

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: LIZETTE AHENAKEW
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: SANDY LAKE RESERVE
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: WATERHEN LAKE RESERVE
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: CREE
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: JUNE 21, 1983
INTERVIEWER: CHRISTINE WELSH
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: J. GREENWOOD
SOURCE: WELSH/SNOWSILL
TAPE NUMBER: IH-120/IH-121
DISK: TRANSCRIPT 7
PAGES: 38
RESTRICTIONS: THIS MATERIAL SHALL BECOME
THE PROPERTY OF THE INDIAN HISTORY FILM PROJECT ORAL HISTORY
COLLECTION AT THE CANADIAN PLAINS RESEARCH CENTER, UNIVERSITY
OF REGINA, AND SHALL BE USED WITHOUT RESTRICTION FOR RESEARCH
PURPOSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FILM SERIES DEPICTING THE
HISTORY OF CANADA FROM THE INDIAN POINT OF VIEW. IT MAY BE USED
BY THE PUBLIC AND FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES SUBJECT
TO THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT UNLESS
OTHERWISE INDICATED, RESTRICTIONS APPLY DURING MY LIFETIME ONLY.
THIS INTERVIEW MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR
REPRODUCTION, QUOTATION, CITATION OR BROADCAST ONLY WITH THE
INFORMANT'S WRITTEN PERMISSION.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Lizette Ahenakew, born Little Pine Reserve. First girl from that reserve to attend high school
- childhood memories
- naming ceremonies; significance of Indian names
- training of children, especially girls
- menarche seclusion
- women: influence of, in religion and ceremonialism, pregnancy
- her education: traditional; experiences in Anglican boarding school (integrated) in Saskatoon.
- training for roles as wife and mother

Christine: Because I have had a chance, well I have known Smith for a long time and I have had a chance to talk to him various times about your parents and the way that you were raised and stuff, and I have always found his stories about that really interesting. But I have never heard your side of it. So maybe you could start out by telling me a little bit

about your parents.

Lizette: Well, my parents were very traditional people so they knew a lot about the ways and the way the Indian people lived. It was very simple I thought, but now at my age, I think it was very important the way we were brought up. As children, we had real discipline in the home and this was, something I didn't realize. I thought, you know, all the time my parents were mean (laughs) because you know, we weren't allowed to be late coming home from school, you know. We had to be right on time and we had to be in bed at a certain time and we couldn't play out when it was dark. As soon as it was dark, we had to come indoors and we had to do something else, if we wanted to stay up. I don't really know, but the story behind this, the belief that the Indian people had is when children were out after dark, the evil spirits were more at work in the dark and so children were supposed to be in after it was dark. This was why they had us in. But I didn't realize this until after. I just thought my parents were mean. (laughs) And some of the other kids would be playing out, especially in the summer time, you know, it is really nice to play out when it is dark, and anyway, this is, I think one of the main things that I look at today with my grandchildren because very often they are out, you know, out after dark. You know I have told this to the girls and they keep their kids in. As soon as it gets dark now, they like to bring them in and do something with them. And this is another nice thing about my teaching from my parents because they always taught me to do something. You know, if I wanted to stay up and really do something instead of going to bed, well they taught me pastimes, you know, different things how to pass the time away. And by these little things, it was like learning songs for instance. We would sing with my dad and my mother, she would tell me little stories and they would have a meaning to it and she would turn around and ask me what was in that story that she wanted to, she wanted to pass an idea on to me. And see, this was done at a very early age too. So we learned, we had to learn.

And then of course they would invite old men into the, into our home and old ladies and they would tell their stories

and they would give them tobacco if they would come and tell us stories. And of course these stories meant something, they had a meaning which we had to figure out ourselves. So it was always that thinking, you know, the idea of thinking quickly and being alert all the time was what we were being taught. But I didn't know this at a young age. I thought you know, the stories were really nice, but when you were told after the old man had told the same story like you know, one or two or three times, then he would turn around and ask, and the same with the old ladies. They would turn around and ask you know, what it really meant to me. And so my brother, likewise, and the other kids that were with us. And it was so funny at times because we would be playing you know, we would be playing this game about the story that we had heard and then we would ask one

another you know, what it really meant and I remember one story, it had a baby, it was about a baby, a mother and a baby and the mother left her baby but the father looked after the baby after she left. But she didn't really leave the baby, you know, to go and have a good time or something, which is very often today, but she went away for some reason you see. She had to go and she left her baby but it wasn't very long. And I remember us playing, you know, we had a doll and we were playing we were asking one another, how this, you know, what the meaning was. And I remember one of the boys saying, "That mother didn't love her baby." (laughs) Which was really, you know, it was good the way he came out with it. And of course us girls, we argued for the woman.

Christine: What did you say?

Lizette: Well, we said, "She was just giving a chance for the man to look after the baby. He was taking a turn at looking after the baby." And little did we know that you know, this was a teaching for us. And several things like that, like you know, they would tell us a story maybe about horses. Sometimes, it was a story of a horse and its colors. Maybe one horse would be beautiful and another horse wouldn't be so beautiful and yet they were both the same, you know they were both horses, but what is the difference, what is the significance of the two horses they were telling about? The boys of course said, "That ugly one is the woman's horse." (laughs) And we would argue you know, that of course the woman

could brush the hair of the horse and if the woman gave the uh ribbons to the horse on the forehead and the tail, you know, this would make the horse beautiful. Of course, you know, again, we had been taught that you can dress up a horse in ribbons. That is their cloth like, and it can be any color. Sometimes they would have certain colors for certain horses according to their spiritual belief you know. And they would be told to give those certain colors to a horse and we learned this at a very early age and this is why we would come out with these colors.

Christine: How would you know which colors would go for each horse?

Lizette: Well, they were told. The men were told, like the old men were told. And if they had a child, they named a child, the old name. And that boy had a horse, he was attached to a horse. Well the old man in time would tell that boy what colors that horse wanted. And therefore, those were his colors. And every year or at certain occasions they would give them these colors, the ribbons on their horses.

You don't see those ribbons on horses anymore. But you know, if you went to an Indian Reserve, you always saw ribbons on the

horses.

Christine: Even just on an ordinary day?

Lizette: On an ordinary day, sure. And I have forgotten what, it was a certain time of the year they decorated their horses.

Christine: I never knew that.

Lizette: You didn't?

Christine: No.

Lizette: Well, we learned that at a very early age because my parents had a lot of horses. My mother loved horses and my dad, he raised a lot of horses so we were sort of into horses and cattle and this was one of the reasons why we were very particular about that. We always had to remember you know, and again they told us it was a belief that Indian people had. For instance if you were very sick and you had a horse or a pony and you were very attached to it and you got very sick,

sometimes that pony died or something. But, you know, it left your life, gave you your life. He died instead of you.

I remember one story of an Indian woman, and this wasn't too long ago. About four or five years ago, and she was very, very sick. There was no hope for her. They flew her into the University hospital I think, and then they flew her ... I don't know whether they flew her back but anyways she got back home. There was no hope for her. She was just allowed to come home and that was it. They had no hope for her and this one night they put on a ceremonial thing, whatever it was, and she had a favorite horse and she said the horse started pounding against her cabin, their cabin, and he put his head through the window, they just had one, a little window. He put his head through this window and she wondered what was going on because this horse wouldn't leave them alone. And then she remembered this saying that you know, this horse, she sent for the old men and of course, they prayed with her and her fever left her but the horse died. Right outside her cabin. So the old men said, "Well, you have got your health back and he had to go instead of you." I was really surprised at that because I had never really ... I had forgotten and we were taught that when we were very young.

Christine: That is something that you don't hear about now.

Lizette: Nope, you don't hear about it.

Christine: No. I believe that.

