...this is for miss, miss Vita Rordam. I have received two letters from Vita, dating somewhere along September. On a same month. And also receive some material which is transcribed tape recording. About my stories. They were just very nicely done. I am much satisfied, the way it has been written. And also I have seen the application. I have read the application which I have signed, been uh received. And it, it should have been mailed, some time ago. And, also I have some received some papers which are, I should have consider filling them. Which is the will. The will, which I understand is a person who write the things that will, should be done, if he dies.

So, for that reason, let me say, I don’t have much to leave behind. The only thing that I have to leave behind is the stories that I have collected in my lifetime. And today, being sixty years old, it seems so short. It seems like I have just begun to understand, that my health wants to give out. It’s a very sad thing to have. But the things that I have done for the last twenty years, trying to collect the stories of our people in this area. In this west coast of James Bay and the Southwest coast of Hudson Bay. People who live there, is what I have talked about.

They were so much, there are so much stories that have been that I’ve been told by our ancestors, and so much that is not recorded and so much that has never been written. And that was the main concern. My main concern is that these stories, that they should be recorded, and that they should be written down in paper. Whether if it’s a scroll or whether if it’s blade of paper, or whether if it’s hand-written, it doesn’t matter.

But today’s world needs perfection. And the only thing, the only people who perfect things is the white people who are advancing so fast, that they continuously have a classification of, of judging person’s work. And that is one obstacle. And another
person, another thing is, the person who tells stories that he must have a measuring stick when he tells about the story. That is not possible. That has been my problem. But I could use the Native, I could use the First Nation measuring stick, by repeating as it has been. As the way it has been passed down. The history. The history of our people long time ago.

Let me say this again. The history of our people is legends. Not necessarily individual involve in these legends. But the whole, the whole group of legends, the whole grouping of legends, is the whole class of people, who have experienced some life. Similar to these situation in the legends. Our legends are our history. Our legends are history of our kind. And in it contain all the things that are supposed to be that is supposed to work for our culture. Before the European came.

When we speak about the Native people who are First Nations in this area, or in any area, we speak about people who live here before somebody else came. They have their culture. Culture in covering spiritual things, and non-spiritual things and material things, and, and other things. That involve in their life. And also to understand, to try to include, why their culture was so different than Europeans. And why they have to, why they have to live the way they live. Long time ago, before the European came. That is the thing.

And also to try to understand, a total of their culture make-up. What I mean to say is, one has to set aside his own personal judgment. If you want to understand the First Nation culture in one particular, particular area of the North America, you must set aside, if you are European, you must set aside your culture beliefs, and practice, and classification. Otherwise, you will change the history of the Native people. Of the First Nation. Because you want to fit it in to the white man’s world. It doesn’t work that way. If you want to tell the story about the First Nation you must get down to your knee and to your mind, and to the spiritual things and understand that way. And then you are actually capturing it.

And if you want to be a writer, and if you want to express explain this to the major society today, which is now, what you’re doing is that, you are picking up the story that is over five hundred years ago, which existed five hundred years ago. Not only today or yesterday or fifty years, a hundred years. That you are. You are traveling back five
hundred years ago. And, they own that. And that is the First Nation culture. In doing so, it is up you, up to you as a writer, to try to explain how you understand. And to try to make connection. Or to try to...uh, in your work, to try to compare what was there in those days, and what not, what was not there. Compare it, when the European came.

The cultural exchange. Cultural classes. Culture classes I mean is, collusion courses of two classes. Two classes. Two classes of people. The First Nation being as they are, simplistic as they were, in the eyes of the European. And, the First Nations, in the eyes of the First Nation as they encountered the European. What did they think? What happened there? And that is something that we have to, that I want to, keep it intact. Rather than putting the First Nation down. And, make him as a, as a less civilized than a European.

Perhaps it is. Perhaps, I’m not saying they were not. What I am saying is that their culture was suitable for them to survive where they were. Where they were seen. They were not found. They were seen. They were occupying the land. They were living on the land. There was nothing wrong with them. It has, they had lived there, many years before. And to them, the world was a, was it’s as best as they can make it. Then we have to think about, you know, why did they have to live the way they are? What caused them to live the way they are? Why did they, why did they adapt the migration life? Circling the area and, going back and forth into the situation the small area or a larger area. Why did they do that? That is something that we have to understand. And what makes them able to do it. What it makes them, what makes them able to live there peacefully or...maybe not as comfortably as it should be. But to them, it was fine.

After saying that I’d like to come back to the, to today. Today’s world. I want to explain something which is very negative, and it’s very sad. Our elders today, when they speak about their culture, to the young people. There are so many. Very few of them ever spoke about their culture, to be proud. Or to be proud, they inherited such culture. There are so many of our elders, who express their culture with grief. With sorrow. With shame. Because, they were not as comfortable as European. Because, they didn’t have a house. Because they didn’t have any material possession as a European. So when they do that, when the elders do that in today’s world, it’s prevent our youngsters, our young
people to be proud of their own culture. They say, why should I care to know about the past? And so terrible and painful as it sound, when the elder speaks about our culture.

That is one, one cultural conflict that we are experiencing today. And that is the problem today. And nobody seem to understand that. The elders who are willing to speak, on the media, radio, or, who wants to, wants somebody to. The elders who want to speak and want their, their statement written down. It is always like that. That is within the Hudson and James Bay area. But they are First Nations somewhere across this land, who have dug up their own culture, and brought it up with as much as pride as they can be. Regardless what it has been considered in the past. By the other nations.

And that is correct way to do it in my opinion. Even though if it seems to be less, even though if it seems to be a minor. Even it seems to be less civilized. Even though if it was not advance culture. As long as those people have a satisfaction of living in their life, to my opinion, that’s it. And if anybody wants to listen to that, that is why I say, we must set aside, of other beliefs, other, a other knowledge of classification of human-kind. I think we should remember that.

