

## **Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 1**

### **Encounters with First Nations Remembered**

[Taken from C&SS, Nunavusiutit, 2008, pp.13-17]

**Joe Karetak:** Now we can change to the subject of Indians if anyone has talked to you about them or if you have heard any stories told to you about them.

Or if you have heard anything about them at one time or another, we would like to know any stories you have heard about them. We would like you to tell us any stories you have heard about them.

It is known there were some encounters between Inuit and Indians, they use to meet or lived together sometimes.

I know there are different stories that have been written down. There is Inuit knowledge, as well as Indian and Qallunaat perspectives. Sometimes what is written by Qallunaat is not the same as Inuit knowledge, in fact sometimes some of it is usually the opposite.

For this reason, we would like to hear stories from the Inuit side. We know that there were encounters between Inuit and Indians and we would like to hear your side of these stories. There are rumors of the times when Inuit and Indians used to war against each other.

And of course there are rumors when they were extremely friendly with each other, and knowing each other's language. We have heard different stories like that. If you had someone tell you stories about them, we are asking you to tell us about them.

**Phillip Kigusiutnak:** Well, I have heard that Itqiliit Indians (Chipewyan) were known for wanting to attack Inuit, but Unaliit Indians (Cree) were not as aggressive. [Note: The Itqiliit shared territory with Inuit for thousands of years while the Unaliit were only drawn into the area with the Hudson Bay Company in later years.]

Also, Itqiliit Indians used to go up to the tree line, all the way up to Qamanaarjugjuaq to visit Inuit. The reason for their visit was to trade, for example wanting to trade something for Inuit dogs or something else.

An Inuk would also wish to trade something else from the Indians. They never refused each other and they usually exchange something and would say something positive about the trade.

**Joe Karetak:** Well it's obvious if they wanted something they would have to visit each other. That is the most obvious thing to do when trading something and it was done in those days.

Did they also trade something else besides the things just mentioned? Is it known which items

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 1

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

were traded amongst Indians and Inuit?

**Donald Uluadluak:** I remember back in 1947 when we were living at Kinnga'naat, and I mentioned it just yesterday, of a trade that took place when Alarea'juaq and I met up with an Indian who wanted to visit our place.

We were living at Kinnga'naat, and he wanted us to ride in his sled. We were scared and we refused the offer, because we were on foot, pushing along a tiny loaded sled. When we reached home, my grandfather was acting as an interpreter.

They were already exchanging in trade and they received axes in exchange for dogs. They made other small trades as well. What was truly amazing was this used to establish strong friendships.

Or was it simply because they admired each other? We were truly amazed at what was happening. My goodness, we would smell something from each other. The smell coming from the Indians was that of smoke from qisiqtuutit trees (evergreens), perhaps they could smell something different from us, maybe the smell of seal oil.

**Joe Karetak:** I wonder if they wanted leather thongs?

**Luke Kiniksi:** I don't know, I don't remember, but of course I was just a kid then at that time.

**Joe Karetak:** Just thinking of square flipper thongs, they were really good thongs.

**Donald Uluadluak:** Yes, these kinds of items were things they really went after.

**Joe Karetak:** The Indians really didn't go after sea mammals, and I suppose they really wanted the leather thongs and walrus tusks if there were any.

**Donald Uluadluak:** Yes, these were things they really wanted, but at that time they never thought of trading, they just helped us. This was a very long time ago when I was only a small kid back in 1937. We were living at Uviniktalik when they arrived and they were asked why they came.

**Joe Karetak:** And for sure the Indians were the first people Qallunaat made contact with before they saw Inuit. Maybe they were able to trade items from Qallunaat then, things like metal and few other things.

I think it was easier to trade things when only the Indians were around and only the Inuit. The skins they sold were different and they lived where there was a lot of wood.

**Donald Uluadluak:** They used to talk a lot about leather goods, Itqiliit and Unaliit Indians used to have a lot of leather goods.

