

# YUKON WOMEN

by Jo-Ann Badley, Anthea Bussey, Tracey Read & Audrie Walker

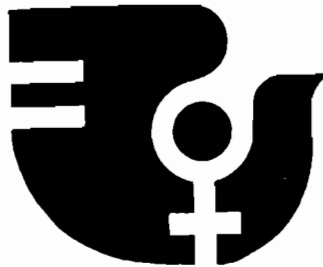
Illustrated by Claudia Lowry





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*The Yukon Status of Women Council  
dedicates this book to all the  
women of the Yukon during  
International Women's Year, 1975.*



by  
**Jo-Ann Badley  
Anthea Bussey  
Tracey Read  
Audrie Walker**

**Illustrated by Claudia Lowry**



## INTRODUCTION

This book has been a year in the making, and by the time it is published it will be nearly two years since a group of women within the Yukon Status of Women Council identified the need for such a book and began seeking research funds. With a grant from the Department of the Secretary of State, we five began reading and interviewing in May 1974. The group then consisted of Audrie Walker, Anthea Bussey, Jo-Ann Badley, Jenny Jack and myself, Tracey Read. After doing many invaluable interviews, Jenny left for another project and the group narrowed to four, and finished research in September at the end of the grant period. As we were all involved in either jobs or school during the winter, we wrote our sections during spare hours. When spring arrived we spent the lengthening evenings huddled over cups of tea, criticising each other's work with much appreciated objective help from Joanne Linzey and Leslie Choy-Hee. Joyce Hayden joined us briefly to write two biographies and as the manuscript became finalized, Claudia Lowry began her illustrations.

Since the book is the Status of Women Council's project for International Women's Year, we hoped to make it available at as low a cost as possible to the women of the Territory. We are grateful to the Departments of the Secretary of State and Multiculturalism for funds which largely cover our printing expenses.

We hope the book will give Yukon women useful information about their legal rights and responsibilities, and the availability of health care in the Territory, as well as giving a sense of the roles women have played in the history of the Yukon and a glimpse into the lives of some of the women living here today.

Because the research was done in 1974, some women's situations are bound to have changed and some of the information may soon become obsolete. Several women who were interviewed for the section "Some Yukon Women" have not had articles about them included in the book for reasons of space and to these women we apologise and say thankyou for having been helpful to us.

All in all the assistance we received from everyone we contacted was remarkable. It seemed that everyone was convinced of the value of such a book and went out of their way to help us. Several people deserve special thanks; namely Diane Johnston and Jean Cook at the Public Archives without whom we would have had a harder time locating sources, Ron Veale who proof read the Legal section, Ted Potsepp who read the Health section, and Corine Stolte who typed our (sometimes undecipherable) manuscript. A singular thank-you to Claudia Lowry for her very beautiful illustrations. And a word should be said for all the patient women who transcribed our many tapes; the most historically valuable of these will be donated to the Public Archives. The names of those others to whom we owe thanks follow, and we apologise to anyone inadvertently omitted from the list.

Tracey Read, Co-ordinator

*. . . Thanks to:*

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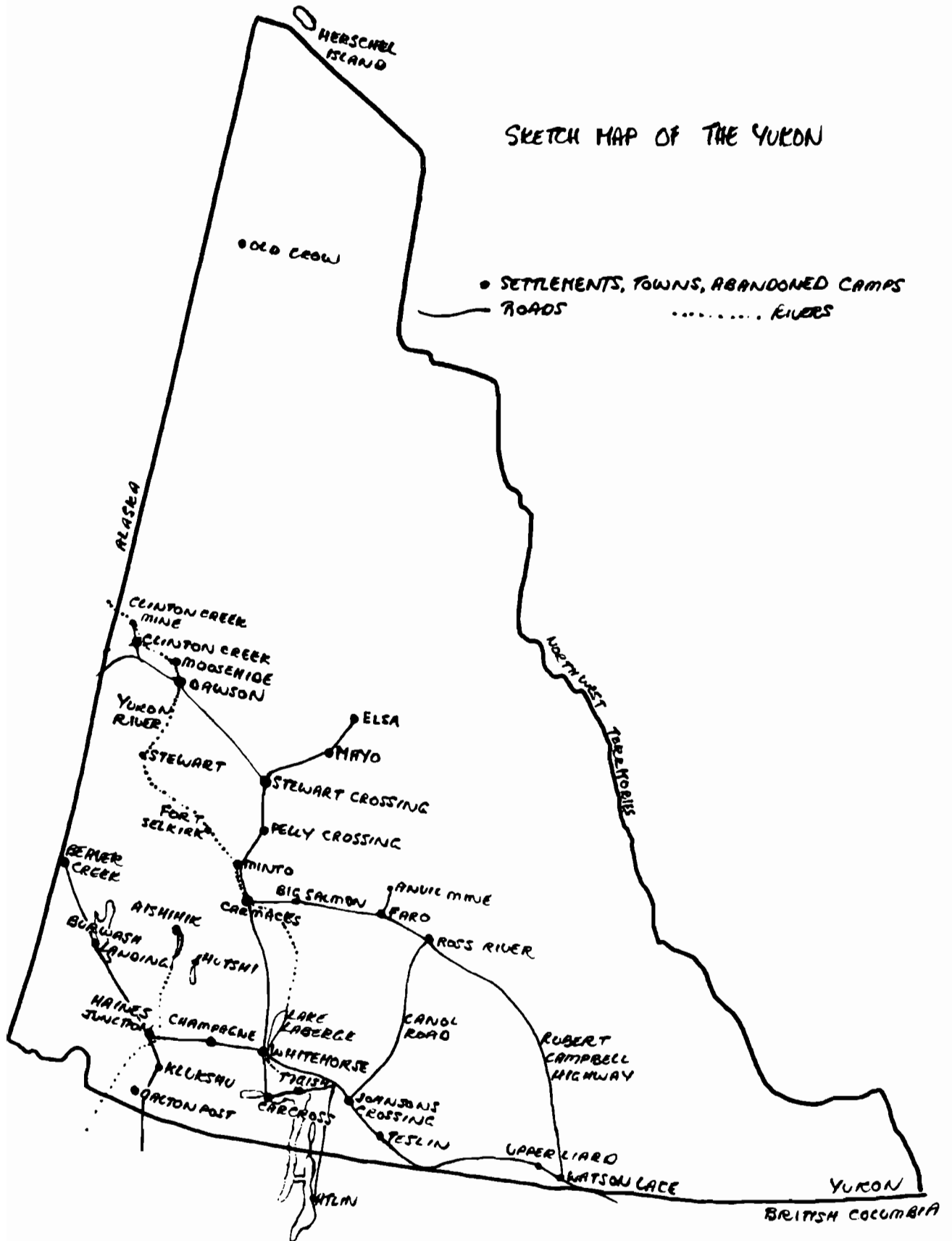
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Yukon History and Women <i>Audrie Walker</i>	1
2. Yukon Women and the Law <i>Jo-Ann Badley</i> .....	35
3. Women and Yukon Foods <i>Tracey Read</i> .....	87
4. Some Yukon Women <i>Anthea Bussey</i> .....	109
5. Yukon Women and Health Care <i>Tracey Read</i> .....	157
Footnotes .....	186
Bibliography .....	191





# SKETCH MAP OF THE YUKON





## YUKON HISTORY AND WOMEN - 1850 - 1950



The qualities of adaptation and perseverance and the courage becoming of men are not unique to them. Throughout the ages, women have borne these qualities equally and independently, some as leaders spiritually and politically.

“Yukon History and Women” 1850-1950 developed from an appreciation of the past and a search for the old ways now lost in a new age.

This section records one hundred years of Yukon cultural history. Of primary concern are the attitudes and attributes of women facing the demands of social customs and social expectations.

Authoritative information was gathered both from the Yukon Archives and the many women's memories we were able to harvest.

## BAND CULTURE

*“It was the river that fashioned the lands,”  
and those who followed  
adopted a geographical affiliation,  
to dress themselves for their survival  
and flow,  
as the river that fashioned the lands.  
The peoples:  
Kutchin, defending the Peel and Porcupine areas,  
the Central Bands,  
surrounding the Ross, Pelly and Salmon Rivers,  
and the Inland Tlingits,  
occupying the Teslin, Tagish and Atlin systems.  
As culture developed,  
each tribe became a conglomerate product-  
through intermarriage - of war, and trade,  
each forming a common technology  
and a generally common language,  
Athapaskan.*

### **The Origin of Moiety Organization:**

“The animals were the first people and the smartest of all the animals; and the wisest were the Wolves and the Ravens; the next was the Wolverine. All the animals could talk and can yet. The Wolves and Ravens intermarried and their children were Indians. They called the Wolverine their brother-in-law and were very friendly with him. The Wolves and Ravens held a meeting and made a law that they would not marry any other animals, but a Wolf was to marry a Raven and a Raven a Wolf.\* The children would own the country.

“Sisters and brothers, after they became of age should not speak or play with each other; when a Wolf died the other Wolves should make a big feast for the Ravens to eat and would find the Ravens presents but would eat nothing themselves. When a Raven died, he was to do the same for the Wolves. And so the world was started.”<sup>1</sup>

*A mother's heritage  
now formed her child's birthrights-  
a complex graph of social obligation -  
strictly adhered to, throughout life.*

“A girl held her childhood name throughout her life and the boys took their father's. Only in anger did one call a grown person by his name. People employed these relationship terms even though no blood connection. Older men commonly received the designation 'grandfather' while an age-mate responded to 'brother-in-law'. A child took special care not to utter his mother's name.”

\*Author's note: Moiety or Clan Group.

*Band structures,  
headed by Chiefs and Shamans -  
those of acquired  
or inherent positions commanded  
community respect.  
The wife of a Chief  
possessed a parallel position -  
enabling her appointment  
as an official  
at births  
and as a speaker at council meetings.  
Woman:  
bearer  
of spiritual heritages  
retained family crests and emblems.  
Personal ownership rights included  
articles supportive of her labours.  
A man's wealth  
comprised materials of his labours,  
soluble in times of trade  
or as payments to a Shaman.*

“A rich man stood out among his peoples because he could support four or five wives. His word received ready attentions. His wealth was derived from skillful hunting and trapping, or from noble birth. The poor man lived with a single wife and often found it difficult to support her and their children. In group affairs his word held less weight. If a rich man spoke harshly to his less fortunate peer, the former's supernatural powers might desert him with his abilities to kill game reduced. Under such circumstances, helping a poor man would assist him to recoup his luck. Poor men who received assistance from wealthier people, repaid such help by working for their patrons, for example, visiting the latter's deadfalls.\* In this way the rich came to enjoy the labours of servants and community prestige.”<sup>3</sup>

\*Author's note: Animal trap.

*By the mid 1980's  
the coastal Tlingit peoples had established  
a stringent monopoly  
governing all trading activities  
with the interior bands.  
An intermarriage policy  
of Tlingit women adopting interior men  
and homelands  
promoted a network of relations.  
These provided prevention of war  
and alliance in times of war.  
The procurance and manipulation  
of wealth brought pleasure  
prestige  
the excitements of foreign lands  
and exchange of news with relatives.  
Trade wealth  
represented the prestige of lavish distributions  
to feast one's relatives and guests*

*with exotic foods  
and to take handsome presents of imported objects  
to affined kinsmen.  
Trade goods of the coastal Tlingits included  
sea shells  
sea weeds  
fish oils  
and Chilkat blankets.  
The Interior peoples  
traded goods composed of  
white marble for doll's heads  
tanned skin garments  
quill decorated squirrel robes  
and other furs.*

\* \* \*

*Band traditions required  
a special initiation ceremony  
celebrating the puberty metamorphoses.  
An isolation period  
generally one month  
enabled the band's old women  
to form the young larva to the attitudes  
of her new role —  
Woman.*

Each band practiced a specific puberty custom but in general similarities existed. A study of the Kaska Indians describes this custom:

“A girl during her seclusion, wore a large hooded robe of smoked skins, lacking sleeves and wide enough to envelop the whole body, while the hem was pegged to the ground. To scratch her head with fingers threatened loss of hair; for this she employed a bone rod. A quill drinking tube and a special sewing awl also constituted her garb. These objects were carried on a line, passing around her neck. A mother placed another line around her hood to which she fastened a small piece of dried meat. This was to prevent the girl from being stingy with food in womanhood.

“Throughout the confinement she remained industriously occupied; when other tasks were completed she kept her fingers busy, endlessly counting the needles from spruce brush on the floor of her dwelling. Ending this seclusion, both garments were burned.”<sup>4</sup>

The Kutchin peoples practised another custom:

“At the event of a girl's first menstrual period, she went into seclusion and drank from a ceremonial cup, which she had made herself. The cup was not allowed to touch the lips, but by making a channel of the left palm with the little finger side toward the mouth the drink was poured into the mouth. The cup was supported, in tumbler fashion, by a stick in the bottom.”<sup>5</sup>

Tlingits employed still more customs, though striking similarities did exist:

“At the beginning of puberty, a girl is secluded, as unclean, in a little hut of branches. During the whole period of seclusion the girl was not allowed to leave her narrow and dark prison, except at night and then only when fully covered. She wore a hat

## **An Indian Tanning Recipe**

*1 hide*

*Stove ash*

*1 solid frame*

*1 smooth stone*

*1 teepee frame*

*1 smudge fire*

*1 scraper*

Roll hide up inside out. Soak in water with stove ash, two or three days. (Or until hair pulls out easily). Stretch hide on solid frame, then scrape with blunt edge 'til all fat removed. Wash in good soapy water several times. Dry. Stretch again, then rub to softness with smooth stone (until colour becomes white). Wrap hide around teepee frame over smudge (colour becomes a light tan).

## **Stories and Legends**

These representations are stories of the Indian women's role in Band culture. They reveal many of the traditional beliefs and religious ethics lost to a new way of life.

### **The Origin of the Potlatch**

"A girl was pregnant. When she was ready to have her baby, she went into seclusion behind the dwelling. Here, one day, as the sun was setting, her father heard her talking and laughing. The people did not know she had given birth to a monster. The girl returned to her parents but the monster grew large and ate many people. He was almost a hundred feet tall and had a great wide mouth.

"Everybody wanted to kill the thing but nobody was able to do so.

"One day, the people sent the girl away. That is when they killed the monster. When the mother returned, she cried like hell because this had been her child. The girl cried so much that the old man became frightened. So the old man made a big potlatch and gave away many things. Pretty soon the girl felt better. So since then, the Indians had a potlatch everytime someone died."<sup>16</sup>

As told by the Kaska Indians

### **The Grey Woman Along The River**

"Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e was a girl who had married a boy. One day, while sewing she said, 'I don't want to sew moccassins any longer.' She said this for fun because she always worked hard and could do everything. But the people, hearing her remarks thought it was bad for a girl who had just married to say that and they decided to take her clothes and leave her to freeze. Everyone agreed so they took her clothes and everything she had.

"When the people moved on, they put snow on the fires so she could get none. Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e's partner, another girl, was the last to leave. She told Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e, 'When I left my camp, I also left a piece of sinew and some fire burning under the snow for you.' Then Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e went there and found the sinew and fire. She built a big blaze to warm herself and made a snare for ravens from the sinew.

"She caught a raven and skinned it. From the raven's feet she took more sinew.

She snared more ravens and made clothes out of the skins. Then she took the sinew and made rabbit snares and caught rabbits and made fur clothes. Thus she had food and dress. Sometimes she captured porcupines.

“With the sinews from rabbit’s feet and the porcupine quills she made fancy things.

“Then she went to another place where there was a good river and she lived along the bank.

“One day two boys came down in a canoe and found her but she ran away from the camp. The boys called her saying, ‘Come back’, so she returned.

“When the boys saw all the beautiful things she had made and kept in sacks, they wanted to marry her, but she put them off saying ‘I was married once before and I don’t want to marry again.’ Then the boys, who were partners, said, ‘We will both marry you.’ At last Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e agreed.

“Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e went with her two husbands into the mountains. There the two boys hunted together and killed caribou. Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e packed all the game and prepared skins for a house. Also she dried all the meat and when August came, and the fur was good on the caribou, she tanned skins for clothing.

“In fall Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e and her husbands returned to the river to stay. They had plenty of clothes and food, so good a worker was Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e.

“The next year they met many people who had been making dry fish caches. Among them was Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e’s partner who had left her sinew and fire. When Klin-ni-go-me-dja-e saw her, the first thing she said was, ‘I will give you one of my husbands, and you can live on one side of my house.’ The girl was very glad.”<sup>17</sup>

As told by Kutchin Indians

### **A Taboo Regarding Incest**

“A brother wanted his married sister, but couldn’t get her. He went one day to hunt beaver with the girl’s husband. This man had a premonition that he was going to be attacked and the sister dreamed of her brother assaulting her husband. The brother succeeded in wounding his brother-in-law after which he returned to the dwelling with a beaver. The girl refused to eat the meat until her husband returned.

“When he didn’t come back soon, she started out to look for him. She found him lying wounded at the beaver house. After treating his wounds, she asked him to kill her brother, which he did.”<sup>18</sup>

As told by Kaska Indians

### **Wolf and Wolverine**

“Long ago Wolf and Wolverine hunted together but each had his own camp.

“One day Wolverine found a beaver home, made a hole in it and killed the beaver. That was the way Wolverine lived. His wife was Wolf’s sister but he would not give any meat to his brother-in-law even when Wolf was starving.

“So his wife and mother, who kept house for Wolf, made their camps close together, and they put a string under the snow. Wolverine’s wife had a baby who sucked all the time. Wolverine saw that his wife was growing thin so he gave her big pieces of meat. These she cut in half and tied one piece to the end of a string, which had been put under the snow, and her mother pulled it into her tent.



with a broad brim so that she would not look at the heavens and make them unclean with her glance. Only her mother and her slave or her nearest female relatives were allowed to visit and bring her food.”<sup>6</sup>

Tlingit peoples believed that for a pubescent girl to view her tribe would bring misfortunes such as: “Her look might destroy the luck of the hunter, fisherman or gambler. She might even turn objects into stone.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Indian Medicine For No Grey Hair**

“Hey, listen, first time young woman, she can menstruate; she put in a long hat. And then they get crow and kill it and take the skin out and they put it on top of her head so she won’t turn grey.”<sup>8</sup>

Symbolic rituals completing the metamorphosis proclaimed a woman marriageable. In the case of the Kaska Indians,

“A rich man could provide a feast for his daughter.”<sup>9</sup>

“Kutchin peoples made a feast for the girl of wealthy parents; although the young woman herself is not present.”<sup>10</sup>

Tlingit customs closely align those of their brothers:

“If the girl belongs to an important family, the relatives give a feast at which the girl, clothed in new apparel, is brought before the assembled guests whereupon the serving of food commences. The slave whom the girl clothes for this feast obtains her freedom and the old clothes are destroyed.”<sup>11</sup>

*The Bands' customs of ordaining the nuptials  
in mating  
embraced taboo,  
the interrelations of alike clan members,  
and the economic convenience of trade relations.  
Most peoples exercised  
the betrothal systems of the mother's choice,  
Kutchin often employing the wisdom of Shamans.  
Among the Pelly and Little Salmon bands  
a man sought acceptance from a girl's parents.  
Tlingit peoples exchanged gifts,  
a lavish distribution among clan members.*

“She fifteen, sixteen, she be ready to be married. They send her and five young men to hunt and pick berries. And who kill moose, he is the bridegroom and girl with the cleanest berries is the bride. Then the parents of the man have to pay for her.”<sup>12</sup>

*Woman :*

*protectress of the home and creator of life.  
Her social role in band society  
was to derive esteem from  
the recognition of being a good worker.  
During the seasonal migrations of hunting  
or other food gathering activities  
woman bore all articles of household convenience  
and she  
being the sole architect  
constructed and destructed all camps.  
Her labours of the home included  
preparation  
and construction  
of the hides necessary for clothing  
and the coverings used for canoes.  
Fat must be rendered for lamps,  
firewood  
and some small food items gathered.  
These and game were preserved  
to protect from cold winds and bitter times.*

“Food was served on birch bark or fresh poplar as well as in other solid wood dishes. A hole drilled in such a vessel served as a handle.

“People avoided using one another’s dishes for fear that doing so might lead to a small otter emerging from the careless person’s mouth.

“Utensils consisted of bone knives and sheep horn or wooden spoons. Etiquette prescribed that a knife must never be tossed to another person blade first. Deliberately violating this rule constituted a hostile gesture.”<sup>13</sup>

“Fleshers used in cleaning hides were obtained by cracking the shaft of a caribou leg-bone and sharpening the traverse fractured surface until it formed a smoothly tapering edge.

Awls for sewing and bark basketry works consisted of bone splinters. Needles with eyes were also manufactured accompanied by a thimble consisting of a flat piece of bone held in the palm.”<sup>14</sup>

The labours of life were a shared reflection of pride and stability. A man and his family worked side by side.

“Quite a few men, they help women out, they help women to tan skin. Even some women who smart women, they could make snowshoes; just like men too. Womans and men just work together.”

“One day, Wolverine heard the string and he said, ‘What is the matter?’ His wife told him, ‘When I made camp here, I saw many mice; it must be they who make the noise.’ Her husband accepted the explanation.

“When they moved to the next camp, Wolverine found another dam and killed a beaver. Wolf also killed a moose.

“The Wolverine heard Wolf breaking bones so he took a piece of roast beaver and went to Wolf’s house. He asked, ‘Did my brother kill something?’ But Wolf’s mother said, ‘I have old bones which I am breaking to make soup for your brother-in-law. He has killed nothing and is hungry.’ Then Wolverine laughed. He said to Wolf, ‘I am young man and can do anything. You are a young man and can do the same. My mother never has to make soup for me out of old bones.’ He showed the piece of beaver meat but gave Wolf none.

“The next day Wolf went to hunt and Wolverine followed him. Wolf found a band of caribou and killed them. When he opened them, he took off some fat and built a fire to roast it. Wolverine came to him and sat down on the other side of the fire. Wolverine’s trousers were open in the front. Then Wolf jumped over the fire and held Wolverine’s knees together. In this way Wolf killed Wolverine.

“Wolf went home and his sister came to him asking for her husband. ‘Where is your brother-in-law?’ she asked. Wolf answered, ‘We killed caribou and he stayed there.’

“The next day Wolf and his sister went to get the caribou and they found Wolverine, frozen stiff with the fat between his legs.”<sup>19</sup>

As told by Kutchin Indians

### **The Origin of the Sun and Moon**

“Originally these were a sister and brother. Since the sister had a lover she embarrassed the brother in such a painful manner that he left the house. She later became one of the great heavenly bodies and the brother, the other. But her disgrace followed her and therefore she constantly tries to stay away from her brother.”<sup>20</sup>

As told by Tlingit Indians

### **The Brown Bear Legend**

“One fall day some girls, among them the daughter of the chief, went into the woods to pick berries. When they came across some bear tracks and then found some excrement, the chief’s daughter, in spite of the warnings of her companions, began to ridicule the bear, calling him a slow, stupid and blind fellow.

“On the way home, she dropped the baskets in which she had picked her berries and they spilled out. Her companions helped her to pick them up, but she always dropped them again until her friends grew angry and left the chief’s daughter behind. After she picked up her berries she followed her companions, but lost her way as it became dark, and after wandering around aimlessly she laid herself down exhausted and soon fell asleep.

“When she awoke she saw a handsome young man standing before her, who offered to show her the way. She followed him willingly but when they did not come upon the path she became uncomfortable and afraid of her companion, who tried in vain to quiet her. At last they came to a bear den and her guide asked her to enter it. When she stepped in she saw two bears inside, and, frightened, she wanted to flee, but her companion held her back, saying that she had made a mistake. Actually, when she looked a

second time, she saw, in place of the bears, an old man and an old woman, who greeted her in a friendly way.

“Suddenly her companion assumed the form of a bear and explained to her that he had lead her here because she had ridiculed him and laughed at him. Although at first the girl was very sad, she finally found the bear attractive and became his wife.

“When in the spring, her tribesmen came to the den, they killed the bears and would have killed her too, for she had assumed the form of a bear, had she not made herself known to her brother and her relatives who were among the hunters. They brought her back home again where she took on human form again.

“Now when women see the tracks of a bear, they praise him and beg him not to be angry with them and not to steal them.

“The men cut the head off a dead bear before they skin him and decorate it with feathers like the head of a Shaman and throw it into the fire while they sing certain songs in order to bring good luck in future hunting.”<sup>21</sup>

As told by Tlingit Indians



*Tatoeing  
Bone ornaments  
Hair oils:  
Symbols  
of women's beauty.  
And no laundry day woes;  
disposable  
clothes.*

“They didn’t wash it cause it was just made out of skin. When it got dirty, they just throw it away and they make a new one.”<sup>22</sup>

“Only a woman painted her face and used rendered bone marrow for hair dressings.”<sup>23</sup>

“The lobes of older Kaska women and girls were weighted with plugs, carved from bone, but no ornaments penetrated the helix. In the lower lip a woman often inserted a labret made of a small piece of fish bone. A young girl carefully concealed her unhealed septum hole from an old woman. The people believed that infection would occur if a woman were to see the freshly made hole.”<sup>24</sup>

“Tatoeing was a form of adornment practiced primarily on women of the Kutchin tribes. A sinew thread, coated with black pigment is drawn under the skin by means of a bone needle. The art was performed principally on the chin, in a series of vertical lines.”<sup>25</sup>

“They just wash their face with rabbit feet. They put in water and in the morningtime they wash their face with that rabbit feet, and they get another, dry one; with that they dry their face, that.”<sup>26</sup>

## THE FUR TRADE AND NATIVE WOMEN’S ROLE

Furs, symbols of wealth and importance were the foremost demand of the European markets. In 1840 the sources of these furs included Canada’s Northern Territories.

The fur companies and independent traders seeking goods and fur exchanges utilized the inter-band trade network of the coastal Tlingits. All trading was conducted through trade partners; an inland Indian dealt exclusively with a coastal partner, loyalty preventing the loss of furs to anyone else. Also, this procedure avoided the costly and dangerous practice of establishing isolated posts.

The Hudson’s Bay Company and its rival the Northwest Fur Company had developed a long-standing feud of competition. The Hudson’s Bay Company dealt with the coastal Tlingits and northern Kutchin, whereas the Nor’wester men acted on an individual basis, as independent traders. This competition was dissolved with amalgamation in 1821 under the Hudson’s Bay Company name.

Each company placed stringent operating regulations on its staff. The Nor’westers promoted a policy known as *à la facon du pays*\*. The Hudson’s Bay Co. at first forbade any inter-marriages or casual contact on grounds that the expense which would result from support and the dangers of affronting the Indians would prove to outweigh any advantages. This regulation, though enforced, was found to be not fully

\* Author’s note: ‘In the style of the country’.

practiced and was later dissolved in favour of inter-marriage. The keeping of an Indian woman became the accepted prerogative of the officer in charge of the post. This economic allegiance of inter-marriage enabled the trader to secure the trade of his wife's band and with his new knowledge of the native tongue his effectiveness as a trader greatly increased.

Primary trade was conducted through the liaison of a trading chief. An Indian man, company hired, promoted trapping among his community. He retained the powers of exchange rates and gave special concessions in cases of the crippling non-productive disasters caused by illness and death.

“Elaborate trading ceremonies were a part of all trade contact between Indian and White. These were used as a reward system for loyal trading chiefs. The trader presented the chief with gifts of food for his band to open trade and as an incentive for returning to the post the following year.”<sup>1</sup>

Later policies developed through the trading posts. The trader recorded a trapper's accounts establishing a debt system, controlling the trapper's personal economy. Furs were exchanged for a set value in goods, usually the trapper's yearly outfit.

### **Native Women: Cultural Liaison**

The native women, trained in the necessary skills of survival were uniquely qualified to act as the liaisons to those White traders inept in a foreign land. Their knowledge of equipment, clothing articles and language proved to be of great importance to the traders and the women themselves gained valued economic reputations;

“They clean and put into a state of preservation all skins brought in by the Natives, undried and in bad condition; they prepare line for snowshoes and also knit them, they make leather soles for the men who are obliged to travel about in search of Indians and furs.”<sup>2</sup>

In this way, a native woman aligned with a trader in a ‘country marriage’, considered by all to be a legal and honorable union, retained her powers of influence over trade. Her importance to the success of the trading post occasioned the use of the phrase ‘petticoat politics’.

“One crafty wife was not only adept at hoarding the trade provisions, but even managed to carry on a private trade. As this couple had great influence over other natives, the company was obliged to turn a blind eye.”<sup>3</sup>

As the Indian peoples adjusted to preferences for imported goods such as rifles, ammunition, woolen clothing and iron tools, and even food stuffs of tea and tobacco, their reliance on the post increased. Gradually the trapping profession superseded traditions of sustenance hunting and survival living. Some traders having established their survival knowledge, abandoned their then useless native women, no longer of necessity or benefit to them. The arrival of European women to trading post communities marked another breakdown to the strength of Band culture, as the cultural differences became more distinct. An effectual transition had begun, transforming residential patterns, political structures and even family organization.

## MISSIONARY INFLUENCE AND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

In 1865 a Bishop bore messages of Canada to the Church of England: "He had so much to tell of the vastness of Canada, and the great regions where the children of God lived and died without the knowledge of Christ." Church Mission Societies worked towards the betterment of Indian Missions, the promotion of Christian knowledge, aiding in the erection of churches, and provided scholarships for Indian schools.

The Indian peoples traditionally supported their cultural survival by absorbing environmental changes, and so adopted European religion and customs.

Missionary gospel in the new lands was a 'rejection of all that was Indian'. The Band culture obliged the church societies' attempts to correct the heathen ways and lead the peoples to 'a better way of life'.

The Church of England, represented by the Rev. W. Kirby, established first contact in 1861. He then reported of the Kutchin peoples: "A naturally fierce, turbulent and cruel race...all of whom were astonished but appeared glad to see a missionary among them."<sup>2</sup>

Hudson's Bay Co. trading posts serviced the early missionaries at convenient congregation points. At Fort Yukon, the ground of initial contact, Christianity was first introduced to those who dwelt in close proximity. A practiced gift exchange professed the societies' policies of intended good will: "There were the material attractions that brought the natives near, such as the endless cups of tea, biscuits and plates of beans which the Missionary wives served up to their Native visitors... perhaps the most significant, in gaining the Natives' attention and confidence, were the medicines and medical skills which they came to associate with the Missions."<sup>3</sup>

The Catholic Church was the next Christian sect to arrive; this prompting a bitter competition over conversion rights. "Protestants were regarded by their rivals as heretics, leading the Natives 'dans les chemis de la perdition'\*; while they spoke of their rivals as 'devils in black skirts'."<sup>4</sup>

Earnest Catholic missionaries waived the customary waiting period for adult baptism and children were baptized at birth, often without parental consent. Anglicans enforced an instructional period for adults and insisted upon parental consent for a child's baptism.

These conflicting policies and the Catholics' failure to establish firm relations resulted in their departure, leaving the Anglicans to carry on their teachings. Years later as the country developed, other sects appeared, dividing the teachings.

The peoples of Band Society accustomed their culture to these European ways. "All articles in use by the Whites are named by the Indians without hesitation, according to their employment. A table is 'what you eat on'; a chair 'what you sit on'; a pen, 'what you write with'. A watch is called 'the Sun's heart'. A minister, 'the speaker', and the church, 'the speaking house'. A steamboat, before it was seen by Indians, used to be called 'the boat that flies by fire'."<sup>5</sup>

Christian doctrines induced a new realm of ethics; Missionaries promoted church marriages, introduced practice of Christian burials, reduced instances of polygamy, encouraged conjugal family units, and promoted the relinquishment of sexual taboos, puberty confinements for women, infanticide and euthanasia for the elderly.

\* Author's note: 'on the roads to hell'.

“The Indians were formerly accustomed, instead of burying their dead, to place them on high scaffolds above the ground; but this habit was probably owing to the ground being for many months in the year, frozen too hard to dig. The raising on scaffolds was also a greater preservative than burying underground, from the ravages of animals of prey. Since mingling with the Whites, however, the Indians conform to European habits of burial.”<sup>6</sup>

While Christianity suppressed some traditions, many peoples retained religion and culture in dual belief. “The Indians do not give up the use of their languages when they become Christianized; on the contrary, they cling tenaciously to it. Quite a number speak a broken kind of English, but only when compelled to do so.”<sup>7</sup>

Those peoples acquiring a respect for these Christian doctrines spoke of the teachings amongst their community members.

“John Tizya learned to read the Bible, Prayer Book and hymn books in the Kutchin language, and he then taught the boys and girls around him to read their own language. His teaching was done in skin houses by open fire light, and at the end of forty years of this work, he became blind. After John Tizya saw log cabins built for the first time, he decided to build one for himself at the mouth of the Crow River. Thus he laid the foundations of the settlement where the people live today... Here John Tizya used his own cabin for church and called the people to service by beating frying pans with a stick. He used a good many frying pans before he was given a bell.”<sup>8</sup>

As the teachings in the new lands developed, the Church of England’s Mission Society established a Territorial diocese with district missions. The Diocese of Selkirk comprised the Yukon Territory and established various missions at Hudson’s Bay Co. trading posts at Rampart House, 1882, Buxton, 1887, Fort Selkirk, 1892 and the village missions of Moosehide, 1897 and Carcross, 1900.

It was an arduous task, the maintenance of these missions, and those godly duties of gathering the peoples in a unity of Christian knowledge, and of attending upon the sick, often obliging the missionaries to travel a-far and live amongst the peoples.

“Home was rarely more than a small log cabin with a roof of pine bark or shingles and walls caulked with stiff earth or clay.”<sup>9</sup>

The discouragements of a severe climate and the hardships of primitive travel often over-powered Christian dedication. Many succumbed to fatigues of sickness, mal-nutrition, and over-work.

“We have had and are still having a good deal of sickness amongst our Indians, which causes much anxiety and trouble, not having a medical man within 180 miles of us.”<sup>10</sup>

Missionary women bore the Christian dedication and hardships equally, rarely expressing any complaint and gracefully following their husbands journeys, adopting orphaned children, tending the sick and disabled, and often entertaining lonely miners. Charlotte Selina Bompas, Charlotte Canham and Susan Bowen were three such wives who recorded their experiences.

“Our tent and quarters in the church were a place of refuge and courage to many. There was always room for a lonely man to come and have a talk and have a cup of tea.”<sup>11</sup>



“There was a wind that was almost unbearable, we were unable to sit down for any length of time, even for meals, and had most mornings to make the kitchen stove our breakfast table.”<sup>12</sup>

“The Yukon steamer came in last night, which was the cause of much excitement. I heard a whistle and the shouting of Indians, and William was up in a few minutes and off to the River, returning with several newspapers and a few letters, all more than a year old! We were very busy through the remainder of the night writing, as the steamer returns at once.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Education: Residential and Mission**

*To establish a centre  
large enough  
for his students to flourish  
under his constant wing,  
an Ideal  
Bishop Bompas  
achieved  
in the Spring of 1903.  
Chooutla Indian School,  
a unity  
of Christian education,  
a preparation  
for the sanctity of God's world.*

Bishop Bompas wrote in his journals that Caribou Crossing, “forms the center of a hitherto un-occupied area, and forges perhaps one of the last links of the chains of Church Missionary Society Stations which girded the world.”<sup>14</sup>

In 1903, thirty-five children were housed and taught daily lessons in two small, log buildings, over the ten months of school residency. The Bishop gathered his students from Forty-mile Village and other small Mission schools.

During this period of ten months, and without rest, these select few faced cultural imbalance - never seeing family or traditional ways of life - while others, of neighbouring homelands attended local schools at Mission villages.

“One half of the day is spent in the classroom. There the children are given, whenever possible, an ordinary school education. During the other half of the day, they are taught the things most necessary to lift them... to something nearer to the Christian standard of cleanliness and industry. The girls learn house-keeping, sewing, etc., and the boys gardening, rough carpenter and blacksmith work, and numberless other things that will be useful in the kind of life that they will lead.”<sup>15</sup>

*A formula of partial  
self sufficiency  
umbrellaed  
school digestive well-fare.  
Agricultural lands,  
Diocese owned,  
cultivated by  
students' applied knowledge.*

*Funding  
solicited from  
Womens' organizations and  
Church congregations.  
Anglican education  
recognized in 1911.  
Indian Affairs  
financial funds, granted.*

“The school’s crops were successfully harvested. The yield was as follows: potatoes - 1,650 lbs.; turnips - 2,050 lbs.; radishes, etc. as needed for summer use.”<sup>16</sup>

“By the kindness of the members of the Women’s Auxiliary, the children of the school are supplied with clothing for another year. Thirty bales in all were received, coming from Montreal, Kingston, London, Toronto and the Diocese of New Westminster.”<sup>17</sup>

Mission schools operated on daily or monthly basis, a direct contrast to that of Residential school’s continuous curriculum. The Teslin Mission School, begun in 1910, opened seasonally in May, June, July and August. Regularly subjected to the shifting of church management and funds, the Teslin school operated on a tightrope.

“We would always begin in a prayer, and a hymn and then the various classes would come forward to do their work. We had the various grades sort of set apart because of what they could do and we used a system of each one helps one. While we had books from the Department of Education as readers, we had, at times, to supply our own exercise books by going to the store and making shift with wrapping paper, cut and lined and then tied together with string... Our boys and girls started as soon as they could come to school, around six or seven, and went up as far as fifteen or sixteen. We kept regular school hours, nine til twelve, one til three. Then in the afternoon we always had things to do, games to play. In the evenings there was usually a pick-up game of baseball, with the Mounted Police on one side and myself, and the Mission men on the other.”<sup>18</sup>

Other later church institutions included St. Paul’s Hostel in Dawson, and Lower Post Residential School. These operated under parallel procedures. In November of 1920, St. Paul’s opened.

“This institution is situated in Dawson, which is centrally located and has a combined public and high school. Children have been sent from a radius of six hundred miles to the Hostel, which furnishes them with a good home under Christian influences and surroundings. It is also the aim to give as much domestic and other training as time and circumstances permit.”<sup>19</sup>

### **Band Society Education**

Traditionally, the family units taught their children the lessons of a future, prosperous life within Band culture. Sons learned the art of providing on hunting expeditions and built the tools of these labours alongside fathers. Daughters were prepared by household duties to meet those expectations of being a mother or a wife, bearer of spiritual heritages. School education forced interruption of this family unit cycle. Parents, having no jurisdiction over or understanding of the new teachings, often resented the loss of their children for four to ten months of each year. Speaking on Residential Schools, four women related personal memories of their experiences on this controversial topic: Education. For many, the shrouds of bitter memory parted, revealing...

“...It was a bit lonely sometimes, especially in the summer; winter was so cold; not enough to do. It was really lonely.”<sup>20</sup>

“...A great separation between the sexes at schools. You couldn't even talk to your own brother, boys had their own yard over the other side of the fence.”<sup>21</sup>

“... Well, they were pretty strict. Very strict. But it was really good to me. I always think that was a real good thing that happened to me to go down there... When I was leaving I thought of the Sisters very much. They were pretty strict but I thought they were good to me and we all learned a lot of things. Everything we done by ourselves, like sewing. We sew and make our own clothes and boys do a lot of work around the place, like milking cows and helping the staff to plant vegetables and everything like that and they had cows, and pigs, and chickens and they all make their own butter and they sell the eggs from there. So we learned a lot of things and we do our own laundry and we baked our own bread. And so when I came out of there, I was only green to the stuff the Native people do in a trapground.”<sup>22</sup>

“... We were taught the three R's; Reading, 'Riting and Religion.”<sup>23</sup>

### **THE GOLD RUSH ERA - 1896-1910**

The Yukon, an almost totally undeveloped fore-arm of the North West Territories, was not yet distinguished when in the autumn of 1896, the nuggets that were to bring thirty to forty thousand people from the outside world were gathered from their resting place on Bonanza Creek.

Patsy Henderson spoke of the discovery:

“George Carmacks and Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie and Bob Henderson and myself; first people in Klondike. We find the gold; all except me. That time when we find Klondike and gold. I'm just a kid that time. I'm an old man now.

“Well, so George tell us; 'That man he went this way months ago, Bob Henderson, let's go look for him; maybe he found lots of gold'. So we go look for him, so there's Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie and George Carmacks; that three people look for Bob Henderson. So then three people, George, Skookum and Charlie, they stay there, Bob Henderson's camp one night. Next morning they turn back but go different creek and they see gold, so they look for a rich place.

“Well then they went up Russell Falls, they take time, cook there. They don't find gold yet, but a quarter mile below the Falls, they took rest on top of bank. One man go down to creek, drink water. Skookum Jim, he's the man. When he took water he see gold on the rock. 'George! come down here'. 'Well,' says George, 'that's gold'. And he put the gold pan there, he put gravel in the pan and pan him. 'I guess we got a good place here; we're going to stake a claim'. So they stake a claim them three people on the creek; on the seventeenth day of August. They give him a name too, the creek on the Bonanza. That's the way the Gold Rush start.”<sup>1</sup>

Discovery marked for many seasoned and luckless prospectors the end of an era in empty ritual.

Dawson City's beginnings that year were ones of hardships; most spent the winter in tents and make-shift buildings. Profits were reaped from short supply and large demand. Townsfolk eagerly purchased eggs at one dollar each, and bathed under a tent wash-house entrance fee of one and a half dollars for a despairing rinse of five minutes.

By the spring of 1897 Dawson, grown to fifteen hundred citizens, was now established as the famed Lousetown and Dawson proper. Before summer's demise a

tangled growth boasted ten saloons, each of which took in no less than three hundred dollars a night.

“Town lots were selling for as high as twelve thousand... bacon and tea cost seven times their outside values.”<sup>2</sup>

June and the arrival of the first steamboat; the only link with the outside world. While Dawson prospered, the developed nations of the world slept in ignorance, for news of the great strike was not yet known.

The public's palate was enthralled; newspapers and news bulletins fevered an epidemic of Klondike. Dreams of riches and adventure rotted imaginations while few bothered to research the raw realities of a miners' life.

“... one gold seeker in Seattle asked the station master which train he should board for Skagway... and another in Victoria... who's outfit consisted of thirty-two pairs of moccasins, a case of pipes, a case of shoes, two Irish Setters, a Bull pup and a lawn tennis set... a tourist going to the gold fields for a good time.”<sup>3</sup>

“In London, an enthusiast called upon Henry de Windt, an Alaskan explorer and wanted to know if he could ride a bicycle over the Chilkoot Pass.”<sup>4</sup>

Of travel routes entering the popular gold fields, the most arduous, soul examining experiences were the climbs of the Chilkoot and White passes.

Only a rich man could, in theory, remain seated during the all water route. By first completing the three thousand mile distance from Seattle to Alaska, then journeying along the upper reaches of the Yukon River for seventeen hundred miles, one reached Dawson.

The bulk of prospective gold seekers first outfitted in Seattle or San Francisco, then booked passage on every available means of steamer transportation. By September First, 1897; a total of nine thousand persons and thirty-six thousand tons of freight were recorded to have departed Seattle, Skagway bound.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police were authorized to regulate border crossings in 1898, when an act of Canadian Parliament created the Yukon a separate Territory. Each new immigrant crossed the threshold, bent under a mandatory size outfit, usually totalling a one ton weight. These outfits contained an assurance of well being, a full year's supply of food and goods. The parcels were either packed on human or animal backs or dragged on sleds. The average load for man or woman totalled sixty-five pounds bivouacked stage by stage until the total weight reached the other side of the pass.

“A steamboat man and his wife moved two entire sternwheel vessels, in bits and pieces, across the mountains... also in the crowd... a woman with bread dough strapped to her back so that it rose with the heat of her body.”<sup>5</sup>

Between the years of 1896 and 1898, an army of forty thousand kindred souls, each fighting for life itself, conquered extremes of climate and terrain, all for the lure of gold, the riches many never found. Some settled around Atlin where in 1897, a strike built a town. Others, foreseeing hazards, faced the discouragements of failure and returned homeward, while those remaining pushed onwards to Dawson.

European cultural developments once again prompted another adjustment within Band Society; traditions were again relinquished in adaptation. The introduction of wage labour, seasonal packing and guiding, and the European money system stretched a vast crevasse of social segregation. European townships were covering hunting and trapping ground while European public schools excluded Native children. In 1896 Bishop Bompas feared corruptive influences for his people, those who occupied the lands at the heart of the Klondike. Moosehide Village was established a few miles downstream where Bompas, building a school and church, carried on his teachings unmolested.

To the southern reaches of the Territory, the Tlingit peoples became adept packers and guides, many becoming wealthy respected citizens within their own culture and by those Europeans relying on their services.

Indians women once again held a revered role. Many a deathly sick prospector regained his life and health when cared for by these women.

The initial years of the Gold Rush were ones of rampaging activity and prosperity for both cultures, as each was equally intent on survival.

### The Women's Pages

*Klondike Kate  
Laura Berton  
Diamond Tooth Gertie  
Martha Louise Black*

*Women pioneers  
a few among thousands  
some petite and delicate  
mere fragrances  
some tall and strong  
rugged ladies of business  
some rich and well remembered  
some dying distinguished  
by crosses, row on row.  
All sought land  
a land far from their own  
each saying good-bye to everything known.*

These women, arriving for the birth of the new civilization, relied on the numerous business opportunities born of prospectors' needs. Women operated roadhouses and laundries. Women owned mining speculations, hotels and restaurants. Other women sought their riches in dance halls, and practiced prostitution.

A laundress financed her mining claim, then flatly refused a purchase offer of a quarter million dollars. Mrs. Willis, supporting her invalid husband, sought the opportune north in 1896. First staking a claim, using her cooking to finance its operation, she baked bread to sell at a dollar a loaf. Upon saving the purchase price of starch, two hundred and fifty dollars per box, she launched a new enterprise - a laundry, supporting her mining concern which amassed a fortune.

Other entrepreneurs included the seamstress, Mrs. Chester Adams and business woman Belinda Mulrooney. Mrs. Adams, professional dressmaker, prophesied her fortune as a few hundred. She cleared her first ninety dollars within three days of operation. Advertising a range of practical styles selling for 1897 prices, her garments included: a 'Mother Hubbard' for five to ten dollars, an 'Empress' at six to twelve dollars and a single, wool skirt at a cost of eight dollars.

Belinda Mulrooney, business woman of unusual ventures, was a legendary figure of significance in the annals of the Gold Rush era. In 1897 Belinda invested some five thousand dollars in saleable items of cotton goods and hot-water bottles. Reaching Dawson by raft, via Alaska, her profits procured a restaurant, then from real estate ventures in log cabin building she built a roadhouse at Grand Forks. The town fool she was thought to be, for all the money giants chose the magnetic Dawson. But Belinda was clever in her business. At the roadhouses she sold edibles and whiskey for the highest prices in the Klondike to many infamous locals, who became her steady patrons. Over her first winter

on 'the creeks', Belinda lent her ear to gossiped opportunities, becoming owner of half a dozen valuable mining concerns.

And Cad Wilson, dancehall girl, sporting the largest nugget belt whose theme song 'Such a Nice Girl Too' evoked the tune from all of Dawson's lips. And Klondike Kate, exhibiting her famous flame dance, romping in Paris gowns, delighting the merriment seekers of the Savoy Theatre.

"... a dance lasted a few moments and it cost the man a dollar. We girls received half for each dance; we got a commission of twenty-five cents on each drink a partner bought, and a dollar on each bottle he purchased. Besides that we were paid a salary of twenty-five dollars a week... we thought nothing of paying twenty dollars for a pair of slippers to wear one or two nights, or as much as five hundred for an evening gown."<sup>6</sup>

"Mrs. Berry, 'the Bride of the Klondike', gave her advice to the women of 1899 seeking a northern life. She had experienced a trip the previous year.

"What advice would I give to a woman about going north, she asked pleasantly; why, to stay away, of course. It's no place for a woman. I mean for a woman alone, one who goes to make a living or a fortune. Yes, there are women going into the mines alone, with all the hopes of getting big pay. It's much better for a man though, if he has a wife along. The men are not much at cooking up there, and that is the reason why they suffer with stomach troubles, and as some say they did, with scurvy. After a man has worked all day in the diggings, he doesn't feel much like cooking a nice meal when he goes to his cabin, cold, tired and hungry and finds no fire in the stove and all the food frozen...

"I took an outfit of clothes, made especially for the trip. I got everything of the best material and found it paid in the long run... cost two hundred and fifty dollars. I had very heavy woolen underwear and knitted wool stockings. My skirts were made short, only a little below the knee. I had a heavy fur coat of marten, a fur cape, fur gloves, and the heaviest shawl I could find... When I got there, the house had no door, windows or floor and I had to stand around outside until a hole was cut for me to get through. We had a two room house and after it was fixed up, it was very comfortable, for Klondike. The stores, that were kept in the cache to save them from the wild animals, were frozen of course and had to be thawed out before being cooked. The dried and canned things were very tiresome eating.

"We didn't lack for visitors at the mines. I had nine to luncheon with me, there, before I had even a table to eat off; and it was so, that strangers would come and eat, even come and take any food in sight and bolt with it.

"The cabins didn't have all the modern improvements by any means; no porcelain tubs or hot or cold water. When we wanted a bath, we melted ice, heating the water, got the pan that we used for washing the gold, and did our bathing in that.

"Things were very high; at one time we paid sixty dollars for a fifty pound sack of flour and twenty-three cents a pound extra for portage."<sup>7</sup>

Women of all callings decorated Klondike life but perhaps the least remembered samaritans were the immigrant nurses. Requisites for this work were qualities of strong fortitude and tensile courage. Working long hours of silent toil, their efforts were often thankless ones.

"A nurse speaks of the luxury of a real floor in her tent hospital...and...pillows were made from the packing that came around our dishes."<sup>8</sup>

*In the year  
1900  
the selective webs  
of Cosmopolitan centres  
blossomed  
at Whitehorse  
Atlin and  
Dawson City*

As population inflated and buildings erupted, European settlements rose in shapely communities, each displaying amenities of permanence; churches, hospitals and schools.

The Yukon itself was also experiencing pulsing development. Roadhouses like Dalton Post, trading posts like Champagne, were settlements inviting new life, while to the south, workers on the White Pass and Yukon Route rail line hand-spiked link upon link an engineering feat two years in duration, 1898 to 1900.

A telegraph line furthered communications, stretching from Whitehorse to Dawson City and wood burning steamboats trotted the waterways, seasonally. The 'boat that flies by fire' burned an average one cord of wood an hour at a cost of eight dollars per cord, upstream navigation. A round trip between Whitehorse and Dawson lasted from seven to nine days, and upon occasion longer, when boats were forced to the banks during caribou migrations.

Northern existence revolved around the sustaining steamboats, valued more than any other communication system; "Our lives were ordered by the seasonal cycle of the first and last boats, break up and freeze-up."<sup>9</sup> One year Dawson City experienced a major disaster. The stores supplied by steamboat ran out of almonds, a mandatory necessity for any social gathering.

#### *Of Town Life*

*Victorian age customs  
dominated  
Yukon cosmopolitan life,  
"a country fine for men and dogs  
but kills women and horses."  
A woman  
dressed with distinction  
held afternoon teas  
among select company.  
Daily life, and  
rigors of climate  
inflicted  
torturous inadequacies,  
customs and proper dress  
inhibited  
practical and sensible ideals  
of movement along slippery streets  
of treacherous mud  
and sleet.  
Portable mosquito domes  
relinquished  
her beauty  
from the seeking eyes  
of evening romance.*

Few women travelled without the aid of an escort. A jealously guarded reputation may be suddenly jeopardized should she travel without. Life was further complicated by roadhouses oblivious to Victorian ethics.

“There were no doors on the ladies bedrooms...which used to worry those new travellers, but the men were perfect gentlemen, in those days.”<sup>10</sup>

*On Rural Life*

*In a tent among the willows  
with no floor and  
nature for companions,  
some women slept  
longingly,  
other women slept  
lovingly,  
bellies rounded  
by all that abounded.  
Life was hard  
and sometimes  
bleak.  
Chores to be done and  
little time  
for much fun.  
Riches  
to be sought  
vegetables to be bought  
and  
two sons to raise.  
A stitch here a patch there  
so much  
thread bare  
and clothing  
nothing but black slime  
a crime —  
laundry on the Sabbath.*

An overland stage line connected the rural areas to the settled communities and facilities. Pregnant women, near to time, boarded a coach a week in advance.

“One woman was to have twins and went down on the stage and came back home with the babies in hard tack boxes. The stage man wanted to charge freight. Well, when the stage came in and all the people came down to meet it, the driver told the woman the charge. She said to him ‘Well, I carried my babies down in my belly and you never charged me then and you want to charge me now.’ Well, he was so embarrassed all he could say was ‘go on, get going and I’m not going to charge you.’”<sup>11</sup>

*Dawson City  
once distinguished  
again distinguished  
as seat of the Territory’s Capital.  
In 1901  
Government operated  
Public schooling  
White only*



*and three judges and thirty-five lawyers  
crowded the bench  
all at one time.  
Whitehorse  
railhead town  
of booming business  
and blustering activity.*

1901

“The Whitehorse Public School opened in the Presbyterian Church.”<sup>12</sup>

1902

“The site for the school house is no more than half a mile from the home of the most remote pupil.”<sup>13</sup>

1907

“Mrs. Moore will open baths for ladies and gentlemen, also shampooing, rubbing, manicuring and chiropody.”<sup>14</sup>

1907

“Spring Clean Up” no fewer than ten women residents of the restricted district were charged either with selling whiskey without a license or being inmates of disorderly houses.”<sup>15</sup>

*Carmacks  
named for Kate  
strategic of location  
along Dawson's route,  
settlement of  
trading post and  
RCMP and telegraph stations,  
also  
the coal mine  
Tantalus Butte  
where Indians worked  
and lived.*

“The White people didn't mix with the Indians... the Indians years ago lived differently. They lived on different foods; meat, berries, fish and roots, Indian way, no White food. If they went to the dentist, payment was made by meat or something other than money value.”<sup>16</sup>

*Gold greedily sought  
still in 1910,  
automated  
massive dredges clawed the earth,  
the company  
Yukon Consolidated Gold.  
Former prospectors  
laboured as sorters, row by row  
of gold, the Company's gold.  
Downtown  
no gold from a miner's poke  
spoke for him, anymore.  
It was all paper now.  
The end of an era  
even now  
still glamorous in decay.*

## WORLD WAR I AND THE DEPRESSION YEARS 1914-1940

*War, the hungry cause  
sought the Yukon's man in 1916.  
Two full eclipses  
and a thousand souls past: 1918.  
Yukoners, the safe and sorrowful few  
read of its disease on porches,  
streetcorners and saloons.*

Captain George Black, active in Governmental and war affairs, issued a proclamation appealing for service enlistment: "...It is the duty of every able bodied man in Canada, who is not supporting helpless dependants, to offer his services to fight for the empire in this great crisis... We have remained at home in safety while others have been fighting our battles for over two years, although no more obligated to do so than you or I have been. They have for us, in many cases made the supreme sacrifice. They are calling to you and me for help. Are we going to fail them or will you come with us?"<sup>1</sup>

Two hundred and fifty-six men enlisted. They composed a full regiment, decorated as the Yukon Infantry Company, commanded by George Black.