Now, I’m gonna go back. As I said before, what we should try to understand when we want to talk about First Nation culture. First Nation people, in one particular, geographical place. Canada is a large country. Canada is big. And in it, there were different First Nation, belief and practices. That is depend what geographical location it is. The B.C. The British Columbia First Nation had their ways. They’re the people who, who created an objects to remind them of their culture. They are the people who carve the sticks. The wood, the trees. To remind them, their past and their beliefs. But the problem is, when the European came, they consider that idol. Idol-worshipers. But it was not. There is the first classification that destroys the pride of the First Nation.

So they are so different, those people in B.C. Than it is in west, southwest coast of James Bay and south, west coast of James Bay and southwest coast of Hudson Bay. Because of the geographical location. The land in which they live here in Omuskego people, James Bay and Hudson Bay. Southwest coast of Hudson, James Bay and, no. And the south coast of Hudson Bay. It is land that’s very flat. And the trees are small. Therefore, there is no big trees. And our people did not carve the, the trees to remind them of their ancestors. Their culture. They have other things.
And these are the things that we may have to talk about. And it’ll take a little time. It will take time to understand. We may not be able to cover everything at one standing, or one sitting. Because it will be too complicating. Because most of it will be just mentioned and not explained, why. And that was my purpose. My purpose, first, to collect stories was just to record them. Not to try to understand it. Just to record how it was and, what it was and, not necessary why. It’s just to record’em as they were. As the stories goes. And to try to explain about the use and application of our religions. That is something that stood out in my mind. When I first aware, the importance of our culture.

I hear some of it, from other parts of the land of North America. I have run into some Native people, who were from the State. These people were from the United State. And, northwestern, central of United State. For example, I work with the man, who was Blackfoot First Nation. Blackfoot Indian, then. And this was in somewhere around ’sixty. Nineteen-sixty. Nineteen-fifty-nine, to be exact. I worked, at Churchill national harbor board. And many other stevedoring people. Where they’re from Alberta, Saskatchewan...southern, south, south side of Saskatchewan. Even some of them from the north. And, they were mostly half-breeds.

And there were some, there were some Native people from the south side of Saskatchewan province. And they were the ones who, who were interested because, they knew about the Natives in Saskatchewan. And they knew about the prairie, uh, prairie people. And uh, but they didn’t know much about the Omuskego people. People from Hudson and James Bay. South, southwest coast of Hudson Bay, and west coast of James Bay. And they know them. They didn’t understand, I mean. But the first thing they would usually ask is that, if our, if our ancestors practice any spiritual practices. If they have any beliefs in spiritual practice. That is something that I was not, I was not prepared to answer. Because, from my days of young people, young person, I had been told many times, that I should never harbor the thoughts about the, about our First Nation spiritual beliefs and practices. Which has been already condemned by the Christianity. By the time I was born.

So it was startling for me to hear a Native person ask me those things. Because, most of those who ask me they didn’t know it themself. It’s a simply didn’t know it. But they were in a in the process of trying to dig it out, or trying to understand what it was.
These were the young people. They were the same age as I am. I was only twenty-four? Or twenty-five. Thereabouts. No, just a minute. I was twenty-four years old. I was born nineteen thirty-four and I was working there nineteen fifty-nine. Fifty-four I would have been twenty, and then another, fifty four, fifty-six fifty-seven-fifty eight fifty, four years, I was twenty-four years old. When I first met those people who were interested. Those uh, the Native people who were interested about our past culture.

That time I was not interested. That time I thought it was something that, that has been forgotten years past, long time ago. But it did, it did stir me. When I think back then, after this man, after this person ask me there, he has an elder. There was an elder from Saskatchewan, not far from Saskatoon. Who was an old person. His name was Jimmy, but I forgot his last name. Uh, this Jimmy, was a, was an expert. A fiddle playing person. He plays the violin. And jigs and all that stuff. Real. And he was pretty good. He has a tune that I loved to listen, and I used to, he was very old. He has a lung problem. Not asthma but. He was still working at stevedoring.

And, some Saturdays, we would invite him someplace and ask him to play a tune for us. Pass time. Saturdays and Sundays. So it was then, in between those times, that sometimes he used to ask, used to ask me. He was interested in me. He was interested in me, this Jimmy. Because I was supposed to be Cree. And I was, and he couldn’t understand me. He says I speak too fast. And, vice-versa, I think he speak too slow. And it was this reason that we adjust our speaking system. And he ask me those questions about if our Omuskego people had any spiritual beliefs and practices. As they have, in their part of the country.

So I, at that time I was not interest, I didn’t know. I was not well-informed. But I know, from the young days when I was young boy, we used to have a legends that are full of those things. Full of those stories. Magic stuff. Powers. Practice in our legends are powerful people. So, then I said, “Yes, yes, we have some legends that contain those things.” The one day they ask me to tell them a short story, a short legend, about this myth that we have, his name is Chakaapesh. Chakaapesh is a midget. So I tell part of that story and how this, how this little man is able to do extraordinary things. Because he has a mystical power.
Once I finish they say, “Exactly. That’s exactly what we are looking for. We have those stories.” They said, “We have them but most of them we have forgotten.” So it was then, it was there and then, that I begin to be aware those things were important. Before that, I didn’t care much about them. I thought they were just simple entertainments, for the kids. But those people said, “There is contain our culture.” Even then I didn’t believe that. It took some time. It took another ten years, before I begin to actually became interested. Between nineteen-fifty-nine to ‘seventy. Between ten, ten years, my life, that I contacted many different kinds of people in my, my activities. That I began to hear more about these things. And I begin to get more information about how little we keep our, our cultural history.