**Joe Karetak:** Yes, they had a different way of preparing skins and Inuit had another way of preparing their skins.

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 1

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

**Donald Uluadluak:** Yes, they used to trade qulittags (caribou outer parkas) and other Indians possibly admired them for wearing decorated qulittags with strips of white hair sewn on for decoration.

That's the way they used to treat and admire each other long ago. Of course this is just something I have heard. But there was one incident that I witnessed that happened like I said it.

**Luke Kiniksi:** One time my grandmother, Ulaaju'juaq, when they were living at Qasigialik, three Indians arrived to their camp.

She sewed a pair of qamiit and a pair of caribou mitts and gave them to an elder Indian. He was extremely thankful and repeated saying "thank you, thank you". They went back home and came back again with a box filled with all kinds of good stuff he had brought for her.

The main items people wanted were tobacco and tea. Both of them were extremely happy and became good friends. That is how I heard it.

**Phillip Kigusiutnak:** They probably traded goods to establish friendships, because long ago they would want to kill Inuit.

And of course Inuit did the same thing, wanting to kill Itqiliit Indians. I have not heard too much whether the Unaliit Indians did the same thing. They would just trade goods to establish friendship.

**Luke Kiniksi:** Maybe what they did was to trade goods to establish friendship.

**Joe Karetak:** I assume only some of them liked killing, and majority of them possibly liked establishing friendships. These are things that have happened and we have just heard about them.

I doubt other people have heard of these things and even now a lot of people have never heard of them. That is why we want to include them in the curriculum, so students will know other things that they were not aware of -- what Inuit experienced.

Helping each other has always been around even amongst Unaliit and Itqiliit Indians, these kind of things. Some people were quite capable of understanding each other, especially among those who have been in contact with each other for a long time, I assume.

That is how we have heard it, in fact I remember Arnaraujaq could speak like a Superman, he could speak the language of Itqiliit Indians.

**Phillip Kigusiutnak:** Inuit and Itqiliit Indians could speak Inuktitut. An Inuk could speak the language of Itqiliit, or an Itqiliq Indian could speak in Inuktitut. They learnt each other's language from frequent visits with each other and they could understand each other.

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 1

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

**Luke Kiniksi:** Even your old uncle Qamnumiaq, I'm amazed how he acquired the language. He was able to speak several languages.

**Phillip Kigusiutnak:** We were living at Nunaalaaq one time with Atanga'naaq, Qilluq's family, I used to go out with them quite frequently because they had a Peterhead boat. We used to visit three people who could speak Inuktitut down in Churchill. They would invite us for food, and we simply agreed to go. They were quite fluent in Inuktitut. They were three people, Unaliit and Itqiliit Indians who spent a lot of their time with the Inuit. They would invite us over for food speaking Inuktitut.

We simply accepted their offer and ate with them, eating food, Inuit food that they put out for us to eat, laying them on top of the table where people eat.

**Luke Kiniksi:** One time I went down to Churchill with Killujuaq, there was an Itqiliq Indian by the name of Itqiliraujaq who could speak perfect Inuktitut.

**Donald Uluadluak:** Yes, I have heard Itqiliraujaq who could speak perfect Inuktitut, although I don't remember him.

**Phillip Kigusiutnak:** And you know that long point down in Churchill facing West, a rock ridge that is crooked, there are a lot of tent rings and even old cooking pots.

Last year in the spring time they started to go to see the place, but the wheeled vehicle couldn't climb up because it was too rough, and smooth ice.

I said to him, I remember tent rings left by Itqiliit and Unaliit Indians around here at the big point facing west, on this side of the rocky ridge.

