
SARAH SIMON

Fort McPherson, N.W.T.



A Pictorial Account of Family, Church,
and Community

By Sarah Simon

© Mrs. Sarah Simon
Not to be reproduced without
permission from Mrs. Simon

A Production of the Yukon
Native Languages Project

Published by the Council
for Yukon Indians and the
Government of Yukon

Preface photo of Mrs. Simon
by James Whyard

Whitehorse, Yukon
1982

Cover: Rev. and Mrs. James Simon
with daughter Susie and son Charlie,
circa 1947.

SARAH SIMON

Fort McPherson, N.W.T.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the people who have assisted us in assembling this booklet of pictures from the photo and slide collection of Mrs. Sarah Simon.

Many of the photos reproduced here were taken by Mrs. Simon herself. Most of them, however, were given as gifts or souvenirs to Mrs. Simon and her late husband, the Reverend James Simon. The photos and slides have been collected over many years. It is impossible to identify and acknowledge each individual contributor, but we wish to extend a collective "thank you" to all of them.

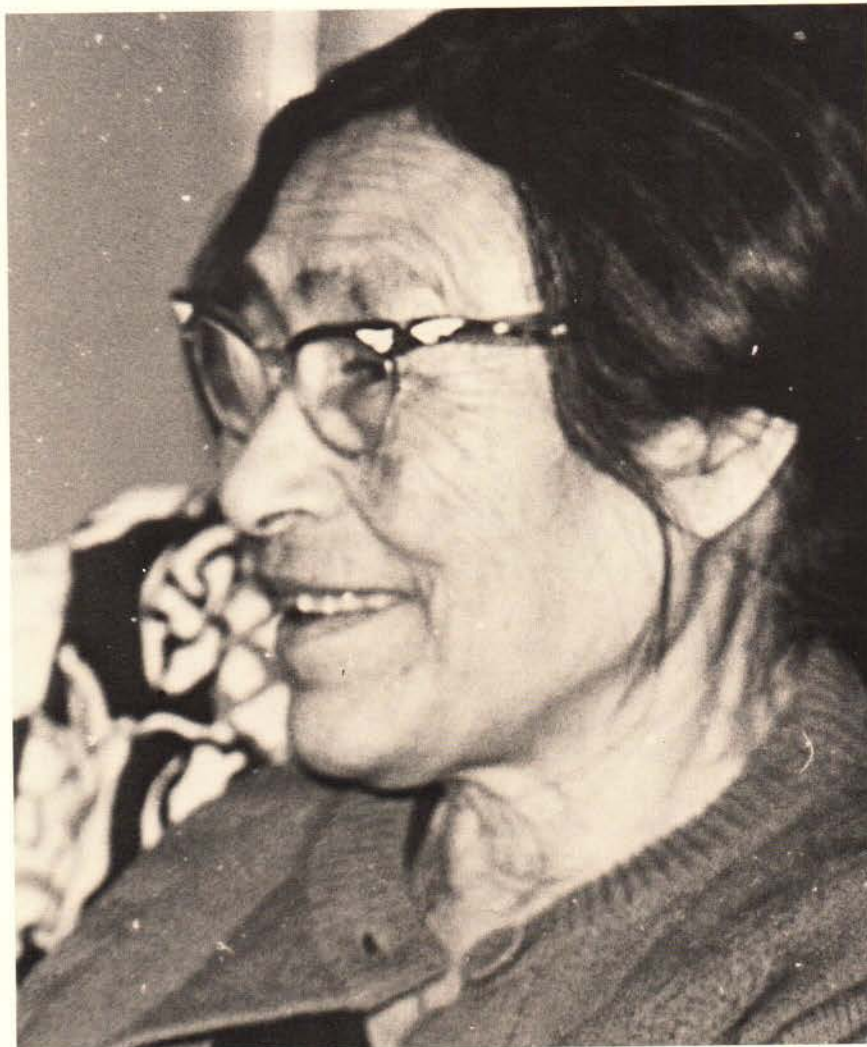
Special thanks go to Mr. and Mrs. Al Wright, who were very kind and helpful to us when Mrs. Simon was in Whitehorse; to Mr. and Mrs. James Whyard, who provided us with a good recent photo of Mrs. Simon; and to my colleagues Julie Cruikshank and Bill Ferguson for their assistance all along.