And there was no such thing as written history, about our culture. It is was, it was nineteen-seventy or, thereabouts, that I begin to understand, and I begin to ask my own people, my own elders, if there was any history at all, in our culture. So most of them said, if you listen to our legends, yes, that’s part of our history. Or even, could be all the history there was. And, because the legends are made for that. I was interested. This was nineteen-seventy. By the time I get, really get serious.

And that’s when I begin to think about writing down, or even record’em if it was possible. But in nineteen-seventy there were very little of technical advance about in radio. So there was no smaller cassettes that can be used as we have today. There were just reel-to-reel machine, recording machines. And of course the, the records. But the records only last, maybe ten, fifteen minutes or ten minutes mostly. So ten minutes is not the time to, to record something.

So I, anyway, I have listened to many, many legends in our area. Different kind. Different ways of saying. Different people, different ways of saying. It is not rigid. It’s not only one way of saying things, one way of reciting the legends, it’s many ways. It’s up to individual who wants to recite the legends whether for just simple entertainment, or whether he want to recite it, to point out something. And that’s when it was really important. If an elder tells you the legends, which he wants to point out, the fact of life or, about the situation in that present day. And this is the way they were used, the legend. It opens the subject, which is sometimes, very private. Or sometimes, controversial. So they were important that way.
I have heard a person who did that once. Who told a very short contents legend. And when he finished, some of us were laughing, some of us did not. Some of us, some of us say that, “Well, that’s not all.” “Yes,” he says, “That’s not all. Because I don’t want it all.” So he says he picked the point where he wanted to stress. So he pick out the point, where pointed the finger to some of us, who were doing something wrong in our life. So he uses it that way. He uses to advise us, to give us advice, for our life. So the legends were very useful. It’s, it’s depend on the person. But most of the time, it was an elder, who have mastery of using the legends.

Once again, I want to repeat, the importance of our, our legends, in our culture. At least, at least, on the Southwest coast of Hudson bay, and the west coast of James Bay. The legends that we have there in that area, are applicable only to that area. They are other legends that are similar to ours, that are also applicable within the land. The communities that we know today, such as, Bearskin, Big Trout lake, XXHasabanikaXX, Webique, and Manston House. XXMadon FallsXX. All those other communities that are clustered around that lake heads, I mean, the headwaters of those major rivers, which are flowing into the Hudson Bay.

Our legends there are similar to the coast region. And in fact, our legends in this area, are similar across the country of Canada. We have the characters that plays the roles in legends, who are, who are very similar to ours. Although they have a very slightly different names. But the ground and the land they involve in is different. It is noticeable. When you listen to these legends from the west coast, that the character that plays there is actually involve in mountains, lakes and creeks. And also that you’re listen to legends that are in a prairie. The character that plays in that legend is also dealing the land that is flat. And the legends that we have, in the Muskego land, character that plays the leading role in that legend is has to deal with the muskeg area. And the bays of water.

So that’s the geographical difference of the legends. But the legends are the actual history of, of the First Nations. But I must say again, it is not one person that have created these legends. It’s a, it’s a persons, maybe a hundred persons, maybe a thousand persons, maybe more. But each part of this legends, anything that happens there, that happens to one individual during the past, but his name is not there. His name is, characterized it’s a fictitious name, which has been created of different kind of names.
Five different kinds. Which I have said before, animals involve, there was a giant skunk, and then there’s a birds, there was a sinkiipis, the diving duck. He represent the, the human activities on the land.

And then, then there is Wiisaakechaahk. He is a created character in the story, who play the part of the human, the human function. Human situation. Person who live there. He never was. There never was any Wiisaakechaahk. Then there is a Chakaapesh, which is also, Chakaapesh is also means a midget. And that’s a partially of the fiction. But it is still represent the human behavior. Of our people. And then there is, Wemishoosh is the name of the, Wemishoosh is the name of the buck. Water-buck. Who seems to carry the plant with him. So this water-buck, his name is Wemishoosh.

So the Wemishoosh is at the end of the story. Of the story of such character. But, but it always begin with the story like, once upon a time, there was Wemishoosh. But Wemishoosh was not there, the beginning of the story. It was human. But at the end, at the end of the story, at the, at the self-defeating story, it’s, that’s where you see the Wemishoosh in the story.

And then, there’s other, other stories. There are other stories that are not quite, quite as long as the legend. But they are part of the legends and they are part of the human history also. There is this other one that, usually considered as one of the legend is which called, it is called Ayaas. Ayaas is a character which built a story about, a person who has cleaned up cannibalism. He’s a hero. He’s always called upon when there’re too many cannibals in the land. And it’s a very interesting story. It is, it is part of the legend. And then there is, but the thing is about this one, it is so real, that is actually, you can actually see it, in your imagination. The story.

And then there is another one. And there is another stories. Some of them that I forget now but let me try to remember. Oh yes. There is another story that’s similar to the Ayaas. There is a story about the lady, who have uh, who have made her dream come true. One lady. And which is very complicating and which is also very long. But it’s supposed to be a, it is a legend. But it doesn’t classify as a legend. But it’s much more. It’s more, it is more history of human. The actual history. Human behavior. It has to do with the righteousness. When you, when you listen to that story, it actually gives you the vision of something. Which is not, which is, which is uh, emphasizes the morality. And
there’s this lady who have dreamed, who have visioned, dream-vision. And who have tried to practice it.