Departure day, Friday, thirteenth of October, 1916. While the steamer Casca loaded its human cargo, Europe bound, Dawson newspapers recorded eulogies to those whom many would ever remember and to the many who would never return:

"A spell of sadness ran through the Yukoners who remained on the wharf yesterday. The spectacle of so many close and dear old friends departing on a long journey of hazard tried the stoutest of hearts of those at home... everyone who witnessed the epoch-marking departure of the last division of the Yukon's first complete company will be inspired by the memory of the splendid morale displayed in the cheer and optimism, the true British spirit in which the Klondiker goes forth to engage in the game of war - war for the defense of home, humanity and right."<sup>2</sup>

The war effectively squashed the Yukon's economy, baring Governmental coffers. Revenues once gained from the industries of gold and tourism deflated to exhaustion and the gold industry, vacant of its men, now neared collapse.

With the advent of increased European populace, cultural hives, and now economic depression, Band Society was forced to forego former policies aiding adaptation. The two cultures now evolved as separate forts of existence, with little social interaction apart from ventures provided by seasonal wage employments. These eroding effects distinguished a growing crevasse of social segregation.

"The Indians have been keeping to the hills all the time. Very few have been into the posts, and then only for a day. They have to work hard to be able to afford even a small outfit of food for their trapping season and no credit is the order of the day."<sup>3</sup>

Those who, previous to 1914 had been able to earn a living wage trapping, adjusted to the war prices the fallen fur markets imposed.

"... the fur market is utterly demoralized - one local buyer received telegraphic instructions yesterday from his outside connections not to pay over the following prices: Muskrat, .05; Mink, \$2.00; Martin \$3.50; Lynx, \$4.00; Bear, \$3.00; Ermine, .40; Cross fox, \$8.00; Red fox, \$4.00... These prices look as though they have been shot to pieces, and in fact they have... the European war has done the shooting, since the great fur markets of the world are London, Paris and Berlin."<sup>4</sup>

### **The Womens' War Works:**

"This great war is a woman's war as well as a man's war. When peace comes, the articles of peace will affect the women quite as vivally as they will affect the men. So that while we, because of our sex are not called upon to bear arms in the physical sense, yet we are daily called upon to bear the brunt of many a battle. There is work for all women in all walks of life at the present moment."<sup>5</sup>

A small women's task force was organized under the dome known as the Women's Patriotic League and headed by Martha Louise Black, the infamous lady who was not a lady - as she often said. These Dawson members held fund raisings supporting the Yukon's concerns throughout the war years. Mrs. Black committed herself with tireless efforts and was later to become distinguished as the first woman Yukon representative in Canadian Parliament.

"Government House  
Ottawa, Canada.  
February 23, 1916.  
Dear Mrs. Black:

I am sending you off by today's mail six pairs of socks which Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Connought has knitted herself on her knitting machine, and which she is very glad to be able to send for your Canadian section of the Fete of the Allies. "...at the Martha Munger Black Hop Saturday evening, three pairs of thick fine grey wool socks, knit by the Duchess of Connought, were raffled for the benefit of the Patriotic Fund. Tickets had been sold at various meetings, at twenty-five cents a chance, and a large sum realized."<sup>6</sup>

### **European Women's Cultural Concerns**

The Yukon lay dormant, once again a silent embryo, ready to be awakened anew by another age of great booming development. Cosmopolitan centers were but shrunken remains, pillaged by war, disasters and old age. The Whitehorse of 1919 was home to a mere three hundred souls and Dawson City, once a-bustle with over forty thousand now diminished to eight hundred. War had ceased in 1918 bringing home few, and of those few, many sought outside climes. In the fall of that same year, the last boat departing Dawson, the Sophia, carried a great number whose lives had been Klondike staked so many years ago. The steamer with one hundred and twenty-five souls aboard floundered, leaving no trace but one half-starved dog to speak of it's disaster.

For those who remained, life was silent, peaceful for a change. Deserted buildings fell to the lean, predicting their present day stance, and the lives of Dawson's eight hundred folk moved in a leisurely fashion among the few amenities withstanding the tortures of time and loss. Just three churches, one theatre and a hospital remained, full of old prospectors and arm-chairs, fitting for long days of sun.

Pre-war social customs still held steadfast; a thick armor of respectability, of women who still dressed correctly. At Whitehorse, train days promised social importance to all townfolk who flocked to the station at the whistle's first distant shriek. The train linked the town with the Outside twice a week, unless prevented by the frequent wrath of God's inclement weather, bringing supplies of fresh miik, produce, mail and tourists; these increased vitality - for a while.

"I think it is our duty to show the tourists that we're not all Indians and Eskimos and that we know how to dress decently."<sup>7</sup>

Though life still revolved around the seasonal shipping, invention, a neighbour of isolation, prompted Dawson's elaborate market gardens and the many root cellars to

brim with produce the year round. The age of technology arrived slowly there, where pre-war facilities operated intact; few cherished running water and sewage systems.

*Convenience!  
What word is that  
when in 60 below  
a call from the outhouse befalls?  
And youngest bathed with oldest  
in a tub far too small.  
Household life the ruffian type  
where kitchen headquartered  
activities year round,  
of cooking and preserving  
of Monday washes and Friday teas.  
A life of water at twenty-five cents a bucket,  
delivered,  
and creaking scavenger carts  
on secret rounds of refuse collection  
in the centre of the night.*

The following are representations of the life and times, harvested from women's memories.

"We used to order our next six months groceries in fall and spring as everything came on the first and last steamboats. We used to say that if everything came on the last boat that was going to come it would sink the ship. We were forever waiting for the last boat but I never heard anyone complain, we were used to it and everyone did their best making do."<sup>8</sup>

"Oh we melted water for years when we first lived in Mayo. We didn't have the modern conveniences at first. Water was delivered but if it went down to sixty below Joe wouldn't take the truck out, 'too cold, he said.' So any time we ran out, Jack packed ice up from the river and quite a long ways from our house."<sup>9</sup>

"I never had the feeling of being without, never; just never. Of course being young you could cope... you could make your own ice cream, in those days.

#### A Recipe for Homemade Ice Cream

*2 tins condensed milk  
1 tin strawberries  
sugar to taste  
quantity cracked ice  
sprinkling rock salt.  
Mix together, then freeze."*

"We lived in a small cabin, one room... it was big back then. We wouldn't get our mail more than once every six weeks when we walked out to town, twelve miles. At that time people were making quite a lot of money raising mink. So we decided we would raise mink, which turned out to be a big flop. The first year a big fire nearby frightened them and they killed all their young. We had names for all them, fed them year round, so I couldn't take a night off it seemed. Just awful to have to start from scratch again. We had three children, two boys and a girl and we lived out at Mayo Lake. We got school books from the open shelf division of the B.C. Library at Victoria. The children picked out what they wanted and postage was free, they even paid the postage on the return."<sup>10</sup>

“I can remember the ironing days when the stove had to be red hot for those flat irons. And wash days were something else again with the wash board contraption. There was so much white, pinafores and petticoats and all those things. For bathing we used the big wash tub on Saturdays. A kettle of hot water was added after each bath so the oldest was last to bathe.”<sup>12</sup>

“It’s been a wonderful life and I can honestly say I don’t regret one bit of it.”<sup>13</sup>

“Years ago White women held two classes - the virtuous and the ones of no virtue. In Whitehorse, the redlight district started at the Regina Hotel and women didn’t cross the line. One woman did. Rosie O’Conner, a prostitute came over the line to clean house for a sick woman. She did this for a few days until the husband came home early and after realizing her situation, he kicked up such a fuss and told her never to come across the line again.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Native Women’s Cultural Concerns**

For Band society the war held no suffering, no loss and little understanding. Bounded by a cultural separation, Band groups sustained lives of hunting, trapping and the opportunities of seasonal wage labours provided at wood camps along the steam-boats’ river routes.

Tradition remained a dominant cultural identity. A woman’s esteem was still derived from her skillful labours, and marriages of maternal selection and patterns of migratory sustenance were maintained.

The citizenship census of 1940 brought right to the Indian peoples. An integration effort emitted from Federal Government headquarters in the form of the policy known as Enfranchisement. To be Enfranchised meant eviction from the Band list and loss of status, relegating the bearer to be the privileged holder of right.

The right of public schooling, the right to own a business licence, the right to drink at public parlours and the right to now hold title to land were the benefits of Enfranchisement. Under Territorial law, a common-law marriage achieved legality following a seven year union. This reversed the traditions of maternal lineage and heritage, these records now being under the father’s surname. Children of common-law marriages remained of their mother’s name and status, then upon the marriage’s legality the next born received the father’s surname and non-status Enfranchisement. It was an arbitrary procedure and the Government applied no force, although it became popular to be Enfranchised - the privileged holder of right.

The following excerpts are representations of the life and times, harvested from women’s memories.

“When the menfolk killed those caribou and moose we’d put up all the moose skins. We’d work on them, wash them. And my mother-in-law used to take real pride in making those moose skins. The cleaner and the whiter she got them, boy, she was so proud.”<sup>15</sup>

“All the women did their wash at the river in a group and we had lots of fun.”<sup>16</sup>

“We had a trapline up at the south end of Teslin Lake and we used to go out there and we’d stay out there all winter... There were just loads and loads of strawberries and raspberries. We picked them by the bucketful, my mother-in-law and I. They didn’t know anything about canning so I told my mother-in-law I could put that up and save it for the winter. We had sugar maybe for six or seven months. So when I start canning those I used that ten pounds of sugar, just quick. And I ask my mother-in-law for more and she said no.

I said 'I'm not going to put anymore up because I know that the fruit is gonna go spoiled because there's not enough sugar. I said 'the ones that I put up you told me not to put too much so I didn't put enough sugar in it and I'm sure it's gonna get spoiled.' But anyway we put them up. And that winter they went down to get those berries. And we had a little cache building and the raspberries they were all boiling over. And so they had to dump all that out and we lost every bit of it and all the sugar that went in.'<sup>17</sup>

"Well, they give money to Dad. That is my wedding money he give to Dad. He give four hundred and fifty dollars. He got black fox. He killed black fox and he pay that fox. And then my mother say 'You can go with that man. That is your husband.' And his mother says 'That is going to be your wife, that is your wife.' Because he pay for me."<sup>18</sup>

"They go hunting and trapping. Sometimes they go out and dry the meat, go fish. They don't work hard for their living."<sup>19</sup>

"Sometimes we used to go out to Five Mile Point and we used to hunt muskrats with my Dad. We'd just walk around with him. So we took a dog team out there and my Dad bought a whole bunch of apples and oranges; he'd hide them from us and he didn't want us to see them so he'd put the package in a packsack like and he'd hang it on a handle on the dog sleigh. My dad was sitting on a chair and my little sister was sitting in front. I was bigger so he says to me 'You hang on behind, behind the sleigh'. And it was in springtime; we came along with this dog team and the dogs were running and my sister and I would say 'Mush, mush, go on,' and they would just slow down and take their time. My Dad used to say 'Sic, sic, sic, sic, sic' and the dogs would just gallop. When we came to some ice broken up from the fall the sled hit it and tumbled over on its side and then we got all the apples and oranges that were rolling around."<sup>20</sup>

"The trouble is that we took the paper. George took the citizenship paper in 1940, when the soldier came in. We want our kids to go to school. We had to sign all the children, he had to sign on the list. They were small, but we got their name down so they all could go to elementary school. That's how it happened."<sup>21</sup>

"We couldn't go to the school. There was some kind of prejudice that they wouldn't even let the Indian children go to school there, just White children."<sup>22</sup>

"I wasn't a registered Indian and was not allowed to go to the Residential schools. At Dawson City, the Anglican Church had homes for children to board at. They looked after about thirty-six children, both boys and girls.

"It was like being in a convent. They had rules and regulations. I think they were a little more strict than they had to be. It wasn't really like a home, it wasn't a home atmosphere. And, as a result, I think a lot of children weren't that close to their parents, not when they were in school ten months of the year and only home for two months, those that could afford to go home for holidays."<sup>23</sup>

### **The Depression — 1928 - 1938**

The New York stock markets collapsed without warning, disintegrating fortunes and years of frugal savings; millions lost homes, prestige and livelihood. The effects touched but lightly upon northern life, though as late as 1931 Governmental coffers once again fought battles of deprivation as railway freight and tourism volumes dwindled to a faint trickle.



Among dry and depressed nations of the world, opportunity was met with the fervor born of an empty stomach and hopes for a better life. Northern life offered this opportunity to many:

“My husband and I were driven North by the depression. Here we found a stable living and friendly atmosphere.”

Following these years, the Yukon returned to an accustomed life of silent isolation, to await the last historic upheaval - the Alaska Highway.

### AMERICA'S GLORY ROAD - THE ALASKA HIGHWAY

*The Yukon, dormant now  
with past eras' sleep  
lay unsuspecting in its solitude,  
awaiting a new age of siege.  
Development loomed.*

Prior to 1942 the north remained an insular community, drawing its sustenance, foods, shelter, and entertainments, from one major source - the country and its inhabitants. The silent isolation was to become forever obsolete. World War II instigated an event of modern chivalry, the Alaska Highway. Over a period of eight months, ten thousand engineers forged the one thousand, four hundred and forty-two miles of a virgin phenomenon at costs reaching twenty million dollars. Construction of this type normally commanded a span of five to six years.

Canadian oil slipped into the works through the Canol Project, a pipeline built to carry oil from Norman Wells, N.W.T. to a future refinery at Whitehorse. Upon completion however, the engineering of the project proved inefficient, forcing its abandonment.

The White Pass & Yukon Route railway, built in 1900 for ease of entry for the gold seeking population, now performed valued service as an American troop supply link.

With this new development boom descending, population figures exploded and employment rose, rupturing the peace of isolated areas. The pleasure of visits to distant towns, once discouraged by climate, topography and necessity were now to be replaced by almost daily commerce and news exchanges between communities.

#### European Women's Cultural Concerns

The following excerpts represent life as it was in an age of galloping change.

“I was born in the Yukon around the 1930's and educated in a three-room school house by Outside teachers. I felt a sense of unity with my classmates. As teenagers we used to go to the Whitehorse Inn cafe and bowls of fruit sat on the counters for the taking.”<sup>1</sup>

“When the Alaska Highway came in the Americans were courteous and interfered in no way with community life. Before the highway we had only the train and telegraph, then the road and telephone.”<sup>2</sup>

“My house was a log cabin downtown and in the bush. I hauled my own water and chopped the wood. The American invasion brought all their own food, set up separate stores, hospitals and in no way interfered with the townspeople. We all opened our doors to them.

“I arrived in 1941 as a nurse to a ten-bed hospital where the two nurses and one doctor lived in residency. Although the hospital was equipped with piped water from the river and septic tanks for indoor plumbing, we nurses were responsible for our own laundry.



“Nursing was steady work, we were always on call and our entertainment was the teasing we got from the men’s ward as we passed by at night, in nightgowns, to the washrooms.”<sup>3</sup>

“When I came north I was first employed by the highway crew as a bookkeeper. My first cabin was a tent-topped house I called my ‘little castle’. It was a frontier town of no crime and no locked doors where everyone knew everyone else, a strong sense of community.”<sup>4</sup>

“We raised pigs and cattle for sale to highway crew camps. All the meat had to be steam cooked by giant boilers. The bears were drawn by the smells and came in crowds. On weekends we would have as many as thirty people come to visit and see the bears. I found too many things to do and people to see to experience loneliness. We had thirty-one head of cattle and at least ten cats and dogs.”<sup>5</sup>

“Food supplies were freighted in over rail or road from Vancouver or Edmonton. Whenever supplies were short we did without. During the war we were never rationed. One time my mother ordered veal from the butcher but got beef instead. Disappointed, she went back to the butcher who replied that sure it was veal in Edmonton when ordered but by the time it gets here it’s beef.”<sup>6</sup>

“When the Americans came in we had almost no knowledge they were coming. In three weeks, thirty thousand army personnel flooded the town and the adjustments took five to six years. As a nurse I became a member of the social crowd. The more affluent families of distinction held tea socials including uniformed maid service. The first question I was asked when I arrived was ‘did you bring your evening gown?’<sup>7</sup>

“I worked in the Post Office and we had a time adjusting to the mail raise from five hundred people to thirty thousand. When my mother’s house was connected to running water she was so afraid of the sounds it made, gurgling in the drain, she wouldn’t use it.”<sup>8</sup>

“It was fabulous coming up the Alaska Highway that first time in ’51. I can tell you the motels were something else. Well most of the motels had been camps taken over by private individuals and had worked their pratts off trying to get them into shape and they hadn’t got around to doing much with them as yet. In the rooms you heard the guy in the next bed sneezing and snoring and chemical toilets up the hall, it was dreadful. They all smelled of oil because of the leaking oil stoves that heated.”<sup>9</sup>

“We had no food shortages or rations. The Americans lived in luxury although they weren’t allowed to have their wives join them as housing was so short. Clothing was so scarce it was bought right out of the packing crates. Housing shortages were so bad, that people put together shacks with anything they had.”<sup>10</sup>

“Coming up the highway was just out of this world, I had never been up here before and expected a land office and snow, the way people still do. One night we were driving along; my husband said it was time we looked for a motel. I said good heavens no because I was leaning against the fender reading a newspaper and he asked me what time did I think it was, you see he knew I didn’t, it was the end of June, and I said about eight-thirty. It was eleven-thirty.”<sup>11</sup>

“The only access in was the two-mile hill and we drove in on a Saturday night about suppertime and coming down the hill there we saw squatters along the side of the hill and I was horror-struck to see these women kicking their screen doors open to throw the dish-water out.”<sup>12</sup>

“There were a handful of beautiful homes, but just a handful and they had nice yards but the rest were just dreadful. At the Marsh Lake beach the American Army had built a whole works of teeter-totters and swings for kids and diving boards. When they pulled out they just left it and within a couple of years there was nothing left. People just went out with trucks and knocked it apart. Nobody cared and a lot of people did their building with tearing down buildings that the army had left and plumbing that they took out of these homes. It was a funny world up here.

“The building materials were sky high, they always have been up here because of the high freight rates and if you have only one lumber yard in town there’s no competition of course. Trucks would actually back in and load up piles of lumber, that lasted two years and then it was gone.”<sup>13</sup>

“I came to the Yukon on my honeymoon in 1947 and arrived to an army-built apartment where I was greeted by the ruins of my husband’s stag party. It was so awful that I wouldn’t take my hat off and I was going right back to the train..

“Fortunately a neighbour supplied a wonderful dinner that first night so then I took off my hat and stayed.

“I had left my home in Victoria and arrived to find a dusty Western-style town of wooden buildings and board sidewalks. Now if Hop-along Cassidy were to walk down Main Street I wouldn’t have been surprised.

“Our apartment in Takhini was a prefab combination of cement and asbestos. There was a wood burning stove, ‘the little black monster’ I was to call it, cool lockers instead of ice boxes and thank goodness, indoor plumbing.

“And no one had any landscaping - every house was surrounded by just sand. The landscaping was all imported later.

“As no one could afford a car, War Surplus allotted one car or truck for combined families to go on outings. Then when one family did buy a car everyone went to look at it as if it were the greatest thing in the world.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Native Women’s Cultural Concerns**

The highway formed a crossing of the segregational crevasses of past years, integrating Natives and Whites in communities, livelihoods and patterns of living.

The long wide path across the once virgin land provided access to those goods and services the people now required to support their new lifestyle of wage labour employment and medical attention.

The Government ordered a re-location program; the Indian people of Carmacks were shuttled across the river and Pelly Crossing was given it’s birth-by-convenience.

In the Teslin area, highway work took all the men from hunting; for the first time the entire band spent the winter of 1942 in Teslin, where disease felled those with no natural immunities to a plague of foreign diseases. No one trapped that year.

Travel reliances of former years disappeared gradually as the new arrived. Automobile transport proved more desirable, old ways died.

The Enfranchisement offered a greater promise of wealth and ready service at any local supply store. The wages offered by seasonal labour were much in demand; treasures of automation glistened in shop windows - a lure few resisted.

Education programs now serviced the entire population in both Public and Residential offerings, and few resisted the challenges of the development from which they were unable or unwilling to depart.

The Yukon was at least delivered from its silent isolation, to an age of galloping change.



**Elsie Smith**

**Sophie Isaacs**



**Lisa Ben Kassi**

**Broden Sterriah**



**Renee Charlie**



**Mary Charlie**





**Rachel Dawson**



**Clara Frost**

**Mira Moses**



**Mira Kay**



**Sarah Able**



## YUKON WOMEN AND THE LAW



This section catalogues the Law with regard to various roles which we assume at different times, namely: Women as Citizens; Women as Wives; Women as Mothers; Women and the Criminal Code; Women as Consumers; Women as Patients; Women in the Labour Force; Women and Property; Women and Government Programs; Women as Students; Women as Drivers.

The law is constantly changing and as Women's rights continue to exert an influence on judicial opinion, laws pertaining to women's issues will gradually be reviewed. "Yukon Women and the Law" is a statement of current law and does not attempt to criticise the present status of women in the eyes of the law, or suggest changes which should be made to equalize the positions of men and women before the law.

Most items of law refer to both women and men, so in that sense the section does not apply specifically to women. Likewise, the law in Canada is general to most of the country. Yukon law is stated where it is different from laws elsewhere or where special cases exist, but such laws are not designated as being Yukon laws when they occur in the text.

## WOMEN AS CITIZENS

Canadian citizenship is a term which simply means your home country is Canada and that you have the privilege of being a citizen here. It also means you are a subject of the British Empire. There are two ways of becoming a Canadian citizen - you are born that way or you apply to become one. The opposite of a citizen is an alien - someone who is a citizen of another country.

If you were born before January first, 1947 in Canada or on a Canadian ship and are not an alien you are considered to be a natural born Canadian citizen. If you were less than 21 years of age on Jan. 1, 1947, and were born outside of Canada but not an alien (i.e. you did not hold citizenship in another country) and your parents were Canadian citizens or British subjects living in Canada, you are considered to be a natural born Canadian. If you were born after December 31, 1946, you are considered to be a natural born Canadian if your parents were Canadian and your birth was registered according to the regulations within two years. The two year period may be extended for special circumstances. In these legislations the word parent refers to your father if your parents were married and to your mother if they weren't.

If you are an Indian as defined by the Indian Act, you are considered to be a Canadian citizen if you were born here, or if you were living in Canada on January 1, 1947 and had been here for more than ten years by Jan. 1, 1956.

A person can get Canadian citizenship though even if she is not a natural born Canadian. If you were given a certificate of naturalization before Jan. 1, 1947 or if you were a British subject living in Canada before Jan. 1, 1947, you are a Canadian citizen.

But if you have come to Canada since 1947, there are different rules which apply to you. First of all, to be allowed into Canada with the plan of living here (immigrating), there are certain standards you must meet. These are set and changed by the Canadian government except for the basic conditions which are not changed. You cannot be mentally disturbed or retarded, insane, have a psychopathic personality, have epilepsy, T.B., trachoma or any contagious disease. You cannot have physical defects (such as blindness) unless you have a trade to support yourself or a family to keep you. You cannot have a criminal record unless you can show you have been rehabilitated. You cannot be a prostitute, homosexual, alcoholic, beggar, drug addict, political radical or in any other way be seen as unacceptable.

Once you are in Canada you are considered to have Canadian domicile; you are a permanent resident and you can begin to consider citizenship. You must be 21 years of age (or the spouse of a Canadian citizen), have lived in Canada for twelve of the last eighteen months, have lived in Canada for five of the last eight years as a permanent resident, be of good character, be able to speak English or French (unless you were over forty years old when you came to Canada and have been here over ten years or were less than forty, but have been here over twenty years), know about the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship, be willing to take the oath of allegiance and be planning to stay in Canada permanently. If you live in Canada before you are allowed to become a permanent resident, each of those years counts as six months toward the five year time requirement. Any time spent in the Canadian Armed Forces or in Canadian public service outside of Canada can be counted toward the five year requirement. You cannot count any time spent in a mental hospital or a prison.

Once you fulfill all those conditions, you apply to the clerk of the court. A notice of your application will be posted in a public place for three months so that anyone who wants to can object to the court. You will have to appear in court to support your application and then it will be forwarded for approval. If it is approved you will be given a certificate and be required to take the oath of allegiance. If it is rejected you will be

notified and you can appeal to the Citizenship Appeal Court within thirty days. If it is rejected there you can re-apply after a period of two years.

Special situations exist for women and children. Laws are in the process of being changed, and by the time this book is printed the relevant pieces of legislation may have been changed. Check with the Immigration Department for current law. Women who are married to Canadian citizens or who are widows of Canadian citizens may apply for Canadian citizenship. Women married to men in the Canadian Forces or foreign public service can be included on their husband's immigration visa and so admitted as permanent residents. On the other hand if you lost your citizenship because your husband was or became another nationality, and you were previously Canadian, you may be granted Canadian citizenship. Children become citizens if their parents apply for them. If they are older than fourteen, they must be able to speak English or French. A child who is living in Canada can become a citizen by being adopted by Canadian parents or by showing that her legal father is a Canadian citizen. For these purposes, a child whose father died before she was born shall legally be considered to have been born before the father's death.

Finally, children left deserted by their mother in Canada are considered to be Canadian citizens.

You can be made to leave Canada if you are a resident, not a citizen, for any action of disloyalty, for trafficking or growing narcotics or because of dishonesty in dealing with immigration officials. You also lose your permanent resident status if you voluntarily leave to go live somewhere else.

If you gained Canadian citizenship as a child because your parents became Canadian citizens and you are living outside of Canada and have not declared that you wish to be a Canadian citizen, you will lose your citizenship three years after you become 21. If this happens by mistake, you may apply to have your citizenship resumed - and it will be resumed. Also you will lose your citizenship by marrying a foreigner. If you are found to have been dishonest in applying for citizenship you will lose it. And finally, you lose it for serving on the Armed Forces of a country at war against Canada.

A Canadian citizen has the right to come into Canada. A person who is a permanent resident in Canada also has this right. As well both can buy, hold and dispose of land. Only citizens can vote or hold office and they alone can own Canadian ships. All can be tried by Canadian law.

It is a criminal offence to misuse a certificate of naturalization or citizenship or to lend it knowing it is going to be misused. It is illegal to make false statements in an application for citizenship or a passport. It is against the law to forge a passport or a certificate of citizenship.

Specifically in the Yukon there are some things of interest to a citizen. First, the age of majority (when you can vote), is nineteen. You can vote in the Territorial elections if you are of age, a Canadian citizen or a British subject and have lived in the Yukon for twelve months. Anyone who can vote can hold office unless employed by the Territorial government or executing a contract for that government.

Councils are elected every four years, but the head of the Yukon government is the Commissioner. He is appointed by the Federal government to administer the Territory under guide-lines given by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. He acts with advice from the council but has final say in the areas of taxation, setting up the government bureaucracy and regions, Legislative Assembly elections, licensing, property and civil rights, education, hospitals, fines, agriculture and game conservation, and mineral exploration. In other words, all Territorial business.

The Yukon has special status within Canada since it is not a province, but Canadian laws apply to all its residents. The Commissioner-Legislative Assembly struc-

ture and the ordinances and regulations they set apply only to the Territory. They stand as provincial laws do in the ten provinces. Citizenship though is a privilege enjoyed to the same degree by all Canadians and its rights apply equally to the Yukon as to the rest of the country.

## **WOMEN AS WIVES**

Married women have a unique position in law; they are able to own property in their own names and have the right to use it as they see fit; they are responsible for all debts made before marriage, and can legally take out, for themselves, contracts or debts after marriage; they can be sued. In other words, with regard to property rights, they can act as independent people. But their husbands have a legal duty to provide for them.

Neither you nor your husband can take anything which belongs to the other person when you are intending to desert your spouse. It is considered as theft.

In a court of law, you can always give evidence in defense of your husband, but only in cases of child mistreatment, rape or attempted rape, incest, gross indecency, bigamy or other such crimes can you give evidence against him. You don't ever need to disclose anything that he told you in a private conversation. You do not need to say anything in a court case which might show you were guilty of adultery.

The act of marriage which makes a woman a wife is a legal act, and as such has certain requirements. There are two ways of becoming legally married. You can buy a licence or have banns read. Banns are announcements which are read in the churches you and your fiancé attend; they must be read on two succeeding weeks on the day of the church service. Within three months of having the banns read or purchasing the licence, the wedding must take place. If you buy a licence, you must wait at least 24 hours until you can be married. Only clergymen and marriage commissioners can perform weddings, and they cannot do it without either banns or a licence. You need two witnesses as well as the person performing the marriage and the bride and groom to be legally married. And unless the person performing the marriage allows it, you cannot be married between ten in the evening and six the next morning. After the ceremony you should receive a certificate of marriage, and the person performing a marriage will register it with the Department of Vital Statistics.

There are some special cases where additional information may be needed - and where a marriage cannot take place.

A person who has been married before must be able to present a death certificate or a certificate of divorce or annulment before that person can be remarried. You cannot marry someone who is mentally disordered, who has a communicable disease or who is drunk.

A person under nineteen years of age cannot be married without the parents' consent unless the person is independent of the parents, or the law makes a special allowance. If a woman is pregnant or has a child, and the parents do not consent to the marriage, the couple can apply to a judge for consent. People under nineteen years of age, but over eighteen can receive special consent if they fulfill certain requirements available from court personnel.

If you are under fifteen years of age, you will need special permission from the government to be married unless you are pregnant. You cannot get married if either you or your future husband does not know the language the ceremony is performed in unless an interpreter is there. But no clergyman can be sued for not telling you about these special rules unless he knew you were a special case when you got married.



A marriage can be declared void if either party is a minor (less than nineteen years of age) or if they have not had intercourse. There must be a trial though to declare the marriage void. If the marriage has not been consummated after a period of a year (that is, no sexual intercourse has taken place), divorce can be granted on that ground.

The Criminal Code states that it is an offence for a man to pretend to get married, or for anyone to pretend to perform a marriage ceremony in order to deceive a woman. But more than one person must be able to give evidence against the man. Bigamy (being married to more than one person at a time) is also illegal, as is marrying a blood relation. However, a man can marry his dead wife's sister or niece, and a woman can marry her dead husband's brother or nephew.

A married woman is not required by law to take her husband's name. However, once she does she must continue to do so.

You can change your name in the Yukon if you are nineteen years of age, a Canadian citizen, and have lived in the Yukon for at least a year. A change of name because of divorce (i.e. resuming your maiden name) does not have to be done by a court, so the rules and regulations of the Change of Name Ordinance do not apply.

An application for a change of name must include all vital statistics, a guarantee that the change is not for dishonest reasons and a certificate from the sheriff telling about any unpaid debts. If a married man applies for a change of name, he must have the consent of his wife and all children between the ages of 14 and 19 except those who are mentally disordered. He must at the same time apply for a change of name for all his family and with consent, may include the family of a married son - if the son is less than 19 years of age. Once your name has been changed, the Department of Vital Statistics will have all birth and marriage certificates altered whether they are in the Yukon or outside somewhere.

There are three special situations which involve women. First, if you were an unmarried mother and you have married, you may apply for a change in the surname of your children. You must have the consent of your husband and all children over fourteen years of age. If you are an unmarried mother and you wish to change your name or your children's names, you must first have the consent of those children over 14. Second, if your marriage has been ended you may change your name - and if you have the consent of your former husband, the names of the children that you have custody of can also be changed. If you remarry, you must have your new husband's consent to change the names of your children. Third, if you are a widow, you may apply for a change of name for yourself and your children with their consent. If you remarry, the same law applies as for a divorced woman remarrying.

### **Common-Law Marriage**

A common-law marriage is one in which the parties live together in a marital relationship without having had a marriage ceremony. Generally speaking the legal rights of each spouse are not defined clearly as is the case with a legal marriage.

A common-law wife who has been deserted does not have any claim to support for herself, but if there is a child who has been supported by the man for at least a year, the woman can gain support for the child. This support is only given until the child is six years old.

If one spouse dies, leaving a will in which the other spouse is not mentioned, the surviving spouse cannot claim part of the estate. In the case of a legally married couple, if one spouse dies, ignoring the other in the will, the other spouse will share in the estate regardless.

If there is no will, in a common-law marriage of at least two years duration, the court can allot the surviving spouse as much of the estate as it sees fit. An illegitimate child who was supported by the dead spouse for at least the year preceding the death will also share in the estate.

A common-law spouse cannot be claimed as a tax deduction by the other.

A common-law spouse of at least a six year relationship can claim a survivor's pension under the Workman's Compensation Act, and if there is a child of the relationship, this period is reduced to two years.

Under Canada Pension Plan rules, a surviving spouse may be entitled to benefits if the relationship was longer than seven years and there was some legal reason that the couple could not marry.

Property in a common-law marriage should be held in joint names with clear evidence as to joint ownership; otherwise the man is likely to be considered to be the owner. (See Women and Property).

## **Separation**

Many couples considering divorce decide to have a period of separation prior to the divorce, and wish to state clearly what the terms of the separation include. A three year period of separation is legal grounds for divorce. A couple can simply live apart, but they can also draft an agreement through their lawyers setting down such things as:

1. Custody of the children.
2. Visiting rights.
3. Division of jointly-owned property such as a house.
4. Division of jointly-owned property such as cars, furniture, etc.
5. Responsibility for debts.

Although many people use the term "legal separation", a separation agreement is not a court order, but only a contract. As such, the services of a lawyer should be used to protect the rights of both the woman and the man. A separation agreement can be incorporated later into a divorce decree if all concerned agree, or it can be set aside and the divorce decree can be written.

## **Divorce**

The grounds for divorce are quite specific:

1. Adultery.
2. Physical or mental cruelty of such a kind as to make it intolerable for the couple to continue to live together.
3. Bigamy.
4. Homosexuality, rape, bestiality, or sodomy.
5. Permanent breakdown of the marriage.

A permanent breakdown can occur because:

1. The husband has been gone for three years with no word of his situation.
2. The husband has been living apart from the wife for three years.
3. The wife left the husband five years ago.
4. The marriage has never been consummated.
5. The husband is grossly addicted to alcohol or drugs and has been for three years.
6. The husband has been in prison for at least three of the last five years.

For the purpose of divorce, "apart" means deliberately moving to another place to be separate from the spouse. A man who moves to another city for a job cannot be considered to be living apart. In a case like this, if the woman chooses not to go with the man, it is she who has deserted the husband.

If you are living apart and then attempt reconciliation but it lasts less than ninety days, this does not interrupt the time requirement for living apart. Only one ninety day period of reconciliation is allowed in a three year separation period.

A divorce on the grounds of adultery can be granted if it is reasonably established that adultery took place. If one spouse is living common-law, a friend can stand witness to this; if there is an illegitimate child, its birth certificate can be forwarded as evidence; a witness can state that she has personal knowledge of adultery. It is legal for one spouse to give this evidence, but a divorce cannot be granted if the couple agree to set up a situation purely for the sake of evidence.

Divorce on the grounds of cruelty can be granted if evidence is given to prove either physical or mental conditions which make it intolerable for the couple to continue living together.

Acts of cruelty, adultery, etc. that a person is held to have forgiven the spouse for (condoned) can't be used as grounds for divorce unless the court holds that it is still in the public interest to grant a divorce. The interpretation of this condonation is dependent on the court.

### **Procedures for Obtaining a Divorce**

In the Yukon it is very difficult to take a case for a divorce through the courts without a lawyer's help. If you have been living in the Yukon for a year, you can apply for a divorce.

The first step is to fill out a petition and file it with the Registrar. You will need a copy of your marriage certificate. Information on the petition includes:

- Grounds for divorce.
- Attempts made at reconciliation.
- Details about the children.
- Plans for custody of the children.
- Family financial position.
- Relief asked for.

All the copies of the petition are then registered and given to the spouse. If you do not know where your spouse is and you make a sincere effort to locate him, notice of the divorce proceedings can be printed in the newspapers of his last residence city; if there is no reply the proceedings can go forward.

All documents concerned with your proceedings are called the Record. This is registered; then a trial date is set. If the divorce is granted, a Decree Nisi will be granted; then there will be a three month waiting period from the date of the registering of the Decree Nisi before application for a Decree Absolute. It will take a further few weeks for these papers to be processed. You cannot remarry until the final papers are in your possession.

Every lawyer is supposed to try to help you reconcile your marriage by informing you of marriage counsellors and counselling himself unless it is clearly of no use. The courts too should adjourn proceedings if it looks like that would bring about a reconciliation. If this happens, you can apply for the proceedings to continue after two weeks. After the court has dissolved the marriage, (Decree Nisi), the decree is not finalized for three

months. If there are special circumstances, such as the imminent birth of a child of one spouse and a third party wishing to marry, the decree can be made final immediately. The clerk of the court will register the divorce with the Department of Vital Statistics.

## **Maintenance**

Maintenance is a lump sum or periodic payment made by one spouse to the other; it is ordered by the court in three circumstances, namely, divorce, desertion, and alimony. The amount is determined by each particular situation, and may be changed or stopped later as the court sees fit.

In the case of divorce, a woman may be entitled to maintenance payments if she is caring for the children of the marriage.

If a woman is deserted - this term is fairly widely interpreted as being any situation in which a husband has left his wife in need - she can apply for maintenance for herself and her children. She can also apply if she is living apart from her husband because of cruelty or assault. The woman may become disentitled if she commits adultery or deserts without good cause (eg. assault), or if she signs a separation agreement waiving her right to maintenance.

It is important to note that no act of the wife can entitle the husband to cease maintenance payments for the children. He must make these payments.

The third instance in which payments to the wife are made is nearly obsolete and has largely been replaced by the maintenance system. This payment is called alimony. It can be paid if the husband deserts his wife, and she brings action against him to take her back to restore her to her conjugal role. She can accept a payment system instead of being restored to her former role. The changes in the roles of women in past years have rendered this law practically unnecessary.

Maintenance payments can also be ordered for grandparents, parents and grandchildren as well as wives and children. And finally, any maintenance order can be changed or stopped if the court feels the circumstances have changed. (For further information see "Women and Property.")

## **In Case of Death**

If a person dies, or is almost dead, call the hospital or a doctor (if not dead yet). If the person was a relative or you were present at the time of death, you are responsible for registering the death at the Department of Vital Statistics. To bury someone, it is easiest to call a funeral home and let them take care of the details. You can bury a dead person yourself since a body doesn't have to be embalmed. You must get a burial permit and a plot in the graveyard (from the City), then you bury the body. If the cause of death was some disease, this may not be acceptable since it may not be sanitary. If two people die at the same time, as in a car accident, the law states that it is as though the older person had died first.

To settle the estate of a deceased person the simplest procedure is to call the Public Administrator. She can do all the paper work, knows what benefits exist and just generally can help you. You can go to a lawyer instead, but the government pays the Public Administrator to be there and she will help. She safeguards the assets of the deceased's estate, can charge the debts for the funeral to the estate and only charges a minimal fee.

The best preparation for death one can make is to write a will. Both husband and wife should have one and both should have an executor -- someone who will see that the will is carried out. The executor should know where the will is and should know where



all the things listed in the will are. Second, it is also wise to have all the property in the names of both husband and wife, i.e. joint tenancy. Then the house is not willed to the wife (if the husband dies); she owns it immediately. It is important to have the wills written up correctly – if they are written incorrectly there is some question as to who gets what -- the whole thing may end up in court, and then your wishes may not be carried out. If a lawyer does it, it is done correctly and it does not cost very much (probably less than \$35.00).

Before looking at the regulations for wills and for dying without a will (intestate), it is important to understand two things. In carrying out the will, the court will not leave any of the deceased person's family without sufficient support. And second, the court will not allow the wife to be given less than she would have received if her husband had died intestate.

In a will you can give away property of all kinds. To be valid, a will must be in writing, signed by the person making the will and two other witnesses all at the same time. The only exception is what is known as a holograph will - the man-alone-in-the-cabin will. For this one to be valid it must all be in the handwriting of the deceased person and must be signed by him. No witnesses are necessary. Do not choose witnesses who are going to receive anything from the will since they will lose their inheritance. Your will can be stopped if you write down that you no longer want that will to apply, if you destroy it, or make a new one. If you marry again, your old will is automatically no good unless you write in the will that you knew about this marriage when you made it. You cannot change a will by drawing a line through some of it unless it is impossible to tell what was written there, or the witnesses sign to say they understand the change. An illegitimate child of a woman is eligible to receive as much as a legitimate child unless the will says differently. A child born after the death of her father is also eligible to inherit - the law acts as though the child had been born just before the father's death.

But what happens if a person dies without a will? If all children of the family are less than nineteen years of age, the wife can apply to inherit everything from her husband's estate. If the children are older than nineteen, or if the wife does not apply to inherit everything, the estate is split; if there is one child, the widow gets half; if there is more than one child, the widow gets a third and the rest is split equally among the children. Any child conceived before the death of her father but born after, or any illegitimate children can inherit the same as the rest of the children. If there is no widow, the children inherit the whole estate, dividing it equally. If there is no widow or children, the deceased's parents inherit. If no parents, the deceased's sisters and brothers or their families inherit - and otherwise, it goes to the next-of-kin. If the widow was living with another man at the time of her husband's death, she can have no part of his estate.

If the spouses were living apart for the purposes of divorce, and had been for at least a year, the wife loses all rights to the estate.

A common-law spouse has some claim to the estate, even if the man dies without a will. If the couple had been together for at least two years, the court can order as much of the estate as it sees fit be given to the woman.

The Department's Relief Ordinance offers help to dependent family members who have not been mentioned in the disbursement of an estate. If a person dies without a will, the estate is divided up according to a formula. Whether or not there is a will, dependents can apply to the court for a larger portion of the estate. The most common applicants are wives and children, but anyone with a considerable moral claim - an illegitimate child for example - may apply. The court may refuse to help a wife who has deserted her husband and who is living with another man, and will not help a divorced woman.

The laws regarding these domestic affairs become quite complex when they consider children who are minors or situations where one child has inherited previous to

the parent's death, but most of the general cases have been dealt with. Inheritance taxes depend a lot on location, so it varies extremely from case to case. The people collecting taxes will let you know if you owe them money. The most important thing to remember is that you should have a will, and that a lawyer should help you write it up.

## **WOMEN AS MOTHERS**

The demands and requirements of the law in this area do not specifically apply to women only; instead, they are to be concerns of parents whether they are single or part of a husband and wife team.

### **Surname of Child**

In Canadian society a child receives its surname from its father. His particulars will go on the birth certificate along with the mother's. This applies whether the mother is a married woman living with her husband, a married woman living with a man who is not her husband, a woman living in a common-law marriage, or a single woman. The child will receive the mother's surname if there is no man to take the title father. A child is considered illegitimate if the mother is single at the time of conception, but can later become "legitimate from birth" in the eyes of the law if the parents marry during the child's lifetime.

### **Parental Responsibility**

Parents have a legal responsibility to provide for any child in their care who is under sixteen years of age. If you abandon or do not take adequate care of a child under ten years of age, so that its health or life is threatened, you can be imprisoned for up to two years. Any acknowledgement that a child belongs to you will serve as sufficient proof that the child is actually yours. This applies to foster children, adopted children and children born out of wedlock. The law makes provision for unmarried women to gain financial aid from the man who has fathered the child or caused the pregnancy. This financial help is called a contribution. An unmarried mother, by law, is a woman who is pregnant or who has given birth to a child and who was unmarried at the time of conception. It also applies to a woman who was widowed, divorced or separated for at least three months previous to the time of conception. You can receive a contribution payment for any medical, or living expenses during pregnancy, at the birth of the child or for termination of the pregnancy, or you can receive payment for living and education costs of the child. If the mother or the child dies during the birth, the contribution payment can cover burial expenses. There are difficulties in having a contribution awarded. The man does not have to pay the contribution unless there is evidence of a financial agreement made or of previous financial support given, evidence of sexual intercourse during the period when the child was conceived, his statement that he is the father of the child, or something else to suggest his involvement. To qualify for a contribution for pregnancy, a woman must be able to show a medical certificate proving she is pregnant. If a woman marries the man or a married woman starts to live with her husband again after a separation, she gives up all rights to legal proceedings for contribution payments.

If contribution payments are awarded to the mother they are a legal debt against the father's estate should he die. This means they will be paid off before anyone inherits anything from him. Finally, if the circumstances involved change (for example, the cost of living goes up, the needs of the child change, or the financial situation of either the mother or the father change) the amount of the contribution can be changed by applying again to the courts.

As well as financial obligations to a child, parents have a certain moral obligation to a child. They are responsible for taking all possible steps to prevent a child from

committing any breaches of the law. As a parent, you have the right to use force as a correction as long as that force does not exceed what is reasonable in those circumstances. It is interesting to note that school teachers also have this right, although it is not clear as to what constitutes reasonable force in the school context.

The law also requires that parents aid their children in obtaining an education and make them attend school.

## **Education**

In the Yukon, you may send your child to school if the child is five years and eight months old on September first of that year. If your child has attended a public school somewhere else, he may be admitted to a Yukon school at five years of age and placed in the correct grade. Those are the limits when a child may go to school, but in the Yukon, a child must be in school at age six years eight months as of September first of any year and stay in school until the end of June of the school year he turns sixteen. To be absent from school, a student must have one of the following reasons:

1. Illness or other unavoidable cause.
2. Receipt of satisfactory instruction elsewhere.
3. Observation of a holiday of his religion.
4. Granting of a reasonable request made by the parents.

If you don't send your children to school, you can be fined up to \$200.00 or be forced to give a secured promise that you will send them to school.

There are other areas of law which partially involve the parent. First, there are the areas of service which the Territorial government should provide. If you live more than two miles from school, the government must provide transportation to school - unless the school is so far away that the pupil has to live away from home - in this case, the government must provide accommodation. If you live less than two miles from school, any government sponsored transportation may cost some money in fares. The government may sponsor a kindergarten, but your child can only attend one session each day, and the child doesn't have to attend at all. The schools are supposed to be open for 187 days of instruction per year and for three other days of non-instructional school. (These include play day and teachers' institutes). Your child will be taught five hours of classes each day, and will be taught in English unless a second language is being taught.

There are some rules which your children are expected to follow when at school:

1. Observe school rules.
2. Carry out activities as directed by the teacher.
3. Diligently carry out the courses of instruction.
4. Regularly attend school.
5. Refrain from damaging school property.
6. Be punctual for class sessions.
7. Dress appropriately.
8. Return any books or apparatus upon request.

Parents are required to pay for any damage or replacement of school equipment or property that their child has willfully destroyed or stolen. If any of these rules are broken, the student could be suspended. A student can also be suspended for swearing, using drugs, liquor or anything else that could physically hurt his classmates or damage their character. To get a child back into school, the parents must apply within ten days of his suspension to the Regional Superintendent. He will set a date within the next two weeks to hear the appeal. At the appeal, the parents will be allowed to present their case before the Regional Superintendent and the school committee (a board of citizens), if this committee exists in the area. The decision made here will be carried out by the principal.



The operations of the school committee may be of interest to those concerned about educational matters. One can be set up in any school district if a petition with ten signatures is presented to the Commissioner. A person is eligible to be a candidate for election if she is a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant and if she is over nineteen years of age and has lived in that school district for more than twelve months. You can vote for candidates if you are over nineteen and have lived in that school district for twelve months. Teachers or school employees cannot be candidates or vote. The primary function of this committee is to act as an advisory board to the principal and regional superintendent. A complete (and readable) description of the duties and requirements of the school committee can be found in the School Ordinance, sections 54-72 part V.

Bad health is the only other reason for the removal of a child from school. If the child has a disease, such as scarlet fever, which could be dangerous to the other people in the school, the medical officer of the school may report this to the Superintendent who will dismiss the child until his health improves.

In connection with schools, you have one other important right. Anyone over 19 years of age can look at her school record and parents can examine the records of their children. If you find anything there that isn't accurate or which doesn't help the educational atmosphere, you may request the principal to remove it. If he refuses, a final decision on the matter can be received by applying to the Regional Superintendent.

## **Child Welfare**

Governments do not dictate parental responsibilities and then leave it at that; they have provided some aids to parents.

The government distributes financial aid called family allowances. A mother is paid \$20.00 per month for each child under sixteen and for each child between sixteen and eighteen who is attending school on a full-time basis. This amount is indexed to the fluctuations in the cost of living. It is given to be used to take care of the child and ends when the child is not being kept by the parent, is not resident in Canada, turns sixteen (and is not going to school), or marries (if female), or when the child isn't attending school regularly or receiving any training in place of school. If a parent makes any false statements to influence payment, or cashes a cheque that is not rightfully hers, she can be sentenced to a fine of up to \$500.00 or a prison sentence of six months.

If a child is not being cared for well enough (if parents are not carrying out their responsibilities as outlined below), the child may be taken to a foster home by a social worker. A social worker may also enter a home without a warrant to take a child that needs protection or was in the parents' care and has run away. A child cannot be taken from the parents unless one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. The child is an uncared-for orphan.
2. The child has been deserted.
3. The people in charge of the child cannot properly care for her.
4. The people in charge of the child bring her to Social Welfare to be cared for.
5. The child is regularly left with an older person who cannot properly care for her.
6. The home is unfit.
7. The child's companions are unfit.
8. The child is found begging.
9. The child commits an offence of the law with the consent of the person in charge of her.
10. The child is being allowed to grow up idle, delinquent or without proper education.
11. The child is habitually absent from home or school.
12. The person in charge does not obtain proper medical care for the child when it has been recommended by a doctor.
13. The child is not being given enough affection and this is stopping her emotional and

mental development.

14. The child is in danger of losing her life, health or morals by cruelty, grave misconduct or intemperance from the person in charge.

15. The person in charge is incapable of exercising parental control.

16. The child is born out of wedlock and is brought forth by the mother.

17. The parents are in prison, a hospital for the mentally ill, a tuberculosis sanatorium or a rehabilitation center for the disabled and the child is not being cared for.

But there are safeguards to the powers of the Social Welfare department. If a child has been taken, the Social Welfare people must, within ten days, appear before a justice, identify the child, and satisfy the justice that the child is truly in need of protection. The child's parents or the person in charge of the child, must be notified before the trial and have the right to a lawyer. This lawyer will be paid for by the government if the parents cannot afford to engage one on their own, through legal aid. A decision on the custody of the child must be made by the court within four months of the trial. If the child is to be placed in a home, it can be in the Yukon Territory or in any province.

The role of the Social Welfare Department is to keep families together and the children in the home, and there are procedures within the Department to ensure that the power to remove children is not misused.

### **Juvenile Delinquents**

If a child does break the law, there are legal precautions to make sure that the child is dealt with in a different way than an adult criminal (someone who is sixteen years of age or older). Under the Juvenile Delinquents Act, the intent of the law is to provide care, custody and discipline in the same way as it would be given by the child's parents; the child is not to be treated as a criminal but as a misguided and misdirected child needing aid, encouragement, and assistance. An exception to this exists; if the child is over fourteen and has committed an indictable offence (very generally speaking these are the more serious offences) the child is tried in adult court but only with the consent of the judge. A child under seven years of age cannot be convicted of any offence, and a child between seven and fourteen can only be convicted if she knew what she was doing was wrong.

A juvenile waiting for a trial cannot be put in a jail where adults are imprisoned unless the child is over fourteen and cannot safely be kept anywhere else. The child's parents or guardians have the right to be present at any hearing and the trials will take place without any publicity, or attendance by anyone other than family and court officials, somewhere away from the regular courtroom. No publication of the trial or any identification of the parents or the child can be made. There are several things which can happen in a juvenile hearing:

1. The trial can be adjourned from time to time.
2. The final sentence can be suspended.
3. A fine can be imposed.
4. The child can be placed on probation while living at home or in a foster home.
5. The child can be sent to an industrial school.
6. The child can be committed to a juvenile home.

If the court is satisfied that the guardians or parents or any other person have contributed to juvenile delinquency, they can be charged with an offence and fined for damages or costs, under a portion of the Juvenile Delinquents Act which deals with contributing to juvenile delinquency. A child cannot be placed in a foster home which has a different religion than his home situation unless no other place is available. If the child is under twelve years of age, she cannot be sentenced to an industrial school unless everything else has failed; no juvenile can be put in an adult jail. A person who talks a child into

leaving her foster home, industrial school or detention home or who helps her to run away or takes her from the home or hides her can be fined up to \$100.00 or given a jail sentence of up to one year or both.

## Adoption

The other remaining area of child legislation deals with adoption. An unmarried or married mother must give her consent before her child can be considered for adoption. This consent must be given after the tenth day after the birth of the child, and the mother cannot withdraw that consent unless she can show that she can take care of the child better than anyone else, and she applies to the court within thirty days from the day consent was given. However, after the final papers have been signed, the mother cannot regain her child. The child may decide she doesn't want to be adopted if she is old enough to know what is going on.

A single woman over twenty-one years of age can apply to adopt a child; a married woman must apply with her husband.

The adopted child will take the new parents' last name unless the adoption papers state that this will not happen. The child's given names may be changed by the justice to the names the adopting parents desire.

Anyone wishing to adopt a child should apply at the Social Welfare office.

The law holds that the care of children is a serious responsibility. Children are guarded by legal provisions that are only the outgrowth of the love, concern and discipline that all parents should give their children. The law provides aid and safeguards to keep children safely in their homes and only disturbs this arrangement when the parents neglect their responsibilities or the children have not learned theirs.



