

MODERN MAN TO HUNTING BAND: A READAPTION

The Social Organization and Dynamics of the
"Old Timers" of the Yukon. 1882-1898.

by

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ABSTRACT

Before the rush for gold to the Klondike River area of Canada's Yukon Territory in 1897-98, there was in the vast land a small number of white frontiersmen who, over the previous twenty years, had entered the region in small groups to explore and prospect, and eventually to reside in the Yukon. These were the men who found the gold which precipitated the greatest gold rush the world has experienced.

These "old timers", as they are dubbed in the literature, were physically and linguistically indistinguishable from the Klondike gold seekers who followed. Both groups were, by a large majority, Americans or immigrants to the United States. However, the old timers as a viable group have been overlooked in the literature, being simply included with the "cheechako" (newcomer) stampedeers. Research led to a strong impression that this inclusion is not valid.

These early pioneers, under the ecological imperative of survival in a harsh primeval land (share and help one another or die), had with extreme rapidity formed a unique society which was quite unlike that of their fellow-countrymen, the Klondike stampedeers. The two groups are entirely distinguishable from each other in anthropological terms. They shared neither the same cultural values nor social organization.

This impression was formed unexpectedly during what was intended as background reading in consideration of quite another problem. However, with the realization that this group of Yukon old timers had formed a separate unique society, and that this has been totally unrecognized in the historical literature, the problem became the verification of this strong impression. An ethnographic reconstruction, and identification of the theoretical category to which this society belonged, was undertaken through the use of historical evidence and

anthropological theory.

It was concluded that this group of modern American men in a land which permitted no alternative, had taken on the social characteristics of the most simple full form of social organization, that typical of hunting-gathering societies all over the globe. Such readaption to the hunting-gathering mode of life is unusual, but not unknown to anthropologists.

(It has been noted to have occurred in certain tribes in Ceylon and South America who once maintained an advanced form of agriculture and who have readapted to being "small-scale hunting and collecting" societies (Lathrap, 1968:25).)

To facilitate the inquiry, library sources were utilized, consisting as far as possible of journals, diaries and memoirs of old timers, published in the form of books at or near to the time of the actual experience. Such historical sources are both scarce and fragmentary, and as is usual with such sources, present only the aspects of the experience which the informant felt worth recording. Thus the study has an impressionistic character, rather than being holistic and conclusive.

As first-hand old timers' memoirs are few, when necessary the works of outsiders to the society judged of high reliability are used to fill in gaps and to cross-check, adding the strength of verification to old timers' recorded observations.

While no permanent conclusions can be drawn from such a study, it is useful as support for points regarding hunting societies which anthropologists have speculated upon. Most intriguingly, the study affords glimpses of a hunting society in formation, a rare anthropological experience.

We also see a society in the process of rapid social change, moving towards institutionalization, particularly in the judicial area, as they attempted to cope with a sudden influx of powerful outsiders to the society, their fellow-

countrymen, the Klondike gold seekers.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page		i
Approval		ii
Abstract		iii
Acknowledgements		vi
List of Illustrations, Pictures & Maps		ix
Preface		x
<u>Chapter One:</u>	<u>Introduction</u>	1
	Methodology	3
	Historical Background	6
	Ethnic Origins	13
	Population Size	19
	Survival Time Span	23
	The Model Old Timer	26
	Cabins	35
<u>Chapter Two:</u>	<u>Social Control</u>	43
	Flux and Movement	43
	Groups and Partnerships	48
	Visiting	52
	"Sprees"	56
	Practical Joking	59
	Low Value on Gold	65
	Talking	68
	Exchange	72
<u>Chapter Three:</u>	<u>The Political Sphere</u>	77
	The Deviant	77
	Leadership-Jack McQuesten	79
	Miners' Law	84
	Sanctions	88
	The Yukon Order of Pioneers	99
<u>Chapter Four:</u>	<u>Survival: Conditions Affecting Yukon Adaptions</u>	105
	Marriage	105
	Death	121
	Health and Disease	127
	Food	131
	World View	138
<u>Chapter Five:</u>	<u>The Organization of Leisure</u>	149
	Entertainment	149
	Story-Telling	151
	Drinking	153
	Dancing	164

<u>Chapter Six:</u>	<u>Available Women</u>		167
	The Prostitutes	167	
	The Dance Hall Girls	171	
	The Indian Women	176	
<u>Chapter Seven:</u>	<u>Religion</u>		178
Conclusions			189
Footnotes			194
Bibliography			195

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS, PICTURES & MAPS

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1. Gold Along the Yukon (Map) | 1a |
| 2. Early Stove-Fireplace (Illustration) | 39a |
| 3. First Saloon in Dawson (Picture) | 156a |

PREFACE

At a symposium held at the University of Chicago in 1965 anthropologists gathered to consider current research on the hunting way of life. Claude Levi-Strauss, one of the speakers at the gathering, presented a provocative paper entitled, "The Concept of Primitiveness". In it he suggests that instead of defining hunting-gathering cultures in terms of a number of specific groups that can be pinpointed on a map, "the concept should be defined in terms of a certain way of life that may exist in pure, blended, and even highly diluted ...forms." Thus it is a certain type of behaviour that should be the object of our studies, not merely individual tribes (1968:344).

Most interestingly, Levi-Strauss feels that in discussing the cultural category of the hunter-gatherers, "it would be foolish,...to leave aside the direct experience we ourselves may have had in our own societies of hunting or gathering behavior." He suggests, by way of example, that we study the psychological experience of people in France and Russia and elsewhere who gather mushrooms as a full-fledged gathering activity (ibid:344). "We cannot consider the hunter-gatherers as belonging to a semi-animal condition of mankind," remarks Levi-Strauss (ibid:349), recalling the assertion of another speaker (Lathrop), that in parts of South America and Ceylon certain groups of hunters are not primitive, but have regressed to the hunting way of life. No doubt this is the case "in many other places," Levi-Strauss suggests.

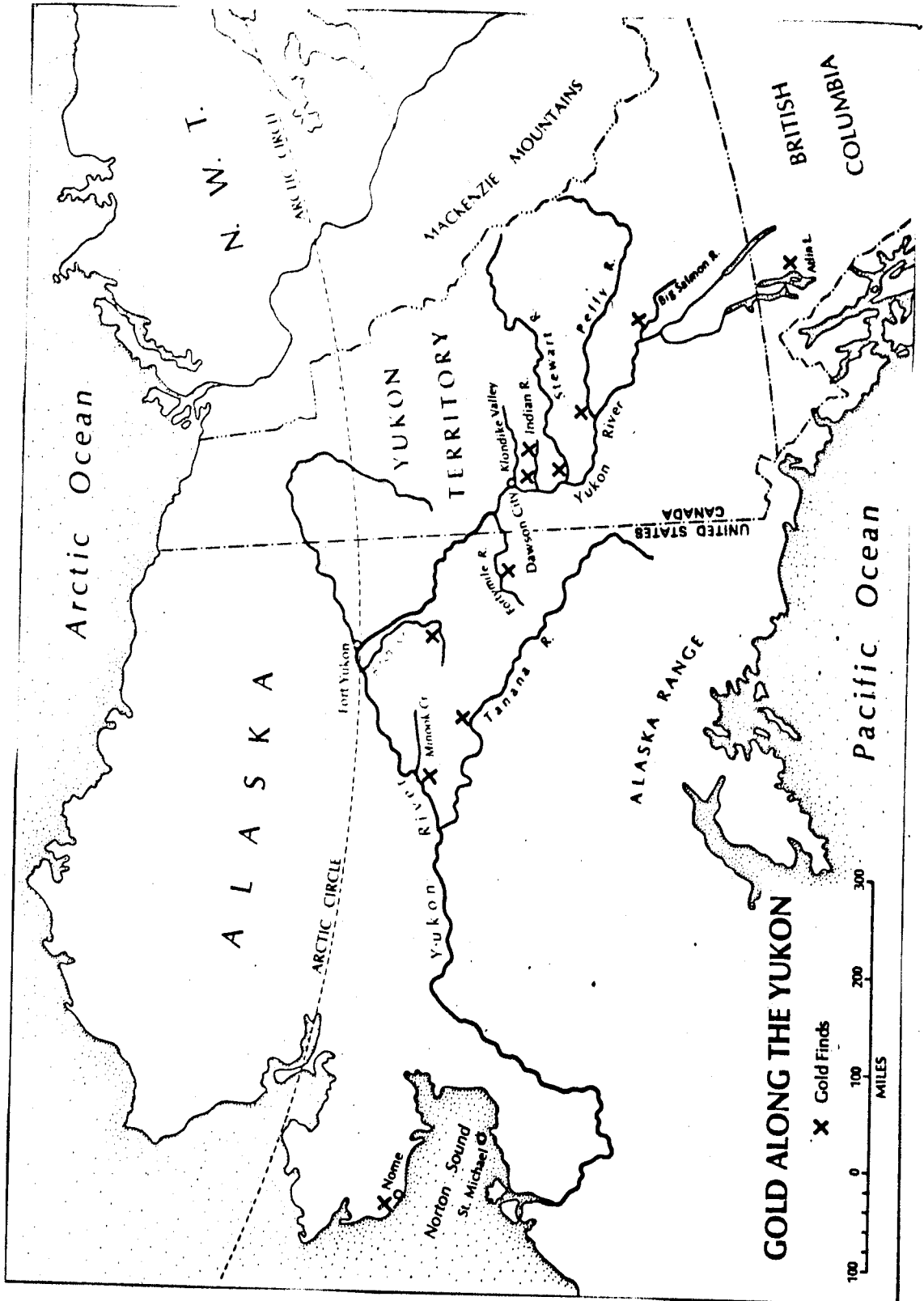
This study is an ethnographic reconstruction and consideration of a hunting band society in one of those "other places" -- Canada's Yukon Territory, 1882-1898.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The great Yukon River, fourth largest waterway on the North American continent, has its inception in Canadian territory, less than fifteen miles from the tidal waters of Dyea Inlet, at the northeasternmost tip of the Alaskan Panhandle. Gathering strength from a multitude of tributary creeks and rivers, the Yukon flows northwest about 450 miles to touch the Arctic Circle, where it arcs abruptly southwestward, cutting more than 1,500 miles across the center of Alaska, to empty at length into the cold waters of the Bering Sea.

In August 1896 an exceptionally rich gold strike was made on the Klondike River, a tributary river which empties into the great Yukon in Canadian territory about 100 miles above the point where the Yukon crosses into the American territory of Alaska. This strike precipitated the greatest gold stampede that has ever occurred, tens of thousands of men and women, mainly from the United States, started north. Approximately 40,000 actually arrived in Dawson (Clark, 1962:93). This human tidal wave engulfed and submerged in its irresistible numbers a unique, distinct, and totally unrecognized small society which had formed among the small group of white men, the pre-Klondike "old timers" as they are usually referred to in the literature. These were the men who ventured in over the mountain passes to explore and prospect, and eventually to live in the Yukon and Alaska; the men who found the gold that set off the stampede which overwhelmed their society. This society had evolved with great rapidity under the ecological imperative of human survival in a harsh primeval frozen land (i.e. share and help each other or die), into the most simple and earliest known full form of social organization -- a hunting band type of society.



Although many writers appear to have recognized that the old timers were in some vague ways different from the following stampedeers, the extent to which these men who had their own unique social organization were culturally distinctive from the inflooding 'cheechakos' (newcomers), has not been clearly distinguished in the literature. There are several reasons for this, the most obvious that they were physically and linguistically indistinguishable from the 'cheechakos', the Klondike stampedeers of 1897-98. Both were white, English-speaking, and very largely from the United States. Furthermore, this was a small and short-lived society, existing for only twenty-odd years, hence it was dwarfed and obscured by the magnitude of the 1897-98 rush to the Klondike River strike, which their rich find precipitated.

S.D. Clark, perhaps the best known social scientist to examine the Yukon society of that era, does not distinguish the old timers as a unique society. He remarks only that, "the undoubted richness in gold of the Klondike River bed, ...quickly attracted a large body of experienced prospectors and miners once the first discoveries had been made." (1962:93). Since Clark's important work, however, anthropological theory has expanded greatly. Furthermore, an upsurge of interest in our Canadian heritage has led to the publication of many heretofore unavailable and overlooked historical documents. Many fascinating and valuable experiences, recorded first-hand by early pioneers are now available, which was not so when Clark did his research.

Interestingly Clark, in his essay on "The Gold Rush Society of British Columbia and the Yukon" (1962), identifies as being generally characteristic of the miners in B.C. from 1858 to 1902 many of the attributes which anthropologists find in the hunting band type of society. For example, Clark mentions the high rate of mobility of the miners, "the constant flux and exodus of people", the impermanence of the camps, the work pattern of periods

of labour alternating with periods of idleness (1962:83), the strong individualism of the men (ibid:85) and the lack of organized religion (ibid:91). Not all the adaption towards the hunter's life style took place after the prospectors entered the Yukon.

METHODOLOGY

The main research source utilized in making this study are personal journals and memoirs written during or very shortly after the actual experience, and published in the form of books. As far as possible, records written by old timers, members of the society, are utilized. Such sources are extremely few, hence the work of outsiders judged reliable -- contemporary persons who observed the old timers' group first-hand, are used when necessary to support or link-up each historical 'clue' from the old timers' memoirs, and so lend strength to the credibility of the utilized remark.

Such sources deal only with the aspects of life the author thought worth recording -- usually his own physical and emotional experiences and observations. The evidence by old timers is particularly limited and fragmentary, which necessitates building up the ethnographic 'picture' on snippets of evidence from many sources, forming a collage of evidence, rather than a consensus. This is not as large a problem as might be expected, due to this society being (evidently) of the hunting band type.

Anthropologists are in general agreement that men in hunting societies in widely separated parts of the globe live by certain strongly similar cultural rules and values. Individuals within such a society live very similar lives; thus drawing on evidence left by a few old timers as representative of the society as a whole, or piecing together shreds of cultural evidence from several such sources has validity. Cultural evidence left by a very few members

of a hunting society may be expected to be much more representative of that whole cultural group than records of a similar number of members of a more complex society. Nevertheless it should be understood that this thesis is an impressionistic study. There is no claim to its being conclusive.

Being impressionistic, the familiar device of using quotes, of letting the recorder speak, as far as possible, in his or her own words rather than rephrasing (and perhaps unconsciously warping the meaning) seemed useful and is employed.

A major shortcoming of the reconstruction method is that there is usually no means of rechecking a hypothesis as the social system under examination has ceased to function. In the case of the old timers' society as mentioned, fortunately there are memoirs by several outsider-observers, which facilitates cross-checking.

One of these, William Ogilvie, was in the area surveying the Yukon-Alaskan boundary line for the Canadian government as early as 1887 (Ogilvie, 1913:36). Ogilvie, who has the reputation of being a meticulous recorder, as well as being the pioneer surveyor of the region, was much involved with these men on an extended basis through his work. Colonel Samuel Steele and Staff-Sergeant M.H. Haynes, both of the (Canadian) North West Mounted Police detachment sent in to police the Yukon area in 1895 often unknowingly verify the old timers' testimony.

Also many stampeders, or journalist-observers of the Klondike gold rush phenomenon, make reference in their memoirs to the men who were the old timers. In virtually all cases, as shall be seen, there is complete unanimity as to the group character of these pioneers which is strongly supportive of the hypothesis made.

In this study it was necessary to limit the exercise to the reconstruction

(and analysis in terms of anthropological theory) to the old timers and their society only. Their relationships to the other human elements in the Yukon, the outsiders to this society -- the native tribal peoples, the missionaries, later the North West Mounted Police and the cheechako-stampeders of 1897-98 -- do not get the attention they should, being referred to but briefly. These tasks must await another occasion.

Other aspects of the societal record anthropologically important are missing simply through lack of clear or sufficient evidence. The attributes most clearly documented in the very personal historical documents have to do with the type of behaviour, the values and the ideology of the group; the social relations and interaction; the kin feeling between society members; the organization of the band; the way in which authority is exercised; the means of social control, and the adaptations the society made as they strove to cope with large numbers of newcomers to the territory, outsiders to the band. Details of the technology are largely missing, as are many aspects of family life and child-rearing practices, for example.

With many areas of anthropological importance missing it was realized that this could not be a holistic study. The aim became that of identifying this group of men as making up a hunting-gathering type society.

The 1965 symposium on Man the Hunter is a reconsideration of past notions regarding hunting-gathering societies. It led to an updating of many older ideas in the light of new ethnographic findings. This modern concept of the Hunter is heavily relied on, the anthropologists' findings being accepted as given. Not all hunting societies necessarily respond to this model. Where the work of an historian is drawn on, it also is taken as given.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Anthropologists generally consider the hunting band type of society the most simple and earliest full form of social organization. Above the family level of integration it is "almost an inevitable kind of organization" wherever there is low population density and aboriginal conditions since cultural man's beginning.¹ Such small-scale societies appear to arrive independently at similar solutions to similar demographic and ecological problems, despite widely differing social ideologies (Lee and DeVore, 1968:6). Hunting bands in very widely separated sections of the globe share a fluidity of both composition and movements of groups, a pattern of generalized reciprocity, and a strong bond of brotherhood (ibid:12). All these characteristics, considered to be the basis of a hunting band type of society, will be seen to be clearly evidenced by the pre-rush Yukon old timers.

Using the definition of society as being "a group of people with a common and at least somewhat distinctive culture who occupy a particular territorial area, have a feeling of unity, and regard themselves as a distinguishable entity,"² the hypothesis may be made that these men, (most of whom, it shall be seen, came from the rapidly industrializing United States) entering the northland on foot, with only what supplies they could carry, with truly astonishing rapidity developed the basic culture and social organization of a hunting type society.

Alien in the empty malevolently cold primeval land, in which the need to find sustenance was more urgent than the desire to find gold, life was possible only through a series of rapid cultural adaptations; the first was to accept the imperative nature of sharing, of always offering a comrade help in every form. From the very beginning, and always, in a very real sense in the unexplored Yukon cooperation was not merely expedient, but a functional imperative. A

society's readapting to a hunting form, or "devolution" as anthropologists dub it, is not unknown. Lathrap, in Man the Hunter cites a number of hunting peoples whom he refers to as "failed agriculturalists" -- for example, classic hunting societies such as the Siriono of South America and the Veddas of Ceylon (1968:4). The old timers were less "failed agriculturalists" than, perhaps, "refusing industrialists".

The hazards of moving through the unknown and often brutal land made men dependent on each other for many things. It took two men to whipsaw lumber to build a boat (the river was the highway); it took more than two to portage the boat past a waterfall; it took three to five to row and pole and haul a boat upriver; and if a man was sick or injured, having a companion might mean the difference between life and death.

The significant aspect of this organization is that not merely the co-operative sharing pattern of the hunters was taken on, (which might have been simply expedient), but there is much evidence of a general value change; the prospectors who initially functioned together in the hunting pattern clearly became a hunting type society that prospected!

This society was not a typical hunting society for many obvious reasons; for example, if they had not brought in rifles with which to hunt game, they would not have been able to make this cultural adaption -- their survival as a distinctive unit would not have been possible. The old timers can be considered as are the Inuit, the aborigines of central Australia and the !Kung Bushmen of the blazing Kalahari desert, an extreme and unique example of the dramatic and radical adaption man can make under dire environmental pressure (Lee and DeVore, 1968:5).

Being designated a hunting society implies a lifestyle characterized by constraints on the possession of property which serves to keep wealth diff-

erences between individuals to a minimum; there are no specialized occupations, and no formal ranking: the society is egalitarian. The horizontal "solidary" group is, according to Service, "a nucleus of cooperating males ["brothers"] (who) hunted and defended the camp." (1971:37). "Sharing and human caring are held to be the fundamentals of human hunting societies." (Washburn and Lancaster, 1968:296).

Before validation of the hypothesis is attempted through the historical evidence, several aspects will be explored: who these men were, in terms of their ethnic background, an 'ideal type' model of the old timer society member will be suggested, the time span during which this society was distinguishable will be defined, and a very brief sequential history of the Yukon region from the coming of the first of the old timers will be outlined.

These pioneers ranged widely over the whole of the Yukon-Alaska territory, following the two thousand mile Yukon River and its many tributaries wherever they wound through the mountainous land. The Canadian-American boundary had not yet been firmly established, there was no governmental authority in the land, and the men gave scant recognition to such political limits. The earliest miners referred to all the areas they worked in as "Alaska", Ogilvie has recorded, "as they were American and the International Boundary was not settled" until a few years after the earliest diggings. "They had formed the habit of referring to the whole region as Alaska, and continued to refer to both the Yukon and Alaska by that title." (1913:12-13).

Hence, in this study, where the term Yukon is used, it refers to no sharp cutoff point at an international border, but to the general area from (American) Juneau to the headwaters of the great river in Canadian territory, down the length of the river to (American) Circle City, and well beyond. The same old timers were at various times up and down the entire river from the headwater

lakes at the foot of the formidable Chilcoot Pass, to St. Michael near its mouth on the Bering Sea. Although this handful of prospectors fanned out, scattering thinly over a vast area, contact between them was far more frequent than might have been expected. This was due to the fact that all men, traders, Indians, missionaries and prospectors moved on the river, and custom decreed that no man passed by a fellow man without pulling into the bank for at least a smoke, to exchange news, almost always to exchange supplies and, often, to make camp for the night or visit for a few days.

The kind of gold sought was placer or 'free' gold, which had been broken loose by the action of water and time and deposited through its weight in crannies and gravel banks and bars of streams. It could be mined without expensive equipment by "any man with a shovel and pan and a strong back" as Berton puts it (1963:15) -- plus the patience, endurance, knowledge, and luck to find it. All mining up to 1887 was "skim digging", a crude technique in which only the unfrozen two to four feet of the surface was worked (Ogilvie, 1913:138). After 1887, on Ogilvie's suggestion, a firing method of softening the ground by building a fire, then digging out the thawed earth and refiring permitted mining down to bedrock, resulted in a quality and quantity of gold not before dreamed of, and winter workings (ibid:140).

Most of the men in the period before 1895 were working in the upper Yukon Valley, mining the gold found at the Stewart River and at Forty Mile River in 1886. The usual pattern in the earliest years was to winter in Juneau or Sitka or some U.S.A. settlement, raise a "grubstake" (money for supplies), and go "in" in the spring over the Chilcoot Pass in small groups. They built boats at the upper lakes, and prospected down the river highway, poling back up and "out" again in September before the river froze. If they had had a lucrative season they might alternatively drift down river, or take the once-a-year (and

always unreliable) trading company steamer, to St. Michael to go "outside" to revel in the luxury of San Francisco, or Seattle, or Victoria, before returning (always 'broke') for the next summer's explorations.

Until about 1882 the only white men in the whole upper Yukon Valley above Fort Yukon were, as far as is known, the three traders who plied the river between the small fur-trading post, Fort Reliance, which they established for the Alaska Commercial Company (A.C.C.) on the Yukon about six miles below where Dawson later rose, and Fort Yukon. This earlier established post was 350 miles down river at the point where the great north-flowing river makes its sudden swing to the west. Both posts were supplied by a small company steamboat which attempted the trip upriver from St. Michael once a year with trading goods and to collect a cargo of furs (McQuesten, 1952:5).

Until 1882, the upper post's trade was entirely with the few small spear and bow carrying semi-nomadic Indians; however, that year at Christmas, when his aboriginal customers were celebrating the Feast of the Dead, Leroy N. (Jack) McQuesten, trader at Fort Reliance and pioneer on the upper Yukon since 1871, had for the first time in the ice-locked winter, "someone he could converse with". Two groups, totalling twelve prospectors, had not gone out the previous fall as had been necessary in the past, but had wintered "in", at or near the post. These men regularly met at the station in the evenings, and "would play cards, tell stories and the winter evenings passed away very pleasantly." (McQuesten, 1952:8).

These men were not strangers to the traders, being it seems, seasoned prospectors, friends, or friends of friends, who had come in response to letters or word-of-mouth messages passed along from one or another of the traders. Harper, in particular, is mentioned by many authors as writing many letters, urging "old mining comrades in B.C." to come north (Haskell, 1898:50).

There had been, the previous summer, a total of perhaps eighteen men travelling and prospecting up and down the upper Yukon River. Of those who went "outside" to winter some probably never returned; of the group who wintered at Fort Reliance 1882-83, and spent the following mid-June to mid-September season prospecting Forty Mile and Sixty Mile Rivers, all but two left in the fall of 1883 to go to Juneau (McQuesten, 1952:11). This pattern of flow in and out, and interchange of personnel continued to be the pattern throughout the entire pre-Klondike gold rush era. The "wintering in" near a trading post, that is within two or three days travel, was the first experiment with a new group life style -- that of permanent residence in the Yukon.

As news of a series of small strikes was spread by letter and word-of-mouth among friends and fellow prospectors, small groups of gold seekers trickled in. W.H. Pierce, whose book Thirteen Years of Travel and Exploration in Alaska was published in 1890, was one of the very earliest pioneers. Unfortunately for our history, he does not give names or dates but, from his description, it was the following year (1883) that he was one of a group of forty who, after a summer of exploring the then unnamed Forty Mile River, built cabins and wintered at the mouth of that river (1890:187).

By 1886, there were about two hundred and fifty men in the entire upper Yukon valley. There was a winter camp of about two hundred at the mouth of Forty Mile River (so named as it was forty miles from McQuesten's first post, Fort Reliance) where good "coarse gold, the great desideratum of all miners" as Ogilvie put it, had been discovered that year. The rest were mainly at the rich 'flour' (fine) gold claims, found a few months earlier at the Stewart River (Ogilvie, 1913:109-111).

McQuesten had opened a small trading post at the Stewart in 1886, but as the coarse gold of Forty Mile was easier to mine than the fine dust of the

equally rich Stewart River claims, "everybody decided to strike the new field and the (Stewart) camp being practically deserted, Harper and McQuesten had to move to the new ground; they built a post at the mouth of Forty Mile...(in 1887." (Ogilvie, 1913:112).

As there was no base of supplies above Forty Mile

"nearly all the work and prospecting done in the country had to be done at Forty Mile...For several years from that date about three hundred men mined in the region, but as the small steamer plying on the river could not bring in provisions enough to winter more than one hundred...the other two hundred had to make their way out ...After the Arctic began to make regular trips on the river from St. Michael, in 1890, there were plenty of provisions in the country as a rule, and more men ventured there..." (Ogilvie, 1913:112-3)

In 1892 another trading company appeared on the river, the North American Transportation and Trading Co. (N.A.T.&T.). The increase in population brought a detachment of North West Mounted Police into the area in 1894, and with their coming many of the independent and self-governed men moved on, mainly to Circle City. This was a new camp they established 170 miles downstream on the U.S. Alaskan side of the boundary, at a new (Birch Creek) gold find.

In the late summer of 1895, "a lot of gold came down to San Francisco from...the Yukon, and...Alaska began to attract a lively attention in the mining camps of the Rocky Mountains and along the Pacific Coast," and a number of men went north (Haskell, 1898:53). Soon there were five hundred men in Circle City alone, and scattered along the Yukon and its tributaries were about one thousand prospectors, approximately half of whom wintered in the area (Hunt, 1974:235). By spring 1897 there were fifteen hundred men in the Klondike area alone, and a new camp, Dawson, with a population of about one hundred persons was forming (Hulley, 1953:251).

As Birdsell points out in Man the Hunter, five hundred individuals is the model number theorized as being still able to maintain face-to-face communication in the sense of everybody knowing everyone. Larger groups tend to sub-

divide into smaller units of twenty-five to fifty persons (1968:233).

Webb, one of the earliest Klondike "millionaires" who went out on one of the two gold ships which brought the news (and hard evidence) of gold in the Yukon to the outside world, described the situation at the new Klondike strike in 1896-97. At this time, although the cheechako-stampederers had not yet arrived, hundreds of the hopeful of Alaska certainly had, swelling the local population well beyond the 500 optimum number for maintaining relations as one group. Webb, drawing on the 1896-97 Klondike situation, remarked that "a claim, when 'opened up' and shovelling in is going on, is an active little community of about 20 persons -- a cluster of cabins and tents, a cheerful, happy, working lot," (1898:687) which seems to fit with Birdsell's notion.

With so many men on the river, more (still one-yearly-when-possible) river steamers and a second source of supplies, those who lived by the cultural rules through expediency appear now to have had some choice. This distinctive old timers' society can be seen to have been swept aside and completely submerged in the tidal wave of Klondike stampederers.

The era before 1896 appears to have been their "finest hour"; however, it shall be seen as we go on that, through various sanctions and cultural adaptation, the tiny society coped quite successfully with the constant influx of personnel, right up to May 29, 1898, when the ice in the river broke and the first of the flotilla of cheechako gold seekers appeared up river. But here we must deviate in order to establish the background of the men who made up the old timers' society.

ETHNIC ORIGINS

The large majority of the old timers were American citizens or, at least, from the United States, having migrated there in earlier years. William Ogilvie,

a Canadian government surveyor of the Yukon-Alaska boundary, reported in Ottawa in early 1888 that most of the miners in the region

"while of foreign origin, were American citizens, or had declared their intention to become so, many even of Canadian birth...having done so, for the advantage it gave them in the region, no alien being allowed to...record claims in the American territory of Alaska, while Canada allowed any one to stake and secure title." (1913:143)

However identifying these men as Canadian or American citizens lends a false emphasis -- the majority of the Canadians had spent many years in various of the western mining areas of the United States before coming to the north country. Conversely, many Americans had mined in B.C.'s Fraser and Cariboo districts (as had also the Canadians). For example, two of the old timers most discussed, both born in Nova Scotia, had spent the previous fourteen years silver mining in Colorado (Ogilvie, 1913:119; Berton, 1963:34-6). Frank Buteau, a French Canadian from Quebec, had moved to Maine at the age of twenty-one. Later he moved again, to Wisconsin, Tacoma and Seattle over a nine year period; the next three years he spent in the tiny frontier mining town of Kamloops, B.C., moving next to the infant city of Vancouver, before going north in 1886 in the company of twenty-one others (Heller, 1967:93).

Of the four original pioneers, (the three traders McQuesten, Mayo and Harper -- and Fred Hart, a rather shadowy figure glimpsed throughout early Yukon histories), three are identified as having been from the U.S.A. McQuesten was American-born, apparently of Irish descent, being referred to occasionally in the literature as "the big Irishman". Harper and Hart, who had been born about the same date (1835) in the same county of Ireland, had emigrated to the U.S.A. during their early youth "to try their luck" (ibid).

McQuesten, who had come as a very young man from New Hampshire to the California mining area, was for a time in the northwestern American silver mining area, and from 1858 to 1863 was in Canada's Cariboo gold mining country.

Harper, Hart and Mayo had also mined in the Cariboo. On receiving word of another miner's success in striking gold in the Peace River basin, McQuesten and several partners went there; trading, trapping, exploring and prospecting along the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers, until a Hudson Bay trader told him "big stories" of ample fur and gold in the Yukon River country. As a result, in 1873 they went into the Yukon-Alaska region. (McQuesten, 1958:2).

Another factor making identification of these earliest Yukon pioneers in terms of citizenship both difficult and essentially meaningless, is that they did not think of themselves as either Canadian or American. For instance, Henry Davis who came to the Yukon in 1884, and who was born in Rosebud, Montana in 1861 (Heller, 1967:16), told us his partner "from Toronto is a Dane and myself English." (Davis, 1967:43).

The old timers were, according to Berton, "Civil War veterans and Indian fighters, remittance men from England and prospectors from the far west. Many ... (of whom) had known each other in the Black Hills..." and various U.S. mining camps (1963:18).

While they probably had done, at some time, all of these things, the important aspect is that they were all experienced frontier men. Records of mobility such as Buteau and McQuesten had were not merely commonplace, but apparently the norm.

Father William Judge, a Jesuit missionary at Forty Mile, wrote in 1896 that "a great part of the miners seem men who have been running away from civilization as it advanced westward in the States, until now they have no farther to go." (1907:162). Frank Pierce, who 'went in' to the Yukon in 1877 later described the "Frontierman" of the Yukon in terms which suggest that Father Judge was right. Judge also cited one old timer "who had never seen a railroad because he kept moving ahead of the railroad until he got here." (1907:

162). Another old timer is said to have sold his rich Forty Mile claim for \$120 and a Winchester rifle. The buyer, on washing out four ounces (\$68 worth) of gold in one day, asked him why he had sold it. The old timer replied that it was because "they's gittin' too thick for me round here". This was in 1887, and then "there were only 65 men in the whole country," claimed the writer (Webb, 1898:681).

A more precise identification than that of nationality would be to suggest that, due to the custom of spreading news by letter and by word-of-mouth, plus their shared background of frontier experience (prospecting, trading, trapping, hunting), they formed a subculture of frontier men, which evolved under extreme environmental pressure and lack of any real alternative into a hunting society.

Yet some prior ethnic identification is possible because the old timers' records utilized contained many names. McQuesten, Harper and Hart have been identified; others in their traveling group in 1873 included Finch, a Canadian from Kingston, Kansellar, a German (Ogilvie, 1913:88); Sam Williams, cousin to McQuesten and who was with McQuesten on the Yukon in 1873 (Wickersham, 1938:98); and ethnically unidentified men such as McKnipp and Kensley (ibid). There were other blood relations among the earliest pioneers. Old Captain William Moore, still an active influential old timer at the age of 73, had two sons, Henry and the author J. Bernard Moore, among the early men. Davis mentioned "the Ashley brothers" among the group in 1887 (1967:49). He also listed among a group of the earliest men who were together at the mouth of Forty Mile River in 1887, such names as Densmore, Hughes, Wright, Bender, Hess, Ashley, Bozeman, Hill, Coniff and Edmunds (1967:49). Other very early old timers were Maiden, McClosky, Marks, Beach, Boswell, Franklin, O'Brien, Love, Johnson, Finch, Swanson and Day. There was an almost complete lack of eastern European or Latin

names, pointing to the British and Western European heritage of these men. This agrees with S.D. Clark's findings regarding the miners of earlier B.C., who, before 1860, were almost entirely from California (1962:82). Later other nationalities arrived. Clark mentions Canadian, American, Australian, New Zealanders, English, Irish and Scots and various groups from Europe. The English, and the educated, he remarks, tended to be apart from the mining population, being mainly colonial administrators and merchants (ibid:89). As these earlier miners made up much of the old timer population, we can take it that Australians and New Zealanders were also represented, although there is no record of anyone being designated as such. French names (from the evidence French-Canadian) were fairly common. And often, it seems, the French had been originally Hudson's Bay Company men.

Throughout the literature one notices many mentions of meeting "Hibernians" -- a literary term for Irishmen (Haskell, 1898:256, 258). Also Ogilvie recorded many old timer tales in an Irish brogue (1913:73), as did journalist Adney (1900:270). At the impressionistic level, it appears that the very earliest old timers consisted of a group of friends and old acquaintances who had pioneered together in the past, quite a number of whom (though not all) were Americans of Irish descent or Irish immigrants to the U.S. in earlier years. The Scots seem to have been traders, Company men; the French-Canadians originally Hudson's Bay Company voyageurs, and the English were not represented in this society.

There were a few Italian names. One notices that the few with "foreign" names were referred to as "Gus the Greek", "Russian John", and "French Pete, Joe and Louis", a designation which may have been simply a convenience since their surnames were probably difficult to pronounce. If it was based on accent surely we would find such nicknames as "Irish Mike", "Scotch Harry", but we do

not. These nicknames were not derogatory -- these men were partners, sharing cabins and prospecting trips with the others.

The old timers brought many racial prejudices with them to the Yukon. They came in with a prejudice against Indians, based on their experiences in the U.S. Western mining area. They discriminated vigorously against Orientals, permitting none in Alaska or the Yukon (Ballou, 1889:184). Old timer Murphy recalled an occasion in Juneau, 1885, when fifty Chinese employed by Treadwell mines were forced to leave through the actions of the white miners who "held a meeting and decided they would ship the Chinese out of the country..." They were put into large Indian canoes, and placed aboard a schooner and deported to Puget Sound; all except for one, "China Joe, who was a baker in Juneau and who had at one time saved the miners in the Cassiar district from starvation." Watching them leave was "a beautiful sight." (1967:25). They also refused to allow a solitary Japanese through the Chilcoot Pass, again calling a meeting "because they did not want any Japs in there." (Moore, 1968: 169).

Nor were there Jews or blacks in the society or the territory. Henderson remarked that in 1897, there were but "two negroes in all of Alaska." (1898: 288). These appeared after the N.W.M.P. took over jurisdiction. One was probably the negro barber mentioned by Ogilvie as being in Forty Mile in 1896 (along with one Jew, a tailor) (1913:252) and an old gray-haired Negro from Georgia who came in with a freighting outfit and "no idea of trying for gold" but who did stake and made \$30,000, Haskell reported (1898:336). That the first two were clearly outside of the society will become clear in other contexts later. It seems likely that the black from Georgia was permitted to stake through the vigilance and enforcement of 'fair play' by the N.W.M.P. S.D. Clark writes of "the inherited antagonism of the Americans to Negroes"

coming to the fore when many blacks (escaped slaves) made their way into the small mining towns. "Displays of racial tolerance on the part of the British peoples served only to aggravate the strained relationships." (1962:89-90).

The old timers were designated as being "a cosmopolitan crew" by N.W.M.P. Sergeant Haynes, who claimed that there were "many gentlemen, born and bred... several university men" among them (1897:153). Haynes was, however, an Englishman of an era when Englishmen were extremely conscious of class. One does not doubt his claim, simply his emphasis. It seems clear that these men were occupationally and by education not distinguished -- "nondescripts" is the term Adney said was usually applied (1900:273).

POPULATION SIZE

It is difficult to arrive at a reasonable approximation of the population size of the old timers' society. These men exhibited to a bewildering degree what anthropologists consider to be the hunting bands' most characteristic feature -- that is, a pronounced fluidity and flexibility of band composition (Lee and DeVore, 1968:7): a constant flux, by which is meant "a constant change-over of personnel between local groups and frequent shift of campsites through the seasons". This apparent instability reflects in fact, as some anthropologists maintain, a highly effective social mechanism which "give these (hunting) societies their cohesion." (Turnbull, 1968:132).

The flexibility of living arrangements and constant flux presents "at first a confusing and disorderly picture", as Lee and DeVore point out (1968:9). The old timer traveling segments, working units, hunting and cabin-sharing groups constantly shifted and reformed, lasting a few hours, days, weeks or months with no discernible time pattern.

Furthermore, the internal fluidity of the old timers' society extended to

a constant going and coming into and out of the Yukon, some for a winter season (to earn money to return), others on a "spree" which would last as long as their money, perhaps up to a year. Others (the majority) left never to return. Newcomers came in, some to remain and become old timers, others to stay but a few weeks or a season.