That, that’s not the only one. There is another one. It’s a second woman story, that women also again play here in this very important part. Which she has dreamed again when she was young. That some day, a second husband will come from nowhere. And then it did happen. In the story. And then there’s another, there’s another fictitious story this one, this one is just imagination. It is a story about two ladies, two young teenage girls, who are come to an age of, desire to have sex and to have a man. And apparently they were laying down in the bed in teepee. And the teepee usually there’s a hole in the peak there. And they were whispering with each other and they say that, they said, “I would like to marry that brightest star over there.” And the other girl says, “Oh yeah?” And then the other girl says, “No, I would marry this...faded-looking star which is more like red.” And so they went to sleep. So this story goes on. And then at the end of the story, it tells you something.

The elders who tell you the story, they will, they were interpreted. They were translate the story. Why does it, why has it been told that way. And there are many of those. Many of those kind of stories. Which are, which applies to a man. A male. Mostly it is a moral teaching. And then there are stories that um, that seems time immemorial. People mystified by those things. The mystery things. The mystery stories.

There is something called Wiihtiko. Wiihtiko is, like a bogey-man. The bogey-man is imaginary sometimes, sometimes it’s not real at all, sometimes it’s, it is human. But the bogey-stuff is something that is not necessary understood. So is the same thing with this Wiihtiko. Wiihtiko stories are not necessarily physical. They more like imaginary. But in our culture, they seem to be so real, and so fascinating. Now I shall leave that for now.

And there are other stories, that are, that are partially are not true. And some that seems to be very real. Let us pick one story for, for example. They are, they are a bunch of stories that has to do with the, with the Native people, with our Native people in Hudson and James Bay area, who have experienced being attacked. Attacked. By other
groups of Native people. First Nations. And the Omuskego people. have a name for those people.

One of those tribes are known here as, Aatawewak. Aatawewak. And, another ones, another ones we, they used to call the pwaatak. But I don’t believe pwaataks, are actually the group that we think they are. Because pwaatak, pwaatak is the name of the tribe. Pwaatak were just a group of people, who used to, who used to come in to the short distance, and kill a family group. For the sake of killing. It has nothing to do with, with the land.

Our First Nation people in the past, at least, at least, in the northern Ontario. Northern part of this country. There is no story that says, our people have fought the war, of other tribes, for the land. No. There no such stories. We can still hear that today. Because people today, they are the old people, they’re still talk about, not owning the land. Nobody owns the land. Says it’s the Creator. That belongs to this. And the Creator give us this land to use, they say. To use. Not to earn. So therefore their stories are similar. Long time ago. There’re no such stories to say they fought with this piece of land until they kill the other group. No. There no such thing.

But they has been killings. They has been, skirmishes, or, fights. But never has anything to do with the land, at least, on the west coast of James, on Southwest coast of Hudson Bay, and west coast of James Bay. It was only, it was only ever since the white men arrived, that the white people fought each other for the group, for the, for the place. Even for the place to build their fort. And our Native people never understood it was for the land. They simply thought these people were, mystery. Shall we say, nuts. You know, to fight for the piece of land where you house it. Because a Native person in those days, just simply walk away from where he lives for a few months, and change. Don’t bother to clean, because the nature will clean. Come back in the same season. So when they saw the European fighting for the, for the post or, or a fort, the thought it was a very peculiar and very stupid behavior.

So we know that. They didn’t know. Our people didn’t know that. They didn’t have the idea of owning the land. Not at least in the Hudson Bay, southwest coast of Hudson Bay and not in, not in the west coast of James Bay. We never hurt the land. We never hurt the water, or mugs people or skirmishes, for the land. We never hurt her that
way. But they were, they were sporadic fights. Especially in summer. But these were nothing to do with the land. They’re have to do only for simple, simple beliefs of taking a life of one other person that you extend your life. And you kill a person. And then you killed another one for your friend. And you killed another one for your friend. And this is the reason they kill.

Other than that it was nothing else. Finally, our Omuskego, Omuskego people understood these things. The mitew. People, shamans. They want to understand why did those people come and kill? They could only get the answer that way. And it is bad enough for that. To be killed all of a sudden by no reason, it was something bad. But then again, if we were to look at a total picture of the creation, and the Great Spirit, and the Creator, supposing that was the way of the Creator, maintaining population explosion. Or, punishing or eliminating the bad things that start to develop in some, a group of human people. Human. As First Nations. Maybe that’s the reason. That is my understanding.

Anyway, these are the stories that we have. We have the stories about Mohawks, they say today. We have the story about Aatawewak, coming down from James Bay and walk up to the, Cape Henrietta Maria in summertime and kill off the Omuskego people. For no reason at all. And then there were other groups...

This is coming to the end of this tape, and we’ll start on the other side. Hopefully, we will continue with this kind of story which I am, which I have begin. I will explain more...

...this Tape. Side A. At the end of the tape I was talking about other tribes. Coming from south or west or, whatever. Killing our Muskego people, in various places within, between, between Moosonee and Fort Severn. Or even to York Factory. So, so the group that we, that we hear so much of stories about, this people were called Aatawewak. Today, people think these were the Mohawks. Or Iroquois. Because, one story goes like this. I’m not going to tell the story, but I am going to sample the story. Because they are many of those stories. There are lots of them.
One story is like this. One summer, a group of people attacked the village of the Omuskego, in around the Cape Henrietta-Maria. And it was so sudden. The men were out hunting. And all of the elders and the young people and the women, were staying at home. And it so happened that one young man, who was, who was sixteen years old, teenager, was spared. And so other woman, and perhaps another young woman. It seems to me, it sounds like as if they were two, three young men, and, one young, one or so young lady, and one elderly lady.

So the idea was this. He would survive because these people who came to travel all the way, they needed to take, they needed to take some kind of a captive. To back to their home. And also, they also have to take an old woman, who is expert in sewing things and all that stuff. To serve them. Because the, at particular time they have not brought their own women. Most of the time they have not brought their women. The, my reasoning myself, after reading many stories about Native people, involving in the war parties. The war parties, or warriors usually do not take their women along. Very seldom, except if the woman is a warrior.

