

Reel 161A

- 1-7 Nova Scotia Song; sung by Mr. Freeman Young, East Petpeswick;
4 vs. & cho. well sung for old man.
- 779 Moose Call; demonstrated on horn made of stiff paper; tells
of calling for moose and then explains how signs in
the woods tell of trouble at home. Told by Mr. Peter
Michaels, Middleton.
- 9-15 Hunting Story: told by Mr. Peter Michaels; in this a man
sleeps unknowingly in a ~~xxxxx~~ den with a bear; also
explains how bears hibernate.
- 15-18 Indian Tribal Dance; sung by Mr. Peter Michaels; well sung
for old man, and he explains position of Indians
during the singing.
- 18-22 Indian Dancing Song; sung by Mr. Martin Sack, Shubenacadie
Reservation; taps on box with two fingers to keep
time; good, but he doesn't sing as well as Mr. Michaels.
- 22-end, continued on B side: story told by Mr. Sack; this begins
with the flood and the pigeon finding a blueberry
leaf and leading missionaries to Indian village; tells
how language learned and first chief made; gave
whole oration with eyes tightly shut. Mr. Sack is,
I believe, the only one of the old Indians left on
this reservation. Whether his interpretation of the
flood is the same as other Indians I have not yet
ascertained. He talked as one does who is familiar with
a subject.

Nova Scotia Song

Reel 161A1-7

(Now then, what you want?

The Nova Scotia Song.

The Nova Scotia Song. (clears nose loudly) I can't sing very good to-day, my throat's all slopped up (clears throat) then sings;

The sun was sinking in the west,
The birds were singing on every tree,
All nature seemed inclined for to rest,
But still there is no rest for me.

Cho.

Then farewell to Nova Scotia's sea bound coast,
Let her mountains dark and dreary be,
For when I am far away on the briny ocean tossed
Will you ever heave a sigh or a wish for me.

2

The drums they do beat and the wars do alarm,
Our captain calls, we must obey,
And early very early at the dawning of the day
I must bid farewell to my Nova Scotia shore. Cho.

3

Now brothers and sisters have all gone to rest,
They have folded their arms across their breast,
But a poor sailor boy like me
How often have I for to cross the sea? Cho.

4

I grieve to leave my native land,
I grieve to leave my comrades all,
I grieve to leave my aged parents
And the bonny bonny lass that I adore. Cho.

Sung by Mr. Freeman Young, East Petpeswick, and recorded by
Helen Creighton, July 1956

Question: You're going to give a moose call, are you Mr. Michaels?

Answer: Yes, I'll give one now. Will I call now? I'm calling for the bull.

(gives the call for the bull) I'm getting an answer in just a couple of minutes.

Question: You're waiting for the answer are you?

Answer: I'm waiting for the answer. No answer yet. (Then he gives it) It's comin'. It's comin'. Now he's stopped, you see. I'm givin' you the - he stopped - I must try him again. (calls again) he's comin'. Another answer, further on. Another answer, east and west and north. They're comin' together now. No answer. They're stopping. (clock ticks in background) I have to give them a short notice. (calls) They all met together at this bog. Now they're fighting. I wouldn't answer them now cause they're fighting. The friend I have, I say, "There's something funny, I can't get an answer. Can't get them very handy." I say, "They must be going away. They won't come. Didn't know which one would come for us. In all the rest of the signs there's something wrong. That's a sign there's something wrong.

Question: When the moose won't come for you?

Answer: Won't come. I guess it's my brother. I guess we have to go home. There's something wrong. Something going to happen. One start off (makes moose sound) that feler start off (makes another ~~grunt~~ noise) one is certainly in the same place. Stays there for a few minutes (makes loud noise) That's the time he kinds of barks like. He started off. We all started. Can't stay here any longer. I guess we have to go. And when we landed home, in about fifteen minutes an answer comed. My father's died. That's the answer from the moose that I was telling you about. We got it there. And that's the sign for moose, and that's all, in that part, of it.

Question: Oh I see. This is a demonstration of how the moose had warned you that you were going to get bad news.

Answer: Yes. I was worrying quite alot, and when I went home I knowed it anyway, that something going to be happening. That's the sign. That's a sure sign. We all have these signs in the woods, anything going to happen at home, you see, amongst our relatives or something like that. You see we get our signs in the woods. We don't have to worry. We don't have to look for our signs outside. We'll all get our signs in the woods.