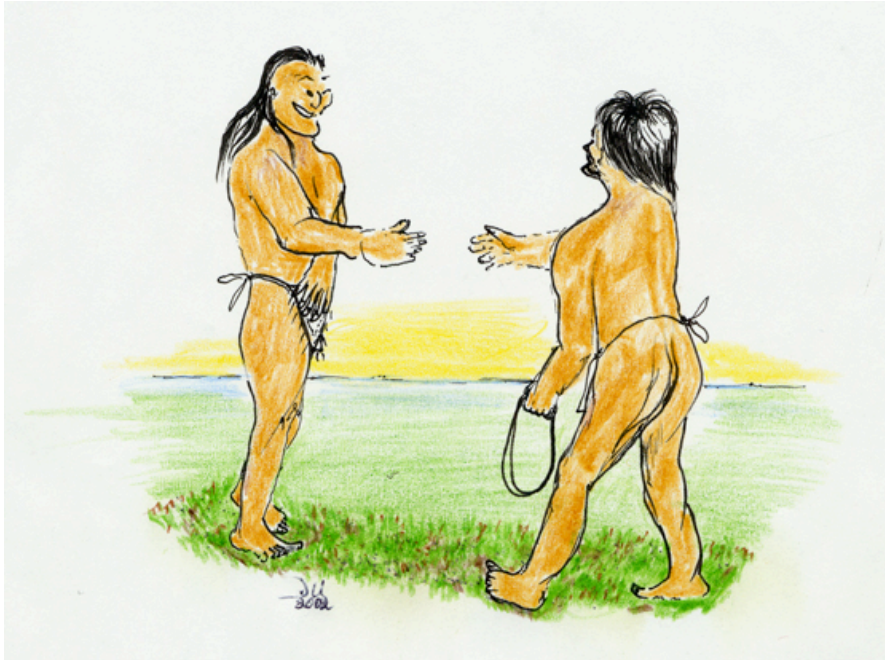
But we couldn't climb up, he said he doesn't think we will be able to make it to the top, and there was a big house situated side ways that we were approaching.

**Luke Kiniksi:** That Itqiliq Indian person known as Itqiliraujaq, possibly spent a lot of time with Inuit around the area of Qasigialik. Did he learn to speak Inuktitut from your old grandfather (Ullibuq)? He could speak perfectly in Inuktitut. There was not a word that was not known to him. Perhaps some of his ancestors are still around.

Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2  
Encounters with First Nations Remembered

**Ahiarmiut Inuit Elders' Interview #2**  
**Encounters with First Nations Remembered**

[C&SS, Job & Eva Mukyunik, 2008, pp. 4-11]



**Joe Karetak:** But have you encountered any Unaliit Indians where you came from? Did Unaliit Indians ever come around to your camp?

**Job Mukyunik:** Where at Ennadai, Unaliit Indians at Ennadai?

**Joe Karetak:** While you lived at Ennadai Lake.

**Eva Mukyunik:** No, we have never seen any Unaliit Indians, not at all.

**Joe Karetak:** Maybe you were too far inland to see any Unaliit Indians.

**Eva Mukyunik:** It was only when we went down to Qikiqtariaktuq (place with many islands) that we started seeing Unaliit Indians and there were no Itqiliit Indians at all, and there was none at all at Ennadai Lake.

**Joe Karetak:** But however, a bit longer ago, have you ever heard whether Inuit and Indians ever lived together, are there any rumors like that?

**Job Mukyunik:** I was born in 1934 and during that whole space I had never seen any Itqiliit or Unaliit Indians. It wasn't until 1949 that I saw an Indian.

Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2  
Encounters with First Nations Remembered

**Joe Karetak:** Have your parents or your grand fathers ever talked about Unaliit Indians?

**Job Mukyunik:** Yes of course, they used to talk about them a lot. They spoke only of the times when they quarreled with Inuit, these are things we heard them speak about.

**Joe Karetak:** Yes, if you wish to speak about the things you have heard; I wish you would talk about the things they've said.

**Job Mukyunik:** At the time when people like Aijjuajjuk, and people like Iahaa, and our fathers were young, Itqiliit Indians and Inuit used to try and kill each other up in Aharmiut land. I heard these things only from stories they told.

**Joe Karetak:** Is that why they never seemed to want to be together, because they were sort of enemies?

**Job Mukyunik:** It is said they were enemies when people like our grandfathers, Aijjuajjuks, and our in-laws were young. They used to tell stories like that because they knew it. Onetime men went out hunting during the summer,

They saw three bull caribou taking rest between the trees on a flat area at distance with each other. They saw these caribou at rest looking through their telescopes.