Lizette: Uh huh. Even dogs, you know, there is a certain

story about dogs too. That people are attached to dogs and that dog knows you and you look after him and one day, you are sick and he is gone. So, this was something that, you know, I had forgotten about these things until I actually saw them happen you know. Actually happen to people.

Christine: Were you given an Indian name when you were a child?

Lizette: Yes.

Christine: How did that work?

Lizette: I think my mother was preparing for a naming ceremony for me and I remember, this is kind of funny on my mother's part, because she was preparing a ceremony for me to get named, and this was a special elder that she was going to have in the home and he was going to name me. And this old man came along. He was always drunk. You know, he always made his brew and he was always kind of drunk and he heard about the ceremony that my mother was going to put on for this certain elder and he was a real fine man. This old guy came in there, but he wasn't, I don't think he was drunk that day. And he named me. (laughs) He got ahead of the other old man. (laughs) But they couldn't say anything. You see, they had so much respect for elders themselves and he, I guess he wasn't drunk, that is why they allowed it you know, but they couldn't say no. It wasn't the thing anyway, to say no.

Christine: So that was how you got your name?

Lizette: That is how I got my name and it stuck with me. (laughs)

Christine: So what kind of preparations did your mother have to make?

Lizette: Well, she had to get cloth and then she had to prepare a meal. And she got the stuff all ready of course tobacco and sweetgrass and you know, dad had his pipe and they were all ready. And this old gentleman came in and he sat down. He smoked his pipe you know, and he said, "This is going to be her name." So there was nothing my mother and dad could do. I got that name.

Christine: What was the name?

Lizette: Um, I don't know how you would say it. We were talking about it this morning. Something about rock, a rock.

Christine: One of those words that you can't translate?

Lizette: Uh huh. Had to do with rock and it is a home like, you know, a home of a rock. Something like that. We couldn't

translate it anyway, this morning, you know, into a name. That is how I got my name. But I don't remember getting the name.

Christine: How old would you have been?

Lizette: I don't know. I must have been small because I don't remember anything about it because my mother was telling me after and they were laughing you know, how I got my name. So she said she had to use up her food anyway. (laughs) And it was really comical. After she said, "You know, he didn't really go through the real ceremony," she said, "the way I wanted it. But," she says, "I hope you are a good girl." (laughs) Oh, dear.

Christine: So that was really important to them that you had a name.

Lizette: Very, very important. Because that was your keeper. Whatever you are named after is your keeper. So rock was mine. And it was funny when one of the boys, when we were going to school, he was always very foolish and very outspoken so one day he went by me and he would go around hitting the girls and calling them by their Indian names you know. And he came to me and he said, "Hi Rock." (laughs) "You are a rock." (Laughs) And I of course, I didn't budge. "I said you were a rock!" (laughs) So these are some of the things, and you know with us Indian children, we knew the meaning of the names, the different Indian names we had so it didn't mean anything for us, for somebody to call you by your Indian name. It was your name.

Christine: Did people mostly, did you amongst yourselves, did you call each other mostly by your Indian names or by your other names?

Lizette: When we were young, yes. Just by the name you were given by the elders. Because each of my sisters had a name and that is what she went by. And my brother, he had a name, that is what he went by until we were baptized and given these other names and when we went to school, that is when we changed our names, you know, to the names that we were baptized with. Otherwise we stuck to the other names and there is a lot of Indians yet that have their names that were given to them and that is what we call them. There is no other, you know. And I think one of the important things in those days was, if you had a name and people were having a lodge or something, a ceremony, a lodge preferably, and suppose your daughter or your grandchildren were miles and miles away, you know, you would ask the spirits to go and see how this person was. One time,

we asked how our son was and he was in Winnipeg and we were in Alberta, and he came back and the spirit told us, "Oh, he is fine. He is watching a little box with a picture." That was a TV. He didn't say TV but he said, "Oh he is fine." And he said, "He is going to be coming home very soon." In two or three days, my son was back. (laughs) And I asked him what made him come back and he says, "I don't know." He says, "I just decided I wanted to come home so I came home."

Christine: So those names have a lot of power?

Lizette: They do have you know, they used to, but there is very few people now that take the time to go and get their child named.

Christine: Is that the only way that a name can be given, is to a child? Can names be given to adults?

Lizette: Oh, yes. The adults can have names, but they have to ask of course. And there are so few elders left now that a lot of Indian people don't have a name.

Christine: Yeah, I was wondering about that because I know an elder, a Sioux lady from the states and I saw her one time and she said, "Oh, you have got to get yourself a name. You just have to have one. You shouldn't have gone so long without one." And I said to her, "Well, I don't know how." And she said, "Well, you will find out eventually how."

(laughter)

"When you find out it will be the time."

Lizette: Yeah, you see, we have grown away from our culture so much that people don't think it is important. Like, for instance, with us, I knew it was important but, when I married into this family, they were Christian people and they didn't believe in their own culture. So therefore, they didn't believe in that and they made sure that the kids didn't go into that, that I didn't go into it because they knew I knew my culture. Well, I sort of knew my culture. But they definitely didn't want the kids to be involved in it. And they were Indian people but you know, we grew away from it. In fact, I

think, the family I married into, the whole reserve was Christianized. Whoever the priest or the missionary was, made them burn their medicines by the church, by the lake where the church was. He made them burn their medicine bags and you know, this was when they were turning Christian. And that is what they left. You know, they didn't believe any part of their own culture after that. It was just the Christian. Mind you, they were good people. You know, the weren't bad people.

Christine: That would be terrible thing to try to recover from wouldn't it?

Lizette: It sure would be because their medicine bags were sacred. And a lot of them knew so many healing medicines. Some of them are simple and others, you know, some of the medicines that you have, that you collect as an Indian, you have to only get them in the States. There are certain medicines that you have to get in the States. Some in Ontario and some in B.C. This is why, one of the reasons why they have a special bag. For these medicines that they get from far away and some they get from the Arctic. You know, otherwise they wouldn't be able to get them here. But people have to travel that distance to get this.

Christine: Did they always? Like even way, way back, did they travel to these places?

Lizette: Oh yes. Just to get them. And this is why it was important to them. And you know if they had friends over there, they would ask them to bring the medicine for them you know.

Christine: So, everybody was connected, all over the different places?

Lizette: Yes. Sure. Everybody was connected through their medicine. See their medicine bags were very interesting, very valuable to them because they could only get a certain medicine from down east or in the States and B.C. and a lot of them of course were shown where to get their medicines. I remember one old elder telling us when he was down in B.C., he dreamt to go to a certain area and he said, here was this lake, a crystal clear lake in the mountains. It was just sort of like in a dip and he was told to pick the sand around that lake so he did.

And he didn't know what he was going to do with this sand. He could only carry a certain amount. He couldn't carry too much. But he came away with it and he was told after I guess, how to use it. But he said it had many uses.

So, you know, it is interesting how they can get all of their medicines.

Christine: And then to lose it so fast.

Lizette: And to lose it.

Christine: Well, was your family Christianized to a certain extent? Or how did the two go together, like the traditional and the Christianity?

Lizette: Well I don't know. My father was a very smart man. He must have been a smart man because he made sure that we went to school when school opened. And yet, he made us go to church too. And he told us that the values of the white man gave the good values. We were never to throw them away. And yet keep our good values, like the Indian values that we thought were good. So he says, "You can go side by side. But," he said, "you must never forget your Indian culture." But eventually we were sort of whitewashed too you know, when we went to school. But of course our parents didn't know this because for the two months we used to come home, we were really into our culture again. But then we had to play, you know, in the other world, we had to play their part. When we went to school, when we passed our grade eight, my mother and father both went to the school with us. And we were going to go on to college. And they went and sat with the teacher, "Now what advantages are they going to get out of going to school?" You know they found these out. And the teacher, she was sort of a missionary. She told them that in everything was good in the white world. That we weren't going into nothing evil, that it was good. And of course, they believed this. Because, she was a good teacher but she didn't like our Indian culture and she was a halfbreed herself. But she didn't believe in any of this. So, anyway, they allowed us to go to school, my mother and father. But when we went out to school, now, this was where we started

finding out that this wasn't all good. And what she had told our parents, we found out there was a lot of bad that we had to face. And every once in a while, my father would sit down and talk to us and eventually he dug out this part where we are having problems. You know, it wasn't all good out in the world, that there was a lot of problems we were having.