Question: If you hadn't had a message would you have gone home anyhow?

Answer: Well we would have stayed there and started next morning, see, in a different place again. See if we couldn't get them moose back, but this sign when they're fightin', wouldn't come and barkin' and go away, that's sure sign that somethin' going to happen at home. Now that's our signs in the woods, hunting.

Told by Mr. Peter Michaels, Middleton, and recorded at the Shubenacadie Reserve by Helen Creighton, July 1956.

This started out to be a moose call, but ended by being an Indian forerunner.

Later he said of the recording, "The little sounds are the cow. The moose was our telegram."

Now this was about eighty years ago. Yes I was born. I was four years old. My father used to go in the woods quite a lot hunting. That's where I learned to be a guide myself. Now Mr. Paul - he was an old man then, and he's been dead for a good many years - he used to go hunting with my father in the woods. But anyway they took astray back in the woods in the fall of the year hunting bears, any kind of an animals. They had along journey. After they got away back they had along journey to go home. At the time of the evening, just about dusk, he said, "Mr. Michaels, I don't think we can reach home to-night." (holds jaws cupped in palms of hands).

He said, "I can reach home. It's up to you." Of course my father was a little younger than he was, Mr. Paul, a little younger. This Mr. Paul lived down near Newport. His son got shot here about thirty-five years ago. So anyway it commenced to snow, heavy snow falling, heavy snow falling, and he said to Mr. Michaels,

"If you can find a way to go ahead help yourself. I can stay all night in the woods," so my father beat it. He knowed where he was going. The old man was tired out. The snow was falling about a foot and a half snow. He said (Mr. Paul) to himself he had to go somewheres and look for a lodging, so he come to a clift of rocks. He seen a place there. It was awful dry. He crawled in this hole under this clift. "It's nice and warm in there now," he said. "I'm going to go in there and lay down and go to sleep." So anyway he slept. About a foot and a half of snow fall in the morning. He got up and dig his way out here and he hear something in this hole. He couldn't see cause it was awful dark. Big hole you know. He couldn't see nawthin'. But he seen those two lights. Two bright lights, you know awful shinin'. He didn't know what that was. He went to work and he had matches and he lighted up and looked. There was an old bear was layin' there doubled up, lookin' at him. Now he slept with that bear all night. That bear never bothered him. And that's a true story too. I believed that man. And he got out. When he got out of the den he was frightened then. He thought,

"My gracious, that bear might liable to tackle me. He didn't have far to go from home, about seven miles from home, about seven miles from there. So he got out. He got away somewheres. He said, "Look here, I've been sleeping with a bear all night. Where's Mr. Michaels?" His son said, "I haven't seen him." And he enquired. He went to the store he said. He said ~~xbank~~ last night about eleven o'clock a man came in here. He was cold. He said he was going to Kentville. So that was all right. He knowed the old man, my father was, you know, he knowed my father was safe. Them times you know the Indians could walk fifty miles, a hundred miles, like nawthin', you know just as handy for them. So anyway, this happened. He went in and he told his son,

"Look, I've been sleepin' with a bear all night, and boy I was some frightened. I get out of the den, and I just thought about you then. I say we have to go back in the

morning get that bear. Had old flint guns then, long flint guns you know. Him and his son went back. The boy was about 15 or 16 years old then you know. Well when they got back there the bear had got out, didn't see no track. Of course it was snowing. The bear beat it. They went inside and looked, they got along pole and they couldn't see no sign of the bear at all. You know, when you go in the bear den, the bear won't stay there, he'll go right out. He'll never stay there after he gets the scent of a person in his den. Anyway they lost the bear! They couldn't find the bear so they went home. Anyway the son wouldn't hardly believe that cause he didn't see the bear you see, but he went in there and he seen where he was layin', his bed and everything, the boy did, course the bear wasn't there. He went out. So he believed that, and he was telling the peoples all around. He said,

"My father slept with a bear last night," and everybody found out here and everything so it went all right. So that settled that business. He was all right but he said, "I don't think I'll ever go in the woods again on a stormy night cause I don't want to sleep with another bear no more." So that's pretty near everything. That's his word he said.

Question: What a thing to have happen to you.

