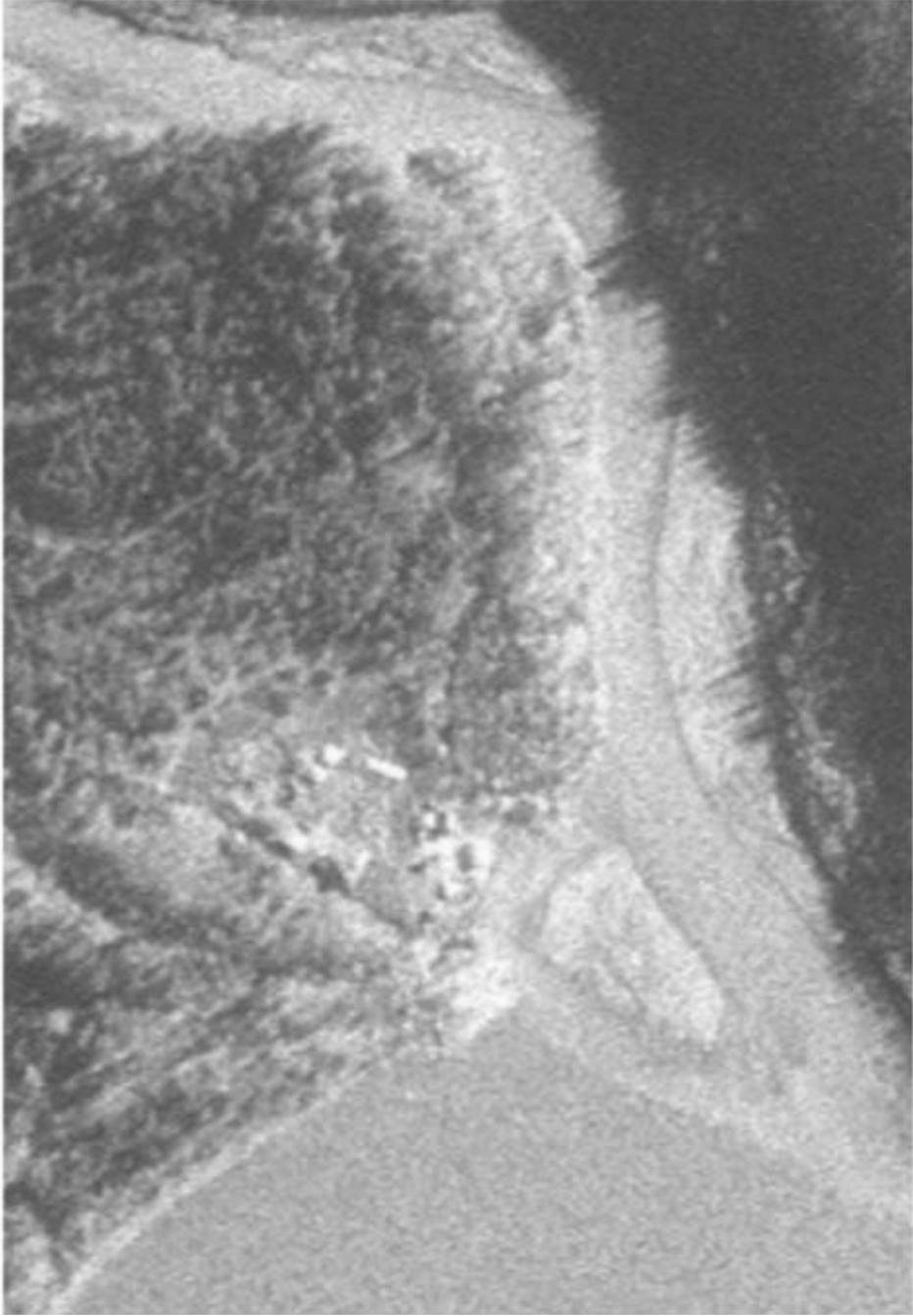


# History of Lansing, Yukon

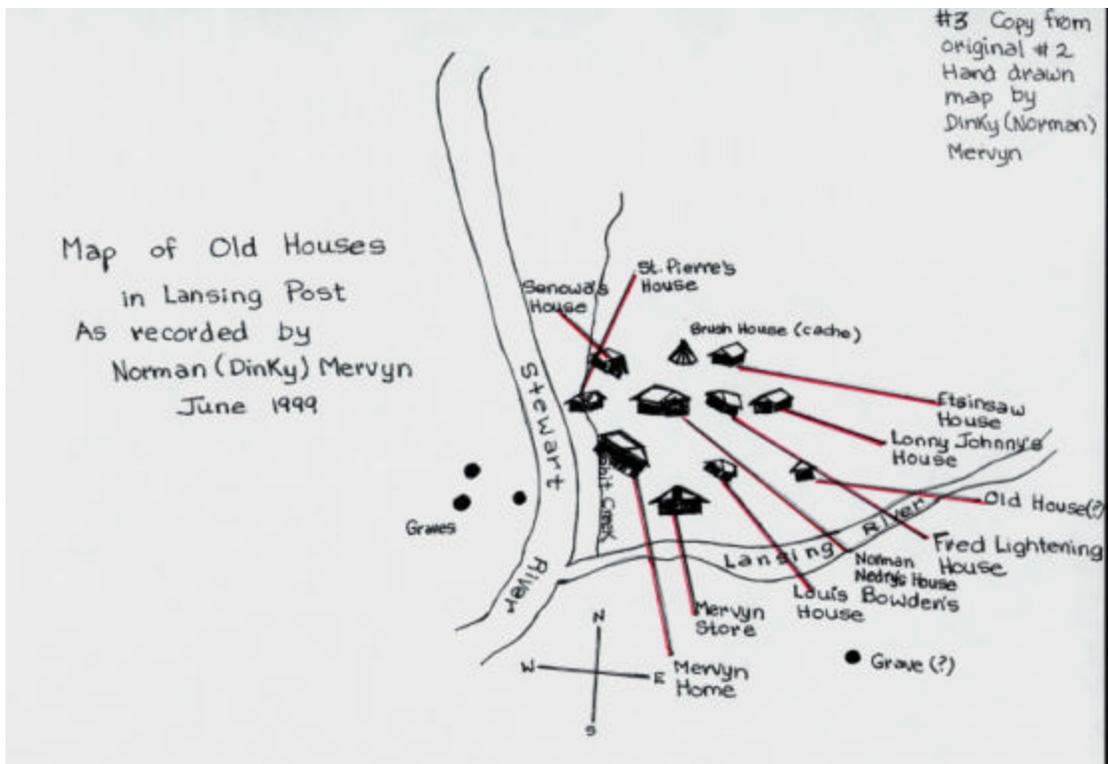


Arial Photo, Lansing Post, 1998

Prepared for  
Heritage Branch  
Department of Tourism  
Government of Yukon

by  
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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to provide a history of Lansing based on written and readily available oral history records. Although detailed information about the trading post is limited, we can piece together the chronology of the post's operation and better understand who used it and who lived in the Lansing area.

Since this report is intended to be a preliminary effort at compiling information about Lansing, the accuracy of the information has not always been checked and re-checked. There are occasional discrepancies. For example, some records show that Jim and Helen Ferrell bought the post in 1915, while others say that they bought it in 1911. These known anomalies have been flagged.

There are also certain things that remain vague. For example, the following questions arise from both the written and oral history records:

- What was the relationship between the local Stewart River people and the Mackenzie River people prior to the establishment of Lansing post?
- How did epidemics and disease affect the population at Lansing and the migrations between the upper Stewart River and the Mackenzie River areas?
- How many native people at Lansing returned to the Northwest Territories on a regular basis?
- How many returned permanently in the early 1900s?

As suggested in a following section, it would be helpful to clarify some of these issues by conducting genealogical research to determine births, deaths and the relationships between people. Although information shared by individuals about their families has been presented, the author did not attempt to compile a genealogical chart.

Finally, this report contains a significant amount of material quoted from original sources, as it was not the author's wish to make general interpretations of what people said.



Jim Mervyn's freighter at Lansing. (Maggie Mervyn, Florence Mervyn)

## The Trading Post

In 1902, Percival Nash and Frank Braine travelled from the Mackenzie River to the confluence of Lansing Creek and the Stewart River to establish a trading post. Braine, a former Saskatchewan fur trader, had travelled through the area several years earlier on his way to the Klondike gold fields. Disappointed with prospects in the Klondike, he returned to the Mackenzie River where he and his new partner, Percival Nash, organized a group of Slavey people from the Fort Good Hope area to guide them back over the mountains to Lansing Creek.