Journalist E.T. Adney, who was at Dawson through the fall and winter of 1897 before the main surge of newcomers swept in with the 1898 spring breakup, was told by the old timers that they did not consider a man an old timer "unless he came in with the first rush of sixteen years ago." (1900:268). Davis' remark, added to sum up his journal entries when he was an old man still living in Alaska, to the effect that "there are only a few of the old boys alive. Not more than five or six who came here prior to 1886, ... (and) we will all soon make our last trip over the last divide..." (1967:83) verifies Adney's statement. Davis considered as his comrades the men who came in prior to 1886. Through these several remarks the old timers are self-identified as being the perhaps two to three hundred men who wintered at Forty Mile camp prior to the very rich Forty Mile and Stewart River finds in 1886, which brought in a larger than optimum number for effective survival of a hunting band type of society. By 1894 or '95 the pattern of the majority of the men mining for a season or two, then leaving never to return, had reduced this earlier number to a nucleus group of about 70 to 80 of the original men.

Among the earliest pioneers an informal bond of "camaraderie" amounting to kinship was quite evident. The Briton, DeWindt, who explored Alaska, twice remarked that "the old timers (of Circle City, 1896), are more like members of one large family than anything else." (1898:164). "There is a kind of brotherly affection among them." (ibid:128).

In 1892 news of a strike on Birch Creek, where Circle City later grew, was

sent to Forty Mile camp. Eighty men, at that time about one-half of the total population at Forty Mile, left and went down river to a point just over the boundary in U.S. Alaskan territory, where they established a new camp they named Circle City under the erroneous impression that it was on the Arctic circle (Adney, 1900:458). This camp was washed out the following spring, and so was moved a few miles. On his way upriver in September 1894, pioneer trader McQuesten told Ogilvie he found about seventy-five miners who had laid out a townsite and had about thirty cabins under construction at the new Circle City site (Ogilvie, 1913:113). In Circle City also, about 1895, the old timers formed their first formal organization, a fraternal order, the Yukon Order of Pioneers (Y.O.O.P.) with an active membership of seventy to eighty members and one honorary member, Captain Constantine of the N.W.M.P. (Adney, 1900:356). At first membership was restricted to men who had been in the country prior to 1887, later it was extended to include men who had come into the country as recently as 1892, and there were lodges at Forty Mile and Dawson also, bringing the total membership to 145 (Webb, 1898:681). "The society levies on its members for sick benefits, care of widows and for sending out of the country any of the members who become broken down by the life." (ibid).

Webb, who called the Y.O.O.P. "one of the most powerful influences for good order in the country", dated its formation as taking place in 1890, not in 1895 as do most recorders (ibid). Adney, a usually reliable reporter said this order was formed in 1895 in Circle City (1900:356), as did old timer Davis, one of whose journal entries, September 3, 1895 recorded that "George Snow opened up a theatre here. (Circle City) After the show we are going to have a Pioneer's meeting. We organized and called it the Yukon Order of Pioneers." (1967: 75). According to Berton, the Y.O.O.P. developed from the earlier Miners' Association (1963:32). It was probably the parent order which began, as Webb

indicated, in 1890. Later Jack McQuesten was installed as president of the Y.O.O.P. It was "a great night at Circle City when the gold watch and chain bearing the insignia of the order was presented...(to him). It had cost \$500, but no one knows what Jack's bar bill amounted to that night at four bits (50¢) a drink." (Webb, 1898:682).

After the formal public organization the Y.O.O.P. took on judicial duties as shall be discussed later; however, until this order came into being any white man in the Yukon was accepted as a "brother" with full reciprocal rights and responsibilities, unless he proved himself unworthy of the brotherhood offered and expected.

It is the nature of hunting-gathering societies to be preeminently personal and familistic, as Service has indicated (1966:75) and "all families in the world" have rituals or "Life Crisis Rites" of some sort connected with birth, marriage and death. Many, but not all, also have rituals connected with the change from childhood to adolescence as an important partial step towards full adult status.

In band societies, according to Service, the rites involving the initiation of adolescents are the most distinctive.

"Birth, marriage, and burial rituals are individualized, occur sporadically, and in the case of birth and death, at least, they happen when they happen...The rites of initiation to adulthood seem more socially significant ... (as) the initiation rites seem of group interest, whereas birth, marriage, and death are of more concern to the immediate family, less so for the more distant relatives.... (ibid:75).

The most elaborate ceremonies involve the initiation of boys, Service continues, "almost universal features of these ceremonies are physical ordeals." (ibid).

In the old timers' band society, no formalized initiation into full manhood, or full society membership was necessary. The fact that a man was there

was ample proof that he had undergone a physical ordeal, an environmental 'initiation'. As Henry Davis suggested, "it was a man's job to tow the boat up White Horse Rapids," (1967:37) as was living in general in the brutal empty land.

However, to return to our topic, the approximately eighty men who Adney told us left Forty Mile for the Birch Creek strike in 1892, and who founded Circle City, were probably the seventy to eighty original members of the YOOP. These self-identified old timers appear to make up a core group, the nucleus of this society. This statistic permits some rough estimation of flux or "survival time" in the sense of permanency of residence in the Yukon -- in 1884 they numbered about 200, but by 1895 they only numbered 70-80.

SURVIVAL TIME SPAN

The time span during which the old timers' society was distinguishable is more readily established. In hunting societies there are no separate institutions as a political system, government, legal or religious system above the informal authority of the group through consensus based on custom (Service, 1971:98). The economy, polity and ideology is unprofessionalized, hence any disruptive act, say, the refusal to share or to cooperate according to custom, cannot be tolerated. The chief sanction is shunning, the mode of recognizing status is respect. Both status and sanctions rest on the accord given group approval or disapproval (Harris, 1971:374). It is clear that when the sanctions lose their coercive power, the whole societal fabric disintegrates.

In 1893, in the old timers' society, there is evidence that the informal sanctions still held power. Bishop Bompas, Anglican bishop of Selkirk (Yukon) who made the Forty Mile camp his headquarters and who had written to the Canadian government at Ottawa in 1882 complaining that the miners "were teaching

the Indians to make whiskey with demoralizing effect" (Cody, 1908:27), wrote again to Ottawa. On this occasion he reported that "the miners have themselves now checked the drinking among the Indians by deciding that the next person who gives a drink to an Indian shall receive notice to leave the country in twenty-four hours." (ibid:267). In 1892 the old timers still "had the law in their own hands and with rare exceptions, kept good order" Bompas testified in a further communication to the government (ibid:264).

William Ogilvie remarked on the miners' law in the early camps, which was self-administered through the open forum of miners' meetings (a topic to which we shall return). Miners' Meetings were called to consider any question pertaining to the camp. All present participated, the evidence for both sides of a question was presented, discussed openly, and an open vote taken, "the majority carrying the judgement which was promptly executed" (1913:247). In the early days, before the coming of the N.W.M.P. in 1895, the sentence was said to have been always banishment from the district. To exclude a man from help, comradeship and access to a trading post was, in effect, to force him to leave the country.

As the population swelled in 1886 beyond the optimum number that could interact as a hunting society, the miners' meeting became less effective and less just (ibid:247). "That potent factor in modern mischief, the saloon, began to have an influence...(I) think about 1889," wrote Ogilvie (ibid:247). "The saloons had their clientele of loafers...miners' meetings were held in them, and as all present were generally counted miners, ...seeing as it was the only employment in the country, so all had a vote." (ibid:248). Ogilvie blamed the presence of liquor and "drunken irresponsibility" for the decline in the effectiveness of this form of justice, and Haskell agreed:

"For a long time they had answered very well, as the miners in the district were few and acquainted with each other. But as

the influx of all elements began...and saloons increased in number, disputes became more frequent and miners' meetings became a mere burlesque." (1898:150)

Both men pointed to the same case, which occurred at Forty Mile in 1896, as evidence of final breakdown of this form of miners' law. On this occasion the earlier mentioned Jewish tailor took the negro barber before a miners' meeting over a disputed small debt. The meeting was held in a saloon, "after due inquiry and deliberate consideration, judgement was entered for...the tailor in the sum of one dollar and fifty cents, the exact amount...due to him." As soon as judgement was given, someone rose and proposed that the tailor be fined twenty dollars for calling a meeting to consider such a trifling matter. This was about to be put, "and no doubt carried, when an Irishman (an old timer from the mining camps of Montana)...shouted, 'No!... the poor man has called on ye for jushtice, ye have acknowledged his claim be meetin'...and now ye want to fine him for ashkin' for jushtice, ...ye can't do it." This time the motion was withdrawn, had it been carried, "the money would have been spent there and then, the reader can guess how" wrote Ogilvie (1913:253-4).

The barber then rose, and "with picturesque profusion of profanity" requested all present to go to hell. He would go down the river on the underside of a log, he observed, "...before he'd pay the \$1.50 fine." If they tried to enforce payment, he "would apply to the N.W.M.P. for protection." (Haskell, 1898:153). "So the meeting dissolved, quietly dissolved into its original elements. It was realized that without power to enforce their decisions miners' meetings were no use," remarked Ogilvie (1913:254).

Later it will be shown that the old timers did not drink to excess on such occasions as the miners' meeting. The large number of newcomers distorted the tone, intent and outcome of the meetings. This was a problem in Canadian

territory, where the presence of the N.W.M.P. nullified the power of the old timers' society to enforce its sanctions. The problem of large numbers of newcomers was successfully solved in Circle City, on the American side of the Yukon-Alaska boundary beyond the jurisdiction of outside imposed formal law as shall be shown. We shall return later to the important matter of old timer law.

THE MODEL OLD TIMER

Frank Pierce, an old timer who left Nanaimo, B.C. in May 1877, one of a party of five young men bound for the Cassiar gold field, and who remained thirteen years in the north, traveling, exploring, and prospecting (mainly in the Yukon area), published an account of his life and travel experiences in 1890. Pierce divided the early prospectors into two types, one he called "the Frontierman", ... "who lives his life out on the frontier, braving every danger for the sake of excitement". This man he seemingly romantically portrayed as

"...the quiet unassuming man. He never talks of his great deeds, in fact he hardly appears to know that he has done anything extraordinary...These are the men to choose for companions on hard and dangerous trips. They can be relied upon. If you are sick they will do all they can to assist you. In the face of danger they will not shirk, but meet everything bravely, quietly, and with determination. They do not exult over a fallen foe...These men are not all members of the church...but all are men of good morals. If there is labor to be done all are willing and prompt. If food is scarce all are self-denying...Although gruff in their manners, they are honest. Many of them...(pray nightly)." (1890:147-8)

Although this seems a somewhat idealized figure, the historical evidence will be seen to bear out his description for the most part, and so, perhaps unusually in anthropology, in this society the modal and the model coincide.

Interestingly, Lynn Smith, a stamper turned sourdough, who for many years as U.S. Marshall in various parts of Alaska knew many of the old timers, who originally collected the journals, written accounts, and oral testimonies which Heller has assembled under the title Sourdough Sagas, considered Henry

Davis "a typical pioneer" (Heller, 1967:16). Davis, whose simple "Recollections" seem completely without self-consciousness, impresses one as fitting this 'frontierman' model very well. Boastfulness regarding one's own generosity is incompatible with the basic etiquette of reciprocal exchange, rather modesty is prescribed, according to Harris (1971:245), and many outsiders and observers testify to the "quiet, unboastful manner" of the old timers (Henderson, 1898: 174). The college man, "if he is here," or the man with thousands in gold, are no better than anyone else, and "exhibit no haughtiness" remarked Haskell. All are "on a perfect equality" (1898:165).

Joseph Ladue, one of the earliest and best known old timers, having been one of the original twelve who wintered in, in 1882, presented a less sentimental model in his slim book of advice to the prospective prospector. According to Ladue, men coming to the Klondike should be "sober, strong and healthy ...practical men, able to adapt themselves quickly to their surroundings... their temperaments are important. Men should be of cheerful, hopeful dispositions and willing workers;" (1897:87-88) -- an opinion which concurs with Aberle's (1961) point that egalitarian hunting societies emphasize rearing "self-reliant and persevering males with high frustration thresholds." (Harris, 1971:577).

There was another type of men among the pioneers, Pierce told us: "the bad class of white men who are always flocking to the frontier. I do not mean that...even one-fourth are bad. But there are always enough to do irreparable damage (to the Indians, by teaching them)...all the vices of the whites."

This type among the early prospectors Pierce spoke of as

"creatures from the slums of cities whose modes of life had hardened their feelings." barroom brawlers, cowards, boasters with whiskey courage, the first to give up in days of danger and hardship "...the first to become a burden to his less pretentious companions. If there is hard labour to do he feigns sickness, ...if food is scarce he must have his full supply. No

self-denial there; no sympathy for an unfortunate comrade.
...If a comrade loses his provisions this creature will spare
him nothing, although others in the party will divide."
These men were not miners. (1890:145-8)

One might regard Pierce's descriptions as model types at the two extremes of a continuum of old timer social character; however, anthropological evidence shows people may be encultured to behave in one way, but may be obliged by situational or functional factors beyond their control to behave another way. (Harris, 1971:140).

Although shiftless men, "freeloaders" are tolerated within the sharing hunting bands, they are scorned, not fully accepted fringe dwellers (Harris, 1971:237). It is clear that a small society based on generalized reciprocal exchange could tolerate but a very few such men, certainly nowhere near one-fourth of the group. That such men as Pierce described came into the area is not doubted, but we can expect, and there is evidence to indicate, that they were quickly pressured by group consensus to conform, leave, or be forcefully banished.

Anthropologists should tread carefully when speaking of "typical" or "modal" personalities, although as Harris points out, the existence of "typical" personalities as being associated with particular separate populations is often obvious to even a casual observer. The countless tourists who notice that the average Englishman is more reserved than the average Italian are probably correct, he feels (1971:575).

Service, in outlining the economic implications of reciprocity in primitive hunting societies, asserts that there is no bartering, no attempt to get the best of a bargain; these primitive peoples "give things away," they admire generosity. "And strangest of all, the more dire the circumstances, the more scarce (or valuable) the good, the less 'economically' will they behave and the more generous do they seem to be." (1966:14). Further, according to

George Homans, "the more cohesive a group is (that is, the more valuable the sentiment or activity the members exchange with one another), the greater the average frequency of interaction of the members," and "the greater change that members can produce in the behaviour of other members in the direction of rendering these activities more valuable." (The more valuable the activities that members get, the more valuable those they must give.) (1958:599)

Further, "if the influence is exerted in the direction of conformity to group norms, then when the process of influence has accomplished all the change of which it is capable...the larger the number of members that conform to its norms." (ibid:600)

Although "evidence exists that dramatic shifts in modal personality can occur in a remarkably short time" according to Harris (1971:575), conforming to a norm does not necessarily indicate an embracing of the values -- it may be due to expediency. That the "barroom brawler" was present in early days is testified to by Moore's report that while traveling down the river with a group of prospectors, in the spring of 1887, they "called in at Cassiar Bar...and found George Ramsey and his partners there, in a terrible way about some men who stayed in last winter and worked his bar clean out, also raiding his caches and taking out all his tools." (1968:60). Such men would not dare to remain in the territory. It will become evident that the pattern of constant flux and exodus, and/or the strict swift imposition of miners' law weeded out such men. The "brawlers" who remained either took on the values, or were eliminated from the society and the territory, but this will be better argued after the evidence is presented.

We can, however, expect that before newcomers came in too quickly, in numbers too large to absorb, they had no alternative but to become conforming society members if they wished to remain in the area. The forceful banishment

which was reported to be the ultimate sanction against those who did not conform to the informal custom or law, was backed up by the promise (not threat) of death if not obeyed. The sentence included being out of the area within twenty-four hours or being shot on sight. Voluntary withdrawal of those who did not wish to conform was the only alternative. The outsiders in the early days (prior to their coming in numbers which could not be acculturated by the existing society) found it necessary to conform to the cultural rules. At first it may have been through expediency, but later it seems, they took on the values. This can be argued simply on the basis of their remaining, or constantly returning to the Yukon. In the early days, during which a primitive "skim mining" method was used, miners seldom "hit it" really rich but, when they did, many went "outside", spent it recklessly and rapidly, and returned. There was always a process of self-elimination. Those men who handled their earnings in a different fashion, using them to invest in some small way -- perhaps buying a small business or property -- did not return, eliminating themselves as members of the old timers' society.

Pierce's "barroom brawlers" seem to have disappeared one way or another, as there are literally no negative reports or disparaging remarks in any of the outsider-observer sources utilized; indeed, the admiration for the character and order of these rough men is unanimous.

Journalist Adney, who had the advantage of observing the old timers at the Klondike gold site and in Dawson during the winter of 1897, spent a week interviewing some of the old timers at the rich Klondike creeks; returning to his cabin, he told us, with "a higher appreciation of the character of the class of men who explored and developed the Yukon." (1900:274). Adney told us that the old timer

"has his own strict ideals of morality, ...there is a dearth of blood-curdling tales...(as) the Yukon has been too law-abiding

for many stories of violence. The rigors of the country and the broadening effect of the life has made men behave themselves. The police...have not brought about this condition. It existed before there were any police here... Their sense of honor in the matter of debts is most strict, but, as unbusinesslike people often are, they are 'touchy' about the presentation of a bill...As long as a man was in debt he would not leave the country." (1900:269-272)

The old timers were "courageous, men of honor and character, respected in a community where a man was valued, not according to his pretensions or position in 'society', but in proportion to his manliness and intrinsic worth" wrote Adney in testimony (1900:337). These are the characteristics valued and developed among primitive hunters also (Service, 1966:82).

Similar remarks were made by earlier observers, who knew and mingled with the old timers for a much longer term. Hallock in 1886 wrote that U.S. Navy Captain Beardslee, whose gunboat protection persuaded the Chilcoat Indians to allow white miners to use the pass in 1880, "speaks with high approval of the miners...A most orderly community...most respectable manner, ...willing co-operation" are phrases Beardslee used regarding these very earliest old timers (Hallock, 1886:129).

William Ogilvie, Canadian government surveyor in the area, was a respected outsider in the society. Ogilvie recorded that he left them in 1888, "with regret, for my intercourse with the miners has been most pleasant..." (1913:140). When asked by the Deputy Minister of the Interior his opinion on how many men the N.W.M.P. should send in "to enforce order and punish lawbreakers" in the territory, Ogilvie suggested that ten to twenty would be sufficient, as "they would be supported by the good practical common sense of the community as I know it...There has never been any trouble in the country." (ibid:151-2). Ogilvie was impressed by the "universal kindness and consideration of the miners" (ibid:177) and "their strict sense of honor and honesty." (ibid:180). The miners were "very much on the side of fair play and justice," he remarked (ibid:

252).

The testimonies are so numerous that we shall list only two more -- M.H. Haynes, a Staff Sergeant with the first N.W.M.P. detachment from 1895 to 1897 recorded that on arrival at Forty Mile, the police, who had been sent in without specific instructions, other than "not to interfere (with the miners) so long as the men were behaving themselves" (1897:2) found the men of Forty Mile to be "naturally inclined to be peaceful and orderly." This was unlike his experiences in other mining camps in other territories, he remarked over and over throughout his book. The police were treated with "respect...and great civility on all sides" (1897:79). They had little difficulty with the miners, and "no serious case" of civil disobedience at all (ibid:85). Haynes was impressed with the miners' habit of sharing equally all supplies that came in on the steamer (ibid:87). In the saloons things got "a bit lively, ... noisy, often boisterously so-- ...(but) I never saw anything the least bit objectionable take place when I was on duty, and we had very little difficulty arising from the presence of the saloons." (ibid:89).

Haynes felt "this says a good deal for the general 'tone' of the pioneers of the Yukon," (ibid) adding that "absolute honesty" was the order of the day, and that "a most unusual peace and quiet prevailed. The miners were all thoroughly law-abiding, well-behaved and good-natured." (ibid:154-5).

William Haskell, a miner with experience in the American mining camps before coming to the Yukon with an old timer partner in 1895, felt like Haynes, that Dawson in 1897 was "a less vicious and more orderly place than the new mining camps of the Rockies were." The population was the "most moral" mining population he had ever seen (1898:377).

Such testimonials suggest more than a forced compliance to the society's cultural rules and values, as the characteristics of a high independence --

very much a value of the American frontier man -- coupled with a serenity of temperament do not readily co-exist in a situation of forced compliance.

This does not imply that the old timers made up a society of saints. As Harris points out, the fundamental source of human social behaviour is the self-interest of the individuals who comprise a society. "Cooperation, mutualism, respect for the person and possessions of one's fellows arise most readily from ecological situations where each individual's well-being is enhanced by a common abstinence from competitive and aggressive behavior;" (1971:372) and this was, to a very high degree, such an ecological situation. A comment passed by Haskell suggests that the old timers sensed this. In describing the peace and order of Circle City, "the old timers' town" in 1897, Haskell remarked that in Circle "there was a sort of feeling that the dangers of existence here were too many and too real to have them aggravated by any unnecessary outbreaks of the evil side of human nature." (1898:175). Peace among the old timers was, as it is in primitive hunting bands, the normal condition (Service, 1966:55).

Also, among populations of only a few hundred people, crimes and lapses cannot go long undetected (Harris, 1971:375). This was so in the small early Yukon community where, Ogilvie noted, "it followed that every member of it knew as much of the doings in camp as every other, and that all had a pretty accurate conception of the characteristics of the others" (1913:246). Moreover, as outsider Henderson probably correctly pointed out, when "a man is liable to be deported in the dead of a winter-long night, in a country where...a crow flying would have to carry his provisions with him, he is more or less cautious, even in his cups." (1898:288).

The old timers cultivated a mildness of demeanor, but it would be a mistake to consider them as in any way meek.

Ogilvie told of handling the registration of a claim for a man "who bore

the reputation of being the toughest citizen of (pre-rush) Dawson," and of whom Ogilvie expected "little in the way of conscientious scruples". The oath of application taken to register a claim at that time required a locator to swear "that I have discovered therein a deposit of gold," -- which very few had, Ogilvie pointed out, as the custom was to locate as a result of some other persons' finding gold nearby, and then prospect the claim after registration.

On reading this section of the affidavit to the 'tough citizen', the man stopping him sharply, exclaimed, "But I have not! I did not look for any," Ogilvie wrote (1913:180). He had, as was usual, merely staked the ground, and he had but forty-eight hours to return to his claim, prospect it, find some gold, and return to record it, before his option lapsed. The man, traveling and working day and night managed to do all this, arriving back in Dawson with but one hour to spare. When all was completed, he said, "Mr. Ogilvie, I am considered a hard case here, and there are more want to pass me than speak to me, yet I would not have taken that oath to save my claim, not for all the claims in the Klondike." (1913:181). This "toughest citizen of Dawson" demonstrated not only the absolute honesty noted as characteristic of the old timer, but also the strictness with which they adhered to this value. In the ecological conditions under which they lived there could not be the discrepancy between the ideal of law and the practice of actual life which Malinowski found in more complex societies, in more benign climates, where men were less starkly dependent upon each other.

Although it cannot be proven, or even assumed, it is possible that this "toughest citizen" was, when he came into the Yukon, a "barroom brawler" as Pierce characterized some of the earliest men in the region, and that he had become truly assimilated into the new society. It is clear that he shared enthusiastically at least one of the most basic values, absolute honesty.

One more point of explanation: although these men may be correctly termed frontiersmen, it would be inaccurate to designate the old timers as "prospectors" in the sense of that being their only occupation.

In the primeval frozen desert of the Yukon and Alaska no man could sustain himself by prospecting alone. As bands of hunters actually spend rather little time in hunting (two to four hours a day, some authorities estimate, in alternating periods of steady work and sustained idleness (Lee and DeVore, 1968:88)), so the old timers appear to have spent a fairly small percentage of their time in actual prospecting and mining. They all traded for furs with the Indians, as middlemen for the trader, trapped, hunted, fished, occasionally cut logs, sawed lumber, and worked as builders for trading company or missionary. They also cut wood for, or worked on, the river steamer or trading post. They did similar jobs outside in Juneau, Sitka, Victoria and Seattle, and other places, in order to earn "grubstake" money to go into the Yukon to prospect and explore. Prospecting is a group occupation and entails much movement over the land. Both group activity and movement were high values in the old timers' society, and also of the contemporary hunting societies reported on by anthropologists at the Man the Hunter symposium (Lee and DeVore, 1968:7). For this reason the two peoples tended to think of themselves as prospectors, and as hunters, although prospecting (or hunting) is but one of the occupations or activities in which they engage.

CABINS

Although information regarding the technology of this society is very scanty, we do find good descriptions of the type of cabin these Yukoners built in several of our sources. The very earliest cabins were described by Pierce. They were built with walls more than four feet thick, consisting of two walls

of logs filled between with clay and gravel. The roof of logs was covered with bark and gravel also to a depth of four feet. They were heated with large rock fireplaces (which Ogilvie later described) and had double doors arranged so that one could be closed before the other was opened, in order to keep out the cold. There were no windows in these first cabins. Pierce consoled himself that "as there is little daylight in winter in that region, there would be but little use for windows." The cabins were built to house two to four men, he told us, without mentioning any measurements (1890:187).

Buteau was among a group of sixteen men building three cabins in which to winter in in 1886 -- "we had no stove, no stovepipe and no windows, and only one-half dozen candles," he recorded (1967:96). Buteau using ingenuity, cut about a twelve inch square in the door, over which he placed a clear piece of ice held on with wooden button-like supports. It remained clear all winter without thawing or frosting, he reported (ibid). Sometimes untanned deer-hide was used to cover the window aperture: "this was translucent to a limited degree, but by no means transparent. Sometimes a bit of white cotton canvas was used, or empty white glass bottles or pickle jars were placed on end on the window-sill, and the interstices between them stuffed with moss." Whatever method was used to admit light, it admitted little, "indeed in the long winter nights, about twenty hours out of the twenty-four windows were of very little use anyway, and in the summer months the miner only used his cabin to sleep in, and he invited darkness rather than light." (Ogilvie, 1913:298-299).

Understandably the men went out as much as possible "for fresh air and exercise...By bundling up very warm we could stay out several hours." The time was spent hunting and trapping rabbits, Pierce pointed out (1890:189).

Pierce described a somewhat unusually lavish use of furs in his cabin, although the rest of the furnishings were standard.

"Our cabin was carpeted and lined with the skin of animals. Our bedsteads were made of polls, (sic) our table of rough boards and our chairs were blocks of wood sawed the right length. For light we used tallow-dip candles, which we made ourselves from the tallow of moose and cariboo. (sic) We also used some bear's oil in a lamp made from a yeast powder can." (ibid)

Ogilvie described the construction of the cabins in somewhat more detail. They were built of wood from whatever trees were found adjacent to the site chosen, usually spruce or poplar; the walls and roof were made of logs of a size and length the group intending to use the cabin could handle (1913:298). Moss to a depth of three inches was laid atop each log, the accumulated weight of the logs compressed it to a tight weatherproof half inch layer. The chinking of moss, being "airtight against winter cold, and mosquito proof for summer, ...is one of the little things upon which the comfort of the cabin will depend," wrote Haskell (1898:176).

The roof consisted of small poles, laid from ridge pole to the supporting wall on either side, on this was placed a layer of moss about one foot deep, covered with a similar layer of clay. This made "a close, warm roof", even in summer time it took an unusually heavy rain to penetrate it, Ogilvie assured us (1913:298).

The furnishings were much as Pierce described them, consisting of stools, this time made from sawn cross-sections of trees, supported by three or four legs. Tables and beds were platforms of small beams, one end of which was driven between two of the wall logs and the other supported by uprights driven into the ground (Ogilvie, 1913:298). There was no flooring, Haskell mentioned that "the only preparation is leveling off the frozen ice or 'muck' as it is called." (1898:176).

The bed Haskell described as consisting of a shelf at the back end of the cabin, "usually divided in the center and so wide that two men can sleep each

side of the partition." (1898:179). It was built

"by placing a pole horizontally across the end of the cabin about four feet from the back wall, and jamming the ends between the chinks of the logs in the side walls...(The partition in the middle adds support.) Some people put slats for beds across...but there is more spring, more...comfort if they are placed lengthwise. The mattress is nothing but moss and straw well bedded down." (ibid).

Adney also mentioned this size and style of bed, adding the refinement of an occasionally encountered pillow improvised from a flour sack stuffed with socks or moccasins, and an ever-present 'bitch', usually a milk or meat tin, filled with bacon grease and a loose wick, to supplement the always short supply of candles. The original 'bitch' had been "a piece of fat bacon stuck in the split end of a stick," the end of which was jammed into the chink between two wall logs (1900:198). Adney was describing the 'bitch' lamp of 1897-98. In earlier days the old timers would not have burnt bacon fat, this was used for cooking. They would have burnt bear fat, as Pierce described earlier, although bear fat also was used in cooking. One can imagine that the smoke and the smell gave these primitive lamps their name.

Ogilvie also reported that the "mattress" was of grass or small spruce branches. It was Ogilvie's opinion that "sleep on this primitive bed was as sound as that enjoyed anywhere and the food eaten off the rough uncovered, table tasted as well as if laid on the finest mahogany." (1913:299).

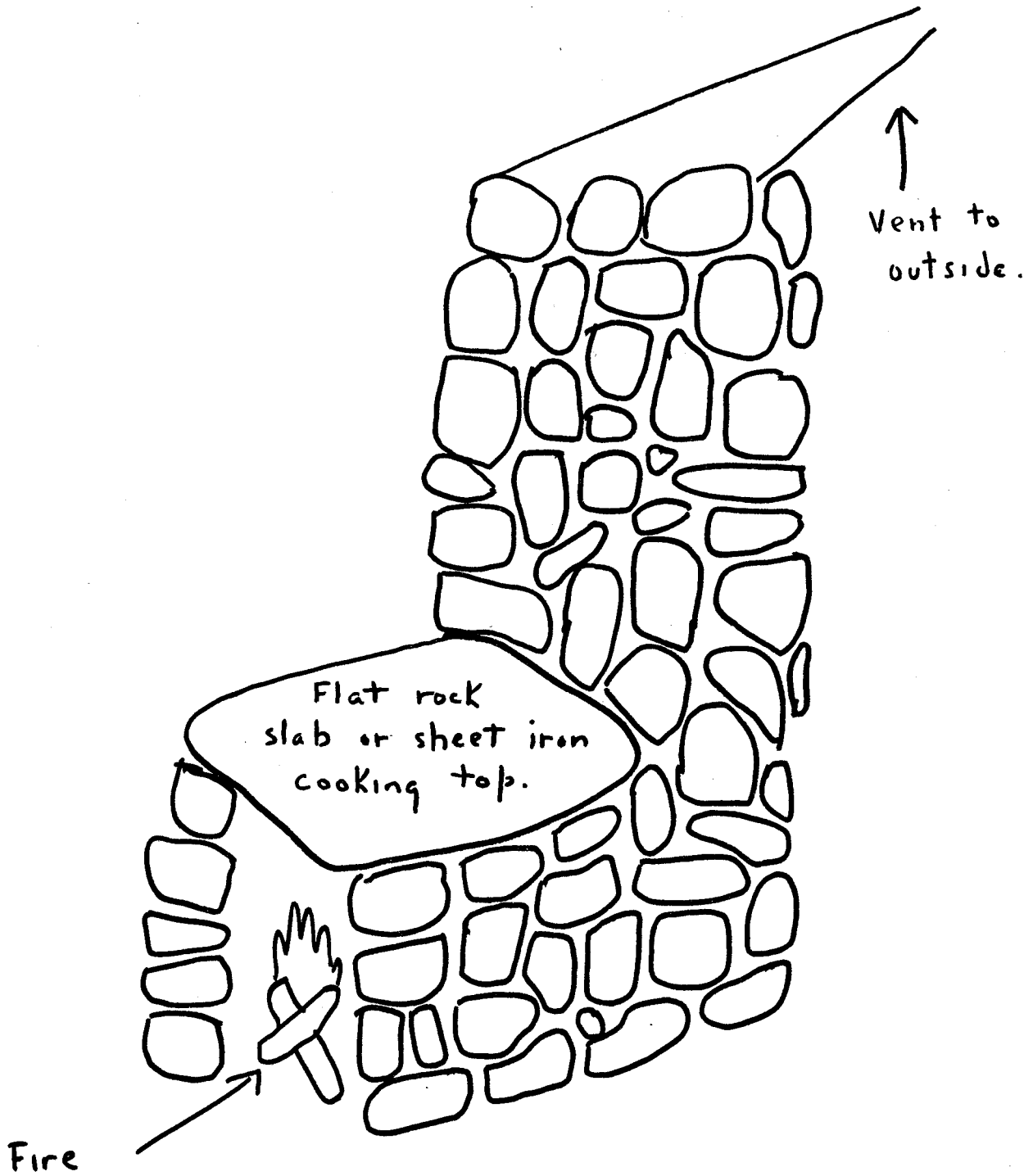
Interestingly, Haskell mentioned that the furniture was almost always in the same place in all cabins, "the table under the window, the beds across the end", and so on (1898:170).

Stoves were almost unknown at first, Ogilvie reported. Fireplaces of rock were built in the cabins. "On account of the low temperatures these fireplaces had to be closed on the top, and at the rear end continued to the roof in a chimney." Sometimes, where suitable rock and clay could be obtained, "these

fireplaces were rather artistic in form and finish." (Ogilvie, 1913:300). Certainly they made the cabin very comfortable, "as the mass of rock, once heated, retains the heat for a long time." (ibid). Ogilvie described the fireplace in his winter quarters (a cabin "palatial in dimension," being twenty-two feet square, and housing seven men) as being "a rock stove three feet wide, three high and eight long, the rear end, three feet square, continued in a chimney to the roof." All this rock was bound together with an "excellent clay" they found nearby (1913:300). This stove or fireplace may have been larger than is usual in the usually smaller cabins; however, they clearly took up a great deal of the very restricted living space.

We can surmise that Ogilvie's group learned from earlier pioneers' mistakes and experiments how to build this very functional stove-like fireplace. Buteau implied that he and his two cabin mates were the first to develop this stove or fireplace in 1886, the first year he wintered in the Yukon. They first tried having an open fire on the floor, and building a wooden chimney directly over it extending to a hole in the roof. As this proved unsatisfactory, letting in too much cold air, they then gathered "rocks and mud" and made a stove with a chimney of these materials. "We used a large flat rock for the top of the stove, and cooked in the mouth of it." (1967:96). (See *illustration*)

By 1888 small manufactured stoves were beginning to be brought in by the traders. Davis told of his luck in obtaining one. He had gone to the trader hoping to obtain some sheet iron with which to top his fireplace (stove), rather than using a more cumbersome flat stone, which occasionally split with the heat. (Buteau recorded his difficulties, when the stove top split, of attempting to locate another stone of a suitable shape under the snow and ice.) The trader had no sheet iron, but did have an old stove to sell. "When we



EARLY STOVE-FIREPLACE

(As in Ogilvie, Early Days on the Yukon, 1913.
From photograph, facing p. 298.)

asked, 'How much?' he replied, 'I'm a Scotchman boys, it will be twelve dollars.'" wrote Davis, "'Sold,' says I, and we were the lucky ones. No more smoke in the cabin, no more baking bread in gold pans in winter." (1967:61).

While the fireplace may have heated the cabin well, as Ogilvie mentioned, apparently they were very smoky, and seem to have been abandoned as manufactured stoves became available. Mrs. Berry, the wife of one of the late-coming (1894) "Klondike millionaires", described the Yukon stoves as "narrow, long, little sheet-iron affairs, with two (lidded) holes on top and a drum to bake in." (Stanley, 1898:173). These stoves were very small, they could bake but one loaf of bread at a time, but they were very efficient, they kept a cabin "cosy and warm" Mrs. Berry remarked (ibid). Being small they were easily portable, although old timers seem to have left theirs in one of their more permanent or frequently used cabins. There may have been several sizes of stove --Haskell mentioned that in Circle City in 1897 a fire was usually built in the center of a cabin to warm the interior, the smoke going out a central vent in the roof. "The stove is commonly used in camp huts for cooking only, and is not sufficient warmth in severe winter weather." (1898:178-9). Most later recorders mentioned the old timers' cabins as usually overheated, indeed, Adney mentioned a small box being set in the roof, with a door that can be opened and shut, because of the overheating and poor ventilation (1900:198). Perhaps the old timers' native wives simply preferred the open fire to which they were accustomed.

It should be mentioned here that this was equipment used by the earliest groups in wintering only. The life style of summer was entirely different, being dedicated to movement over the land. In summer, the camp fire was still the social and cooking centers. Moore told of how men cooked bread between two gold pans. A hole was dug, the bread dough put into it between the pans,

the hole filled up, and a fire built on top of it. Two or three hours usually cooked the bread using this method. Often food was left baking in the ground all night, or occasionally yeast powder bread (actually a sort of biscuit) was made in the frying pan over the open fire (Moore, 1968:88).

Besides building cabins, there were other vital (autumn) preparations for winter. September was the season for 'serious' hunting; indeed Pierce used a similar phrase when he recorded that after trading with the Indians for fur clothing (an extremely important transaction which is seldom mentioned) "we went hunting in earnest." (1890:188).

"Finding a good place, we soon killed game enough to last us through the winter.

As fast as we killed the game we allowed it to freeze, and by keeping it in the shade we kept it frozen. We got our beef (probably caribou or moose) to camp and built a small house for it. We then got a supply of wood and when winter came we were ready for it." (ibid:188).



Other fall or winter tasks Davis mentioned are fixing snares for 'chickens,' as he called a local bird, making dead falls for marten, and putting out poison for wolves. "I started cutting birch for a sledge and snowshoes. I cut lots of sinew (from the spinal cord of a moose) and rawhide for snowshoes, stretching them to dry." (1967:51).

All lumber for any purpose was in the early years laboriously whipsawed by two men, one standing on an elevated platform, the other below, working the large saw through the length of the log vertically, a difficult task which strained many relationships. "My how it (the saw) would pull and would not run straight but twisted and pulled, so we went to dinner to cool off," wrote Davis of one such experience. Cutting boards by this method was a slow task, Moore mentioned in one day's work "sawing out" seven twelve-foot spruce planks (1968:56). After the men began to winter in the Yukon, much of this work was done during the late winter months. Buteau told of deciding to winter at his

claim in 1889 rather than going downriver to St. Michael as he and his partners "had to whipsaw lumber and build one-half mile of flume for our new claim." (1967:105)

CHAPTER TWO --- SOCIAL CONTROL

FLUX AND MOVEMENT

Anthropologists have long agreed that hunting bands characteristically exhibit a nomadism required by the foraging economy, a simplicity and meagerness of material culture due to the necessity of transporting all their worldly goods with them, a lack of specialized or formalized institutions or groups which can be differentiated as economic, political, religious and so on, an egalitarian pattern of social relations, and an exchange of goods conducted in terms of reciprocity (never by commerce) (Service, 1966:80). More recent research points to the fluidity of band composition as the most outstanding characteristic feature of the 'modern' hunters studied (Lee and DeVore, 1968:7).

This 'fluidity' in composition of social units and residential mobility, a constantly occurring fission and fusion Turnbull calls "flux" (1968:132). There is an irregularity to the constant changeover of personnel between groups, and to the shifting of camps which is distinctive from the strictly seasonal fragmentation or shifting of band societies.

Both their own scanty records and those of numerous amateur outsider-observers testify strongly that the group of old timers in the Yukon exhibited all of these characteristics of the hunting societies, perhaps most strongly, the pattern of "flux".

