

Name of Interviewer: Simone Bedard

April 11, 1972

1. Collette Robitaille
3. Collette Gareau
4. Nipissing Property
5. 679-8264
- 6.
7. Gracefield, Quebec
8. My parents were both born in Gracefield
10. We arrived in Cobalt in 1919. Mr. A. Chenier my, mother's brother came to Cobalt a couple of yrs. before us. He was an undertaker and he operated a drugstore at the same time.
11. We came to Cobalt from Willowbunch Sask. by train. Dad had a wheat and grain farm.
13. my parents 4 boys and 2 girls.
14. My dad was a millwright and carpenter.
17. The only war memory that I have is when they took my father off the train in handcuffs in Winnipeg, they thought he was a war deserter and when they found out that he was a farmer and the father of 6, they gladly let him come back to his crying mob.
18. It was like a big city, it was very busy and a lot of people of all kinds and everybody was happy.
19. It was a heck of a big place to live, and there were a lot of people.
20. Dad came to Cobalt for work, we sure didn't think it would look like this and to us children it was a very nice place.
21. There was mining work, the nipissing and larose mines were big mines
22. They worked 12 hrs. a day
23. Carpenters and millwrights were paid more than miners,
24. My first home was a frame home on Russell St.
25. It was gathering at my aunts and all the relatives were there, not many toys but plenty of food and music, singing and merry making, this would start at Christmas Eve and last until little Christmas Jan. 6, during those days maybe we would eat only one meal at our own home, as we went from relative to relative and friends, all the children would come along with the parents. Everybody could remember flaming a good time during the Christmas holidays.
26. We had tap water when we came to us it really was something
27. We also had electric lights for the first time
28. We had a great big wood cook stove
29. We had a Quebec heater.
30. There were all kinds of shops, here are some of them as I knew them in 1925•28 or more. On the east side of Lang St. beginning from the north end. Mr. Contour's Grocery shop, Mr. Sabourin confectionery, Mrs. Miron Confectionery Shop, Mr. & Mrs., Olson grocer, Mrs. Saumier Remnant Shop, Mr. Belanger second—hand and New Furniture, there was an Ice House on Galbraith St, Mr. Ketiennir Dairy, Mr. Oblin Meat Shop, Mr. Joe Robitaille grocery, Mr. Lemire's garage. The Polish Pool Room, Mrs. Savard on Ferland St, Furniture store and Second hand store, Mrs. Riopelle Boarding house and

home Baking, A Finnish Grocery Store. Mr. Kerfinckle Book Shop (school books, music, records, toys), Mr. Poloni's Pool room and Barber Shop, Bijou Theater, Mrs. Vellis's Ladies Store, Mrs. Daoux's Hat Shop, Mrs. Cote's confectionery and record shop, Mr. Matton's Barber shop, Mrs. Wilson's Boarding House, Mrs. Causimic's Confectionery, Singer Sewing Machine Shop, on Peter St. Mr. Campbell's coal sheds, on Laird St. Taylors Hardware (warehouse), Mr. Rosicki's Men's Shop, Morin Frere Grocery and Hardware, Jabour Ladies Shop, Mrs. Villeneuve Boarding House, on Laird St. Freight Sheds Mr. Auger's Fruit and Confectionery, Bette's Shoe Shop and Repairs, Curler's Ladies and Men's Wear, next was a taxi Stand, Mr. Lavaevits. East Nipissing Store men's hop, next was a garage. Jabours Grocery Shop, next a Hat Shop, a Shoe Shop, Sullivan and Shellington Grocery store and warehouse, Damiani's Grocery, Mr.

k.6 r4

Mino's Shoe Repair Shop, Mr. Hawkings Wallpaper and Paint Store, on Laud St. Gamble, Robinson's Wholesale, Finnish Pool Room and Turkish Bath and Barber Shop, McDermott's Ladies Shop, Lavery's Wholesale, next was a boarding House, Mr. Shaw's Drugstore, St. Patrick Hall, Rowdon's Hardware, next was a Business School.

SQUARE.

Express Office, Stock Brokers, Jewelry Shop, 5-10-15 cent Store and upstairs office, Schmidt, Dr. Chase, Dr. Armstrong, and Lawyer McKay, Bank of Commerce, Stadelman's Block, Shop and records, school books, Mr. McEwen's Grocery, next was a tailor's shop, Mr. Fauteau's Meat Store, then a Garage, Reckin and Son Wholesale, Mr. Cote's Garage.

West side of Lang St. North end.

