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LOUIS GARNEAU

Louis Garneau is a Metis and a resident of St. Paul,
Alberta. He is a cousin of Jim Brady.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Working in the north during the twenties and thirties.
- Jim Brady: his family, his personal characteristics, his wartime experiences, his political interests.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Louis Garneau was a cousin of Jim Brady and spent much of his time as a youth and young man with Jim. He speaks of those days.

INTERVIEW:

Murray: I'm speaking to Louis Garneau of Lloydminster.
Louis, I guess we could start by talking a bit about Jim,
himself, and his personality. How would you describe Jim?

Louis: Well, Jimmy and me, we were brought up together, you know. Jimmy's Jimmy. And he was overseas, you know, for a good stretch. Jimmy stayed with us after he come back, you know. And the way he disappeared now, nobody knows. You see, his brother was here. Tony was here last summer and he took a trip up there at Cumberland House at that time. Didn't find nothing. Couldn't find anything.

Murray: What kind of man was Jim Brady? How would you describe him as a person? Was he a sort of secretive person or an open person?

Louis: Well, he was quiet but he could talk your head off if you start discussing politics or something like that, you know. He's pretty well-educated, you know.

Murray: So he was quiet unless the topic was politics?

Louis: Well, he discussed practically any subject. He was pretty well (inaudible). Yeah.

Murray: You were cousins but you were also friends. What kind of friend was he? Was he the kind of person that you could go to for help or advice or anything like that?

Louis: Oh yes, yes.

Murray: Did people often do that?

Louis: Well, occasionally, yes. We lived together as well, we went to school together and went to work together later on in years. We were on threshing crews down south there, round Cukknife and there. Jim and I went up there a couple of falls.

Murray: Was he the kind of person who was easily angered?

Louis: No, not Jimmy. No. But if he did get angry (inaudible). He could argue with anyone but he was no fighter or nothing like that.

Murray: So he was usually pretty quiet. What kind of things would get him mad?

Louis: Oh, I don't really know now.

Murray: You can't remember any instance where he got really angry, eh?

Louis: No, no, I never did see him angry, you know. A little argument, I seen arguments - working with people, you know, and the old bosses are pushy. Jimmy didn't like that, you know.

Murray: Can you remember any particular situation with the

boss that he...?

Louis: No, no. No not, no particular. I remember how hard it was. Here's one - St. Paul - we were working there as carpenter helpers, you see, in those days. Yeah.

Murray: Do you want to tell that story? It may not seem like much of story to you but it might help me.

Louis: Oh yeah, there was much to that one. Louis Johnson! We were supposed to be helpers, you know, carpenter helpers. And of course we didn't know a hell of a lot about carpentry, in those days anyways. I still don't. I'm a plasterer by trade. So anyway, I got laid off and Jimmy didn't like this so he got in an argument with Louis Johnson, the old boss, you know - the only time I seen Jimmy really angry with the boss.

Murray: What happened in that argument with Mr. Johnson?

Louis: Well, naturally he got laid off, see. Well, naturally they didn't like it, you know, especially in them days - the hungry thirties. (Inaudible) It's a long time. Always argue with anybody in politics, you know. Nothing, you know, just quietly, you know.

Murray: Didn't get rehired though?

Louis: No, no. No, no, we didn't, no.

Murray: I'm wondering if you could recall - you and he went harvesting and one of your other cousins, too.

Louis: No.

Murray: Just you and Jimmy, eh? Do you remember what year that was that you first went to Saskatchewan?

Louis: The first year, let's see, the first year I went there, no. Jimmy, and I went two falls up there. We were up on the farm that time and we used to go up there, Cut Knife, harvesting. (Inaudible) And the first year, the year it snowed anyway, that's the first year Jimmy and I went there. It snowed early in September sometime and there were snow drifts there, you know, high.

Murray: Right in the middle of harvest time?

Louis: Yeah. And I come home after. I took train and went (inaudible) come around (?) and come home. And that snow went, you know. Believe or not, that snow all went and Jimmy went back again. He went back that farm. He went and finished up there. Snow went, it cleared up and he went back and finished up.

Murray: I talked to one of Jim's sisters and she thought the first year Jim went was 1928. Would that be about right, do

you think?

Louis: '28, that would just be about it, if I remember right now. I was there in '27 in the first you see, but Jimmy wasn't there that year - or was he? '28 I guess it was, and '29, yeah.

Murray: Those two years?

Louis: Yeah, that year that the bridge dropped to nothing. That's the year Jimmy went back. After the snow cleared up and that.

Murray: So he went home and then came back again?

Louis: Yeah, he went, he come home and the snow had cleared up and he went back. But I didn't go, I stayed home.

Murray: Were there many Metis men who went to the harvest and did the harvest work from Alberta?

Louis: That time? I couldn't say.

Murray: As far as St. Paul was concerned it was you and Jim who went?

Louis: No, no there was (inaudible). Fred was there too in - let's - see he was there in 1927.