The operation of the post is not well-documented. By all accounts, trapping conditions in the upper Stewart River area were very good in the early 1900s. First Nation's people trapped throughout the region, and they also gathered furs while travelling between Lansing and the Mackenzie River. The extent to which non-native trappers operated in the area in the early 1900s is less clear, although some men were trapping in the Hess River area in 1905. Braine and Nash did not purchase land for the post, nor do government records show that these men (or their successors) obtained a trading permit for the business. Information about Lansing is found, however, in descriptions by visitors, missionaries and government officials in the early 1900s.

In June 1905, Charles Camsell, a government surveyor, travelled up the Stewart River to reach the Peel River area. Below Lansing, Camsell's party met Frank Braine who was on his way to Dawson. Braine, surprised to see these men attempting to get upriver in such high water, told them to make use of his trading

post and whatever supplies they needed. Camsell described Lansing as follows: “We found the trading Post at Lansing Creek deserted except for a trapper by the name of Frank Williams, who was acting as caretaker during the absence of Braine and Nash. The Post consisted of half a dozen log cabins, but the stock of supplies in it was reduced to a small quantity of dry goods and a few cans of condensed milk and two pounds of tea. We took over the whole stock of condensed milk and the tea. I figured it might be eight weeks before we could reach Fort MacPherson and we had supplies on hand enough to last us only six weeks.” Percival Nash and a First Nations boy from Lansing Creek (Camsell did not mention the boy’s name) guided Camsell’s party up to the headwaters of the Peel River.

Joseph Keele also stopped at the post in 1905. In a report on his exploration of the upper Stewart River area, he wrote that a “small band of native inhabitants” had cabins at the mouth of the river, and aboriginal people from Fort Good Hope made annual journeys to Lansing. Keele was impressed by Braine’s vegetable garden at the mouth of Lansing Creek.<sup>1</sup>

Frank Braine and Percival Nash operated the post until 1908 when they sold it to Jim and Helen Ferrell. In August 1911, the Ferrell’s were turning the post over to Jim Mervyn, a trader from Ontario, when a RCMP constable visited the site [see appendix].<sup>2</sup> In his patrol report, the constable noted that a trader on the Pelly River had been spreading stories about all white men on the Stewart River being thieves, thereby discouraging native people from trading with Ferrell. During the previous season, the Lansing trappers had reportedly all traded their furs at Ross River.

