A LIFE HISTORY
OF
AN OJIBWA YOUNG WOMAN

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Fragments of an Ojibwa Life History.

The following life history materials were collected from a young Ojibwa woman at Lac de Flambeau Reservation (Wisc.) during the summer of 1946. The text represents an attempt at a literal transcript of our conversations during nine sessions between the end of July and the end of August. However, all personal names have been changed. The frequency of the interviews and the irregular intervals between them were in large measure dictated by the necessity of finding the subject when no other adults were present. Similarly, our formal interviews usually stopped when the subject's common-law husband came in, since he usually monopolized conversation once he was present. Yet contact with the subject was not limited to the formal interviews and information from other contacts is occasionally referred to in the text. The dance to which frequent reference is made, is the annual 2 Pow-wow held as a tourist attraction, in which not only the local Indians participate, but also a troupe of professionals, whose repertory consists of Plains accoutrements and dances from a variety of tribes. The Pow-wow is held in a clearing in the woods, where wigwams are built around the circular dance ground, and some of the families move to these wigwams during the period of the dance. Other activities include, as mentioned in the text, the sale of bead work, and of hot dogs. On this particular occasion, the dance broke up several days in advance of the date set originally, since on the insistence of one group, the gate receipts were divided and a general drinking spree resulted.

The stabbing to which reference is made (p.2.2.) is explained in the text; the question was prompted by the subject's mentioning, on another occasion, of pain in the area.
The occasion for collecting these life history materials was my participation in a field party of graduate students from North Western University and the University of Chicago, under the direction of Dr. and Mrs. Hallowell. (cf A.I. Hallowell, *Culture and Experience*, chapter 18, 1955.)

Erika Bourguignon
Ojibwa life history: ADD

The Lac de Flambeau Indian reservation contains two villages, the old and the new village. The New Village contains the post office, government school, the agency, stores, a factory, a hotel, churches, as well as homes. The old village, on the other hand, has none of these facilities. The dance ground and the dance hall however are close to the old village. Nelly E. lived in a frame house in the old village, along the dirty road that runs through the village and along or of the lakes. I became acquainted with Nelly by stopping to talk with her three-year-old son Edward one day, in front of the house. After two visits I proposed to Nelly to take down her life history, at a payment of $0.50 per session. I had been looking for a subject and she was willing to talk and also in need of money. The only limiting condition on the frequency and length of our sessions had to be the necessity of find Nelly without adult company, since she would not talk in other people's presence. Since her house faced the road, and she took a considerable interest in whatever went on outside, there were frequent interruptions. The protocols of our sessions attempt not only to record our conversations, my questions as well as the subject's accounts, they also purport to describe behavior that was to be observed, on the part of Nelly as well as that of her children.
Session I July 25, 1946
Nelly B. - born May 20, 1923
Mother - Mary W., daughter of second Mrs. Fir, who died long time ago when Mary was a little girl.
Ann, daughter of Mary by first marriage - raised together with Nelly, is five years older, or four. Mary "first got married at 13 - had no place to go when her mother died - lived with her. Mother - had to take care of her younger brothers and sisters. Some women then used to get married at 11. Mother must be about 49 - don't know. Doesn't look so old - doesn't care to talk of herself." Says she (N) could write a book about mother's life - could make a book out of it but hasn't got the time. (Mother) had 4 other girls - all died - 3's children - no boys, just girls.
"My sister (Ann) has all boys. (?) The (last) child (born 2 weeks ago) was 10 months but she got sick suddenly. She was in the hospital a couple of weeks but she got tired of waiting. (?) was here when the baby was born. But when it got bad I got scared just couldn't stand it. First time I ever was around when a baby was born (baby cries - Nelly starts nursing her - tickles baby's lips) Jeez, I feel no good - back hurts, legs are just numb. I went to get a doctor this morning - it's the first time, chest hurts too. That's why I said maybe I'm smoking too much. (?) Rather nurse her than give her the bottle (tears at child, tilts her cheek) (You don't remember when you were as little as Mary? One thing I remember when I was a small baby - mother went up town and left me with an old lady who had a long peaked finger nail - must have hurt me when she changed my diaper - I sometimes think about that - just started to walk around (i.e., indicates her age at the time) - (Pauses moment, plays with baby, changes
diaper- sits baby on old quilt on floor- gives her clothes pins to play with- some other items from her dresser including a lens) Fred uses it(lens, for bead work- just wants to be bothersome- he just bothers me trying to help with bead work- have to thread the needle for him- do the first line. Had a quarrel last night (spoiled some food with a sauce). He quarrels at me when I'm not in a mood to quarrel and then he quits when I get mad.(?) Hurts my feelings- I don't know how to cook so- I never cooked when I was staying with my mother- never had to do anything. Fred was in jail for not giving his wife any money. He's supposed to be my uncle- on my father's side- just like brothers. We've known him for a long time- used to stay with us. Just said he was coming for a visit. My step-dad was working at a resort. That's when I made $60 a month on beadwork. We lived 5 miles from town (Upson, Wisc.) North of Ironbelt- where's north (Points, then changes her mind as to direction)- that was about 3 years ago. Said that he had a secret to tell me. Must have thought of us when he was in jail- never did when he had money (?) Yea, he used to, had money in the Indian office- what he inherited from his mother and his dad. Came here from Clam Lake near Hayward- were livin' together with my mother- step-dad was still working for the same people. Last summer we moved down to Baraboo (Wisc. near Madison) down south someplace where they had powder plants during the war. Fred was working in a plant. (Not living with mother then- just Baraboo went to Clam lake and then to St. Louis. Still goes to Michigan now and then- still has in's house up there.
Fred's mother was dad's aunt—his dad's sister. (therefore relationship term for Nelly to Fred) missuno. (laughs at suggestion that she calls him that) He'd make fun of me if I do that. (?) He would call me a daughter (laughs) ndanos—mother calls me that. Calls mother ma—called father mbaba. Would call Ann (half sister) by her Indian name (?)"mine is funny; saga jui-osikwe—that's a lad.
The whole thing? the sun coming up.
Could talk all day. When I get to know anybody—when they listen, then I could talk. (?) No, I just have to pipe down when he's around. (Fred)—he likes to talk himself—I mustn't say anything when he is around. Some times that (interruption by entrance of Fred in high boots and with ax—had gone to cut wood for wigwams—For dad but obviously had not gone to get doctor for Nelly.)
Session II (approximately one week after first formal interview. Had been seen several times in between but never alone.)

(?) Father was from L'Anse, Michigan, was part Indian- herself 5/8. Mother is full blood- dad 3/8, part French- Jerry E. - was youngest in the family- guess about 8. All boys, all dead. Grandfather: Dick E. Didn't know had any grandparents until five years ago when met Bill Fir. He's hard to make friends with but when I know him he's all right. Dad- he was just a laborer- that's when they used to work in the WPA- and he used to guide in the Land o'Lakes(?) Just once went out hunting with him- that's before he died that fall. Dad was married before he married my mother. Had a little girl but that little girl died. Didn't know her. He never talked about her- he never used to talk much.

There is nothing much to tell about him. He never used to talk about himself. There was nothing much except when he got drunk- always fighting. Every payday. It's funny how we used to live a long time ago- $44 a month- and he always had something left at the end. I guess that's when everything was cheaper. He never got drunk 2 or 3 days at a time. I never was around- I was always with my grandmother (?)- Mrs W.- don't know how we are related- they're all related in that village (interruption- white man looking for someone making birch objects) Fred used to make canoes and basket he's too lazy to go after the bark. He's too lazy to sell the hides- Ida's going to come and help me- he's going to collect tickets- got himself another easy job!