Murray: So it was pretty common for people to go from that area into the south where there was more wages?

Louis: The only thing they can get here - \$2.50 a day, about \$3 I'd say, at the most. And you got \$6.00 over there. We used to get \$6.50 where we worked, you know.

Murray: Around Cut Knife?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: And would only get \$3 a day around St. Paul?

Louis: Yeah, and over there we get \$6.50. An extra fifty cents. Two different bosses worked for, Housewitz and Vances.

Murray: You got only \$3 a day for doing the same kind of work around St. Paul?

Louis: Yep.

Murray: Harvesting work, eh?

Louis: \$3 a day and over there you got \$6.50.

Murray: Why was the pay so low around St. Paul do you think?

Louis: Well, it never was much pay in Alberta anyway, no

matter where you went. In Alberta, you never got no wages.

Murray: So the pay was generally better in Saskatchewan?

Louis: Oh double, you see. Double, you know. Well that's why we went, you know.

Murray: Right. So quite a few people went from that area.

Louis: Oh, quite a few from St. Paul, yes. And my brothers here, two brothers.

Murray: This would have started in the late twenties, do you think, or had people been going for a long time?

Louis: In '27. First year we were up there. '28, '29, '30. I went there four different falls. And Jimmy is along twice - two of the falls Jimmy was up there. And '29, that's the time he went back there.

Murray: I'm wondering where Jim picked up his socialist ideas. Do you think he ran into any socialists in Cut Knife among the farm movement?

Louis: No, no not in Cut Knife. No, there's no such thing around there - not that I've ever noticed anyway. He got into it somehow. He belonged to some club there. Reds, we used to call them in those days. (laughs) We still call them Reds, I guess, anyways.

Murray: Think so. But as far you recall he didn't run into any political people in the Cut Knife area at all?

Louis: No, not in there, no.

Murray: Nobody from the CCF?

Louis: No, no, not that I remember.

Murray: Right. How long would you have stayed each time you went?

Louis: Well, we always leave here about middle of August, you know, around 14th, 15th of August and then stay there until freeze-up.

Murray: That would be about end of October?

Louis: Yeah, till it started to get cold, you know.

Murray: How would you go?

Louis: Well, I always go by team. Well Jimmy and I went with (inaudible) by the CN, CP you know, through Unity, that ways, you know.

Murray: The train went through Unity, eh?

Louis: Yeah, in those days. Well, we are ten miles from where we work, you know. That's at Cut Knife. We travelled south. Unity you know, it is.

Murray: What was the name of the town you mentioned that you actually worked at - Vandis?

Louis: Cut Knife.

Murray: Cut Knife was the area, eh?

Louis: Oh yeah, I worked there four different years. Cut Knife, yeah. Jimmy was there two different falls.

Murray: Do you know if Jim made any friends in that area or was he there long enough to do that?

Louis: Oh, oh naturally he made a lot of friends, you know, but, you know, just threshing outfits, you know. Like that, you know.

Murray: So people would come together for that short period and then they'd be gone again?

Louis: Yeah, gone again.

Murray: You don't know if he made any friends that he wrote to after that, eh? It was just a transient sort of friendship, I guess.

Louis: Yeah, more or less see, outside that time they went back again after that snow, you know. That's the only time Jimmy went back again, back to Cut Knife. But as far as friends, political friends, no. Didn't have time for that anyway. (Inaudible)

Murray: But Jim never stayed in that area longer than just for the harvest, he came back when the freeze-up started?

Louis: Yeah, just in harvest.

Murray: I'm jumping over a bit here but I wanted to find out a bit more. I never met Jim so I'm trying to understand what kind of a man he was. Did you ever see him be cruel to anyone, or mean?

Louis: No. Not Jimmy. He was...

Murray: He was a kind man?

Louis: Oh yeah, Jimmy was. I liked him (inaudible).

Murray: In Lloydminster, eh?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: What year would that have been?

Louis: What year was that Jimmy was here, Momma? What year was it? No, it wasn't here. He came to Edmonton. When Jimmy came and stayed with us. St. Paul it was? When Jimmy came? St. Paul, yeah. No, no, his father was here yet. Redman was here, Tony. Yeah after he came from overseas. Yeah, that's when he came home.

Murray: One of the people who knew Jim in Saskatchewan said he - now I don't know if this is right or not - but said he tended to be a little lazy.

Louis: Jimmy, no.

Murray: That's not true, eh?

Louis: Not as far as I'm...

Murray: Not from your experience?

Louis: No, no.

Murray: Did he like to work?

Louis: Well, naturally, sure.

Murray: He enjoyed it as well as needing to work?

Louis: Oh sure, yeah.

Murray: You mentioned that you'd worked as carpenter's helpers. Did you have a lot of odd jobs in St. Paul? The kinds of things you would do.

Louis: No.

Murray: What kinds of work might you be able to get in St. Paul besides being a carpenter's helper? What other kind of things might be available?