They couldn't recognize them and they were saying, are they truly caribou or not—they looked suspicious. They were at rest and you could see their big antlers.

Itqiliit Indians usually pretend to be caribou by putting caribou skins over themselves. They were wearing caribou skins with the antlers intact. They were near the trees on a flat area pretending to be at rest. They saw the area of their buttocks and discovered they were empty and that's how they discovered they weren't caribou at all.

**Eva Mukyunik:** They used to call them Unalirjua'juit (big Indians), just their names.

**Joe Karetak:** Are Itqiliit Indians and Unaliit Indians different, is that right?

**Job Mukyunik:** Yes. They are different, in fact they don't understand each other when they speak. But Inuit used to dread Itqiliit Indians because they and the Inuit used to try to kill each other.

**Joe Karetak:** Do you know what the problem was; is it known?

**Job Mukyunik:** Well some how, what seemed to be the problem? I'm asking you Uluadluak.

**Donald Uluadluak:** Maybe because of the abundance of animals, abundance of fire wood-- things like that which they wanted to protect, or because they lived a different life that they feared each other, maybe that was the reason. It is said though that, that's how it was long ago, and

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

recently they have started to support each other.

**Donald Uluadluak:** I think that is the reason why it started, that there was fear over a group that was strange—a person might kill us off. This might have been their thought, or something else. It made it worse because people like to protect themselves in order to live.

**Joe Karetak:** I don't think that was the only thing that happened around here, for instance there was a massacre one time between Unaliit Indians and Inuit who killed each other. That was after the HBC boat traded with Inuit around Arviat and would not trade with the Unaliit who came to the coast to meet the trade boat.

But they did have a legitimate reason for Itqiliit Indians to be angry, they wanted possessions and Qallunaat were refusing them, but instead Qallunaat went to Inuit further up the coast to give that service while they expected Unaliit to travel down to Churchill to receive goods.

As soon as the ship left, apparently, they soon went to rage war with Inuit down in Arviat. There were these incidents around here -- raging war with each other long time ago. [Knapp's Bay Massacre]

**Job Mukyunik:** There is a place down in the seacoast where Inuit and Itqiliit Indians used to quarrel with each other. There is a place known as the "place of laughing". Inuit and Itqiliit Indians were stalking each other and two groups of them met each other at close range.

They saw each other on the side of rocky hill and they just burst out laughing. They surprised each other and saw each other at close range. They were so close to each other that they were touching each other. When they first saw each other, they began to laugh, so they named the place "place of laughing". That is how it is known today.

**Eva Mukyunik:** Maybe that was the time when they started to treat each other kindly, when that incident took place. Maybe that was when Inuit, Itqiliit Indians and Qallunaat started to treat each other in kindness. That was when things turned for the better, and maybe they began to show love for each other when that "place of laughing" took place.

**Job Mukyunik:** Maybe because Itqiliit Indians said they decided to end the fighting. Maybe they said they wanted to show kindness to Inuit instead. That is how people like Aijjuajjuk and other elders used to say.

Itqiliit Indians wanted to be kind to Inuit and they wanted to stop being enemies, so the Itqiliq Indian cut his arm over here, and also cut the arm of an Inuk.

By cutting their arm, they made a blood covenant that they become one, that they are now friends and they never warred with each other any longer. These are stories told by elders, but I have never witnessed it.

**Joe Karetak:** Yes, these are things they have heard and told about. We would never have heard it

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

and do not know it. If we don't accept what few people have heard there will no other chance.

**Job Mukyunik:** Itqiliit Indians and Inuit used to make hiding places on the land. They made a ditch by cutting the ground into a square, and they stabilized the ground. They put a piece of wood at the end with a handle; they would just lift it up and hide inside. That's how Itqiliit Indians made their hiding place.

