

**Judith L. Anywaush
Narrator**

**Deborah Locke
Interviewer**

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**AL = Aimee LaBree
Minnesota Historical Society**

**DL = Deborah Locke
Minnesota Historical Society**

JA = Judith Anywaush

AL: This is Aimee LaBree at the house of Judith L. Anywaush, 185 Highway 212 East, #76, in Granite Falls, Minnesota. Interviewer, Deborah Locke

DL: Could you spell your name for me?

JA: J-U-D-I-T-H A-N-Y-W-A-U-S-H.

DL: Do you have a nickname?

JA: No. I answer to Judith, Judy, my middle name is Lorna, and my maiden name is Cavender.

DL: Sometimes Indian children are given nicknames from a grandparent or a parent, so that's why I asked.

JA: Daddy used to just call me Baby.

DL: When and where were you born?

JA: Here in Granite Falls, Minnesota.

DL: The date would have been?

JA: June 7, 1945.

DL: Could you give us the names of your parents?

JA: Naomi Bear Cavender and Floyd Walter Cavender.

DL: Where were they from?

JA: Granite.

DL: Were they both enrolled?

JA: Yes, in Sisseton, South Dakota.

DL: Are you enrolled here, or Sisseton?

JA: I'm also Sisseton.

DL: Who were your siblings, or are your siblings?

JA: I have one half-sister. She lives in Flandreau, South Dakota. I also have another half-sister and she lives in Mankato.

DL: Who were your grandparents on both sides?

JA: Elisa Roberts Cavender and William Ray Cavender.

DL: That would be on your father's side?

JA: That's on my father's side. I can't remember my mom's. I never got to see her as much as my grandmother here, and now I'm drawing a blank about her name.

DL: How long have you lived in Granite Falls?

JA: For the past almost ten, fifteen years now. Before that, we were always here for Christmas, Thanksgiving, summer vacation—I even went to school here for a short period of time.

DL: Maybe we should start from the beginning then. Tell us where you grew up.

JA: I was born here. They took me back to Minneapolis for a while. I went to school at Lafayette in North Minneapolis, by the Basilica. That's all been torn down now for the freeway. Then I went to school in Holmes, in Southeast; Marcie, Southeast; and Marshall High School, Southeast. That's where we pretty much lived. But I've lived in St. Paul, too. We went back and forth from Granite to Minneapolis. My dad worked there, and we always came back here.

DL: What did your dad do for a living?

JA: He was what they call a roofer, where they tarred and papered roofs for businesses.

DL: And your mother, did she work outside the home?

JA: Yes, when she first got to Minneapolis, she got jobs cleaning houses. She went to school in Pipestone and Flandreau as a power machine operator and finally got a job doing that. She did that all her life until she retired.

DL: We have you as a child then, going back and forth from the Cities, and then in Granite for a while and then going back to the Cities. Did you have more family around here?

JA: Yes, they were all here. Because my dad, we lived in Minneapolis and St. Paul, my aunts came and they lived with us, got jobs and worked there. And his cousins and a lot of people from here came to stay at our house.

DL: Tell me about your experience as a student. What do you remember about being in grade school?

JA: I tell the kids this sometimes: I was in kindergarten at Lafayette, and at Holmes I was in first and second grade. At Marcie I was in third grade. And when we moved, everybody was working. My sister was at Marshall High School. She went to register herself, and I went to register myself when I was in the third grade. I remember wandering around that big school; I didn't know where I was. I didn't know where the offices were or anything. That's pretty little to be wandering around. I don't think you could do that anymore, the way the city is now. So I was really on my own at a very young age.

DL: Taking care of what you needed to do.

JA: Yes. And I'd go home for lunch and cook my dinner and go back to school. Nobody ever told me to go to school; I went to school.

DL: It just was important to you.

JA: All by myself. I'd watch TV. We had one of those TV's where you dropped a quarter in and it would run for a little while. I never see them anymore. I don't know where they managed to get that TV. And now when I go back and think of all the different things that I did, it's kind of amazing.

DL: Tell me about more of them.

JA: About school?

DL: The things you did to take care of yourself.

JA: They had a dentistry {dental school} at the University of Minnesota. So I took myself at that age, over to the dentist. Mom took me the first time, and then after that, then I would go by myself to the dentist. And now you see kids that are really afraid of the dentist. I don't know why. I did what I was told to do. I remember getting my teeth drilled, and that was over—do you know Minneapolis fairly well?

DL: Pretty well.

JA: We lived over by Como Avenue; that was all campus then; still is. Marshall High School closed and I think Marcie closed. I don't know if Holmes School is still operational. There's hardly any kids anymore; no more families; it's all students—housing for college students. When I think back, I don't remember seeing any people of color at Holmes, Marcie, Marshall. I was the only Indian student at Marshall. I quit school when I was—you could quit school when you were in the tenth grade, so that's what I did. And I think I came down here and went to school for a while. But over in North Minneapolis at Lafayette, I remember seeing just one Afro-American there.... And of course that's all changed now.

DL: You had to feel pretty isolated if you were the only Indian student out of hundreds and hundreds.

JA: Yes. Marshall High School was a big, big school at that time. But I always kind of wonder if I didn't feel too badly about that, because we had kids there that were—we had deaf kids and we had kids that had cerebral palsy and handicapped kids, so I guess I didn't feel too out of the ordinary, until after I was more aware. Then I realized when we got our first Afro-American, and then Asian—just one, just one student. And then pretty soon we got one more, I think they were Ojibwe, but that was it, in a school of hundreds and hundreds of kids.

DL: Did anyone pay any attention to you? Did any teachers take an interest in you and encourage you?

