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" I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST PATIENTS AT CHARLES CAMSELL HOSPITAL "

By Beatrice Calliou

*incident to set this off*

(I was born Beatrice Callihoo, a member of the Michel Band, Calahoo Reserve, about thirty miles north-west of Edmonton. My ancestors were Iroquois of the Caughnawaga Band, Province of Quebec, who came west with the fur traders in the late 1700's. My mother, Elizabeth Plante, married Solomon Emil Callihoo, son of Michel, <sup>who was</sup> chief of the Calahoo Reserve.)

During the summer of 1945 I was admitted to the <sup>TB</sup> ~~W.B.~~ Ward in the Edmonton General Hospital. Three nurses who were working there ~~(were)~~ Mrs. Margaret Gardner, Mrs. Rita Loney and Mrs. Cecelia O'Sullivan, ~~(these ladies)~~ were to become part of my life for several years. *This was my second admission for tuberculosis, the first being in 1938 when I was 15 years old. I was there for two and one-half years.*

We heard that the Government of Canada had purchased the Jesuit College from the American Army and were going to use it for a hospital for Treaty Indians who had tuberculosis. This was of interest to me as my mother's stepfather, Mr. Norris, had donated the land for the college to the Jesuits.

*and one*  
Mr. John Norris was a realtor, <sup>and one</sup> One of the Jesuit priests asked him if he had some land which they could purchase as they wished to build a college for Catholic boys. Although Mr. Norris was not ~~a~~ Catholic, he was friendly with the priests. <sup>and gave them land</sup> His reply was "Sure. I have land close to ~~my~~ his place, a little west of the main city. <sup>There was enough land on which to</sup> I'll give it to you to build ~~a~~ the college ~~and some ground surrounding the area.~~ <sup>as well as enough for grounds surrounding it.</sup>

*When the*  
~~Getting back to the~~ Canadian Government <sup>announced its</sup> purchase of the building, ~~well~~ both the Edmonton Journal and the Edmonton Bulletin carried the story. What a controversial subject it turned out to be! Some people said the Indians would pitch their tents on the grounds around the hospital and try to live in the area. Others said they would be beating the tom-toms and having pow-wows every night and, in general, making a nuisance of themselves. *others claimed that* The Indian Hospital would bring down property values. At that time, the area

*still*

wasn't built up. <sup>although there</sup> ~~There~~ were many acreages to the west and north. After the hospital opened, the acreages were surveyed in to building lots and post-war construction took over.

While the controversy was raging, the College was being used as a military hospital <sup>for</sup> ~~with~~ veterans <sup>of</sup> ~~from~~ World War II <sup>(being admitted)</sup>. Dr. Harry Weinlos was the medical officer in charge.

In January 1946 the Indian patients from the <sup>TB</sup> ~~TB~~ Ward of the Edmonton General Hospital were transferred. ~~I am unable to remember any names except Miles Callinoc and myself.~~ The women were admitted to a room on Ward 9 and the men to a room on Ward 10. <sup>These wards were</sup> ~~The latter~~ was the farthest down the Burma Road, a name given by the veterans to the long hallway which connected the redwood buildings.

Mrs. Edith Taylor was the first nurse on staff, ~~to be~~ followed by Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Loney and Mrs. O'Sullivan, whom I have mentioned already. Miss <sup>therine</sup> K. MacKenzie came later, as did other nurses.

Soon patients from north, central and southern Alberta hospitals were being transferred to the Indian Hospital. The mobile patients were put into the upstairs rooms and <sup>later</sup> a second large room downstairs was opened on both wards. At first we were mostly Cree from central and northern Alberta. <sup>Later</sup> ~~Then~~ patients came from the Blackfoot, Sarcee and Blood reserves and some of the Stoney Indians from Morley. At first the Crees weren't too friendly but that soon passed and we made friends with each other.

Some of the first people to be admitted were Mary Jane Boucher from Fort Chipewyan; Vera Rabbit, Duffield; Harriet Buffalo, Hobbema; Florence White Quills and Alice Running Rabbit from Blackfoot Agency; and Jack Royal, Mr. Standing-in-the-Road and Mr. Shot-on-Both Sides from the Blood Reserve near Cardston. Many of the names from the south were very colorful. <sup>Dr.</sup> ~~Doctor~~ Stone <sup>[Regional Superintendent for Indian Health Services]</sup> said that they had to register their Indian names. He knew the southern area quite well as he <sup>had been</sup> ~~said he was~~ an Indian Agent at

one time for those reserves.