Mrs. Simon has worked on this booklet with tireless enthusiasm. In January she travelled from Fort McPherson to Whitehorse in very bad winter weather (even by Yukon standards). She spent several days patiently explaining the places and events depicted in the slides and photos, paying particular attention to names of individuals and their family ties. I have tried to record everything just as Mrs. Simon told me, and any errors in identifications or spellings are entirely my own.

The pictures printed here represent only a small portion of the total collection. Our selection is based on the three themes of Family, Church, and Community. This thematic division is somewhat arbitrary, but it does reflect the recurring subject matter of the entire collection.

It is our hope that this booklet will serve as an aid to the people of Fort McPherson, especially the young, in studying the history of their community. We also hope that they will follow up with more work of their own: there are many more photos and many more stories right in Fort McPherson. Finally, it is our hope that people from other areas will find this booklet of some use and interest as they do their own work on local studies.

John Ritter
Director
Yukon Native Language Centre
Whitehorse, Yukon



Preface by Sarah Simon

To all my people:

I hope you have many good memories when you see the pictures in this book.

I hope the older people will tell their children and grandchildren about what they will see here — our old friends, our relatives, our Chiefs, our town, and our way of life. We want our young Loucheux people to know about these things and be proud of their community.

James Simon and I worked together for our Church for a good many years. It makes me very happy to see these pictures from the different places we stayed —

Hay River, Whitehorse, Old Crow, and Aklavik. But of course our real home is always Fort McPherson.

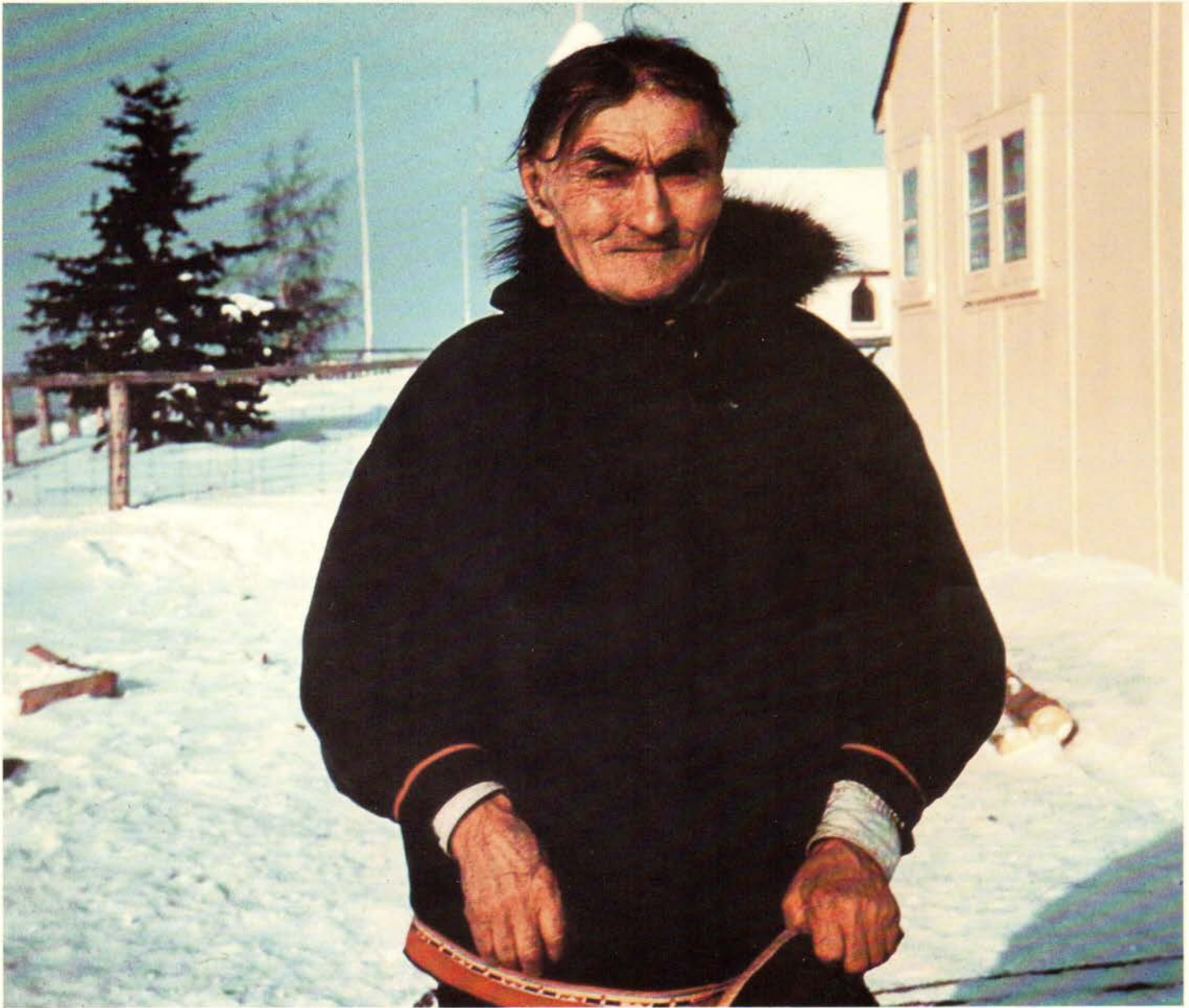
Some of the pictures in this book were taken many, many years ago. Some were taken not so long ago. Some of them are our own, and some were given to us by other people. I would like to thank them and all the others who helped us with this book. I hope everybody likes it.