Answer, not quite understanding the question: That was no sign at all (referring to forerunner in previous story) but he slept with a bear. He couldn't get home. He was late. It was snowing, you see. He didn't realize where he was going. He had to be there. So that's the only chance he had to keep away from freezing, to go in that den in the rocks. He didn't know there was any bear there or anything like that. That was the only shelter he had, not to freeze.

Question: Why do you suppose the bear didn't attack him?

Answer: The bear won't tackle him in the den. You can go in the den, you can sit around in the den, the bear never bother you. Oh no, the bear never bother you, but they bother you outside though.

Question: You'd think that's the time they would bother you if you walked into their den.

Answer: Oh no, a bear never bother anybody into their den. No that's right. All the old Indians will tell you that. That's sure. You can go right in the den and take their paw and they'll never bother you. That's the way they sleep. ~~They have their~~ ~~two paws~~ ~~in~~ with their paws in their mouth like that. They have their two paws under their jaws like that (Holds his own jaw cupped in palms of hands to demonstrate). And they breathe into the palm of their hands and they lick that. That's the way they live. Yes, just to breathe from their mouth licking their paws. Sometimes in the spring of the year if you catch a bear their paws is all sore and raw from licking them. That's the way they live on them. Well, that's all my story.

Told by Mr. Peter Michaels, Middleton, and recorded at the Shubenacadie Reserve by Helen Creighton, July 1956.

That is a song for when you are dancing. Just the same you are singing to 'em. Just the same if you were sittin' down and you sing a song or a tune for a person, for the childrens or anyone. That's what it is in the old Indian. (he and Mr. Martin Sack say a few words in Micmac). That would be the tribe dance. They all goes together in one camp, big round camp, see, and the old chief would be in the centre, having those two sticks beating the drum or somethin' like that, you know. Those all would be dancin' around. Then when he commenced to beat (calls out in Micmac) and they all holler when he says oh ho. (he has just sung a little piece) Now that's their sport. That's their dancin'.

Sung by Mr. Peter Michaels, Middleton, and recorded at the Shubenacadie Reserve by Helen Creighton, July 1956

(He sings, tapping on box with two fingers to keep time; then talks in Micmac and sings again and ends up by saying Thank you).

That's an Indian dance, and when they all gathered, all the great big circle around. That's the old Indian dance, and the peoples around they call it the war dance but it isn't a war dance. That's the real Indian Micmac dance. Just as many as could get in would dance, as many as you like. Ten of them or twenty or forty just whatever, three four. They all lined up, great big circle right around just as many as want to dance, long as they can get in here. What I'm sayin' now is sittin' right in centre of great big ring. The Indians and peoples dance all round me. I'm sittin' right in the middle of this ring and the peoples dance all round me. The war dance is different tune, the song I don't know the war dance tune, but there is Indians tunes for the dance. This is a dance just for pleasure with a big circle round. Thank you.

Question: What instruments did you have, Mr. Sack? Did you have any instruments for dancing? Or just the drums?

Answer: No, there's just the drums that you have to double up a piece of bark, you've got to double it and you have a little stick and you pound it. (demonstrates) That's all the music the Indians that they have. They have a great big circle around, just as many as want to dance. You don't have no instruments. Just a song and a tune, that is all the music, and the words (demonstrates again, keeping time).

Sung and told by Mr. Martin Sack at the Indian Reservation at Shubenacadie, and recorded by Helen Creighton, July 1957.

This is a story of the Indian Micmac, however they were here before there were whites here. And this is a village, as a town and there was a lot of peoples and they wasnt all mixed up. There was some pretty good peoples and some bad, all mixed up, and this old man, he was an old fella, he was the kind of the head of those peoples. And there was a lot of missionaries and some of those were good peoples and the bad peoples. They divide up, a lot of the peoples. And this old feller, he says now this town's goin' to be cursed. In times to come it's goin' to be cursed. And he's taked to the old fellas and these peoples and these peoples didn't listen to the old man, and they said,