JA: No. The only person that took an interest in me was my one aunt. Her name is Berna Cavender Ross. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was really involved in Native American lives, and when she [aunt Berna] became a teenager she decided she was going to do a little running around. So they took her and put her in Sauk Centre {juvenile detention facility}. I think that's on I-94. My aunt had a counselor or something like that. It was the funniest thing, her counselor also worked at Marshall High School and she recognized me right away by my name. She asked me if I was related to my aunt. And I said yes, that's my aunt. And she would come right to the house to see me. When I started not wanting to go to school, she would come right to the house and looked at me to see what I was doing. She was the only one {who took an interest}.

DL: So she cared about what you were doing and what would happen to you.

JA: Yes.

DL: How about your auntie, how did she turn out?

JA: She remained here in Granite for all of her life, and she married and had several kids.

DL: You were pretty independent from what I've heard, and you did get yourself through school up until the tenth grade. Let's back up a little to when you were very small. When you would come home from school in the afternoon, what would you do? What were your afternoon activities?

JA: Actually, I think I came home, but there was never anybody home. So I would just turn around and go right back out. I got a bike for my birthday when I was—that must have been third grade—a full-sized bike. And I would ride to my friend's house and we would play all afternoon. I always wondered when I had supper, or if I even had supper—I don't recall.

DL: In the winter months, maybe you'd just walk somewhere?

JA: Yes, I remember walking home from school. But we were always playing, always had friends.

DL: What kind of games did you play?

JA: We always pretended we were horses. I mostly went to Dorothy's house, Dorothy McGuire. Now we lost touch with each other and I don't know if she's even alive. High school was so big. We all got put in different classes and so I hardly ever saw her anymore.

DL: When you were a little girl, what did you think about your future?

JA: No, I never did. Other than the high school, they tested us, and it seemed to me that they never said we could become lawyers, or doctors, or flight attendants—nothing like that. It was always clerical. They always made sure we knew how to type on the typewriter.

We always lived Southeast, and we would walk sometimes through the campus. It's funny that we never really thought about going to school there. We would see all those kids, all going to college and it never occurred to us to go to school. Now that I look back at it it's kind of amazing. It wasn't until later, until we were older and my husband and I were married, and he went to school on the G.I. Bill. I was always working on reservations. In Morton—I worked at the Environmental Office. And the grants ended

and I was like a displaced person. Then I finally went to school, and I enjoyed that a lot and I always wished I had been younger.

DL: Where did you go to college?

JA: Right here in Granite at Midwest. My downfall was—I shouldn't say downfall—but it was math. I wasn't a good math student. I hated math because I didn't know anything about it. I suppose if I had paid more attention maybe I would have liked math.

DL : Do you have family members at other reservations or Indian communities?

JA: My mom heard that we have relatives at Prairie Island, because we had an uncle that came from Santee. During the summer months they would give him an extra pair of moccasins and he would walk from Santee all the way to Prairie Island. And apparently he had a family there. So we have relatives there. And we have relatives in Santee; they're located in Norfolk, Nebraska right now. And they're part Dakota and Ponca. And we have relatives in Sisseton and relatives here, where we're based mostly. I'm not aware of blood relatives in Morton. I would guess we do — anything that's written down is from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, so it would be kind of hard to go back that far to see if we have any relatives in Morton.

DL: Do you remember if your parents thought anything of the fact that you wanted to drop out of school, or did they care.

JA: They tried to keep me in school. My dad would make my breakfast in the morning and wake me up and get me off to school, or get me going to school. That didn't mean that I actually walked through the door of the high school. I always went to visit my older half-sister. They tried to keep me in school. It was important. But I didn't like it. And I didn't like school down here. It was, like say for science class, they always had projects they were doing, but you needed money to even get the basics. You had to have some sort of case with a glass cover, and the pins to stick through the insects and cotton to stick them in. I was wondering afterwards if there were any Indian kids that could afford to do that. So that didn't work out too well.

DL: What is your earliest memory as a child?

JA: Falling down the back stairs in Shakopee, Minnesota. We lived there for a period of time. That must have been traumatic; I went all the way down from the second floor until I hit the bottom.

DL: How old were you then?

JA: My mom says I must have been two.

DL: You were real little.

JA: Yes, but I survived.

DL: Did you have to go to the hospital?

JA: No. I bounced and rolled all the way down.

DL: What's the first news story you can remember from your childhood?

JA: The Vietnam War. But I can't remember anything before that. There were a lot of things going on in Minneapolis, but I don't recall anything specific.

DL: You remember the war years.

JA: Yes.

DL: Why do you suppose they stand out?

JA: We had a lot of boys that were drafted. Four of them were killed from the grade that I was in. They went on to graduate and went right into the service right out of high school, and were killed almost in that first year. So everybody talked about that.

DL: When you were growing up, did your family have a TV set? You mentioned the one that took quarters.

JA: That was the only one that I can remember. And I think they probably got that for me so I could watch Casey Jones at noontime. I don't recall watching TV in the evening.

DL: Which relatives had the most influence on you?

JA: My grandmother.

DL: Why?

JA: She was Christian. She would take us to church all the time. All my cousins and I didn't wear lipstick, we didn't listen to rock and roll. We did later as we got older but my grandmother didn't like that. We went to church every Sunday and we went to daily vacation Bible school, and then we went to Bible camp. It's funny we did not all become ministers.

DL: Which church did your grandma take you to?

JA: Assembly of God. They were like missionaries that came out of Minneapolis. And my grandmother, I don't recall her ever speaking English. We talked about that too. Even when we were little, we were trying to remember whether she spoke English, or

was she talking to us in Dakota? We don't know now. There was no smoking. She was kind of strict in a way, and she definitely did not like rock and roll.

DL: She had a lot of influence on you.

JA: Yes, and those weren't the only things. There was how she treated people and treated her own adult children. She had 11 children and from those, four survived, [me and my] three sisters. They're all buried up in Doncaster. Real little graves, too. That had to take a lot of strength to come through that. So I always try to remember that when I think I'm having a hard day.

DL: You think of what your grandmother had to deal with?

JA: Yes.

DL: Did she teach you anything about being Dakota?