## WOMEN AND THE CRIMINAL CODE

The criminal code describes and accounts for a very large number of crimes. You can categorize them in many different ways. One way that they are legally divided is with the kind of sentence which is given. The first category is those crimes which are indictable offences. These are crimes which have specific sentences and are usually the more serious crimes. The rest of the offences are called summary convictions. These offences must be dealt with in court within six months of the time the crime was done and the sentence can be a fine of up to \$500.00 or a jail term of up to six months or both. Both kinds of crimes are put on a person's record and prevent that person from having some rights which they otherwise might have. In order to have this crime pardoned a person applies to the Solicitor General of Canada, two years after the end of a fine or sentence for a summary conviction or seven years after the end of a sentence for an indictable offence.

After a pardon has been granted, the criminal record is not supposed to be used against the person. The person is also then restored to a position of full citizenship. If she ever commits another crime, the pardon is negated and all her past record can be used against her.

A second way of categorizing crime is to look at who is hurt by it. You then have three general categories — against people, against property and against society and government. But there is also legislation which applies to all criminal cases — the rules and regulations in general and for arrests, court procedures and prisons, etc.

First of all, both English and French are official languages in Canada — and both are to be used with equal status in all governmental institutions — such as courts and prisons. If you think that this has not been done, you can apply to the Commissioner and he will investigate the situation.

Second, there are some definitions which are important. You are party to a crime if you actually did it, you helped someone else to do it or you encouraged someone else to do it. You are an accessory after the fact if you help someone who you know has committed a crime after they have committed that crime. You can be sentenced to up to fourteen years in jail if you help someone who is sentenced to life in prison or death, or half their sentence if they receive less than fourteen years — or summary conviction if they receive a summary conviction. The exception to this is a spouse: a wife can help her husband escape and not be an accessory after the fact. She can also help someone else if he orders her to and watches while she does it without being charged with accessory after the fact.

Third, to inquire into the way a lawyer handles your case, you apply within one year to the legal advisor of the Y.T. That person will then investigate your complaint and make a decision about what should be done.

Dates are often important in law — for example, you may have up to two weeks to pay a fine; so the law carefully defines holidays since they could be the day some event is due. If something falls due on a holiday (Sunday, New Years, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Dominion Day, Discovery Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, the birthday of the Queen and any other day that the government says are holidays) then they are due the next day. If you are given three clear days to do something, this does not include the day the order was given or the day the thing is to happen. For example, if on a Monday you are given three clear days to find someone to appear in court, you must bring that person to court on Friday, you have Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to find the person.

A term often used is "criminal negligence". This simply means something you should have done but you didn't and damage or death happened because you didn't do it. If

your negligence causes death, you can be put in prison for life; if it causes harm, you can get up to ten years. If you don't know about a law and you break it without knowing it, your ignorance is no excuse — you can be punished anyway.

If you try to stop a policeman from doing his duty, or try to make things difficult for him, or if you try to make him believe something that just isn't true, you can be sentenced to up to two years in jail for obstructing the course of justice. This also includes bribing or threatening a policeman. If you try to fool someone into believing you are a policeman or a member of the Canadian Armed Forces you can be arrested and given a summary conviction.

There are some situations where it is legal to use force, but it should be noted that it is always illegal to use too much force. You are criminally responsible for any excess of force you use regardless of the situation.

There is one situation where you can commit a crime and not be punished for it. That is when someone else threatens you if you don't do it and you truly believe he will carry out his threat. This rule applies to all situations except treason, murder, assisting in rape, robbery, arson, kidnapping or hurting someone else. If it can be shown that you helped to plan the crime, the rule does not apply.

## **Arrest**

A policeman may arrest anyone who has committed a crime, is committing a crime or is planning to commit a crime. He can also take any weapon he believes to be misused and search any place except a house without a warrant for such weapons in order to take them to court. If you resist the police, or don't help when asked or try to prevent him from lawfully taking goods you can be sentenced to up to two years in jail.

In the usual procedure for an arrest, the police do it to make sure the person shows up in court. They work at a case until they think they know who did it, then they obtain a warrant for his arrest. It can be made up on a Sunday or holiday and the person can be arrested on those days; it remains in force until the person is arrested. The warrant includes the name of the person to be arrested, or his description, and briefly states the offence and orders that person to come before a justice. The arrested person is to go before a Justice in the area where the crime was committed.

Once the police take the person into custody, they will question him to see if he is the person who committed the crime. If they have enough evidence against him they will charge him and will release him if they don't have enough evidence. If he is charged, he will be told his rights, brought before a judge with twenty-four hours and given use of a telephone to get a hold of a lawyer or someone to post bail for him (if necessary).

It is possible that a policeman making an arrest with a warrant makes an honest mistake and arrests the wrong person. In this case, the policeman is not held responsible for his error and cannot be sued for his mistake.

As a private citizen you can arrest someone you see committing an indictable offence (without a warrant), or someone the police are chasing. Anyone arrested must be turned over to a police officer who will continue with the regular process of questioning and laying a charge if necessary. Again the warning against using too much force should be noted.

A second kind of warrant exists — it is a warrant for committal and is issued against people who owe money on fines for previous convictions.

Once a charge has been laid, it may be possible for the arrested person to get out on bail. This is not possible if they have been charged with an offence punishable by death, treason, or non-capital murder. Bail is granted by the court and is obtained by

making application to the arresting officer. When cash is required as a deposit against the release of a person a recognisance form is filled out. This in effect is a promise to stay in the area and to be available to appear in court. If a person has been arrested on a summary conviction offence, she may be released by the officer in charge if she signs an undertaking. This is a promise that she will appear in court and gives the date of the trial and the conditions of the release. At times neither bail nor an undertaking is granted. In this case the person is held in custody until the trial. This happens if the court thinks the accused person probably won't appear in court or will repeat the crime.

If a woman is arrested, charged and kept in jail, she will be searched by a female guard, guarded by a woman and kept in a cell apart from the men in the jail.

The procedure for a court case is simple. The charge is read out and the accused person says whether she is guilty or not guilty. If she says she is not guilty, the case is postponed so that the case can be prepared. If she says she is guilty, the defense lawyers, the prosecution lawyers and probation officers make suggestions to the justice regarding the sentence and then the sentence is given.

A court case is open to the public except in two cases; when the accused is less than sixteen years of age and when the judge thinks that it would be better for public morals if it were not public. In these cases, the public is excluded.

There are a great number of rules regarding evidence since it is such an important part of any court case. You can give evidence in either French or English, but the court may order, if it is possible and efficient, that all the evidence be given in one of the two languages. If you are confessing to having committed the offence, you only have to confess what you have been charged with, unless other crimes have already been proved or implied by the trial. In order to give evidence, a person who cannot speak can give the answers in any way that they can be understood. It is legal to call in up to five professional people without permission of the court, to have a handwriting analysis done or to bring forward any previous criminal record. It is illegal though to decide a case only on the basis of evidence given by a child. You cannot refuse to answer a question in court on the grounds that it might incriminate you, but any evidence you give cannot later be used against you in another court case. The exception is perjury — telling a lie in court.

At a preliminary inquiry anyone who refuses to be sworn or answer questions can be jailed for up to eight days while the case is adjourned. This also applies if they refuse to produce any required writings or to sign their statement. Anyone who makes a statement before a legally authorized person or under oath, knowing it is false is subject to a sentence of up to fourteen years in jail. It is an indictable offence. The other offence you can make when giving evidence is perjury. Perjury is giving information that you know to be false in a judicial proceeding with the intent to mislead the jury and judge. If in a court case you make contradicting statements, you *may* be charged with perjury, but the judge must be satisfied that you meant to mislead the court before you can be convicted. If you are charged with perjury, the sentence is up to fourteen years in jail. If you meant to lie in order to falsely convict someone who would receive the death penalty, you would receive a life sentence. Perjury is a serious offence.

Jury duty is regulated by the Jury Ordinance, a Yukon Territorial legislation. If you are nineteen years old, a Canadian citizen or a British subject and you can speak and understand English, you can serve on a jury. You cannot serve on a jury if you have served more than one year in jail (without a pardon), or be blind, deaf or mentally incapable. You don't have to serve any more often than once in two years unless there is no one else to do it. Jurors are paid a fee for attending court and for travelling and living expenses if they live far from court. These fees are paid by the unsuccessful party in the court case.

The Superior Court in the Yukon is the Supreme Court of the Yukon. The Judges in this court are appointed by the Federal Government. This court has jurisdiction over all criminal and civil cases through-out the Territory. It tries all indictable offences. The court of appeal for all Supreme court decisions is composed of the same judges as British Columbia Court of Appeal.

Whenever any court is in session, the following people will probably be in attendance; the magistrate, a clerk of the court, a court secretary, the prosecutor (an R.C.M.P. officer or the crown prosecutor), defense lawyer, the court reporters for the newspapers and probation officers.

After a decision has been made at court, the accused person will be set free (if innocent) or sentenced (if guilty). If she is sent to jail, she is under the authority of the Superintendent of the jail. She will be searched when she enters (by someone of the same sex) and any possessions she has which she cannot keep with her are listed and put into safe-keeping. No one under sixteen years of age will be kept in a jail with people over twenty-one years of age except in special circumstances. Those under sixteen are usually sent to a juvenile correctional center. Those people who are over sixteen and are serving sentences of less than two years are put in the Whitehorse Correctional Institute. The superintendent there may order a work program for an inmate or a vocational training program. Those who are serving sentences longer than two years are put in the penitentiaries in other parts of Canada.

It is a criminal offence to escape from lawful custody or to not appear as promised in an undertaking or recognisance form or to not answer a court summons. It is also illegal to escape from prison or to help someone else escape from prison. All are subject to jail sentences, up to two or five years.

It is possible to have a jail sentence shortened by one quarter of its length for good conduct. It is forfeited by an attempt to escape or any bad conduct. As well the sentence can be shortened by three days for each month during which the inmate worked hard and obeyed the rules of the prison.

Parole is granted by a national parole board. The board regularly reviews the cases of all inmates with sentences of over two years and those who apply for a review with sentences of less than two years. It grants parole if it considers the prison has done as much good as it is going to, the inmate can be best helped by being on parole and society will not suffer any risk by letting the person go. The board can demand any conditions of the parolee, and parole is lost if the person commits an offence.



## Crimes Against Society and Government

One of the most common crimes against society is vagrancy. A vagrant is a person who

- wanders about without any means of support and can't justify her presence.
- begs from door to door.
- is a common prostitute or night-walker but can't justify her presence in a public place.
- supports herself by crime or gaming.
- is known as a dangerous sexual offender and is found near a school or a park.

The offence results in a summary conviction. A situation which looks a lot like vagrancy is loitering — but it differs slightly. Loitering indicates a presence on someone else's property, without a reason. It is also subject to summary conviction. Finally, when a person is found in a place he shouldn't be and he has no excuse for being there, and it looks like he was about to commit a crime, he can be sentenced to up to ten years in jail. In the court case, it is not a situation where the prosecutors must prove he had no reason to be there but rather that he must show he did have a reason to be there. In other words, he must prove his innocence rather than the court show his guilt. It is illegal to cause a disturbance in a public place by fighting, swearing, being drunk or bothering others. Again, a summary conviction.

Riots are also illegal in a sense. If you take part in one you can get up to two years in jail, if you get together to disturb the peace, it is a summary conviction; if you incite a crowd to hate some group, you can get up to two years. The procedure to break up a riot is also given in the Criminal Code. The peace officer will warn the group of the consequences and if they do not break up within thirty minutes or if they prevent the officer from giving the warning they can be sentenced to life imprisonment.

It is illegal to publish hate literature or any material which discriminates against some group of people. You can be jailed for up to two years for telling false stories or news that will upset the public. It is also illegal to publish defamatory libel or extort money by threatening to publish such information. Defamatory libel is anything that is likely to hurt the reputation of another person by exposing him to public ridicule, or anything meant to insult another person. Finally, you cannot publish blasphemous libel which is crudely defined as an opinion about God or religion expressed in filthy language with the intent to injure or cause problems. It is specifically defined by the court for each case.

Nudity or any indecent act in a public place is a criminal offence. Nudity is legally defined as being dressed (undressed?) so that it offends others. Both are summary convictions.

It is illegal to keep a common betting house or a common gaming house. A betting house is a place to make or pay or tell the results of bets. A gaming house is a place kept to make money by playing games. If you keep such houses you can be sentenced to up to two years in jail and if you are found there without a good reason or if you own or rent the place, you can be taken to court for a summary conviction.

There are specific regulations dealing with explosive substances. You can't own them, carry them around, throw them or generally use them for illegal purposes. You can get anywhere from five to fourteen years for misusing explosives or handling them without care and consideration for the people and property around you. The use of guns is also regulated. You are not supposed to point a gun at another person or handle a gun in a way that might put another person in danger. It is illegal to fire a gun with the intent to



injure someone. You cannot carry a gun to a public meeting or anywhere else with the idea of committing a crime. For these offences, you can be sentenced to jail for up to five years. The court can also decide that you will not be allowed to handle a gun for up to five years after you have served your jail sentence. Finally, if you find a gun or lose a gun, you are supposed to report it to the police. It is illegal to deface or change a gun or to remove its serial number. All these are summary convictions.

Arson is a crime which is punished by a sentence of up to fourteen years in jail. It is defined as willfully setting a fire to a building or to any other kind of property. As well, if you give a false alarm about a fire you are committing an offence with a summary conviction.

It is wrong to set traps with the idea of hurting someone else or killing them. This includes changing something to cause a car or truck to work incorrectly. If you have a responsibility to do something but you do not do it and harm, damage or death results, you are considered a nuisance by the law. For example, if you were supposed to erect a sign warning of a sharp turn and didn't, if anyone was killed or hurt on that corner it would be your responsibility.

There are also crimes against society in general which deal more with negligence than an unlawful act. You are responsible to mark or guard any hole in ice or the ground since anything that happens because it was there is your fault. In other words if you leave a well uncovered and someone falls in and dies, you can be charged with manslaughter.

As well it is wrong to leave poison out where animals can get at it or to allow an animal to suffer.

There are some unusual laws dealing with things you might never think of doing but are illegal. One is to stop a priest or minister from doing the things he is supposed to do. Another is to disturb a church meeting. A third is to take funds from some charity without having the right. Or alter the stock market. Or break a contract if it will endanger the public or the necessary facilities of a city (such as gas, power or water). These are all special cases, rare but interesting.

The crimes against the government are easier to identify and less likely to apply to most people. First the more common one — Bribery of government officials and positions. It is illegal to sell appointments or resignations to any office. It is wrong to threaten bribe or deceive any government official or any member of his family, any person giving tender to a government contract, any election candidate or anyone who pretends to have influence in the government. The sentence is steeper for those who try to bribe the judges and policemen of this country (fourteen years instead of five).

Treason and sedition are the worst crimes against the Canadian government. They include assassination of the queen, war against Canada, attempting to overthrow the Territorial or Federal government by using force, or conspiracy to do any of the above. But a person cannot be convicted on the testimony of only one person and a charge for these acts must be laid within the first three years after they happened.

It is also illegal to help foreign governments who are at war with Canada or to advise people to be disloyal or mutiny against Canadian forces. In general, it could be said that acts of violence or disloyalty against the Canadian government are illegal and the sentence for these crimes are from ten to fourteen years.



## **Crimes Against Property**

Deceit and stealing are the two main kinds of offences that people use against property. In this case property includes everything from money to television to important papers. But as for all situations, the law makes finer divisions within these categories.

False pretenses are any statements that are made by a person who knows they are false in order to get someone else to do something. In other words, it is a lie told so that someone else will do something they wouldn't do if they didn't hear the lie. If you tell this lie to a policeman so that he will investigate someone else, you can be sent to jail for up to five years. If you use false pretenses to get money or goods from someone else you can be sent to jail for up to two years (if the goods are worth less than \$50.00) or for up to five years (if the goods are worth more than \$50.00). A good example of this is using cheques when you know that there is not enough money in the bank to cover the cheque. If you tell false information to someone to alarm them or hurt them you can be sentenced to up to two years in jail. To tell a lie in court is called perjury and the sentence can be up to fourteen years in jail.

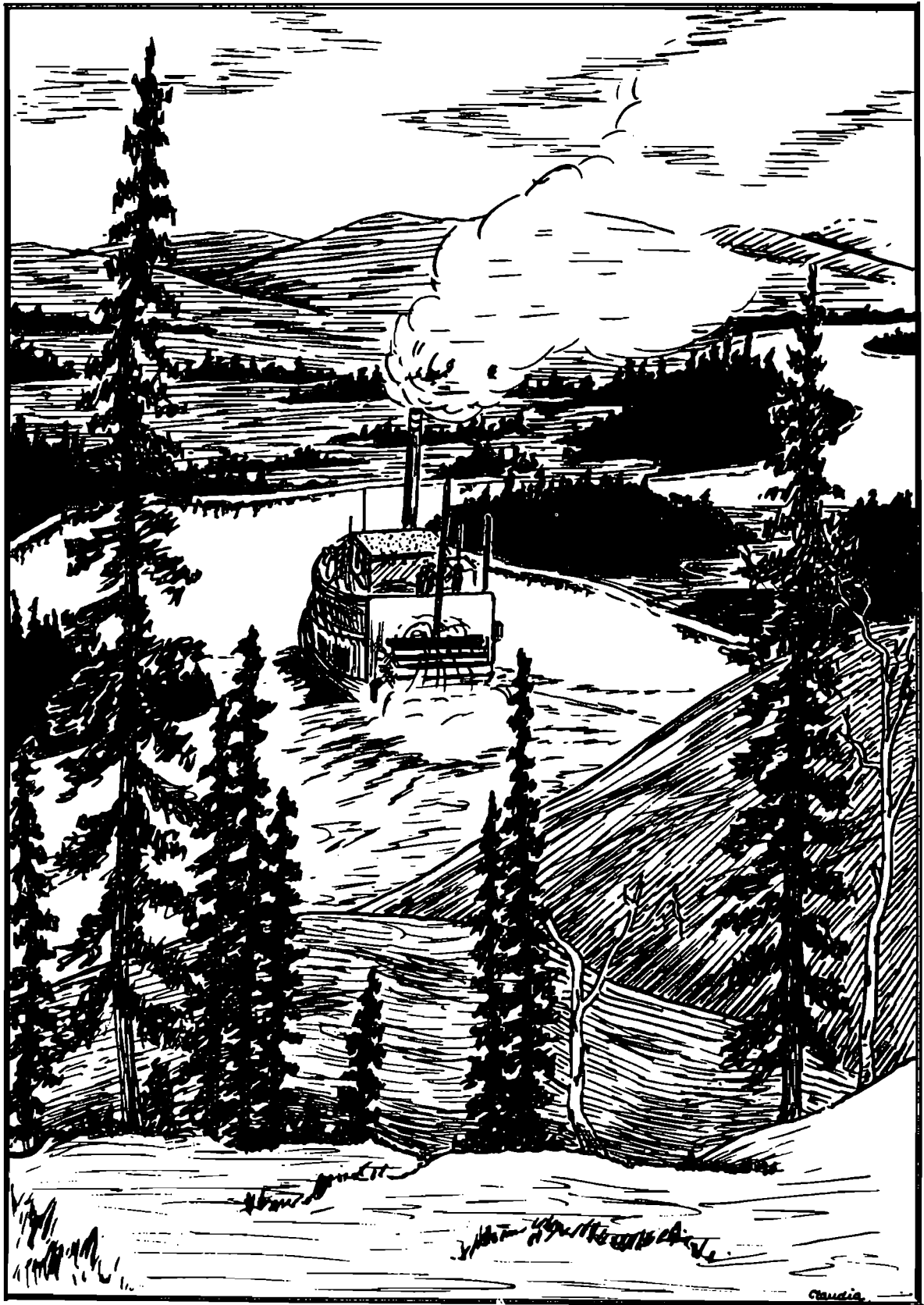
Forging documents is a kind of deceit, and the law punishes those who do it. It is illegal to make or use a false document or to change or alter a document. You cannot add on to a document in order to deceive someone or erase part of it. Without permission, you cannot even send a telegram in someone else's name. All these acts are indictable offences and the punishment is up to five years or fourteen years in jail. There are some documents which are special cases. For instance, if you forge a legal paper such as an affidavit, you can get up to two years; forging an employment record results in a summary conviction; a stock market report, up to ten years; a trademark, up to two years. In a number of these cases, the punishment can also be dealt out to those who falsify an existing document.

Printing money is something only the Government is supposed to do. For this reason, it is illegal to have any machine for making counterfeit money, or to have paper which resembles the paper that they make money out of, or the colour dyes to make false money. As well it is illegal to make counterfeit money or to bring counterfeit money into Canada. All these are indictable offences with a sentence of up to fourteen years. To make counterfeit money is quite a complex procedure, but there is a less-difficult practice which is also illegal — putting plugs in coin-operated machines. This is a summary conviction offence.

Finally, it is illegal to pretend to be someone else in order to deceive someone for your own gain (fourteen years). And you cannot legally deceive people in other ways by changing your identity. For example, to gain food or place to stay in a hotel or boarding house by deceit is illegal (summary conviction); to fool the public or any person out of money or property (ten years); to pretend to be a fortune teller or sorcerer in order to gain, (summary conviction).

Destruction and theft are crimes against property because under Canadian law, owners of private property have the right to use their things as they see fit. So you, as owner, are justified in preventing another person from taking your property or misusing it. You cannot use force, but if the person refuses to give you your things back, he commits assault. Mischief is legally defined as willfully destroying property or preventing the lawful use of property. If you cause mischief with public property you can get up to fourteen years in jail, with private property of greater than \$50.00 value, up to five years, and for private property of less than \$50.00 value, it is a summary conviction with a fine equal to the cost of repairing the damage.

Theft and robbery are also crimes against property. There are many kinds of stealing. Breaking and entering is defined as going into a place without permission with



the idea of committing an offence. If you have entered without an excuse, you must show that you did not intend to commit a crime. You can get a life sentence for entering a house and up to fourteen years for entering any other place. It is also illegal to carry the tools for breaking and entering, and in a court of law, you must show that they weren't for that purpose.

Stealing mail is an indictable offence — and the sentence is for up to ten years. This includes having a key for the Canadian Post Office locks or any stolen mail or stealing a mail bag (with or without mailing it). The value of the goods stolen, in this case, is irrelevant.

Theft is taking goods without permission or without paying for them. It includes stealing natural gas or electric power or using the telephone without paying for it. Theft is committed as soon as a person starts to move an object with the intent of using it herself or selling it and therefore not allowing the owner to use it anymore. Ordinary stealing is an example, but so is shop-lifting. If the value of the goods is less than \$200.00, you can get up to ten years and if it is a car, it is a summary conviction.

Robbery is defined as stealing using violence or threats of violence; it is a more serious crime than either breaking and entering or theft. It is punishable by life imprisonment.

Finally, fences for stolen goods are acting illegally. A fence is a person who takes stolen goods from the thief in order to sell them. It is illegal to knowingly have stolen goods in your possession (ten years if goods have a value of greater than \$50.00, two years otherwise), to bring stolen goods into Canada (up to ten years) or to advertise a “no questions asked” attitude for the return of stolen goods — (summary conviction).

These have not been a complete list of all the different kinds of offences that people commit against the property of others, but they are the most common. They all come from the act of trying to take what is not yours, a violation of Canadian property rights. Note that the sentences expressed are maximum ones and lesser sentences are usually given varying with circumstances.

## **Narcotics and Liquor**

As most people know, the law controls the sale of alcohol and tries to prevent the use of drugs.

By law, you are not supposed to make any liquor in the Yukon without the consent of the Commissioner. You are not supposed to keep any that wasn't bought from a government outlet, or buy it if you're under nineteen or give it to someone under nineteen. You are not supposed to be drunk when in the liquor store or in any public place. Rather than charge you though, the police will probably just lock you up until you are sober (less than twenty-four hours). Any charges laid will be for summary convictions. (Sentence for the first offence is a fine of less than \$1000.00 or jail for up to six months or both; for second or following offences, a fine of less than \$3000.00 or up to twelve months in jail or both).

The control of drugs in Canada is a far more serious task. The convictions are for indictable offences. There are actually three kinds of drugs which are considered in Canadian law. The first are controlled drugs and they are controlled by the Food and Drug Act. They are such things as the barbiturates (seconal, phenobarbital, tuinal, and nembutal for example), the amphetamines (dexedrine, dexanphetamine, biphphetamine), methadrine, preludin and tranquilizers (librium and equanil miltown). It is illegal to traffic such drugs or to possess them without the prescription of a doctor. The offence is a summary conviction the first time (jail for up to eighteen months) and indictable the following times (up to ten years in jail). The second category are the restricted drugs. These are drugs such as LSD, DET, DMT, STP, (DOM), MDA, MDMA or LBJ. The

sentences for possession range from a \$1000.00 fine or jail for six months (summary conviction on first offence) to a \$5000.00 fine and jail for three years, (indictment).

For the police to search a home for drugs, they must have a warrant. They do not need one to look anywhere else. They can search people found on the premises and seize anything they find. If you are charged with possession for the purpose of trafficking, you must first be shown to have possessed the drugs (i.e. be guilty of possession). Then the person accused must show his innocence with respect to trafficking rather than the prosecutor show his guilt.

The third category of drugs are narcotics and they are regulated by the Narcotics Control Act. The narcotics include the opiates (opium, morphine, codeine, heroin, dilauded and percodan for example), the synthetic opiates (demerol, methadone, alvodine, and lurtine), cocaine, and anything containing THC such as marijuana or hashish. It is illegal to import, export, make, grow, traffic or possess a narcotic. A policeman may enter any place without a warrant (except a house) to search for these drugs, he can enter a house if he has a warrant; he can search anyone on the premises and seize anything he thinks may be a narcotic. In a court of law, the prosecutor will first try to prove possession, then if you are found guilty, will try to prove possession for trafficking. The person who is accused is required to try to give a lawful reason for having the drugs once possession is proved. The sentences vary; for first offences for pot, a summary conviction of \$1000.00 fine or jail for six months or both, for second offences, up to seven years in jail, for trafficking, life imprisonment, for growing it, more than seven years but less than life in prison. It is also possible that the court may impose a sentence of preventive detention (a jail term) for an unstated length of time in a penitentiary for second offenders. The punishment for narcotics abuses is generally stronger than for either controlled or restricted drug abuse.

### **Crimes Against People**

Any offence to a person consists of assault to some degree. In effect murder is assault to the final degree — death. There are two kinds of assault in a non-technical sense, sexual and ordinary. This distinction is important to women since sexual assault is most often directed towards women.

Rape has occurred when a man has sexual intercourse with a woman who is not his wife, without her consent or if she gives consent because she was threatened or tricked or the man impersonated her husband. Attempted rape is an attempt to have intercourse without the woman's consent or by deceiving or threatening her into giving her consent. The maximum sentence is life imprisonment.

Indecent assault of a woman is also a crime — and assault can be with her consent if she was tricked or forced into giving her consent.

A bawdy house is a place kept by more than one person for prostitution or acts of indecency. Such a house cannot legally be kept (two year sentence), and the owner of such a house or anyone found there can be charged and sentenced under a summary conviction. It is illegal to bring a girl less than eighteen years of age into a bawdy house (up to five years in jail), or to direct anyone to such a place, to persuade or to force a woman to become a prostitute in Canada (especially an immigrant girl who has just arrived in the country), to take a woman to a bawdy house or to hide a woman there, to try to get a woman in Canada to become a prostitute outside the country, to drug a woman so that she will have illicit sex, to help a woman to be a prostitute, to live off a woman's earnings as a prostitute. All these are criminal offences and are subject to a ten year jail sentence.

Gross indecency, buggery, bestiality, incest, intercourse with someone who is feeble-minded, insane, or an idiot; these are all acts which are illegal. Gross indecency,

buggery and bestiality are allowed between husband and wife or between any two consenting adults, as long as they are done in private. The rest are always illegal. Consent must be given freely (without threat or force) by a person who can make the decision (not an imbecile). The sentences vary from two years to fourteen years and all are indictable offences.

Children are protected also from sexual assault. It is illegal to have sexual intercourse with a girl less than fourteen years of age — even if she gives her consent, or if she looks older than fourteen. The maximum possible sentence is life imprisonment. It is against the law for a man to have intercourse with a girl less than sixteen unless the court thinks that the girl is more to blame than the man. Parents or guardians are not allowed to try to persuade a girl to have illicit sexual intercourse with other men or to force or even permit her to be seduced or become a prostitute. You cannot subject a child to adultery, sexual immorality or drunkenness since they will endanger the child's morals. The sentences depend upon the age of the child (two to fourteen years), but all are indictable offences.

A man who is a minor (less than nineteen years of age) who seduces a woman who is also a minor commits a crime. This also applies where he seduces her with a promise of marriage.

All these facts sound pretty cut and dried but in a court of law a great number of other little things crop up. First, it often must be shown that the woman was "previously of chaste character". In other words, she didn't cause the rape or assault by her behaviour, dress and demeanor. Second, almost always the evidence of one person is not enough to convict a man. Third, no male under fourteen years of age can be convicted. Fourth, almost all of the proceedings for sexual assaults must be started within the first year after the event happened. Fifth and perhaps most significant, the judge will warn the jury in a case of rape, attempted rape, indecent assault or intercourse with a woman less than sixteen years of age that it is not safe to convict a man only on the evidence of the woman without any further facts. In combination, these problems make a sexual offence conviction very difficult to obtain and a frustrating experience for the woman.

Assaulting another person is illegal. It is also illegal to hit a person with her consent if the consent was obtained by deceit or force. It is legal to hit back though. If someone assaults you, you are allowed to hit back in order to defend yourself as long as you do not intend to kill the person attacking you. You can cause death or serious injury only if you are threatened with the same.

Kidnapping is a criminal offence — you can be sentenced to life in prison for withholding a person against her will. It is wrong to try to persuade a girl under sixteen years of age to leave her parents, or to take a child under fourteen years of age away from her parents. Stealing children is an indictable offence with a sentence of five to ten years.

Homicide, or killing other people is not allowed in Canada. You are responsible for the death of a person if you do something or do not do something that causes her to die. In other words, if a person dies because you did something (for example, shot her), or you didn't do something (for example, didn't cover the well which she fell into and died), you have in effect killed that person. If you hurt someone and they die from the injury, it is your fault or if you stop someone from saving their own life, you are responsible for the death. In all but the last case it is called homicide and the sentence is for life imprisonment or death. In the case of stopping someone from saving her own life, you are sentenced to ten years in jail.

Homicide can be deserving punishment (culpable) or not culpable (self-defense). Culpable homicide is either murder, manslaughter or infanticide. Infanticide is killing babies and children. (It is discussed in the section "Women as Patients"). Murder

occurs when a person means to kill someone else or means to injure them and death results or does something he knows will kill someone. Murder is either capital — when you kill a policeman or a prison guard or non-capital — when you murder anyone else. It is murder if death occurs during rape, treason, kidnapping, robbery or arson and the killer meant to cause harm in order to carry out the crime. Anything else is manslaughter. The sentencing for homicide is as follows:

- non-capital murder — life imprisonment.
- manslaughter — life imprisonment.
- infanticide — five years.
- attempted murder — life imprisonment.
- conspiracy to commit murder — fourteen years in jail.

One final comment which applies only to women who are sentenced to death. If a woman is pregnant at the time she is sentenced, she may have the sentence postponed until the child is born or until the child cannot be born.

The last criminal offence to be discussed is perhaps one of the most common. It is illegal to make indecent phone calls or to harrass anyone by continually phoning them. Both are summary convictions.

If you are prosecuting a person for some reason, there is a time limit within which you must start the legal proceedings. Following is a list of the limits for different kinds of situations —

- Libel or slander — two years.
- Assault — two years
- Fraud — six years
- Mischief with property — six years.

There are many such small details in the Canadian law — things only a lawyer knows about. As well, the law is based to a large extent on the way things were done in the past — precedents.

If you think you've been wronged — see a lawyer if you can afford it or go see the people at legal aid. The rules and outlines given in this short survey of the Canadian law are not the complete situation — and what you may understand to be the case may not be the whole problem. Let a lawyer decide.



## WOMEN AS CONSUMERS

If there are two vague areas of legislation they would be the two kinds of consumer legislation. The first is the set of regulations for protection of consumers. These regulations are difficult to enforce anywhere but no one tries in the Yukon. The second is credit legislation but legal prosecution here is often a lengthy and expensive process for very few results.

### Consumer Protection Legislation

Labelling and packaging in Canada is required to meet certain standards as given by law. Anything you buy including food and drugs must be labelled, packaged, processed, advertised and sold in a way that you are not deceived about its safety, value, character, quantity or contents. The label must include some measure of quantity - either a count of the number of articles in the package, or a measurement of some kind such as weight or volume. It must be clearly displayed on the label and easy to read. All articles made of fabric (including material to be sewn) must be labelled so that you know what kind of fibres are in the material. Gadgets and devices cannot be sold which may cause injury when used according to the directions or in a usual way.

In Canada, there are a number of protective laws dealing with sales of food, drugs and cosmetics. First, cosmetics cannot be sold if:

- they are likely to cause harm when they are used.
- they contain dirty or decomposed matter.
- they were produced under dirty conditions.

Drugs cannot legally be sold either if they were manufactured under unclean conditions. It is illegal to sell any food if

- it is poisonous or harmful.
- it isn't fit for people to eat.
- it is rotten or filthy or diseased.
- it was not made or packaged under sanitary conditions.

No one can advertise to sell cures for conditions such as cancer, diabetes and influenza. (For a complete list of these conditions see Appendix 1). Without the permission of the government, no one can advertise a contraceptive. Finally it is also illegal to advertise or sell anything which is supposed to be used as a method of abortion, to cause a miscarriage, to restore sexual virility or to cure venereal disease.

Under the hazardous products act, a number of products were named as dangerous substances and controls on advertising and selling them were set up. (See Appendix 2 for a list of these products). Some were completely banned (those in part one of Appendix 2) and in some cases special conditions were imposed on the way they are manufactured and sold, (those in part two). If an inspector has reason to believe that a hazardous product is being made, packaged or sold on a piece of property, he can enter and seize any product he may find. Anyone on the property is required to give him full assistance in his search. These rules are set down by the Hazardous Products Act and if you wish to prosecute for an offence, you must do so within the first twelve months after the situation occurs.

The sale of firearms is another area where sales are controlled. If you are under sixteen (and don't have a permit), or if you have been prohibited from owning a gun, or if you are insane, you cannot legally buy, be given, borrow or in any way obtain a gun.

It is illegal to buy, sell, lend or have in your possession a prohibited weapon. (Appendix 3 gives a list of prohibited weapons). It is illegal to own a restricted weapon or



lend it to someone without a permit. (See Appendix 3 for this list also). Anyone in the business of selling restricted weapons must have a permit to business, must keep a record of all transactions and must make that record available to the R.C.M.P. upon request. A permit to own a restricted weapon is granted by the R.C.M.P. if you need it for protection, for your occupation or for target practice. The R.C.M.P. can also revoke your permit. If you have been refused a permit or your permit has been revoked, you can appeal this decision by applying to the magistrate within 30 days. You must be able to give a good reason for appealing the R.C.M.P.'s decision.

Legislation exists to control the sale of obscene literature and entertainment or crime comics. Any publication whose dominant characteristics is the undue exploitation of sex, or sex and crime, horror, cruelty or violence is considered obscene. A crime comic is any magazine or book which talks about committing crimes, real or phony, or about things which are used in criminal acts. It is against the law to make, print, publish, distribute or sell any obscene material or a crime comic. Unless it is required for a court case, it is illegal to send anything that is obscene or immoral through the mail. It is also illegal for a magazine seller to refuse to sell you a copy of one magazine because you refuse to buy a copy of another magazine which you think is obscene or a crime comic.

It is illegal for the manager of a theatre to present any obscene performance, and it is illegal for an actor to take part in such entertainment. To prosecute against the use of obscene material, a judge may offer a warrant to search any property and seize any obscene literature or crime comics. Within seven days, the person responsible for the property will be called to court to tell why the material should not have been seized. The owner of that property and the author of the material may appear at the same time in order to oppose this seizure of the literature. The court decides whether or not the material is obscene and orders it destroyed if it is; if it is not, it is restored to the owner. The courts within one Province or Territory cannot prosecute twice against the same publication.

## **Sales and Credit Legislation**

Sale of goods including everything from toasters to cars is actually a legal process in which the title to the goods passes from one person to another. Therefore, the law has a lot to say about exactly when the title belongs to the seller - and when it has passed to the buyer. When you begin to think about credit, buying on time, taking delivery after payment and other such occurrences you can begin to see why it is a complicated procedure. There are different laws for different situations.

### **Sales**

First, consider direct selling. The Yukon Consumer Protection Ordinance (which is not enforced) places restrictions on what is called direct selling. Legally defined, direct selling is a transaction carried out in a place other than in the seller's place of business. The seller approaches the buyer without the buyer asking the seller to approach, or if the buyer does ask the seller to approach, the seller has asked the buyer to ask the seller to approach. In other words, it is direct selling when it is door-to-door or on the street. Any sale made this way is often a pressure sale and the buyer does not have much time to consider the offer. As well it is usually difficult to return a good purchased in this manner. So the law provides a method of ensuring that orders can be cancelled. If you do not agree in writing to a sale (for example, you do not sign any order sheet) you can cancel your order by sending a written letter by registered mail or delivering it personally within seven days of making the order. If the seller was not licensed, or if the goods are not delivered within 120 days, you can cancel your order by notifying the person who sold it that you are cancelling. You must do this within six months of making the order. The

seven day cancelling period should be included in any agreement you sign, but if it is not, you have thirty days to cancel your order. As long as someone at your house has not damaged the goods or the seller has done all he said he would and you have not used the goods all up, you can cancel the order within the legal time limits. It doesn't matter if the goods have been delivered already or if you have used or partially consumed the goods, or if there has been accidental damage or if the seller has done some (not all) of the things he promised, you can still cancel the order and return the goods. But the time period cannot have elapsed. If the order is cancelled, anything you owe to the seller is eliminated, your money is to be returned and you must return any goods the seller has delivered to you. If you have damaged or used the goods you are returning you must pay the seller for what you have used or damaged.

Second, consider auction sales. The sale is complete (or the contract has been made) when the auctioneer says so, and until he does, you can retract your bid. Each lot of goods is considered to be a separate item of sale, so it requires a separate contract of sale.

A normal sale process can be complicated too. The problems hinge on when the contract is made and who must take responsibility for the things that happen just before and after the sale is made. Legally, a contract of sale is made when a seller hands over or agrees to hand over some good to a buyer in return for a sum of money (the price). If you are the buyer, the sale is made when the seller hands over the goods to you. If it is to happen sometime in the future, it is only an agreement to sell, and it becomes a sale when the goods are exchanged. A contract of sale may be made in writing or by word of mouth. A bill of sale (a written contract) must include a full description of the goods and the terms of the agreement such as the price or any special credit agreements. The price may be set when the contract is made - or it may be set in the future. Unless there are circumstances which show otherwise, it is assumed the seller has (or will have) be made. The seller must be ready to deliver the goods and you must be ready to take them and pay for them according to the terms of the contract.

If the contract for sale is for an article which the buyer does not see, but only knows about because of a description (catalogue shopping, for example) the goods you receive must match the description in the catalogue. If there is a description and a sample, the goods must be the same as both.

If it is a contract for a sale less than \$50.00, no one can legally take action against you until you have accepted part of the goods (they've been delivered), you've paid for some of them or you've signed a note indicating that a contract has been made. If you haven't paid for the goods and the seller hasn't delivered them, he can keep them — until the credit terms have expired.

— if you go broke.

— until he is paid (unless a credit agreement was in the contract).

If you pay for the goods or he allows them to be delivered, then he loses the right to keep them. If the seller has allowed delivery, and you do not pay him, he has the right to take them back, demand payment or re-sell them.

Since a great deal depends on the time of and responsibility for delivery, it is important to look at this question. Delivery, unless the contract states otherwise, is at the seller's place of business. The expenses to make the goods ready for delivery are costs to the seller. (In other words, he pays for packaging and repair for store damage). If the seller is ready to hand over the goods to you and you do not accept them within a reasonable amount of time, you are responsible for all the extra costs for care and maintenance. If you have the right to reject the goods, and you do not accept them when they are delivered to you, you are not responsible to return them to the seller, but you are responsible to let him know that you refused to accept them. If you have no right to refuse them but you do anyway, the seller can take legal action against you for any damage done to the goods. You may take legal action against him for any damages incurred if he does

not deliver the goods according to the contract. You are responsible for any damage incurred during delivery, unless the contract states otherwise. If goods are delivered to you that you have ordered but you have not seen, you must have a reasonable opportunity to look at them before you can legally be considered to have accepted them. You will be considered to have accepted them

- if you say so to the seller.
- if you act like you own them.
- if you don't say anything to the seller within a reasonable length of time.

If the delivery is not correct with regard to quantity or contents (if what you get is not what you ordered) you can either keep the part which is yours and send the rest back or send the whole thing back.

Delivery of the goods though, does not necessarily determine ownership. Usually it does, but if delivery is delayed or if you don't accept delivery, the cost of keeping the goods is charged to the person at fault. With a conditional sale, the right to ownership passes when the conditions have been fulfilled and the other person knows it has happened. With an unconditional sale (no special conditions), the goods change ownership at the time of the sale. With a sale on approval, the title passes when approval is given or when a long enough time has passed and they have not been rejected. With an agreement to sell by description, the goods change owners when the buyer accepts them.

There are certain rights of ownership you have after you have bought something. You can re-sell them if you wish, you can enjoy using them as long as you make all payments that are due and no other person can ask you to pay extra charges to have them.

One final point before turning to credit legislation; anyone who destroys - for dishonest purposes - any title to goods is committing a criminal offence.

## **Credit**

Credit legislation is quite detailed and complex since there are many types of credit. One basic rule of thumb is to read carefully everything you sign - and ask about any words you do not understand. It is far easier to be careful when you are making an agreement than to try and recover damages later. There is basically only one requirement of you when you are applying for credit - be honest. It is a criminal offence to give false information. As well, according to the Consumer Protection Ordinance, the seller must present full honest information. If goods are offered for sale with monthly (or any periodic) payments, the total cash price, the total amount to be paid by the buyer and the annual rate of interest of the cost of the credit (expressed as a per cent) must also be given.

If you purchase an item on credit, a bill must be delivered before or when the item is delivered. Written on this bill must be a listing of all costs, a total of these costs, any deductions (such as a trade-in or a down payment), the balance, the cost of the credit, the details of the method of payment, the annual rate of the cost of borrowing, and any other charges you are to pay. Your signature must also be there for it to apply to you. If you have received the bill, but the seller has not delivered your goods and it is seven days past the date you should have received them, you do not have to pay the credit charges for the days you did not have the goods. It is possible though that the balance you owe is owing only after delivery in which case you must pay the full credit costs. The contract for credit may be written so that if you miss one payment the rest of the money is immediately due, so it is important that you read the contract before you sign it. If no rate of interest is given, it is 5% per year.

If you purchase an item on time, your signature must be on the bill before delivery is made. The bill must describe the goods, tell when title to the goods passes and what happens if you miss a payment.

If you obtain a credit card, you are allowed to charge various amounts to your account. This is called variable credit because the amount you owe varies. Before you can charge anything, you must have a copy of the agreement telling you the periods of payment, the minimum amount you can pay on your account each period and the rate of charges you will have to pay (expressed as a per centage and in dollars and cents). If the store makes a change in rates or amount of payment, this change can only be applied on future purchases. In other words, if you still owe \$200.00 on a refrigerator and you were paying \$25.00 a month with a cost of credit of 20% per year, these payments cannot be changed. If the store changes their credit policy so that the minimum payment is \$40.00 a month with a 25% interest charge, the new rates only apply to those purchases you make after they tell you about the changes.

Unless a bill of sale or a mortgage is registered or the goods are delivered right away, the bill of sale cannot be used to demand payment. For example, suppose you sell your car to someone and you make an agreement in writing (you have a bill of sale) but you do not register it and although you deliver the car, they do not pay you for it. You cannot demand payment for the car on the basis of the bill of sale. It is a good idea to register any important document with the clerk of registration in your district. In Whitehorse, a bill of sale or mortgage is registered on the first floor of the Lynn Building. It must be registered within 30 days of the day the agreement was made and the registration clerk will write down the time you registered it. If the buyer does not make payments or goes broke, you can show that the agreement was made and the money is owing. Banks and mortgage companies take responsibility for registering all agreements they make.

The question that remains to be discussed is the procedure for repossession when you do not pay what you owe. First of all, if neither you nor the seller can fulfill the contract, it can be dissolved. This means that anything you have paid is to be returned, but you must pay any costs that have been made. Second, it is illegal to hide, sell or give away any goods with the idea of deceiving your creditors. But if the goods have been delivered and you do not make payment, then the person you owe money to can apply to the courts. If the debt is less than \$500 it goes through the Small Claims Office (in the Federal Building). The creditor will make a statement of claim (it costs \$5.00) and then the Small Claims Office will issue a notice of claim which you can pay or dispute. If you pay it, the matter is over; if you dispute, you have a day in court and the judge will decide if you should pay it or not. If you are ordered to pay it and don't, the court can order that the goods be repossessed or else the court can order that some of your wages (if you're working) will go to pay the debt. The decision of the court depends on the value of the goods as they are now; the amount you have already paid, the balance owing, the reason for not paying and your financial situation.

If the debt is greater than \$500.00 the case should go through a lawyer.

There are some special cases and conditions which you should be aware of. If less than 25% of the total amount is all that is owing, the goods cannot be repossessed unless the court says so or the owner can't be found to make payment. It may be possible for you to agree to pay extra money each month to make up the payment you missed, but it is illegal for the creditor to demand that you do this once you have paid the money for the missed payment and any expenses he incurred because you missed the payment.

It may be possible to pay off a debt anytime - and you do not have to pay all the costs of credit for the time when you would have had the debt if you hadn't paid it off early. You can ask for a statement of the total amount you owe at any time.

Within 48 hours of the time that your goods were repossessed, you should receive notice telling you the date of repossession, which goods are to be repossessed, how much you owe, the last date you can make payment (20 days after the court's decision)

and the address where the goods are. You must pay for them or apply to the courts to have the repossession questioned. If you have often defaulted on payments you do not have this 20 day period of grace. If your goods are repossessed and you have deliberately damaged them, you can be charged the value of the damage or the amount you owe, whichever is less. Once a seller has lawfully repossessed your goods, he can resell them, but if he sells them for more than the amount you owed him on those goods plus his expenses, he must turn the extra over to you.

## **Loans**

Companies or people must be licensed by the Minister of Finance in order to lend money. Under the Small Loans Act, there are limits to the amount of interest that a money-lender can charge. Loans are to be repayable in equal monthly installments but you can repay your loan at any time and must pay all costs that have been incurred up to that time. If you are going to borrow money, before you receive any money, you should receive a notice in writing stating the amount, any insurance charges, any registration fee, any other costs, the cost of borrowing the money, the total, details about repayment, the annual cost of borrowing and any costs which will be charged if you miss a payment. Unless the loan agreement states differently, the money should be given to within seven days after you sign the agreement or the date agreed upon in the contract. If it is not, you should not be charged with any interest for those days.

## **Bills of Exchange (Cheques)**

A bill of exchange is an order signed by the person giving it requiring the person to whom it is addressed to pay a sum of money to a specified person. A common example is a cheque; you order the bank to pay someone else a specific sum of money. The bill is discharged when payment is made. (i.e. the cheque is cashed). If the sum of money is written in words and in numbers, and the two don't say the same thing, the words are taken to be correct.

## **Bankruptcy**

If you have so many debts that you cannot pay them, you may apply to go bankrupt. This is a privilege granted by the courts in which your assets (such as your house or your car) are equitably distributed to your creditors. To go bankrupt in the Yukon, you have two alternatives. First you can try to go through the two B.C. trustees who have Yukon licenses. If they will not handle your case, (they only handle larger business bankruptcies) you can apply to the Federal Trustee in Vancouver. This is for those with debts of more than \$1000.00. You will be expected to provide full financial information and co-operation. In effect, the trustee comes between you and your creditors so that all legal actions against you for debts cease. For full information you should contact the trustee in Vancouver. It is illegal to give any property to a related person (someone in your family) just before you go bankrupt.

Since sales, credit, debt, and consumer protection regulations are so complex, it is difficult to ensure they are obeyed. If you are concerned about some specific transaction you are involved in, the best thing to do is to see a lawyer. Legal documents such as a Bill of Sale are available at stationaries - but if they are not filled in correctly, they will not stand up in a court of law. As well, a great number of these regulations are found in the Consumer Protection Ordinance but it was publicly announced they would not be enforced. If you have questions or problems or you think someone has cheated you, contact Legal Aid and they will help you if they can. The best advice though is to carefully read before you sign; it is easier to dissolve a spoken commitment than a written one.

## **WOMEN AS PATIENTS**

Although it would seem that health should be a private matter between you and your doctor, the law does have a few things to say about it. This is because most of your health care is paid for by a government controlled insurance plan, and because some aspects of health are the concern of the whole society.

The areas where legislation exists include everything from venereal disease to cornea transplants to legal protection for medical people to registering babies.

The most obvious place to begin is the hospital. As a patient, you have certain rights and responsibilities, and there are certain procedures which you may need to know about sometime. In an emergency the best place to go is to the emergency entrance of the hospital. This is open twenty - hours hours everyday and a doctor is either in the hospital or can be called in immediately. You can also call your family doctor from there if you prefer to have your case handled by him. The clinics in town are not equipped to take care of people who need care quickly, but are there to take care of scheduled appointments. An ambulance service is available but the service charge of \$10.00 must be paid by the patient. When you arrive at the hospital, the staff, (probably a nurse or desk clerk) will want the following information from you:

Your name

Your address

your next of kin

address and phone number of the next of kin

your sex

your marital status

your birth date

your date of arrival in the Yukon (if you have just come recently)

your social insurance number.

The social insurance number is especially important because it is the same number as your Yukon Health Insurance Service number. (YHIS)

It is possible to release yourself from the hospital, but you must sign a paper called a voluntary release before you go. This legal paper explains that you are leaving the hospital without your doctor's advice and so you must take all responsibility for anything which happens after you leave. This means you cannot sue the hospital if you get sicker and your relatives cannot sue if you die. The only patients who cannot release themselves are those who have been committed to the hospital under the Mental Health Ordinance. Most hospital services are insured by YHIS. The exceptions are non - emergency services that you ask for but which the doctor did not order.

An example is a special - duty nurse that the family has asked for but the doctor did not consider necessary.

Your YHIS membership covers a number of health services that occur outside the hospital. But there are a number of services that it does not pay for. You must pay for the following services:

Advice by telephone

Advice of another doctor in one illness unless the first doctor refers you to the second.

Any medical examinations required for application forms, third parties, travel.

Immunizations for travelling.

Plastic surgery to people over fifteen unless a doctor states it is necessary.

Supply of drugs.

Services of an optometrist.

Dental services.

Cancer treatment, which is not available in the Yukon, can be taken in Edmonton or Vancouver and YHIS will pay for it. A medical practitioner must give a preliminary diagnosis and certify to the administrator that further examination or treatment is necessary.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Another area which the law has something to say about is communicable diseases. The Public Health Regulations require that you immediately contact a doctor or medical health officer if you think you have a communicable disease. You are also required to notify a public health officer if you know of someone who may have a communicable disease. A medical health officer has the right to enter your home in the daytime to ask about the health of anyone living there. If the health authorities think you have a communicable disease or if a doctor has found out that you are sick then you can be put in a special place, in the hospital or somewhere else, so that other people do not get your disease.

A communicable disease which the law treats specially is venereal disease (VD). The name VD includes syphilis, gonorrhoea or soft chancre. If you think you may have VD, go to a doctor to be treated, and continue treatment until the doctor says you are cured. If you are suspected of having VD, you can legally be served with a written notice requiring you to have an examination by a doctor. Your case is supposed to be kept confidential and any records will be kept by using numbers instead of your name. A doctor must report all cases of VD to government authorities and he must also report it if you skip treatment for seven days. If you are under sixteen, these regulations will be enforced by giving all the notices, directions or orders to your parents who are under obligation to ensure they are enforced. Under the Canadian Criminal Code, it is an offence to knowingly give another person VD.

### **Suicide**

The law even protects you from yourself. You are not allowed to consent to have someone kill you. The person who does it is still considered a murderer. It is an offence to attempt to commit suicide — and you can be sentenced to up to fourteen years in jail if you talk someone into taking their own life or if you help them.

### **Mental Illness**

In the Yukon Territory, a person is considered to be mentally disordered if they have a condition of arrested or incompletely developed mind. It doesn't matter if it happened because of a disease, an injury or because the person was born that way. A second case exists if a person is suffering from a disorder of their mind and because of it they need to be controlled and looked after for their own protection or for the protection of their property. You must prove in a court of law that the person or his property needs protection before the second case is legal. Anyone may apply to have someone tested by the courts, but the justice may not think it is a good idea to have the person brought to trial. If there is no trial the matter is dropped; if there is the justice hears the case and decides either to let the person go, or the person is taken by the R.C.M.P. to a hospital to be

care for. Someone will be chosen to handle the property while the person is away. You may take yourself to a hospital if you are over 19 years of age, but your parents or a relative must take you if you are over 16 but not nineteen. The hospital's director will accept you or reject you once an examination has been made by doctors. If you wish to leave, you simply tell the director and he must let you go within 72 hours.

### **Insanity**

Insanity is defined a little differently. To be considered insane a person must not be able to understand what she is doing when she is doing it. It doesn't matter why she can't understand — it could be because she was born that way, or because of a disease of the mind. If a person has committed a crime and it is shown that she was insane at the time she did it, she cannot be convicted of the crime, but she will be committed to an institution. But a person must prove she was insane; the courts consider her to be in her right mind until it is shown she was not.

### **Donating Your Eyes**

Your eyes are needed by people after you have died. The doctors can use part of your eye (the cornea) to help someone who is blind or almost blind to see again. Before the doctors can take them out of your body, they must know that you gave permission to do this before you died. To do this you should write down your consent and have two people sign it at the same time you do. As well, you should tell your relatives that you want to give your eyes to be used by someone else, because the person in charge of your body will have to give his consent for the operation to take place. There is only one case where the doctors cannot take your eyes, even with your consent. That is when there is to be an investigation about your death, i.e. an inquest.