Louis: Oh well, not too darn much, you know. (Inaudible) outside doing those kind of work.

Murray: Labor jobs and that sort of thing?

Louis: Yeah, laboring, you know. No, there was nothing. Not much doing anyway them days. Well, still it was busy in them days. Well, we were out in the farm. I was, you see. We were eight miles north, you know.

Murray: This was your grandfather's farm, was it?

Louis: My dad's farm, yeah.

Murray: Your dad's farm?

Louis: Yep.

Murray: When you worked these odd jobs, would you work steadily or would you work for a while and then be laid off? How much of a year would you work, do you think?

Louis: You mean in the...?

Murray: In the twenties and thirties when you worked with Jim.

Louis: Well, when we went to work, when we went threshing, well naturally you're there till freeze-up.

Murray: So that was solid work then?

Louis: That was solid work, yeah.

Murray: What about the rest of the year?

Louis: The rest of the year? Well, it's hit and miss, you know.

Murray: Mostly miss or mostly hit?

Louis: Well, even though it was in the thirties, it was miss a lot, you know.

Murray: Did people try to live off the land a bit too then, hunting and that sort of thing when things were tough?

Louis: Well, a certain percentage of people did, yeah.

Murray: Did Jim go out hunting at all or trapping?

Louis: Oh yes, he used to go out. He was no trapper but he liked to go out hunting, you know. Oh yeah (laughs).

Murray: Was he a good shot?

Louis: Yeah, Jim was a pretty good shot.

Murray: I've heard his sister say that he was a generous man. Was that your experience too?

Louis: Yes, oh yes. Jimmy'd help you out any time.

Murray: Can you remember the kind of situations he might help you out in?

Louis: Oh well, whatever come along, you know. He wouldn't see anybody stuck, you know. Not if he could help it.

Murray: If he had money, he'd give it away if other people needed it?

Louis: Yeah, he'd give other people money, if they were hard up, you know. Oh yes, Jimmy was like that.

Murray: There's something that I haven't been able to find out much about Jim Brady, and that was whether he had any girl friends.

Louis: The one that I remember, Lac La Biche when they were living there, you know. I was up there for a couple of months one winter and he had a girl friend there that time. But I don't know what happened.

Murray: Do you remember her name?

Louis: (laughs) I don't know. I remember her. If I'd see her, I'd remember her; but her name I forget.

Murray: But she was sort of a steady girl friend, was she?

Louis: Well, more or less. You'd call her a steady girl friend, you know. He only had one girl friend that I know of.

Murray: So he wasn't a man who always had an eye for women then?

Louis: (laughs) Oh, not Jimmy. No vice versa.

Murray: Why do you think that was? Was he a shy man?

Louis: Well, in ways. As far as ladies was concerned, he was a shy man, more or less.

Murray: When all the boys went out harvesting around Cut Knife did most of them go and look for girls in the town, for dates and that sort of thing, and Jim would stay home or...?

Louis: No, he didn't have much time for, hold on girls, you know. (laughs) We were threshing, you know. And then we were so far out of town anyways, you see.

Murray: So you were just too busy?

Louis: The only time you get in town is Saturday nights, you know, after supper. Stores used to open till ten o'clock in those days in Cut Knife there. So I would go in on Saturday nights. Yep. Cut Knife (inaudible). In the old thirties.

Murray: Did you ever experience in Cut Knife any racial discrimination? Was there any...?

Louis: I never noticed it, I don't think, no. Although you met a lot of people in there, you know, different, from different, four corners of the earth. A lot of people from down east, you know, Toronto, Ontario. They used to come up there to the threshing, you know. Yeah, I worked with a few of those boys.

Murray: So Jim never had any girl friends in Cut Knife or anywhere? Just that one that you can remember in Lac La Biche?

Louis: Yeah. The only girl friend I ever knew Jimmy ever had.

Murray: Did he ever talk about getting married or having children or anything like that, that you can remember?

Louis: No, I don't think that was much in his head, you know. Not according to...

Murray: That wasn't in his plans?

Louis: No. It didn't seem to be anyway, you know. No, just not interested.

Murray: Was that unusual? Did most other men seem to be thinking about that a little bit at least?

Louis: Well, the average person, I guess, does.

Murray: So he was a bit different from other people in that?

Louis: Yeah, not too much interested.

Murray: What was he interested in?

Louis: Politics mostly, you know. He was a quite a boy to argue; he was in politics, (inaudible) you know.

Murray: Was politics the kind of thing he would bring up all the time, talk about, or would it just happen once in a while?

Louis: Well, not necessarily. It just depend what started the argument. He'd follow right up with it.

Murray: So if someone made a comment, he'd be ready?

Louis: He was right there.

Murray: But would he normally start a discussion or would he usually come in if someone made a comment.

Louis: Yeah. Mostly it happened.

Murray: It was in a response to someone else?

