

LIVINGSTONE CREEK, YUKON: A COMPENDIUM HISTORY



Livingstone Creek ca. 1906, YA 2002-1-118 #349, E.J. Hamacher fonds

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Additional support came from the Yukon Foundation through the Doris & John Stenbraten Fund and Roy Minter funds, and through an invitation to present the first phase of the project at the Foundation's 2003 AGM.

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Special gratitude goes to the private individuals who granted interviews and access to their photographs, videos and documents. Several of these people have now donated their materials to Yukon Archives, adding important new documentation on Livingstone Creek and area.

Contributors to data in the finding aid include Frances Clethero Woolsey, Donna Wilson, Eva & Emil Stehelin, Jim Robb, Pearl Keenan, May Suits Getz, Margaret & Rolf Hougen, Bill Webber, Ken Jones, Gerald (Gerry) David McCully, Goodie Sparling, and Bob Cameron.

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The contractor offers special thanks to the forbearing and patient staff at the Heritage Resource Unit, and to Sophie Partridge of Yukon Foundation.

Forward

The Livingstone Creek research project consisted of two main phases: heritage inventory and the research report (the present document).

Heritage Inventory

The Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory (LCHI) was researched and compiled by North Words Consulting under contract to the Heritage Resources Unit, Government of Yukon, 2001 – 2003, with additional support from the Yukon Foundation: Doris and John Stenbraten Fund & Roy Minter funds. *Livingstone Creek, Yukon: A Compendium History* is the outgrowth of an initial project to inventory available documentation on the Livingstone Creek area.

The inventory project examined documents, journals, maps, images, and videos held at Yukon Archives, Heritage Resources Unit, MacBride Museum, Energy Mines and Resources Library, Parks Canada, and several private collections, some of which were donated to Yukon Archives through the activities of the project. A limited number of interviews were conducted; of those that were taped, the recordings and transcripts were donated to Yukon Archives.

The inventory product (*Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory*) consists of a finding aid in the form of image and document databases. The databases were printed out and assembled into binders. Copies were deposited with Yukon Archives, Heritage Resources Unit, Yukon Foundation and North Words Consulting. Intended as a guide for researchers, students, and those with a general interest in Yukon and mining history, the finding aid is designed to be added to and corrected as more information becomes available. Users of these aids are encouraged to add their notes and to contact the addresses below.

Research report

Livingstone Creek, Yukon: A Compendium History is a loosely constructed collection of articles covering a range of topics by various authors. The tone ranges from formal and scholarly to gossipy and colloquial. In two instances, excerpts from personal diaries are used. Some articles by the editor are based on interviews. The report includes biographical sketches of just a few of the many people who lived and worked in the area. Some information is repeated section to section as it is presumed that some readers may want to read only specific articles. Most photographs are from the personal collections of contributors. Others are from Yukon Archives and the Heritage Resources Unit.

Personal names and place names are given a variety of spellings in the source documents and interviews. Livingstone is sometimes noted as “Livingston”, and Mendocino is also known as “Mendocina.” The community of Livingstone Creek is known variously as a town, village, or camp. When personal names have varying spellings, the one most frequently noted is used; in the instance where a living informant knew the individual, their memory is relied upon.

Selection of material was a difficult task, and much more has been omitted than is represented. Some important information about contemporary individuals and recent activity was not available until too late in the project to be included. With reluctance, some information that could not be verified has been included, with the expectation that readers will respond with corrections and verifications.

Readers are invited to submit notice of errors, omissions, or leads to additional sources, to the addresses that follow.

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-Leslie Hamson, May, 2006

Acronyms used in report

CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
DIAND	Department of Indian Affairs & Northern Development
HB	Heritage Branch
HRU	Heritage Resources Unit (formerly Heritage Branch)
HSMB	Historic Sites Management Board (Canada)
LCHI	Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory
YA	Yukon Archives
YHS	Yukon Historic Sites (part of Heritage Resources Unit)

Livingstone Creek Chronology

Livingstone Creek Chronology

Sources are those quoted in the report. See footnotes and endnotes in report sections.

DATE	PERSONS, ENTITY OR ISSUE	EVENT
Pre-1881	Ta'an Kwäch'an & Tagish Kwan	Traditional use of lands and resources in area. Livingstone is within the traditional territory.
1881	Big Salmon River ("lyon")	Four men prospect along 200 miles, panning and finding colours.
1894	J.E. (James Edwin) Peters	Prospects Livingstone Creek.
1898 or 1899	Jospeh Peters. Peters, George Black, Sam Lough	Stake Discovery Claim, Livingstone Creek; \$3,600 gold reported by Black & Lough.
1900	NWMP Census	Census shows 84 people on Livingstone Creek. Fluctuates 60 – 125 to year 1910. 1907 estimate of summer pop. of 100, winter 35 – 50 exclusive of children.
	J. E. (James Edwin) Peters	Claim on Lower Discovery yields \$10,000.
	Livingstone Creek Syndicate	Buys claims 1-6 below Discovery at public auction.
	Daniel G. Snure	Moves from roadhouse on Hootalinqua to roadhouse at Livingstone.
	Transportation	British Yukon Navigation Co <u>SS Bailey</u> makes occasional trips to Mason's Landing but refuses to give regular service. The <u>SS Quick</u> owned by Thomas Smith fills the gap.
1901	NWMP	Post of three buildings established on wagon road, 150 yards south of creek, due to "great influx of people into the Big Salmon district." Duties included affidavits, issuing free miners' certificates, acting as sub-mining recorder, crown timber & land agent.
	Summit Creek	Named by prospector Meany.
	Transportation	Miners blaze 15-mile pack trail between Mason's Landing on the E. side Teslin River & South Fork of Big Salmon and rough in winter trail to Upper Laberge 1901-1902.
	Bob McIntosh	Closes his 'hotel' for the winter with plans to return in the spring. Unknown whether he does.
1902	Transportation	Gov't constructs 16-mile, \$1700 wagon road Mason's Landing to No. 10 below Discovery.
	William Clethero/Cletheroe	Mining on Little Violet Creek along with "Dutch" Henry Broeren. Cletheroe & family remain in district intermittently to 1953, when William Cletheroe dies. Other Ta'an Kwäch'an families also participate in mining over the years.

DATE	PERSONS, ENTITY OR ISSUE	EVENT
1902 (cont'd)	NWMP- roadhouses	Cpl. Ackland notes two licensed & two unlicensed roadhouses, & general store.
	Lillian Mabel Taylor	Cook and launderer at Livingstone arrives, stays to 1909.
1903	Transportation	Miners' "makeshift" trail improved to "fair one-horse" by NWMP & miners.
	Mining Recorder Office	Moved from Hootalinqua to Livingstone Creek. L. Pacaud MR 1903-1905.
	Livingstone Creek Syndicate	15 men employed. Creek produced \$100,000; profit of \$20,000.
	May Creek	Named for Samuel May who prospected for many years after 1903.
1904		Decline of \$40,000 output; late spring, early frost.
	RNWMP	"Royal" added to NWMP name.
1905	May Creek nugget	39 ounce nugget found, largest to date for area.
	Livingstone Creek Syndicate	New pay streak discovered in old creek channel. \$100,000 produced. Output fluctuates \$35,000 - \$100,000 yearly until protracted decline beginning 1910.
1906	"Stampede" John Stenbraten	Active in district into 1940s.
1907	Telegraph	Telegraph line put in. Dan G. Snure operator.
1908	Livingstone Creek Syndicate & other	Limited mining in district.
	Post Office	Established after miners carry cost of delivery since 1905. Dan Snure postmaster. PO closed 1915.
1909		Heavy rainfall; miners predict claims will be worked out by 1910.
	Lillian Mabel Taylor	Leaves Livingstone likely for Whitehorse
1910	NWMP	Detachment withdrawn over winter of 1910-1911; patrols made until 1912.
	Gold estimate for decade	Bennett's report written ca. 1978 quotes estimated \$1 million overall, most of which came out 1900 – 1910, and does not include activity after 1910. For more current total, consult Mining Recorder office in Whitehorse.
	Dan (Daniel) G. Snure	Acts as agent to mining recorder until 1925, also runs road house, retails general merchandise, is postmaster, owns mining claims.
1911	Population	Levels off to 30.
	International Mining Co	Working No. 21-26 below Discovery, without much success.
1912	Mining	"...unusually quiet"- Department of Interior annual report.

DATE	PERSONS, ENTITY OR ISSUE	EVENT
1914		James Geary hydraulics for A.C. Company; A. Officer drives in thawed ground for good pay; George Bruce works open pit on Summit; L. Keyzer runs hydraulic plant on Cottoneva, finds \$215 nugget; W. Cameron works head of Sheehan's Gulch, No 1 above Discovery; Harry Barry drives adit 350 feet.
1915	Post Office	Closed.
	Mining	New pay streak on old claim discovered, but poor yields in 1916.
1916	Mining	26 miners produce 546.39 ounces- \$8,195.85
1917		485.97 ounce- \$7,289.55 @ \$15 ounce.
1920	Mining	Limited mining, mostly prospecting. No more than six or seven men operating in district throughout 1920s.
1925	Dan Snure	Resigns as agent to mining recorder; no evidence of anyone in that role thereafter.
1930s-1960s	Various people	Frank Slim, Clem Emminger, Louis Engle, Tom & Beda Kerruish, Geary brothers, and others continue some level of trapping, prospecting and mining. Bill Geary & wife run stagecoach.
1938	Air strip	Runway created by pulling stumps by hand or with horses in meadow one mile from South Fork of Big Salmon River, three miles west of Livingstone townsite. First recorded flight in May by Trimotor Ford piloted by Ev Wasson & Buck Stone, passengers Livingstone miners. Cable car used to get to Livingstone side of river.
1950s	Air strip	2 nd airstrip 100 x 1200' built by Louis Engle with D2 Cat.
1967	Mining Preservation issues	Max Fuerstner & Erwin Kreft stake claim on Livingstone. At this time the village is in remarkably good condition; cabins are furnished and many mining and household artefacts are in situ.
1971-1973	Upper Lake Creek	Ed Hill, Augie Trexler, Dick & Lela Young, Todd & Fern Ames from Washington State mine. Hill's property sold to Ed Kosmenko in 1976.
1971	Constellation Mines	Ace Parker, Gerry McCully, Maria Bjorkes Serafinchon and Al Serafinchon form an association to placer mine Livingstone Creek, Cottoneva Creek and Lake Creek, with percentage interests to Louis Engle & George Asuchak for ground.

DATE	PERSONS, ENTITY OR ISSUE	EVENT
1971 (cont'd)	Winter road	New road built with some assistance from government tote road program.
	Air Strip	Engle's airstrip is enlarged to 250' x 1800'.
1972	Mining	Constellation Mines begins operations on Louis Engle's old claims. Serafinchons leave association; remain active in the area as miners & trappers until 1986. Nakaumuras mine Mendocina into the 1980s; Asuchaks mine Lake Creek.
1973	Historic reserve status	The Livingstone Creek village and NWMP are made a DIAND (Department of Indian and Northern Development) reserve for review by HSMB (Historic Sites Monument Board Canada), #9337, 81.2 hectares in size, Quad 105E/8. No preservation work undertaken. Eventually (date unknown, but by 1980) HSMB decides against designation as National Historic Site.
	Preservation issues	Many artefacts have been taken from the village, apparently removed by helicopter. Current residents provide protection from theft during mining season but more artefacts are taken over the winter.
1974	Mining	New partners Max Fuerstner Sr. & Bob Miller bring resources to cash-strapped Constellation Mines. Gold prices rise. Mining activity on other creeks by other parties, including Moose Creek.
	Large nugget finds	July 21 1974 20 ½ ounce nugget found by Constellation Mines on Livingstone Creek, valued at \$6,000 - \$10,000, sold in 2004 for \$30,000. An earlier find was made by Louis Engle (date uncertain) of a 21 ½ ounce nugget upstream. A 39 ounce nugget was found on Summit Creek (date not known). See also 1997 below.
1977	Mining	Name Constellation Mines dropped. Partnership consists solely of Max Fuerstner Sr. and Bob Miller. Miller buys out in 1981.
1978	Mining	Serafinchons and Frank & Phyllis Brown join Max Fuerstner Sr. as partners on Livingstone Creek. Canada Tungsten provides investment to upgrade equipment.

DATE	PERSONS, ENTITY OR ISSUE	EVENT
1980	Historic reserve status	Parks & Historic Resources Branch, Dept of Renewable Resources (later called Yukon Historic Sites, Heritage Resources Unit) conducts building survey of the five structures at the NWMP post and 10 at the townsite, photographing and reporting on conditions. Some level of preservation assistance is requested by residents, and recommended in report, but is not acted upon.
1983	Mining	Max Fuerstner Jr. assumes full mining decision authority in 1983. As Livingstone Placers Ltd. he mines Livingstone, Summit, Cottoneva & Mendocina Creeks.
1984	Preservation issues	Fuerstner & company moves out of village into trailer camp. Village buildings deteriorate rapidly with “no-one to keep the heat on”—Max Fuerstner Jr.
1992-1995	Preservation issues	Donna Wilson & Gordie Lautamus mine in the district. Extensive correspondence from Wilson to Heritage Branch expressing preservation concerns for the Livingstone village.
1997	Big nugget find	36.6 ounce nugget found by Max Fuerstner Jr.
1993, 1996, 2000	Preservation issues	DIAND & Yukon Historic Sites (Heritage Branch) make inspection trips and photograph and videotape structures. No preservation measures taken. By 2000 all buildings but one are seriously deteriorated.
2000	Mining	Max Fuerstner Jr. moves operation to Mayo district, but retains 200 claims on Livingstone through to Mendocina creeks. Minimal activity on other creeks by other miners.
2001	Historic reserve	Yukon Land Records registers change of size from 81.2 to 15.28 hectares.
2003	Mining	Little Violet Creek the only active mine site. Doug Gonder retains interests on Martin Creek, and Gordie Ryder on Sylvia Creek.
2005	Mining	Fuerstner plans to move drilling rig in over the winter and begin hard rock drilling in the summer.

Rocks, Gravel & Gold:
Geology Notes of Livingstone Creek Area

By Charlie Roots, Yukon Geological Survey

Rocks, Gravel and Gold:
Geology Notes of Livingstone Creek Area
by Charlie Roots



Sheehan's Gulch, Livingstone Creek, YA 2002-48 Photo #46, Donna Wilson fonds

Flying towards Livingstone Creek, one sees spur ridges of the Big Salmon Range, with slopes of spruce and dwarf birch sweeping up to rocky ribs. Fast, rushing streams drain the range westward to the broad valley of the South Big Salmon River. The shallow, rocky bottom and gravel bars along the curving banks are flooded in late June, but nearly dry by late summer.

Initially the valley provided good hunting and was used as a direct route between the Teslin and Big Salmon rivers. When gold was discovered the settlement of Livingstone was established near the mouth of the most important creek.

1. Bedrock

The Big Salmon Range contains metamorphosed rocks that were deposited on a seafloor between 300 and 500 million years ago, in the early Paleozoic era. The black mud on the bottom was interlayered with fine sand settling through the sea far from river mouths. Layers of tough green rock are the remains from submarine lava flows.

This part of central Yukon was crumpled by the collision of ancient North America as it inexorably moved westward, collapsing volcanic islands and uplifting the old seafloor. The mountains were formed between 180 and 100 million years ago (Jurassic to Early Cretaceous periods). The sediments were compressed, forming quartzite and schist – the rocks now seen in the canyons of the creeks.

2. Source of the gold

Eleven tributary creeks of the South Big Salmon River contain placer gold: Dycer, Mendocino, Little Violet, Cottoneva, Lake Creek, Summit, Livingstone, Martin, Sylvia, Moose and Fish. The gold is found where the streams flow into the valley. No gold, however, has been found in the bedrock of the Big Salmon Range; it appears to come from the small quartz veins that occur in the creek canyons immediately upstream.

The streams cross broad bands of these rock types. The rocks are faulted. The abundant graphite and mica in the rocks acted like grease when they were deformed.

During uplift of the rocks, cracks formed and warm water pulsed through the fractures. Quartz and small quantities of gold were precipitated –like the white salt crust that forms in the kettle or a hot water tank. Eroded by the streams, these crack fillings released their gold, which was winnowed from the less dense rock by the turbulent stream. Scientists have extracted gold from the quartz-filled fractures in the canyon and found the same trace element proportions as that of nuggets mined from the gravel downstream (Stroink and Friedrich, 1992).

3. Burial and preservation of the Livingstone gold-bearing gravel

Like all of eastern Yukon, the Livingstone area was completely covered by thick ice sheets many times during the last two million years. As the climate warmed after each glacial maximum, ice melted from the mountaintops and large glacier tongues moved northwest down the South Big Salmon River valley. The side valleys escaped scouring by the glacier, leaving the gold-rich, pre-Ice Age gravel undisturbed.

As the ice receded, a blanket of mud and stones previously carried by the glacier lay on the valley floor. Rushing rivers of glacial meltwater redistributed the layers of glacial mud and stones (Levson, 1992). Dammed by a wall of ice downstream, the water backed up in the valley, depositing silt and sand terraces high on the valley walls. The modern streams have only had the last 12,000 years to erode through the accumulated layers of lake silt, river gravel and glacial till, to once again expose the pre-Ice-Age gravel where the pay-streak lies. The challenge for the early miners was to follow the buried original stream channel, because the modern stream in places chose a different course.

Summary

The rich deposits of coarse gold on the east side of the South Big Salmon River differ from most Yukon placer deposits because they lie well within the area covered by continental glaciation. The layering of overlying sands and gravel records a series of glacial, river and lake environments before its current exposure by streams and mining. The source of the gold is small quartz veins in the dark schistose rock of the area. It was eroded from the rock before the Ice Age, locally remobilized by streams between glaciations, and escaped scour by valley-filling ice.

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Stroink, L. and Friedrich, G., 1992. *Gold-Sulphide quartz veins in metamorphic rock as a possible source for placer gold in the Livingstone Creek area, Yukon Territory, Canada*. In: Yukon Geology, Vol. 3; Exploration and Geological Services Division, Yukon, Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada, p. 87-98.

First Nations Presence in the Livingstone Creek Area

First Nations Presence in the Livingstone Creek Area



Lake LaBerge, S.E. view from Deep Creek, looking towards Livingstone Trail Photo: Yukon Government

Long before mining activity began in the Livingstone Creek district, the area was used by Tàa'an Kwäch'än,¹ Tagish Kwan and Teslin people for hunting, fishing, and gathering. Later, the families participated as miners, freighters, trappers, and as suppliers of game meat for the Livingstone village.

The ancestral lands of the Ta'an Kwäch'än ("people of the flat lake place") extends from Hootalinqua to the McClintock Valley and west from the White Bank village (31 Mile) at the confluence of the Takhini and Little Rivers and east to Winter Crossing on the Teslin River. Their northeast territory extends to Livingstone Creek and the area below the confluence of the Big Salmon and the South Big Salmon River.²

One group of Ta'an Kwäch'än families trace their ancestry back to Lande, from Tagish, and Mundessa (Old Man Chief) from Hutshi. Mundessa and Lande had several children: Shuwateen (Maggie Boss), Kashxoot (Chief Jim Boss), Tusaxal (Jenny Boss), Shaan Tlein (Susie Boss), and a second son Undeahel.³

Maggie Boss and her first husband, Dawson Jim, had two children, Kitty and Elsie. Maggie Boss and her second husband, "Dutch" Henry Broeren, had seven children:

¹ Spelling conventions differ from source to source. This spelling is from Yukon Native Languages Centre.

² Ruth Gotthardt, "Ta'an Kwäch'än, People of the Lake." Whitehorse: TYG/NRI. 2000.

³ Gotthardt (2000).

Celia, Alice, Aggie, Charlie, George, John and Willie.⁴ References to this family are found in the 1904-1905 journal attributed to Lillian Mabel Taylor⁵ and in the storytelling session about Livingstone Creek and area by Clem Emminger recorded by John Scott in 1965.⁶ Emminger also makes a number of references to Jim Boss.

Jenny Boss married Dawson Jim and had children George, Ida, and Louise.

Susie Boss and her husband Sam Walker had a daughter, Kitty. Kitty and her husband, Angus McLeod, lived at Lower Laberge for many years. Angus was from Scotland and worked as a deckhand⁷ on the boats and ran mail to Livingstone by dog team in the winter. In the 1920s, Angus and Kitty, with other Ta'an people, operated a fox and mink ranch at Lur dayel (31 Mile) the home of Mundessa until his death in 1925.⁸

Jenny Smith Laberge's name was Hu ala, from Klukwan,⁹ Alaska. Her husband, Laberge Billy, (also known as Billy Laberge) was K'umgaelte. He was born and raised along the Hootalinqua River at Winter Crossing near Livingstone. He was Gertie Tom's grandmother's brother.¹⁰ Billy Laberge died in June 1939 at about age 60.

Jenny Laberge and Laberge Billy had their base camp at Winter Crossing on the Teslin River. Eventually they settled and raised their family in Whitehorse. Jenny had nine children: Peter, Amy, Pauline (Polly Irvine),¹¹ Mary, Sadie, Violet (Storer), Harold, Elizabeth and Peter. Amy and her husband, William (Bill) James Clethero, (spelled by some family members as Cletheroe)¹² were among the first to mine in the Livingstone Creek area, along with "Dutch" Henry Broeren. Other Ta'an families also sometimes joined in mining operations.¹³ (For more on the Clethero family, see **Biographies** section.)

⁴ Gotthardt (2000).

⁵ YA Stehelin Collection 2002/53.

⁶ YA Clem Emminger Collection ACC 77 55 SR 42-1.

⁷ Frances Woolsey says he was a captain—Personal note, Dec. 2004.

⁸ Livingstone Notes, Sally Robinson, Heritage Resources Unit.

⁹ However, Amy's daughter Alice says Jenny came from "Rangoon just out of Juneau, Alaska."

¹⁰ Gertie Tom interviewed by Kathy Sam. Carmacks Oral Histories, 1987.

¹¹ Polly was born at Winter Crossing in 1916 and her son-in-law, Robert "Hoss" LeFleur, used the Winter Crossing cabin on his trapline.- Gus Karpes, *The Teslin River: Johnson's Crossing to Hootalinqua*, Yukon, Canada, Kugh Enterprises. 1995:79. Polly died in 2003.

¹² Frances Clethero Woolsey, personal commu.

¹³ Ruth Gotthardt, "Ta'an Kwäch'än, People of the Lake". Whitehorse: YTG/NRI. 2000.



Elsie Baker Suits at gravesite of her mother, Sadie Jackie Baker, Livingstone Creek, 1995.
May Suits Getz fond YA 2002/133 #1

Also resident at Winter Crossing were "Big Salmon Pat", and Charles (Charlie) Smith and his married family, who were known as "Mackintosh".¹⁴ Elsie Suits mentions Charlie Smith living at Mason's Landing.¹⁵ Charles Smith and Field Smith served Livingstone Creek as hunters, selling wild meat (see **additional notes**, below). Kitty Smith's father delivered mail to Livingstone, and told stories of a Christmas party there.¹⁶

Marsh Lake Jackie, a chief, and Mary Lilly were direct ancestors of the Baker family who lived at the Boswell and Mary rivers, homesteading, trapping, and mining. Sadie Jackie and Jim Baker raised their children there, and also spent time mining at Cottoneva Creek. Mike Murphy and Louie Keise were Baker's mining partners. Sadie died at Cottoneva at age 30 in 1919 and is buried on a hillside above the Livingstone townsite.¹⁷

Frank Slim, the only First Nations river boat pilot to be fully licensed, lived in the Baker Lake, Winter Crossing and Livingstone Creek areas. For a time he lived in what is known as the Trapper's Cabin at Livingstone, and appeared to have sold trapping supplies from there.¹⁸ According to Elsie Suits, he used to stay at Baker Lake for the winter to protect the place against theft.¹⁹ (See also BIOGRAPHY section of this report).

¹⁴ Karpes (1995:).

¹⁵ Elsie Suits interviewed by Josephine Holloway, Jan. 1994 p. 7.

¹⁶ Kwanlin Dun Video Project: Kitty & Fred Smith Teslin River Trip Johnson's Crossing – Little Salmon, August 11 – 15, 2003.

¹⁷ Sources: Interview with Elsie Suits by Josephine Holloway, January 1994; Bill Webber, 2002; May Suits Getz, 2002.

¹⁸ Based on receipts found at the cabin in 1972 by the author.

¹⁹ Elsie Suits, p. 7. Elsie also mentions the Good family at Teslin Crossing.



Dorothy Baker Webber, daughter of Sadie Jackie Baker, Boswell River, 1934
William Webber fonds, YA 1002/134 #2

Additional notes

The First Nation population at Livingstone Creek was 15 in 1904. From 75 to 90 persons were employed at mining in the Livingstone Creek district in the summer of 1904.²⁰

Found with papers belonging to Louis Engle at Livingstone Creek were cheque stubs with dates ranging from November 5th 1934 - October 23 1942. These included cheques to Frankie Jim and Field Smith for meat, and to Charlie Smith & Chas Smith for moose skin & meat.

From the "Accounts of Percy Sharpe" found at Livingstone is the following note: McGinty [McGinty] Indian, Gld Standing 1931, In Account with J.E. Peters, "Mr. Peters gives No Detail: \$2".²¹

²⁰ Royal North-West Mounted Police Annual Report. Sessional Paper No. 28. 1905:19, 33.

²¹ YA 20001/165 Jim Robb Collection, (J. E. Peters papers).



First Nations Traditional Territories, Livingstone & Laberge area.

A Summary History Of Livingstone Creek, YT, 1897-1930

Adapted from an original report by Gordon Bennett, post-1973

Note: The following is modified from a staff report written by Gordon Bennett for Parks Canada in the 1970s.^a Subtitles, photos, maps, and further notes (appended as footnotes a,b,c etc) have been added. Mr. Bennett's Endnotes, as in the original, are at the end of the article. Because some passages have been rearranged, not all Endnotes are in sequence, but the numbers correspond to the appropriate notes.

A Summary History of Livingstone Creek, Y.T. 1897-1930

Prelude

The gold rush of 1897-98 is commonly associated with the stampede to the Klondike and the spectacular rise of the town of Dawson.

Less well known is that there was a corollary if not corresponding series of smaller stampedes from Dawson to other regions in the Yukon, impelled by the discovery that most of the gold-bearing gravels in the Klondike had already been staked before the second great wave of stampeders hit Dawson in May and June of 1898. As early as mid-August of that year the Yukon's first commissioner, James M. Walsh, reported that upwards of five thousand people had left Dawson for the Stewart River country.¹ Nor was the Stewart the only region to attract gold seekers whose Klondike aspirations had been frustrated.