So in this case, it seems like, it seems like, at this particular time, these pwaatak whatever you call’em, needed some women to sew their moccasins, whatever they use to travel. Because, one moccasin lasts only a few days. If you travel in the terrain, muskeg and sand and, stone. It doesn’t last very long. Even that day. Only one day, takes to wear out moccasin. So these people if they were traveling in the distance, they would have need someone to repair their moccasins. So that is the reason they used to take the woman who is the mature person. To serve them.

But, this particular story has to do with the sixteen-year-old boy. Who was captive for these group. After they have killed women, children, and elderly men. And then they took off. Back towards their home. And, the young man, the young women, and also a lady, they were blindfolded in the first part of the journey. They were blindfolded but they know, because the Omuskego has built-in compass. They have an instinct where they go. So they were not blindfolded actually. They know they were heading south. Every day when they travel they can, they can feel, they can hear, and they can smell. So they can, they can hear, and they can feel. So by hearing, they can stand how many times the person walk on water, and the wind, which way does it come
from, and what is the prevailing wind in their land. They know which way they’re heading. And the feel of the sun, if it’s sunny. They know which way they were heading.

So they were very sure they were taken south. And they say, for many, many days. Moons, perhaps. They travel many days. Finally sometimes they find birch-bark canoes, which are differently made. And travel by birch-bark canoes and portages, many portages. Then finally they would reach the area where the camp, where the, these peoples’ home. So they describe it, it’s the shores of the great lakes. The lakes of the freshwater. It is the freshwater. Because where they come from, the bay is salty. And they know that the great waters they walk on, they walk into, is freshwater. And they know they were, they head south. And besides that, they heard about the great lakes in south. And into the west, from the Muskego country. So they said they were taken south.

And they reached the camp, they have found that these group were having the village. And, they grow something they eat. So it seem to describe the Mohawks or Iroquois. And these people are um, naturally a warriors. They have warriors. They go raids other communities for some reason. Same reason as these captives understood why they were being taken. And this particular young man, I’m gonna make this story short. This particular young man have survived this captive.

One of the elder ladies, not the very old but perhaps maybe forty-five year old lady, happen to see the boy, and instantly, reminded of her son that was lost, in one of those raids. Warrior raids. War parties. And right away she walk up to the young man, and said, “My son, my son you’re back.” But it actually that’s not her son. It’s just similar shape and very similar everything. And, she was told that that’s not her son, that is the Omuskego tribe, and we have captive. It is a captive. So he beg, she beg. She beg the leaders and elders and chiefs and warriors, that she will be this, this particular boy to be put in the custody of her care. Until the time comes that whatever they want him. Her request was so pitiful, that the elders and chiefs agreed that she will keep the boy in her home. On condition of that there will be sentries outside. One or two. Each day.

And it so happen this lady love the boy so much, because he had, she had lost the son that looks exactly the same age and looks exactly the same. And for sympathy and
for caring and love, she teach the young man of mitewiwin. That’s the shaman, shaman-training. And the boy pick up very fast, and he learn a lot from the old lady.

And, there was the public meeting which they were, they attend. That one of the captive of the Muskego land, was this day to be sacrificed. And this boy watch carefully what was taken place and he, he also spoke the language of her adopted mother. And the mother says, this boy, is a, is his day to be sacrificed. He shall be, he will be killed, and he will be cook, in a pot, and everybody in a community will have a taste of this soup out of this body. And, the boy ask, “Why is it?” He says, “That’s the holy sacrifice. A human sacrifice, that our lives will be extended within it.”

So that’s their philosophy. These people. That’s why they kill those people. So they, so the boy ask, when is going to be my term, my turn? So the old lady says, it usually happens every three months. So if this boy is killed now in this fall, perhaps the other one will be killed by February, or another one by early spring. And I’m gonna ask a request to the elders and chiefs that you will be granted the last, the last of your people to be sacrificed.

So, the lady went to see the chief and council and the warriors and all that, and she went to beg and ask, to be allowed to keep the little boy for the next six months. At least. It was agreed. And by this, by all that time, she trained the young man to have a dream vision, and a dream quest. Dream quest and a dream vision. Which was applicable in their tribes and teach the young man the dream of escaping. To have these dreams to come true some day when his time come, that he will be able to escape and survive. So every day and each day, the boy learn many things from this lady, which of course she was partially a shaman. And then the boy was actually did have a dream quest practice and also the dream vision. Which encouragement of her mother. Foster-mother.

Soon, before six months was over, the young boy was ready. The young boy had enough, have gathered enough knowledge and also practice. And had a dream vision. That should be enough to save his life. So the old lady says, “I am glad that I was able to provide you, and hope for you to live, to save you your life and, go back where you came from. And I want to thank the Great Spirit that you have came. To rekindle my feeling towards my son which I have lost. Even though that I will lose you, I will always remember you that you are alive.”
And then all this sad prediction of him and her. The boy was by now truly attached to this lady. Maybe more than his mother. And then some day, time came. This was early part in the spring. That his time came that he will be sacrificed. By this time his mother has, his mother has train him and brief him, and everything what’s gonna happen. And to try to fit her, his dreams in this action in these parts. In these uh, proceedings. And then, he didn’t have to tell her, his dream to her. But he knows himself what dream will fit. That will save him.

Then one day he was called in. And bravely he lift up his head, and walk up to the council in, and um, a circle where the sacrifice is to take place. And then, every time when there’s the person to be sacrificed, it was usually, the person was given the last request. What will he want to have for the, for this last day? And it was this day that the boy had dreamt few things which might save him. So anyway, he request it, in front of the elders and chiefs, and executives, executioners. Who will put him into stake to kill him. I think they usually kill him. And then they would cook him.