My dad, when he was drunk, he used to chase everybody out of the house. He'd never sleep, just sit there. That's why I never stayed home. He'd chase us out all the time. Or when we'd stay home, he
bother us- call us- my mother and my sister and myself. Like my
mother'd be laying by him and he'd still want to know where she
was- just bother us(?) I'd go to my grandmother's. She got run
over by a car- she was looking for her boy I guess. This guy,
his son, was drunk- he was driving so fast. He didn't see her-
must have dragged her about 10 feet. That was that fall before
my dad died. There was three of 'em killed. That winter before sh
died my sister's husband was run over by a car. That's the first
husband she had.(?) Edward was born in January after all this.
(When you were stabbed, was that before Edward was born?) Edward
was a year old then. I used to tease this guy (laughs). I got
tired of their drinking over there- so when they came to pick up
the cherry pickers I went along. (Edward wants something to eat-
"I don't let him eat between meals") Then we went to Sturgeon Ba:
I was there for a week then those girls I went with kept coaxing
me to go out with them. So I did- we got a ride from a white guy-
he drove us around. Then we saw that Indian boy- he talked to us.
There was four of us girls. I don't know how he picked me. I
didn't care much about going around with anybody. His dad (Edward's)
was in the army and he was sending us money for him. So
that guy picked me out and he kidnapped me (laughs) I was drinkin
that day. And he just took me over to where he was staying with
his mother and his aunt. The next morning I wanted to go home bu
I didn't know which way we had come. That guy was just watching
me all the time I couldn't run away from him. (Were you scared?)
(nods) (What happened then?) We didn't make much money picking
cherries so we went home. (How did you get away from him?) I
didn't, he came with me- then my mother was here. My step-dad
wanted somebody to work with him in Upson. So we were ready to go when Martin wanted us to drink with him. It was over by the tower I got stabbed. It was in the hunting season. This guy always carried a great big blade with him (what year was that?) that was 3 years ago—no it isn't either—2 years ago I think (yawns) (Were you all drunk?) (laughs, nods) Never learned our lesson either. Anyway, I must have teased him too much, he stabbed me. I had an overcoat and a suit—that's why it wasn't so deep. Good thing it was on the right side here (points at scar actually is on left side). They (police) were right there. They took us down the Indian office. I didn't know what happened. Told'em I must have fallen over something. They didn't believe. Then they told me I got stabbed. (?) It hurts after a while. I almost got blood poisoning from it. (Put you in the hospital?) No-I stayed here—with Mrs. Love (?) my mother's aunt. Bill Fir's sister I think. I only stayed there for a while then my mother came after me. They put this guy in jail—must be still in there. Gave him three to five years. (ever hear from him?) Yeah, he used to write to me. (How long did you live with that guy?) Three months, after we got through picking cherries. (Did you like him?) Don't know—sometimes. (Laughs) I got a hangover. (Party?) Aha.

Then I went to Upson with my mother. Christmas Fred wrote to me— I don't know—he was in jail. Said he wanted to come and visit. Then the second letter he said he wanted to tell me a secret. (?) I don't know, he never told me. My mother was the one who wanted me to stay with him. I don't like him. (?) He used to be just like my dad. (?). He always came and stayed with us. He had a car and used to take us out for rides. He had his wife along. I was
just a kid then. He used to bring me over to stay with his mothe.
I liked that old lady. We used to call her just Mrs. René or by
her Indian name. I don't know her Indian name. She was always lo
of fun. Used to wrestle around with us kids. I used to run away
from Fred at first. He always came after me. So we settled down
afterwards when I got to know him good, then it was all right.
(baby whimpers, picks her up, puts shoes and socks on baby) Then
they moved us over to Clam Lake- I told you that before- that me
he was working for. We stayed there a couple of weeks, then we
started drinking again. I told the boss if Fred doesn't go I'm
going. So they chased him out. I stayed and they fired Fred. I
used to stay with them cutting pulp. It was fun- we used to work
half a day. I don't know how we got in a fight. He was jealous
I guess. That's the way he used to handle me. Like a hag. Kick
me around and knocked my teeth out. (changes diaper, smiles at
baby) Oh then he went to- I think he went to Milwaukee- (rocks
baby ch-ch-ch-) Then he used to write me from Milwaukee- said
he was sorry he did that. I never used to write to him. Then on
the fourth of July- he used to tell me he had a lot of money-
then I wrote to him (starts nursing baby on left breast). I
asked him for money on the fourth of July. That boss told me
not to write to him. So he came after me- we went down to Bara-
booc (last year?) Yeah- I liked it over there- he (boss) used to
take us to the show. (interruption)
Session III August 8, 1946

On stoop- Nelly is doing beadwork.

(Again, more rapport had been established but since the previous session this was again the first time Nelly was alone. I asked where Fred was and she said she had sent him up to the dance ground. He talks too much).

I could go half a day without talking. One time I was a witness at a trial, when the U.S. marshall came after me from Superior about 300 miles- I didn't talk all the way over there. So when I was to come back he didn't want to take me. I just get that way sometime. (?) I don't listen when somebody talks to me.

(Baby- sitting inside on the floor on a ragged quilt- cries. Nelly gets up and gives her as toys, a paper box, a paper bag, a wooden loom, a pie plate and wooden clothes pins.) (?) I don't know if I dreamed or not- just slept straight through- just woke up once.

(tired?) yeah- I walked to my mother's and back and over there (dance ground)- (did you carry the baby all the way?) (nods)

One of them Indians there that's dancing just looks like my dad. Jeez, I just felt a lump in my throat. He's kind of dark (?) don't know where he's from (?) When things don't go right I think of him. Fred and I don't get along so well. If I had enough money I'd go. When he's going to Wisconsin Rapids.... I suppose he's just talking. (fight?) No, just don't get along. He said he's going to let me go. (interr.) When he starts going again he'll be all over. That's what he did last fall. You see, he left us in the hunting season. (Baby cries, Nelly does not react for a few minutes, then quietly starts fixing swings while baby goes on crying. Picks the baby up only when the swing is set up- changes diaper while putting baby into the swing. Since the baby goes on crying she takes her over to where she was sitting before and
starts nursing her—while doing this she says) Did you ever see that baby in the other house? (neighbor's) It's a great big bab... She (Mary) just wants to be bothersome. I wish I had a car. (?) I go out for a ride. I had a car last fall. Something went wrong—the water froze in the generator—it just cracked. (Car passes—as she goes on nursing the child, Nelly laughs—"he was watching me.") Jim is selling my dad's land (money?) Just me and Jim I think. (kisses sole of Mary's foot while nursing her) (?) Jim's father and my father were brothers and they owned the land. (put baby in swing and sings to her.) (Indian song?) No, I just made it up—no, I used to hear my grandmother sing that. (baby goes on crying, Nelly changes to rocking motion) What do you want me to tell you?

(Pause—ever think of when you were a kid?) Used to have hard times when I was a kid. My mom and daddy used to leave. (Pause—were you scared?) (Nods) That's when they quit leaving us. We were going to school. My sister had a headache that day and didn't want to go to school in the afternoon. I went and when I came back she was moaning and screaming—she went almost crazy. went after my aunt and they found that some Indian was witching her. Then the next day they went after my mother. Then they never left us. She almost lost her. I don't know who the Indian was. Then they never left us. (I.3. Compare with 3/20 when in discussion of Lydia's fit, Nelly says her sister once had fits like the caused by some strange Indian, named Jim, whom the children were teasing.)