Louis: Yeah, more or less, yeah.

Murray: People must have known that Jim was a Red or a socialist or whatever they might have called him. How did they feel about that?

Louis: I never even asked any people. Well, I suppose everybody had their own ideas about that situation, you know. I never bothered to find out what anybody else, what they

thought of it.

Murray: But Jimmy was respected, was he, by the people he knew?

Louis: Oh, yeah. He was a gentleman, yeah.

Murray: And that's how everybody would see him, as a gentleman?

Louis: Yeah, oh yes. Yeah (inaudible).

Murray: The Garneau family is a very interesting family, and, of course, Jim's mother was a Garneau.

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: How was the Brady family seen in Lac La Biche? Was it one of the sort of first families - I mean in St. Paul?

Louis: Oh, in St. Paul. Yeah, pretty well, you know. Yeah, pretty well.

Murray: How did people see their family? Was it a pretty special family in people's eyes? I'm trying to get a feeling for where they fit in the community, the Brady family?

Louis: Well, they were a respected family, you know. You see, my uncle was a bookkeeper for my grandfather, the Garneau estate.

Murray: This is Jim's father?

Louis: Oh yeah, Jim's father. He was James, too.

Murray: Was he a man who was active in community affairs, Jim Senior?

Louis: Yeah, well he was, you know.

Murray: Did he ever run for public office in town at all?

Louis: Yeah, he tried for the Liberals I think it was, against the - you know that big store that used to be at the west end there, that big mercantile store there - Lasard. Well, Lasard, they have a big mercantile store there in the west end of St. Paul.

Murray: Laurent Garneau was a relatively wealthy man.

Louis: Well, he had to be.

Murray: He was a farmer, was he?

Louis: Well, he was - he had a store there in St. Pauls - for years, you know.

Murray: A general store?

Louis: Yeah, a general store, yeah. And then he had seventy-five quarter sections in that country at one time. Believe it or not - grandpa had. He bought all these quarters from people, you know.

Murray: He bought the land? He was a sort of pioneer? Did he buy from the government or did he buy it from other people?

Louis: Other people mostly, you know, pretty well.

Murray: Would they have been native people or white people?

Louis: Well, both.

Murray: Both.

Louis: I know lot of farms up in that country yet, you know, (inaudible).

Murray: Did he eventually sell them then?

Louis: Yeah, they got disposed of. He sold them or somebody else sold them after he passed away, yeah.

Murray: Was the Brady family more wealthy, do you think, than the average Metis family?

Louis: Well, no I wouldn't say. I don't know. (Inaudible)

(Break in Tape)

Murray: Did James, Senior, have a farm as well as work for...?

Louis: No, no. They had the Brady's farm just half a mile straight west of town. Well, it's practically in town now, you know, the town's spread out that far. Just half a mile straight east town, sixteen highway - not sixteen, twenty-eight I guess, yeah. They had quite good land then.

Murray: Some land?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: When I talked to Jim's sisters, I asked them whether there were many Metis people in that St. Paul area who had come from Saskatchewan River Valley and the Red River Valley and had been associated with Riel? Of course, Laurent Garneau was. Were there many other Metis people who were working from that area?

Louis: Laurent was here with Louis Riel? What Laurent?

Murray: Laurent Garneau?

Louis: No.

Murray: Had he not come from Saskatchewan originally?

Louis: No, he come from the States.

Murray: Was that south of Manitoba that he had come from?

Louis: Who?

Murray: Laurent.

Louis: No, he come from Winnipeg and through there somewheres - Red River settlement.

Murray: Right.

Louis: That's where Grandma was born and comes from, too.

Murray: Right.

Louis: She was a Miss Cameron, schoolish lady.

Murray: Oh, yeah.

Louis: That's my grandmother, you know.

Murray: What I'm wondering is whether or not there were many Metis people in St. Paul and that area who knew their history about the Riel rebellions and all the things that have happened in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Were there many people who knew about that history?

Louis: Oh, I don't doubt there was. But where would they be today, down six feet. In the churchyard.

Murray: Right. But I'm just wondering whether people were aware of that and had a sense of their history, you know, knew about their history?

Louis: Oh, no doubt a lot of them did.

Murray: Were they proud of that, do you think?

Louis: I'm sure they would be.

Woman's Voice: My grandmother knew Louis Riel. She was a little girl at that time growing up and she said he was a very noble man. I think for his people and country.

Murray: Jim's mother died when he was quite young I guess, eh?

Louis: Yeah. Yes, she died in - let's see, what year was that? Do you remember, Mama? No, you don't.

Murray: He was about ten years old, I think, so it would be about 1918. It was the flu I think, wasn't it?

Louis: You see, the girls are all living yet. Now Cathleen's the baby of the family, you see, but her age now... But Eleanor, Mrs. Olsen, well she's about my age, you see. Well Jimmy's five months older than me and Eleanor, this Mrs. Olsen, she's in Lake Louise. No, Edmonton.