"A great many people also went up the Pelly, Little Salmon and Big Salmon rivers," Walsh wrote, "but no reliable reports have yet been received as to what prospects have been found in these localities."²

A year later, gold was discovered on a small tributary of the South Fork of the Big Salmon River, Livingstone Creek (see Fig. 1).

^a Original title: Livingstone Creek, Y.T. Source: Yukon Archives, Historic Sites & Monuments Board of Canada Collection. Used with permission.

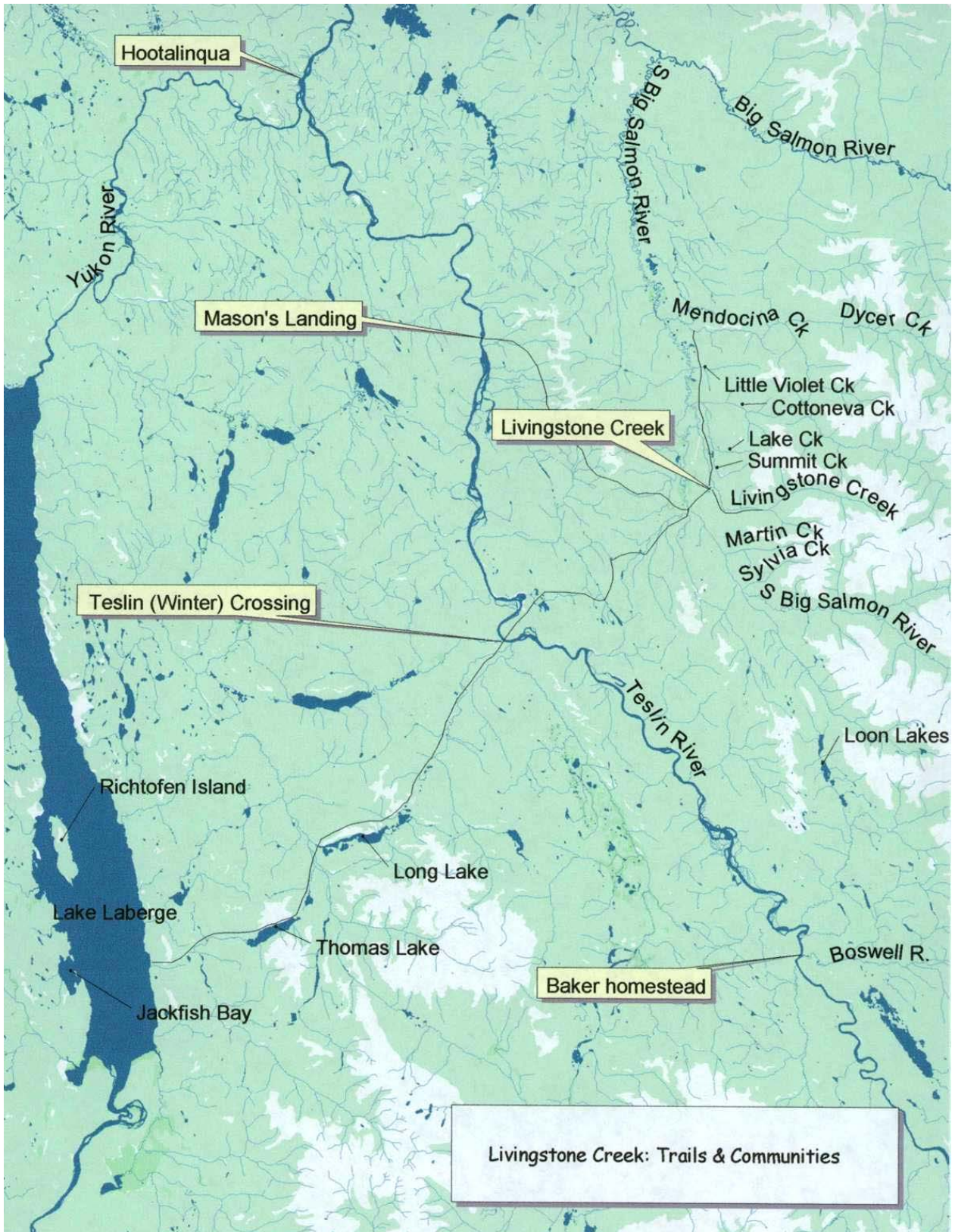


Fig. 1 (Map provided by HRU)

Discovery

The discovery of gold on Livingstone Creek is generally credited to George Black^b and Samuel Lough.^{3c} For the former, the discovery presaged a career that would culminate in the Speaker's chair in the House of Commons, for the latter it meant temporary recognition and subsequent obscurity.

More relevant to the history of Livingstone Creek is that the discovery followed the pattern described by Walsh; for after weeks of unsuccessful travail in the Klondike gold field (Black later wrote that he did not find "a colour of dust") Black abandoned the Klondike for the Teslin River-Big Salmon region. For almost a year Black operated out of his base camp at Hootalinqua before he and Lough discovered pay on Livingstone Creek. According to a contemporary issue of the White Horse Star, Black and Lough took out \$3,600 from their claims in 1899. "No Bonanza, to be sure," admitted Black, but enough to repay "us well for two years of unremitting toil and hardship."⁴

Mining Activities 1892-1902

From the beginning, Livingstone Creek was not a "poor man's" camp. This fact pre-disposed a course of development for Livingstone Creek that differed in many respects from the pattern if not the outcome of development in the Klondike.

Although the Livingstone Creek diggings were blessed with a high assay value, a stream with a steep gradient (150 feet to the mile) and a more than adequate supply of timber and water (a crucial requirement for placer mining in the Yukon), it was evident as early as 1900 "that hand labour would not pay and that some form of machinery was required to put the claims on a paying basis."⁵

There were several reasons for this. Much of the ground on Livingstone Creek, unlike the Klondike, was not frozen.⁶ While this eliminated the need for thawing it meant that cribbing was required for all drifts and tunnels.⁷ In contrast to the Klondike again, water was plentiful - so plentiful, however, that shafts were continuously flooded thereby necessitating the installation of pumps and the sacrifice of "a claim or so" on the creek in order "to get a drain to bedrock."⁸

^b See also Biography section

^c Joseph Peters is also sometimes named a co-discoverer. He prospected the area in 1894, and staked with George Black in 1898—Occurrence No, 13, 1994.20.194, p. 17, 9

Large boulders, some of which measured six to eight feet in diameter hampered operations on the canyon portion of the creek and required costly hoisting apparatus although in this instance the water supply was used to advantage as a power source for the derricks.⁹

Finally, mining was "practically all open cut work" using hydraulic monitors and could be more efficiently prosecuted on a series of claims rather than individual ones.¹⁰ Taken together, these factors deterred the smaller operator who lacked capital except in so far as he was willing to work for wages.

Some indication of the problem encountered by the smaller operator is given by A. Acland, the corporal in charge of the detachment at Livingstone Creek, in his report for 1901.

"A large number of claims recorded in this district have not had a shovel turned in them this season," he wrote, since "the owners were either out of the country, working day labour for other parties or prospecting for easier creeks to work."¹¹

One of these creeks was Lake Creek, two miles below Livingstone, but as J.T. Lithgow, the territorial comptroller, wrote, "the stakers [on Lake Creek] consist of persons who desire to hold claims and await developments and are not as a rule actual miners."¹²

Such was also the case on Livingstone Creek where Corporal Acland predicted "that the properties worth holding will eventually pass into the hands of larger operators, until which time very little can be looked for."¹³

Although the census of April 1900 showed 84 people on Livingstone Creek the only claim that could be called a producer was J.E. Peter's lower discovery which yielded \$10,000 in 1900 and \$7,193.56 in 1901.¹⁴

On 2 June 1900 creek claims one to ten below discovery were sold at crown auction in Dawson.¹⁵ These claims were acquired by the Livingstone Creek Syndicate.¹⁶ The syndicate spent most of 1901 preparing for the 1902 season and several tons of machinery were brought in that winter.¹⁷ The company employed six to 12 men through the summer of 1902 but the diggings did not advance beyond the development stage, discovery claim still proving to be the only steady producer.¹⁸

Despite this apparent lack of progress, production declined in 1901 and remained static in 1902. Assistant Commissioner I.T. Wood's report on the 1902 season was that the "claim owners seem to be very well satisfied with the prospects."¹⁹ Although the years 1900 to 1902 were not conspicuous in terms of production the camp made steady if unspectacular progress.

To draw a parallel with the Klondike it can be said that the nature of the Livingstone Creek placers forced a transition in the methods of mining at a very early stage in the life of the camp and that this transition preceded and anticipated the conversion to capital intensive mining that took place in the Klondike after 1903.²⁰ As was the case in the Klondike, this transition was marked by a decline and then a leveling off of production until the new mining methods had pretty well replaced more primitive types of mining technique, after which production revived.²¹

Transportation

In the meantime, the camp steadily improved its transportation links with Whitehorse, its principal supply centre. Although Livingstone Creek was part of the Big Salmon River system, the camp relied on the Teslin or Hootalinqua River for access to Whitehorse during the navigation season. In part, this was a consequence of the difficulty of navigating the Big Salmon.²²

Probably more important, however, was the fact that Hootalinqua, located at the confluence of the Teslin and Yukon rivers, was 30 miles closer to Livingstone Creek than the post at Big Salmon, and was the site of the closest mining Recorder Office as well.²³

By 1901 the miners had blazed a pack trail between Mason's Landing on the east side of the Teslin River and the South Fork of the Big Salmon, a distance of 15 miles, and constructed a rude bridge over the South Fork from which branch trails led to the various creeks in the district.²⁴ That this primitive transportation route was not satisfactory is apparent from a comment made by Assistant Commissioner Wood.



Mason's Landing, Blick child YA2002-132 # 48, Pearl Keenan Coll.

"One thing has however kept this district back," he wrote, "and that has been the cost of necessaries, as freight from Eureka Landing [one mile south of Mason's' Landing on the left limit of the Teslin River] to the gold bearing creeks has cost 8 cents a pound; this added to the charge of freight from Whitehorse, 1½ cents a pound, made the cost of provisions, & etc, so high

that only fairly rich claims have been worked at a profit."²⁵

In response to demands for a wagon road between Mason's Landing and Livingstone Creek the government constructed a 16 mile wagon road at a cost of \$1,700 between Mason's Landing and No. 10 claim below discovery on Livingstone Creek in 1902.²⁶ Although some of the miners complained that the road was poorly located, an



Men on Wagon Road to Mine YA2002-132-39 Pearl Keenan Coll.

investigation revealed that most of the inhabitants were satisfied.²⁷ Their satisfaction is understandable when the reduction in freight rates, that followed the road's construction is taken into account. According to Acland, the new road constituted "a saving of \$3,066 per year in provisions alone," and "half as much more [again] on... tools, machinery, clothing and general supplies, thus making a total saving per year in round figures of \$4,500," for the settlement.²⁸

The matter of summer land communication with Mason's Landing had no sooner been disposed of when Corporal Acland advised that "a winter trail to White Horse is urgently needed here, via the head of Lake LaBarge [Laberge]."²⁹ Because the rivers were frozen over during the winter, and because the river route from Mason's Landing resembled a switch-back, a much more direct route was desirable. During the winter of 1901-02 the miners roughed out a "makeshift" winter trail to Upper Laberge, and this was improved to a "fair one-horse trail" by the North-West Mounted Police and the miners the following year.³⁰



THE QUICK, Freighting To Livingstone, Teslin River YA2002-132 #80

Surprisingly, the one element in the transportation system that proved most difficult to improve was steamer connection between Whitehorse and Mason's Landing. The British Yukon Navigation Company's S.S. Bailey made occasional trips to Mason's Landing in 1901, but the company refused to give regularly scheduled service.³¹ This was a source of great irritation to the residents of Livingstone Creek since no one knew when supplies, especially perishables, would be

delivered and few people were interested in making the round trip of 32 miles to the Landing on the off-chance of catching a riverboat.

The situation was exacerbated, moreover, by the British Yukon Navigation Company policy of eliminating all common carrier competition in order to gain a transport monopoly on the upper Yukon River, and this discouraged the miners themselves from operating a boat as they were afraid if one were placed on, the B.Y.N. would then put on a boat, with freight rates that would drive the private boat out of business.³²

With its achievement of a practical monopoly, on the most important waterways by 1900, the British Yukon Navigation Company abandoned its concern with the economically marginal side streams trade and in that year Thomas Smith of Whitehorse began running on the Teslin River with the tiny S.S. Quick, thereafter supplying Livingstone Creek with the bulk of its supplies.³³

Mining Activities 1903-1915

The year 1903 established Livingstone Creek as an important gold producer and commentators reflected on the fact that the creek was finally "beginning to make some return" for the considerable expenditures of labour and capital of the previous three years. The Livingstone Creek Syndicate employed fifteen men through the summer and realized a profit of \$20,000. All told, the creek produced \$100,000.³⁴



Livingston Creek Syndicate YA2002-118 # 338 Hamacher Coll.

A short working season in 1904, caused by a late spring and early frost, resulted in a decline of \$40,000 in the camp's output compared with the previous year. Even more disconcerting was that only a few claims continued to yield pay, it being estimated that only two claims other than those worked by the syndicate produced gold in 1904.³⁵ Although production reached its 1903 level of \$100,000 in 1905, \$76,000 of this was taken out of two claims.³⁶

The discovery of a new pay streak in the old creek channel on the left limit of the creek in 1905 raised the hopes of the operators but did not result in increased productivity. Output fluctuated between \$35,000 and \$100,000 a year until 1910 when the camp entered a period of protracted decline.³⁷

Two types of ground were worked on Livingstone Creek, the bar diggings on the creekbed and the "old channel" on the left limit hillside. Little if any mining appears to have been done below upper discovery on the hillside which was located just below the head of the canyon. Operations on the creekbed covered a larger field, extending from lower discovery at the head of the canyon for some distance above, and through the three-quarter mile long canyon into the valley portion of the creek below. With two notable exceptions, the creek claims below discovery were hydraulicked or ground sluiced and the claims above discovery were worked with adits and drifts, as were the bench or hillside claims. The two exceptions were creek claims 10 to 18 above discovery which were hydraulicked, and some claims below discovery where drifting was attempted in 1900 but forsaken when the shafts flooded (at a depth of 70 feet) before reaching bedrock.³⁸

By 1908 mining was confined to creek claims 10 below to 18 above on the creek and upper discovery to 9 above on the hill.³⁹ The Livingstone Creek Syndicate appears to have abandoned hydraulic mining for drifting in 1909, and operations entirely after that season.⁴⁰ Because water was needed to work the deposits extractive operations were primarily confined to the summer months and many of the miners appear to have spent the winters elsewhere.⁴¹



Livingstone Creek Syndicate YA2002-118 # 348 Hamacher Coll.

A change seems to have occurred in 1909, however, for the agent to the mining recorder's report for that year states that "the bulk of the mining....is carried on the year round." This may have been the result of the predicted demise of the camp - the same agent wrote that "the miners here agree that the known ground on Livingstone Creek will be about all worked out next year" – and the operators may have wished to retire their diggings as quickly as possible.⁴²

Another possible explanation is that operations were severely curtailed during the summer of 1909 by heavy rainfall, it being reported that "the incessant rains of the present season practically put a number of miners on Livingstone Creek out of business as far as accomplishing anything in the way of mining."⁴³

Comparison of Livingstone with other mining communities

Unlike its more famous counterpart, Dawson, the town of Livingstone Creek bore little resemblance to the gold rush camps that have become an integral part of the literature of the northwest. If anything, Livingstone Creek more closely resembled the isolated outpost settlements described by C.A. Dawson in his study of the Peace River frontier.⁴⁴

Because mining required a good deal more capital than the average stamper or prospector possessed, the Livingstone Creek diggings did not attract the type of settler synonymous with Barkerville, Forty Mile, Circle City and Dawson.

Corporal Acland captured the ambience of the community succinctly when he wrote that "the general tone has been good, nearly all the inhabitants being hard-working, industrious people, and the camp is not rich enough to attract the riff-raff which usually follow mining camps."⁴⁵

Unlike the Klondike gold field, where bitterness between capital and labour was a commonplace until the passage of lien laws, there were "no differences between employers and employees among the miners" at Livingstone Creek.⁴⁶ Nor was

there the organized and vociferous opposition to capital that marked the Klondike field between 1902 and 1906-07.

To summarize, it can be said that there was no collision between the forces of metropolitanism and the values of the frontier on Livingstone Creek.

North-West Mounted Police post and population numbers

The post (see Figs: 3 & 4), was built in 1901 "owing to the great influx of people into the Big Salmon district."⁵⁵ It consisted of three buildings: a barrack, kitchen and office building measuring 30' x 18', a storehouse (12' x 14') and a combination stable and doghouse (12' x 18'). The main building was made of lumber and had a board floor and mud roof.⁵³ The buildings straddled the wagon road and were located approximately 150 yards south of the creek.

The duties of the men of the detachment involved very little law enforcement but many activities that supported the miners. The officers discovered "that the best of



Fig. 3 N.W.M.P. Cabin, HRU 1980

feeling prevails here between the police and miners," and found that most of their work involved patrols and bringing in mail, while the N.C.O. in charge of the detachment took affidavits, issued free miners' certificates and acted as sub-mining recorder and crown timber and land agent, tasks with the exception of the first, that were properly the responsibility

of other government departments.

The N.C.O. was relieved of his non-police duties in 1903 when the Department of the Interior moved the mining Recorder Office from Hootalinqua to Livingstone Creek, but these duties were re-assigned in 1905 when the Department of the Interior closed the office part of a general policy of retrenchment.⁴⁷



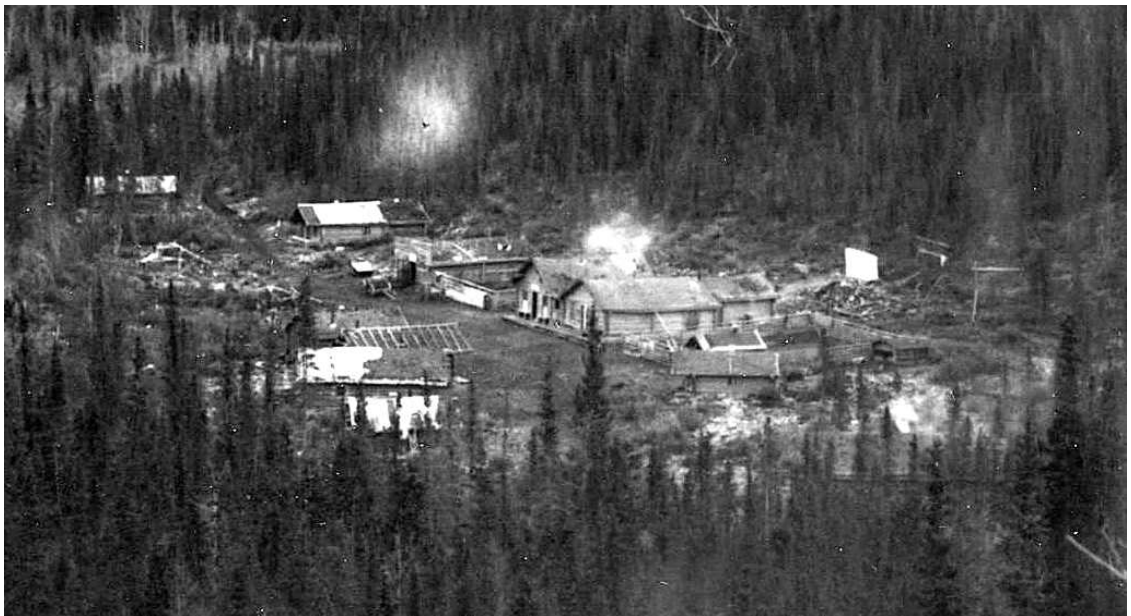
Fig. 4 NWMP Jail, HRU 1980

Although consistent population figures are not available, the population of Livingstone and surrounding creeks appears to have fluctuated between 60 and 125 for the period 1900-1910.⁵⁶ In 1907, an average year for the camp in terms of production, a resident estimated the summer population at 100 and a winter population of 35 to 50 exclusive of children.⁵⁷

The North-West Mounted Police considered withdrawing the detachment for the winter months as early as 1906, giving the reason that "there will not be sufficient people there to justify maintaining Police." However, the post was not withdrawn since "the non-commissioned officer in charge is acting as agent to the mining recorder and Crown timber and land agent [and that] compel[s] us to keep open a post which would otherwise be closed until the residents of the creeks returned in March."⁵⁸

With the decline in population after 1908, and evidence that the creek had been "pretty well worked out" by 1910, however, the detachment was permanently withdrawn during the winter of 1910 -11.⁵⁹ For the next two years the camp was visited by police patrols but there is no mention of patrols being made into the area after 1912.⁶⁰

Livingstone Town



Livingstone Creek ca. 1906, YA 2002-1-118 #349, E.J. Hamacher fonds

The town of Livingstone Creek was the supply and administrative centre for what was known as the Livingstone Creek district. The district included several small creeks running from east to west into the South Fork of the Big Salmon River: Mendocino, Little Violet, Cottoneva, Lake and Summit creeks to the north; and Martin and Sylvia creeks to the south of Livingstone Creek (see Fig. 1). Placer operations were conducted on each of these creeks, although none matched Livingstone Creek as a gold producer. In his report for 1902, Corporal Acland noted two licensed and two unlicensed roadhouses as well as a general store in the district.⁵¹

The town itself, located some two to four miles above the mouth of the creek in a "Z" shaped, bend in the water course, contained a number of substantial log structure built along the wagon road from Mason's Landing.⁵²

Daniel Snure,^d who had previously operated a roadhouse at Hootalinqua, followed the miners to Livingstone Creek where he established a "hotel" (roadhouse). If anyone can be said to have been Livingstone Creek's first



Dan Snure's Place YA2002-118 # 155 E.J. Hamacher Coll.

citizen Snure was it, for in addition to owning the roadhouse he retailed general merchandise, owned mining claims, served as the community's one and only



Kitchen in Dan Snores (sic) Road House YA83-77 H247 PHO 232#59

postmaster, was the local Dominion telegraph agent (a telegraph line was put in in 1907) and served as agent to the mining recorder from 1910, when the Royal Northwest Mounted Police detachment was withdrawn, until 1925.⁵⁴

A post office was finally established in 1908 after a long campaign for regular postal service, the

miners having "themselves borne the expense of a messenger (sic) to carry the mail at a very heavy cost" since 1905.⁴⁸

Mail delivery continued to be a problem, however. In 1912 George Ameroux [Aimraux] one of the largest operators on Livingstone Creek complained that the contractor, Thomas Smith, the owner of the Quick, was leaving the mail at Mason's Landing, "hanging in a tree... exposed to the weather and when delivered on the

^d See Biography section

creek some of the letters and papers are so wet and mutilated they could not be read."⁴⁹ Complaints were registered at varying intervals between 1912 and 1914 until the post office was closed in 1915.⁵⁰

Mining Activities 1911-1925

An indication of Livingstone Creeks' diminishing importance after 1910 is that references to the district become a good deal more scanty. The population levelled off at about 30 and operations were continued on a much reduced scale.⁶¹

Snure's return for 1911 mentions that claim number 21 to 26 below discovery were being worked by the International Mining Company, but the company does not appear to have enjoyed very much success.⁶²

The annual report of the Department of the Interior for 1912 stated that "Livingstone creek and tributaries have been unusually quiet throughout the year,"⁶³ and this condition appears to have prevailed through 1914.⁶⁴

The discovery of a new paystreak on an old claim in 1915 raised the hopes of the miners but these hopes were not sustained by the following year's returns.⁶⁵

It is impossible to determine whether the recurring theme through these years that "the miners have absolute faith in the existence of gold in paying quantities" constitutes an embellishment on the part of authors of various official reports or an inaccurate reflection of miners' sentiment.⁶⁶

In any event, output must have put that faith to a very severe test. In what looks to be an attempt to find some reason, any reason, beside the obvious one of exhaustion, difficulties were attributed to the war and the related problems of capital accessibility and the availability of labour.⁶⁷ While these two factors had a significant impact on production in the Klondike, they were not important considerations on Livingstone Creek, however.

Production for 1916 and 1917, two years for which statistics are available, was 546.39 ounces and 485.97 ounces respectively, making, a total output of 8,195.85 in 1916 (distributed among 26 miners) and \$7,289.55 in 1917 at a valuation of \$15 an ounce.⁶⁸ No figures are available for subsequent years, production being variously described as "very low" or "very small."⁶⁹

After 1920 mining per se appears to have given way to prospecting in the Livingstone Creek area. Although this does not mean that production ceased, it does suggest a reversion to the earliest stage the mining process where diggings are worked in the hope of making a strike but where the prospector is satisfied so long as he can sustain a marginal if not meager existence. This denouement was not peculiar to Livingstone Creek; it does, in fact, constitute part of the typical life-span of most placer camps.

During the 1920s no more than six or seven men appear to have carried on operations in the district and no one seems to have been appointed local agent to the mining recorder after Snure resigned in 1925.⁷⁰

In 1928 Richmond Yukon Copper Limited, which had taken over the Whitehorse copper properties, was granted a lease of two miles of ground on Livingstone Creek but the company did no work and its lease was not renewed.⁷¹ Two years later (1930) the same company took out 200 ounces of gold on a bench on Lake Creek but although it was predicted that this would have a salutary effect on mining in the region nothing appears to have happened.⁷²

Demise of Livingstone Creek 1930s

The passing from the scene of an outpost on the frontier is seldom if ever proclaimed. When that outpost is on the mining frontier it becomes even more difficult to date its final demise. Wherever there are prospectors of the "old school", as there were in the Yukon during the 1920s and 30s, some of them are bound to be in a fringe region panning various creeks in the hope of making a new discovery. What is clear, however, is that by the mid-1930s, the once active camp at Livingstone Creek had long since passed into history, and a revised map published by the Department of the Interior in 1936 designates only a "shelter cabin" at Livingstone Creek.^c

Apart from its importance in a very localized sense as a community where people lived and worked, the origins of the camp at Livingstone Creek represent an aspect of Yukon history that has not attracted very much attention. For just as the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek in August of 1896 led to the Klondike stampede, so did that stampede spawn a series of smaller rushes to the outlying portions of the territory. The phenomenon described by the American writer, Rex Beach, that the short-lived nature of placer camps like the Klondike "very largely accounts for the headlong stampedes that were a characteristic feature of Alaska's development and which resulted in such rapid exploration of the country," also occurred in the Yukon and found expression in the establishment of settlements like Livingstone Creek.⁷³

On a smaller canvas, Livingstone Creek, along with the Kluane field, was the most important producer of placer gold in a region (the Whitehorse mining division) where lode mining otherwise predominated. It has been estimated that Livingstone and surrounding creeks yielded something in excess of \$1,000,000 worth of gold, the largest portion of which was taken out between 1900 and 1910.⁷⁴ Because no records were kept of production from various creeks it is impossible to verify this figure. More likely it was closer to \$750,000.⁷⁵

Judged strictly in terms of production, there seems no reason to revise the early (1901) assessment of the government geologist, R.G. McConnell, that the Livingstone "field can only be considered of moderate richness."⁷⁶ Of the estimated total of \$250,000,000 in gold won from the Yukon's placers, Livingstone Creek's share was 0.4 percent.