There used to be an old fellow he used to chase us to school with a shotgun. He was drunk all the time. Always had to hide. I never
used to talk English much since (sic) I went to high school. The teacher in the school over there never could make us talk English we used to sit in class and whisper in Indian. It got so he learn Indian too, listening to us gibbering away. The first one (teacher) used to be mean- he used to kick us around. He was a great big tall fellow. When he used to punish us he made us stand on our tip toes and put our arms like this (spreads arms) and put books on our head and made us stand like that for an hour. Some of the kids just cry. When he'd punish me I used to stand on my feet each time he looked away. I never went to school until I was 9 years old. I don't know why they never wanted me in school. Each year I'd be up there the first day and they'd send me home again. I could read before I ever went to school. My sister used to bring books home. I used to like mathematics- went way up to trigonometry in high school.

(Baby is asleep, Nelly wants cigarettes, talks about brands.) One time I started to write a story about myself- just outline- I still got it over to Clam Lake. I had it typed in school. That's the only thing I like to think about is when I was in school. (I'd like to see that story.) I suppose them kids will get into everything there. I put it way up on the shelf. (Pause- when did you go out of school?) 1942 was when I last went to school. It's too far from here- my dad didn't let me go the last year. It's a good thing he didn't- I wouldn't have seen him anymore. Jeez, that's awful. I just felt lost. They took my mother and sister up to jail.

(whispers- interruption- RC comes by- Nelly goes on swinging baby) (Silence- were you there when it happened?) (Smiles, shakes head) Seems like I was always out of the house- I was there late that night though- I wanted to see what they were doing before I went to my grandmother's. They were making a lot of noise. I was standi
by the door- he came over. They were sitting on a cot and he put his
arm around me. Then the next morning my mother woke me up- no, it
was my aunt. She said the house burnt down. No, it didn't, one of
those ceremonial drums was outside; it was my dad's. I went inside
and there he was laying- his arm was still smoking, just his boots
were left. (Silence- Nelly is visibly upset, with a faraway look on
her face- offered her a cigarette, she goes into the house to light
it- pause, then continues) And after that, those people were just
standing around there. They weren't doing anything, just crying. So
I sat down there (whispers) so I just covered him up. (pause) Oh,
I just went over to this guy's place- I didn't know he was the one
who had done that- he was sitting by the door in his underwear- no
shoes, no sleeves, his sleeves must have burnt. I didn't think any-
thing. I asked him to take me uptown to get the sheriff. He said:
"wait a while". I didn't want to wait. So I went to my aunt's. They
took me uptown right away. While we were in town they must have re-
moved this guy's things- his shoes and his cap and everything. When
we came the police were right behind us. They took my dad- I mean
my mother and my sister. When they brought the coffin I was all
alone. (pauses- swings baby) What time is it? (I tell her, don't
go on if it bothers you) It used to bother me- it doesn't bother me
any more. He used to say sometimes all of you are going to, like
going to hell- that's just what happened. (pause- continues matter
of factly) We stayed around there for about four months, I think.
Then we came up here and stayed with my grandfather. (waits for
good) Got to work on this! (sits down to her headwork) What do you
want me to tell you now? (pause- Did you dream about it afterwards.
Hum- I used to get nightmares. If I was walking somewhere all alone-
I used to hear him whistle- call me. He had a lot of pet names for
It got so that I could understand his whistle. I used to go out to the woods all the time. Just sit in a tree. Two times my mother lost me. They found me in a swamp someplace. It was in the winter time. I never knew what I was doing. (pause) It seems like I was the only one he was around after he died. He bothered me. If I was sleeping alone he'd stand by me. I could hardly breathe, my ears were ringing—just couldn't move. That's why my mother took me away from there. (Pause- Did it stop when you came here?) (shakes head) Mmm- I had it for a while—my grandfather used to stay up with me—talk to me—after a while it didn't bother me anymore. (Did it ever come back?) (Shakes head) We used to have a lot of fun with him. Like in the morning he used to be the first one up—make a fire and get everything ready for my mother. She used to sleep on—he'd drive her out of bed and then he'd drive us out too, me and my sister, he'd throw water on us. (pause, laughs) I was going to give M. a nickel yesterday to bring me some candy. He said he'd bring me some for a present. (talks about beadwork she is doing, belt Fred is making) I feel sorry for him (Fred) sometimes. I don't know why, he don't feel sorry for me. Gee, that M. he makes me so mad I could just cry, he hurts my feelings—and I have to laugh! Guess I'm just a cry baby. (pause) (Did you ever really like somebody?) What do you mean? (Well, you don't sound as if you were crazy about Fred!) I'm not. I find out a lot of things once I stayed with him—like he never fills his promises—makes promises and never... (what did he promise?) He promised a little work. When I first started staying with him he promised I wouldn't have to do my bead work—that's what I'm doing for a living now. Wonder where is wife is. (Do you know her?) Yeah, we
used to quarrel and he'd say he'd go back to her. (Would she take him back?) I don't know, 'she'd do anything I guess. He's got a boy as big as Shorty (14). I guess he wanted to take it, that kid, away from his wife- so she said if I can't have it you can't either so they put him on a farm. His room and board must be $300 now. They must have agreed to go half and half. He says he's going to get him out. Fred's just hopeless. He's just getting old, I guess. Complaining about his aches and pains- I used to tease him about- Y' know and he used to just laugh but now he doesn't laugh any more. (Edward crosses the road and runs after a car and Nelly is frightened, goes to call him- returns and sits down to beadwork again). Don't you wish you were a millionaire? (What would you do?) Just take it easy. (Might help) Might help me! (Well, what would you do with it?) (laughs) Put it in a bank- oh, just a little bit o'money- suppose I'd go crazy with a million dollars.

(Interruption- Nelly invites me to stay for lunch, talks about the dance, etc. says May, who is her aunt, sells the bracelets for her at the dance ground and takes out 25 c from every $1.50 per bracelet.)
Session IV August 14, 1946