Everything was ready, and it happens to be inside the tent. Inside the tipi dwelling. And it was one of those long houses. And the pot was hanging there on open fire, and people were sitting around and, elders and chiefs and warriors and all that. In, in the rink. And, the boy was ask, what would he have for his last request? So he said, I want to dance. I want to have a last dance, before I am, before I’m dead. And also I wanted to have a tomahawk in my hand. So the elders and council decided. And, soon they agree. They say there’s no harm in having him dance and the Mohawk, and tomahawk it’s alright. So they let him have his wish.

And the, and the drums begin to roll, and also the singers. And as the music picks up the tempo, the boy, the boy begin to dance. And he dance so masterfully, because he have dreamed it. And then while he was dancing there were people sitting around the open fire and the pot and also the execution place. So he dances around the people sitting there. Some of them worship him as a living food. Some of them were having their spoon, wooden spoons in their mouth. Some of them have the knife. And some of them were actually wanted to kiss him, as he dance by. And he so happen to know this one elder was standing close by him, sitting close by him. Who literally, lick his wooden spoon. That he actually taste him already.
As he dance, when he was given the tomahawk, he have asked to give him a tomahawk on the last round. The tomahawk was given to him on his last round. As he pass by to the old man who’s eagerly, and desperately wanted to have him killed, he hit him over the head with the tomahawk. It killing him instantly. And then as soon as he does that, he jump in the opening of the, of the hole of the long-house. Jump right over the, the hole. And instantly turn into the raven. No, crow. Instantly turned into a crow, as he go on the other side of the hole. And flew away into the sky.

At that instant all the warriors and people scream and, yell. And the warriors begin to run outside with the bow and arrows and start shooting the crow, but they keep missing. And the crow begin to fly away. And the, and the warriors begin to chase, and the chiefs, and the best runners. To try to catch him. But the crow just remain to, remain flying. Seeing those people walking, running in after him. And then he disappeared into the sky and come ‘round again. Where he had flown. He fly again to that place where he was chased to. And then he saw those elder people first, walking back home, crying. Because, so close, but they have lost the living food which they believe. And, the boy let go his droppings into these elders. Just for the sake of intimidating them.

And then finally all the warriors, those who were so fast finally give up the chase. And then went back home. And the crow flew away from them. A little ways and then, landed into a, into the ground. Turn himself as a young man again. And this what he has dreamt, and this is what the dream quest has been. This is what the dream vision has been. Which he has so believe would save him, to the guidance of his, of the foster-mother, who have love her, love him so much. So he went home. And it was him who returned back to the Muskego land. And told the story.

These are the kind of stories that we have, beside legends. I guess these stories can be, they are the ones, I mean. Which I call recent history because part of them are true. And part of it is not. Maybe it is not true. What the young man have said about how he escape. The rest of it, it sounds so convincing. But the way he escaped the prosecution or, or the ritual, is a bit of, it’s not possible by human, by ordinary person. And that’s what teach us. That’s, that’s how our young people, fascinated by the culture spiritualism. We, I call it the spiritualism because, there was no other in the time past. Nobody knows about Christianity. Nobody knows about Jewish religion. Nobody else
know any other religion but their own. But it was not the church. It was individual, spiritual, practice and belief.

So the stories teach us these things. So we have lots of them. There is, there are quite a few of those. They are two kinds of them. They are two kinds of those, shall we say, skirmishes, or shall we call them raids. I guess raids will be the proper word for it. Because these Muskego people are raided. They are not ready. They are not expecting any war. They are ambushed. And those people who are who are attacking them are skillfully arranging their ambush. If you want to call it ambush then you can call it, raids. And then, these kinds. These kinds that I have describe by this story of the a young person, they are the kinds. They are, they are those kinds. And they are another kinds. And these are different. They are similar stories, they are raids, or sometimes ambushes. Or, they are very, they are very, more like massacre.

Sometimes, a very small group of people not, not the distant land but within, within the area of the Muskego sometimes, just the next door neighbor more like, who used to come and search for women. Young women. Especially the young men used to travel as a group. What they do is you know they see the women and then they steal the women, or they ask for the women. And they threaten the family. If the family says no, and then they will threaten him with the, with the shaman power. And, in order to avoid being threatened, the families used to hide their young women, when those people appear.

But sometimes those people used to spy on the Omuskego camp. They see how many young women are there. And once they see how many and who they are, and then they were appear, they will approach, they will approach the small village. And, settle just amongst them, and then ask the parents for their daughter. And if the daughter says, “No I don’t have a daughter,” they know that they were not going to be given. And that’s when they usually threaten them. With the shaman power. And sometimes they even threaten them, physical arms. And if the Omuskego parents are stubborn, they would remain firm.

And, sometimes these young people, young men from the neighboring communities, they would have their shamanism. Shaman, shaman, their own, of their own kind. That means, that’s their power. That’s why they threaten those people. So if
they fail to, if they fail to get the women, ah, the direct approach, and then they will threaten, and after that they will turn to the shaman, to apply the, to apply their threatening. And sometimes the shaman would listen, sometimes not. Because, a shaman is a human. And, he has a bad conscious too. So if he start to harass, if he start to harass the community by his power, the Omuskego people have a power also. And once you threaten the Omuskego by your powers, they can be a devastating affect. Because sometimes you are the, you move first, and you action will make you a blasphemer. Then you’ll get, your reward.