In the early years of his operation, Mervyn and his native helpers poled boats up the Stewart with the supplies. He later bought two motor launches — one kept above Fraser Falls and one below the rapids — and was able to supply the post by making one trip to Dawson in the summer, bringing in goods sufficient to last the entire year. According to one report, Mervyn had a good relationship with the Mackenzie River people —it should be noted that his wife, Julia, was originally from the Mackenzie — and they brought their furs to him from as far away as the Mackenzie River.<sup>3</sup> Mervyn used trading tokens rather than currency — aluminum tokens worth \$1.00, brass octagon tokens worth \$10.00 and a slightly larger brass octagon token worth \$20.00.<sup>4</sup> Dave Moses remembers that people could use these tokens at other stores (at Fraser Falls, for example) and Jim Mervyn would buy them back.<sup>5</sup>

A number of factors possibly contributed to Mervyn closing the post at Lansing. In 1918, the First Nations community was decimated by sickness, leaving only a few

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<sup>1</sup> Keele, J. Report on the Upper Stewart River Region Yukon, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Other sources state that Mervyn bought the post in 1915, but this appears to be inaccurate.

<sup>3</sup> Aho, Aaro. “Notes on Keno Hill,” p. 26-10.

<sup>4</sup> See photographs of the tokens in: Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena, p. 169.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Dave Moses, at his homestead at Crooked Creek, July 21, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

survivors. Although some of the people remained near the post, others returned to Fort Good Hope or resettled in the Mayo area. Then, in June 1936, the Stewart River at Lansing rose 12 feet in 45 minutes, eroding the banks on which the post stood.<sup>6</sup> The post was flooded, but fortunately for Jim Mervyn, nothing was lost because he had piled his stock high and dry. He operated the post that winter.<sup>7</sup> In January 1937, the Mayo Miner reported that: “Jim Mervyn, veteran Lansing Creek trader and trapper, reached Mayo last Saturday and spent several days in town this week on business. Jim was accompanied on the long, 125-mile mush by his son Dinkey. They made the overland journey in jig time with their fleet string of dogs but report the going heavy.”

In the late 1930s, Jim Mervyn began expanding his business activities in the Mayo area. He seems to have taken his first step back from the operations at Lansing in 1938. The Mayo Miner reported that the Mervyn's daughter, Maggie Wood, and her husband, Jimmy Wood, were going to run Lansing Post that winter because Jim Mervyn planned on taking a trip outside. It is not clear when Mervyn actually closed his store at Lansing, but his purchase of the Binet Bros. firm in Mayo, including the general store, in the summer of 1938 may have contributed to the closure.<sup>8</sup>

James Bond, a big-game hunter who was being guided by Louis Brown and Norman Mervyn through the Wind River/upper Stewart River area, described the rather desolate but beautiful scene at Lansing in September 1947:

*“It is a sorry looking place. Once three hundred Indians lived here and now — no one. The buildings had fallen and most of them had rotted into piles of debris. Where people once walked and carried on a happy community life grass now grew four feet tall. Willows and grass also flourished where the squaws and maidens had grown potatoes and vegetables. Only two buildings are in good shape, the two that Norman and Lonny Johnny use in their trapping venture... The finest vegetation I have seen anywhere in the Yukon grows at Lansing. In the Yukon there are over five hundred varieties of wild flowers officially recognized and classified. Norman told me about gathering*

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<sup>6</sup> Aaho, Aaro, “Notes on Keno Hill,” p. 26-11.

<sup>7</sup> The Mayo Miner, June 27, 1936: “Last Sunday evening the N.A.L. aviators flew to Landsing [sic] Creek with Mrs. Mervyn and 5 children...Winging back 11 p.m. the fliers reported that Jim Mervyn's post had been flooded but that the pioneer trader had lost nothing. The waters came over the counters in the store but Jim had previously piled his stock high and dry. Asked how they liked their first air ride by Pilot Murphy, the Mervyn kiddies replied: ‘It was too short.’” Another article in this issue reported: “The White Pass aces [pilots] left for Lansing Creek 1.25 p.m. with 1500 lbs freight for Mervyn.”

<sup>8</sup> The Mayo Miner announced this purchase on July 8, 1938. Probably based on what Norman (Dinky) Mervyn told him, James Bond wrote in 1947: “[Jim Mervyn] had worked up a fine post when the flu epidemic hit the country and over half of the natives died. Those that did not die thought the country was cursed and moved back to Fort Norman [Fort Good Hope?] from whence they had come many years before. With no one to sell his merchandise to the old man finally gave up the post and moved down to Mayo.”

*five different kinds of wild berries close to his home here on the river. I ate some of the wild raspberries and they were large and tasty and without noticeable seeds.”<sup>9</sup>*

The transition from being a centre for trade and social activities in the early 1900s to a ghost-town by the 1940s occurred over many years. As one First Nations woman commented, people began to “drift away” and moved to Mayo or to their camps.