Mahsi' choo.

Sarah Simon

THE FAMILY

3



This old man is Charlie Stewart when he is 83 — this is taken in 1956, and this is my daddy. He is the most happy man that ever lived. Lots of people remember him.

This picture is taken right beside the Mission House. Maybe the missionary gave him a cup of tea so he looks very happy.

He used to be a Special Constable for many, many years. He's the one that found the Lost Patrol with Sgt. Dempster. He was a Guide. And he made many police patrols by dog team, by boat, by canoe, like that.

He was a good interpreter, too. So I try to take after him, but I couldn't do it — and I am his daughter!

My father was a very good dancer. I think even now today, when they dance, like George Robert the other day told me that when he play the song for what we call duck dance, he remembers him. That is the last dance he played for him and he was very light on his feet. That is why everybody remembers him dancing. I don't think that anybody is as light as my father.



Sarah Simon and Maria Stai



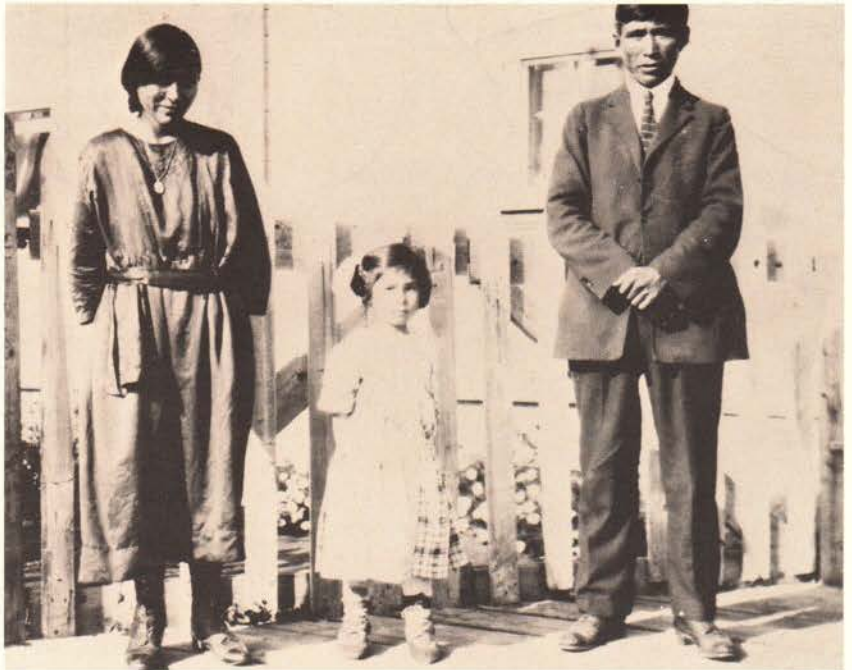
Kenneth and Annie Stewart



*Maria Stai with first
grandchild, Marlene
Snowshoe, 1952*



*Sarah Stewart (Simon) taken
when very young, standing
beside H. B. Co. Fur Press
in Ft. McPherson.*