### **Birth, Abortion and Infanticide**

Your child must be registered with the government at birth. A statement of birth must be sent to the Vital Statistics branch of the Territorial Government. If you have twins — or any more than one child — you must send in a statement of birth for each child. When the child is born dead, it should be registered as a still birth to obtain the permits for burial. If the child was taken from the mother's womb after twenty weeks or weighed five hundred grams but there was no breathing, heart-beat or movement of any kind, the child is considered to be stillborn.

At the present time there are certain procedures which the law regards as criminal acts. According to the law, a human being exists when it is completely outside of the mother. It does not matter if the baby has not breathed yet or if it is still connected to the mother by the umbilical cord, it is still a separate human being. There is a special word used in law that refers to killing a new-born baby; it is infanticide. Punishment for infanticide is a possible five years. Anyone who injures a child before or during birth so that the child will die later, is responsible for the death and can be charged with infanticide.

At present, except in cases where the life or health of the mother is endangered, abortion is a criminal act, resulting upon conviction in a jail term. Some hospitals, the one in Whitehorse included, have therapeutic abortion committees which allow legal abortions to women who apply for them through their doctors. The doctor makes representation on the woman's behalf to the committee; the medical personnel on the committee do not have personal contact with the woman desiring the abortion. At present the criteria for allowing a therapeutic abortion are when the life and health of the mother are endangered. There is no consensus in Canadian medical and legal circles as to what constitutes "life and health of the mother", so the legality of obtaining and performing an abortion is in a state of controversy.



If you abort your child yourself you can be sentenced to up to two years in jail. If someone sells you drugs to be used to cause an abortion, he can also receive up to two years in jail. If someone else tries to abort your child, he can be sentenced to life in prison. This law does not apply to hospitals which are approved to perform abortions.

If anyone disposes of the body of a dead child so that no one will know the mother has had it, he can be imprisoned for up to two years.

### **Restrictions on Medical Personnel**

Finally the law has a say in one other area of medicine — that is in the area of control on the actions of people in the medical field. Doctors are guilty of improper conduct if:

- they leave their patient in danger without first giving the patient a chance to get another doctor.
- they issue false medical certificates.
- they divide their profits or fees with a person who is not their partner without you, as the patient knowing about it.
- they are addicted to liquor or drugs.
- they impersonate another medical practitioner.

You must start legal action against a doctor, for any reason, within the first two years after the incident occurred. But the law protects a doctor too. If the doctor performed surgery and used reasonable care and skill and the patient was in a good enough condition (considering all the circumstances) to have the operation done, the doctor cannot be charged with anything.

In order to legally charge a druggist with anything connected to how he did his work, you must start the legal proceedings in the first year after it happened.

You must start legal proceedings against a chiropractor or an optometrist within one year also.

## **WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE**

Labour legislation deals with three main areas — labour standards, workmen's compensation and unemployment insurance. The Labour Standards Ordinance is the piece of legislation which controls working conditions in the Yukon. The Workmen's Compensation Plan is also Territorial legislation but the Unemployment Insurance Commission is a Federal plan. For these reasons, regulation for labour standards and compensation which apply in the Territory may apply Outside but this is not necessarily so. On the other hand Unemployment Insurance practices are the same all across Canada.

In the Yukon it is illegal to discriminate against a person for race, religion, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, marital status or sex. This rule applies when an employer is hiring someone, or setting a rate of pay, and also applies to unions. An employer cannot ask for any of the above characteristics on a job application form. It is also illegal to refuse to hire someone or to fire them because they have complained about discrimination at some time. These regulations do not apply in situations where there are fewer than five people employed, or where the work is domestic service in a private home or work for a non-profit organization. If you wish to complain about discrimination on any of these grounds, you apply to the Labour Standards Board if it is a non-unionized job. If the job is unionized, the union will probably take care of the situation.

According to the Canadian Criminal Code, union activity is to be free; an employer cannot fire or refuse to hire someone for union activities or frighten or threaten to fire an employee if he joins a union. A group of employees cannot conspire to do any of the above either.

The hours of work that any employee works for regular pay are not to exceed eight in a day, and 48 in a week. As well, an employee's off-hours should be scheduled so that she has twenty-four hours off in a row each week — and Sunday should be included in some of those hours if possible. It is not illegal to work some overtime; but the maximum hours to be worked are ten per day, totalling sixty per week. If you are doing seasonal work, the number of hours can be averaged over two weeks; in other words, you can work up to 120 hours in two weeks — and they can be split in any way. The exception to these rules is an emergency when there is no maximum.

The minimum wage in the Yukon is equal to the amount set by the Canada Labour Code plus ten cents. Since the Canada Labour Code minimum wage is regularly adjusted the Yukon minimum wage varies. If you are required to work more than forty-eight hours in a week, you are supposed to be paid at least time and a half (one and a half times your regular wage) for each extra hour worked.

It is legally required that you be paid within ten days of the end of each month. When you are paid you should receive a statement at the same time, telling you the period the pay is for, the number of hours, the rate, details about any deductions made and the total amount you actually are receiving. If you are not available to be paid when your job has ended, your employer will keep the money for you for up to six months, then he will send it to the Commissioner's office where it will be held for you for three years. If you haven't collected it by that time, it is taken by the Territorial government to be used. If an employer refuses to pay you, you can contact the Labour Board. They will talk to your employer, find out his side of the story to be sure it is not just a misunderstanding. If the Labour Board conclude that money is truly owing to you, they will contact the employer informally and ask for payment. If he refuses they will send a formal letter and if he still does not pay, they will start legal proceedings. Usually the Labour Board only handles non-unionized situations since the unions take care of their members.

Holidays and holiday pay are also regulated by legislation. There are two kinds of holidays; the first is the two weeks per year required as a complete break from work; the second is the general holiday falling on such days as Thanksgiving Day, Discovery Day and Good Friday. In the Yukon there are nine such general holidays, the three mentioned as well as Christmas, New Year's, Victoria Day, Dominion Day, Labour Day and Remembrance Day. Since these are holidays with pay if you are working by the week or by the month you are not supposed to receive less pay because you didn't work that day. If you are working for an hourly wage, you should receive full pay for that day. If you are required to work on a general holiday, you should receive time and a half for the hours you worked on that day and you should receive a day off with pay at another time. This ruling is for people who are working at jobs in essential services (for example, power) custodial work or continuous operations (for example, a mine). You do not get paid for a general holiday if:

- You have not worked at least fifteen days out of the last thirty.
- The holiday comes during your first thirty days on the job.
- You take the day before or the day after the general holiday without your employer's consent.
- You have not worked at least an average of twenty-four hours per week for the last four weeks.
- You did not come to work on the holiday when your employer called you in.



Everybody is entitled to receive two weeks of holiday with pay for every year worked. And you must take this holiday within the first ten months after the year of work has been completed. If you quit your job before the year is up, your employer has to pay you an amount equal to four percent of the wages you have received as holiday pay — unless you have worked less than thirty days.

Your employer doesn't have to pay you any holiday pay if you've worked less than thirty days. If there is a general holiday in the time when you are on holiday, your holiday with pay is lengthened by a day.

### **Workmen's Compensation**

Workmen's compensation is a financial plan to give assistance to injured workmen and their families. It covers all employees regardless of age and it includes those who do contract work. The money to pay for the fund comes from employers who pay according to the risk of their operation and the number of employees.

Compensation is paid to anyone who is injured or catches some industrial disease while on the job. Compensation is not paid to casual employees, to domestic servants, to airplane crews, or to those working off the employer's property. If family members are employed by their father, they are not eligible for Workmen's Compensation unless they make a special application. If an employer is working alongside his workers, he cannot receive Compensation if he is injured unless he makes a special application to the compensation office and it is approved.

If you are injured, or someone working with you is hurt, you should tell your employer or foreman that you are going to the hospital for a medical examination. You should also report to him later in writing the name and address of the person hurt, the details and consequences of the accident and the place the accident happened. Your employer should then submit a report of the accident to the Workmen's Compensation, the injured person must be examined by a doctor and the doctor must send a medical report to the Compensation office. An accident must be reported within a year of the time it happened. Finally, the workman should fill in a report form for the Compensation office which he can get from her employer or from the Workmen's Compensation Office (Box 2703, 208 Casca Bldg., Whitehorse).

The amount of Compensation depends upon the injury. If you are totally disabled — you cannot work at all — you can receive up to seventy-five per cent of your former wages. If you are less injured you will receive less Compensation. If you were temporarily hurt, you will receive Compensation for as long as you cannot work. If you are permanently injured, you will receive Compensation for as long as it is needed. The Commission may pay for repairs to glasses, false teeth, artificial limbs or clothing damaged in the accident.

If death of the family bread-winner occurs while on the job, the Commission awards benefits to the family. The funeral expenses will be covered (up to a maximum of \$600.00), monthly payments to the widow or widower will be made and payments for dependant children will be made. If the widow or widower remarries, a lump sum payment is made and all monthly payments stop. If a workman who is on compensation is put into jail his Compensation payments will be made to his dependents.

You are not eligible to receive Workmen's Compensation if you live outside Canada without the approval of the Compensation office, if you change doctor's without a referral by your first doctor or the office's permission or if you refuse to see a doctor or take treatment for recovery as suggested by the doctor.

The amount of Compensation can be changed if the workman or her boss requests a review of the case. It can be increased, decreased or stopped. If such a review

is undertaken, a second medical examination will be required. Any workman wishing to appeal the decision made in her case should apply to the senior staff of the Claims Department of the Workmen's Compensation Office. If more information is required about Workmen's Compensation, the office should be contacted. It is important though to remember to report the accident to your employer, see a doctor for a medical examination immediately after the accident and report it to the Workmen's Compensation office, giving full details.

## **Unemployment Insurance**

Unemployment Insurance is a Federal government plan to help people who are temporarily out of work. It is available for any workers who have been employed for eight weeks out of the last year or since the last time they went on Unemployment, whichever is shortest. The worker has to be available for work, and must make an active attempt to find a new job. If you are a woman with children, you must be able to show you have arranged for a babysitter to be considered available for work. While on U.I. you must report all earnings from any part-time or casual employment.

The U.I.C. has established a two week waiting period before any benefits are paid. This period only applies to those who have been laid off because there wasn't enough work. If you quit your job or got fired, you may have to wait up to three weeks for any U.I. payment. In order though to receive any money, you have to apply. In Whitehorse the U.I.C. office is at 107 Main Street. You can get an application form here and also help to fill it out if you need it. When you apply you should bring your Record of Employment, which you should have received from your employer when you left your job. As well, you will need your Social Insurance Card.

There are some types of employment which are not insurable. You cannot collect U.I. if you leave uninsured work. If you are over seventy, or capable of receiving Canada Pension, if you are casually employed, or if you are employed by your husband or by your parent, your job is uninsurable.

The amount of your U.I. payment will depend upon how much you were making previously; each case must be dealt with separately. It is an offence to make false or misleading statements when you are filing a claim for U.I. The fine for such an offence is equal to three times your weekly benefit payment. If you are not satisfied with any decision of the U.I.C. office, you may appeal by writing to a Board of Referees located at the District Office of the U.I.C. Tell them the reason why you are appealing, the date of the letter U.I.C. sent you telling about their decision, whether you speak English or French, your Social Insurance number, and make sure you sign it. Your appeal will probably be heard within thirty days and the decision will be made at that time. You can attend the appeal and it is probably in your best interest to do so, but you must pay all your travelling expenses yourself.

There is a benefit available from U.I.C. which is especially for women; it is the Maternity Benefit. To qualify you must have been working for 20 weeks out of the last year or since your first U.I. claim whichever is the shortest period. Secondly, your wages must have decreased to two-thirds their previous level or have stopped because of your pregnancy; that is, the number of hours per week you work must decrease or you must stop working. As well you need your doctor to fill out a U.I.C. form which confirms your pregnancy and gives the expected date of birth of your child. Finally, you need to be able to show you were working for at least ten weeks between the thirtieth and fiftieth weeks before the doctor expects your child to be born. After you apply (when you've started receiving a lower salary or no salary at all), you must wait two weeks and then you can receive payments — but the longest time you can receive money for is eight weeks before the child is born, the week the child is born and six weeks after. By the time this book goes

to press this situation will probably have changed to fifteen weeks to be taken at the woman's discretion, around the time the baby is born. Check the status of maternity leave with the U.I.C. office. Your payment will be equal to two-thirds of your regular salary minus any income from an employer's insurable plan (if there is one). At the end of six weeks after your child has been born, you can change to regular benefits (you have to meet the regular requirements) or you can return to your old job. This program is subject to the U.I. Act and the U.I.C. office can answer any questions you may have about it.

The U.I.C. has a sickness benefit program which is quite similar to the maternity program. After you have had to stop work due to illness, you can apply for U.I. Previous to this, you must have worked for twenty weeks of the past year or since your first U.I. claim, whichever period is the shortest. After the two weeks waiting period, you can receive benefits for up to fifteen weeks. Again you must be able to provide a medical certificate to show that you are ill. The amount is calculated according to U.I.C.'s standard sickness policy and after fifteen weeks it is discontinued.

The final U.I.C. program is a retirement program; it is for those people over the age of sixty-five who leave the labour market and have not yet started to receive Canada Pension. In order to be eligible for this benefit you must have worked twenty weeks out of the last year or since your first U.I. claim whichever is shortest. There is no waiting period for this benefit and it is a single lump sum payment equal to three times a regular weekly payment. At this point it is important to note that once you are past seventy, you cannot collect U.I. and so no employer should deduct U.I. payments from your pay check.

So from age seventeen when you can enter the labour force, to eighteen when you need a Social Insurance number, to maternity benefits, to sickness coverage, to old age and retirement, the U.I.C. stays with you hopefully fulfilling what their purpose is — to financially assist between jobs.

## **WOMEN AND PROPERTY**

The law has a significant concern for property, especially land and housing; it lays down a number of do's and don't's for people who are renting, owning, buying or selling property. The Yukon Landlord and Tenant Ordinance contains legislation relevant to these concerns.

### **Landlord and Tenant**

If you are leasing residential property, you must be provided with a copy of the Ordinance and it must be delivered to you within twenty-one days of making the agreement. If you do not receive it, your obligations as a tenant (such as to pay rent) cease. However, as soon as a copy of the Ordinance is delivered all obligations apply. Your rent cannot be raised in the first year - and you must be notified three months before any rise in rent. You cannot be charged a security deposit although the landlord may require the last month's rent in advance. If a landlord holds any deposit you made, he must pay you interest on it at a rate of at least 5% annually. You do not have to provide post-dated cheques for rent payments.

While the landlord is responsible for maintaining the house or suite in a good state of repair, and for meeting all health and safety standards, the tenant is supposed to keep it clean and repair any damage caused by the family or guests and friends. Normal wear and tear on a residence is classed as deterioration and the tenant cannot be held responsible for this. Neither the landlord nor the tenant can alter the locks without the consent of the other person.

If a tenant does not pay rent for one month she cannot be charged immediately for all the remaining months of a tenancy agreement. If a tenant does not pay the rent within seven days of the time it is due, and refuses to reply to written demands for the money, the landlord can serve any adult on the premises with a demand for payment. If the landlord is not paid he can begin legal action. The tenant will be served with a Summons for Eviction, advising that in three days court action will go ahead. The three days allows the tenant to make whatever arrangements seem to be fit, such as paying the rent or seeing a lawyer. If all the rent that is owed is paid, the case will not go to court and the tenant will be allowed to stay in the residence. If the rent is not paid the case will go before a judge who will determine whose right it is to have the residence. If the judgement is in the landlord's favour the tenant must move out, and if the tenant refuses, the sheriff's office is responsible for removing the tenant and her possessions. The summons for eviction procedure is also followed if a lease period is up and the tenant has neither left nor paid further.

The landlord cannot enter an apartment without the consent of the tenant except in an emergency, after the tenant has given notice that she is leaving, (or the landlord has given notice to the tenant) or if the tenant has abandoned the place. A long term lease will list conditions under which the landlord can have access to the residence, as will a tenancy agreement (for month-by-month rentals). The landlord cannot enter unless he has a right to do so in the rental agreement but to exercise such rights he must give twenty-four hours notice that he is coming and must come at a reasonable time (between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.)

If you have an agreement to rent a place for six months or more, you can sublet the place. Some leases require the permission of the landlord before subletting but the landlord cannot refuse without good reason. However, the landlord can ask you to leave at the beginning of the next full month's rental period. (If your rent is due April first, the landlord must give you notice before March first).

When a tenant wishes to end tenancy, she must tell the landlord on or before the last day before the final rent period. (If the tenant rents an apartment by the month and wishes to leave at the end of June she must give notice on or before the last day of May).

The only exception to this rule is when a tenant rents by the year; she must then tell the landlord sixty days before the end of the rent period.

The tenant can tell the landlord either verbally or in writing, but the information needed will be the tenant's name, the address of the residence and the date for leaving. If a landlord gives notice to a tenant it must be in writing.

A landlord can remove a tenant at short notice if any of the conditions of the lease or tenancy agreement are broken by the tenant.

It is important to note that all of these comments apply to rentals of residential premises, and that different rules apply to commercial leases.

## **Buying a Home**

If you are buying land there are two types of titles you can have - single and multiple. The most simple is single tenancy title; one person has full claim to the property and upon her death the title passes to whoever is named in the will or if there is no will, whoever has a right to it by law.

There are two kinds of multiple tenancy - joint tenancy and tenancy-in-common. Joint tenancy is very common; all the people named on the title have equal right to the property. If one person named on the title dies, the other people have right to her share. The use of joint tenancy is most common between husband and wife as it gives both parties some security and equal rights to the home.

Tenancy-in-common is unusual except in business. It is like a partnership and if one person dies, her part of the title passes to the person named in the will or to the person entitled to it by law. It does not go to the other people named in the title, as in the joint tenancy situation.

When you are buying a home, quite often you need to borrow money through a bank. Because the bank uses the house as security in case you cannot repay the loan, the loan is called a mortgage. A mortgage is a charge on the land, which will allow the money lender to take court proceedings to foreclose the mortgage. This means he can have you removed from the property and can sell it or have the title put in his name if you do not live up to the terms of the mortgage. If you apply for a mortgage, there are some pieces of information the bank will need to know before they will consider your loan application. The loan officer will ask your personal financial situation including all debts and assets. (This is necessary so that the bank does not put you into a debt you cannot repay).

Second, the loan manager will probably want a letter of confirmation of employment from your employer stating your yearly wage. If both you and your husband are working, letters from both employers will be required. Third, the bank will want a copy of an appraisal done on a house, or a copy of the plans of a house that you want to build. Finally the bank will obtain a credit bureau report on you. These four points are guidelines, not requirements, and they may not all be necessary at every bank. A single person without a family may find it harder getting a mortgage than a married person. Some banks do not consider the salary of a wife to be permanent income, although new guidelines suggest that a woman be granted the same rights as a man concerning credit if her job is stable.

If you are a married person and holding title as a joint tenant the bank will require the signature of both you and your husband on the mortgage. Both spouses are then aware of the financial situation, both have responsibility to meet payments and the wife has claim to the house if her husband should die. With a single tenancy only one person takes responsibility for the mortgage and when that person dies the house is passed to the person named in the will. A legal wife is protected by law from the family home being sold upon her husband's death, leaving her with no place of residence. This does not mean that the wife gains title, or that she can profit from a sale of the house. The bank will encourage the person taking a mortgage to take out a life insurance policy of the same amount as the loan at the same time. Then if the person should die, the amount of money due on the mortgage is not a debt to the estate, but is paid for from the insurance and the house is then an asset.

## **Property Rights**

Once you are living in a place, whether you own it, have it mortgaged or rent it, there are some restrictions the law places on you with regard to your dwelling-place. You can use force to prevent someone from trespassing or to remove someone, but you must use no more force than necessary. If you use too much force, you are committing an assault. If the trespasser resists, he is committing assault as well. If you use force on someone who is entering peacefully when you do not own or rent the dwelling-place, you are committing an assault.

The office of the Commissioner can take any land they need for public purposes (such as for roads) without the consent of the owner. But they must pay for any disturbance they cause and pay for the land at its commercial value. This process is called expropriation.

Marriage creates special problems with regard to property. Just because a couple marries does not mean that all their property is held in common. If the property is held in the husband's name, regardless of whether or not the woman contributed signific-



antly to its acquisition, she is likely to have no claim. Current law may not protect the rights of a wife to the fruits of her marriage unless the crucial step to assert joint ownership has been taken.

If a man has been making mortgage payments on the family home in joint names, one-half of its value is considered to be a gift to the wife. However if the couple separates and the payments continue to be made solely by the man, the wife loses her one-half interest unless a separation agreement states otherwise.

When a couple has a joint bank account used to buy property or personal possessions the law is unclear as to who actually owns the property or possessions. (In law the word property refers to real estate - houses, land. Articles such as refrigerators and cars are considered personal possessions).

If the husband is the sole contributor of a joint bank account, or makes all the payments on a credit card or installment purchase plan, the property or possessions may be considered to be the man's entirely. The woman's half is only considered to have been given to her as a gift if the article is put in both names.

If both parties contribute to the account or make installment payments, each is entitled to the portion he/she has contributed. If the wife has been contributing to a joint account alone and making payments, the husband may not be entitled to a one-half interest.

For the woman's protection, the house and all major purchases should be held jointly.

Disputes between marriage partners over property or title are settled by the Supreme Court.

A married woman can pledge credit in her husband's name. That is to say, she can buy things in her own name but make her husband responsible for paying for them. A married woman living with her husband can pledge credit to the amount that he has demonstrated by past purchases he is willing to spend. A married woman who has been abandoned by her husband, or a woman whose husband has ceased to support her as stated in a separation agreement, can only pledge his credit for what are called "necessaries" - those things necessary to maintain a lifestyle. A woman who had not previously had a colour TV would probably not be able to purchase one on her husband's credit.

If the husband wishes to halt the practice of credit pledging, he must inform creditors, often by an announcement in the newspapers, that he will no longer be responsible for any debts incurred by his wife.

An abandoned woman, or one living under a separation agreement, cannot pledge her husband's credit once she starts living with another man or begins working outside the home. After a divorce which did not make a maintenance agreement, a woman cannot pledge for former husband's credit.

(Further information on maintenance will be found under that heading in the section "Women as Wives").

## **WOMEN AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

Within Canada there are two general forms of social aid. One is a pension plan - the Canada Pension Plan - which distributes money to people who have made contributions to the pension plan. The other is an agency for helping people who need it - the Department of Social Welfare. The pension plan only provides financial assistance; Social Welfare does that, but it also provides personal counselling services.

### **Social Welfare**

Social Welfare provides two kinds of help - counselling and financial. They try to help families with their problems and unmarried mothers and single parents and problem children by counselling them and offering suggestions to change their situations. They provide marriage counselling as well.

A second important part of their work is to provide financial assistance. In order to receive money, you must apply through the department of Social Welfare. To do this you make an appointment in one of their offices (there are offices in Whitehorse, Dawson City, Ross River, Mayo and Watson Lake) or with one of the two travelling social workers. The man is considered to be the head of the household in both a marriage and common-law situation, so he should apply for assistance. But if he can't or won't, any adult can. The person applying must be able to show that she can't support herself. As well, she must allow an investigation of her bank accounts and be willing to tell the social worker any information that is needed. The interview and all information will be kept confidential. Once the situation has been examined, the department will decide whether or not the person applying needs the assistance and if so, how much. The Welfare cheque will only be enough to care for a family's basic needs - and while the family is on Welfare, there are certain kinds of things they cannot buy (e.g. cars). The assistance is supposed to be for only a short time, so these restrictions are not too binding. The amount is determined individually; each case is different. A budget is set up for the family for shelter, food, clothing, fuel and extras - and then the amount of income of the family (if any) is deducted from this total. The amount left is the amount Social Welfare pays. There is a maximum though beyond which the department will not go.

There are some warnings which should be noted. First, it is illegal to give any false information in order to get assistance from the department of Social Welfare. And second, if you receive money which you should not, it is a debt you owe to the Territorial Government and that amount may be deducted from any further cheques. Finally, if you feel a Social Welfare officer has treated you unjustly, you can appeal to the Appeal Committee in your area.

### **Canada Pension Plan**

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) is a more complex situation. Basically, there are three kinds of situations: when you are contributing to CPP, when you are receiving an old age pension, and when you are receiving some other kind of pension.

You must begin contributing to CPP if you are eighteen years of age and working in a job which is considered to be pensionable employment. These are all jobs except those in farming, fishing, hunting and trapping, or logging and lumbering, where you earn less than \$250.00, or work for less than 25 days. You do not contribute to CPP if you are only working on a casual basis or if you are working for your husband. Your employer is supposed to deduct all the money from your paycheque and send it in to the government. If he does not, he can be fined, or fined and sent to jail. At present, the amount is calculated at 1.8% of your salary minus the basic exemptions, and your

employer contributes the same amount. If you have paid more than you owe, you can have it refunded if you apply within three years. Usually you check this when you send in your income tax return. Your social insurance number is used by government to keep track of how much you earn and how much you have made in contributions, so within a month of turning eighteen years of age or getting your first job (if you are over eighteen), you should apply for a social insurance card. You can get an application form for a social insurance number from the post office. You stop paying at 65 years of age or when you are no longer working.

In Canada, there are basically three plans which all Canadians can apply for - the Canada Pension Plan's retirement pension, the Old Age Security Pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. The Yukon government also provides an income supplement in some cases.

First, consider the CPP's retirement pension. You can apply when you are 65 years of age if you have retired from your job, when you retire after age 65, or at age 70 regardless if you are working or not. The amount of the pension depends upon how much you have contributed - so you must have made some contributions in order to receive any pension from CPP. You must apply before you receive any pension, and all Yukon residents apply by writing to this address:

c/o District Office  
Canada Pension Plan  
Room 214, Royal Bank Building  
550 Victoria Street  
Prince George, B.C.

Payment will begin the month after you apply - and it will be paid retroactively if you could have been receiving one earlier. The amount changes yearly - and is calculated according to your earnings over the years. It is a rather complicated formula and the amount is different for each person so the best way to find out how much your pension will be is to let the CPP office calculate it.

You are eligible for assistance under the Old Age Security Act if you are 65 and meet one of the following conditions:

1. Have lived in Canada for the last ten years or
2. Have lived in Canada for the last year and for twice as many years as you lived somewhere else or
3. Have lived in Canada for 40 years since you were 18.

Payment begins one month after you apply and ends when you die. If you leave the country for more than six months, payment will stop in the seventh month and won't start again until you return to Canada. As always, if the government sends you money it does not owe you, it is a debt you owe to the government - and the government may take the amount out of any further cheques they send you. It is illegal to give false information on an application or to apply when you know you should not receive any money. Finally, to apply you will need a social insurance number and some proof of your age. A birth certificate or baptismal certificate is best - but other documents may serve if you don't have either of those two.

The guaranteed income supplement is available for those people who do not have any money to live on except their old age security pension. Whether or not you can get it depends on your income level. The CPP office in Prince George can give you full information and also an application form. You will have to apply each year.

The other pension is the Yukon Territorial Government supplement. You must apply at the Social Welfare Office and the amount of your present income will determine whether or not you can receive this supplement. You are eligible if you are over 65 years of age.

Other kinds of Pensions:

### **Disability Pensions**

Under the CPP, there are pensions available to those who cannot work for long periods of time because of physical or mental problems. You must give a written doctor's report when you apply for a disability pension and a board of the CPP will decide if you deserve a pension. You may also be asked to go to specialists for a second examination or for rehabilitation, but the board will arrange and pay for that. The eligibility rule for disability pensions changes - so it would be easiest just to check with the CPP office. Your disability pension will cease when you get better or when you turn 65 (and receive retirement pensions) or when you die. The amount you receive depends upon how much you have been earning and the schedule changes yearly so this fact too can only be obtained from the CPP office.

Dependent children of a disabled father receive benefits if they are unmarried, under 18 or under 25 if still in school. A disabled mother must have been financially providing for her family when she was disabled for her children to be considered dependent upon her.

A special situation exists for blind people. They are eligible for assistance if they are over 18 years of age and not receiving any other pension and have a low income. They should apply through the Yukon Territorial government.

### **Death Benefits and Pension**

Widows, widowers, orphans and heirs to an estate may receive money under the CPP upon the death of a contributor to the CPP. It may either be a lump sum payment or a monthly payment depending upon the situation. If a lump sum payment to the estate is approved, the board of CPP may determine who will receive it, or how it is to be divided. Any heir or the person executing the will may apply for a death benefit.

Children whose father has died can receive monthly payments if they were financially dependent upon their father. This applies also upon the death of their mother if she was their supporter. The application for payment can be made by any person having custody of the child, and the payment will be made to that person. If the child is older than 18, but still in school, he still receives the benefit - and it is paid directly to him.

A widow under the age of 65 receives a full pension if

1. She is older than 45 or
2. She is less than 45 but has dependent children or is disabled.

If you are a widow less than 45 years of age without dependent children and are not disabled, you will not receive full pension, but will receive some. Widows older than 65 can receive pensions equal to 60% of their husband's retirement pension. If you have a right to a retirement pension for your own contributions, you can receive both, up to some maximum amount.

A widower can receive a pension if he was disabled when his wife died, and was dependent upon her income before she died. When the widower reaches age 65 he can receive 60% of the amount of her pension plus his retirement pension.

There are some special circumstances when the rules for survivor's pensions do not apply. If a widow remarries, she loses her widow's pension. If a woman marries a disabled pensioner, she is not eligible for a widow's pension unless her husband became well again and worked before his death. If a woman marries a man on a retirement pension, she cannot receive a widow's pension. If a man and woman are divorced before his death, she cannot receive a widow's pension. If a woman marries a man who is likely to die within a year, she cannot receive a widow's pension. In the case of a marriage separation, the CPP board will decide whether the wife can receive any pension - and the care of the children will be considered in this decision. Finally, if a man and a woman have been living together common-law for a number of years and the woman has been maintained by the man, a widow's pension may be payable. If they have been living together for over seven years and couldn't marry because of an undissolved marriage, and the man was supporting the woman, the woman may be eligible for a widow's pension when the man dies. Both these cases though will be investigated before any payments are made.

Again it must be emphasized that it is illegal to give false information in order to obtain any pensions or government money and that any over-payment is a debt owing to the government and can be deducted from later cheques. Finally, a person who thinks he has been ill-treated by any government decision can appeal to the federal Minister of Health and Welfare by writing to the Deputy Minister of Health.

### **WOMEN AS STUDENTS**

Programs providing opportunities for additional education or retraining do exist in the Yukon. These programs are sponsored by Manpower (Federal Government) or by the Territorial Government.

To qualify for assistance through Manpower, you must meet the qualifications set up by the Adult Occupational Training Act; you must have been out of school for one year and be one year older than the school-leaving age (in the Yukon, the school-leaving age is 16 years), and you must meet the course requirements. You must have the characteristics that your Manpower counsellor thinks you would need to get through the course. The Manpower counsellor decides this after meeting and talking to you, considering your background, your family situation and the type of course you want to take. Finally, your course must not be longer than fifty-two weeks.

If Manpower decides to sponsor you in a training program, they will pay the tuition of your course and will provide you with a weekly amount to live on. You cannot receive Unemployment Insurance and a training allowance at the same time.

If you are at school in the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre the school provides the texts, but the student must pay for materials and tools. Accommodation is available at the training center or at the Y.W.C.A. if you do not have your own. If the course is not available in the Yukon, you can go outside (usually B.C.) to take the course. Manpower training is either academic upgrading or pre-employment training (pre-apprenticeship courses or certificate courses).

There are a few general comments which could be useful to remember when considering Manpower opportunities. First, Manpower's clients are those people who need jobs — so if you are seeking training for a job in a field where there are few jobs available, you may have to provide your own opportunity. Also, if you are already working (are skilled in some way) you may also have to supply your own opportunity to change job areas. Second, Manpower prefers to sponsor people who are going to succeed in their new job so it may be better if you have some experience working in the new area. Third, Manpower cannot sponsor government or crown corporation (such as CBC) employees in retraining. Last, circumstances change, so re-apply if you've been turned down once.

Night school is an alternative for people who wish to upgrade themselves while they continue working. Manpower may pay tuition, but this is usually your responsibility as a student.

The Territorial Government also provides opportunities for training and upgrading. They choose the people who will be able to train at the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre. To be eligible to go to school there, you must be able to give reasonable assurance that you will finish the course. You apply at the school and your application will go before the student counsellor. You may be required to take some tests to find out if any upgrading is necessary before you enter the course. Then your application goes before the screening committee who will finally decide if you will be allowed to attend the school.

The Territorial Government may provide you with a living allowance, but it does not necessarily have to. A married woman whose husband is working and supporting her, who has been accepted to train at the vocational school probably won't be granted any living allowance. The government does pay all tuition fees and the student is responsible for materials and tools. You are not allowed to collect Unemployment Insurance while you are going to school.

The Territorial Government provides the night school as a public service. If you wish to attend, you must pay your own tuition fees, and you apply at the Vocational School or at the education department on the fourth floor of the Lynn Building. The names of the classes that are being offered are advertised in both local papers.

There is one more service available to students in the Yukon: you may be able to obtain a student grant if you are taking full-time training or studies outside of the Territory which you cannot take in the Territory. To be eligible to receive such a grant, you must have the scholastic standing needed to get into the school, you must be a Yukon resident, or the daughter of a Yukon resident, and be under twenty-three years of age. A full list of available bursaries and scholarships is on file in the Public Library.

## **WOMEN AS DRIVERS**

The legislation in this area applies to everyone in society who drives a vehicle. There are three areas of concern — cars, rules for driving and other vehicles.

### **Cars**

There must be certain equipment on a car for it to be legal to operate it on public roads, namely a horn, a muffler with all parts working, a clear windshield, wind-shield wipers, a rear-view mirror, brakes, headlights, tail lights, licence plate lights, brake lights and licence plates. If a car is being operated without licence plates there is a possible fine of \$100.00 or thirty days in jail for a first offence and \$200.00 or six months in jail, or both, for a second offence. If a car lacks the rest of the necessary equipment, there is a possible fine of up to \$50.00. If a vehicle is sold the registrar must be notified within ten days. Finally, it is illegal to own or repair the apparatus to make a smoke screen.

### **Rules for Driving**

You must hold an operator's licence before you drive a car on any public road. In order to get this licence you may have to have a medical examination and you will have to take a driving test. Once you have your licence, you must give the Registrar a written notice of any change in address or name.

The owner of a vehicle is responsible for any loss or damage to anyone or anything caused by the vehicle unless the vehicle was operated without the permission of the owner. She is also responsible to pay any penalties that a driver is charged with while driving her vehicle, including damages and traffic tickets, unless he took the vehicle without her permission. For this reason, there is a legal requirement that the owner have insurance; it is to cover any claims against the owner that she otherwise could not pay.

Insurance must be carried for a benefit of greater than \$150,000.00 against harm to persons or death and damage to property. Any claims for body injury have prior claim to property claims. If an owner does not have this amount of insurance, she can be fined \$250.00 or sentenced to up to three months in jail or both. Anyone planning to bring legal action against an owner or driver because of an accident involving her vehicle must do so within thirty-six months of the time of the accident.

There are many laws to be observed by all drivers. The speed limit is considered to be sixty miles per hour unless the speed is otherwise posted. In settlements and towns, the speed limit is thirty miles per hour. It is not legal to race on public roads. There are some criminal acts associated with driving — if a driver is found negligent in operating a vehicle, if she leaves the scene of an accident, if she is driving dangerously, if she is driving when she is drunk or stoned, if she is carrying a prohibited weapon in her vehicle, if she is driving a vehicle with the registration number wholly or partially scratched out, or if she is driving a stolen motor vehicle she can be fined or sentenced to jail or both. For example, a person charged with drunken driving may be fined from \$50.00 to \$1000.00 or sentenced to up to six months in jail or both. The degree of drunkenness of a driver is determined by a breathalyser test and a blood alcohol content of 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 milligrams of blood, or more, constitutes drunken driving. The policeman has to have reason to believe that a person has driven a vehicle within the last two hours while drunk to ask for a breath sample.

Some idea of the fines for violations of the Motor Vehicle Ordinance can be gained from the following list:

- Failure to produce a licence — up to \$25.00 fine.
- Interfering with an officer — up to \$100.00 fine.
- Giving false statements — up to \$100.00 fine.
- Driving without a licence — up to \$100.00 fine or thirty days.
- Driving without due care and attention — up to \$100.00 fine.
- Anything else — up to \$100.00 fine.

These are for first offences, in some cases second and later offences have heavier penalties.

If you should come to the scene of an accident, you are legally required to stay there, give help where you can and to report it to the police if anyone was hurt or killed or if the damage was more than \$200.00. If you are involved in the accident, you are to give the police your name and address and the name and address of the vehicle's owner (if you do not own the vehicle), the number of your driver's licence and the vehicle registration number.

A small last point; it is a criminal offence to own, sell or buy an auto master key with a sentence of up to two years in jail possible upon conviction.

### **Other Vehicles**

Motorcyclists and their passengers must wear safety helmets and must sit on firmly attached seats. They must obey all other traffic regulations.

Bicyclists must also obey all traffic rules. They must stay off the sidewalks, ride single file, keep one hand on the handle bars and sit on the bike seat while riding.

Pedestrians must obey the traffic rules. They have the right of way in crosswalks (but nowhere else); they must walk on the sidewalks if there are sidewalks and on the road facing the traffic if there are no sidewalks. A person cannot hitch-hike from the road; this regulations is imposed more strictly in some areas than in others.

Snowmobiles can only tow machines made to be towed by snowmobiles, and the two parts must be joined by a non-flexible hitch so that the part being towed cannot sway

or skid. A trailer must be attached by a hitch strong enough to pull it, and must also have a second hitch just as strong. There must also be mud guards to reduce the spray off the wheels to the rear.

Boats can only be operated from sunrise to an hour after sunset. They cannot be driven dangerously, or while the operator is impaired. If a group is water skiing, there must be a second person in the boat watching the skier. A person charged with breaking a boating law can be prohibited from driving the boat again for any period of time (even for the rest of her life if the circumstances were extremely serious).

## APPENDIX I

### Food and Drugs Act

Cannot advertise any food, drug, cosmetic or device, or sell any for these diseases: alcoholism, alopecia, anxiety state, appendicitis, arteriosclerosis, bladder disease, cancer, convulsions, depression, diabetes, disease of the prostate, disorder of the menstrual flow, dysentery, edematous state, epilepsy, gall bladder disease, gangrene, glaucoma, gout, heart disease, hernia, hypertension, hypotension, impetigo, influenza, kidney disease, leukemia, liver disease, nausea and vomiting of pregnancy, obesity, pleurisy, pneumonia, Poliomyelitis, rheumatic fever, rheumatoid arthritis, scabies, septicemia, sexual impotence, tetanus, thyroid disease, tuberculosis, tumor, ulcer of the gastro-intestinal tract, vaginitis, venereal disease.

## APPENDIX II

### Hazardous Products Act

1. Jequirity beans or any substance or articles made of or from. Children's toys, furniture or other articles painted with liquid coating material containing lead in excess of 15% of the total weight of the contained solids. Liquid coating materials, paint and varnish removers for household use with flashpoint of less than 0-degrees F.
2. Bleaches, cleansers and sanifiers for household use containing chlorine or compounds thereof. Cleansers for household use containing sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, sodium bisulfate, hydrochloric acid, or phosphoric acid.
3. Household polishes and cleaning agents containing petroleum distillates or chlorinated aliphatic hydrocarbons.
4. Glues for household or hobby-craft use containing aliphatic or aromatic hydrocarbon solvents or ketone solvents.

## APPENDIX III

### Restricted Weapons:

- any firearm designed to be fired with one hand -- handguns.
- any firearm capable of firing bullets in rapid succession during one depression of the trigger.
- any firearm less than 26 inches in length whether by adaptation or telescoping or some other means.
- any weapon not a shotgun or rifle commonly used for hunting and sporting purposes.

### Prohibited Weapons:

- any device meant to muffle or stop the sound of gunfire -- a silencer
- any knife that opens automatically by gravity or by hand pressure to a spring -- a switchblade.
- any weapon not a shotgun or rifle commonly used for hunting and sporting purposes.





## WOMEN AND YUKON FOODS



Problems of food supply in the North have never been easily solved, but through time people found ways to overcome the hardships imposed by the country, and thrived. "Women and Yukon Food" describes traditional methods of food gathering, preservation and preparation, traces some of the changes in food supply caused by the Gold Rush and later development, and suggests a few of the ways in which we can find a balance between traditional and modern styles of eating.

I often wonder what I would have done if someone had offered me the opportunity of coming to the Yukon at the turn of the century. I'd like to think that I'm hardy and resourceful enough to have been able to make a life here, but then a day comes when there's no fresh milk in the store because the truck's frozen up somewhere down the highway and I find myself opening a can of Pacific, grumbling quietly. What's so hard to take about a can of milk? People have grown up on canned milk and still do - and if I'd lived in my fantasy time of 1900 I'd have been lucky to have had a can of milk a month, let alone half a case in the cellar for 'emergencies'.

Somewhere along the line we've become soft. I think that according to the degree to which we depend on modern conveniences and store-bought foods, to the same degree we are not really prepared for life in the north. Perhaps people who have to use the grocery store for everything are different from those who use the land to some extent to supply their food. To me this is a measure of how the north is changing. Until eighty years ago you didn't live here at all unless you were capable of supplying everything you needed yourself. Times changed and store-bought things were available but for many people they were still luxuries, precious extras bought only when money was available. The wheel turned again and more and more people came up from the south, less and less of whom were prepared for the harsh realities of living that the north had always imposed - the constant struggle to find enough food and the axiom "Get well or die".

To make life easy for all these people still others came north, hoping to create an oasis of southern comfort in the midst of the rugged mountains. The wheel is still turning. It isn't necessary for anyone to use the land to survive any more, but a few people choose to do so and others use fish, game and edible plants to supplement their store-bought foods. As generations change and game becomes even more scarce, the time will come when the diet of the northern resident will be virtually the same as that of anyone anywhere in Canada.

The majority of people who come to the Yukon today bear very little resemblance to those who came at the turn of the century, and even less to those who lived here originally. The key to the survival of the Indian peoples through centuries when the patterns of life were governed by the seasons was their ability to adapt to whatever conditions nature handed out and their expertise in using everything around them to its fullest extent. When the great horde of gold seekers tumbled down the Yukon side of the mountain barrier, very few had any idea of what was waiting for them. It was only the iron hand of the North West Mounted Police that saved thousands from starvation by insisting on each person's having a ton of supplies to see the first year through. Even at that, some starved to death, and others ruined their health, so obsessed with gold that they were unable to adapt to the land that held the lode. When the rush was over the ones who stayed were those who were prepared to meet the country on its own terms and live at least partially by their wits, as the Indians were so expert at doing.

As the twentieth century moved along on its course of industrial progress, it became less and less necessary for the newcomer to the north to prepare herself for her new home. Modern conveniences gradually became the rule rather than the exception and a steady supply of food was guaranteed by the growing transportation system. Now the only thing a person moving up from the south has to do is buy a warm coat for herself and a battery blanket for her car. It is something to consider that this conversion from the traditional Indian way of life to modern Western society has taken place in a hundred years and for some Indians still living, within their lifetime.

How did the Indians cope with the necessities of living before the days of trading posts and stores? Many newcomers to the north seem to think that survival was based on haphazard methods of hunting and food gathering but nothing could be further from the truth.

We asked several Indian women what they remembered of the way things were done in the old days. My information comes from Mira Kay and Lisa Ben Kassi of Old Crow, Anne Ned, who lives north of Whitehorse on the Alaska Highway, Mary Charlie of Ross River and Eva Carlick of Good Hope Lake. Mira Kay and Lisa Ben Kassi don't speak very much English, so Edith Josie translated their conversations for us.

Each tribe had lands which were understood to be theirs because they had used them for centuries. Just about every square mile was explored over time, and networks of well-used trails criss-crossed the country.

Anne Ned described how the lands around Klukshu became one clan's hunting area:

“That Klukshu, one man he find 'im. Lake Arkel. they fish in there and he go hunt. He don't know where to go. He follow moose. then he go into Klukshu. Nothing to eat. Don't take no lunch - one day hunt. He got in there in that little creek -- it's not too deep that one there. He go there. He follow moose and he go cross. Just like that - fish. He don't know what kind fish. so he caught 'em. Down there under the trees he make 'em fire. he cook. He see fish egg in Salmon. He cook it. Pretty soon he want some more. He want to pack it home. He let it go that moose. He sleep there. In the morning. gee. lot fish there, and he pack it home. From Lake Arkel all go. everybody go. all this. They see 'im the fish in summertime. I know that man. I don't know the man but I know the name. That's the one it first place Klukshu. Then they give us. I'm a Crow. me. They give us Klukshu”

Food gathering depended on the time of year and the availability of game. The family unit was a very important structure and families stayed together to hunt and fish. People moved around from place to place depending on the season to kill and cache game and fish, and to pick and preserve berries and edible wild plants. Most people used similar methods of hunting and preserving food all over the north but there were subtle differences between tribes.

The mainstays of the diet were moose and caribou, but every kind of animal was used depending on its availability in a certain area, including gopher, rabbit, sheep, mountain goat and bear. Even so, from year to year there might be drastic fluctuations in the numbers of animals so every band had to be prepared to change its habits and food sources to meet the new conditions.

Once in a very long while all the forces of nature would conspire against the people; the weather would be unpredictable and the animals would vanish. Mary Charlie remembers being told about such a disaster happening:

“Just one year. that's what they say. everything gone. Everything gone that time. even moose. They walk around on top snow and that moose gone and caribou. everything. Whole bunch of caribou were running in the tracks and someone come. they try to come get 'em. try to take 'em out. And the tracks too hard to follow like that and then nothing - don't know where they are. Just took off like that. That's what they say. you know. And then Springtime come. You know every spring come and snow go down and soon that bare ground come up? It's like they said one year and then all the snow come back again and lots of time people starve. Kids and all. all over. everywhere. Other people they told me about it.”

Men were the hunters of big game and women were responsible for small animals such as rabbits, and fishing. There was a communal atmosphere to good gathering. Men hunted in pairs or in groups often leaving the women and children in camp for weeks at a time. During fishing season when the women were busy at fish camps, there was constant activity as everyone pitched in and helped with the several stages of drying fish. There was no such thing as hoarding food for one's personal use.

After game was shot it was handed around to whoever needed food. The hunter would go back to camp and tell where the game was and someone else would go and get it. It may seem incredible that the dead animal could be found by a simple description of its location, but the people knew their land in great detail and had no trouble visualizing the place in question.

“Whoever get caribou they just give everybody one or two caribou. And they mainly have a good time.”<sup>3</sup>

“Who get the most meat or fish and after some people got no meat they take all the meat out and they spread it around and they just give meat to whoever got no meat. They give meat away and then they invite the people and all those people go to the house. That's how they make little feast like that.”<sup>4</sup>

The size of the group of people living together at one time depended on the type of game around and its numbers. During the days of the great caribou migrations as many as two hundred people could live together and eat well, but a family hunting moose in winter would be hard pressed to put up with more than just themselves if the moose were hard to find.

Over the years, the places where moose and caribou have been numerous have shifted often. At one time there were great numbers of caribou in the Aishihik and Klukshu areas, and Carcross is named “Caribou Crossing” because large herds forded the narrow river regularly.

The bow and arrow and the snare were the most common means of killing game. Anne Ned says:

“And bow and arrow, they make it that one too. And they chisel most of it, bow and arrow. They make bone, you know, so pieces go to moose and he die.”<sup>5</sup>

Hunting techniques had to be developed to suit the different characteristics and habits of the moose and caribou. Moose tend to be solitary animals who can easily get away from a hunter by running an erratic escape route. Killing moose involves patience, great skill in tracking, and accuracy in shooting. On the other hand, caribou are herd animals and if one shot misses its mark the chances of hitting another animal are good. A group of hunters can drive caribou much like cattle and by killing the leader can throw the entire herd into such a state of temporary panic that many animals can be killed before the herd re-organizes itself.

Centuries ago the Indians built caribou surrounds so that they could herd numbers of animals into an enclosure and kill them either with bows and arrows or with snares. The ruins of these stone surrounds can still be seen on the northern plains between Old Crow and Eagle, Alaska.

“Long time ago they had big trap. They make big trap for caribou and when caribou go through they have snare on both ends and the caribou come through to the gate this end, they snare them. Caribou go there and then they get another caribou.”<sup>6</sup>

It may seem hard to believe that an animal as large as a caribou can be snared, with his rack of antlers as broad as it is, but the Indians regularly snared moose too. The women made the snares from various parts of previously killed animals, depending on the size of the animal to be snared.

“Caribou, sheep, they snare him too. Even ptarmigan. Ptarmigan too they snare. With a sinew they do that. I don't know one thing. How many, how many string for moose? Moose snare? I think twelve. Twelve, see, you put it. Then you twist it between the log. You know, tree. Then you put a log on. You stretch it. Then you get it moose. That's what they say.”<sup>7</sup>

“Long time ago it hard to get things. They just make snare out of caribou and they skin its heart and they make it out of the skin.”<sup>8</sup>

Some snares were made from strips of babiche, or raw hide, which were braided in thicknesses to suit the plan of the hunter. There was a lot of skill in setting the snare on well-used animal trails so that it wouldn't be obvious - especially a snare thick enough to hold a moose. Snares were also used for smaller animals such as gophers and in addition, more intricate traps such as deadfalls were used for medium-sized animals. A deadfall is a trap set with a heavy weight such as a log, set so that it will fall on the prey and stun it or kill it outright.



The Indian peoples' success in preserving game after they killed it made it possible for them to live through seasons when animals were scarce. They had no salt or other preservatives but they had found efficient ways of keeping food edible. From area to area these methods differed slightly but they were based on drying the food and then caching it for later use, either high up in trees out of the way of animals or in rock caches.

“When summertime they dry it, they dry that caribou and then as soon as it starts to get cold they have a big cache up on the mountain and they put the willows so it's kind of cold and there's where they hang all the meat up and even summertime they hang meat up and it never get spoiled up on the mountain. They just travel up on the mountain. That's where they used to keep their meat. Whoever travel on the mountain they take it some.”<sup>9</sup>

“It's that rock cache and they take little pieces and they put that dry meat under those rocks and mud and it never spoil and they use it for two years...”<sup>10</sup>

“When they had meat they dig ground and they put their meat like they make ground hole. They put their meat there... Meat they store all over the place.”<sup>11</sup>

A man by the name of Glave who travelled in the southern Yukon in the 1980's described in his journal the organized preparation of food that he saw going on.

“They were busy collecting and preparing a supply for the long winter months ahead - already their roofed platform sagged and creaked and threatened to fall over with its weight of caribou, moose, mountain sheep, rabbits, squirrels and fish. All the game had been killed by one young hunter, the trapping and snaring department was handled by the women and children.”<sup>12</sup>

Nearly every part of the animal killed was used, from the hides to the bones and sinews. The Indians skinned and butchered their game so that the different parts could be used to their best advantage. The hide was removed in one piece and the carcass was cut to keep the sinews along the backbone intact.

Cooking habits were not set into patterns as ours are today. Mealtimes were erratic and often family members ate at different times. Families did eat together at the end of a day on the trail and at feast times, but if the family were camped, mealtimes were casual.

There were many ways of preparing meat. Cooking fires were an always present part of a camp. The flame was started by striking sparks from flint onto a bed of dried moss or bark or wood shavings. Boiling was a favourite method because it left a hearty broth. After a bark basket was filled with water and stones hot from the fire, pieces of meat were added. As the stones cooled they were removed and more hot ones were put in to keep the water temperature up. Quite often fresh blood or chunks of frozen blood were added to the water before the meat was put in. A lot of roasted meat was eaten, usually well done. There were several ways of using entrails. To some people stomachs were a delicacy; the stomach was emptied of its contents and hung up for about a week until it took on a sour flavour. It was stuffed with meat and fat and left for a time. The stomach acted as a good preserver - the contents were out of the way of the flies. Large intestines, esophagi and lungs of moose and caribou were also stuffed, making a kind of sausage. If the lungs were to be used they were first blown up to let them dry out a bit. Lungs were also boiled and eaten.

Caribou heads and antlers were both considered delicacies, especially when roasted. The velvet would be scraped off the antlers and the meat underneath eaten. The

eyes, tongues, kidneys and hearts of both moose and caribou were favourite foods, and the fleshy moose nose was a great treat.

Animal fats were rendered down and preserved in sacks made from parts of the entrails such as the stomach. The fat was cut away from the meat, then dried and later heated to extract the oil.

The women dried meat for use in the winter by cutting it into strips and hanging them over smoky fires which kept the flies away. The tenderloin was the favourite part for drying because it made the best pemmican, a ready-to-eat meal of pounded dried meat and berries.

Bone grease was made by boiling up bones in water. Apparently the water had to be kept simmering and not allowed to boil, or the oil and grease wouldn't float to the surface.

This is a recipe for pemmican and bone grease.

“They cut all the meat from the bone, then they dry it, then they pound it on the rocks. After they pound it then they put some bones on the stove in a pot. Then they put just enough water in it, just half water and then it start to boil and if it's wintertime they put in snow and ice. While it's boiling the ice it melting. Then you put another ice on top. When it get higher and it's still boiling then after you get some grease. You take that grease out in the bowl and then you take the marrow out and you put that marrow back on the stove and you take out the meat. You take that dry meat and you cook the marrow. Then you put whatever, what dry meat you pound you mix it into that marrow. That's what they call pemmican. Then that bone grease you put it into a bowl and you eat dry meat with it.”<sup>13</sup>

“Meat they store all over places and they fry it with anything, with blood, with different kinds of grease, but long time ago there's hardly any store around here and whatever her parents or grandparents killed they simply eat it right there. They eat beaver and they eat deer and ground squirrel and they travel on mountain they see mountain sheep they kill those mountain sheep and they eat everything like that.”<sup>14</sup>

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Fishing during the summer and autumn provided an important source of food for the whole year and was the job of women and children. Salmon were especially important to the people living in the southwestern Yukon because there were annual runs up several rivers which could be relied on to provide enough fish for many people. There were several permanent and semi-permanent settlements, which was unusual for a country which normally demanded constant migration.