Christine: What kind of problems?

Lizette: Well, it was racial problems. And we never heard swearing at home. There was a lot of swearing. I found out the white boys looked down on an Indian girl and they figured that sex was what they could get out of an Indian girl. But for a long time, I was afraid to come out with this because I thought maybe my mother and father would get after them if I told them this and I was sort of afraid and I wouldn't, you know I wasn't able to go to anybody and yet I knew that I should talk about this to an old lady. But I didn't and I kept it within me and finally my father got it out of me. And so he told my mother. He says, "You better have a talk with her." So she talked to me and she made me feel that it was up to me. If I wanted to listen to bad, well I could listen to bad. And if I wanted to think of a person bad, well, you know, maybe that person wasn't so bad but it was really up to me to determine where I was going. She taught me a lot about sex. Because I was about 16 when I started going out to high school. Even younger than that. I was 15 when I entered

high school. So you know, at that age, she made me see that it was up to me, where I was going. And she also told me that I was going to meet all kinds of people and it was up to me to decide which person I was going to stick with. And this was very valuable to me because afterwards, I found later in life when I was about 18 or 19, I could look at a person, and she had told me this. This was very interesting. She had told me, she says "You can look at a person and you can be with them for a few minutes, 15 or 20 minutes, just for a little while," she said "and you can know them. Know what that person is like." And I hung on to that for the rest of my life, and I could figure people, it was true, I could figure people in a few minutes, you know, if they were really my friends or whether they didn't really amount to anything, and you know, to me.

And I could do this on my own after a while. And then I went back and I talked to her after I finished my high school and I said, "You know," I said, "all through my high school life, that has been very valuable to me because I can pick my friends within a few minutes," I said, "I can pick my friends and know where to go." "Oh" she said, "you did find out." You know, very calmly. But it was her that had taught me a lot of these things and I didn't realize it when I was young though. You know, as a child I didn't know.

Another thing she taught us was my dad made all the noise, like you know, every day in praying, early in the morning before sunrise you know, and we would get kind of cheesed off because we didn't get enough sleep you know. Of course, that was explained to us after and so we pretty well had to live it. Anyway, she used to have a pipe and she used it. She used this pipe all of the time, but my father used his more. But when she went to use a medicine, like to give us some kind of a special medicine, she would use a pipe. But my father, he used his every day, morning and the last thing at night. And they were very regular at this, you know, this session. And what my mother used to do was she used to go outside, whether it was shining or raining or cold or what, she used to go outside and stand outside and she would look at everything. I didn't know what she was doing at first. I used to watch her you know, to see what she was doing.

Christine: When did she do this?

Lizette: In the mornings. And then she would turn around, she would face east and then of course turn around and then come in. And this was her prayer of thanks, for everything that was being given to us by the Creator. But we didn't know this at first but she explained it after. And everytime we passed a river, crossing a river, and this was by wagon of course when we were children, she used to throw tobacco into the river and this was her thanks for the water. You see, they never forgot anything at all. They never forgot it. And we grew up like this. It was like, well, you know you had to go to school at a

certain time so all of these things were, you know, we were trained that they just came to us.

Christine: Was your training different from, say, your brother's training? Was the training different for a boy and a girl?

Lizette: A little bit. Not too much, but a little bit, because the boys had to learn survival eh. Survival, and they too had to learn about girls and sex you know. They had to learn how to survive and I think this was about the only thing that was different except maybe the pipe. You know the boys handled the pipe. They learned, to be servers too, the boys at a very early age.

Christine: What kinds of things were you taught?

Lizette: One of the first things I remember being taught was how to sit. Like you know, I wasn't very ladylike. (laughs)

Christine: Like a lady, they were trying to teach us how to sit.

(laughter)

Lizette: You never sat with your legs crossed. I thought that was one of the hardest things and you had to sit one way but you know they trained us. I remember my mother pulling me down you know and slapping me (laughs) to get my legs down, both my legs down a certain way. And I finally learned, I learned. I had to sit that way and I know she used to get disgusted later on with my girls now, they didn't know that, but their grandmother taught them. You know, this was the lady's way. And you know they had a certain bunch of ladies they picked out. And these ladies were sort of a club, and if there was a dance, they led in the dance, and if there was an unhappy occasion, such as a near death, these women were the ones that went and helped the family. You know, gave their services. Just different things like this, and if there was a ceremony, they were the ones that got up too and they sort of gave a leadership to the others, to the other women. And this was very important.

Christine: How, did a person become a member, one of those people?

Lizette: I don't really remember how they became a member but all I knew was my mother belonged to this club. And as a child, you naturally think that there is a certain group of

people who are leaders. And this is the idea we got. We were never told why but these were very, very important people in our camps or anywhere. Because they got up first to help the men with their ceremonies and everything. They were right there. But there had to be ladies too, you know. There were certain things they couldn't do but they knew that. But they were respected by all. They were recognized people but they had to earn this, I guess, because people looked at you, by your life. Like you know, the way you looked after your family, and if a person didn't look after their family, and didn't act on their responsibilities, well they were not chosen to be those people. I don't know what they call them. It was sort of a society. A high society like, you know, but you had to earn it, different ways. And then of course you had to perform your, whatever; you see everybody knew their simple medicines. Like for colds, and certain little ailments, everybody knew these. The way you performed was one way they looked at you. If you really performed right and really played your part as an Indian was one way that you got into that society. Otherwise you were left out. So all these things I learned as a child I didn't realize though that they were that important until later on in life.

Anyway, I guess my life was very hard to live in a way because of the fact that my parents really were responsible people let's say. Like being late going somewhere. See we were allowed to visit sometimes but we had to be home at a certain time. And the other thing was we were taught, if we visited, not to touch

anything you know. And we were taught this at a very early age. When we visited, nothing in that house was ours. And so we didn't go touching everything. We just sat, you know, and visited. I don't know why but it seemed that when I visited like, at an early age, I always sensed visiting old ladies and they always seemed to give me something and this was very interesting. And when I would tell my mother, well, you know, sometimes she wouldn't be too sure where I was visiting. And she says, "Did you visit her?" You know, and this would be a stranger to her and yet I would be visiting this stranger and that person would be telling me something and of course I would go home and tell my mother. And she said, "You know, you don't talk about those things openly." And yet these old ladies would be talking to me about it.

Christine: So you learned things from a lot of other old ladies? Other than your mother?

Lizette: Yes. I didn't ask for them though. You know, I just visited and they were ready to give me the information and this is why she wasn't sure sometimes you know, if I was doing the right thing because she didn't know some of these strangers. Like if there was a Sundance, I would be visiting an old lady.

And I was just thinking, you know, this girl, this granddaughter of mine, she visited these old ladies all day and that is exactly what I was like you know. Going and visiting other old ladies and you know, they would tell me. I was taught too that I was safe with old people, older ladies, because I was growing. Because my mother taught me very strictly that you know, men and boys are going to be looking at you as you grow.

Christine: So you stuck to the old ladies?

Lizette: I think that was one of the reasons why I stuck to the old ladies because then I knew I was safe and if I went back to my mother and told her who I was visiting then she would know. (laughter) But on the other hand, she wasn't too sure sometimes, who I was visiting because, you can meet all kinds of people in life and she wasn't sure whether I should be meeting these certain people or not.