Alex Van Bibber and Dinky (Norman Mervyn)



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<sup>9</sup> Bond, James. From Out of the Yukon, p. 208.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Catherine Germaine, Mayo, July 15, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

## The People at Lansing



Cecile, Madlin, Jim Mervyn and child, Etsisaw

### ***Population***

The non-native population at Lansing appears to have consisted of the trading post owners and individuals who occasionally helped to run the post. The RCMP visited Lansing from Mayo and travelled in the area, and Catholic priests visited from Dawson and then from Mayo, holding church services at people's camps or in a meeting hall at the post in about 1918.<sup>11</sup> No buildings appear to have been constructed specifically for government, nor were there people posted at Lansing to carry out government business.

The official census figures by community in the Yukon Territory for the years 1921 and 1931 do not include Lansing.<sup>12</sup> The most recent census list (names of individuals) currently available is for the year 1901. Census lists for 1911, 1921 and 1931 are unavailable for public use at this time.

Official statistics on the aboriginal population by community in the Yukon are available beginning in 1914 when John Hawksley assumed the position of Indian

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with Father Henk Huijbers, OMI, Mayo, July 24, 1992, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>12</sup> Yukon Archives: Northern Affairs Program, Northwest Territories & Yukon Branch, Central Registry Office, RG 85, vol. 749, f. 4413.

Agent for the territory. In his first annual report, Hawksley noted that “Slave Indians” were centered at “Lancing Creek” and Ross River. Statistics for the Yukon include the band at “Lancing Creek (Slaves)” with a population of 100, all of whom were Roman Catholic. He wrote in his report that a fire at the police headquarters office in the previous year had destroyed the previous records of the Indian population. Hawksley’s population total must therefore have been an estimate based on information he acquired.

Not until 1923 did Hawksley obtain a new total of the Lansing band — 110 people of whom 106 were Catholic and 4 were Anglican. In 1929, Hawksley reported that there were only 41 people in the Lansing band, all of whom were Catholic.<sup>13</sup>

#### Census of First Nations People at Lansing: 1923 & 1929

	Total	under 6		6-15 yrs old		16-20 yrs old		21-65 yrs old		over 65 yrs old	
		m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
1923	110	17	10	6	14	0	6	30	25	1	1
1929	41	2	1	7	7	2	4	12	6	0	0

In a letter to his superiors about the 1929 census, Hawksley acknowledged assistance from the RCMP in compiling the returns from native communities. He also wrote: “It will be noted that there is a marked decrease in the numbers of the Moosehide and Lancing Creek Bands. This is accounted for by migration. The Indians at Lancing Creek were mostly from Fort Good Hope N.W.T. Since the 1923 Census was taken many of them have gone back to their original homes.”<sup>14</sup>

A 1941 Indian census for the Mayo District shows that eight people were living in the Lansing Post area at the time — Lonny Johnny, Delphinia Allison, and Christine, Helen, Paul, Frank, Joe and Katherine Germaine.<sup>15</sup> Probably none of these people lived there year-round. Norman “Dinky” Mervyn (one of Jim and Julia Mervyn’s sons) and his trapping partner, Lonny Johnny, had their trapping cabin near the old post. In 1947, Norman Mervyn explained to a visiting big-game hunter that the area had already been trapped out, but he and Johnny still managed to get quite a few lynx and wolves, and some fox and marten.<sup>16</sup>

Catherine Germaine remembers her uncle, Paul Germaine, saying that when he was growing up, many people used to gather at Lansing: “Just white with tents, he

<sup>13</sup> Statistics derived from: Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended March 31, 1924. Ottawa: 1924; Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended March 31, 1922. Ottawa: 1922.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from John Hawksley, Indian Superintendent, to J. D. McLean, Asst. Deputy and Secretary, Department of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, August 30, 1929. [Yukon Archives: Yukon Government records, YRG 1, series 1, vol. 9, f. 1490-J, GOV 1619]

<sup>15</sup> “Indian Census — June, 1941, Mayo District, Y.T.,” submitted by W. W. Sutherland, Mayo Detachment. [This one-page census was received from the Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation, Mayo.]

<sup>16</sup> Bond, James. From Out of the Yukon, p. 141.

said. The people, the Mackenzie people, some homesteaded right there and they went out trapping. The men went out trapping in winter from there, different areas. They always came back there, in the summer, to Lansing.”<sup>17</sup> Jenny Germaine mentioned several people at Lansing, including Senowa and Norman Nedry, Norman “Dinky” Mervyn, Nora Mervyn and her husband Johnny Gatey, Maggie Wood, Florence and her husband Albert Pelland, Dowa [sic], Louis Brown and Effie.<sup>18</sup> Alice Buyck also remembered that there were quite a few houses at Lansing, including Lonny Johnny’s house, Norman Nedry’s house, and two houses owned by the Germaine family.