The largest settlement was located on the upper Tatshenshini River at a place named Neskatahin. This village was the year round centre for trade between the coastal Tlingit and the interior southern Tutchone people, but during the salmon run nearly everyone went down river about sixty miles to the fish camps. A large semi-permanent fish camp was located on the western shore of Klukshu Lake. Both of these places seem to have been used for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Bands from Hutshi and Aishihik who didn't have such quantities of fish in their territories joined the Tutchones during the sockeye season.

People in other parts of the Yukon also had reliable sources of fish. Salmon ran up the Yukon River and most of its tributaries as far as Atlin Lake in the south and the Ross and Pelly rivers in the east. The king salmon which ran in July and August were used as human food and the chums which ran in September were fed to the dogs.

People living on the Porcupine River had king salmon runs in July and chum runs until late fall. The Peel and Firth rivers drain to the Arctic Ocean and don't have salmon, but many other kinds of fish such as grayling, whitefish, trout, inconnu and arctic char could be caught.

People in the southeast relied on lakes for their fish, and were able to catch jackfish, pickerel, lake trout, brook trout, whitefish, grayling, loche and sucker. Because these fish didn't run in the fantastic quantities that the western salmon did, people couldn't live together in such large groups.

The women used several methods to catch fish. They made nets from long straight spruce roots which were split into three pieces, then dried, smoked, soaked in warm water, dried again, and twisted and manipulated until they were soft. Then separate pieces were twirled on the woman's thigh until the ends were joined. This process of making a root usable took about three days, so the making of a whole net was a long and tedious task. The inner bark of the willow could also be used if it were gathered in the spring and worked under water until it was flexible enough to be twirled into the long pieces necessary to weave the nets. Some women used sinew instead of willow for their nets.

Ann Ned remembers seeing small bright objects hung from the nets, not as bait but to attract the attention of the fish.

“That sinew, they make it fish net with it. Lotsa work I guess, oh gosh. They put it some kind of metal, they put it so fish gonna come to it. Not bait. Some kind of shell. Shell, yeah, just like beads.”<sup>15</sup>

The nets were set in quiet eddies at right angles to the bank of the stream or river. If there weren't any eddies, the women created them by driving two or three inch thick willow stakes into the river bottom in a line sent out about six feet from shore. Then they would make a little dam against the stakes with brush, mud and stones, and set the net so that it floated from the outermost end of the dam. From year to year, one family's right to fish at certain eddies was recognized by the others.

On rivers where there were fish running, fish weirs were built communally. They were most often made from willow saplings which were cut from green trees, tied in bundles so they would dry straight and then driven into the river bed to form the weir or trap.

Mira Kay recalls what was done before nets were used at all.

“A long time ago those people had no net for fish. They just gather old willows and with that willow they make it just like hands. They just put it right across the river and they just make it small, just a space to go through. The fish go into and down at the end they make a round thing, that's where the fish go in. Just like the dam, they make a dam for fish. That's what they did and that's the only way they could catch fish. Soon they start to get fish and all of them they just pack it up to where they stay. They pack it up in some kind of pail and then the mother cut it up and dry it.”<sup>16</sup>

Fresh fish were prepared in a variety of ways. One way was to split a fish open, hold the sides apart with green willow twigs, and broil it over an open fire. Another way



was to wrap the whole fish with wet clay and put it in a hole which had hot stones and ashes in it. The hole was filled with dirt and left until the clay was baked hard and when the clay was chipped off, the fish scales and skin peeled off easily leaving the juicy meat. The effect of this kind of cooking is similar to what we get if we use a clay baker today. Fish were also boiled. The fish would be cut into pieces and put into a basket filled with water which was kept hot by stones heated in the fire.

Fish which had to be preserved for winter food were dried. The women cut off the heads and sliced down each side of the back, removing the backbone and tail. Some tribes left the tails on so that when the fish was thrown over a pole the pieces of meat hung down on both sides. The flat meat was scored in squares and hung up to dry. Once the meat began to dry it would curl, so greenwood skewers were pushed through to keep it flat. In good weather, the drying would take three days. The women and children kept fires burning under the drying fish to keep the flies off and give it a smoky flavour. Some people built smokehouses covered with spruce bark where the fish would be put after they had dried in the air.

The Peel River Kutchin had a unique way of packing their dry fish which made good articles for trade. They made bark baskets about a foot and a half long and filled them with fish grease, pieces of pounded dry fish and berries. They sewed a cover on, then wrapped that parcel with whole dried fish and finished it off with willow netting. These bundles were valuable because they contained almost everything necessary for a balanced diet.

Fish grease was prepared from fish entrails. Some kinds of fish such as the western salmon have much less fat around the entrails than others and rendered smaller quantities of grease. The grease was made by simmering the entrails in water, and was then purified by being reheated and strained through some material such as a baby caribou stomach. It could be used for pemmican but it tasted very fishy and was extra greasy.

Here are two ways of using fish grease.

“They take a square (of grease) and then after they freeze it they cut it in narrow piece and cut it just like you cut cake, they cut it into small squares. Whoever in the house, how many there, they just give it to house family.”<sup>17</sup>

“They leave fish overnight and then next day they cut it and hang it up for couple of days. Then after that they cook it. They fry it, and they pound it and they clean all the bone out from that fish and then they have fish and then they put that fish into that grease.”<sup>18</sup>

Yearly migrations of birds provided another source of food. Fantastic quantities of all kinds of ducks, geese and swans could be hunted in many areas and were a pleasant change from constant use of meat and fish. Of all the birds, the raven was taboo because of its reputation as being one of the animals who gave birth to people and thus its importance in clan relationships.

Edible wild plants and berries rounded out the northern diet. The collection and preservation of these foods was women's work and from year to year they would find varying quantities. Raspberries and salmonberries were not usually preserved but were eaten fresh. Strawberries were cooked and blueberries were usually mashed up. Cranberries were the most versatile fruits because they could be stored in sacks, preserved in grease or eaten both raw and cooked.

“They find just cranberries and they never get enough berries, just cranberries. Where they stay there's lots of roots around there too and just cranberries growing around there and they

pick them and they stick the ground (to dig up the roots). They put some kind of wood - they make some wood and they cut down some tree and they make it flat with an axe then they put it together. They just make some kind of little box with it. Then they put something in there (probably fish grease) and they put that cranberries and they put it underground. They keep it like that for the winter and when they start to get fish and those women get the fish gut and eggs and they fry it and after they fry it they put cranberries in. They put it in the guts and the eggs. That's the way they eat their berries."<sup>19</sup>

There is no grain in the Yukon which could be used to make flour or be used as rice, but the parsnip-like tuber of the woolly lousewort that ripens after the first frosts in August was eaten. It could be dug out of exposed hillsides all winter if the snow were shallow enough to leave the tops showing. Apparently the flavour is improved by frost, but they are quite difficult to dig out and cook and clean.

Mushrooms could be found almost everywhere and in a good year there would be thousands. Of course some species are poisonous, so people had to know how to pick out the edible kinds.

"Now a woman told me she ate the orange (boletus) mushrooms. Now, her test for mushrooms is not scientifically correct. She told me that if the skin pulls off easily it's safe to eat. This has been proven not to be true all the time. Botanists will tell you not to go by that. Another woman told me she goes by what the squirrels eat. Now that may be a safer test - watch the animals. The squirrels will gather a certain mushroom and take it up to their tree and dry it and the rabbits will like the edible mushrooms too."<sup>20</sup>

In the spring people ate willow buds as they walked through the woods. In season they ate wild rhubarb and onion tops, but these foods would be used on their own and not as ingredients as we would use them today. Some people tapped birch trees, caught the syrup in small baskets and ate it either raw or boiled. It was a regular practice to eat the stomach contents of moose, caribou and fish, so the people got the benefit of all the vegetation that the animals had gathered.

Beverages weren't used to a great extent. Tea was brewed from rose hips and dried herbs such as kinnickinnick, and there was the broth left after cooking meat or fish.

"They just drink meat juice. They boil meat and they drink the juice like tea."<sup>21</sup>

Of course there was always as much pure cold water in the streams and lakes as one could ever want. Some tribes told their young people to drink as little as they could because they wouldn't be able to run fast if they drank a lot of water.

Although the northern diet didn't have much variety, it supplied all the elements necessary to keep people alive and healthy. The emphasis was on protein, and there were no foods that provided empty calories. On this diet people remained slim and active for many years.

\* \* \*

For centuries the Indian people lived independently, feeding and clothing themselves as their ancestors had before them. Gradually articles of trade such as guns, powder and knives began to filter into the Yukon, through trade with the coastal Tlingit. These people got their wares from Russian fur seal traders and exchanged them for furs from the interior. The height of this trading system was reached in the mid 1800's, so by that time in the southwestern Yukon at least, guns were used for hunting.

People further from the coast became familiar with trade articles from the south as the Hudson's Bay Company and the Alaska Commercial Company gradually established posts in various areas. Some posts were located where the people already had meeting places and others where no one had settled before. A large number of the early posts were not profitable to the companies which set them up and were short lived, so the people who were introduced to commodities which changed their lifestyle considerably had to revert to their traditional ways until another post was established near enough to be useful.

The fur trade made important changes in the lives of the people by introducing tools which had not been available before. The gun made the biggest impression. Game could be killed faster and from greater distances; the caribou surrounds which had been used for so long were no longer necessary. Women learned to shoot and hunted alongside the men.

Edith Josie told us about one of Mira Kay's hunting episodes.

"She was staying from here not very far down river. She used to stay there summertime and she fish with net and wintertime she stay around there for snare rabbits. One summer she was there alone and she saw something swimming across river down right in front of her camp and she was standing on the bank. When it got to shore it was, she see it was moose in front of camp. She shoot at it and that thing just fall down and she went down and look at it and it was moose and it too big to skin it by herself so she come up here and tell her son she shot moose and she tell him to go down with her and skin moose for her."<sup>22</sup>

Eva Carlick was out hunting moose one day when she saw a bear in the willows.

"I didn't know it was grizzly bear. I see the cub first. It was sitting on top of the roots. There was a little bare ground there and about that deep snow. It is too late for black bear to be walking around you know. Seem he just came out to sit in the sun. It was a nice sunshiny day, nice and warm. And I come very close and I never see the mother under the tree. She is laying down under the willows. I come close enough to shoot and I make one shot and kill 'em. Then the mother jump up and I give her two shots, just one inch between the bullet hole and right in the heart. The mother - great big. And I kill 'em. Then another come out and I shot 'em. And when the last one come out I must have got excited. I shot it in the leg. Then he start to walk toward me. I missed him four times. This last he went into the bush. And I fill up my gun and I went around in the bush and I gonna kill 'em. He beat me and come out other side. I never see 'em. He beat me - when he come out I never see him. Big bushes. And I went and guts those bears, three of them. And I guts them and I go home. My husband, he had pneumonia that time and he can't hunt, he can't do nothing. And I got little boy name of Joe that I adopted. Was my sister's, she died. Was about ten years, that boy. "Gee, your mom's shooting fast - she's shooting a bear or something. Too fast, she shooting." Boy, he got worried and he go down that bridge cross that creek. And then when I guts them I come, just in the evening I come. And there he was by the bridge look for me. That bear I wounded he went right by that bridge and he went up the creek. And they never see 'em. They got a bunch of dogs too and they barking and they never see 'em. "I come back and he ask me, he say, "What'd you shoot?" I tell him I shot three grizzly bears. Boy! I'm not scared to do

that. And he say, "Why'd you do that?" And I tell him I didn't know it was grizzly bears. And I see the cub there and I shout at him and he jump up. And when he jump up I shoot 'em. Three of them down, mother and two cubs. And this one got away from me. Right across and you guys never see 'em."<sup>23</sup>

With the coming of the trading posts other tools besides the gun made life easier. Twine fish nets made the long task of preparing roots and bark a thing of the past. Fish hooks made from steel were introduced. Fish wheels took the place of the old fish weirs, and are still used today in Dawson to catch salmon during the August run. Matches made the job of starting fires fast and reliable and iron cooking pots could be used right over the fires, replacing the bark baskets filled with water and hot stones.

The establishment of trading posts also meant a few changes in food habits. Staples of White diet such as flour, sugar and tea became important additions to the Indian people's diet, depending on the amount of money available to purchase them and the nearness of a trading post. The main patterns of life remained fairly stable though, until the Gold Rush began in 1896.

For the Indian people living near the goldfields of Dawson and the routes leading there from the coast, the Gold Rush was a drastic event, changing their lives immediately and affecting the futures of all the people of the Territory.

Until then there had been few Whitemen in the Yukon, and suddenly all along the trails to Dawson poured thousands of newcomers noisily stripping the forests to build boats and fuel their fires, and occasionally letting the fires get away. For the Indians this type of activity was devastating - game simply vanished into the hills to escape the horde and the booming noises of its boats. Several NWMP reports say that game was scarce during the early years of White settlement.

The White men brought their food habits with them; habits based on the fact that in their home towns they could buy whatever foodstuffs they needed rather than supplying them by themselves. Many people packed in great quantities of bacon and beans which they thought would keep them healthy only to discover too late that a steady diet of these foods resulted in weakened bodies susceptible to diseases such as scurvy and typhoid fever.

Two things conspired to keep the common miners from the foods their bodies needed. There was not a gold mine for every man as people had been led to believe and the prices of store-bought foods were too high for most people to be able to afford them on the wages they were earning working other men's claims.

In 1897 reports reached the American Government that several thousand miners who had reached Dawson ahead of the rush were dying of starvation, and it was decided that something had to be done to get food to the city. In December, food, snow locomotives and a small army of packers, guides and troops were sent north but they never reached their destination. The stores and troops reached Skagway but the pack train and locomotives were held back further south because their ship was named in a lawsuit. In March this expedition was abandoned but was replaced with another known as the Great Reindeer Relief Expedition.

Five hundred and fifty-eight reindeer, troops and supplies arrived at Haines Mission on April 15 and set out for Dawson over the Dalton Trail. They never made it any further than one hundred and eighty miles inland because the people who had organized the affair hadn't realized that the lichens and moss available were not the kind that reindeer would eat. The animals died like flies and by September only one hundred and forty remained alive. At the rate they were travelling it would have taken them two years to reach Dawson.

Some of the thousands of miners in Dawson and other mining towns were prepared to live off the land to a certain extent, but all were here for the gold, and the question of survival in the north had not been a major consideration in the decisions of most to come to the Klondike.

In her book *My Seventy Years* Martha Louise Black described her introduction to Yukon foods.

“All along the way we fished - trolled for trout from the boat. I caught a salmon-trout weighing nine pounds but others weighed over twelve pounds.

“We picked berries of all kinds - raspberries, strawberries, red currants, blueberries and cranberries but we sorely missed fresh vegetables.

“We cooked our meals on a little sheet-iron Klondike stove and there was generally an unlimited supply of dry wood for the gathering. At first we had not big game but our men shot a few squirrels which for a time I could not eat until driven to it by a wild craving for fresh meat. Occasionally we had a wild fowl, and, as we neared Dawson, we were able to buy pieces of moose or caribou from the Indians.”<sup>24</sup>

In a letter written in November 1898 Martha mentions a problem which many people had - that of planning well enough ahead to stretch food supplies over a long period of time. After freeze-up the stocks in stores were either bought up or priced out of the reach of most people, and one had to make do with what one had already laid away, until spring when supplies would be available again.

“We had many regrets for our high living of these early winter months. We did not realize the problem of a food shortage and the terrific winter prices which were to add to my troubles of that lonely winter. It became necessary to ration ourselves, and I determined that I would share as the men. For six months we were to be entirely without butter, sugar or milk. Our breakfast consisted entirely of cornmeal mush with molasses and clear coffee. Flour was a dollar a pound, meat two dollars a pound, butter three dollars a pound, eggs three dollars a dozen, oranges and apples and onions a dollar and a half each - when they could be had. Cow's milk was sixteen dollars a gallon, but hay was four hundred dollars a ton. How I longed for a change of diet - some fruit and vegetables. Instead I gulped down the ever unpalatable cornmeal mush, prunes, tea with no milk or sugar.”<sup>25</sup>

All through the Gold Rush enterprising individuals made fortunes supplying food to the people who either had to pay their prices, fall victim to disease, or die. Jack Dalton had blazed a trail from Haines to Dawson which was used to drive livestock to the market in the north. Anne Ned remembers seeing the cattle drives - which must have been quite a sight to the Indian people.

“Now I know that time at Dalton Post, Jack Dalton come. I was little girl that time they take cattle by Hootchi way down. I saw him that time, yeah. Lotsa cattle. Every spring they go, summer-time they go right through Hootchi way.”<sup>26</sup>

A woman whose name is not known wrote in a letter home from Dawson in 1897:

“Sixty head of cattle were driven in from Juneau and got here last week. The first beef ever in this country. We got two por-

terhouse steaks for Sunday dinner. They cost \$10.00 - \$1.00 a pound - bone trimmings, fat, horns, and tail, all the same price. We got, by chance, two hundred and fifty pounds of native potatoes - we are the only ones with that many. We had to kill our chickens as the chicken feed did not get here. I have them frozen and will have chicken for Christmas and New Year's."<sup>27</sup>

Many Indian people made money by killing game and delivering it to the ever hungry thousands. Others worked in the wood camps that kept the boats running along the Yukon River. Money, which was an entirely new concept to these people, was theirs for the spending, and if they wanted to buy any of the foods in the stores, they like everyone else had to pay prices which were incredibly high by the standards of the day.

In the same letter quoted above the writer says,

"Fresh vegetables are hardly known here. The season is too short to give them time to develop. Wild onions and rhubarb are found everywhere. They are terribly strong, but we relish them as you would strawberries and ice cream."<sup>28</sup>

Her opinion on the chances for successful vegetable growing were soon proven wrong for the islands and lowlands produced fantastic crops which banished (for those who could afford them) the boredom of beans and evaporated vegetables.

In a few brief years the foods available in the north changed from only what the land could produce to what the entire world had to offer. By Dominion Day 1898 the patrons of the Regina Cafe in Dawson were able to dine on:

Consommé a la Jardinière  
Rock Point Lobsters  
Piccallilli  
Lobster Newburg  
Chicken Salad en Mayonnaise  
Broiled Moose Chops aux Champignons  
Cold Tongue  
Roast Beef  
Boiled Ham  
Bengal Club Chutney  
Saratoga Chips  
Cakes and Jellies  
Pears and Peaches  
Cheese  
Coffee

In short, anything money could buy.



The Gold Rush was over by the early 1900's and most of the people went home, but a core group of men, women and children stayed on. Stores or posts were gradually established in every area and the problems of food supply were made a little easier to solve, even if sometimes the stores couldn't keep certain articles in stock.

Tootsie Charlie tells a story about the Hudson's Bay Company.

"Hudson Bay tea - you know Hudson Bay tea? There's a little high bush like that and leaf just like willow leaf? Long time ago there's Hudson Bay Company around. They run out of tea you know. They ask people for Hudson Bay tea. They pick up that Hudson Bay tea for that store and they bring it to that store. Those store people they dry it and they pack it up and they sell it back to those Indians. That's why everybody call it Hudson Bay tea you know."<sup>29</sup>

Certain things such as tea, coffee, flour, jam and baking powder became just as important to the Indian people as they were to the Whites. Eva Carlick describes a long trip she went on when the group ran low on supplies, only to find that the store they reached was out of some things too.

"And we travel like that and we come to a place that they call - what do they call that place - ah - Johnson Town. We got in there. Then we stay there all night. We got short of sugar, we got no sugar. Just got straight tea and live on meat - straight meat.

"Then we come to this other people. Lot of people. All the world. And this old lady she bring us big pan full of White man food. Raisins. No sugar. She brings us this stick candy too, they say 'rock candy', they call it. It's that long and twisted. So we use it for sugar. We put in the tea. No sugar in Teslin store. A lot of things short, you see. No rice but they got flour all right. And she brought us raisins and bread and things like that."<sup>30</sup>

After the halcyon days of the Rush, for the most part stores outside Dawson and Whitehorse stocked simple, basic articles. Jeanne Harbottle ran the Ross River store in the late 1940's and even at that late date she says that they stocked very simple things.

"It was the basics; flour, sugar and tea and lard and beef fat and tobacco and chew. You couldn't be without chew - that was a disaster. And candy of some kind - you know, not so much candy bars but mixed candy of some kind."<sup>31</sup>

Some of the White people who stayed after the Rush and others who came north in the next few decades were prepared to utilize the products of the land in addition to their foods. Peggy Shand and her husband ran the roadhouse on Stewart Island in the early 1900's; they had a huge garden and a greenhouse, and used fish and game to supplement the food they had shipped in to feed their many guests.

"All summer we enjoyed the fresh vegetables from the garden. I canned, dried and put away, carrots, beets, turnips, onions and cabbages in the root cellar. We bleached the celery and it came out white and crisp. Green tomatoes were wrapped in paper and put into milk crates.

"Long before the freeze-up loads of groceries came by boat. with the outfit for the winter. Forty pounds of cheese in big boxes, crates of eggs, butter, sugar, oatmeal, cornmeal, barrels of flour, big cartons of tea, bags of coffee, rice and drums of coal oil. After the first year I made my own preserves and jellies. We had fine smoked fish and good fresh meat."<sup>32</sup>

The Shands had a large greenhouse attached to their bedroom, which they heated early in February to start off the seedlings for their vegetable garden. Other people found equally ingenious ways to solve the problems created by the short growing season. There was a garden at Selkirk whose owner

“...planted potatoes for several years, but to protect them from winter frost went to the expense of having an immense awning made of heavy cotton which he lowered on them every clear night when frost threatened. Without this they would not have ripened.”<sup>33</sup>

In the quiet years before World War II the cycles of life in the Yukon were fairly stable. Freeze-up and spring thaw made it necessary for food supplies to be ordered often months in advance to coincide their delivery with an appropriate season. People continued to use the land in degrees varying according to their temperaments, and some determined individuals tried to provide their neighbours with foods which were not really suited to being produced in the north.

“In Dawson there was only one dairy, though I never heard it called that. It was run by a Miss Munro, a wan, pioneer woman who kept a few cows, rarely if ever inspected, which she housed in a shed at Guggieville on the Klondike. She was a hard working woman of great poverty, for cows were difficult to maintain that far north... One morning the milk arrived late and Miss Munro apologized, explained that her house and shed had been immersed in the spring floods. She had had to stand all night up to her hips in water in order to keep a calf on a kitchen table and save it from drowning.”<sup>34</sup>

The 1940's were boom years for the Yukon; many people were drawn north for jobs constructing the Alaska Highway and for positions in the Armed Forces. In this second wave of newcomers there were a few who were prepared to live mainly off the land for a good part of the year. Jeanne Harbottle and her husband trapped north of Ross River for several years and of their diet she says,

“Our staple was meat, lots of wild meat, birds and fish. We ran a net, but it was mostly meat - moose meat, caribou, bear meat. I used all bear fat. I'd take me enough in the fall to last until we got game and render it down or use it whole. And I did, and still do, eat any piece of fat that you or anybody else doesn't want. I live on it, summer and winter. And even in my bannock I chop up hunks of moose fat and put it in there. It's just like candy to me.

“I didn't ever use much flour 'cause I didn't have time to bake except when we were at the cabin and I'd only make enough to eat while we were there. We took bannock and we carried cracked wheat. We bought it by the 100 pounds - 600 pounds every spring. But you didn't carry meat on a trap line, or we didn't. Our toboggan was so loaded there was no way you were going to pack meat for the dogs, and they were hard working big dogs. So we carried cracked wheat and cooked for the dogs and they ate out of the same pot. We seemed to live on cracked wheat. Instead of the polished it was the whole. The same with the rice. We never ate polished rice. We used what the Indians call 'dog rice'. We got the best of the rice and the best of the wheat.

“We had all kinds of dried stuff - vegetables, onions and carrots and in the first part of the fall you would have lots of potatoes but they wouldn't last long. I was never very much on dried apples





but I was on dried apricots and raisins. We didn't use much sugar because we weren't sweet eaters but we did use a lot of jam or honey or something like that, especially honey. We'd use more honey and peanut butter than anything else.

"You just don't eat fancy. You just eat plain and... well, what could you do fancy without an oven?"<sup>35</sup>

Of course a person brought up on a great variety of foods could find it a little hard to give certain things up. As Jeanne says,

"Oh God, girl, you crave all the time... a nice big thick sirloin with mushrooms on it, or you know, a salad with tomatoes and lettuce and mayonnaise. Sure you crave. Usually if you started thinking you'd dream of the food you were going to eat if you ever got out of that place. And then of course you'd drive to the first restaurant and you'd eat it, and I'd be sick."<sup>36</sup>

The plain diet that Jeanne describes is still useful to people trapping or living in the bush. Tootsie Charlie's meals when she is on her trap line east of Ross River are quite basic.

"I'm still trapping. Yes, every year. I go out every year, every winter trapping. Dog team right up the river. I'm alone, me all alone with my dogs. Last year was cold, really cold. I take rice, beans, cornmeal, macaroni, oats, dog meat. No potatoes - things like that too heavy. Raisins and chocolates too, I take."<sup>37</sup>

Today it is taken for granted that food supply is well organized and constant, and that everyone can buy whatever is needed in the stores. Is there any way we can find a balance between what the land has to offer and what the stores have in stock so that we can relate to the north on its own terms and not live under the delusion that we are separate from it?

Different people find different levels at which they want to get involved with supplying their own food. There are many to whom the idea of killing an animal is revolting. It would be impractical for all of us to suddenly become hunters; game would soon disappear entirely. With careful game management and an attitude of conservation on the part of those who do hunt, there should be enough game animals to fill human needs and keep nature in balance for the years to come.

Fishing is a way of supplementing store-bought foods which appeals to many people. It is easier to keep fish plentiful than game animals, because lakes can be seeded with fingerlings to replenish depleted stocks.

Gathering berries, edible wild plants and mushrooms is another way to harvest the land. Regardless of whether these things are picked or not, they will reproduce the next year in quantities depending on the weather. All that has to be done is to learn the edible varieties and methods of preparing and preserving them.

There are many varieties of edible plants but not everything growing in the woods can be eaten safely. The following chart lists some of the plants and berries that can be eaten, their probable habitats and cooking suggestions. There is also a list of some of the plants which are poisonous. Further varieties of both edible and poisonous species are described in books about the flora of the north. A new one which is very easy to use since the plants are illustrated with photographs as well as drawings, is the publication from the editors of Alaska magazine, *The Alaska-Yukon Wild Flowers Guide*. I have not mentioned mushrooms since their study requires some care; a person interested in edible fungi should refer to one of the many books on mushrooms that are available.

## SOME YUKON PLANTS

COMMON PLANT NAME	TYPICAL LOCATION	EDIBLE PART	COOKING SUGGESTIONS
woolly lousewort	dry, stony tundra	root	raw, boiled
yellow pond lily	ponds, slow streams	rhizome leaves	raw, boiled
pigweed	no particular	leaves	raw, boiled
strawberry blite	no particular	young leaves	raw, boiled
mountain sorrel	wet places, snow beds	leaves (not root)	raw
bistort	meadows, heaths, bogs, tundra	rhizome leaves	raw
Alaska willow	bogs, tundra, creeks, rivers	inner bark	scraped & eaten
wild chive	meadows, grassy slopes	leaves in spring, bulb in fall	raw, boiled
cattail	shallow water, marshes	young stems, spikes	raw, boiled
bracken	dry open places, woodlands	young shoots	boiled
fireweed	roadsides, meadows	all parts	raw, boiled

## BERRIES

NAME	TYPICAL LOCATION	USES
strawberry	meadows	jams, fresh
high bush cranberry	woods, thickets	sauce, jams
low bush cranberry	woods	jams, teas
raspberries	meadows, roadsides	jams, fresh
alpine blueberry	heaths, bogs	fresh, pies
soapberry	woods	Indian ice cream
mossberry	woods	pies

## NON-EDIBLE PLANTS

NAME	TYPICAL LOCATION	NOTES
marsh marigold	moist places	poison broken down by boiling
cursed crowfoot	wet places	poison may cause skin wounds
nootka lupins and perhaps others	gravel bars, roadsides	generally poisonous. seeds may be poisonous causing inflammation of stomach & intestines
yellow anemone	meadows, snow flushes	often mistaken for buttercup
mackenzie water hemlock	marshes, sloughs	roots deadly poison
bog rosemary	mossy bogs, pool margins	causes low blood pressure, breathing difficulty, vomiting, diarrhea, cramps



A Menu circa 1898

Hûîtres Baltimore

POTAGE  
Consomme Impérial  
Sherry

POISSON  
Klondike Grayling Alaskan Colihans  
Sauterne

SALAD  
Homard

ENTRÉES  
Fois de Volaille Pate Poulet  
Claret

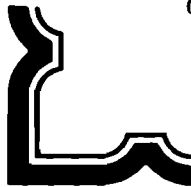
Hors d'Oeuvres

RÔTI  
Boeuf  
Champagne

GIBIER  
Ptarmigan aux Champignons

LÉGUMES  
Petit Pois Asperges  
Port

DESSERT  
Omelette au rhum Fromage Rochefort  
Fruites Fraiches Noix Raisins  
Sherry



Cafe Liquer

from Three Years in the Klondike

Outfit Recommended For One  
Man For One Year

Bacon .....	150 pounds	Flour .....	250 pounds
Rollled Oats .....	25 pounds	Beans .....	100 pounds
Tea .....	10 pounds	Coffee .....	10 pounds
Sugar .....	40 pounds	Dried potatoes .....	25 pounds
Dried Onions .....	2 pounds	Salt .....	10 pounds
Pepper .....	1 pound	Dried Fruits .....	75 pounds
Soda .....	4 pounds	Evaporated Vinegar .....	1/2 pound
Compressed soup .....	12 pounds	Rice .....	40 pounds
Mustard .....	1 can		

from The Klondike Record's Book of Gold Seekers

Several years ago Leona Kananen became interested in what foods the Yukon had to offer and did a lot of research into methods of preparing different ingredients. The result of her work is the *Yukon Cookbook*, which gives traditional and modern recipes and line drawings of edible plants and mushrooms. This little book would be a good place to start to learn how to use the products of the land. Then as one became more involved one could talk to people who have had experience in using Yukon foods, or find books on specific subjects in the library.

Leona was working at the Yukon News writing a cooking column when she first thought of publishing a book.

“One of my jobs was writing a column called Yukon Cookbook. I would do an article on rose hips when it came time for picking them and I’d spend many days trying out new ideas for recipes, like combining rose hips with low bush cranberries. My original idea was to collect my column in a book. I added to it and improved it and then put out the book on my own.”<sup>38</sup>

Her research was meticulous. She spoke with many people about traditional methods of preparation and corresponded with a botanist to identify the edible plants.

“Sometimes a person would tell me that there was such a plant that they ate when they were little and I would try to identify it. I would go looking all over the Yukon for say, “muskrat grub”. I wrote a friend, a botanist, and asked him what is muskrat grub, what plant is this, and he would write back and give me maybe two or three plants and I would look in the large botanical works - I’d go through whole books, and I’d find maybe three or four that were close to the description. And finally, I’d write to my friend again and we would come down to what I really thought it was. I didn’t call it muskrat grub in my book - I called it muskrat turnip. In fact, I have passed by many of the common names, such as, instead of calling it “bum gut”, I called it “moose tripe sausage”.<sup>39</sup>

Leona has several theories about the development of Yukon cooking since the turn of the century, and these are reflected in the book.

“I think what is pretty well typical of Yukon cooking is that people improvised. If they didn’t have a bar-b-que they used metal that had been discarded when they were building the Alaska Highway during the war. They would take a sheet of tin and lay it over the salmon, and they would wrap the salmon in a clean shirt. In fact, this is how many people have survived the difficult challenge of the land - they have used old discarded things...

“Relishes are very common here with the White people. They like to make relishes with their garden vegetables. It’s a simple way to preserve them for the winter, and they seem to crave that bit of vinegar that’s in the relish. Especially rhubarb-onion relish. That’s an old favourite. Brown sugar, vinegar, rhubarb and onions.

“There was the use of certain spices - allspice or cloves, more commonly cloves. Allspice is a good substitute for cloves, a little better for you. And there’s sage, a local herb. I use that a lot in my recipes. A good number of recipes have been given to me using sage.”<sup>40</sup>

There are other cookbooks devoted to the use of local ingredients, such as the *Northern Cookbook*, and various books on edible plants, which ease the task of learning to use unfamiliar foods.

A garden, a greenhouse or even a few window boxes full of vegetable plants can keep fresh food on the table at a cost lower than charged by the stores. In many places the soil is not fertile enough to support healthy plant growth but careful additions of nutrients and sand can develop adequate soil over a period of years. The growing season is short but intense and if seedlings are started indoors early in the spring and then transplanted outside they will have plenty of time to develop. A greenhouse is necessary to grow tomatoes, cucumbers and green peppers but its construction needn't be expensive or costly. A simple wooden frame covered with plastic will do a good job of incubating the plants. Many people are very knowledgeable about the development of poor soil and are willing to share their experience with cultivation and picking seed types. If you see a thriving garden you may find that its gardener will be happy to talk about its development.

Living north of 60° is no reason in itself to feel defeated by the elements or intimidated by the harshness of the landscape. Because there are so few people living here there is a unique opportunity for getting in touch with the surroundings and of being rewarded with a few of the things that the land has to offer. If we have the knowledge based on centuries of experience, and the patience and interest to meet the land on its own terms to ferret out its produce, we will find the Yukon more hospitable than legend has her, and a good place to be called "home".



## SOME YUKON WOMEN

One warm clear morning in the summer of 1974, Audrie and I were thumping over the road to Carmacks when we both screeched, "Look!" and I braked hard in the middle of the road. Sharing a banquet of porcupine were a huge bald-headed eagle and a raven! When the birds saw us they reluctantly left their meal, but as we drove away I glanced in the rear-view mirror and caught sight of the two companions once more settled down to their dinner.

Later on in the summer, a trip to Mayo brought us into a more hair-raising contact with Yukon wildlife. As we were slapping flies from our sandwiches at the Mayo campsite, my daughter began pointing excitedly towards the river. "Mom, there's a black bear on the bridge!" I watched the bear idly for a few seconds, then a warning rang in my head. I remembered reading about the speed of the awkward-looking creatures once they caught the scent of food. Frantically, we threw our lunch into the car and jumped in. As we roared out of the picnic site, I noticed that black bear charging through the bushes, heading right for our table!

Actually, animals were low on the list of our hazards as we rattled over Yukon highways. By far the worst bugaboo was the weather, since the summer of 1974 proved one of the wettest on record. For most of our trips, the car either groaned through inches of mud or slithered from one side of the road to the other. On several occasions our vehicle was completely coated in muck, the only visibility provided by a tiny patch in the windshield.

The most memorable - and disastrous - trip was the run up to Elsa. Our bad luck started when we paused for a quick tree-watering and leg-stretching just south of Braeburn. Removing my watch from my purse, I put the purse temporarily on top of the car. You can imagine the rest. We drove the fifteen miles to Braeburn Lodge before I realized my purse, containing fifty-five dollars as well as all my identification, was missing. We returned to the scene of the crime and combed the area, but found nothing. However, that was only the beginning of our disasters. By the time we finally reached Elsa after slogging through particularly muddy roads, I had acquired laryngitis. Determined not to waste the trip, I started in with my interviews, although I could manage only a whisper. However, we were forced to return to Whitehorse the next day when my daughter, who had been itching mysteriously all the way up to Elsa, came down with chicken pox and a high fever. What a nightmare! But many of the bad memories of that journey vanished a few days later when I discovered that an observant truck driver had picked up my purse and turned it in - complete with all my money and papers - to the Whitehorse detachment of the RCMP!

Those were a few highlights of our summer, when Audrie and I interviewed women in almost every community of the Yukon. We were constantly amazed by the friendliness and co-operation of the women we approached, and humbled by their honest replies to our questions.

My task was to interview and photograph all sorts of Yukon women, to discover what they are thinking and doing in the 1970's. The process of selection was quite random - I talked to numerous people who suggested women to interview, who in turn recommended others. If time, space, money and other factors had permitted, this section of the book would include many more women. The articles you are about to read are intended to be glimpses into the lives of a potpourri of women, rather than a comprehensive study. I hope you enjoy them.

Anthea Bussey



**PEGGY NOLAN  
WHITEHORSE**

Peggy Nolan is a single parent. Being solely responsible for the loving care, health and education of her five young daughters is without doubt the moving force in the life of this young Yukon woman.

It isn't always easy, nor is it always fun, but Peggy seems determined her daughters will have the kind of life she herself missed. Thereby she faces a dilemma common to many northern women, who, while attempting to provide a stable and happy life for their children, must decide between low-paying jobs and inadequate child-care, or staying home with their children and living on welfare. It sounds simple - but social pressures are heavy, as Peggy has learned. "I've been on and off the welfare roll... simply because, with my education, I can't find a job that will support us. If it's not feasible for me to work, I would rather stay home with my children until I can get more education. Another problem has been with day care... as far as I'm concerned day care services up here are not sufficient... I could have my three daughters put in a day care centre (the other two are in school) for up to about \$250.00 a month, and have that amount supplemented by Welfare. But if I'm going to be working eight hours a day, I'm not going to be running to Welfare's door, asking them to look after my kids. I'd rather stay home and look after them myself, and not go through the hassle of putting them in day care, where they're in a different world. They don't really understand why I have to go to work and to the Welfare at the same time. It's just too much for both of us."

Transportation is also a problem. There is no public transit, and Peggy can't afford to buy a car. Taxi fares eat up a large portion of income needed for other purposes. As she says "I bet I spend a good \$500.00 a year on taxis, just to buy groceries and do the things I have to do to carry on day to day living."

As in many isolated places, prejudice thrives in the Yukon, and discrimination in Peggy's life is constant. As an attractive woman, separated from her husband, a single parent, and a non-status Indian, she must cope with it daily. It affects not only her sense of pride and self-worth, but her children, her purchasing power, and her social life. The hardest of all to bear is discrimination that involves her children. She says "I'll be buying something in the stores, handing people money, and they'll say 'Oh, are those your kids?' and right away they check my hands for rings... When they see I don't wear rings (I don't believe in wearing my wedding band now that I've left my husband) they look at me as if to say 'You've got five kids, and you're not even married.'" Her social life suffers too, from gossip and inuendo. "Everybody believes that every guy I talk to or every guy I dance with or go out with is my boyfriend." Other children can be cruel, too. "If one of my friends' children knows that I have been going out with a certain guy, these children will go



to school and ask my children if he is going to be their new Dad. It bothers my oldest daughter, because she's ten years old now, and she's very wise".

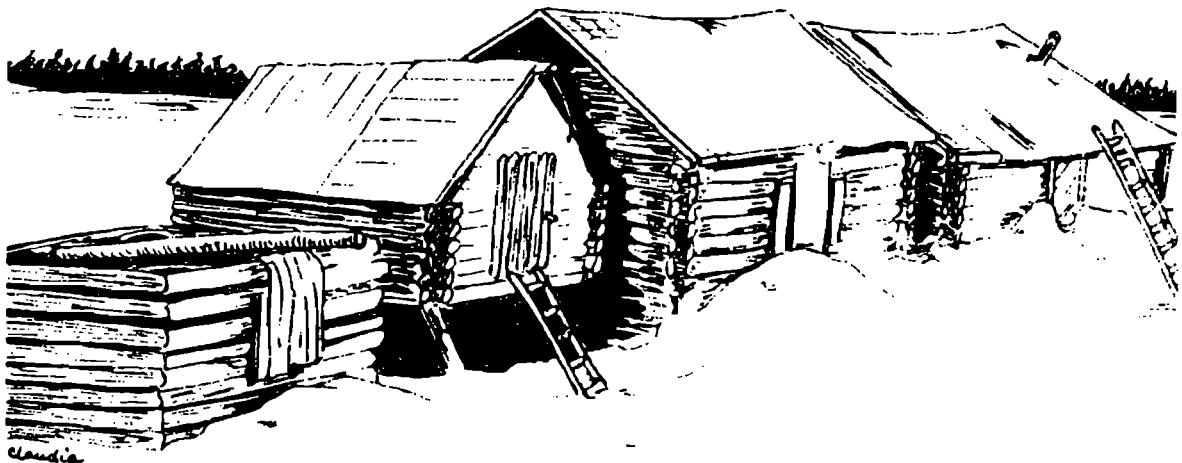
Peggy's own childhood, her sense of pride, and her sometimes bitter memories are a strong influence in her life. She was born in the Yukon, but has spent much of her life elsewhere, returning to stay in 1971, after separating from her husband. She says "My Mother and Father broke up when I was thirteen years old, and neither of them could look after us. My Father did construction work, and he couldn't drag us kids along with him, and my Mother just couldn't afford to keep us. She didn't believe in Welfare or handouts, so she put us in a church-run home for children. This was something like a Residential School, only it was religion oriented. I really disliked it... It was too religious oriented. We did an awful lot of praying and none of us knew what for."

It seems that in this home, Peggy was classified more or less as an orphan. The children in the Home wore second hand clothing, even in grade nine, and for Peggy that caused "a lot of hassle". This part of her childhood was an unhappy experience. Peggy hopes for a better life for her children.

Meanwhile, her plans for a personal future must wait. Someday, when her children are grown, she would like an education. As she says "I would like to go to school for the rest of my life, if I could!" Unfortunately, Peggy's hopes for furthering her education can't be realized in the Yukon. She would have to go "outside" to University. Like many northern women, she longs for educational opportunities to be available at home.

Being Indian is important to Peggy, and it irks her to be called non-status. She says "...to look at me and my children, anybody with two eyes knows that we are Native." Because of actions her grandparents took years ago, Peggy and her children are denied the rights of other Indian people. Yet she must suffer the patronizing attitude many White people have toward Indians. She says "The Indian managed quite well without the White man... they had a workable system, and I don't think the Whiteman should come up here and tell us what to do. We were here long before they were." However, she believes there is now a place in Yukon society for White people "because they are here, they can't be turned away - rejected - they just wouldn't take it." If it were only possible, Peggy would like to teach White people to "let Indians be themselves, without giving orders, and telling them what to do."

Peggy Nolan is a courageous young woman, and one suspects she will have a hand in making the Yukon a better place to live, for both Indian and White people. Meanwhile, she still has five young daughters to raise.





**LOIS TREMBLAY  
HAINES JUNCTION**

Lois' long-time interest in pottery found expression about two years ago when several potters formed a group at the Junction. As it happens with many other small-town clubs, this one was started by one woman who had taken a course in pottery. Her enthusiasm spread rapidly until about twenty people gathered to form a group with each person contributing fifteen or twenty dollars towards a kiln and other supplies. This year a group of fifteen men and women had a very successful winter season and are looking forward to starting up again after the summer. The potters are considering a sale of their work to help finance another year's work.

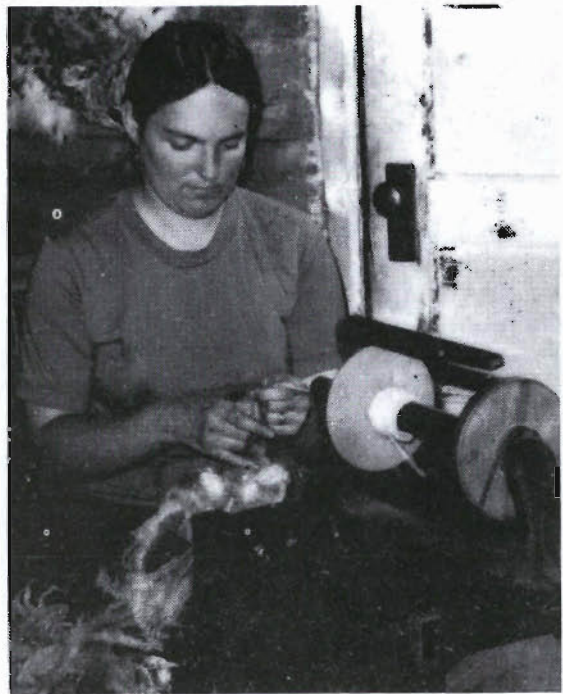
Lois views her pottery as a hobby she pursues in her spare time. Since she has no extra room in her house, when she feels in the mood to work with clay she clears out her kitchen. Having to import clay and glazes makes pottery an expensive hobby. Since it costs about five dollars to fire up the kiln at the Community Centre, she and her friends wait until they have enough articles to fill the kiln before they fire it up.

Lois finds pottery an exciting hobby. She likes to experiment with glazes. Sometimes the colour patterns that emerge from the kiln are entirely different from what she expected. Much of her work is with molded bowls, mugs and fish-shaped ornaments. One of her best pieces is a tea set she made by hand, which took several weeks from start to finish. Even though she finds working by hand very time-consuming she likes the originality of the finished product. One of her favourite articles is a set of wind chimes she made by hand and she plans to make more of these.

Brought up on a farm, Lois is used to small town life. She and her husband once lived in an isolated cabin at Blue Creek, sixty-six miles from Jasper, where a winter trek to town meant a journey of several days, snowshoeing ten miles a day. The Tremblays came to the Junction nearly three years ago from Waterton Park, Alberta. They now live about three miles outside town where Lois' husband is stationed as the Chief Park Warden of Kluane National Park. Four times a day - 7 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. - Lois checks the weather station and sends in a report. In addition to her usual routine she works part-time at a local restaurant during the summer.

According to Lois the Junction is a good place to live. There are so many activities it's possible to get too involved in the community. But location is not important to her, because she is happy to live anywhere she happens to be.

**CLAUDIA LOMBARDI  
ATLIN**



Claudia's knitting, once a pastime begun at age six, has grown into a profitable business. As well as the tourists who buy her crafts at Atlin's summer fairs, local people have flooded Claudia with so many requests for mitts, socks and hats that she can't keep up with the demand. Her work is so popular that she could easily sell it all if she knitted full time. Claudia's customers are her best advertisers. When they find out that her socks are warmer and more durable than machine-made articles, they spread the word quickly. About five years ago Claudia started spinning her own wool when she discovered that handspun yarn, which is spun tighter than commercial yarn, is so strong it can't be snapped by a jerk of the hand. Garments made of handspun wool are much warmer than those made of commercial yarn, and they last a lot longer. Most of Claudia's wool comes from New Zealand sheep, but she also uses dog hair which she says makes very warm mitts, and hair from mountain goats. She hopes to raise her own sheep someday so her wool supply will be handy.

After spinning the wool Claudia dyes it with natural dyes (she sometimes uses onion skins) before weaving it into ponchos, shawls and rugs. With ten years experience behind her she can weave very quickly. Before she had a family of her own, Claudia spent much more time than she does now weaving for outlets in Gastown and Victoria. Now with two small daughters she has learned to work fast in the time available. It takes her only two days to knit a curling sweater. Claudia believes all women should be doing crafts such as knitting and weaving. She thinks the reason more women are not involved in crafts is that they feel intimidated by the technical perfection of machine-made goods. However, she notices that people are buying more handmade articles now than ever before, because they are starting to appreciate the superior quality of handmade goods, and they are looking for things that are unique, not carbon copies. As well as being a competent knitter and weaver, Claudia is a talented baker. Her pies and pastries are sold at a local store, where the children prefer them to chocolate bars. Money earned from the sale of these baked goods pays the Lombardi's grocery bills.

Claudia likes working for herself, doing what she likes best without supervision. "You do a better job if you work for yourself." Working at home she can knit, weave and bake at her own pace, and charge her own prices. Claudia says she could never work at a service job paying only the minimum wage, because if she does a job well she expects

to be paid well. Since the materials in the articles she makes are of fine quality, she charges a fair price. According to Claudia, "Northern employers really exploit women; it's impossible for a woman to support herself on the minimum wage."

A few years ago when Claudia worked in a sawmill at Quesnel, she found out just how much employers can take advantage of women. Starting wage for men was \$2.50 per hour; for women doing the same work, starting wage was \$1.25. It was hard to advance, because management thought women would not make good supervisors. However, Claudia was eventually promoted to the position of graderman at a good wage. She recalls the men enjoyed working with women. After they had been employed a while at the mill the women were respected because they didn't quit after only a few weeks, but lasted longer than the men. If a supervisor gave one of his male employees a bad time, the man would quit; but the women were admired because they stayed on no matter how they were treated.

After the Lombardi's moved north they built a two-storey log house a few miles outside Atlin, where there is no running water or electricity and toilet facilities are a few yards from the house. Claudia recalls how the oldtimers in Atlin, always very suspicious of newcomers, remained aloof from the Lombardi's for quite a while. It was about two years before people in Atlin accepted the Lombardi's, but now that Claudia has earned a good reputation as a talented artist, she feels right at home in the town.



**MATTIE CHAPMAN  
WATSON LAKE**

Mattie first arrived in the Yukon in September of 1932. "I came here on holidays to visit my sister and brother-in-law. I was working for a lawyer in Vancouver, and when the time came to go back, my sister and brother-in-law said, 'Well, why don't you stay the winter?' And here I am, forty-two years later, still not exactly on a holiday, but..." Mattie found that first winter a trying one. "I was not so much afraid of it as my sister and brother-in-law. They were afraid that if I put my nose out I would be frozen to death. I was pretty lonely, because it was such a cold, cold winter, around fifty below, for what seemed to me to be forever." Since that first winter Mattie hasn't noticed the severe climate and the isolation. "In Dawson City, the only transportation was to go on the riverboat from Dawson City to Whitehorse, then take the train from Whitehorse to Skagway and Skag-



way to Vancouver by boat. Of course, that was only in the summer months. But in the winter, everybody settled down and we just made our own entertainment. Everybody got along and it was a beautiful place to live in at the time. There was no feeling of isolation”.

Mattie and her husband were married in Dawson City in 1934. “When we lived in Dawson City, Chappie was manager of the Northern Commercial Company there. It was a big store and took up a whole block. In those days, everything came in by boat. He had to order everything, along with groceries and so on for the whole community, plus all the mining camps that were operating then, plus Old Crow. I tried to help and I think I did - I’m sure I did. I worked for him in the store and in the garage, and when he was manager of Northern Metallic Store, I’d even go in there and lend him a hand if he needed it. I’ve helped in many ways”.

“You know, two people have to work at a marriage, and if two people don’t work at it, then you have problems. I think when you work side by side as in the days when we were... there was no such a thing as women going to work - they stayed home and raised a family. And in those days, women didn’t have to go out to work as you pretty much have to now. In Dawson City I didn’t have much spare time. I had my house to keep, I had my two children to raise, and this takes a lot of time. And Chappie being in charge of the NC here, we entertained quite a bit. Actually, I used to play ball; we did a lot of knitting. And of course, the ladies used to have afternoon teas which were beautiful affairs. You didn’t go to a tea without your hat and gloves, and the ladies used to bake for days before... they had all those beautiful little cakes. We used to have bridge parties and a picture show. They had hockey games. There was a lot to do in Dawson City if you wanted to do it. Of course in the evenings we didn’t have TV like we do now, and the only radio we had in those days was from the States, and we could get Moscow just beautifully. We would do other things rather than listen to the radio too much. In fact, I would say that those were better days than they are now.”

“The children had social activities at school. They had skating rinks and curling and what we called the Dawson Youth Association, which was a club that the Catholic priest organized there. They used to have dances on Friday nights under the supervision of adults. There was no such thing as vandalism or anything like that. They had lots and lots to occupy their time. I seem to remember that when our children were growing up in Dawson City, they were the last of the people who had beautiful times... when there were no worries or no problems that the young people have today.”

Because the school population in Dawson was so low, children wanting to complete high school had to go to Mayo. Mattie’s son Bill went as far as grade 8 in Dawson City and then finished in Mayo, and her daughter went to school in Dawson City until grade ten, but she had to study grades eleven and twelve through correspondence because the two teachers in Mayo didn’t have time to teach those grades. “She went to school every morning and took up a seat in school from nine until the time came to leave school. The year she wrote her grade twelve exams, she was the only student in the Yukon that passed.”

One of Mattie’s fondest recollections is of being chosen as Mrs. Yukon for 1972 by the Yukon Order of Pioneers. “This was really an honour, and it was a beautiful experience, too. We came to Whitehorse to be in the Rendezvous. We were in the parade... it was forty-four below that day, and we were sitting on a sleigh on an open truck. But we were just so thrilled at this that we didn’t mind at all. And then CP Air offered us a trip anywhere in the world, anywhere that they flew. Well, when you are not planning a trip like this, then you don’t know where to begin. A friend suggested the South Pacific, and that is where we went. We started our trip by attending the Yukon’s Convention in Vancouver.”

After living in Dawson City for twenty years, the Chapmans moved to Mayo, then to Whitehorse, then finally to Watson Lake where they have lived for ten years and

are now retired. "Watson Lake is a really nice little town to live in. The population is mostly government people. Of course, the owners of the saw mills and such are here permanently, but the sap is more or less transient. I enjoy it, and Watson Lake has been very good to us. We see many of our friends from the northern part of the Territory when they are passing through, so in that way we have been able to keep up our contacts in Dawson City and Mayo and Whitehorse."

"I think I could live very nicely outside, but then on the other hand, I don't know, because you go on a holiday and look forward to all the things that these cities have but it soon wears off. And I think probably that after living all these years in the Yukon the city life would be pretty hectic. Now it is getting so that in the wintertime we try to go out for the worst part. But I don't think that we would be happy outside."



**MRYKA HALL-BEYER  
CARCROSS**

Mryka enjoys teaching at the Carcross Community Education Centre because of the emphasis on communications and understanding which enables her to know her students intimately. By living and learning and working together, staff and students avoid many of the problems created by the barriers set up in ordinary public schools. When there are important decisions to be made, all members of the school are involved... not just one or two. Even though this method of deciding on policies is very time-consuming, Mryka feels it is the best way. The school, which is still under the auspices of the Anglican Church, was for many years a residential school for Native children. Today students from many parts of Canada who are searching for a more satisfying learning experience apply to live and learn at the Carcross Community Education Centre. Each student at the school makes a contract for his academic work, which is supervised by his parent member. In addition every student makes a monthly contract for chores. Parent members enter into a contract among themselves to uphold the Christian values on which the school's philosophy is based.

The friendly atmosphere at the Carcross Community Education Centre didn't happen by chance. It is a product of the philosophy that people matter more than academics. The staff will not hesitate to interrupt a class to discuss a problem which is bothering the students. During one of Mryka's math classes, a student asked what to do about his friend who had come in drunk the previous weekend. The class then turned to a discussion of the problem which was more pressing at the time than math.