"Don't mind that old man. He don't know what he's talkin' about." But a lot of peoples listen to this old fella, a lot of missionaries they too and he said, "You goin' to have a big storm here, and I want all you people who want to help me to listen to me to be saved and if they won't listen to me I don't know how they'll be saved. They ask the old fella what the old man has wanted. "Well I want you fellas all to help me build a boat. We want to build a boat so we can get in it when the storm comes," so they all work on this boat, everybody busy building a boat and leaving a lot of animals to go to watch those peoples what they were doin'. All those elephants and leopards and even the monkey was theretoo. He was watchin' all those peoples workin'. The boat was all built up, great big ship, no sail, no engine in it, no paddles, they have nothing, just the boat itself. And they all got on it. The old fella got the peoples want to listen to the old man, they all get onto this boat. They hear the storm comin' and that was the water, and they got onto this boat and they got all packed in, the elephants, camels, and all the birds and all around the peoples, and a lot of missionaries there workin' hard. And the water it starts raisin'. The flood was comin' to flood it. And all those bad peoples drowned that won't listen to the old man. They're all on a boat what was just loaded. Well you see the picture in your school books, those magazines, you can see the picture. You can see the boat, just right now, to-day yet. And that was a true, and the waters they all flooded and this town was all underneath the water and those a-bad peoples were all drowned and they was all shipped. Those missionaries they work hard, say their prayers and they work hard, and the birds flyin' all round this boat. See no land, nothing, just the boat. No steam, no sail, no paddles, nothing. The birds flying all around you see and the pigeon was there, and the pigeon started flyin' around with the other birds, and the pigeon lost his route, and he thought when he was tired he wanted to turn around and go to his boat but he keep goin' till he see a black thing right on the sea, and he keep goin' goin' and the pigeon thought that was his boat, but that was land. The pigeon got to land. He found a piece of land. It got bigger and bigger and bigger and he thought about this land. And the pigeon he have to sit down, he was tired and walk around and he see this leaf, this blueberry leaf, on the ground, so this pigeon took this blueberry leaf

and This was Canada

and started out, and of course I gotta go back to my boat, and the pigeon started out flyin' way out in the sea, no compass, no map, nothing, he went right in the waters of the sea, he flyin' and flyin' and flyin' and flyin' and when he got tired he sat on the waters for a rest, but in a few minutes he got up again and started flyin' again, till he see his boat and he landed and he come right to this boat, and it were the same boat that he left, and he sit on the railin' of this boat. And the old fellow was walking a boat, the missionary was a sayin' his prayers. "There's a pigeon. What's you got in your mouth here? Oh the pigeon's got something in his mouth. What is it?" "I don't know." The old fellow come along. "The pigeon got somethin' in his mouth." "Pigeon what's that you got in your mouth? Oh that's the ~~kaxx~~ leaf. That pigeon found the land somewhere because this leaf doesn't grow in the water. The blueberry leaf grows in the ground."

The pigeon was sittin' on the rail of this boat. Wherever this pigeon pointin' lookin', that's where you're pointin' our boat, so they steered where the pigeon was lookin' right ahead. That boat was goin' to keep going, keep goin' till they see the land, see the black thing right ahead, this a-country. And they see this one land, this country, and they all got off, they all pleased to see the ground and they all got off, and all the animals got off and the peoples and the missionaries too all got off and they got on the ground and they went. And all the missionaries started workin' and ~~kaxix~~ sayin' their prayers and readin' their books, and they got nothin' else to do, just a prayin' and prayin'. And there's one missionary, they keep goin' right over this a-ground when he was readin' his book which he set up you see in the camps, way ahead he seen something that looked like the camps. And this was the real camps too. And he would keep goin' sayin' his prayers and readin' his book, and there they are, the camps. There's a little girl and a woman and a man. There's only the three of them on this first camp, when the missionary come to this first camp and seen somebody comin'. The little girl run out ~~kaxix~~ and said to its mother, "Mother, there's somebody comin' over there." They all looked over. There's missionary comin', somebody comin'. "So we'll run away from this camp. We'll go to next camp." They went over to next camp and the missionary got in this camp and the peoples that live in this camp kneel down at the door of this camp. The camp is all fixed up, all boughed up good, nice, everything nice and clean and snug, and this missionary sayin' his prayers askin' God if he could get an answer from those peoples.

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The next day he went back to those camps and the people stood there watching and all, and they couldn't understand each other and the missionary see the little girl ask mother, "Mother, I want a drink of water." The missionary stood there watching them. The missionary took that hint. "Mother I want a drink of water." This old lady she says "Ah," and she got up, she tipped the water and pass it over to this little girl and this little girl have a drink. That's the first of the language you people got, to drink water. Drink water. So the missionary keep to learn more of this language, that to learn, learn all he could and after all they teach him pretty good.