Charlie's (Finnish grocery store, Zanin's grocery and bakery, Mr. Poisson's wood yard. Mr. Chenier's drugstore and undertaker, Mr., Pico's Livery stable in front of the Church, Mr. Adducer's Coal delivery, Mr. Shawasue Jewelry, Charlie's Laundry, Me. Coutu's grocery, Mr. Wilson's livery stable, Finnish pool room, Mr. Murphy's black smith shop, Mr. Riley's leather shop, Mr. Martin's second hand store, Mr. Lapointe's Ladies wear, next was a restaurant, Mr. Torpe's Furniture, Sam Buckovetsky's Clothing and Shoe Store, Mr. Aimone's Book, tobacco accessories of all kinds and pool room, Mr. Vellis's Men and Ladies Wear, Mr. Irwin's grocery next was a Chinese restaurant, Mr. Black's hardware and variety store,

Tip—Top Taylor Shop, next was a Jewelry Store, Imperial Bank, next was an hotel, there was a jewelry store, a grocery store, a book shop all on the ground floor of this hotel, Mr. Moore's drugstore, Mr. Giachino's fresh fruit and vegetables and meat store a beautiful store to see, next was a tobacco store, next was a Bank then Mr. McKay's Taylor Shop. The Minerva Restaurant, a shoe shop, Mr. Ferris confectionery, The Fraser House, once the Post Office, the Cobalt Nugget now the Laundry, Mr. Shaw's drugstore a doctor's office, The Lyric Theater, The Grand Theater, Taylor's Hardware, Mr. Taylor's Taylor Shop, Mr. Bert Ough grocery store. The Y.M.C.A., the Telephone office, Harris's Bake shop a second hand store, Cobalt Miners Hospital and the nurse's home.

31. There were all kinds of entertainment, and many theaters and people went in for concerts and plays and went in for dressing up. We also had carnivals
32. Baseball, gymnastics as we had the Y.M.C.A. in those days, and we played basketball and boxing for the boys, swimming and the tutor was Carl Hutt, we had a baseball ground in West Cobalt, where everyone participated in something.
- 34 & 35. I went to school at Temiskaming Mine near Cobalt and at St, Pat's School and finished my schooling in grade 11 at the convent in Haileybury.
- There were the trains, horse and buggies, streetcars. And it only cost 30 to go to school in Haileybury from Cobalt on the streetcar in 1929-30
36. My first family doctor was Dr. Taylor
37. They were very good in Cobalt, the nurse's residence is still there, it was where Buffam's Funeral Home is to-day.
38. My first child was born at the Haileybury Hospital.
39. One was 18 and the other was 17 yrs. old.
40. Peter went in the army, Richard worked in Toronto now he's working for the Hydro.
41. They were big, the Nipissing Mine looked like a little town when it was all it up at night.
42. They had hand drilling, hand mucking, tramming and they also had horse contest in heavy weight pulling. 43. They had a good healthy meal
44. It was the same as the miners, potatoes, vegetables, meat pies, and cake, and puddings all homemade.
45. On week days we wore our school clothes, tunics, blouses and after school we'd wear our play clothes, we didn't wear slacks in those days
46. We dressed in our Sunday best, our newest
47. We went to church in the morning, and our big meal was dinner, we were all in our Sunday best and no one touched anything dirty. We went visiting relatives or we'd take a walk on Boardwalk from Lang St. to Crown Reserve and this was all sidewalks and it was full, everybody seemed to be out walking. In the evening we'd go to the station to meet the train after supper it was a family affair and we were all dressed fit to kill.
48. yes
49. What I like about Cobalt is that everybody is so friendly.
- 50.
51. They have the bus going up the hill on Prospect Ave. There's Bass Lake, We have a new Post Office, the Library, the arena, the Community Center. All the good changes on the buildings on Lang St.
- 52 & 53. They should bring back our ball grounds in town, they have taken the mail, the express, the telephone and Long distance and the Hydro office.
54. Why should we have to pay extra when we pay our hydro and telephone bills
- 55 & 56. It would be nice to have a shopping center in Cobalt to keep our people here for the shopping so that it wouldn't cost so much when we need anything we could buy it at home in our own town.
58. There's the card parties, dances once in a while, I used to bowl, I went skiing a few times and I like to go out just for walks.
59. My hobbies are sewing, cooking and I love music.

60. There should be more work. they should bring in a manufactory for clothes making, as this would mean that it would give jobs and they would be lasting.

61. Mining engineers and rock hounds would be interesting in Cobalt.

62. We have plenty, canoe rides, mining tours, camping, Hydro at Ragged Chutes Air Plant, There's a lake where you have to walk up a hill for 2 miles and when you get up, there's a beautiful lake and scenery. At Matabitchewan there's a place where they let the logs down in the lake and this goes to Lake Temiskaming. You can get to that lake by canoe from Latchford, this would be a beautiful tour for tourists and even for school children, this lake is also called Bass Lake but not the same one as we know as Bass Lake just outside of Cobalt, they also have beautiful cottages there. There's beautiful things to see that are made by nature in this certain area.

When we were going to school, we wanted and we had a lot of fun doing it too. In the Winter the teams of horses that used to bring the ore to the freight sheds were just the --- thing for us, the teamster would stop and let us on the sleight it was a real sleigh ride for us.