^c In fact, there were still about a dozen buildings extant in the 1970s, several still habitable. See Livingstone Village section.

Closing notes

Gordon Bennett's report was written post-1973 but does not include the revival that began in 1971, peaked in the 1990s, and continues in some measure to the present. For gold production figures for that period, consult the Mining Recorder Office in Whitehorse. The town of Livingstone was reoccupied at intervals by varying numbers of people from 1972, and during that time served again as a social hub for the outlying creeks. By 2003 the village had not been occupied for some years, and most of the buildings have succumbed to creek flooding and age. For a summary of this period see the Serafinchon account, **Time Spent At Livingstone Creek (1971–1986)** and the **Fuerstner Family (1974 to present)**^f in the Biographies section. Bennett's history also does not mention the airstrip. See **Aviation History**.

Endnotes

- 1 Canada. Department of the Interior, Annual Report, 1898 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1F;99) (hereafter cited as CDI, Annual Report [appropriate year]), Pt. IV, P. 329.
- 2 Ibid., p. 330.
- 3 Dawson Daily News, Special Edition, 21 July 1909, p. 72; Canada. Public Archives hereafter cited as PAC), Martha Black Papers, MG 30, H43, "To the Electors of the Yukon," a pamphlet distributed by the supporters of George Black in the 1930 federal election; George Black, "striking Gold in Klondyke Was My Finest Hour," John Bull, 24 Dec. 1932, p. 22. Two discovery claims were registered on Livingstone; one on the hillside called upper discovery, and one on the creek known as lower discovery. Records available to the writer in Ottawa do not indicate whether Black and Lough located on the upper or lower discovery claim, or which claim was the first to be recorded. It is known, however, that some of the claims applied for by Black were hillside claims. See PAC, Records of the Northern Administrations Branch, RG 85, Box 1420, fol. 24119. The Mining Recorder Office in Whitehorse should have a bound volume on Livingstone Creek listing all claims and transactions.
- 3 Reconstructed from George Black, op. cit., p.22. Allowing for minor mistakes in dating and a disconcerting disregard for geographical accuracy, this article is the only first person account extant of the Livingstone Creek discovery. The production figure is from the White Horse Star, First Annual Edition, 1901, 1 May 1901, p. 14. See also PAC, RG 85, op. cit., which places Black in the Hootalinqua region and describes the problems Black had in recording his claims.

^f 2005

- 4 H. Bostock, comp. Yukon Territory: Selected Field Reports of the Geological Survey of Canada, 1898-1933, the Geological Survey of Canada, Memoir 284. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1957), p.39; , Annual Report of the Commissioner, 1901 (Ottawa, King's Printer, 1902) (hereafter cited as NWMP [after 1903, RNWMP], Annual Report [appropriate year?], Pt. III, p. 30; PAC, RG 85, Box, 1437 fol. 144190, Beaudette to Acting Commissioner, Dawson, 18 July 1907; CDI, Annual Report, 1901, p. 30.
- 5 H. Bostock, op. cit., Pp. 40, 623-4.
- 6 See PAC, RG 85, Box, 1424, fol. 32198, Corneil to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 20 Jan. 1909, which describes operations on Livingstone Creek.
- 7 H. Bostock, op. cit., p. 40; NWMP, Annual Report, 1900 Pt. III, PP. 30-1; ibid., 1903, Pt. III, p. 34.
- 9 NWMP, Annual Report, 1903, Pt. III, P. 34; H. Bostock, op. cit., P. 39.
- 10 NWMP, Annual Report, 1903, Pt. III, p. 34.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 PAC, RG 85, Box 1419, fol. 22585, Lithgow to Ross, Dawson, 30 July 1901.
- 13 NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt. III, p. 51.
- 14 Ibid., 1900, Pt. III, pp. 30-1; ibid., 1901, Pt. III, p. 31,
- 15 Ibid., 1900, Pt. III, p. 31.
- 16 The syndicate may have been a subsidiary of the Alaska Commercial Company, see White Horse Star, First Annual Edition, 1901, 1 May 1901, p. 14. No record of it exists in Statutes of Canada, 1898-1905 or the Canada Gazette for the same period. Under an amendment to the Companies Act of 13 June 1898 (61 Vict., Cap. 49) all companies with foreign charters (the Alaska Commercial Company was an American company) wishing to mine in the Yukon had to secure a license from the Secretary of State of Canada and "notice of the issue of such license shall be published in the Canada Gazette" (Sect. 4 of the Act). As previously mentioned, however, no such notice was ever published for the Livingstone Creek Syndicate.
- 17 NWMP, Annual Report, 1901, Pt. III, p. 30. 18 Ibid., 1902, Pt. III, p. 30
- 18 Ibid., 1902, Pt. Iii, p. 51.
- 19 Ibid., 1901, Pt. III, p. 30; ibid., 1902, Pt. III, pp. 7, 51.

- 20 The annual reports of the North-West Mounted Police, which constitute the source of information during this period, make repeated reference to the importation of heavy machinery and hydraulic plants between 1900 and 1902-03. Ibid., 1900, Pt. III, p. 7; *ibid.*, 1901, Pt. III, p. 30; *ibid.*, 1902, Pt. III, p. 7; *ibid.*, 1903, Pt. III, P. 34.
- 21 See Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Chronological Record of Canadian Mining Events From 1604 to 1947 and Historical Tables of the Mineral Production of Canada Ottawa, King's Printer, 1948, p. 92.
- 22 H. Bostock, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
- 23 CDI, Annual Report, 1909, Pt. VI, p. 29, Table 3. The first mining Recorder Office for the Big Salmon gold field was at Fort Selkirk. An office was opened at Hootalinqua circa 1900 and an office was established at Livingstone in the spring of 1903 (PAC, RG 85, Box, 1420, fol. 24119 *ibid.*, Box 1414, fol. 17194; *ibid.*, Box 1417, fol. 203461).
- 24 H. Bostock, *op. cit.*, p. 37; PAC, RG 85, Box 1419, fol. 22585, Lithgow to Ross, Dawson, 30 July 1901.
- 25 NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt. III, p. 7.
- 26 *Ibid.*; White Horse Star First Annual Edition 1901, 1 May 1901, p. 14; PAC, RG. 5, Box, 1419, fol. 2255, Lithgow to Ross, Dawson, 30 July 1901; CDI, Annual Report, 1902-03, Pt. IV, p. 26.
- 27 NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt. III, p. 50. 28 *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*; 1903, Pt. III, p. 35. It is interesting to note that the winter trail resulted in the NWMP withdrawing its detachment from Hootalinqua for the winter after the fall of 1905 (*ibid.*, 1905, Pt. II, p.8).
- 31 PAC, RG 85, Box 1419, fol. 22585, Lithgow to Ross, Dawson, 30 July 1901; NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt III, pp. 52-3.
- 32 NWMP, Annual Report, 1902; Pt. III, pp. 52-3.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 1907, Pt. III p. 22; Canada. Department of Marine and Fisheries List of Shipping 1908.(Ottawa: Ring's Printer, 1909, p. 124. Mention must also be made of the settlement of Commercial Centre (see Fig. 1) which various issues of Polk's Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer describe as the "commercial point for the Big Salmon mining district" (1903, 1905-06, 1917-18). The writer has found no reference to this community elsewhere, nor is it shown on either the 1903 or 1917 maps published by the Department of the Interior.
- 34 NWMP, Annual Report, 1903, Pt. III, PP. 19, 34.

- 35 Ibid., 1904, Pt. III, pp. 33-4. The syndicate worked Nos. 10 to 19 above discovery in 1904, in addition to its own claims.
- 36 Ibid., 1905, Pt. III, p. 41.
- 37 CDI, Annual Report, 1904-05, Pt. VIII, p.. 31; H. Bostock, op. cit., p. 243; PAC, RG 5, Box 1424, fol. 32198, Acland to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 1 Jan. 1910; CDI, Annual Report, 1909, Pt. VI, p. 16.
- 38 Dawson Daily News, Special Edition, 21 July 1909, p. 72; H. Bostock, op. cit., pp. 39-40; PAC, RG 85, Box 1424, fol. Y08, Corneil to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 20 Jan. 1909.
- 39 PAC, RG 85, Box 1424, fol. 32198, Corneil to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 20 Jan. 1909.
- 40 Ibid., Acland to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 1 Jan. 1910. No mention of the syndicate is made in the reports of the agent of the mining recorder at Livingstone Creek after the 1909 season.
- 41 Ibid., Corneil to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 20 Jan. 1909; NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt. III, p. 7.
- 42 PAC, RG 85, Box 1424, fol. 32198, Acland to Gold Commissioner Livingstone Creek, 1 Jan. 1910.
- 43 RNWMP, Annual Report, 1909, Pt. III, p. 208. See also CDI, Annual Report, 1910, Pt. VI, p. 18.
- 44 C.A. Dawson and R.W. Murchie, The Settlement of the Peace River Country: A Study of a Pioneer Area., Vol.6 of Canadian Frontiers of Settlement, eds. W.A. Mackintosh and W.L.G. Joerg Toronto: Macmillan, 1934, pp. 3-4.
- 45 NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt. III, p. 53.
- 46 Ibid., 1906, Pt. III, p. 19.
- 47 Ibid.,1901, Pt. III, PP. 7, 9, 19; ibid., 1903, Pt. III, P. 35; ibid., 1905, Pt. III, p. 44; ibid., 1907, Pt. III, p. 22; PAC, RG75, Vol. 599,01. 2149, White to the secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, 15 Oct. 1906; ibid., Box 1417 fol. 20346, Wood to Smart, Dawson, 18 Nov. 1902. The closing of the Livingstone Creek office should not be considered an indicator of diminished status for Livingstone Creek. Offices on Bonanza, Hunker, Sulphur, Gold Run, Upper Dominion, Forty Mile, Glacier, Stewart River, and at Selkirk were closed concurrently (CDI, Annual Report, 1904-1905 Pt. VII, p. 5.
- 48 PAC, RG 85, PARC 426, "Memorandum re: mail service provided to Yukon District," n.d.; PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, RG 91 , Vol. 10, fol. 2093, Reel M-2835, Blick et al to the Postmaster General, Livingstone Creek, 6 July 1907.

- 49 PAC, RG 91, Vol. 10, fol. 2093, reel M-2835, Ameroux to Thompson, Dawson, 12 Oct. 1912. Ameroux, 's name is variously spelled -oux and -ioux.
- 50 Ibid.; PAC, RG 85, PARC 426, "Memorandum re: mail service provided to Yukon District," n.d.
- 51 NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, Pt. III, p. 51.
- 52 The figure "a dozen or more" is given in Bostock's 1921 field report (H. Bostock, op. cit., p. 62.0). However, a forest fire in 1920 destroyed several cabins (PAC, RG 85, Acc. 70/310, Box 6, file 4907, Berton to _____ Whitehorse, 5 Apr. 1921). It is presumed that the town was close to the NWMP detachment which is shown in Figs. 3 & 4. A map submitted to the department (Indian and Northern Affairs) in 1973 requesting that an historic reserve be placed on the creek shows the mining recorder's office in the same general vicinity as the police compound. Figs. 5 & 6 show well-constructed log structures on each side of what was probably the wagon road [photos not available].
- 53 NWMP, Annual Report, 1901, Pt. III, p. 20; PAC, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Records, RG 18, Vol. 3087, "NWM Police Reserves in Yukon."
- 54 PAC, RG 85, Box. 1420, fol. 24119; Polk's Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer, 1915-16, p. 780; PAC, RG 85, Box, 1424, fol. 32198, Corneil to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 20 Jan. 1909; PAC, RG 91, Vol. 10, fol. 2093; reel M2835, Lowe to Henderson, Dawson, 14 Aug. 1907; RWMP Annual Report, 1907, Pt. III, p. 6; PAC, RG 85, Acc. 68/130, Box 155739, fol. 62853, Keyes to Dawson Gold Commissioner, Ottawa, 6 Oct. 1910; PAC, RG 85 Vol. 659, Reid to Whitehorse Mining Recorder, Dawson, 2 July 1925.
- 55 Annual Report, 1901, Pt. III p.7.
- 56 Ibid., 1901 - 1910; CDI, Annual Report[s], 1901-1910
- 57 PAC, RG 91, Vol. 10, fol. 2093, reel M-2835, Blick et al to Postmaster General, Livingstone Creek, 6 July 1907.
- 58 PAC, RG 85, Vol. 599, fol. 2149, White to Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, 15 Oct. 1906; RNWMP, Annual Report, 1906, Pt. III, p. 99.
- 59 RNWMP, Annual Report, 1910, Pt. III, pp. 214, 224.
- 60 Ibid., 1911, Pt. III, p. 214; ibid., 1912, Pt. III, p. 224
- 61 Ibid., 1911, Pt. III, p. 221-2; Polk's Alaska Yukon Gazetteer, 1915-16, p. 80.
- 62 PAC, RG 85, Box 1424, fol. 32198
- 63 CDI, Annual Report, 1912, Pt. I, p. 80.

- 64 Ibid., 1914, Pt. I, p. 70-1.
- 65 RNWMP, Annual Report, 1915 Pt. III, p. 250; CDI, Annual Report, 1916, Pt. I, p. 62.
- 66 CDI, Annual Report, 1912, Pt I, p. 80; *ibid.*, 1914, Pt. I, p. 70-1.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 1917, Pt. I, p. 62.
- 68 PAC, RG 85, Acc. 70/310, Box 6, fol. 4907; Polk's Alaska Yukon Gazetteer, 1915-16, p. 70-1.
- 69 PAC, RG 85, Acc. 70/310, Box 6, fol. 4907; PAC RG 85, Box 1431, fol. 48020, "Synopsis of Annual Report of Whitehorse Dominion Lands District, 1919."
- 70 PAC, RG 85, Acc. 70/310, Box 13, fol. 4907, "Report of the Whitehorse Mining recorder, 10 Apr. 1928," which gives a brief description on mining in the district between 1922 and 1927; *ibid.*, 1929; PAC, RG 85, Vol. 659, fol. 3595.
- 71 PAC, RG 85, Acc. 70/310, Box 13, fol. 4907, "Annual Report for the Whitehorse Dominion Lands District, 31 Mar. 1930."
- 72 *Ibid.*, Box 15, fol. 5659, "Mining Conditions in Yukon, 1930,"; *ibid.*, "Mining Conditions... 1935."
- 73 Rex Beach, Personal Exposures (New York: Harper, c. 1940), p. 58.
- 74 H. Bostock, *op. sit.*, p. 623.
- 75 See PAC, RG 85, Acc. 70/310, Box 6, fol. 4787, Rowatt to Self, Ottawa, 11 Feb. 1913. The writer's estimate is based on a study of production figures given in various years.
- 76 H. Bostock, *op. sit.*, p. 41.

Aviation History of Livingstone Creek

The following is drawn from the memories of Bob Cameron, Al Serafinchon, Lloyd Ryder, Gerry McCully, and the researcher. Other sources are as identified in the footnotes.

Aviation History of Livingstone Creek

From the 1930s on, air travel has been an important part of supporting the mining and trapping activities of the Livingstone Creek district, transporting passengers and many tons of freight and gallons of fuel in all seasons, thus reducing dependence on the long, often impassable roads. It had a direct effect on the social life of the creeks by making it more possible for young children to be part of the isolated community (55 air miles, 70 miles by winter road from Whitehorse). Because they could be transported relatively swiftly to medical attention if needed, families were able to remain together throughout the mining season.



Ford Trimotor airplane at Livingstone Creek, May 1938, YA 82-322 PHO 26 #22, Norman Stone Coll. L. to R.: Taylor McGundy, Solomon Charlie, Co-pilot Buck Stone, Dan Snure, & unidentified "Livingstone Miners". Pilot Ev Wasson below on same occasion.



The first landing field was a meadow approximately one mile from South Fork (Big Salmon River), about three miles west of the Livingstone townsite. Lloyd Ryder recounts, "That runway was done by hand, pulled all the stumps and stuff with pry-poles. It was in good condition. There were no Cats out there in the '30s. They could have done a lot of the work with horses."²² At that time there was a cable car across the river.²³

²² Interview, March 17, 2004.

²³ Al Serafinchon, personal comm., Jan 2004.

The first known flight to this field was in 1938, recorded in the photo above.²⁴ The plane was a Ford Trimotor owned by BYN (White Pass), piloted by Ev Wasson²⁵ with co-pilot Norman “Buck” Stone. Passengers were White Pass deckhands Solomon Charlie and Taylor McGundy, and Livingstone miners including Dan Snure²⁶ (center).

A second airstrip was built by Louis Engle in the early 1950s with a D2 Cat, about two and a half miles from the Livingstone town site. It was upgraded and enlarged from 100 feet x 1200, to 250 feet x 1800 feet, by Al Serafinchon and Gerry McCully of Constellation Mines in June/July, 1971.²⁷



A small dirt-floored shack at the side of the airstrip was affectionately known as the Airport Chalet and sheltered people, sometimes for days at a time, waiting for their plane. The inside walls were covered with the graffiti of many years. Al Serafinchon made the signs pointing to the creeks in 1971. For some years a red mailbox was nailed to the logs next to the door. Jim Greer made

Airport Chalet at Livingstone Airstrip 1971, Ken Jones Photo

the door and covered it with plastic. A very small woodstove gave an indifferent heat.

The airstrip was often the gathering place for people from all over the creeks, an opportunity to gossip, swap mining stories, and make deals. The sound of an incoming plane could create a stampede of people arriving on foot, by truck, “swamp buggy” and motorbike, hoping for mail, tobacco, and alcohol, or to snag a trip out. Often a plane would alert the party it was intended for by flying overhead, wagging its wings. This did not prevent the occasional “theft” of a plane when an enterprising individual arrived at the airstrip ahead of the person who’d ordered it, and convinced the pilot to take him instead.

Sometimes messages were air-dropped from a plane in a tobacco tin, weighted with a rock and flagged with bright orange engineering tape. In 1974 the Liberal party sent out a plane to bring voters into Whitehorse for the Federal election. A few Americans without Canadian voting rights got on board too. Nobody complained.

²⁴ Lloyd Ryder believed the flight was in 1934 or 1935.

²⁵ Identified by Bob Cameron.

²⁶ Snure is identified by the researcher from a comparison of his likeness with another photo of the same period.

²⁷ Gerald (Gerry) McCully remembers the remodeled strip as 5000 feet long. Interview July 21, 2001 YA2003/05.

Pilot and aviation historian Bob Cameron says “regarding Livingston - local airplanes and pilots have been going in and out of there as far back as I can remember. Pretty well all of us who have flown commercially out of here [Whitehorse] (not counting airline pilots) have done trips to Livingston with Beavers, Otters, Cessnas, etc.”²⁸

Cameron made frequent flights to Livingstone between 1971 – 1975. His first flight was an emergency trip at midnight June 23, 1971 in TNTA's (Trans North Turbo Air) Beaver to pick up pilot Harold Hoobanoff and passengers Ace Parker and Doug Craig, who had just crashed on take-off in a Cessna 172. The pilot seat had come loose, sending Harold sliding into the back of the cabin just as the aircraft became airborne, causing the plane to cartwheel. The pilot and passengers escaped with scratches.



Pilot Ed Phillips (L), Max Fuerstner, (R), and flipped Cessna 185. YA 2003/05 #14 McCully

Two or three years later Ed Phillips flipped a Cessna 185, C-FZRA, upside down on landing in heavy wet snow on wheels. Again there were no serious injuries. Two earlier crashes were a Great Northern Airways Beaver (CF-MAS) which crashed on take-off in spring of 1968, and a Mooney that went down in 1969.²⁹

²⁸ Email correspondence, Dec. 03, 2003.

²⁹ Bob Cameron, emails and personal comm., 2003.



Great Northern Air's CF-MAS ca. 1968 YA 2003/05 #13 McCully Coll.

Other aircraft flown to Livingstone were a 206 Cessna piloted by Ed Phillips, a Beaver belonging to Great Northern Air piloted by Lloyd Ryder, and a DC3 owned by Northward, which carried a large fuel bladder, piloted by Bill Dayton.³⁰

Rene Leduc was a helicopter pilot. He also flew a Cessna 206 that belonged to Elvin's Equipment that he later purchased.³¹ He owned a small Suzuki trail bike that he modified with a hinge plate so that it could be folded into the hold of the plane and used for running around the creek roads.

Helicopters have been a part of Livingstone's aviation history, with their ability to fly directly to the claims on the creeks.

Pilots were sometimes reluctantly involved in tragedies as when, in the 1980s, Peter Kelly flew a helicopter out with the coroner to retrieve the body of a young man who died on one of the creeks. Sometimes the flights were rescue missions. In June 1953, Stan Clethero walked out to Whitehorse to get a plane for Louis Engle who was ill from food poisoning. A week later Stan's own father was so ill with cancer that Stan again had to walk out to summon help. This time a helicopter came, but was unable to land close by,

³⁰ Gerald (Gerry) McCully, Interview July 21, 2001 YA2003/05.

³¹ Al Serafinchon, personal comm. (2004).

so Stan had to carry his father three miles on his back to the airstrip. William Clethero died in hospital two weeks later on June 26.s³²



Waiting for the plane, 1974, YA 2003/05 #12, McCully Coll.

Back row (L -R) Matthew Wilkie in truck, Mary Greer, Jim Greer, Ed Hill, Augie Hill Trexler, George Asuchak Sr., Lee Wilkie (Leslie Hamson), Ronnie Asuchack, Bob Miller, Georgie Asuchak, Steve Ames. Front row (R-L) Todd Ames, Gerry McCully & son Jonathan, Burr Mosby, Dick Young
Photo by Max Fuerstner Sr.

Pilots to Livingstone were also witnesses to amusing incidents. Bob Cameron was hired to fly Sheriff Al Adams out in the late fall ca. 1974 to seize a pickup truck for non-payment. The flight was made in a Single Otter ski plane. The truck was found frozen into a glacier that had formed in a dip of the trail. It had been brought to Livingstone over the winter road by Armand Arsenault, who arranged to sell it to Gerry McCully, but no payments had been made. When Arsenault learned where the truck had been found, he commissioned a helicopter to fly to the location, stuffed the truck full of dynamite and blew it up. The following spring, McCully scavenged the parts that had been protected under the ice to repair another old Dodge pickup, creating a serviceable vehicle.³³

Mining activity in the Livingstone district dropped to minimal as of 2003. According to Bob Cameron, “the most frequent operator in and out of there is Big Salmon Air (Dave Young).” Young affirmed “We used to make up to 250 trips a year to Livingstone; now we are down to about ten,”³⁴ despite an increase of gold prices in 2004 that stimulated a small renewal of mining activity.³⁵

³² Interview with Stan Clethero by Doug Olynyk, June 01, 1993, for the Heritage Branch, and Alice Pamela Clethero McGuire, Chapter 8, Yukon Women of Power, Joyce Hayden, Windwalker Press, 1999. McGuire Press gives her father’s death date as June 27. The cause of Louis Engle’s illness is from a story heard by the researcher in the 1970s.

³³ Bob Cameron personal commu., & Gerry McCully (Ibid.).

³⁴ Personal commu., October 6, 2004.

³⁵ A further rise in gold prices is creating more mining related activity in 2006.

Livingstone Creek Biographies

Biographies Forward

The following biographies represent a selection of people from different eras of the Livingstone Creek district. Selection was limited by availability of material and time constraints; unfortunately, some people who deserved to be represented were omitted. Dates beneath the names refer to the years the individuals or families were active in the Livingstone area. Where known, the birth and death dates have included been in the text of the article. The articles are arranged by date of approximate arrival in the district, as below.

	Individual or Family	Dates in District	Page
1.	J.E. Peters	1894-1932	49
2.	George Black	1898	52
3.	Daniel G. Snure	1900-1930s	55
4.	Clethero (Cletheroe) Family	1902-1953	58
5.	Lillian Mabel Taylor	1902-1909	63
6.	“Stampede” John Stenbraten	1906-1940s	68
7.	Frank Slim	1930s	70
8.	Clem Emminger	1930s-1960s	74
9.	Tom & Beda Kerruish	1930s-1960s	77
10.	Louis Engle	1930s-1970s	80
11.	Nakamura Family	1970s-1980s	82
12.	Al & Maria Serafinchon	1971-1986	84
13.	Fuerstner Family	1967-present	90
14.	Gerald (Gerry) David McCully	1970-1976	94
15.	Additional notes & photos	various dates	99

J. E. Peters

Dates in area: 1900-1932



"If I had it to do over again I would not take all the gold in the Yukon and be away from my family."

Mr. Peters was one of the longest-term residents of Livingstone Creek. A relative of Joseph Samuel Peters³⁶ who was co-discoverer of the gold finds on Cottoneva and Livingstone Creek, James Edwin Peters left a large number of papers, letters, letter press books, claim deeds, and other documents³⁷ that chronicle his business activities, interactions with others on the creeks, and refer to his family affairs.

The documents indicate he was active in the Livingstone area from 1900 to 1932 or longer.³⁸ In a letter³⁹ dated March 16, 1912 he mentioned having been in the north since 1896, following his work that year at Schwabacher Hardware in Seattle.⁴⁰

³⁶ Other relatives active in the area were Frances William Peters—Northern Affairs Program, Mining Recorder Records (Placer) Series 10, 1-9 Index of Free Miners Certificates Gov 1898-1906; 1907, and Joseph E. Peters who prospected and mined with George Black—Occurrence No 13 1994.20.194, pp. 17-19.

³⁷ YA MSS 98/29 James E. Peters Collection; Livingstone Creek Collection YA Acc# 2003/08; Jim Robb Collection 2001/165; Stehelin Collection 2002/53.

³⁸ Livingstone Creek Collection YA Acc# 2003/08.

³⁹ Letter to Dr. Charles A. Tryal College St. Toronto re: health issues--2001/138 J.E. Peters Letters MSS 280, f. 2, 3, 4, 5.

⁴⁰ YA Livingstone Creek Papers. MS 82/193 f-20.

Some of J. E. Peters' early years in the Yukon can be tracked through the issuance of Free Miners Certificates:⁴¹ in Dawson in 1898, at Tagish and Hootlinqua in 1900 and again in 1903-1904. In the 1905-1907 certificates he was described as being "of Whitehorse".

In 1903, Peters worked for the Big Salmon Hydraulic Company, a publicly traded mining company involved in all phases of placer mining. At that time the company was camped near Livingstone Creek. J.J. Maney was the General Manager.⁴² In later years Peters continued to correspond with him regarding mining ventures.⁴³

Polk's Directory lists James E. Peters as a Livingstone Creek freighter in 1911/12 and a miner and a freighter at Livingstone in 1915-1916 .