Ain't got nothing on my mind (talk about the first thing you think of) Are you scared of dead people? Ever see 'em? My ma and I found a dead man- the first camp we were in- that wasn't last winter- the winter before. (pause- what happened?) We got scared. We just happened to go over there- the snow was deep- I was taking the nails out of the wall and she went to- what do you call them there those dark places where you keep meat- any way, they're built in the ground. She started hauling out the old clothes. First she pulled out an old jacket- it was a good jacket too- said she'd take it home- she wanted me to light candles out there for her- it was dark in there- she just knelt down by the door- she got all white. Took her a long time before she got her breath. I just ran and left her- I thought she'd seen a bear. I told her not to tell me until we were about a mile away. Then she said there was a man in there (fondles baby, pauses) Was one of those lumberjacks. Went in there a couple of months before. Oh that night my mother couldn't sleep- it didn't even bother me- until the next night when they went after him- for four nights we couldn't sleep. (baby cries.. "her teeth are coming out!") Oh, we never went there again without going with somebody. (Edward puts face against baby's rear "all soakin' wet") What else shall I tell you? (Childhood) I don't remember much (repeats) I don't remember much. (pause- what sort of things do you like to think about? laughs) Did you see my picture that what's his name took?- gosh, I used to be fat. I was fat when I was 14 years old- I couldn't have no boy friends. I used to follow my sister around- she didn't like me. Always was in her way. She never could go out either without me around. One time she made
a date with this girl. Said she'd go out after supper after she'd do the dishes. So I waited for her- said I wanted to go along or I'd tell on her. But she didn't want me to go so I told on her. Then she couldn't go either. We never could play out at night like those other kids could. Had to go to bed before 9 o'clock. Just when they had games we'd have to go to bed. (pause- first date? Laughs) That was when I came back from school. I don't know why those boys never used to like me. (laughs) There was too many girls. Right after I came back from school. I was about 18. Had to wait a long time to find a boy friend. Them boys used to be afraid of my dad (puts baby in swing and starts swinging) I have a tooth-ache- the baby too- my jaw just hurts (takes a cigarette, goes on swinging baby) (pause- boy friend at school?) No, I was too much of a book worm. Never went to parties. Went to shows with the girls- I don't care much for boys. (How about now?) No, I don't care much for boys. There used to be more boys than girls at school. A lot of us never had no boy friends. Those boys at home anyhow all they did was drinkin' and take a girl out. (yawns) Like some people there they'd pick a man out for you and you'd have to stay with him. Like the one my sister's staying with now- that old guy they picked him out for her (That didn't happen to you?) No, never listened to my dad. He wanted me to stay with a white man. He was from Crystal Falls. Just because he had a car. I didn't like to stay with him. He used to be around here a lot though. I suppose he's married by now- must have a big family by now. (starts lighting and pumping stove) (First guy?) Dick Bear (Never talk about him? Laughs) Then I stayed with Leroy-Redbird- he's a Winnebago- (pause) and Fred. (Dick?) He used to come around there- even when I was a little kid he always used to come to see me- just like Fred (Don't like to think
about him? He's staying with my cousin now. I like to think about that other guy though. (laughs) (liked best?) Yeah (Looks away-looks at her hands, yawns, picks her nails) (Go back to him?) If I could! No, it's too late now. (Why?) Nothing (laughs) Fred's allright. (laughs) He's all right when he isn't drinking (gets up to work stove) Even haven't got the ambition to clean when I'm expecting somebody. Today is the 15th- when are you going back- the 1st? Bet you're glad to go back (No, etc..) Does what's his name have to do that too, show pictures? (Rorschach cards) (Who?) J. I used to study about all the bones in the body- that's what those pictures remind me of. (Pause- what did you like best in school?) Mathematics- only thing I liked. And then, in grade school, I used to like spelling. I won a spelling contest once. With 5 high schools, I think. I was scarfed too. I was the only one from home. (age?) I was 17 years old-16 or 17. (Where?) That was in Ramsay, Mich. (pumps stove) I wish I had my old stove back. (Tells Ed. to swing baby) (Ever think of what you'd like to do?) (laughs) No. (To Ed.) Go on playing outside- you never stay in here when I'm all alone. (Ed. runs out crying) Shut up, shut up now! (Chases him out) (He goes on bawling) Shut up now- I didn't even whip you, what are you crying for? Shut up! You'll wake up that baby- go on upstairs and don't cry either. He woke that kid! (smiles, swings baby) He just wants to be (laughs) (Ed. goes on crying upstairs; Nelly goes to get him) Jeez, what's the matter with you? Jeez, what do you make that noise for, shut up. Gee, my ears are ringing- I don't know why he does that- maybe he sees them kids doing that-never was so lazy in my life. Just like a fever- spring fever. Coming over to the dance again? I think I'll go over. I ate almost half of those
pills last night—maybe that's why I'm so lazy today. (Indian medicine? shakes head—Ever cured that way?) There's only three times I remember I was sick in bed. Typhoid, stomach flu and small pox. Small pox when I first went to school. I'd just gotten there, I cried all night, I wanted to go home. The next day my face was full of scabs. The matron looked at me and she got scared when she saw my face. They took me to the hospital. I stayed there for 2 months. My cousin was sick the same time— one day I leaned out of the window and I heard somebody call me. They all had pet names for me. He had it good there— radio and games. He put the radio on the window so I could hear it too. My dad sent him up to school, it was $25 for each of us. He ran away from school. I just had to tough it out the first year. I didn't want to go the second year but the girls wanted me to go so I did. They ran away and I had to stay all by myself. Jeez, I was stupid at first. I used to look for a washbasin. They had a big shower room. They put me in a room with 4 other girls—I didn't want to talk to them. Jeez, I was stubborn. Then they asked me what my name was and I told them. I always went along at the end. The first time I went to the dining room, jeez, there was a lot of kids. I sat down at the boys' side. They called me over—I didn't know I wasn't supposed to sit there. I couldn't eat because I had to listen to everybody. They had 3 stair ways, I didn't know to go downstairs. The matron asked me where my room was, I said I didn't know. Then I got to know them kids in there we sure raised hell though. (hums to baby-mood noticeably improved) I was 17 years old— that's when I first went away— No I wasn't either. I was older than that. See, I didn't start school till I was 9 years old— Here's 'red.
Session V  August 16, 1946

I'm always all alone in here- every day, he(Fred) makes so much noise- Where's J.? Them girls next door got Fred to chop wood for them. He's mad at that girl. (Why?) Borrowed her oil stove when we first moved in. She kept after us everyday and now she's still not using it. (Car passes.) Gee, that guy goes fast- got a ride from him one day- gee, I told him I'd never go with him again. Gee, it's been nice this morning- nice and warm- it looks smoky though. (Baby whimpers, sits her up in swing- beams at her- ties her in sitting position.) I've been patching up clothes (with a look at Edward's bed which is full of clothes- opens door) Where that kid (Edward) went? (Goes back to looking at Sears catalogue) (What are you thinking about? Pause- do you order things?) Twice already this month- Edward's pants and the kid's shoes- safety pins and thread- Store ran out of them- you can't get it in town. (Is Clam Lake further away from town than here?) 9 miles. -(Hard?) No, I liked it out there in the woods. Last summer, that's where I got lost- short cut in the woods- I had Edward along too. I went too far out. Y' see I walked about 30 miles that day- we were just starving. There were a lot of fire lanes there- I just kept on walking. I was on top of a hill- then I saw the sand turned over so I saw the road (in the distance) When I got to that bridge I knew I'd been there before- than I followed that road. It was getting toward evening. I could see the wolf tracks and the bear tracks. That kid slept all day, he was so hungry. I had him on my back. I was scared. I'd start to run and get tired and just walk. I was wearing new shoes that day- the heels came off- all my clothes were torn. We came to that other camp- and the lumberjacks told me where to go. When I walked down the road I saw a bear crossing- he didn't even see us- he just crossed. Then a car passed us- that's when the bear crossed. Then they came back and picked us up. We came
home at 9 o'clock that night. We'd left at 7 in the morning. (Gets up to look at passing car) Just walked out too far. The next morning I couldn't even walk, my muscles were just stiff. (smiles at baby- puts head on knees- sighs- hums to baby- pause- Quite a story!)

I'll never take a short cut again- always take the long way around. I always say the long way around is always better than the short cut. Christ, I saw a lot of country that day- wild country- sometimes I couldn't even get through- them bushes were so thick, I'd have to break off branches or crawl under- or just walk around. (lights cigarette) (Scared?) (Nods) After I saw that bear. If I'd a gave up somewhere in the middle there we'd still be there. They could have found me- they couldn't have seen my tracks off the road. Fred must have gone and looked. Must have thought I was over to that camp. (smiles at baby- sighs) Wonder how old a baby should be to be trained- so they wouldn't be wet. (How old was Edward?) Hex started younger than that kid- he was always a clean baby when he was small. (Did you train him?) No, he was always clean. (Trouble with Mary?) Yeah, she nurses too much, too. (Stopping?) No, she won't quit. (You just let her do what she want?) I don't like to hear her cry. (How did you get Edward to stop?) Oh, we used to take him to the show (last summer in Baraboo) and then when he'd get hungry we'd feed him on the bottle. Gee I had to laugh in Baraboo last summer- we'd just bought him a car- one of those wooden ones- he used to like them in the show- what do you call 'em, the comics. He must have started to chew on them wheels- after the show was over he had them wheels all chewed up.