Christine: Was that because they were powerful people?

Lizette: Um-hum. That was it. And when I came home with all of these stories, you know, this old lady told me this and that person told me that, my mother would sometimes get very worried.

Christine: What would she be worried about?

Lizette: Well, I imagine it would be because I would be learning the wrong things of our culture. See some of our own people always are very powerful and they were with evil. Like you know, they displayed evil. I think this is one of the reasons why she was always very strict. Well, I can see it now. You know, I wouldn't want to see my children and my grandchildren getting mixed up with somebody that was practising something that wasn't good. And I think this was one of her reasons why she was very careful.

Christine: Did you learn to know whether they were good or not?

Lizette: It wasn't until after because we had always been taught this you know, that there was always good and evil like you know. Like for instance, in a pow-wow grounds they used to have round dances. We weren't supposed to run across because if there was any bad medicine around, we could get hit by that. We had to go around and it didn't matter who it was. Even adults were taught not to cross just anywhere at all. If they wanted to go, they had to go around.

Christine: This morning Mrs. Nightraveller was talking about when she had her first period and what that meant and what was

done then. Did you have a similar experience? Could you tell me about it?

Lizette: Yes. I guess I was about, just before I went to high school, I was about 14 when I had my first period. Immediately when I told my mother that I had my period, she didn't let me come into the house right away. She got the sweetgrass and then she, she made me sit in the house and they prepared an old shack by our place at that time. She cleaned that up and she went and got an old lady, they went and

got an old lady, this was my aunt, and I had to live with her for the rest of the week. And I had never been away from my mother and father really, because I was never allowed to go camping anywhere. Not even with my friends and when I visited, I came home. I had to come home. So this was an experience right off the bat, living away from your parents and living with this old lady. And she got you up early in the morning and I made breakfast for her. I had to make breakfast for her. Mind you she showed me how to do the things, like cook eggs or whatever she was going to eat.

Christine: You hadn't done these things before?

Lizette: Well, I sort of had done them, because my mother taught me how to do these things. And she taught me the handicraft, like, sewing moccasins, beading. I had done a little bit but my mind wasn't set on it you know. I would do a little bit and then go out and play and, it was still there for ages. I finished whatever I started with the old lady, I had to finish, and this was moccasin-making. I didn't tan the hides like, the leather, I didn't do this because my mother had already taught me this so I didn't do this. I learned this at a very early age.

(End of Side A, Tape IH-124)

(Side B, Tape IH-124)

Lizette: ...about having sex like. You know, that was the way you started your baby and that is the way the baby grew. And she also taught me that, it was very important that if I was pregnant, that I go to these ceremonies, the Indian ceremonies, and go to listen to Indian songs because the baby then would be introduced to these various ceremonies and songs and so forth, that the baby would be learning by going to these ceremonies. We were transmitting messages sort of, to the baby. And of course by singing, you know you had to be happy while you were pregnant. And you could sing and dance and she said there was no reason why we couldn't dance you know, while we were carrying the baby. A girl should be happy and she is able to take part, up to a certain stage of the pregnancy. And by doing this, you are transmitting all these different messages

to the baby. You are educating your baby which was very important.

The other thing she taught me was that you had to exercise while you were carrying the baby. By exercising, it meant that um, the baby wasn't going to be lazy and it was an easier birth for both. And of course the old ladies always had tea she said, that they gave you when you were pregnant. So it was a big education I guess in those seven days that I was alone with her. I hadn't heard any of these things from my mother. Although she touched a little bit on the boys, on the subject of going with the boys and that. But it was the old lady that really got into it. And then after of course, I came out of that, well I started asking my mother all of these questions, why she didn't tell me about it. She said, "Well, this is an area where in reaching your womanhood that you have to get this education from the grandmother." And she said, "Yes, you can ask me anything now." she said. "And you have got your first education more or less." So I knew a little bit of what to ask and that I had already got my first education and so now I was able to ask her more questions. So anyway, I flooded with her, her with questions after that and you know, she told me the same things the old lady told me. Only you know, this was my mother I was talking to, not to the old lady, but she knew all of this but she hadn't told me yet but she was prepared to answer any questions that I had to ask.

I think the next thing that was very important was after you had the baby, you had to get a name for the child. And this was very important because the child had a keeper after you put the baby through this naming ceremony. You had to prepare for that baby's ceremony and that would be getting the cloth and tobacco and getting an elder to name the baby. You had a choice of which elder was going to name your baby or your child. And usually it was a big thing, everybody came like you know, it was a big feast. I remember one baby that was being named and this was done in a lodge and you could actually hear all of these different animals as they came into the lodge and this loon was making a great noise, he was making all the noise you know. I knew he was making all of the noise but I didn't know why because I hadn't been to a ceremony, a naming ceremony. I had been to quiet ones, like naming in a sweat,

and even there you could sense these various spirits coming in. But the other ceremony was just a simple ceremony with the pipe and the rattle, the old man singing and he got the name. So, I hadn't been to a big ceremony like this but this was the first one I came to. And I just happened to be there and they

had it in the lodge and you could hear these animals. The bear, you knew it was a bear, and the loon was very noisy and, the horse and so forth, you know, so many in there, you could hear them. And they were trying to make you feel, you know, make you know who they were. And you actually could tell.

Anyway, afterwards we asked of course who, somebody asked. I was glad somebody else asked because I didn't know. But they asked why the loon was making all this noise. They had had these lodges there before but I guess maybe they never really considered it anything. They asked why the loon was being so noisy. And the one who performed the lodge said, "Well, he wanted to be; he was the important one tonight." And he was the one with the most power that night. So he was trying to make himself known by his noises but they didn't pick him. They picked the bear and the baby boy was Bear Child, they picked. So, that loon didn't get the uh, but if they had picked the loon, he would have been that much more powerful. So, I thought this was very interesting when I found this out. And I hadn't known this before. Because most of the children that I knew, and my grandchildren, they got theirs from the sweat. From the sweat, and it was quiet.

Christine: And you couldn't hear anything?

Lizette: Well, you could you know.

Christine: But not as much?

Lizette: Not as much. But this one in the lodge, it was different. It was a higher ceremony.

So, anyway, this was what this old lady had been telling me about. You know, the naming of the child and why it was so important that, even if the mother and father were gone, the child still had a keeper and whoever kept him would know

what the child's name was because you called the children by their names and hence you knew, who their keeper was. And everybody knew, if their keeper was such and such an animal or that every once in a while, you have to give flags or tobacco for your namesake and he gives you a blessing. But you do, maybe once a year, and you present a gift to the person who had given you the name. That also is important. While he is living because if he is an elder, he doesn't live too long maybe after he has given you your name.

Christine: Did elderly ladies ever give names or was it just men?

Lizette: Oh yes, yes, There used to be a lot of elderly ladies that were able to do this but of course, they sort of vanished in time and I don't think there is too many today

that really can give a name. And there is very few ladies, Indian ladies with pipes and that.

Christine: What is the difference between a man's pipe and a lady's pipe?

Lizette: The lady's pipe is small. Very small. The man's pipe, of course, is big.

Christine: Do they have different meanings and significance, the lady's pipe and the man's pipe?

Lizette: I think they are the same. But you see there is a spirit that is really for the ladies and they call her anyway, it is a female. And she looks after the women and naturally, she is the one that you talk through to the Creator. We talk to the Creator through her. And that is the one that the ladies use whereas the men, they have their own. Not their own, it is the same, you know, it is the same thing.

Christine: Because I always wondered you know, we go to the pipe ceremonies here and you can't touch or walk in front of it or anything, the women. And I always wondered, I sort of thought well, you sort of feel left out because you never really hear about, or I never really hear about ladies having pipes and using them.