However, an emphasis on people doesn't mean a loss in academic quality. Regular classes are held five days each week, with the sixth day set aside as a crafts and chores day. Each student has a different "free" day each week. Many of last year's graduates from the Carcross Community Education Centre are successful at university. Mryka marvels at the change in under-achievers, who because they disliked the public school system, stopped trying to use their talents. But at Carcross they really get involved.

Mryka teaches math, physics and geology. Starting in September, 1974, the school went on a semester system. Now students don't have to study calculus in May and June, a chore which Mryka describes as fatal. Natural sciences, which are very popular at Carcross, are taught outdoors whenever weather permits. Much of the geology that students learn from Mryka comes from questions they ask on such things as rock formations observed during a walk outside.

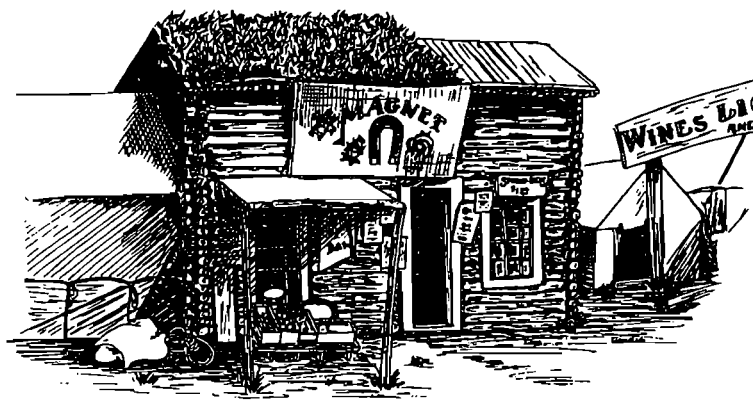
As well as teaching sciences, Mryka helps the many students at Carcross who are interested in crafts. A friend pieced the top of a lovely quilt which she then set up on a frame and spent hours quilting, and she is now helping her students to make one in its entirety.

In 1973 the students earned \$500 from sales of their art work, including knitting, crocheting, beadwork, woodworking and batik. The famous Carcross bread is sold privately and in Whitehorse stores.

The continuous intimate contact with the other members of the school does not make Mryka feel confined. For relaxation she plays the piano and takes walks through the mountains that surround Carcross. Also she loves to knit and crochet. During university lectures Mryka used to do a lot of knitting. Her professors were puzzled at first, but gradually they became used to Mryka's knitting, and after a while they even admired her. They reasoned that if Mryka could knit during class and still get good marks, the notes she was taking must be very thorough.

A lack of communication and what she calls the "one-up-man ship" battle frustrated Mryka at university, where both she and her husband taught geology while taking courses for Master's degrees in that subject. She found the atmosphere too competitive. When asked questions about their work, people would become suspicious and answer in vague terms, afraid of revealing "secrets". Mryka finds the atmosphere at the Carcross Community Education Centre a welcome contrast.

After she and her husband finish their teaching stint at Carcross, Mryka plans to return to university to write her thesis for a master's degree in geology. Her dream is to do research, preferably with a museum, but if that isn't possible she would like to work for a group such as the Geological Survey of Canada.





**RITA HAMILTON  
WHITEHORSE**

"I'm a great dabbler. I've enjoyed doing my own thing all my life, and I think everyone else should do the same; otherwise what's the use in living?" Rita believes it's a shame that so many people put off doing something they really want to do. Some of these people, interested in painting, buy some oils and brushes, but they are so afraid of not doing a perfect job that they can't bring themselves to pick up a brush and dip it into the paint. Unlike these people, Rita has no fear of trying something new, and although she does not consider herself an expert artist she has gained much satisfaction and delight from her ceramics, painting, writing and crocheting.

Rita's favourite art form is writing, a hobby she has pursued in fits and starts all her life. "I love words. For me, writing is a personal thing; it's therapeutic to get my emotions out of my system". She loves words so much that she sometimes gets carried away browsing through Roget's Thesaurus. Rita likes to write about things that concern her. "I'm pretty opinionated." Someday, she plans to write gossipy articles for the newspaper on who's doing what around town. "Everyone likes to see his name in print, as long as it's spelled right". Other future projects are writing stories about her early days in the Yukon, or writing columns similar to those put out by Erma Bombeck. One problem she has run into is finding an outlet for her stories, but a few of them have been published by an American insurance company. After a dry spell of about a year, Rita has the urge to get started again by writing letters to the editor.

A fascination with words has led her to write poetry, especially the sort she describes as "touching - the kind that gives your heart a twist". She has tried a potpourri of themes, including love, narratives, the futility of building up a store of money, and the beauty of the Yukon. Some of her work was published in "The Midnight Sun Quarterly", a poetry booklet produced in the Yukon, and "The Anchorage News". Among her favourite poets she lists Robert Service, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Sara Teasdale, and Dylan Thomas.





As well as writing, Rita dabbles in painting when the mood strikes. The clay banks are visible from her house, and although she has painted them at various times during the day and night they continue to inspire and amaze her. She finds the colours in the cliffs change so often that even if she could observe them twenty-four hours a day she could never paint the same scene twice. Rita also likes to paint trees but she refuses to paint snow scenes or sled dogs, considering those subjects too overworked. Once she has decided on her subject and the composition of her picture she wastes little time. Instead of making sketches first, she jumps right in with charcoal, oil, or water colours. When she lived at Morley River Lodge about twenty-five years ago, she used to paint landscapes in water colours for sale to tourists, but now she gives away her paintings. Although she realizes that most people are afraid of hurting an artist's feelings, Rita gets annoyed with people who just look at her work, politely controlling their opinions instead of being honest.

A lifelong addict of the mystique of the Yukon, Rita first came here from Ohio in the winter of 1946. She and her husband and four children were on their way to homestead in Alaska, but found the highway closed to tourists because it was colder than thirty below. Caught by the extreme temperatures at Coal River, Rita and her family had a chance to study Yukon scenery and later fell in love with the site of an old construction camp at Morley River. She recalls the setting was as beautiful as a Christmas card. The family leased the old buildings and moved into the only airtight structure - a building used previously as a steam bath. The following summer they built the first lodge at Morley River, mile 777.7. After living in the Yukon for ten years Rita went south to California. During her eighteen years there she carried on a romantic but distant courtship with her future second husband until the fall of 1973, when she returned to the Yukon to marry him. Coming back to the Yukon was like coming home, since she had missed the Territory so much while living in California.

According to Rita the Yukon is not so much a geographical place as a state of mind. Beauty is all around you. You don't have to look for it. People think she's crazy to go outside at forty below to admire the lovely landscape, then return inside to rave about it. Rita feels that emotionally, a person hits the highs and lows here much more than anywhere else. Sometimes, she explains, you feel you're walking on air but at other moments you can feel incredibly depressed. Even more so than Mexico, the Yukon is "manana" land where people keep putting things off until tomorrow, yet tomorrow never seems to come. Rita cites herself as an example. For months she has been planning to write seriously, but only now is she finally getting around to it.

In order to show other people how to enjoy life as much as she does, Rita has become active in "New Horizons", a group devoted to creating a better life for senior citizens. The aim of the group is to help retired people find new interests and start a new life by taking part in group activities such as a recent trip to Atlin. Rita thinks it's a shame that so many older people just sit in front of the TV all day. As well as lethargy, another problem encountered by senior citizens is that they are often shunted off to rest homes so their families can conveniently forget about them. "New Horizons" gives older people continued enjoyment of life and provides Rita with a way to spread her joy and enthusiasm.

**KATHLEEN THORPE  
WHITEHORSE**



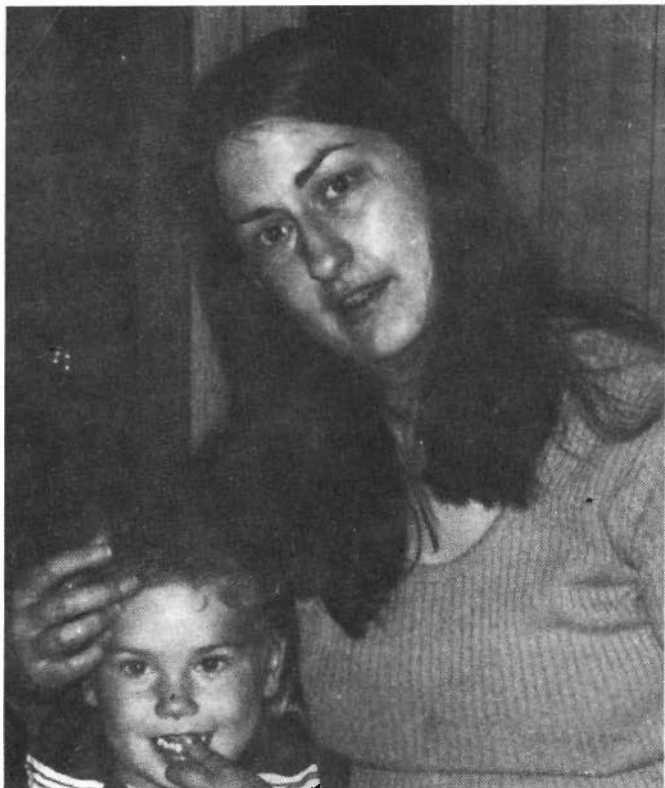
Kathleen uses her brushes and oil paints to preserve the beauty of the Yukon. She paints dog teams and portraits as well as her favourite landscapes and old cabins. Most of her paintings originate from images in her own mind, but sometimes she uses a photograph, and occasionally she paints a particular subject on request. Interested in creating different lighting effects, Kathleen has painted several black-and-white pictures, and recently she has started to experiment with blue shades for winter scenes.

Kathleen loves painting so much she would like to make it into a full-time occupation. However, her elderly mother and invalid brother who live with the Thorpes both require constant care. Whenever she has a few extra moments she sits down to sketch. Painting runs strong in the blood of Kathleen's family. Her three sisters, including Leta Israel of Carmacks and Lynch Curry of Whitehorse, are artists as well. Each Discovery Day they sell their paintings to tourists in Dawson City.

As a child Kathleen showed a strong interest in art, but no one encouraged her. Because her father felt that practical matters were more important than academics, and that school was necessary only to teach children how to read and write. Kathleen did not stay long at the Residential School in Dawson City. But even at home she continued to show her artistic talents. While the other children preferred outdoor chores such as tending traplines, Kathleen liked to help her mother around the house and do sewing and beadwork.

When she was twenty she bought her first set of oil paints and dabbled in them off and on for many years, but it was not until she moved to Whitehorse and joined the Yukon Art Society that Kathleen began to paint seriously. Now she serves on a committee of the YAS that rents paintings to the Medical Centre, banks and other businesses. Many paintings are sold in this way. Because she has exhibited and sold much of her art, Kathleen feels she has improved greatly.

Kathleen was born at Selkirk and lived at Pelly Crossing until just a few years ago when she and her husband moved to Whitehorse. After travelling outside on several occasions, Kathleen says she wouldn't live anywhere but the Yukon because the country here is exceptionally beautiful. Someday she and her husband want to sell their house so they can move back to Pelly Crossing.



**LEONA ISKRA  
CLINTON CREEK**

“I’m a great believer in self-reliance. I grew up on Bonanza Creek. I liked to go out all day. It scared hell out of my mother. Mom used to say, ‘Leona might run into the men from the camp’. She was positive we were going to be eaten by bears. Dad used to say, ‘The men at the camp are always so busy you never see them, and as for the bears, the two-legged white ones are worse than the four-legged brown ones’. I never came to any harm. I learned to like going through the woods on my own. My father was a great believer in, if you get yourself in a jam, it’s up to you to get yourself out. When we lived in Dawson, Dad would be on the road for two or three months, so we had to know what to do about the furnace if it breaks down when it’s cold. He made sure both my brother and I knew how to change the nozzle, prime the pumps, and all the rest of it.

“I always found that anything I wanted to do, I could darn well go and do it. The Yukon is a man’s world, but a woman can get away with more than she can outside. People up here are inclined to say that as long as you’re not hurting somebody, do what you want, whereas outside, the weight of public displeasure is likely to come down on somebody that’s doing something slightly out of the ordinary.

“Yukoners are pretty snobbish. They figure that anybody who can live through the winters and the isolation up here, they are that little bit better. There are a considerable number of people here who find they just can’t hack it through the winter. Some of them don’t even try hard. Here, wherever you go, you’re making your own entertainment. I think that’s the main problem. It’s more of a problem for women than for men. The man, at least, has his job. He’s not going to see the same person day after day. A woman in the house does the same job day after day. During the real cold weather, she can’t get out with the children. She sees the same four walls. There’s a lot that have never developed a habit of reading, knitting, or any type of hobby. They’ve always been entertained. All their entertainment from childhood on up has been structured one way or another, and it’s bad.

“During the winter, we have the Petticoat Circle, and that’s usually a once-a-month night out, strictly for women. There’s a ceramics group starting up. There are lots of things for women to do here if they want to, but the trouble is, there’s an awful lot that don’t want to. I always read. I learned to knit when I was six or seven, I learned to embroider. When my husband was up here and I was in Dawson, I had to have something to do. Since I stayed awake at night anyway waiting for the house to burn down, I taught myself to crochet. I have four children, and I babysit anywhere from two to six more. In Dawson, I always had a dozen kids over at the house at all stages and ages. When I came up here, I actually found with just the four that I was quite lonely. I started babysitting.

“I would like to upgrade my education, more for my own enjoyment. I like learning for the sake of learning. I’ve often thought I would really enjoy a part-time job. I wouldn’t like to work more than five hours a day, because I think the kids deserve to have their mother at home. But I would like to be able to have something different to talk about than the kids when my husband comes home.

“In 1972, I submitted a brief to the Yukon Status of Women Council. I complained that things seemed to be doing mostly for Whitehorse, but there didn’t seem to be much for the outlying areas in recreation. Plus any teaching program, it goes in Whitehorse, it rarely comes out. I blasted CBC Radio. There’s women things going on and we’d like to know about it. If there’s anything for women in general, it’s not often that the outlying towns hear about it, which is totally unfair. There’s no reason why CBC couldn’t give even half an hour a week to bits and pieces around the Territory. I blasted the CBC TV, too. Here we are, stuck with one channel, no choice. I can’t see why they can’t open another channel for four hours a day with educational programs. They could teach hobbies, language, upgrading, business courses. Why can’t they put university programs on one of the channels. While I was at it, I said why do all women have to go to Whitehorse to see a gynecologist. If they can ship around a dentist, why can’t they ship him around? Whitehorse has so darned much, and the small centers have nothing.

“When I attended the Western Conference for Women in 1972, I don’t think I’ve been so mad in my entire life. The women I spoke to were all rabid women’s libbers, but they honestly did not give a damn about what happened in the north. They’re complaining about what they have, and we have nothing. I was asked when I went on the radio, did I go because I was a women’s libber. I said, no, I was more of a people’s libber than anything else. In particular, a northern people’s libber.

“Everything I’ve ever read while I was outside about the north is so distorted. When I went to school in Victoria, I was asked with deadly seriousness if we lived in igloos. When I went to school there wasn’t anything about the north. There was no mention of our Gold Rush, and as for trapping, that all took place in middle Ontario.

“I enjoyed the couple of years we spent in Vancouver, but it is not where I want to bring up my children. In Clinton Creek, there’s not a lot of organized entertainment for kids, but they don’t need it. Nowadays, it seems that you’re almost morally obliged to get educational toys for your children and make sure they learn this, that, and the other thing. I think that’s bad for them. I see no reason why everything a kid does is supposed to have an obvious teaching value, because they’ll learn just by dropping something on their foot, for heaven’s sake. I expect my children to be respectful to their elders. I know an awful lot of dumb old people; but if nothing else entitles them to respect, their age does. I expect my children to use their pleases and thank-yous, because that does them no harm. Up here, I know what they’re going to get into. Down there, I have no idea of what they would have to face. Up here, most people are at least willing to be a friend. When I lived in the city it was darn hard to find anybody willing to be a friend. Yukoners are more inclined to give a helping hand to the next guy. If one of my kids is screaming in obvious pain, every door in the neighbourhood is open to see what’s the matter, and if I didn’t get there somebody else would. Now, if I was in the suburbs somewhere and my child was out there screaming, I’m not so certain the doors would open.”



**THELMA MUSQUA  
WHITEHORSE**

“The day before yesterday, a young man came to see me. He was so depressed - he had just lost his girlfriend and quit his job. I told him to forget about his girlfriend and go find another job. When he left my office, he really felt a lot better.”

Working out of Skookum Jim Hall, Thelma is in charge of Native Alcohol Awareness, which is financed by a LIP grant. In conjunction with Alcoholics Anonymous and Crossroads, which assist alcoholics who are trying to change their lives, she operates a program of education and rehabilitation. As well as trying to make people aware of the dangers of alcohol, she helps those with an alcohol problem find an alternative to drinking away their lives. Some people consult Thelma in her office; others come to her home for a talk with her and her husband, Danny. Most of the heavy drinkers who visit Thelma are men. As women generally drink at home their problem is not obvious to other people and few seek help, but when they do, they require much more time and attention than men.

An important part of the Native Alcohol Awareness program is reaching those who live outside Whitehorse. Thelma and Danny have travelled to many communities to hold public meetings, show films and talk to school children. “Basically,” Thelma points out, “it’s a question of communications, because residents of outlying areas resent city ‘experts’ who come to tell them what to do.” Although she has had some success in making people aware that alcohol is a big problem in their community they won’t come out to a meeting. Many heavy drinkers complain that some unknown force is making them drink and that they are helpless to control this force. Thelma says the only way for these alcoholics to change is for them to get started on a new life by themselves. “It would be ideal if a few people in each village organized a group to help each other by discussing alcohol problems.” Thelma thinks her program might be more successful outside Whitehorse if she could speak the different Indian languages.

Alcohol has played a tragic role in Thelma’s life. Ever since she can remember, her father drank heavily. When her mother started to drink, Thelma was left with the feeling that her parents had abandoned her.

After she married and began raising a family Thelma vowed to provide a completely different life for her children. Living on a Manitoba reserve all her life had made her feel cooped up. She had left school early because no one at home had encouraged her to keep going. Now she wanted her children to know they were loved by their parents and to have many opportunities to do what they liked. The reserve became more confining after Thelma realized she wanted very badly to go back to school and create special interests for herself, apart from her family. However since she had nine children, many of whom were quite small, returning to school was impossible.

In 1972 the Musquas moved to Whitehorse. Thelma says just getting away from the reserve gave her a great feeling of freedom. "As soon as we arrived in Whitehorse we drove by the Vocational School, and I knew I wanted to go there so much." Thelma's re-education combined an Up-grading course with a Lifeskills course, in which students learn a business course. In the spring of 1973 she was a Yukon delegate to the Western Conference on Opportunities for Women in Vancouver. Now she feels at ease talking with all sorts of people, either as individuals or in groups.

Thelma doesn't think she has reached the end of her education. If she can't get another grant to carry on with the Native Alcohol Awareness program, she wants to take a secretarial course and learn to type. So far she is pleased that her children like school and are trying hard and hopes to see them all graduate one day.

Thelma is so busy with her work and her family that she doesn't have time to think about hobbies, but lack of things to do is a problem for her children because recreation is very expensive in Whitehorse. With nine children to feed and clothe there is no money for camp or hockey school, and she doesn't want to give opportunities to one child without allowing the other children the same privileges. One day each week Thelma and her husband take the children fishing or camping.

Thelma finds she needs something more besides being a mother and a housewife. Although she sometimes feels guilty leaving her small children with a neighbour, she is able to go out to work because she has confidence in her babysitter, and the other children have learned to help out. With the Alcohol program, Thelma feels she is doing just what she wants. She has fulfilled her wish to find a satisfying activity for herself outside of the family.

**AUDREY GOODMAN  
FARO**



For Audrey Goodman, painting began about ten years ago when she was living in Thompson, Manitoba. Up until then she had never painted at all - she wouldn't even take



art in high school. But the teacher in Thompson was good, and the town employer, Inco, sponsored travelling shows of paintings and prints from across Canada, so Audrey's interest was stimulated. Now she sells some of her paintings and others are popular with the Yukon Art Society's rental program.

She finds the Art Society useful as a means of getting her paintings displayed. At one point she found that her interest was lagging because she was sitting and painting alone all the time. But after becoming a member of the society and being able to get some response to her efforts, she started to paint again.

Audrey prefers to do abstract work rather than representational, although she can paint realistically when she chooses. She reads a lot about artists and her favourite painters are the Canadian Group of Seven, especially Lawren Harris. She would like to be able to take some courses but that would mean a trip outside, so at the moment she hasn't any definite plans for attending any particular school.

Audrey's method of painting is to start doodling with lines - "Nine times out of ten it turns out to be something". Then she works from that germ of an idea, developing a full scale drawing on her canvas with charcoal. She uses both oils and acrylics, but prefers the oils since she can only paint in the evenings and the acrylics dry too fast to be reworked if they are left for more than a few hours after they are applied. Her favourite colours are earthy ones, mainly blues, rusts and warm browns, and these colours are reflected in her home.

Audrey likes to experiment, and as well as oils and acrylics she's used pastels and various washes and would like to try her hand at pottery and collage. There isn't any kind of organized art society at Faro although on one occasion several people tried to start one. There are enough people interested though, that a society might get it's feet on the ground if another effort were made early enough in the year so that interested people would sign up before other groups got going. There are so many activities in town that sometimes there aren't enough people to go around.

Anvil mine claims Audrey's time during the day, so she is only able to paint after all the necessary chores have been done around the house. She hasn't the luxury of a space where she can leave paintings while she is working on them, so she has developed the enviable talents of being able to paint at the dining room table with all the confusion of family life going on around her, and of being organized enough to clean up after every night's work. She usually has about four or five projects going at one time, and then there might be a space of several months when she does no painting. Audrey doesn't find that painting is particularly relaxing --

"It relieves tension, but I kind of get really worked up over a painting - it's not the kind of thing to put you to sleep at night."

Audrey's interest in art leads her from books to galleries. She always makes a point of going to the art shows in the library when she goes to Whitehorse, and likes the opportunity to see what artists in other areas of Canada are doing. When she goes outside she steepes herself in the galleries in the larger centres. What began in Thompson those ten years ago has blossomed into a continuing and deepening interest in all areas of art.





**ELLEN DAVIGNON  
JOHNSON'S CROSSING**



“I’m a sourdough, born and bred, ten times over. I was born in Dawson City. My dad built this place and we moved out here when I was ten years old. My husband and I have been in business for twenty-seven years. We don’t want to get any bigger. The way it is now, we find that my husband and my family and I can run it if we have to, without having to worry about the help problem. It is a good life, but it ties you down so much. In all the years we have been here, we have never gone on holidays, all of us together, because someone has to stay here. You don’t have any privacy, since the only time we can sit and talk is at night when we close, and then you can’t have any light on at all, because there is always somebody banging on the door demanding something. In the winter, on the average three times a week I get up to answer the door, mostly to give gas.

“In the winter, we haul our water from the river. In the summer, we pump it up. We heat with wood. My husband and my oldest boy haul thirty or forty cords of wood. They treat it as a sort of vacation, and spend a week or ten days. You know, the work here is mostly just chores, fiddly stuff - serving gas and that. This gives them a chance to get out and use their muscles and swear and cuss at the world.

“Times have changed. There are about ten campers for every car that comes up. With the camper and far more trailers, we don’t get too many tourists here. People are wanting more in the line of groceries and conveniences for their campers. They don’t want to use your facilities, they want to buy things so they can use their own. And we’re an older place. We only have basins in the rooms, we don’t have a shower. People are getting more and more spoiled. The fact that they have to walk across the hall to have a bath is sometimes too much to bear. I don’t blame them. They like the creature comforts. But we are nearly always filled in summer with highway crews.

“There is no better advertising than word of mouth. All you need is to spend five seconds talking to people. All you need to say is ‘Isn’t it a nice day today!’ It makes all the difference in the world, it really does. The mistake a lot of people make is that they come on the highway, and they’re going to make a million, right now. They’ve got dollar signs

all over. They're gouging right, left, and centre. Just take as much money from you the first time so they don't have to worry if you don't come back. But if you spend just a few minutes talking to people... And you hear it so many times: 'Golly you're the first person who has taken the time to talk with us.' And then they always come back. We see a lot of people that way.

"Writing is really my number one hobby. I loved being the Teslin correspondent for The Whitehorse Star. First, I wrote the Teslin news, but it didn't take very long to find out that if I just wrote what happened there wouldn't be too much enjoyment. I got tired of writing the same news, because it seemed I was writing the same thing over and over again. I used to tell really outrageous lies, not trying to fool anybody. I think they knew I was stretching things. And I always used to pick on somebody that most people knew about.

"Our second youngest was just a baby when I started writing, and he was a little hellion right from the word go. As Jordie's personality developed, I started writing a lot about him. One time, I wrote about losing him in a store. I had been talking, and he was gone. I had no idea where he was, so I looked in all the departments. This guy came up and said, 'Did you lose something?' And I said, 'Yeah'. He said, 'You're Ellen Davignon, aren't you? Is that Jordie you've lost? Congratulations.' His personality had really caught up with him. It didn't matter who we asked - we asked about half a dozen people if they had seen him - they were all just thrilled to death that we had finally lost him!

"I would like to try my hand at writing seriously. I was always good at writing in school. When I got out, people said, 'You should go for a career as a journalist.' And I said, 'Sure, I'm going to be a journalist.' So I got married right out of school. I am always saying that I am going to write my memoirs. I have enough material from the lodge here. I would like to write a tourist guide for the Yukon, a humourous one - personal observations.

"Curling makes quite a bit of difference in our life. If I go out once or twice a week to curl, that gives you a whole new outlook on life. But January and February are bad months, it doesn't matter where you are. You know, you have really nothing to look forward to for awhile. You get so that the highest point in your life is when it gets colder than fifty below, and it takes on the spirit of adventure. You coast along and you are pretty depressed, then something happens. You get a visit from somebody and all of a sudden you realize that you've been so crabby no one can stand you. Or you go to a bonspiel.

"Women in this area (I shouldn't even say this) are such narrow little people. A group of women come in from Teslin, and all they talk about is their homes and their kids and nothing else. They don't have any outside interests. They need something, but I am not sure just what it is. It seems to me that people in the Yukon are too isolated from the outside and their views are narrow and insular. They can't relate to anything that doesn't personally involve them. Especially on the highway where the news is so hard to come by. By the time we get a lot of our news, it is a week old and fairly meaningless.

"I would like my kids to go away from the Yukon and see something. We were all born here, we got married up here, and we didn't go out. We knew absolutely nothing about anything. I mean, we knew the lodge and the highway and Whitehorse, period. I wouldn't want that for my kids. This hitchhiking around the country and seeing things is not really a bad idea. Opportunities are very limited here, especially for girls. I wouldn't want my daughters to settle down at eighteen and start raising a family in the Yukon. I want them to get out and see something other than the Yukon before they settle down. And I'd like them to go to university.

"My sister and I flew down to Montreal for a holiday, and that was the trip of my life. Boy, did I rubberneck! I was born in Dawson, then we moved to Whitehorse, then we moved out here; I just have never been anywhere. After twenty-seven years of work, I would like to see something different."

**ROSALIE WASHINGTON  
HAINES JUNCTION**



Rosalie's pride in her independence was developed a long time ago - the hard way. Because she was away from her family during much of her childhood she had to rely mostly on herself. At age eight she was sent to the Carcross Residential School, returning home only in the summer. At thirteen, when a battle with tuberculosis ended her schooling, she was sent even further away from home to take treatments at St. Mary's Hospital in Dawson City. When that institution burned down she transferred to Edmonton. Yukon friends dropped in once in awhile and prevented her from being too lonely. Altogether, Rosalie's fight with TB lasted three and a half years, ending with the removal of half of one lung. Today Rosalie is proud of her independence. When she married her husband, a White man, she didn't mind losing her rights as a Status Indian because she doesn't want to rely on government handouts and government housing. For Rosalie, being married to a White man is an advantage, since she has a foot in both doors - she can take part comfortably in both Indian and White activities. She doesn't want to be isolated in an Indian village, identified only with the Indian community.

While recuperating from TB, Rosalie learned sewing and beadwork from her mother. Today her work which is sold at Haines Junction and Burwash, brings in an estimated \$300 to \$400 each month. Rosalie's favourite beading designs are birds, animals, and pink and mauve flowers. One of her most time-consuming feats was a parka made entirely of gopher skins. Now, she uses the tiny skins mainly in mukluks and purses. Most of the skins and furs used in her work come from Rosalie's trapline or from hunting trips. In winter she and her husband drive their snowmobilies many miles from town to the trapline to collect lynx, wolverine, muskrat, gopher, wolf. When it's extremely cold they take their seven-dog team which is much more reliable than machines at very low temperatures. When the Washingtons shoot a moose they pay someone else to tan the hide, because tanning moose would be strenuous for Rosalie. However she does tan the skins of the smaller animals. She has noticed that people don't like to buy commercially-tanned hides anymore because they are not as durable as those that have been treated individually.

Rosalie thinks Haines Junction is a good place to live because there is lots for children and adults to do, but she feels it's up to the individual person to get involved. She likes to be active in the community, helping out wherever she can. She is convinced that women in the town need a group such as the Women's Auxiliary, which Rosalie used to belong to.

The Washington family includes one son who will graduate from high school in 1975, and two foster children, aged nine and eleven who have lived with Rosalie and her

husband for the past nine years. Rosalie also cares for another nine-year-old child who was left alone following a marriage breakup.

Although Rosalie likes Haines Junction, she thinks that most of her people feel trapped and useless there. In the early 1960's when the government shut down the Air Force Base at Aishihik and stopped maintaining the road, the Indians had to move into Haines Junction. There they found themselves cut off from trapping, hunting and fishing. Because so many lack formal education, jobs in town are hard to find. With nothing to do many of the Indians have turned to alcohol for relief from their boredom and frustrations. When the young people see their parents drinking they become discouraged, lose their ambition, and drop out of school early. Rosalie thinks the town needs someone to help these young people feel good about themselves and hold onto the courage necessary to keep going in school. Although many of the Indians are talented craftsmen, there is no outlet for their work. Rosalie would like to see a handicrafts shop at Haines Junction where the Indians could sell their sewing, paintings, snowshoes, etc. She also sees a need for someone to give these artists a big push to get them going.

Rosalie feels that religion has helped many of her people to stop drinking and smoking. Three times a week she leads church services at the Indian Village when she reads the Bible and leads the singing. She prefers these informal get-togethers to the Anglican or Catholic ceremonies because people don't have to get dressed up to attend. During the service they all participate and feel much closer to God than in the conventional ceremonies. The older people in particular enjoy these meetings. Rosalie is happy to see a few young people attending as well, because going to church is better for them than hanging around the bars.

Because she feels satisfied with herself, Rosalie sees no need to change her life in any way. She is content to live in Haines Junction, secure in her religion, and proud of her independence.



**MARY TAYLOR  
BEAVER CREEK**

“Do you live here all year round?” “Do you go outside when it's sixty below?” These are two of the questions Mary answers most frequently at the Visitors' Information Centre. Ever since she and her husband moved to Beaver Creek six years ago, she has enjoyed working at the tourist bureau. For the past four years she has been supervisor heading a staff of four other women. The Centre, which is open twelve hours a day from May to September, is a popular spot; last year, 20,000 visitors dropped in, most of them Americans. Many of them, says Mary, have exaggerated visions of the northern winter -



Beaver Creek residents shivering in unbearable cold, buried under mountains of snow. Mary assures them the area receives very little snow and residents can drive down the road whenever they want. As well as inquiring about demon Yukon winters, tourists frequently ask for recipes using local plants and berries. Many of them admire the wildflowers that Mary has mounted on the wall of the Centre, each one labelled with its common name. Mary talks to many botanists who stop in at the Centre to see the flowers.

Preserving wildflowers has long been one of Mary's favourite hobbies. In order to keep as much as possible of the flowers' natural colours, Mary says it's important to pick them at just the right time and then refrigerate them for a few days before preserving them. A silica gel powder between sheets of blotting paper helps to preserve the colour of the specimens. Some of her flowers are used to decorate notepaper, while others such as those hanging on the wall of the Visitors' Centre, are sealed onto paper by liquid plastic. Mary is anxious to try some hormone spray that is supposed to preserve the fresh flowers just as they were when she picked them.

A northerner for forty years, Mary has had lots of time to study Yukon flora. She first went north in 1933 to teach at Taylor in the Peace River District at a time when jobs were scarce - only six of thirty in her class actually found teaching jobs. Mary taught school for three years in Taylor before getting married and raising a family. When the youngest of her four daughters was in Grade Five, Mary started teaching again. Then the family moved up the highway to Sikanni where she taught for ten years. Another move took the Taylors further north to Muncho Lake, where Mary instructed a class of Grades one to eight for nine years. When she first came to Beaver Creek Mary was asked to teach in the school, but she felt she had done enough teaching for one lifetime.

Another of Mary's longtime interests is gardening. She has three gardens, as well as a greenhouse with controlled temperatures where she raises cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers and flowers. Outside the protection of the greenhouse she grows cauliflowers, cabbages, potatoes, and carrots. Because peas freeze very quickly she gets a good crop only about once every five years. Mary used to can vegetables and wild meat, but since coming to Beaver Creek all her vegetables, as well as some local berries, have gone into her freezer. She says the potatoes in particular taste very good after they have been frozen.

Most of the women in Beaver Creek order supplies from Whitehorse, since there is no large grocery store in the town. Mary usually buys enough groceries for a month at a time and orders a six-month supply of meat from Whitehorse to store in her freezer. She bakes all her own bread, mostly whole wheat with wheat germ. She has been using the same pan to mix dough for the past forty years.

Mary has been a Community Health Representative with Northern Health Services for five years. When she first took on the job, Mary admits she was stymied. All she had was a supply of basic drugs including antibiotics and a few narcotics, and a book describing the types of drugs to use for various ailments. When Mary is unsure about the treatment required, she phones the doctor on call in Whitehorse who sometimes sends up drugs after she has described the symptoms. Most of her work involves patching up small accident cases and treating colds, sore throats, bronchitis, and tonsilitis. Mary dispenses a fair amount of Gravol at the Visitors' Centre because many stomachs weaken on the roller coaster road out of Beaver Creek.

Part of Mary's job as Community Health Representative is teaching people how to stay healthy. She speaks to school children and shows films on nutrition and the prevention and treatment of colds. Mary is concerned about the inadequate diets of many children. She says kids eat too many refined foods, candy bars, chips, and pop, but she is convinced that poor eating habits can be changed. Once when the teachers in the local school took some of the children on a hike, they ate peanuts and raisins for snacks instead of junk foods. Mary says the kids loved it. She is trying to convince mothers to buy juice for



their children instead of soft drinks, but finds it a battle because many of them think that flavoured sugar-and-water drinks are juice.

In addition to her other interests Mary is treasurer of the local Community Club. It's hard to get anything going in the summer, but during wintertime a committee of four people is responsible each month for organizing entertainment for the community - dances, curling bonspiels, and weekly movies. Mary especially enjoys curling which takes place on natural ice.

There used to be a Women's Institute at Beaver Creek, but it died out. Mary would like to see it start up again, but women with small children find the lack of babysitters a problem. The many women who are interested in crafts here attempted to start a crafts club but it didn't work. However, there is a chance that a crafts course will be started soon.

Mary says there are jobs for women who want them, as the Visitors' Centre, Canada Customs, and the local lodges all require staff. Two of the lodges are open year-round and the other functions only in the summer. The owners of these lodges have trouble finding and keeping enough help in the summer.

Mary's four daughters are grown up now, but the Taylor home is kept lively in the winter, when an eleven-year-old boy who lives down the highway boards with Mary and Sandy so he can live near school.

Both Mary and her husband enjoy living in the north. Sandy, who is at retirement age, is going to keep on working for the Highways Department for a few more years. Mary has no plans for retiring either. Growing vegetables and flowers, making tourists happy, helping with community activities and looking after the health of the town's residents keep her vibrant, happy to stay in Beaver Creek.

**CATHY OLIN  
MAYO**



Cathy, who was born in Mayo and has lived there ever since, is dissatisfied with life in the town today. With the continuous rise in the cost of living it is increasingly hard to buy adequate clothing and feed nutritious meals to her husband and nine children. "Even with the money my husband makes and myself, it just seems to be going for food and clothing. We'd like to have a house of our own. This house belongs to the Welfare. There's

never enough money to put aside for a home. We need money for a car; that would be nice to have for the family, especially in summertime. It just seems to go for the food bill and clothing bill." With nine children, the Olins find it impossible to go to movies or take part in other activities that require money. When Cathy was young, the Protestant minister used to organize roller skating and other activities for the children, but today there is a lack of inexpensive recreation.

Although the rising cost of food and clothing can make life miserable, Cathy finds some relief and enjoyment in her work at the Mayo Hospital where she fills in for the kitchen helper and ward aid on their days off. "It's nice if you're not stuck with the same thing all the time. I'd get bored with it. I enjoy it - it's just to get away from home mostly. It gives me a sort of hobby, because there's not too much to do in Mayo." Once a month she attends meetings of YANSI, a group which is helping Non-Status Indians in Mayo to fix up their homes and stock an adequate wood supply.

After searching for a long time for a sense of direction, Cathy has found a new, more positive way of interpreting life since she started going to revival meetings. In an age when skeptics flourish and church attendance is down, the revival meetings at Mayo attract many devoted followers who find this new religion the answer to some of their problems. "I got to a point where I was searching for peace. I couldn't find what I was looking for in the churches. I've been to the Lutheran and many churches when I was outside. I wanted something deeper. When I used to go to the Catholic Church, I even asked myself if there was a Jesus, why I didn't see Him."

"This winter, the Holy Spirit spoke to me. Only ten dollars, it's all I had. The Holy Spirit said, 'You send that ten dollars to a certain person,' and it was close to Christmas, and I didn't want to part with that ten dollars. I wanted to hang onto it. Then I got guilty. I thought there must be a reason to send that ten dollars away. Why should I be stingy? Somebody else needs it more than me. Surely I can go without a turkey this year. So I sent the money away. I'd forgotten about it and just about two days before Christmas, I heard a knock at the door one evening, and here it was the RCMP. He had a paper bag. He says, 'This is for you.' I said, 'For me?' He said, 'Yes, we had one extra, so I thought I would give you this', and here it was, a twenty-five-pound turkey. And the day after, someone brought a fifteen-pound turkey and a box of oranges. That's why I had to send ten dollars. So, you really put your trust in the Lord. He works things out. I think He did that just to see if I had enough faith to give that ten dollars away, or whether I was selfish and keep it for myself."

"The Lord has given me some dreams. He shows me things that are going to happen ahead of time. Many things, like car accidents, even people I don't know - I've seen it happen. I don't know what you call it, night visions or dreams. It never fails, they do happen, maybe not right away, but they always happen."

Most of the people who attend the revival meetings are Natives. Cathy thinks that White people don't go to the meetings because of "Pride - they just don't want to be mixed in something that's beyond their understanding. They never really looked into it, you know, to find out for themselves. In Mayo as long as I remember, the Indians and the Whites have always been separated. The Whites never mixed with the Indians, though the Indians were willing to try. I've never had any trouble mixing with the Whites, but some of my friends were pure-blooded Indians - they just kind of ignored them. It's disturbing, because I never see any difference in a White or an Indian. They're all the same to me."

Cathy has noticed changes in herself since she began attending the revival meetings. "It always gives me a sense of peace when I go to the meetings. I don't feel so discouraged. I used to have an awful lot of trouble with fear. Most of all, I was afraid of death, of sickness. When you accept Jesus and truly put your trust and faith in Him, you find all this disappears. The revival meetings have taught me to stop drinking and smoking. Before, I would go down the street and I'd see fancy-dressed people with money,



and I used to think they must be really nice people, but I've met some people who have money and they weren't as nice as they looked. It's just a cover-up. I have met other people that aren't well-dressed and talk kind of foolishly. I found that when I needed help, they always came and offered their help. You see the difference in people. I used to worry a lot. Now when I have money, well I don't spend it foolishly. I buy what I need, but if I don't have enough to buy something fancy, I don't worry my head off about it. It's true that you need security, but I don't really think money is everything. Like the Lord says in the Bible, you shouldn't worry about money, or clothes or food, because you know that the Lord will provide."

"I have a more deep understanding of things. I'm not so troubled as I was before. I used to be a very nervous person, but now I'm not nervous or tense. I take things as they come. I used to be a person who used to think of tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow. I've found it's better to live each day as it comes, then you don't have to be so worried about tomorrow. A person doesn't know whether they're going to see tomorrow or not, so what's the sense in worrying about it?"

**JAN COUTURE  
WHITEHORSE**



It all started about ten years ago at her home in Yorkers, New York when Jan became very concerned about pollution. After reading many books on the subject she decided she wanted to live a clean, free life instead of the ugly, closed existence of the city. Five years ago, her new ideas firm in her mind, Jan set off for Alaska. However, when she stopped at Whitehorse she met Gerry - that was the end of Alaska. Jan hurried back to New York to pack her things and returned to meet Gerry in the Yukon.

Her introduction to country living was a job cooking for Gerry and his crew at Tin Cup Lodge. Although a creek running underneath her tent made the setup much more primitive than what she had expected, she wanted to be with Gerry so she put up with the inconvenience.

Now Jan, Gerry and their three-year-old daughter Misty live at Mile 931.9 on the Alaska Highway in an attractive, spacious log house they built together. After Gerry sawed down the trees, Jan peeled, bleached and scrubbed them to get smooth, clean logs that need only a quick wipe when they are dirty.

A twenty-member welcoming committee barks greetings at visitors to Jan's home. Jan and Gerry raise these dogs and train them so that Gerry can take part in the dog-team races. A few winters ago Jan trained her own team, and she hopes to do so again this winter. The Coutures sell the dogs that they can't use in their teams.

Most people who hear of Jan's way of life think it must be very romantic, but Jan says living in the bush is a lot of hard work. It took her quite awhile to get used to doing without the comforts of electricity, automatic heating and running water - Gerry tells her she did a lot of crying at first. In the summer, water is hauled from a stream about half a mile away; in winter, the Coutures keep a hole open in the ice to get to the water. Jan finds her biggest problem in spring and summer is the lack of refrigeration, but in winter she stores food outside.

Even though she has to work hard to make her home comfortable without the help of modern conveniences, Jan does not feel deprived or inhibited by the Yukon's severe climate. Because she is happy to be alone much of the time, she does not feel isolated at home. Any spare moments that she has left over after caring for her household and the dogs are spent knitting, crocheting, or doing macrame or needlepoint.

Jan feels the biggest problem for women in the Yukon is "having to cope with male prejudice". She terms job-hunting here a "humiliating" experience because women are cast into stereotyped roles. When she describes the way women are treated when they try to land a job that pays a living wage Jan becomes quite angry. Although the cost of living in Whitehorse is about the highest in Canada, as she points out, it's almost impossible for a woman to earn a decent wage. One of the few jobs available to women that does pay a living wage is janitorial work, which has only recently been opened up to women. Jan thinks perhaps one of the reasons there is so much prejudice against women in the Yukon is the nature of the frontier society which attracts the sort of man who is inclined to discriminate against women.

Jan does not see herself as a feminist, although she is involved in a quiet revolution for herself and her family. She says Gerry used to be a traditional husband but he isn't anymore, and Gerry himself thinks it's ridiculous to see "family" in terms of husband-at-work-wife-at-home. He and Jan want to experiment with role-changing; Gerry will stay at home while Jan works in Whitehorse until they can earn enough money to live in the bush permanently. Right now Jan feels her most important roles are raising her daughter and living in the bush. When Misty reaches school age, Jan would like to teach her by correspondence rather than put her into the school system which she feels makes children conform too much. "I want Misty to have the opportunity to do whatever she wants to do."

Even though living in the bush involves many hardships, there are compensations that for Jan overshadow the need for modern conveniences. "It's important to me to live in harmony with my surroundings rather than suppress them". Jan says she has never felt healthier. Because she is proud of having developed the strength needed to chop wood and haul water she resents people who offer help.

Jan and Gerry aim to be as self-sufficient as possible, but Jan says they have a long way to go towards living the kind of life they want. Because the soil at Mile 931.9 is unsuitable for farming they are planning a move to Thistle Creek on the Yukon River where they want to grow vegetables, raise chickens, pigs and sheep, keep a cow, spin wool from their sheep and weave their own cloth. Ideally, the Coutures would like to put all their garbage to use. Although much of their waste goes into a compost heap, much garbage still has to be dumped, because the Coutures have not yet found a use for it. Eventually they want to live year-round at Thistle Creek, supporting themselves from farming and trapping. After all, says Jan, people lived off the land years ago. Why can't we do it now?

**MABEL JOHNSON  
TESLIN**



Mabel used to hunt and trap, but she claims she is now too old for such vigorous activity. However, she is proud of her skill in tanning hides: "I can tan anything, except maybe elephant skin." All the skins used in her sewing come from hides she has cleaned and tanned herself at the back of her house. While the hide is soaking in water, she adds moose brains to soften the skin.

Mabel has been sewing for a long time. When she was small, she first learned the art by watching her mother and she gradually started sewing herself. She says it's a shame that young women are living on government handouts when they could be supporting themselves with money earned from their sewing, and it's deplorable that small girls no longer learn the old crafts.

The beading on Mabel's work is carefully shaped into flowers and designs. Usually she copies the flowers outside her house or those found on printed cloth. Sometimes her designs reflect frost patterns on her windows. Although Mabel no longer makes mooseskin jackets because her eyesight is not as good as it used to be, her other sewing is so popular that she can't keep up with the orders. Last year one of her vests won first prize at Sourdough Rendezvous. Most of her moccasins and mukluks are sold in Kelowna, B.C., and some of them even find their way to Norway and France.





**BEATRIZ GAILITIS  
ELSA**

Ten years ago when she moved to Elsa from her home in Brazil, Beatriz had to adapt to a completely foreign situation. One of her biggest hurdles was the English language. She was already fluent in Portuguese and Latvian, her native tongue and she understood Spanish, French and some Italian, so English was an interesting challenge. "Languages are beautiful. The more you know, the better. Going to different countries, you can communicate easier. So many different books you can read." While working at the Elsa Market she practised speaking English with a variety of people and later she enrolled in a correspondence course to perfect her grammar. As well as learning the language, Beatriz had to adjust to an unfamiliar kind of people. She found English-Canadians very reserved, afraid of voicing their opinions and showing their emotions, in contrast to the warm, extroverted Latin Americans she knew in Brazil.

Beatriz misses the closely-knit Latvian farming community where she grew up. "I was raised in a small town where everybody knew everybody. We had the same background, we were raised in the same Baptist religion. When you have weddings you meet everybody and you enjoy your kind of happiness together because you know each other very well. Here the nationalities are so different and even if you get together you don't know what to talk about."

One of the problems with living in a mining camp is "lack of privacy - we're crowded together." Another is the uncertain future of the mine. "They never know how long they're going to go, two years and then they go two more. The town is always patched up; it's not planned like Faro. It would be nice to have a recreation director, someone who would look after folks who are interested." But "the women should learn to adapt. If you start complaining, each day turns worse."

Beatriz feels that once a person has adjusted to northern isolation the Yukon offers unique opportunities for self-development. "The harshness of the Yukon makes you mature quickly. All of us are steadily changing but I'm completely different from the way I used to be. Here you have more time than Outside because winter is so long. You can do lots of things like embroidery and knitting. I run out of time because I have so many things to do. The leisurely pace of the Yukon also provides time for families to do things together. Beatriz feels that northern life encourages a closer relationship between husband and wife since a married couple is together all the time. "We enjoy going places. Berry picking is a family project - everyone can go and take part. Even in the winter when we go out we take the children along."

In the past few years Beatriz has become interested in nutrition and she reads

everything she can on the subject. "It's fantastic what the right nutrition can do for you, especially yeast. It gives you the B vitamins you don't get from our processed food. I think most of the population lacks vitamins and this is why people get mentally unbalanced. I believe the craving for alcohol is from lack of vitamins. I used to get big depressions but I don't feel depressed anymore because I use so many vitamins and I care so much for nutrition. All those soft drinks, chocolate bars, candies and potato chips - I don't think you get anything out of that as far as nutrition is concerned. If you were snacking on something else like a piece of fruit or cheese, you would be better off. Make your life more natural. In the store you can choose. You can make your own cereal." Much of her food including various flours for her bread, if ordered from a health food store and she bottles wild blueberries, raspberries and cranberries. "There's no preservatives, no chemicals added. I have blueberries and raspberries in the freezer from the year before. They store for so long."

Because she believes that a regular exercise program goes hand in hand with good nutrition, Beatriz works out with the local Keep Fit group. Concerned with her spiritual health as well, she is an active member of the Anglican Church and plays the organ on Sundays. At home she relaxes by playing her favourite classical music on her grand piano.

In Brazil Beatriz taught school but now she feels it is important to stay home with her two small daughters. "I like to have a job. I would like teaching again but when you have children it just doesn't pay to have a job then come home tired and run the house." As well as bringing up her children the way she wants to, one of her goals as a homemaker is "to make anyone feel well in the home; keep it clean and tidy."

Both the Gailitis' are Latvian and Beatriz wants her daughters to be proud of their heritage. "Latvians don't like to stay down, they always try to improve themselves. If they have a chance they finish school. They are perfectionists; they have a high sense of responsibility." When her daughters are older she wants to send them to a school in Europe. "Outside they have concerts and drama clubs and all the social gatherings in their own language. I think each child should know something about his culture."

**MYRNA CLIFT  
WHITEHORSE**



Myrna finds painting a very satisfying outlet for her different moods, especially during the long winter when she feels like working out her frustrations. She says the general opinion that artists are a temperamental breed is true. Like many other painters she uses her art as therapy to help her relax. As well as soothing her emotions, painting has provided ways to meet other people - fellow artists, potential buyers, or people who just like to admire her paintings.

Until about four years ago Myrna did many sketches but she did not feel confident enough to use colour. However, when her mother started to paint Myrna also decided to experiment with colour, and she has never looked back. Although she has not had any training, she observes that through experience her art has grown. Someday she would like to take some training, which she thinks she needs, perhaps at the Banff School of Fine Arts. After she has become more experienced and confident she wants to hold a one-woman showing of her art.

Now that people are buying her paintings, Myrna has a great sense of confidence and independence. She realizes that it's impossible to please everyone since each person has his peculiar likes and dislikes, so she feels free to paint the way she wants. She no longer becomes upset when someone says he doesn't like her paintings. She wishes more people would comment honestly instead of just cooing, "Oh, I love that."

Because Myrna's art is assertive, revealing bold lines and colours, admirers often think her work has been done by a man. Many of her paintings are interpretations of photos of landscapes and people. She wants to do more impressionistic work, as she thinks she can best reveal her emotions through this kind of art.

Garth Clift plays an important role in her painting. Myrna feels her husband has helped her improve by spurring her on with criticism and encouragement. Without his approval she believes she would not be able to paint at all. Because people show they like her works by purchasing them or renting them from the Yukon Arts Society she feels she is developing both as a person and as an artist. Myrna is happy that she has found her niche in life and she believes other people can also attain this contentment. "I think everyone was born with a God-given talent, and everyone has the responsibility to use that talent."



**ANNE HENRY  
WHITEHORSE**

For Anne it is very important that her seven children learn to live in the bush. Many summers she packs enough groceries to last a few months, then she takes the children to Lake LeBarge where they live off the land, hunting rabbits and moose and

catching fish. This summer the family is going to Klukshu where Anne knows people with fish traps, and where everyone shares in the catch. She plans to smoke salmon, and hopes that her son who is fourteen, will shoot enough game for them. Anne has already bought her son three guns so he can learn to be a good hunter. Although she looks forward to living in the bush during the summer, she doesn't think she could live there year-round because it would be too isolated in the winter.

Anne has warm memories of her childhood at Dalton Post, where families formed a closely-knit community of friends who visited each other often. Because there were no doctors, neighbours took care of one another; babies were delivered by friends with the husband often helping.

It was not until she was sixteen that Anne started attending school. After three years of schooling she began working in Whitehorse, first as a dishwasher, and later as a chambermaid. At that time she remembers that many of her friends spent their days wandering around town waiting for a certain job to come their way. But Anne was proud to be earning money - it didn't matter what the job was. Today Anne makes some money by sewing slippers and mitts which she decorates in her favourite floral designs using natural colours. Working all day she can sew about three pairs of slippers for sale at the Indian Craft Store.

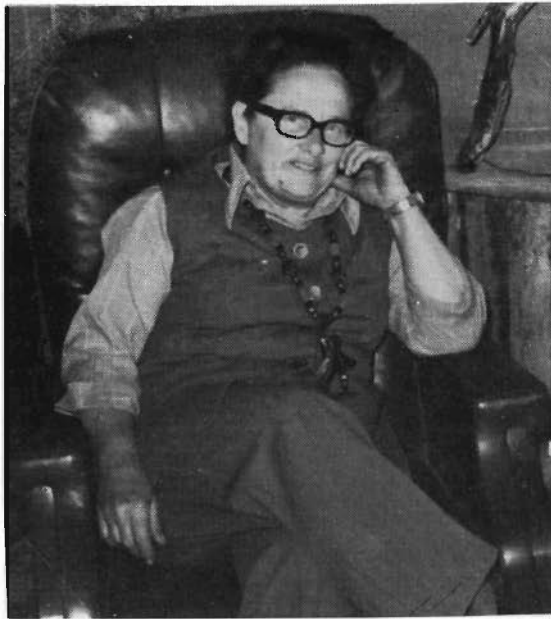
Anne is very proud of her fifteen-year-old daughter who does relief work as a chambermaid. She wants to see her children work steadily so they can make a living for themselves. The type of job does not matter - dishwashing is all right - "It doesn't have to be something you dream of doing".

Anne misses the old ways. She finds life at the Indian Village in Whitehorse lonely and fragmented in contrast to the warm, secure life of her childhood at Dalton Post. In Whitehorse, neighbours are strangers. If one of the children falls ill, it's off to the doctor instead of the nearest friend. Because there is no game around the Village, Anne has to buy her meat at the stores. High prices for meat and other essentials in Whitehorse means that there is rarely any money for recreation. Although Anne gets cooped up staying in her tiny house all day, there are few places she can go without money, but some evenings she visits Skookum Jim Hall to watch TV or have coffee with friends. A few years ago the women in the Village used to meet regularly to sew and talk, but for some reason these gatherings have faded out. Anne hopes she will have the chance to make more women friends at meetings of the Indian Women's Association.

