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Oral History Transcription with Joseph Roland Albert & Doris Dufour Albert

Joseph Roland Albert

Doris Dufour Albert

Don Cyr

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JOSEPH ROLAND ALBERT
AND
DORIS DUFOUR ALBERT
INTERVIEWED BY
EDON CYR
APRIL 14, 1981
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Interview with
Joseph Roland Albert

Today's date is April 14, 1981.

Q. Would you give me your full name?
A. My name is Joseph Roland Albert.

Q. Where were you born?
A. I was born in Guerette in 1930. My father was working in the woods at the time up in Allagash for Conners. They had married in the winter of the year before. The wife had accompanied him that winter to the Allagash. I was born on a little farm in Guerette. I was only two weeks old when we moved from there, came to live in Stockholm. Dad had bought a farm in '29, just before the depression hit. He had the money to pay for it, left it in the bank, the banks closed of course, so he lost all the money, he ended up paying for it piecemeal. It took him many, many years to pay for it.

Q. I'll bet he regretted not paying for it.
A. Well, he had the money, but he didn't know the banks were going to close, so it took a long time before he paid for it. He bought it for $6000. We lived there for most of our life. He retired in 1965, moved to Sinclair and died in 1967.

Q. You say it cost him $6000, do you know what his average wage was for a week?
A. I think they worked for a dollar a day.

Q. That was a lot of money.
A. It sure was. When he was sixteen years old, he left the farm to go work in the woods, of course it was only in the winter type of project. He left early in the fall after harvest was over, stayed in the woods all winter. No place to spend money, just save it, come back down in the spring, work on the farm in the spring for his dad. It took him a long time to save that money because he felt responsible for his family, his folks and the children. There was quite a few young ones. His dad, more or less, expected quite a lot of him. One year he bought a team of horses and he paid for it out of his own pocket. He never used that money, he was that type of individual. He started in the woods at sixteen, got married when he was twenty nine, worked there almost thirteen years.

Q. You say he worked for Conners?
A. Connor. He was a cook, a very good cook, that's what he did in the woods.

Q. What kind of things would he cook in the woods?
A. Oh, he would make pies, make cakes, bake beans, pot roasts, cook potatoes, anything that you would normally find in a woods camp.
Q. What kind of pies would he make?
A. Apple pies, raisin pies, brown sugar pies. Of course they didn't have the mixes you can buy in the stores, you had to make your own.

Q. Those are very rich pies. When you're working hard in the woods, you can burn those calories right up, no problem at all.
A. Oh, yes. That's how he made it until he moved to the farm.

Q. Did he go away in the winter and come back in the spring?
A. He worked in the woods all winter long until he bought the farm, then he never went back to Connor.

Q. When he came out in the spring, was there any ritual he would have to go through to get rid of lice or anything like that?
A. I don't know.

Q. Did he ever tell you how he...everyone who worked in the woods was lousy.
A. He never mentioned that, apparently he never had that problem. He used to wear union suits, in fact, he made that a habit. When he worked on the farm, he used to wear union suits all year round. He felt more comfortable in the summer time, a little cooler in summer time than we were without it. These were 100% wool union suits. Right in the middle of July hauling hay, he would wear one of those, but he never complained that they were lousy.

Q. Somebody mentioned that on Sundays they used to take their union suit off and roll it in the snow, leave it in the snow for a few minutes, it would kill all the lice. Then bring it back in and wash it in boiling water.
A. Probably no way you could get rid of it.

Q. Is the house you were born in still standing?
A. No, it burned. Route 161 goes right over it. We lived in the bottom of the hill in Guerette past the church on the way to Fort Kent. You round the corner, the road goes right over the property where the house used to be. The old road used to pass near the spring west of where the present road is. It created quite an embankment and the house was right on top of that embankment. Dad had bought the farm in 1945, I think. My grandparents moved out and moved down state, there wasn't much going on in Guerette. He had bought the farm, plowed it up and seeded it, then rented the house and while it was rented, to a Martin family, it burned down.

Q. Do you remember the dimensions of the farm, was it a long narrow farm?
A. Very long and narrow and very hilly.

Q. Do you know how long it was and how wide it was?
A. Much narrower than the farms you find in Stockholm, probably half of the width of the Stockholm farms. Way, way back in the woods.

Q. That's the French way of doing it, everyone had frontage either on the road, on a lake or on a river and then it goes back a long ways.

A. The house was located right next to a spring, beautiful spring. The was always cold, in fact, it was almost too cold. That's how my grandfather died. He was quite a worker himself. He died when Dad was two years old, so my Dad never knew his father. He had gone up on the hill to cut grass with a hand scythe. It was a hot, hot day in July. He had a little girl who accompanied him almost just like a tomboy. He sent her down to the house to get a pot full of water, they had those little lard pails about two and a half pounds. She filled that up with spring water and brought it up to him. He drank it, he was still thirsty, so he sent her for another pail. Of course, he was quite a ways up on the hill so it took her a while to get down and back. He started to drink the next one but it wouldn't go down. He just left everything there and went down to the house and he died that night. It must have been too much of a shock. He had a younger brother who was two years younger than he was.

Q. Your father or your grandfather?

A. My grandfather. He married my grandmother, so he still stayed an Albert name.

Q. So he married his sister-in-law then?

A. That's right. Fabian is the one that died, Joe is the one that married...

Q. So that means your father's uncle was also his step father?

A. That's right.

Q. How large is your family?

A. You mean my father's family?

Q. If you remember, sure.

A. There were three daughters, I guess, that died during the influenza of 1918.

Q. Do you have any stories about that influenza, have you heard anything about it?

A. Only that Dad was very sick, he lost his oldest sister, whose name was Leona and two other girls, I don't recall their names, and a younger brother, who was eighteen at the time. He was also working up in the woods with him, in fact, they were up in the woods when he died. They took a team of horses and brought him back to Guerette by sled to bury him. That was November of 1918. While he was home he became very sick too, but he never went to bed. Everyone else was sick abed, so he helped nurse them back to health.
They were able to save Grandma, the others all died. There was only he left, and Grandpa and Grandma.

Q. There were stories around, back in those times when they would go back to those farms on the back roads, they would find whole families dead.

A. Some of them died and were buried, there are stories about some of them, they weren't completely dead. When they gave them a decent burial later, they found that they had gnawed with their hands in order to try to get out of their predicament they were in.

Q. You mean get out of their coffin?

A. They weren't put in coffins, they were put in gunny sacks or whatever was available, dumped in a hole and covered quickly. They were so afraid of that sickness, just getting them out of the house was the thing to do.

Q. I think they called it the plague, didn't they?

A. They called it influenza, la gripe espagnol.

Q. What were your parent's names?

A. My father's name was Patrick. My mother's name was Leona Lagasse. Her parents were George Lagasse, they called him George Lagasse, big family. There was another George Lagasse that lived in Stockholm. Those were cousins I think, second or third cousins.

Q. What was her mother's name, do you remember?

A.

Q. He was a Lagasse with a big family, how big was his family?

A. Seven or eight boys. There were five girls, there must have been twelve or thirteen kids. A lot of them died.

Q. What was your grandfather's name?

A. On my mother's side?

Q. On your father's side.

A. Fabian.

Q. And his wife?

A. Laura Bourgoiné. I don't know if that was Baptiste's daughter or if Baptiste was an older brother, but I do remember he was living there when I was a young boy. Baptiste was an old man, wore glasses, smoked a pipe constantly.

Q. What kind of a pipe?

A. Corn cob.
Q. Do you remember any further back on either side?
A. I don't remember my great grandparents.

Q. Do you know their names or anything?
A. Well, I know quite a bit on my father's side. Fabian was the son of Josie who was the son of Paul who was the son of Fabian. It goes way back.

Q. Is this research that you've done recently?
A. No, that was something that Dad told us as we were growing up. It isn't even recorded. I mean not in family history, it's probably recorded somewheres.

Q. How would he say it?
A. (Repeats it in French on tape) I never used the last names, never used Albert for the last name. It's almost like the Arabs, they always give the name of the son who is the son of that son and so on, trying to trace it back to Mohammed. I found that very unusual, I was stationed in Cassablanca, kind of reminded me of how they used to do it here.

Q. Of course the last name is understood.
A. Oh, yes. I don't know when they picked up the last name or where they picked it up, it must be a ways back. There's traces of Alberts in France, they must have had a last name then.

Q. I know it's a Quebec family, it's a family from Quebec.
A. I think my father believes that he came from Acadia or that his ancestors came from Acadia.

Q. Well, is an Acadian name, so that would be the Acadian tie.
A. I never went back that far back in genealogy. I was going to try to get some information from Guy Dubay, but everytime he happened to be in town I was doing something else.

Q. He's in Madawaska, he can be reached. He's a principal of a school in Madawaska.
A. I took a course from him, so I know who he is.

Q. What was your father's occupation?
A. They were brought up on a farm. They never tilled that farm very much other than keeping two or three cows, cutting wood. I don't recall that they ever planted any potatoes except for their own use. It was more of a dairy thing, just enough to keep them in subsistance.

Q. Did they have any sheep?
A. Oh yes, they always had sheep in order to provide the wool that made their union suits and socks and mittons.

Q. Did your mother knit or weave?
A. They all did.

Q. Did she weave?
A. No.

Q. Did she spin?
A. Yes.

Q. So she would spin the yarn for her knitting?
A. She knitted personally and a time when they had it done commercially. At one time the whole family was knitting. Dad knitted, Mom knitted, I learned to knit from a woman that came to sit with us when the folks traveled down country. The girls all knitted.

Q. Why was it necessary that everyone knit?
A. Just to pass the time.

Q. You had enough need so it was enough to keep everyone going?
A. I suppose the folks could have done that, but we enjoyed it. There wasn't much going on, there was no TV.

Q. Were the union suits knit?
A. Yes.

Q. They were knitted. It's not like knitting mittons and stuff like that, there's a lot of knitting to that.
A. I recall their knitting, I remember that they talked about knitting when they were on the farm in Guerette. When I was a young man, they were available in the stores. You could buy the cheaper wool which was probably not as picky on your body as the old ones. I don't know how they could stand the old wool.

Q. Did your father complain of scratching or anything like that?
A. No, he did a lot of scratching.

Q. You mentioned that your parents went down state for a while?
A. My grandparents.

Q. What did they go downstate for?
A. Well, I guess he retired and they got tired of living in Guerette. They had a daughter, Martha, who was married to a Roy, who lived in a camp right next door. When they moved to Houlton for employment, they felt more or less alone. So they decided to move further
south where they had relatives. At the time, I had another uncle, Walter Belanger, married to one of the other daughters that lived in Waterville. They moved to Waterville and stayed there for a number of years. Then they came back and lived next to another daughter Ebba. Ebba Bar who lived in Enfield. That's where Grandmother died, Grandmother Laura, she died in 1948, shortly after her birthday. Her birthday was the second of October. We had finished potato harvest, I was working for Axel Tall at the time. We were in the process of building a potato house, he stored his potatoes elsewhere. I recall having to travel down for the funeral. Grandfather, he was quite a man, he remarried three times after that. He was in his nineties when he died.

Q. Did his wives keep dying on him?
A. Yes.

Q. Do you know their names?
A. No, I remember only Laura. I was never very close to my other grandmothers. He married four times.

Q. You get used to that after a while.
A. I guess so.

Q. Did your mother work outside the home at all?
A. Not after she...she worked in Lewiston, or Lewiston-Auburn in a couple of mills as a young lady.