Murray: Eleanor Olsen?

Louis: Eleanor, yeah.

Murray: She's in Vancouver. I talked to her.

Louis: Is she? She was here last summer.

Murray: Was she?

Louis: She stayed a week with us.

Murray: I talked with her and Cathleen in Vancouver.

Louis: Oh, oh yes.

Murray: Cathleen did most of the talking.

Louis: Oh yeah, she made the air force. I met her. I was in the army at the time, too.

Murray: What happened to the children of the Brady family after their mother died?

Louis: Well, now that's - some of them stayed in - let's see. I don't know. Jimmy stayed with us for a long time.

Murray: Was that right after that?

Louis: That's years back, but the rest of the girls, now I don't know just where they went to. (Inaudible) No, I can't, it slips my mind now. One went to the nunnery, June. She's a nun and she's down east somewheres. And then Nora(?). But they went to Lac La Biche, you see. And they were there for years. But Ellen stayed with them there a month or so.

Murray: This was all the Brady children went to Lac La Biche?

Louis: Yeah. They were all there. Cathleen and Dorothy.

Murray: But Jim was with you?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: With your family?

Louis: Well, Jimmy was up there, too.

Murray: Oh, he was there too?

Louis: Yeah, he was there. They lived just east of town there and I only stayed a couple of months, in the wintertime. Used to do a little fishing you know, in the lake at the time.

Murray: So were all the children together after they split up, or after they left...?

Louis: Yeah, pretty well. As far as I remember, yeah. In Lac La Biche they were all there, you see, yeah and (inaudible) Olson.

Murray: Where did they stay?

Louis: Just east of town there about - Lac La Biche.

Murray: Who would they have stayed with though?

Louis: They had their own home.

Murray: Oh, they had their own home.

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: And so Jim's father looked after them, did he?

Louis: Yeah, yeah.

Murray: In Lac La Biche?

Louis: Yeah, yeah. I once stayed with them for a couple of months. Redman, he's still there, you see. Yeah, he still is in Lac La Biche.

Murray: Could you tell me a little bit about St. Paul and Lac La Biche? What was St. Paul like as a town? Was it mostly Metis people?

Louis: Well, there's a certain amount there, but (inaudible) a lot of French people in those days, you know, (inaudible) days. Yeah, but today's cosmopolitan, you know, every nationality you want to see in St. Paul today.

Murray: But it was a lot of French and Metis people in those days?

Louis: In those days, yeah.

Murray: How many people would have been there, do you think, in 1930?

Louis: In the thirties? I don't know what the population would be in the thirties.

Murray: Five hundred or a thousand people?

Louis: Oh, it would be a thousand, yeah. No doubt. Oh yes. What is it today now around? Yeah (inaudible). I forget now what the population would have been in those days, you know.

Murray: What did most people make a living at in St. Paul in those days?

Louis: Well, mostly farming, you know. It was almost all farm country through there, you know. Well, you've been through there I guess, eh?

Murray: I'm going there. I haven't been there yet.

Louis: Well, it's all farming, yes. The majority of it. A lot of people used to haul a lot of wood in those days, you know. There was no gas like there is today.

Murray: So that provided a lot of work for people?

Louis: Oh, a lot of work.

Murray: Did you cut lots of wood?

Louis: Yeah, I hauled a lot of it.

Murray: Jim, too?

Louis: Yeah, Jimmy and I. Two teams. We had a lot of horses at home.

Murray: Had your own teams, eh?

Louis: Oh, yeah. From the farm, you see. We had ten horses, at that time. So we had a lot of horses. So I always made a buck or two there hauling wood.

Murray: What were the social activities in St. Paul? What would you do to entertain yourselves on the weekends, say?

Louis: Well if you were old enough, you played pool.
(laughs) As usual.

Murray: You had to be a certain age to get into the pool hall?

Louis: Yeah, yeah, you had to be eighteen in those days, I think.

Murray: It was a long time to wait.

Louis: Yeah, yeah. Eighteen.

Murray: What else was there to do in St. Paul besides the pool hall?

Louis: Not a hell of a lot. You could go to picture shows, yeah.

Murray: There was a movie house?

Louis: (Inaudible) bowling alleys (inaudible).

Murray: So Jim would take part in those things too, would he?

Louis: Oh yeah, sure. (Inaudible)

(END OF SIDE A)

Louis: (Inaudible)

Murray: What was his last name?

Louis: Connon.

Murray: Connon?

Louis: Connon, yeah.

Murray: Did almost everybody from town show up for those dances?

Louis: Yeah, it was pretty well a get-together, you know.

Murray: Would Jim go to those?

Louis: (laughs) No, not Jim.

Murray: Not Jim, eh?

Louis: No, no. Never seen him at a dance. Well, at a party sometime, a home party or something.

Murray: He might get up and dance at a party?

Louis: No, I never seen him.

Murray: He would never dance? He would come to, but he wouldn't dance?