Nurse Margaret Gardner and I had a standing joke between us. She would ask, "Beatrice, when are your parents going to put up their tent and stay awhile?" "Oh they will <sup>be a long</sup> one of these days and bring the whole tribe with them. <sup>Then</sup> ~~They~~ you'll hear them singing and beating the tom-toms". It is too bad it never happened.

In the spring and early summer of 1946 the first Eskimo patients arrived. Doris Kikpak and her little cousin, <sup>from Coppermine</sup> Moses, ~~arrived~~ <sup>were admitted.</sup> They were <sup>and she and Moses</sup> upstairs in a private room on Ward 8. Doris spoke some English. One day some of the staff took Doris and Moses downtown. ~~She~~ Doris couldn't stop talking that night. ~~She~~ "I saw big dogs pulling a wagon!" "Doris, those are called horses and they are pulling a milk wagon." "What's that?" So, Mary Jane and I explained about home milk deliveries, <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ about cows and milk, cream and butter. "We rode in a big long car with lots of people". "That is called a streetcar". "We went in these big stores, they sell everything", ~~and~~ "These are called department stores, Doris." "So many cars! They go so fast! So many people! All kinds of people! I was scared. I hung onto the nurse's hand real tight. I was glad to get back to the hospital".

made friends easily.

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Poor kids; They were so excited and so exhausted. Doris ~~recovered and went back to Coppermine after Moses died.~~ I'll bet <sup>Doris</sup> she never got over her first visit to the big city. ~~Doris and Moses made friends easily.~~ <sup>Doris recovered and went back to Coppermine <sup>in 1946</sup> Moses died while in hospital.</sup> I was discharged from Ward 8 the same year, 1946.

I was also discharged in 1946 and <sup>and</sup> went back home to the reserve. <sup>and</sup> In the spring <sup>of</sup> 1947, I came back to the hospital and asked Dr. Matas if I could get a job. He took me into the main office and asked someone to find me a place. <sup>I was</sup> ~~They~~ put ~~me~~ to work in Ward 6 kitchen on the <sup>veterans'</sup> ~~veterans'~~ ward. I worked split-shift and sometimes, before starting my supper shift, I'd sit at the little piano in the hall and play some oldies, such as "FIVE Foot-two", "Georgia Brown",

*the entertainment.*

"Twelfth-Street Rag". I think the vets enjoyed ~~that~~. The vets were a nice bunch of boys, but they loved to tease - especially Alex Katz, Fred Aslin, McCorkle. One day I couldn't take it any more. I turned <sup>to</sup> on them and said, "If you don't stop teasing, I'll swear at you in Cree". Alex Katz said, "And I'll swear at you in Yiddish". That really broke me up.

One day while I was working in Ward 6 there was a great hustling and cleaning going on. Doctors came around and examined every nook and cranny. Shortly afterward some dignitaries ~~came~~ from Ottawa <sup>arrived</sup> and ~~went~~ <sup>tour</sup> all through <sup>the</sup> hospital. Alex Cryer, a native veteran, <sup>when introduced to the Hon. Mr. Martin said,</sup> said to them, "I knew somebody pretty important was coming <sup>by</sup> around the way they've been cleaning around this place the last few days". *We learned that our*

*important visitor was the Hon. Mr. Paul Martin, Minister of Health.* I played the piano for a couple of dances at the hospital with Robert Gray on the guitar, <sup>and</sup> Fred St. Germain on the fiddle, <sup>real old-time music.</sup> I worked on Ward 6 until I was re-admitted in the spring of 1949. <sup>This</sup> ~~That~~ was my third admission as a <sup>T.B.</sup> patient. ~~The first time was in 1938 when I was fifteen years old.~~

~~to the Edmonton General Hospital for two and one-half years. The second time, 1945, to the General and transferred to the Veteran's Hospital, which is now the Charles Camsell Hospital.~~ In 1949 I had three pulmonary operations and was finally discharged in September of 1950.