So that is dangerous. And that’s why some shamans do not apply that, when they are right close to the Omuskego people. So usually they have to go away, a little ways and, a small bothersome maneuver. That’s what they would use. And then, the family, once they find out, this is it. And if they get scared then, the shaman will know they get scared and then they’re go back to the village, and ask the girl again. And sometimes the scared Muskego family would submit to them. And then they will allow their daughters to be taken.

So that was, the second kind of a...bothersome cultural activity that was, not so proud to be, we are not so proud to mention. But it’s real. And this is happened on each of those main rivers into the James Bay. The ones that are empty to the James Bay and also to the southwest coast of Hudson Bay. And at the headwaters of those rivers is where mostly of those people came from. And sometimes a bit lower. Further away.

Whatever the reason that happened, it happens mostly after the European arrive. After sixteen-forty. Because by sixteen-forty, our Omuskego women had illegitimate children from the white people. And our Muskego people in that west coast of James Bay and southwest coast of Hudson Bay, were the fair-skinned women. And the men. And this is what the, neighboring tribes were intrigued by that. Let’s say, a forbidden apple. Or, just, just simply curiosity.

So therefore there’s lots to say about this. So they were, they were two different kinds of raids. The actual raid that has been experience by the Omuskego people, Muskego people along the west coast of Hudson Bay and southwest coast of Hudson Bay, were the ones that are well-organized. And these are the ones that are long-distance travelers. Usually they were, they were blamed. They were pin-point as a Mohawks.
Sometimes it’s Iroquois. And one of those tribes. Southern, southern part of Ontario. Near the great lakes.

And then, and there were the other tribes. Some kind of other people, who usually bothered the Native people of the Cape Henrietta Maria. They were, they were Inuit people. They were from, a Belcher Island. And some of them maybe further up north. And they used to ah, walk across the ice, early spring, early summer. And, the ice that just right into the Cape Henrietta Maria. And, part of the June and part of July. And part of July is already summer in, on the shores of the southwest coast of Hudson Bay.

And it was then those days that these people will appear from nowhere, it seems. And attack the Omuskego people, for whatever the reason they have. But these were the most vicious people. The Inuit. They kill for the sake of killing. And besides that, they eat human flesh. Almost the same as the other people from south.

Well, (chuckles) just for the joke. Just for the joke, of our people. They say, Omuskego people they irresistibly delicious. Well, that might be the case (chuckles). If the cannibalism was the key thing in the world, yes. They may have been delicious. Not only the taste. And it was much more so after the European mingled with them. And they were more delicious then more than taste. Well, that’s my opinion.

Well anyway, the fact is that, these were the kinds of stories that we have. And these stories are so recent. It was after, it was after sixteen hundred that that happens. And the Omuskego people already had guns, muskets. The early type of uh, shot gun that the European brought in, within the Hudson Bay. So those inland people like um, Mohawks, or it could have been some other tribes, Ojibways, or something like that, they didn’t have the guns yet. Maybe one out of fifty. But in the Muskego, maybe one out of ten or fifteen. So that’s the only advantage the Omuskegos have then, it’s guns.

So they use the guns, you know, to beat off those raiders. Sometimes they, sometimes they kill them all. One time, in between Cape Henrietta Maria and Attawapiskat there was a famous place there. Famous name. Which is called Human Skeletal Shawl. Shawl? Or shore. And, this is where the Muskego people take vengeance to this action. And they kill all those tribes and, let their heads pile along the shore. Because those people who had raided their community, they had beheaded some beautiful women with the beautiful face and hair. And they were walking home with the
lances stuck, heads stuck into the lances. And this would cause us so much pain and anger. Amongst the Omuskego tribes and, kill all those who have raided them, who have raided their village. And beheaded them all and, dragged their head along the beach of the Southwest coast of James Bay. And then finally drop them off in the place where it’s called, The Skull Shore of the James Bay. The human skull of the James Bay. It James Bay was not named yet but at least that’s the word can, that can fit it today.

Now, there are many stories like this. There are individual stories. I have only mention part of each of those things. I only mention one story which is, which is the way that those, some of the stories that have involve. Some stories are very long. These kinds, and there are some that are very short. There are many. That are short. And now we shall see how much more do we have this story, tape.

We have about maybe fifteen minutes tape left in this machine. So I’m gonna try to time myself, to fill in some more about the stories that I’m talking about. Now these are the, these are the specific kind of the stories that originated from the west coast of James Bay and the southwest coast of Hudson Bay. And this, and this area, these histories, these activities, human activities took place in, in within, within the southwest coast of Hudson Bay and also west coast of James Bay. Around, about two hundred miles or a hundred miles from the Hudson Bay shore. From the bay shore. Because, the Omuskegos covered the land about a hundred and fifty miles inland, from the shore of the, of the bay.

And within from there, then we have what we call Oji-Cree people. And they also cover another one-hundred-fifty miles line down to the south. Right up to the rail heads. Right up to the railway. To the C.N. And then, from there on south they are other tribes. Which, now then, the actual Ojibway people. The real Ojibway people are in the area of Thunder Bay region, Kenora, and Sioux Saint Marie, and their places. These were the real Ojibway people. And northern, northern part of that, they were partially Ojibway, partially Oji-Cree, and, north of that there’s Oji-Cree, and then, north from that there’s there is, there is a Cree people. Which we call them, which we used to call them Cree people. But actually, I have said it again. We should not use Cree people, we should use, Omuskego. Omuskego people. Because that is the tribal name.
Now, we have introduced the stories. And now, I am going to introduce another kind of a story that are involve in my stories. And this is to do with the shamanism. Shamanism. The activities of, the activity of the shamans. And, the kind of shamans. These we can, we can talk about that a little bit. And why is it shamanism? Where does it come from, is the first thing we should ask. How does it develop? How does one person became a shaman? That is itself it’s a very long story. And we should not deal with that here in this tape for the time being.