Lizette: Well, I have a pipe in here but I can't use it because I don't know how. I have to find out first. It has been blessed and everything. I use it as a keeper now but, I don't know how to use it. Like you know, there is a certain way a woman prays with a pipe and this I don't know. I haven't found a woman yet and that is what they are praying for in there is for me to find the right person to teach me how to use that pipe. Beatrice was telling me just this morning, she said, "You know, I came back with a pipe" she said. "Somebody came and gave it to me over the weekend." And she said this boy had been, I think they were plowing in a field and dug this pipe up and there it was and so they came and gave it to her. So, now she has to find out how to use it. You know, it was given to her. Mine was given to me by an elder and he has passed on.

Christine: So the person that gives you the pipe doesn't necessarily tell you how to use it?

Lizette: No, because this was a man that gave it to me.

Christine: And they don't know?

Lizette: I guess they don't know how to use it because it is a woman's pipe. And her, she got it from a little boy so he, you

know, you have to find out. You have to wait and find out. You can have your pipe blessed and that you know, but you have to learn how to use it and you have to earn it. So that is where my pipe is, just sitting there. We could have been using it if I had known. See that old lady that was here, Mrs. Pooyak, she knew how to handle the pipe. But I didn't, I just never realized you know. But she was gone and after she was gone, I realized I had my pipe and I could have got you know, I could have got her to show me how but maybe that is not the right person eh? Because I didn't think of it. And you know, after she was gone here, I remembered I had this pipe. I took it out and took it to the tipi and that is where it is sitting.

Christine: Well, now that I know what they are praying for, I can pray too. (laughter)

Lizette: Well, these are some of the things, you know, you don't really know. He really said a very nice prayer for

me when I took my pipe. He said he prayed and he would keep on praying that I would find somebody to show me how to use that pipe.

Christine: When you were in the little house with the old lady, is that the time too that she would tell you about all the things that you can't do when you have your period?

Lizette: Oh, yes, definitely.

Christine: All the things that you had to do and not do? What are those things?

Lizette: Well, one of the things that she told me was that, I couldn't go near a Sundance. I couldn't go into the Sundance lodge with my period. Or even go close because it would affect the dancers. And they were there fasting and praying for something and if I went in there, that I was going to lower their, you know, their prayers weren't going to be as strong. And they themselves would become very weak. I have seen certain people fall down, you know, in the Sundance lodge. They were prayed for and they were given a drink but the old men also knew why. It was for a reason why she fell, there was somebody there. She had gone out from the lodge to the bathroom and this woman, whoever it was, had walked, you know, where this girl was going out.

Christine: It is that powerful?

Lizette: It is that powerful. And yet you know, as I have said modern girls today, they don't understand this. Like in my day, I understood this. All of us girls, we understood what it meant so we didn't even question. There was no use

questioning it. But one time there was a doctoring session going on and this girl that was being doctored came down with her period unfortunately, and her sister also did. And they kept on asking you know, if they could go in like that. They were having a lodge and a healing ceremony anyway for her and she was one of them that was being doctored. And they kept on asking if they could go, if there could be an exception. I was related to them. I thought I had the right to tell them, "Stop asking because you are not going in anyway." So that, is what I told them. I said, "You can't go in, there is no way you

can go in. Unless you want to down the whole thing." And they were left at the house alone. Anyway, they didn't have that, you see, they weren't brought up with this and with us it was just an understanding. There was no use asking and it was no use us going to a ceremony because those old men would know anyway. There were times, the old men walked up to the girl that had her period and just tapped her, "Go on home." And you know, it has happened.

Christine: I guess you would learn not to go. You would be embarrassed!

Lizette: It would certainly be very embarrassing because everybody would look at you and everybody knew you know, that that was it. So you didn't dare show your face close there. (laughter) You were just out.

Anyway, the other things this old lady told me, was the feasts. Like you weren't to be around the feasts. And if you had anything to do with cooking or anything, you simply had to tell somebody else to do the cooking. Of course you can direct what they can cook and that but of course, us, you know, we were all taught what the leading soups and bannock and fruit, and all this. They never cooked any different kinds of soup at that time. It was just a straight meat and flour soup or the leading soup was this berries, saskatoon berries, and flour and meat. That was the leading. That was the original soup. Or if you had dried meat, you could cook dried meat. And that was the leading.

So it was really an education in itself because they taught you how to dress, you know, you dressed neatly. If you want your body to look nice, dress your body up neatly. And by neatly they meant of course, you know, washing and being clean. And they said if you are going to be a lazy person later in life, you are going to end up with lice and you know, (laughs) these dirty little things. They made you see what was going to happen to you if you were lazy. This old lady, she didn't hit around the bush. She just came out and told me straight you know. And she really had her point and you listened, and you do

as you are told. This sort of discipline. And then of course, she stressed this: after you have your children, one of the very foremost things was to teach your children discipline and yet the love of people and respect and so forth. And humility was another thing that we were taught. Humility had different meanings and different ways of expressing humility. You had humility because you must never forget that the way you live, maybe you are a well person, a healthy person, or you could be a sick person, but if you are a healthy person then God has given you this health. So you must thank him for that. And never forget to thank for all of the different things that he has given you, so therefore you are nothing except what God has given you. He might have put you here on earth for a very definite purpose and you have to work to find out what that definite purpose was. And he is not going to use you if you are only doing things lightly. Like in the ceremonies, you know. If you are there just for show or just for curiosity, then it is a different thing again. So, these were very important things that she taught me. And of course, later on I asked my mother again why she never taught me these and she said, "There comes a time. Somebody has to tell you, another person has to tell you these things."

Some girls had their periods early. But that is okay, they learned at an early age. But I was 14 when I had mine. Fourteen or fifteen. I guess that is kind of old you know, to start your periods. And I said, "Well, why am I so different?" You know, my friends, they all had their periods. I was the last one in my group, to have the periods, even the next group, like younger than me, some of them were already having their periods. She says, "I wouldn't worry about that. You know, you are just made that way," she says, "Maybe you are going to take longer to understand all of these things." (laughter) It was comical.

That is another thing. This old lady used to tell me funny stories and we would laugh you know. Happiness was an important thing and sometimes I would be sitting there wondering how long am I gonna be here? Right away she would notice I was sitting and just thinking and she would tell me a story, you know, for me to laugh or do something you know. And one time I remember, she was dancing, and there was no drums or

anything but, she said, "This is the way you dance when you dance at the ceremonies." You know, they had certain ways of dancing to certain beats and she said, "This is the way you dance. See if you can do it." And of course I would jump and go right behind her and she said, "Well, you are dancing too much like a boy." I guess I would kick my feet up too high, but there was laughter. It wasn't all just seriousness. And she would tell me funny stories about my grandfather you know, what he did to her and all these little jokes you know. So there was laughter, there was a lot of laughter. There was no

time for loneliness. She made sure that I wasn't going to be lonesome for that week I was there. She said, "You have no business to be lonesome because you have got lots to do."

Christine: Before that happened to you, did you know what you were going to have to do? From your friends and stuff, did you know that, were you looking forward to it or were you sort of scared about it or ...?

Lizette: Well, I don't know. I think of a period, that week, was what I was dreading. Because I was going to be away from my friends and my family for that whole week and this was about the only thing I was dreading. And, the girls scared me. They said, "You know, when you start your periods, you are going to hemorrhage really bad you know," and all of this and they said, "You are so old, you know, you have waited so long for this period." And "I'm sure you are going to hemorrhage," and they got me all scared. I remember this really funny too, maybe I shouldn't say this, but anyway they had told me all of these stories and when I knew I had my period, uh, I remember going and um sticking a blanket under me. I thought I was going to hemorrhage. I was really going to hemorrhage. And I walked out and there was nothing, you know, not anymore than what I had noticed at first. And yet I had that scary story I guess and it just stuck with me.