JA: No, other than language. It was never anything verbal, it was all action. I always just watched what she was doing, whether it was cooking, cleaning, how she talked to people and treated people with respect.

DL: What was her name?

JA: Elisa Roberts Cavender.

DL: Did your family celebrate the holidays?

JA: Yes, Easter, Christmas. Those were always big days for the family. We went to all the different churches here in Granite, Assembly of God, Presbyterian and Episcopalian. So we went to all those churches at Christmastime.

DL: You were a busy church-goer.

JA: Yes. We were always going from church to church, and then we'd go home. And we were talking about that too, one day, how big that house really was. It might have been as big as those two rooms, but at that time it didn't seem small. A kitchen and a dining... I don't even think it was that big, and a living room and a bedroom. There was always a Christmas tree, a table, a stove and a bed, and a trunk. My mother had a trunk where she would pack everything, and at Christmas she'd bring it all out and then she'd wrap those gifts. She must have been saving stuff all the time for Christmas.

DL: Where do you suppose she got money from?

JA: She had land in South Dakota and they would get lease checks. But I don't know if they got lease checks every month or not. I don't know where that money came from; how they lived. They always had a big garden.

DL: Did you learn any of traditional Dakota ways, if not when you were younger, maybe when you were a bit older?

JA: What kind of Dakota ways?

DL: The traditional ways.

JA: Those came from my mother. Such as how she would treat my sister's husband, because she was the mother-in-law. She never seemed to talk or look directly at him, and was never intrusive into their married life. But she was always there to take care of the grandchildren.

DL: And that was something in the Dakota culture which was that you don't ...

JA: Yes, you don't meddle.

DL: Or deal directly with your in-laws. You don't meddle, even if you're under the same roof.

JA: Yes.

DL: Do you have a Dakota name?

JA: Yes, Witopaywi, or, Careful Lady. And I inherited that; that was my mother's name. And her grandmother, the one that was on the 1862 march, gave that to her. So I was very happy to get that.

DL: Your mother's grandmother was on the march?

JA: Yes.

DL: Tell us more about that.

JA: Her name is Wechankpeotowe which means "Many Stars Woman." As my mother tells it, her grandmother was three when she was on that march. They went to Fort Snelling and that's where the mother and dad died, and all she had left was her sisters and her aunties. One of them carried her on her back. They said they went up that gang plank, or whatever that was, into the boat or the ship, and they went down to, where was it, Crow Creek. And I think they said that, what was his name, Bishop Whipple...you know, I always wished I had listened harder. My mom was fluent Dakota and we could have been talking Dakota. Even when my grandmother talked, it was like talking in an undertone, or talking in an aside—never real loud or conspicuous. They didn't want to be conspicuous when they were talking.

DL: What do you remember them saying about Bishop Whipple?

JA: That before they got on that boat, or at some point in time, he was praying. He prayed for them when they were on that boat.

DL: But that little three year-old did survive.

JA: Yes, she survived. Later certain things really stuck out in their memories. They cut down a living tree, not a dead one, and they hollowed out that tree and they built fires under it, and they were using that to boil meat. I don't know what kind of meat it was, but the reason why they talked about it was because it was a living tree and the sap from that tree went into the soup. I don't know what kind of soup they made, but it tasted bad so they took the meat out of that soup. They must have had pots and pans. They ended up having to re-cook that meat and cook that sap taste out of it before they could eat it. And I thought, how long did it take to cut down a tree, hollow it out, build that fire, and cook that meat? They must have landed someplace, gone ashore, and all sat there, waiting to eat.

Then they set up camp. Their tents must have been kind of close together, and they talked about how they were inside the tent. And you kind of wonder what was going on too, because one of those soldiers came and they could see his shadow through the tent, and he proceeded to urinate on the side of their tent. It kind of makes you wonder: Why did he choose that tent? Ordinarily it would be reasonable to think that you would go outside the area, where there must have been some place where they were going to the bathroom. But he chose their tent to urinate on. Ma said they left in the middle of the night after that happened. I don't know how long it took them, but they went all the way back from Crow Creek back to Santee. That's where they ended up.

DL: They walked back to Santee.

JA: Yes. But that kind of makes you wonder, how did they survive? What did they learn so they could walk that far and survive? What did they eat? It's really kind of mind-boggling that they managed to make it all the way back.

DL: Did you ever hear what your great-great-great grandparents died from when they were at Fort Snelling?

JA: No. Oh, and then they told another story about that too. I imagine there were a lot of them dying there, I suppose from whatever sickness, but this story was about a baby that died. It was during the winter and I suppose the ground was really hard, but they must have tried to dig down to bury that baby. They said that there must have been dogs inside the walls and that a dog must have dug that baby up. They saw it running, and they were all yelling that he had the body of that baby.

DL: Did they catch it?

JA: I don't know. That's all they said. It must have been a pretty awful site.

DL: Did your grandmother, if she was so little, remember much of what happened?

JA: That's all my mom ever mentioned. I imagine there were other things that she could tell. There is just one other thing to tell, that I remember, and this must have been before the march, wherever they were at, wherever they were living. (JA begins quietly crying and taping is stopped momentarily by DL)

(JA continues quietly crying while telling this story) An old woman had arthritis and all the things that attack you when you're old. The soldiers were coming and they were chasing all the people and she fell. They were all running and screaming and she couldn't get up. I suppose everybody was in such a panic that they were all running by her, and they remember her saying, "Just help me up. If you can just help me up, I know that I can run."

The people all ran past her and one of them must have turned around and looked. The soldiers were surrounding the old woman and they had their guns pointed at her. They must have killed her. I can't imagine anything worse than having to leave her behind, but what else could you do. They survived. And because they survived, we're here today. That was a terrible price to pay.

DL: This older woman who fell behind, was she a family member as well?