The possession of these characteristics alone however, do not necessarily indicate that these men made up a society as defined. The constant moving about the country might not be a cultural trait, but simply a territorial pattern necessary to the occupation of prospecting. The meager material culture, and their egalitarian status might be due entirely to their limited funds and the fact that the Yukon was a primeval country: perhaps to succeed, was to be able

to leave, -- wealthy. The lack of institutionalization might be a result of the old timers being merely an aggregate of loners, alienated men lusting after gold, self-interested, who found it expedient to share, and to join together to travel the uncharted land and unknown river.

Most significantly, it is the evidence surviving of the old timers' cultural values which suggests that they were indeed a society with distinctive and well defined systems of social roles, norms and shared understandings that provided not only a regularity and predictability in their social interaction, but a strong sense of community amounting to kinship -- to brotherhood. The forementioned aspects, nomadism, material simplicity, and lack of institutionalization identify the society as being of the hunting band type.

Lee tells us, most informally, that hunters "live in small groups and they move around a lot." (1968:11). Anderson, another speaker at the symposium, refers to band society as "the original mobile society," even the relatively settled bands, as well as the most nomadic, appear (perhaps with differing frequency) to be fluid in group composition and size over time (1968:153).

Among societies noted for fluidity of composition, surely the old timers' society would lead them all. The old timer "always holds himself in readiness to move elsewhere at a moment's notice" Haynes of the N.W.M.P. noted (1897:65). Forty Mile had "no fixed population," although numbers were generally constant -- roughly three hundred, he estimated. "Miners were continually coming in, stopping there for a day or two and then passing out again, their places being continually taken by fresh arrivals who would pursue an exactly similar course." (ibid:47).

The easy impulsiveness with which large decisions regarding movement were made, or changed, the constant individual movement and interchange of group personnel are all well illustrated in one short paragraph by outsider DeWindt, a British explorer who was in the Yukon and Alaska in 1895. On a down-river

voyage on the steamer "Alice" bound for St. Michael, the boat met another steamer coming upriver.

"Following a practice borrowed from the whalers and known as 'gamming', both vessels moored alongside each other for an hour to exchange news. I was surprised to see many of the miners who left Circle City but twenty-four hours ago suddenly shake hands with their comrades, shoulder their belongings and embark on the up-river boat, some of the Forty Mile passengers followed their example. I learnt that this was a common occurrence on the Yukon." (1898:165-66)

One old timer, who left the boat with the rest to go back, "had already made three ineffectual attempts to leave the country," DeWindt recorded.

Men in partnership groups moved freely and frequently from region to region, and as individuals, from group to group. Partnership groups seem to have been formed on a simple basis of mutual feeling that the proposed partners would suit each other as companions. There was no commitment to a particular time span. Plans were made and changed on impulse, a trio heading for Stewart River meeting a foursome traveling to the Pelly might simply change their plans and travel along with them, or one of them might shift to the other group. Under almost no circumstances, however, would one man be left alone, especially while traveling.

Group size in the old timers' society (through the constant flux) varied widely; the minimum was two men, but large numbers are reported as traveling together in a loosely linked conglomerate of smaller sub-groups. The size of the larger groups recorded as traveling together does not appear particularly functional in terms of being a hunting group, or for sharing the labour; it does not take fifteen men to build a fish trap (Buteau, 1967:106), or sixteen or thirty-two or forty-eight men to lift a loaded row-boat over a tree blocking a stream, yet these are numbers recorded (Pierce, 1890:161-67). Nor did they ever mention moving because game was getting scarce in the area, this was not an important part of the reason. The value seems to be comradeship, being to-

gether; and a value on movement, for its own sake, seems to have been present. These values are noted in other hunting societies, who tend to move long before food and other material shortages become at all serious, Woodburn points out (1968:106). These societies do not have to overcome the inertia which would face a society which had substantial houses and centralized political authority, Lathrap comments. "In short, since the resistance to moving is small, the forces required to bring it about can also be small." (1968:24).

At first glance the interchangeability of partners seems to throw the claim of these men valuing comradeship into doubt; however, in hunting bands the commitment is to the group -- almost any congenial member of the group serves to fulfil the role of comrade and representative of the group (Woodburn, 1968:107).

This was the situation and feeling among the old timers also. The unity of the group was seen in a record made by a Klondike stamper who traveled 'outside' to Seattle with a group of old timers in 1900. He was impressed that "the trip seemed...more of a pleasure outing than a journey of...600 miles." When night approached, there were no stragglers,

"the party was intact, and each and everyone was ready to do his part in preparing a comfortable camp, feeding the dogs, getting wood for the big campfire; after which they sat about partaking of the hot dish prepared by other members of the party. The pipes and tobacco came out, and an hour was spent in general talk, story-telling, and an occasional song before retiring to the sleeping robes." (Chase, 1943:178).

There was always a certain minimal amount of organization to the larger traveling parties; old timer Davis, recording a trip which several groups undertook jointly, mentioned the name of one man who was to be cook and that he, Davis, "was the flunky" (1967:46). Through a column of advice to newcomers (by an old timer) we get the impression that tasks were not usually allotted, but assumed voluntarily. On the trail, this experienced old timer suggested, "while some are busily engaged in building a fire and making a bed, let the

best cook of the party prepare the supper" (Haskell, 1898:556). It appears that if a man liked to cook, he volunteered. If he didn't, he got wood and water, or assumed some other task.

The casual manner in which a large traveling group was formed, how a decision to travel together was reached, and the type of trip undertaken is demonstrated quite typically in the trip Davis mentioned. This particular 1887 trip came about as a result of a chance meeting with several other traveling groups. While Davis and his partners were working a river bar, several boats came down river (separately), drew in and joined them. "We now have twelve boats and crews, all wanting to go somewhere, but nobody knows where," wrote Davis (1967:46). It is not clear how the decision to travel was made, but they "took off" Davis recorded. They travelled to the Salmon River, where they encountered a previously known Indian who told them that a rumor of the Indians planning to fight the white man was without foundation. One of the group killed a bear, "and everybody ate bear that night," then they moved on to Pelly River where they saw a banished man, "all in rags" and "ashamed". From there "our next stop was Stewart River where we saw Al Mayo...(who) said that Forty Mile was good camp." Two men then decided to leave the group to go "to rock up Stewart River," the rest went on to Forty Mile, after having run into another man, whose boat had upset causing him to lose "most of his grub" and to have to swim ashore. "We picked up lots of it and stayed with him to dry it out," recorded Davis (1967:46-47).

On another occasion, a party of six who had started off on a long trip, once again not knowing "where we are going" (ibid:63), met five sleds coming upriver. As was customary, they stopped and "had a big talk". News of absent comrades was exchanged; items such as one man's having gone to the Kolkoquim River leaving his family at Kokrines camp, another was (unusually) coming upriver alone, yet another was going to stay at St. Michael for the winter and

would return next year, and so on (ibid:65).

The parties joined up and the men deliberated on where to go next. "Someone said, 'Well, let's try the Kuskokwim River...So off we went.'" (ibid:67). "It was a happy bunch" recalled Davis (ibid:64).

Decisions on whether to stop at some spot for the winter seem to have been arrived at as lightly. Once again Davis is our informant: on the Hootalinka River two parties totaling seven men encountered each other, someone shot a moose, and "we cooked a lot of moose meat and that night did some hard thinking (talking) of what we should do as winter was almost here. We decided to stay here all winter, so found a fine stand of timber...and the next day started to build my cabin." (ibid:39). These men apparently felt at home and competent, to a large extent, to live off the land anywhere in the vast territory. They appear, as do the primitive hunters, to exude "a confidence in the capacity of the environment to support them, and in their own ability to extract their livelihood from it." (Lee and DeVore, 1968:89).

GROUPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The basis for the formation of the small sub-groups or partnerships is difficult to determine. They cannot be divided into boat crews, as some groups built two small light boats rather than one large one. They were not basically personal friendship groups, as they appear to have regrouped for each trip or season. They seem rather to have consisted of a pick-up group, who simply decided to travel together. Probably, as in !Kung Bushmen hunting parties, these old timers' groups were "freely organized by men who like to hunt (or travel, prospect, live, etc.) with each other", and the composition of the sub-group was, in the Yukon as in the Kalahari, "not a matter of convention or anxious concern." (Marshall, 1961:236-7). An entry made by Pierce supports this. He told us that knowing

of some men who had plans to go 'in' to the Yukon, "and who I thought would suit me as companions, I joined them." (1890:149-50).

The sub-groups, or small groups were referred to in conversation as "Frank Densmore's party," but this seems merely a method of identification as all, or several, group members work together building boats or cabins; thus ownership was joint. As among men of the Kalahari, the groups seem to have taken the name of a person well known enough to make such identification useful (Marshall, 1961:242).

In this early Yukon culture, as in other egalitarian cultures, no individual held exclusive right over any natural resources or land, other than the legal footage permitted to be staked as a mining claim under Canadian or American law. Even a claim was actually owned by the group, in that claims were always worked on equal shares. Discovering the gold did not entitle the discoverer to a larger share than his working partners, even when the working partners had not been members of the original prospecting group. Pierce recorded that when three traveling partners of his became discouraged and decided to go outside, he moved his tent over to the other miner's encampment and continued to prospect. He found a good spot, but needed help, so he showed his gold to "two 'old hands' at the creek, offered equal shares, and they went to work" (1899:28).

Boats and cabins, when not needed, were left for the use of the next men who came along. Haynes mentioned that when traveling upcountry, several groups of two or three would crowd into one cabin "put up by former pioneers and left there for the use of others." Everyone wanted to get his dog inside as well as himself wrote Haynes, as it takes more food to sustain a dog left out in the cold. "The result is generally a terrible amount of bad language." (1897:105) Large tools, such as saws and sleds, were cached, available for use (and return to the cache) by the next passerby. There was clearly a sense of communal,

rather than personal or sub-group, ownership. Some equipment, individual things such as clothing and, particularly, rifles were personal property and do not seem to have been borrowed -- perhaps because it was necessary, as hunters, for all men to possess these items -- however, most utilitarian things could be borrowed. Token permission was probably asked, if the owner was present, but refusal to permit borrowing was highly unlikely; reciprocal exchange and generosity with one's possessions "is universally employed as a method of creating and reinforcing solidary egalitarian relationships" in hunting societies. (Harris, 1971:374-376).

Among the old timers both cooperation and generosity were values; these traits gave rise to what the stampedeers later romantically labelled, "The Code of the North" -- the unwritten law that any man might use any other man's cabin, food and firewood if his situation necessitated it, provided he did not leave the owner in precarious position for supplies. The precise rule was, according to one old timer informant, that

"a man can take food from a cache -- what he needs for immediate use, and if he cannot pay for it he has only to leave a note telling the owner just what he took and why and who he is. Nothing is ever thought of that. If...he were to steal the pack...he would ...likely dangle at the end of a rope." (Clements, 1897:31).

Ogilvie's survey party observed the unwritten rule of not taking any more than was absolutely necessary from a cache. He told of his party's provisions being exhausted on a "terrible" exploring trip, and of finding a cache of dried salmon at the river mouth which they broke into, and "took a few," after which they resumed their journey (1913:150).

Frank Pierce, whose period in the northland stretched from 1877 to 1890 wrote of a summer journey in 1884 up a then unexplored river (later named the Forty Mile River) by thirty-two men in the usual loosely-united small groups. The whole group stayed together for the full summer season, individual groups broke away to prospect or hunt for a few days at a likely spot, then rejoined

the main group further on. When good sized lakes were discovered two large rafts, each to bear sixteen men, were built and utilized to float down the lakes, then each group of sixteen by plan made their ways up the opposite shores, prospecting as they moved back up. Coming down river again in the fall the small groups moved more independently, meeting again at the mouth of the river where they had cached their winter supplies, there to build cabins for the winter (Pierce, 1890:161-167).

Pierce's trip serves to illustrate one of the two discernible patterns of movement, a type of northern group "walk-about" -- an exploration in which the men might stop here and there for perhaps a few days or a week but, in the main, simply traveling. Pierce mentioned raising the "color of gold" here and there but, "as prospectors always have a feeling that it is richer ahead, we kept on." (1890:106).

The other pattern was of similar movement by the same loose conglomerate of small groups; however, when one group found a likely looking claim, all staked in the same vicinity. There was the usual coming and going, but the camp lasted the full season.

When more supplies became available at trading posts and the claims were paying well, some might decide to winter in the area. Two or three of the men built the cabin while others journeyed out to the nearest post for supplies. There was a "temporary permanence" to this type of camp. As was customary, men who decided to go out would spread the news of their friends wintering at the good strike, and other men would come to the area and join the wintering group.

Old timer Henry Davis wrote of the rich new find at Birch Creek (where, as a result, Circle City camp appeared). "In August the steamer Arctic came up (to Forty Mile camp) and said a new strike was on below Eagle some place and brought a letter from George Cary to come on down and hurry." (1967:74).

Davis went.

It is characteristic of hunting societies to be sharing and non-competitive by nature. Based on this, and on specific evidence not yet introduced, it may be tentatively postulated that this is what early rushes amounted to: an excuse for comrades to gather.

Due to the severely cold and very long winter, the shelters the men built for wintering in the Yukon had to be sturdy, hence the cabins were used year after year. This tended to encourage a pattern of a man coming back to the same spot to winter which, in turn, caused more of these gregarious men to build in the vicinity, that is, within two or three days travel. A small trading post was usually established where a cluster of cabins appeared. While the cabins remained year after year, a man with a cabin at Forty Mile sometimes joined a group who were going to winter at the Stewart River, so he might erect another cabin at Stewart River, or at the site of the latest strike. Thus men had ownership of several widely separated cabins, as well as the use of their comrades' unoccupied cabins, at any of which they might decide to winter. It was the buildings rather than the residents that were permanent.

There developed, however, some predictability as to wintering locale, a semi-nomadic pattern of gathering for company and companionship throughout the idle winter months at a home camp, a pattern of transhumance characteristic of some hunting societies (Lee and DeVore, 1968:11) and a change from the simple nomadism of the prospectors before they began wintering in.

VISITING

Recent anthropological studies of hunting-gathering peoples suggest that such very flexible group structure as these men evidenced (flux) is an important and common means of social control, a resolution of conflict by fission. When

disputes arise within the band the principals simple part company rather than let the argument cross the threshold of violence, thus avoiding recourse to fighting or to formal modes of litigation. The essential condition seems to be the lack of exclusive rights to resources and the effect of this practice is to keep the population circulating between camps and groups (Lee and DeVore, 1968:9). The practice of the population shifting between partners, sub-groups and areas also serves to widen each man's acquaintance with others of the society, strengthening the cohesion of the group through communication.

This theory of the resolution of conflict by fission may best explain the extreme fluidity among the old timers in the "temporary permanence" of their winter cabins, due to the face-to-face (one might say nose-to-nose) confinement of four to six men in almost windowless one-room cabins, averaging sixteen feet by eighteen feet in size (Ogilvie, 1913:300). Some were smaller, Davis described "a fine cabin," fourteen by sixteen feet which he and two partners built and lived in during the winter of 1886 (1967:39).

Probably the close confinement of the tiny cabins had a great deal to do with the early development of a custom of almost constant visiting. Although a gift of meat, or news, may have occasionally been taken along, no excuse or gift was necessary, or even usual. Men visited back and forth all winter from cabin to cabin within a few days' walking distance. Usually one individual went visiting alone, and a visit might last an hour, a day, or a few days. Henry Davis, in his journal, made many entries such as the one in November 1886 in which he recorded that

"Ben Atwood came down today...Ben wanted to go hunting, but we looked at the frozen quicksilver and that meant to stay at home. Ben's partner is building a new cabin but Ben is staying alone -- we didn't ask questions as we didn't know what the trouble was. He went home the next day." (1967:43)

Ben was back a few days later, when the weather moderated, and they went hunting.

Service considers primitive hunters "quite literally, the most leisured people in the world," due to the simplicity of their technology and lack of control over the environment (1966:12).

The old timers too, in the winter season, particularly during the earliest days before mining by winter firing became the accepted mode in 1887, were leisured. They simply waited for spring, and the melting of the ice on the river bars and banks. The time indoors was spent playing cards, talking, mending and making equipment such as fish nets, snowshoes, and in later years, dog harness, and so on. One suspects a good deal of time was passed in sleeping, as among primitive hunters.

Two men were mentioned as setting up a blacksmith shop in one of the cabins, fashioning their crude tools out of what materials they had at hand; they then "fixed up all the picks that needed repairing and got everything ready for another summer's work." (Buteau, 1967:102-3).

Some of the work during the winter was by way of a pastime. Davis mentioned one of his partners making a fiddle, however they do not appear to have developed a characteristic art form, such as the scrimshaw carvings developed by idle whalers.

It will be shown that the old timers developed an oral tradition amounting to an art form through a distinctive type of story-telling, however, since the pattern of visiting has not yet been fully explored, we will delay discussing this art form at this time.

With several men confined to each tiny cabin, as much time as possible was spent elsewhere -- outdoors, running a trap line, hunting, fishing through the ice, and always, visiting. Only when the mercury which they placed outdoors to measure the temperature froze at 40° below zero, did they remain at home. Some of the "hardier souls" went out even then, Haynes claimed, "although when pure alcohol froze, at 72° below zero, as it did on rare occasions, even the

hardiest decided it was too cold that day to venture out." (1897:85). One can surmise that it was indeed a virulent case of "cabin fever" which took a man out in such temperatures. It was not customary, or advised.

On winter hunting trips they would usually choose a hunting companion from another cabin or, alternatively, hunt alone, sometimes staying at a nearby cabin overnight, or less frequently "siwashing it" (sleeping out) in the shelter of trees, and returning to the cabin for help in carrying back the game when the hunt was successful.

A journal entry for February 27, 1887 illustrated winter activities and atmosphere rather well.

"Buckskin came down today for some Epsom salts for Bob English and said he was sure it was scurvy. We gave him some meat and Lubeck potatoes and onions. It is still very cold and Chris is making himself a fiddle. I am making fish nets and Nick and Charley are playing poker at one cent a chip.

We made a spring camp and Chris and I will live there as the cabin is very dusty and we are getting bored looking at each other...Chris says he will go crazy if he stays in the cabin with the other fellows any longer. We will move soon."
(Davis, 1967:44).

Chris was a newcomer, Davis told us, it was his first time away from home, and Davis "guesses he is homesick" (1967:43). (This is the only case of a complete novice among the earliest old timers I have come across.) Chris can be expected either to develop the tolerance, patience and endurance necessary to the life, or he will leave the Yukon. In this way, the old timers were self-selected, and had, or developed, a particular group personality.

Chris was reported to have started outside with another man in November, but his partner's feet got frozen and they had to come back. The following March, 1887, having endured the winter, Chris was mentioned as helping Davis and a third man fix up their boat to go prospecting together (1967:45). Chris appears to have chosen to stay.

"SPREES"

Men not only moved around the Yukon in groups, but when the monetary results of a successful season permitted it, they went "outside" in groups, to such places as Juneau, Seattle, or San Francisco, on what they referred to as a "spree"; which they also enjoyed as a distinctive group; staying at the same hotel, going to theaters, boxing matches, dance halls and brothels together.

Davis told of one occasion in San Francisco when

"the gang from the Yukon went down 'south of the Slot' and had a hot time. Those girls made the squaws and Circle City dancehall girls look like a Dirty Deuce in a new deck. But they came high," he remarked (1967:78).

If a man did not have a particularly lucrative season his spree was celebrated locally. Allsprees seem to have been limited in scope only by the amount of money (gold) available. One gets the impression that it was customary to return to the north, or to work, "broke".

A spree, Berton feels, had "something almost ceremonial to it," there was "a traditional pattern to the behavior which was followed." (1963:29). A man on a spree moved from saloon to saloon, standing drinks for all. To refuse a drink on this occasion was an insult -- unless one accepted a cigar. To refuse to buy drinks for all was also not acceptable apparently, for whenever one of the "new millionaires" was backward in treating (which was not often) "the crowd -- always a good-natured one -- would pick him up by the legs and arms and swing him like a battering ram against the side of the house until he called out 'Enough!'" (Adney, 1900:315).

Berton's description of a spree also demonstrates mock violence. According to Berton

"a man on a spree moved from saloon to saloon swinging a club as a weapon, threatening the bartenders, pouring the liquor himself, ...then driving everybody ahead of him to the next

saloon, where the performance was repeated. When a spree reached its height, the miners would line up on two sides of the saloon and throw cordwood at each other...When the spree was over, the man who began it would hand his poke of gold dust to the saloonkeeper and ask him to take the damages out of it." (1963:30)

A spree could last several days, and the costs for damage could be high. The bill for one such spree came to \$2,900, Berton asserts. William Ogilvie, the Canadian government surveyor, told of one man whose season's work yielded him only \$500, and who already owed the trading company \$700 for past grubstakes, arranging with the trader, Jack McQuesten, to have his spree first, and then pay what he could on his account with any money left (Ogilvie, 1913: 102). As was usual after a spree, there was no money left, so McQuesten let him have another outfit on credit, to be paid after his next "clean up" (ibid).

Such local sprees lasted only two or three days, or as stated, until the money ran out. Outside sprees, although also a prolonged celebration were not so clear-cut in form.

Davis told of several outside sprees which he enjoyed. On one occasion in 1896, just before the big Klondike strike, after a good winter he sold his claims and his dogs, sent his native wife to stay with her tribal relations, and went outside to San Francisco with eight companions -- a number which increased as they met the next steamer down from the North and were joined by "lots of the boys from Circle and Forty Mile." (1967:78).

News of the Klondike Strike took them north again. Davis worked a good claim for a month or so, "picked and rocked out \$1,200" and again went "to town (Dawson) for a good time". "We went back after we were broke," Davis wrote, "but the pay was spotty" from then on, and "we did not wash up as we thought we would." (1967:79).

As a result of working a rich Klondike claim in 1897, Davis went on what was probably his most extensive spree. After cleaning up the gold from his

winter's work, he then sold the claim to the Bank of Commerce (which was now in the area) for \$22,500.

Davis did not mention how much money he took out, but on this well-funded spree

"we went to Vancouver, B.C., and then to Frisco, and then to New York. There I met with Tom O'Brien and we went to Montreal and from there to Ottawa...I began to get lonesome for the Yukon, so we went to Winnipeg and met Bill Eagle there. We buzzed a few nights (almost to daylight) and then I started home for good, I think." (1967:81).

Davis gave no further details of this particular prolonged spree, but one notes it is fellow old timers he went to meet, not blood relations. The social bond remained strong outside of the working situation, as did the pattern of moving over America and Canada apparently on whim, as he did over the Yukon.

Such large sums spent on sprees were not unusual, the men spent whatever amount they had. Adney tells of "Jimmie the Tough" (Jimmy McMann to his older friends) who sold a Klondike claim for \$35,000 and spent \$28,000 of that sum on a local spree. This sounds impossible until we learn that during the Dawson hysteria, the bartender was sent out into the street to call in all within sight for a drink. Jimmie then went out with \$6,000 to San Francisco, returned to Dawson with \$588, got drunk and spent \$500 in one week, and then settled down to work again. (Adney, 1900:316).

After a number of months in the wilderness, the spree was important to the returning prospector as a high point, a release of tension. As the values of egalitarian societies are cooperation, mutualism, respect for self and one's fellows, and these arise most readily from "ecological situations where each individual's well-being is enhanced by a common abstinence from competitive and aggressive behavior" (Harris, 1971:372), it also probably functions through the element of rough "horse play" as an amiable channeling of aggression. Most importantly, the spree acts as an efficient levelling mechanism in this egali-

tarian society; no matter how unevenly the wealth was distributed at the end of a season, everyone started the next season once again, fairly equal.

PRACTICAL JOKING

In hunting societies, where equality, fraternity and order are socially subscribed values, aggression among members threatens the survival of the society: disruptive behaviour cannot be tolerated, nor yet can overt coercion and restraints. Among band peoples with a norm of amiability, a good deal of quarreling is often quite usual. Turnbull mentions that the Mbuti pygmies are "violently emotional, they fight continuously, although the fighting is without malice." (1968:91).

Although quarreling among the old timers seems rare, outsider DeWindt, who saw no brawling, "never...a blow struck in anger" mentioned that there were "many heated arguments." (1898:145). This assessment was based on the behaviour of the men as he observed them relaxing in a saloon. It is probable that much of this was social argument, not malicious quarreling. Davis recorded a few serious quarrels which threatened to break into violence. One such dispute broke out on an occasion when a group of the men decided to go up the Forty Mile River to prospect. Two of the men said they were going to stay at the mouth of the river

"'where the grub is.' someone said. 'Yes, you are afraid to go up...as it is too tough,' and Hank told him 'plenty', and I believe he meant it all and would have fought a wild cat." (1967:49).

Among the old timers any man who seriously challenged the harmony of the group, such as threatening to use his gun in a quarrel, was told as was Davis on one occasion, "any more talk about shooting...and out he would go." (Davis, 1967:60). Such solutions ended the quarrel, but did not drain off hostility, hence it was necessary for this society to develop methods of displacing and chan-

neling off the suppressed aggression of individuals in ways that not only did not undermine, but actually strengthened the social bond. Flux was the main solution, in this case the man with whom Davis had quarrelled was a newcomer, and he was persuaded by the men to "go away and cause no more trouble," whilst old timer Davis was warned re future shooting threats. The spree seems in part to fulfil this function, but to a much greater extent, the old timers' most indulged in form of humour, the practical joke, also served this social need.

Practical jokes were often used as a leveler, in this capacity even extending to deflating outsiders with whom the old timer had dealings. Ogilvie felt that it was difficult to get any exact statement of facts from the miners as "many of them are inveterate jokers, and take delight in hoaxing: the higher the official or social position of the person they hoax the better are they pleased." (1898:68).

A great many practical jokes are reported in detail in the old timers' literature, often jokes in which the recorder did not actually take part. Apparently the telling and retelling of these often elaborate tricks was vicariously enjoyed by all. They ranged from the harmlessly humorous, often against a favourite person in the group, or a well-known perpetuator of practical jokes, through the slightly malicious to the vengeful. They were occasionally the effort of one individual but, as recorded, were more often group sponsored, sometimes against an individual, sometimes against another group of their fellows.

As an example of the most harmless type of joke, seemingly enacted only in the spirit of fun, one might cite the occasion when a whole steamer load of twenty-odd men united to play a joke on one of their cohort, an Irish-Canadian immigrant known as "Long John", a man "famed all over the Territory for his fun-making qualities, which being absolutely unstudied were all the more

amusing." (Ogilvie, 1913:73).

On a trip upriver, the small river steamer was having engine trouble and, so, making exceedingly little headway against the current. While Long John and some others were sleeping it was decided that the boat would have to turn back. All sleepers (except Long John) were wakened and told of the change of plan, then he was called. When he came out, he was delighted at the speed the boat was making (upstream, he thought), all joined him in admiring the new-found speed and explained to him "in original detail just how...(this) was accomplished." John sat and smoked, remarking every few minutes on how they were "goin' like h--l now" and so on, and calculating gravely "whin" they would reach their destination. Finally he looked thoughtfully at the trees and the water rushing by and flinging his arms up shouted, "Julius Caesar's ghost, boys! its down we'r goin'! What the h--l has happened?" and so on, "in the most lurid language imaginable while every soul on board was in convulsions of laughter" (1913:74-5). When the joke was explained to John, he enjoyed it as much as anyone, Ogilvie told us.

Another harmless prank recorded by Haynes, was played on a saloonkeeper "equally fond of practical joking." One man, anticipating a candle shortage, mixed condensed milk and water until it looked like tallow, inserted wicks, froze it, and made very genuine looking candles of the mixture. Then he told the saloonkeeper he was going "out", and sold him the "candles" for a "big price." The saloonkeeper planned to sell them when the anticipated shortage occurred, however when he opened the box he found "a little congealed milk and a lot of wicks." The story spread all over the district and the saloonkeeper "seemed to enjoy the joke as much as anyone, for when P____, delighted with the success of his fooling brought him back the money, he absolutely refused to take it." He wanted "revenge," Haynes told us, and he got it, later selling P____ a fifty-gallon keg of "fine whiskey" for \$400. The keg turned out to

contain an arrangement of a very small inner keg with whiskey in it connected to the tap, and the rest of the big keg filled with water (1897:117).

Such jokes seem essentially good-natured, but others clearly contain an element of leveling, as when Joe Ladue, an overly optimistic old timer and six others, "all seven being selected on account of their assumed superior knowledge of mining" (Ogilvie, 1913:197) were all given separately the same tip about a rich strike, each believing he was the only one let in on the secret find. Arriving at the scene of the so-called rich strike, they each became aware that other men were in the woods, and they spent the whole day dodging each other. On their return, tired and hungry in the evening, "the chaffing and greetings accorded them can best be left to the imagination," Ogilvie told us (1913:197).

A less elaborate joke, in the same category of amiable 'put-down' was played against a good-natured fellow who was proud of his strength. He was maneuvered into betting "cigars all round" if he could not lift -- or at least tip over and roll, a very large heavy keg of whiskey which, unbeknown to him, had just been emptied. He took a firm grasp of the barrel and heaved. The barrel flew up into the air and he tumbled over backwards -- whereupon the air was filled with laughter and profane language, apparently in equal proportions (Moore, 1968:148). Boasting is not approved of in old timer (or hunter) society.

A somewhat more malicious joke was staged against a boastful Finn named Charlie. He had located a claim, the potential of which he boasted of at some length for several days, "and the boys determined to stop it, so fixed up a little job." In playing this joke, it was arranged that two newcomers would come into the bar and talk of having struck something very rich in the vicinity of Ready Bullion Creek, which was where Charlie had staked his not yet recorded claim.

Charlie, listening nervously, heard one of the newcomers ask whether anyone knew who owned claim number six (Charlie's claim) as he could not read the writing on the post, but he had been told the locator had not recorded it and he hoped to get and record that claim.

"Poor Charlie could stand no more," Ogilvie wrote. He left quietly "and rushed to his cabin, seized some cold pancakes, ...and without any more clothes than he wore in the house, started on foot for Forty Mile (sixty miles away) to record." (1913:194).

A man nine miles down the trail met him running wildly, streaming with perspiration; then "serious fears were entertained lest the poor, half-clad, half-fed man would perish on the long, lonely sixty-mile race." (Ogilvie, 1913:194-195). He reached Forty Mile the next day and recorded but, "alas for poor Charlie," exclaimed Ogilvie, "Ready Bullion proved no bullion at all, and as far as I have ever learned, that girl in Finland is still waiting." Ogilvie met him later and remarked that "that was a great race you had," and was replied to in language which "made me regret ever since that I mentioned it." (1913:195). Clearly use of profane language was an acceptable and much utilized tension release.

Particularly when people tried to assume a superior social status did the old timers go to great lengths to level them. The usual method was through a humiliating practical joke, however Haynes, the former N.W.M.P. constable turned successful Klondike miner, recorded as "a recognized salute" a habit of the miners, if dropping in on a fellow "who happens to have a newly cleaned stove," of spitting tobacco on the stove, as "an informal way of starting conversation" (1897:44). One suspects that this was a habit reserved for the owners of newly-cleaned stoves, as an indication of how little respect the miners had for the practice of polishing stoves. At any rate, it was probably most offensive to those who valued polished stoves.

As we know, the quiet unassuming man was model in this egalitarian society. "In a community where so many communistic ideals prevail...class distinctions were prohibited and anyone who tried to raise them was not only despised, but unmistakably shown he was," observed Ogilvie (1913:294).

That old timers could be malicious in their leveling, particularly of outsiders, was indicated by Bishop Bompas, who wrote that a young English missionary stationed at "Buxton" (as Forty Mile was called at the time, 1891) through the miners' playing practical jokes "of a most serious nature upon the young missionary, ...made life so hard for him that mind and body completely gave way and in that sad condition he was taken back to England." (1908:248). The young man's offense is not recorded, nor can we tell how much the practical joking was to blame for his breakdown. Nevertheless, it does seem implied that the old timers' harrassed him to a considerable degree.

In Circle City, in 1894 or thereabouts, the resident old timers, in order to deal with the rapidly swelling population of newcomers, appointed a Mr. McConnell as judge, and "he held the job really believing he was a judge," wrote old timer Bender. McConnell was "a very precise and dignified person, who stayed strictly to the white women of the town, and always appeared well dressed when on the streets" (Bender, 1967:90). The old timers did not object to precise and dignified people -- Ogilvie was certainly such a person and clearly much respected by the miners. One can only suspect that the "judge" was also pretentious, as is mildly suggested.

There was also in Circle City an "old nigger wench by the name of May," a prostitute against whom the old timers' also held a grudge, in that she sued a man who had lived with her for some time for board, and she refused to take her case before the traditional miners' court, but demanded a jury trial. On losing her case, and being assigned costs, she refused to pay them. Late one morning a group of old timers went to her cabin, got a long pole, reached up

and knocked her stove pipe, scraping and bumping the stock across the roof, and at the same time shouting, "Come down, Judge, don't steal May's stovepipe." The judge "was still in bed when May rushed in and began beating hell out of him," we are told. "The poor judge didn't know what it was all about...We told everybody (that the judge attempted to steal May's hard-to-obtain stove pipe)...and he was never able to convince some of the white women it was not (so)" (Bender, 1967:90-91).

On a coastal windjammer coming out to San Francisco, the Captain was what the old timers considered unnecessarily authoritarian, so they, knowing the Captain would want to play, started a poker game. When he joined in, as they had expected, they signalled their hands to each other, beating the Captain, who "jumped up mad and quit...We are roughnecks from Circle City and don't know nothing, I guess," remarked Henry Davis, with obvious satisfaction (1967: 76-77).

LOW VALUE ON GOLD

Although these men spent their lives looking for gold, they do not appear to have actually valued it as wealth, or as a source of the power or luxury wealth permits, which is why it was suggested earlier that 'rushes' were not basically for the sake of gaining wealth.

Many reasons for offering this hypothesis may be deduced from the documents. In one case, in 1886, when gold was first discovered on the Forty Mile River in American territory, the miners wintering in (twenty-one in all, according to participant Frank Buteau), agreed to restrict their claims to 300 feet each, rather than the legal 1,500 feet allowed under American mining regulations, "in order to make room for others who might want to locate in that district." (1967:101-2). As experienced miners they were aware that they might

well be giving up the richest part of their claim, there is no way of knowing in advance just where gold will be concentrated. (One must surmise, that they were also confident that the law of reciprocity would hold.)

In 1894 many of the old timers moved down the Yukon River to the site of a new gold strike just over the boundary, in U.S. territory. There they built a new camp, Circle City, which, being beyond the jurisdiction of the N.W.M.P., they ran themselves according to old timer custom and unwritten law. The miners' meeting continued very successfully to be the "supreme tribunal" in Circle, Staff Sergeant Haynes remarked (1897:126). At the time of the rich Klondike strike in 1896, "it was rumored" Ogilvie wrote, and he "has reason to believe that there was good foundation for this report, though it may have been exaggerated as I heard it," that the miners in Circle City, before leaving to join the rush to the new Klondike strike, held a mass meeting and resolved:

"That in the opinion of the resoluters the claims in the new ground were much too large: That one hundred feet square of the ground in the new area was enough for any man who had the fear of God and the love of his fellowman in his heart."
(1913:207-8)

It was probably not rumor, but in the eyes of the old timers a reasonable request. One decade earlier, as Buteau's evidence has indicated, under the old timers' (and hunter's) law of reciprocal exchange (sharing) such a request would not have been necessary.

There is further evidence in support of the hypothesis; old time Frank Buteau also told of a man (previously unknown to Buteau) coming by looking for a spot to locate a claim. Buteau, needing a working partner, offered to make him a full partner. Although they took out \$600 each in one week, when another party came through camp, heading for another reported gold strike, the new partner decided to go with them, as he felt he "had accepted enough help" from Buteau (1967:102). This seems a version of a custom on which Adney re-

ported. According to Adney,

"every man was a prospector and a hard worker, accustomed to hardship, rough yet generous to his fellows. One custom in particular that shows this feeling was that when the first of August came, any one who had failed to locate a paying claim was given permission to go upon the claims of such as had struck it and take out enough for next season's outfit. This peaceful condition in general characterized the Yukon."
(1900:240-1)

There are also many reports similar to the case Moore recorded, in which an old timer, who took out \$320 in coarse gold during his first four days' work at the Forty Mile strike, sold his claim "which looked good" for \$300, as he and his partners wished to go elsewhere (1968:77). Men mining rich claims at Stewart River, on hearing the news of a strike at Forty Mile River, gave up their "sure things" to rush to the gamble of a new claim at Forty Mile. The same thing happened at Circle City in 1896, on news of the Klondike strike, although the mines they were abandoning had proven to be rich. "For the lack of 'representation' many of these rich mines have by this time become legally abandoned; and may be restaked," wrote an incredulous outsider-observer (Henderson, 1898:270).

One Circle City miner who 'rushed' to the Klondike, left a thousand dollars worth of provisions and four full claims on one creek, "...all considered good prospects; and says he, 'I haven't paid any attention to them since.'" (Adney, 1900:298).

Murdock, discussing the high value the nomadic hunting bands place on movement, tells us "individuals and groups move from place to place far more often than is strictly necessary if movement is seen as a means of providing the best possible access to supplies (of food and water)" (1968:106). It appears that the old timers also valued movement in the same way as do the hunting bands, movement "normally taking place long before it is essential" (ibid:106) in terms of supplies of gold or meat. As Haskell remarked of the

old time prospectors, "some men esteem gold dust very cheaply" (1898:371).

In band societies subsistence is always derived from the natural habitat, the men of native Indian bands of the Yukon (essentially the same type of hunting-gathering society) hunted for part of their food, the women gathered wild vegetables and berries in season. It might be reasoned, that as these white men also hunted for meat but had (until they married) no women gatherers, they "foraged" gold from the land to buy the other part of their diet from the trading post. Gold was currency at the post, equality requires that no one man have more of it than his brothers, there was competition to find it, in the sense of a game or a gamble, but they had real use for only a very limited amount of it: a man needed only enough to buy a grubstake.

TALKING

Marshall, in describing the social customs of the !Kung Bushmen, points to talking as an aid to peaceful social relations "because it is so very much a part of the daily experience of the !Kung." Talking serves to keep up good open communication among the members of the band, acts as a salutary outlet for emotions, and as the principle sanction in social discipline (1961:232). "The !Kung are the most loquacious people I know," remarks Marshall, in part because among the Bushmen "the common human needs for co-operation and companionship" are particularly evident, the !Kung are "extremely dependent emotionally on the sense of belonging and on companionship." (ibid:231). All of the above can be applied equivalently to the old timers and their custom of talking.

As well as talking throughout the day, at night the !Kung talk late by their campfires, or visit other people's fires to converse.

"There always seems plenty to talk about. People tell about events with much detail and repetition and discuss the comings

and going of their relatives and friends and make plans. ...The men's imaginations turn to hunting. They converse musingly, as though enjoying a sort of day-dream together, about past hunts, telling over and over where game was found and who killed it. ...They also plan their next hunts... ."(ibid:232).

This too will be seen to apply equally well to the Yukon pioneers.

In the earliest days, the men, as we know, routinely went outside to winter. During their summers in the Yukon the campfire marked their home, as these men carried no tents in their moving about, but simply slept on the ground, rolled in a blanket. When Forty Mile camp took on a semblance of permanence, the saloon became the winter meeting place, where much the same kind of conversation took place, as will be more fully discussed below.