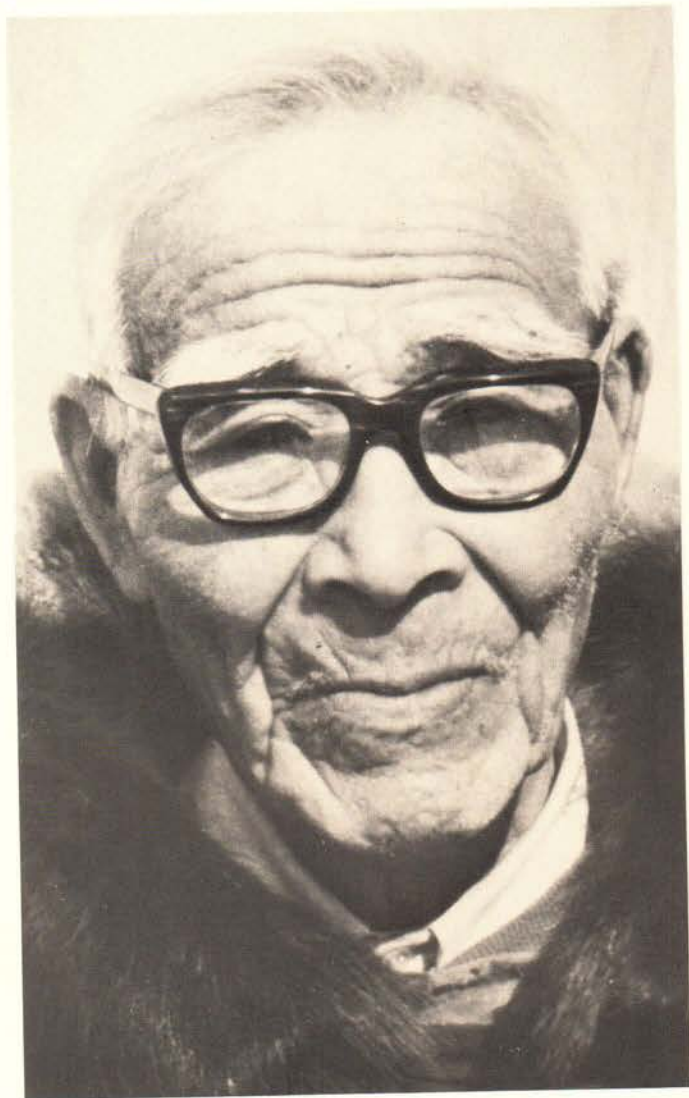
*James and Sarah Simon with little
daughter at Hay River.*



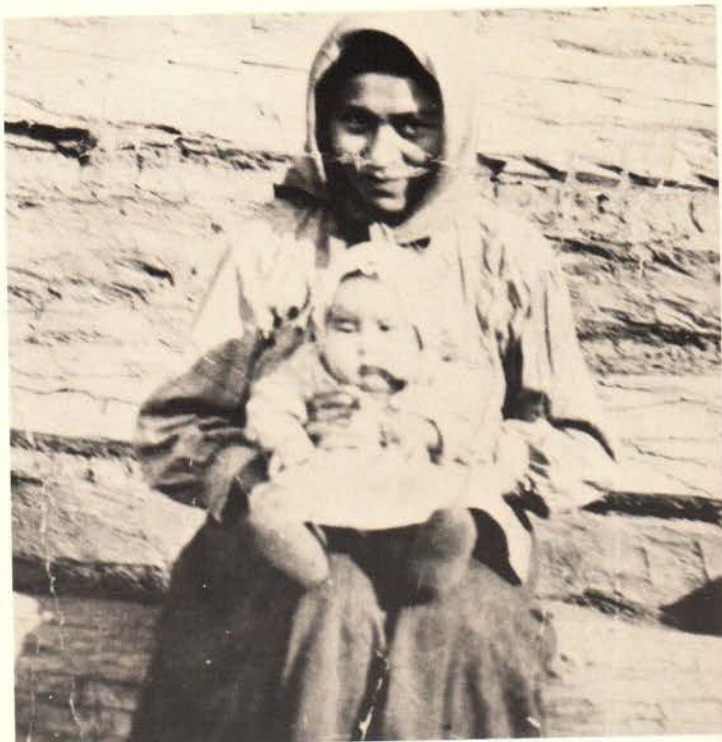
*James Simon with a school teacher,
taking fish from net at Hay River*



*Sarah Simon and
Chief Johnny Kay, 1977*



*Chief Johnny Kay
(Sarah Simon's mother's
brother) in 1977*



Sarah Simon with first child, 1921



*The Stewart Family. Left to right:
Annie Stewart, Sarah Stewart (Simon)
(15 years old), Kenneth Stewart holding
young George Greenland, Joseph
Greenland and Catherine Lazarus.*



Alex and Harriet Stewart



Sarah Simon and Lawrence Simon, 1956



James and Sarah Simon at home in Old Crow.