Q. What kind of mills were those?
A. They made shirts and they also made bedding. She hired out first of all as a house maid, she worked for the Carlson family in Colby for quite a few years. She left there in the fall of 1918. I guess when she went to the city, she just loved it. On one of her treks back to Guerette, she met Dad. They probably had known each other for quite a few years, never went out, never was very serious. They married in 1929, she was twenty seven years old, he was twenty nine. He was born in 1898 in Guerette and they got married in 1929 so he was thirty one years old, she was twenty seven.

Q. Was she born in Guerette or St. Agatha?
A. Guerette.

Q. Do you know where your grandparents were born?
A. My Grandfather Albert and Gramma Laura were born in St. Agatha. Then they moved to the farm. I think for a while they owned two homes, the farm in Guerette and also the place where they resided in the winter time in St. Agatha. At the time I don't think there was a parish in Guerette, they would go to church in St. Agatha. They were baptized in St. Agatha and they did their confirmation in St. Agatha.

Q. Did your parents go to school in St. Agatha?
A. No, they had a small school house right next to the farm house. In fact, that's where Uncle Alphie and Aunt Martha lived for a while, they converted that to a...it was something like a log cabin...they converted that into a home. That's where they went to school. Dad didn't go to school very much, he spent most of his time babysitting, taking care of the other children. I guess he went to the second grade never completed it. Mum went as far as the sixth grade.

Q. In Guerette there was a problem for a while, paper companies and land ownership or something like that, did you ever hear anything about that?

A. No.

Q. Could you name your brothers and sister and would you know when they were born?

A. Approximately, they were about two years apart, I was born in 1930. Geneva, my older sister was born in 1932, born in June, born in a snowstorm.

Q. In June?

A. Seventh of June. Half the potato crop was in the ground, the oats were up about six inches. It completely covered the oats, covered the potatoes too.

Q. Did it ruin the crop?

A. No, it was the best year in crops they ever had. They called it poor man's fertilizer. He said there was a distinct difference between the potatoes he planted before the snow, and those he planted after the snow. They were much better before the snow.

Q. I wonder what would account for that?

A. There must be some mineral content. A lot of moisture if nothing else.

Carmen was born in 1934, March 10, 1934. Cecile was born in 1936, she was also in March wasn't she? September. I know there was two in March.

(Mrs. Albert) Rachael was in March 12th.

(Mr. Albert) Cecile was in 1936, Rachael was in 1938. Roger was born in 1943, there were two boys that were born in between Roger and Rachael. Mum had negative type blood and of course the children were all born at home, they didn't have treatment for it at the time, so the two boys died of yellow jaundice. They were only two or three days old. I remember that very well, just like it was yesterday. Roger was born in 1943, January 23, a big snow storm too. There was so much snow on the ground that all the roads were closed. The plow, it was driven by Ken Westman at the time, had gone up the hill, turned around and tried to make it back, he couldn't do it, so he left the truck right there and walked back to town. When the snow finally subsided, the only thing you could see was the end of the long handled wood shovel sticking out of the snow. The truck was completely covered. I had gone down in the morning to town to help the doctor up to the house and we
touched the telephone wires anywhere. That's what guided us back to the farmhouse. It was blowing.

Q. How did you get there on top of all that snow?
A. Walked.

Q. It must have been an awful walk.
A. Oh, yes. We lived up on top of the hill by the cemetery, walked down to Fogelin's store used to be.

Q. You must have been wading to your hips?
A. No, it drifted so bad and it packed as it was drifting, we walked right on the snowbank, no problem at all, didn't even use snowshoes.

Q. You walked from Fogelin's store?
A. I walked down to Fogelin's store and then back again. I remember that so well, you know Oreille Dufour, his father was buried that morning, and her father was related. Oreille's father and her father were brothers. He died in 1943 and that morning they buried him. They hauled his corpse in a casket on a small sled, couldn't use horses, just guided it down to the cemetery. Of course they buried them then, they couldn't keep them, dug a hole, the hole was full of water, they just dumped the casket down through the snow into the water, covered it up the best they could, finished it up in the spring. Dad heard that, he was recounting that to us, I didn't go to the funeral myself, kind of a sad way to do it.

There were four daughters and two boys in my father's family.

Q. Now this is your father's family?
A. Yes.

Q. Can you remember who the girls married, what their names were?
A. My sisters?

Q. These that you just named?
A. These are my sisters and brother. Do you want my sisters or Dad's?

Q. Now that we've named all these people who are your sisters...
A. If I can remember. They're all living. Geneva is married to Clarence Roy, he's also the brother of Alphie the one I mentioned a few minutes ago. He is not related, Alphie is an older boy of that Roy family who was married to my father's sister. Clarence is married to Geneva, who is the oldest of my sisters.

Q. So there's a connection.
A. They're living in East Millinocket, he works at the mill in East Millinocket, he's been there since in the 50's. They were married in 1954, I was in the service at the time. He was living in
Patten at the time, but was working in East Millinocket. The mill had just opened, he's been working there ever since, they've raised a good sized family.

Carmen lives in Enfield, Connecticut, she had a good job, she was the director of a huge beverage plant, whiskey. He works for a sugar plant in Connecticut, they deal in warehousing preceding shipping.

Q. Did you give his name?

A. Rosaire, that's another brother, Clarence and Rosaire are brothers married my two sisters.

Then there's Richard Levesque, who has recently moved to Caribou, formerly lived in Stockholm, he's a barber in Caribou. She works for Health and Welfare office.

Q. What's her name?

A. Cecile. Rachael is married to Irving Cyr, Cyr Brothers, right now he's vice president of the Cyr Corporation, they live in Caribou.

Roger married Louise Clavette from Van Buren, they presently live in Hamlin and he works for...right now he's laid off because nobody is working in the woods. He enjoys that type of work.

Q. Could you name your aunts and uncles on your father's side?

A. I never knew Albert because he died in 1918, that was the only brother Dad had of the first marriage.

Q. His name was Albert Albert?

A. Albert Albert. There was only one other boy in the second marriage and that was Eddie. He lived in Dickey Brook for a while, he was married to Mamie Bouchard. Jobs were scarce so he moved to Augusta, Hallowell, that's where he made his home for part of his married life. They had two children. He was an excellent carpenter, he died of cancer in 1956.

Q. You say he was a carpenter, did he do furniture as well as...

A. Yes, he was a finish carpenter and a rough carpenter, both. He picked that up himself, he just loved it. He was my favorite uncle, of course he was the only uncle I had on my father's side. We were very close and I visited him often. He took pride in taking me out and showing me the things he had built, houses he he had built, furniture he had finished off.

Q. Was his furniture modern style or was it traditional style?

A. It was French style.

Q. Where did he pick up French style, did he ever mention where he learned to do it?

A. No, he never mentioned it. On my father's side there were several girls. Eva was the oldest, she was married to Pat Bar, they lived in Enfield. Then there was Martha, who was married to Alphie Roy; Helen who was married to Walter Belanger. Those are the only ones
that I really knew.

On my mother's side, I don't remember the name of the oldest girl; Aldina; there was Rose; Estelle was the youngest. Rose was a girl that they had raised, she was not their blood daughter, she was just like one of the family.

Q. Do you know where she came from?

A. No, I don't really know. She probably was related some way. Probably one of the girls had a baby, I don't know, I know they raised her, she was just like one of the family. There was... what was Hebert's wife's name... Yvonne, she's still living in Lewiston. Those were the girls; Leona, Aldina, Estelle and Yvonne, and Rose their adopted daughter. There was quite a few boys. Teddy was the oldest one, he died when I was very young. He was walking along the street somewheres, I think it was around Lewiston and they found him the next morning, he had been hit by a plow. When they found him, he was dead. There was Uncle Fred who lived in Guerette most of his life, he died there. There was Leo who lived in Lewiston; Edmond who lived in Fort Kent. These have all passed away. Donat lives in Lewiston, he's been a carpenter all his life, he's still living, in fact, he's in his eighties and he's still doing carpenter work. There is Uncle Albert, he lives in Bingham and I have another uncle, Wilfred who lives in Chester, Massachusetts, he's not feeling too well, he's blind.

Q. What is the surname of all these people?

A. They're all Lagasses. All of them were carpenters by trade, all of them except one, the youngest one.

Q. Did they learn from their father?

A. Yes and no. The father was not really a carpenter by trade, although he did do some of it. He was a farmer and quite a successful farmer at that. They had their own sawmill, in fact, that was THE sawmill in Guerette. It provided the lumber for anyone who was building.

Q. Do you know the name of the sawmill?

A. Lagasse Saw Mill. It was located, if you travel north through the woods and you reach Guerette, at the present time there's a house on the right and a barn that just recently fell down. There's another farm which used to be the Hebert farm, now it's owned by Daigles. Their farm was right opposite, on the other side of the road. The house was built three different times and all three times it burned down. There are no buildings left there at all. Then they built a smaller house where they retired in front of the Catholic Church and that's burned down since. They weren't living there at the time. Grandfather George Lagasse died in 1949 and my grandmother died while I was in the service, that was in the 50's.

Q. Where did you go to school?
A. I went to grammar school here in Stockholm for eight years. We had a two year high school at the time, so I completed my first year of high school here and then I discontinued it, so I had to go somewhere else, so I went to Caribou. Transportation was a problem, we went which ever way was handiest or what was available we hitch-hiked, we took the train down to Caribou and back.

Q. You must have boarded there a little bit.
A. No.

Q. You went there every day?
A. Everyday. I traveled with whomever I could find a ride with.

Q. Did you ever miss any school?
A. No.

Q. Did you have a place down there where you could stay if you couldn't make it back here?
A. No, we made it back.

Q. It must have been really difficult in the winter.
A. We would come home sometimes on the train, the train would leave Caribou at eleven on a normal schedule, sometimes it wouldn't get there until the wee hours of the morning because of storms down below. So we slept right there in the station until the train arrived. I saw many times getting into Stockholm, the sun was up, get off the train, walk up to the house, change clothes have breakfast, walk back down, take the train back. It was the hard way of getting to school.

Q. You did that for two years?
A. No, I completed my tenth year in Caribou and Dad had great aspirations for me to become a priest, so he insisted that I go to a Catholic School. I was accepted at Biddeford, Biddeford School was operated by the Franciscian Fathers. Father Thibodeau of Fort Kent...

Q. Do you know the name of the school?
A. Off hand, no. It was called St Francis, St. Francis School in Biddeford. That became a two year college later, much later a four year college. I think it's Bowdoin at the present time. I completed my eleventh year there. In the spring of that year Dad wasn't feeling well at all, he'd passed out a couple of times so he went to the Lahey Clinic in Boston and they determined he was anemic, severely anemic. He wasn't capable of planting himself, so I did my exams earlier, I came home to plant the crop. He never felt well the entire summer, so I didn't go back. In the fall I went back to CAribou and we arranged different transportation. Axel Tall, who lives above us, was a school teacher, I worked a deal with him, to commute with him every day. He used to pick me up right in front of the house and delivered me right in front of
the house. They didn't provide transportation like they do today.

Q. What year did you graduate from high school?
A. 1948.

Q. So this was just after the war?
A. After the second World War, yes.

Q. Going to Caribou every day.
A. I'm still going to Caribou every day, the same school I graduated from.

Q. Which one is that?
A. The old high school is now the Junior High. I've been going to school for a long time, since 1937 with a few years in between, I guess.

Q. What was school like here in Stockholm?
A. Well, there were huge classes, there were an excess of thirty in some classes.

Q. More than one grade to a class?
A. There were two grades to a room. I suppose that's the reason that there were over thirty because of the two grades.

Q. Were there any things that you took up in school that you don't take up now?
A. No, it's about the same.

Q. This is a town where there's a mixture of French and Swedish, were there things introduced in school that you don't think would have been in other schools, things from Swedish culture and French culture?
A. They weren't so up on culture as they are today. There were a lot of students that didn't speak French or didn't speak Swedish or didn't speak English. In fact, when I started school, I knew more Swedish than I knew English. We were brought up amongst a Swedish community. We were only French family on South Main Hill, we were surrounded by Swedés.