It seems that everybody went out and picked berries. The school children could hardly wait for the summer holidays to get out of school so they could get out there and pick.

The

whole family went, they would go to Martineau Bay. There they would put up their tents and stay there all Summer, buy did I ever envy them, their mom, their sisters, brothers and their

neighbours sitting around the fires at night and sing songs one after another and having a real picnic all the Summer long. But they did pick every day, then they sold their blueberries

to some truck that would b0 them right at their tent. Some come home with a sizeable sum. Those were the days.

Some boys from the town got together and went to Peterson Lake and they made a nice beach. You could go out there any day and you would see mothers with their children enjoying the nice weather. In hot days you could see a parade of people going to Peterson Lake. Many a happy hours were spent there. In winter the boys made a skating rink, you should have seen the crowd there. They had the rink in the old French School. This school had been struck by lightning in 1927 and it had burned down. This happened just before school re-opened in Sept. This school was on O'Brien Property.

One morning we were not allowed to cross the Right of Way Bridge, because a horse and carriage had gone right through the bridge and fallen on the tracks below, the horse was dead and the carriage was all smashed up. I guess the man got away ahead because we never heard that he was dead.

Some people from the French church held a garden party at the French School on the O'Brien

Property, it lasted three days. There was a good time for everyone. Lots to eat and a lot of music and concerts and plays. Games of all kinds, thus was an affair for the entire family. The old boys re—union, there was so many people, it was held at the baseball grounds West Cobalt. It seemed to me that the ground was all fenced in. There were clowns and more clowns, races of all kinds, I went in a few. Pictures were taken. I just can't

remember everything but I do remember everybody seemed to be all dressed up in their best and when

we got home we were all tired but happy.

in the Temiskaming Mine we played a lot of baseball, everybody played. We went for walk's with mom and dad and the neighbours went swimming on Sunday we would sit and watch the cars come and go. There was a lot of cars that would come out to Temiskaming Mine because the roads were nice to drive on. We went swimming in a swimming hole and everybody went, one day my sister was drowned there, no one noticed until quite a while that she was missing the principal of our school found her. I never went back to the swimming hole. We went to school in a little red school house it was a nice school and so were the students.

There was a Wild West Rodeo in Cobalt it was held at the baseball ground. You should have seen the big parade with all their cowboys and cowgirls with they're horses. They also had broncos. Those cowboys could lasso just about anything, then when they were gone, almost every day in town had a lasso and they could lasso anything across the street, one day i was lassoed and the rope got me right on the eyebrow, next day at school the whole class had quite a laugh. This Wild West Rodeo reminded you of Calgary Stampede, only on a smaller scale. The town was bursting at its seams with all these people in town.

I remember when the Larose shaft house burnt down, we thought i was the end of the world.

You know that the ladies in Cobalt were noted for being the best dressed ladies in the North. When we mentioned how nice a certain lady was, people already knew, and in Ottawa I was told that the ladies of Cobalt were noted for being stylish, that made me quite proud. We did have some stylish ladies. When they'd put on their plays, dances or what have you, you should have seen them, such a lady was Mrs. Mitchell.

When the Nipissing Mine burned it made me sad because it was so beautiful to look at. In the daytime it looked like a little town in itself away up there on the hill. People would stop and gaze at the bucket of ore travelling away up on the cables over Cobalt Lake over the town to the Nipissing shaft house and back again to the mill. There wasn't only one bucket but many of them. It really was something, to see the buckets passing one another to and fro. I asked my husband what was the first thing he thought of when he first saw Cobalt in 1934. He said he had never seen so many crooked streets and black houses in all his life. This is true, because it seemed that no one ever painted his house, they just let it get real black. Now some people list paint. It seemed that one started then another and another now Cobalt looks better than it did then.

I have a friend that came to visit me during the Centennial Celebration, she came from Florida. She wanted to see everything she could during her holiday. She was brought up here and went to Public School. Her name then was Viano Kettinen, her parents had a dairy and the delivered milk all over Cobalt. Any way I took her to Saturday Matinee, ragged Chutes, She just couldn't get over it. It was such a nice thing to see and to think that it was the first time that she had seen it, and to think that she was so close to it and could have seen it

a million times. It was 30 yrs. since I had seen her. We never noticed what we had until someone makes us see and appreciate it. I think there's a lot of people here that does not

know what we have right here to show them, we don't have to travel for miles and miles to see interesting things, we have them right at our finger tips.

The other day a school principal asked me what was in those big pipes that run down that hill is it oil or gas. I said no it's air. she said air what for. I told her they used it for the mines, she wanted to know all about it. I told her all I could and also about Ragged Chutes. And she answered. And here we are sending our students to Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and other places while they have more here for them to see than they see in those other -places. I agree and there are also tunnels with ice on them too.