JA: I don't know. I think they were at a village, and when the soldiers came, the people were just running, scattering, trying to find some place of safety. But that must have really been traumatic for them to have to leave her behind, simply because she was an elder. It was something my mom used to talk about all the time, too. She would say every now and then: "If you just give me a hand up, I know that I can make it." There are a lot of stories out there. How gruesome and how horrific it must have been. But like I say, we wouldn't be here now today, without that grandmother, that three-year-old grandmother who lived.

DL: Who was watched out for and cared for by someone, and raised.

JA: They went through an awful lot, just to get her back to Santee.

DL: Yes. She had her own resilience.

JA: Yes. She raised my mom and my mom's two brothers. She was an undertaker, and I think she got lease money too, from the farmers there. The farmers all knew that she had kids, that she was raising her grandchildren. They would call upon her when they were butchering a cow, or something, and they would give her all the throw-away, what they thought was waste. So she would take that and it must have lasted them a long time. And corn.

DL: She understood how to survive, like so many Dakota people do.

JA: Yes.

DL: Did she live a long life?

JA: Yes, she was pretty old. When she died my mom was either at Flandreau or at Pipestone, and she was graduating. Education was really something that she thought—I won't say "they," but "she," my grandmother thought was really important. And she told my mom: Well, you just keep going to school, because I won't be there to see you graduate.

DL: She could have lived to about 1914?

JA: You know, I really don't know how old she really was. I was thinking along the same lines, and I was thinking: I wonder how old she really was. Because to be carried on somebody's back...

DL: You had to be a real little girl.

JA: Yes, really little. And then, she told these stories, or did she actually remember them? I was two and I remember something traumatic happening to me. So because she was two or three, did she remember those things because they were that traumatic?

DL: And if she lived a long life, she could have lived the next thirty-five years up until 1900, and then another fifty years into the 1900's.

JA: Yes. I don't know. I should look that up to see how old she was when she passed away. She's buried in Santee. I don't think there's anybody buried in Sisseton; they're all buried in Santee. My mom is buried here; I was always going to take her back {to Santee}, but all her life was spent here, so that's why I buried her here.

DL: What was that grandma's first name?

JA: I want to say Julia, but I don't think it was Julia. I guess because I always think of her as Wechankpeotowe but I can't remember her English name.

Here is another story: they must have been going to build some housing there. They dug up a spot and found bodies. How long were they there? Who were they? Now, my husband is Ojibwe and he's from the White Earth Indian Reservation. They were going to build a new Head Start, and started digging up a site, and found graves there. How come nobody knew there were people buried there; just like at Santee: they were buried on the side of a hill someplace.

DL: They're everywhere.

JA: (laughing) It kind of makes you wonder—if you dig up someplace, you'll be digging up somebody. But it's all kind of overgrown. Does nobody mow the cemetery? Because I know there are a lot of people buried, babies and stuff, but you can't see it anymore. There's no headstones or anything. I suppose nobody could afford to buy a headstone. The only one that's there is my grandfather, and the only reason I think there's one there is because he was in World War I, so the service paid for his headstone. So that's the only one that's there when you go there. That's the only reason why I know that's where a family plot is there.

DL: Do you know where your grandmother's grave is?

JA: No. I'm sure the church does. I did get in contact with them when my mom passed away, but I decided to keep her here.

DL: What a strong and determined woman she was.

JA: Then there was another story too, that a man came from Sisseton, South Dakota traveled all the way to Santee in his horse-drawn wagon, and he came to—the name was almost on the tip of my tongue.

And he came to her and he wanted her to marry him and she said yah, she'd marry him, but he'd have to take these three kids; that she couldn't go with him without those three kids. He said no. He said he didn't want to take those three kids. So that was the end of that. And how old was she then? But I think at that time, land was a big—he probably had a lot of land and she must have had a lot of land, too. So I suppose combined, they probably would have been able to live fairly well.

DL: The next question; you've answered most of it, but the question is: What did you learn about Dakota history while you were growing up, and who told you about it?

JA: My mom.

DL: Did you ever hear of the 1862 U.S.-Dakota War during your growing up years?

JA: Yes. On my dad's side, he was, I want to say he had an Indian, Iyangmani buried here at the Upper Sioux Agency. His grave is unmarked. My one auntie knows where that's at, and she was telling me about this. But he was shot and he didn't die right away; my understanding is he got really sick and then he died.

DL: Why was he shot?

JA: He was shot at Wood Lake, during that time. The War of Wood Lake?

DL: Battle.

JA: Battle of Wood Lake. That was when he was shot, and as I understand it, he was shot carrying the white flag of surrender.

DL: What was his name?

JA: Iyangmani. But he must have been—John Roberts, yes. Have you been up to the Upper Sioux Agency?

DL: Yes.

JA: My grandfather is buried somewhere in there, beyond those brass signs, further on in the woods. I never asked where. I figure it's better off I don't know. Then nobody can say where he's at. And right across the river here, we talked about that too one time. I'm 65 now, and I'm going to take my daughter over there and show her where my grandmother told me a young lady had gotten sick and she's buried there. It's Memorial Park. My grandmother said that she was buried with all her jewelry, but I never told anybody that either, where exactly the burial really is.

DL: Your grandfather who was carrying the white flag; obviously that didn't mean much.

JA: No.

DL: Are you related to any of the chiefs or the leaders from that time?

JA: That was that Iyangmani. I don't think that they ever really called him a chief, but he was one of the leaders of this community.

DL: What was his name again?

JA: John Roberts Iyangmani.

DL: Can you tell us anything about the aftermath of the war and the scattering of people?

JA: My grandmother, she was at Santee, lived there all her life, and after her kids were born, like my mother, when grandmother was going to school, they told her they couldn't give her any money because she wasn't from there. She had to go to Sisseton to get money to go to school. And it was like, all I ever knew was that Wechankpeotowe was born, we figure, down in the Prairie Island area, and that they traveled back and forth from Sisseton to Santee. My grandmother was born by some lake down there. I don't know what lakes are down there. I think there's a few, but probably all well populated by now.

DL: Have you ever been to Mankato, to the site of the execution?