Peters bought the lower half of Discovery Claim on Livingstone Creek from Arthur Johnson in 1913.⁴⁴ He worked until June 1914 on Summit Creek in the Livingstone District when he was forced to suspend operations due to lack of water for sluicing. He started a sawmill to cut sluicing lumber for a 6500' flume, owned four claims, and had options on more. He planned to start hydraulicking on the upper end of Discovery.⁴⁵

In 1918 Peters lived at the Alberta Road House on the Overland Trail on the Stewart River. In 1921 he was a purser on a steamer and in 1920 worked on the Winter Mail Service.⁴⁶ He bought Discovery Claim [upper half?] on Livingstone from Percy Sharpe in 1924.⁴⁷

James Peters carried the mail twice a month to Livingstone on the winter road. He had two horses and a sleigh,⁴⁸ and was stableman for the White Pass Winter Mail Service. Another position was as a Yukon Gold Company pointman.

Peters was an avid correspondent, copies of which he kept in "letter press" books now in the Yukon Archives (see footnote #1). A widower, some of his letters reflect his family ties that he cherished although he spent most of his life away from his two sons and daughter. He had a tender correspondence with a young niece, who is later referred to when she is grown up and ready to marry.

In the 1930s Peters wrote a number of letters from Seattle to correspondents in Livingstone in a very shaky hand after an apparent illness. At that time he still hoped to return to Livingstone, and spoke with concern about the wellbeing of his horse he had left behind. However towards the end of his life he noted "If I had it to do over again I would not take all the gold in the Yukon and be away from my family."

⁴¹ Northern Affairs Program, Mining Recorder Records (Placer) Series 10, 1-9 Index of Free Miners Certificates Gov 1898-1906; 1907.

⁴² YAUL (Yukon Archives Union List) Big Salmon Hydraulic Co fonds description.

⁴³ 2001/138 J.E. Peters Letters 1909-1911 MSS 280, f.1.

⁴⁴ YA Mss 82/193 Livingstone Creek papers f20 f4.

⁴⁵ Mining and Scientific Press, October 17, 1914.

⁴⁶ YA Livingstone Creek Papers. MS 82/193 f-20.

⁴⁷ YA Mss 82/193 Livingstone Creek papers f20 f4.

⁴⁸ Yukon River Oral History Project, 81/32, tape 6, Johnny Hoggan.

Additional Notes:

The Livingstone Creek Collection YA Acc#82/93 consists of the following:

- records relating to the mining efforts of J. E. Peters, ca. 1900-1920, which include receipts, invoices and shipping bills
- correspondence, legal papers, and placer mining grants, documents and deeds of mining transfer
- correspondence from the Pacific Construction Co.
- photographs of J. E. Peters, J. K. Peters and his son
- mining papers of Raymond J. Peters, 1917-1921

George Black
Dates in area: 1898



George Black,
Hougen Collection 2002/118

George Black was born in Woodstock, New Brunswick, April 10, 1872 or 1873. In 1897 the young lawyer left with other New Brunswickers to join the Klondike Gold Rush. He and Samuel Lough discovered gold on Cottoneva Creek in 1897 or 1898. According to a Clem Emminger interview with John Scott in 1965,⁴⁹ other partners in the discovery were Lloyd Peter [?]⁵⁰ Bob Chestnut and Joseph E. Peters. Emminger said that Cottoneva Creek was named after Cottoneva County in California where Lloyd Peter [?] was from (p.16).

Joseph E. Peters prospected at Livingstone in 1894. He and Black staked Livingstone Creek in 1898⁵¹ and took out 200 ounces in four weeks.⁵² They named the creek after Black's colleague in Whitehorse, M.D. Livingstone.

According to Emminger, the staking of Cottoneva and Livingstone creeks was done all in one day, traveling on foot from Cottoneva to Livingstone:

"...of course there was no trails them days, they went up the creek and came over the top of the mountain.... You follow the ridge along, and then they came down Livingstone Creek. And prospected the Livingstone Creek, and by God, they found some very good prospects there. And they stake from there on up, and they dispatched a recorder to Dawson.they done all this in one day, and the fellow went down the valley, down the creek.... and down the Big Salmon and down to Dawson [to register the claims]. "(p.16-17):

Emminger gave details of the staking:

"...they stake five claims, each one a claim, and they dispatched a recorder. The next day they went down the canyon and they came back; each one with a pack full of nuggets that was lying right on bedrock.they could stake 10 claims for themselves and 10 for the Crown, and they put the Crown ground down in the canyon where it was the richer. First they pickup up all the nuggets then what they could put in [pack sack?] you see. They tried to catch the guy went down recording, but they couldn't catch up with him, he was gone. That's why the NC [Northern Commercial] Company got that ground then, you see, they bought it

⁴⁹ YA Acc#77/55, SR 42-1 John Scott fonds. A transcript was prepared as part of the LCHI project in 2003.

⁵⁰ Not clear on recording.

⁵¹ Occurrence No 13 1994.20.194, pgs 17-19.

⁵² B. Krefit Placer Mining and Exploration Compilation, NTS 105E. Open files 1995 9 (G).

Black later sold his claims and went to Dawson City.

The name Mount Black was suggested by Hugh Bostock in 1935; it is the highest peak in the Big Salmon Range.⁵³

From 1905 to 1911 Black served three terms as a member of the Yukon Council. In 1912 he was appointed Commissioner and in this capacity was occasionally still involved with the affairs of Livingstone Creek: the Yukon Placer Mining Act August 1908 describes the Rules of Procedure before a Board of Arbitrators acting under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act, approved by George Black, Commissioner and G.D. MacKenzie, Gold Commissioner, April 7, 1913.⁵⁴

Black resigned from this office in 1916 to form the Yukon Infantry Company, recruiting 275 Yukoners whom he led overseas. Returning after the war he was elected as a Conservative Member of Parliament in 1921 and represented the Yukon until his retirement from politics because of ill health in 1935.

His wife Martha Black, whom he married in 1904, was the Yukon MP from 1935-1940. George Black was again MP from 1940-1949.

The Black's residence in Dawson City was at 5th Avenue and Turner Street and is still maintained as a heritage house. Their home in Whitehorse was on Jarvis Street near the Regina Hotel.⁵⁵ The Blacks lived in Vancouver between sessions of the House of Commons.

Martha died in 1958 and George remarried in 1959, moving to Vancouver, where he died in 1965.



George & Martha Black, 1957
Hougen Collection YA#2002/118

⁵³ Coutts, R, 1980, Yukon Places & Names, Gray's Publishing Ltd, Sidney, B.C. Canada.

⁵⁴ YA MSS 98/29 James E. Peters Collection.

⁵⁵ Prior to the Black's residency, the house was lived in by the T.C. Richards. The building was purchased by the Regina Hotel and demolished in the 1970s—Goodie Sparling, interview, March 13, 2004.



George & Martha Black Hougén Coll. YA 2001/118

Sources:

YAUL (Yukon Archives Union List)
Other references as described in footnotes

Daniel G. Snure
Dates in area: 1897-1930s



Dan Snure as a Young Man
Dan Snure fonds, 99/72 PHO 500, #2

Lindeman, B.C., Snure arrived in the Yukon in November 1897, locating with Ned Dycer and Arthur Manners at the mouth of the Hootalinqua where it joins the Lewes River. They operated a road house for the early stampeders.

In 1900, after traffic was diverted to the Overland Trail to Dawson and business at the roadhouse declined, Snure moved to Livingstone Creek and operated a road house from about 1905.⁵⁶ His building may have replaced an earlier one run by Bob McIntosh, who closed operations for the winter in 1901,⁵⁷ or possibly the establishments were in different locations. Hugh Bostock dates the Snure roadhouse at Livingstone as 1899 - 1912.⁵⁸

Daniel Gerald Snure was born in Jordan, Ontario on March 26, 1863. He boarded a ship from Portland, Oregon to Alaska in August 1897 to join the Klondike gold rush with his partner Ned Dycer, after whom Dycer Creek, near Livingstone Creek, is named.

After spending the first winter at Lake



Dan Snure & Friend
Dan Snure fonds 99/72 PHO 500 #9

⁵⁶ See roadhouse photo, Bennett Report & Village sections.

⁵⁷ "Big Salmon Happenings", Whitehorse Star, Dec 04, 1904.

⁵⁸ H. S. Bostock, Pack Horse Tracks, recollections of a geologist's life in British Columbia and the Yukon, 1924 - 1954. GSC, 1974.

Snure also had mining interests over the years,⁵⁹ and paid his mining debts by working as a general merchandiser for a mining supplies office, an agent for Dominion Telegraph established in 1907, and as the only postmaster from the opening of the office in 1908 until ca. 1916. He was also the Agent of the Mining Recorder at Livingstone from 1910,⁶⁰ when the Royal North-West Mounted Police detachment was withdrawn, until 1925.⁶¹



Three Oldtimers. Dan Snure on Right
Dan Snure fonds 99/72 #11

During Snure's tenure as agent for Dominion Telegraph, J. E. Peters made the following communication, dated May 1 1909, to J.J. Many regarding a mining deal: "Dan G. Snure is agent for Gov this end of telephone and as he is interested in the Livingstone property it would not do and anything comes over the wire through him is more public than

a postal card..." In the same letter he referred to Dan Snure wanting to "sell all of Livingstone Creek" to someone named G.A. Singer.⁶²

Peter's 1910 entry, further evidence of Snure's varied entrepreneurial efforts, notes advice for Dan G. Snure from Whitney (merchant with Whitney & Pedlar): Moose horns "are of no value...as they can't be shipped out of Canada."

Snure's store sometimes served as a meeting hall. Peter's stylograph⁶³ contains the minutes or report of a June 2, 1912 meeting held there regarding the urgent need for road repairs from Mason's Landing to Livingstone. Among those referred to were

⁵⁹ "D. G. Snure is driving into the hillside a short distance below [Geary, on the left limit of Livingstone Creek]—Mining & Scientific Press, October 17, 1914.

⁶⁰ YAUL (Yukon Archives Union List) gives the dates as ca. 1916-1919.

⁶¹ [Gordon Bennett's f.n. #54] PAC, RG 85, Box. 1420, fol. 24119; Polk's Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer, 1915-16, p. 780; PAC, RG 85, Box, 1424, fol. 32198, Corneil to Gold Commissioner, Livingstone Creek, 20 Jan. 1909; PAC, RG 91, Vol. 10, fol. 2093; reel M2835, Lowe to Henderson, Dawson, 14 Aug. 1907; RWMP Annual Report, 1907, Pt. III, p. 6; PAC, RG 85, Acc. 68/130, Box 155739, fol. 62853, Keyes to Dawson Gold Commissioner, Ottawa, 6 Oct. 1910; PAC, RG 85 Vol. 659, Reid to Whitehorse Mining Recorder, Dawson, 2 July 1925.

⁶² J.E. Peters, Stylographic copy book, entries May 20 1909 - Nov 23 1911, Stehelin Collection YA 2001/138.

⁶³ J.E. Peters Letters MSS 280, f. 2, 3, 4, 5 (1912) 2001/138.

Captain P. Martin, Mr. W.L. Phelps, and Andrew Campbell who was to be hired for job. The document was for presentation to Yukon Council.

Snure eventually moved to Whitehorse and worked for the fur-trading and merchandising company Taylor and Drury Limited, relocating to act as their manager in Carmacks. Elder Kitty Smith, in 2003, recalled visiting him in the store there when she was a child.⁶⁴

Dan Snure remained in Carmacks until his terminal illness brought him back to Whitehorse. He died in Whitehorse on June 29, 1940. Snure was a Mason and is buried in the Mason plot. He left relatives in Vancouver and Eastern Canada.⁶⁵



**Dan Snure in First Chair in the Yukon
Dan Snure fonds 99/72 PHO 500 #10**

⁶⁴ Personal comm. Dec 2003.

⁶⁵ "Pioneer of the Yukon Passes away in Whitehorse Hospital" The Whitehorse Star, July 5, 1940.

The Clethero (Cletheroe)⁶⁶ Family
Dates in area: 1902-1953



Amy Laberge Cletheroe at Quiet Lake, cutting moose steaks, ca. 1970 Alice Cletheroe McGuire Coll.

Amy Laberge Cletheroe was born at Winter Crossing in 1906, the daughter of Billy Laberge (also known as Laberge Billy) and Jenny Smith. Jenny's traditional name was Hu ala. She was from Rangoon and was raised in Tagish, Yukon.

Billy Laberge was born and raised along the Hootalinqua River at Winter Crossing near Livingstone. His traditional name was K'umgaelte.⁶⁷ He also had a cabin in the McClintock Valley where he hunted moose, especially in February and March, using a trail that went over Grey Mountain to the McClintock Valley.⁶⁸

William (Bill, Billy) Cletheroe came from the Falkland Islands to the Yukon to take part in the Klondike gold rush, arriving in Dawson in 1900. He prospected in the Livingstone Creek area around 1902 and hunted game for Burns meat store. Acquiring claims on Little Violet Creek, he maintained the assessment work on it every summer until eventually moving there. He also worked as a cook and hauled freight.

⁶⁶ Some family members spell the name ending in "e", others do not—Frances Clethero Woolsey, personal comm., 2003.

⁶⁷ Gertie Tom interviewed by Kathy Sam. Carmacks Oral Histories, 1987.

⁶⁸ Louie Smith interviewed by Sweeney Scurvey. Canyon City Oral History, 1995.



Billy Cletheroe at Little Violet Creek, in the raspberry patch ca. 1940. Alice Cletheroe McGuire Collection

Cletheroe met Amy Laberge at Winter Crossing, where the whole camp was in mourning because Amy had fallen in the fire, burning her left side and arm, and was expected to die. Bill took her to the hospital in Whitehorse. She attended the Chooutla Indian Residential School for five years. Although Amy was 20 years younger than Bill, the couple married in about 1925 when Bill was manager of Taylor and Drury's store in Champagne. Bill hauled freight by horse and sleigh, later by truck. For a time, he worked on the Yukon River hauling freight from Carmacks to Winter Crossing.

The couple lived at Livingstone and Little Violet creeks, mining and trapping. They had nine children. Ralph was born at Livingstone and Violet at Little Violet Creek. Two of the children died in infancy. The surviving children were Stanley (d. 1998), Frances (Woolsey), Ralph (d. 1992), Alice (McGuire), Violet (Santo), Dora (McGuire)⁶⁹ and John.

Frances Woolsey remembers the family home on Little Violet as a cabin with two large rooms and a porch. Alice described a house that burned in a forest fire in 1920 and was rebuilt in 1931⁷⁰ at a different location, at the bottom of the hill. A smaller cabin was used to store trapping tools. The smokehouse was a log structure with screens, and a tentframe at the top of the hill was a tool shed used for the mining operation.⁷¹ An old mining adit served as a cold storage root house. The family had a green house, and dammed a spring to make a pond, where buckets were filled and carried to tubs to warm in the sun for watering the plants in the evening. By 1993 the home cabin area had been bulldozed.

⁶⁹ Dora and Alice married brothers—Frances C. Woolsey.

⁷⁰ Alice Pamela Cletheroe McGuire, in *Yukon's Women of Power: Political Pioneers in a Northern Canadian Colony*, Joyce Hayden, Windwalker Press, Whitehorse, 1999, p.254.

⁷¹ Personal commun. 2004-2006.

The family also had a cabin at Livingstone, across the creek from most of the other dwellings. As well, Bill Cletheroe had a tent frame on Martin Creek. He built roads for his mines.⁷²

In later years Stanley built a trapping cabin with the help of his brother Ralph at the junction of Mendocina and Dycer creeks as well one on Dycer itself. He also built a trapping cabin in the Big Bend area in 1945, and prospected as well.⁷³

Alice Cletheroe McGuire recounted⁷⁴ “For years and years there was hardly anyone at Livingstone Creek except us,” and described the place as “a ghost town by the 1930s and early ‘40s. All of the houses were just as they had been left when people walked away. There were even dishes on some of the tables. Dinner plates were still sitting there and everything. I remember there was a big roadhouse with a barroom. When we were kids we used to go in there, if we could sneak away. Dad never allowed us to touch anything, so we never did, ever. But we would go into the barroom and play act all the stories we had read. It was really neat.”

Frances remembers that there was only one section standing of what was originally a two-part roadhouse (see “Dan Snure’s Place” photo, ca. 1905, page 31). She recalls seeing a coffee grinder, and noted that the floor was either dirt or sawdust, but no boards.⁷⁵ Stanley described the bar “where you could drink whiskey”, the dining room, and the kitchen in the center of the building. His father worked at the road house for a while.⁷⁶ The building was rumoured to have burned down some time in the 1960s.⁷⁷

Alice described Mrs. Kerruish⁷⁸ coming to Little Violet in the summers to keep up the assessment work on her claims after her husband died. Frances recalls visiting the Kerruish house at Livingstone, and that the couple kept a garden. They had a horsehair couch that years later Frances saw in the MacBride Museum.⁷⁹ Jack MacGillivray, Clem Emminger,⁸⁰ and Louis Engel also came out to maintain their claims on Cottoneva Creek. “Now and again there would be a group of Indians going through, like the Jackson family hunting party from Teslin. They came to the Livingstone area to hunt beaver.”⁸¹

Amy was a strong, courageous, and humorous woman, whose hunting and fishing skills maintained the family. She hunted with a .270 calibre rifle given to her by Billy Laberge and prepared moose hides and furs to make clothing, moccasins and mitts for the family, also doing beautiful beadwork. She taught her children to snare rabbits and use the .22 at a young age. The family lived at Little Violet and Livingstone until Amy left with the children in 1947,⁸² bringing them out to Whitehorse by foot and by boat. Bill and Stanley,

⁷² Stanley Clethero interviewed by Doug Olynyk, June 1, 1993.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Yukon Women of Power (1999).

⁷⁵ Personal comm. March 2004.

⁷⁶ Stanley Clethero (1993).

⁷⁷ Ace Parker, personal comm, 1972.

⁷⁸ Misspelled as Kurough in Yukon Women of Power p.254. See also Tom & Beda Kerruish Biography in this report.

⁷⁹ Personal comm. 2002.

⁸⁰ Misspelled as Emenger, Ibid.

⁸¹ Yukon Women of Power (1999; p. 254).

⁸² Stan Clethero, Interview with Doug Olynyk, June 1, 1993.

the eldest, stayed behind for the summer to do assessment work on their gold claim. Bill continued to return seasonally until he became ill in 1953.

Lloyd Ryder⁸³ recalls the Cletheroe family well. “They stayed out in Livingstone all the time and they’d come to town usually this time of year, in March, and get re-supplied. They always came by dog team. Of course being kids, we were always interested in dogs, especially teams that came to town. Their kids were pretty much the same age I was so we’d play around together. I think at that time in the ‘30s at least one of them was going to school here, maybe more.”

Bill died of cancer May 27, 1953, two weeks following his son Stanley’s long walk from Little Violet to order a medivac by helicopter from Whitehorse. “He knew had it [cancer] but wanted to stay at Livingstone Creek as long as he could.”⁸⁴ The air force helicopter couldn’t land where he wanted it to so Stanley had to pack his father on his back about three miles to the airstrip. Just a week before he rescued his father, Stanley had made the trek on foot to order a medivac plane for Louis Engle.⁸⁵

Bill’s age at death is not clear. Stanley believed him to be 72.⁸⁶ His date of birth, however, as registered on his birth certificate found at the Old Log Church by his family, places him at age 76 when he died. He is buried in the Pioneer Cemetery in downtown Whitehorse. Amy died July 15, 1986 at 79 years.⁸⁷

Two of Amy and Bill’s children, Frances and Alice, made significant contributions to the political and social development of the Yukon. Both women were involved with Yukon Association of Non-Status Indians, Frances as a founding member. YANSI was the counterpart to Yukon Native Brotherhood which served only Status Indians. Eventually the organizations amalgamated with the Council of Yukon Indians to give more force to the land claims process.

In 1966, prior to the formation of these organizations, Frances was the treasurer of the Klondike Indian Association, then in 1969 the executive director for the Skookum Jim Memorial Hall, which for a brief time was known as the Yukon Indian and Metis Friendship Centre. She was a founding member of the Yukon Indian Women’s Association in the 1970s and the Them’ma Day Care Centre, and is a current member of the Whitehorse Women’s Circle.⁸⁸ She has participated in a number of cultural heritage research projects over the years.

⁸³ Ryder, interview, March 17, 2004.

⁸⁴ Stanley Cletheroe. p.2.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p.2.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p.2.

⁸⁷ Yukon Women of Power (1999).

⁸⁸ Frances Clethero Woolsey, personal comm. March 2004.



**The Cletheroe Children, Rear L to R: Frances, Alice.
Front L to R: Dora, John. Alice Cletheroe McGuire Collection**

Alice also has a long record of community service, founding and managing a number of programs and organizations including the *Yukon Indian News* and the first Indian Special Police Program. She was president and volunteer manager of the Grey Mountain Housing Association and managed the Yukon Indian Centre, which among other functions housed Them'ma Day Care Centre, one of the first in the Yukon. She set up centralized accounting systems for several First Nations organizations. In Haines Junction Alice served on the Local Improvement District Board and was president of the local Non-Status Association while also running two successful businesses. In 1978 she was elected to the Yukon Legislative Assembly as the member for Kluane. With Grafton Njootli of Old Crow, Alice was the first First Nations person to be elected in the entire 80 years of the legislative assembly.⁸⁹

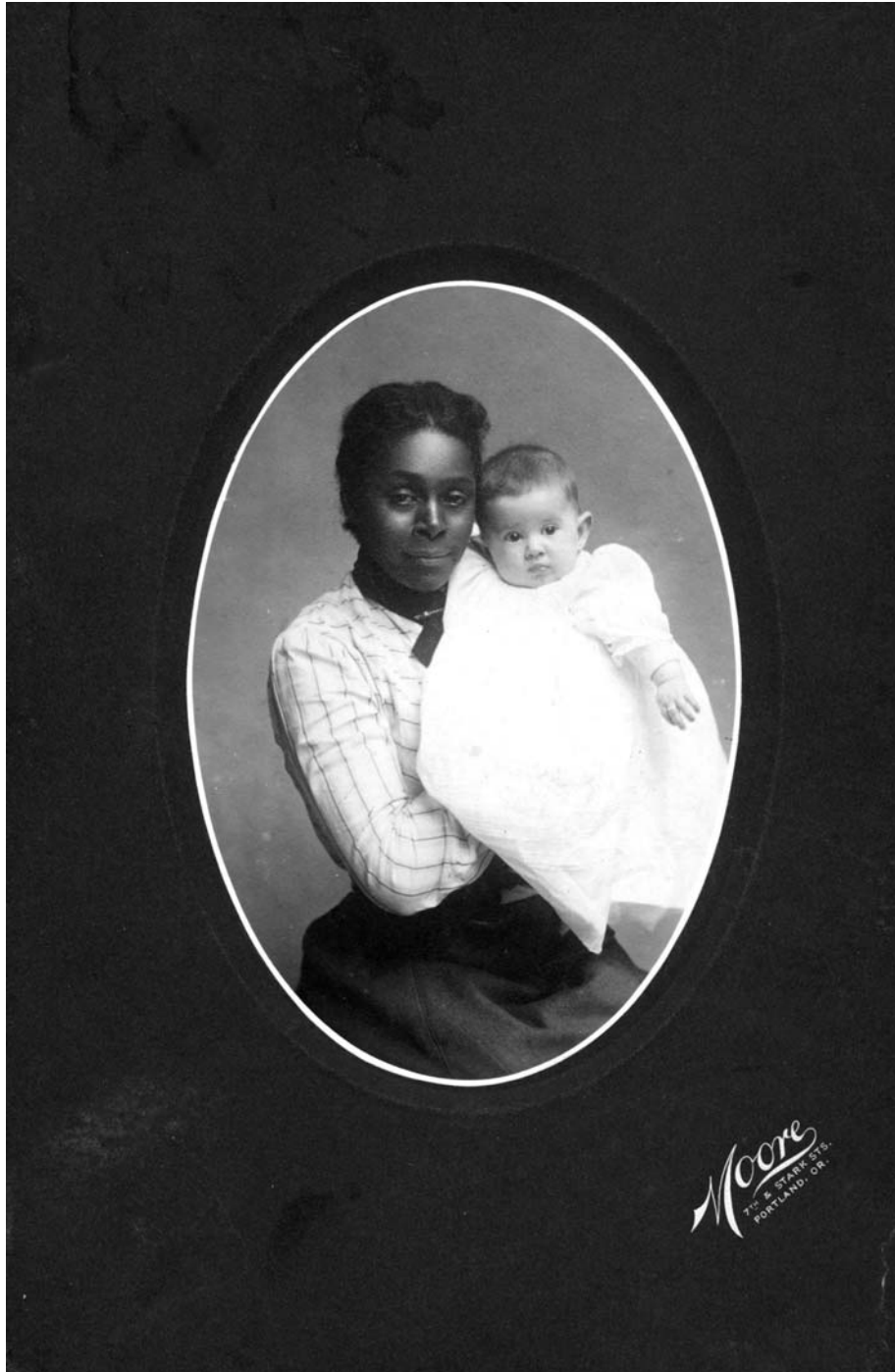
Alice and Frances continue to work on behalf of First Nations through their contributions to the Ta'an Kwacha'an Council.

Sources:

- Frances Clethero Woolsey, interviews and personal communications 2000 - 2004
- Alice Pamela Cletheroe McGuire, in *Yukon's Women of Power: Political Pioneers in a Northern Canadian Colony*, Joyce Hayden, Windwalker Press, Whitehorse, 1999
- YAUL (Yukon Archives Union List) description, Amy Cletheroe fonds
- Livingstone Notes, Sally Robinson, Heritage Resources Unit

⁸⁹ Yukon Women of Power.

Lillian Mabel Taylor
Dates in area: (1902-1909)



Stehelin Collection YA ACC 2002/53, PHO 547.

Lillian Mabel (Mable)⁹⁰ Taylor resided at Livingstone Creek from 1902 to 1909, working as cook and laundress for several men. She was one of only a very few black women in the Yukon at that time.

Taylor owned mining claims in Skagway in 1898,⁹¹ purchased a claim from R. J. McKnight on Marshall Creek in 1903,⁹² and was a partner with him in a Sheep Creek (Kluane gold rush) exploration.⁹³ She was also an investment partner with William Rudisell who also prospected in the same area in 1904.⁹⁴

A studio portrait found at Livingstone⁹⁵ that may be of Taylor shows an exceptionally beautiful young woman holding a white child, indicating that she may have worked as a nanny prior to coming north. The photo was taken at Moore Studio in Portland, Oregon in approximately 1898. A diary⁹⁶ found with the photo, dated January 1- March 14, 1905 refers to mail received from Portland.