### ***The Mackenzie River people***

People from the Mackenzie River basin had been travelling over the mountains to the Yukon River drainage for years before the post at Lansing was formed. A NWMP report on a patrol to McQuesten, written in October 1900, mentions that the native people would be heading to the upper Stewart River area as soon as the river froze to meet native people from the Mackenzie who were hunting there.<sup>19</sup>

Some traders and explorers in the Pelly and Macmillan River areas described the “Mountain Men” and people from the Mackenzie River area whom they encountered. After his 1907-1908 trip between the Mackenzie and the Pelly River, Joseph Keele reported that about 100 native people hunted and trapped on the Gravel River (Keele River) and its tributaries, trading their furs at Fort Norman and supplying the Hudson’s Bay men with meat. Keele wrote: “The Mountain men and their families generally leave Fort Norman in September, walking over a direct trail to the Gravel River valley, up which they trap and hunt. Sometimes during the late winter they cross the divide, to the headwaters of the Stewart, Macmillan, and Ross rivers, where certain kinds of fur are more plentiful. In the spring they return to the Gravel river and build moose skin boats, in which they descend that river to the Mackenzie. The Mountain Indians have hunted on the Gravel river for a long time; there are meat-drying racks everywhere along the stream banks. Some of their signs are very old, showing evidence of stone implements having been used. It was probably a long time before they grew bold enough to cross the divide, but even now they are careful not to go far down the streams on the western slopes for fear of meeting the fierce Yukon Indians; so that mutual fear and distrust have established a dead line over which representatives of neither side pass.”<sup>20</sup> How many, if any, of the Fort Norman people traded at Lansing is not clear, but oral history accounts depict a

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<sup>17</sup> Interview with Catherine Germaine, Mayo, July 15, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Jenny Germaine, July 13, 1998, Mayo, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>19</sup> This reference is from notes made at the National Archives in Ottawa. [National Archives of Canada: Letter from J. Pringle, Stewart River, to the Officer Commanding, B Division, NWMP, August 7, 1900. RG 18, vol. 189, f. 339-00.]

<sup>20</sup> Keele, Joseph. A Reconnaissance across the Mackenzie Mountains on the Pelly, Ross, and Gravel Rivers Yukon, and North West Territories. 1910, p. 12.

similar scenario of people using moose-skin boats in their travels on the Stewart River and its tributaries, and in travelling to and from the Mackenzie River.<sup>21</sup>

First Nation's people already living in the Stewart River area said that the people who came over from Fort Good Hope were a distinct group. According to Flora (Moses) Harper, her mother said that they were nice people: "They always go up there to have big potlatch. They're different people going together. That's what she say."<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Louise Profeit-LeBlanc remembered: "My Grandma told me, she said, 'Mayo people just jelloo (jealous) for the Mackenzie. They sew so good!'... They got nice mitts, nice clothes, she said. Made with quills and moose hair."<sup>23</sup> Catherine Germaine described people dancing in the Mayo village when she was a child: "Dancing, jigging and lot of those young men in those days, down in the village, and Mackenzie people were good guitar players, fiddlers, yeah, and accordion and mouth organ. They were really talented people."<sup>24</sup>

Gradually, people originally from the Mackenzie River who stayed in the Stewart River area blended in with local people. Catherine Germaine gave the following examples of intermarriage: Julia, originally from the Mackenzie, married Jim Mervyn; Julia's sister, Senowa, married Norman Nedry; Garleen married Johnson Lucas, but she died of tuberculosis; Jumah (or Alice) married Dave Hager; and Steven Louis married Jimmy Lucas' mother.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the Germaine family and a small group of other Mackenzie River people remained somewhat separate from the First Nations community in Mayo for the many years that they were based in the Ladue Lake, Rackla River and McQuesten Lake areas.

### **Life at Lansing**

Oral history research has provided invaluable information about the native people living at or near Lansing. In their accounts, people such as Paul Germaine shared stories about the good times, the hard times, their families, and their seasonal activities.

*"Indian people came from Fort Good Hope on the Mackenzie and stayed at Lansing. There were many tents there, more people than at the Village (McQuesten). People would dance far into the night, play drums and sing. They played drums and stick gambled.*

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with Jenny Germaine, Mayo, July 13, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon government]

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Flora Harper, McCauley Lodge, Whitehorse, August 25, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Catherine Germaine, Mayo, July 15, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Catherine Germaine, Mayo, July 15, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

*“People travelled back and forth from Lansing to Fort Good Hope, Fort Good Hope to Lansing, until the border was drawn between the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories. The first time they travelled back to Fort Good Hope, all the people went.*

*“Most of the people who were there (in Lansing) the first time came back to Lansing again and some new families came with them. Again they lived at Lansing. Family groups went to various areas to make food, such as dry meat and fish, for winter. In winter they would leave to trap and come back to Lansing in the spring to trade fur. People travelled a wide area to trap and hunt. They went up the Stewart River, Rackla River, Nadaleen River, Beaver River, and Hart River.*

*“The third time, half of the Mackenzie people went back to Fort Good Hope and the rest stayed Lansing. Then sickness fell upon the people of Lansing. Most of the people died. Only one or two families were left. St. Pierre (Izhihó) was head man of the Mackenzie people. His wife was Mezié. They had a son, Däboo, and two daughters Kätini (or Katrine) and Mary. Kätini married Philie Unëbel. Däboo was sent outside by Jim Mervyn and he died there of stomach disease.*

*“Grandma Tulä and her husband Jerroo also lived at Lansing. Some of the people’s names I can remember who went back to Fort Good Hope are Pete So’de’chili, Je begün, [and] Tsá Ta’tini who I believe has a daughter still living in Yellowknife.”*

... as told to his niece, Catherine Germaine.  
[Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena. 1990.]