*John Simon
in Churchill,
Manitoba*



*Alfred Simon,
older brother of
Rev. James Simon.*



*Charlie Stewart
in 1958, father of
Sarah Simon.*



*Susie Husky and
Susie Simon.*



*John Simon being sworn in as
Justice of the Peace, 1969.*



*Catherine Stewart (Mrs. Simon's grandmother),
Bella Greenland with infant Frank, and Kennech Stewart.*



Sarah Simon.



*Sarah Simon holding
photo taken in 1918.*



*wedding picture of
Andrew and Marcha Stewart.*



*James and Sarah Simon
with daughter Susie at her
confirmation.*

THE CHURCH

11



The "New Church" in Ft. McPherson: St. Matthew's.



Dismantling the "Old Church".



Picture of old church, taken in 1963.

This is our old church. Many, many people got married in there and many, many babies been baptized in there. And we kept it so clean.

As far as I can remember back it was rebuilt twice in my time by the people, by the Indian people. In 1924 people decided to take it right down because it was getting too small for the congregation. They tore it right down and everybody goes out and cuts logs and brings the logs in by dog team, their own dog team, their own axe, everything. All the tools is their own and they have about two or three leaders — good men that can work with logs like the man by the name of Jim Greenland, he is the head for them, Abraham Francis, Peter Thompson. All these, they know how to build house. They cut logs and square logs and they built the church.

When summer came, the month of July the people went away fishing and the mens went too and put their nets in and fixed up all their fish camps ready. They all

came back. There is no such motor boat or canoe with kicker on it. There is just paddling. They came back up to town and they're working here for one week. They go home on Saturday, then the other bunch come up and their wives give them bannock and fish to eat and we send them fish.

They don't work for money, they just do it for their church. They rebuilt it and they worked there all summer long. The inside is not finished, but the first man that got married in the new church is John Robert and Rachael Robert. They got married inside that church, the first. I always remember them there.

And then later on in 1940 sometime a missionary was here, Mr. Dewdney, a good carpenter. He made all the chancel walls very modern and he fixed all inside so it was beautiful. And the baptistery, Peter Thompson donate the money for it.



Church procession in Aklavik: Walter McPherson, Bishop Donald Marsh, Rev. Ralph Gibson, Rev. Jim Edward Sittichinli, Joseph Vittrekwa ("John Doe").



Revs. James Simon and J. Holman at Aklavik Church.



Rev. and Mrs. James Simon, Paul Ben Stai, with Uukon Bishop and clergyman in Dawson.



Rev. James Simon at altar of Aklavik church, 1970.



Sarah Simon and Joanne McDonald displaying W.A. life memberships.



Rev. James Simon baptizing child, Old Crow, Yukon.



*Bishop H. Marsh
and Rev. James Simon,
Old Crow, Yukon.*



*Sarah Simon and young Paul Ben Stai
with Sunday school class in Old Crow.*



*Fort McPherson W.A., 1958. left to right:
Christie Thompson, Bella Ross, Mary Kay,
Sarah Dymeat, Julia Koe, Ellen Vitrekura,
Maggie Julius.*



*W.A. meeting to donate muskrat skins,
1957. left to right: Jane Charlie, Mary
Firth, Mary Heyando, Annie B. Roberts,
Sda Stewart, Sarah Simon, Rebecca
Modeste, Lucy Vaneltsi, Laura Thompson,
Edith Kay, Alfred Stshik, Sarah Francis.*



Ordination of Rev. James Simon at Christ Church Cathedral, Whitehorse, Yukon, October 18, 1959. Left to right: Sarah Simon, Rev. A. Privett, Rev. James Simon, Bishop Greenwood, Rev. H. Bullen.



Outdoor service conducted by Rev. James Simon and native catechists at Nitaiinlari, Eight-Mile, on Peel River.