(Puts baby in crib: "Sit down"- puts shoes on her- "She's grown so much this last month- change: diaper and baby's shirt) (What's she going to be like when she grows up?) Be spoiled I guess. (Just like her mother?) I guess I was spoiled. (goes on dressing baby) I still got a big doll
from long time ago—got a Christmas present—way ahead of time I used to tell 'em what I wanted. (Always get what you wanted?) (nods) Even when I had it I wasn't satisfied—like I used to have 3 or 4 of those sleighs. (Plays with baby, standing her up on her lap) I'll sit her on the floor. (Gets ragged quilt from line outside—picks up baby, kisses her and gives her toy—"home made rattle"—"We couldn't get a rattle in town"). (Just like a doll?) (Smiles) I don't think she'd play with a doll. (watches a truck go by, smiles) They were going to let us have that house—old messbe's. They were going to move down there—that house by Brown's. The fellow lived there was cutting wood—must have built a fire to warm up the motor—must have left the pan with the ashes right by the house—so when he came back with the wood the house was burnt down. Always happens to him. Other time too, he must have fallen asleep in the toilet—must have had a cigarette—must have dropped that cigarette in all them papers. When he woke up the toilet was almost gone. (laughs while telling all this—walks to dresser—brings me childhood picture of her with boy's haircut) You know—when they always left us home—then after school I went and hired somebody to cut my hair. I always heard that girl could cut hair. We were sitting by the lake and she cut my hair—I used to wear braids. I used to have straight hair—somebody must have scared me one time—yeah, my hair used to be straight. How many color beads does she have?—(counts colors, then, "what did your mother say when she saw your hair cut?") (laughs) She gave that girl—she scolded her for cutting my hair—she still got that hair—2 big braids. Maybe I'd still have straight hair if she hadn't cut them. (Did you have braids again after that?) They wouldn't—they didn't grow—spoiled them. Jeez, I used to look funny—I remember my hair used to be—used to stand up. One time my sister tried to fix me up—cut my bangs—put a lot of oil on so it'd
stay on.

Jeez, a long time ago we used to have a lot of pets—a beaver and a crow. (laughs) I killed that crow—everybody was always drunk. I was the only one—I fed that crow—the crumb was too big, so the next morning when my father sobered up he found that bird laying there. We used to have ducks and porcupines. It's a wonder we didn't have a bear, and a snake. (did you ever have a snake?) No! (baby falls on face—picks her up—lets her look in mirror—takes her on lap and rocks her—laughs at her and hugs her hard—red walks in.)
Session VI- August 17, 1946

(Dreams?) Just crazy dreams? Did you ever have those? I woke up twice like that- when somebody gave me some money and I was still holding it. I woke up and there wasn't any money. A long time ago. They say if you dream three times the same thing, it'll come true. (How often did you dream it?) Just two times. (nurses baby) What was I talking about when Fred came in? (Pets) Do you like pets? I don't anymore. I've enough pets here (indicates children with head motion). The last one I had was a little rabbit-jezz, those things are cute when they're little. My aunt was sleeping with us and it bit her ear. Then I bent down to kiss it-it bit my nose. Jeez, I got mad, then I just killed it. My dad never used to let me have the cotton tails though-they say they dig the graves and eat those people. I don't know if that's true-they used to believe that. I never had one. (Edward tries to get a grasshopper- Nelly tries to teach him to pronounce the word correctly.) I wish Fred'd come home and bring me some bread. Oh, do you know what I heard about Martin Jones? One of those old ladies told me- they put some tobacco and some snuff and Martin Jones he put some medicine on it because he was mad at some people. They took the show away from them. Somebody took it, somebody stole that snuff. (What happened?) Nothing happened yet. (Do you think anything is going to happen?) Maybe. (pause- James knows all kind of medicine!) Everybody is scared of him. That's why Fred didn't say anything when he wanted to put that store up there and Martin Jones kicked.

(Edward tries to repeat "Martin Jones"-Nelly laughs and tries to make him say "Erika") Oh, he used to make us mad when he first started to talk, he used to say "Fred Ape" he meant "apple". Jeez, we had a hard time last summer. Picking potatoes on a farm after we came back from Baraboo- couldn't even walk from bending over all the time.
Jeez, I remember a long time ago—a lot of Indians—the dance we had, the place we had—a great big dance hall with four rows of seats inside. There wasn't enough room and they had to dance outside. I wish we had a car and I could show you that place. We used to dress up in buckskin—everybody used to wear velvet and put beads on. There used to be a lot of Indians—a long time ago. (First dance?) I remember the first time—I was about—bigger than this kid here (Edward). Oh, it wasn't nothing—they got $1 a day dancing—just the money. (How about the medicine dance?) I was just a little baby when I first went in. About four years ago I joined— that's the fifth time. I took my dad's place after he died. They gave me a snake hide 15 feet long. It's over to Bill's (grandfather) I had two snake hides—I guess my mother gave them away. (Drumming is heard) They're starting to dance, I'll go over after a while. (To Edward) Jeez, you have big eyes, little Frankenstein, big head and eyes. (Edward looks for bread—slight interruption) (What's the most exciting thing that ever happened to you?) Don't know. Want me to tell you about the time I first got drunk? My dad used to chase us out—I didn't want to go. I liked to watch them when they were drinking. He didn't like that. I was a kid—just 14. (Stopped by passing car) So I saw where he put that wine— I went up to the next house, my grandmother was sitting all alone—everybody must have left her. She asked did they have anything to drink over at the hill—at the house. So I said I'd go and get some. So I got a quart of wine and we were drinking it. She got drunk first. I didn't know what would happen. Then I heard my dad calling me. I tried to get up and couldn't. I started crawling away from there but he caught up with me. Asked me where the wine was. That's the first time I got drunk. (Pause) If he'd gave me a licking I'd never have done it. He just laughed at
me. (Did you like the stuff?) (laughs) No, I used to hate it after that. The first drink I hated. I used to know what I was doing though all the time. Just my legs. Oh, you asked me when I first went on my date? (laughs) I used to wish that guy would notice me. I don't know how it happened. My dad hired a car and they got this boy to drive it. His name was Bob, an Indian boy from Clam Lake. Anyway I used to wish he was my boy friend. It wasn't really a date. I was sitting in the front seat. We were just packed. Anyway the car got stalled and we slept in the car, so the next morning I woke up he was holding my hand. Jeez, I was bashful, I didn't know how to act. (Plays with baby in bassinette—baby cries—"The baby's hungry too"—nurses baby, hugs her—looks after passing horses and wagon). That was one guy I used to go with for a long time—After I got to talking with him again. (Were you scared of boys?) Not him after seeing him around all the time. My dad used to like him too, but he never had a job, just hang around. (Tries to teach Edward to say "wodekaya") (Did you like Bob?) Yeah, my first boy friend. He never paid much attention to me. I used to dress up in my mother's high heeled shoes and long dresses. He never noticed me. (Did he take you out?) We used to go to the show or to a dance. Dance on Saturday night. I used to get tired of going to the dance on Saturday night though. He used to get drunk and I'd have to carry him home—drag him home. One song he used to sing I remember—"Stop, it's wonderful". He used to sing that all the time. (Puts baby back in bassinette) Last time I saw him was two years ago. He gave me a pin what he got for bravery in the army, you know. I lost it. It was gold. (Where is he now?) Must be in Milwaukee. I wish I had a nice big dinner, I don't eat much either. Like when we have a lot of things to eat, I don't want anything and when we don't have anything I feel hungry. (pause) (Did you have a lot of those army pins?) I had a lot
of them things. I had a whole box of them. I knew a lot of boys in the 77th Division. Every time I used to go the post office I used to get a whole stack of them. (Jack B. goes by) That poor guy. They only gave $5 for collecting the money out there (at the dance ground). I used to work for them (B's) one summer—do the washing. When Fred's really desperate some time and he knows I can't do anything he goes out and works. (Fred went to dig a grave that afternoon). I made a contract with Mrs. S. for bracelets—she'll send for them. She wants them all in the same design.
Session VII-August 21, 1946