Q. Your father was a farmer?
A. That's right.

Q. There were only two French farmers in all of Stockholm, weren't there?
A. Well, Joe Plourde who lived up in Little California, there was Florence Plourde who lived up on Donworth Street, and there was the Albert family, the only three French farmers.
Q. So you were up with the Swedes, what was it like up there?

A. It was all right. Most of them didn't think that we were going to make it, because a lot of people that had lived there before hadn't stayed very long, they moved out.

Q. Do you mean because of the land?

A. No, at one time the French and the Swedish people didn't get along that well. The Swedish people were a proud people. I guess the French were also proud, but the two didn't see eye to eye on a lot of issues. I guess maybe we were until we made a name for ourselves. They didn't think that Pat Albert was going to be able to make it. If it hadn't been for a few of the Swedish families who appreciated us, we probably would have left. Albert Hjulstrom who lived right across the road from us, just as kind hearted as he could be, he helped us in a lot of ways. He was an established farmer, he had been there a number of years. He was the type of person who didn't squander his money away, he believed in looking out for tomorrow, so he had some money put away. There were times when you needed to buy things and the money wasn't there, we borrowed from him and we paid it back. He was probably one of the only ones who would have dared to do that.

Q. He must have offered a lot of advice too.

A. We had a difficult time making ends meet. The first year Dad planted potatoes, they sold for 10¢ a barrel. He sold half of the crop for that price and the rest of them he hauled them in the field. There was no market for them. The following year I think he didn't sell potatoes, he hauled them right out in the field in the spring. He wasn't paying the mortgage very fast that way, and he still needed equipment and he still needed horses so he had to buy them. He worked on the roads in the summer time, helped roll the roads in the winter time with a team of horses. They all got together you know. A certain farmer would hook up a team and go a distance and then another farmer would...

Q. The roller would stay, they would just keep attaching to the roller.

A. That's right, they'd go from one end of the town to the other with the roller. The remains of that roller are up on Clarence Anderson's farm, on the hill. I remember that very well.

Q. How late would they roll the roads?

A. Until the snow started to melt in the spring, to a level where they would use a scraper to make two furrows. That would scrape the snow down to a hard surface and leave enough place for the two wheels of an automobile to pass through. Until that point in time the cars were away for the winter. Probably late March or early April you start looking forward to cleaning out some snow in the roads so you could operate the automobile.

Q. It must have been a tricky transition time when you didn't know whether to roll or plow.
A. No, they were never that anxious, they knew when winter was there and when spring came. I suppose they got fooled on occasion, but not too often. They weren't in a big hurry about it.

Q. When the snow would melt, would it go off the fields before it went off the roads completely?

A. Well, it never melted until the first part of June. Winters seemed awful long, in those days, I can remember. My birthday is May 4, I can remember a lot of years the ground was completely covered with snow, just hoping for it to melt. Probably the latter part of April was the time when they would scrape the roads. They didn't have a plow, it was a wooden type of sled that had two metal spades hooked up in front. They pulled that with horses, it would plow two furrows, it had wings that shifted the snow from either side. In certain spots they would make a double track so when you met a car, you would have a chance to allow the car to go by.

Q. It must have been tricky on the hills?

A. It had one or two spots where you could meet. There weren't that many cars anyway, so it didn't make that much difference.

Q. Your father grew potatoes?

A. Raised potatoes, we raised wheat, buckwheat, oats.

Q. Did you mill your buckwheat or did you used to plow it under?

A. Milled it.

Q. Where did you have it milled?

A. Up to Corriveau's in Frenchville. We also brought it up to... they had a Corriveau Mill in Fort Kent. I think part of the machinery that was in Fort Kent eventually moved to Frenchville, some of it went to Madawaska. Remember the fellow who we used to pick up some flour from? Was it a Hebert family? (Mrs. Albert) I can't think of his first name. (Mr. Albert) Issac? In St. David, there used to be a grist mill up there too. We were a buckwheat family, we loved ployes.

Q. You were the only ones who grew buckwheat around here?

A. I think we were the only ones who grew it for buckwheat flour.

Q. So a lot of the buckwheat flour sold around here to French families would have come from your farm?

A. Some of it.

Q. How did it get to them, did your father used to sell the flour to the stores around here?

A. They would buy it right from us. We weren't the only suppliers, we didn't raise that much. I think the stores probably purchased their flour from the same grist mill, from Corriveaus. You had a lot of French families that lived in town, most French families
loved ployes.

Q. Did you raise cattle, sheep?
A. We always had cows, we had six or seven cows, a flock of sheep.

Q. Would you ever slaughter the sheep for meat? Or were they strictly for wool?
A. Oh, yes we had lamb.

Q. So you had lamb now and then?
A. It was so sweet I didn't care for it.

Q. Would your mother prepare it any special way?
A. No different than she would prepare beef roast. I never cared for the oily taste of the sheep meat. It was hard to get rid of that lanolin taste, like wool. We had a lot of lambs that stayed right with me, take all that away we wouldn't have much left. We probably would butcher one or two lambs in the course of a year. The rest of them we sold to Johnson's in Caribou. That's the one who used to own the present Cyr Meat Packing. The real reason for growing them was for wool.

Q. You mentioned that you know quite a bit of Swedish, did you learn your Swedish from the other kids in the neighborhood?
A. If I recall correctly, there weren't any young ones. Most of the children of the Swedish families were grown up, on the hill. Albert Hjulstrom's had one daughter, she was born when I was a young man. They were our next door neighbors. The Peterson family that lived where Bob Kirchman lives now, their children were all grown up and married. The only other boy that I knew of, I grew up with was Don Nickerson across the road. The others didn't have any young children. The young children that we met were the ones that went to school, that came from town.

Q. How did you learn your Swedish?
A. There were some people who didn't know how to speak English. The real Swedish families that lived on the hill didn't speak a word of English. So how can you communicate? You learn to communicate in Swedish.

Q. You learned just from contact with them?
A. That's right. The very same way that you would learn any language.

Q. Were you pretty fleunnt in Swedish?
A. Oh no, I never was, but I could get by, but I knew more Swedish than English when I started school, of course I spoke French.

Q. Could you name some ways in which Swedish culture is radically different from French culture? The closeness of the families, was
it much the same with the Swedish and the French?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. What about customs and things like that, were there any Swedish customs that stand out in your mind because they were so different than what you were used to?

A. No, I don't think so. We probably didn't see that difference because we may have copied or done much the same things that the Swedish people did. The Swedish people had their own style of dancing, although most of them danced the waltz, they still do.

Q. What was their style of dancing?

A. They had what was known as the Swedish Hop which was quite popular.

Q. What did that look like?

A. Probably similar to a polka, only more jumping to it.

Q. Was the music really lively that they would do that to?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. As lively as what the French would jig to?

A. You probably have more numbers in French music that you could jig to, than you have Swedish hops.

Q. When the Swedish would do their Swedish hop, what music would they go to?

A. Either accordian or piano, where the French would use fiddle. When I was growing up, dancing wasn't that popular anyway, it was frowned upon. It was frowned upon by our church, it was also frowned upon by many Swedish people. We didn't do much dancing. That changed a little as I became a young man and went into adulthood.

Q. What about food, their food must have been radically different.

A. They had this Swedish biscuit which they, I find probably is much different from the French, they used to dunk in hot coffee or hot tea in order to be able to eat it. I don't recall what they called it.

Q. In your family, did you copy any of their food?

A. No.

Q. You stayed strictly to the things...

A. Things that we were brought up with. That's the only thing that I noticed was really different, it was hard bread really. It was covered over with a sweetner. In order to be able to munch it, you had to dunk it in some hot liquid. That's about the only thing I noticed, that I remember. Some of them adopted the ployes. The Swedish families learned to enjoy the ployes from the French. I
think that's really a French delicacy anyway.

Q. Only to the St. John Valley, you don't find it anywhere else but the people who are in the valley. I consider this part of the valley. Family groups that came from the valley and settled someplace else like down in Waterville, but their families were originally from the valley. It originates in the valley. You say a lot of Swedish families enjoyed them also?

A. You want to go to Black Joe's for instance, I don't know if he owns it now or not, it used to be the Sporting Club in Sinclair. That was one of the things he offered. He offered steak meals and also offered ployes. A lot of Swedish families went up there to eat just like the Frenchman. They enjoyed that.

Q. Were there very many times you would go to eat in Swedish homes and they would come to your home to eat? Was there very much of that?

A. No. The only way I got to enjoy Swedish food, I worked for a Swedish family, on two different occasions. I worked for Axel Tall for a whole year and I worked for Harold Anderson two years before I went into the service.

Q. Did they have pretty much a meat and potatoes fare the way we do?

A. Yes, about the same style. There were special dishes I guess on holidays. One of them was lutfisk, although I never tasted it. That was a favorite dish of theirs.

Q. What was that like?

A. I think it was fish that was put in a type of brine or lye, it did something to it, cooked it. I never tasted it, but I remember the name, lutfisk. The families we were closest to were the Hjulstroms and the Talls, they lived right next door. There was an old man, John Tall, he was an uncle of Axel. I don't recall that he ever spoke a word of English.

Q. Were they tall people?

A. He was quite tall. I remember when he was over ninety years old, he was out plowing the farm on a sulky plow. It was rigged up in such a way that he would depress a lever on the seat and the plow would raise itself. He had a hard time when it would get stuck on the rocks, then he would have to get off and try to loosen it up. He was plowing when he was ninety two or ninety six.

Q. To get back to school, you mentioned there were two grades to each room. Were there any teachers that you particularly remember?

A. My first grade teacher was Hjelm. She's a sister to Axel Tall's wife. I don't know if I remember her because she was such a nice looking lady, I know she was a very special teacher. I've only met her once since then, I think it was two summers ago, I was doing some work up to Axel's, and I saw her there. She came up for a visit, they live out in the mid west. I don't remember most of my other teachers. I remember a Soderstrom woman, and I remember Axel Tall
distinctly. Axel Tall started teaching when he was only sixteen years of age, taught in Caribou and taught here in Stockholm. He was my seventh grade teacher. In the eighth grade I had a whole slew of teachers. They just couldn't seem to keep teachers that year. I had seven or eight different teachers. My freshman year we had Merrita Anderson, who lives in Stockholm. She married Frederick Anderson, she's a girl from Bangor, an excellent teacher. She taught in the Caribou school system for many, many years, she's now retired. I remember her very well, Axel Tall very well and the Hjelm person. The other...there was a Borjeson woman who taught school but not while I was going to school. I had her as one of the teachers when I taught here in 1961 to 1968. There was also a Mrs. Södergren, she's also retired. That's all the teachers I really remember.

Q. It must have been a big difference when you went to Caribou? What was your first impression when you got to Caribou?

A. I was lost like most kids are today when they go to a different school.'

Q. Were there a lot of things you could get there that you couldn't get here?

A. Oh, yes. When I went to Caribou my first year, I was able to take a course in agriculture, which wasn't offered in Stockholm the school wasn't large enough.

Q. Were you able to point anything out to your father?

A. My father was interested in education, but he never really understood. He had problems himself, for one thing, when he got married he had been denied an education, it wasn't like he didn't want to go to school. He had been denied that opportunity and he wasn't going to deny it to his children. One thing he made sure of was that we went to school. In fact, at one point of time when I was in, I think it was my first year in Caribou, I wanted to quit school so bad, I was so fed up with it. He had his way, he convinced me, he put me to work down on the bottom of the farm the following summer. He managed to plead with me and convince me that I should stay in school, and during the summer he made sure that I was going back to school the next fall by giving me a job on bottom of the farm clearing a piece of land. The flies were what bothered me most, I was so fed up with fighting flies, black flies, I was all eaten up. I promised myself then that if there was any possibility I was going to do anything else other than farming for a livelihood, so he never had to twist my arm again to get me back to school.