Interior of Day River school church, 1928.



left to right: Rev. John Hopflin, Harriet Stewart, Lucy Rat, Bishop Henry Marsh.



Wedding, 1921. left to right: Rev. Chrisall, Rev. Edward Sittichinli, George Vittrekwa, Sarah Vittrekwa, Alex Stewart, John Francis, Effie Francis, Charlie Snowshoe, Christie Snowshoe, Peter Snowshoe.



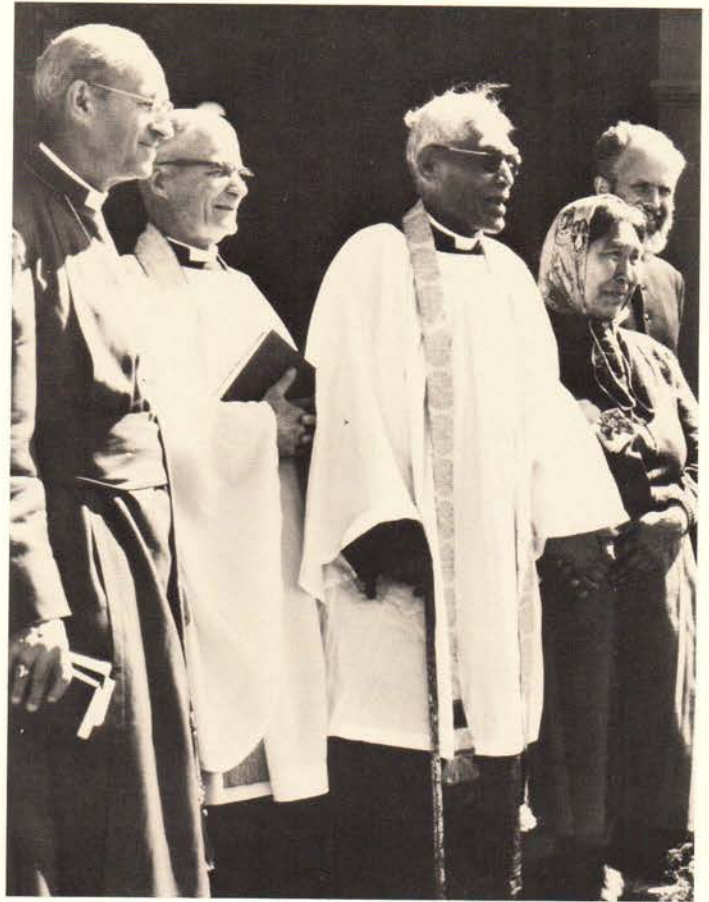
Old Crow, Yukon: Rev. and Mrs. Simon at Christmas party for the children.



left to right: Simon Diindzik, (catechist)
Christopher Colin, (catechist)
Rev. James Simon.



Confirmation. left to right:
Willie Firth, Clarence Firth,
Frederick Firth, Christie
Albert, unidentified girl.



Dawson City, Yukon: Rev. Richard Martin
with sister Charlotte Wehus and
clergymen.



John Francis and John Wilfred bearing coffin
of Laura Simon, deceased at the age of 14.
St. Matthew's, Ft. McPherson, 1935.

THE COMMUNITY



Old Caroline

This old woman is 95 years old when this picture was taken and she lives in that old tent by herself. Her name is Caroline. In Loucheux we call her Ts'igii Vahan.

In those days we have no welfare, no social worker here to look after her. The welfare teacher was here, but she hasn't got any authority to put her up somewhere, so she has got her own tent to live in. And this one day it was warm outside and she came out to pick up those little bits of wood, little chips around her doorway for her firewood. She feels around and picks them up in

her parka and takes it into her tent and we took her picture there. She is blind, she cannot see.

While she is living in this tent, one good-hearted family decided to look after her. They are not her relations or anything, but they just wanted to do a kindness towards her, I think. It is Ben Kunnizzi and Mary, his wife, they took her in and into their house and they kept her for about four or five years before she died.



Men serving at July 1st feast, 1952.



Men serving at outdoor feast.

Feast

And this is the community feast. You see there, part of that house showing, that is the Community Hall, and all the rest is just Native houses around. In those days, no traffic of any kind. All we have on our feet is moccasins made of moosehide. We don't even wear rubbers, I don't remember, just only on rainy days. That much of Fort McPherson's ground was good green grass, it is not dirty, so instead of in the house everybody sit outside on the grass.