During prospecting and exploring trips the informal gathering by the campfire was the pivot of the society. When traveling, or at a temporary camp, there was always a nightly gathering of the groups for an evening smoke (or "chaw") and talk before sleeping. This tradition was continued, Chase, a cheechako traveling with an old timers' group in 1900, mentioned the pleasant hour of "general talk, story telling and an occasional song" around the big evening campfire.

A flow of talk went on endlessly when old timers were together. They were surely as loquacious as were the Bushmen, even Davis remarked that they "talked ...(people) blind." (1967:49). There is little direct evidence of the topics of conversation at the old timers' campfire meetings, but as the principal sanction in hunting societies is through the force of public opinion, one might expect that criticism and gossiping and social censure of transgressors were important topics. The old timers are recorded as gossiping, with varying degrees of malice. Adney quoted the words of an old timer who was in Forty Mile when the, at first disbelieving, prospectors got word of the success of men who had struck the Klondike. They were scornful of one of their comrades who

was said to have hired two men to work for him as he was "getting good pay." The Forty Milers' reaction was to exclaim that it must be a lie. "Louis Rhodes! When was he able to hire two men?" Of another old timer who had also a rich Klondike claim it was remarked, "Hell!...I've known Ben Wall these ten years, and he's the all-firedest liar in the Yukon." (Adney, 1900:294).

Such talk and more serious criticism was indulged in at the campfire meetings, but these occasions seem also to have been a time of relaxation, of smoking their pipes and yarning and 'joshing'. As well as relieving tension, such talking may be seen as building fellowship. Davis recorded over and over again such episodes as on meeting another group after a hunt, that night "we told yarns, smoked and went to bed. The next day we split up." (1967:36). Another time, "we camped at the head of the lake and met two men coming down-- We got sugar and tea from them and there was lots of talk that night." (ibid:37). On a river trip Davis and two other men saw signs of a campsite and landed.

"We found five men were asleep here who had not heard us land because the wind blew so hard.

I made a camp fire and cooked breakfast and hollered, "All hands to the grub pile." Everybody jumped up... . There was plenty of talk now." (ibid:39).

Yarning, the telling of ordinary everyday happenings in story form was characteristic of the old timers, who appear to have used a story form even in ordinary conversation. Adney quoted one old timer's telling of the finding of an unusually large nugget in this style. According to the old timer,

"Mike Young sees something bright like a pea in the bucket, and he brushed it off, and it kept gittin' bigger and bigger, and he pulled it out. You know Mike--nuthin' ever gits Mike excited, a regiment of soldiers wouldn't get Mike excited. He picked it up and come to the hole and hollered down, 'I've found a nugget!' 'How much?' I says. 'It may be forty and it may be fifty.' 'Gosh darn,' says I, 'it'll go a hunder and fifty.'" (1900:270-71).

This nugget was two hundred and twelve ounces in weight, and was shaped

like a frog. So, the old timer continued,

"I called it 'The Frog'. I told him to take it to Demars (a Frenchman)...and he'll give him double the price. Say, he'll kick him out of the house." (Adney, 1900:271).

Usually at campfires such yarns were told, news of "good color" (traces of gold) seen here and there exchanged, news of accidents, natural hazards, new routes and so on related, and always when they stopped and "had a big talk" as Henry Davis put it, news of absent comrades was exchanged.

"They said Hank Wright had gone to the Kolkoquim River. He left his family at Kokrines. They also said King was coming upriver alone. Bettles was still at St. Michael but would come to Walker's Point next winter. Bill Eagle and his (native) wife Mary had stopped at Baker Creek." (Davis, 1967:65).

Old timers were "little interested in the outside world," Haskell observed (1898:339). At the Klondike strike, in 1897, all the old timers talked about was "the cold weather, the poor grub and little of it, incidents of a hard trip with dogs, the time there was no butter in Circle City -- these constitute about the whole stock of conversation," according to journalist-recorder Adney (1900:270). One can see the importance of 'yarning', of much relaxed recalling of past practical jokes, lucky (and unlucky) accidents, good past hunts, "sprees" and celebrations, good-natured teasing, and so on. Pierce recalled the "twitting" he took from "the boys" for his handling of a most serious situation, in which he and his six companions found themselves through accident with 300 miles left to travel to the nearest supplies, winter closing in, and no provisions or meat left. At the point of near collapse from starvation, Pierce got the idea of searing the fur off three rare fox skins he had obtained in trade from the Indians, cutting up the skins finely and boiling them until they were tender enough to eat.

"The boys often afterwards laughed about the inglorious end of those high toned fox skins. I sometimes answered ...that if it had not been for my fox skin stew they would still be sleeping on the shores of Lake Bennett." (1890:135).

This ordeal also serves to illustrate the natural courtesy and sharing which is a part of reciprocal relations among egalitarian hunters wherever they are found (Marshall, 1961:235). Pierce continued, "Sometimes we would get a rabbit or grouse which we would carefully divide. We were getting weaker each day and yet all of us were kind and pleasant to each other." (1890:135). Social control through the giving or withholding of respect implies a good deal of gossiping regarding all men's actions and transgressions, of disapproval voiced when custom (the law) has been ignored. As the strength of the sanction lies in group, not individual disapproval, the gathering of men in a social situation as at the campfire seems a natural forum for this kind of censure, as Marshall has suggested.

EXCHANGE

It was an unfailing custom or courtesy in the Yukon to pull into the bank wherever and whenever another individual was encountered, to exchange local news and information over a smoke, a meal, or most frequently, an overnight camp visit. The old timers observed this courtesy toward Indians also, many of whom had a few words of English or Chinook, and who were a good source of river-news, but not usually to the extent of an overnight visit (Stanley, 1898: 64). They also traded tea, tobacco, sugar and meat for information, furs, fish and meat. The old timers also gave the Indians meat or a little tobacco, or a mug of tea, as a somewhat restrained courtesy.

Although it is deviating briefly, it is noticeable that the old timers, being generous, were often willing to share commodities of which they had sufficient supplies with the Indians, but they did not feel it their duty or obligation to share with the natives. If they were short of a commodity, they refused a native's request. They would share unfailingly whatever they had with

any other white prospector.

In hunting society, according to Service, "social obligations so dominate the character of exchange...that in the usual modern meaning of the word there is no economy at all." The emotions, as well as the "etiquette of kinship and the morality of modesty and generosity all together dominate the exchange, rendering it a social act as well as an economic act." (1966:81). Among primitive hunters, not only were social relations a part of the exchange process, but "the implementation of social relations for their own sake often can be both the function and the purpose of an exchange of goods." (1966:18). This was clearly so among the old timers, who observed an unfailing custom of pulling into the riverbank to exchange news and gossip with literally every white man (and most Indians) they encountered. These visits, from a half hours' smoke to a few days' or a weeks' camp were also almost invariably economic to the extent that exchange of goods and foodstuffs was a standard part of the social interaction. Indeed, among these early white men who roamed up and down the Yukon River, various exchanges of their limited supplies took place almost as inevitably as did the exchange of news and gossip.

Basic provisions were bought at the ill-supplied trading posts, a problem the trader handled by carefully rationing his very limited supplies, and each man received an equal share of whatever was available, whether he had cash or required further credit (Davis, 1967:50). The post, however, regularly ran out of goods and foodstuffs weeks or even months before the supply boat arrived. The old timers were chronically short of even the most basic provisions, particularly when traveling. Thus, when men on meeting a fellow traveller, drew in to the bank of the river according to custom, it was routine to inquire what a man was "long" on, and what he was "short" on; exchange between whites much more routinely than between whites and Indians was almost always part of an encounter. Many methods of exchange are recorded as taking place, straight

exchanges were made -- moose meat for nails, tea for fish, flour for furs, cartridges for sugar, and so on. Amounts do not appear to be very carefully calculated, if a man was "long" on sugar, he gave the other individuals some, the others might be able to spare some tea. Occasionally such goods were bought rather than exchanged, paid for in gold dust. If a man was completely out of food, he was given a share of the other's small stock. This was expected; when one group lost their entire outfit due to a river bank cave-in, Pierce commented, "We were then obliged to divide our stores with them and to assist them to build another boat." (1890:116). This custom of sharing became a problem when the unprepared and unsupplied stampedeers poured into the area. When DeWindt, discussing the situation with an old timer, pointed out that at least one-third of the stampedeers had food enough, he got a growling answer, "What good is that? They (meaning his fellow old timers from Forty Mile) will have to share what they have got with the others!" (1898:128).

Among the old timers, as among the hunters, of whom Service writes, "sharing is not gift giving, -- but an obligation or a duty. It is an expectation of the moral order and a rule of etiquette, as well as the keynote of the value system. A man shares simply because it is the right thing to do; he may later receive, and this also is his right." (1966:16).

One entry from Davis' journal records trading fresh meat for nails with prospectors met working a river bar, of getting a rocker iron from them, of buying "grub" from another small group who came down the river, and of paying these new men for "cleaning up" (separating their gold dust from sand with quicksilver). As the river was rising and full of driftwood, all three groups remained on the bank, "Joe and Chris went hunting and killed a small moose... The next day we all packed it in and had meat." (Sharing) (1967:35).

There seems no hard and fast rule to the particular form of exchange

followed, once again it appears, as in the composition of old timer small groups and Bushmen hunting parties, "not a matter of convention or anxious concern." It does appear that as among the primitive hunters, meat is the most frequently shared item, perhaps because the Yukon was primarily a big game country. The main game animals, moose, caribou and bear, yield some hundreds of pounds of meat. One three day hunt (certainly more than usually successful) Davis mentioned yielded four caribou and one bear (ibid:50).

Historical evidence suggests that in the early years game was ample to sustain the number of men taking up residence in the Yukon. Davis mentioned many good "bags", once when he was building a winter cabin, "a big moose came along and we killed it, and gave everybody that came along some meat." (ibid: 50). Another time he went hunting and got 27 mallards. "I had to make two trips to pack them home and gave nearly all away," he recorded (ibid:54).

Primitive hunters too "give things away": both groups share a morality of generosity (Service, 1966:14). The feeling of many of the anthropologists at the 1965 symposium, that "reciprocal access to food resources would rank as equal in importance with the exchange of spouses as a means of communication between (hunting) groups," (Lee and DeVore, 1968:12), is of particular significance to this study. When leadership in this egalitarian society is discussed, it will be seen that to a considerable extent, the pattern of reciprocal rather than commercial exchange holds to a certain extent even in obtaining goods from the trading company stores.

Another important thing shared was service in the form of help. Ordinary tasks, building cabins, boats and such, seem shared only among the small partnership sub-groups, however help in an emergency was unfailingly offered by all in the vicinity. A typical example, one of many similar experiences recorded throughout the literature, was one of the experiences Davis recorded. He and his partners encountered a man who had upset his boat, and lost most of his

supplies. Davis' group went down river picking up "lots of it, and stayed with him (building fires) to dry it out." (1967:47). Another time an old loner, "Calamity Bill", came along "pulling his sled by his neck with a load of grub." As he was not feeling well (indeed, he died five days later), he stayed overnight. The next morning "we hauled his sled home for him and left Dutch John with him," wrote Davis (ibid:51). In general there seems a simple acceptance of the familial form of reciprocity as observed among the !Kung Bushmen, in which the flow of labour, provisions and services do not appear contingent upon any definite counterflow (Marshall, 1961:244).

CHAPTER THREE --- THE POLITICAL SPHERE

THE DEVIANT

Anthropological evidence shows that in egalitarian societies where a man is respected for and judged on his intrinsic character, and conformity to a law of reciprocity a functional imperative -- the most important means of social control is through sanction of public disapproval. A transgressor is made aware of having lost the respect of his comrades. In hunting societies, "formal law does not exist, but sanctioned forms of deterrence do, and they can vary all the way from punishment, like ostracism, ridicule and withdrawal of privilege to actual physical violence, even death." (Service, 1966:49).

For lesser transgressions, such as freeloading, shirking one's share of the work or obligation to share, cheating in some minor way, a man is simply made aware of a steady current of disapproval and scorn. He is not actually ejected from the larger group (Harris, 1971:238).

It seems very likely from the tone of the scanty references, by the old timer recorders, to George Washington Carmack, discoverer of the rich Klondike strike which precipitated the great 1897-98 gold rush, that he was such a minor deviant, and that the hunting society's sanctions toward the free-loader were applied to him. He was reported to be lazy, boastful, and a liar. The miners claimed that "they could not tell when he was telling the truth, if he ever was" (Haskell, 1898:244). Hence, among men who used no derogatory nicknames, he was known as "Lying George", and "Siwash George" -- the latter because he had taken the only alternative open to the shunned man who wished to remain, the man not wanted as a partner, and had joined his native wife's tribe, living with them and accepting them as kin. This was a procedure outside of old timer convention -- although they married native wives we shall see that they did not

accept kin bonds with her tribal relatives. (Acceptance of kinship to the Indians incidently distinguishes the 'squawman' from the old timer with a native wife.)

It is significant as an indication of Carmack's status in the community that Bob Henderson, a "fierce" subscriber to the prospectors' code (Berton, 1963:39), on passing the tip of good prospects in the area to Carmack which resulted in his rich Klondike River strike, requested Carmack to let him know if he struck anything. Carmack promised to do so, according to Ogilvie (1913:132). Under the code it was his duty to do this, a promise was unnecessary. If Henderson extracted a promise, by doing so he registered his distrust of and scorn for Carmack quite clearly.

Ogilvie thought it was Carmack's association with the Indians which created a prejudice against him in the community, plus the fact that he had but recently come to the Forty Mile area, and because he did little prospecting (1913:133). However, Carmack had been in various other areas of the Yukon since at least 1887, when Ogilvie had met him packing along with Tagish Indians at Dyea Pass (1913:133). He had been a partner in the past of several of the old timers, he was known in the Forty Mile community as all men in the vast territory were known (by reputation), even if he had not been in that particular area before. It was more likely that his personal traits caused the prejudice and led to his association with the Indians. Certainly Carmack would earn the contempt of all men of the community when, on receiving a tip from a fellow society member regarding good prospects which led to his discovery of gold, he failed to send word of his find to Henderson as expected, customary, and promised. When "men went back on their pledges," which did not happen often, Walden assured us, they were "looked down on and almost boycotted." (1928:47).

Such men were fringe dwellers in old timer society as they would be in

other hunting bands. Carmack was still given word of good prospects as were all men, but he was received at the best with the restrained courtesy shown the natives, and also at times with a sort of hearty disrespect, exemplified by one old timer's greeting, when Carmack came into the bar at Forty Mile, "Hello, you old Siwash! Have you any dried salmon to sell me?" Davis mentioned a typical old timers' encounter with Carmack, or any such deviant, on going upriver. At an Indian camp "George Carmack was there with his squaw wife, but we didn't stay long." (1967:37).

The free-loader, or non-producer, was "not considered by the old timer to be in the same class or entitled to the same consideration as a prospector or miner," Adney indicated (1900:269).

LEADERSHIP-JACK McQUESTEN

On the other hand, leadership in egalitarian band societies, is also dependent on personal qualities. These societies reject the authority of personal force, except the authority of the father over his children, Service asserts (1966:81). Hence, "it is better to speak of persons of influence rather than persons of authority. ...An 'influential person' in band society connotes someone who has admirable qualities, such as wisdom and character, rather than physical power." (ibid:82).

One cannot deviate to explore the leadership of one particular individual in the course of reconstructing the social organization of a society, however, neither can one reconstruct the old timers' society without mentioning the earliest pioneer of them all, Leroy N. (Jack) McQuesten, fur trader, trading post manager, steamboat captain, and "person of influence" on the upper Yukon River since 1873. McQuesten, from evidence of both old timers and outside observers, possessed the basic characteristics of the leader in egalitarian

society as outlined in anthropological theory to such an extent as to appear almost an ideal type.

McQuesten, an American from Maine, had been an Indian fighter in the American West and gold seeker in B.C.'s Cariboo district. For years before he came to the Yukon River area in 1871 he roamed Canada's northern wilderness, trapping, trading with the Indians, exploring and looking for signs of gold. (McQuesten, 1952:1).

When the first prospectors ventured over the pass and down the river, McQuesten already knew the whole upper Yukon valley intimately -- he and his two partners, Harper and Mayo, had been moving up and down the one thousand miles of upper river for fifteen years; he was wilderness wise and wilderness hardened; he was thus for a long time the sole source of advice and information regarding the largely unexplored river.

Once again we find in the historical documents utilized complete unanimity of opinion. Not only was there not one derogatory remark, but virtually all outsider-observers spoke very highly of McQuesten. The old timers, themselves, did not actually praise McQuesten as the outsiders did but their documents reveal a respect, and an increasing acceptance of his egalitarian leadership. He was a man of much influence throughout the whole lifetime of this unique society.

Davis illustrated the attitude of the old timers' toward this man. On one occasion McQuesten had "put me to whipsawing," Davis told us, "but I had my hip pocket full of gold dust and quit. I told Jack -- no more whipsawing for me. He laughed and said, 'Henry, they all say that, but they get there all the same.'" (1967:54). Another time, in 1896, Davis had had a good season and told McQuesten he was going outside. McQuesten advised him to stay in, as "someone is going to make a big strike here soon for sure." Davis left. (ibid:76).

In 1888 a prospector was killed by an Indian (an unusual occurrence). The old timers held a meeting and decided to find the Indian and to "teach them a lesson not to kill prospectors." (ibid:55). This incident will be dealt with more fully later, however, they found, tried and hung the murderer. On their return, "that night we held a meeting and both Jack (McQuesten) and Al (Mayo) made talks and said we did a fine thing for Alaska..." (ibid:58). Although the two traders seem to have spoken as headmen on this occasion, Davis usually referred to either as being one of the "boys". Without praise, he mentioned that at McQuesten's and Mayo's trading post, "they gave the same things to all, money or no money," (ibid:51).

The glowing testimonies as to Jack McQuesten's leadership and character were recorded by outsiders to the society, they are too many to list. Webb, one of the new men who "hit it rich" at the Klondike find in 1896, referred to McQuesten, as many do as "The Father of the Country". He

"has come into contact with almost every man who has been in the country. He has probably supported, outfitted and grub-staked more men...than any person knows except himself and the (trading) company. ... He has done all this from kindness of the heart, without any selfish motive whatever; for if he had been more exacting, or had demanded even the share which he would have been entitled to on a grub-stake agreement, he would probably be to-day one of the richest men in the country." (1898:682).

Although Ogilvie suggested that McQuesten was given the informal title of "Father of the Yukon" by the miners because he was so intimately associated with mining developments in the area, it was much more the miners than the mining with which he was intimately associated. "Many a story is told in the Yukon...of Jack's goodness of heart and generosity," remarked Ogilvie (1913: 102). Old timer J. Bernard Moore echoed these tributes, as do all writers who mention McQuesten. Moore, however, extended the praise to all four pioneer traders -- Harper, McQuesten, Hart and Harper. They were all

"big-hearted fellows...(who) assisted many a poor miner to get

a grubstake and otherwise perform acts of kindness... . No man I ever met, either in or out of that country but had a good word to say of the firm of Harper, McQuesten and Company." (1968:36).

McQuesten however, even more than the other pioneer traders, was clearly to all accounts a much admired and respected man. His endless generosity did not pay him in gold as Webb pointed out, indeed in terms of wealth McQuesten "has comparatively little to show for his long life and many hardships." (Haskell, 1898:333). Hunters, however, do not view sharing as gift giving, Service points out, they admire generosity but they expect it, as an obligation or a due.

"A man shares simply because it is the right thing to do: ... Giving and receiving are matters of course in his everyday life." (Service, 1966:16).

We note that it was the outsiders who did not share the hunter's values who tended to be most impressed with McQuesten's generosity and felt he should have been more amply repaid in gold. However, "accumulating goods promotes envy and distrust," in hunting societies, "or at least reduces the prestige and esteem a person may enjoy." (Service, 1966:18). Further, according to Harris, an egalitarian leader must set an example for generosity. Indeed, "the first and main instrument of his power is generosity," he has no clearly defined powers or publicly recognized authority (1971:385).

All observations recorded, by outsiders or old timers, indicated that McQuesten fulfilled the main theoretical rule for a (charismatic) egalitarian leader; his generosity seemed without limit, he gave credit upon credit to the prospectors, he sent out no bills, but simply trusted the men to pay him when they made a good strike, a trust which was not abused by the old timers, but which was abused by some new men even before 1896, according to Ogilvie (1913: 104). Indeed, Berton tells us that his credit was so liberal that by 1894 the miners owed the A.C.&C. Company one hundred thousand dollars (1963:29). It was

then that the A.C.&C. Company replaced McQuesten with a dictatorial new manager who was "all business"; his refusal to allow any credit and his imported class attitudes made him as unpopular with the miners as McQuesten had been popular (Ogilvie, 1913:294).

McQuesten assumed a responsibility toward the old time prospectors which went far beyond his loyalties to his trading company employers, and which can only be touched on within the bounds of this study. He, along with the missionaries, was one of the few sources of wages for men who wintered in the Yukon and who needed money for supplies. He hired men to cut logs, whipsaw lumber, build trading post buildings, crew the steamboat, cut firewood for the boilers, clerk in the post, and so on.

The journalist, Adney, was at Dawson the winter of 1897-98 before the spring break-up brought the engulfing wave of thousands of stampedeers. Adney accordingly knew the old timers better than many outsider-recorders, also he spent one week interviewing old timers exclusively. Adney felt that "it was a keen understanding of the old timer, his good traits and his prejudices, that endeared McQuesten to them, so that they spoke of him before any other man as 'The Father of the Yukon'." (1900:272). We might add that in hunting type societies, the social bonds are familial. The leader of this old timers' society was the "father".

Although the norms of a charismatic leader are usually considered to reflect those of the group, in this case the proposition seems to be reversed, as McQuesten's character and behaviour were evident and commented upon before the old timers were in the Yukon in any numbers, or the society as such took form. Lt. Schwatka, for example, based his assessment of McQuesten's character (which was as the others) on a meeting with him in 1883, thus it seems that in this instance, that the norms and values of the old timers were formed not only through environmental necessity, but to a considerable degree by the example of

McQuesten, and that McQuesten had a great deal of influence (though little authority), over the type of social behaviour which led to the society taking its particular form. Nor can it be entirely without significance that the first prospectors in the Yukon area came in as friends, in response to personal letters from McQuesten, Mayo and Harper, the first traders and only white men in the entire upper Yukon valley for more than thirteen years previous to their coming. I believe that these 'first-timers' wintering with McQuesten, being dependent on him for supplies and information, cannot have been without influence on them as the nucleus of an embryonic society. This society was never actually acephalous, being for most of its short successful life-time under the influence - but not the authority of - Jack McQuesten. Later, under the pressure of rapid population expansion, McQuesten and the old timers through a fraternal order which they formed (The Yukon Order of Pioneers), moved toward some institutionalization of authority. This we will come to.

MINERS' LAW

The very few earliest old timers did not hold structured meetings in order to come to agreement on the need for censure or the application of sanction against a troublesome society member. Such matters came up and were dealt with informally in the course of the usual evenings' gathering for gossip and conversation and a smoke at the communal campfire. As more men came in, social control through the form of miners' meetings with which they had been familiar in earlier American mining camps before the advent of established law came into use, and became a Yukon tradition.

The function of miners' meetings was self-government of the community by common agreement. The men drew up their own mining regulations, elected a recorder of claims and so on, but in the earliest years and throughout the

society's short history, they acted most importantly to impose and preserve civil order. The society was small enough for several years for the form of the meeting to be trial and judgement by open vote of all members of the community present. All might question the accused, and all vote by a show of hands, or by stepping forward or backward, or some such simple indication of their vote. A decision was arrived at through discussion, informal debate, and coming to a consensus. Pierce, our earliest recorder told of the discussion which went on around the campfire when two men had gone missing. Indians were suspected of having killed them, and plans were being made to raid the Indian camp. "There was much difference of opinion as to what was the best course to pursue, ...a few wanted to leave the area," (these were 'barroom brawlers', wrote Pierce with bitterness).

"I let them talk and said nothing, although most of the men had been looking to me for an opinion. At length someone asked me to express my opinion, which I then did." (1890:177).

The men then asked Pierce what he thought they should do, he suggested a plan of attack "to teach them (the Indians) respect for the whites". (Although numerically weak, the white man's guns gave them superiority over the bow and arrow carrying Indians.)

Having talked the matter over, "they adopted my plan and war was declared on, ...The men insisted on my acting as captain, which I consented to do provided all were satisfied." (ibid:178-83).

This account strengthens the impression that earliest miners' meetings could be simply a part of the campfire discussion when the group was small enough for the evening campfire gathering to be a fair representation of the total population of the area. Further, there does not appear to be a chairman or organizer of any sort. Probably in the earliest years when the group was very small, a meeting was never called as such, problems were raised and decisions made, as in Bushman society, in the course of the evening talk, or

even less formally. For example, once when Davis in a quarrel with a newcomer was threatened by the man, Davis responded by getting his rifle and threatening that "we would settle this right now." The newcomer went into a cabin, some of 'the boys' followed him in, then came back and said the newcomer had agreed "to go away and cause no more trouble". Both men were told that "if anyone talked any more about shooting in the camp, out he would go. That settled it," wrote Davis (1967:60).

Earlier we mentioned briefly another "war" foray against the Indians in 1888, also as a result of the killing of a white prospector. The men temporarily commandeered a trading company steamer to take the raiders up a tributary river to the Indian camp, returning it to the worried Russian captain later "with very great gratitude and thanks." (1967:58). Volunteers were called for -- Davis, recalling the tone but surely not the actual words, told us that the old timers "had a big talk" and decided that they must teach them not to kill prospectors.

"Someone made a motion. 'All those willing to go hold up the right hand.' ...the chairman said, 'Now boys, no rough stuff, stay by the miner's law and do the right thing. We are here to protect ourselves and our white race in this country as there is no other law...'" (1967:55)

Several "officers" were appointed (Davis does not tell us how, or on what basis), "Gordon Bettles was the main squeeze (commanding officer of the tactical force), Bill Moore was acting (boat) Captain, Jim Bender was next in command, Matt Hall was chief cook, I was flunky." (1967:56). Davis, in this account, referred to Bettles as "Captain Bettles."

This form of leadership in the old timers' society was not the usual form, but utilized in this special "war" situation, being very temporary, a one-occasion delegated command. Once agreed to, however, the leader took on a good deal of military type of control, assuming or perhaps being given the title of Captain, appointing an assistant (Lieutenant), giving direct orders

and instructions, and receiving quick obedience from his (temporary) troops. Leadership in this egalitarian society, as in other simple egalitarian societies, was usually more nebulous without this direct authority, as we have outlined earlier.

On this occasion one Indian was hanged, but the case against another, an old medicine man, could not be proved, so there was some disputing as to the verdict in his case. To settle it, the spokesman for the group drew a line on the ground, and asked all in favour of hanging this man to step across the line. Only seven of the twenty-two did so, so the medicine man was turned loose (Bettles, 1967:122).

As the population increased, the miners' meeting necessarily became more structured; they began to elect or appoint -- both terms are recorded -- a chairman or spokesman (rather than a judge) whose temporary authority was accepted. Even later, in Circle City, they found it necessary to appoint a judge and use their version of the jury system; but until about 1890 to 1893 miners' meetings were very unstructured, and democratic.

Prior to these and other very significant structural changes however, in addition to punishing transgressions, miners through their meetings made a few laws which they enforced. Between 1880 and 1884 due to "some unprincipled scoundrels" making and selling "vile whiskey" to the natives near Juneau, the old timers made a law forbidding the sale of liquor to Indians. If men continued to do so the miners seized and destroyed both their stock and their still, Pierce recorded (1890:64-65). When the liquor was made to be sold to other old timers, the same law applied, but as shall be seen, was not applied so rigorously.

They appear also to have been inclined to dismiss as not serious, lesser crimes than theft or murder; as a man publicly tried, was effectively publicly shamed. For example, a man accused of selling brass filings as gold was tried

and acquitted; the inference made in the brief account is that although it was proven at the trial that it was brass, not gold dust, the miners found a dog fight which broke out more interesting (Murphy, 1967:25). With their rough but common sense justice they probably also felt that any man 'green' enough not to be able to distinguish between brass and gold deserved what he got. Later miners' meetings resulted in an agreement to keep Orientals out of the Yukon (Moore, 1968:169). Also, if a man could pay his debts, but would not, "the recalcitrant was requested by a miners' meeting to settle -- and he did," wrote Adney (1900:269).

SANCTIONS

Because respect from one's fellows was the basis of good standing and status, and material goods were shared, criminal acts among the Yukon pioneers were few. However, both in the early years and throughout the society's history, the swiftness and the certainty of enforcement of the unwritten law through trial by miners' meeting was surely a great deterrent.

As this society had no jails, trials were held within minutes or a few hours of a man's being apprehended. In a quite typical comment on the speed with which a judgement was enforced, Adney pointed out that

"Theft is as great a crime as murder, and when either happened, which was rarely, a miners' meeting was called, the accused was given a chance to be heard, and then by a vote the decision was rendered swiftly and surely. If guilty, he had to leave the country at once. How he left was a matter of no concern. He had to leave! (1900:268-9).

Theft was not only as great a crime as murder, it was probably more serious, the society would have been inoperable if stealing had become commonplace. The roaming way of life necessitated men's caching their supplies, and being able to count on their cache remaining there safely.

The most frequently rendered sentence was banishment, with a promise of

being shot on sight if they returned. In winter, whatever the weather, the culprit was given a sled, usually a small amount of food, and perhaps an escort for about one-half day's journey. One Circle City man "who had resorted to gun play in a dispute over a dog" was sent out despite the thermometer's registering 66° below zero at the time. "No account was taken of it and the man was dismissed into deadly weather." (Hunt, 1974:23). In summer a man would be sent downstream in a small boat, but it might happen that no boats were available, and "the evil-doer would depart on a log. Depart he must," wrote Haskell (1898:73).

Acts of murder among the old timers were entirely unrecorded, all writers agree that murder was almost unknown among these earliest Yukoners. Except for one case of attempted poisoning, it seems simply never to have happened. In Circle City, the old timers' town, "we had some killings but no murder; one case of theft, but the man never stole again." (Walden, 1928:47). Circle City, which the old timers built just over the border inside American territory and out of the jurisdiction of the N.W.M.P., had in its first year (1894) 300 to 400 inhabitants, and no door which locked, Berton points out (1963:30). Circle had

"no taxes, courthouse, or jail, no post office, church, schools, hotel or dog pound...no written law, no sheriff, dentist, doctor, lawyer or priest. Here was no murder, stealing or dishonesty, and right was right, and wrong was wrong...Here life, property and honor were safe, justice was swift and sure, and punishments were made to fit the crime,"

recalled old timer Walden looking backward to apparently more golden days (1928: 45). Primitive hunting societies also have no jails, no law courts, no civil service, no priestly hierarchies.

Haynes, being an outsider, was not at all nostalgic as Walden perhaps was, yet he dubbed Circle City "an enormously successful town" from the aspect of self-government (1897:126). In Circle City the miners ran themselves, and

the miners' meeting continued to be "the supreme tribunal", he recorded (ibid).

Traveller DeWindt also noted that in Circle City crime was rare, though there was the "usual rowdy element" in the town (1898:163). "The miners constituted themselves into a self-elected committee and made all kinds of arbitrary bye-laws (sic) to govern the new discovery" at Circle (ibid:126). Making formal by-laws by committee of course is indicative of change in the old timers' society: in earlier days the few laws made were formulated by the group, a motion passed, and then passed on from man to man by word-of-mouth.

As was previously mentioned, Service asserts that in hunting societies, where formal law does not exist, but sanctioned forms of deterrence do, "these deterrents can range from ostracism...to actual physical violence, even death." (1966:49). Service is not indicating murder, but some form of society sanctioned execution, which is what I presume Walden was referring to when he remarked that in Circle "we had some killings but no murder".

"The removal of a deviant who is threatening the social fabric by violent means is occasionally sanctioned by the society in hunting bands." (Harris, 1971:238). In primitive hunting bands, the dangerous deviant, whose actions might split the group into feuding factions, is usually accused of witchcraft by the shaman, whose accusation is "largely constrained by public opinion" and who actually "deduces, formulates, and expresses the will of the people," (Harris, 1971:382).

The employment of such extreme means of social control is fairly rare, Harris goes on, although the use of this extreme device varies with the amount of community dissension and frustration. When the traditional ecological balance has been upset, as with increased competition for resources, "an epoch of increased dissention and frustration can be expected," and the heightened anxiety may lead to increased use of this means of eliminating the evil-doer (ibid).

The use of extreme solutions, some type of society-approved killing amounting to informal execution, acts as a means of social control rather further than merely eliminating an antisocial individual. "These violent incidents convince everyone of the importance of not being mistaken for an evildoer. As a result...people are made more amiable, cordial, generous and willing to cooperate." (ibid). That this theory applies equally well to Yukoners as to the primitive hunters was clearly demonstrated through an incident related by Haskell, a miner with experience in the mining areas of the American West, who went to the Yukon in 1895 as partner to an old timer with whom he had worked in Colorado. As this is considered to be a revealing and typical, rather than isolated, incident it will be related in considerable detail.

Haskell and his old timer partner on their way in lost all of their supplies in a boat overturn in the rapids. They managed to save only a sack of sugar and a few pounds of beans. Other old timers, also on their way back in helped them salvage their boat and "offered us all we wanted. We suffered for nothing. We could make ourselves at home in any tent there," wrote Haskell the newcomer, clearly impressed. "There are some rare qualities in the rough breasts of the pilgrims of the Yukon." (1898:127).

While he and his partner were watching other boats go through the rapids, someone stole the sack of sugar out of his boat. "Theft is one of the worst crimes a man can commit in this country and it is not common," reported Haskell.

"Only tenderfeet...will dare commit it. Generally anything can be left with perfect safety...Travelling would be impossible but for a rigid regard for other people's property. It is the unwritten law of the land, and it comes as naturally to the Indians as anyone. ...these Indians rarely touch a thing that belongs to anyone else. ...I knew it was some white man who had taken my sugar." (ibid:126).

Haskell remarked that, could he have found the culprit, everybody "would have given him then and there, what in the parlance of the Yukon, is called a

'jig-in-air' at the end of a rope." (ibid). Several newcomers' boats had passed through however, so Haskell and partner joined the traveling group of six or seven old timers' boats. That evening while watching for a good place to camp, they came upon three boats pulled up and a little camp on the bank. They pulled in also -- Haskell had not forgotten the sugar, nor had the others, he told us, as they had all been indignant against the thief. (It is clear that theft affects not only the direct loser, but the group who under the law of reciprocity are obliged to share their very limited supplies. All go shorter on the usually irreplaceable supplies.)

Haskell "raised some consternation" he told us, by insisting on going through the boats. In one of them he found his sack of sugar.

"In less than a minute that boat and the man claiming it were covered with a dozen guns, but I was somewhat surprised to see my friends put a rope around his neck and lead him struggling towards a tree. ...I was somewhat taken aback by the swiftness with which my friends proposed to mete out justice. ...

The rope was thrown over the limb,... and a half a dozen men caught hold of it ready to pull.

'Hold on a minute, boys', I said. 'It strikes me its pretty tough to hang a man for stealing a sack of sugar.'

'Hang the man who steals anything!' said one of the old timers." (1898:131).

Haskell however protested, the "poor fellow was...ghastly pale" and looking at him "with beseeching eyes". The old timers told Haskell it was his sugar, "all you've got to do is say the word and up he goes." Haskell declined, asking to settle it some other way.

"He's got to be punished, somehow," said the old timer in a determined tone, "and, if you don't want to have him pulled up, you'll have to give him the lash.

We sometimes does that." (ibid:132).

Haskell agreed "knowing some form of punishment would certainly have to be administered." They stripped the man to his waist, strung him up "so that his toes barely touched the ground" and handed Haskell a rope, telling him, "Nothing less than fifty lashes." Haskell began, but wanted to stop short when the man,

who "stood it remarkably well" began to cry with pain. "Nothing less than fifty," shouted the old timer. (ibid.)

Haskell recorded that he came to know that man very well later on. "Strange as it may appear, we grew to be friends, and he made a good citizen of Alaska. I never knew of his again taking a thing belonging to another. These primitive methods of punishment are quite effectual, after all." (ibid).

Due to the custom of passing news from man to man, and campfire to campfire up and down the river, the story of this punishment and of the near-hanging would circulate very widely, impressing the need for honesty on many men, and lessening the temptation to steal, and the need for such rough justice. It was as Haskell told us, only a tenderfoot who, not realizing the certain consequences, would "dare" to commit a theft.

To return to the subject of banishment, this was said to have been invariably the punishment according to old timers: Bender (1967:90) and Davis (ibid:76) although there is other evidence that hanging, or lashing was sometimes used. Banishment was spoken of as being always irrevokable, and out of the country, but Ogilvie told of two banishments limiting the culprit to not coming within one hundred and fifty miles of the camp on pain of being shot on sight (1913:50, 270). Ogilvie and old timer Davis reported separately of having seen one of these banished men who remained in the Yukon, for some time, working alone at a distant location the following summer. That this man did feel disgraced by his banishment seems evident, as according to Davis, when he encountered the man, "he looked ashamed as he was all in rags;" (1967:46) an interpretation which seems highly unlikely as clothing carried no status at all in old timer society.

Ogilvie also encountered the same man while traveling upriver. He attempted to talk to this unknown man according to custom, but could not get the man to speak, or even to look at him, indeed Ogilvie wondered if he was a deaf-mute.

He learned later from old timers who this man was, and remarked that while this banishment appeared a severe sentence for the crime of stealing butter from the strictly rationed allotment at the trading store

"the idea appeared to be that he was a bad man, and lest he get the camp into difficulty over a killing, it was deemed best to get rid of him in time." (1913:271-2).

There were other incidents recorded which serve to illuminate the limits of behaviour tolerated by the society, to both the involved and the uninvolved men in the early Yukon. The old timers were typically highly independent frontiersmen, touchy about insults and swift to react to slights. We have few descriptions of the character and personality of individual men, other than of an outstanding person as Jack McQuesten. Very usefully, however, Walden described two old timers who came close to shooting each other until stopped by the group. One of the men might be considered as resembling Pierce's "Frontier-man", the other, the "barroom brawler"; both were old timers.

Among primitive hunting bands, quarrels between individuals are stopped, as, if permitted to spread they might ultimately lead to a feud, destroying the group cohesion (Service, 1966:55). The old timers also took steps to see that individual quarrels did not become feuds.

One of the quarreling men, a buffalo hunter from Montana, had come north fourteen years earlier (in about 1882) because he had killed a man. He was "in no way a bad man," wrote Walden, "but being a product of the early West he was a law unto himself." He was "not the least quarrelsome," in fact, good-natured. He could take any trick or joke played on him without offense, but "any insult he resented, as in the early days when the West was wild. He was absolutely honest and a great respecter of women, although he knew very few." (Walden, 1928:49-50).

The other man, a known troublemaker in old timer society, "had a very bad

disposition and was generally feared when he was liquored up." He had the reputation of having been "an old-time gunman" in the American West, and a very fast shooter. (ibid:53).