Q. So you went back to school and ended up in education?

A. Well, not right away. I graduated in 1948, I worked on the farm for Axel Tall the first year out of school. Then I went to work on the base as a carpenter's helper that fall, was laid off early in January, then went to work for Harold Anderson for two years.

Q. Farming again?
A. Farming, then I decided to take a hitch in the service, the Korean War was on, I didn't want to be drafted, so I joined the Air Force. I enlisted in the Air Force December 6, 1950. I was there four years.

Q. What was your specialty in the service?

A. I was a petroleum specialist. Of course having been brought up on a farm, I was familiar with equipment, I thought I would stick with equipment. That might have been my downfall. I had a lot of leadership qualities that I didn't know about. I started out by working in the motor pool right out of basic and my first assignment was in Ohio. There was so little work to be done driving truck, that they put me in charge of operating a vehicle for the mess halls. I spent more time writing up menus than I did driving truck, so I stayed there for two months. Then they decided to ship me overseas, I went to Texas for processing, came back to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, then went over to Cassablanca. I was stationed in Cassablanca, Africa for two years. One of the guys that almost had me courtmartialed while I was stationed in Dayton, Ohio, for driving a truck in the city in other than a class A uniform, I was wearing fatigue. The sergeant in the messhall had given me a special errand to run, so I went to the store, it must have been reported by someone, because as I walked out of the store with the supplies and EM requisition, there were two AP's there. They wrote me up and gave me a ticket for being out of uniform. I had to appear before my commanding officer to explain what had happened. He was going to give me an article 15, I fought like the dickens to avoid that. It was the sergeant of that squadron that had insisted to the CO that I get an article 15. He must have kept his eyes on me, kept tabs on me, because he followed me down to Texas, followed me back to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey and followed me overseas.

Q. He didn't like you.

A. He didn't like me, no. He came over to me one day and asked me if I would like to join the refueling section. I said, "I don't know the first thing about it." He said, "We'll teach you." So I finally joined the refueling outfit. We didn't have any tankers that were worth much. They had left some over there after the second World War, put in moth balls. We spent the first month just cleaning that equipment, taking the grease of it, making sure they were operational. We tore down engines, repaired them. Then I left that section for almost two months and became an interpreter. I had taken French in school, four years of French in high school and taken three years of Latin, so I was well versed in French, I could speak it, write it, and read it. All I did for those six weeks, two months, took my time, was act as an interpreter, to help officers to find places to live so they could bring their families over. They provided me with my own Jeep, I saw a lot of Northern Africa, wrote up contracts for them, found them places to live. I saw a lot of Africa. Then I went back to the refueling section and worked there for two years, drove a semi-truck and was a dispatcher. I became a sergeant eighteen months after I was in the service and I was in charge of the petroleum section overseas. When I was shipped back state side, they hadn't changed my MO and they were going to put me back in the motor pool. I objected strongly, so
I went to take the test and they gave me my MO 60350, which was petroleum specialist. I stayed in that refueling section until I got out of the service in 1954.

Q. Why did you get out of the service in 1954?

A. Well, my wife and I had married in 1953, she didn't particularly care for the service and I was a little fed up with it too. There were some boys in the service that give you the same type of problems as some kids give you today in school. They didn't want to work, didn't want to do anything. I hated being away from home, I guess I probably could have learned to tolerate it, but the wife didn't care for it. My parents didn't particularly care for my being in the service, they wanted me back home. So I got out of the service, I had to talk my way out of it, I had to appear before a board of officers twice, explaining to them why I didn't want to stay in. They had offered me a tech-sergeant promotion and I would become the chief officer, non-commissioned officer, of that whole petroleum section in Topeka, Kansas. I decided not to. They also offered that I go to school, officer's school, I chickened out on that. I also had the opportunity to go to flight training, which I didn't take. I probably should have stayed in there and taken one or the other. When I came out of the service, we had one child, we moved to Connecticut and stayed there about a year, moved from one job to another, never really could find satisfaction.

Q. What kind of jobs were you doing?

A. My first job was a carpenter's job, I worked there for a month, then there was no more work, so I was laid off. I went to work for Whitney Chain, making links for chains, that was the most boring job I ever had. I left there a month later, I had no fingernails left, they were completely chewed off. My job was to take links which had been punched out by one machine, arrange them, they had to be placed in a certain manner, in a forward position. You collected them in bunches and put them down in a jacket and they went to another press. They were alike so that they fit almost exactly with the very minimum of tolerance. I got kind of fed up with that, the pay wasn't that good either. One of her uncles offered me a job working in Bon Baking, so I went to Bon Baking Company for six months in packing and shipping. There was a man who was working there part time and he was also an educator, he worked in schools during the day. He was working on his master's program, we developed a good friendship. He offered me to take some tests to determine if I had ability in education or wherever I had abilities. The test indicated that I had good leadership qualities which I had learned about in the service. There was potential for me becoming an educator. So one day my wife and I decided to come back home, we could make a living right here, there was no sense trying anywhere else. In late summer we drove back to Stockholm, we lived with Dad and Mum for a while. I worked for Harold Anderson that fall in the potato house. We went to Madawaska, St. David, to help her father finish the crop. I worked for Philip Pelletier's son up in Fort Kent. After the potatoes were all over, there wasn't too much going on. I had applied for diesel machanic's school and I guess I probably would have been accepted, but it took so long for them to respond.
In the meantime I checked around, I went to garages to look for work and there was no work available. So I decided to take advantage of the G. I. Bill and go to school. In 1955 I guess in the fall, school had already been in session for three or four weeks. I went to see Joe Fox, he was the president of the Fort Kent Normal School, at the time it was called Madawaska Training School and he accepted me gladly. I was the only veteran going to that school at the time. I completed three years there and transferred to Presque Isle. Went to school two years, worked part time in order to help the family, because the family was growing all the time too while I was going to school. We had a daughter who was born in the summer of 1955, that was Pat. Ken was born while I was in the service.

Q. Was that around '56? No, it couldn't have been.

A. I got out of the service in '54, we got married in '53, Ken was born in May of '54. Pat was born in '55, I had a kid one year apart. I was working for Fred Soucy for a while, did all kinds of odds and ends, hauled trash, cleaned out latrines, cleaned out old outhouses, hauled oats, did just about everything imaginable, worked in the garage as a machanic. Worked at J.C. Penny's on a part time basis, anything to get a dollar to help the family. At the end of two years, the whole family was just about out of clothes, we didn't have any money, so I decided to go to work. I became assistant manager at J.C. Penny's for a year. There were certain people I just couldn't get along with in that store. One of them was the girl who was a secretary, we just didn't make it off together, so I decided I wasn't going to stay there, so I went back to school. I convinced myself then and there that I was going to become an educator. It took a long time to decide, so in 1958, I went back to school as a third year student, it was a three year program then, graduated in the spring of '59. We continued to live in Fort Kent that summer and I got a job with my uncle Edward Lagasse, who is an experienced carpenter, they were building houses at the base in Caswell. He offered me a job that summer to earn enough money to go back to school, it was a good job. I learned a lot about carpentry, electricity, plumbing. I use all those trades to my benefit today. I went to Presque Isle in the fall of '59, we moved the family to Blaine and commuted that every day, back and forth. I graduated in the spring of '60, I was thirty years old.

Q. Why Blaine?

A. There was no other place for us. We tried to live in Presque Isle, we couldn't find a decent rent.

Q. The base was really going then.

A. That's right, so there was not too many houses available for rent, that's why we moved to Blaine.

Q. You named a couple of your children, could you name the rest of them now?

A. Ken is the oldest, born in '54, he's married to Earline Doucette from Hamlin, they don't have any children as yet. He's going to school, he's a fourth year student at Presque Isle. He's been a
major in business administration. She works at the Arthur R. Gould Hospital in, I don't know what you call the division now, she gets all the utensils ready for the operations. I guess they plan to move to the southern part of the state as soon as he finishes school. They would like to move to the area around Portland, probably more opportunities, even southern New Hampshire.

Patricia is my oldest daughter, married to Gary Canning a boy from Caribou, who I remember from school. I was a science teacher in Caribou, he came over to see me a number of times for some help on a project, little did I realize then that he was going to become my son-in-law. He joined the service before he was married, joined the Navy, went to schools, some of the finest schools, became an electronics specialist. He's now out of the service and he works for the hospitals in the Boston area, works on catscanners, installs them, repairs them, keeps them operational. They live in Derry, New Hampshire, just love it there, have one daughter, her name is Elizabeth, she's our only grandchild.

We have three other grandchildren that we almost call our own. Those are the children of Janice Jackson, she lived with us for a while, she's just like our daughter, very close to Patsy and just like our own daughter. We almost call those children our grandchildren, so I guess you could say we have four.

Carol, who's a nurse at Eastern Maine Medical, she went to school there recently, graduated last spring, just loves her job. One of the few people I know that really enjoys what she's doing.

Jeanine is a third year student at U.M.P.I., she's going into social work. She's a sociology and psychology major.

Roland, he's the next to the oldest son, he stays at home, he's had a harder time in life.

I have Michael, he's the youngest, he's been through quite a few experiences. He's had two major operations for his heart.

I have Alan who's in the other room right now. So there's three boys living at home, and there's three daughters. So we have seven children, three daughters and four boys.

Q. Could you tell me what your wife's name is?

Q. How did you meet your wife?
A. 1949 was the first time I met her. She met me in 1947 unknown to me. Her uncle Medley, who was Oreille's father, lived here in Stockholm, and when one of their daughters got married, Theresa, the wedding took place here at Eureka Hall and the whole family had come down for the wedding. She remembers seeing me, but I don't remember seeing her. I guess probably through an aunt of hers or Oreille's mother we were more or less introduced. There wasn't too much activity going on in this particular area at the time. Oreille and I used to travel to dances to the French country, Edmunston and Madawaska and Fort Kent. That's where I met her, met her at a dance. It's a small world, I guess, we started discussing relationships, how her and Oreille were related and what-not. So we became kind of serious, at least I became kind of serious at first. Then we broke off in the fall of 1950, I went into the service. I guess it was 1951, latter part of 1951 we started writing to each other again. I came home on leave, go up and see her. We got engaged in '52, got married in '53.
Q. Is she from a large family?

A. Fourteen children in her family. Eleven of them were living until Bert passed away in 1976.

Q. Could you name them, or would you rather have her name them?

A. I can name them. The oldest one is Ronald, married to Mabel Pelletier, they live in New Britain, Connecticut. He works for Pratt and Whitney Aircraft, a company which I would have liked to join, by the way. I tried to get in there when I was living in Connecticut. I put my application in, I went in for several interviews. It was not until I enrolled in Fort Kent, going to school, that they called me, wanting me to go down and work for them. But I wasn't going back.

The next to the oldest, a month difference with my age, Willard married to Clair, they live in Connecticut. The next oldest is Gilman, he lives in Southington, Connecticut; there's Joel, he lives in Plainville; Bert who died in 1976; there was Angela, married to Eldon Thibeau, they live in Enfield; there's another boy, he lives in East Hartford; Bernadette, married to George Olay, lives in St. John, New Brunswick, he's an adjuster for an insurance company; Joyce Martin, she's the baby of the family, she's married to Frank Martin of Frenchville, they own the Martin Shell on the corner of 162 and route 1. Did I forget any of them? Oh, Fern, he lives in Plainville. Joel lives right next to New Britain. This is the old man, it's a picture of the 50th anniversary they celebrated in 1976.