And the mens served with whatever food is cooked, and you see that boy coming out with pot of something

— I think that's Johnny Charlie, and those mens are serving. In those days the womans are too embarrassed to get up and join the mens, whatever they do, so the womans are sitting down and the mens do the serving. Now today when there is feasts, still we hold our feasts for some occasions, but they just leave it to the womans, and the womans serve. Sometimes womans get lazy too and Jim Robert usually move the mens. You can see Peter Thompson sitting right down there and can pick out so many people that we remember.



Nellie Mitchell



Laura Thompson



Watching the Christmas Concert. Sarah Wittrekuwa, Richard Martin, James Martin, Bertha Drymeat, and Bella (Drymeat) Ross.



Children at Christmas Concert, 1950's.



Chief Johnny Charlie in 1968.



*Isaac Kunnigzi
and John Simon,
Churchill,
Manitoba, 1952.*



*hazarus sittichinli as
member of R.C.M.P. patrol.*



*Sarah Simon and
Mrs Hinds (school
Teacher), early 1950's.*



*Peter Alexie holding
Edwin Greenland.*



*Joe Malcolm, Liza Malcolm,
Persis Kendi. Eagle, Alaska.*



Rev. John Martin and family at Ross River, Yukon, circa 1933: left to right: Ekkie, Bella, John, Robert, with Renee and Betty in front.



Rev. James Simon and young friend, Whitehorse, 1960.



Aklavik, N.W.T. (left to right): Martha Stewart, Adeline Billips, Rev. Richard Martin, Charlotte Uehus.



Peter Thompson's children.



ladies at Ald Crow. left to right: Maria (Elias) Kendi, Julia McDonald, unidentified tourist, Old Annie Ch'iazee, young boy, Myra Kay, Martha John Charlie, Myra Delrin, Annie (Donald) Fredson, Eliza Jessie, Liza Steamboat (Zhi' Isoo).



The Dymeat family, Aklaivik, 1929. left to right: Ellen Roderick, Eunice, Rersis, Bella, Sarah holding Bertha, Roderick, Peter Dymeat.



Henry Firth and family.



Treaty Party, 1921. left to right: Simon Diindzik, John Marten, Ben Kunniizze, R.C.M.P., Old Robert, Johnny Kay, Fred Firth, Chief Julius, Mr. Conroy, old William Vittlekukli.



*Old William Smith and family:
William, Catherine, Julia, Rebecca.*



*Jeanne McDonald
and Sarah Simon.*



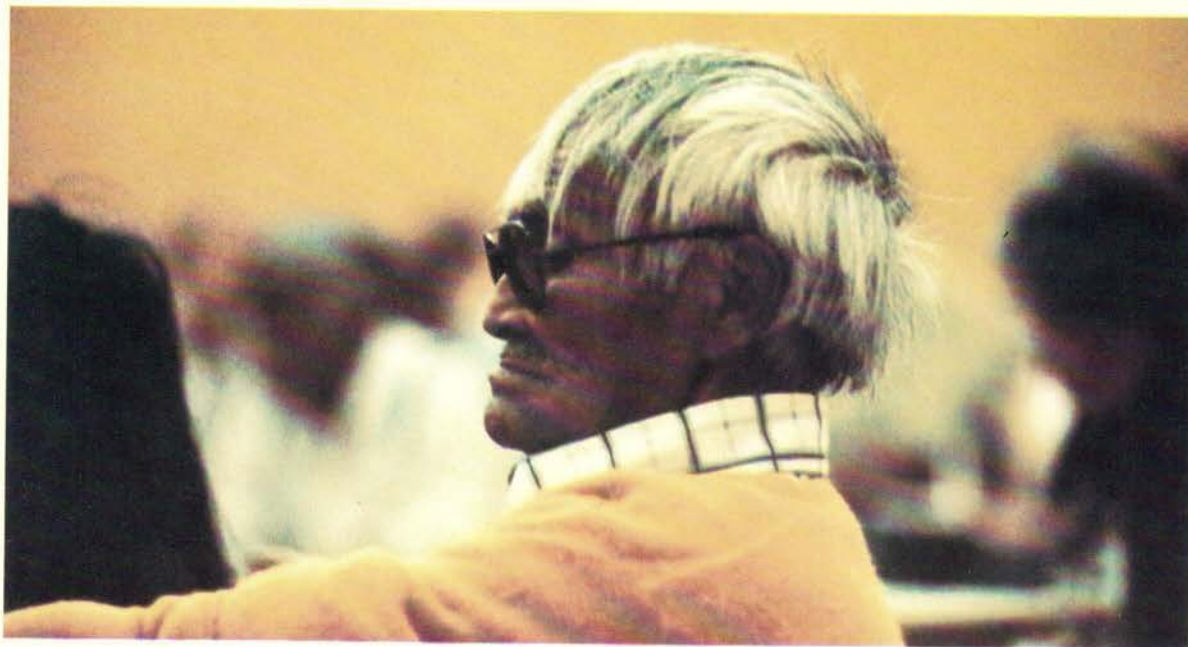
Mrs. Lella Alexie, 1981.