JA: Yes, where they have that big buffalo? Yes. You know, I was going to ask about that too: Where are the pictures? You gotta figure that there was some photographer taking pictures by the hundreds. Where are they?

DL: *Harpers Magazine* sent an illustrator who did the drawing that's quite famous, but I've never seen a photo.

JA: They took pictures way back then. I think they had good photography back then.

DL: 1860's?

JA: I think so. They had the tin types, didn't they? That would be really, really, really something if you guys could dig those up someplace.

DL: When were you actually at the site?

JA: I have a half-sister, she lives in Mankato. She's lived there for many, many years. She was born and raised here until she got pregnant and the Community stepped in. Her grandfather took care of her, he died in a house fire, and the rumor was that she's the one that burned the house down.

And we talked about that, her and I, and she said, no she didn't do that. But she figured whoever was there was the one that did that, because there was the smell of kerosene, she said, all over the house. So somebody probably killed him. They were all drinking, I guess. They decided she was not capable of running her life so they sent her to St. Peter {location of a mental health facility}. She lived there for quite a while, and finally got out. She remained in Mankato. They said she's mildly schizophrenic. She lives in an Assisted Living place and has Parkinson's now. I go and I visit her and then we go to the pow wow at, what is that, Land of Many Dreams Park.

DL: In September?

JA: Yes, we go there and we've camped out there many times. My ma was always big on pow wows, so we used to go to Prairie Island and Mankato and Sisseton and Santee. They used to have pow wows in the City too, so we went there too. She always made sure that we knew who our relatives were.

DL: And to this particular {Mankato} site, you just visited it to see what was there? And how did it feel being at the Mankato site?

JA: I guess I didn't really know what to expect when I went there. I had just seen that white buffalo {born at the Wisconsin farm}. And I guess I was just kinda curious to see—I don't know what I thought it was going to look like. Maybe I thought it was going to be bigger, maybe an interpretive center; I don't know. I guess I don't really know how I feel about that. I feel kind of isolated from that.

DL: There's a few other places, maybe you can tell us your thoughts about these places, if you've ever been here, or what you remember from them, how you felt being there. One of them is Fort Ridgely.

JA: We were there when Canadians came down through Sisseton, and then they came down this way. And it's always during the winter. And we welcomed them at that Fort Ridgely, and I think that was the first that they came there. They brought food, we brought food, and we were there and we all introduced ourselves and welcomed them. And I don't recall where they went from—I think they went to Mankato.

DL: Birch Coulee.

JA: Yes, we go there for the pow-wows, and we wonder where the birches are. There are no birch trees there anymore; if there ever were. There must have been at some point in time. It's a very pretty place.

DL: The Lower Sioux Agency where the storage building is.

JA: We took the kids. My aunt, Carolynn Cavender Schommer, she does the language for Upper Sioux. She's eighty-one now, and she does the language at the high school too. And so we took the kids to the Interpretive Center there. And I've been there, because I worked there. You can tell people stories, but it's not real until you actually take them there. And when we were walking through there I told them, I said, "Just think, you're walking where a lot of Dakotas left here on that forced march." I said, "You're walking in the same footsteps that they took."

DL: How about the Upper Sioux Agency?

JA: No, we never took the kids there.

DL: Another location would be the Traverse des Sioux, which is where the treaty was signed.

JA: Never been there.

DL: I know you lived in the Twin Cities for a while; I'm wondering, did you ever hear of the Sibley House where the Sibley family lived?

JA: Yes. And I can picture two different places, but where is it located at?

DL: Where is the Sibley house located—we don't have the address. I think it's in the Lilydale-Mendota area.

JA: We walked through there too, and nobody ever said anything while we went through there.

DL: So you went to the site?

JA: We were on a march and were afraid that we were going to get picked up and thrown in jail.

DL: Oh my goodness.

JA: Yes. We saw police. At first I thought they were watching out for us. When we got to the Mendota bridge, I'll call her a cousin—that's the Dakota way—she may not even been a blood relative, but she was like a spiritual woman and she had the staff and she was wrapped in a Pendleton blanket. I walked up to her and took her arm and said, "Well, let's go," I said. "Are you ready?" I said, "We might get thrown in jail; are you ready?" "Yup, I'm ready." So away we went and we walked across the bridge. And my daughter, she parked her car down below on one side of the bridge and she went across the bridge.

DL: When did this march take place?

JA: It takes place every two years, November 6th, I think it starts, and it goes for a week. We start out in Morton and we go right down through, is it St. Peter? No. New Ulm. And we go down to Mankato and then back up. We follow the whole trail that they took, all the way. We went through a little town where a woman came out of her house. Word must have, the first time we went, word must have preceded us, {and people knew] that we were coming through. She came out of her house and she yelled at us. She said, "Why don't you guys just forget about it. You guys should just forget about it." That was the first inkling. And it seemed like on that stretch, we were getting into a more populated area, and then every mile we had stakes with names. We put a red flag next to the road and put tobacco there, and said a prayer. The State Troopers came and told us we couldn't do that. While {the trooper} was telling us that, I noticed there must have been a car accident right there. There was a big memorial. He was telling us—we couldn't do that, but somebody else had already done it. We were putting ours a little way away from theirs. The troopers followed us all the way. When we got to 35W, then it got to be really dangerous for the marchers, so we decided that we would go in cars from there, right to the Mendota Bridge and then we parked there, and then we went across. But I figured down there in Fort Snelling, all the people that died and were buried there, I'm sure the floods have taken all those bones and swept them down the river. There's nothing there now.

DL: Do you still do this every two years?

JA: Yes, I'm thinking that last November was the last one. We did that for ten years. It seemed like a long time. We were supposed to eat at some church over there by the Mendota Bridge. By that time it was really....

DL: There was really severe weather.

JA: Yes. That's too bad that they didn't make it all the way.

DL: I'm sure they'll do it in 2012.