The diary does not refer to any relatives in the Yukon, but a November 22, 1905 letter from “Herbert”, a NWMP officer who courted her, says “give my love to your sister, and if possible bring her back [to White Horse]⁹⁷ with you.”⁹⁸ An August 11 1904 letter from William Rudisell closes his letter “with love to you and Roma”.⁹⁹ A document in the Taylor papers is in the name of “Alice M. Taylor.”¹⁰⁰

The diary describes the writer living in her “apartment” next to where she cooked for the men, so she may have lived in one section of Dan Snure’s two- part roadhouse.¹⁰¹ Her papers¹⁰² at Yukon Archives include an elaborate menu for what appears to be Christmas dinner, and the diary describes her cooking experiments, not all of which were successful.

Taylor had a life of hard work, health problems, and ambivalent relationships with the men she served. She enjoyed almost nightly card games (called “solo”) with them, but she also notes feeling insulted or hurt by their treatment of her.

Taylor was ardently courted by a NWMP officer who, in a letters dated November 22, 1905 and February 03, 1906 on NWMP letterhead stationery, addresses her as “Lillia” and signs it warmly as “Believe me Yours only” and “your own Herbert” with rows of

⁹⁰ Alternate spelling found on some LMT documents.

⁹¹ YA 82/93 Mss 20 Livingston Creek Papers.

⁹² Ibid, f. 9 of 15.

⁹³ Ibid, letter from McKnight, Sheep Creek, April 20, 1904.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ For original photo and diary see YA Stehelin Collection 2002/53. The diary is written in pencil in a small black notebook featuring a Taylor & Drury advertisement on the inside cover. Transcript is approximate due to faint writing. Original spellings and punctuation preserved. Additional notes on the people referred to were provided by Goodie (Goodrun) Sparling.

⁹⁶ For transcript of diary see Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory 1003/08 item HRU-LCHI-TR-LMT-Diary.

⁹⁷ Common spelling of Whitehorse at that time.

⁹⁸ YA 82/93 Mss 20 Livingstone Creek Papers, f. 9 of 15.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Letter from life insurance co. 1909. YA Mss 20 Livingstone Creek Papers, f. 14 of 15.

¹⁰¹ See photo, Dan Snure Biography.

¹⁰² YA 82/93 Mss 20 Livingston Creek Papers, f. 9 of 15.

kisses. Several times he urges her return to White Horse and refers to getting a house with her. However he also rather discouragingly writes “you say you are learning a trade, well Lillia you know a trade is no use to you in White Horse so you are only wasting time.”

Taylor’s angry correspondence from Rudisell from Sheep Creek¹⁰³ indicates she became mistrustful of him and asked for her grubstake investment back. On January 05, 1905, Taylor submitted expenses from March 14 to July 02 for \$30.75 for personal items such as razors, medicine and bootblack, miner’s license and recording claims (Rudy Gulch), riverboat fares, and “Drinks at Violet’s”. At the bottom of the bill she added a note “...and other small amounts of .25 & 50 cents at the time which I will let go and be very thankful to get the other which will oblige yours in need.—Lillian M. Taylor”.

Taylor made the best of her isolation, teaching herself to play the banjo and composing romantic song lyrics, which she attempted to have published.¹⁰⁴ In one of these songs she refers to “a Klondyke Koon”, “black gal” and “chocolate babe”.¹⁰⁵

Among the men mentioned in the diary are “Dan”, most likely Dan Snure who operated the Road House, and Mr. Pacaud, who was the Mining Recorder. A number of entries mention the “Barracks” and the “Post”, referring to the RNWMP post. “Corp” may refer to a corporal from the Post. “Cap” is also a frequently mentioned individual. “Bliss” appears to be a sweetheart with whom she was having difficulties. “Bill E” and Bill Gerry “Jim” & “Joe” are also frequently mentioned. Mozeak, Gillis, Blick, Amereaux, Dutch Henry, Billy Clethero, and Kit Watters are also referred to.

The last entries describe a trip to and from Whitehorse by dog team. Taylor gives the names of people she visited including Whitney, Spague, Pucket, O’Conner, and MaGuire. She appears to have anticipated a visit from Captain Martin that did not take place.

Rudisell’s letter of August 11 1904 refers to an offer by Mrs. Frannie Smith to sell Lillian her house, (presumably in Whitehorse), and a house being made available by Mrs. Gomez is mentioned by “Herbert”.

It is not known when Lillian Taylor moved to Whitehorse nor how long she lived there. However on January 17, 1913 a local paper¹⁰⁶ carried this notice, under the heading of “Sick and Afflicted- Time, Medicine and Nursing Working Cures at Hospital:

Miss Lilly Taylor, the young colored (sic) woman who has been in the hospital since early in the fall with rheumatism, is now at her cabin. Her case is a particularly sad one. She has no relatives in this country.”

¹⁰³ August 04 and 11, 1904.

¹⁰⁴ Shapiro Music Publisher, 1909. YA MS 020 f. 14 of 15, Livingstone Creek Papers.

¹⁰⁵ A letter from Jacobs Pharmacy in Atlanta, CA. in 1909 responds to her query for Palmer’s Skin Whitener.

¹⁰⁶ Photocopy, MacBride Museum standing files; the newspaper header is missing.

Song lyrics by Lillian Mabel Taylor¹⁰⁷

I am a Klondyke Koon
and I must get busy soon
Don't show me your shovel, Don't show me your pick
Just give me a gold dust poke and Eldorado Creek
Feed me nuggets with a spoon
For I am a Klondyke Koon

Went to the Klondyke , his fortunes for to find
He took along his razor, just bear that in mind
He met a cop, who wore a red coat,
Who said your baggage I must search.
Says- don't you take my razor, you'll leave me in the lurch
For the coon certainly got what he was looking for
Then to the out er de he went, to see his black gal
The coon took all he found then to the states he went
To see his chocolate babe on this he was bent
She didn't do a thing to him only took him down the *[missing word?]*
Now he's going back to Klondyke to
see what else he will find/

pineapple [scrap note from kitchen list?]

Man

I have come back to the old home, Mother, for a little while. Is there room for me?

Woman

Did we think of roughness & steepness of path below when we stood here 2 hrs. ago & looked on the glory of this scene? Did we stop to think of the bruises & scratches of the ascent, of how many times we had stumbled or of weariness of the way? (No, it was all forgotten and so, when we come to stand together by & by, up on the heights of love- Such love as we have not even dreamed of yet, Will we then look back up on the tears, the harm, the heart ache of today. Will we stop to recount the sorrows through which we climbed to the shining heights? No, they will be forgotten in the excess of joy!

¹⁰⁷Found with her papers at Livingstone Creek, where she lived 1902-1909. Her diary records that she was teaching herself to play banjo. The words to the lyrics had numbers written above them, probably indicating the banjo strings to pluck.

Alpha & I used to pluck wild Roses
In the woods when we were girls,
We stroll down the old lane in the evening
With roses that were dearer than jewels.
We'd watch the cows in the meadow
Then we'd drive them to the old red barn
Then each to our home we'd go
And sleep till time for the roses in the Morn

=====

Now Alpha sleeps among roses
I take to her grave each morn
Forever & ever she shall lie [lie] among roses
The little [] from the earth was torn

=====

The Angels took Alpha up to heaven
Where flowers are always in bloom.

“Stampede” John Stenbraten
Dates in area: 1906-1940



Prospector ‘Stampede’ John Stenbraten being set out at Livingstone Creek by the Northern Airways Fairchild FC 2W2 CF BXF. Pilot was Herman Peterson (1944)
H. M. Peterson photo.

This photo is on display at the Transportation Museum in Whitehorse.¹⁰⁸

John Stenbraten was born in San Francisco in 1887 when his family was visiting from Norway. He lived in Oslo Norway until he was fourteen, when his father sent him to work on a North Dakota farm with his uncle. Dissatisfied, John left at age fifteen. He came to the Yukon in 1904 following the lure of gold.

“Stampede” was at Livingstone from about 1906¹⁰⁹ and still had registered claims on Livingstone Creek in the 1940s.¹¹⁰

Goodie [Gudrun] Sparling was child of seven or eight when Stampede stayed at her family’s hotel, the Regina, and describes him as “almost part of the family, for many, many years. He was really good friends with my brother and later with my son Joe. He was interesting to talk to. He was well-travelled, had been to a lot of places around the States, and enjoyed talking to the [American] hunters who stayed at the hotel. He walked in and out of Livingstone, at least once every year. He spent a considerable amount of time there. He would cross the river right in front of the [Regina] hotel and head out over

¹⁰⁸ Photo provided courtesy of Bob Cameron.

¹⁰⁹ Livingstone Creek Collection YA Acc# 82/93 Folder 15. Jo [John] Stenbraten documents 1906-1908. Includes “scribbler”, accounts & diary (work log?) for 1908. Lists. Campbell, Berry Johnson, Omiranys (?) & Fischer; Hector McCrean & Mike Murphy, Wallick, Wm. Heron & Co., W.F. Geary, O'Brien, James Geary, Harry Reynolds, Ray Peters, Ed Dycer, Donald Beaton, Harry Reasy [?], Hendrickson, Hector McNeil, John Marsh, John Johnson, Kermy Hicky [?], W.R. Elliot on No. 9 Hillside Above Discovery.

¹¹⁰ Occurrence No 13 1994.20.194, pp 17-19.

the hills. I'm sure he walked every square foot of the Yukon and Alaska, for days and days. He was always staking claims. He couldn't afford planes. I don't think he ever had a [wage] income [though] he'd come in with nuggets, nice big ones," and "had a mouthful of gold teeth. He shone when he smiled."¹¹¹

Stampede made a solitary journey on foot across the Bering Strait "to have a look around, but was chased out by Russian Cossacks".¹¹² Sparling noted "he seemed to follow the gold people around" and is known to have gone to the western United States and Mexico, always returning to the north.¹¹³ He spent time in Dawson City, Mayo, Kluane and Atlin,¹¹⁴ and also on the Stewart River and Keno Hill in the 1920s.¹¹⁵ A mountain peak in Mayo was named for him.¹¹⁶

Stanley Cletheroe, whose family mined for years at Little Violet Creek and Livingstone, noted that Stampede John was the last person known to have lived in a cabin built by Harry Berry at Shane's [Sheehan's] Gulch on Livingstone Creek. (Cletheroe added that "no gold came out of Shane's [Sheehan's] Gulch; all the gold came from above and below the gulch".) He said that "Stampede John used to hunt for whatever was available" and also lived for a time in the house owned by Tommy and Mrs. [Beda] Kerruish.¹¹⁷

Stampede John built a small log cabin on the lake shore in Atlin, B.C., in the 1950s, and this became a favourite place for himself and Doris Bernice McMurphy, a Whitehorse school teacher with an Arts degree whom he married in 1961.¹¹⁸ Both of them had waited until quite late in life to marry. "I think no-one was more surprised than Stampede."¹¹⁹

The estate of the couple, worth \$374,000, was donated to Yukon Foundation upon Doris' death in 1999.¹²⁰

Sources:

Yukon Foundation
Goodie [Gudrun] Sparling, 2004
Other sources as indicated in footnotes.

¹¹¹ Sparling, personal comm. Nov 13 2002; interview March 13, 2004.

¹¹² Bio, undated press release provided by Yukon Foundation, December 2003.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *Gold and Galena*, Mayo Historical Society, 1990, p.455.

¹¹⁶ Yukon Foundation.

¹¹⁷ Interviewed by Doug Olynyk June 01 1993, Heritage Branch, Gov't of Yukon (p.3-4).

¹¹⁸ Yukon Foundation, undated bio notes.

¹¹⁹ Sparling (2004).

¹²⁰ A grant from this fund in part financed the writing of this report.

Frank Slim
Dates in area: 1930s



Frank Slim, YA 2000/37 PHO 575 #219

The following account is drawn largely from notes prepared by Helene Dobrowolsky, 11 March 2003, revised April 2003. The sources she consulted are listed at the end of the document. Additional notes are appended as footnotes.

Frank Slim, famous as a riverboat captain, was named “Transportation Pioneer of the Year for 1997” by the Yukon Transportation Museum. He was also honoured by having a mountain named after him by the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. Mount Slim, 5,840 feet high, is located south-east of Lake Laberge, west of Joe Mountain and south of Joe Creek, where the family burying ground is still located.¹²¹

For several seasons, between his riverboat travels, Slim worked at trapping and placer mining in the Livingstone Creek area. He worked on Summit Creek in 1936 and operated a hydraulic placer mining claim on Livingstone in 1938-1939. His daughter

¹²¹ Map Sheet 105D 15, Lat. 60° 56' 10, Long. 134° 52' 00”.

Virginia remembers picking nuggets out of the sluice box.¹²² He lived in what is known as the Trapper's Cabin.¹²³ From bills of lading¹²⁴ found in a hand-built pigeon-hole desk in the enclosed front porch, he appears to have used that area of the cabin to sell trapping supplies.



Trapper Cabin #5 1973. Leslie Hamson photo

Frank Slim was born June 27, 1898, the son of Slim and Ginny Jim, in a small village at the north end of Marsh Lake approximately fifty kilometres south of Whitehorse, a property that eventually became the homestead of the Joe family. The family also had places up the M'Clintock River.

According to Frank Slim's granddaughter, Donna Dillman, the Slims were a high status family. Frank's great-uncle was Skookum Jim who first discovered the gold on Rabbit Creek near Dawson City that set off the great Klondike gold rush. Angela Sidney was his cousin. Frank had three sisters and one brother: Suzy (Fred), Willie, Lily (Kane), and Anne. Suzy and Willie were twins. Both Anne and Willy died at young ages. Anne and her mother Ginny are buried in the hilltop cemetery overlooking the Whitehorse General Hospital and Yukon River.

Angela Sidney mentioned visiting Marsh Lake in 1913 where she and her siblings played with their cousins Frank, Annie & Susie Slim, and described hunting that fall on the mountain back of Judas Creek (Mount Michie) where they killed then dried moose meat. Frank Slim, Whitehorse Billy and Angela Sidney's brother Johnny then went to Whitehorse to sell the meat.

Frank married Agnes Broeren about 1917. She was niece to hereditary Chief Jim Boss and great niece to Chief Mundessa. Their first child Sophie (Miller) was born in 1919

¹²² Virginia also remembers Percy Sharpe, an old-timer who lived nearby and gave her goodies.

¹²³ # 5 on street guide. See Village of Livingstone Creek section.

¹²⁴ Found by the researcher ca. 1972 but left in situ.

when Frank was 21 and Aggie was 17. They had four other children: George, Irene (Adamson), Owen and Virginia (Lindsay). The daughters live in Whitehorse with their families; the sons have died and are buried beside their mother at the old village site at Lake Laberge. Slim's granddaughter, Joanne McDougall, owns and operates Kanoe People in Whitehorse, organizing canoe rentals and tours along the same rivers her grandfather once travelled.

In his early years Frank Slim attended large potlatches at the Marsh Lake village with up to 300 visitors from Champagne, Tagish and other places. He remembered people bringing gifts of cloth, beads, meat and moccasins. As a boy he travelled to Whitehorse by paddling a dugout canoe to Canyon City then walking the trail into town.

Slim was multilingual, speaking Tagish, Southern Tutchone, Tlingit, and English. He learned to read English from the labels on Campbell's soup cans and other groceries while working on the boats as a deckhand on sternwheelers from about age 16. He realized that education was important and paid a non-native man to teach him how to increase his reading skills and to write.

From 1929 through the 1930s Slim worked on Taylor & Drury's supply boat *Yukon Rose*, travelling the Teslin, Mayo and Ross Rivers. He also worked on a ferry on the Mackenzie River in the North West Territories. In 1937, he wrote the examination in Vancouver that qualified him as a steamboat captain, allowing him to pilot boats to maximum of 1500 T. dead weight. He was the only First Nations man in the southern Yukon, perhaps the entire Yukon, to become a licensed Captain and pilot. In order to do this, he had to give up his First Nations status, a great sacrifice.

Slim worked mainly for the British Yukon Navigation Co. as well as Taylor & Drury. In later years he stated that of all the boats he had worked on, the S.S. Klondike was his favourite. In 1960 he was featured as the pilot in The Last Voyage of the Keno,¹²⁵ a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (C.B.C.) documentary of the trip to deliver the paddlewheeler to its final berth on the shore of the Yukon River at Dawson City. Circa 1967, Slim also piloted the George Black ferry from Whitehorse to Dawson.

Ever versatile, in 1933-35 Frank Slim worked with Louis Irvine on the mail service. When sternwheelers were beached for winter, he worked on the winter road, freighting supplies overland to remote communities first with horse-drawn sleighs, then later motorized cat trains. During this decade, Slim's daughter Virginia recalls, her father also made a trip with three companions, her uncle Johnny, Frankie Jim, and Big Salmon Harry to Frances Lake to trap marten, walking overland the entire distance. The Slim family also travelled around Lake Laberge, hunting and fishing, and trapped at Little Salmon Lake, travelling by dog team from Lake Laberge. The family cut trees for rabbit bait and set snares among them. They met the Washpan family at this time.

In 1940-1941, Frank Slim freighted construction supplies to be used to build Watson Lake airport via Dease and Liard Rivers in northern B.C. Slim, with his wife Agnes and daughter Virginia, travelled by train from Whitehorse to Skagway, then by plane from Carcross to Dease Lake. They lived with the Asp family at Portage Landing on Dease Lake. There were three vessels used in the work: two motor vessels and the

¹²⁵ 16 mm film, 363C 364C, Whitehorse Public Library; 16-20 Yukon Archives; VideoV-46-4 Yukon Archives.

sternwheeler, the Drew. (According to Joe Lindsay, the Drew was motorized with a chain driver for the paddle.) They moved cats and graders to Lower Post where they were used to build a road from Lower Post to Watson Lake, then to build the airport. The family travelled together to Watson Lake on the last trip, then flew back to Whitehorse. Virginia remembers that they sat on a pile of baggage in the back of the plane.

After the riverboats shut down, Slim operated passenger ferries on the Pelly and Stewart Rivers on the Mayo Road during navigation season until permanent bridges were built. He also worked at heavy equipment operating, fur buying and trapping. In later years, he was captain of the M.V. Schwatka, a tourist boat owned and operated by John Scott.

Frank Slim was an avid photographer, whose legacy of images is housed in the Yukon Archives. As his daughter Virginia said, "There's never a picture of my dad [in his collection] because he was always the one taking pictures". He spent his last days in Macaulay Lodge in Whitehorse. He died in summer of 1973 at the age of seventy-five.

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Clem Emminger
Dates in area: (1930s-1960s)



Clem Emminger, Whitehorse (?) ca. 1952, Emminger Coll. YA

He was a year-round resident for some time and traveled the Livingstone country by foot and on snowshoes with his dogs.

Emminger built a small cabin at Livingstone in 1935, occupied over the years by many people including Bill Geary and his wife who ran the stagecoach, and Mike Murphy. The windows were put in some time after

Clem Emminger was from Salzburg, Austria. He came to the Yukon in 1925 with his brother Andrew.¹²⁶ Clem was a prospector who worked in the Livingstone Creek area for a number of years. He was partners with Louis Engle and the two built a cabin on Cottoneva Creek¹²⁷ in the 1930s and prospected the discovery claim on Livingstone Creek in the 1950s-early 1960s.¹²⁸



Emminger & Engle Cabin, Cottoneva Creekm 1932, Emminger Coll. YA

¹²⁶ Andrew (Andy) was killed in a caterpillar accident (Sparling) while on a mail run to Dawson (Lloyd Ryder), interviews, March 2004.

¹²⁷ See photo in Serafinchon account.

¹²⁸ Occurrence No 13 1994.20.194, pgs 17-19.



Emminger Cabin, built 1935. Photo by Leslie Hamson 1973

Emminger built it.¹²⁹ People associated with Constellation Mines including Ace Parker used it in the 1970s, and it was still occupied into the 1990s.¹³⁰ At some stage in its history a gable was added.

Three other cabins were built by Emminger: one at the end of the airstrip, another between Thomas Lake and Long Lake and one on the Winter Crossing Road.¹³¹ In Whitehorse, where he worked as an electrician in the 1950s-1960s, he had a home on the corner of Second Avenue and Hanson Street.¹³²

Clem Emminger was a great storyteller and recounted several tales recorded by John Scott in 1965,¹³³ describing the

people and activities of the Livingstone Creek area. Among other lifestyle details, Emminger refers to having to order food a long time ahead:

“I was at Livingstone at the time [year not given] and I came out to order grub for next year. You see we have to order these a year ahead all the time, and I had to catch the [boat that was (?)] supposed to bring it up the river.”¹³⁴

“I was making a grub shack for next year, you see. I started to work on my own there on Cottoneva Creek and I came in to get all the stuff I needed. And I had quite an outfit-grub for a couple of years and tools, and all kinds of stuff, you know.”¹³⁵

Emminger described relaying his supplies: “....I made a round trip every day from Livingstone Creek – 10 miles, every day I made 20 (?) miles [round trip?]. But I was in good shape and I was young and I had good dogs and lots of moose meat for the dogs. And I was taking 200 pounds every day until it was no time before I had all my stuff in there you know.”¹³⁶

For a time Emminger ran a small sawmill¹³⁷ to process lumber for building a 30-foot dam on the creek. The mill could make 1000 feet of lumber a day. Prior to that, for “two or three years” they cut the lumber by hand. Even with the mill they still had to cut the logs

¹²⁹ Stanley Cletheroe interviewed by Doug Olynyk, Heritage Branch, Gov’t of Yukon, June 01, 1993.

¹³⁰ Building # in Village section.

¹³¹ Stanley Cletheroe, p.3.

¹³² Lloyd Ryder, interview, March 17 2004.

¹³³ YA Acc#77/55, SR [sound recording] 42-1 Emminger interviewed by John Scott, 1965. For a list of people referred to, see Additional Notes.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p.3.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p.5.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p.9.

¹³⁷ A vintage sawmill in “like new condition, maybe never used” was found at Cottoneva Creek by Al and Maria Serafinchon in the 1980s and was used by them to upgrade the cabin Emminger had built.—Al Serafinchon, personal comm. Dec. 2003.

for the dam by hand. The dam was used to build up water for sluicing.¹³⁸ Emminger broke up the big rocks by drilling a hole and inserting a half-stick of dynamite.¹³⁹

The lifestyle, though hard work, appealed to Emminger: "... If we made \$2000 a year, that was pretty good, you know. Sometimes we make \$1800, \$1700, \$2000. One year we made \$2400 [between the two of them]... That was pretty good money... because no matter where you worked on a job, if you made \$1000, that was pretty good money them days. And then we didn't have to look for any work, you see—I mean you was your own boss. Sure you worked 10 hours a day, and things, but then was nobody riding you, and you done what you liked to do, you know."¹⁴⁰

Lloyd Ryder remembers Clem Emminger from his years in Whitehorse, when Ryder was a child.¹⁴¹

"I knew he was interested in mining, but I didn't really meet Clem until he started his own electrical business here in Whitehorse. That was in the 1950s or '60s. [But as school children] in the '30s (1933-1935)] we used to go down and talk to Clem during recess because it was just over the hill from the school. He would tell us stories about the war [WWI]. Our teacher was Jack Hulland who was in the war. They used to talk together. They thought they were at one time fighting against each other on the Austrian-Hungarian border. The temperature, and the weather, the time and dates and so forth, it all sort of worked out that Clem was on one side of the border shooting and Jack Hulland was on the other side. They used to have lots of chin-wags about this.

"Clem never talked about Livingstone [to me]. With Jack, even in the school when he'd start telling us a history story, it wouldn't be long and we were on the battle lines over in France. It must have impressed his mind because he would start talking about the war, and Clem and him would be talking and it would be about the fighting, so there was no Livingstone Creek talk at that time. Not in Clem's mind anyway."

Clem Emminger did not marry. His date of death was not found, though it is known he died some years before his mining partner, Louis Engle.

Additional Notes

People referred to in Clem Emminger's stories about Livingstone recorded by John Scott (see f.n. 133) include:

Eddy Marcotte [sp?], Tom & Mrs. [Beda] Kerruish, George Carvill, Dutch Henry, Louie Moi, Bill [William] Clethero, Jim Boss, George Lopuschuk, Captain Grey [Gray?], Roy McGilvery [McGilvray], Lloyd Caesar, Harry Berry, James & Lyle Garrister [more likely Geary?], Jim Geary, Roy Churchill, Lloyd Peter, George Black, Bob Chestnut, Joe Peter, Mike Murphy, Percy Sharpe [?], Harry Woods [?], Henry Arp and others.

¹³⁸ Emminger p.24.

¹³⁹ Ibid, p.25.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p.25, 26.

¹⁴¹ Ryder interview March 17, 2004.

Thomas and Beda Louise Kerruish

Dates in area: 1930s–1960s



Kerruish Cabin, 1969. Photo by Ken Jones

Tom Kerruish was a mining engineer¹⁴² who worked Lake Creek, a pup of Livingstone Creek that was first staked in 1898, from 1930 until his death in 1944.¹⁴³ His wife Beda maintained his claims there in good standing until 1954.¹⁴⁴ She continued to spend the summers at their Livingstone home until some time in the 1960s, and may have done some hand-mining on her own until she was quite elderly.¹⁴⁵

Alice Cletheroe McGuire remembers Mrs. Kerruish coming out to Little Violet Creek every summer to do assessment work.¹⁴⁶ Alice's sister Frances Woolsey recalls visiting the Kerruish house at Livingstone, and that the couple kept a garden that their father warned them to stay out of.¹⁴⁷ They had a horsehair couch that, years later, Frances saw in the MacBride Museum¹⁴⁸ in Whitehorse. She recounts that "Mrs. Kerruish tried everything the men did. Her husband Tom spent a lot of time mining on Lake Creek and also lived at Winter Crossing at times. She wasn't going to just sit around doing nothing, so she tried her hand at trapping."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴² Lloyd Ryder, interview March 17, 2004.

¹⁴³ Olynyk, Lee, 1995 paper for gold exhibit, MacBride Museum.

¹⁴⁴ Occurrence No 11 1994.20.172-176, p. 12-14.

¹⁴⁵ Mrs. Landry, personal comm., 1972.

¹⁴⁶ Yukon's Women of Power: Political Pioneers in a Northern Canadian Colony, Joyce Hayden, Windwalker Press, Whitehorse, 1999, p. 254. (Kerruish is misspelled as Kurough).

¹⁴⁷ Rhubarb was still growing in this garden through the 1970s, as also near other cabins on the Creeks.

¹⁴⁸ Personal comm. 2002.

¹⁴⁹ Personal comm., Nov. 11, 2005.