Q. Is she still alive?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. She looks very familiar.

A. Melba. She lives right across the road from Frank Martin's. Melba St. Amand.

Q. Do you know her grandparent's names?

A. No, but she does. Is she still on the phone?

Q. Well, we'll catch her later. Where did you go to church?

A. St. Theresa's.

Q. When you started going, was the church built then?

A. Oh, yes. It was built in 1928, I wasn't even born then. The first priest that I remember was Father George Cyr. There was one before him, Father Cremillon, I don't remember him. The first one I remember is Father George Cyr. I remember him very well because I became an altar boy for him. He was here for fourteen years.
Q. What was he like?

A. A very kind man. He had a violent temper, but it was only a spur of the moment thing. You would notice that especially when you played cards. He just loved to play cards, Charlemagne especially. His partner wasn't making the right moves, he got upset with his partner and the ones that were with him, that's the only time you noticed that he got upset. He was a very religious man, I considered him a saint, a very saintly man.

Q. Do you know where he went after he left Stockholm?

A. He left here and went to Wallaggrass.

Q. Was he ever made monsignor?

A. Yes.

Q. He was the monsignor here from Madawaska then?

A. No. This is a different monsignor. This pastor that we had is Father George E. Cyr. The Cyr that you're talking about, Monsignor Cyr arrived at Fort Kent, and he was at the parish in Madawaska, St. Thomas in Madawaska for a while. I don't think they are even related. This George Cyr that was pastor here came from Waterville, he came from a family of bridge builders, in fact, he was quite a cement man. Each priest that have come here have had a particular thing that they enjoyed doing. That was his speciality. If there was any type of brick laying or cement pouring, that was his speciality. Someone else it was in the area of carpentry or grounds or something like that. I remember he came here in 1937 or left here in 1937.

Q. And he had been here for thirteen years?

A. Yes.

Q. He would have to come in 1924 then.

A. That's not correct either.

Q. The church was built in 1928.

A. Father Cremillon was here. I think '37 is right, he came in '37 and left in...

Q. 1950?

A. 1950, he left before, when I left to go into the service, Father Augey was here, he had been here for two years.

Q. What priest married you?

A. I wasn't married here in Stockholm, I was married in St. David, Father Soucy married us.

Q. Mrs. Albert, we already have your brothers and sisters, could you name your grandparents?
A. I can name the one on my father’s side, Lausier, and my grandmother...I know her name but I can’t remember it. I was only eight years old when she died.

On my mother’s side, her father is Paul St. Amand. I had everything on a piece of paper, I had them on both sides.

Q. Were they both from St. David?

A. was from St. David, and my mother was from St. Agatha.

Q. Were there any stories that came down in your family about where your family was from or anything like that?

A. I never really asked.

Q. What about you Roland, were there any stories about where your family was from?

A. Dad mentioned a number of times that he thought we had come from Acadia, but that was all his own invention. His real ties were around St. Agatha. He knew an awful lot of people around the St. Agatha area, Chasses especially. There’s relation there between the Chasses and the Alberts, but I can’t connect the two together.

(Mrs. Albert) A couple of years ago or a year ago, we started taking names and every time we would go home and ask Mom and Dad about their families and we traced them as far back as we could. We had them on a piece of paper, I don’t know where that paper is.

Q. Did any of your parents work in the mill?

A. (Mr. Albert) My Dad worked in the mill for a while, I think it was a summer, two summers. He came and lived with the Jim Gagnon residence with was on Lake Street.

Q. He didn’t enjoy working in the mill?

A. He preferred working on a farm and working in the woods to working in the mill.

Q. You say there was some tall stories about the mill?

A. Oh yes, a lot of people have lost their lives, especially in the tower where they made the... in the veneer mill, where they used to put the logs in and let them soak in hot water mixed with acid. I guess they used it to debark or soften it up so they could make it into sheets as they put it on lathes. A lot of people lost their lives.

Q. Falling in the tank.

A. They told a story of one guy who fell in and it just happened that it was a weekend and they had just shut the furnace down, the water was cold. As he hit the water he was sure he was gone, he hit cold water, so he lived to tell about it.

Q. He was lucky.
A. One of the people that died I guess was Willie Plourde. There was also a Willie Rossignol that died in that.

Q. Seems to me there was a Derosier too.

A. Quite a few people lost their lives. It was unguarded and especially in the winter time when there was a lot of fog or steam in that particular area, it was easy enough to walk right into it, you'd never know what hit you. Some of them I don't think they ever found, just cooked.

Q. There was acid in that water too.

A. Yes, sulphuric acid. He never worked in the mill very long. One of the jobs that he had to help the family out while the years were bad on the farm was to haul mail from Stockholm to Guerette. He had an old Essex that he used in the summer time. He didn't use the car all the time either, in the beginning I don't think he could afford a car so he had a pony which he attached to a two wheel gig. He used to make it up to Guerette and back in two, three hours. Left around noon time, was back in early afternoon, enough time to work on the farm. He used a sled in the winter time, small sled. He did that for quite a few years.

Now where were we...

(Mrs. Albert) My grandfather on my mother's side married twice. I was about three years old when he died. I never knew my grandmother. We don't talk too much about it, my mother would mention it now and then.

Q. Were you one of the younger children in your family?

A. I'm one of the oldest.

Q. The younger ones heard even less.

A. That's right. The kids wanted to trace back a few years ago in school.

(Mr. Albert) Her father's name was Paul, he was the son of Joseph Dufour who was the son of Abraham Dufour, and that's as far as we have been able to go back on her father's side. Her grandmother's name was Flavie, it doesn't give her maiden name, she died in 1940. That's all we know there. Some of the children, brothers and sisters of Mr. Dufour.

Q. Which Mr. Dufour was that?

A. Her father, Paul. There was Josephine, I think she was the oldest of the daughters. There was Olive, Nina, Alice, Bertha, Lizanne, Jeanette, Marie. There were only three boys: Medley; Ernest, who is still alive; and Paul. Medley passed away in 1943.

This one person that I forgot on my mother's side.

Q. Now your talking about your mother's side?

A. Yes. Romeo. I never knew Romeo.

Q. Romeo would be an uncle, you mean?
A. Yes, Romeo Lagasse. He was a severe epileptic and it affected his mind so terribly that they had to place him in a home. He spent most of his life in Pineland, he died only last year. I never met him, although I did meet some people from Pineland. I guess we've named just about all... on her mother's side, her mother's grandparent was Paul St. Amand and he died in 1936, he's buried in Grand Isle. There were five children, all girls. Alma, Amelia who was her mother, Ethelyn who lives in Augusta. I said all girls, there were four girls and two boys. Neil who is deceased, and Eric who lives in Madawaska. He worked in the mills many years and retired from the mills. That's about all we know on genealogy. (Mrs. Albert) I had two of my brothers who worked in the mills in Madawaska. The oldest one Ronald worked there for, probably three years. After he got married he went down to Connecticut. Roland worked there for quite a few years.
(Mr. Albert) My grandmother's mother's name, my grandmother Laura Bourgoine, her mother was Maryanne Ouellette, and my grandfather on my mother's side who was named George, was the son of Zephan Lagasse.

Q. You've been talking about your father working in the mills, about the tanks and things like that, did you ever hear of any complaints or old songs written about anyone who fell in the tanks or anything like that?

A. No.

Q. Were there any other stories you've heard about the mills, other than people falling in the tanks?

A. That's about all I remember about the mills.

Q. Were you ever in the mills?

A. No, the mills were completely demolished by the time I was old enough. The only thing that I recall of the mill is the foundation on which they later built a sawmill that was owned by Sam Antworth of Houlton. I've made several trips around that area in order to get to where we went fishing. Two years ago I came across the foundation where they used to have a huge furnace to heat up the water for the mills. The only mill I remember in existence is the shingle mill, that was owned by Sam Collins, and the lumber mill.

Q. Where was that located?

A. That was located on the north side of the river, east of the bridge. That burned, the last time it burned, they moved the sawmill to Caribou.

Q. Do you remember when that was?

A. That was in 1940...it was in the war years, '43 or '44.

Q. Do you remember the clothespin mill?

A. No, I've heard about it. There were five mills at one time I guess. There was the shingle mill, lumber mill, clothespin mill, veneer mill...what was the other one...
Q. Could there have been more than one lumber mill?

A. Yes, probably.

Q. We'll start talking about holidays a little bit now. How did you used to celebrate New Years?

A. As a boy?

Q. Yes.

A. Very quietly.

Q. Did you go around visiting other families?

A. Oh, we might have visited friends, yes. One of the places that we visited quite a lot as a young man, was the rectory. My mother and father were very close to Father Cyr.

Q. What was the rectory like?

A. It's still up, where Delmar Brissette lives now. It hasn't changed much.

Q. Was it a pretty grand house?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. One of the grandest houses in town?

A. Well, it was grander than ours. It had nice hardwood floors all throughout, the latest in tapestry. The housekeeper kept it emaculate at all times, Miss Rose Boucher from Auburn, she was his housekeeper. The two families were very close. I never visited California very much, but I remember my mother and father taking off early morning by sled, they would have two or three seats on that sled, they would pick up couples along the way and drive all the way up to California, visit with them, play cards until ten or eleven o'clock at night, then head back.

Q. This would be just any time?

A. Oh yes, in the winter time. It didn't matter how cold it was or what kind of weather it was, they went. As far as the visiting went, it wasn't too many families that we visited. As a young man I visited the Flourde family quite often, probably the reason, there were girls there. Rachael and Joyce.

Q. A lot of them too.

A. No, I'm not talking about this family up here, I'm talking about Albert Flourde's family. They're both deceased, They were Albert and Elfreda Flourde. Her aunt, Yvonne, was a place I used to go to a lot. We had parties there. That's probably the place where the young folk collected.

Q. They used to have soirees and things there?
A. Yes. She had a good number of records.
Q. All English?
A. No, a lot of French songs.
Q. Old French songs or fairly recent ones?
A. Old French ones, old French medleys.
Q. What kind of dances would you do to them?
A. Waltzes mostly.
Q. Did you ever know anyone who did jig or reel or anything like that?
A. No, you'd have to travel up country for that. I don't think there was anyone in town who was a jigger.
Q. There are a lot of people in town who knew jiggers from Guerette. How did you celebrate Christmas?
A. At home with the family. We tried to visit the grandparents in Guerette when they lived there, of course when they moved out, that was out. We visited the LaGasse side, that was more often. We usually spent our Christmas at home. We tried to invite relatives to our place, for a very good reason, it was difficult to travel any great distance with a family because there was always some chores to be done at the house. We had a farm, we kept cattle and someone had to stay there and take care of it. If you went on any Sunday trips, went anywhere, you had to come back before evening and make sure that the cows were milked and fed. We kept horses, we kept cows, we kept pigs.
Q. You didn't have a hired man to take care of it.
A. No hired man, that's right.
Q. Did you go to midnight mass on Christmas?
A. Yes, that was always something to look forward to.
Q. Did you have revillon after?
A. Oh yes.
Q. What would you do at revillon?
A. Stuff our face.
Q. You used to have a meal then?
A. We usually had a chicken stew after mass.
Q. Chicken stew and ployes, that type of thing?
A. Oh yes, a real feast.
Q. How late would you go to bed?
A. Oh, two or three in the morning. We go to bed a lot later than that today. One of the few nights that we stayed up.

Q. When would gifts be opened?
A. In the morning, Christmas morning. We had to wait until Santa Claus got around. We made sure to hang up our stockings.