Christine: Were you at school when this happened?

Lizette: Uh, it was in the morning, I noticed it in the morning when I was told to get up. Mind you, I was on my way to school, I would have been.

Christine: Did you go to, you didn't go to residential school?

Lizette: No.

Christine: You went to, where did you go?

Lizette: I went to a day school, a public school right on the reserve.

Christine: Where was that? On Little Pine?

Lizette: On Little Pine, um-hum. You see, my father never believed in boarding schools either. In fact when I was old enough, my brother had been going, but when I became old enough to go to school, he said that being close, being with the family was a very important thing. And staying home with my parents. But unfortunately some of my friends had no parents so they had no choice, they had to go to this boarding school in order to get their education. So, there again the old lady stressed, because this was while I was going to school. And she says, "Now," she said, "You are going to be finishing school." She says, "What are you going to do? Get married?"

At 14 or 15, me get married? And I said, "No," I said, "I don't think I am getting married." She said, "How do you know?" I said, "Because I think my dad wants me to go to school." "Oh," she said, "And where are you going to school?" Of course I said, "In the city, I guess, to get my high school education." And she said, "You know, you are going to have to go through a very difficult life because," she said, "I don't know what it is like to go to high school. I have no education." she said. "I don't know what contacts you are going to have." "But," she said, "As long as you remember what I have told you and what your mother and father have told you and don't forget your culture. That is the most important thing. You can mix in with anybody but it has got to be you that has got to do the right thing." And she says, "You are old enough now, today is your day. You are old enough today now to make your, to decide what you are going to be. Where you are going. So, and when you go to school," she says, "I don't know anything about that part of life because I have never gone through it. But with what you have been taught as a child and growing up with your culture," she said, "You should be alright. Providing you listen to all that."

Christine: So was it unusual then for girls to go to high school when you did? Did very many girls go?

Lizette: I was the first one on the reserve. You see my brother had gone and Beatrice's two brothers had gone. We were the first ones that went through high school.

Christine: Gee. Yeah, well as she said, no one could help you. No one had done it eh?

Lizette: No one had done it she said. "You are going to have problems," she said. "You may have problems," she said, "but," she said, "if you remember what we have taught you, then you will be alright." And you know, it was kind of a happy feeling for her telling me that, you know, "You will be all right," even though she didn't know what kind of a life I was going into.

Christine: Where did you go then to high school?

Lizette: I went to Saskatoon.

Christine: Oh you did, all the way to Saskatoon? Where did you live when you were there?

Lizette: I lived in a school, in a girls residence in Saskatoon on Idylwyld, I have never been back to the residence to see, you see it is a nursing home now. But this was a girls home and it was run by um, Anglican, they don't call them Anglican, nuns, what do you call them? They are not sisters either ...

Christine: No, I don't know what they call them. I can't remember either.

Lizette: Anyway, that was what we were under.

435 . The Matron was an Anglican and so were the staff but I didn't find they were that strict with us. You know, being in at a certain time and but, the girls, the other girls, they just belly-ached you know, that they had to be in at a certain time and yet it didn't make any difference with me because I had been taught all these things but I learned a lot of things in my high school days because there were so many different types of girls in there, at the residence. And they were all ministers' daughters that were boarding there. Most of them were ministers' daughters and yet they were the most, some of them were the most evil ones. (laughs) And you know,

for me to get into this, it really jarred me, because I was told that everything was going to be so super and good when I went to high school and this was what the missionary told my parents and yet, I was faced with all of these things, like some of the girls even stole, and they were very dishonest some of them. And they were ministers' daughters! And I was only an Indian.

Christine: Were you the only Indian there?

Lizette: Yes. The first year, I was the only Indian there and so I had to learn fast. And the other difficulty I had when I first went to high school was, there was so much red tape from the government for us to enter the high school education that we didn't go until about November. So you were, you know, you were behind all those months and that was difficult. That was difficult. In fact, I failed my nine because it was so different. But they gave me another chance you know, after I failed my nine, they told me that I could go back and try again. But by Christmas, going back to the same school, by Christmas I had passed all of my tests and they accepted a bunch of kids that had failed their grade nine, they were going to give them a chance into their grade ten. So I got into this group, I was in this group but still everybody thought I was really dumb. You were called kind of dumb too you know, by the other students and I wasn't used to this. Because I did well in my grades when I left school, up to grade eight I did well in my grades so being called dumb was something else I had to face. But I got along. I got an A in my first term so then after the first term then some of us who were able to go through to make the A, went into grade ten. And it was just a partial ten but it broke up all the years after that. You know, because I only got my partial ten and I came out with good marks.

Christine: So that was as far as you went?

Lizette: No.

Christine: You graduated?

Lizette: I graduated. I went to grade twelve too. And then again, after I finished my grade twelve, we had to go through

red tape again before I got any training. They told me I couldn't train for a, what was it, I wanted to be a secretary and they said I couldn't learn to be a secretary because it wouldn't help my people any at all. And I was very good at hairdressing by this time so I tried hairdressing. No, that wasn't any good for me. So that profession was out.

Christine: Who was telling you these things?

Lizette: Well, the government people you know. They just told us what to do. And the teachers. And then they decided that well, you know, you could go in for hospital training. So then, we decided, well we had no other choice. I never thought of becoming a teacher and it wasn't until years after that I found out that I had patience with kids and I could teach. I used to sub for different classes with kids and I found out I had patience with kids. And I could teach them.

Christine: Well, you are a good teacher too. I know that from this morning. (laughter)

Lizette: But, I didn't find that out till way later.

Christine: Oh well, you are doing it now.

Lizette: Well, I have been doing it for ...

Christine: Sort of eh?

Lizette: Uh huh. I have been doing it for quite a bit and ...

Christine: Why was it so important to your dad that you go to high school?

Lizette: Because, well one of the things he told us was these people moving in around us, the farmers and that, they were settlers. He says, "They are going to stay and you are going to have to live amongst them." That was his idea. And he says, "You are going to have to learn how to get along with them. And by getting an education, which I didn't have, and I have difficulty with that." He says, "You are going to be able to communicate with these people and yet you have got your Indian culture behind you. Just as long as you don't forget

that then you will be all right." And he said, "You are going to have to make a living like these people are making a living." He says, "So you may as well get educated." And there was only two of us in the family and he says, "I am not very pleased with the fact that I have only two children left in my family and I have to give them up to the world." He told us that.

Christine: It must have been very hard for him.

Lizette: Yeah, well, it was very hard for both of them because I used to see my mother cry for us you know, when we would leave. The trains came at six o'clock in the morning and we had to be at the train by six o'clock in the morning, six or seven o'clock in the morning and go to Saskatoon and we only came home for Easter and Christmas and of course the summer holidays but I used to work for the summer holidays. Get my money for clothes and that, because in my time, they never gave you half of what these kids are getting now. They never gave you an education allowance or anything, clothing allowance or anything like that. And you choose your own profession. They never had any of that. So it was very hard on my parents, you know, to give us up. We were, there was only two of us and, they let us go to a strange place, and learn all of these things. It wasn't easy for them. But I know, he prayed a lot for us and that was what we had behind us was this constant prayer. We were taught to hang on to this.