Tool Shed (Work Shop) Built by Tom Kerruish. Photo by Saugstad, 1993, for DIAND

Stanley Cletheroe¹⁵⁰ recalled two gardens, and that Tommy Kerruish built a workshop and ran a small sawmill. Stanley noted that Beda (whom he recalled as “Edith”) died in 1967 or 1968, following which Stampede John (Stenbraten) lived in the Kerruish home for a time. The cabin had three rooms and an attached shed. There was a two-apartment dog house in the back yard.¹⁵¹



Jonathan & Matthew Wilkie in Kerruish Dog House, 1975. Leslie Hamson photo.

¹⁵⁰ YTG (Heritage Resources Unit) Interview w/ Stan Cletheroe & Doug Olynyk, June 1, 1993.

¹⁵¹ Personal knowledge.

Clem Emminger refers to Tom Kerruish in his stories recorded in 1965, describing a trip the two took from Livingstone to Whitehorse (date not recorded).¹⁵²

The Kerruishes stayed at the Regina Hotel on occasion when in from Livingstone. They were good friends of the hotel owners, Mr. & Mrs. Erickson. Their daughter Goodie [Gudrun] Sparling remembers Beda as “a sturdy woman, quite pleasant, though forthright. She and her husband Tom travelled to and from Livingstone every season with their large packdogs. Beda was very competent with the dogs.”¹⁵³

Lloyd Ryder remembers “Tommy” Kerruish. “He settled in Livingstone Creek but of course he had a nice home in Whitehorse on Hanson Street and the corner of Second Avenue. He would stay all winter in his house on Hanson Street and go back out to Livingstone for the summer. And she [his wife, Beda] went with him. That had to be in the early 1930s.”¹⁵⁴

Sparling¹⁵⁵ also described the location of the Kerruish couple’s Whitehorse home, placing it “on the corner near Taylor’s [Chevrolet dealership] on Second Ave, possibly where The Esso station is now. At that time the old hospital was at the present site of YTG [Yukon Territorial Government].”

Mrs. Landry and her husband ran a store¹⁵⁶ on Second Avenue in Whitehorse that carried bush supplies, living in the apartment above. She recalled Mrs. Kerruish as a midwife who delivered a number of babies in the Livingstone area. Well into her senior years, Kerruish lived as the only resident of Livingstone after the town was deserted. Ace Parker recounted that Beda Kerruish had a rivalrous relationship with another elderly miner, Louis Engle, who maintained his holdings on Cottoneva Creek, each of them rushing to re-stake claims as they came open and accusing one another of claim jumping.¹⁵⁷

Landry said Kerruish hiked in from Livingstone each fall with a large St. Bernard dog carrying a pack, building herself a raft¹⁵⁸ to cross the Hootalinqua River, and returning in the spring. Kerruish was eventually brought out by her son, and died shortly after in Vancouver in 1967 or 1968.¹⁵⁹

Tom and Beda Kerruish’s dwelling housed a succession of miners and their families over the years and out-lasting most of the other buildings in town despite being flooded with creek water and filled with ice¹⁶⁰ on occasion. It is not known whether, as of 2005, it is still standing.

¹⁵² YA Acc#77/55, SR 42-1. For transcript see Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory 2003/08.

¹⁵³ Sparling, interview March 13, 2004.

¹⁵⁴ Interview March 17, 2004.

¹⁵⁵ Interview March 13, 2004.

¹⁵⁶ The store became the Talisman Café when the Landrys retired and is currently (2006) an Internet Café.

¹⁵⁷ Personal comm., 1972.

¹⁵⁸ Clem Emminger mentioned that Tommy Kerruish had a boat stored at Winter Crossing.

¹⁵⁹ Landry, personal comm., 1972.

¹⁶⁰ Video scene, Al & Maria Serafinchon, 1988.

Louis Engle¹⁶¹

Dates in area: (1930s-1970s)

Louis Engle came from Austria, arriving in the Yukon in the late 1920s.¹⁶² He was active in the Livingstone area from at least 1934,¹⁶³ and continued to visit the Creeks into the 1970s.¹⁶⁴ He built a cabin with Clem Emminger on Cottoneva Creek in the 1930s¹⁶⁵ and worked his claims there until 1953.¹⁶⁶

Engle and Emminger prospected Discovery claim on Livingstone Creek in the late 1950s-early 1960s.¹⁶⁷ Emminger maintained his interests in the claim until selling out to Ace Parker of Constellation Mines in the early 1970s, for ten per cent royalty of any revenue produced from the claim.¹⁶⁸

Engle's fortunes were apparently variable. A tax notice for the year 1951 showed "Nil taxes paid or owing,"¹⁶⁹ but he discovered a 21 ounce nugget on Livingstone in the mid-to-late 1950s, made good investments, and died with a substantial fortune in his estate.¹⁷⁰

In his early summers in the district, Engle worked for J. E. Peters, later forming his partnership with Emminger. Both men worked for the U. S. Military in the winters during the 1940s, Engle as an electrician and Emminger as a carpenter. This earned them the privilege of hitching rides in Military aircraft to Livingstone Creek for their summer work as miners.¹⁷¹

The Emminger/Engle partnership dissolved, and Engle continued to work his claims on Cottoneva. He engaged Don Taylor to install a radio system there in late 1940s or early 1950s.¹⁷²

Engle owned a very small Caterpillar, a D2, with which he built an airstrip two and half miles from the Livingstone townsite in the 1950s.¹⁷³

¹⁶¹ No photo was located that could be confirmed as Engle. See Emminger Collection, Yukon Archives, for photos that may be of him.

¹⁶² A Serafinchon, personal comm.(2004).

¹⁶³ Jim Robb Collection YA 2001/138 includes cheque stubs dated Nov 5th 1934 - Oct 23 1942. Recipients include Charlie Smith & Chas Smith for moose skin & meat, indication of business conducted with First Nations. Cheques also to N.C. Co, W.A. Puckett, Burns & [?], C. Emminger, Chas. Smith, Eaton's, R.F. Suick [Suich?], David Spencer, JB Watson, B.P.O. Elks, and Mining Recorder.

¹⁶⁴ Personal knowledge.

¹⁶⁵ For cabin photo see Clem Emminger bio, this report.

¹⁶⁶ Occurrence No 10 1994.20.192, pg 10 -11.

¹⁶⁷ Occurrence No 13 1994.20.194, pgs 17-19.

¹⁶⁸ Serafinchon (2004).

¹⁶⁹ Department of Internal Revenue Taxation Division Notice of Assessment, Dawson, Y.T. May 2, 1952, Taxation Year 1951, Addressed to Louis Engle, Whitehorse. AA 9098—Jim Robb Collection, YA 2001/138.

¹⁷⁰ Bob Miller, a lawyer and partner of Constellation Mines, as told to Al Serafinchon ca 1975. Miller estimated the fortune as "300,000 – 400,000"; Max Fuerstner Jr., whose aunt translated the estate, believed it was "much higher".—Interview, Jan 24, 2005 .

¹⁷¹ Serafinchon (2004).

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ This airstrip replaced an earlier landing field one mile from South Fork (Big Salmon River) and was upgraded and lengthened by Gerry McCully and Al Serafinchon in the 1970s.

Lloyd Ryder¹⁷⁴ recounts the following memories:

“I knew Louie Engle very well but I don’t remember too much about his mining activities at Livingstone except when he bought a Caterpillar. He made a couple of trips to Livingstone with this tractor and then on the way back he fell in the river up to town and he broke through the ice just where the Takhini River runs in. My dad had a Cat and so he had to go down to see what we could do about getting Louie’s cat out of the river. It wasn’t completely covered but it was in about four or five feet of water. So we spent a whole day trying to get it out. He had a pretty good sleigh that he would load up with. with fuel and stuff for his cat, and supplies that he needed and mining tools, and he’d haul it in [to Livingstone].

“The next story I heard about Louie was he had his Cat over there [at Livingstone] and of course it was too small for the Livingstone Creek area for the big boulders. He was underneath a big rock with a hydraulic jack, and he jacked this big rock up, trying to get it so he could move it, and there underneath it was a good-sized nugget. So he brought that back to town and showed it off to everybody.

“In his later years he lived over on Lambert Street and Second Avenue. We used to see a lot of Louie because he’d walk up and down the streets, and then he was working on the dock with the White Pass freight department.

“With prospectors, they don’t get much this summer, but after a long winter, the stories get good, and the ground gets richer and next summer they’ve got it made.”

Engle cannot be said to be a happy man. His business arrangements with other miners were acrimonious. He received no royalties from his deal with Ace Parker (Constellation Mines) regarding Discovery claim on Livingstone Creek, nor was he able to recover his investment of equipment and freight costs from the company during his lifetime. After his death, the ten per cent royalty became payable to his estate when Max Fuerstner Sr.’s company discovered a 21 ½ ounce nugget on Discovery in July, 1974.¹⁷⁵

Despite Engle’s fortune he lived in poverty, reluctant even to buy fresh food for himself. He had no refrigeration in the small cabin he occupied in Whitehorse and not infrequently ate spoiled food. In the summer of 1972 or 1973, he became very ill from ptomaine poisoning while visiting his cabin on Cottoneva. He somehow made his way to the “airport chalet” cabin at the airstrip and lay for two or three days waiting for the plane he’d ordered to arrive.¹⁷⁶

Into his late years Engle continued to claim ownership to cabins on several creeks by posting signs on even very dilapidated, abandoned structures. In 1974 he confronted a family, residing in the Kerruish house in Livingstone village, with a shotgun. However he was mollified with a bowl of moose stew and gave permission for the family to remain there.¹⁷⁷

Upon his death ca. 1975, Engle’s estate was willed to relatives in Austria. It is not known if he had any family in Canada.

¹⁷⁴ Interview, March 17, 2004.

¹⁷⁵ A Serafinchon, personal comm. (2004).

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Personal knowledge.

Nakamura Family
Dates in area: (1970s-1980s)



Sumi Nakamura, Mendocino Creek, 1974. Photo ©Bud Nakamura

Sumi Nakamura was born in Sashigawa, Japan, on October 25, 1897. She came to British Columbia when she was twenty-four years of age and married Saichi Nakamura. The couple had three sons and four daughters. Sumi worked as a launderer in lumber camps, earning the money to buy land and establish an orchard. The land was expropriated by the Canadian government in W.W.II and the family forcibly moved to Alberta where Sumi worked as a labourer in the sugar beet fields. In the 1970s Sumi moved north with son Juzo (Butch) to join his brother Sagoro (Bud), who had moved to the Yukon some time earlier. The family mined Mendocino & Moose Creek for several years.

Juzo married Carol Morishita November 24, 1979 and the couple ran the Porter Creek Service garage until the mid-1990s. They had two children, Dean and Emily. Juzo died February 14, 2005. Bud continues his mining interests at Quiet Lake.

Well into her senior years, Sumi loved her life at Mendocina Creek, housekeeping for her sons in an old log cabin with rough-hewn floor, washing clothes by hand and preparing Japanese-styled cuisine from the materials at hand. She made life-long friends with people from the other creeks, acting as grandmother to the children. With the help of her son Bud she grew a lush and abundant garden behind her mobile home in Whitehorse, and was famous for her hospitality, serving elaborate meals of many dishes to drop-in guests.



Juzo (Butch) James Nakamura staking claims Livingstone Creek area, circa 1974. Photo courtesy of Carol Nakamura.

In the photo above, as a joke, Sumi's sons strapped the gun belt on their mother & gave her the rifle to hold. Her poodle was named Casey.

Sumi died March 1997 at 99 years of age.

Al & Maria (nee Bjorkes) Serafinchon
Dates in area: (1971-1986)

The following account is drawn from the diaries and memories of the Serafinchon couple, describing their years as miners and trappers on Livingstone and Cottoneva Creeks.

Time Spent at Livingstone Creek by Al Serafinchon¹⁷⁸



Maria and Al with fresh loaves, Livingstone Creek, 1971, Serafinchon Coll.

In **early 1971**, Ace Parker, Gerry McCully, Maria Bjorkes, and myself (Al Serafinchon) formed an association to undertake placer gold mining in the Livingstone Creek area. Also included as percentage interests were Louis Engle and George Asuchak. Louis Engle held Discovery claims on Cottoneva and Livingstone Creeks. George Asuchak contributed much information and an extra snow machine in exchange for Lake Creek interests.

Early February 1971: Gerry McCully and myself ski-dooed from lower Laberge to Livingstone, approximately 55 miles. It took three nights and four days to make the journey over the old winter trail which hadn't been used for many years. We set up camp in Louis Engle's cabin at Cottoneva Creek and prepared the Livingstone airstrip for air support from Whitehorse.

¹⁷⁸ Edits and some additional notes by Leslie Hamson.

February 14, 1971: Ace Parker and Maria arrived with Lloyd Ryder piloting the Cessna 206. We had no radio communication at that time. Most of the creek trails had overgrown and thus we used snowshoes for travel, placing posts.

February 28, 1971: The four of us ski-dooed back to Horse Creek on the Mayo Road one long cold day - approximately twelve hours.

March, 1971: Prepared equipment and material to construct a new winter road. At that time the Government tote road program allotted \$7500.00 for the initial phase, and an additional \$3000 for phase two was granted in August of that year. Actual costs amounted to over \$46,000.00.

April 3, 1971: Started the winter road from Mile 8 Mayo Road, Burma Road, and Yukon River Crossing. Followed a rough cat road to Pine Lake, approximately twelve miles near Thomas Lake. We had a 1965 Terex C-6 Dozer (D-7 size), a 1965 Scoopmobile four-yard Loader, a 1969 Dodge Fargo 4x4 pick-up with camper, and sleigh with camper and fuel and gear. We built approximately 32 miles of new road to Teslin River Crossing (also known as Winter Crossing) in less than two weeks.

April 23, 1971 - Gordon McIntyre, Mining Recorder in Whitehorse, performed our marriage ceremony in his office with George and Marlene Asuchak as witnesses, after which Maria and I purchased \$528 worth of food supplies from Taylor and Drury' headed out of town that evening via Long Lake Road (also known as Hospital Road) to the start of the winter road at Yukon Crossing. This crossing was unsafe to use by then. We spent our honeymoon night on the trail. Break-up (not ours) was well underway.



Flatbed through ice, May 1971, Serafinchon Coll.

April 24, 1971:

A very slow trip to Teslin River all of today. Crossing was very wet. Waited a week for more gear to arrive via cat train from Whitehorse.

May 1, 1971:

Tried to cross with approximately 20 tons but broke through. Lucky not to

have lost the entire load. The river went out the next day.

Mid-May, 1971: We continued the winter road to Livingstone and relayed all gear to Livingstone and Cottoneva Creeks, approximately 18 miles. Maria and I made the Recorder's cabin at Livingstone our home and commuted five miles to Cottoneva daily to the diggings. It took about a month before sluicing began.

June-July, 1971: We extended the airstrip from 100' x 1200' to 250' x 1800'. We also rebuilt the main trails. (Note: Gold increased in value (Nixon years) from \$37.50 to over \$60.00 per oz. Start of the new Gold Rush. As the wise expression goes towards placer deposits - "Gold is where you find it.")

September, 1971: Although Ace Parker was a professional mining engineer, his theories about where to dig didn't pan out very well. If only he had taken Louis Engle's advice! To make a long story short, we decided to end our partnership, and to pursue other ventures away from Livingstone and placer mining. Ace Parker and Gerry McCully, Constellation Mines Ltd, moved to Livingstone Creek that year and had better results.

1972: Constellation Mines Ltd. continued operations on Livingstone Creek for the season.

1973: In the fall, both Cat and Loader belonging to Constellation Mines were brought back to Whitehorse due to financial problems with various creditors.

1974-1975: Another party comprising of Max Fuerstner Sr., Gerry McCully and Bob (Robert) Bob Miller returned with the original equipment and additional gear to continue mining on Livingstone Creek. Due to the amount of very coarse overburden which covered the paying ground, only a small portion of the creek and bench was mined over those years. Gerry McCully remained a partner until the fall of 1976.

1976: In November Maria, myself and Jim and Ron Lafave decided to lease the trapline rights from Dolly Jackson. The lease boundaries extended from Livingstone to Mason's Landing, west to approximately forty miles north almost to the the Big



Furs on Cabin, Livingstone Creek, 1976-77, Serafinchon Coll.

Salmon river, and approximately ten miles east to upper Mendocino. We flew ourselves and gear via Trans North's Twin Otter and had a decent season harvesting lynx, wolverine and wolf. Fur prices were quite good then, especially wolverine- up to \$450.00 per

pelt. We lived in the Kerruish house, formerly occupied by Gerry McCully and his family (1972-1976). The Lafaves lived in what is known as the Trapper's Cabin.

August, 1977: Maria and I returned to Cottoneva and began working on a partnership to resume mining with Max Fuerstner Sr. and Bob Miller on Livingstone Creek. We wintered at Cottoneva.

Spring, 1978: We moved to Livingstone Town site. Frank and Phyllis Brown from Whitehorse were included as partners for most of the season. By then most of the easy ground had been worked. We prospected the bench ground till the end of the season with encouraging results and prepared for '79 mining season. Max Sr. encouraged 'Canada Tungsten' to become a partner. They provided financial support to enable up-grading of equipment. The season ended on a positive note. Maria and I acquired Cottoneva Creek from Gerry McCully. We wintered at Livingstone, and kept busy preparing for the next season. We set up the old saw mill and cut some 25,000 BF (board feet) of lumber for water ditch and shop.

1980: We hydrauliced bench ground on Livingstone with some good results. In the Fall of that season we constructed a new road from the airstrip to Cottoneva complete with a bridge at Cottoneva Crossing. We opened a new cut above Discovery with good results. We spent approximately two months away from Livingstone that winter. We resumed activities in February, milling approximately 15,000 BF for construction work at Cottoneva.

1981: We spent the summer season building a new camp at Cottoneva. We also rebuilt the existing cabin and moved the saw mill. We wintered at Cottoneva, keeping busy with indoor work.



Al and Maria Serafinchon with Al's parents, 1981 Serafinchon Coll.

1982: We conducted a small scale mining program on Cottoneva with track front loader and hoe that summer. Pay was spotty and overburden was always a major factor. Gold output was less than fifty ounces.

1983: We continued mining and contract work for Livingstone and Little Violet Creeks, mainly supplying lumber needs. I became an active partner in a hardrock venture on Livingstone Creek and optioned gold, lead, and silver property to Archer-Cathro. We exposed an old drift and additional bedrock and put down two shafts of 20 feet and 40 feet with very poor results. We renewed the trapline lease with Dolly Jackson.

1984: Much the same as the year before. We decided to put in an adit beyond the last workings. Much effort and finances were expended with poor results.

1985: Due to poor fur prices and low gold production, we decided to leave Cottoneva Creek and take a position with a mining firm in Dawson City.

1986: In early March we decided to sell our operation to an interested party. We drove out over the winter trail, stored our belongings and flew to Whitehorse in April to start a new life.



**Cottoneva Ck. cabin ca. 1932, YA-78/26
PHO 81 #6 Clem**

Commentary:

During the 1980's the Livingstone camp became very active with mining operations on Little Violet, Cottoneva, Lake, Summit, Livingstone, Martin, Sylvia and May Creeks. Some exploration work was also conducted on St. Germaine, Mendocino and Dycer Creeks. In 1983, a 55 mile winter trail was constructed to Teraktu and d'Abbadie Creeks to the north.

By the end of the 80's the rush began to slow down. A combination of lower gold prices, mega overburden, and remote access all contributed to the lack of interest. Max Fuerstner Sr.'s last year of operation was 1981. He died in 1995. His son Max Jr. resumed with hand mining in 1982, then took on working partners from down south for one season. His operation eventually grew to a substantial enterprise, Livingstone Placers Ltd. However even with very large equipment, operating costs out-weighed profits, and Fuerstner decided to pursue other interests in the Dawson and Mayo regions. His last active season on Livingstone creek was year 2000. However he still owns 200 claims, 144 of which are hard rock, and he hopes to begin drilling in the summer of 2005.¹⁷⁹ The only active operation left during the 2003 season was on Little Violet Creek. Doug Gonder may still maintain a summer camp on Martin Creek. Gordie Ryder has interests on Sylvia Creek.

Into its third generation Livingstone Creek may well continue to be revived from time to time with new discoveries. As an old saying goes: "New prospects are usually old over looked ones."

Maria and I are currently living in Whitehorse. Both of us still enjoy working though we consider ourselves semi-retired. Maria is self-employed in commercial cleaning and part time apartment management. I enjoy working with heavy equipment, employed seasonally with H. Coyne & Sons doing site development and road construction, often in communities throughout the Yukon.

Having traveled "Outside" on many occasions to various places, we have chosen the Yukon as our permanent home. We recently purchased a new residence and enjoy the challenge of adding our own special touches in the way of small renovations.

We have truly experienced the north in all its kindness and harshness, and have learned from both.

¹⁷⁹ Fuerstner telephone interview with Leslie Hamson, Jan. 24 2005. See Fuerstner Biography.

Fuerstner Family

Dates in area: 1967-present

The Fuerstner family has had a long tenure in the Livingstone Creek district, from Max Sr.'s staking of his first one-mile claim in 1967 with Erwin Kreft,¹⁸⁰ to his son Max Jr.'s current ownership of 200 claims on all the creeks from Livingstone to Mendocina.

Max Sr. and Poldi (Leopoldin) Fuerstner originated from Austria, arriving in Canada in 1952. Their children were born in Whitehorse, Marlene in 1958 and Max Jr. in 1963. The family owned the Alpine Hotel¹⁸¹ and Bamboo Lounge until Max's retirement in the early 1970s.



Max Fuerstner Sr. at Livingstone Creek , ca. 1974. Gerald David McCully Coll. YA 2003/05

¹⁸⁰ Occurrence No. 13, 1994.20.194, publication not noted, MacBride Museum Standing Files.

¹⁸¹ Yukon News, July 9, 1975 Vol. 15., No. 26.

Max was frank about his early life in Austria. As a member of the Hitler Youth, understood at the time to be simply pre-militia training, he learned to work with gliders and to handle rifles, and later was a member of the Luftwaffe, touring Poland, France, Belgium and Russia. As his son recounts,¹⁸² these experiences made his father “very grateful for the freedom here [in Canada].”

In 1973 Max took up mining at Livingstone Creek along with partners Bob Miller and Gerry McCully of Constellation Mines,¹⁸³ on ground formerly owned by Louis Engle.¹⁸⁴ The company’s equipment had been repossessed because of duties owing when the equipment was brought across the border from the United States, and was bought back with Fuerstner’s funds when he and lawyer Bob Miller joined the company.¹⁸⁵



Max Fuerstner Sr., Bob Miller, Jim Greer, Gerry McCully, July 21, 1974

On July 21 1974 the partners uncovered a large nugget, weighing 20 ½ ounces, valued at \$6000 to \$10,000 at the time.¹⁸⁶ Max Jr. sold it for approximately \$30,000 in 2004. The former record on Livingstone was a 21 ounce nugget found by Louis Engle upstream from the Fuerstner find.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸² Telephone interview, Jan. 24, 2005.

¹⁸³ Constellation Mines was founded by Ace Parker, but after the first year he was not included in the partnership with Fuerstner. The company finally dropped the name in 1977, by which time Max Fuerstner Sr. and Bob Miller were the only partners. Miller bought out in 1981.(M. Fuerstner Jr., *ibid*). Miller became a legal editor in Calgary, then moved to Regina where he may still live, working as a freelance legal advisor. Ace Parker worked for several years in Calgary as a mining engineer for oil exploration. It is not known where he is at this time (A. Serafinchon, 2005).

¹⁸⁴ Gerry McCully, interview, July 21, 2001, YA 2003/05.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁸⁶ Yukon News, July 9, 1975.

¹⁸⁷ Whitehorse Star, July 26, 1974.

These records were surpassed in 1997 when Max Jr. found a 36 ½ ounce nugget. Despite its greater size, however, its value was about the same as the 20 ½ ounce nugget because “it just didn’t have the character of the other.”¹⁸⁸

“Livingstone Creek is known for producing the biggest nuggets in the Yukon,” he avers, though the Whitehorse Star cited the largest Gold Rush find as a 77 ounce nugget found by Staples and Small on Cheechako Hill in 1898.¹⁸⁹ Max Jr. has found “quite a few” nuggets weighing 10 to 12 ounces, and others weighing 14 and 17 ounces each. He believes that Clem Emminger and Louis Engle “probably got quite a bit of gold out of Livingstone with hand mining, as they had it for decades.”¹⁹⁰

Max Jr., known as Maxi as a child, was initiated early into the art of finding gold nuggets. His first summer at Livingstone at the age of 10, his father sent him up to the bench on Discovery claim, and told him to “put your nose down and look.” Within twenty minutes, “I was running down the hill holding up a one-ounce nugget.”



Max Jr., now a husband and father of two children,¹⁹¹ spent the next 27 summers in the district, over the years mining Livingstone, Lake, Cottoneva and Mendocina Creeks. He still owns 200 claims along the ridge from Livingstone to Mendocina. His father remained the main shareholder until his death in 1995, with Max Jr. assuming full responsibility for the mining decisions in 1983.

On Cottoneva, Fuerstner was amazed to discover a 200 foot long mining drift running 25 to 30 feet deep under the Emminger/Engle cabin. After investigating, he carefully replaced all the ground so as to preserve the cabin, although the two cabins on Discovery claim on Livingstone Creek were destroyed when he mined under them.

Fuerstner describes Cottoneva as “a good gold creek, the second best one for me” and says there is still gold there, and on Livingstone, but “it is just too deep- about 150 feet under the overburden”, and no longer practical to mine as a placer operation. “Hard rock mining is the best bet now, and has good potential. It’s the way to get to the source of where all the gold comes from.”

One hundred forty-four of Fuerstner’s 200 claims are hard rock, and his future plan is to haul in a drilling rig in the winter of 2006 and “hopefully begin drilling in the summer.”

¹⁸⁸ Max Fuerstner Jr.

¹⁸⁹ Whitehorse Star, *ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ Fuerstner’s aunt Anna Mandl, who acted as translator for the Engle estate, said it was worth “much more” than the \$300,000 to \$400,000 stated by Constellation Mines lawyer/partner Bob Miller—Max Fuerstner Jr., *ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Wife Mandy, children Cambria and Regan.

Drilling is not new to the Livingstone mining history. In 1907 or 1908, Fuerstner says, the Dawson Daily News reported that the Seattle-Livingstone Company hit the richest pay streak at Livingstone Creek at a depth of 162 feet. The borehole was still visible when, inspired by this report, Fuerstner invested \$50,000 to drill the same site area. However, he did not hit bedrock until 220 feet, and now believes the Dawson Daily News report was “probably just a promotional thing.” He “did not get much pay” for his own effort, but says “that is not the first \$50,000 I spent trying something out.”

Among his experiments, he reopened the old Emminger/Engle drift on Livingstone above Shane’s Gulch, with good results.