**Eva Mukyunik:** This is a very old story that happened before we were born.

**Job Mukyunik:** They would have hiding place on the flat land, on flat area of land.

**Joe Karetak:** Yes, so it is. When they started trapping foxes, long ago foxes didn't have any price I don't think. I mean before that everything was fine. I'm wondering if those other issues created the problems.

It seems like anything that developed into money making operations were things people began to press for, it seems like this created an enmity and they didn't even want to look at each other any longer.

**Eva Mujuynk:** Long ago when you awe someone who had more than yourself and so on, it really bothered us. Maybe that's what happened to them and the Itqiliit Indians started getting angry and the Unaliit Indians too.

They wanted to be the ones to receive benefits or to receive riches, especially from the Qallunaat. And like, this person is very rich while this one has to walk around to go places. Maybe long ago that's what was happening.

**Job Mujuynik:** Right now Itqiliit Indians are not the people to be feared, right now Itqiliit Indians and Inuit are best of friends.

**Joe Karetak:** In fact I remember Arngnaraujaq who could speak like Itqiliit Indians.

**Job Mukyunik:** Back in 1949 when they took us over to land near Itqiliit Indians [relocations of Ahairmiut to Henik Lake], we stayed there all summer and we went hunting together and spent the nights with them on the land, well they were as good a friend as ourselves.

**Donald Uluadluak:** In fact Itqiliraujaq, an Indian, was able to speak Inuktitut very well.

**Everyone Talking:** Who was he anyway? Was he the one who lost one eye? I don't even know him, who was he? Kabjahia Tappia'juaq? Lugi, lugi one eyed named Itqiliraujaq, where was he living at Qikiqtariaktuq?

**Job Mukyunik:** The government transported us to the Itqiliit Indians in 1949.



## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

**Joe Karetak:** Was that when he learned Inuktitut, that time? Did he learn Inuktitut about that time? Some of them could already speak Inuktitut?

**Eva Mukyunik:** Some of them could already speak Inuktitut, they learned the language from our fathers, grandfathers. They already knew the language, but some of them could not speak it accurately.

**Job Mukyunik:** You know some Inuit elders can almost speak in English, that is the same way with Inuit who had contact with Itqiliit Indians. They can speak Itqiliit Indian language but just don't speak it, as for myself I have forgotten the language.

**Joe Karetak:** When you stop speaking the language or stop doing anything you tend to forget.

**Job Mukyunik:** Back in 1949, we were able to understand them when we talked to each other, but now I have forgotten-- the words are gone, except for only a few like, I'm hungry, I really want to smoke.

I can still say something is bad or something is good, or say caribou. That's all the language I know now. There are a lot of words I don't know anymore.

**Eva Mukyunik:** Long time ago people were enemies with each other, because of riches, I mean not us, a long time ago among Itqiliit Indians, Inuit, and Unaliit Indians apparently were like that.

That is what it means, but us, the new generation, will never start hating each other unless someone is hurting us. It is not desirable to do harm or beat another.

**Donald Uluadluak:** But who were the people that were eliminated from the Ahiarmiut tribe?

**Job Mukyunik:** These were Itqiliit Indian men, who went and killed Inuit women while their husbands were out hunting. The men who were out hunting came home and went out to revenge their wives.

Itqiliit Indians had killed off all their wives and children. Inuit wives and children were all killed right there, just across from Kinngarjualiik (Padlii). So up in that rocky hill you can see a lot of old Itqiliit Indian bones.

There are a lot of old bone skeletons on the big rocky hillside. Apparently Itqiliit Indians had their tents below the hill. So when night came, a man took a young lad with him, and set out to revenge their wives.

When Itqiliit Indians fell asleep, there was a little old Itqiliq Indian sitting outside guarding the sleeping Indians.

The man who was out to seek revenge in the dark, surprised the Itqiliq Indian, and let her turn to the Indians, but she never said a word.

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

The Indian lady didn't say anything at all, but just stepped aside. The Indians were all sleeping in their tents and he stabbed them with a knife. They had long knives for killing caribou from their qajaqs.