As well as creating barriers between people, Anne finds the clash of the new ways with the old has caused many of her people to turn to alcohol. In the old days at Dalton Post, friends would have a pleasant chat over coffee or tea. Now, guests are offered liquor no matter what time of day, and many people go home drunk.

After Anne separated from her husband she found it hard to raise the children by herself. For a while they lived with Anne's mother across the river, where they found life more peaceful than at the village. Because Anne has neither the money nor the room to keep all her children at home, most of them live at Yukon Hall. She finds this arrangement very frustrating because her children are becoming strangers, growing up in surroundings different from their mother's. Anne says they take everything for granted; when they come home on weekends, they don't pitch in to chop wood, haul water or clean house. She would much rather keep her children at home, so she could watch them grow up with her values.





**PEGGY MILIUS  
ATLIN**

Peggy feels more comfortable in the bush than in populated areas. She tries to convey her love of beautiful landscapes to other people by painting the lakes, trees and mountains in all their different moods. Her oil paintings are very much in demand by tourists who come to Atlin. Peggy's aim is to reproduce her subjects as closely as possible. "If someone in Atlin studies one of my paintings and says, 'Yes, that's what it looks like,' I know I've succeeded." She especially admires the many colour changes in the winter sky. Once she painted a winter scene showing a bright green sky which visitors thought strange and unreal, but people living in Atlin appreciated that green sky because they knew it was true to life.

Last summer Peggy boated down Atlin Lake with her dogs and pitched her tent at a remote spot where she lived by herself for two months. Mornings were spent doing various household chores which don't seem like drudgery in the bush, but harmonize with the natural rhythms of outdoor life. During the afternoons she painted. Peggy made her camp homey and unique by clearing the area and making her tent into an art gallery with her paintings. She loved the solitude, but most of all she appreciated the beautiful landscapes - a glacier and the lake flanked by mountains were all visible from her tent. Sometimes she explored other parts of the lake in her canoe in order to paint a different view of the mountains, or just out of curiosity - to see what was around the next bend.

Was she ever lonely out there by herself? "How can you be lonely when there's such a lovely mountain to look at!" However Peggy says there were times when it would have been nice to share her thoughts on the beauty of the area, an especially lovely sunset or certain animals passing by. But Peggy wasn't entirely isolated, because as the summer progressed she became a tourist attraction for people taking boat tours down Atlin Lake. Every week a boat stopped at Peggy's tent for people to admire the paintings and sip a quiet cup of coffee. Although she enjoyed these brief visits, Peggy was always glad to see the last tourist go. After the boat left, "It was all mine again."

Peggy scoffs at the warning many people have given her that a woman can't live alone in the bush. By being careful instead of hasty, she has learned to survive independently when in the bush by herself. The long daylight hours offer a measure of security, because strange noises can be investigated easily at night. A local fisherman who was concerned about her finally convinced Peggy to keep a shotgun in her tent, especially after one hair-raising incident. Peggy had gone on an exploring trip down the



lake, leaving her tent up for her fisherman friend. When he arrived, he found the tent ripped by bears. Peggy admits she was afraid of the grizzlies, but she feels her malamute kept them away.

When she's in town Peggy pursues other art forms in addition to painting. She has started to make wind chimes of moose or caribou hooves. When they are frozen, she boils the hooves in a pressure cooker until all the material inside has fallen out. After the hooves have been cooled they look like waxed wood. She prefers to boil them in the spring when she can open all the doors and windows to get rid of the foul smell. Peggy's training and experience as an interior decorator sparked an interest in carpentry. After she moved north to Atlin in 1971 she put her power tools to work on an old house that she and a friend converted into a crafts shop. Peggy did most of the carpentry herself, putting in cabinets and shelves while preserving the homey atmosphere of the place. "The Discovery Shop" now sells crafts and souvenirs made by local artists.

Peggy prefers living in the bush to living in town where she feels closed in and out of tune with her surroundings. Even though she has to stay in town during the cold months, she loves the northern winter. "When it's dark, I just sleep and relax and read a lot." By spending summer outside in the bush and winter in Atlin, Peggy has achieved a satisfying balance of life in harmony with the North.

**CLARA SHINKEL  
CARCROSS**



Clara believes in the philosophy that if you want to change your life, you have to take the bull by the horns and change it yourself. Clara is a good example of her own philosophy in action. Her first marriage during which she had three children was a tragic one - she drank heavily, and the partnership ended in divorce. But Clara found solace in the Baha'i faith which helped her stop drinking. "It gave me something to hang onto."

Religion is still an important part of Clara's life, but she was not always a Baha'i. When she was quite young Clara attended the Mission School at Carcross run by the Anglican Church. The way she entered school was rather unusual. After her older brother started school, Clara became quite depressed because he was no longer with her. When her parents and the local doctor realized she was acting sick because she missed her brother, it was arranged for Clara to start school early at age five. She remembers leaning on her brother so much she even used to sleep with him in the boys' dormitory. Clara thinks the teachers were very strict and taught too much religion. But because she was the youngest and rather sickly Clara did not have to attend church as often as the

others. "I got away with a lot." The Mission School closed down for awhile, then reopened, and Clara attended again from age eight to twelve. At that point her parents signed away their rights as Status Indians so their children could go to public school. After she quit at age sixteen, Clara worked for the Whitepass Railway at the Bennett station as a waitress.

In her late teens Clara began to question the religious beliefs she had learned at the Mission School, as she realized there were so many important questions that could not be answered in the Bible. She no longer believed that Mary gave birth to the Son of God. At the school she had been taught that Jesus was the only manifestation of God on earth, but she later came to believe that there are many representatives of God, including Mohammed, Buddah and Bahauallah. Clara was disillusioned with her Christian teachings in other ways too. She was taught that Jesus told people to love each other, yet a century later Christians were thrown to the lions, and the Christian Church became divided.

For Clara the Baha'i faith has all the answers she couldn't find in Christianity. At first her second husband was skeptical about her religious beliefs, but now he is just as strong a believer as she is. When people ask Clara for proof in writing that what the Baha'is say is true, she shows them the teachings of Bahauallah, who unlike Jesus, left many statements in his own writing.

The Baha'i religion has taken Clara on teaching tours all over the Yukon, through parts of Alaska and to Holland. Her ultimate goal is the unity of mankind. It doesn't matter whether a person is a Status or a Non-Status Indian, or a White person - Clara believes people should get along with each other. For that reason she is not bothered by the fact that she is no longer a Status Indian.

According to Clara, the biggest block to uniting the people of the Yukon is alcohol. Years ago, she says, the Indians didn't have as many problems as they have today because they were united under one religion. Now, she thinks the Baha'i faith is the way to bring Indians together.

Clara believes that both Indians and White people will have to change in order to make the Yukon a better place to live. If White people learned about Indian languages, dances and crafts, she thinks there would be a much better understanding between Natives and Whites. Instead of looking down on Indians because they have different beliefs, White people should accept the Natives as worthy human beings. Clara points out that when White people first came to the Yukon, the Indians welcomed them as guests, with the result that Whites and Indians got along very well. There were no Indian wars in the Yukon, unlike other parts of Canada. It was not until much later when White people started to outnumber the Indians, that Whites began to look down on the Natives. On their part, Clara thinks that Indians should try to integrate better into White society. She feels it is impossible for Natives to return to the old way of life. For instance, if every Indian had his own trap line the animal population would quickly disappear.

Clara is convinced that the only way to improve your life is to change it yourself. For this reason she thinks that women as a group do not require special attention on the job market. She notes that many employers demand that their employees be highly qualified. If a woman wants a job that requires good qualifications, Clara says that instead of crying discrimination, she should take more training so she will be qualified. However, Clara believes too often employers demand that prospective workers have lots of experience - how can a person get experience if no one will hire her? Clara thinks the Department of Manpower is placing too much emphasis on hiring students, and is not doing enough to help older people.

The Schinkels have been married for seven years. For a long time they tried to have a child but unfortunately none came. Bahauallah, prophet of the Baha'i faith, had written that if you make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and pray very hard a miracle may happen to you. Last year after Clara made a pilgrimage to pray for the arrival of a daughter, Tehera was born to the Schinkels. Clara calls the child her miracle baby.



Tehera, the Persian word meaning "pure", is the name of the first woman martyr of the Baha'i faith. Clara hopes that Tehera will not have to cope with prejudice. However, she remarks that too often people look for prejudice - then they find it. Clara no longer feels discriminated against. She enjoys a very close rapport with her family whose members have married into so many different nationalities that their gatherings resemble a United Nations. Large family get-togethers are frequent, and in the event of a tragedy someone always comes to help.

A recent operation to relieve a crippling case of rheumatoid arthritis did not slow Clara down very much. Because she was in hospital for quite awhile, she had lots of time to teach the staff about the Baha'i faith. Someday she would like to take a secretarial course, not to find a job as a secretary (she says her husband is still old-fashioned; he would never allow it), but to help her do better work with the Baha'i teachings.



**JEAN GORDON  
MAYO**

"I enjoy other people's battles. That's how I ended up on Territorial Council from 1967 to 1970. I was the first woman elected. It's always the same old thing: 'Why doesn't somebody do something?' Well, if you don't do something yourself, something won't get done. My husband said, 'If you want to run for Council, go ahead, don't sit.' I finally tried it. It's a fascinating experience. One term isn't very long, it takes you at least two years to know the procedure and what you are doing. But I felt I did accomplish things, maybe not directly, but the year I put in, I think it helped. One of my concerns was the sewer and water system in Mayo. A big problem was the hard line the administration would take. I was part of the group going down for consultation with the Prime Minister about the formation of the Executive Committee. We were a good Council. We had differences in various ways, but on major issues we were together. When we had our problems we went in the back room and thrashed them out there.

"You have to have the confidence of the people. If they have that confidence in you, you shouldn't have any problems. I had experience in things - not political experience, but people experience, personal experience. I'd grown up in a mining community. I know what placer mining was about; my husband and I trapped, I've been in business. I wasn't talking just off the top of my head; I know what I was talking about.

"I was Charlie on the Council. When we had our first conference meeting, I made it very clear that I didn't want any special privileges. I don't feel myself as a woman

primarily. I'm a person first and then a woman and the two really compliment each other. If you've got something to offer it doesn't matter whether you're a male or a female. I just figured that anything anyone else could do, I could do too; maybe do it better. Size never really entered it. When everybody says, 'Oh, you're so little', I don't feel little, I feel pretty big.

"When I took a course to be an Outreach worker I did a test. I learned there were only two spheres of work I shouldn't tackle, and one of those was dressmaking. I found it very amusing, because I made all the costumes for a play a few years ago. I once knit a tablecloth from ordinary store string. I've made and sold quite a number of heavy wool sweaters, some of my own design, all in one piece, because I hate sewing them up. Usually, I take a size I know that fits, outlining it on graph paper. I always line my sweaters. Quite a few years ago I made a caribou-skin jacket. It was an ordeal because I had to make a pattern for every piece. I sent it to Dawson City for their Handicraft Exhibit on the 17th of August, and told my friend to make sure it didn't get into the Indian Handicrafts. But that's where it ended up and took first prize. I don't know what people there thought, but up here it was quite a joke.

"I envy anyone who can draw things out that they see in their minds with their hands. I can see the things, but my fingers don't bring it out. I make things that are geometrical or mathematical. A few years ago I bought a bunch of beads and experimented to see what I came up with. I did neckbands and headbands on a bead loom, and I thought if you could do that, you could do pictures too. One of my pictures has 9,000 beads. I make my own graph paper. Beads aren't square, and if you do it on ordinary paper when you make it up you've got to compensate for the distortion. Bead looming is quite an old Indian art. It's something that should be developed because it's a fascinating hobby.

"We trapped for seven years fifty-two miles from Dawson City before we came to Mayo. The main reason we came up here was so our daughter could go to school and have experiences with children her own age, rather than living all by herself. It was pretty hard on her the first years she came here too. She wasn't used to playing with other children. She tried to buy her friends for awhile, but after she grew up she was able to stand on her own two feet. I brought her up to be self-sufficient. If she wanted to do something, okay, go ahead and do it.

"The women here curl in the winter time, read, and we have TV. If a woman wants everything created for her she's going to have trouble in Mayo. But if she wants to do things for herself, if she's got interests she wants to build, it's an ideal spot because she can take the time and do something. There are so many things to do. I don't feel I am going to live long enough to do all the things I would like to do. I would like to have been a geologist, a doctor, an anthropologist, teacher - just anything, but there's not enough time.

"I have a research project I'm going to do for the Department of Northern Studies in Alberta. It's the impact of television on small northern communities. I've got two years to complete it. What I'm interested in is Indian homes - how much difference in understanding of English. I think the ads on TV are not very helpful to young people, though one of the things I'm wondering about is how much of all this they'll think as being real, and how much of it they feel is fantasy because the show is made for entertainment.

"I would like to see more for young people here. They tend to drop out of school and get into trouble. We should be developing more handicrafts. There's nothing for girls, consequently they get tied up with a family and become nothing. The community being what it is, with almost two cultures, one of the main problems is that the one culture is disciplinary and the other isn't. One culture learns by example, and the other learns by discipline and self-discipline. So you've got children in both cultures that are kind of lost.



"One of the problems in Mayo is that there's so few jobs for students. One of the things I impress is, stay in school. There are a lot of people here with special needs and people who need to be up-graded, and there's no knowledge of this anywhere except to go to a big centre. In the Outreach program we make the information available to the communities. I've been doing everything from helping somebody fight the Income Tax Department to giving them personal advice on their problems. It's work I enjoy. The first time somebody called me a politician, I nearly hit that person because to me, politician is a dirty word. But if you take politician in the true sense of the word, it means someone who is concerned about what happens to other people. I realized then, I've been a politician all my life."



**LISELOTTE HUTTON  
HAINES JUNCTION**

As the only painter in town, Liselotte admits to the occasional feeling that she's working in a vacuum without the fellowship and the trained criticism of other artists to keep her going. When she first arrived in the Junction she was struck by the close relationship between the out-of-doors and the people - a relationship much more evident than in the city. There didn't seem to be much time left over for 'the arts'; leisure time was used for activities such as snowmobiling and fishing. But even though there are no other painters in town with whom to compare notes, Liselotte continues with her art because her husband spurs her on by offering lots of honest criticism and encouragement. Being the only painter in town does not make her lonely since she finds the Yukon's beautiful scenery provides companionship in itself, and she feels accepted by the townspeople who admire her talent.

About a year ago the Huttons moved to the Junction from Calgary. Their plan to get away from the rat race worked out well when Liselotte's husband, who works with the Parks Branch, applied for a posting in the Kluane region, and Liselotte quit her job as program assistant for CBC. Both of them dislike living in a city apartment and spending

hours each day fighting traffic. According to Liselotte, many city people have artificial values, centering their goals around the accumulation of material things such as a larger house or a swishier dress for the next party.

Liselotte, who came originally from Denmark, has painted since she was very young. She once studied at the Banff School of Fine Art. Now that she is no longer working full-time she is happy to devote as much time as she wants to her art. An independent person, she would rather take off into the bush for a few solitary hours of painting than attend coffee parties in town. In the woods she is constantly awed by the endless variety of landscapes waiting to be painted. Close by are beautifully-coloured rock formations, a little further on is a desert and back in the mountains there are patches of snow even in summer. Because the land is much harsher in the Yukon than in the south she finds the colours cleaner and bolder, requiring stronger shades of paint to capture the right tone of the scenery. Her paintings show a feeling for the landscape as a whole, as she merges trees with mountains to create peaceful scenes in which there are no strongly definite lines where one shade ends and the other begins. Most of her paintings are landscapes but she has done some portraits. Some day she wants to paint Silver City, an old mining town north of the Junction. She would also like to paint the local Native children as well as the older people because "their whole life is etched in their faces." Finding suitable frames for her pictures is a big problem. Liselotte likes simple ones, mostly as brief borders, but she finds the only frames available here are ornate ones that attract too much attention away from the picture. She and her husband have found the solution is to either make their frames themselves or order them ready-made from Outside.

Liselotte paints only to please herself, not other people. She gives away her paintings and has no plans for selling them because she doesn't think tourists would pay a lot of money just for a painting. However, she is considering requests from some of the local lodge operators to hang her pictures in their offices. Someday after she has improved and has more confidence in her work, she would like to show her paintings outside the Yukon.

**JESSIE JOE  
BURWASH LANDING**



"Why should I get married? I want to be my own boss." Jessie decided a long time ago that she would stay single. After she noticed how many women were abused by their husbands or left to support their children when their husbands deserted them, Jessie was committed to an independent life. She didn't care if people thought her strange.

Although she chooses to live alone, Jessie firmly believes that family members should stick together and help each other. Her father's lifelong devotion to her set a lasting example. When Jessie was only a baby her mother died, and her father insisted on bringing up Jessie by himself rather than giving her to a different woman. He refused to consider another marriage, saying he would never be able to replace his lost wife. When Jessie was very small her father always took good care of her, even boiling and straining rice to make a broth to feed her. Much later when Jessie grew up and her father became ill, she was able to repay his devotion by looking after him until his death.

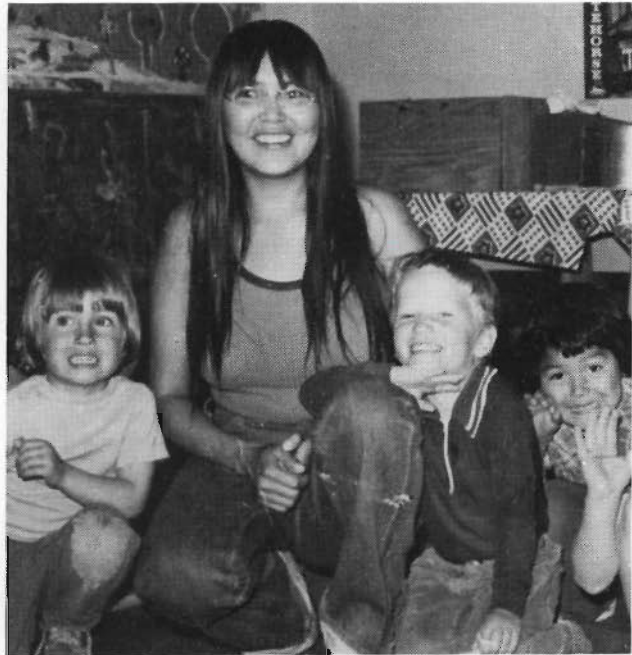
Jessie's great sense of responsibility to her family is unselfish and limitless. Following the death of her sister-in-law, Jessie helped take care of her brother's three small children. After her brother died Jessie, who had been like a mother to the children for quite some time, felt responsible for looking after them even though she had to get some assistance from the Department of Social Welfare. During this time she learned to sew and made all the children's clothes, inventing ways to make attractive garments from old castoffs. The two older children have since grown up and left home but Bonnie, age thirteen, still lives with her aunt. Jessie is proud that Bonnie likes school and rarely misses a day, and that her niece is responsible enough to take care of Jessie's food orders from the co-operative store at the village. As well as teaching her the old skills of tanning hides, sewing and headwork, Jessie is encouraging Bonnie to get a good formal education so she will be able to help the Native people around Burwash. Jessie hopes that Bonnie will take nurse's training to enable her to treat the Native people while speaking to them in their own tongue. Many of the older Indians who are afraid of hospitals are especially in need of help.

Jessie, who rarely drinks, is disgusted with the amount of time many people spend in the local bar, but she says they won't listen to the Catholic priest or anyone else. She thinks it would be better if White men were not allowed to sell liquor to the Indians and if Indians were not allowed in bars. Pointing towards the graveyard, which she notes is becoming quite full, Jessie says, "The Indians are drinking so much, pretty soon there won't be any of them left". But she thinks that even though some of the Indians drink too much White people should not be so critical of the Natives, because many of the Indian ways are better than those of the White people: for instance while Indians take care of their older people, it is the custom in White society to put senior citizens into institutions where they are often ignored by other members of the family.

Although Jessie says modestly that she does beadwork only when she feels like it, her sewing which she sells at the local Kluane Museum, pays for her food and upkeep. Her beadwork is an amazing variety of intricate shapes and patterns in flowers, leaves, birds, animals and abstract designs. She uses attractive and unusual combinations of colours with an artistic skill that is appreciated by her many customers. Jessie learned her craft mostly by herself, with a little help from her sisters. Because arthritis has slowed her down to the point where she needs a cane to walk she no longer hunts or traps, but instead buys moose, beaver, gopher and muskrat hides from her friends. However, she still tans the hides herself. With the price of fur so high, it's expensive for her to buy fur trim for the moccasins, purses, mukluks and other articles she sews. After so many busy and independent years spent hunting, trapping and raising three children, Jessie feels her present life is rather quiet. "I'm lazy - I don't do anything anymore," she comments jokingly. But Jessie is not the sort of woman who can sit still. With her niece to look after and her customers to satisfy, her life will continue to be an active one.



**NORMA SHORTY  
WHITEHORSE**



There are still young women in the north who base their life-style on their faith, and see the manifestation of that faith as the care and education of children.

Such a person is Norma Shorty. Eighteen years old, native to the Yukon, she is truly a Yukoner, both in spirit and in fact, yet her life-style reflects something other than the usual myth of the hard-living, hard-drinking northerner. Just the opposite, in fact, and she has strong feelings about what happens to people who try to live with that myth. She sees alcohol as the number one problem in Whitehorse, and possibly throughout the Yukon. She says "When you start drinking, everything else goes out the window, including your children. You really don't think about them, you think about yourself. That's the only thing that bothers me in Whitehorse. A lot of people drink and they throw everything else out the window. Nothing else matters, except where they're going to get their next bottle of wine."

Norma was raised in the traditional church, but became a member of the Baha'i faith at age 15. Her faith, her love of children, and her family are the central core of her life. When asked how she became a Baha'i, Norma recalled her first meeting "When I walked in, the feeling was really good, you know, and it was so pure in there - it really was - and you went in, you felt really good, so, I wondered, and they started telling me about the faith... about eight months later ...I said 'okay, I accept your faith'... That's really how I became a Baha'i."

Norma's parents didn't try to restrict her choice of faith. She says, "My Mom left it up to me." "Be what you want to be" was what her Mother told her, and Norma feels her Mother's attitude is "really good, really great!" Now Norma "... just can't imagine not being a Baha'i... because the faith is my life and... it comes before everything."

Working in Day camps, and Day Care Centres, as well as helping her mother in a local kindergarten has firmed up Norma's intention to make teaching and working with children her career. Children are her love, and she hopes her life will centre around them. She sincerely believes that each child is an individual, and should be treated as one. Her friends laughingly tell her she will "likely have twenty children". Norma thinks not quite that many - but perhaps the children she teaches will in essence become her own.



**BETTY BURDEK  
DAWSON CITY**

Betty's interest in art was kindled long ago in her preschool years when she used to imitate her mother, who sketched with bits of charcoal from the fire. Betty vividly recalls how her earliest artistic success occurred on one of the first days of school, when the teacher asked her students to draw whatever they wanted on the blackboard. Betty found it strange that all the other children drew nothing but flowers and little stick people. She had more ambitious ideas; luckily she found a large empty section of blackboard space where she could expand her thoughts. Always fascinated by the wicked queen in "Snow White", six year old Betty drew a big portrait of that creature. Her teacher was so astounded by the maturity of Betty's work that she summoned the principal, who also expressed amazement that so young a person could display such talent. Betty says that throughout her school years, her teachers continued to encourage her sketching. But it wasn't until about two years after the last of her four children was born that she began painting in oils - a relaxing experience to fill the long winter hours. Finding time to paint is one of Betty's constant problems; she is kept busy with her family as well as her job as hospital receptionist.

Her favourite subjects, Yukon mountains, appear in all of her landscapes, which reveal Betty's deep love of the beauty of Yukon scenery. She has painted a few pictures of animals, but hasn't tried portraits because she feels incapable of getting the shading just right. Betty thinks that one of the qualities of a good artist is the ability to paint from images in the mind; she admires a certain Indian man she knows who can paint memories of his childhood. Because she has trouble recalling details Betty prefers to paint from slides. Occasionally she paints what she sees outside. Much of her work shows scenes of Ethel Lake, where she and her husband Smokey holiday in the summer. Someday, she plans to drive up the Dempster Highway to paint the spectacular scenery there.

Strong colours and definite lines are important to Betty. She uses oils rather than water colours, because she finds it easier to paint bold colours in oils. After she has sketched her subject, she starts painting at the top of the page, then works her way down, later filling in the fine details. Betty tries to reproduce her subjects as closely as possible.

so that the scene she paints will be realistic. She doesn't like "modern art", because the subjects are not always clearly recognizable.

Betty admits that until recently her talents were relatively unknown in Dawson City, probably because for her painting is a quiet hobby rather than a means of earning money. She gives away some of her work, but does sell a few paintings. In 1974, Betty's art finally came out of the woodwork when one of her paintings was raffled off to raise money for the local Badminton Club, of which Betty is a keen member. People were so enthused about the painting they quickly snapped up the raffle tickets.

Betty has never had any training in art. She would like to take a course, but is wary of people who try to force others to adopt a certain style as necessary technique. She feels that even without training her art is improving with every year and every work completed.

**RONNA ROUNDS  
AND LEE HAZELTON  
WHITEHORSE**



These are good times for artists, as people are fed up with machine-made, mass-produced articles, and are craving hand-made crafts, say Lee and Ronna. But Ronna points out that although people want originality, they still insist on uniformity and technical perfection. For instance, a customer may object if one cup in a tea set is slightly larger or smaller than the others. Ronna tries to convince people that no two hand-thrown items are going to look alike, that is part of being original. Both Lee and Ronna are adamant that working with molds is against their religion.

Because the potting process is a long one it takes about a month to fill an order. After the article has been thrown it must be dried, trimmed, fired, glazed, then fired again. Lee and Ronna like to use a matte finish rather than a glossy one to give the pot an earthy tone. They make their own glazes which are lead-free so their customers can cook and eat with no danger of lead poisoning. Because they have not yet found the temperature at which local clay should be fired so that it stays hard, Lee and Ronna order clay from Medicine Hat, Alberta.

The two potters feel very lucky to have a permanent place to carry on their craft, because space around Whitehorse is scarce and costly. In return for operating Yukraft, the Vocational School allows them to use the back of the shop as a studio... rent-free. While the School contributes a kiln, each woman supplies her own wheel, providing a convenient arrangement for both sides. Only those articles made by Yukon-

ers are sold at Yukraft, and most of these items are created by students of the arts and crafts courses at the Vocational School. Because of possible conflict with the Indian Craft Store, Yukraft does not accept such items as snowshoes and moccasins. Yukraft takes a commission of twenty-five percent on every article and the artist gets the rest.

Most of Yukraft's customers are local people who like to buy planters, tea pots and windchimes. Ronna detects a distinctively Yukon theme in the art that is sold in the shop; it tends to be rough, rustic and woody, reflecting the sort of person who comes to live in the Yukon... generally someone who wants to escape the artificiality of city life.

If they worked fulltime at their pottery Lee and Ronna could make a living for themselves. However since most of their time is spent looking after Yukraft, they just manage to complete enough orders to meet potting expenses. Lee and Ronna usually have more orders than they can handle, the most popular items being casseroles and planters. Currently they are experimenting with wine glass holders and cream and sugar sets.

Both Lee and Ronna are experienced potters. Ronna started before she was in her teens. After two years at Kansas State University where she concentrated on pottery, she took a course at Edmonton. In a farming community about sixty-five miles north of Edmonton she taught a very popular course in pottery and it was so successful that the people there have since formed their own boutique. After she arrived in Whitehorse in August 1973, Ronna badgered the YWCA and the Department of Education to support a pottery course, until the YWCA finally agreed to finance the program which turned out to be very successful. Ronna plans to give instruction in pottery to teachers from various communities who want to learn all about glazes, kiln operation, and the art of firing outside.

Lee has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Connecticut, where she first learned pottery. After obtaining her degree, she took a course at Madison, Wisconsin. One of her favourite experiences was a pottery course she taught for two years at a free school in Everdale, Ontario. After she had her first child, she gave up pottery for three years until she started working at Yukraft. She says it was like a breath of fresh air to get at the wheel again.

Ronna and Lee say there are so many people interested in pottery here they would like to see a potters' co-operative... a central area where potters could assemble their materials and work together. Each person would contribute a certain amount towards a kiln and potters' wheels. This arrangement would solve the financial problem that discourages many potential potters, as it is very expensive to buy a kiln, a wheel, clay and glazes. Ronna also sees a big need here for an arts centre where artists of all sorts could work and teach, and where equipment could be stored.

There is a growing respect for people whose art is their vocation. However Lee points out that some people can't understand why she and Ronna aren't working nine to five at a job which pays a lot of money. Others regard the two women in a very condescending manner as if to say "Isn't that cute" or "Aren't you having fun!" But most people recognize pottery as a useful craft in which artists have participated for centuries, and many people even envy Lee and Ronna for being able to spend their days doing something they enjoy.



**BESSIE LAWRENCE  
TESLIN**



One of the many changes Bessie has seen in the twenty-two years she has lived in the Yukon is in the use of the telephone. When she first lived at Destruction Bay, the telephone was not a tool for private conversation, but a Territory-wide grapevine. At that time there was only one telephone in the whole camp. "And that was one of those crank-up deals where you could talk to everybody all at the same time between Whitehorse and Dawson Creek. Everybody listened and everybody talked." More important than a gossip center, the telephone was a lifeline in case of emergency, as the nearest doctor was 200 miles away. But according to Bessie people learned to cope with accidents and sickness.

"Real serious things never seemed to happen. A person did get a little bit panicky if anything happened to one of the youngsters, because you were so far away. But it always seems that you managed to cope. You didn't think about it at the time. You went ahead and did what you had to and then got sick when it was all over. If anything happened to one person, everybody would pool their knowledge and get together and help out the other person. You could count on anybody. You didn't have to have a phone. In two minutes everybody was there to see what they could do to help out." Now that health services in the Yukon are much handier and more efficient, Bessie thinks people are no longer as close to each other as they used to be, because they don't have to rely on each other so much.

Although it was frustrating to be far away from a doctor, she is glad she brought up her children in the Yukon, since they have been isolated from many of the problems brought on by congested living conditions in the south. She prefers Yukon schools, as children are close to each other and since there are so few students in each class a healthy competitive atmosphere develops. "They are determined that they are going to be ahead of whoever else is in their class, and they are usually going to better their marks." She thinks that in large classes in city schools, students get discouraged because there are so many others to compete with.

The Lawrences are a very close family and they like to do things together. Bessie and her husband are keen on athletics; as a result, participation in sports is a family affair. All the Lawrences curl. Bessie used to play softball, but now she has given in to age. She is proud of her daughter's curling success and her son's achievements in track and field. "They don't enjoy anything unless we take part in it. The youngsters have never given us any problems. They have just gone out and participated in sports. They take an interest in it because they know that we take an interest in it. That's nice."

Bessie enjoys being with people, and in her job at a cafe in Teslin she has lots of opportunity to meet travellers. "I just like people, that's all. Make sure they are treated

right along the Alaska Highway.” Most of the winter traffic consists of the regulars - truckers and service personnel, but Bessie is amazed at the number of winter tourists who travel the highway without preparing either themselves or their vehicles for the extreme cold. Most of the summer travellers who drop in are tourists heading for Alaska.

Bessie has always worked in cafes. Whenever her husband was transferred to highways maintenance camps along the Yukon road system, she found work in a lodge. As a matter of fact, a job in a restaurant at Destruction Bay was her introduction to the Yukon twenty-two years ago. At first the arrangement was rather primitive, as the old power plant had to be watched carefully and given a boot once in a while, or else there would be no power at all. She was so occupied serving the many people on the highway she never had a chance to notice the isolation.

While living at Destruction Bay she tried her hand at writing as a correspondent for an Army publication called “The Highwaymen”, and later in Beaver Creek, she wrote newsy items for “The Whitehorse Star”. A few years ago, she tackled a more serious type of writing for the highway section of “The History of Teslin”, produced by the Women’s Institute.

The Teslin WI is the only surviving branch in the Yukon. As well as publishing their book, the group has been involved in many other community activities - raising money for a bursary for a high school student, catering, organizing bazaars and bake sales, holding informal get-togethers over a slide show, and promoting community education. The WI also encourages homemaking skills. If for instance, a woman needs help with an article she is sewing for a WI bazaar, a member of the club will teach her what to do.

As well as taking an active part in the WI Bessie is Vice-President of the Teslin Community Club. Every summer when community business tapers off she plants a garden. In addition to nursing such perennials as pansies, delphiniums and tiger lilies, she is trying to coax a lilac bush into bloom. In the vegetable patch are potatoes, onions, carrots, beets, cabbages, radishes, lettuce and dill seed, and the greenhouse incubates her cucumbers and tomatoes. She cans the vegetables and does all her own baking. Even though she makes good use of the land, she admits to being an indifferent berry picker.

Bessie finds her biggest problem is a lack of hours in the day. “I am working most of the time, and I don’t have the time to get involved in as many things as I like to, or used to be able to. I don’t know whether it’s being older that makes the days go by so fast and your time run out a little faster, but I used to be able to do a lot more things than now - the day’s over before it starts!”

Although it sometimes seems she is leading the hectic pace of city life, Bessie much prefers living in the Yukon to living outside. She was brought up in North Surrey, but, “I don’t think I could ever stand to live out there again. I can’t stand the pace out there. Here, you can be away from all that noise and traffic. You can go outside and it is quiet. Out there, you never seem to be able to get anywhere where you can see the stars. The air is a lot fresher and cleaner here. You can get away from it all.” Bessie prefers the people here too. “I find that up here in the Yukon, if you have a friend, that person is a friend for a long time. If you are in need of a friend, there is always somebody to talk to. But I find that outside, if you speak to strangers, they look at you as if to say that you are either after them for something or there is something wrong with you. I find that up here, you can talk to people like you know them, and like you have known them for a long time.”

## YUKON WOMEN AND HEALTH CARE



Women have traditionally been involved with caring for the health of their families and have often gone beyond their homes to help other people in need. In our present time specialists are largely responsible for health care, but women constantly deal with sickness among family members and need to know what is available to them in the way of medical assistance. "Yukon Women and Health Care" looks at some of the ways women have solved their health problems throughout the Yukon's history and outlines the facilities which are offered today.

The high level of technology which we rely on today to provide care for our sick has superceded most of the remedies of past years when cures and treatments were developed from materials at hand without the benefits of science and its ability to create synthetic ingredients.

Before the early days of White settlement in the Yukon it was the Indian women who were responsible for the care of sick Band members. The materials that they could use for their remedies were simple by modern standards, but the illnesses that they had to treat were fewer and more predictable. There were colds, headaches, diarrhoea, cuts from hunting accidents, difficult childbirths and broken bones; infectious diseases such as measles, tuberculosis, influenza and smallpox were unknown. Trade with the coastal Tlingit in the mid 1800's brought the first epidemic into the interior of the Yukon but people were totally unprepared to fight such disease. Their bodies had never had the opportunity to build up resistances and many died. After White settlements began, epidemics of various kinds occurred again and again, taking their toll in unknown numbers.

Many older Indian people can remember days when it seemed that there were fewer sick. Lisa Ben Kassi says,

“White people come, come around here, that's the only time the people sick. But a long time ago hardly any Indians sick.”<sup>1</sup>

Because the people in the interior of the Yukon were limited in the materials that they could use for making remedies, ingredients such as pitch and gum from various trees were used to ease a variety of symptoms. People closer to the coast were able to get more exotic ingredients through trade with the coastal Tlingit and were not so restricted in their medicines. Knowledge of remedies and cures used to be widespread and some tribes carried their practice of medicine to very sophisticated degrees of surgery. Few people seem able to use the old ways anymore. Knowledge of traditional medicine may be in danger of dying with its elderly practitioners since very little in the way of specific information has been written down. Generalized remedies such as pitch are common knowledge but recipes for more subtle combinations of herbs appear to be the domain of very few people.

A common complaint in this land of long severe winters was colds, and there were several ways of easing coughs and sniffles. A strong tea could be made from the shredded and boiled inner bark of spruce, poplar or alder trees. Such a brew would be strong tasting, more like cough medicine than tea and a little swallowed at a time would be sufficient. Kinnickinnick berries and spruce pitch were used to make soothing teas. Rose roots were dried and powdered and used later for a tea which was taken for coughs and soreness in the chest. Some people chewed dried alder catkins, the inner bark of young spruce trees or boiled, cooled spruce gum.

“They treat whoever get sick with cold, they boil that pit (kinnickinnick) in a cup and after they boil it they drink it. And then, you see that green spruce? They take the bark out and under (is) that white thing. They chew it and chew it and they drink the juice and whoever got cold they stop coughing. You see that little spruce that's just started growing from the ground? That's the kind of spruce for cold.”<sup>2</sup>

“Who got bad cold and they cough, they get spruce gum and they boil it and after they cool it off and they chew it and it's good for cold.”<sup>3</sup>

Because the carcasses of animals provided the only source of fat in the northern diet, if game were scarce or lean there could be a shortage of fat which would result in headaches and diarrhoea. Mild headaches could be helped by drinking a beverage made from the yarrow plant. The whole plant was used to make an infusion, then the liquid was



poured off and allowed to settle before being drunk. The usual cure for more severe headaches was to deliberately cut the patient's head around the eyebrows.

"A long time ago when they have headaches some women they good for operation. Just like doctor you know. Whoever got headache long time ago they cut their head and take the blood out."<sup>4</sup>

The country itself inflicted problems on the people, especially frostbite and insect stings and bites. Severe frostbite was treated by cutting off the layers of dead skin and applying a covering of pitch. Willow leaves chewed to a pulp were pressed on stings. A layer of pitch over the face was used as a mosquito repellent and some people stuck feathers onto the pitch for further protection.

Cutting people to make them bleed is a common form of medicine in many cultures. It was believed that the sleep that resulted when the bad blood had been gotten rid of would speed recovery.

"If somebody had sore chest and pain in their chest they roll their tongue out and they cut one of the veins there and they take the blood there."<sup>5</sup>

"When they cut people they scrape a stick and they tie up the hand and when they start to cut they put it (the stick) on the tongue. The tongue goes between and that stick they hold it right here, one side, and you roll your tongue back and your vein under your tongue is going to be sticking out and they just cut it. Soon the blood comes out and you go to sleep. And after the people get up they feel better, they never sick."<sup>6</sup>

Cuts, sores and burns were everyday occurrences which had several remedies. A mild skin abrasion could be treated with clear spruce pitch melted down with a little grease, or with a powder made from dried Labrador tea. Sores which started to swell were treated by making a number of small incisions to drain the poison and then applying clear pitch as an ointment. Puffballs were also used as poultices, as they soaked up the pus.

"Whoever gets some sore on their face or their body, they take those spruce brush, they boil it and after they boil it they cool it off and wash their face with it. That's what they do for a sore."<sup>7</sup>

Minor cuts were dealt with by packing the wound with various materials to stop the flow of blood.

"Whoever cut their hand or their feet and they bleeding much they can't stop the bleed - you see on the ground that round little thing, we step on it and yellow powder - yeh, that puffball - they take that powder out. They keep it and then after, whoever cut themselves they put that thing on the cut."<sup>8</sup>

"When they cut themselves they cut some meat out, you see. When they kill caribou, the fresh meat they cut out and they just put that meat on. They wrap it up. That's how they heal when people get cuts."<sup>9</sup>

Among some tribes, treatments for serious cuts, and bone breakages were highly developed. The functions of anaesthetics and stimulants were understood and these medical aids were made from various plants.

"The puffball was used as medicine as an anaesthetic. When it turned into a powder, the powder was dusted into people's faces and they would breathe that in and it would pretty well put

them halfway to sleep but it was rather toxic. If they needed an operation of some kind they would do this.”<sup>10</sup>

The level of sophistication that surgery had reached among the Peel River people is described by George Mitchell. He was a miner who broke his kneecap while travelling with a band from the Peel area in 1897 and he later wrote at length about his experience with the skilled women who helped him.

“Now you must understand...that surgery, among my Indians, was entirely an affair for the women. Old Colin’s wife Jane, and the young girl Flora...were both surgeons - Old Jane had learned the Indian medicine and surgery from childhood.

“...Bonnet Plume...explained to me that they were going to take the skin back and bring together the two halves of the kneecap, which they said was broken across the centre...They broke some flint flakes with sharp cutting edges off a block of flint that they kept for striking lights. I asked Francis later why they used flint flakes instead of an ordinary knife and he said that a fresh flint flake was clean while a steel knife would be dirty.

“Flora made her first cut, about three inches long, inside the knee and upwards; this didn’t bleed freely and what blood there was came out clotted, but it gave a feeling of relief and I urged them to press the blood out. Then she made another cut crossways below the knee and a third like the first, up the outer side of the leg, and after these cuts the blood came much more freely. Then she seized the U-shaped flap of skin that she had just released on the two sides and bottom and she flayed it up and back, exposing the kneecap; and just as old Jane had said, it was split right across from side to side with the two halves drawing away from one another upwards and downwards.

“Old Jane had evidently known what she was going to find and had set some men to make a lot of little pins out of caribou bone. Now she forced the two halves of the kneecap together and...drove in the pins below the base of the lower half and above the top of the upper half and then wound them very firmly together, figure-of-eight, with fine strong sinews taken from the back of a caribou and pulled out to the thickness of the coarsest sewing thread. Then they put back the flap of skin and bound it into place with thongs, without any stitching.

“I must have passed out more than once, as I would waken up to find little bags of moose skin with hot ashes in them in the palms of my hands, which they used to revive me when they thought I had been out for too long and perhaps might not come back otherwise.

“For the next month every second or third day one of the squaws would come and clap a bloody awful poultice on my knee... It was made of herbs and the inner bark of some tree, and it drew like a bank draft - you’ll hardly believe me but its drawing power was so great that the whole wound healed perfectly, without a trace of pus, in spite of no washing or sanitary precautions.”<sup>11</sup>

In the same book there is a description of the women’s treatment of a boy who was shot accidentally during a bear hunt.

“The squaws were a good deal puzzled when they found that the bullet had not gone straight through, but they probed for it in the approved manner with flexible strips of willow and when they eventually found it they removed it through an incision in the back.

“Finally they were evidently quite well aware of the danger of allowing so deep a wound to heal superficially while any possibility remained of trouble arising inside, as they left the probes sticking in the wound...and only withdrew them very gradually as healing progressed from the bottom.”<sup>12</sup>



patients, made poultices, received supplies, cut out garments, held consultations, drew charts, wrote records and often swallowed a hasty bite while watching a delirious patients within the wards.. It is beyond me to describe the work of nursing under these difficulties; one must need take part in it to understand. In spite of all the drawbacks the doctors expressed satisfaction."<sup>25</sup>

The R.C.M.P. were involved with care of the sick during the early years of their service in the Yukon. Most barracks had a hospital attached, staffed with doctors and surgeons and although these facilities were mainly for the benefit of the Force, they took in needy individuals. There were also hospitals in small mining camps but they were hardly worthy of their name, being filthy cabins with few or no supplies and poorly qualified staff.



Women living in Dawson were lucky to have two well respected hospitals nearby to help in case of need, such as childbirth, but hospital care was expensive. For the White women living on the creeks and in the bush the problems of having a baby were often solved by doing as Indian women had done for centuries; they delivered their babies alone. Martha Louise Black had to decide what she was going to do when her child was due to be born.

"...There was the immediate problem of financing. I went to see Father Judge. He told me my hospital and doctor expenses would be \$1,000.00. He was kind and offered to trust me until I could get the money in the spring. I was brought up to abhor debt. I had had two children and had the advantage of the most expert medical care in Chicago. I decided to get through alone.

"The baby came ahead of time. I was alone and it was over quickly, an incredibly easy birth - Mother Nature's gift to women who live a natural out of door life as I had done. And weren't the menfolk surprised, when they returned home at night, to find, wrapped in red flannel - a fine, healthy boy."<sup>26</sup>

Not every woman was as lucky as Martha Louise and many women died in tiny cold cabins leaving young children and distraught husbands to carry on the search for gold alone. Many a miner cursed himself for what he thought was his heartless stupidity in bringing his fragile wife to such a harsh land. A motherless child was welcomed into the community and eagerly adopted by other women, as any baby or young child was the delight of a mining settlement.

"What a welcome the camp gave my baby!... They brought in foodstuffs - fresh baked bread, cakes, chocolates, par-migan, moosemeat, every wild delicacy of the country.

"With tears in their eyes my visitors told me of their own babies so far away. They wanted to hold mine, to see his toes, to feel his tiny fingers curl in their rough hands, to see for themselves that his back was straight and strong."<sup>27</sup>

Conditions were rough for most people living in the camps and larger settlements. This, coupled with the constant flow of people between the Klondike and the coast meant that infectious diseases could spread rapidly. The government had to act to contain epidemics. The most dreaded disease was smallpox but diphtheria, typhoid and influenza wreaked havoc among the population and especially devastated the Indian camps. Medical Health officers appointed from the available doctors were responsible for programs of vaccination but supplies of vaccines were hard to come by in the quantities needed and it was difficult to guarantee that when they arrived after their long journey they would be effective.

“Kindly arrange to have the vaccine sent down by stage wrapped up in robes alongside of a foot warmer giving the driver special instructions to see that there is no danger of it freezing”<sup>28</sup>

Epidemics of smallpox and diphtheria were rampant in the south during the early years of 1900 and quarantine stations were set up at the borders to isolate possible disease carriers before they entered the Yukon. Every riverboat on the Yukon had to be inspected and incoming mail fumigated. One case of a disease was enough to prompt government vaccination programs as everyone knew the danger involved in allowing disease to spread.

During epidemics every able hand was called to tend the sick and men as well as women were employed as nurses. Families often nursed their own sick, leaving the hospitals free for those who had no one to care for them. Isolation hospitals were set up when there was fear of an epidemic starting and people were paid to stand by waiting for cases to appear. If people did fall sick in numbers, the work load on the nursing staff was enormous until the disease abated. One woman who nursed in Whitehorse in 1900 wrote to her government employers asking for further salary in view of the work she had performed beyond her professional calling.

“Gentlemen,

In acknowledging your vote of \$150.00 for my services in nursing indigent patients I would respectfully ask your courteous consideration of the fact that I had to perform the duties of laundress which work does not come within the province of a nurse, but as the laundry here refused to wash and no one else would be found for fear of infection as the case was suspected smallpox - I thought it my duty to do it. Also that I had no relief from duty and any rest I got was by sleeping in the ward with my patients.

I am Gentlemen,  
most respectfully  
Mrs. Barbara Moss.”<sup>29</sup>

Imposition of quarantine caused no great problems among the White population since it had been a familiar measure for years, but the Indian people were confused and angered by this restriction of their lifestyle. Government officials felt that their normally unhindered travelling could spread sickness for miles. When the Moosehide people were quarantined during a visit to Dawson by their trading partners from the Peel River, their confinement had to be enforced by two policemen.

Outbreaks of smallpox, diphtheria and typhoid re-occurred for the first twenty years of 1900 and the government tried its best to keep the diseases under control by closing public meeting places, imposing quarantines and carrying out vaccination programs under the threat of a penalty of \$400.00 for failure to co-operate with the Medical Health officers. In 1918 there was a world wide influenza epidemic which reached the Yukon in 1919 and caused many deaths.

provide cures for diseases with which the Indian people had no possible means of coping. As disease spread relentlessly through the Indian camps, the rudimentary training that the White women had received proved insufficient to be of much help.

“We are sorry to say that two little girls died at this camp, the children of one mother. It is events such as these which make us feel a wild desire to hurt somebody, because we did not take a course in medicine when we had the chance. If only we could get a travelling medical missionary in the Yukon, and the funds to support him...”<sup>17</sup>

When the missions became more widespread after the Gold Rush, they remained centres for medical attention for the people living nearby. Formally trained medical personnel stayed close to the mining settlements, so the Indian people relied on the missionaries.

“An important part of the missionaries work is the care of the sick. In the absence of a doctor, who visits the camp once a year, it falls to the parson to look after the sick. Many of them are quite fair amateur doctors, some may even rank as equal to professional medical men, in practice at any rate. There is always the quota of camp wounds to be bound up and treated - cuts with axes or knives, burns, scratches and bruises. Occasionally there are epidemics of small-pox, diphtheria, la grippe, chicken pox or measles. All this work falls upon the missionary.”<sup>18</sup>

Some of the people involved with the Church were sympathetic to the problems that the Indians were encountering and worked with tribal leaders to overcome sickness. Kathleen Martin lived at Selkirk for many years and wrote,

“I suppose all the Indians are healthier when they are roaming around in the woods. As soon as they come back to their close little cabins with such poor ventilation, colds and various illnesses develop at once. Last winter after the severe weather in December an epidemic of colds broke out, confining to bed almost the whole camp. I made three visits a day to the camp, giving free medicine and free use of camphorated oil. This lasted three weeks and although I am sure that there were cases of pneumonia, they all pulled through, with the assistance of an Indian medicine man... The medicine men still have great power over the people.”<sup>19</sup>

The influx of newcomers during the years of the Gold Rush brought attack after attack of disease. Thousands of people living together with no preparations for sanitation meant typhoid fever, monotonous and meagre diets without fresh vegetables caused scurvy, close living quarters often with dozens of people bunked in one room meant the rapid spread of infectious diseases. Many doctors came to the Klondike; some left their practices to become miners and others charged such high fees that hardly anyone could afford to have their care.

Father Judge, a Roman Catholic priest who had been working up and down the Yukon River for several years before the Rush, went to Dawson in May of 1897 to build a church and a hospital. The City had a population of four thousand when he arrived and the building of his hospital, St. Mary's, was a feat of determination and resourcefulness. Medical necessities were nearly impossible to get - even mattresses were hard to come by, so when the supply ran out, the Father stuffed sacking with dried grasses and herbs. An arrangement was made that several of the nursing Sisters of Ste. Anne would come north to staff the hospital. They did not arrive in the spring as was expected, so their arrival was counted on before fall. In November 1897 Father Judge wrote in a letter to his Father Superior,

“The first and most important news is that the Sisters of Ste. Anne did not get here. They came, it appears, on the “Alice” as far as Fort Yukon, but the water was too low for the boat to pass and they... returned to Nulato.

“I was obliged to open the hospital towards the end of August and I have ever since an average of twenty sick persons. At first I took on only temporary help; but, when I found that the Sisters were not coming, I made arrangements for a permanent staff of nurses, cooks, etc., and everything is working as well as could be expected in the circumstances. All the sick are most agreeably surprised to find as much comfort and all are loud in their praise for the good work we are doing, and the great blessing the hospital is providing to the camp.”<sup>20</sup>

Father Judge’s hospital was known to all in the north and he was well loved for his tireless efforts to save the sick and frozen.

“You just ought to know Father Judge. He’s the biggest jollier - merriest fellow you ever met. When he runs out of medicine he goes and gets a whole lot of bark and spruce boughs and he’s kept a whole lot of ‘em alive up there, waiting for medicine to come in.”<sup>21</sup>

Of the Sisters who finally arrived in July 1898 it was said,

“On all God’s green and beautiful earth there are no purer, no nobler, no more kindhearted and self-sacrificing women than those who wear the somber garb of the Catholic Sisters.”<sup>22</sup>

The Sisters and Father Judge nursed the patients in St. Mary’s hospital through an epidemic of typhoid until the Father died suddenly in August 1898 and the Sisters had to carry on alone.

Women in the Klondike were highly regarded - revered almost, by miners who had left their families behind them to come north. In May 1898 the Victorian Order of Nurses dispatched four nurses to travel with a military expedition to the Yukon and when the women arrived at their destination in early fall they were immediately taken to heart by the whole community. The Dawson Medical Health Officer wrote of their work,

“If all patients could receive the careful nursing which is given by these devoted women, the mortality would be substantially decreased.”<sup>23</sup>

By the standards of the day, any woman coming north was exceptionally brave and daring, and the nurses were no less so in their short skirts and bloomers specially designed to make walking in the mud easier. Nurse Scott was attached to the North West Mounted Police Post at Selkirk and nurses Powell, Hanna and Payson went to Dawson where Miss Powell “undertook the charge of the Good Samaritan Hospital (the Presbyterian hospital) entering on (her) duties as matron, teacher, nurse and maid of all work.”<sup>24</sup>

In letters and diaries of these women we learn of the conditions which medical personnel had to deal with in the raw mining towns.

“Blankets were scarce, the patients often using their own, and those were oftener than not alive with vermin... No disinfectants, there were not any in the place - no materials for dressings, or bath clothes. Of dishes we had a few cups and plates for the patients, they all drank in turn... In the space between the wards was a large, rough table - and here in rain or shine, we prepared food for the

The matter of childbirth was women's business. It was considered to be a completely natural process and did not have any of the mystery and special status attached to it that it has today. If a band were on the trail and a woman went into labour, she would drop behind, have the baby with the help of a woman companion, and then walk with the baby to catch up to the rest of the group.

Some women mention that there was a herb used for birth control but others say that there was nothing that they know of. There does not seem to have been any medicine used to bring on a miscarriage, but extra heavy lifting and strenuous work could induce one. From tribe to tribe there were varying taboos regarding the foods that a woman could eat during her pregnancy; some tribes only had restrictions for the period of labour.

Every woman became experienced with childbirth and was able to help with a baby's delivery, but if a large group were living together, one particular person might become the midwife.

"Any womans used to deliver baby. Even young like that when whoever going to have babies, they just deliver baby, just anybody. They help each other."<sup>13</sup>

Knowledge came from experience and experience was greatly valued if unusual circumstances arose such as a difficult first labour, a breach birth or the delivery of twins. Lisa Ben Kassi was a midwife years ago, and

"She worked lots for the womans going to have kids. She worked lots, she did lots of things, ways to work for them. When woman had hard time she just wash her hands, puts lots of soap on her hands, she puts her hands inside her and just put the soap inside her and that's how she help first born.