For some years the Fuerstner family lived in the Mining Recorder Office during the summer mining season, but moved out of the village in 1984, residing then in trailer camps that were moved from site to site as the mining operations changed locales around the creeks.

“Everything went downhill fast in those buildings once the heat was off. The heat kept the buildings dried out at least.” As of Fuerstner’s last visit in the winter of 2001 to move his camp out, “the back end of the Mining Recorder Office was caved in completely. The front room was still standing due to a brace we put in against the wall.”

The Kerruish cabin is now unsafe to enter, with “the roof mostly down, though the walls were still up”. The “little cabin,”¹⁹² built by Clem Emminger in 1935 is “the best one, possibly still livable”, but most of the rest are gone. “The creek took a few cabins away, including the two between the Kerruish house and the little [Emminger] cabin.”

However, there are four or five rarely seen cabins some distance above Sheehan’s Gulch, with machinery and other mining artefacts relatively untouched. The structures include two “major cabins” made of big timbers. Although the roofs are down, the walls still stand. Fuerstner believes the site dates back to 1914 – 1919, and that the site’s good state of preservation is due to its isolation. “It is very difficult to get to- you have to fight your way through the buckbrush.”

Fuerstner acknowledges that his mining activities in the district have changed the appearance of the areas he has worked in. “You remember how steep Summit Creek used to be? It is all flattened out now.”

However, he avers that the placer industry can actually enhance the environment. “In 1990 we were put on ‘0 Discharge’ orders so I built a big settling pond below Cottoneva by damming the end of the creek. The pond is as big as a lake, big enough to land a float plane on. Now the wildlife gathers there. Also placer areas are very quick to re-vegetate, which brings in the moose and so on. And we don’t use any chemicals.”

The proposed hard rock mining “will definitely move some ground around” and will eventually feature a crusher and mill.

¹⁹² Known as “Small Cabin”, # 6, in the Yukon Historic Site Inventory. See Village section.

Gerry (Gerald) David McCully
Dates in area: 1971-1976



Gerry McCully & Max Fuerstner inside Discovery claim cabin ca. 1974 YA 2003/05 #10

Gerry McCully arrived in the Yukon from New Zealand in the 1960s. He met Ace Parker of Constellation Mines around 1969 when McCully was “out in the bush somewhere with a Cat and he [Ace] was the mining engineer on the job. I got to talking to him, and one thing leads to another, and I come away with all these big ideas about how we’re going to conquer mining in the Yukon.”¹⁹³

McCully and Al Serafinchon made the first reconnaissance trip to Livingstone Creek by skidoo the winter of 1971, then followed with a loader, tanker, and Terex cat, building the winter road as they went, and arriving mid-April as the Teslin (Hootalinqua) River was breaking up. They broke through the ice, losing their camp stoves and other small equipment.

McCully extended the existing airstrip to 5000¹⁹⁴ feet from approximately 1000 feet,¹⁹⁵ worked on the roads between Livingstone and Cottoneva Creek, and began operations there on claims formerly owned by Louie Engle. McCully describes the Cottoneva venture as “a complete disaster. No gold.”¹⁹⁶ That’s a disaster. Without the gold you’ve

¹⁹³ Interview Gerald David McCully, July 21, 2001, transcript, p.7 YA 2003/05.

¹⁹⁴ Al Serafinchon gave the extended length as 1800 feet.—see Serafinchon biography.

¹⁹⁵ Originally built by Louis Engle with a D2 Cat—Al Serafinchon, personal comm.(2004). Gerry Leverman is also said to have worked on it—McCully, Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ However the creek has been successfully mined since by Max Fuerstner Jr. (telephone interview, Jan 24, 2004). See Fuerstner Family bio this report.

got nothing.”¹⁹⁷ He spent the winter of 1971-1972 there with Jim Greer, and ran out of food for the last two weeks until the rest of the crew arrived at the end of March.

The company moved operations to Livingstone in 1972 and began work at the mouth of the creek at the site of an old boiler, with poor results. They moved on up to Discovery Claim, using the Terex and front-end loader for a gravity-feed sluicing operation.

The Terex caterpillar belonged to McCully, awarded to him in lieu of wages owed him by an American company that went broke. However he was not aware that Customs duties were owed from when the Terex was brought in from Alaska, and the machine was seized. The loader was repossessed by its original owner in Vancouver.

New investment was needed to resolve the crises. Max Fuerstner Sr. and lawyer Bob Miller joined Constellation Mines in 1974, with Fuerstner providing the capital to buy back the equipment. Ace Parker was no longer in the company. In a grueling trip over the winter road, the equipment was brought back into Livingstone, along with a fuel tanker and other machinery.



Equipment Train, Livingstone Trail 1974 YA 2003/05 #18

The wheels pulled off the fuel trailer in the deep snow. McCully recalls “So right there in the middle of the bush we had to cut logs and put them underneath and make a skid out of it, dragged it in that way.”¹⁹⁸

He also remembers the dubious joys of winter travel, “camping out under the stars, sleeping on the mattresses and waking up covered with snow. Lots of fun! Lots of fun!”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ McCully, *ibid*, p.3.

¹⁹⁸ *ibid*, p.29.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid*, p.28.



Fuel tanker on skids, Livingstone Trail 1974 YA 2003/05 #19

By 1974 the operation became more sophisticated, employing a pump and water monitor. The steep banks and huge rocks still made equipment operation difficult and hazardous, and on one occasion McCully's Terex tipped over. He escaped without injury or serious damage to the Cat, and the work continued. At huge effort, the company erected a dam to increase the use of water as a sluicing agent. The first effort washed out, but a second, improved structure worked with some efficiency.



First sluice dam, about to collapse ca. 1974 YA 2003/05 #08

On July 20, 1974 McCully moved a four ton rock to get at the gravels underneath. The following day, a nugget weighing 20 ½ ounces was pulled from the sluice box by Max Fuerstner Sr. This marked a significant turning point for the operations.

However, McCully did not derive any financial benefit from his years of

commitment His last season was in 1976. "I didn't get anything out of it. Six years of work. Lots of experience!—enough to turn me off mining for a long time."²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Ibid, p.10.

McCully came out of his experience with a philosophy: “If you want to be successful at mining, you’ve got to have three things: you have to have some ground that’s got gold in it; you have to have enough money to get you started and carry through until the gold appears and starts paying its way; third thing is you have to have somebody who knows

what they’re doing and how to get there. If you miss one of those three things, it’s not going to work.



Gerry McCully with son Jonathan, 1975. Leslie Hamson Coll. #48

“At Livingstone Creek we were missing two of those things, that’s why it didn’t work.²⁰¹ We had the ground with the gold in it; we didn’t have any money, and we didn’t have anybody who knew what they were doing. So that’s why it was a disaster. So, that’s my philosophy, and I think that’s pretty accurate.”²⁰²

But McCully values “learning about mining, and surviving in the bush by yourself, cutting firewood, and all the practical things that a lot of kids don’t do today. Yeah, it was good in a lot of ways.”²⁰³

After leaving Livingstone, Gerry McCully worked for wages, mining in Canyon Creek and for Cogasa. Eventually he settled in Dawson City and founded a trucking company which he still runs in 2005. He married Doris Hoeflich on December 28, 1984. Their son Justin was born January 07, 1987, and daughter Nadine May 08, 1988.



Gerry McCully holding nugget, with stepson Matthew Wilkie ca. 1976 YA 2003/05 #05

²⁰¹ The company was later successful. In 1977 the name Constellation Mines was dropped, and Max Fuerstner Sr. and Bob Miller were the only partners. In later years Max Jr. headed the operations and still has 200 claims in the district in 2005—Max Fuerstner Jr., Jan 24 2005.

²⁰² Ibid, p.11.

²⁰³ Ibid, p.10.



Jon McCully Wilkie, Indian River, Schmidt Mining, 1998. Phot by Rick Rimer, J. Wilkie Coll.

Doris McCully died on February 05, 2004. Gerry now lives in Whitehorse with Justin and Nadine while still maintaining part of his operation in Dawson. His son Jonathan McCully Wilkie works as a heavy duty equipment operator for mines in the Dawson district. Stepson Matthew Hamson Wilkie works as a mapper for the Government of Yukon and has two children, Cole and Danica, with his spouse Kim Hobus.

Additional Notes & Photos of Livingstone Creek Area Residents



George Geddes and friends, Livinstone Creek, 1913
Pearl Keenan fonds YA 2002/132 Pho 566 #30.

George Geddes married a Tlingit woman from Teslin. In 1912 he hauled freight from Masons Landing and by 1913 was mining at Livingstone Creek, with the Livingstone Creek Syndicate. His daughter Pearl Geddes Keenan donated the photographs to Yukon Archives. The image above is a postcard addressed to "Mrs. Geddes Teslin Y.T." The handwriting on the back reads "*Livingston Creek Yukon Territory Oct 12th 1913. Dear Annie, What do you think the old men. Here now. I am your friend Jessie.*" George Geddes is identified on front of photograph as the man on the left.

The Blick family is mentioned in the 1905 diary of Lillian Mabel Taylor²⁰⁴ so is known to be the area from at least that date. The Keenan photos included other pictures of them at Livingstone and Mason's Landing.



Mr. & Mrs. Jack Blick & boy, Pearl Keenan fonds YA 2002/132 #45.

²⁰⁴ Stehelin Collection YA 2002/53.

Slim Foster

Lloyd Ryder²⁰⁵ knew Slim Foster in about 1964-1965 through his job as pilot: “[We made] many flights out to Livingstone Creek. [Some of these were] to pick up Slim Foster; he had been out there all winter. By the time you landed you could see Slim talking, and he’d get in the airplane and he’d talk all the way back to Whitehorse. You never had to worry about having anything to say, because he did it all! One year he had a partner, and of course you know what it’s like, two people living together, and he snowshoed a trail from the cabin down to the airstrip, and he said ‘Now I’ve done that don’t you use that snowshoe trail, you make your own!’ So they weren’t sharing too much at that time. I can’t remember who his partner was.”

Stanley Cletheroe²⁰⁶ recalled that Slim Foster built a cabin at Sheehan’s Gulch on Livingstone Creek with Harry Berry, whose last work before retirement was in 1945.



Asuchak family with pilot Moe Grant with Fairchild, 1971, Serafinchon Coll.

Foster spent his last years in Closeleigh Manor in Whitehorse. The George Asuchack family mined on Lake Creek and also had interests on other creeks. George Sr. died ca. 1988 or 1989. His son Ron undertook hand mining with Max Fuerstner Jr. on Livingstone Creek for one season ca. 1983-1984. Ron continued to mine in the area over the years and may still have interests on Summit Creek. Joe McNroy was a former partner of Ron’s. Todd Asuchack died on Lake Creek in his twenties. Georgie (George Jr.) worked as a labourer and equipment operator for his brother Ron, Max Fuerstner Jr., and Gerry Leverman, who worked on Little Violet Creek.

205 Lloyd Ryder, interview, March 17, 2004.

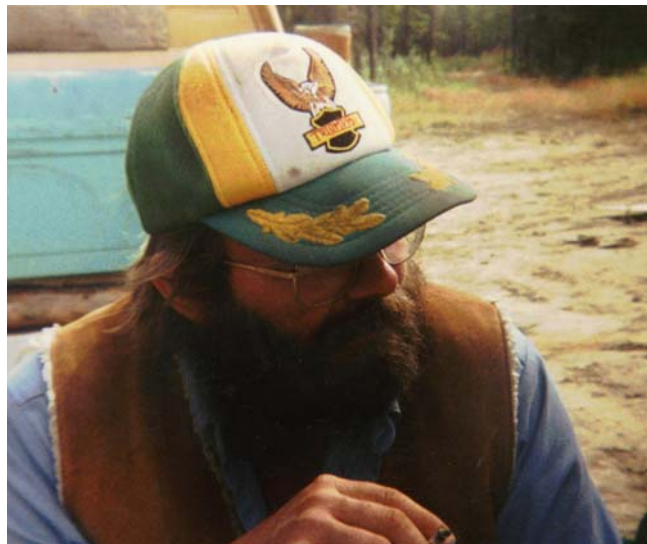
206 Stanley Cletheroe, interviewed by Doug Olynyk, June 01, 1993.



Augie Trexler, Lake Creek, 1975, Leslie Hamson Coll #31.

Ed Hill, Augie Trexler, Dick and Lela Young, and Todd and Fern Ames from Washington State mined on Upper Lake Creek 1971 – 1973. In early 1974, Hill and Trexler moved to the Burwash area and worked with Henry Besner for two seasons, and later worked Dublin Gulch with Ron and Helen Holway. Ed Hill sold his Lake Creek property interests to Ed Kosmenko in 1976. Kosmenko still retains these claims. He and his wife Penny live in Whitehorse. Ed Hill died some years ago. Augie Trexler still resides in Washington States and visits the Yukon in the summers.

Other miners included Donna Wilson,²⁰⁷ Gordie Lautamus, and Otto Hanson who mined in the area in the 1990s. Wilson has since moved to the United States. Lautamus still maintained claims in 2003.²⁰⁸ Hanson died of exposure while caught in the mud at the clay cliffs in Whitehorse, September 12, 2005.²⁰⁹



Gordon Lautamus ca. 1995 Donna Wilson fonds 2002/48 #39.

²⁰⁷ See Donna Wilson fonds, YA 2002/48 for diaries and photos.

²⁰⁸ Personal comm., 2003.

²⁰⁹ Whitehorse Star, September 25, 2002.



Otto Hanson & Donna Wilson, Mining Recorder Office, ca 1995 YA 2002/48.

Addendum

For people referred to in Clem Emminger's stories about Livingstone recorded by John Scott see Additional Notes on page 76.

Names appearing in records for Hillside No.3, October 1906²¹⁰

R.A.J. McKay, Bliss Rogers, Arthur Johnson, E.B. Dycer, Carl Christianson, Harry Barry, Harvy Smith, William Elliot, J. Garry & Man [?]

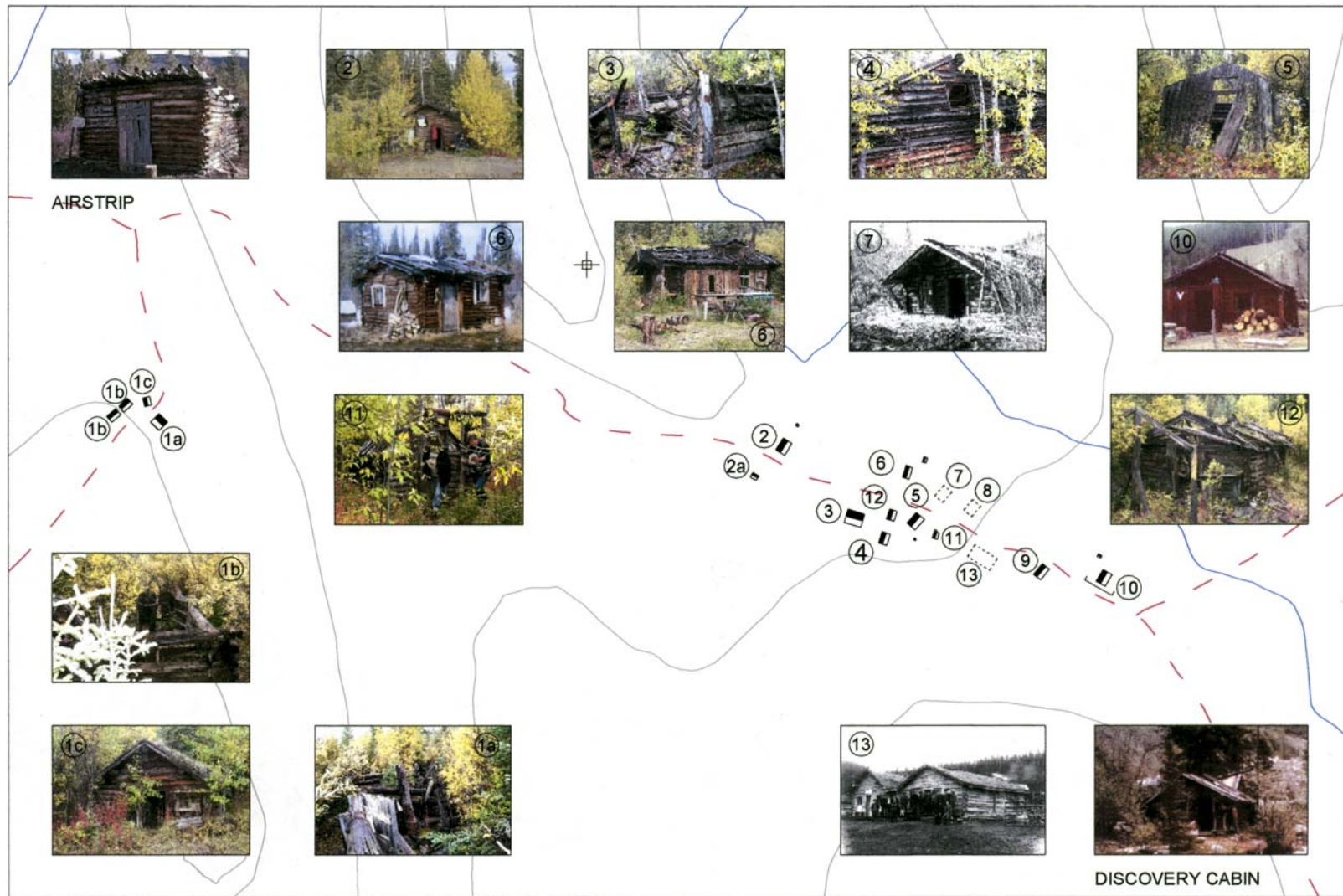
Hillside No.3, February 1907 includes: Arthur Johnson, Robert. R. Eames, L. Kezer, Harry Barry, Andy Campbell, J. Gear and Team.

Leslie Hamson, then known as Lee Wilkie, and her eldest son Matthew resided at Livingstone Creek 1972 to 1976. Her second child, Jonathan Gordon McCully Wilkie, was conceived at Livingstone and was born in Whitehorse in 1973.

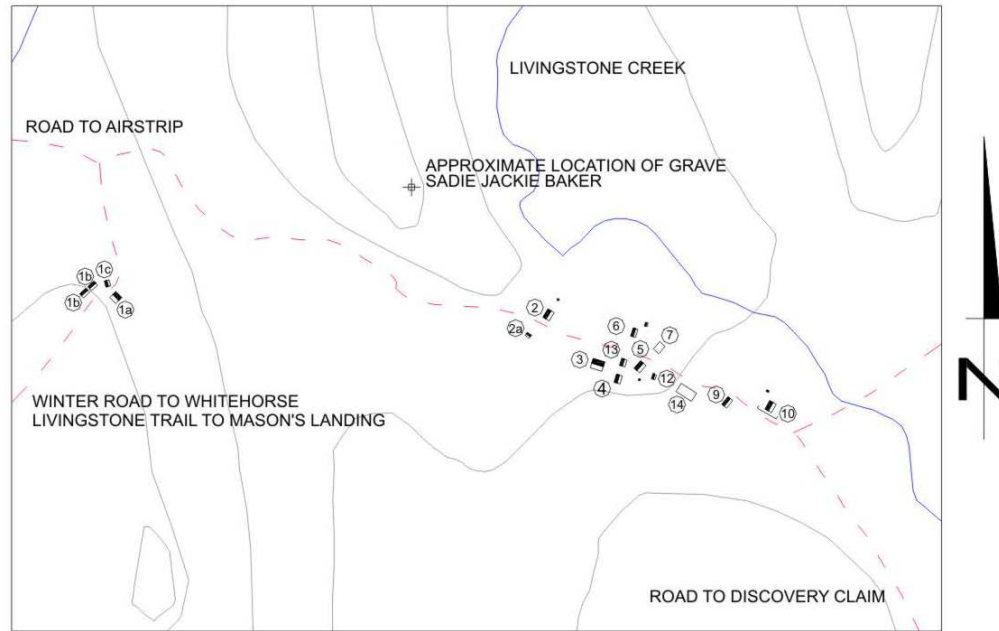
In 2000, Hamson began a children's novel set at Livingstone Creek but could find very little documentation. This led to a research project, the Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory, and to the writing, compiling and editing of this report.

²¹⁰ Provided as notes by Jim Robb, Feb 02, 2005. For additional names, refer to the Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory Document Database, available for viewing at the Heritage Resources Unit. See also the several collections and fonds at Yukon Archives.

Livingstone Creek Village



Livingstone Creek Village, HRU 2004



BUILDING KEY

1. NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE COMPLEX.
 - 1a. ONE AND A HALF STOREY BUILDING.
 - 1b. BARRACKS (2).
 - 1c. N.W.M.P. POST CABIN.
2. MINING RECORDER'S OFFICE & OUTHOUSE.
 - 2a. GREENHOUSE.
3. BARN (STABLE).
4. BLACKSMITH SHOP.
5. TRAPPERS CABIN & OUTHOUSE.
6. SMALL CABIN & SHED.
7. McGILVERY CABIN (NO LONGER EXTANT).
8. CABIN REMAINS, LOCATION UNKNOWN.
9. TOOLSHED.
10. SERAFINCHON (KERRUISH) CABIN & SHED.
12. CABIN W / TABLE.
13. CABIN W / PLATFORM.
14. ROADHOUSE (NO LONGER EXTANT).

HRU 2004

Livingstone Creek Village



Ariel view looking north, 1974 YA 87-69#13553 Walmsley Coll.

Entering the village of Livingstone Creek in 1972²¹¹ was a step into enchantment. Several of the cabins were still livable and a number were furnished with stoves, beds, tables, dishes, lamps, bedding, clothing, dried food, books, magazines, diaries, letters and ledgers. Mining artifacts were everywhere; clumps of rhubarb and furrows under the grass showed the location of old garden sites. The barn still had feedboxes and harnesses, the blacksmith shop was fully equipped with forge, anvil, bellows, and tongs. One could take one's cabin of choice, and, after minor repairs to roofs, floors and windows, simply move in.

Located approximately two and a half miles from the airstrip, the village consisted of several dwellings and outhouses, the Mining Recorder Office, blacksmith's shop, barn, and toolshop/workshop strung along a stretch of road that led to Mason's Landing in one direction, and up the Creek in the other. On a hillside behind the Mining Recorder Office, a white picket fence marked the grave of a Ta'an Kwäch'än woman, Sadie Jackie Baker,²¹² and the site may hold other graves as well.²¹³

A photo taken in approximately 1905 shows a two-part roadhouse²¹⁴ at Livingstone run by Daniel G. Snure, and a NWMP report²¹⁵ of 1902 noted two licensed and two

²¹¹ Personal observation.

²¹² Died 1919—William Webber interview, August 27, 2001. YA2002/134 (restricted). See photo First Nations section.

²¹³ Frances Clethero Woolsey, personal comm, 2002.

²¹⁴ Dan Snure's Place YA2002/118 #155 E.J. Hamacher Coll. For view of photo see Bennett section of this report.

unlicensed roadhouses and a general store in the district. The NWMP post,²¹⁶ consisting of five buildings as of 1980,²¹⁷ was located approximately one mile away. The jail cell's bars were made of wood. Many cabins were scattered up the length of the surrounding creeks and, throughout most of the mining history of the district, their inhabitants used the village as their supply and social centre. Likely there were also numerous tentframes in both the townsite and surrounding areas.

Lyle Geary, a former resident, believed there were “almost 200” people in Livingstone in 1906.²¹⁸ The NWMP census of 1900 cited a population of 84, with fluctuations to 125 in 1910.²¹⁹

By 1972 Dan Snure's roadhouse, which also served as a general store, was long gone, presumed burned because of charcoal found at the site. An old safe survived the fire and remained at the site for some years.²²⁰ A diary dated 1905, believed to be written by Lillian Mabel Taylor,²²¹ describes her life cooking and doing laundry for several men including Dan Snure. Lyle Geary remembered “Liquor was sold by the bottles or glass at the trading post (road house) and only a few years ago a full bottle of Kentucky Bourbon was found behind a wall in the old store.”²²² Members of the Cletheroe family, who as children grew up on Little Violet and Livingstone Creeks, remembered the roadhouse clearly.²²³ Kitty Smith, born at Winter Crossing, recalled a story of a relative attending a Christmas party at the roadhouse.²²⁴

The Mining Recorder Office has a long history, as one of the longest-surviving buildings and the most consistently used and occupied. Located on the crest of a slope at the north end of the village, it consisted of two main rooms and shed attachment. The logs are numbered, indicating the structure was built at another location and disassembled for reconstruction at the present site. The Office was “moved” from Hootalinqua in 1903,²²⁵ however it is more likely that the function of the office, rather than the physical structure, was moved such a distance. Al Serafinchon, who lived in the building with his wife Maria, speculates that the original location of the present structure may have been some distance up the creek.²²⁶

²¹⁵ Corporal Ackland, NWMP, Annual Report, 1902, PT.III, p.51; PAC, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Records, RG 18, Vol. 3087, “WMP Police Reserves in Yukon”. See photos Bennett section.

²¹⁶ For photos and description see Bennett section.

²¹⁷ Parks & Historic Resources Branch site visit, R.W. Ingram report.

²¹⁸ Ghost Town Trails of the Yukon, Don Sawatsky, Stage Coach Publishing, Langley B.C., 1995, p.67.

²¹⁹ NWMP Annual Reports.

²²⁰ Now bulldozed into the bush at the edge of the clearing—Max Fuerstner Jr., personal comm. Jan 24, 2005.

²²¹ Stehelin Collection YA 2002/53.

²²² Ghost Town Trails of the Yukon, p.68.

²²³ See the Clethero/Cletheroe Family, Biographies section.

²²⁴ Transcript, Kwanlin Dun Video Project, 2003.

²²⁵ NWMP Annual Report, 1903, Pt. III, p.35 .

²²⁶ Personal comm. 2004.



Matthew Hamson Wilkie & Gerry McCully at Mining Recorder Office, 1972
- Photo by Leslie Hamson, McCully Coll.

The Mining Recorder Office was used as such by L. Pacaud from 1903 to 1905²²⁷ when the office was closed by the Department of Interior.²²⁸ No records were found to indicate the Office continued after those dates. J.E. Peters lived in the building and kept journals during his occupancy from at least 1909 to 1913 and may have lived there much longer as he was in the district until at least 1932. By 1911 or 1912²²⁹ the Yukon Government Telegraph office was most likely run from this building, attested to by the wiring still visible in 1972. The telegraph line was a 40-mile link to Hootalinqua post, 20 miles below Lake Laberge.²³⁰ The structure served as a cookhouse in the 1970s and as a private home for many people over the years.

By 2001, however, the back room (shed attachment) was completely caved in. The front room was still standing due to a brace set against the wall.²³¹ The only building that remained salvageable by that date was the small cabin built by Clem Emminger in 1935, which had been maintained and upgraded periodically. Several buildings had been washed away by the creek. The Kerruish house, at the south end of the village, was still standing, but a good portion of the roof was down and Max Fuerstner Jr. deemed it unsafe to enter.²³²

It is not known, as of 2005, if any of the buildings remain standing.