And when I was in that residence you know, these Anglican ladies that were looking after us, they were deaconesses, that is what they were. They were praying all the time. So that wasn't new to me that it had to be, you know, in the white language and I had to learn how to, you know, of course, I had been going to church. My dad was an alderman at the church too. And he looked after the church you know. But he never got paid for any of that. But there were many on the reserve, like elders, that were doing this and, it was because they understood, you know, the church is a place where they go for prayer. Even if it was going to a church, it wasn't hurting anybody. And that was the way we were brought up. Us, not disliking any church at all and we were taught that. Because we were all praying to the same Creator, only in a different way. You know, we had to accept this. It was hard, for the old people. Very hard. I can understand now, how hard

it must have been for them for us to leave and go to school and I was the first girl and my mother always said to me, that is funny, she always said to me, "Why do you have to be the first one to go to high school?" She said, "Do you know, you could have stayed home and helped me, but," she said, "of course you had to go to high school." "Well," I said, "you know I had to

work hard at school." "Oh, you didn't work very hard." She said, "I know," she said, "You didn't work very hard at school." (laughs) "But you always seem to get yourself into something you know." Going out at the reserve, she said, "You know, do you realize you are the first Indian girl here that is going out from the reserve and going to school in that big city. My goodness," she says, "you are the most adventurous girl I have ever come across and it had to be you."

Christine: Did you feel adventurous?

Lizette: I don't know, I was just right along, I guess I was you know, but I didn't realize. I was just as happy as a lark to go to school and learn. But, I loved my parents. My mother was very close to me. Smith was very close to his dad. So that you know, the education that we got at home was very important. And the other thing, coming back to the old lady, the other thing that she taught me was, the responsibility that I was going to have as a mother. That role I had to play as a mother. And I would always have to play this because I was never going to stop being a mother. And she was right. She says, "You are going to be a mother and then you are going to be a grandmother and then you are going to be a great-grandmother, and great great you know, if you are lucky to live that long." And I used to think what responsibility? And she said, the first thing she said, "You are going to be responsible for your baby. You are going to nurse your baby because that is the best type of feeding that you can give your baby." And then she said, "Of course you are going to be good to your man and you are going to have to work. You are going to get his meals and you are going to please him." Oh, there were so many things about responsibility that she told me. So I kind of knew I had to be a mother after I got married, and the other thing she told me was, "You know," she says, "you are not a bad looking girl" she said. So she says, "Men are going to look at you, any time they will. But," she said, "don't you be bad. I have told you all about sex, what's going to happen,

you know." And she had told me, of course. And about sex and that, she says, "Do you know, if you have sex with a man, you are going to have a baby. You will likely have a baby." She said, "And this is before you are married." She said, "That isn't, you know, that isn't right." So she said, "You better right that." But she did scare me you know, in places when she was teaching me about sex and this sort of thing. There were scary things that she told me but it really wasn't scary I guess, it was just the way she told them, and she didn't want me to do anything wrong and so she said, "Now," she said, "If you are a good girl now," she said, "If you are a good girl, you are going to stay good to find the right guy," she said, "and you are going to be very happy when you find him because he is going to teach you a lot of things and you are going to both play a part in your lives and you are going to play

together and live your lives together and you are going to have children and of course, you are both going to be responsible parents." The other thing she stressed on, she said, "You are going to be the teacher of your children. What I am telling you, in a week's time, you are going to be teaching your children in a lifetime."

Christine: Was she right? Did you find the right guy?

Lizette: Oh yeah, oh yes. I found the right guy but I wasn't, it wasn't until I was, she was gone by the time I found him because I was going to high school and working here and there and she never did ...

Christine: Where did you work before you got married?

Lizette: Oh, I used to work out on farms.

Christine: Yeah? What did you do?

Lizette: Oh, just general housework. And what I got paid for was five dollars a month and so that would be only ten for the two months I worked.

Christine: When was that?

Lizette: That was in uh....

(End of Side B, Tape IH-124)

(End of Tape IH-124)

(Tape IH-125 Side A)

Lizette: ... close to home. Oh my parents didn't let me go too far away during the summer holidays. So I could visit, like you know, for the weekends, I could visit and so they were quite satisfied I was working. They didn't have any objections to my working. But it was hard work. And I was supposed to be on my holidays and very little pay. But I didn't mind. Actually, I didn't mind. I had lots of fun.

Christine: So you had to do all the work in the household? Was there usually a farm wife there or ...?

Lizette: Well, she was there but she was a teacher and I don't know whether, it must have been summer school she was teaching because it was during the summer holidays and she taught during those two months. That is why she needed somebody in the house and she had three children, but they were fairly big, but sometimes they got kind of snotty and they were big enough to do these things. But it was an experience. I learned how to make bread out of it. (laughs) Which I never learned, I knew how to make bread when I got married. (laughter) So, there is some real things I had to do, you know, I used to have to chop

wood for the kitchen stove because there was no electric stoves at that time and all they had was a wood stove so I had to chop wood and I learned how to chop wood. Of course my mother always taught me these things but then you know, I always picked up the easiest things to do. (laughs) And my brother had to chop the wood so I didn't...

Christine: So you didn't have to do it very much.

Lizette: So I didn't really have to do it very much but there was always a time when I had to do it you know. And I could do it so when I was at this farmhouse and the little boy was not big enough to chop the wood, split the wood, well I had to do it. I didn't mind.

Christine: Did you do all the cooking?

Lizette: I did most of the cooking. Well, when she was home, she did the cooking but usually I ended up doing so I learned lots I guess. (laughs)

Christine: So, how did you meet your husband then?

Lizette: Lets see now. Oh, we were going to high school and there was one girl from his reserve that was in high school with me and she was in the same grade and one Christmas we decided we would get together and I think it was her mother or her father, that was sick, so she couldn't come to my place so she said, "Well, you come to my place then." And she said, "Next Christmas, I'll come to your place." And this is how we met.

Christine: So, how old were you when you finally got married?

Lizette: Twenty one. So I was ...

Christine: Did your parents have anything to do with it or was that just between you and him?

Lizette: No, that was just on my own. (laughs)

Christine: Because when we were talking to Joe Duquette, of course, he was telling us about when he married his first wife and how it was all arranged for him and, but he is quite a bit older than you are so I guess by the time you were getting married, people weren't doing that anymore.

Lizette: Oh, no. In a way they were but there was an old man in Sweet Grass, and he came down to our home and he wanted, he asked for me, to marry his grandson but very politely my mother had said that I was going to school so that one time she used my schooling as a good excuse. And she told him that I was going to school, you know, that I still had two more years to go so then the old man said, "Oh, yes, yes, of course," he said, "these young people, they have to do things the way they

want, what they want to do." And it was brushed off like that, very lightly. And I remember my mother telling me, she said, "You know, that is the first time," she said, "you ever did something that I liked." She says, "I always sort of disliked you going to school because I don't know what you are getting out of it." But she said, "Now," she said, "this old man came over and asked for you and now you are going to school. I had that excuse and it worked." she said. And then I said, and she said, "I am happy," she said, "I am happy that you don't have to get married at an early age."

Christine: Would she have, if you hadn't been going to school, would she have felt obliged?

Lizette: Probably, probably. That is the way, you know. My sister was given away. And she didn't have a very happy marriage. But she lived with him. She learned to live with him and she had children from him and she was a very good housewife. I think that is why a lot of marriages were successful. Because we were counselled you know. We were told what responsibility was for each other. Although you often married somebody that you didn't even know or liked. And that is what happened to my sister. She married this guy, she didn't like him and uh, she was a very good-looking girl but she had to marry him. But she made her marriage but then you know, he was the one that left her. And of course she ended up living with another man. But most marriages were successful, most of them.

Christine: Is that the idea of responsibility?

Lizette: Yes. And especially after you had children, you were one like you know. Together, there is a responsibility towards the children. And the children were very important in the Indian nation I'll say. You know, it was an addition, and that child was very important and it was up to you to bring that child up right and to teach them and to be good person. That was the important thing. Most of the marriages worked.

Christine: What kind of a wedding did you have?