In Circle City carrying a gun within the town was forbidden by miners' decree (Walden, 1928:49). When the two men got into a quarrel, "as they were not fist-fighters they ran for their cabins to get their revolvers." Hasty shots were exchanged, the troublemaker was "creased...across the calf." (ibid: 50-51).

"There had been a duel in Circle City the year before, and the Canadians at Forty-Mile had made cracks about the lawlessness on the American side. The men of Circle City, not wanting to justify this name, called a Miners' Meeting on these two men to stop their fighting. This Miners' Meeting was held in Jack McQueston's (sic) trading post, a log building over a hundred feet long. A chairman and clerk of court were chosen as usual, but proceedings came to a halt because neither man would make an accusation against the other.

Some men spoke of their shaking hands and making it up, some wanted to see a fight and kept quiet: but the majority didn't know what to do until Higgins, stepping out from his side of the room said, 'If Mr. Stanley will come outside with me we will settle this difficulty with no trouble to any one.' This was responded to by a stampede to the door by the two principals. It was the old idea of the 'drop,' where the first man outside would shoot the other as he came out.

Jim Belcher, the chairman, then distinguished himself by jumping out of his seat, and snapping out like the crack of a whip, 'Come back, gentlemen!' The order was obeyed just as two setter dogs obey the command of their master. Stanley and Higgins walked up the room like two church deacons coming up with the plate, step and step, with their hands on their hips and their eyes on each other, and in front of what might have been the chancel they backed off to each side of the room.

From now on the proceedings became dramatic. The chairman gave up his chair to another man, and addressed the meeting. 'Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen! I make a motion we let these two men fight. If one is killed we will give him Christian burial; if both are killed we will give them both Christian burial. But if one survives, we'll hang him!'

Another man took the cue, and stepping forward said, 'I'll make the amendment that if either man is found dead under suspicious circumstances, the other shall be hung without trial.' Unanimous verdict.

Then Higgins stepped forward and said, 'I'll not fight under any such conditions as these, as I know I'll kill Stanley and I don't want to get hung.'

This ended the trial. But to my own knowledge these two men

met each other on the sixty-five-mile trail to the mines and no harm came of it. Each man knew that if either 'turned up missing,' the other would be hanged. And I actually believe that if either man had fallen down a prospect hole or into the Yukon, the other would have pulled him out. Yet each hoped for the other's death by some means or other not traceable to him. They were brave men both, yet each was always afraid the other would either forget or take the chance." (Walden, 1928:51-52).

If these two independent men, one of them a respected and popular man, a member in good standing, took so seriously the motion to hang them if they continued their feud, then clearly they knew it would, without fail, be enforced. Indeed, "the Miners' Association (from which later sprung the Yukon Order of Pioneers) (Berton, 1963:32) was more feared by evil-doers than any courts or police would have been," wrote Haskell (1898:173).

Three years later, the same troublemaker, Washburn (Higgins is a pseudonym used by Walden) became the aggressor in another shooting fray in Circle City. He snatched the saloonkeeper's gun from the bar and threatened others in the saloon with it. The saloonkeeper, an old timer named Connister (or Kronstadt, as Walden calls him) (1928:53) "turned to face him and stood...with his hands crossed behind him, waiting his chance to get control of the situation." Someone managed to slip a gun into Connister's hands, and he "walked directly towards Washburn, firing as he walked, and hit him between the eyes, killing Washburn at once." (Buteau, 1967:113). Immediately afterwards Connister (or Kronstadt) "wrote his own notice out, calling a Miners' Meeting on himself, walked across to the trading post, pinned it up, and everybody followed him in. He was tried and acquitted in twenty minutes." (Walden, 1928:53).

"He was liked and respected by all those who knew him, and it was decided that he had only killed in self defense. This happened the winter of '96." (Buteau, 1967:113).

In such small communities it followed that "every member of it knew as much of the doings in camp as every other, and that all had a pretty accurate

conception of the characteristics of the others....a man's known character would avail him something in a trial," Ogilvie observed (1913:246).

Washburn was a long-time troublemaker; he had also been involved in an earlier (1893) shooting affray at Forty Mile Camp, which was settled after both men were wounded by each other, nursed back to health by their comrades, "burying the hatchet," shaking hands and becoming friends again (Buteau, 1967: 113).

There are two recorded accounts of the Circle City shooting incident, one by Buteau, which I have drawn on, and one by Walden who related it with only minor differences. Both accounts state that the saloonkeeper, at very close range, aimed at the troublemaker's head. By finding Connister not guilty of what was clearly a deliberate killing, the society gave their approval, rendering this a Yukon form of the ultimate hunters' sanction, execution of dangerous deviants by the society. As among the primitive hunters, it served as a means of social control beyond the removal of one dangerous member, emphasizing to the society at large the limits of tolerance of dissidence which endangered the group.

Although virtually all observer-recorders marveled at the peace and serenity of the old time prospectors -- "quiet, orderly and well-behaved as a Sunday School Teacher" (DeWindt, 1897:127); "naturally inclined to be peaceful and law-abiding", different from other mining camp populations, according to Staff Sergeant Haynes, who had experienced other mining camps (1897:79); as we have seen there are historical 'hints' that this was when necessary a swiftly, firmly, even ruthlessly, imposed peace.

Among the first and smallish wave of incoming stampedees (1896-97) were a "number of old professional miners, ...who had seen the gilded gambling palaces of Virginia City...(and) Tombstone...." They remarked "many times that the miners of the Klondike are another race of men from those they used to know"

in Western mining camps in the United States, observed Haskell (1898:377). The growing new camp of Dawson was in 1897 a "less vicious and more orderly place than the new mining camps of the Rockies had been. ...The severity of life on the Yukon had kept out many desperate characters, and the Klondike...is filled up with people...having a taste for an orderly life," Haskell decided (ibid). Indeed, the population was the most moral mining population Haskell (who had been himself a miner in the American Western camps) had ever seen (ibid).

That Haynes, who lived among the men at Forty Mile two years on duty with the North West Mounted Police (1895-97) and who took a leave to rush to the new Klondike find in 1896 along with these men, thought that they were simply inclined by their nature to be peaceful and law-abiding, suggests that application of force was not often necessary among society members by this date. It will be argued later that this was a result of a value change: being amiable, generous and cooperative had become (as among primitive hunters) the norm and the morality. Within the society there was not 'peace by the sword' or the gun, but a morality of peace. It will also be argued that, when necessary, force was used against outsiders deemed threatening to the society, but that this was concealed.

The point which suggests a value change and a certain moving towards development of a modal type of personality among the old timers, which these recorders missed was that to a very large majority the earliest old timers who had been in the area since the early or middle 1880's -- and some of the later pre-Klondike arrivals so different from the reckless lawless men of the Western mining camps -- were miners from these roaring camps. This group included authors Pierce, Davis, Buteau, Bender, Ladue, Bettles, Moore, McQuesten, Murphy, Haskell, Walden and Stanley.

The first small groups in the Yukon, as we know, were made up of old friends and past partners, even in three recorded instances, blood relations.

Haskell described one old timer, a miner for forty-two years, the last ten of them in the Yukon, as being "noted for his steady upright moral life" (1898: 330). Whether most of the band were like this man, unusually moral men when they entered the north, or whether the ecological imperative of "help one another or die" incubated rapid radical cultural adaption need not be settled at this point. It can be accepted that this was a group of tough, independent, individualistic men, many of whom had come north to escape the restraints of civilization, or the law. In the past, they were accustomed to settling arguments with a gun. Such peace, order and highly non-aggressive behaviour as an unwritten but iron rule amounting to being the norm must have been, when necessary, strongly reinforced and backed with the severest of sanctions, death.

THE YUKON ORDER OF PIONEERS

Further change in the form of the miners' meeting is seen at Circle City, the camp that the old timers set up just across the boundary in American territory, in 1894. Here in 1896, Haskell revealed, "miners' meetings (still) appeared to afford satisfactory justice, and they had not become liable to some of the abuses noted elsewhere." (1898:174).

When a miners' meeting was called, according to Haskell,

"all the miners at hand assemble, a chairman and secretary are appointed, and the plaintiff is called upon to state his case. Then the defendant is heard, and any other testimony introduced. The assembled miners act as the judge and jury together, can ask all the questions they desire, and make any motion they please. Any motion that is carried for the disposal of the case settles it, and a committee is appointed to see that the judgement is carried out. So long as the majority of the miners are actuated by a sense of seeing fair play for every man, no court could be more efficient or just. The element of danger comes when a little frontier politics works its way into the system and justice is defeated by some man of influence, who more than likely may be a saloon-keeper. But so far as I witnessed the operation of justice in Circle City at this time, it was adequate and fair. There being no police force at hand, as over the Canadian border, and the authority of the United States being

too far off to be effective, the miners fully realized the importance of not abusing their own authority, and of being fair and just to all concerned. The judgements rendered would sometimes appear curious to an outsider, but when all the conditions of life in these regions were taken into account, their rationality would become apparent." (ibid.)

This was the form of meeting which had earlier developed from the group campfire talks. It was very efficient when the total population numbered approximately sixty-five, or even two hundred and fifty. In 1896-97, when Circle City "was an enormously successful town, the population totalled 1,000 to 1,200 people"(Berton, 1963:33). The original self-identified old timers who set up the town and formed the restricted Yukon Order of Pioneers numbered about eighty, and among the total population was the "usual rowdy element" as DeWindt had mentioned.

One wonders why the miners' court here did not fail as it had earlier in Forty Mile, when the accused man refused to pay the fine levied against him, saying that he would go to the N.W.M.P. if they (the old timers) attempted to make him pay. There were no police, no outside agency to resort to, however the true believers were surely hopelessly outnumbered when it came to a vote. Visitor DeWindt however recorded a change which kept the control in the old timers' hands. According to DeWindt, Circle City "is ruled by miners' law represented by a society called the 'Yukon Pioneers'." (No longer was there voting by all men present.) "Everything from a mining dispute to a broken head is settled by this tribunal. There is no appeal, the law being carried out if necessary by physical force, and strange to say, this rough and ready mode of administering justice has so far been satisfactory." (1898:163).

Although the historical "clues" are far from numerous, there is one other hint of a still further change, a new structural form which the traditional miners' meeting took on in a temporarily successful effort to cope with the flood of outsiders, many of whom had very different values and ways. In 1897-98

many of the old timers crowded by the Klondike stampedeers, set up yet another new camp at the site of a new gold strike at Ramparts, several hundred miles downstream, farther into the heart of Alaska. According to Berton, Ramparts' "mayor" was Al Mayo, McQuesten's partner on the Yukon since 1871. Mayo "presided at the miners' meetings and settled their disputes." (1963:207). We may take it that Mayo's was an unofficial mayoralty, as Berton places the word in parenthesis. Circle City, Berton refers to as "McQuesten's town". (ibid:5). In Circle City despite "all the idleness, drinking and gambling," there was little crime, Haskell stated (1898:173), adding that, as has been mentioned, "the Miners' Association, (the parent of the Y.O.O.P.) was more feared by evil-doers than any court or police would have been."

Thus it does seem that just before the incoming tide of stampedeers overwhelmed and obliterated this same society with its sheer numbers, that the original small group, the brothers of the early 1880's, became a governing body, making up the jury, or having the final say, or being the only ones permitted a vote (although perhaps the discussion was still open to all) or taking on some such final authority. Haskell's remark that "some man of influence" might affect the outcome of a trial also suggests that this is so. The "men of influence" appear to be increasingly men of authority, who had the power through their comrades of the Miners' Association or perhaps the Y.O.O.P., to settle disputes and enforce sanctions.

There is another very tentative hypothesis we may make, based on only one small historical clue, backed up by the fact of the "enormous success" of Circle City miners' self-government which Haynes remarked on, and by the theory regarding hunting band societies. In such societies as we know, sanctioned forms of deterrence ranging from ostracism to death exist (Service, 1966:49). The employment of the extreme device, death by societal consensus although used infrequently, tends to rise when the ecological balance is disturbed, as when

increased competition for resources gives rise to dissension and frustration (Harris, 1971:382).

At the new Klondike strike to which Circle City dwellers moved almost en masse in 1896, hundreds of men of all descriptions had gathered, from complete novices newly arrived from the United States to (in old time miner Stanley's phrase), "the worst toughs of Alaska and Juneau." (1898:130). Despite the presence of these "toughs", Staff Sergeant Haynes, who had staked a claim eleven days after Carmack's Klondike find was reported in August of 1896, recorded that amidst the rush and the crowd at the new strike, "a most unusual peace and quiet prevailed. The miners were all thoroughly law-abiding, well-behaved and good-natured." (1897:154-5). The new camp of Dawson was "roaring" but with it all "they preserved their character of law-abiding well-behaved citizens." (ibid:166).

Stanley, who also "hit it rich" at the Klondike, an experienced miner and frontier man for thirty years in the U.S., in passing reference mentioned that when he and his three partners took their \$112,000 each in gold to the new camp of Dawson, to await voyage out on the "gold ship" which electrified the world when the newly rich miners arrived in Seattle and San Francisco in July of 1897, they took turns standing armed guard over their gold, due to the previously mentioned presence of "all the toughs of Alaska." Stanley then provided an important historical clue, going on to record that

"during the winter and early spring, a number of the worst element had been disposed of by the vigilance committee. No one ever knew what became of them, for they simply disappeared...and the chances are that even their relatives will never be able to trace them. ...These examples had the desired effect, and I believe... our untiring vigil was unnecessary." (1898:129-30).

This seems a more likely explanation of the peace and quiet and orderly conduct at the rich strike than Haskell's surmise that "the severity of life on the Yukon had kept out many desperate characters." (1898:377). One cannot

visualize the toughs of Alaska as being men of soft hands and faint hearts, or as being without the love of gold and excitement.

Stanley did not indicate who made up this vigilance committee, but such a committee would not be permitted to operate openly, due to the presence of the N.W.M.P. force. The vigilance committee might have been formed by the newcomers, the cheechakos, however these men were less interested in law and order than they were in gold. They would not be likely to organize against the "toughs" unless the "toughs" were organized against them, as happened during the (1898) Soapy Smith reign in Skagway.

The newcomers were largely strangers to each other, and on individual quests for fortune. The old timers, the men of the Y.O.O.P., were "brothers," experienced in keeping tough men in order, organized and dedicated to maintaining peace and egalitarian reciprocity. Quiet execution for society's sake could easily be concealed under a conspiracy of silence, the pattern of constant flux, and the probably high incidence of disappearance through accidental death.

Further, during the early days of the 1896 Klondike strike, the N.W.M.P., "so few in number that if lawlessness (had) predominated, they could not have done very much to restrain it" were stationed sixty-five miles away at Fort Cudahy, near Forty Mile camp; a distance of roughly two days' journey, from whence they made periodic patrols to the new Klondike site (Ogilvie, 1913:182). These respected, even liked policemen, were very much outsiders, being a different sort of threat to the societal values. They, of course, would be told no word of these executions by the society, nor would the "toughs" be willing to, or dare, appeal to the police. The ordinary law-abiding gold seeker would be unquestioning, and grateful for the disappearance of the "toughs".

Again we are left to guess, however it seems possible, if not indeed probable, that the old timers were still in control of the Yukon society, even

to the brink of the arrival of the thirty to forty thousand frenzied gold seekers, the summer of 1898. Then it seems, they retreated once again, further into the wilderness of central Alaska, deeper into their particular Kalahari.

CHAPTER FOUR --- SURVIVAL: CONDITIONS AFFECTING YUKON ADAPTIONS

MARRIAGE

Three of the original pioneers, McQuesten, Harper and Mayo, took native wives during the earliest years of entrance into the Yukon country, apparently in the early 1870s (Moore, 1968:36). How much their example set a precedent for the men of the forming society cannot be guessed at -- however, these men, particularly McQuesten, were respected and admired "men of influence". Perhaps their example helped overcome some of the prejudice against Indians which the men had brought with them from their experiences on the U.S. Western mining frontier.

Such alliances must have been made initially and remained for at least some years through the native custom of paying a bride price, yet these men evidently did not feel that they had bought a woman, but married a wife. Theirs were life-long alliances entailing loyalty and responsibility towards the women. The traders' wives and families "lived like whites in handsome homes of square-cut logs, with neat vegetable gardens at the rear. The wives were partners in the true sense, and the dusky children were sent out to be educated in private schools in the United States," writes Berton (1963:13). When McQuesten finally retired many years later, he took his Indian wife with him to California, she managed his estate and headed the family when he died (ibid). As wives these women had a separate status from that of other native women with whom the old timers had relationships. Davis, having decided to winter "in" at Forty Mile and feeling lonesome, remarked that there is "a fine-looking squaw near here, and maybe I could get her for my partner. McQuesten, Harper, Mayo, Chapman, Folger and lots of the boys have one or two each -- why not me, I could try." (1967:59). In the records utilized, it is clear that

only one of the women in these relationships was referred to constantly as "my wife, Helen," "Folger's wife, Anna," the other women were not mentioned.

Despite an ambivalence between the mens' wish for wives and their lingering prejudice against Indians, both old timer Davis (1967:69) and observer Adney recorded that "nearly all" of the old timers married Indian women, "who have shared the good fortunes of their husbands in the Klondike strike and are treated with the same respect that would be accorded a white woman." (Adney, 1900:355). This respect was shown them by their old timer husbands, by the old timers in general, but as was usual in the frontier situation, when white women became available, Indian women were downgraded in the public eye. Authors Moore and Davis, one notices, both mentioned being initially attracted to their native wives through their physical appearance, both women being described as "clean and neat," and lighter in skin-tone than is usual. The first time Moore saw the young native girl who was to become "his little girl wife"

"she was apparently fourteen or fifteen years old, quite light of complexion, of somewhat delicate appearance and with long black hair. In fact she looked pretty, refined and modest, in a way above any of her class I had yet seen. ... I became immediately interested in this little girl. ... I was lonesome and yearning for the companionship of the opposite sex." (1968:143).

Davis, whose "Recollections" make clear his attraction to various native women being based on their proximity to "white" standards of beauty, was very much aware of his susceptibility to white womens' charms. He found the fresh cheechako dance hall girls of Dawson "nearly irresistible," they "almost made me forget my (native) wife Helen," he admitted (1967:79). "The squaws don't look so good now," he mused (1967:75), however Davis' alliance with Helen remained until her death many years later, as shall be seen.

Davis', Buteau's and Moore's memoirs recorded many entries, which although brief, do illuminate many of the old timers' attitudes of responsibility to-

ward, and concern for, their native wives' well-being. Buteau mentioned a fellow old timer who was mining near his claim asking him to take his wife to Forty Mile "as she was not feeling well and wanted to go to her home at Juneau." (1967:114). On another occasion, Buteau took a companion's sick wife and her twin babies by dog team one hundred miles to the N.W.M.P. doctor at Fort Cudahy, near the Forty Mile River mouth. Davis also recorded an old timer's turning down a group exploring trip "as his squaw is sick, but he will lend me his (good) rifle." (1967:55). (Among the old timers, greater love hath no man!)

However these alliances were made, they were not usually lightly broken. As sexual favours of moral native women could be obtained (it appears) through the giving of gifts or perhaps simply through gaining consent, and those of demoralized women obtained through gifts of liquor and other temptations, these men did not view their wives as sexual conveniences only. They were working partners; they were written of as traveling with their husbands, sometimes a wife or two was recorded as traveling with the male group, although this was not customary, except when only a few men had taken wives. Davis remarked that he was "joshed a lot" for bringing his wife along with the group (1967:71).

These wives knew the country, worked the rocker while their husbands filled it, hunted with their husbands, were good contacts with the tribes, acted as translators, were experienced gatherers, knew of medicinal herbs and wild foods, dried fish, prepared food, and were unmindful of discomfort. Probably simply seeing how much more comfortably a man with a wife lived, accounted for the rapid spread and popularity of taking a permanent wife over the impermanent sexual encounters otherwise available. Judge Wickersham, who was sent by the U.S. Government to Circle City in 1900, described one wife as

"a comely Tagish native girl whose intimate knowledge of Indian life and Tagish methods of obtaining and preparing native food in the wilderness enabled her to stave off starvation and provide...(her husband) with sufficient native clothing sufficient for Arctic winters. She was proud to be a trader's wife and George was glad to have always at hand a competent cook who knew how to manage a birch bark canoe, where to gather wild berries in season, and how to catch clean and dry salmon. Their long association gave ...(her his name) and her neat appearance and willingness to work won her the respect of the few white men along the river." (1938:111-112).

The usual division of labour by sex was observed, but as is customary among the primitive hunters, the women could and did lend their hand to many of the 'male' tasks when necessary.

The wives left the band to live wherever their husbands went, they were alien to their husbands in many ways, but as the social organization of the Yukon-Alaskan tribes was also that of the Hunters, and as hunting peoples all over the world have been noted by anthropologists to share many basic characteristics, they too valued movement, generosity, amiability and so on.

Although these women were seen by outsiders as "docile" towards their husbands, actually they were not: they might better be described as independent but not resistant, they had self-respect, they knew they were useful to their husbands, and like the old timers, they shared a norm of being cooperative and amiable. Both marriage partners can be described as mild, but not meek.

It will become evident that these women were not the docile slaves outsiders took them for (indeed they were quite capable of "standing up for themselves"), the relationship was basically egalitarian. They were, in these marriages, help mates as were white pioneer women, and despite some division of labour by sex, quite capable of breaking trail for the dog team, helping work the claim, and so on. Also, many of the native women preferred white men to their own people, "understandably," Henderson remarked, as they are "fond of dress and are naturally disposed in favor of being sure of something to eat." (1897:261).

The alliance being generally satisfactory to both is quite understandable,

the old timer obtained the only type of woman who could share his life style, and the woman got what she saw as food, security, even a rich husband, as the white man's guns gave him supremacy in hunting over the bow and arrow of the Indian. (Although a few of the Indians had very old and usually unreliable guns, they were largely living as stone age aborigines, according to historian Hulley) (1953:27).

It seems likely that our two best old timer informants, Buteau and Davis, were fairly typical in the regard and respect they showed towards their wives. Buteau, on returning from an outside spree with his male companions which had lasted almost a year, wrote that he found his wife "in good health" at McQuesten's post where he had made arrangements for her to stay before he went out. "She had been busy making all kinds of mittens, moccasins, parkas, etc., and was considered one of the most skilled workers in this line in the country," he wrote, surely proudly (1967:112). Buteau remained married to this woman all his life. Davis was also married to one native, Helen, for many years. On her death, he married another Indian woman, who lived only a few years. Davis expressed open affection for both.

"They were fine partners, good workers, good fish cutters and I got used to the fishy smell and loved them both very much. I busted up when they went to another happy hunting ground." (1967:83).

While old timers' marriages were generally spoken of as enduring, we have no statistics nor percentages of how many endured. Not all did. A stamper recorded meeting one of the old timers and his native wife at their remote mining claim in Alaska in 1899. She, who had been renamed Fanny according to the usual custom of giving the Indians an easily remembered Christian name, was introduced by her husband to the stamper. "She spoke fairly good English, could play whist, was a good cook, did all her chores and seemed happy. ... (she was) too flat-faced to be good looking, (but) she was neat and clean and fitted into the picture perfectly," this man recorded (Austin, 1968:143). However,

Fanny left her husband on their return to Forty Mile Post that autumn. She was mentioned again somewhat later as being seen again "in town, at the dance".

Davis wrote of an 1888 raid made against a remote Indian tribe because a tribal member had killed a white prospector; as a result of the raid the white men hung the murderer on the spot. After the hanging was over, the Indians approached the white men, "the squaws began coming out of the woods and there were a lot of fine-looking 'chickens' (as the miners called the young girls) among them. Guess I will come back here and get a wife sometime, I thought," wrote Davis (1967:58), clearly considering a non-mission trained woman. Another "fine-looking squaw" he saw closer to Forty Mile he also thought he might "get for my partner".

Whether the old timers married tribal women or mission-reared Christian native girls was not indicated. Certainly Davis seemed interested in obtaining a tribal woman, which would entail paying a bride price, however later marriages appear to have been performed by the missionaries at Forty Mile.

Most of the younger men among the old timer group appear to have married shortly after 1889, according to the sources available. At that time two of the men went down the Yukon as far as Nulato and "each came back to Franklin Gulch (where a group were mining) with a wife." (Buteau, 1967:104). Nulato is about 100 miles downriver from Forty Mile; according to the Catholic priest, Father Judge, the Indians at Nulato were

"more civilized in their manner of living than those further downriver. They all live in log houses and some of them keep them very clean. They have mixed much more than the others with white men, especially the miners, which accounts in part for the difference."

All the upper Yukon natives were cleaner and better-housed -- and less

demoralized than the coastal Indians (Judge, 1907:96).

These men's marriages appear to have started a trend among the white miners. In the sources utilized no marriages were mentioned before 1889 other than those of the pioneer traders, although some of the men had "squaws". After that date there were many brief references, such as Davis' entry for October 18, 1889,

"John Hughes got married today to a native woman. Well good luck to them. Pretty soon everyone will have an Indian wife." (1967:69).

It appears to be the following spring that Davis took a wife, though he was "joshed" for this by a comrade who "said he would not marry a squaw unless he never saw a white woman -- but he fell for a Koyukuk squaw and is now a member of the squaw man union and is in good standing," remarked Davis, facetiously it seems, as these men did not consider themselves 'squawmen'.

As has been pointed out, 'squawmen' accepted kinship ties with their native wife's people. The old timers did not accept such kinship ties. Davis told of John Hughes "father-in-law" coming and trying to move in with them, "but John gave him some tea and told him to move back, that he didn't marry the whole damn family." (1967:71).

Although the male bonding remained primary throughout the period in which this society survived, (perhaps because its survival as a distinctive society was cut short in 1898), much significant social change resulted from the introduction of marriage and the nuclear family pattern which developed. With wives to support (and later, children) expenses were higher. Davis indicated that just when John Hughes married, in October 1889, he and Davis had to stop their work of making shingles for the mission, as the missionary felt it was too cold. "This made John blue, for he had just been married. I told him, 'Sun still shining, I will lend you money for grub...'" (1967:70). They got their winter outfits, Davis' expenses came to \$375 and Hughes and wife's to \$500 (ibid).

A change in the traveling pattern was also noticeable. Now traveling groups consisted of a number of men, several with wives, going for the summer to work claims at some predetermined spot, rather than making the impulsive decisions of previous times. Buteau told of "my wife and I" going up to Troublesome Point "to our claim" and mining there all summer, coming back to Forty Mile at the end of the season "and I finally built the house I have been planning on so long." (1967:112-113). The following year Buteau and wife went up to Miller Creek, one days' journey from Forty Mile, where he had already staked a claim. "Frank Cormier and his native wife were also at Miller Creek this time." (1967:114). A new domestic life style apparently evolved.

The next fall, (1894), Buteau bought a blacksmith shop at Forty Mile, and in the summer of 1895 built a warehouse in which to stock his materials (ibid). Buteau and his wife were back at Miller Creek the summer of 1895. This time the Day brothers, two much-respected French-Canadian old timers who were the only ones with white wives (two sisters, also French-Canadian, whom they had married in Juneau in 1893), were at that location. Family groups at mining locations were becoming commonplace.

The change of traveling and living pattern however was limited. Men still went traveling in groups without their wives and children, leaving them for long periods either settled near a trading post, under the care of the trader, or perhaps often through their choice, sending them back to their people on an extended visit, for periods ranging from a few weeks to perhaps a year. At the symposium in Chicago it was pointed out that among primitive hunters, "the fluidity in group composition and group size over time...appears to occur (though probably with differing frequency) among relatively settled as well as nomadic peoples." (Lee and DeVore, 1968:153).

By the time of the Klondike stampede somewhat permanent home camps were well established, although when a man settled somewhere for a mining season,

he sometimes sent for his family. Other times the women and children were left at a semi-permanent home camp. Adney observed that the winter of 1897, when most of the men were at the new Klondike strike, "Lousetown", the site of a former Indian village across the Klondike River from Dawson camp was "still the residence of Indians, but only such as are the wives of old timers, whose little half-breed children run about in furs." (1900:177-8). Other families remained at the almost deserted Forty Mile camp. A stamper recorded seeing "the few native women remaining...engaged in smoking salmon. ...some half-naked children were peaking (sic) from doorways." (Chase, 1943:84).

There is some indication that these white men, with a background of very different marriage customs, initially felt that they were purchasing a woman not marrying a wife when they paid a bride price. Henry Davis first mentioned his hope of obtaining "a fine looking squaw" for his "partner". However, we discern a change in tone in his "Recollections", the earlier journal entries referred to 'squaws', the later to 'wives'.

There is no evidence as to what caused this change of attitude and tone, nor is there evidence as to how many of these alliances were by Christian marriage; but some of them which took place in the period just prior to the Klondike rush apparently were. Haynes of the N.W.M.P. recorded a quarrel breaking out between two men over a woman considered the grieved man's wife, while the wife and the other man were "at the Bishop's, getting married." (1897:69). As the Bishop was about to marry the pair, the first marriage must have been through native custom. The would-be bridegroom was suspected of having a wife in the U.S., and he was "a scoundrel and coward," so the N.W.M.P. solved the dilemma by "putting him in a boat in the middle of the night with a

piece of bacon and let him row down to American territory." (ibid:71). The Canadian police apparently adopted the old timers' device of banishment as a useful solution to some social problems.

Long time miner Stanley noted that many of the miners married to Indian women were French-Canadian, an observation which seems likely, as the French-Canadian frontier man did not share the deep prejudice against Indians which the American miner brought to the scene. A tradition of French-Canadians marrying Indians goes back to the voyageurs. As most French-Canadian Yukoners can be taken to be Roman Catholic in background, and due to the norm of amiability and cooperation, one can imagine that it was relatively easy for the Catholic missionaries, when encountered, to persuade these men to sanctify the union, particularly after children appeared. Buteau, a French-Canadian from Quebec, appears to have gone through the Christian form, as in 1890 he went to Forty Mile for provisions and at the same time "got a wife, Henry Willet being witness." (1967:106). Whether the custom of going through a Christian form of marriage became the norm or not, and we cannot tell, Davis referred to "my squaw" in 1888 (1967:67), and began to speak of "my wife, Helen" in his journal entries of 1889 (ibid:71).

Further, although old timers' marriages were spoken of as enduring, and those of the old timer authors utilized reinforce that impression, there is no record of how many such alliances were considered and treated as temporary by the men, or the women. Henderson referred to an elderly Frenchman on the boat going upriver in 1897 accompanied by "the young girl he had just married to succeed the squaw he had cast off." (1898:100). From such brief mentions we cannot tell whether this man was an old timer, nor whether this attitude was common. Henderson, a quite open-minded woman and observant outsider who, as the wife of a senior trading company executive, spent at least two summers in Forty Mile before the Klondike rush, wrote of "the shameful way these 'heathen'

women are treated by the 'Christian men', many of whom have left wives and children in the States." (1897:261). Henderson, like so many outsiders, tended to confuse the old timers with the newcomers. She told us that "the miners deplore that there are not enough squaws to go around," she felt the Indian women were desired as "they are more docile than the depraved white women and will work for their lords and masters." (ibid:89). Indian women of marriageable age and status probably were in short supply, the aboriginal population was small and scattered. In 1867 the entire population of Yukon and Tanana Indians was estimated at about 2,800 according to historian Hulley (1953:27), and since that time disease had decimated the tribes, "passing downriver from tribe to tribe as rapidly as we had done," wrote Schwatka (1894:292). This suggests that if an old timer managed to obtain a woman, it would be to his advantage to make her his legal wife, in the eyes of the other Christian men.

It would also be politic to treat her well; Henderson remarked that these women "are usually treated kindly, ...but some of them have brutes for keepers." One of these "despicable men brought his squaw aboard our boat. She was a clean, decent-looking girl, and had been to a mission school, but he paid no attention to her, and when she left the boat with her baby, he did not even bid her good-bye, though she watched him quite pathetically for a look." Henderson spoke to the girl, who told her she was going to leave at the next stop. "But, she added quickly, ...my husband is coming back for me." (1898:261). Henderson may have been correct in her inference that this man was not coming back to his wife, or she may have been quite wrong. She lumped with this "despicable man" another miner who was going outside, leaving his squaw at Dutch Harbor to go back to her own people.

"He said he was going to return to her and perhaps he was. One thing to his credit was that she had a stateroom and he had her sit beside him at the men's table, the only Indian who was so allowed. He was a man of perhaps thirty-five, she must have been ten years older. He was rather good looking; she was, it

goes without saying, homely, besides being lame and stupid looking. She had lived for several years with a white man who had died, and she said that his children had offered her a home back in the States....

"Did you know that slavery exists in the United States? Alaskan girls are often sold by their parents, ..."

recorded Henderson, in obvious horror, telling of one father at Nulato "who refused to give his daughter to one of her own people because he wished to sell her for \$100 to a 'civilized man'." (ibid:262).

All this suggests that the handsome white man with the homely Indian wife was an old timer, or at least he displayed the old timers' attitude towards a "good" wife. These native wives, it seems reasonable to surmise, were valued and well-treated being, as Berton suggests, "true partners". One also suspects that this man was headed outside on a customary spree, as his wife had, Henderson reported \$3,000 or more in nuggets. He was not leaving her financially short. Nor do we suspect that these "sold" women were slaves; we have the report of Fanny leaving her old timer husband, and staying around Forty Mile without undue fear of being forced to return.

This woman may have been older, or appeared older than her husband (women were in short supply); however, the few clues we have indicate that they tended to be younger, being marriageable at about fourteen to sixteen years of age. Moore, as previously mentioned, referred to his native wife as "my little girl wife," she was about fifteen to his twenty-two years on marriage (1968:143). Davis also told of being attracted to a light-skinned, probably half-breed tribal girl, who he thought appeared about fifteen or sixteen, and who he felt eligible for a sexual-gift exchange (1967:63). Further, women for whom a bride price was paid do not seem to have been simply 'handed over' by their fathers, but appear to have had some say in the matter. A stamper recorded that his friend jokingly offered an Indian \$50 for his daughter, an offer which the father accepted "as the daughter appeared willing" (Chase, 1923:43).

Another Indian woman who married a 'sourdough' (a stamper who took up permanent residence in the Yukon) had several years earlier not wished to marry the man her parents had chosen, so "she slipped out of camp early one morning...with her uncle," and left the area (Walmsley, 1973:50).

Old timers occasionally took their wives outside with them. Davis, in San Francisco with "a bunch of the boys from Circle City" but without his wife, mentioned that "Gordon Bettles and his wife are here, buying goods to take back." (1967:78). Davis, whose alliance was life-long and apparently generally satisfactory to both parties, told of his wife Helen being suspicious of his intent to return from a "spree" he was taking with his companions to San Francisco in 1896, asking, "how do I know you will come back?" Davis apparently, as a sort of bond, gave her \$1,000 to keep for him; "but I never expected to see that \$1,000 any more," he wrote (1967:76). He was apparently indicating that Helen was not a good money manager as he told us elsewhere that when Bishop Bompas at Forty Mile paid him with English sovereigns for work done on the mission building he "put them in Harper's safe for I was afraid to leave them with Helen." (ibid:73). Davis apparently planned to come back, although Helen's doubts suggest that not all husbands returned from outside.

As has been mentioned, the old timers did not accept any kinship ties with the Indian tribes, the women left the band to live where and how their husbands lived. As in the tribes, there was the usual division of labour by sex, but these wives were not subservient. They were, Henderson commented in rather contradictory terms, even in the tribes "treated as nearly equal to their lords." Henderson felt, however, that they were not really equal, basing this feeling on the fact that she never saw Indian men and women talking together for long, although she suggested, "perhaps this is not proper," a statement which probably is the explanation of the lack of public communication between the sexes, rather than such reticence being indicative of lack of equality (1897:105).

Not only did the native wives not take a role of submission to "their white lords and masters" as Henderson believed, but they, instead, were independent and egalitarian, although generally amiable and cooperative. They were not, however "put upon". Davis told us, after four years of marriage, that he

"does not know what is the matter with my wife Helen. She gets jealous and stuck-up, and we quarrel lots of times nowadays. I told her that if she didn't quit getting mad I was going to quit her and go get me a white woman. She laughed and stuck out her chin and said, 'Huh, I wish you would, that's good enough for you.'" (1967:73).

Ogilvie told of another couple's quarreling, of a white miner and his native wife

"having a stand-up fight, the woman's mouth was bleeding and the man had a cut on his cheek where she had landed on him. I believe she was getting the best of it, but I stepped between them and stopped it, apparently much to the dissatisfaction of the woman." (1913:273).

Ogilvie had the N.W.M.P. lock them up overnight, the first imprisonment in the territory, he reported (1897). The next day the released pair "took over the hills, as though the town were plague-infested." (1913:275).

Turnbull, who studied Pygmy hunting societies in Africa, mentions that although these hunters almost totally lack aggression (in the form of feuding, warfare, witchcraft, and so on), "life in Pygmy camp is far from peaceful; husbands frequently beat up their wives and vice versa." But such aggression is an outlet, Turnbull believes, helping avoid "intended calculating aggression." (1968:341).

Perhaps the old timers' pattern of leaving their wives at a home base or with their people was a form of the flux used among the men to avoid the outbreak of serious aggression, and to relieve tension.

Despite the societal changes brought about by the marriages, the all-male prospecting and traveling group seems to have remained the basic way of life. The change seems to be additive; along with the customary pattern of male

traveling (prospecting, hunting and sprees) and male campfire (and saloon) talking, there was a new domestic aspect to their lives.

Among the !Kung Bushmen marriage is very stable, and the nuclear family is the basic cohesive unit that stays together throughout the year. "Yet this does not mean that the !Kung have a family level of organization. They live in multifamily groups of 10-50 individuals with modes at 15 and 25 persons." (Woodburn, 1968:152). There are two basic units of !Kung society, the nuclear family, and the multifamily living group, the camp, or band (ibid).

The old timers developed a similar marriage system, based on the same two basic units. The emphasis was more on the camp, the group, and less on continuous residence with the nuclear family. The old timers spent considerable time away from their wives and children. Old timer records referred briefly to married couples being at the same winter or summer camp, to the wives being ill and their caring for them, to children born, and so on, but they do not appear to have developed any inclusion of wives in social occasions, other than the "big dances", which shall be remarked on later.

The position of children in the society is one area in which we can make very little comment due to an almost complete lack of historical evidence. The records on which we have drawn made little mention of children, perhaps because of the emphasis in the society of the bond between "the cooperating band of brothers". The children seemed to have been looked upon as belonging more to the women, and indeed they spent more time with their mother, and with the mother's tribal relations, than they did with the traveling father.

Neither Buteau or Davis mentioned any child of their own, although Buteau had at least one daughter, as he is said to have lived with her in Fairbanks in the 1920's (Heller, 1967:15). Also, in the summer of 1894 Buteau's wife went to visit her people at Unalakleet, and on her return brought back with her a two year old nephew, who was raised by her and Buteau until the boy's death

at the age of nineteen (1967:114). This was the only mention Buteau made of this boy.