JA: Yes. When we went—my mom was still living then, we camped out. There was no way we were going to suffer the way they did—in that cold while wearing moccasins—I don't know how they did it. That whole march, that road, there must be bones laying all over. I don't know how they did that. They must have lost a lot of people.

DL: It sounds like you have been to Fort Snelling. What are your thoughts about Fort Snelling?

JA: Well, like I said, it's too bad there isn't some place, like a cemetery or something. I always wondered; even last night I was thinking about that and I was wondering: I wonder what they did with all the people that died there. And there must have been a lot that died there. What happened to them? Expendable, I guess. That's the way I feel about it. They were throw-away. It still happens today. I feel kinda bad about that. When you go down there—have you ever been down there? And you see some of those trees are really old and I was always wondering if somebody could drill a hole and take a core sample and see how old some of those trees are. They say if walls could only speak, or trees could only speak and say what they've seen.

DL: Camp Release.

JA: They have a spot where they have a lot of old buildings, old houses, old churches, little log buildings and stuff like that. And it seems like I've seen that someplace, but nobody ever talked about that either.

AL: It's right by Montevideo.

JA: In Montevideo?

AL: Right outside of Montevideo.

JA: It seemed like I remember seeing something—I remember it, but that's all. Then other than that, Lac qui Parle, there's a church there that my grandmother used to go to all the time, and it has something to do with the Indians, but I don't know what the historical part of it is. And they still meet there every year, every August, to sing Dakota hymns. And they come from Sisseton to do that.

DL: Where's that located?

JA: That's west of Montevideo. So I was thinking maybe these two things have some relationship. Nobody ever talks about that either, and I think that's interesting.

Yes, I'd like to know where that is, so we can take the kids. Every summer the kids come to Language Camp.

DL: How about Wood Lake?

JA: Wood Lake, and the Battle of Wood Lake: There's a memorial over there. It's a big spire, and they've got all the names of the soldiers and I think a lot of them are buried there. I don't believe there's any monuments though, just the one. I don't know if they're all buried there, where are they buried? I don't know.

DL: How about New Ulm, have you ever been there?

JA: Yes, that's where we would march through.

DL: How was that?

JA: I had my mom with me. If we had enough money, we would spend the night at a hotel. But the rest of the marchers stayed—is there a college there, or a church there? Anyway they offered accommodations to all the walkers, and food. I don't recall anybody saying they experienced anything negative there. When we walked through, what was it, Sleepy Eye, the Catholic church offered accommodations there, but they weren't too happy with what Chris Mahto Nunpa told them about 1862. Now when I think about it, I wonder what they thought he was going to say. It wasn't what they wanted him to say, so it kind of makes you wonder what they think of 1862, the church. Because the church is there; they were probably there in the very beginning.

DL: Another location, and this would be in the Twin Cities, St. Paul, probably around Lilydale, would be Camp Coldwater, the springs.

JA: Yes. I was there. Chris Mahto Nunpa married his wife there. And so that's the reason why we were there. And who did I talk to? I think it was a woman. Anyway, she was talking—it was in the news that they were talking about some tree that was over a hundred years old there, and so they figured that was one of the trees that was there during that time. But other than that, having grown up in Minneapolis, I never heard of that place. The only other place I heard about was, what was it, Black Dog.

DL: Black Dog Village.

JA: Yes, that was just across the river. And the only thing I associate with that is they hauled all the garbage and trash from Minneapolis, and that was a humongous trash dump. I think they got it all cleaned up and everything now.

DL: What is your opinion about the war; the six-week war.

JA: They said 500 people were killed, and virtually a nation disappeared, land right along with it. One of the girls, one of my cousins bought a house here in town, and she

had the abstract. And we were looking at it and we went all the way back, and here it was Indian land. She had no idea that she had bought a house that was formerly Indian land, almost virtually in the middle of Granite Falls. I don't have very positive thoughts about 1862.

DL: That war, or that period.

JA: Abraham Lincoln, either. It's kinda funny, but then again it really isn't funny. They were saying kind of awful things about President Lincoln. Everybody celebrates his birthday. And how he viewed the slaves and why, and Civil War and all of that, and yet, how did he view the Indians? I don't know; what was his opinion?

DL: I've read that he was informed that the rage in Minnesota was so intense that all Indians were endangered.

JA: Yes, that's why they took them to Crow Creek.

DL: Yes. And that there had to be some bloodshed; there had to be some sacrifice. And so he decided no way on 303, but we'll narrow it down to these thirty-eight. And even there, there were serious mistakes made. So, do you think that that is—does that make it a little easier to accept what he decided, or would you still say he could have pardoned them all?

JA: He could have. That would have been a difficult thing to do, but what would have been the answer? How come he didn't go after the people that were supposed to be giving supplies to the Indians? I think that would have been the direction to go, but I don't think it could have happened any other way. They wanted Indian land. We paid a big price for all of that; even today, and who knows, tomorrow.

DL: How does it extend to today?

JA: We were—my daughter wanted to write a language grant; she's still trying to do that, and we were talking about it and why it is I understand Dakota. I say I talk just like a cave woman. I can make myself understood. And all the ones that are my age, we can talk amongst ourselves, and then we laugh, because we know we sound like cave people.

We can't speak fluently, and so we were trying to put that grant together and trying to figure out how come there's all kinds of us like me—me and all my cousins, and I'm sure hundreds of us. This is what I figure, because my dad wasn't supposed to speak and my ma wasn't supposed to speak their own language so they always spoke in an undertone. They asked us questions, but we never responded in Dakota. I was remembering my grandmother. When she talked, it was always with her hand covering her mouth or whispering and I thought we got the idea that speaking Dakota wasn't the thing to do. So when she asked me a question, I answered in English. And so now we're desperately trying to hang onto that language, and they're teaching the kids and

the high school kids, but we're still out there. There's a bunch of us like me, and so we were hoping we could get a grant together to try—it's almost like a last ditch effort, if we could just go someplace and just sit with my Auntie Carrie and talk we'd somehow get to a point where we could speak fluently. Because there's all kinds of words that we know, but we just can't string them together.