People in the area were not concentrated in one central location. According to Eliza Farr, people were spread out: *“Oh, lots of people all over. Back in there. They got a village slough? And they get it Yukon there. They got all tent all over, way back in the bush there... And even behind that, way up, Lansing Creek... Way back there. Oh tent too. Talk about people... They all come for store and for blanket and stuff like that... They come for that snuff too, chew tobacco... They all singing. Oh, I don’t know, from Mayo, people and all over place, they’re come in.”*<sup>26</sup>

Alice Buyck described the large gatherings at Lansing: *“I was small when, and they said and there was a big potlatch going on there. But David, I remember quite a few stick gamble. My Grandpa, [by] night time they used to make big fire and*

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Eliza Farr, Dawson City, July 16, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

*people around they drumming and they stick gamble, yeah... Fall time, fall time, I guess about September month... and people used to dance.*<sup>27</sup>

Dave Moses remembered similar gatherings at Lansing:

*“1924. We went to Lansing. Going to be Pow Wow, Potlatch, like so they call us up there. We go up there too. Spring time we poling boat. Everybody go up there. Whole my family. My Grandpa, my Father, my Mother, my Grandma. Oh lots of people beside. We go up there with poling boat. We come to the Fall [Fraser Falls]. We portage boat across. And then everybody poling boat up the three mile rapid, five mile rapid. From there No Gold. From there go up with poling boat all the way up. We use dog for poling boat some time and then we come to Lansing. And then... we have big pow wow there. People make cook dry meat for another and dry fish like that feed one another. Pretty soon start to make pow wow like. Put all the fur. They catch fur with a deadfall. Put there and pretty soon dancing, singing dancing. After that they pay one another with fur, moose skin. Pay one another with a fancy clothes.... for two or three days like that, and after that they go. They start to play stick gambling... And one side they go near like, and one side hun deah [sic] like. So that’s the way it go like long time ago. So they start playing and I go, hunt, clean everything. Hun deah lost out. That crow we call them now. They lost out. Wolf they got everything. So francy (fancy) mitts, fancy clothes. All happy, they build big raft, go downriver singing and go down and come back to Gordon’s Landing. A long time ago, there was a trading post at Gordon’s Landing. We come back there and after we start, we move down to Mayo, when Keno Hill start mining like.”*<sup>28</sup>

The native people living in the upper Stewart River area had seasonal patterns not unlike First Nations people in other parts of the Yukon. They fished, hunted and trapped, and for many, trading their furs at Lansing fit into the cycle of their activities. As Alice Buyck explained, family groups had their own routines:

*“So that’s what we do. We just set the trap and check the trap, things like that... So, from there, we started off from Lansing, way above, above, I don’t know how many mile, and Louis Brown and David they was trapping there too. They got all their family with them. Mary Moses and Effie and we with dog team we go up there, we stop there, and they come with us too! So three dog team. And from there we go through, ah... Rackla, Rackla River... Up Rackla River we go, going up that way and I don’t remember. We camp though. I think one day we make it to Germaine family. Germaine family they stay at the Rackla River*

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Alice Buyck, Mayo, July 14, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Dave Moses, at his homestead at Crooked Creek, July 21, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

*there, too. And I remember, they got about two, two log cabin there. It was Germaine, Paul, Lonny, Frank and Joe and Christine. Christine that's their grandma. Kathy was just a little girl. So we come there. And from there we stay there overnight. And from there now about six or seven dog team now. All Germaine, all come. And from there we come through the Ladue, Ladue Lake, and McQuesten Lake, there was a cabin there too. I don't know it belong to that cabin though. And we camp there too. And from there we come through to Keno... Then from there down to Mayo... Come down to Mayo. Come back for Easter holiday.”<sup>29</sup>*

### **Sickness and Death**

First Nations people living in the Yukon River and Mackenzie River districts had no immunity to the waves of epidemics that repeatedly afflicted their people. Influenza (Spanish flu) killed many people throughout the Yukon between 1918 and 1919. In the Mackenzie District, people were again affected in 1928, and the Yukon Gold Commissioner suggested that a quarantine in the Yukon should be put in place preventing Mackenzie people from visiting Yukon people. The disease had reportedly already run its course however, and the quarantine was not instated.<sup>30</sup>

It is difficult to determine which of many illnesses affecting First Nations people killed individuals in the upper Stewart River area. Oral and written history accounts refer to tuberculosis and epidemics of influenza and diphtheria, but as Catherine Germaine commented, people tended to attribute anything that made people cough to “tuberculosis” or “consumption.” It is generally accepted however, that the Germaine and St. Pierre families were somewhat protected from the epidemic that killed most of the families in the Lansing area because they were somewhat isolated at their trapping grounds in the Rackla River/Ladue Lake area.<sup>31</sup> As revealed in oral history accounts, many others were not so fortunate.

