the people, the native people of today, the Metis people are stronger because they're organized. And if they go at it the right way they can get help for their people that is something that they didn't get in the olden days. So I would say that by being stronger and well organized that we benefit from it. Well I think that...

Connie: Okay, I'd like to thank you for letting me interview you.

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