*Birthday celebration for Rev. James Simon, Old Crow,
Yukon. L. to r.: Sarah Abel, Charlie Peter, Charlie,
James and Sarah Simon, Neil McDonald, Effie Hinklater.*



*Aklavik, N.W.T.:
Moise Mitchell and
Effie McDonald (Krutko).*



William Mittrekuwa at the Berger Inquiry, June, 1975.



*Ruth (Vaneltsi) Carrell,
Lucy Vaneltsi, Sarah
Drymeat, and young girl.*



*Elijah Andrew, Sarah Drymeat,
Abraham Francis, Sarah Francis.*



Children at day school, early 1950's.



Spring picnic in Ft. McPherson. Catherine Nersyoo is seen at left.



John Kay preparing to leave for summer fishing.



Corinne Kunniuzzi, Mrs. Elizabeth Kunniuzzi, Mrs. Riza Kunniuzzi, and Eugene Kunniuzzi.



Old Robert George and wife Annie.



Sarah Simon and Laura Thompson practicing a dance.



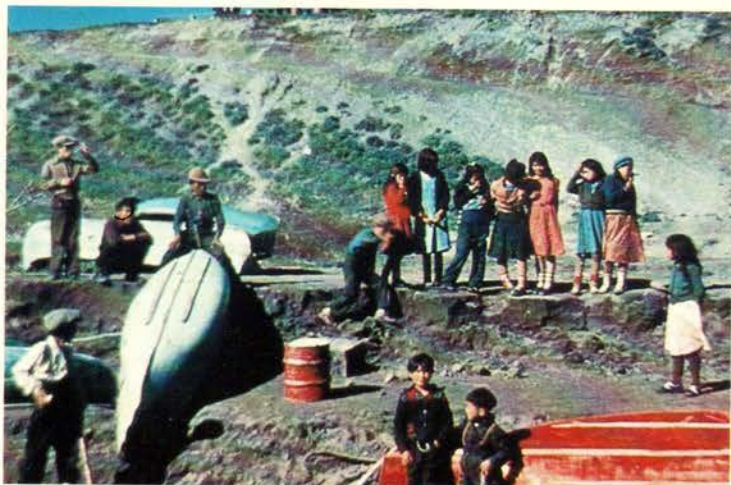
*Ellen Vittrekwa with
young Joseph, 1952.*



Jean Chrétien and Annie Wanetsi



Catherine Sempé with child.



Children playing around "Hudson Bay bank"



*Harriet Stewart with
Bryan Francis. (note Fred
Fitch in the background.)*



1917. left to right: John Ts'igii, John Robert, Annie H. Robert with child, Al Robert.



Sarah Simon teaching Effie (Blake) De Bastian to set traps for muskrats at Chii Tsal Van.



Walter, Inna, and young Gladys Alexie.



Harriet Stewart dancing with Herbert Blake.



Andrew Wilson (Andrew Choo), father of Mary Firth, Charlie Wilson and Ellen Vittrekwa.



Old Alfred Tetlitchi (Ttchi), father of John Charlie and Johnny Charlie.



Lucy Rat walking from the "rations house".



Day School and teacher's quarters, circa 1953.



Laura Pascal, young friend, Edith Nerayoo, James Nerayoo, and Renie Pascal.



Fort McPherson, N.W.T. (Tetl'it Zheh)



Fort McPherson, N.W.T., circa 1952