Dave Moses remembered that many people died in the upper Stewart River area: *“Then now they all die off. And all people nothing left. Only Paul Germaine, and his two brother, three brothers that all that's left over. And then eh... Lonny Johnny and Senowa and Jim Mervyn. And then Jim Mervyn old lady [Julia]... That's all that's left over. So not very much people left. That, they all in the grave yard. You see how many people there. Quite a few. And then the Fall [at Fraser Falls] quite a few there too... Long time ago, lots of people all right... They died. They long time ago, people. I don't know [why they died].*

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Alice Buyck, Mayo, July 14, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>30</sup> Letter from O. S. Finnie, Director, North West Territories and Yukon, Dept. of the Interior, to G. I. MacLean, Gold Commissioner, Dawson, August 13, 1928. [Yukon Archives: Yukon Government records, YRG 1, series 1, GOV 1619, vol. 9, f. 1490-J]

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Catherine Germaine, Mayo, July 15, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

*Some kind of flu... They just get flu like and puke and don't feel good and pretty soon he die... I lost my two brothers that time too... That's the time there's lots of people there. They die off.*<sup>32</sup>

Alice Buyck also referred to the grave sites at Lansing: *"And I know at Lansing there was a quite a few graveyard there too. And I use to sit by the window, and I look at those grave up on the side of the hill. And that was my Gramma's brother. And I know his name, in Indian is Demyet [sic]... And his name is David but I don't know his last name. and the grave I could see there that time. But I don't know right now, if it is still there... And across, across the river there too, was quite a few graveyard there too. I see some of them and kids' coffin was sticking out.*<sup>33</sup>

A few archival and published sources refer to accidental deaths and illness in the Lansing area:

- "A member of the Lansing Creek band met with a fatal accident while out hunting moose. He stepped on an overhanging snowdrift and fell down a precipice, being instantly killed." ["Report of J. Hawksley, Indian Superintendent for Yukon Territory," in Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year Ended March 31, 1915.]
- Death of Alison Mazie, who died in a snow slide on Canyon Creek in March 1929. [see appendix for the Statement of Lewis Franklin Bowden, May 10, 1929.]
- "Cecile David, native woman of Lansing Creek, who had been confined to the hospital last week, has been discharged." [Mayo Miner, July 2, 1937, vol. 3, no. 6]
- In a RCMP report (July 9, 1945), Const. Ivor Mast described the drowning of William John "Kaiser" Mervyn and Hugo Nyman on July 4, 1945. They fell out of a boat 30 miles upriver from Mayo. Lonny Johnny and Ella Moses, David Moses (brother of Mrs. William Mervyn, and son of Ella Moses) were also in the boat. He also wrote that Mervyn was born at Lansing River on May 4, 1919 and left behind his wife Alice and a baby. [Yukon Archives: YRG 1, Series 7, GOV 2843, vol. 33, f. 33937-3, pt. 4]

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<sup>32</sup> Interview with Dave Moses, at his homestead at Crooked Creek, July 21, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Alice Buyck, Mayo, July 14, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

## ***Individual family stories***

### **The Germaine Family**

*“My father, Jermie, originally came from Fort Good Hope on the Mackenzie River. It was there that he met my mother, Sophia Christine, who had come from Aklavik with her adoptive parents Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin. Jermie and Sophia, and Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin came to Lansing with other people from Fort Good Hope.*

*“My father had a younger brother. People said he died of shock, while he was very young, when another child pretended to threaten him with a knife.*

*“The Jermie family lived at Lansing with the rest of the people from Fort Good Hope. They travelled (up) the Stewart River, Nadaleen River and Swan Lake areas to dry meat and gather food for winter. During the winter they caught white fish, grayling and trout in Ladue Lake.*

*“When St. Pierre, the head man at Lansing, and his wife Mezie died, their daughter Mary came to live with our family. When Kätini’s husband, Philie Unëbel died, Kätini stayed with our family when we were at Rackla and Ladue and then she went to stay with Mike Tomoff’s friend at Keno City. Kätini was Mary St. Pierre’s sister.*

*“My father, Jermie, died before sickness came to Lansing. After he died the family moved to Rackla River. My brothers and I trapped around that area. We built a house at Ladue Lake and our family lived there as well.*

*“There were at least eight children in the Jermie family, three died very young. The ones who grew to adulthood were: Colley, Paul, Ellen, Frank and Joe.”*

... Paul Germaine, as told to his niece, Catherine Germaine.  
[Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena. 1990.]

In another interview, Catherine Germaine explained that her grandfather, Jermie, was from Fort Good Hope, and her grandmother (her Indian name was Sophia, but the missionaries renamed her Christine) and her grandmother’s sister (Elizabeth) were born at Tanana River in Alaska. The family travelled back and forth between Tanana River and the Fort McPherson area:

*“Then from what heard my uncle say, that they used to travel up that way for fish and caribou on the river in a moose skin boat... And when my grandmother and her sister were up there, their parents died. So they were orphaned, and my great-grandmother — I call her my great-grandmother*