Q. Did you celebrate Mardi Gras?
A. No.

Q. Did you ever see any kids running around in costumes or anything?
A. No.

Q. What about Lent, was that a big thing?
A. We had our own Parish Priest, there was something going on every night. There was a mass, there was the Lady of the Cross. Of course as a young man I was a server, an acolyte. At the age of fourteen, I joined the choir, and I've been in the choir ever since. I learned to play the organ on my own and I've been an organist since I was fourteen years old in the church, and Fort Kent.

Q. Did you ever celebrate micareme?
A. No.

Q. What was Easter like?
A. Easter was a relief from Lent. When I was growing up, fasting was the thing and we kept strict adherence to that, didn't eat any meat except on Sunday. We ate a lot of fish and we fasted a lot. There was always something going on in church. Of course when we lost our priest, that changed our lifestyle a little bit.

Q. In what way?
A. Well, we only had church services when he offered them. We became a mission. The priest was located in Sacred Heart. Of course his primary functions are there. Now we have a mass once a week, we haven't had stations of the cross for I don't know how long. The Blessed Sacrament was something we used to attend every Sunday evening, that's out. I don't think we have had Blessed Sacrament meeting since before I went in the service.

Q. You used to have that every Sunday evening?
A. Yes.

Q. And most people would attend?
A. Yes, it was a place to go, in those days there was no TV. It was a chance, it was not only a religious exercise, but it was a chance for people to get together. We used to have get togethers after the services in the hall, played cards, served food. That's why
we are so obese. We had movies, on Sunday evening we had movies.

Q. What about fete dieu?
A. Which is when? I've heard of it.
Q. It's in June.
A. No, that's never been a big thing here.
Q. Did they ever have a procession?
A. We used to have a procession, but I don't recall that it was on that particular feast.
Q. What would the procession be like, would it go through town?
A. No, no. The longest the procession ever was, was a trek outside the church on one of the paths around, next to the rectory and then back into the church again.
Q. Were you an altar boy then?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you remember exactly what happened in these processions, were the people first?
A. The priest was first.
Q. The priest was first and did he have the blessed sacrament?
A. Oh yes.
Q. Was he under a canopy?
A. Yes.
Q. Altar boys with candles, crucifix at the beginning?
A. Yes.
Q. Were there any nuns around?
A. No, we didn't have any nuns.
Q. So the choir would probably go behind him.
A. Behind the priest and the acolytes.
Q. And the people.
4th of July, was that a big holiday?
A. Never a big holiday.
Q. Thanksgiving?
A. Not other than with the family. It was usually a family affair.
Q. It wasn't a religious affair?
A. No.

Q. What about maple sugar time? Did you ever go to maple sugar camp?

A. I did as a boy. Uncle Fred Lagasse, he lived in Guerette, had his own sugar camp. It was about ten miles away from where he lived. It was a long walk, we did it by snowshoes. I only went once. I went once, we stayed there three days, made a whole batch of sugar and headed back, carried it back on our backs.

Q. Would you get sugar in the spring and store it and use it through the rest of the year or was it something special?

A. It was something special, it was a spring time special. We never had that much money anyway to stock up on it and we never produced it ourselves. It was a form of livelihood for him, so whatever he made, he either gave away or sold, he tried to sell most of it. Those sugar camps were not as modern as they are today, we had to put a pail of some kind under each tree and we would have to go up either by sleigh or pull a sled itself or bring a horse, fill the barrels and haul it in. Most of the time it was footwork, lot of footwork. By the time you hauled in two or three drumfuls you had had a pretty good day. He didn't produce the sugar that maple sugar camps produce like the Jalbert Camp in Edmundston. That was quite an operation. The thing is fed right in to a central place by pipe.

Q. Are there any businesses around town that you particularly remember?

A. There was always the Anderson's Store, still in existence. That was a grocery store.

Q. Was that a meeting place?

A. No. You mean with the old pot stove in the middle of the floor? That's before my time.

Q. Was there any place where people would tend to meet in town?

A. Fogelin's store is one that I remember. That was a big store, it's now the museum.

Q. Would everyone meet there or would that be the place where the French met, or the Swedish met?

A. It was not a prearranged meeting, we just happened to meet whoever was in the store. You talked about problems you were having on the farm or problems you were having with taxes, that's been an age old problem anyway, still is.

Q. What kind of entertainment did you have when you were young? Mostly chores, huh?

A. A lot of that. We had a radio, but we were not the first family in town to have a radio. The first radio I recall seeing was owned by Dick Jennette, who was an old retired railroad man. He had one
an old Victrola, RCA Victrola, that had a big speaker on it, was operated with a battery. When the battery went dead, of course the radio went dead. Our first radio was not a battery operated radio, it was an electric radio. It was the first one we ever had on the farm.

Q. That must have been really something.
A. It sure was.

Q. What had you done before then, did you do a lot of reading? Go to bed early?
A. Go to bed early. Chores were very demanding. We kept seven or eight cows, they were all milked by hand. You had to feed them and tend them and milk them. Most of the time I did that myself. I remember doing that before going to school in the morning and that was the first order of business when I got back from school at night. We didn't have too many lights so we didn't stay up too late in the evenings anyway.

Q. Did your parents tell you many stories?
A. They didn't tell too many stories, they read stories. Mum was a believer in reading, of course Dad didn't read very well. He hadn't received that much schooling, he was able to write his name very well, that's about all he could write. How he ever learned mathematics, I don't know, he was a pretty good mathematician.

Q. Probably by playing cards.
A. Probably. Before the radio came into our home, Mum spent a lot of time reading, either French stories or English stories, whatever kind of books she was able to get. Many of them came from the rectory, Father George Cyr, as I remember, had a pretty good library. If there were any books that were coming out that were good books, he bought to build up the library.

Q. Would other people borrow them also?
A. Yes. She read a lot of stories and many of them were in French. It was almost like a serial on the radio, she would read one or two chapters in one evening and the following evening she would do the same thing. So you kind of looked forward to the next evening to see what was going to happen in the story. The children became just as interested as Dad was. That was usually the thing we did before we went to bed. We all knelt down, Dad was a firm believer in prayer. We all knelt down as a family and said our prayers, and then we would sit down and listen to Mum read the story and off to bed we went.

Q. You mentioned borrowing books from the priest, was it mostly French people who borrowed books from the priest or did everyone?
A. French, Catholic families.

Q. Where would the Swedish people get theirs?
A. Probably from the school library, they had a pretty good library or from their own church.

Q. So the priest served as a librarian too then?
A. Yes.

Q. Anyone in your family play an instrument?
A. In my family, sisters and brothers?
Q. Right.
A. My youngest brother plays the piano very well, he's a self taught pianist. My youngest sister is a pianist, organist.

Q. Did they learn this while they were home or after they left home?
A. I think Roger learned first of all on the accordion, that was at home, he learned that on his own, then he became interested in the piano. When I was growing up there was no piano in the house, there was only an organ. I started to take lessons and the two didn't jibe together. I'd take the lesson on the piano and the touch is different, so I went back to make my presentation and never had the right touch for the piano. I got really upset with that and I just gave it up. I decided when I was going to learn music, I was going to do it my way, so I'm a self taught organist. I can listen to something and I play it on the organ and I make my own accompaniment.

Q. Did you have music in your home?
A. No.

Q. No one in your family played anything at home?
A. No, not when I was growing up.
(Mrs. Albert) Roger did play, after you were gone, but Roger did play some.
(Mr. Albert) But he's referring to if there was a musician in the house. Dad probably knew a few chords, but he was never able to play any tunes.

Q. Did your mother or father sing?
A. Dad has been a singer in church ever since I remember.

Q. Did he sing very many songs that have been passed down through his family? Old songs?
A. No, there are a few I recall, but I don't know all the words to them. There's one that I...

Q. Do you know the names of them?
A. No. The one that I remember goes: (says it in French on tape). This was a tune that they harmonized, it took two voices to sing it, usually a male and a female. My Aunt Martha and Uncle Eddie
used to sing that just beautifully. There are a few of the verses I don't recall.

Q. Have you ever heard anyone sing Evangeline?
A. Oh, yes. Aunt Martha and Uncle Eddie used to sing that a lot.

Q. And they were from?
A. Guerette.

Q. Because very few people here in Stockholm that I've spoken to remember hearing Evangeline sung.
A. They could sing that beautifully. My Grandfather Albert, Joe, not my real grandfather, but the one who married my grandmother, used to sing some of the French songs. Of course whenever the family met, either for a wedding or for just a family get together, I can remember Grandpa singing.

Q. When he sang how would he go about doing it, would he have to be coaxed to sing?
A. I suppose, there was always a certain amount of coaxing.

Q. Did he stand up when he sang?
A. No, he used to sit down.

Q. Would he excuse himself when he finished?
A. No.

Q. Never said excuse a la at the end?
A. No.

Q. Did you ever hear anyone sing any complaints? It would be a song that would start off and say "Listen everyone I want to tell you about"...a murder or a death or some tragedy.
A. No. There was one song I guess about a young girl. (Speaks French on tape). It tells about what happens to her (more French). That was one of the songs.

Q. That sounds like a complainte, it's kind of like a history. Did something tragic happen to the girl later on?
A. Yes. Then there was also the story of the two lovers, the song about the two lovers of whom the parents didn't approve. The father had built a huge tower in order to keep his daughter away from her boyfriend. They ended up with, he took his own life and she did the same thing.

Q. Do you remember in the song where these people were from?
A. No.
Q. That could be a very, very old song, passed down through the family.

A. It is a very old song. I used to know it by heart too, but it's a long time since I sang it.

Q. Do you know of anyone who has ever written it down?

A. No.

Q. Do you know of anyone who might remember it?

A. I think probably if I tried hard enough I would remember it.

Q. Do you suppose you could try writing it down as you remember it?

A. Sure.

Q. I'll bet it would come back.

A. I wouldn't be able to do it for you right now.

Q. For sure, no problem at all.

Did your mother used to make ployes?

That's kind of a foolish question because we've already talked about it.

A. Oh, yes, at least once a day. She used to have a bucket. She would make the dough in and let it sour to produce levin for the next batch.

Q. Ployes du levin.

A. Yes. She always had a batch of that in the sink somewheres.

Q. She must have made it with water.

A. Yes.

Q. Mrs. Albert, how do you make your ployes?

A. I make mine, I don't keep du levin. I use baking powder in mine.

Q. And water?

A. In water and then I put some warm water in.

(Mr. Albert) She mixes it in cold water.

Q. What about pies, what kind of pies did your mother used to make?

A. (Mr. Albert) Oh, the apple pie...

Q. Canadian pies?

A. I don't know what a Canadian pie is.

Q. Canadian pies would be like sugar pies, raisin pies, maple syrup pies, things like that.
A. She made sugar pie and raisin pie, but the apple pie was the number one. We had our own apple orchard, she used to put some up as preserves for the winter months.

Q. Did she ever dry any apples?

A. No, the neighbors across the street used to, Mrs. Nickerson. I remember going visiting over there and the whole kitchen around the stove was lined up with lines from one wall to the other and they were all filled up with apples. You just pass a needle through them and hang them up.

Q. In slices?

A. In slices.

Q. Did you ever used to make bignets?

A. Oh, yes. In the spring time especially.

Q. Would it be around any particular holiday?

A. During the maple season, maple sugar time. They always managed to buy either the syrup itself or buy the hard sugar cubes, then flake that down, melt it on the stove in water, then make the bignets.

Q. Those must have been really special.

A. Oh, yes. That was usually after Easter. That was probably an Easter feast. One of the items you had for Easter.

Q. Was there any other type of thing that used to be really special? Did you have tortierre at Christmas or anything like that?