Lizette: Oh, I had a beautiful wedding. It was exciting. (laughs) We had horses, we used horses ...

Christine: Was this at your reserve?

Lizette: No, at his reserve. No, No, I got married in Sandy Lake. It was really a nice wedding. Of course then, everybody used horses for their weddings and there was no cars at the time, very few. Oh, we had a beautiful wedding, only my old man got drunk on my wedding night. (laughs)

Christine: Was it an Anglican ceremony or a traditional ceremony?

Lizette: Anglican ceremony. Oh, yes, at that time there was no traditional ceremonies. I did get to see a traditional ceremony and, but this wasn't in our area. This was in Alberta when this couple got married by a J.P. He had his papers as a J.P. in order to marry people and yet in the Indian way he had authority, to perform a marriage. And they used feathers, two feathers on there. And they went through a ceremony by him and then the elders, they talked to the bride and groom separately. The lady elders talked to the girl before she was married and then after. Like her responsibility before she was married, they talked to her then, I think it was four days they had her. Like you know, they didn't live with her four days. That is the original idea though, to live with this girl for four days. And they counselled her, you know. But how they did it then was they just counselled her for four days, like you know, counselled her periodically for the four days. And then after they got married, then they gave her authority to say prayers.

Certain things that they gave her, like they gave her power on her wedding day so she could say prayers. She had to have power. But it was very interesting.

Christine: But they didn't have anything like that when you were married?

Lizette: No. They didn't have anything. That was out already. And only a few people go through this way. Down in the States, they go through it but ... My cousin's wife was telling me, she says, "Doesn't take very long you know, for an Indian wedding." she says. All they go into is the J.P. I guess and then they go through these I think they use the chief and the councillors and they perform the ceremony. And then of course everybody goes to wherever they have their feast and then the elders give them their blessing there.

Christine: So, you had an Anglican ceremony and then was there a feast too?

Lizette: Yes, there was a feast, a banquet. Just like any other wedding.

Christine: Was that usual that the girl went to the husband's reserve to get married?

Lizette: I guess it could be either way. It didn't matter really because after we got away from our tradition like, you

know, I guess originally it used to be the man coming for the girl and take her back to his reserve. I think that was the way it was. But, you know, we lived away from so many of our traditions by that time that we were just living and getting married like the white society. Everything was done the same way.

Christine: So you went off to live at Sandy Lake?

Lizette: Yes.

Christine: Was that hard to go to a different reserve.

Lizette: It sure was. It was because I had been very close to my mother and of course I had been through school but then, you know, you felt that you were gone. You have left your reserve and that you are gone, but my mother told me that wasn't the important thing. Life was like that. That sometimes when you got married that you had to go and live wherever your husband lived. And she said, "Don't think of running home all of the time. In time you are going to get used to it." And I didn't, I didn't go home. I only went home once a year. And that was hard you know, because I was used to going to my mother and talking things over with her if I got into any problems and uh, after I got married I couldn't do that anymore so it was hard on me. I was brought up traditionally eh. And when I married into this family, they weren't traditional at all. They were church people. But this is one of the reasons why I was never able to bring up my children traditionally because I married into the family where they were just like white people and they just used church. And you know, they were good people but they just didn't believe in their culture. But towards the end now, when my husband turned to his culture, started doing his culture, at first they really resented him. His whole family resented him but he carried on in spite of the fact that they resented him and after a while, they started turning, believing he wasn't doing anything wrong. At first it was a real hassle that he was turning to his culture and that you know, he was practising evil. You know, this is the way they had it. And he was practising evil medicine and yet he didn't have any medicine, he didn't know any medicine but he could

perform wonders with his pipe. He had a special pipe. I was going to bring that here but I couldn't find it. One of the boys must have it. And it was really a big challenge for him but he went through it. But at the same time he went to church. But some of the things that we experienced, the family themselves, they experienced a lot of things with his pipe. And there was one, oh, there was a lot of things that happened, so many things that happened. And they were all for the good. And one time my little grandson, in fact it was my brother's boy, got married at the Bessborough Hotel, got married there so

we all had rooms at the Bessborough Hotel. We went to the dance and we went to the banquet and we went to the dance there. Of course all of the kids were there you know, and they had, my grandchildren were there and this one little ...

(End of Side A, Tape IH-125)

(End of Interview)

PROPER NAME INDEX

PROPER NAME	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
SANDY LAKE RESERVE, SASK.	IH-120/121	AHENAKEW	7	35
SASKATOON, SASK.		AHENAKEW	7	27

INDEX TERM	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
ANIMALS				
-in religion and and ceremonialism	IH-120/121	AHENAKEW	7	19
ASSIMILATION		AHENAKEW	7	9
ASSIMILATION				
-conflicts resulting from		AHENAKEW	7	37
CEREMONIALISM				
-right to participate		AHENAKEW	7	22
CHILDREN				
-naming of		AHENAKEW	7	6,7,18,19
CHILDREN				
-raising of		AHENAKEW	7	2,8
CHILDREN				
-training of		AHENAKEW	7	2,10-12, 22,23
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES				
-attitudes toward		AHENAKEW	7	30
DISCRIMINATION				
-against Indians		AHENAKEW	7	11
EDUCATION				
-attitudes toward		AHENAKEW	7	10,26, 27,29,30
EDUCATION				
-integrated		AHENAKEW	7	26-29
EDUCATION				
-secular		AHENAKEW	7	27,28
EDUCATION				
-traditional		AHENAKEW	7	17,24,31
GIRLS				

-training of	AHENAKEW	7	13-18, 21, 22, 31, 32
HORSES			
-adornment of	AHENAKEW	7	3-4
HORSES			
-significance in religion and ceremonials	AHENAKEW	7	4
HUMOR			
	AHENAKEW	7	24, 25
INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF			
-paternalism	AHENAKEW	7	29
LITTLE PINE RESERVE			
	AHENAKEW	7	26
MARRIAGE			
-arranged	AHENAKEW	7	34, 35
MARRIAGE			
-ceremonies	AHENAKEW	7	36
MARRIAGE			
-preparations for	AHENAKEW	7	36
MARRIAGE			
-responsibilities	AHENAKEW	7	35
MEDICINE AND CURING PRACTICES			
-ingredients, gathering and preparation of	AHENAKEW	7	9

=

INDEX TERM	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
MEDICINE AND CURING PRACTICES				
-prayer	IH-120/121	AHENAKEW	7	5
MENSTRUATION				
-menarche		AHENAKEW	7	16, 17, 24, 25
MENSTRUATION				
-taboos		AHENAKEW	7	22, 23
MENSTRUATION				
-and power		AHENAKEW	7	22, 23
MISSIONARIES				
-as agents of assimilation		AHENAKEW	7	9
NAMES (PERSONAL)				
-naming ceremonies		AHENAKEW	7	5, 6, 18
NAMES (PERSONAL)				
-significance of		AHENAKEW	7	7, 8, 19, 20
PIPES AND SMOKING				
-and women		AHENAKEW	7	12, 21, 22
POWER				
-evil		AHENAKEW	7	16
POWER				
-from dreams and visions		AHENAKEW	7	9, 10
PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH				
-management of		AHENAKEW	7	17, 18

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY			
-prayer	AHENAKEW	7	12
SOCIETIES			
-of women	AHENAKEW	7	13,14
SPIRITS			
-animal	AHENAKEW	7	4,5,18,19
VALUES			
-cleanliness	AHENAKEW	7	23
VALUES			
-humility	AHENAKEW	7	24
WOMEN			
-influence of	AHENAKEW	7	13,14
WOMEN			
-and pregnancy	AHENAKEW	7	17,18
WOMEN			
-in religion and ceremonials	AHENAKEW	7	13,14, 20,21
WORK			
-for wages	AHENAKEW	7	32,33