"One womans she was sick about one day and one whole night but still that kid never born. She put her hand inside her and that's how that kid born. Then after that kid born the mother she went to sleep and she sleep for quite a while, that's how she feel better."<sup>14</sup>

After the baby was born its umbilical cord was tied off a couple of inches from its belly with a piece of animal skin which had been blackened with soot to prevent it from slipping. The women of some tribes kept their children's cords inside separate small pouches as amulets to keep the babies safe from harm when they were very young. When the children grew older the charms were buried in the bush.

Occasionally a baby would not live after birth, especially if it were premature or very small as would be the case with twins, or if the weather conditions at the time of its birth were unusually harsh.

"One baby - nobody helped me. Born just like that... That baby born too small like that, outside too, in snow. I can't breathe you know, I'm all in you know, I can't do nothing. I tell that to my old man, "I'm all in." I can't do nothing, I can't breathe. And then after, I feel real sick. I go out the door, I don't feel very good. Snow everywhere. I go out of door and I fall into the snow. I call him, I call my old man, "I'm all in", and he come out, he grab me and already I don't know nothing and that baby born. The baby can't breathe, you know. It start to cry out but he can't cry, you know, it's too cold. And he die. It's tough."<sup>15</sup>

Sometimes something would go wrong with either the birth or the delivery of the after-birth and the mother would not live to care for the child. The baby would be given to someone else to be brought up, depending on the situation of the band and who was available.



“Since she was born her mother pass away and everybody look after her because she was so small and that time it hard to get baby bottle. All they do is they feeding them from the breast. And its father pay, give little flowers to woman and they could feed her from their breast. She got really bigger and her father came up to Ram-part House where is that store there. He take some flour and sugar and her father just make it some porridge, like.

“Like those kids when they born, after they born they grow quick, where she, her father had hard time with her. They raise her. She around five or six years old her father pass away and then all her grandparents look after her.

“And they used to go out in the woods and they set net and all that. That how her grandfather, he just stay in the woods with her and he raise her with caribou.”<sup>16</sup>

Normally a baby would be breastfed for at least a year before any other foods were offered to her, since many Indian people had a great fear of a young baby’s choking on small pieces of food. If a baby’s mother died and there was no other woman able to breast feed her, she was fed painstakingly with a rabbit’s foot dipped in warm broth; the child would suck on the foot just as she would have her mother’s breast. Once weaned a baby would eat whatever was available.

Moss was used for diapers. All summer long the women would sort over large supplies to get rid of clinging bits of branches and stems. The soft moss which was left was very soft and absorbent and could be either thrown away after use or washed, dried and used again.

Indian women were prepared to take care of nearly every illness with which they came into contact before the days of White settlement, and their stores of herbs and plants usually stood them in good stead. Serious illness which did not respond to their care needed the magic and mystery of the Shamans, or witch doctors. Shamans were most often men, called to pursue their careers by visions and irresistible signs, and educated by older men experienced in the intricacies of their art. Women could be drawn by the spirits to this secretive life and would assume the role of Shaman.

The spirit world played a large part in the structure of Shamanism and a sick person was cured by spells and incantations. Evil spells could also be cast to bring bad luck or death to chosen individuals. Many Shamans were powerful and rich political figures wielding great authority over the lives of their people, and were held in high esteem because of their association with the spirits and their power to heal or destroy.

Very little is presently known about the practice of Shamanism in the Yukon beside the fact that it did exist and was very important to the people and that a few still follow in its ways. After the coming of the missionaries and the conversion of many people to Christianity the powers of the Shamans began to be eroded, although its practitioners were still respected and called on from time to time.

When the first missionaries came into the Yukon in the 1860’s they brought with them not only their religion but also knowledge of ways of healing that were unusual to the Indian people. Although the missionaries were not medical men, they had small stores of tonics and pills with them and many whom they treated came to believe in the supernatural powers of these new medicines. Some dedicated women accompanied their missionary husbands during their travels in the bush and their sojourns in remote mission stations and the task of healing came to be theirs.

Christianity had caused an upheaval in age-old religious customs; the Shamans lost some of their power and the White people were sought out more and more to

The Medical Health officers tried to ward off diseases by issuing regulations for food and water control. A common problem for years was that people dumped their sewage and garbage on the river ice all winter so that it would be carried away in the spring; anyone living downriver would be using filthy untreated water which often caused typhoid fever.

The general failure to respect sanitary precautions characterized many aspects of northern living in the early days. In the 1920's in Dawson there was fresh milk supplied to town families by several farmers who paid little attention to the condition of their milk.

“Miss Munro delivered the milk three times a week in old whiskey bottles stoppered with ancient corks tied in place with pieces of string. The price was twenty-five cents a bottle. I am afraid she never had the time nor the energy, let alone the equipment, to keep these bottles properly clean. I was shocked by this at first and used to try to boil the corks each day, but in the end I found it simpler to trust in the Lord and the good clean Yukon air.”<sup>30</sup>

Eventually when several children developed glandular fever and had to be taken to Vancouver for treatment, the Health officers had the cows tested and some were found to be tubercular. Most families then changed from fresh to canned and powdered milk which solved the problem.

Food supply was a problem for many years. Fresh fruits and vegetables were unavailable to most people from freeze-up to spring thaw so bodies became run down and lacked resistance to disease. Hundreds of people suffered from scurvy in varying degrees and many had to be hospitalized, creating for the nurses what they considered to be the most gruesome conditions for nursing. The cure for scurvy, foods high in Vitamin C, was hard for even the hospital to get, and something that was not available as a cure for scurvy was certainly not to be had as a tonic for other illnesses. Laura Berton described her sick son's futile craving for oranges.

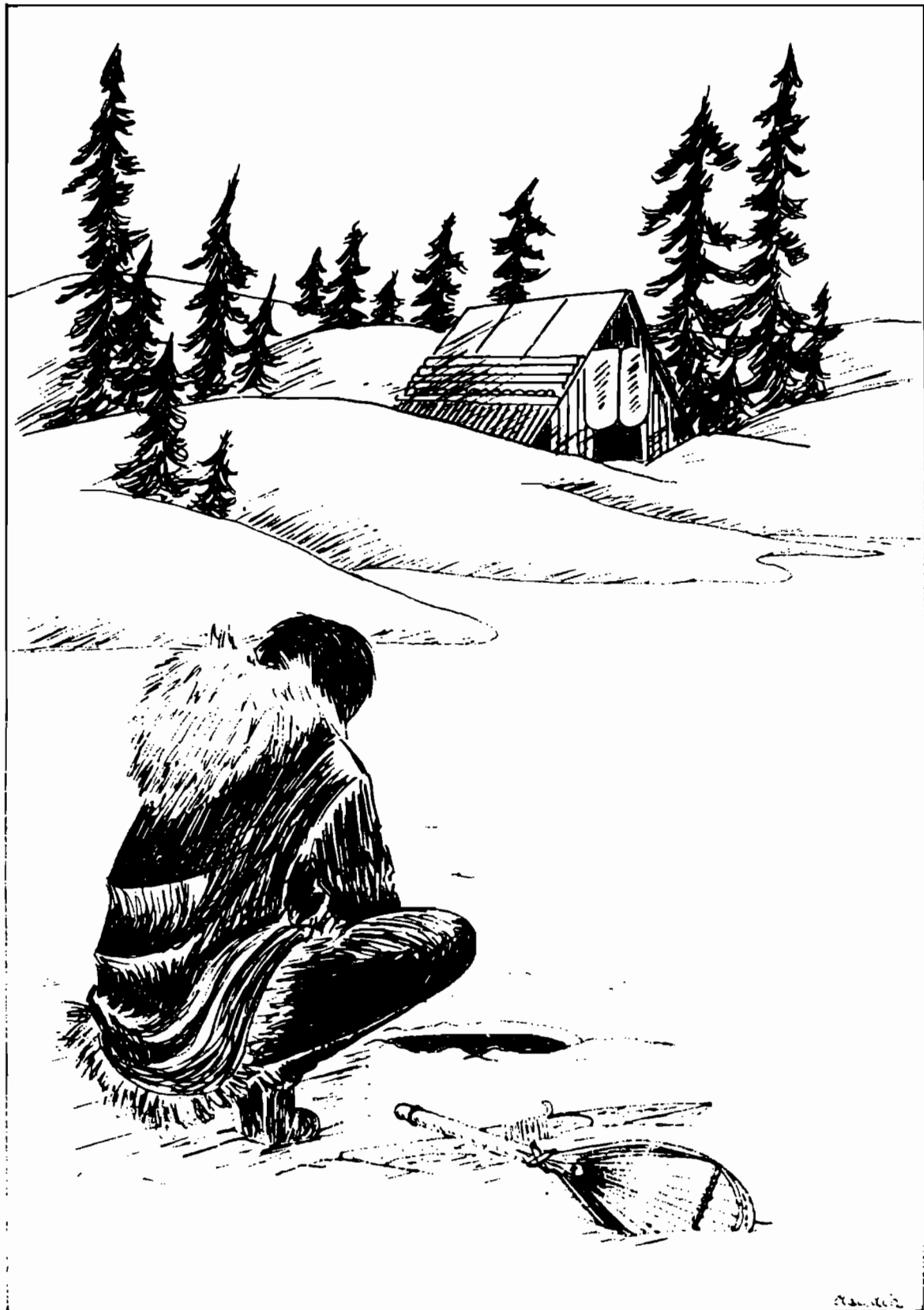
“...It was at the end of that second post-war winter in Dawson (1920) that our small boy came down with pneumonia. He became delirious and parched with fever, crying continually for orange juice. There wasn't an orange for sale in town, and though his cries echoed down the hospital corridors we were powerless to do anything. Succour came from an unexpected quarter. In the next from a middle-aged prostitute lay critically ill. Through those telephone walls she heard the baby's cries, and when told about the dearth of oranges, sent him some from her private supply. The cries stopped and we were thankful.”<sup>31</sup>

All these years saw individual women looking after the health of their families at times with no recourse to medical assistance and perhaps taking the chance that what help there was would not be competent.

“The doctors and dentists... came and went as methodically as the migrating caribou. We had some very good doctors in Dawson and also some very bad ones but few of them seemed to stay for long.”<sup>32</sup>

Some women were remembered fondly by the people they helped. One miner said of Peggy Shand, the woman who ran the roadhouse at Stewart Island in the early 1900's,

“I'll never forget that little woman. Years ago I was there in a spell of bitter cold weather. The house was full to overflowing. I



was new to the country, sick, and in bad shape, without enough blankets in my bedroll. She doctored me and put mustard plasters on my chest, and soaked my feet in hot water and did all she could. She fixed a bed for me on some chairs near the stove, but I was chilling and couldn't get warm. She didn't have any more bedclothes to give, but she got her coat and took off her petticoat and spread them over me. That was the best little woman in the north. I'll never forget her."<sup>33</sup>

Simple remedies were usually all that was available but women did their best to help the sick and frozen.

"On the first day on the river-boat from Dawson, Mary became ill and very feverish. I had a few ordinary little remedies with me and there was a doctor on board, though he had long given up practice to engage in mining... We got some mustard from the steward and the doctor made a large poultice which he wrapped around her back and chest. Perhaps what really saved her life was a present from a fellow passenger of a bottle of old brandy. I put a little of it in the warm condensed milk, which was the only proper food we could get for her."<sup>34</sup>

"Men often came in from the trail, sick and discouraged. Sometimes I thought their own carelessness caused it.. I was the nurse and handled the unpleasant tasks as best I could. Frozen hands and feet were common. Men would come in with hands and feet festering, almost rotten from being frozen.. I kept a foot tub which served for these cases of doctoring feet and it was used many times as the years went by...

...I was often up all night, putting hot compresses on a congested chest, working to keep away the dreaded pneumonia, doing all I could to ease his pain."<sup>35</sup>

Ingenuity and resourcefulness made up for the lack of professional help and facilities until the population became stable enough for the government to consider setting up a system of public health care. People found ways to help each other. Two medical students from the University of California travelled down the Yukon River...

"Peddling a medical book on home first-aid... Their customers, to be sure, were few and far between, but every single man on the river had bought their book. It was a practical book for people living without recourse to medical aid."<sup>36</sup>

One young couple had a baby born in Whitehorse during the winter. They needed to find a safe way to get it home in the freezing weather, and solved the problem with the help of a stage coach driver.

"The new baby was tucked cosily into an egg crate and carried home in the Warm Storage Stage along with dozens of boxes of perishables bound for Dawson. This stage normally carried no passengers but was used to bring in eggs, fruit and certain vegetables, at proper temperature, and was kept warm with large charcoal heaters. The baby was dropped off sleeping cosily and peacefully at their doorway."<sup>37</sup>

With the shifts in population that occurred over the years, the hospitals had to re-assess their position in the community. The Good Samaritan Hospital closed its doors in 1918 due to lack of patients and part of its structure was later sold to Bishop Stringer to

be used as a childrens' hostel. Much of the building was taken down and shipped by boat to Mayo where it was re-constructed as a hospital in 1922. The Sisters of Ste. Anne who had so ably operated St. Mary's Hospital were asked to take over the new facility but were unable to take on the task. The Territorial Government took charge. St. Mary's Hospital remained open all the years that there was commercial activity on the gold creeks around Dawson, and operated until the building burned in 1950. As Whitehorse grew there was need for a permanent hospital and a sixty bed building was constructed. This structure was torn down in 1956 after the present hospital across the river had opened up.

Mechanization meant changes in the kind of health care possible in the Territory. The first ambulance was purchased in 1913, a vehicle boasting "a platform spring, sarven patent wheels with rubber tires, leather trimmings, carmine gear, pole, shafts and brakes, stretcher, rubber mattress and pillow and rotary gong"<sup>33</sup>, all for eight hundred and seventy dollars.

By the late 1920's airplanes had become important in cases of emergency and many small centres had radio contact with Dawson and Whitehorse making it possible to avoid unnecessary deaths. The bush pilots earned reputations for being skillful and daring; they flew in and out of impossible situations and were the heroes of the north.

"Three airplane visits during one winter is quite a record for a comparatively isolated place like Selkirk and if the circumstances had not been so sad they would have been most welcome.

"Unfortunately two of the White residents met with accidents and one was taken ill and all had to seek medical aid. We were thankful for the airplane which was able to take the people to hospital and save them much suffering."<sup>39</sup>

Later the pilots became indispensable to the nurses who travelled around the Territory.

"In the years I've been involved with Northern Health I think we have had fantastic service from the pilots. You would get pilots that would take you to Ross River and not only would they fly you out there, they'd transport you to the clinic, stay and light the fires, help you with the clinic, bring you back to Whitehorse. And they have always done this. They were really great."<sup>40</sup>

The RCMP was also respected by the people in the bush for its help in caring for the sick. More than once a constable turned nurse to bolster the manpower of people trying to pull a settlement through an epidemic.

As the population of the Yukon grew and infectious diseases such as tuberculosis became more common, pressure was put on the government to undertake some responsibility for the health of the people as a whole. The involvement of two government departments had to be organized to answer the needs of both the Indian and White populations. Sickesses seemed more common and obvious among the Indian people than among the White since groups coming into contact with disease for the first time would have more people falling ill than would have in the same number of White people.

When the Alaska Highway was under construction some Indian bands had their first contact with White culture since the gold rush, with devastating results. One case history in Teslin lists epidemics of measles, dysentery, jaundice, whooping cough, German measles, mumps, tonsillitis and middle ear infection striking down the people in a period of just a year and a half.

In the late 1940's the Indian Affairs department organized the first tour of the Territory to do tuberculosis testing. The Department had under its jurisdiction the Charles Camsell Indian Hospital in Edmonton and people with TB were sent there. The

tours were carried on at intervals for several years and everyone possible was tested. The difficulties involved in carrying around all the necessary equipment and personnel were overcome on several occasions with the help of the Armed Forces.

The expeditions ran into many problems with bad weather and road conditions but the results of the tests helped check the progress of TB in the Territory.

“On July 19th. the party left with four vehicles for Carmacks. The first vehicle left at 0930 hours. This was a Dodge 4x4 Carryall which unfortunately broke down seventeen miles from Whitehorse. The remaining vehicles continued on and a great deal of difficulty was experienced on the Carmacks road. At one time one vehicle, a Chevrolet panel Ambulance, was stuck for five hours in a muskeg bog, and vehicles were continually high-centering, and as a result, after fifty-three miles of driving, getting stuck and freeing the vehicles it was decided that the road was not passable for our vehicles and camp was set up, as it was by this time, eleven o'clock at night. The party returned to Whitehorse the following day. I should like to recommend that if road transport is to be used on the Carmacks road in its present condition, a 6x6 vehicle equipped with a which should be hired to transport the party.”<sup>41</sup>

Also in the late 1940's the government set up a mobile nursing service which was to call as it's territory the entire length of the Alaska Highway within Yukon borders, as well as all settlements not reached by roads. Incredibly, in the first year of the service there was only one nurse, based in Whitehorse but constantly either on the road or in the air attempting to adequately cover her vast posting.

Over the next ten years more nurses were hired and posting areas became somewhat smaller and more easily handled. The philosophy behind this early Northern Health system was that the nurse should provide preventive medicine such as inoculations and teaching so that disease would not arise, but in a country with so little medical aid available, the philosophy could not always be followed and the nurses found themselves in the role of doctors.

“It was preventative medicine. I was there primarily on a preventative medical basis - immunization program, school health program, maternal and child health, VD control. They were the five basic programs I was there to carry out. Dawson was fine; there was a hospital there. Anywhere else I travelled - down the Pelly and Granville - there wasn't any medical help at all. So I found out that when I held a clinic it wasn't strictly preventative medicine, it was treatment. In fact, it was seventy-five percent treatment and twenty-five percent preventative.”<sup>42</sup>

The nurses worked on a flexible schedule travelling from place to place as they found necessary. It was hard work with long hours. Many people were still living in the bush and had to be visited in their camps, so an office routine was out of the question. The long distances between settlements meant hours of driving. The nurses found the work exhausting and finally convinced the government that more manpower was needed to do the job properly.

“I always did my areas alone, at least once a month anyway. Depending on the weather number one. We weren't supposed to drive if the weather was minus forty degrees or colder. Which is fine but you may start out when it was minus thirty degrees and by the time you got to Gravel Lake it was minus fifty degrees.

“Number two it depended on what was happening in the

community. For instance I can remember there was an outbreak of TB at Pelly so I went there three times in one month. You would go down and do the tuberculin testing and wouldn't necessarily stick around for three days, you'd go back again in three days. It was only one hundred and sixty miles down the road so I would go back to Dawson and come back in three days and read it again.

"I came up here to work in the hospital and then the hospital approached me and asked if I'd consider Watson Lake as the nurse was really inundated with work. She had a really big area to cover and she was on call. There was no doctor at Watson Lake and she was on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, plus she had all the highway work from Watson Lake to Whitehorse to do. She was worn down to a frazzle.

"I went down to Watson Lake in May and stayed until October and quit. It was just too much even for two people. We had no cleaning women, we had nothing at all... We had to do everything. Either one of us would sleep. I can remember one time going all the way to Edmonton on a mercy flight in one of the bush planes one night. Took a patient with a head injury, flew him all the way and then got back and got diverted at Fort Nelson back to NWT for another mercy flight. We brought him all the way to Whitehorse and then I had to go back to Watson Lake with no sleep in four days to go right on call. It was just fantastic. They had no conception of what they were asking people to do at all. I was all of twenty-two years old. It was too much."<sup>43</sup>

The nurses worked hard but the guidelines they were directed to live by caused some problems for the people they intended to serve. It was suggested that Indian mothers feed their young children pablum and more milk; but there wasn't enough time to properly teach the women about unfamiliar foods, so their use was not understood.

"They insisted that I give them, sell them - no, give them powdered milk and pablum. And I refused. I never stocked it. I never dreamed of giving powdered milk to an Indian. They bought Pacific for their coffee, and I certainly didn't expect them to feed it to their kids. The Public Health nurse came in and showed them how to use powdered milk ... and until then they all nursed their babies. And I had three kids nearly dead of malnutrition. You know what that milk looked like? Pale ink. They didn't know how to mix powdered milk to drink."<sup>44</sup>

Gradually as the population settled in definite areas it became possible to establish permanent health care facilities more closely in touch with the needs of the people in the area. The current network of centres grew like topsy over the years and is still expanding.

The system of health care in the Territory today is run by Northern Health Services which is a Federal organization. Just recently the Yukon was made a zone in its own right, and will gradually become responsible for its own operation and eventually be under the direction of the Territorial Government.

The system has been developed to ensure that everyone has access to medical attention. Since Whitehorse is the centre for health care it has many services which are not offered in the outlying communities. The populations in these areas are too small to justify spending the money that would be necessary to fully service them, so people needing special care are brought to Whitehorse.

## **HEALTH CARE IN THE YUKON**

### **Kinds of Facilities**

There are four kinds of health care facilities under Northern Health Services; Health Stations, Health Centres, the Whitehorse Hospital and Cottage Hospitals.

A Health Station does not offer continual service since it is not staffed by a nurse who lives in the community. A small trailer or some other place is provided which serves as a clinic and overnight accommodation for the nurse and doctor who visit at regular specified intervals. When the nurse is not in the community the Community Health Representative takes care of situations that she cannot deal with herself by contacting medical personnel in another community. Health Stations are located in Carcross, Burwash Landing, Pelly Crossing, Mayo and Clinton Creek.

A Health Centre is staffed by a resident nurse who keeps office hours and who is then on call for the rest of the day and night. She deals with emergencies and carries out public health programmes, but does not have facilities to treat bed patients. All people requiring round the clock attention are sent to the hospital in Whitehorse or to one of the cottage hospitals. A doctor visits each of the Health Centres on a regular schedule. Besides the doctors living in Whitehorse there are doctors living in Watson Lake, Dawson, Mayo and Faro, and they visit communities in their areas. Health Centres are located in Watson Lake, Teslin, Whitehorse, Faro, Haines Junction, Carmacks, Ross River, Dawson, Destruction Bay, and Old Crow.

The only true hospital in the Territory is in Whitehorse. It provides round the clock nursing care by trained nurses working shifts, laboratory services, meal service, and the equipment and staff to perform operations. Even at that, some major medical, surgical and pediatric cases are sent outside, usually to Vancouver or Edmonton. The "hospital" in Dawson is not what its name would imply, even though there were once two busy hospitals there. At present there are three nurses and holding beds for patients who are going to be sent to Whitehorse but the service in Dawson falls under the classification of Health Centre. The administration of Northern Health feels that the public is best served by evacuating patients to a properly equipped facility. From time to time pressure is put on by residents in a community to be able to stay in their "hospital" but in the outlying areas the centres are not equipped to treat bed patients. By law there must be two doctors present whenever an operation is performed; one acts as the anesthetist and the other as the surgeon. At present the only place where this is possible is in Whitehorse.

Maternity cases are different however, since childbirth is a natural function, and babies are born in the cottage hospitals at Faro, Mayo and Watson Lake. These three places as well as Dawson have equipment for use during abnormal births. Despite careful planning though, babies have been known to have been born just wherever they choose.

A cottage hospital has beds for overnight patients but again, anyone who needs an operation is sent to Whitehorse. A woman needing a Caesarean delivery would be brought to Whitehorse where she can be best cared for.

What we have then is a stepped arrangement which should cover all needs; regularly visited Health Stations, single staffed Health Centres, multiple staffed Cottage Hospitals, the main hospital in Whitehorse, and if necessary, evacuation to the Outside.

In mining towns the medical services are legislated by the Camp Ordinance and the company has to make arrangements for a doctor. Clinton Creek has a doctor, four nurses and a clinic, and the Public Health nurse travels there from Dawson to conduct well-baby clinics. Elsa is a private mine and has equipment for mine emergencies but the government facilities in Mayo are near enough to be used by the public.



## Public Health Service

The Public Health nurse is the backbone of the Yukon system. The nurses in each area are graduates of a school of nursing and have had an extra course in Public Health. They are responsible for a number of functions in the community besides dealing with emergencies.

If you are pregnant they will keep careful track of your development. They will give advice on diet and exercise, will dispense vitamins if they are necessary and will tell you what to expect from your pregnancy and labour as well as giving emotional support if it is needed. If there is only one woman pregnant in a community she'll get individual attention but if there are several or many women pregnant at the same time the nurses may run pre-natal courses covering diet, physical exercise, fetal development, breathing exercise to help during labour and birth and care of the infant after its birth. In Whitehorse these courses are run continually and information about them can be received from the Public Health Centre on Hospital Road. The courses are helpful even if one has had a child previously. They are given to supplement regular visits to the nurse and doctor. Fathers to be are welcome to attend the classes.

The nurse will make appointments with the doctor so that when he visits a community he can check on the health of both the mother and baby. If you live in Whitehorse the nurse will recommend that you make regular office visits to a doctor.

After the baby has been born and you have been released from hospital the nurse will make at least one home visit to answer any questions that you may have about the baby's habits and to make sure that you are both keeping healthy. If you have other children and it is difficult for you to get the rest you need she can help you find someone to come in and help out for a few hours a day or full-time for as long as you need assistance.

The nurses hold well-baby clinics to check the development of young children. The child will be weighed and measured and given all the injections needed to protect him from diseases such as polio, measles and diphtheria. In this respect the nurses perform the functions that many family doctors are responsible for in other areas of Canada and the doctors here try to reserve their time for sick children.

The nurse will also keep track of the general health of the women she sees. She can teach methods of checking the breasts for unusual lumps and may do the annual Pap-smear test which detects cancer of the cervix. If there is a doctor in the community, he may do both of these procedures. The nurse can also give advice on birth control and family planning. If you are having trouble with your teeth, the nurse can arrange appointments with a dentist either in Whitehorse or while he is on one of his periodic tours of the Territory.

In the smaller communities the nurse gets to know everyone and can keep an eye open for new sickness. If a person is under doctor's care for a chronic disease such as TB she will help the patient keep up the prescribed treatment.

A large part of the Public Health nurses' job is to do teaching about nutrition, sanitation and disease. They visit schools and check each child's general health as well as giving programmes in nutrition, hygiene, sex education and communicable diseases such as VD.

The Public Health nurses can help people in almost any way; their job is to see that more than just the body is healthy. People should feel free to drop in and talk to them anytime.

The nurses are helped out in most areas by Community Health Representatives. These people are long-time residents of their communities and help the nurses with many of their jobs. The Representatives do not have any detailed medical training but they have certificates in first-aid, home nursing and fire fighting, and are able to deliver

babies in emergencies. Community Health Representatives are valuable to the system of Health care in the Territory as they have lived in their areas and know everyone while the nurses tend to move around and lack the personal contacts which come only with time.

The Community Health Representatives have many duties. They help the nurses teach groups and individuals about such things as pre-natal care, infant and child care, sanitation, family planning and nutrition. They help plan and conduct pre-natal clinics and child care clinics and visit homes to do home care. They do everything that the nurses do except perform medical procedures. If anyone should feel strange about talking to the nurse herself about a problem the Community Health Representative is the person to contact. If more help is needed than the Representative can give she will put the nurse in touch with the situation.

### **Whitehorse General Hospital**

The time may come when a visit to the Whitehorse General Hospital is necessary, and if you live anywhere but Watson Lake, Faro or Mayo and you are going to have a baby your visit is almost guaranteed. If you are curious about the set-up of the maternity ward you can have a tour through the whole area before the baby is due to be born. The tour is part of the pre-natal courses given in Whitehorse but if you are from out of town and you can get into the city sometime during your pregnancy you can arrange to have a tour by contacting the Public Health Centre on Hospital Road.

There is a large area on the second floor of the north wing of the hospital devoted to maternity and gynecological care. There are two labour rooms with single beds, two delivery rooms and a total of twenty-two beds for patients, in eleven two-bed rooms. There are also two single-bed rooms which are usually reserved for cases needing special care or a lot of rest. All of the rooms have a bathroom connected to them.

When a woman comes to the hospital to have a baby she checks in at the admitting desk which is just inside the front door. If she has a lot of money with her, all but five dollars is taken and put in safe-keeping along with any valuable jewelry. The clothes supplied by the hospital are minimal so most women take their dressing gowns and slippers with them.

If you are in labour when you arrive at the hospital you will be taken by one of the nurses to a labour room where you stay until the baby is ready to be born and you are wheeled into a delivery room for the actual birth of the child. There will be an anesthetist on call if you should need an anesthetic. Your baby will usually be delivered by a doctor - your family doctor if you live in Whitehorse - but if the baby should come along very fast there will be a doctor on call in the hospital. If it doesn't look as if he is going to have time to make it either, one of the nurses will deliver the baby. The nurses on the maternity ward are highly qualified and have training as midwives so they are capable of taking over for the doctor. The baby's father can stay with you through labour and delivery but you should discuss this beforehand with your doctor since some doctors prefer the fathers to have attended the pre-natal classes.

The question of whether your baby is going to be breast or bottle fed should be discussed with your doctor or Public Health nurse so that when the baby is born you and the nurses know what to expect. If you want to breast feed entirely with no bottles given at all, the staff needs to be informed since newborns are usually bottle fed a glucose, or sugar, syrup for the first few days before the mother's milk starts to flow. Your baby can be fed at either four hour intervals or whenever he or she is hungry.

If you should want to have your baby in your room all the time you will have to discuss it with your doctor or nurse before the baby is born. This method, called "rooming-in" is becoming quite popular in some hospitals but ours is not set up to offer it all the time. The rooms have two beds and the health of your room-mate is important. If

period on the ward you may have a chance to room-in. You needn't feel that your child is going to be the property of the nursery staff until you are discharged. Mothers are encouraged to bathe their own infants, change their diapers, fetch them from the nursery for feedings and go into the nursery to pick them up when they cry. Women get to know their babies and by the time they are ready to go home they are comfortable with each other.

Women who have normal deliveries are usually ready to go home after five days and women having had cesarean deliveries stay in the hospital for eight days. Visiting hours change periodically so someone wanting to visit should check with the desk. The father of the baby and the immediate families can visit anytime during those hours. If there are other children in the family they can visit as long as there is an adult to keep an eye on them. Clergymen can visit at any time.

Meals are served in the rooms until forty-eight hours after a woman gives birth, and then she is able to walk to the main cafeteria if she wants to. Her mail is delivered to her room. She can bring a radio with her when she checks in and if she wants TV in her room she can get one by talking to the head nurse. There are two TV lounges on the floor, and a library which is supplemented by books on the tuck cart which is brought around three times a week by the Hospital Auxiliary.

Several of the Hospital staff visit the maternity ward regularly. An admitting clerk will come around to register the births of all the babies with the government. The physiotherapist takes mothers down to the physiotherapy department the day after their babies are born to teach exercises for strengthening stretched muscles. The dietitian talks to women either individually or in groups to give advice on nutrition for both the mother and baby, tips on how to save food money, and methods of making inexpensive baby foods.

If you have to go to the hospital for any kind of operation or care apart from child-birth you may be roomed in the maternity ward if it's not full or in another ward such as the surgical ward. In any case the procedures for checking in, visiting hours, meals and recreation are the same as those for the maternity ward. If you are going to be in the hospital for a long time or if you feel like you need a change, you can arrange with one of the nurses to have your hair done.

### **Physiotherapy**

The physiotherapy department is a bright cheerful room cluttered with toys and therapy materials. The therapists teach women who have just had babies the best exercises for toning up the muscles which were stretched and underexercised during pregnancy. The therapists work with the Public Health nurses so that exercises which help during pregnancy are a part of the prenatal advice given by the nurses. Post-operative patients are also visited by the therapists; surgery patients need to know techniques such as deep breathing which help them to avoid chest infections, and the therapist will teach them how to do this and anything else that will help each individual case. Some women who have had strokes or perhaps an amputation have to start from scratch to learn how to cope with their everyday lives. The therapist can assist if this is the case by coming into the home to help with reorganization. For example she can rearrange the kitchen so that as few steps as possible can be taken to reach everything. At present most of the therapist's work is done in the hospital but they are here to help and will do whatever is necessary to start their patients off on their own again.

People living outside Whitehorse for whom arthritis or some other physical problem is making activity awkward should talk to the Public Health nurse. She can arrange for them to come to town for a few days so that the physiotherapists can teach exercises or give aids that can be worked within the home. If the individual couldn't normally afford a trip she can be given a small allowance for the time she spends in

Whitehorse. If you live in Whitehorse and are having problems you should feel free to drop into the hospital's basement physiotherapy department to talk to the therapists but you will need referral from your doctor if any active treatment is to be carried out.

### **Outpatients Department**

The Outpatients department at the hospital provides several facilities for treatment but whose treatment is short enough that they do not have to stay in the hospital overnight. A lot of physiotherapy is done on an Outpatient basis. A person who has had an operation requiring a lengthy period of exercise to restore muscles to their normal level of function will go to the physiotherapy department on an regular basis to work with the equipment there.

The Medical Clinics have the facilities to do some of their own lab work such as basic blood tests, but anything requiring more involved analysis is done at the hospital. If this is the case the patient will go to the hospital to have the tests done, taking along the appropriate requisition forms from the doctor. The same procedure applies to X-rays; some clinics can do basic X-rays of the chest but more involved diagnostic procedures are done by the hospital staff on hospital equipment.

The hospital employs a dietitian to whom people can be referred by their doctors. She will counsel on nutrition and meal planning and preparation if an appointment is made to see her.

The whole Emergency department falls under the heading of "Outpatients". If something drastic happens to you or someone in your family and your doctor's office is closed, go to the hospital. The doctor on call there will treat you and call in your regular doctor if necessary. "Emergency" means just that; if a visit to the Outpatients department is for services that could have been provided by a doctor in his office, the patient is liable for a hospital charge for the use of equipment and nursing services. This fee is waived if special equipment is needed, if laboratory tests are required or if the patient is admitted directly to Inpatients. The emergency staff should always be available to deal with urgent situations. Whenever possible an appointment should be made with a doctor for an office visit.

The nurse in charge of the emergency department is well qualified to provide help and advice. If a person has a problem that she is not quite sure about, a telephone call to the nurse may save an unnecessary trip to the hospital.

### **Doctors: General Practitioners and Specialists**

Outside the jurisdiction of Northern Health Services, but an important part of the Yukon's health scheme are the doctor's offices and clinics. These are listed in the telephone book under the individual doctor's names or by the clinics with whom the doctors associate. The three clinics are the Whitehorse Medical-Dental Clinic, the Family Practice Clinic, and the Branigan Clinic.

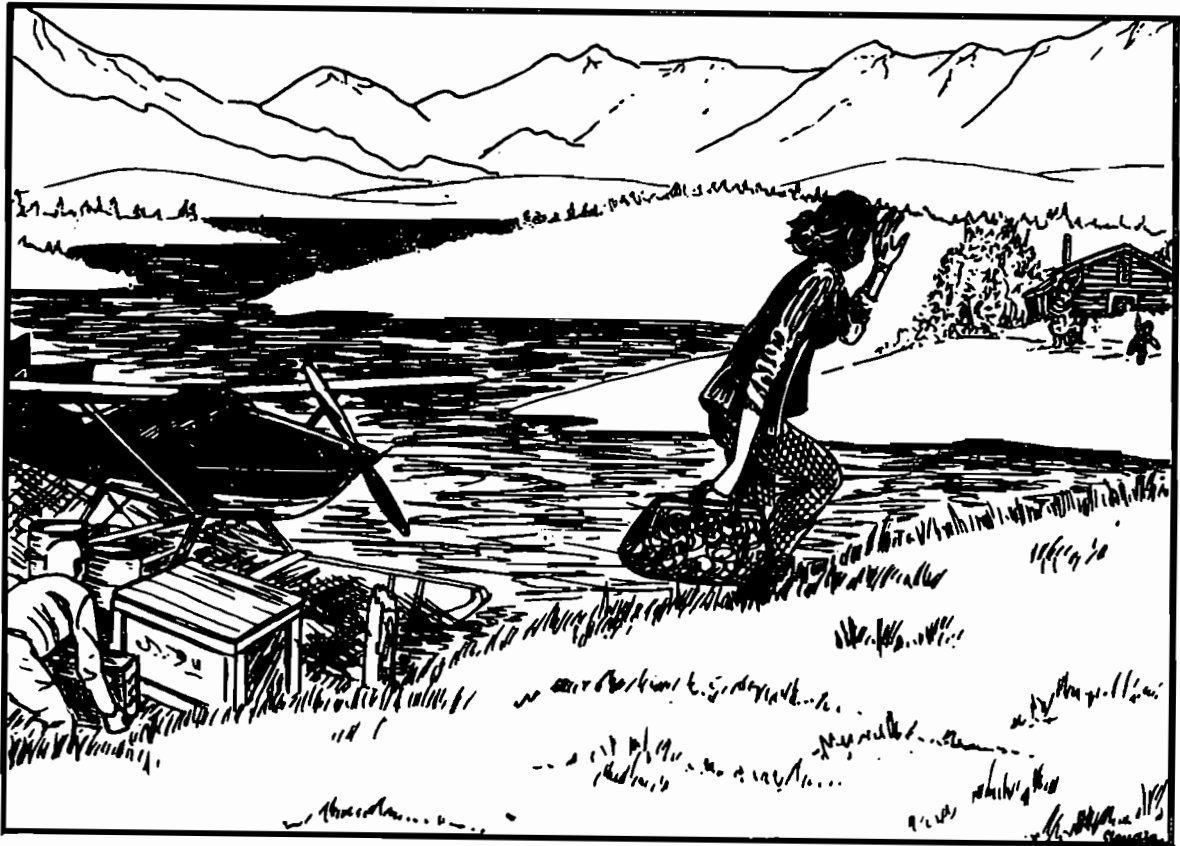
People living in Whitehorse usually have a family doctor to whom they return for all their medical needs, and this is the most efficient system since the doctor can get to know each individual's medical background and all the medical records can be kept in one place. Some people tend to change doctors every time something comes up that needs medical attention - they call the office and ask which doctor can fit them in that afternoon. This is all right in a dire emergency, but it is best to have one doctor all the time.

It may be difficult to find a doctor who suits your personality and your expectations. If possible you should ask your friends to recommend the kind of doctor you prefer,

and then ask for him or her by name when you call for an appointment, otherwise the receptionist will fit you in with whomever she can.

In addition to general practitioners, Whitehorse has specialists in gynecology (women's diseases), surgery and psychiatry. If your problems falls into any of these fields you will probably be referred by your family doctor. If your doctor hasn't mentioned a referral and you would like a second opinion - if for example something about your pregnancy is troubling you - ask to be referred.

Other specialisits in Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Ear, Nose and Throat, Internal Medicine and Ophthalmology (eye diseases) pay regular visits to Whitehorse and hold clinics at the hospital. Your family doctor will arrange an appointment if he thinks it is necessary.



## **Abortion and Sterilization**

If you think that you may be pregnant or if you know that you are, and a pregnancy wasn't something that you had planned for yourself, and you need someone to help you decide what you should do, contact your doctor or the department of Social Welfare. Counselling can help you decide whether it would be better for you to have an abortion or carry the child, and if your decision is to carry the baby you can get help in planning your future whether you decide to keep the baby or give her up for adoption. No one will try to convince you to go one route or the other. All your conversations will be kept confidential unless you want someone else to become involved.

If you want to have the baby outside the Territory, arrangements can be made for you to go to one of the organizations in British Columbia or Alberta which are set up to give women both a place to live and emotional support during their pregnancies.

If you become pregnant and are sure in your mind that you can't or shouldn't carry the child, you should see your doctor or Public Health nurse to discuss the possibility of having an abortion. Your doctor would present your case to a committee consisting of three medical people which meets weekly to consider possible abortions. The hospital in Whitehorse is a federally run institution answering directly to the Minister of Justice who is responsible for the interpretation of the Criminal Code regarding abortion. The Criminal Code states that it is illegal to perform an abortion except in cases when the health of the mother or child is endangered. There is a growing controversy about how the code should be interpreted, with pro-choice and pro-life groups becoming more and more politically active. It will be up to your doctor and the committee to decide whether your particular case falls within their interpretation of the Code. If you are granted an abortion it will be performed as a surgical procedure under anaesthetic in the hospital, usually by the gynecologist. You will stay in the hospital overnight and your bills will be paid by the two insurance plans.

If you or your partner are considering sterilization for either of you as a permanent means of birth control, discuss available methods with your doctor. It is quite straightforward to obtain medical permission for sterilization and the procedure you decide on will be carried out in the hospital.

## **Dental and Eye Care**

Dentists' offices are located in the Whitehorse Medical-Dental Centre. The procedure for getting a dentist is the same as that for getting a doctor - when you call for an appointment the receptionist will fit you in where she can unless you mention a particular name. You will have to pay your own bills unless you have a dental plan through your employer.

There are several places to have eyes examined and glasses prescribed. Both are Optometrist's offices; one is located in the Whitehorse Medical-Dental Centre and the other is on Main Street. You will have to pay for your examination and glasses unless you are referred by your Public Health nurse in which case your bills will be paid by the Government. If your eye problem is caused by a disease or some other medically treatable defect you will be referred to the Ophthalmologist or eye specialist who visits the Territory from time to time.

## **Health Care Insurance**

There are two plans in the Yukon which cover all costs for health care, the Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan and the Yukon Hospital Insurance Service. There are several ways that people pay the monthly premiums which are necessary for coverage by

YHCIP. If you are employed your employer will forward your payments for you. Whether they are deducted from your wages or paid partially or wholly by the company depends on the agreement you or your union have with the employer. If you are unemployed you are responsible for making your own payments unless you are a Status Indian, in which case the government will pay for you. If you have a very low income - if yours is a family with a total taxable income of less than \$1,300 a year - you will be eligible for a discount of half the usual monthly payments, and if your family has no taxable income, you will be covered free of charge. You are required by law to be registered in the plan, and if you have neglected to join, you are liable for all your back premiums since you became eligible for membership. You are able to register in the Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan after three months of residence in the Yukon. Your former health care insurance from your last place of residence will cover you during the three month waiting period. If you are not sure whether you are registered, contact the plan administration at Box 2703, Whitehorse.

The Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan will pay for all your doctor's services whether they were performed in his office, your home or the hospital, unless the service is for a medical examination for life insurance or school, or for cosmetic surgery except in certain cases, since these services are not medically required. You can see the doctor as often as necessary with no additional charges being made, and you can choose your own doctor. The only quirk is that if you go to a specialist without your doctor's referral, you may be liable for payment of the difference between the two fees.

If you are going outside for a trip or if you are moving to another area, you will be covered for a period of three months.

The Yukon Hospital Insurance Service is free to all residents of the Yukon after a period of three months residence. If you have moved here from outside, your last coverage scheme will pay your bills until you are eligible for the Yukon plan.

The plan pays for your room, meals, nursing services, lab work, drugs, operating room, surgical supplies, delivery room, anaesthetic services, x-rays and physiotherapy - in other words you will have no bills to pay after a stay in the hospital. If you are an outpatient the plan will pay for your lab work, nursing services, drugs, operating room and anaesthetic facilities and surgical supplies. The Hospital Service also provides free drugs via the hospital pharmacy for people with certain chronic diseases such as cancer, TB, diabetes, etc., and your family doctor will enroll you for the service.

The Federal and Territorial Governments subsidize the Health Care Plan to a great degree and fully fund the Hospital Insurance Service.

### **Psychiatric Care**

Psychiatric consultation and treatment are other major services paid for by the Health Care Insurance Plan. The Federal Government employs a psychiatrist whose clients are referred to him by doctors, Public Health nurses and other agencies. People who are consistently depressed, hostile or unable to function at their jobs should probably see their doctor or nurse. If they can help resolve the problem they will but if further help is needed they will refer the individual to the psychiatrist.

It used to be quite common for people to be sent outside for care but this seemed to multiply problems instead of solving them. The psychiatrist tries to keep hospitalization to a minimum so that people are not separated from familiar surroundings. He is based in Whitehorse but travels to each of the larger communities three times a year and to each of the smaller, once a year. He keeps in close touch with medical personnel throughout the Territory so that after a person who has come to Whitehorse for treatment goes home again, the nurse or doctor in the community can take over the case.

The psychiatrist prefers to have his cases referred to him but if an individual were to go to him on her own accord he would consider the case. His office is located in the Public Health Building on Hospital Road. Nearly all his clients are residents of the Territory but transients become his patients as well.

### **Alcohol Counselling**

The Territorial Government has a very active alcohol counselling service. The Alcohol and Drug Dependency Service is located in the Public Health Building on Hospital Road. There is a counsellor who meets with people looking for help with their problems and an administration officer who plans and researches programs for alcohol awareness. The counsellor visits some people in their homes and others in her office or in the hospital. Normally people are referred to her but individuals can contact her on their own accord.

People who go to her because they are having serious drinking problems are encouraged to find ways to change their habits and build a new lifestyle. A person living outside Whitehorse can come to town and live at the YWCA for as long as consultation is necessary, and travel costs are subsidized if the individual cannot afford to pay for the trip.

Alcoholics Anonymous works on the basis of people who have successfully overcome their drinking problems giving support and encouragement to other people trying to give up alcohol. There are group meetings several times a week for people who are having problems with alcohol and who want to give up drinking. Alcoholics Anonymous also gives support to the husbands or wives of alcoholics. The counsellors offer help in understanding what it means to be an alcoholic and suggest ways to cope with the problems that drinking creates.

### **Family Counselling**

There are two important services based in the Yukon Family Services office located at 503 Cook Street.

Advice on birth control and family planning is available free of charge. There are pamphlets which can be taken home and a counsellor is available to give personal advice. A large part of the Family Planning Association's job is to provide information to other agencies, and the pamphlets are available in doctor's offices and through Public Health nurses.

The Family Counselling service provides professional counselling for people who have problems which are making relationships with mates and children difficult. If one's marriage is suffering from pressures exerted on it from both inside and outside the home and there is concern that the situation will continue, a visit to the Service could be beneficial. One can go to the office by oneself at first and later with one's mate, or both can go together at the start. Sometimes parents find that they are losing touch with their children and become anxious about the distance between them. There is counselling for parents and children; ideally they would go together although sometimes parents go to the counsellor alone to discuss their problems. The counsellor helps them look at their situation in a different light by showing them how to communicate their true feelings to their families and by suggesting ways to cope with the feelings which are disturbing them.

### **Diet and Nutrition**

Anyone wanting advice on nutrition and meal planning from a specialist should ask her doctor for the name of a dietitian, or for a referral to the hospital's dietitian. There are several women who do volunteer counselling for the Consumer's Association and also give talks on the radio and to interested groups.



## **Ambulance Service**

People living outside Whitehorse who need emergency medical attention can be brought to town either by ambulance or by plane. There are ambulances fully equipped with oxygen and other necessities located at Beaver Creek, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction, Teslin, Watson Lake, Faro, Whitehorse, Carmacks and Dawson, and one has been ordered for Mayo. In Whitehorse there are permanent salaried ambulance men but the other communities are served by volunteers who have first-aid training. The cost of the service is cheap considering the distances involved. There is a basic fee and a fee per mile for mileage over thirty miles. Planes are used extensively for evacuation from Faro and Old Crow. These and evacuations to Vancouver and Edmonton are paid for by the medical insurance plans.

## **Procedures in Case of Death**

Procedures in cases of death are different depending on whether the death occurred in Whitehorse or an outlying community. People in Whitehorse are able to use the services of a funeral home. Someone from the family of the deceased, or a friend, should contact the funeral home and either the family doctor or the RCMP and arrangements for the burial of the body will be made after consultation with the family. Usually the coroner is called in to examine the body; as long as it appears that the person died naturally he will issue a burial permit but if foul play is suspected or in cases of accidental death an autopsy will be performed.

It is not required by law for a body to be embalmed; this is a social custom which need not be carried out. If cremation is chosen instead of burial, the body will be sent outside and the ashes returned at a later date.

People living outside Whitehorse should first contact the RCMP in the event of death. They will help make all the arrangements. The body can be sent to the funeral home in Whitehorse for preparation or a casket can be sent to the community for the arrangements to be made there. The RCMP will contact the Public Administrator in Whitehorse who will talk to the family about the kind of funeral they want. There is a coroner in nearly every community and he will issue the burial permit. If the family has a lawyer he should be contacted immediately so that the legal affairs concerning the estate can be looked after; if the family doesn't have a lawyer, the Public Administrator acts on its behalf.

## **Programs For Children**

There are several programs for children in the Territory. If a child has any special physical problems that the doctor cannot handle he will refer the parents and the child to the pediatrician, or child specialist, who visits the Yukon three or four times a year. At present there is no pediatrician living in the Territory so when the specialist does come to town he is often so busy with on-going cases that his introductions to new patients aren't as numerous as they might be. If you feel that your child's problem is not receiving the attention from your doctor that you think it deserves, ask for a referral to the pediatrician.

There are a number of physically and mentally handicapped children in the Territory and steps have been taken to help them with their problems. If you are concerned about what you think is abnormal development in your child, either physical or emotional, discuss the problem with your doctor or the Public Health nurse. Early testing and diagnosis can often result in treatment which will make the effects of slow develop-

ment or actual physical defects much less serious than if the child were left to develop alone.

If your child is diagnosed as having a physical handicap he will need the attention of specialists. After years of frustration on the part of parents and children who were shunted back and forth between the Yukon and doctors in the south, a plan was developed to provide care for the children in Whitehorse in a small treatment centre. A classroom has been set aside and staffed with a full-time teacher, a full-time aide and a part-time physiotherapist on loan from the Department of National Health and Welfare.

Children now receive help on a continuing basis instead of the former haphazard manner. Hopefully this modest beginning will make it possible for every physically handicapped child in the Territory to receive attention and encouragement, and possibly families with handicapped children from outside who would otherwise have been reluctant to settle in the north, will make the move.

Not every handicapped child's problem is physical. Many children are slow learners with perceptual or emotional problems. There are several programs which could benefit a child with learning disabilities. There are four classes for educable mentally retarded children and one class for trainable mentally retarded children run with the co-operation of the Association for the Mentally Retarded. There is one class for kindergarten and pre-school age children whose language abilities are severely delayed and who have problems with muscular co-ordination. If your young child is having serious speech problems contact the Special Services Branch of the Department of Education in the basement of Whitehorse Elementary School. The counsellor there will arrange doctor's appointments for diagnosis and if it should be necessary for you and your child to go outside to see a specialist your trip will be paid for by the government.

If a child is old enough for grade one but isn't mentally ready for the schoolwork there is a class which has a slowed down grade one course. Children spend a year or two here and are put into regular grade one whenever they are ready. There are two of these classes in Whitehorse and one in Watson Lake.

Besides these special classes there are remedial teachers in many schools. These people are trained to help children singly or in small groups by working with them on their problems. They teach skills such as reading and language and can handle learning disabilities. The child remains in the remedial teacher's care until he is ready to go back into the regular classroom.

Special Services can also help you, the parent. If your child isn't in school yet but you suspect that problems may develop, contact the Department. If your child hasn't been tested, the psychologist will assess his abilities. If he has been assessed elsewhere take along with you all your previous reports. Through discussion you and the Department will decide on the program which best suits your child. If your child is already in school and doesn't seem able to cope, talk to the principal and he'll refer you to Special Services if he feels that the problem is in their field.

If you are the parent of an emotionally or physically handicapped child ask your doctor or nurse for the names of people in the Yukon Association for Children with Learning Disabilities. You could benefit greatly from people whose children have problems similar to yours, in terms of both emotional and practical support.

A totally different service is provided by the Department of Northern Health. It operates a dental health program in all the schools in the Yukon which is directed by a dentist and carried out by dentists and trained dental nurses.

Every child up to grade six benefits from this program and plans are underway to extend the limit to grade twelve. Every child covered by the Plan receives a complete

dental examination by a dentist once a year. If there are any simple fillings and extractions to be carried out they are done by a dental nurse, in the school. She will also clean and scale each child's teeth and apply fluoride. If there are complicated procedures needed such as the fitting of braces, the dental nurse will refer the child to a dentist. If the youngster is going into kindergarten he can be taken to a clinic during the summer. These clinics are advertised on the radio as to time and place.

The parent has to sign a consent form for her child to be eligible for the program and if the form is signed the child will receive all necessary treatments at no charge to the family.

### **Care For the Elderly**

Older people who are beginning to find that the responsibilities of maintaining their homes or apartments are too much should enquire about the Lodges operated by the Territorial Government. Anyone over sixty-five years of age is eligible for residence but priority is given on the basis of age and the degree of need for assistance. The rental rates are low and are geared to people who have only their old age pensions and guaranteed supplements to live on. The rest of the costs are borne by the Territorial Government.

Anyone interested in applying should contact the local Social Welfare office. The waiting period between the application's being accepted and the moving in date will depend on how badly a place to stay is needed and whether there is space available. There are four lodges; the Norman D. Macauley Lodge and the Alexander Street Senior Citizen's Home, both in Whitehorse, and the Alexander MacDonald Lodge and Sunset Home, which are adjoining buildings located in Dawson.

Macauley Lodge has several types of accommodation. There are kitchenette units - really a small apartment - with a kitchen, bedroom, living-room and bathroom, which are available only to couples. Also, there are units with two bedrooms and a shared bathroom. People living in these rooms eat their meals in the common dining room, which serves three meals a day and snacks between meals. If a special diet is called for the food will be prepared specially.

A person unable to care for herself is eligible for nursing home care, which gives twenty-four hours a day care by registered nurses and nursing aides. A doctor's referral is necessary with application for this type of care.

The Lodge has two TV lounges and there are cable TV and phone hookups in each room. There is a recreation room in the basement which is used by several community groups to host birthday teas and special activities. Laundry can either be done by the staff or by the individual in the resident's laundry rooms. Macauley Lodge combines several ways of living - couples who need independence but can no longer cope with heavy maintenance find the small kitchen units ideal, single people who like company can share a two bedroom suite and for all, medical attention is available if it is needed.

The Alexander Street Home has twenty bed-sitting rooms with a kitchenette, a small dining area and room for storage. There are two TV lounges and two laundry rooms. The caretaker lives in the building so if there were ever an emergency he could be called immediately.

The two lodges in Dawson are joined to each other and share facilities. The MacDonald Lodge is a nursing home staffed by registered nurses and nursing aides and its residents are accepted only on a doctor's referral. There are five single bed and five double bed rooms, a dining room, a lounge, a recreation lounge and a TV lounge. The adjoining Sunset Home is for senior citizens who don't need medical care. Residents here have single bed-sitting rooms and share the dining room and lounges with the Lodge next door. Applicants for either of these homes don't have to be residents of Dawson to be eligible. For further information about any one of these lodges contact the nearest Social Welfare Department or talk to a doctor or Public Health nurse.

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