A. We don't make those.

Q. Did you ever make pot-en-pot?

A. What is tortierre, meat pies?

Q. Yes.

A. Mum used to make meat pies.

Q. With pork or beef?

A. What was the name of those pies that she used to make...mincemeat. (Mrs. Albert) But that's not the same. (Mr. Albert) No, not the same as tortierre. (Mrs. Albert) Those she would make special, mincemeat, around holidays.

Q. Did she make any pork pies?

A. Yes.

Q. Did she ever make any pies where she had seven kinds of meat in it?
A. Not to my knowledge. I don't know what the seven kinds of meat could have been. We had pork and beef and lamb.

Q. Venison and moose meat.

A. Dad was not a hunter, I don't think he's ever shot a gun in his life.

Q. What about you, Mrs. Albert, have you ever heard of pot-en-pot or anything like that?

A. Yes, I've heard about it.

Q. A lot of people only used three kinds. But I keep asking this question around here and no one knows about it, but people from the valley...

A. (Mrs. Albert) Would that be like...

Q. Set pot sometimes they call it. It would be three or four kinds of meat with potatoes and onions. It comes out almost like a lasagna, it's so thick, different layers of meat, it cooks for a long time.

A. (Mrs. Albert) I've heard about that.

Q. What about stews?

A. Chicken stews, beef stews.

Q. Any rabbit stews?

A. No.

Q. What about creton?

A. Those were delicious, still are.

Q. Would that be just at slaughtering time?

A. She would make enough to last for a while.

Q. Where would it be stored, in the root cellar?

A. No, it was stored in the refrigerator.

Q. Of course. I keep thinking of your parents, grandparents.

A. My grandparents probably would have stored it in the spring. They had a cabin over the spring, it was a spring house. The temperature there was cool enough to keep things. That's where they kept their milk, they had a metal container. I remember it had a small glass on the side, you could see the level of the contents inside. After milking they poured the milk into this container and they would put it in the spring. The cream would rise to the top and it had a spigot at the bottom to let the milk out, then they kept the cream to make butter.

Q. You must have sold a lot of your milk.
A. No, we sold butter on our farm. My mother was one of the better butter makers in the community. She had no problem selling butter.

Q. Did she make sweet butter or did she salt it down?
A. Salt.

Q. What did you do with the milk, you must have had an awful lot of milk.
A. After the milk had been separated, we fed the milk to the cattle, the calf or the hogs or we even gave some to the chickens. We kept a fair amount for drinking purposes. Some of the cream was used on the table for coffee or for putting on top of pies or sweets.

Q. You used to put cream on pies?
A. Oh yes.

Q. Whipped cream?
A. No, just cream. We had it either way, but most of the time it was in liquid form.

Q. What kind of pie would you put cream on?
A. Any kind, blueberry, and strawberry and raspberry pies.

Q. Did she ever make tarte melasse?
A. No. She made molasses cookies. Mum made a lot of molasses cookies. That used to be a special item too. Dad used to buy molasses by the five gallon pail. He would also try to buy the barrel, when the barrel got close to the bottom. You could always reprocess what was left as a raiser in the bottom of the barrel. She raised more molasses or made kind of taffy out of it, and used the barrel to collect water outside for spraying purposes.

Q. Did you know of anyone who made bagosse?
A. My father was not a drinking man, he just detested it with a passion, so he never made the bagosse.

Q. Did you ever know anyone around who made it?
A. (Mrs. Albert) My father did.

Q. Your father made bagosse?
A. (Mr. Albert) He sure did. He made home made brew too.

Q. What was the difference between homemade brew and bagosse?
A. (Mrs. Albert) Brew would be beer, he made that.

Q. Did he ever make a spruce beer?
A. No.

Q. Did you ever know of anyone who used to make cheese?

A. (Mr. Albert) The only family that I know in town would be the Sjostedt family, made cheese. I just happened to be there one time she was making cheese. It's kind of surprising. White cheese. It looks almost like an egg omelet when it's all done.

Q. That would be what?

A. Cottage cheese.

Q. Boudin?

A. Yes. She is probably one of the few people in town who makes boudin.

Q. You still make boudin?

A. Oh yes.

Q. How do you go about making your boudin?

A. (Mrs. Albert) Well, first of all you have to save the blood, you have to strain that. I put salt and pepper in that, then we add some milk and spice.

Q. How much milk in relationship to the blood?

A. (Mrs. Albert) One quart of milk to a gallon of blood.

Q. So it four to one. There's a lot more blood than milk.

A. (Mrs. Albert) Then you cook some pork, put that in a meat grinder.

Q. Some lean pork?

A. (Mr. Albert) We add fat too, both.

(Mrs. Albert) You mix that in, you spice it good, then you...

Q. Do you boil the milk and blood together?

A. (Mrs. Albert) No.

(Mr. Albert) You put all this in the casing in raw form, boil it in the casing.

(Mrs. Albert) If I'm going to freeze it I don't boil it, I just put it away in plastic bags. When I take it out, then I boil it, otherwise it's dry sausage.

Q. Do you have any problem when you thaw it out, the milk and blood seperating or anything?

A. (Mrs. Albert) No.

Q. You boil it for a while?

A. (Mrs. Albert) You boil it until it cooks inside real good. You use
a needle to prick it once in a while, and if blood doesn't come out that means it's cooked, you take it out, let it cool off and whatever you want to do with it, fry it.

Q. I bet it's good.

A. (Mr. Albert) It sure is.
(Mrs. Albert) I'm anxious to have some more pigs so we can save some more blood.

Q. Did your parents used to have a garden, grow most of their own food?

A. (Mr. Albert) Oh yes.

Q. Would your mother ever mash carrots and turnips together?

A. Yes. Most of the kids didn't care for turnips but with carrots, they would gobble them down. I think I still do that today because I'm one of those people who don't love turnips that much. We still grow some. She just loves them, she would prefer a turnip to a potato any day.
(Mrs. Albert) His father would do that with the kids when they were younger. They would eat turnips if he mashed them with potatoes. He didn't put too much, but enough so they would have the turnips.

Q. So he mashed turnips and potatoes too, did you ever hear of any other combinations of vegetables like that? Did you ever do anything special with fiddleheads other than just eat them like a regular vegetable?

A. No.

Q. Do you have a root cellar?

A. (Mr. Albert) No, we'd like to have one. We raise quite a garden ourselves. We're allowed to use about five acres and two acres of it is garden every year. So we raise quite a bit, but when it comes to storage of cabbage, we don't have any place to store it so we lose a lot. I left most of the crop in the garden last year. We don't have a root cellar, I'd like to have one.

Q. Do you remember when you were growing up, your parents mentioning any ways of predicting the weather?

A. (Mr. Albert) The only thing I think of that they noticed was the direction of the wind.'
(Mrs. Albert) Not exactly, you know those things you see in the sky...
(Mr. Albert) Cirrus clouds?
(Mrs. Albert) Every time we see those it's bad weather coming.

Q. Did you ever hear in winter crows fly south?

A. Yes.

Q. There's a storm coming?
A. (Mr. Albert) No. If crows fly south we're heading towards winter.

Q. There's an old Canadian folk tale that if crows are flying south, there's a big storm behind them, well, winter.

A. (Mr. Albert) Yes, but that's seasonal.

Q. Are there any particular folk medicines that you've heard of? Things in the woods that they would get for certain things?

A. (Mrs. Albert) No, I'm trying to think of what my mother would use. (Mr. Albert) My mother was a firm believer of creme du lac.

Q. What's that?

A. It's kind of a seeded type of plant that grows...

Q. Flax seed?

A. Flax seed probably. That was a remedy that she used for the kids when we had a bad temperature or something like that.

Q. What would she do with it, make a tea out of it?

A. Yes. (Mrs. Albert) There was a kind of root that my mother would use when they had a high temperature and I can't remember what it was.

Q. Did you ever hear of any one chewing on willow branches? If you had a headache or something?

A. No. (Mr. Albert) Instead of chewing on snuff or tobacco they would chew on spruce gum.

Q. Ever any spring tonics that you would take?

A. (Mr. Albert) We used to have an awful lot of cod liver oil which we detested with a passion. If anyone looked sideways or had the beginnings of a cold, they would feed us cod liver oil. It was especially bad when they got to the bottom of the bottle. It was a beautiful day when they came out with the plastic cover for that so you could swallow it before you tasted it. (Mrs. Albert) One thing I know, they didn't take us to the doctor as often as we take our kids these days.

Q. A lot of home cures for things?

A. (Mrs. Albert) We very seldom went to a doctor.

Q. What would you do if you had an infection? Was there anything special' you would do?

A. (Mrs. Albert) Soak it in epsom salts.

Q. Did you ever hear of anyone putting a piece of salt pork on it?
A. Yes.
   (Mrs. Albert) Yes, that's another one, or if you step on a nail.
   (Mr. Albert) Used a lot of creolin too.

Q. What's that?

A. (Mr. Albert) Kind of a disinfectant, very potent. In fact, it's recommended on the bottle not to use it for that purpose, but we used it anyway. I can remember that as a growing boy I was always doing something, I was either stepping on a nail or pushing a fork through my foot or cut my hands. How I still have all of my fingers and thumbs I don't know, but I still have some marking. I have a gash right here that I did when I was seven years old, I almost cut my thumb right off. That was never sewn, it festered I don't know how many times.

Q. How did you do that?

A. I was working on a piece of leather for a harness and there was a small rivet on the inside of it, I didn't see it, of course I was cutting towards me and as I cut it slipped in that rivet, I just gashed myself. On this hand I've got a sore right here that I got when I got curious about a washing machine and the wringer. My hand went right straight through and stopped here at the elbow. I took the other hand and put it on reverse and it came out. When it came to this joint it wouldn't go any further so I had to pull it out, as I pulled it out, I pulled all the skin right off. That took the longest time to heal. We didn't believe in going to the doctor.

Q. Were there any plants that were used for anything like that?

A. No. Epsom salts and creolin.

Q. Do you know of anyone who could stop the bleeding?

A. (Mrs. Albert) Yes.

Q. Did you ever have occasion to use it?

A. (Mr. Albert) We've seen it done.
   (Mrs. Albert) My mother does it and my father. My mother has stopped quite a few from nose bleeding.

Q. Did your father ever teach you how to do it?

A. (Mrs. Albert) No, neither has my mother, I never asked them either.

Q. Were there any other things they could do like that? Can they stop worms in gardens?

A. (Mrs. Albert) My mother can stop the worms. I don't know about my father.

Q. Do you know of any superstitions like maybe eating pea soup on New Year's Day? Did you eat pea soup on New Year's Day?
A. No.
(Mr. Albert) We weren't superstitious.
(Mrs. Albert) We do hear about that because there's still some that does it. They'll cook pea soup for New Year's Day.

Q: Any superstitions that came down through the family?
A. (Mr. Albert) We were never a superstitious family.

Q. Any particular Saints Days that had to do with farming? There was something I've heard about the Feast of St. Pierre, you wouldn't plant until after the danger of frost?
A. (Mr. Albert) I'd never heard about it until she mentioned it. (Mrs. Albert) St. Pierre is in June or July but then what you have to watch for is frost because everything is planted.

Q. Anything about planting in a waxing moon and a waning moon? What's the rule on that?
A. (Mr. Albert) When you're planting anything that grows under the ground, you plant in the waning of the moon. If you're planting something that grows above the ground, it's in the waxing of the moon.

Q. When the moon is increasing. Which would come first?
A. (Mr. Albert answers in French) because they go in the ground.
Q. So you would do it early when the moon was waning.
A. (Mr. Albert) Potatoes are planted early.