Some families were very large, Al Mayo by 1900, had eighteen children, having been married since the early 1870's. Davis occasionally made very brief mention of a comrade's child, usually just a remark regarding the wife giving birth to "a fine boy", or so-and-so bringing his family from wherever they had been left, and so on.

It is important, I believe, as an indication of the bond between the men amounting to being one of kinship, that in two reported cases, when a baby was born to an old timer's native wife, the men took a vote on naming the baby, and the baby was duly given the group-chosen name. "Hank Wright is going to have his baby christened at church tomorrow. I forget whether they call him Joe or Arthur, but I know we took a vote on what to call him," wrote Davis in 1888 (1967:61). Another time, in 1891, "Folger's wife had a fine eight pound baby boy. We had a vote and called him John after his father." (1967:72). The women seem always to have gone back to their people to give birth, and for pre and post-natal care (Moore, 1968:168).

The biggest change that this move into family life made on the male society was residential. No longer did four or more men live cooped up in the small confines of a bachelor cabin, but each as a nuclear family head, separately. Perhaps the cabins became somewhat more substantial in that they had become more permanent dwellings. Buteau's brief remark on coming back to Forty Mile after a summer of mining with his wife at one of his claims, that "I finally built the house I had been planning for so long" (1967:113) suggested that this was so, in some cases at least. No advance planning previously went into cabin building, other than selecting a site near wood and water. Also the use of the term "house" is new: up to this entry, Buteau built 'cabins'.

Although the trend toward wintering in the small spread-out settlements

within a day or two's travel of the trading post had been evident before, it was now somewhat accelerated. The traveling men now knew where they were going to spend the season, the day of the impulsive, on-the-spot, decision was passing. The old timers appeared to have moved closer to the modal hunting society economic system, the core features of which include a home base or camp and a division of labour (Lee and DeVore, 1968:11). (Among the old timers, the men prospecting and the women preserving food and making clothing is viewed as a local variation on the male hunting, the female gathering pattern.) The most important basic feature of classical hunting society, a pattern of sharing out of the collected food had always applied to hunted food, and in emergency, to purchased supplies. This pattern also appears to have held despite the new nuclear families formed.

DEATH

There are many important facets of the social organization of the old timers' society which are entirely missing from our limited sources, or which are so briefly mentioned that to give them any anthropological 'weight' would be irresponsible. Occasionally the failure of our recorders to expound upon an important area of life itself affords a cautious surmise.

For example, old timer records mention death, accident, illness, and hardship very seldom, and then but briefly and unemotionally. Such things were an accepted hazard of the life, considered unremarkable, and largely unremarked upon. Henry Davis in the space of five pages mentioned all of these; a companion who started out of the Yukon in November and had to turn back, having "frozen his feet pretty badly." (1967:42). Later, "we took his toenails off, and then cut wood and got water to cook," remarked Davis, in a sentence which seems to indicate the operation was not more interesting or dramatic than

cutting wood and getting water. Still later, in January, he remarked that "Charley's toes are getting better and he is not so cranky." (ibid:43). In February, "Buckskin came down today for some Epsom salts for Bob English and said he is sure it is scurvy." (ibid:44).

Again, on the same page, "Neil went to get water at the river and said someone was calling downriver. We went about a half mile and found a man talking to himself. Poor fellow has gone nuts. ...He looks starved...he was plumb off his head...but in about a week he got better." (1967:44). This was a thief, who had been banished from a camp further downriver, although Davis did not know this at the time. Davis and a comrade went to see Bob English and "we found him very sick...(scurvy). One leg was swollen and dark with spots all over it. We made up a lot of spruce tea for him...(which is) fine for scurvy." (1967:44). In March,

"Frank Densmore came today. He is sick with scurvy, with his teeth all loose, gums swollen and bleeding. He has drunk spruce tea all the time but had already lost four teeth which had just dropped out. Some Indians came in with moose meat to trade for flour and tea. They told us two white men had died on Chilcoot Pass in a snowstorm." (1967:45).

One May 5, 1887 Davis recorded that the ice was breaking up and the river running full. "We saw a boat go by all broken up. Some poor devil (drowned)...we think." (ibid:46). Later Davis learned there were two men drowned in this accident. Davis sounded almost callous when he told of one man who froze his feet, and had two toes taken off by the doctor accompanying Ogilvie's survey party. "There will be no more trapping (hunting, prospecting, exploring) for Smith as he walks on crutches made from a crooked tree." (1967:52). Obviously, Smith will have to leave the society and the north. It is probably not entirely lack of sympathy but simple acceptance that Davis was expressing. Where man cannot control the environment, what is, is (Service, 1966:13) -- yet one might suspect that Davis also disapproved somewhat of this man's seeking an outsider's

help. Probably he would have roused more compassion if he had followed the customary rule, as Charley did, accepting the administrations of his fellows and "toughing it out", perhaps (Davis felt) he would still have his toes -- and his Yukon life. The medical help of the N.W.M.P. doctor was at all times resorted to only in the most dire of the men's emergencies, or for wives' more serious illnesses.

Due, I believe, to their acceptance of the many hazards of the life, the form of death among old timers was rarely mentioned. Ill health as a result of the hard life forced many of our authors to leave the Yukon for some settlement in their old age; however, death and accident must have been commonplace.

Drowning seem to have been the most common cause of accidental death. Stanley mentioned that the route from Dyea to Hootalinqua River was "dotted with graves, Indian and white men alike" (1898:48). Coming downriver from the headwaters in 1895 Haskell also noticed "all along the route...the graves of those who had been lost in previous years." Three men had already been drowned in the rapids that season (1898:139). This toll was visible, the graves kept count, but one feels men must have disappeared in blizzards, or become lost in the mountains, simply never to be seen again.

The old timers pointedly denied that any men starved, and there was only one incidence of three starving men on the trail disappearing (Pierce, 1899:131), although many were reported as coming into some small camp in near-starvation condition. Probably not many men did actually starve to death, due often to rescue by some encountered band of Indians.

Historian Hunt devotes a chapter of his history of Alaska and the Yukon to relations between the "Natives and the Mining Frontier". Pointing out that the northern mining frontier offered more natural hazards to the pioneer than anywhere else in America, Hunt remarks that "it was fortunate that a kindly disposed aboriginal populace existed to ease the lot of the miners. Natives

saved the lives of innumerable prospectors who lost their way. ...No record exists of the refusal of aid and hospitality by natives to whites, regardless of their own poverty." (1974:259). The natives extended the hunter's hospitality even further than did the old timers.

When old timers did die, no great ceremony attended the death. Men were buried where they died. Davis told of a time in 1887 when an elderly old timer, known as "Calamity Bill", came along

"pulling his sled by his neck with a load of grub. He stayed with us overnight, and the next morning, as he was not feeling well, we hauled his sled home for him and left Dutch John with him. Five days later we went back to see him and found him dead in bed.

Andrew Maiden went downriver (to Forty Mile camp) and he told all the boys they would know what to do with the body. In a few days Joe Ladue...(and three others) came up and we buried Calamity. ..." (1967:51-52).

The four men came apparently to help with the chore of burial, it was no small task to chop wood, build fires to thaw the ground, and dig out a grave-sized hole in the frozen ground. We have it from Pierce that in early days there was no headstone or marker, locations of graves were noticeable only by the large pile of rocks placed over top to keep off animals. (1890:144).

In the only other burial Davis mentioned, a stranger's body was found on a river bar and brought down by boat to Forty Mile.

"We all got busy and dug a grave after others had made a large fire to thaw the ground. ... We put lots of rocks over the grave and a head piece with the date of drowning. The man... had a fine gold ring on his finger and a gold watch. ...we buried his things with him." (1967:46).

The head piece seems to be to identify the stranger: their dead companions' graves were not so marked.

There were no clergymen in the vicinity in early days, (the Church of England was first at Forty Mile, in 1891). (Hamilton, 1964:147). Circle City had a large semi-permanent population by 1897, by that date Circle had a cemetery, but still no clergymen. After thawing a grave, "then came the burial,"

wrote Haskell. "There was no minister, no choir, ...no words that told of a Christian's hope in a glorious resurrection --- ...Rough miners carried the body to the grave." (1898:493). Walden also agreed that in Circle City, "no prayers were said for the dead, but money was raised for the widow." (1928:49).

It was mentioned earlier in connection with a Circle City miners' court trial, in which the two men involved had been threatening to "shoot it out", that if they followed through on this threat, they would be given "Christian burial". It seems that what was meant was "decent burial" as when one of the pair finally did die (by societal execution) the other man was mentioned as "putting on his best clothes" and going to the funeral (ibid:53).

Haskell also mentioned in connection with a young cheechako who had died on the way to Circle in 1897, that at his burial there were no prayers, but "some extracts from the young man's diary were read," references to his mother, home, etc. (1898:493). It is not possible to tell whether or not this was a newly developed custom of the old timers as they became more settled residentially, or a cheechako innovation by his friends. The man putting on his best clothes to go to the funeral was however "a fourteen year man" as was the dead man, which suggests that burials may have been becoming more institutionalized than in earlier more nomadic days.

These burials, as mentioned, all took place before clergymen were in the areas mentioned. It will be argued later that the old timers were indifferent to organized religion, but not hostile towards it. It seems likely that after there were clergymen in the vicinity, burials were probably by Christian ceremony.

Certainly death was not sentimentalized. All old timers' reports of deaths tended to be very brief. The most emotion shown was seen in Davis' remark that two comrades came up and "they told us my old partner, Neil Lamont and Indian Tom Jones had upset in the canyon and that both had drowned. My I am

sorry!" (ibid:48).

Generally, as has been noted among the primitive hunters also, old timers seem not very much concerned, certainly not grief-stricken, when band members die. Anthropologist Woodburn feels that although band people are often very affectionate to each other, the affection is not attended by a great deal of commitment on an individual basis. Individuals as such matter less than the group, the primary commitment is to the group, expressed through any member of it (1968:91). The pattern of flux, of interchangeability of personnel in cabin-sharing groups and traveling partnerships among the old timers suggest that this was their form of commitment also; consequently neither death nor accident was dramatized, nor deeply traumatic.

Although it seems somewhat paradoxical, along with the strong emphasis on group went a great deal of individuation among the old timers. Most observers mention this. Berton, for example, writes that the old timers

"were men whose natures craved the widest possible freedom of action; yet each was disciplined by a code of comradeship whose unwritten rules were strict as any law. They were all individuals, Eccentricities of character were the rule rather than the exception. ... On the face of it, they were men chasing the will-o'-the-wisp of fortune-- But the evidence suggests the opposite. ... If they sought anything, it was the right to be left alone." (1963:18).

In this society, as in other band societies, there were no specialists, no intermediaries, no classes, no rich and poor people, they were egalitarian. Service concludes that the unspecialized character of such a society means that an individual adult participates much more fully in every aspect of the culture than do the people of more complex societies.

"The concomitant for the human personality is that, because of the intimately social context in which everything is carried out, human beings in primitive society are personalized and individuated. (1966:83).

Egalitarian societies are strongly resistant to direction through authoritarian power of any sort, but "within these societies the individual people

are not equal in the sense of being similar to one another. Each person is different from every other in terms of purely personal physical and psychological characteristics, as well as in statuses such as age, sex, marital state and so on...This or that person is whatever he is." (ibid). There is a "natural variety" in persons, rather than a standardization, Service points out.

HEALTH AND DISEASE

Scurvy was the dreaded disease, which in the very early days due to the nutritionally deficient diet and severely limited food supply, struck every winter, and caused more deaths in those very earliest years than drowning or other accidents. Of the group of about forty old timers wintering at the mouth of the then unnamed Forty Miler River in 1883 (before a post was established) twelve men became ill with scurvy that winter; five of these died (Pierce,1890:191). Buteau separately verified this scurvy total of "five or six" (1967:117). Of this group of forty, besides the five deaths from scurvy, three men separated from the traveling group -- these are the men believed to have died through starvation (ibid:130). Also one drowned in a whirlpool (ibid: 186), and two were supposedly eaten by a Tananan (Tanana) River cannibal tribe, a tale which Pierce related at length, including the finding of their roasted and gnawed bones (ibid:169). This tale one has no hesitation in branding untrue; such an incident, if it had ever happened would, of course, be known and repeated all over the territory, yet no other old timer made any mention of this sinister event. Perhaps the men were killed by a grizzly bear, or died through some accident, and the bones had been gnawed by animals, but not roasted.

In the earliest years the cause of scurvy was not known, nor was the cure. Buteau believed poor food, "rancid bacon, moldy flour" etc. to be the cause

(1967:117). Pierce felt that fresh air and exercise would help prevent it, although he does mention that they "discovered the virtues of willow tea" (probably from the Indians) that first winter when five died. He credited the recovery of the other seven afflicted men to willow tea (1967:191).

By the time of the Klondike gold rush scurvy was not a severe problem among the old timers, who had acquired a knowledge of wild edible plants and medicinal herbs from the Indians. In Dawson in the winter of 1897-98, Father Judge reported he had as many as fifty patients in his hospital at one time, "about one half of them scurvy cases, and all new men who came in last summer." (1904:213).

Medical care of every sort was of necessity simply such as could be offered by their comrades, who appointed some one man to act as nurse to a sick man, or to a man with an injury. This appears less a matter of a particular man having special skills with the ill, than simply someone picked or volunteering to do that particular task. Men with scurvy were cared for by their healthier companions, special delicacies which were being saved for a holiday were offered to them, various native brews tried, and "we all cut wood for Tom Evans who had cut his feet. (John) Folger is the doctor." (Davis, 1967:62).

Davis also commented that at a camp at the mouth of the Big Salmon River, he met a group of four men, one of whom had broken his leg by falling from a sawpit scaffolding. This time, "Mark was the doctor." Sick care appears to be assumed by some one member of the group as was any other chore. Perhaps, as was cooking on a roaming trip, someone who was a little better than the others at the job, and so enjoyed it, assumed the chore. In a primeval land where accident was an ever present possibility and medical help nonexistent, one might expect a specialized role of healer to have developed. The old timers, however, seem true to the hunter model: there was no specialization of labour or role.

Many men after accidents found it necessary to leave the Yukon roaming life. Among the old timers who stayed, one notes a history of disease apparently caused by the extremely hard life; consumption forced several prominent old timers to leave the country to die in warmer, drier, easier climes (Ogilvie, 1913:118). A number had severe rheumatism in their old age, as did both Davis and Pierce, indeed Pierce was "yet a young man" when he became "physically a wreck through cold, starvation and exposure. ...My constitution is wrecked." (1890:37).

Ladue, in an 1897 pamphlet of advice to prospective stamperders, wrote that the diseases of the country were "dyspepsia, anemia, scurvy, caused by improperly cooked food, sameness of diet, overwork, lack of fresh vegetables, overheated and badly heated houses; rheumatism, pneumonia, bronchitis, enteritis (inflammation of the intestines), cystitis (inflammation of the urinary bladder), and other acute diseases from exposure to wet and cold; debility and chronic diseases due to excesses." (1897:87).

One must suspect among the diseases "due to excesses" venereal diseases with which, along with tuberculosis, the whole Indian race, lacking any immunity "had been impregnated." (Pierce, 1890:76).

Lice were also an ever present irritation, although the old timers were as clean as circumstances would allow, according to Adney (1900:267). While the men could put their clothes and blankets outside and freeze the lice out (Davis, 1967:51), "hardly one of the cabins on the older creeks (is)...free from the unwelcome occupants." (Adney, 1900:349).

The insect pest of the Yukon was the well known, almost legendary, mosquito, which "rising from the grass like an upward rain" made "aiming a gun properly impossible;" as they were so dense "it was almost impossible to see clearly through the mass." (Schwatka, 1894:173).

"They are very venomous -- have been known to drive men to suicide...I have seen tough miners sit and cry and it is a common sight to see them so worn out and nervous that they cannot sleep even after they are protected from them. ... It is absolutely essential to wear...netting over the face ...and they pile themselves so thickly...(on it) that it is sometimes difficult to converse unless one almost shouts in his neighbours ear,"

testified Haskell (1898:156).

The old timers wore no netting, like the Indians they greased and blackened their faces as a protection of sorts against both mosquitos, and in winter snow-blindness (Moore, 1968:47). Old timers mentioned the mosquitos less, and certainly with less emotion than did the newer men. They did suffer from them, sometimes to the point of danger. Moore told of taking aboard the A.C.C. riverboat a prospector who was "in serious condition from mosquito bites; his face was so swollen and poisoned and inflamed that his eyes could hardly be seen, and he could not see at all." (1968:76). Davis however made only brief reference, as, "the mosquitos were very bad and we looked like niggers as we greased our faces, hands and necks with lard and tar mixed together." (1967:56).

One can only surmise that the old timers and the Indians built up a certain immunity to the poison of mosquito bites after some time, and suffered less perhaps than the unprotected newcomer.

From Schwatka we also learn of a fly "like a horse-fly, but much larger and inflicting a much more severe bite, which a few days later would look like an incipient boil." (1894:125). These bites may, or may not, explain the carbuncles "which are the rage of Alaska" as Henderson remarked in 1897, being "worn by everybody," due to the lack of green vegetables and the severely limited diet, she believed (1898:246).

One of Schwatka's party was so bitten by these huge flies, that he was completely disabled for a week, "and at the moment of infliction it is hard to believe that one is not disabled for life," Schwatka remarked with wry humour

(1894:125). "With these 'horse flies', gnats and mosquitoes in such dense profusion, the Yukon Valley is not held up as a paradise to future tourists," Schwatka went on. (ibid).

Medicines available were few. Pierce mentioned having a few boxes of "Brandreth's pills", a few bottles of pain killer, and a small bottle of gum camphor soaked in alcohol. "Humanity demanded that we should divide" with other sick men, wrote Pierce (1890:190). Other than such simple remedies, they used barks and roots for "teas", and what "home remedies" they could concoct. Tobacco was used to soothe toothache (Henderson, 1898:98), "a few spoonful of condensed milk, hot with pepper, is good for bowel complaint," and spruce gum, "one ounce dissolved in one pint of Jamaica rum or in a pint of alcohol" was good for coughs (ibid). Poultices of warm moist tea leaves were applied to snow-blind eyes (Moore, 1968:47), and as an anaesthetic whiskey was poured down an injured man's throat as liberally as possible (ibid:160).

FOOD

In the early days game was plentiful. Stanley recorded killing three moose, two bear and catching many large white-fleshed fish resembling salmon within the span of three weeks (1898:58). Some of the salmon, Stanley told us, weighed as much as a man (1898:122) and ling cod from the river weighed up to thirty pounds (Davis, 1967:62). Both men and dogs depended on fish, Stanley claimed (1898:123). Ogilvie, however, remarked that with the exception of grayling (Arctic trout) which were numerous in the upper river, fish were not plentiful. The salmon, having come upriver two thousand miles were "poor and spent", suitable mainly for dog food (1898:82). The discrepancy in accounts probably arose from the fact that Ogilvie was in the area nine years earlier than Stanley, with many hundreds fewer prospectors in the area the more desir-

rable meat animals would be more abundant. However, as Birdsell tells us, marginal hunters turn to less favoured food sources when a more preferred source or species is over-reaped (1968:94). Fish were caught with nets, traps, spears, even "shot in the head when they jump" claimed Stanley (1898:123) although the last method sounds like a cheechako trick. Earlier old timers, with a definite limit to their ammunition would consider that method wasteful, when the same bullet, if saved might bring down a moose or caribou. They did catch grayling in traps, Davis told of making "a fish trap with poles in the bottom and the fish ran into a box, the water ran out through the cracks and the fish are high and dry." (1967:50). Fish traps seem to have been set up at the more permanent camps, Buteau told of fifteen men working together in 1890 building a fish trap, "with which we caught about a ton and a half of fish so everybody had greyling (sic) for the winter." (1967:106). Such fishing was clearly a group-oriented project.

Although the old timers recorded hunting all the year round, much of the winter, and some of the summer (prospecting season) hunting was recreational in nature, as a reason to get out of the confines of the tiny cabins, or as a change from mining. The serious hunting took place in September and October, even early November, as fall is the season during which the rutting moose came down to the river area from the high valleys to breed. During this season, the old timers hunted methodically, shooting many of the larger animals, particularly moose, bear and caribou, in order to stock their larders for the long winter ahead. Hunting was often a solitary pursuit, although men also went in pairs or trios. Usually when a large animal was shot, the hunter went back to the nearest cabin to obtain help in carrying in the meat. Having a few inches of snow on the ground made it easier to bring the meat to camp, a man could haul up to four hundred pounds on a sled, whereas he could only carry about one hundred or thereabouts (Davis, 1967:63).

The meat was occasionally preserved in the form of "jerky", being cut into strips, and dried in the sun and over a fire to keep the flies off. More often the animal was cleaned and cut up, and the meat placed in the shade to freeze. If the hunter was several days journey from his cabin he might cache the meat at a nearby conspicuous spot for later use, building an elevated platform on which to keep it out of the reach of animals. Most often it was kept stored in a frozen state in individual caches at each cabin. This more permanent 'natural refrigerator' was a small hut or hutch, sometimes made from the two halves of a boat sawed crosswise and the two halves fitted together to form a hutch, always elevated, and reached by ladder (Stanley, 1898: 59).

Like other hunters considered marginal, the old timers according to their testimony usually obtained ample supplies of the most needed food -- meat -- with relatively little effort or time. Anthropologist Sahlins points out that the body heat generated by the process of digestion of a unit of meat is five times that from a unit of vegetable food, so it makes sense to eat a lot of meat in a cold region.³ According to Stanley, the men were aware of the need to keep food in their bodies in order to generate the large amount of heat and energy life in a cold climate required (1898:10-11). The men ate largely; Haskell mentioned that their appetites were "always like a roaring lion, seeking whatever it may devour." (1898:297).

Although the old timers generally felt that only the large game shot was worth recording, they did shoot and eat smaller game. Davis told of a fall larder-stocking expedition during which

"we went moose hunting and separated for the hunt, but had no luck as we got only five spruce chickens. Ben went fishing in the water hole in the lake and got some whitefish and big pike. It was a nice change in grub and tasted good. We all then went hunting again and had better luck, getting one moose and two cariboo, and hauled them home on Charley's sled." (1967:43).

A short time later they went hunting again, and "got one big fat moose which we cut up and hung to dry and kept a fire under it to keep off the flies." (1967:48). Probably the meat dried this way was intended for use while traveling, as a convenient, light, highly nutritious trail food.

The old timers also ate porcupine, ground squirrels, rabbits, swans, geese and ducks, as well as the forementioned "spruce chickens" which were probably the very abundant ptarmigan or perhaps grouse, and which were relished for special occasions such as the "Christmas dance". The "boys" went up to the Tanana River as this celebration approached "to kill white-meat chickens for the crowd." They got seventy-five (1967:62).

Gathering of native wild fruits and vegetables was seldom recorded, although the men had obviously learned to recognize and use a number of wild plants. They are reported to stop to pick and eat various berries when they saw them. Moore mentioned pulling into the bank when he saw a huckleberry patch one morning and picking berries for dinner (1968:87). Pierce told of pulling ashore for a species of whortleberry, which he "at once commenced to eat." (1890:36). One suspects they did much more of this type of gleaning than was recorded, theirs was not a hurried life.

However, they did not preserve berries or vegetables by drying them, Indian style, for winter use. It can be expected that when the old timers took native wives they were better and more nutritionally fed, as the women were experienced gleaners. The records suggest that this was so, as scurvy, the scourge of the earlier years, by the time of the Klondike strike, was a disease mainly of newcomers, as Father Judge testified. The old timer, Adney remarked, gave "more care to the quality of his food and to its preparation than the new-comer, for he had learned by experience that it pays to do so." (1900:267).

Among the native plants which the old timer knew and used were the fore-mentioned cranberries, huckleberries and whortleberries, which they both picked for themselves and obtained from the Indians in trade. Schwatka told of the Indians at nearly every village on the river offering "trays or bowls of wood or birchbark full of huckleberries, which they wanted to trade for tea or tobacco." Another outsider mentioned seeing an old 'sourdough' eating what looked like spinach. The old timer showed this cheechako two plants he ate. "One a kind of dock, the other a tall weed with a red flower that grew along the river banks profusely." There were small wild onions, "very strong", remarked the same informant, and wild mushrooms. All made "a welcome addition to our monotonous diet." (Austin, 1968:134).

The old timers also learned to make Indian-style "butter", by sawing up caribou horns, boiling out the marrow and letting it cool on top of the water. With a little added salt, they had "a good white butter." (Buteau, 1967:105).

These men do seem to have lived as Pierce felt, in a "land of abundance." (1890:74). As Sahlins claims do other seemingly marginal hunters, they enjoyed "an unparalleled material plenty, though perhaps a low standard of living." (1968:86).⁴ They also like Sahlins' hunters, worked rather little to obtain food. "Rather than a grind, the food quest is intermittent, leisure is abundant, and there is more sleep in the daytime per capita than in any other condition of society," Sahlins points out (ibid).

Hunting and gathering societies are often seen by outsiders as living on the edge of starvation, an impression gained easily, Washburn points out, "as by nightfall every scrap of food in camp may be eaten." (1968:42). But, in effect, he points out, "the environment itself is the storehouse," the people go out and gather as needed (ibid), and "there is a lack of concern that food resources will fail (Lee and DeVore, 1968:12).

The old timers had a different technique of food gathering as, in the Yukon, the environment was only for a brief season the storehouse. When the winter came it was, however, a highly dependable, natural refrigerator, and they used it as such. Thus the harvesting and freezing and storing of ample meat to see them through the next eight to ten months was a simple adaptation.

For convenience, they also developed a pattern of cooking vast supplies of a food, particularly meat, beans and bread at one time and freezing it already cooked. When required, they would simply chop off a suitable sized piece and heat it, saving time and effort on the trail or in the cabin. Davis recorded this method of stocking and preparing food several times.

On one such occasion, one of his partners went hunting, staying out for three days "siwashing it" (sleeping out, among the trees). During the three day hunt he got four caribou and one bear, "and we hauled meat" Davis remarked (1967:51). They also caught "lots of grayling" in a fish trap. It was easy to catch them this way, he pointed out.

"We then went to the Post to get our outfit. ...only... two hundred pounds of flour, one hundred pounds of sugar, fifty pounds of rice, ten pounds of salt, ten pounds of tea, one bottle of vinegar, a can of pepper, twenty-five pounds of dried apples, twenty-five pounds of prunes, a slab of bacon, twenty-five pounds of beans."
(1967:50-51).

On this particular occasion this was all the trader had for each man until the supplies came in again the following July, ten months off.

"It took us four days to get the grub to the cabin. We then stayed home a day to fix the fireplace and bake bread between two (greased) gold pans. It worked fine and we had lots of good bread for weeks. We also cooked lots of beans with sow belly (bacon) and spread them out to freeze enough to last a long time." (ibid).

The old timers shared the same work pattern as is widely found among the aboriginal hunters, that of periods of steady work alternating with periods of

sustained idleness (Sahlins, 1968:88). Later, after winter mining by firing and thawing the soil became common, this pattern might be seen as a time-saver. However the pattern was developed in early days, when after the fall spurt of preparation for winter, the men had nothing to do but sit around and play cards, as one old timer told Adney (1900:297).

Fresh vegetables were unobtainable, the men hungered for them always. A high spot of going outside was the treat of fresh vegetables, particularly potatoes, obtained on the way out at St. Michael or Juneau. Henderson felt the "new millionaires" on the "gold ship" leaving for the U.S.A. in July 1897 were more excited over the potatoes the up-coast steamer brought to St. Michael than they were over their gold (1898:44). While recorders reported vegetable gardens at many of the missions along the Yukon, usually turnips, radish, potatoes and lettuce; generally speaking the miners had no fresh vegetables and fruits. "Anything fresh becomes a luxury." Turnips were called "Yukon apples" and were often eaten raw (Henderson, 1898:230). Buteau told of his enjoyment of a large platter of french fried potatoes at Dyea on his way outside in 1892, they were the first fresh potatoes he had had in his previous six or seven years in the interior (1967:109). While outsiders Webb and DeWindt claimed that vegetables could be grown with "great success," (DeWindt, 1898:89) "the rich black soil, even in the short summer, yields wonderful results" (Webb, 1898:691), Haskell did not agree. "Too rapid growth makes the plants grow well, cabbages thrive, but don't head. Potatoes stay very small (due to the very cold ground) and vines must be protected from frost. ...so there is not much gardening," he explained (1898:190). The nomadic life style, particularly during the short growing season, which was also the mining season, probably was the primary reason why the vegetable-hungry men did not attempt to grow any of these missed, needed and longed-for foods.

WORLD VIEW

Life in this harsh, frozen, primeval land was considered by outsiders to be incredibly hard, and they often commented on the miserable conditions the life inflicted on these first pioneers. Haynes of the N.W.M.P. felt that "it is difficult to exaggerate the suffering and privation that awaits the man who takes nothing but a pick and a blanket (into the land), trusting to luck to supply the rest," (as did these men) (1897:76). "The tragedy of mining on the Yukon," was the shortage of provisions, Haynes felt. He illustrated this point through describing the condition of the miners at Sixty Mile who, he heard, had run out of food as the supply boat had not reached them that year. "They have not tasted sugar or salt at Sixty Mile all winter," they were "simply existing" up there, according to Haynes (ibid:51).

The life was physically incredibly hard. Lt. Schwatka told of an 1883 encounter with a trio of miners who were making their way out of the Yukon "in order to allow the rest of the party (of twelve) food sufficient to enable them to continue prospecting." These men, "on starting (in), had intended to eke out their civilized provisions with large game...in order to carry them through the summer. ...(They) often carried out this plan while prospecting." (1894: 187). This time, as often happened, they had not encountered sufficient game. The men were "ragged and hungry...almost barefooted...the most woebegone objects I ever saw, ...(with) but a mere pittance of food in their haversacks," related Schwatka (ibid). Similarly, British explorer DeWindt, while recognizing that "these men were inured to privation," seemed nevertheless shocked at the physical appearance and condition of four old timers he met while traveling downriver in 1895. The men were "sunning themselves" outside Ladue's trading store at Forty Mile, waiting for the steamer to arrive. DeWindt recorded that

"The four strangers looked very woebegone as they rose and hobbled to meet us, clothed in filthy rags with bare heads

and arms and faces raw from mosquito bites. The poor fellows had clubbed together and risked their all to work gold up the Pelly river." (1898:90).

They had lost their whole outfit and boat, so had made their way back on a rude raft,

"after terrible sufferings and privations, without a penny left. Their plans for the future were vague enough, but they displayed extraordinary fortitude and even cheerfulness under the circumstances,"

remarked DeWindt, adding "We further consoled them...with a few greenbacks and some plug tobacco." (ibid). Outsider DeWindt was probably under the impression he had given the men "a handout", the men by accepting it obviously took it for simple reciprocal sharing.

Interestingly, a brief entry by Davis reveals that he viewed the Indians much as the forementioned outsiders saw the old timers. During a hunt, Davis shot a moose, and the sound of the shot attracted some Indians to his camp. "My they looked bad. We gave them some meat and mooseskin," Davis, this time the outsider, recorded (1967:48).

Much of the theory anthropologists have built up regarding hunting peoples is based on ethnographic study of those hunters left today, who are found only in undesirable environments, "in lands which are of no use to their neighbours and which pose difficult and dramatic problems of survival." This led to a conclusion that their life is a constant struggle for survival (Lee and DeVore, 1968:5). It therefore came as a surprise to some anthropologists, Lee and DeVore remark, to find that "even the 'marginal' hunters studied by ethnographers actually work short hours and exploit abundant food sources." Some live on two to four hours of subsistence efforts per day, and "were not observed to undergo the periodic (food) crises...commonly attributed to hunters in general." (ibid:6).

The old timer did undergo severe shortage of one or another of even the

most basic of food stuffs and commodities nearly every winter. Some anthropologists feel however, that "viewed on their own terms" -- and this is a point to emphasize -- on their own terms, "the hunters' appear to know the food resources of their habitats and are quite capable of taking the necessary steps to feed themselves." (Lee and DeVore, 1968:6).

Sahlins feels that the early anthropological view of the Hunters, which has become traditional, leaves the reader to wonder "not only how hunters managed to make a living, but whether, after all, this was living? The specter of starvation stalks the stalker," writes Sahlins, who provocatively considers the Hunters to be "the original affluent society," (1968:85). Sahlins uses the term "affluent" in a very special sense, defining an affluent society as "one in which all the peoples wants are easily satisfied, ...either by producing much or desiring little." (ibid).

Sahlins postulates an "affluence without abundance" among many Hunters, in that "wants are restricted: a few people are happy to consider a few things their good fortune," a restraint imposed by nomadism, he points out (1968:86). Moreover, even the marginal hunters, such as the Bushmen of the Kalahari desert "seem neither harassed nor anxious. A certain confidence...attends their economic attitudes and decisions." (ibid). They show "a lack of concern" about the issue (Lee and DeVore, 1968:6).

Among the Bushmen, because of the strong emphasis on sharing and the frequency of movement, surplus accumulation of storable plant foods and dried meat is kept to a minimum. There is rarely more than two or three days' supply of food on hand in camp at any time, Lee points out (1968:32). "Nature is the storehouse," hence the Bushmen do not undergo "seasonal unemployment" for several months at a time when the 'harvest' is in, but collect food every three or four days throughout the year, as required. Although this was not the basic food gathering pattern followed by the old timers, we see this lack

of concern regarding food -- probably a confidence that it is readily available rather than a lack of concern -- exhibited by these men. Davis made remarks such as, "our grub was getting short so we went hunting for more, and Joe and I got two porkies (porcupines) and a cub bear that day." (1967:35).

To return to Sahlins' discussion, even the dry season when the desired foods are exhausted in the immediate vicinity of the camp and the !Kung must go much farther afield to obtain food, an exceedingly nutritious 'mongonga nut' which makes up to fifty percent of the vegetable diet of the Bushmen is abundantly and reliably available (ibid). The important point is, Lee maintains, that food is a constant, but the distance required to reach food is a (seasonable) variable. It is also noticeable that the variety of foods available narrows, sometimes drastically in time of drought, then the diet becomes much more eclectic (Lee, 1968:35).

It would appear that what the very marginal hunters suffer from, is mainly a seasonal or climatic restriction to certain type of food. "There is considerable evidence that as one food source is overstrained, people turn to another in compensation. ...where one species is over-reaped...there is a change to a less favored species." (Birdsell, 1968:94). This was the old timers' situation to an even more severely restricted limit, both quantitatively and in variety. Nevertheless when wants are few, "a people can enjoy an unparalleled material plenty, although perhaps only a low standard of living. That I think describes the hunters," Sahlins remarks (1968:85).

It also, I believe, describes the old timers. Although one is tempted to say that their life, by any standards, was incredibly hard, it apparently was not, by theirs. They did endure the chronic food shortages pointed to by the traditionalists of the earlier school of anthropological thought as making brutal the Hunters' life, but they accepted it and endured it as they accepted many things: without undue comment or complaint. Henderson told of the river

steamer picking up a starving man, an Irishman eleven years in the country who had started out with a partner and a \$1,200 outfit. "They parted, a very foolish thing to do in that country." The Indians had found him and brought him to meet the steamer. "Asked if he was through with Alaska -- he said, 'No...it's all part of the life. I shall be well in a few days...borrow money for an outfit, and start again'" (1898:162-3).

It was the outsider-observers who found this a tremendous hardship. It was the outsider who saw, as Sahlins put it, 'the specter of famine stalking the stalkers'. The old timers' reaction to this judgement was clearly one of annoyance.

Although many cases of hunger and near starvation were recorded, very few old timers died of starvation. The three that Pierce mentioned, who in distress left the traveling group and struck out on their own in a blizzard were the only ones recorded. Those of the group who stayed together got back to the settlement. One old timer illustrated the attitude of the men; he, when Adney enquired about the possibility of starvation, told him "slowly and deliberately" that "I have been eleven years in Alaska and there hasn't been a year yet when everybody wasn't going to starve, but nobody has starved yet." (1900:131).

While the old timers always, in the hardest of times, had something to eat, they were forced to be omnivorous. They ate whatever was available, including quite frequently their dogs, when they had them. Sometimes the dogs were sacrificed one at a time to keep alive the other dogs, and the men. Old timer Frank Densmore, one of the original twelve who wintered in, told of eating loon and muskrat boiled together, which was very tough, and tasted, he remarked, like glue (Henderson, 1897:188). The Irishman, Long John, who was previously mentioned as the butt of a harmless practical joke on the river steamer, told

Ogilvie of his predicament in the spring of 1887. Long John was very low on all provisions, and he wanted to go from the Stewart River mining site to the new finds at Forty Mile. After he shook out his flour sacks, he found he had about "forty pounds of purty d--d dirty luckin' stuff, ye could call it flour if ye wanted ti." (1913:284). All in all, he had about one months provisions, it was March and "how I was going to live on it till the first boat...in July, maybe in August, was more than I could tell." He had "d--d little ammunition" too. To save waste in mixing a batter every time he wanted to bake, he mixed all the flour with baking powder and water and put it outside to freeze. "When I wanted bread I'd rowl it up agin the fire and whin it was pretty black on that side I'd knock off the cooked part, an' ate it." One night his hungry dog got the ball of frozen dough and scratched and chewed at it rather unsuccessfully, pushing and rolling it right across the river in the process. Long John retrieved the dough, considered cutting off the scratched and licked exterior, but decided he could not afford to waste any of it. "It was d--d hard, but I had ti cook it an' ate it." (Ogilvie, 1913:285-6). Long John "hadn't the heart ti touch...the poor divil iv a dog, ...he was starvin'." (ibid).

In more serious vein, the Jesuit missionary Father Judge told of lost men living on a kind of wild rhubarb for two weeks, and eight days on one small salmon (1907:109). Another lost man lived on berries and reindeer moss for a week until he found the Yukon River (Davis, 1967:69), and another had only cranberries and a little flour for an unstated period of time (Henderson, 1898:189). Pierce spoke of eating small birds and ground squirrels and a few mice, before he and his near-starving partners cut the fur off some fine fox-hides and boiled and ate the hides (1890:135).

Every year, by the time the 'annual' supply steamer brought upriver the

new stock of staple foodstuffs and commodities, the old timers had always run very low on most supplies, and completely out of many. Some years the supply boat never did arrive -- journalist Adney wrote of having seen on the door of an upper river trading post, a sign stating that there were no provisions for sale except canned milk, as the 'annual' steamer had not got to the post for two years (1900:163). Adney was told by the old timer storekeeper that the country had never been well supplied, "Mr. Harper says that in the twenty-five years that he has been in the Yukon there has not been a year when there has not been a shortage of something. One year it was candles and the men had to sit in the dark." (ibid).

This does not sound like affluence, yet Sahlins claims that Hunters "have a confidence born of affluence. ... (which) does not desert them during hardship. It can carry them laughing through periods that would try even a Jesuit's soul and worry him so that -- as the Indians warn -- he could become sick." Sahlins quotes from Le Jeune's Relation of 1634,

"I saw them (the Montagnais) in their hardships and their labors, suffer with cheerfulness. ... they said to me, We shall sometimes be two days, sometimes three, without eating ...; take courage, Chihine, let thy soul be strong to endure suffering and hardship; ... see how we do not cease to laugh, although we have little to eat. ... Do not let thyself be cast down, take courage; when the snow comes, we shall eat." (1968:89).