DL: Maybe about 400 non-Dakota settlers died as a result of this war. And they have their own celebrations and their own whatever—at New Ulm and Mankato, and wherever. What would you say to them today?

JA: I guess I really have negative ideas about that, but I'm realistic. I know that people are always talking about lawyers and going to court and doing something, and we're going to protest, but they're never going to give back the land; that's never going to happen. And compensation, no, that's never going to happen either. I don't know. I don't know, really, what to think about that. You know, you can tell your story and you can feel bad about the things that happened, and be angry. I guess I just want my grandchildren to know what happened and use it to be stronger in their lives, so they can keep going.

DL: What do you think about the treaties?

JA: The Ojibwe—they've challenged some of those treaties and they've won. It's taken some time, but I think that's possible. But I don't know that anybody's really doing that. Chris Mahto Nunpa talked about that, and he was going to go to, I don't know if it was St. Paul or Minneapolis, and they were going to go and test it out. Hunting and fishing. He was going to go somewhere and they were going to fish, but I never heard any more about that. And I told him, I said—well, I worked at the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Fort Snelling and they were doing a protest at Minnehaha Park and I watched them. And there were a lot of women there. And the Minneapolis Police, they were just brutal. And I said, "You have to be really certain that's what you want to do, because they're not going to—they're going to brutalize you when they get the chance." I think he actually took that thought to heart.

DL: It's serious.

JA: Yes, it's serious business. Even if you're peaceful, like when we did all that Upper Sioux, the police came and they hauled Angie and one of her children out in handcuffs and dragged them out of there. I don't know if she's going to continue to do those kinds of things now, because she has—I think that's something to consider too, because she now has a police record, and if she wants to continue, I know that she works in Canada, and the Canadians are pretty strict about who crosses their borders now. So that's a consideration also. But I think it needs to be done.

DL: The question is, how do you seek change? How do you turn things around?

JA: I don't think that can be turned around, really. Because, like here in Granite and Wood Lake, they're still—don't think they want it. There's certain ones in that group; they have their people that kind of want to fight over that. And then there's others, they put articles in the paper to inform people about what really happened; that it isn't all what the ones that want to fight about it say it is. It isn't all that way. We aren't all that way, and we don't want to fight about it. And I don't really know what they're trying to do... They have an area where they have a monument. The Upper Sioux Agency Park, they have those brass signs—did you get a chance to see those? I don't know if they ever replaced that one, but somebody stole one.

DL: Do you think it's a good idea to commemorate the events of the mid 1800's?

JA: I do. A lot of people don't want to know. Chris puts a lot of articles in the paper, and one of the car insurance women, they want us to forget about the past.

DL: What are the best ways to commemorate those events?

JA: I think what you guys are trying to do; tell the truth.

DL: We can only do that through you. You and others like you.

JA: Yes.

DL: Well, now we turn back to you a little bit, and your growing up years in your life, because as you know, this is also the Dakota today; it's not just the Dakota yesteryear. You mentioned going to college here in Granite Falls.

JA: Yes, here at the community college. The technical college.

DL: Did you get a degree from there?

JA: Yes, an Associate of Arts degree.

DL: And your occupation? I know you said maybe you did some clerical work at one point.

JA: Well, I guess I would kind of view it as being all clerical, really. My husband, when we lived in the City and we just got married in the City, and he worked for the City of Minneapolis and then he decided to go to school. And so we ended up in Ely, Minnesota. And then from there we went to Grand Portage, Minnesota; we were there for about twenty years. Then we came back to Cass Lake, Leech Lake Reservation and he retired there. Then he went to White Earth and he retired there.

Meanwhile I was back in Minneapolis, working at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and that's where my mom lived, and that's where we lived. She lived in our old house. And she really got old and she took care of herself for quite a few years and then she came to

live with me—I went and lived with her, and then she came to live with me here. But we kind of made a full circle. And on the reservations, other than in Grand Portage, they built a hotel and casino there, and then that's where I worked. On the reservations it's mostly grants and programs. So I worked for chemical dependency as a youth coordinator, social services. We wrote grants. And the Minnesota Women's Foundation, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency in Virginia, Minnesota, Office of Environment in Redwood, Tribal Offices here. It was always to work, you did just about anything. I worked in a hotel as a maid, dealt cards at the casino, sold pull tabs; you name it. The only thing I never did and never even tried to do was waitressing. I thought I was going to spill coffee on somebody or do something like that. I thought that was a hard job to do. And then in Minneapolis it was always factory work, because I was uneducated. I knew how to sew and put on snowmobile covers. And then I worked for Creamette and packed macaroni and ate Cheetos; that's where they pack Cheetos there too. They came hot off the press. They were good hot. I came back with orange teeth all the time. Did we get off the question?

DL: No, the question was, what different jobs have you had? And you've had an assortment.

JA: Then when I went here and I did medical administrative secretary and all those classes, I managed to get a diploma out of there for medical coding. I enjoyed going to school; gosh I sure wished I had gone when I was a whole lot younger. I don't know what I could have been then. But I didn't like school; it was too hard.

DL: How did you meet your husband?

JA: Actually through my sister. He was a friend of her boyfriend, or manfriend—they were older. She was six years older than I am. That's how we met, and we got married in Minneapolis at the Catholic Church, and the freeway tore down that church. But we always lived Southeast.

DL: How many years have you been married?

JA: Let's see, I want to say 47.

DL: Congratulations! That's an achievement.

JA: Yes, that is. There's a girl at the BIA who asked me—we were celebrating our anniversary and she said, "How did you ever manage to stay married that long?" And I said, "Through thick and thin and hell and high water, that's the only way you make it through."

DL: How many children and grandchildren do you have?

JA: I have three and three.

DL: Are your children living around here?