He went around and stabbed them all. When they found out, some started to escape climbing up the rocky mountain side.

The Inuk stabbed them all to death with a long caribou spear. So there are a lot of bone skeletons up there just across Kinngarjualik (Padii) on the rocky hillside. They just left them as they are because they couldn't bury them all.

**Eva Mukjunik:** I thought these ones were people that got snowed in on the hillside?

**Job Mukyunik:** No, this came from fighting Itqiliit Indians. An Inuk went out to fight them in the dark with a young lad. There was a little old Itqiliq Indian, a night watch to see if Inuit were coming, she was sitting outside.

An Inuk surprised her and showed her his knife. The Itqiliq Indian woman didn't utter a sound. The man motioned to her like this, and she steeped further out.

She was still waiting for the Inuk apparently, and when the Inuk came back at night, he met her again and eventually adopted her.

**Job Mukyunik:** Have you see that old woman Qajaittuq? She was Siqaralaaq's mother. Qajai'juaq was an old lady, Siqaralaaq's and Paalikkaalik's father's mother.

Before she was an old lady, Itqiliit Indians were coming onto his side of the mountain. They went down the hill and headed towards the Inuit tents.

An old lady, Qajai, told the story about how many Itqiliit Indians were coming down the hill with only their spears in their hands, coming towards the tents. Itqiliit Indians started to offer their only possessions to the lady Qajai, (before she was an old lady), Siqaralaaq's mother. Indians laid down their only possessions before her.

When they wanted to change the future somehow, Inuit had ways of doing some things. They would take the offering that they had received and say magical prayers, and that is what that little old lady did. Her magical prayer called panirji did something to Itqiliit Indians. I know the magical prayer but I won't say it. I'll only say part of it, (Job sings part of the magical prayer):

Uhaa, Uhaa, Immunngaa Juu'juajua, who will deal  
With the strangers that are unknown-- what will they do?  
It is uncertain what they will do. Imungaajuajuaa.

That was part of her magical prayer to hex the Itqiliit Indians, I won't say all the words. They

## Padlirmiut Inuit Elders' Interview # 2

### Encounters with First Nations Remembered

kept coming and when they got close, they started to disappear and ptarmigan appeared instead. One of them appeared running to charge after them.

Other ptarmigans just walked straight onwards beside them, Qajai had cast a spell on them with her magical prayer called panirji. Elders never tell other people about magical prayers even when they know about them. I don't think they would dare to reveal what they know to Ministers today, how they put magical spells on people.

Qajai's magical prayer is really powerful and something to be feared because it can change people into something else, like she changed all the Itqillit Indians into ptarmigan. My wife has seen Qajai by the way.

**Eva Mukyunik:** Do you mean that old lady? I barely remember seeing her, I remember though when we went to visit them and I was still in my mother's amauti (baby pouch). She was very old. She couldn't even move around in her bed. She was acting very happy when strange visitors came. When they arrived there was a big drum dance in celebration for the visitors.

**Job Mukyunik:** Well us Aharmiut (Inland people) aren't very poor at telling stories, because our parents used to tell us to go out anytime they were going to tell them.

**Eva Mukyunik:** The only times we were able to listen was when they were going to give us instructions, like living a decent life, being good. Anytime they were going to say bad or strange things they would not allow us to listen.

Only living a good life on earth-- things like that—we were told. How to hunt caribou, how to prepare skins-- things like that we learned on the land. They used to ask us to walk, of course we had to walk, that was the only way of getting around on the land, carrying our belongings on our backs. They really knew the land well, just like I'm watching it now.

**Job Mukyunik:** Over at Ennadai Lake, before there were no Qallunaat around, before I was born, Inuit had always lived there. I was born there and there were a lot of people there.

When buildings came to Ennadai Lake (weather station), they took the land away from Inuit. And of course, we were afraid and they took us over to the Unaliit Indians to an island. The plane landed on ice, and they unloaded us on an island, and we spent the entire summer living on an island. (When the ice formed the Aharmiut people walked back to their traditional lands at Ennadai.)