This is, Sahlins remarks, something like the philosophy of the Penan of Borneo who say, "If there is no food today there will be tomorrow." (ibid). It is also like the philosophy of Henry Davis, old timer, who appears to have spoken for many when he wrote

"...Thank God for what I have. I have had lots of money but couldn't keep it, but what is money compared with the life I've had up here. I have never been hungry more than four days at a time." (1967:83).

Old timer author Jim Bender seems to have shared this optimistic philosophy.

Bender pointed out that "when asked if we found it pretty rough those days on account of the grub being scarce, I must say we did without, but we nearly always had butter (caribou marrow) and flour." (1967:91).

It is significant, I believe, that Bender recorded this information regarding food shortage in response to an outsider's inquiry. It is noticeable that all information old timers' supply regarding such shortages was in reply to outsiders' inquiries, or has been recorded by outsiders. Haynes, Henderson and Adney supplied us with the examples we have used. The old timers' reports, Buteau's and Davis' especially, gave us a record of abundance of meat. Haynes saw a clutter of crude shacks at Forty Mile (1898:46,64). Davis always built a "fine cabin" (1967:39, 83).

If these old timers did not feel affluent, obviously neither did they feel deprived. Food shortage was not the only hardship with which the old timers had to live, but clearly from their recorded responses hardship, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. One old timer asked by Adney how cold it gets in the Yukon, replied, "Cold, but not so cold a man can't stand it. I spent one winter in a tent." (1900:131). According to a Canadian government publication, the Yukon winter temperature in January has ranged from a high of -1°F to a low of -66°F .⁵

The fifteen mile trail from Dawson to the Klondike claims was described by outsiders as being "simply dreadful", it lay through swamp which was in a semi-liquid state in the summer season. "The strongest man can walk but a short distance upon it -- or rather through it" before needing a rest, Henderson commented (1898:293). The route lay through marsh where the men stepped from clump to wobbling clump of slippery marsh grass, the watery mud between was to the knees, a stamper reported (Day, 1906:63). Yet this trail was described by the old timers to Haskell as "fair". "We knew enough to know that in Alaska that word applies to any place where a man can go without breaking

his neck," wrote Haskell (1898:250). Not only food shortages, but all the hazards and hardships of the Yukon life were faced, if not with the "confidence born of affluence" of the Hunters in other harsh climes, then with a courage born of confidence.

This courage and confidence was illustrated by Buteau who told of a decision to winter in, in 1889-90, despite the steamer's non-arrival due to its having struck a snag and sunk -- with all supplies. Buteau and his partners had a new claim which they did not wish to leave

"as we had to whipsaw lumber and build one-half mile of flume for our new claim. We decided to winter in the Forty Mile district making the best of what we had. Our food supply was very low, but we killed forty caribou which served as our main food. ... George Maddock and his wife and Pete McDonald and his wife had between them two sacks of flour, a few beans, a few pounds of dry fruit, but no butter, and all of the above were quite moldy. John Campbell and myself had nothing but one sack of flour and a few pounds of beans -- no butter or sugar -- from October 10 to July 1 of the next year. ... yet when the first boat came up sometime in July, we were all well and happy." (1967:105-6).

This was the year Buteau learned to make "bone butter" from caribou horn marrow, he remarked.

Surely it took courage and confidence for these six people, four miners and two native wives, to face the long winter with so few supplies other than meat. They must have been very sure of their ability to find sufficient food.

The Yukon was a big game country, and the old timers seem to have considered only the shooting of moose, caribou and bear worth remarking upon. One can imagine that much of their confidence lay in the fact that the game animals were large, one moose dressed out to between 800 and 900 pounds of excellent meat, according to Pierce (1890:115). Hence, only a few successful hunts yielded meat for all for a considerable period of time. Sometimes they might get 1,000 to 2,000 pounds of meat in one hunt, as Davis and his companions did fairly frequently according to his memoirs. (Of course, the most successful

hunts were the ones recorded.) On various hunts he recorded killing "one moose and two caribou" (1967:43), a three day hunt yielded four caribou and one bear (ibid:50), another time two moose (ibid:60) and on a memorable occasion, with the cooperation of Indian beaters or drivers,

"About five o'clock a moose cow and calf came out of the woods...I grabbed the rifle and killed both animals. About fifteen minutes later a bull and two cows came out from the same trail. I killed all of them. ... We loaded up the boat for home and had lots of meat for the winter." (1967:60).

This last harvest took place in about the same amount of time that it might take to pick a few gallons of blueberries, and with much less effort. It is understandable that they, like other hunters, "think meat".

Can we consider the old timers, in Sahlin's terms, an "affluent society"? Despite the yearly food shortages and the severe nutritional imbalance of the early years (which was corrected when the men took Indian wives), I believe we can. Although the Yukon was an extremely harsh land, these men became competently and confidently at home there. They adopted a pattern of life in which they were dependent on the land for much of their food (meat), their systematic hunting and preserving by freezing of large amounts of game allowed them to view the country as Pierce did, as "this land of abundance." (1890:74).

On summer trips of forty to fifty miles in from the river, a pair of men would take only a pick, pan, shovel, rifle, revolver, one half a blanket, a little flour, bacon, sugar and coffee; "very little" Pierce remarked, as they depended on game for food. Indeed, if game signs were plentiful, they might take nothing in the line of food, save a little salt (1890:154).

This confidence was demonstrated yet again in an account by Davis of a "long trip" on which he and a partner started in February of 1889. The trip was apparently exploratory, and also to locate and join up with "the Densmore party". No reason was given for their wish to locate this group, the party does not seem to be overdue, or in some way a cause for concern. Davis and companion

started out, in the dead of the Yukon winter, each with a 400 pound load on their separate sleds and one dog each. Undoubtedly they carried some food, all travellers in the country carried some basic foodstuffs with them. Davis earlier wrote of two of his cabin partners getting supplies ready in preparation for a trip outside in the fall. "They rendered out bear fat, baked doughnuts, fixed moccasins, mitts, caps and socks from bear skins." (1967:42). On longer journeys it cannot have been enough to take care of all their needs.

On this winter journey, Davis recorded that they "had a hard trip, pulling lead most of the way ourselves. ... We camped at Fish Creek...and found lots of moose meat on cache there." Some days later, after slow traveling in deep snow, Davis arrived at another cache.

"On a platform were two deer and Indians and crows working on them. We covered them up and started for the Tolovana River. That day we shot a lynx and ate the hind legs (just like pork), but didn't have any applesauce to go with it. We traded the skin to Chief Alexander for moose meat at Baker Creek. A boy named Sam...came along with us for about three hours, left, and came back and gave us two hams, having shot a young moose." (1967:63).

Through the use of meat cached by others, by custom to be utilized by travellers in need, hunting, trading with the Indians, and gifts of meat by the natives, Davis and partner managed very well. Yet caches, even if known of in advance, might be emptied before they arrived at them, and the natives might be out of meat. However, Davis and his partner obviously did not fear starvation. Like the Bushmen, they exhibited a "lack of concern" regarding the problem of finding food.

CHAPTER FIVE --- THE ORGANIZATION OF LEISURE

ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment among such simple societies as hunting bands, tends to be basically the same the world over, as the nomadic life style necessitates the most sparse and simple material possessions. The value on movement makes portability important, indeed the less equipment required the more popular are the diversions in the sense of being widely pursued.

And so the old timers' entertainment was simple. Next to the almost unceasing talking, smoking, chewing tobacco, and visiting, the most popular pastimes were card playing and gambling, the latter a popular pursuit among hunters the world over.

A great deal of simple card playing went on; one old timer claimed that the men in Forty Mile "did nothing all winter but sit around where it was warm, playing pedro, solitaire and casino." (Adney, 1900:294). Poker, however, was also popular, many winter hours were spent playing poker with one's cabin mates, or when visiting. Davis mentioned losing \$100 one evening to a good player, \$200 another time. He also mentioned two of his cabin group playing for 1¢ a chip. The object in this latter game was clearly not the winning of the pot. Davis, who played poker often, made no mention of any big wins he enjoyed and one might surmise that the size of the pot was not too important. Gambling was a pastime, not a serious attempt to win money, other wise one might expect to read mentions of a particularly big win. That other forms of gambling were mainly a form of entertainment to the old timers is evident, they would bet on anything. There was a pool of \$5 each on when the ice would go out, (a tradition which remains in the north to this day). They bet on who could spit closest to a crack in the floor -- one stamper who remained in

the north claimed she knew two old timers (who had obviously 'hit it rich') "who bet each other \$10,000 on their respective spitting accuracy, the mark being a crack in the wall." (Black, 1938:135). They also bet on such things as whether the next person in the door would step in with their right or left foot first -- "lots of fun, as we must gamble on something," wrote Davis (1967: 54). The recreation of gambling, although at times involving high stakes, was generally harmless, S.D. Clark feels, as miners "took a careless sporting attitude towards money." (1962:87).

The old timers do not appear to have indulged in wrestling, feats of strength and such at any of their gatherings, in part because the modest unassuming man was the model, as Pierce pointed out, but also there was no need to prove their strength and courage: to live in the Yukon was proof enough. Nor were they really competitive against each other.

McQuesten told of light-hearted games in celebration of the first Christmas that prospectors wintered in near his Post in 1882. They had a snow shovelling contest, "and the one who got beat had to stand on his head." They had a footrace, a good dinner, and "all the Indians that were near the Station had all they wanted to eat."

The Indians, that first Yukon Christmas, introduced a sport of tossing up a person in a moose hide held around the edge by many; the white men began to toss the native women in the moose skin, and the women in turn caught and tossed the prospectors. "That practice has been kept up at Forty Mile ever since," wrote McQuesten (1952:11).

Other simple entertainment was recorded. Buteau told of an 1887 "taffy pull" during which a number of men with beards got the candy into their whiskers. Buteau, himself, was called "Taffy Frank" for a long time afterwards (1967:104).

Some old timers made music, although little was recorded of this. However,

we remember Davis' cabin mate, Chris, making a fiddle, to while away the winter hours (1967:44). Davis also recorded that at Christmas 1888, there was an all-night dance with music provided by a fiddle, bass and fife (ibid:62); also men are mentioned as singing "a few songs" at the campfire evenings. Among the old timers, music appears to have been a form of entertainment, not a creative process, or a folk art.

STORY-TELLING

Typically, in band societies, artistic expression is largely confined to the forms that do not require tools or equipment; it usually takes the form of "oral tradition, particularly mythology, accompanied by song, dance, and ritual drama." (Service, 1966:73). Service points out that such folk art can be appreciated by all, the group can even participate in much of it, it is the "whole people's art".

Story-telling was very popular as entertainment, and probably the closest the society came, during their short history, to developing a distinctive folk art. Organized story-telling clubs, with rules of procedure and behavior were "one of, if not the principal feature of winter diversions," wrote Ogilvie (1913:290). The stories told took on a distinctive Yukon format, and being "a good spieler" carried a certain fame or status (ibid:293).

The old timers' tales, like earlier American folk tales, were humorous through exaggeration; but, unlike the American folk tales, which were organized around the exploits of a super-hero (the giant and powerful logger Paul Bunyan, for example), the old timers' tales apparently did not boast the exploits of any man, real or imaginary. (Later, stampedeers' tales of the Yukon certainly did, and are often confused with the old timers' tales. It was the stampedeers who boasted that a man became a real sourdough after he had wrestled a grizzly

and slept with a squaw, or vice versa, as the old joke goes.)

A distinctive story-telling form developed among the nucleus of old timers during the winter of 1887-88, when some of the small group wintering at Forty Mile built cabins on a close-by island, which because of their skill in story-telling became known as the "Liars' Island". (Buteau, 1967:102). Ogilvie recorded that these old timers held regular meetings, during which as many as could squeeze into the small cabin club-room attended. "The stories, generally, were confined for the evening to one subject, and each story might be commented on, or reflected on without offense." The object was for each "spieler" to attempt to top the previous mens' stories. (1913:291).

Ogilvie gave examples of the topics chosen; one evening the subject was "the sagacity of animals". The first story-teller told an imaginative tale of a highly intelligent pet beaver owned by his uncle, which was by accident locked in the parlor one night during which a water pipe burst. The beaver spent the night cutting up and damming the flood with the furniture -- thus keeping the water confined to one corner of the room. A listener countered with a tale of a beaver which belonged to his grandfather who owned a general store. One night the spigot to the syrup keg was accidentally left open. The beaver, realizing the mess the sticky stuff would make, placed itself under the flow with its mouth open, swallowing as fast as the syrup flowed, and saving the store from a mess. By morning it had swallowed two-thirds of the barrel (Ogilvie, 1913:293).

Another night the subject was the quantity of camp supplies they had seen at any one time. One of the group gravely told of having seen, in the mining camps of the B.C. Cariboo, one hundred and thirty-nine cords of bacon piled on a river bank. "Some one said, 'Ah! come now, Steele, take off a cord or two.' Not a G-d d--n rind" retorted the quick-witted spieler (ibid).

Such stories were much enjoyed. Anthropological theory suggests that

among simple egalitarian peoples, "the most admired performers are those who stay within the bounds of the established culture style but achieve a measure of spontaneous, individual creativity through minor variations," (Harris, 1971: 590) which is clearly what these old timer story-tellers were doing.

The group of men who wintered on "Liars' Island" numbered only six to eight men the first year, according to Buteau, who was one of them. This group came back and wintered here several times, increasing in number, hence the island became "Sixteen Liars' Island", and the story-telling became a tradition (Buteau, 1967:96, 104). The regular club meeting was probably a little unusual, such tales were probably often told in less structured situations, as around the evening campfire, for example.

This innocuous form of story-telling, one suspects, would be engaged in mainly during the extremely close winter-imposed confinement to the crowded, tiny cabins, when the severe weather made the usual solution to disagreement or aggression -- flux -- inoperable for many months. When men could not readily change locations and partners it was more important than ever that hostility be avoided. The norm was amiability and sharing, the object to pass time and to entertain, without raising issues which might cause division among the society members.

DRINKING

Although drinking was part of the camp life, being mentioned in connection with card playing, some visiting, special occasions such as dances, and so on, 'heavy' drinking (drinking to the point of real drunkenness) was indulged in largely as a group and only on certain, very special, occasions. Opportunities, such as a man's annual or seasonal spree, or the arrival of the yearly steam-boat bringing needed supplies (and liquor) were reason for a day or two of

'heavy' group drinking. Walden claimed that when the supply boat finally arrived in July 1897, at a time when the new camp of Dawson was almost completely out of supplies, "what few saloons there were opened up with free drinks: the ban was off and everybody got drunk. This included the temperance men." (1928:106). It is unfortunate that Waldon did not tell us what ban it was that was off. It appears, however, to have been some rule regulating the usage of liquor.

Davis gave a brief description of the celebration on the arrival of the anticipated supply boat. The waiting men sighted smoke far down the river, so "someone ran up the Stars and Stripes." (1967:49). Once when they did not have a flag, they frivolously nailed a moose hide to a pole and raised that. (ibid:75).

"The steamer blew its whistle like the band, and we all got out our guns and started shooting. My, what a racket! There was no sleep that night for poor Al Mayo (the captain) was talked blind. Everybody helped unload the boat. There were lots of willing hands. ... Everybody got drunk and slept it off the next day." (ibid:50).

This is probably the occasion most dedicated to drinking, yet it seems to have lasted only twenty-four hours. Other celebrations, such as Christmas and New Years, do not seem primarily occasions for drinking, the "feast" and a "big dance" seem to have been equally important. Henry Davis' journal entries told of preparations for Christmas 1888:

"Hank Wright is getting ready for the big dance at Xmas (we all chipped in on the makings). (of a supply of hootch) John Folger and I went...to kill white-meat chickens for the crowd. ...we killed seventy-five. We got back...and found it was the 20th of December and that Hank had all the makings ready for Xmas night. ...Mr. Walker (the trader) asked everybody to dinner in his store." (ibid:62).

Davis' next entry is dated December 28, 1888.

"I just woke up. We had a big time. Danced all night and it was fine. Chapman (a missionary) is a fine

fiddler. Mike Hess played bass and Frank Densmore the fife. ...Hank Wright is to put on the party for New Year's." (ibid).

The old timers do not appear to have had any customary celebration of July 4th, American Independence Day, although the later-coming stampedeers did. None of the old timer-authors mentioned it, probably because in July the men were widely dispersed, traveling and prospecting, and so largely unaware of the date. Davis' only mention was actually by omission. He began a journal entry, "We found out this is the tenth of July." The fourth had come and gone, unnoticed. (ibid:48).

The drinking on the occasion of the river steamer's arrival, like the generally uproarious behaviour, can be safely considered a release of tension. The carnival spirit sometimes seemed to have lasted two or three days on the occasion of the arrival of supplies which would see them through the winter. This also fairly rapidly reduced the new supply of liquor, back to a scant supply which would have to be "stretched" with the addition of a good deal of water, and "not used without some thought." (Ogilvie, 1913:217).

Among the old timers, the amount of liquor consumed was actually rather little. At work, while prospecting and mining, "the miner drinks little but tea and coffee, but when he comes to town he generally indulges in a 'fling' for a day or two," commented outsider Haynes, which was correct the evidence suggests (1897:90). However, Haynes went on, "but when he has any time on his hands, he is more than likely drinking or drunk in one of the many saloons," which is misleading, as the old timers' saloons were primarily socializing rather than drinking centers. "Nearly all of the men congregate in the saloons, tell yarns, play cards, and occasionally drink too much, though a man without gold dust is not in danger of it, for prices are high," wrote Haskell, referring to Circle City in 1897 (1898:163). Haynes, however, came into the Yukon in 1895 and he formed his opinion of old timer drinking habits at a

time when, as we know, large numbers of outsiders had poured into the Forty Mile and Klondike areas. (Circle City, 1897, was still very much under old timers' traditional miners' meeting control.)

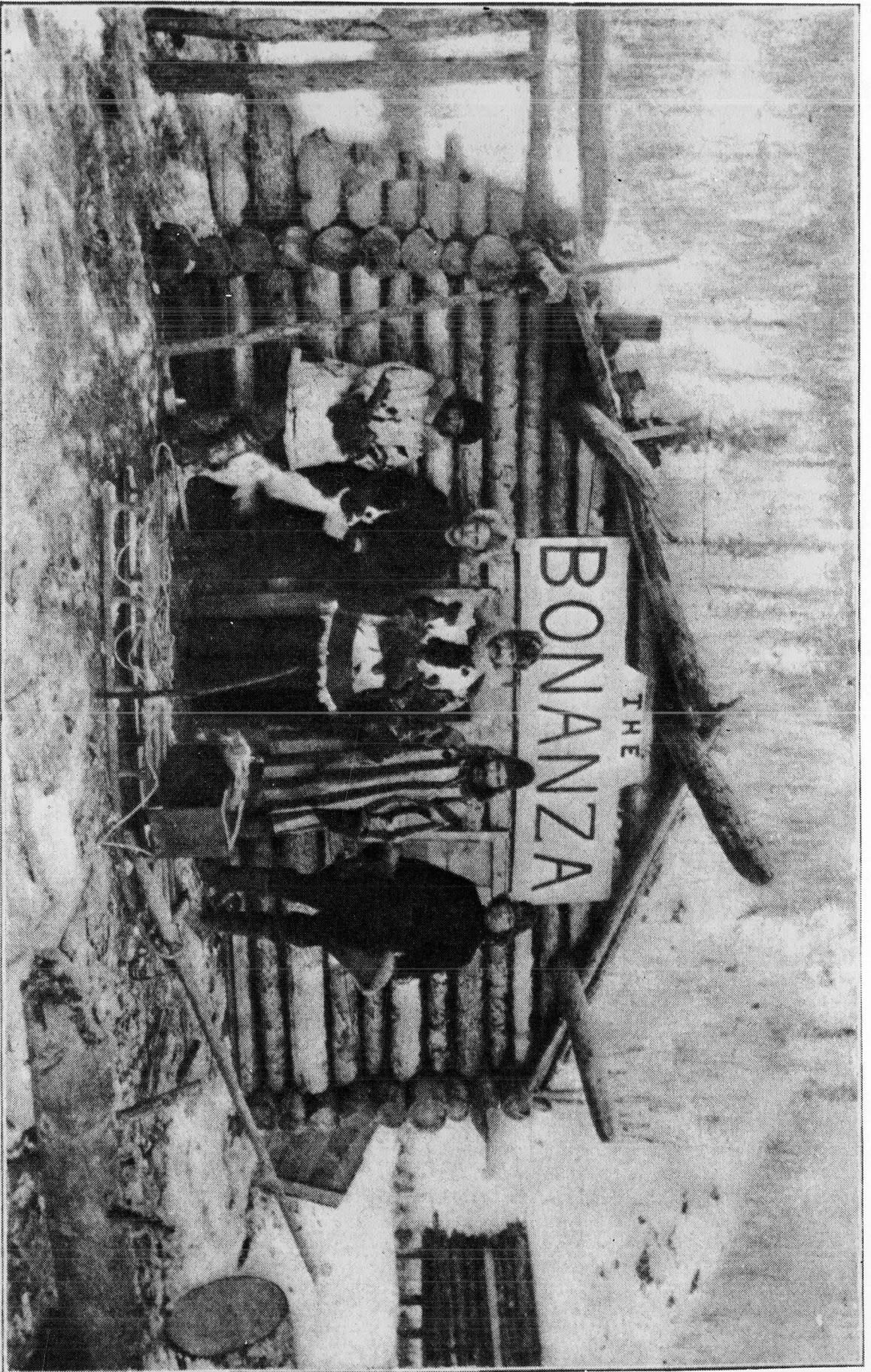
Actually the supply of "real" liquor severely limited 'heavy' drinking until about this period, when the increased (and thirstier) population made bringing in liquor look profitable to some men (Moore, 1968:146). The liquor had to be smuggled into Alaska due to American regulations, but there was no law against its import into the Canadian Yukon, other than that of having to pay excise duty on it. (Ogilvie, 1913:287).

Through the whole of the old timers' society's span, when imported liquors ran out infamous local brews of various ingredients were concocted and imbibed. One, known as "Forty rod whiskey", was said to drop a man at a distance of forty rods, and a man might get drunk on that, intentionally or unintentionally. Ogilvie, however, pointed out that because in 1889 the drinking of hootch had led to a quarrel in which knives were produced, "the making of hootch was... not encouraged." (1913:288-9).

The many saloons mentioned by Haynes sprang up directly in connection with the autumn 1897 wave of outsiders, the first of the would-be Klondike stakers, who managed to get in just before the river froze, cutting off the outside world for the next eight months.

Dawson had, at that early date in its history, one saloon -- the "Bonanza" -- run by pioneer, Joe Ladue. A photograph of it in Adney's book makes it obvious that twenty-five men inside would have been a more than capacity crowd (1900:313). (*See Picture Page 156a*)

On the opposite bank of the Klondike River, with a small island covered with cottonwood trees hiding it from view, was "Lousetown", a former Indian camp. By 1897 the only Indians there were wives of old timers, and their "little half-breed children who run about in furs and whose dogs to the number



FIRST SALOON IN DAWSON

of four to six lie around the doors of their cabins." (ibid:178). Here two of the usual very small cabins had been taken over as saloons by some enterprising newcomers (Ogilvie, 1913:216). "There was a little whiskey in the place, and a good deal of water, but the boys, for old times' sake, were willing to pay fifty cents a glass for the mixture," wrote Ogilvie (ibid:217).

These three tiny saloons served the five or six hundred men who were at the site before the main surge of stampeding cheechakos arrived. Ogilvie's account suggested that these saloons had been opened up partly in anticipation of the rush, in that the saloonkeepers of Lousetown put up a sign upriver, reading, "Danger Below. Keep to the Right", which steered the newcomers to their bank of the river.

"As soon as Joseph Ladue heard...(that) this influx...was drinking up all the whiskey in the camp of the enemy, ...he swore mightily. How to get the multitude to come and partake of his hospitality was a serious matter to him." (Ogilvie, 1913:218-9). This was solved by tying the sawmill steam-whistle open, and the throng was soon attracted across the river to Dawson.

At Forty Mile camp there had been saloons, but to the old timer as mentioned, these were not primarily places to obtain liquor, but winter gathering spots, for socializing, meeting "the boys", taking the place of the summer campfire as a public forum. As Haskell mentioned, even in 1897, "the stores and saloons are the only place to go. If seeking information it is found there -- or if looking for a friend, he is probably not at his cabin but at store (trading post) or saloon." (1898:162).

Adney describing the saloons of early Dawson (1897) as being the center of the social life, "the only public place where a friendly fire burned by day and night, and where in the dim light of a kerosene lamp they might see one another's faces," expressed his belief that "the Yukon saloon was a peculiar institution (I feel that I am describing something that passed away when the

horde of newcomers came later,)" (1900:337), a view with which I would concur.

Adney went on to describe what he felt was the typical saloon as it existed in old timer society, before the great Klondike rush of 1898.

"Most of the proprietors were old timers, who had been miners, men of honor and character, respected in a community where a man was valued, not according to his pretensions or position in 'society', but in proportion to his manliness and intrinsic worth." (ibid).

As an example of "the better class of Dawson saloon" he cited the "Pioneer" or "Moosehorn", "a favorite resort of old timers", as the proprietors were Messrs. Densmore, Spencer and McPhee, all early and well-known pioneers. Densmore, Adney reminded us, was among the first who crossed the pass and had rocked for gold in the upper Yukon valley for "a dozen years before the Klondike was known". (1900:341). (Actually Densmore came in in 1883.)

"I recall the 'Pioneer' as a large comfortable room with the usual bar on one side of it, ...a number of...tables and benches and chairs, the latter always filled with men talking over their pipes, reading much-worn newspapers (six months out of date), a few engaged in games of poker, and nine-tenths 'dead broke', but as welcome, apparently, as the most reckless rounder who spilled his dust over the bar. It struck the outsider with wonder, the seeming indifference of the proprietors whether one patronized the bar or not, for what other interpretation can one place on a (free) water-barrel at the end of the bar?" (1900:341-2).

"A water-barrel in a saloon, think of it!" wrote Adney, in obvious amazement. Yet there it was, "filled with pure cold water at a cost of \$10 a barrel...(free) for the use of all." (ibid:338). Within these walls it cost nothing for the "busted" cheechakos ("homeless stranded men, half sick and dependent...on the charity of strangers"), to warm themselves at the stove, or to snatch some sleep, head on "welcome bench or table...Something of the generous spirit of the old Yukon life made these men welcome." (Adney, 1900:342). Among the old timers, Adney was told by one of them, "the man who patronizes a saloon and the man who goes to church are on the same footing." (ibid:269).

Adney was further informed that, in Forty Mile, "a man would come into a

saloon, and all he'd have would be one drink. ...You'd never see them asking up three or four at once to drink. Why there weren't but three men in Forty Mile that could afford to get drunk." (ibid:294).

Haynes reported that dropping in for a drink was an expensive matter, for it was "unwritten etiquette of the country that a man dropping in for a drink must call everyone within sight to have a drink at your (sic) expense," which might cost a man one hundred dollars, he pointed out (1897:92).

An old timer dropping in rich with dust quite likely would call everyone in sight in for a drink. Haskell revealed a typical old timer attitude when he told of an old timer who had been working hard all day on his claim, who said when he was finished, "'Now I'll just pan out one pan for the boys.' As a result he came to town (Dawson), entered one of the saloons, treated everybody there several times, lost \$13 at faro, and still had \$30 left." (1898:371). "Gold dust is esteemed very cheaply by some miners," Haskell remarked (ibid).

Clearly other evidence points to the fact that the old timer would be just as welcome in the saloon if he came in broke. The custom of having to treat everyone in sight was a Klondike cheechako adaption of the old timers' spontaneous generous gesture, it may have become custom when the Klondike gold was creating "millionaires", it was not, as Haskell would have it, an old timer custom unless the old timer had gold dust to get rid of, spree-style.

Another custom attributed to the old timers, which was in their case largely myth but which became a stamper custom, was also reported by Haynes, who claimed that "when a miner goes into a saloon or store to buy anything, he flings down his sack (of gold) onto the bar or counter, and turns his back while the dealer weighs out the amount in his scales. The latter would be grossly insulted if he were to see you watching him, and the man who keeps his eye on his sack...is considered 'no gentleman.'" (1898:90).

This was not a custom, or even unwritten etiquette of the country, but simply a natural reaction of a genuine old timer towards his 'brother'. Both storekeepers and barkeepers were, in early days, old timers and fellow prospectors, "absolute honesty...(was) the order of the day." (Haynes, 1897:90). The old timer would not watch the weighing of the dust simply because cheating of a brother was unthinkable and unthought of -- and indeed the old timer barkeeper would be deadly insulted if a man's manner of watching suggested that he thought he might be cheated. It would be, however, the cheechako who made an elaborate custom out of an unconscious gesture on the part of the old timer. And so this new custom became part of the myth of the Klondike phenomenon, being reported repeatedly in cheechako records.

Although there was a change in the old timer drinking pattern directly connected with the Klondike strike and the appearance of Dawson, a gaudy, flamboyant "San Francisco of the North", it was probably a response to the times. Many of the old timers, like the cheechakos, appear to have taken to enacting unaccustomed roles under the shock and illusion of the rise of this gold born, gold-borne city, or properly, of the whole Klondike experience. At any rate, the pattern of the old timer working for a full season, then making his way back with his season's earnings, and going on a spree proportional to those earnings, gave way to the men (those who remained on the Klondike to mine rich claims), working a few weeks then bringing their gold to Dawson, which was only fifteen miles from the claims, going on a spree or fling, and going back to the same claim to dig for a few more weeks and then repeating the procedure. Davis, who had a rich claim on "Cheechako Hill", recounted that "we picked and rocked out \$1,200 and then went to town for a good time. We went back after we were broke and took out pay dirt all winter." (1967:79). Standing as host in the saloons to all in the vicinity was considered, in old timer terms, as leveling, sharing, and being generous -- hence,

strengthening the social bond.

Earlier in the study we mentioned that in the very early days the men at their informal (miners') meetings made a number of resolutions controlling the making and sale of "hootch" to either miners or Indians, and that the regulations were most often enforced when liquor was sold to the Indians. Bishop Bompas, first bishop appointed to the diocese of Selkirk (Yukon), and a man who little understood the miners, wrote in 1892 that the miners had the law in their own hands, and "with rare exceptions, kept good order". The Bishop wanted government control, a police force, but as a fair man he also wrote that "the miners have themselves now check the drinking among the Indians by deciding that the next person who gives a drink to an Indian shall receive notice to leave the country in 24 hours." (Cody, 1908:264-7).

The imposition of this law regarding not supplying liquor to the Indians may have been more to keep the Bishop from using his influence to bring in outside control in the form of the N.W.M.P., than through altruism. Yet the core members of the old timers' society did not deliberately debase the Indians. Excessive use of alcohol, potentially threatening to the norm of peace in the society, was controlled.

The control was illustrated by Ogilvie in humorous fashion. He told of a resident of Forty Mile camp in 1886 who, being "broke and idle" decided to make some 'hootch'. Several varieties of these infamous local brews were concocted of whatever ingredients were at hand. They were usually referred to as "vile" by imbibers with sophisticated taste buds, but described by the uncritical as "good stuff, provided you don't take more than two drinks." (Davis, 1967:54).

The hootch was made, and the maker "then called on Capt. Constantine (N.W.M.P.) to learn what to do to be safe in trafficking (sic) the stuff." (Ogilvie, 1913:286). He was told to pay excise duty, which he did. His plan

was to then take the liquor to the best paying creeks,

"to sell it either retail or wholesale as suited the convenience of his customers.

The miners on the two leading creeks..., learning, as he intended...of his intentions, held a meeting and resolved: That in the event of any party or parties coming to their creeks with intoxicating liquors to sell, they would seize the liquor, spill it, and send the party or parties whence they came with a warning. Our distiller heard of this, but smiled and thought, 'Well, we shall see.'" (ibid:287).

Nothing daunted, Ogilvie told us, he took his load of eight to ten gallons of liquor to a vacant cabin convenient to the mouths of both creeks, "where he took up his abode."

"The miners knew he had started, ostensibly, for their creeks, and when he was some time overdue, became anxious about him. At last his whereabouts was learned, and their indignation was increased, if that were possible. But indignation, like other volatile things, is evanescent, and as nature abhors a vacuum, one of them, on the following afternoon, took down his rifle, and proclaimed his intention of going out...(hunting); he was tired of eating bacon, and yearned for a bit of fresh meat." (ibid:288).

He returned from his 'hunt', not having secured anything, tired and weary, but announced he had seen good signs of caribou and might take another look around again soon. That evening another 'hunter' went out to look for signs, gradually, so did others, and when many caribou had been secured, "and the keg was empty, the distiller returned to town with 'a well-filled' poke, ...the price of numerous caribou killed out of season. ...another meeting was called, and more stringent resolutions passed against whiskey sellers, death, I think, being one of the penalties to be inflicted on the next transgressor." wrote Ogilvie, facetiously (ibid).

Significantly, while this distiller cooperated with N.W.M.P. regulation regarding liquor, when he might have said nothing about his "hootch" and disposed of it quietly, "this excise (tax) being a shock to his puny pocket" as Ogilvie pointed out; the same man accepted caribou meat shot out of season in payment (ibid:288). Another old timer, at the time Davis' partner, also re-

fused to accept trader-imposed Indian trapping areas, saying, "I've got as much right to trap as an Indian." He threatened that if the Indians started trouble, "I'll show them how we treated Indians in Montana when they got fresh." Davis backed him up, saying, "You know what the cattlemen did to the sheepmen. Just like that;" (1967:52), however the trouble was settled without resorting to such violence. It is characteristic of hunting societies that they do not recognize territorial boundaries or restrictions, hence the old timers did not accept N.W.M.P. or government-imposed hunting restrictions.

According to the general anthropological consensus that simple egalitarian hunting societies have unwritten but strictly adhered to laws that channel aggression into socially acceptable outlets, one can expect that the use of liquor, as a potential source of trouble, would be controlled. I suggest that in old timer society this was done through the device of keeping 'heavy' drinking confined to group social celebrations. The difficulty of bringing in even essential supplies to the area took care of the rest of the problem. One would expect that the habitual heavy drinker would be scorned and made to feel societal disapproval. There is little direct evidence to bear out this surmise, but there are small hints. As will be remembered, it was a man who became aggressive when drinking who was "executed" by the saloonkeeper in Circle City, and there appears to be an implication that the heavy drinker was disapproved of, in Davis' remark that among the men who had arrived at a new strike was "Hootch Albert" who "looked sick from one week in Dawson." (1967:79). Albert might have gained that nickname as a seller of "hootch", however his looking sick suggests a week of hard drinking on his part. As the selling of hootch was discouraged, and habitual heavy drinking a possible threat to the society, the nickname seems to imply a certain scorn, as did George Carmack's nicknames, "Siwash George", or "Lying George" -- both socially disapproved of activities or attributes.

As with so many other aspects of the societal life and values, the old timers' pattern of liquor usage, both social and psychological, differed radically from much of the drinking of the later-coming stampedeers. Old timers' drinking was almost entirely restricted to the winter settlements, and certain group social occasions, and it was seldom, outside of these special occasions, 'heavy'. The old timers' saloons were in the main, social clubs, taking the place of the summer campfire as centers of conversation.

Drinking while traveling was not indulged in by any old timer. One bottle was sometimes carried along and might be passed from hand to hand when old (or new) friends met, each man taking a swallow (Davis, 1967:39). It is indicative of the general attitude towards liquor I suggest, that on two occasions hoarded bottles of rum were used to make the sauce for a plum duff for a festive dinner rather than being utilized otherwise. One such occasion was Christmas, 1886 (ibid:42). The other was not a special occasion, other than that a fine fat moose had been killed during a traveling, prospecting trip in the course of which three groups had met and camped together.

"We all packed the meat to camp, and Frank Densmore took the tallow and made a big plum duff. Somebody dug up two bottles of Hudson Bay Rum for the sauce for the duff. My what a feed." (ibid:36).

Davis gave the names of eight men present on this occasion. Apparently it was not only Davis who placed more value on liquor as a cooking ingredient than on using it in the more orthodox fashion.

DANCING

At Forty Mile camp, in the 1880's, dances of American style were held several times a winter. A dance was a much enjoyed part of celebrations of holidays and of events such as the completion of new large buildings (such as trading post stores and mission buildings).

There was "a big dance" held the day the ice broke (Davis, 1967:54) and another held in the "Indian sports cabin", one of the mission buildings, the night before one of the old timers' babies was christened -- the first christening the missionary had done in U.S. territory, Davis remarked (ibid:61). Another of his journal entries told of all the men waiting for the new store to be finished so they could hold a dance in it (ibid:72).

On occasions such as Christmas or New Years the dance was very much a highlight, along with dinner, or as Davis called it, "the feast" which was shared by the whole group including the Indians in the vicinity. Bishop Bompas recorded that in Forty Mile the miners held a feast on New Year's Day, "of which every soul in the neighbourhood was invited to partake, both whites and Indians," (1908:268). This was a custom which Jack McQuesten started at Christmas, 1882, the first year during which he had had white companions through the winter months.

The dances usually lasted all night, or simply until people got too tired to dance. Drinking is implied in connection with the dances, in that Davis several times wrote of there being "some headaches" the next day.

As is often the case, our sources made only very brief mention of such dances being held. There was no description included, other than that the music was supplied by Rev. Chapman, "a fine fiddler, ...Mike Hess played bass and Frank Densmore the fife," (Davis, 1967:62) and that at the Christmas and apparently the New Year celebration, a big dinner was featured, as well as a dance (ibid).

Berton's book, Klondike, fortunately includes a description of what the onlooker, a passing U.S. government geologist briefly in Forty Mile in the early nineties, called "a squaw dance." This dance, held in a very large log cabin "rather dilapidated with the windows broken in," impressed the outsider deeply because of the silence with which the miners danced with their partners,

(native women, who had laid their babies aside in a row).

"There was no noise...for the Indian women were as stolid as ever and the miners could not speak the language of their partners. Even those watching said nothing, so that these silent dancing figures in the dusk made an almost weird effect." (1963:21-22).

Later, the women picked up their babies and "slouched off home, the men slipped over to the saloon to have a drink before going to their cabins." (ibid).

"Squaw dance" was an outsider's term. Davis and Buteau never called them anything but "dances", or "big dances". The dead silence reported seems very much out of character as the old timer celebrations tended to be boisterous. It may have been due to the participation of the women, as almost all other celebrations were among the male group only. One also suspects that many of the women were wives of these men and, as we know, the native women were not accustomed to talking to their men in public. Further, the old timers respected their native wives. Perhaps if these had been depraved women the affair would have been noisier. Unless further historical evidence come to light, we cannot be sure.

CHAPTER SIX --- AVAILABLE WOMEN

THE PROSTITUTES

Due to the inhibitions of the age it is not surprising that despite the old timers' being a male society, there was no direct reference to women occupying such a role or position. The implication was that there were no women of such occupation in the pre-Klondike Yukon, there were only "dance hall girls" -- women who, for a salary and a commission of 25¢ of the dollar charged for every dance, would polka, waltz, and square dance from dusk to dawn (Kirk, 1899:98). Yet, as is commonly known, the term "dance hall" was a frequently used euphemism for bawdy house in the literature of the old American West, hence by "dance hall girl" was usually meant "prostitute".