²²⁷ Stehelin Collection YA 2002/53.

²²⁸ See Endnote #47, Bennett section.

²²⁹ Polk's Directory 1911-1912.

²³⁰ Ghost Town Trails of the Yukon, (1975: p.67).

²³¹ Max Fuerstner Jr., interview, Jan. 24, 2005.

²³² Ibid.

Livingstone Creek Preservation Issues²³³

²³³ For description of related documents in Heritage Resource files, see #4057-10-49 in Sources Consulted.

The village was virtually deserted for many years, with visits by occasional prospectors, who, apart from borrowing the odd tool, left the site intact. During the 1960s many items were taken, some of which were sold to Maggie's Museum in Whitehorse, which purchased them, reluctantly, to keep them from being sold out of the Territory.²³⁴ When the museum was closed, the items were purchased by the Government of Yukon, and dispersed without records of origination to various community museums.²³⁵

Despite these missing items, in 1971, when Gerry McCully, and Al Serafinchon made a winter trip by skidoo, the village was mostly intact.²³⁶



Aerial view of Livingstone Creek, 1974. YA 87-69 #1355 Walmsley Coll.

When the company returned for the summer season however, many of the finer items had been taken. McCully speculated that someone had followed their skidoo trail in.²³⁷ Other rumours spoke of helicopter raids.²³⁸

²³⁴ Cal Waddington, personal comm. 2003.

²³⁵ [First name?] Ball, Gov't of Yukon, 2002, Personal comm.

²³⁶ Personal comm.

²³⁷ Gerry McCully, personal comm., 1972.

²³⁸ No specific attribution was found. A number of people consulted by the researcher indicated they knew the identity of either the thieves or the helicopter hired for the job, but were reluctant to disclose. One helicopter pilot acknowledged that he “preferred not to notice” what his passengers were carrying out with them.

An undated, unsigned report found in the Heritage Branch files optimistically recommends “the old community should definitely be set aside as historically significant, against the day when easier access can be provided. It should also be possible to include enough of the creek to permit visitors’ panning.... there should still be some colors (sic) left for latter-day miners and prospectors arriving in tour parties.”



Despite Livingstone Creek’s remoteness, many summer visitors found their way in. Pictured here is Ed Isaac and wife, with Jonathan McCully Wilkie, 1975—Leslie Hamson Coll.

The report notes “the Placer Mining Act prohibits any staking over areas where buildings are located and in the event of any recent staking spree, this will protect the existing buildings.” A handwritten note in the margin cautions “mining is still allowed all around buildings,” and in fact, cabins were destroyed by being literally “undermined”²³⁹ as well as being washed away by creek diversion (see below).

By 1973 the need for some level of recognition of the significance of the site was officially acknowledged. The Livingstone Creek village and NWMP were made by DIAND (Department of Indian and Northern Development) reserve for review by HSMB

(Historic Sites Monument Board Canada). The site was recorded as #9337, 81.2 hectares in size, Quad 105E/8.²⁴⁰ No preservation work was undertaken, despite requests by the residents for assistance for basics like roofing lumber.²⁴¹ Residents made what repairs they could with materials at hand, priority naturally given to the buildings they occupied. Unfortunately, upgrading these buildings often entailed stripping the more deteriorated structures for such things as hinges, windows, and boards.

Stoves, furniture, equipment and machinery were also salvaged, repaired and reused, but in so doing, were removed from their historic context. Some items were transported from outlying creeks to the village, and also taken from the village to cabins in use along the creeks. Thus tracing specific items to their historic owners is usually impossible.

²³⁹ Example, the two Discovery claim cabins on Livingstone Creek. See Fuerstner Family biography.

²⁴⁰ Heritage Resource Unit files.

²⁴¹ Personal knowledge.



Livingstone Creek artefacts: hand built skidoo, toboggan and wheelbarrow, 1975. Leslie Hamson Coll.



Eventually (date unknown, but by 1980) the HSMB decided against designation of the village and NWMP post as a National Historic Site. No reasons were found for the decision, but it is presumed that the isolation of the site, approachable only by air or winter road,²⁴² was a major factor, especially given that other, more accessible and better known sites such as Fort Selkirk were available. A 1980 Yukon Government²⁴³ report (see below) notes “the remoteness and lack of easy access to Livingstone Creek at present would make development impractical.”²⁴⁴

In 1980 the Yukon Government conducted a building survey²⁴⁵ of the five structures at the NWMP post and “approximately ten structures ranging in condition from caving roof and walls to stabilized and partially restored” at the townsite.²⁴⁶ The report notes “the general condition of the site was very good”, and describes efforts by the current inhabitants to curb incursions of the creek into the village by building an earthen dike. Also reported were repairs to structures, made with lumber produced by a small sawmill on the site.²⁴⁷ Regrettably, a structure known as the McGilvery cabin, noted to have “new floor, roof, divider wall and interior wall covering” in 1980 was by the 1990s completely washed away when mining activity diverted the creek.

²⁴² Approximately 55 miles by air, 70 miles by road.

²⁴³ Parks & Historic Resources Branch, Dept of Renewable Resources (later called Yukon Historic Sites, Heritage Resources Unit), report by R.C.W. Ingram, Historic Resources Officer, May 28, 1980, file 6340-1 & -4, 80 0602.

²⁴⁴ Ingram, p.4.

²⁴⁵ Photos available for viewing at Heritage Resources Unit (HRU).

²⁴⁶ Ibid, p.3.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, p.4.



McGilvray cabin ca 1974, built 1944. YA 87-69 #13551 Walmsley Coll.

The 1980 report acknowledges that “most of the portable artifacts of any worth have been removed from the site” and recommends that as the HSMB had decided against designation of the village as a National Historic Site, “reapplication for a land reservation should be made to offer some site protection.” The report notes that site monitoring and basic preservation was provided by the residents and recommends that support in the form of basic building supplies be given. There is no record that this recommendation was followed.

The village remained occupied by the Fuerstner family and company until 1984, when they moved to a portable trailer camp that travelled from site to site as the mining operations changed locales. Max Fuerstner Jr. noted that the village deteriorated rapidly when it was no longer occupied.²⁴⁸

Donna Wilson & Gordie Lautamus mined in the district during the 1990s. Wilson engaged in extensive correspondence to the Heritage Branch expressing preservation concerns for the Livingstone village and proposing development of a museum.²⁴⁹ She gave as an example of an artefact at risk, the unique cookstove in the Mining Recorder Office.

²⁴⁸ Interview Jan 24, 2005.

²⁴⁹ Heritage Branch (now called Heritage Resource Unit) file #4057-10-49.doc.



Eureka stove, Mining Recorder Office LCHI-HRU PHO#2 Photo by Doug Olynyk, 1993.

Wilson's concerns triggered a site visit in 1993, when the buildings were photographed and videotaped.²⁵⁰ Present were the Yukon Historic Sites representatives Doug Olynyk and Bruce Barrett, former resident Frances Clethero Woolsey, Shirley Adamson for the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and Donna Wilson. Woolsey gave some history of the site, and the general condition of the buildings was recorded.



Frances Woolsey & Shirley Adamson, Livingstone Creek, 1993. LCHI-HRU photo #04

²⁵⁰ YHSI 105E/08/001-014.

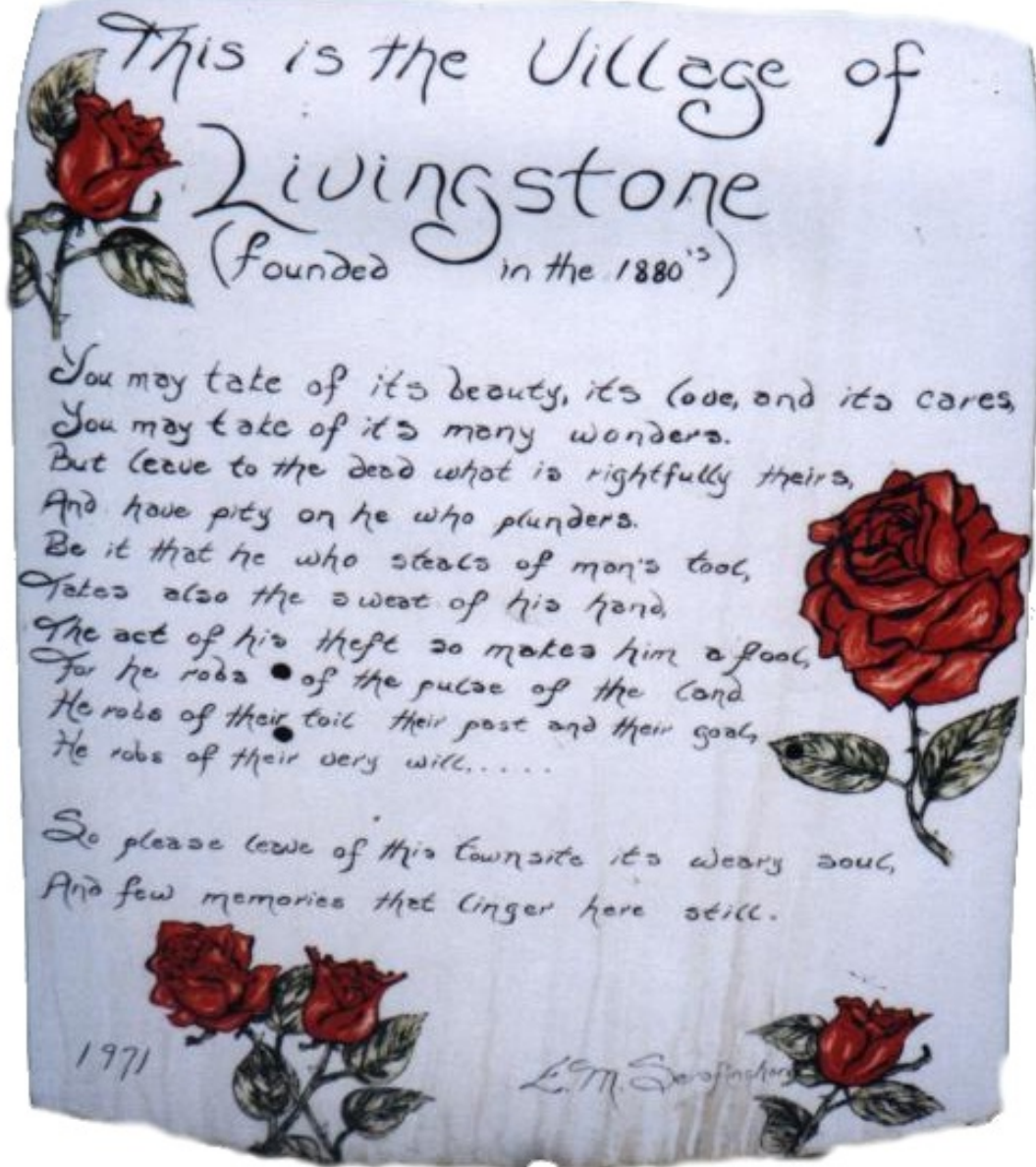
DIAND²⁵¹ also visited and photographed the site in 1993 and again in 1996. The Heritage Branch made a final visit in 2000, twenty-seven years after the first request for preservation assistance, by which time the state of deterioration was advanced beyond repair with the possible exception of the Mining Recorder Office and the Clem Emminger cabin.

In 2001, the Yukon Land Records registered a change of size of reserve from 81.2 to 15.28.²⁵² By winter of that year, Max Fuerstner Jr. observed, only the Emminger cabin was habitable.

In 2005 the question remains as to whether any sort of official recognition should be given this remarkable, near-vanished community. At this late stage, an historic plaque may be the only reasonable tribute.

²⁵¹ DIAND- Department of Indian Affairs & Northern Development.

²⁵² “Yukon Land Records Notice of New Entry: Amendment, Application #9337, Reserve # 105E08-001, Longitude 134 degrees, Latitude 61 degrees 21 minutes.



This is the Village of
Livingstone
(founded in the 1880's)

You may taste of its beauty, its love, and its cares,
You may taste of its many wonders.
But leave to the dead what is rightfully theirs,
And have pity on he who plunders.
Be it that he who steals of man's tool,
Takes also the sweat of his hand,
The act of his theft so makes him a fool,
For he robs of the pulse of the land
He robs of their toil their past and their goals,
He robs of their very will.....

So please leave of this townsite its weary soul,
And few memories that linger here still.

1971

E.M. Serafinchon

Poem by E. M. (Evelyn Maria) Serafinchon, 1971 painted on Fresno displayed on outside wall of Mining Recorder Office, Livingstone Creek

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Sources Consulted

Books, Newspapers, Publications, & Reports

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1901-1910

Occurrences [excerpts; publication title unknown

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1983:5, 9, 13. "*Rivers of the Yukon Territory: Teslin River*". Faro: Rivers North Publications.

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1975: *Ghost Town Trails of the Yukon*, Langley, B.C., Stagecoach Publishing.

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1992. *Gold-Sulphide quartz veins in metamorphic rock as a possible source for placer gold in the Livingstone Creek area, Yukon Territory, Canada*. In: Yukon Geology, Vol. 3; Exploration and Geological Services Division, Yukon, Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada, p. 87-98.

Tom, Gertie:

1992 *Èkeyi: Gyò Cho Chù My country: Big Salmon River, place names of the Big Salmon River region, Yukon Territory, Canada*, Yukon Native Language Center, Whitehorse, Yukon.

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1960: Last Voyage of the Keno, C.B.C., (film: YA 16-20).

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1988: Serafinchon home video.

[Date?] [title?]: Mining promotional video, Energy Mines & Resources library, Elijah Smith Building, Whitehorse.

Interviews

Cletheroe, Stanley

1993, June 1: interviewed by Doug Olynyk, Heritage Branch, Government of Yukon [transcript notes].

Emminger, Clem

1965: interviewed by John Scott, YA Acc# 77/55 SR 42-1 [sound recording; transcribed by LCHI project].

Fuerstner, Max Jr.

Jan. 24, 2005 [untaped telephone interview, no transcript; meeting].

Hoggan, Johnny

[date?] Yukon River Oral History Project, 81/32, tape 6, interview.

McCully, Gerald David

July 21, 2001 YA 2003/05 [Transcript, LCHI project].

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March 17, 2004 [partial transcript, LCHI project].

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March 13, 2004 [No transcript, LCHI project].

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August 16, 2001 HRU-LCHI-TR1 & TR2-BW [LCHI project].

Wilson, Donna

Nov. 20, 2001 YA 2002/48; HRU [Transcript, LCHI project].

Yukon River Oral History Project

n.d., YA 81/32.

Additional untaped interviews & consultations 2000-2006:

Frances Clethero Woolsey, Al & Maria Serafinchon, Eva Stehehlin

Maps

105E/87, 105E/8, Scale: 1:30,000

Additional maps were created for the report.

Photographs

Dan Snure Collection

MSS 272, PHO 500, f.12, 99/72

Donna Wilson fonds

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2002/118

Gerald David McCully

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Gordon & Lorna Walmsley Collection

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J.E. Peters fonds

2001/138

Jim Robb Collection

2001/165

Ken Jones

personal collection

Leslie Hamson

personal collection

Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory

2003/08

May Suits Getz

2002/133

Max Fuersnter Jr.

personal collection

Serafinchon

personal collection

Stehelin Collection

2001/138 PHO 547, 2002/53

William (Bill) Webber Collection

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Yukon Historic Sites, Heritage Resources

1980, 1993, 1999, 2000

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Peters, James E. YA MSS 98/29 (MSS & photo collection).

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Additional Sources

2003: H. Dobrowolsky, Frank Slim notes [unpublished research notes].

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For further references used by Gordon Bennett, see his Endnotes (A Summary History of Livingstone Creek, YT, 1897-1930).

Additional sources cont'd....

Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory: Document Listing
From Heritage Branch file # 4057-10-49

Note: The review was conducted in chronological order, thus starting at the end of the file to the front.

Document Name or #	Description
6340-1, 6343-4	<p>May 28, 1980 Livingstone Creek Site Inspection by RCW Ingram (2 copies, 4 pgs ea.)</p> <p>Legal status of site at that time: DIAND reservation for review by HSMB Canada #9337,1973</p> <p><i>Note: At that time buildings were in good condition, maintained mainly by residents. Ingram recommended support to residents for basic building supplies only. Bob Miller was site custodian, appointed by Commissioner, but rarely present. Ingram discussed situation with Mrs. Fuerstner, Maria Serafinchon & Otto Hanson.</i></p>
4057-10-49	<p>April 27, 1993 Donna M. Wilson's first letter to HB regarding deterioration of Livingstone Creek, request for funds and authority to act.</p>
4057-10-49	<p>May 26, 1993, Correspondence Doug Olynyk w/ Ms. Donna M. Wilson re: possibility of connecting at Livingstone on June 7 fly-in w/ Frances Woolsey</p>
No file #	<p>May 31 1993 memo from Shirley Adamson, Chairperson of Ta'an Kwach'an Council with attached Ta'an Kwach'an Council <u>Principals for Responsible Research</u></p>
4057-10-49	<p>June 2, 1993 Ltr Doug Olynyk to Shirley Adamson, Ta'an Kwach'an Council re: Investigation of Heritage Resources at Livingstone Creek. Acknowledges attached <u>TKC Principals for Responsible Research</u></p>
4057-10-49	<p>June 18, 1993 ltr Olynyk to Donna M. Wilson: followup on field trip to Livingstone Creek. Refers to video taken on site. HB unable to provide funds for restoration or stabilization. Suggests seeking other funding.</p>
No author or file # indicated	<p>June 29, 1993 Title: Livingstone Creek- Issue raised by Donna Wilson Summary of Ms. Wilson's requests to HB; Ta'an Kwach'an claim S-15; HB can provide technical support but not "too much" financial support; support of 1st N needed to remove objects from site; HB would encourage support from miners, Chamber of Mines, RCMP to help preserve site. Ref to proposal by Wilson to Minister of Tourism. <i>"The importance of Livingstone Creek is only moderate and regional in scope when compared to such sites as Selkirk, 40 Mile, Robinson and Rampart House. its isolation and severe deterioration limits its potential for any development, interpretation or restoration and is therefore considered a low priority by the department."</i></p>

Livingstone Creek Heritage Inventory: Document Listing
From Heritage Branch file # 4057-10-49 cont'd

No #	Tape Outline: Interview with Stan Clethero, June 1, 1993 (5 pgs)
YA 93/111	Oct 30 '93 Yukon Archives receipt for donation of Clethero interview
YA 4086-5-10	Undated, Received by HB Oct 28 1993 Thank you ltr Ian Burnett, gov't records archivist re YA 93/111
No file # listed	June 10/93 Wilson to Olynyk proposal re: building replica of LC at north end of airstrip. Signed by Donna Wilson, President of the Livingstone Museum Fund & Gordon R. Lautamus, Sec. Tres. (2 parts, 8 pg)
No file # listed	Aug 31/93 Further thoughts on proposal. Wilson to Olynyk on various preservations concerns.
No file # listed	Oct 13/93 R'd by Dept of Tourism Oct 19/93, Donna M. Wilson, addressed to Dear Sir: request for grant information re: writing a history book on Livingstone Creek.
No file # listed	Oct 13/93 Wilson to Olynyk re: concern about condition of road from airstrip to townsite. Refers to tourists who can't get to the townsite. Suggests new road. Requests contacts for history book she is writing on L.C.
4057-10-49	Oct 26/93 Doug Olynyk reply to Wilson re: who to contact on road concerns; enclosed documents on preparing a business plan, recommends that a professional historian could write Wilson's proposed history book- Wilson could assist researchers. Requests notification about any damage to LC properties. "No legislation specifically outlaws destruction or removal of historic resources in the Yukon unless they are federally designated or identified in a First Nation land claim." <i>Note: Historic Resources Act passed in 1996. See Statutes of the Yukon: 1991, Chapter 8, Historic Resources Act, Department of Justice, Government of the Yukon. Text includes amendments to the end of 1998.</i>
4057-10-49	Nov 24/93 Bruce Barrett, Historic Sites Technician to Donna M. Wilson, enclosing several business development documents, copy of Olynyk's Oct 26 letter, and video of trip to LC June 13 1993
4057-10-49	Feb 24, 1997, Memo, Bruce Barrett to Doug Olynk re: call from Donna Wilson wishing to remove cookstove from mining recorder's Office to building on airstrip she wants to use as museum; MR Office threatened w/ collapse.

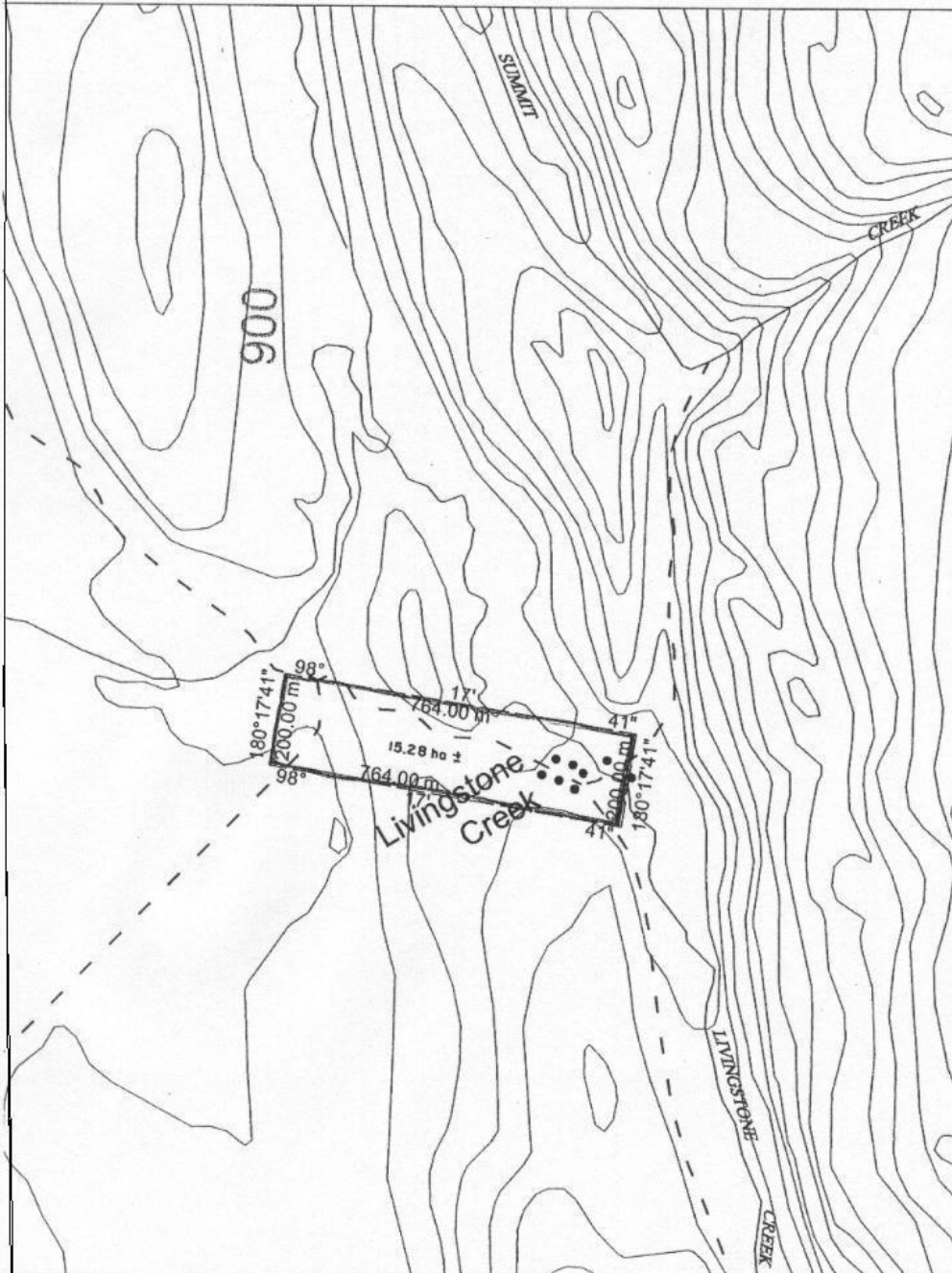
Documents pertaining to transfer of Federal Reserve 105E08-001

105E8.0001 Parks Canada	Portfolio of documents regarding proposed transfer of Livingstone Creek from Parks Canada to Government of Yukon.
	August 27, 1973. Yukon Land Records Notice of New Entry form confirming that <i>“a parcel of land at Livingstone creek has been set aside by notation in the name of the department of Indian Affairs and Northern Affairs pending decision by Parks Canada as to historical significance.”</i>
105E8.000.0001	<p>Oct 07 1999 Land Inspection Report by B. [illegible]. Notes 17 structures, 2 habitable. 7 photos taken.</p> <p>Photocopied section of 1:250,000 map showing Livingstone Creek with boundary of reserve.</p> <p>Illegible photocopies of 7 photos of LC buildings [on file at Parks Canada?]</p> <p>Dec 10, 1999 Facsimile to Doug Olynyk from Kelly DeWald, Parks Canada, Yukon Field Unit: cover to above documents. Notes that Parks Canada will be relinquishing their interest and acknowledges interest of YTG.</p>
4057-10-49	Dec 13, 1999 Letter Kelly De Wald, Parks Canada Yukon Field Unit to Marjorie Fraser, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada re: Livingstone Creek Reserve 105E08-001. <i>“Recommends that Parks Canada has determined the site not to be of national historic interest and recommends transfer to YTG Heritage Branch.”</i> Handwritten note: Faxed to Lynn Black Jan 18 2000. <i>“They will handle application if & when we field check and decide to proceed with reserve.”</i>
2860-20-105E/08	January 19, 2000 To Marjorie Fraser from Bryony McIntyre, Manager, Land Disposition, Lands & Property Assessment Branch re: <u>YTG Interest in Cancelled Federal Reserve 105E08-001</u> . (See map following this page.) Notes YTG interest in smaller parcel of 225 acre parcel; investigative study planned; plan to make application by Sept/Oct 2000 for <i>“a very specific reserve area for identified heritage interests.”</i>

INDIAN AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS / AFFAIRES INDIENNES ET DU NORD



YUKON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT
 TYPE OF TENURE- NOTATION
 PARCEL ID. NO.- 105E08-001
 LOCATION- AT THE LOCALITY OF
 LIVINGSTONE CREEK, IN QUAD 105E/8
 LAT. 61°21'N LONG. 134°20'W



N.T.S. - SHEET: 105E/8	BEARINGS: ASTONOMIC	DATE: MAY 09, 2001
DATUM: NAD 27	SCALE: 1: 10000	SKETCH FILE: 9337