(discussion about religion and the Midewin. Asked her how long she had been in it.) I was about as big as Edward. (Remember?) (Shakes head) This hand (right) looks funny- fingers kind of go back. Whole side of my body was kind of crippled (What was it from?) I don't know what it was from. (Edward is annoying baby- "Leave her alone; get outside and play"- Ed. looks at length for his toy car- 5 minutes interruption) (Has it bothered you since?) Uh-uh. (What did they say it was?) That's what they believe. Like a woman ain't supposed to step over what somebody wears. (Is that what happened?) That's what they said. (Do you think it's true?) I don't know. (How did they find out what it was?) The medicine man found out. (Did they tell you about it?) Mmm. (What's on your mind?) Nothing, I'm just counting these beads here.

A lot of things used to happen to me when I was a kid. Like one time (Edward makes a great deal of noise. Nelly chases him out, then goes on counting beads), when they almost sawed my thumb off. That was when my uncle used to stay with us. There used to be a lot of people in the house. They were going to saw wood so they made me sit on that log to keep it from moving (pause- counts beads) (What happened?) I don't know- my hand slipped- they sawed off my finger off to the bone. I don't know what happened after that. (Baby rings rattle.) Another one! Go on, play outside. (Smiles) Jeez, I'd go crazy if I had another kid. (to baby) You're too noisy, you know what. (Puts baby into Edward's bed- then goes to pump stove, then back to bead work) My uncle used to kidnap me when I was a kid. He lived across the lake. When I'd stay down in the village. He used to come and visit us every month. The day he came my mother and dad were drunk. I was just a baby then. He must have took me across the lake. (Chases Edward out again-) baby
cries-"Shut up; you cry too much." Adjusts blankets, gives baby a piece of bread) Oh, just sometimes that thing bothers me-y'know when I was crippled once. Like when I get scared I just get numb. When I get too excited, I can't move my legs, they just quit on me. (laughs) I got that story all mixed up. (Edward plays horses, 5 minute inter­ruption, Nelly chases him out.) (Were you going to tell me more?) What was I saying? Oh, my mother used to get mad at him for that, because she'd worry when she sobered up. They must have been drunk all the time I guess. My dad used to tell me, see they lost me one time. I was crawling around, when I was on a cradle. They took a rest some­place, on the road, between town and- there was us two babies- that other couple must have had a baby, she was just wrapped up- no, I guess I was wrapped up and she was on the cradle. They must have took a rest by the road, it was a two wheel road. Not a road like this. (Baby cries, puts her on the floor, "You're bothersome", smiles while saying this, gives her a piece of bread-helps herself to some coffee.) I guess they had something to drink. I guess we were both sleeping- that other little girl and I. Anyway they just got up and left us there. Those Indians must have been going from someplace. It was a good thing none of those cars went by. Anyway an old couple came by and found me sittin' on one of those ruts. They started to carry me when they heard that other little baby. They found us both. A couple of miles from there they met my dad running towards town- must have been crying. Are you through? (i.e., catching up with writing, laughs) Any­way he was trying to get there before a car went by. Because he remembered he left me by the side of the road there. That's all there is. (pause Do you remember that?) Mmm, no, my dad told me that. (laughs) I got to count these beads. I made a mistake.
I remember the first time my dad got a bonus—from the first war I guess. He was gone for two weeks. I think he went to L'Anse—that's where he used to live. And he came home the day before Christmas. First thing I noticed was a new sleigh. It was a great big box, it was for us. And clothes for my mother. He brought $5 for me one time and clothes for my ma—how clothes were—just high. He paid $20 for a dress and he got a pair of high heeled shoes too. Those were red. Cost him $9 or $10 a pair. I don't know how much that velvet cost, you know that cloth. He bought a lot of that—for my ma. And a shawl. (laughs at crawling baby—pause—counts beads. To baby "You're wet—come here—come this way—come on" smiles at baby—fixes a swing for her—starts to sing a lullaby—changes diaper.) How can you be so wet? Want to eat? (puts her in swing and sings.) Today is the 21st? (sighs) Where was I last time? I mean last year. In Baraboo. I sure had it easy last fall, last summer I mean—this time. (What did you do in Baraboo?) (laughs) Sleep! Fred had a nightmare last night. We had porkchops—that's why he had that. I couldn't eat that. He likes his raw, I mean rare. Jeez, I couldn't eat that. Then when we went to bed I started reading. That book B. gave me. Then I heard Fred have his nightmare. I started thinking about that book. I didn't even want to wake him up—I thought somebody was murdering him. I just got scared when he started hollering. I couldn't read those books when I'm all alone. Even a detective book, it makes me think about those things. Fred sure likes that guy. (K. visitor with field party.) He (Fred) doesn't know when he hurts somebody's feelings—like the way he does with my mother. He teases her so much she just hates him. That's why she never used to come around here. He teases her about how fat she is. Gee, she doesn't like that. They used to
wrestle around a lot when my dad was still living. They can't do that now because my step-dad gets mad easy. She never used to care though when my dad was living. My dad used to help Fred along teasing her. The four of them used to wrestle around -y'know Fred's mother. Fred used to help my mother out. When Fred used to take his wife over there - that's when they - nobody ever helped her. She'd just sit there. Not even smile at anybody if they were telling jokes. Just sit there. Then I suppose Fred never liked her so he never took her along. He used to get away even if she was strict. Sometimes he'd be gone for a month. (pause - Sounds like quite a woman!) I never heard her talk unless she was giving Fred hell. I came back with them twice. (laughs to herself. What is it?) Nothing, Fred used to tell me she was jealous of me. I never even - Christ, I was just a kid then. I didn't think about going with a man. I suppose Fred used to tease, the way he teases. Wonder what she'd do if she saw me. I suppose she'd kill me. Big woman! (pause - are you scared of her?) No. Was only time I got a lickin' once. There was four of'em against me - got drunk. (Who was it?) I don't know - there used to be see there was two gangs, they caught me. Oh, we sure fixed them afterwards. (What happened?) Why, I happened to be sitting in a car. I heard 'em talking outside. I wasn't thinkin' anything, not looking for a fight either. Somebody came and pulled me out of there. Started pulling my hair and tore almost all my clothes off. (Did you know them?) Mmm, one time my aunt almost got the best of me. My uncle's wife. You know George Fir, don't you? We used to fight over him. Jeez, she used to be mean to him when she was drunk. Jeez, that room was crowded where we had that fight - I guess she tripped me and I fell right in the garbage pail. I had a new coat on. My uncle just laughed at me. He
wouldn't even stop us. He had all the car tools in the house too. She just grabbed a crank and hit me on the arm. Almost broke my arm. I almost scalped her that time. You should see her face now. All scars the way I scratched her up. I pulled her hair till it came off. Jeez, we used to have a wild time. Keep our fingernails long too. The next day we broke off. Comb your hair and your hair'd fall off. We started that when we were kind of young. When the big girls came around we were good little kids. My sister is a good scrapper too—even if she is small. She was quick on her feet and during school and after school they used to chase those kids way out on the ice. We used to chase them out—those girls couldn't walk on the road. Even the boys used to help us out. (pause—Tough kids!) Mmm. Guess they used to fight over their boy friends. Ever since then they haven't liked each other. I still hear about them fights they have over there now. Guess them gangs are kind of splittin' up a little bit. (Same crowd?) Mmm. (Did you have a good time?) Good time talking about them. One time they had the state police—I wasn't over there—they must have ganged up on that girl. She always acted so damn smart—always said what she'd done to that girl—her name was Rosie—the other's name was Lizabeth. The next time Rosie came to the post office there were three of them on Lizabeth's side. When she came out of the post office acting so smart they followed her out of town. Asked her why she was talking about her all the time. I guess this girl didn't answer her just kept walking and Lizabeth must have grabbed her. She hit her on the eye, gave her a black eye. This girl must have started crying. (laughs) Cry baby! Said she wouldn't even fight back. Guess her mother came down and called the police, so the state police came over there—said they had ganged up on that girl, so they asked those girls questions. They said they didn't know anything about it. They couldn't do anything about it. (pause—
Did you ever get into a fight about a man?) No, maybe I'll have a fight with Jane when she comes and wants Fred back-I'm just saying that. Wonder where she is now. (Milwaukee?) I don't think so-maybe she's home. They live in W. (How do you feel about her?) I don't know. (Baby cries, takes her out of swing, puts her first on floor, then in crib, gives her some bread.) How do I feel about her? Do you mean do I hate her? No, I don't hate her. (Do you ever hate anybody?) I don't know, I don't think so-sometimes I think I hate everybody. (Inter­rupts herself to ask me what I will use life history materials for, them continues) I used to do a man's job and a woman's job too. Fred and I went into partnership when we first stayed together-cutting logs-we used to fight over that money. He didn't want to give me half. We used to have fun in the woods. When we weren't fighting. One time-that morning we cut down the trees and in the afternoon we were cutting them up. They were supposed to be 8 feet long. I had my own measure too. He said we'll see who cuts more. He wouldn't help me and he is stronger than I am. I won anyway-I cut more logs than he did. Jeez, he was mad. What I did, I cut those small ones first, they were easier to cut and the big ones last. Excuse me for a second. (goes out).
Session VIII-August 22, 1946