Q. Do you ever plant in the fall?
A. I plant mine every fall.

Q. And you follow that rule, plant in the waning moon?
A. Oh yes. (Mr. Albert speaks French on tape).

Q. Now what would you put in between the moons?
A. You pick them up, take them out of the ground, and you plant them in the waning moon.

Q. You take them out of the ground between the moons, when there's no moon at all.
A. (Mrs. Albert) We still do that with our plants. It doesn't matter when you plant them, but when you transplant them, a certain time of the moon, that's when we do it.

Q. When would you transplant them, on a new moon?
A. (Mr. Albert) On a new moon, when the moon starts to grow. Tomato plants for instance, you plant those after a new moon, because the moon starts to become bigger. But after full moon is when the moon starts to wane away. Tomato plants produce above ground so you plant them on the waxing of the moon.
(Mrs. Albert) We go by that, but there's a lot of people who don't believe it.

Q. Well, those are things that get handed down through families, so there must be a good reason for it.

A. (Mr. Albert) There must be something about it, we have always been successful gardeners.

Q. Was there ever a harvest mass around here?

A. (Mr. Albert) Yes...not in the recent years. Dad was always a firm believer in that. Every year he had a mass said for the crops.

Q. Would there be a cross on the farm anywhere to help protect the crops?

A. No.

Q. Did your father ever bring any seeds for the garden to the church to be blessed?

A. No.

Q. Was the crop ever blessed when it was put in, in any way?

A. Not to my knowledge.

Q. Was French spoken in your home?

A. Yes.

Q. Was French your first language?

A. Yes. It would still be French. My wife and I speak French together all the time. None of the children speak it except... they never did as they were growing up. Maybe they did when they were young, real young, but as they started school, they became influenced with the English language, they just forgot about French. My two oldest ones have learned to speak French. They're having a harder time because they haven't spoken it right straight through.

Q. Did they learn it in school?

A. No, they picked it up from us. They're having a hard time doing it. (Mrs. Albert) Jeanine talks quite a bit. She's not bashful. (Mr. Albert) Of course, she's taking French in college.

Q. Well, that's what it takes, if you're bashful, it's more difficult, or if you hate to make a mistake.
A. (Mr. Albert) And get laughed at.
(Mrs. Albert) We have about three that speak it.
(Mr. Albert) I feel kind of badly about that, because it's not good that we haven't tried, they've kind of lost their heritage in that respect. It's just like the Swedish people, a lot of the young folks don't speak Swedish.

Q. What was it like being French in a town where there were a lot of Swedes?

A. I don't know, I think probably for a long time we felt that we were looked down upon.

Q. Do you think you were looked down on?

A. I don't think so. We had a very good relationship mostly from the beginning. We more or less had to. You found that probably more so with the kids in school. The Swedish people had it in for the French people. I guess the French had a way of getting even too. But as far as the Swedish people that were located around our area, that lived on farming, they all got along well together.

Q. Do you think that is still true now? Do you find people getting along a lot better than they used to?

A. Oh, yes. I think we've out lived that thigma that existed with different nationalities.

Q. What nationality do you consider yourself?

A. I'm an American.

Q. Did your parents ever tell you that you were French, I mean did they ever tell you that your ancestors were French and you should be proud of it? Did they ever mention anything like that?

A. No.

Q. Are there any priests or nuns in your family?

A. No.

Q. What kind of games did you play when you were a child?

A. The usual childhood games. Marbles was a good past time when I was growing up. It used to be the one who had the most marbles was envied by everyone else, all the other youngsters. The girls skipped rope, some of the boys joined in occasionally. We loved to play softball and hardball. In this particular community there was not much else besides that, no tennis courts or such.

Q. Did you used to play borreau?

A. No, I don't know what that is.

Q. It's a game you play with checkers on the reverse of a checker board, it's a very different looking game.
A. (Mrs. Albert) We had that game at home, my mother would teach us how to play, we played borreau for a while. I can't remember how to play now.

Q. Did anyone used to spin or weave in your family?

A. (Mrs. Albert) My mother used to weave.

Q. Did she ever make — how do you pronounce it? The big blankets you make with rags.

A. (Mrs. Albert) No, she never made those. She wouldn't weave, but she would spin.

Q. What about ce benom, did you ever play that game?

A. (Mrs. Albert) What is it?

Q. It's parcheesee, it's played on a cross shaped board where you go up the sides of the cross and if you get inside, you know you're in heaven.

A. (Mrs. Albert) We never called it that.

Q. Do you remember the name you gave it?

A. (Mrs. Albert) We just played the game. The object was to get to heaven, but I don't recall we gave it any name.

Q. What do you call dame, is that checkers?

A. (Mr. Albert) Cards.

Q. Some people call checkers dame.

A. (Mrs. Albert) That's what I call it too.

Q. But hearts would be dame too, because in French the queen is always dame.

A. (Mr. Albert) Yes, it still is.

Q. Where you would entertain and everything?

A. Right.

Q. What day was washday?

A. (Mr. Albert) Monday was washday at our house. (Mrs. Albert) Every day. Washday was three times a week, but it's every day here.

(Mr. Albert) That was quite a procedure, washday, when I was growing up. We didn't have any heating system as such, the water was heated on the stove in a boiler. Because it was such an operation, we didn't do any more washings than we felt necessary. The washer that was used, the first one that I recall was a big
drum made out of wood, hardwood, and it took a gasoline engine to operate that thing, it was a cumbersome affair. You would have to right it up in a certain way so you could take the cover off, and roll up the clothes. There was always a boiler on the stove that had lye in it so you could whiten the white clothes.

Q. Did your mother used to make soap?
A. Yes. That's the way she did the washing. I think in the beginning she did all of it by hand, in a wash tub with a wash board.

Q. Did she used to make soap more than once a year?
A. Whenever we did some butchering, with the tallow.

Q. Did your father hunt?
A. (Mr. Albert) He was never a hunter, never a fishermen.

Q. He probably had enough to do farming.
A. (Mr. Albert) I think probably he had a fear of guns. There was someone who visited his home in Guerette at one time, he had a revolver. I don't recall just how it went, but the darn thing went off inside the house, it just about scared him half out of his wits, so he always had the greatest respect for them, he didn't want anything to do with them. In fact, when he carried the mail in Guerette, he carried a 22 revolver under the seat and the bullets were never in the same place, he never put a bullet in the gun.

Q. Why did he feel he had to carry a revolver?
A. I think probably it was government issue, it wasn't his own.

Q. Did your mother used to eat with your family, or did she serve the family and then eat?
A. (Mr. Albert) We always sat together.

Q. What about your mother?
A. (Mrs. Albert) We always ate together.

Q. Did you ski?
A. (Mr. Albert) Oh, yes, I love to ski.

Q. Did you have homemade skis, or skis that you made yourself?
A. No, these were all boughten skis. Most of them were made by Stadigs, the Stadig family.

Q. So you had Swedish skis?
A. Yes.

Q. Was one shorter than the other?
Q. Some Swedish skis, one was shorter than the other. It was for a good reason.
A. The skis I had were the same length.
Q. Did you used to make your own toys?
A. Well, I made a number of push carts, sleds. I always tried to make a plow for it to plow through the snow in the winter time.
Q. Did your father used to whittle?
A. No.
Q. Make furniture or anything like that?
A. No. The whittler in the family was Mum.
Q. Your mother used to whittle? What did she whittle?
A. She was the carpenter in the family. She kept the tradition of the family name. Dad wouldn't have been able to saw wood straight.
Q. How did your mother learn her carpentry, do you know?
A. Well, all her brothers were carpenters.
Q. She used to help them?
A. Yes.
Q. Did she used to make furniture?
A. Yes.
Q. What kind of furniture?
A. Most of the furniture she made was storage items, like a hope chest...
Q. Did she ever make a rocking chair?
A. No.
Q. Did she make things in the traditional way?
A. They were very simple, no fancy work. They were solid.
Q. That's traditional. What kind of things would she carve or whittle?
A. Just little pieces of wood.
Q. She would make little things and give them to the kids?
A. No, no, just something to pass the time.
Q. She would just whittle them and throw them away? She never used to
make anything, she would just shave the wood?

A. That's right. A good reason for shaving it was to start a fire. You take a piece of cedar and make small strips, put that in the stove and it's a good way to start a fire.

Q. Did you ever know of any women who would smoke a pipe?

A. (Mr. Albert) I think Mrs. Jennette is the only woman who used to smoke a pipe.

Q. Did she smoke a clay pipe?

A. Yes.

Q. Did she smoke it in public or did she hide somewhere and smoke it?

A. She always smoked it in her own home, never smoked it in public. (Mrs. Albert) I knew one too. She was my uncle's mother. I've known her since I was a little girl until she died, and everytime I saw her, she was rocking and smoking her pipe.

Q. Was it a little clay pipe too?

A. Yes, it was a small one.

Q. Did it have a long stem?

A. Oh, it was about that long.

Q. Oh, it was a little one.

A. Yes, she was blind and she was smoking that pipe. (Mr. Albert) That was Pit Lagasse's mother?

(Mrs. Albert) Yes.

(Mr. Albert) You see, she's related to the Lagasses too. We're not related though.

(Mrs. Albert) Not directly. Those that I'm related to, I think was a cousin to his mother or something like that.

(Mr. Albert) Pit Lagasse's father was brother to my Grandfather Lagasse.

Q. Was there ever anyone around who the French used to call "Senor"?

A. No.

Q. What about St. David, was there anyone they used to call Senor? Senor would be the Lord. It would be someone who would be very well off or something like that. That tradition must have been gone by then.

A. (Mrs. Albert) I've never heard of it.

Q. used to be secretary for Mr. Thomas in New Sweden and she used to call him the Senor. Did you ever hear anyone around here call him Senor?

A. No.
Q. In Van Buren there was always a Senor. Senor Hamlin and that type of thing. The French that was spoken around here, was that the same that was spoken in Van Buren and Fort Kent?

A. (Mr. Albert) Well, yes, it's probably a jargon of French, it's a mixture.

Q. The people that came from Van Buren, could you tell they were from Van Buren by the way they spoke?

A. I don't know if you could tell if they were from Van Buren, but you could tell they were not from this area.

Q. The French here was a little more English mixed with it than in other areas?

A. The people in Madawaska speak a better quality of French because they don't have a tendency of intermingling English words or dialects with it. I guess that is also true in Van Buren. I remember going to a shop in Van Buren at special times of the year for clothing and there was a distinct difference between that French.

Q. How did you get to Van Buren? Did you take that road that goes by the school?

A. Out through Connor.

Q. That was quite a trip then.

A. Yes, it was.

Q. Did you ever hear of any highway robbers on that road?

A. No.

Q. That was quite a while before your time. There used to be a long time ago. Is there anything you would like to add that we have neglected?

A. I think the reference you made to my education, I've been involved as a teacher and assistant principal for a number of years. Once we graduated... I say we because my wife studied right along with me when I was going to school... she wasn't going to college and she wasn't receiving credit, but she helped me prepare for my exams along with working on two or three odds and ends in order to make a living. I managed to obtain a 4.0 average while I was in college. I started out teaching in Limestone, that was my first job in teaching. Then we moved back to Stockholm. We moved to Stockholm in 1960 after I graduated. I became a principal and teacher of the ninth grade for two years, then they discontinued the high school. I became teacher of the seventh and eighth grades and I was here for seven years total. For five years of those seven years I was also town manager, tax collector, agent, overseer of the poor. I worked on construction during the summer months in addition to that. In 1968 I moved to Caribou and I've been employed by the Caribou School Department ever since. For four years I was a
teacher of physics and chemistry and then they wanted me in the office as assistant principal so I've been assistant principal since 1972 at the Junior High. It used to be the old high school building.

End