After a while they got learned so they were able to talk, the missionary ~~xxxxxx~~ the English language and the missionary those Indian words so they can talk back and forth and so the Indians got to learn to talk English, and this missionary learned the Indian language. That was the start for this here Rand. You hear of the books of this Rand. He was a teacher around too. He was a minister too, so these Indians they got all together to learn them, and they was all singing the French hymns, but all Indian words. But French voices but all Indian words. The prayers, they learned them, but after the missionary learned those Indians to singing adsy in' their prayers and they went over to the other peoples and they say see what I learned them the peoples I found over there. They're Indians. Because the Indians they were. Where they come from? Nobody know, because they were here before the whites got here, and so this Sunday come along, ten o'clock they'll be sayin' their prayers, so these missionaries all went over, even missionary was a Protestant, the missionary was. This here Protestant missionary, he was next to the janitor (this must mean father) the Pope. And this Protestant he was next to him, and that's where this medal, the chief business, we'll come to that chief because it's comin'.

And this year the peoples liked it here, these peoples singin' hymns so nice and they're good hymns, they're real good, so they're all satisfied and they all go over visit those camps, and that was good. And this man, who was head man of this village? The seven camps. Who's head of this village here? Well there's one young man spoke up and this old man - that's the old man who was teachin' us - will be here to-morrow and we'll nominate the man who was a-teachin' because he's teachin' very good, it's very nice. So the next day those a-same bunch they come back again and they said, "We'll nominate the head man of them Indians, That's the man who's goin' to be leader. Is one be leader and not reserve them camps and we'll crown him and he'll be chief. Not a warden, not a chief of police, not a chief of game warden, not a chief of fireman, it's an Indian chief. Well all right. Now we want to crown him. So they found a little tin. They made what they call a (Micmac word) that's a medal you know. We call that (Micmac word again). The old womens they wear that. So they went over there. So the old man taught those peoples so good now we crown you, we're going to crown you, that's a nomination that belongs to us, but your peoples got it, and we, this election, we got it from your people. But the nomination belongs to Indians. And then you peoples got the nomination. Now we got ~~xxx~~ all mixed up now, We got an election before we can appoint a chief and councillors and all that, we got to have an election, but them times that we had no election, just nomination. So this man said to the old feller, "You teach those Indians so good, your peoples, Indians." That's the first time those peoples come by name, Indians, Micmac Indians. And we'll crown you and you'll be leader, you'll be Indian chief. And all your peoples, you listen to this old man because he does pretty good to you peoples. He learns you, everything you want to be done, your people to do it because he teach you fellas very good, very nice, and he will be your chief, the leader. This a-chief he's so nice to your peoples he's next to the priest. He can do all the other works, talk to

youse good, pray foryouse, and lead and pray for youse peoples, except they can't marry, they can't 'oint you. But they can do the rest. You want to respect this old man because he is leader. He is Indian chief, his duty. So now those chiefs now they don't come to anything like that now, but them days they were respect, even the old peoples. In them days what the old peoples tell you yes, yes, well thank you. (Micmac word twice) thank you. You got to respect the old people, but nowadays we don't because we got all mixed up with your peoples, talk English. Indian language all die away from us now.

Question: Mr. Sack, speaking of the English language, will you say the Lord's prayer in Micmac?

Answer: Oh yes. No, I can't say it myself. I'll say it in the catechism. I studied catechism a lot myself, but still I say my Indian prayers. You wouldn't understand me if I said my prayers.

Question. No, but they'd be interesting to record.

Answer: Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes. They got everything we got. We got the Bibles too. We got them Indian Bibles. We got the prayers all right, the old fellers did. You can read them Bibles right out, the Indian Bibles. You hear of this Rand, this minister Rand, we had some Rand books, Indian hymn books. Oh we had all them things, and I think all them die away from us now, and I think that be about all. (Micmac words). I'm glad, ~~thanks~~ very much, ~~thankx~~ thanks for you obligation to come this far and give me a chance to tell a few words to this about this and that. I'm very much thankful. Thanks (Micmac word twice) adios, thank you.

Told by Mr. Martin Sack, Shubenacadie Reserve, and recorded by Helen Creighton, July 1956