Louis: That's what he's like. Never seen Jim dance, never did. No.

Murray: I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I'm wondering if again, if you think that was perhaps because he was shy. A bit embarrassed maybe.

Louis: Yeah, he was a little shy you know, from the ladies, you know. He stayed aloof. You never seen him at a dance, you know (inaudible). One of those little home parties something like that, yes. But he'd never, never get up on the floor.

Murray: Did people think Jim a little bit odd because he read

so much?

Louis: Well, I suppose certain people would, you know. But you never said nothing to him because (laughs) he had an answer so darn fast, you know.

Murray: (laughs) He wasn't someone you'd take on in an argument too easily.

Louis: Oh no, no. You're damn right you wouldn't. Not with Jimmy.

Murray: Was he a person who would tease people too, was that sort of his style of humor?

Louis: No, not that I know.

Murray: I mean, not in a mean way, but in a...?

Louis: No, he didn't go in much for that.

Murray: So he was a pretty serious person, eh?

Louis: Yeah, yeah more or less serious, yeah. (Inaudible)

Murray: So would you say he was a man who took life pretty seriously in general?

Louis: Yeah. Pretty well.

Murray: And that came from his interest in politics then?

Louis: Well, I suppose, to a certain extent.

Murray: Did he see the world as a place that needed a lot of changes?

Louis: Well, no doubt. He struggled quite a bit after he got back from overseas.

Murray: What kind of stories would he tell you about his...?

Louis: Life in France, you know. Different episodes here and there, you know.

Murray: Can you remember any of them?

Louis: Oh, yeah. That time he built this... there was a lull in the afternoon, you know, and that was at Falaise. He told me all about this afterwards. He built a dugout in the afternoon. It was quiet, you know, and there was an old building, an old log building sitting on - a frame building. It was vacant, you know. So Jimmy went and dug in the afternoon. Quiet, you know. He went and dug a big pit there. And he took some old railroad ties, I think it was, and he built this real solid. And at night, all of a sudden, they

opened up a barrage and jeez, they crowded in there, he said. There was even the lieutenant - that damn fool. They were all in there, he said. They blew that building to hell and gone but they were still okay under there, see. Yeah, and I remember that.

Murray: So he figured they were going to get bombed and he wanted to be safe?

Louis: Yeah, yeah. They knew there was something coming up, see. It was too quiet in the afternoon, you see. And at

night (inaudible) they blew that farm building all to hell, but they were okay then because Jimmy had dug that dugout.

Murray: Saved their lives.

Louis: Yeah. And they crowded in there. (laughs) You couldn't get a sardine in there, he says, by the time the barrage lifted, you know. Yeah.

Murray: Can you remember any other stories that he told about the war?

Louis: No, not too many, you know. There was one time in France there, you know, a lot of people in there.

Murray: Do you think the war affected him? What did he say about the war as a general experience? Was it pretty awful for him?

Louis: No, it didn't seem to bother him much. He never mentioned too much about it. Rough in spots, you know.

Murray: Did he get wounded at all?

Louis: No, no, he was fine.

Murray: Had he changed at all after he came back from the war from before?

Louis: No, not that I ever noticed, no.

Murray: Still had the same ideas and still was the same man?

Louis: Yeah. It didn't affect him much. Didn't seem to.

Murray: Now you mentioned earlier that he stayed with you for a while when he came back.

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: That would have been in 1946 then I guess, eh?

Louis: Yeah, '45, you know. I came out in '45 too and he came out in '45. Yeah, he came out about the same time pretty well, you know. Month or two difference, you know.

Murray: What kind of work did he do when he came back from the war? Can you remember that?

Louis: Well, he moved. He stayed in St. Paul a little while, but he was an accountant, you know.

Murray: An accountant?

Louis: Yeah. That's why he disappeared, see. He was the accountant for this fishery here, this, some big fish outfit. He was the accountant. That was his job, you see. He used to do that in St. Paul.

Murray: He worked for a fish company in St. Paul, did he?

Louis: No, but up here.

Murray: Oh, Cumberland.

Louis: Yeah, Cumberland, yeah. That's where he worked this fish outfit.

Murray: You don't know who he worked for or what he did after the war, eh? He worked as an accountant?

Louis: Well, after the war, you see, well that's when he went up there, you see.

Murray: He didn't go there till about '47, I think. I'm wondering what he did in that time before then.

Louis: I really couldn't say now.

Murray: Doesn't stick in your mind?

Louis: No. Them years there before he went up north, yeah. What the heck did he do now? Not a heck of a lot, I guess.

Murray: Was it a pretty tough time after the war for jobs?

Louis: Well, yes. Well, it wasn't too bad. Not in my trade, anyways. There was always work to do. That was plastering - stucco and plastering. No, no, there was plenty of work.

Murray: And you were in St. Paul after the war?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: And that's where Jim came first?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: Did he stay around St. Paul after the war? Before

they went to Saskatchewan?