JA: Yes, one lives right here in the trailer court, and one lives in Wood Lake, and the other one lives on the reservation and works in Morton.

DL: How do you spend your free time? Are you still working?

JA: No. I got a line on a job in Morton, but I don't know. My husband requires a lot of care. I'm afraid what might happen if I leave. But it's only part-time work, so I'm actually trying to talk myself into it. With gas at \$3.50 a gallon, though, that's going to be a real trek.

JA: When I worked up on the Grand Portage Indian Reservation, {job preferences were} Ojibwe first, and then "Other Indian" and then "Non-Indian." And I fell right into the middle, so I took all the jobs that I could get on reservation. If the enrollees didn't want that job, then I got it. I always worked, though. And so over in Morton, I would be considered "Other Indian."

DL: But Dakota.

JA: Yes, still Dakota, but no, I don't expect any freebies. And they wouldn't expect any if they came over here.

DL: What do you do in your spare time?

JA: At the moment I'm making a design for a quilt. I'm hoping that I can make some extra money. When we were both working we did pretty good. And when he got sick and came home, so to speak, because I was down here, things got pretty tight and so we're kind of struggling, but I got it figured out. Now I know what they talk about when they, what do they always say: Borrow from Paul to pay Peter. We kind of got into that and kind of went downhill on that, but now we're kind of on the upswing. So I feel like either I can work, but I don't really have to work. So that's where I'm at.

DL: What TV shows do you watch?

JA: At this point I watch a lot of politics because my husband likes to watch politics. Other than that I watch old movies; I'm an old movie buff.

DL: What are your favorite old movies?

JA: Bette Davis; I enjoy her.

DL: Do you ever go to the casino?

JA: Yes. When I was working I used to go to the casino, and I did pretty good at the casino, but I sure didn't like it when it came time to pay the taxes. That one year I think

we won something like \$22,000, and when you have to pay the taxes on that, that's not good.

DL: Not good.

JA: Yes, it took a real chunk out of my—I don't want to say where.

DL: What's a typical day like for you?

JA: We're on a health challenge. I told my husband that I racked up something like 13,000 steps per day, and he didn't think that was possible. So I walked it out. From the moment I got up and got him ready, breakfast ready, myself ready, and then he goes to dialysis at 11:30—just from that room up here was like 100 steps, and I didn't even get to sit down and eat yet. And I thought, wow, I should be just skinny! But I'm not, because I eat at night while I'm in bed; that's not good.

DL: What contributions have the Dakota people made to Minnesota and to the country?

JA: Oh gosh. The first thing that comes to mind is corn. Actually, I guess I'd have to think about that.

DL: If you had a magic wand, what would you wish for Dakota people today?

JA: I thought about that one. They had repatriation of bones, I think, that came from the Historical Society. They didn't really know where they came from, but they ended up taking some of them back to Sisseton, South Dakota. And we got to Sisseton kind of late, and we didn't have a map and we had to go to a place called (sounds like) Shicha Hollow. And Shicha means "bad," and I don't know why they called it that.

We got out there and it was pitch black, no signs, and so I told my daughter, I said, "You better turn on your radar." I've never been there and I said, "You better turn on your radar, that's the only way we're going to find where we're going." And so we took a left and right and turns, and finally we came to this spot and there was a little hill we had to go over, and then when you went that far, then your car was kind of pointed upward; you were looking up this hill. And all you could see was teepees, and the glow on the inside where they had their fires going. And it was cold. And I was sitting there and I was thinking, gee.... And there was wood smoke; we rolled down the windows and that's all you could smell was wood smoke. And then I saw a woman and a little kid, they were walking, and she had a long dress on and a blanket, and it was just like we were in some kind of twilight zone.

It struck me that if we went over this hill, we were just going to go right back. And it gave me such a feeling, like gee, if I go over this hill, I'm going to go back and I'm not going to turn around. That was kind of a nice feeling, really.

But I don't know how to start a fire from scratch. I got my little flint, but no, I don't know how to start a fire.

DL: Who was there?

JA: Oh, there were all kinds of Indians from all over. They came for that. And then of course, my daughter got her period right at that point and so then we couldn't go in. I mean, I could have went in and my granddaughter could have went in, but she couldn't go in. So we turned around and we came home again. And we all felt really bad about that, too. But there were more people from Granite that went. You couldn't wear shoes, no jewelry, or anything. And when my one auntie, and I was thinking I wonder how she did that. And I remember that too, her strength that she displayed, because her head got all sunburned. That's how long she stood out in the sun. And I thought that was pretty good.

DL: Was the purpose for the gathering -- to return the bones?

JA: Yes, and the ceremony that was involved.

DL: It wasn't a sun dance?

JA: No.

DL: What a view or scene that must have been!

JA: It was just like a painting. It was dark, you know. What's that one painter, Terry Redlin, did you ever see some of his paintings? I think he's from South Dakota too, Watertown, I think. The smoke was kind of low-lying; maybe it was fog. It was just like; did you ever see that movie, "Brigadoon?" You cross over that bridge—you're gone! Your imagination, especially in the dark, kind of takes over. I thought, wouldn't that be something? Do those people really know that they can stay there; they don't have to come back.

DL: We've talked with a few people who have actually seen some of the Dakota from a century ago. They have actually seen them in their own lives today.

JA: Isn't that wonderful.

DL: They've been visited. And I'm wondering, have you had that experience?

JA: No; I wish I did. No, nothing like that. Up on the Upper Sioux Reservation here, up on the bluff, they built brand new houses and a couple of the houses have, how do they say that on TV: paranormal disturbances. And they live with them; they're in their houses. My mom said that's where the Indians used to travel through all the time. And one of the boys out there—that was a field before, it was being farmed, and they found

a scraper from a long time ago. Not 150 years ago, but a long, long time ago. What do they call it, obsidian?

DL: Black obsidian.

JA: Black, yes.

DL: This concludes our questions. Thank you.

U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 Oral History Project
Minnesota Historical Society