The term "actress" was another polite way of referring to a prostitute. These terms of double-entendre tend to cloud further the impression of the place of the prostitute in old timer society.

There are, however, nebulous clues, brief, cryptic, passing remarks, nearly touching on, but quickly turning away from the whole topic. Fortunately one brief direct statement by Haskell, a young American prospector who entered the Yukon in 1895 with an old timer partner, reveals some significant information. With Haskell's statement as the key, other men's hints and brief remarks take on a certain significance, and an impression which seems probable emerges. Surprisingly, there does not appear to have been a place for the prostitute in the old timers' society.

To begin, there was apparently a handful of professional prostitutes in the pre-Klondike Yukon. The first white woman pioneer to come over the Chilcoot Pass, in 1888, who was later at Circle City, was "Dutch Kate" Wilson, according to historian Hulley (1953:229). The familiarity of the nickname in a land

where any white woman was rare, and so desirable indeed, suggests a disrespect which would not be accorded any moral white woman. A few prostitutes did make their way in, in the 1890's, but very few, the life was at that time too hard, and the miners not numerous or rich enough to make setting up in business in the interior appealing, as Haskell pointed out (1897:163). It does not seem unreasonable to expect that most prostitutes who were willing to face the Yukon interior, were unable for some reason to make a living at their trade elsewhere, as probably were "Old May" and "Black Kitty" of Circle City 1896, who had the disadvantages of being both black, and elderly (Hunt, 1974:21-23).

Mrs. Lippy, the wife of an outsider, one of the hopeful who arrived in 1896 just in time to "hit it rich" at the new Klondike find, recorded that by 1897 there were "nine or ten women at Forty Mile, but they were mostly hard characters" (Stanley, 1898:177). Like all white women in the north she completely ignored the Indian women. By "women" she meant white women. Probably these "hard characters" were prostitutes, however they then numbered but seven or eight, as Mrs. Bompas, wife of the Anglican Bishop of Selkirk (Yukon) District resided at Forty Mile, as did Madame Tremblay, a respectable French woman who came over the Chilcoot Pass with her husband in 1894 (Hunt, 1974:16).

Despite the presence of the few professional prostitutes, on the basis of Haskell's information, and small hints and clues notices in other source materials, we shall suggest on an impressionistic level, that in old timer society prostitution as an institution was almost completely missing, being simply unnecessary, for reasons which shall become clear.

As we know, these men were not without willing, available women. Most had native wives, and they appear to have been able to obtain sexual access to moral tribal women in exchange for small gifts. These women, at this time, cannot be considered as prostituting themselves however. The Indian tribes did

not share the Christian moral rules imbibed by the old timers in their youth. The concept of prostitution was still largely unknown among the not yet degenerated upper Yukon natives; although perhaps the present-paying white men with their alien values, may have sometimes mistaken it for prostitution. Certainly the native women were rapidly debased and placed in the category of prostitute by the inflooding stampeders. They were not in the same sense exploited by the old timers, who also took advantage of their availability for sexual purposes.

Nor did the pre-Klondike dance hall girls seem to have been prostitutes in the old timer's society. Their role will be clarified; however, to return to the several professional prostitutes, May, "an old nigger wench" as Bender dubbed her (1967:90), seems to have been the only woman deliberately badly treated by the old timers. When writing on practical joking earlier, we mentioned a malicious joke played against May and the pompous judge. May roused the ire of the old timers through refusing to accept a trial by miners' open meeting to settle a dispute in which she was involved. She had demanded a trial by jury instead; however, as the old timers also composed the jury she demanded, they rendered a blatantly unfair judgement against her, also assigning her the court costs. When she refused to pay these, they proposed to sell her cabin, "and then go into her house and spend it all with her," (Bender, 1967: 90) which suggests that May lived alone, rather than in an organized house of prostitution. She was, through the men's harassment, eventually driven out, leaving camp with her dog-team and a driver. "She never came back to Circle" Bender reported (ibid). Obviously, if prostitutes were required in the society, and in short supply, this woman would not have been driven out.

Although the American men "brought their prejudices with them" according to Berton, the poor treatment May received does not seem to be based on her being negro, or on her occupation as prostitute. Another prostitute, "Black

Kitty" received quite different and probably more typical treatment from the men.

In 1896, again in Circle City, a miners' court was held on the complaint of a man that his town building lot had been 'jumped'. The 'jumper' turned out to be "Black Kitty", and the complainant (who had not realized who had jumped his claim) then pleaded that "I don't think we ought to be too hard in this case. ...She's a woman, even if she is black and a fighter, and she's alone and working for a living." The miners agreed, Hunt remarked (1974:23).

Kitty, too, apparently lived alone. Dutch Kate came in as a lone woman -- the impression is that the bawdy house form of this occupation did not exist, the women were independent, working for themselves. As Kitty took over a building lot in town, there was apparently no segregation by district.

The bawdy house in connection with the saloon, as known in the old American West (with a public bar downstairs and the women's bedrooms conveniently upstairs) was also missing. In Forty Mile and Circle City, two storey buildings were largely unknown, the saloons were very small. One Circle City dance hall-saloon is described by DeWindt as being a "long low apartment festooned with American, German and Swedish flags." (1898:161). This building was simply the saloon. The presence of women available for dancing partners lent it the label "dance hall", but it was not a separate building maintained for the special purpose of dancing.

In 1895, George Snow built a theatre in Circle City to house the theatrical performances (Davis, 1967:76). It may be that he incorporated a bar room into this building, combining the saloon and the theatre. Dancing after the performance took place in the saloon.

Outsider DeWindt was not taken with the charms of Circle City -- he saw rude, squat huts dripping rain, while a citizen returning from a harsh journey saw the lights shining forth through uncurtained windows "promising warmth,

food and rest" (Walden, 1928:44). DeWindt took a negative view also of the dance hall. He mentioned going to one, where the orchestra of violin and guitar was "almost drowned out by the noisy crowd at the Bar". It was past midnight, but "a number of mud-stained men and painted women (were) slowly circling to the strains of the Donau-Wellen." (1898:161). There were about sixty guests and twenty dogs in the place, he observed (ibid).

We can expect that the sixty guests were not evenly divided between the sexes, the population was largely male and the saloons the only gathering place. Before and also during the Klondike rush some of the dance hall girls were native, whether they were degraded women, prostitutes, is impossible to assess due to lack of evidence, hence it is the handful of white dance hall girls with whom we are concerned.

THE DANCE HALL GIRLS

Old timer saloons, we have already established, were not primarily drinking, but social centers. Dancing was but one more of the activities that went on in these social centers.

In 1896, the old timers were very much in control of Circle City through an adaption of the original open democratic miners' meeting. We know their values. It is hardly necessary to reiterate that all men were egalitarian, staying equal in material possessions was highly important, indeed a man accumulating personal material possessions would lose status, as all things must be shared. It was important to maintain a norm of peace and cooperation. We will come back to this.

In Circle, Haskell maintained

"A dance hall...at this time was not such a den of wickedness as is generally supposed by those who read newspaper accounts of life in these far-off mining camps. In 1896 the Alaska places had not become sufficiently attractive to draw thither in large

numbers the professional rough element. It is rather one of the institutions of society as it must exist here, among hard-working miners, like the blacksmith shop...or the school house. ...It is a community of men, rough in aspect, but not wholly vicious. After long sessions of hard work...even the rasping music of the dance hall sounds sweet. The rough miner...knows that he is in a society which cares nothing about the cut of his clothes and is not critical of the grace of his step. A touch of feminine life, even if not all the fastidious or strictly moral might desire, comes like a warm breath from the southern latitude over the frozen hills. ... Of course the miners have to pay well for it. ..." (1897:163-64).

Haskell, having been unusually frank, then, as all informants did, shied away from the subject, going on to speak of the price of a dance, \$1 in gold dust. "The young lady gets one quarter of it and the house which takes the rest, furnishes the pair a drink if they call for it." (ibid). This last remark is a variation on the usual report of an automatic drink (sounding almost compulsory) at the end of each dance.

"The miner need not pull off his big boots...or even take his hat off, and he can swing his partner with all the gusto of which he is capable. ...If he doesn't take to dancing he can seek relaxation at the faro table. ...Under such conditions and leading a life...which is full of hardships, he seeks amusement when the chance offers... ." (ibid:165).

In 1895, George Snow, an old timer and former professional actor, imported from California a theatrical company of six women and five men, who played everything from Shakespeare to the broadest of farces (Henderson, 1898: 271). These six white women plus some native women probably made up the entire dance hall personnel of the time. As 'queens' of the situation, one imagines that whatever their personal moral standards, they would not tolerate (nor would the men expose them to) the presence of the few professional time-worn prostitutes. These actresses, I believe, were not prostitutes in the sense of being in the business of exchanging sexual intercourse for money (gold); although here again the picture is much blurred through recorders confusing the dance hall as an institution, as it was in old timer society and as it became overnight with the flood of thousands of stampedeers, outsiders to old timer

society.

This imported Californian acting troupe moved, at the time of the Klondike rush, along with almost 100 percent of Circle's inhabitants, to Dawson. Haynes, the N.W.M.P. staff sergeant, mentioned the group as being "a troupe of dance hall girls: whose "entertainment was really excellent, especially the dancing of one or two of the girls." (1898:89). We note the transformation of this acting group of five men and six women to "dance hall girls" in Hayne's mind, although he recorded that there was also drama put on "with elaborate scenery". Haynes wrote of one stage setting as depicting a complete drawing room including Chippendale chairs (ibid). One suspects that performing most dramas required the presence of the male members of the company also.

In 1897 Dawson there was a theatre, or a building used as a theatre, for "after the performance" Haynes remarked, "audience and performers would adjourn to the nearest saloon and "make things a bit lively". (1898:89). Staff-Sergeant Haynes "never saw anything the least bit objectionable take place," which "says a good deal for the general 'tone' of the pioneers...and certainly contrasts with other mining camps," he felt (ibid).

It surely says something about the behaviour of the actresses, or dance hall girls as Haynes called them also. The women of this theatrical troupe did not appear to be prostitutes hiding behind the familiar euphemism of the era, "actress", although all actresses of that period were routinely somewhat suspect. Acting was not considered a suitable career for a 'decent' woman. Whatever their morality back in the U.S.A., however, they now found themselves as white women among the old timers, very exceptional and consequently highly valued people -- "admired like some rare exhibit" as a discerning cheechako later put it (Austin, 1968:165). They probably were to most men of this early Yukon society, as Henry Davis found them, "irresistible". "The squaws don't look so good now" in comparison, Davis remarked (1967:76). (Later when many

fresher, younger, women appeared in booming Dawson these early entertainers in turn lost a good deal of their appeal). (ibid:80).

Taking it that, as some sociologists suggest, prostitution is usually an occupation followed for profit, or through circumstance, and not for joy (Henriques, 1968:311; Winn, 1974:12) these women in the situation probably found that they did not need to prostitute themselves, to offer sexual intercourse in exchange for gold. It was simply not necessary. The men had sexual access to willing native women, they were however, Haskell suggested, hungry for contact with women of their own kind, that is, white American women.

It would appear that in old timer society, the role of these few white women, the actresses who also acted as dance hall hostesses, was closer to that of the geisha than to prostitute. They were, as geisha are, singers, dancers and hired entertainers of men. Their presence added a little tawdry glamour and sparkle to the drab surroundings -- in Haskell's phrase, "a touch of feminine life. ...like a warm breath...over the frozen hills" -- a touch of home.

One would be naive to suggest that the dance hall women were chaste, or that their main satisfaction was in accepting the admiration of these lonely men. They were "gold diggers" also, but in the modern slang sense of the term. They were there to make a profit, and the old timers were generous with their gold. There was a "ball" given nightly at some dance hall-saloons. These relatively sophisticated women would not find it difficult to separate the men from their gold. Davis remarked of dance hall women who came later to Dawson, in response to the Klondike rush, "I just couldn't say no to those fresh Cheechako dance hall girls...(they) were very charming, pretty and fast workers. I was sure easy picking for them." (1967:79-80). Until they came, Davis had found the Circle City "dance hall girls...irresistible." It seems likely that any actress who wished to "gold dig" would find it easy in

return for a smile, a compliment, "a little kiss". One sourdough wrote in 1901 that he found it incomprehensible that a miner would willingly part with \$20 in return for "one little kiss from a show girl," (Hunt, 1974:217) but apparently they did, and I believe felt they had received full value.

Would there be sexual encounters or liaisons between old timers and these women? We cannot tell, there is no sure evidence other than Haskell's remark into which one can reach much -- perhaps more than was actually implied. If there were, one suspects that these would be on a personal basis and not flaunted. There was, as we know, but a few, it seems six of these highly desirable white women. There were, by 1896, close to a thousand men in Circle City alone, and as we have pointed out, it was necessary to the society that men be equal in all ways. To be entirely practical, there was no way the men could share these few "rare jewels" sexually without the chosen parties gaining an enormous amount of prestige not available to all, and so creating a division, a jealousy among the "brothers".

It would seem that perhaps having these women to dance with, to talk to, even to look at, might be the safest way to share their charms without causing disruption within the society. One doubts if this notion can ever be proven.

In old timer society, there did not seem to be a place for the prostitute; there was for the dance hall girl, but even she was a late import. In their earlier days, there were simply available (native) women and native wives. It is also indicative of the tone of the society that under whatever terms or circumstances women were available for sexual purposes, there seems to have been no lewdness and little degradation to the encounter. Even native women were in short supply, as the tribes were small and scattered, thus women in general, and white women particularly, were too rare to be scorned or not valued. If they wished to take advantage of their position, the dance hall girls were in a position to exploit rather than to be exploited. To what ex-

tent they took advantage of this was probably an individual choice.

THE INDIAN WOMEN

The sexually available women were almost entirely native women. The traveling prospectors and the semi-nomadic Indians met frequently while moving up and down the Yukon River and its branches, and there was often a mingling or visiting for various purposes, including that of the white men obtaining sexual access to willing women. These sexual encounters were only hinted at in the sources used, one is forced to rely on very small clues in order to form any impression of this type of exchange.

Davis, for example, during one of the long summer rambling-prospecting trips into hitherto unexplored territory in 1889, told of their boat hitting some rocks. The men had to spend three days near an Indian camp repairing it. "We had a good time at the village while waiting" remarked Davis (1967:67). Davis was usually more specific. If he had been referring to feasting or dancing or gambling he probably would have said so. I take it (perhaps mistakenly) that he meant sexually.

When the old timers' settlements grew, the trading companies opened small trading stores, and the Indian bands came to these posts to trade their furs for goods, stayed a few days, and left again. (They too, as we know, were semi-nomadic hunting peoples.) This may be the basis for Haynes' remark that what female society the miners had "is of purely migratory, come-one-day-gone-the-next character." (1897:65).

In probably unconsciously revealing terms, Davis recorded a somewhat earlier experience he had had due to a blizzard coming on during a November hunt which he and a comrade had undertaken. Looking for shelter, they came across an Indian 'dugout' (a partly underground shelter) in which two Indian

families were sheltering from the blizzard. They all shared the shelter for several days, until the storm abated, sharing the food. "Folger was the cook and we ate white fish all the time and ate together with the Indians," he recorded (1967:62).

"One young squaw sat next to me and she was blind. She asked about me in Indian and when they told her I was a white man, she felt me all over my face and hair talking all the time. ...She was about sixteen years old and had pretty near white skin. I guess a Russian had been around her mother." (ibid).

Davis and his partner left when the storm was over. When they got back to Forty Mile, Davis "hurried over to ask Manook (an Indian who often acted as guide to the early men) about the blind squaw." Both men planned to go back in a few days, taking her a present of a silk handkerchief each, but in this case the Indians apparently concealed the girl. "There was bad medicine someplace for that girl" Davis concluded, as he could not get any Indian to talk about her (1967:63).

The implication seems to be that this was unusual action on the part of the Indians; apparently the sexual favours of moral Indian women were usually available in return for presents, romantic courtship was not part of the Indian way. The white men seem to have been strongly attracted by the girl's action and near-white skin, as Davis mentioned her several times later. The men went to considerable trouble over a period of several weeks, to try to locate her, without success. As the girl was blind it is unlikely that either man thought he might obtain her for a wife or as a traveling companion.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RELIGION

The important area of religious belief has not yet been commented upon, principally because there is little pertaining to this area recorded by the old timers. There were a few brief references which attribute some of the old timers with having retained a simple faith. Pierce, in drawing his modal "Frontierman", remarked that, although "these men are not all members of the church...some are, Many of them remember their Creator, and return thanks to Him nightly on retiring, for His never-ceasing mercies." (1890:148).

In summing up his "Recollections" Davis remarked that, at the time of his adding of this conclusion to his earlier journal records, (1931), only five or six of "the old boys" who came to the Yukon prior to 1886 were left alive, and that we "will all soon make our last trip over the last divide, and I thank God, for we all, no matter how we acted at times, believed in a Supreme Being." (1967:83). Davis claimed they all believed, which is somewhat different from being members of a church.

Most outsiders, like Bishop Bompas, the Anglican prelate for Selkirk (Yukon) district from 1891 to 1906, believed the old timers to be "indifferent to all things spiritual" (Code, 1908:281). Father Judge, a Jesuit missionary briefly in Forty Mile in 1896, before following the rush to Dawson, apparently shared that opinion. He wrote: "there are many...who call themselves Catholics yet practice nothing of what their holy faith requires of them, and a greater number have lost their faith entirely." (1907:163). Another clerical outsider-observer felt that "it is pathetic to witness the ignorance of these rugged gold-miners in matters of religion, and their utter indifference when one offers them substantial soul-food." (Devine, 1906:163).

What the old timers were indifferent to was organized religion and the missionaries' assumption of spiritual guidance; and though indifferent, they were not hostile towards either. As Service points out, it is characteristic of egalitarian societies to be strongly resistant to direction through authoritarian power of any kind. (1966:83).

The old timers were not antagonistic toward the clergymen on a personal basis. DeWindt mentioned "the hearty and affectionate welcome which Father Barnum received from one and all" at Circle City (1898:164); while Father Judge, whose "flock" he wrote was scattered over a hundred mile range at various creeks and camps, found that wherever he visited "all received me well, Protestants as well as Catholics." (1907:161). However, at Forty Mile in 1896, Father Judge said Mass every day, and had only "six or seven present each time, ...and six received Holy Communion." (1907:169). At this time there were several hundred men in the immediate vicinity.

Ogilvie also remarked on the old timers' religious condition, pointing out that among these men, "where religious observations or exercises are very little practised, religious sentiments and prejudices soon become dulled," (1913:295) -- and we note that he mentioned that religious prejudices (as well as observations) lost their intensity.

The old timers did not look on themselves as being Protestants and Catholics: partnership group make-up reveals no such distinctions, nor could the society risk such division. Davis, in his informal way, illustrated this when he remarked that when he and his partner were employed on the riverboat, his partner, a man named Burke, quit when they reached Holy Cross (Catholic) Mission, in favour of a winter job at the mission. "Burke is Irish and the Mission has lots of potatoes. I think that is why he stayed there," observed Davis (1967:69). Apparently the Catholic Burke did not impress his Protestant partner as a devoutly religious man, staying at the mission because of his faith.

Before the Klondike rush the missionaries tended to concentrate their whole efforts on converting the native Indians, however some of them, in the early days, did attempt to have some contact with the prospectors. One suspects that the old timers' refusal of the clergymen's spiritual leadership helped turn the theologians to greener pastures: Bompas among the Indians, and Judge among the cheechako stampeders.

Bompas did assign a missionary to work among the miners at Forty Mile in 1896, "visiting the creeks where they worked and their cabins in town, holding services and endeavouring to win them to Christ." (ibid:281). This man held services at Forty Mile in the spring of 1896, quite soon after that he went to Dawson in response to the great gold rush. He was not mentioned in the old timers' records, however few clergymen are. They had little impact on the old timers' lives, although some of the churchmen were on fairly friendly terms with the old timers. One, a Reverend Chapman, "a fine fiddler", regularly played at the miners' "big dances" (Davis, 1967:61). Chapman was in closer contact with the old timers than any other churchman, but not as spiritual leader. He was enjoyed not only for his fiddling, but he also was "sure...a good talker." (ibid:55).

The missionaries were a source of winter employment for a few men each winter, hiring them for cutting logs, whipsawing lumber, building mission buildings and so on, but they were not close to the miners, being outsiders to the hunting society in so many ways. It was their being part of a priestly hierarchy which was not accepted by the egalitarian society, and their assumption of (spiritual) leadership which made the gulf unbridgable, although one must acknowledge that these early churchmen were forced to make a choice as to what amount of work they could accomplish. They were always in charge of enormous territories, and very short-handed. (For example, Bishop Bompas had only two men to administer to the religious needs of all peoples up the entire length of

the Yukon River.) (Cody, 1908:271).

Anthropological research suggests that the basic form of religious life which involves individualistic beliefs and rites, is characteristic of the most basic form of human society, the hunting band. Each individual decides his own beliefs, according to his needs and interpretations. Each man is his own religious specialist, however not even the hunters are seen as completely individualistic. "Every known society has at least the shamanistic level of religious specialization." (Harris, 1971:538).

The old timers' society however did not recognize any shamans, either those the organized religions offered (the missionaries), nor were any produced by the developing society. They did not, as we know, view themselves as being either Catholics or Protestants, perhaps many in the beginning did not think of themselves as Christians.

They were individualistic in the sense of not being instructed by their society in what to believe, or indeed in whether to believe in any form of religion at all. These old timers however, each and every one of them, shared two significant psychological experiences which would, I suggest, lead to their rapid, necessary and enthusiastic adoption of the values, beliefs and life style of the primitive hunters.

The first, the experience which made this adaption both rapid and necessary, was the Yukon experience. The hunters' pattern of reciprocal exchange and generosity -- in Washburn's and Lancaster's phrase - of "sharing and human caring" for every other man's welfare and well-being was a fundamental ecologically imposed imperative of life in the primeval frozen land. There seemed no other way for men to survive under such conditions. The native Indians, and further north, the Inuit, both hunting types of society, had come to the same basic solution.

Further, the Yukon is clearly a land in which a human being is aware of

his vulnerability. Turnbull, writing of an African band society, the Mbuti Pygmies, who live in a bountiful Congo forest where food is always lavishly at hand, feels that "the one really strong cohesive factor is the forest itself." It is the only constant in their life, the composition of the band is always changing, but there is a feeling of loyalty towards the land, "a clear idea of the generosity...the bounty and benevolence of the forest" which unites them. (1968:156).

The old timers were also held together by an awareness of their land -- but as at once (usually) bountiful -- and always menacing. Pierce one day climbed a mountain alone, for the classical reason, "because it was there." The view from the top was awe-inspiring, but "nothing breaks the stillness of this vast territory: ...I cannot describe the feeling it creates -- one of extreme loneliness in one who witnesses it," wrote Pierce (1890:122).

Another old timer, in conversation with Mrs. Henderson, told her "It's a dreadful country to think in, the solitudes are awful. We all know why the Russians banish their convicts to Siberia." (1898:170). The most competent and experienced old timer must have felt aware of his vulnerability. Marshall mentions awareness of loneliness as something that keeps !Kung Bushmen bands together, remarking that the long days in the veld would be unsupportable for a person alone. (1960:347).

Harris suggests that the Eskimo (Inuit) who are born to the life and who have pursued a hunting band life for numerous generations in a similar environment, felt that it was "not enough to be well equipped" with fur parkas, harpoons, powerful compound bows, and so on: "one had to be equipped to handle unseen spirits and forces which lurked in all parts of nature" and which "could reduce the greatest hunter to a starving wretch." (1971:539). Part of the Inuit's equipment was his hunting song - a combination of chant, prayer, and magic formula "which he would sing under his breath as he prepared himself for

the day's activities. Around his neck he wore a little bag of amulets, "each corresponding to some Spirit Helper with whom he maintained a special relationship," and who protected him and assured him of hunting success (ibid). Surely if the Inuit felt vulnerable enough in similar circumstances to need supernatural help, it is reasonable to postulate that so did the old timers who were new to the land, less well-adapted, and hence much more vulnerable.

Marvin Harris has pointed out that

"The existence of individualistic beliefs and ritual should not be mistaken for unrestricted heterodoxy (varieties of beliefs). While it often appears to the individual that his beliefs are a product of a unique psychic experience, it is apparent in cross-cultural perspective that his thoughts and behavior have been severely constrained by the particular patterns of response characteristic of his sociocultural milieu." (1971:540).

The second significant shared experience was, that these men, whether raised (individually) in religious homes or not, had been reared in the same sociocultural milieu, that is, in a Christian country, in an era when Christian faith and Christian training was strong. Culture, "a society's repertory of behavioral, cognitive and emotional patterns, is learned both consciously and unconsciously; the 'older generations induce younger generations to adopt the group's repertory as their own.'" (Harris, 1971:137).

Despite their overt rejection of orthodoxy, the Christian ideals and values were deep in their consciences. These were the men who drew up a resolution in a miners' meeting at Circle City in 1896 and sent it in written form to the miners at the newly discovered rich Klondike claims, requesting that they, the Klondike claim holders, as men who felt "a fear of God and love of their fellowman" should share the new find by reducing the size of their staked claims, and so in the old way, make room for all. (Ogilvie, 1913: 207-208). These were the men who, in Circle City in 1894 or thereabouts, formed a protective fraternal order, the Yukon Order of Pioneers, taking as their motto the basic Christian ethic to "Do unto others as you would be done

by," emblazoning it across a pin of Yukon gold symbolizing the 'Golden Rule' in the form of a carpenter's ruler (Berton, 1963:32). Indeed, old timer Walden suggested that if a tourist had come to Circle, he "would have said life here was hard and tough, with all the finer things left out, but in reality life had simply narrowed down to the Golden Rule." (1928:47).

It would be a mistake to suggest that the Christian beliefs of the old timers led to their becoming a hunting society. Rather, the ecological imperative led to their formation into a society of the most simple kind, a hunting band, and the code of the hunters ("sharing and human caring") coinciding with the Christian principle revitalized their half forgotten but deeply engrained Christian values.

Anthropologists Lee and DeVore point out that "Cultural man has been on earth for some 2,000,000 years; for 99 percent of this period he has lived as a hunter-gatherer." (1968:3). Long before the advent of Christianity the Hunter had recognized that in order to survive in a difficult world men must do unto other as they would have others do unto them: not through altruism, but as a matter of ultimate self-interest. Hunters were living by 'The Golden Rule' before it was articulated, but it was as a way of life, not as a symbol of what ought to be. We can see, I believe, the old timers' Christianity (that of modern Western man - i.e. a separate morality), undergoing conversion to the Hunters' code -- i.e. a way of life, intertwined, interwoven, expressed and experienced in every important aspect of their Yukon life. They were not aware that they were living as a hunting society. They were, however, aware that they were living as true and practicing Christians. Their Christian beliefs and values, still retained -- at first at a half conscious level perhaps -- coinciding and reinforcing, and being reinforced by the Hunters' creed made adaption to the necessary way of life not only possible, but deeply rewarding and, I believe, helps explain the rapidity with which these men made the

adaptation.

Theorists point out that enculturation cannot be invoked as an explanatory principle, as a cultural pattern may change with evolution of the society. "To say that a pattern has been encultured...is to say that there existed a functional situation appropriate for replication rather than for evolution." (Harris, 1971:141). In this particular case their Christian enculturation can be considered a very important aspect of the readaptation of these old timers to hunting society. Under the dire environmental stress of a brutal primeval land men had no choice but to become their brothers' keeper. The functional situation was not merely appropriate for replication but enforced and reinforced it.

According to Elman Service, a society's ideology, its conceptions and beliefs about things, from a long range evolutionary point of view "are limited by, and in some respects determined by, characteristics of the technology, economy, social system and even the habitat." (1966:63). An ideology makes two kinds of explanatory statements, the Existential, having to do with physical objects, a utilitarian conception of "what is thought to be actually 'out there' and how to deal with it," (the environment is the example Service suggests); and the Normative, which "explains events in terms of such qualities as good and bad, or what ought to be, what is desirable." This category of ideas functions most usually in the context of social relations, having to do with proper behaviour, codes of etiquette, ethics, morals and the like, Service asserts (1966:64).

All societies have both aspects, he continues, but they may co-exist in very different proportions. The contrast between isolated bands and modern civilization in this is "particularly striking" in that in the small-scale societies normative ideology looms large and the existential is very limited, whereas the converse is true of modern Western societies.

In our type of society, morality is "preached...in a supernatural context," etiquette on the other hand is entirely different from morality. In band society, religious ideology "has no moral or ethical content whatever,... morality is taught within the family, ...as is etiquette,"(Service, 1966:71) and it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate etiquette from morality. Not only these two, but ethics, morality, etiquette, indeed all rules about conduct are interwoven and blend into each other.

Normative ideology Service defines as being

"a society's cultural device for transforming, sublimating, or otherwise constraining individual propensities and desires into forms of behavior that serve wider social ends. It exists because of the innumerable ways in which an individual's desires are in conflict with his society. ...Often the rules are implicit only...and may be so covertly punished in the breach that nobody, literally knows about it." (1966:71).

This is a way of referring to "that quintessentially human characteristic conscience," writes Service (ibid). It is not necessary to point out that if the human conscience covertly punishes the rule breaker, it also rewards the rule keeper; such punishment and reward are a common human experience.

Old timer Pierce realized such reward as part of his life under the society's code. Pierce, who left Alaska broken in health from the hardships of the old timer life, testified that

"Through all those long years there was an overruling Providence; an ever helping hand, whose presence was never wanting; who through the medium of our conscience, pointed out to us the path of duty. ...Who is it that having done a good act, an act of kindness or charity, that does not feel happier when he reflects on it?"

(1890:290, my emphasis).

The hypothesis put forward in this paper is that the old timers were modern men, who adapted under the imperative of extreme environmental pressure in a land which allowed no alternatives, to a hunting band society. As modern men, they, deeply encultured to the Christian faith, were accustomed to a split between the (Christian) ideals and the worldly reality. "Love, generosity,

mutual aid, cooperation, all are appropriate...(even) necessary, to the functioning of small face-to-face groups," Service indicates. These are preached as morality in our society, although love and generosity are "not always appropriate attitudes to take in the market economy, the political power struggle" and so on, he feels (1966:71-72). These sentiments and values are not preached and pushed in band society because they do not need to be, according to Service. "There is no larger impersonal context of behavior where it is difficult to practice them."

In the old timers' unique hunting type society the Existential might be considered as giving rise to the Hunters' code. The Normative was based on the Christian faith. Both embody the same morality. What the old timers' felt they ought to do, was what they had to do. There was no gap between the ideal and the reality of conduct, between the model and the modal.

A missionary-outsider, Father Devine, recorded that a Yukoner, a miner with many years of experience "brought home to me the fact that the mining world is a little world in itself, with its own language, its own laws and customs, a world that has attractions undreamt of by an outsider." (1906:175). Old timer Moore, musing over his "long weary trip" into the interior of the Yukon, wondered about "the unaccountable fascination (of the life)...which I do not quite understand." (1968:111).

One does not usually label primitive hunters altruistic in living the life to which they were born, the typical band society life; however, the old timers were modern men, Americans. The many real satisfactions of the Yukon life were largely things of the spirit -- the feeling of belonging, of brotherhood, the experience of being of equal status to every other man, of being judged on one's intrinsic worth as a human being, of gaining both the respect of others, and self-respect. These were things of which these modern men, children of an industrializing society in which the rewards were more material

than spiritual, would be more conscious than would the primitive hunters who knew no other life style. It was fundamentally ecological self-interest which forced the way of the hunter upon them. Although it was an entirely artificial division one might suggest that through living by the Hunters' Code they knew that they earned the respect of their comrades. It was a personal awareness of having achieved the Christian principles which was the basis of their feelings of self-respect.

This was the "unaccountable fascination", and the attraction of their most difficult chosen life. The reward was not gold, but satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS

It was mentioned in the introduction to the thesis, that the major shortcoming of the reconstruction method is that there is no way of testing or re-checking hypotheses other than the test of internal consistency. In this case however, although the society and the men are gone, we have both evidence from members of the society and impressions of many outsiders who observed them. Many of these outsiders lived for periods of a few months to several years among the old timers.

The records left by the two differing cultural groups lend strength of verification to assertions made by either. Each unknowingly acts as a check on the other's information. Through this system of checks, this impressionistic study (based on limited and fragmentary historical survivals) carries more anthropological weight than it might otherwise. It is not a holistic description, and so does not lend itself to explanatory analysis or permanent conclusions. It is useful as support for points regarding hunting societies already speculated on, and for pointing directions worthy of further investigation.

Most intriguingly, this study yields a rare anthropological experience. We catch glimpses of a hunting society in the process of formation. We see it react to rapid social change caused primarily through the sudden influx of outsiders to their culture, making many societal adaptations, particularly in the judicial area. This is an experience which anthropologists seldom encounter.

The history of this small short-lived society is one of an accelerated process of societal evolution, as the tiny group strives to cope with the rapidly increasing population, which threatened to (and finally did) engulf it. One might liken this study to that type of speeded up motion pictures

biologists produce, of a flower bud unfolding, blooming and dying, all in one continuous motion; however, much is missing from our picture. Ours is more of a strobe-light impression of one society undergoing extremely rapid social change. While some moments and some aspects of the society are not seen (obscured in the dark interval between flashes), the flashes are very vivid and highly illuminating. We do get a speeded up, strongly impressionistic picture of a new society in its formative stages and undergoing accelerated social change.

At the 1966 symposium on Man the Hunter, the assembled anthropologists felt (not unusually) that they had raised more questions regarding hunter-gatherers than they had answered.

"At present we have a very inadequate understanding of the way in which authority is exercised in the domestic grouping and the wider residential grouping of hunters and gatherers. ...we should also have a fresh and detailed look at the nature of the various bonds that hold people together.... What transactions occur between a man and the other people in his camp, ...? To what extent do cooperation and coordination occur in subsistence activities? Do people combine to assert exclusive rights over natural resources?" (Washburn, 1966:345).

These simple ethnographical questions have profound implications, Washburn asserts.

As it is generally agreed that hunting societies the world over bear strong resemblances to each other, our findings regarding the old timer-hunters afford a tentative answer to some of these questions. We have, for example, if not a complete understanding, certainly a strong impression of the way in which authority is exercised in one hunting society, that of the old timers of the Yukon.

The anthropologists felt that "when the means of production come to depend upon the exclusive control of resources and facilities, then the loose non-corporate nature of the small-scale society cannot be maintained," hence

a major trend in human affairs

"has been the transformations of social relations as advanced technologies and formal institutions have come to play a more and more dominant role in the human adaptation. The institutions of property, of clan organization, of government, and of the state did not spring full-blown in a divine creation." (Lee and DeVore, 1968:12).

The study of hunting societies may help us to understand how these things began, Lee points out.

In our study it was not technological advancement but rapid population growth which forced non-corporate society to move towards institutionalizing authority. We saw the Y.O.O.P. assume judicial power, under the still informal but recognized leadership of McQuesten in Circle City, and Mayo at Ramparts. We saw the emergence of a vigilante group of enforcers of sanctions, when the force of public opinion no longer held.

The study lends weight to many viewpoints that were aired at the symposium. We see that in the old timers' society, the nuclear family is not structurally the irreducible social unit, as Julian Steward maintains (1966:322), nor is intermarriage the cementing bond as is often postulated. The old timers' society as such was fully formed and functioning well before women as permanent partners came into the area.

Lee suspects that "reciprocal access to...resources would rank as equal in importance with exchange of spouses as a means of communication between groups," and that it "is likely that food may antedate women as the original medium of exchange" as Levi-Strauss suggested in 1949 (1968:12). This is the case in old timer society.

June Helm points to the fact that the group structure of diverse peoples, such as the Dogrib Indians of the northwestern Canadian subarctic and the !Kung Bushmen of the harsh, dry African Kalahari desert show striking similarities despite widely differing social ideologies (1966:125); which leads Lee

to speculate that perhaps small-scale societies may arrive independently at similar solutions to similar demographic and ecological problems, however "without the opportunity of observing behavior, ...such important point would be impossible to establish." (1966:6).

Our study indicates that at least where life is harsh and man is down to the basics of survival, there may be one very basic solution (sharing and human caring for one another), despite differing social ideologies

Steward finds Sahlins' notion of hunters as "the original affluent society" unrealistic (1966:325). We have the old timer-hunters' word for it -- they may not have appeared affluent to outsider-observers, but this is a value-judgement. Despite the chronic food shortage the old timers' viewed themselves as affluent. A society's affluence, it appears, does not depend entirely on a steady year-round abundance of food, but on a confidence that they can survive through their own efforts.

Hamburg views the hunting-gathering type of society as "representing a long period in human evolution" (1968:339). Lathrop argues that hunters are not necessarily representative of an earlier condition of man, but sometimes may be regressive, rather than primitive (1966:25). This is clearly the case in the old timers' society. These were not 'primitive' men. Further, our study indicates that rather than the hunting style being a period in human evolution, as Hamburg believes, it represents a way of life, a type of behavior, as Levi-Strauss stresses (1968:344).

Hamburg also assumes male aggression in the hunters; he wonders whether "we have carried over aggressive propensities that were highly adaptive in earlier environments." (1968:340). Turnbull, on the other hand, is "bothered by the assumption that hunters are aggressive," there is "almost total lack of aggression" in the two groups known to him (Bushmen and Hadza). Rather than being aggressive, Turnbull considers the hunters to be "very gentle people

who lead very hard lives." (1968:341). Although 'peaceful' rather than gentle may better describe the old timers, our study most clearly backs up Turnbull's rather than Hamburg's vision of hunting peoples.

"Does Hunting bring Happiness?" asked the gathered anthropologists; some seeing the Hunter as happy-go-lucky and carefree, others pointing out that they are hungry a lot of the time and that they really do not laugh a lot; some feeling that they are optimistic, others that they are fatalistic: whatever will be, will be (1968:89). The impression formed through our consideration of the personal records surviving these white northern hunters is that their cultural life style brought an optimism born of confidence and personal satisfaction gained through respect for self and brothers, rather than happiness.

FOOTNOTES

1. Elman R. Service, Primitive Social Organization, 2nd Ed., New York: Random House, 1971, p. 97.
When Service wrote this he was referring specifically to the patrilocal type of band. Later he withdrew the element of patrilocality.
See Lee and DeVore, Man the Hunter, p. 8.
2. G.E. and A. Theodorson, Modern Dictionary of Sociology, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1969, p. 398.
3. Richard Lee and I. DeVore, eds., Man the Hunter, New York: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968, p. 93.
Sahlins drew his information from Bouliere, in African Ecology and Human Evolution, F.C. Howell and F. Bourliere, eds., Chicago, 1964, p. 336.
4. Sahlins participated in the symposium but apparently did not present a paper. Where Sahlins is quoted, it is his remark made in discussion groups.
5. W.G. Kendrew and D. Kerr, The Climate of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1955, p. 176.

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