Louis: He didn't stay there very long, no. He just came to visit us.

Murray: How long did he stay with you? A couple of weeks, a month?

Louis: Yeah, it was a couple of weeks at the most, yeah. Yeah, he stayed with us. And he brought a bunch of medals home. Oh, everything you could imagine. He had a bag brought up with all different kind of medals - the enemy's and our own.

Murray: Souvenirs of the war.

Louis: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I spent one night going through those darn things.

Murray: And he'd explain each one would he?

Louis: There was a lot, you know. Where he got them and how he got them and you know. It was interesting.

Murray: Do you remember any of the stories about how he got some of those medals?

Louis: No, no, too many of them.

Murray: Were there a lot of native people coming back from the war in those days? A lot of people gone from St. Paul into the army?

Louis: Oh, I suppose there would be quite a few men. Quite a few of them. Yeah.

Murray: Did Jim have anything to say about politics in Europe when he was in the (inaudible)?

Louis: No, I couldn't say. I wasn't there with him. No.

Murray: Did Jim get along with the rest of the people in his family as far as you remember?

Louis: Oh yes, as far as I know.

Murray: They were a pretty close group of people?

Louis: Oh, yeah.

Murray: And the Garneaus and all that family was sort of one big family was it?

Louis: Yeah, more or less. Yeah. Because he stayed at home, Lac La Biche. He'd stay with his family there. All his sisters, uncle, most of the living men.

Murray: How did Jim get along with his father?

Louis: Oh, they (laughs)... Oh God, I used to get a kick out of those two - politics, you know.

Murray: They were both political people?

Louis: Oh, yeah. Jesus!

Murray: What were the politics of his father? Was he a Liberal?

Louis: Yeah, he was a Liberal.

Murray: Would they get mad at each other when they argued?

Louis: Nope, no. They argued but it was a father...

Murray: Father and son.

Louis: Father and son argument. That's really comical sometimes, you know. His father would get mad. Grow a little loud once in while, you know, disagree on this point and that point, yeah, but there was nothing. The same in all politic-type arguments, you know.

Murray: Right. Was there anyone else in Jim's family who would argue politics, or was he the only one who was really interested?

Louis: He was the only one. Take Redman and Tony. The last thing they had on their mind I think is politics, you know. That's younger brothers, you know.

Murray: How did Redman and Jim get along?

Louis: Well, they got along good, the whole family, you know.

Murray: But Redman wasn't a political person at all?

Louis: No, nor was Tony, you know.

Murray: Some of the girls were more interested.

Louis: Oh, not too much I think. I don't think, anyway. But old and Jimmy - oh boy! They discuss politics.

Murray: Can you remember anyone besides his father who might have influenced Jim about politics?

Louis: It just come natural with him, you know.

Murray: Did he talk often about the conditions of the Metis people? Was that one of his political concerns?

Louis: No, not too much, I don't think.

Murray: It was more a concern about socialism. That's what he wanted to talk about, eh?

Louis: Mostly, mostly, you see.

Murray: It wasn't about native people being poor or focused on native people, it was the world as a whole?

Louis: As a whole, yeah. He didn't allow too much for local conditions, you know. Well, to a certain extent, but he didn't make that his strong point.

Murray: So it would be fair to say then that his main focus was national or international before it was St. Paul or Lac La Biche?

Louis: More or less.

Murray: And this was the same with his father? This is the kind of argument they'd have?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: It was the theory that they were...?

Louis: Yeah, mostly.

Murray: In the thirties there was a tremendous amount of political activity in Alberta; there was the CCF and the Social Credit and the Communist party and the Liberals.

Louis: Had them all. I sure remember that.

Murray: Was Jim active in the CCF?

Louis: No.

Murray: Do you remember?

Louis: No, he was mostly.

(Break in Tape)

Murray: So as far as you remember, Jim wasn't involved in the CCF so much, or was he?

Louis: CCF? Well, he kind of leaned that way. He was more the Reds, you know.

Murray: Was he a member of the Communist party do you think?

Louis: Well, I kind of think so.

Murray: Did he talk about it much?

Louis: Well, you know.

Murray: He'd try and get people to vote for them if there was an election?

Louis: Well, no. I don't think try and influence people in that way.

Murray: But from what he talked about, it was pretty clear he was a Communist?

Louis: Well, you know.

Murray: A Red.

Louis: A leaning socialist, whatever they call them.

Murray: Right. Was there a lot of competition between the parties, the political parties in those days, between the CCF and the Social Credit?

Louis: Oh well, the same as it is today, I guess.

Murray: Do you think there was more activity in those days than there is today?

Louis: Well, no I don't think they make much difference than it is today. Politics is something, well, it always runs about the same, same trend and so on, yeah.

Murray: Right. Was Jim, besides just talking about politics, was he out organizing and doing that sort of thing as well? Would he work for any particular candidate in an election for example?