All we will do now we will, mention another type of story. Now we will talk about, the stories that’s similar to the killings. This time it is uh, is what we call cannibalism. O.k, there are stories about cannibalism. And there were in this area, within this area, where the same area of the Omuskegowuk, and also within the area of the Oji-Crees and Ojibways. All through the land, cannibalism has been experienced, years, years, years, way back. And cannibalism did occur, not too long ago. So cannibalism is um, is a chaos. Where there’s no order because the country, because of the land is poor. Because, maybe the Native people over-kill, over-hunt. But mostly they say, the cycle of life of animals, pit at the same time. When there’s no fish and when there’s no big game animals it’s a biggest, the biggest results of this shaman, a shaman period. I mean uh, the cannibalistic period.

And during those years then, there will be most of them, ordinary people will become cannibals. And therefore, the remaining ordinary people will have to decide what to do. What action do they take. So, usually the elders, who are naturally a shamans, they would, they would automatically decide that the area should be clean of the cannibalism. In order to have a normal human, human beings. So usually they have a exterminator, of uh, of cannibalist, cannibalishly. So they use that within their territories sometimes they have one, other tribes. So they usually sung a sermon. The best they can find. By shaman powers. And then they would um, they would hire him to clean up their area of uh, cannibals. And once they finish this you know the land again, will resume these, go to a natural state of beings.

Um, they were other times that, that the disease would, would cover the land of animals. Mostly the wolves. And, four-legged small animals. And, not necessary the big game animals. But sometimes they were wolf, were begin, known to be have sick.
Today we know that disease where it’s called rabies. But long time ago, sometimes the disease will be within the animals for long time, and it begin to affect their growth. Their genetic makeup goes haywire, and sometimes they used to have a giant wolf who has full disease and really, really a human, evil beast. Which clean up the land and kill people.

Maybe it’s one of the Great Spirit ways to maintain the population of the area. People have said that. But, after the European arrived, those things seems to stop. The cannibalism begin to dwindle into a very, very few times. Because, the European have introduced their food products. Which helps a lot. And, these are the stories. Cannibalism, is a story that is so fascinating sometimes. And then we have, then we have also a mystery stories. Which I mean, the stories that are mystified people in the, in the territory.

Let’s say one of the things that I can conclude myself, by listening to the elder stories is that, they have experienced U.F.O. sightings, contacts, and things like that. And, but they never understood what exactly this all, that the great shaman have understood what those things are, but was not able to explain. The thing is, the understanding was so great, that the ordinary person would never understand. Is what I have heard. Some powerful shaman were able to communicate with the U.F.O.s. With those objects that were known to, to travel in their land. And they were able to, they were able to contact, and they were able to communicate. And um, and just because of that, sometimes those flying objects were able to try to communicate to the land, by having their voice heard on the land.

And, the U.F.O.s, these objects flying objects that were experienced by Native people, they have also power. Those flying objects has a capability to carry or, should I say send out fears, upon the land. And which was very negative affect to the Native people. Because they had more power than the shaman. These. Whatever was in, these object. And then, some stories say that, some Native people have actually seen the, a human figure. Which has a very similar human shape. But has, only the covering. They can, they can actually see the within, but it’s only it’s covered with something.

It’s very similar to the today’s flying, I mean, aliens, which sometimes experience by ordinary people. Which have described the occupants of the flying saucers whatever it is. These have same description that our ancestors used to describe. But the
problem is, the only problem about our elders was that, the days before Christianity, before European came. Our people had shamanism within them automatically. I mean they develop it very fast when they’re young. And they have it, all everybody has it. And, some were powerful shamans who have powers to do something. To accomplishes which is are, which is impossible. Like, having to exert fear, or sometimes having to make people hallucinate, or cause the illusion to appear into a people which they want to scare off. Or sometimes they use to, able to bother somebody with the element. Like water, or from, from the atmosphere. Or even the element such as, thunder. And rain, and wind.

So these are the far-fledged things but they are really there. They were really there. And because they have this power, automatically, they never have anything to investigate. They automatically decided this is another shaman’s power which I am experiencing. So when they saw the object that flies in the atmosphere which was balloon-shaped, sometimes disk-shape, they automatically assume, this is the power of another shaman. To show me how powerful he is.

So, for that reason, they never investigate. Because they already assume, it’s not the out of space it’s here. And very unfortunate thing. But they were shamans who did understand the objects that are appear, appear in the atmosphere, and understood also they are, occupants in it. But the only thing is, there was no word to describe. There was no such word, to describe what is it? Because it was totally alien to the human form here.

So we have those stories. And people, our elders understood those things. But they never were able, they were never able to tell anyone. Only the shaman. The powerful shaman understood these things. That’s why our people understood stars. That’s another part of the story. They understood the universe, the stars and everything, they know that. That’s what they could use it, for navigation also. Now, we shall come to the end of this story.

A few seconds of the tape left. I wanted to say that, naturally our people had acquired the knowledge of astronomy, or astrology. I think it’s astronomy. I think astrology is predicting things from the stars. Astronomy is knowing the position of the stars and knowing, which moves, which not move. Our ancestors, the shamans, understood their planet. Understood the stars that move. Our ancestors then use the stars
to navigate during the night. And also they could study the stars and understood what kind of the weather they’re gonna have, the coming winter. Or even, for summer.

They are many other stories that involve with this, astronomy. Or, universal, universe, the body, bodies of universe. Our people, our shamans understood these things. The only thing is that, you know they didn’t have the language to describe these things. Because shamans live in the bush by themself, they live in the wilderness. So they never have any gatherings, they don’t have the meetings, they don’t have any public speaking. So they know, they know all these things by themself. They have their own education. Just like what the Europeans know today. They know. They know it all.