(Nelly is doing beadwork. Ask her about fasting during childhood.)

When I started going to school-I was about 9 years old. Oh, I just went out and played for half a day. Sometimes we'd forget we were fasting and eat snow. My ma used to feed us good though after we were fasting. Make some pie for us and cake. (Why did they make you fast?) So we'd dream something. I guess. (Did you?) No, Didn't have sense enough to know what I was dreaming about anyway. (pause) I don't know much about that. Just the same thing everyday. She used to make us do that 9 days at a time. Not straight through the day-just half a day. Guess I'll make some coffee. (pumps stove) Jim is going to be here on Saturday-tomorrow night I think he'll come. I used to pity that kid (Edward) until he was that big. (as big as Mary-7 or 8 months) I didn't want anybody to take care of him. I'd take him along when I was working on a farm picking raspberries. I'd just sit him on the end of a row and go all the way up the hill. By the time I got to the end of the row it'd be dinner time. He'd just be red from the sun. He was a good kid though-just sitting there playing with the grass. (Where was this?) That was in Red Cliff—that's the other side of Bayville. (pause-You sure got around!) I was in a lot of places. I was in Mole Lake where my sister is. Then I'd come here—then I'd go up to Upson where my mother is. Then I'd go back to Red Cliff. All summer long we'd travel around. I'd just work long enough to pay my fare and then go again. I worked over there at the Inn once. (Did you get along with them?) Yes, I got along. (whispers) That was when Edward was a little baby (whispers) I just worked there one week—cleaned cabins and washed dishes. Jeez, I had to laugh at that woman in Red Cliff. She was going to make clean that chicken coop. Jeez, it was—it smelled so bad, and I was supposed to clean it out. I just went back in the house and
told her I didn't want to go in there. (Did you have to do it anyway?) No, she didn't make me do it. She just let me help around the house. They are farming, these people. (Did you like it out there?) No, I liked where my aunt and they were staying. I was taking care of her—she's crippled. (Mother's sister?) I don't know—cousin I think. I just call her aunt. Gee, she used to be mean. Bawling her husband out all the time. She wanted me to get after her to—she's in Land o'Lakes—that's near Lac Vieux Desert. I used to get paid when I was taking care of her. Oh, they don't want me to take care of her—she's just been moved around. They'll be moving anytime. Like to have her though. To keep me company. (Are you going to bring her over?) I don't think so. God, I don't know how she used to bear kids when she was like that. I used to laugh at her. I think she had infantile paralysis ever since she was a kid. She used to walk and drag her feet. Now she can't walk. She's getting old—she's older than my mother. My sister used to take care of her last month. Oh yeah, the way she'd carry her babies. She used to wrap it up in a blanket and just carry it in one hand. I smoke too much. My cousin is taking care of her now. May E. She's a great big fat thing. We used to call her that—big fat thing. (How about your aunt's children?) There's only one living. It's a boy. He sure is raising hell with himself, too. He was in a wreck they had here last fall. Broke his hip. (Bent needle—laughs) Look at my needle! (Starts on next bracelet,) I used to make 8 of 'em in one day—now I barely make 3. My dad used to tell us to make beadwork. When we'd be through he'd buy us an ice cream cone or a bottle of pop. (Goes to swing baby) She's awake. Yes, I used to do lot of things when I was a kid. Like I used to knit. I don't do that now. I wouldn't know how. (Gives baby bread, places her on quilt on the floor.) (Who taught you?) My mother, used to do that work. (Baby cries—"Damn you, I'll spank you
too- shut up now." -goes on looking for a needle.) That one is crooked too. I can't do anything. Guess I'll keep that for a souvenir. Oh, there's an ambulance. (Ambulance passes house, goes up to the dance ground) (What is it?) I don't know. (silence- Did your mother do beadwork?) Mmm. (Did they teach it in school?) Yeah, they used to teach me things my mother taught me long ago. (What did your mother teach you?) How to make moccasins. Have to have the buckskin first though. She taught me to fix the deerhide, but it's too hard. Me and Fred tried it once last summer- last winter. Just one hide. We did all right I guess. (Did you have a sugar camp?) Yeah, a sugar camp. Used to have 2 or 3 of 'em. (Did you go up there every spring?) Not anymore. That's the timber of there, I don't know where they're gonna make sugar now. My dad used to get mad when they'd cut wood on them maple trees. Tell them not to cut wood on them maple trees but they just went ahead. Do you ever get that way when you just get a cramp in your neck? Like one time I was sliding down a hill and a car came. I wanted to look who it was and I got a cramp. I just had to keep my head that way. For 10 minutes I think I had to hold my head that way. Of all the darn things that used to happen to me. (What made you think of that?) I was looking over there and I felt that little pain in my neck here. Never look behind-just look ahead. I get a pain in my neck. Can't look so far ahead either. I live from day to day. Can't tell what happens tomorrow. I almost got drunk last night. Fred brought that whiskey. He said: "This is for your toothache." He made me drink it. It was half-full- I was hungry too. I made believe it didn't affect me. I felt it in my eyes anyway. I wish I could buy that junk. (What?) (points) to car outside) Peddling. (pause- You were telling me about those sugar camps- did you go up there?) Just when I had time after school. They made us carry sapwater-
something I hated. (puts baby in swing, kisses her, ties her in sitting position) What's going on out there? They used to tell us not to spill even one little drop. (Did you?) When nobody wasn't watching we were just careless. But they didn't know it if we'd spill anything. Like my dad when we'd get through carrying the sap he'd look if those pails were up the way they were hanging. He'd see the ground, if it were wet. (What happened if you got caught?) Nothing. He'd just bawl us out. They'd tell us the trees wouldn't give us anymore sap if we spilled that. Look at that blonde out there. Guess she dyed her hair.