Louis: Well, yes. Oh yes, he's always involved in politics.

Murray: Which candidates would he support? Can you remember what party they might be from?

Louis: Well, I really couldn't say, no. No.

Murray: You weren't as interested in politics as Jim was?

Louis: No, no. I don't worry about politics much. (Shows photograph) That's Jimmy there. It was taken overseas. Oh, that's me.

(Break in Tape)

Woman's Voice: He was a very clever man. Smart. You can learn quite a bit from him. I sure enjoy his company. You learnt quite a bit from him, too.

Murray: What kinds of things would you learn by talking to Jim?

Woman: Oh well, about the war and travelling the country.

Murray: What did he tell you about the war? Can you remember?

Woman: No, I don't remember.

Murray: Did he find it a pretty terrible experience, or did he seem to be not too affected by it?

Woman: He didn't seem to be.

Louis: What's that?

Murray: Oh, I was just asking the same question I asked you, whether the war had affected him at all.

Louis: It didn't seem to, you know.

Woman: It didn't seem to bother him, no.

Murray: He didn't stay around long after the war in St. Paul, eh?

Louis: No, not too long. Oh he stayed there, oh I don't know, he stayed with us for a couple of weeks. A week or so, yes. That's about all, and then he left.

Murray: Did he leave St. Paul then or did he just leave, didn't stay with you anymore? He left St. Paul?

Louis: No, he left St. Paul. And he went back to Lac La Biche. Yeah, he went back there.

Murray: So maybe that's where he stayed for a while and then, after that, he went to Saskatchewan.

Louis: His people are all there, you see. He wanted his people around. Because I went to stay there a couple of months in the winter. Yeah, and after that he left and went to there.

Murray: To Saskatchewan?

Louis: Cumberland House.

Murray: Do you remember much about the Metis Association that Jim was involved with?

Louis: No, not a hell of a lot.

Murray: He was on the executive, I guess. He and Malcolm Norris?

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: Were a lot of the Metis people, most of the Metis people in St. Paul, for example, members of the Metis Association?

Louis: (laughs) That I couldn't say.

Murray: Were you a member?

Louis: No.

Murray: What did you think about it at the time? Did you think it was a good idea or not very important?

Louis: It didn't affect me much, you know.

Murray: So you weren't that interested in it then?

Louis: No, not (inaudible).

Murray: I guess there's not too much left. You knew Lac La Biche too; you didn't live there that much but you've been there.

Louis: Yeah.

Murray: Most of the people in St. Paul were employed in farming. What was the main activity in Lac La Biche?

Louis: Fishing. Biggest part of it, you know. It's all timber country around there, you know. Mostly fishing, a lot of fishing going on in those days.

Murray: Was Jim involved in the fishing business?

Louis: No, not too much. No, he didn't bother with fishing.

Murray: Was there quite a bit of trapping in that area around Lac La Biche, too?

Louis: Yeah, no doubt there was. Oh, yes.

Murray: Was it mostly native community?

Louis: No.

Murray: Lot of white people living there too, eh?

Louis: Yeah. Majority of white people.

Murray: Can you remember if the native people in the area paid much attention to the elections and that sort of thing? As much as anybody, I guess, eh?

Louis: Well, no doubt, yeah. The same as it is today. Some are not interested and a lot of them are, you see.

Murray: It was no different than the white population. There were some who voted and some who didn't?

Louis: Yeah. Well, the same as it is today.

Murray: Was there an even split among the native people as far as who they voted for? Or did they tend to vote for the Liberals or some other party?

Louis: I never got interested in that.

Murray: You weren't interested enough to find that out?

Louis: Yeah. I'm not interested in politics anyways.

Murray: You mentioned earlier that Jim was a pretty serious person but I've heard also that he had a sense of humor.

Louis: Oh, yes.

Murray: What kinds of things would make him laugh?

Louis: Oh, many things, same as the average person.

Murray: But he didn't laugh that often though, eh?

Louis: No, no. He was more of a serious nature.

Murray: Was he the kind of person who would get things going, like initiate things? For example, if you were sitting around would he say, "Let's go bowling," or "Let's go this or that." Or would he be the kind of person who would usually follow if someone else suggested something? That might be a silly question but I'm trying to...

Louis: Jimmy enjoyed to play pool, you know.

Murray: So he might initiate a pool game?

Louis: Oh, yeah. He liked playing pool, we played many a game.

Murray: Was he a good pool player?

Louis: Yeah, just average, you know.

Murray: Like everybody.

Louis: (Inaudible) That was our big goal you know, after school was out we'd go and shoot a game, the only time for supper at least. Yeah, from schools on.

Murray: Was Jim the kind of person that was hard to get to know, do you think?

Louis: Well, yes and no, you know. He was more aloof.

Murray: He'd stay back from things.

Louis: Oh yeah, he (inaudible) nose into nobody's business,
you know.

(END OF SIDE B)
(END OF TAPE)

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