*During my* second stay at the Camsell, from summer of 1949 to September 1950, I met a few more patients on Ward 4: <sup>an Aleut</sup> Lucy Thomas, a Slavey; some Dog-ribs; Beavers; <sup>at Paradise</sup> Margaret Kindo, from Aklavik. ~~and~~ After the <sup>Cogwalsetka</sup> T.B. Indian Hospital in B.C. burned, <sup>at Paradise</sup> ~~(Kopaleetka)~~ the patients who required surgery were transferred to the Camsell. <sup>two or three</sup> ~~Included were~~ Silach from the Vancouver area, Klinkget from Simpson, and Haida from Old Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands. I became good friends with Vivian Davidson, a Haida from Old Masset, ~~the~~ ~~tribe that carve the Totem poles.~~ She had many interesting stories to tell for their way of life <sup>as deep sea fishermen</sup> is far different from <sup>that of</sup> the prairie farmers. They

were deep-sea fishermen.

Before our operations <sup>the hospital staff</sup> they used to shave ~~off the hair from~~ our body <sup>and</sup> rub us down with alcohol and wrap <sup>us</sup> our ~~bodies~~ in long bandages. They did this to Lucy Thomas <sup>who was</sup> a small ~~blond~~ woman. During the night we awoke to hear her crying ~~in our ward~~. Mary Jane and I got up and went over to Lucy to see what was wrong. ~~At the time~~ By the time we got to her bed she was singing and laughing <sup>but</sup> in a few minutes she was crying again. Mary Jane said, "I ~~do~~ think ~~believe~~ Lucy's drunk from the alcohol." I said, "She can't be, it didn't bother us". Mary Jane went for the nurse and told her what was happening. The nurses came and moved Lucy's bed into the hallway.

I went home to the reserve <sup>and</sup> was married in October 1951. We lived ~~first~~ in Spruce Grove and then moved into Edmonton in 1952. <sup>she raised</sup> ~~three children.~~

~~When the Native Society was initiated by Mrs. Daryl Sturrock in the fall of 1959 a few native musicians got together to form a band. We practised at my home. I was the piano player.~~

~~We held a couple of meetings at the Charles Camsell Hospital. Then a meeting was held at St. James United Church for Canadian natives from five provinces. We had a dance after and our band provided the music, free~~

~~I maintained some ties with the hospital through a band of native musicians, for which I played piano. We occasionally met at the hospital. Two band members, Lawrence and Pete Anderson, worked at Mrs. Sturrock knew Mrs. Fox from the Cloverdale Community Centre.~~

~~Through Mrs. Fox we rented the Cloverdale Hall and held weekly dances to help finance the society. At first we donated the music but gradually we each received a small amount of money. Lawrence and Pete Anderson, <sup>both</sup> talented brothers who worked at the Camsell, played the fiddle and the guitar, Sgt. Lawrence Laboucan played the guitar and sang, and Ray Desume was lead guitarist. I played the piano for the Native Society until April 1973.~~

~~In February 1977 I phoned Father Rheume and asked if anyone could <sup>attend</sup> go to Mass at the hospital. He asked me my name and when I told him he said, "Oh yes, Mrs. Calliou, I would be pleased if you could come and play the~~

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Mabel*

to ten o'clock Mass

organ and sing the hymns in Cree!. I still go every Sunday, ~~to ten o'clock~~  
~~Mass~~. When Miss Cogill moved away, I took over setting up the altar and  
taking patients to the chapel.

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It may be of interest to you to know that Mr. Norris was ~~my~~  
mother, Elizabeth Plante's, <sup>was ph-horis</sup> stepfather. ~~Mother~~ <sup>daughter</sup> married Solomon Emil <sup>(o.k.)</sup>  
Callihoo, better known as Dick Callihoo, son of Michel, chief of the  
Calahoo reserve.

Mr. Norris' relationship & significance  
is established in ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> para.  
Perhaps my mother, Elizabeth Plante, married  
Solomon Emil Callihoo, son of Michel,  
chief of the Calahoo reserve, " should be  
added to para 1.

*AB.*