I make $4.00 a month or more than that sometimes. We have been living like that. We don't eat the way white people do. Like one meal all we have is potatoes and bread. In the morning all we have is cereal and toast. No dessert for dinner. That costs money. You should have seen us last winter though. That's all we were doing, drinking. That is when we were staying with couple over there. Bert Les's daughter Edna N. They had a car. I had a black eye every day. That's how I lost weight so quick. I'm glad I'm skinny, though, I don't sweat so much. Jeez, that baby— you're bothersome. (puts her on floor with toys.)
August 24, 1946

Nelly says Lydia had a fit "fighting herself" the night before. People think it's Martin Jones who did it because they quarrelled with him the time they were drunk. That's why Nelly is glad she wasn't drunk at the dance. Goes on to say how afraid she is of "those Indians"—not for herself but for the children. Fred doesn't watch what he says and to whom. Her sister (Ann) used to have fits like that once. It was a strange Indian who had done that—he had been sleeping on the beach and the children had been teasing him—poking some straw up his nose. The good thing about those Indian doctors is that they can find out what the matter is. One of them cured Ann—took something out of her head—it looked like a hair but it wasn't.

Session IX—August 26, 1946

Pre-session conversation: Nelly mentioned dance Saturday night and having been drunk. I asked about Lydia. Said Lydia's mother was away. When I added old mesabe had gone too, she explained that they must have gone to a "medicine" dance at Hole Lake. Nelly started to talk about the Midewin. Will go through for sixth time this fall to take place of Fred's mother who died about three or four years ago, since there is no one else to take her place. Fred isn't in the Midewin at all. In a lifetime one is to go through the Midewin eight times. Her mother had gone through six times. Nelly says she has never been baptized. Almost got to be in school when the girls talked her into going to church. But then she got scared and never came back. Nelly saw the Peyote Indians at Hole Lake baptize her sister's son. The first time they gave her peyote her sister said she wouldn't be able to sleep but she fell asleep right away. The next time though she couldn't. She sat with them and her head got very light. Said when you take peyote you mustn't look at other people—she almost burst out laughing when she did so she kept her head down.
Jeez, I had a funny dream last night-I can't forget it-it comes back. I dreamed about that old lady that died at home. A truck ran over her. We were upstairs-Fred and the old lady and my uncle came in. We had a bag of groceries-Fred gave me a piece of summer sausage. I was just going to put it in my mouth and she took it away from me. So I came downstairs. I was mad-I started crying because I was so hungry. I came to the cupboard and started drinking coffee and she followed me. I saw that big truck standing there. I didn't think anything of it. She just sat down by the steps and started laughing. She was laughing at me. Got me so mad. Oh, then I went outside and I was going up that hill then I thought of that truck in here-I was wonderin' how my uncle got it in there. Then I saw those Indians sittin' by the road. A whole bunch of them. Then I saw my mother coming out of a house-I don't know whose house it was. Then I started telling her about that truck. I wonder how he got it in here, I said. Them doors are so small. Oh, we were talking about that letter Jim got from Ida Fir-not Ida-my uncle's wife. She wanted to see her little girl. That's what we were talking about in my dream. I suppose he went down there to see her. Oh and we knew he went down that way to W. because he had that old lady. That's what my mother was saying. Then I told her to come back with me. We came down here and my uncle had a different truck in here. That dump truck. He had a yellow dump truck in here. That's all I remember, I can't forget it either. It keeps coming back. One night too, I don't know what happened-I was dreaming that what's his name was going to leave us-Fred. I woke up and was hoilering. Then I must have fallen asleep again and I was dream- ing about this kid here-Edward. Why, I dreamed that kid was calling me-he sleeps down here. I must have got up while I was sleeping. I was down here striking a match. Fred must'a followed me down-he said what are you doing. I was walking in my sleep. Seems I knew what I was doing
while I went downstairs. (M. enters—interruption—during that time I mention that Lydia had been rude to me that morning—after M. leaves, Nelly says:) Lydia! One time I invited her down here— in a nice way too. I guess she thinks she owns this house. We were standing over by the dance hall. I said let's go over to my house. Your place, she said, that's my house! seems like everybody owns that house. We were almost quarreling in here. Ever since then she's never been here. Oh, I talk to her. One time her and M. (her husband) wanted me to go with them. They wanted me to leave Fred so they brought this white guy over. That's the time I told you about—they had that snuff box. They got to quarreling. They knew I wouldn't go. (Why?) Wanted me to leave Fred. (But why?) I don't know. Just try to break somebody's home up. I thought if they haven't got any more respect for me I don't want anything to do with them. I suppose they thought if that guy took me out he could have all the things he wanted. (Do you want to go on with the dream you were telling me about?) Gee, that was funny though. I remember all of it. (Puts baby on floor.) some day we'll have some furniture. When we moved in here we didn't have anything. Just a heater. We just had to depend of those guys next door. We stayed over by B's, that house there. That couple used to be fighting. That girl used to holler at Fred all the time. So we just left and moved in here. Sometime I feel so— I just know when something's going to happen. Like my shoulder keeps shaking. (What does it mean?) (smiles) Something bad. I sure saved Fred one time, it happened to me last winter. Like one time those guys came and invited him drinking. I felt sick and I told him no to go. He stayed home. That evening we heard they were in a wreck. The car must have jumped clear across the bridge and landed in the creek. Nobody got hurt though—just scratches on their faces. And that next time what's his name— Jack Little— came and invited him out again. He was washing his feet— he had his
feet in water. He wanted to go and I told him not to go. He followed my advice and there was another wreck. Seems like that guy is always so lucky. And that time that old lady died—her daughter—the old lady that's staying with Bill Fir. I told Fred somebody's going to die and sure enough that next day that old lady died. (Do you feel that way again? Nelly starts nursing baby.) I feel so scared. Why, I never tell that to nobody—they don't believe me—just those little things. One time too, last winter—I was in Clam Lake with my ma. I used to go to the toilet all alone. It was getting dark—it was a Friday night. It was like somebody poked me in the back. I didn't think anything but then I got scared. That Sunday they told us about that little boy that drowned here. (ceases nursing) I wish I had some soap. (plays with baby, kisses her, talks to her) Dog day, eh? I wonder how they know when it's a dog day. (What does it mean?) I don't know. I suppose dogs have their days too. My mother used to tell us not to go swimming when it's a dog day. Might get scabs or something.

(Fred was upstairs that day, according to Nelly with arthritis. It later turned out that at the drunk the previous Saturday Fred had gotten in a fight. Four fellows ganged up on him and beat him up pretty badly. Would have killed him had not one of the older men interfered. The doctor feared several ribs might be broken and promised to take him to be X-rayed.)