*that's Mädlin and Et'tsi ts'ò. Mädlin was related to my grandmother, my grandmother's mother in some way. I don't know which way, but they, they took in my grandmother and they raised her. While Elizabeth, her name is Elizabeth Blake, later when she got married she, her name was Elizabeth Blake. But the Ross family from Fort McPherson took her in and raised her at Fort McPherson and raised her as Elizabeth Ross. I don't know her name. She must have had one... And after that my, Et'tsi ts'ò and Mädlin took my grandmother and live up at Aklavik. Originally Et'tsi ts'ò was from Red, Arctic Red... He call himself Hitahshee... Hitahshee Denee... And that Et'tsi ts'ò and Mädlin they took my grandmother to Aklavik, and that's where she was raised up until she was in her teens. And then Et'tsi ts'ò had a younger brother who was also adopted out to another family at Aklavik. That, that boy that brother there died. And I know, my uncle said, Et'tsi ts'ò said his brother died from starvation. That family did not look after him well, and Et'tsi ts'ò was very upset and told the people that his foot would never step on that land again, that ground, so he took my grandmother and Mädlin and they moved to Fort Good Hope. And this is, they walked. They had dog packs in the summer. They walked and used dog packs and went to Fort Good Hope.... And that's where my grandmother when she was in her teens, in her late teens probably about, anywhere, 18, 19, 20. That's the age, long time ago, the women used to get married. And that's where she met my grandfather, Jermee... And then after, I don't know how long they been married, but there was a group of people from what my Uncle Paul say, he was told by his grandparents though that, that it was a real cold winter, and they were up there. One year he said it was just cold, and there was no animals. So some of those families from Fort Good Hope they got together and they decided to come over this way, and they came with dog team and by foot over the mountains. And they, like in the spring time, they made moose skin boats and came down the river. And they settled at Lansing. [They made a big camp at Lansing long before it was a trading post]... And at Lansing, that's where my uncles and my mother was born there [Ellen, Frank, Paul, and her eldest uncle, Collie]... Now Joe I'm not sure if he was born in Lansing, but he may be born at Rackla, because they homesteaded at Rackla too." When Paul Germaine died in 1988, he was 86 years old. "[He was born in] 1902. Around there or 1905, somewhere around there... He used to tell me that he was born in the bush, he say. No doctor. Bush baby, he say." The Germaine's stayed at Rackla River until Catherine Germaine was eight years old, and then they moved to Ladue Lake for a long period of time. "And my uncle Paul built a lumber house there. And one at McQuesten Lake. That was a log house at McQuesten Lake. There is just the remains of it there now. And then gradually they moved my grandpa, Et'tsi ts'ò and Mädlin moved to Keno. And then the Germaine family bought that big house from Jim Mervyn... They moved*

*down here.” Catherine Germaine’s grandfather is buried somewhere on the trail between Lansing and Rackla River: “It was in the summer and he died there, and uncle Paul told me he figured that he had some lung disease or something. Yes. That time I remember there was no vaccination against TB or that kind of... so a lot of them died. Everybody said it was TB that time but it could have been other things...”*

... as told by Catherine Germaine to Louise Profeit-LeBlanc, July 15, 1998.  
[Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

Father Joseph Plaine, a Catholic priest (Oblate of Mary Immaculate) who served for five years in the Mayo area in the early 1940s, knew the Germaine family. He explained that they lived in the Ladue Lake and Rackla River area during the winter to trap, came to Mayo in the summer, and also spent time at McQuesten Lake to fish. There were about 15 people who lived with the Germaine family, including Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin, Eliza (Farr) and Lonny Johnny, and a man named Steven Louis (“Crooked Neck Louis”). Some of these people died however, and about 10 people lived in this group when Father Plaine worked in Mayo.

Father Plaine explained that the Germaine’s were originally Jeremie’s (or Jermie’s), but because the Mackenzie people and the people from the Mayo area spoke different languages, the name was mispronounced, and the name “Jermie” became Germaine.<sup>34</sup>

### **Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin**

*“Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin (also know as Myr Lithon Atsitsaw and Taja) were from Aklavik. They adopted Söfiá Christine and raised her there [Mädlin was somehow related to Söfiá Christine]. Et’tsi ts’ò left Aklavik when his younger brother died of starvation. The family moved to Fort Good Hope where Söfiá Christine met and married Jermie. Söfiá Christine and Jermie were my mother and father. Jermie and Söfiá, Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin moved to Lansing with the rest of the Fort Good Hope people who went over.”*

... Paul Germaine, as told to his niece, Catherine Germaine.  
[Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena. 1990.]

Father Henk Huijbers, a Catholic priest (Oblate of Mary Immaculate) who knew Et’tsi ts’ò and Mädlin in the 1940s and 1950s, said that the best detailed information that he found about them was in the Mackenzie River area where he found their baptismal records. There were two men named Et’tsi ts’ò (or Atsitsaw) in the Mackenzie records, one of whom was three years older than the other. These records show that both boys were baptized in the same church. Father Huijbers

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with Father Joseph Plaine, OMI, Whitehorse, December 18, 1993, by Brother Spruyt, OMI. [Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse]

believes that it was the younger man whom he knew in the Yukon, and the church records show that this man was born in 1854 below Fort Norman. Et'tsi ts'ò died in 1959, and if his birth date is correct, he would have been 105 years old. Father Huijbers remembered that Taja was younger than her husband, and the church records state that Taja was born in 1908.

Although the couple had no children, they were said to be in charge of two orphans. According to Father Huijbers, one was Lonny Johnny, and the other was Eliza (Farr).<sup>35</sup>

### **Steven Louis**

Louis (or Steven Louis, "Crooked Neck Louis") died of tuberculosis in about 1943. Father Joseph Plaine, OMI, knew Steven Louis in the early 1940s but had never heard of any members of Louis' family. Father Plaine understood that Louis was living alone with the Germaine family, and that the Germaine's looked after him when he was sick. He described Louis as being very friendly, open and talkative, and having some French ancestry. When he was dying, Louis went to the old village near Mayo where Father Plaine last visited him.<sup>36</sup>

Eliza Farr also knew Steven Louis, and said that he stayed at Lansing for some time and then moved to McQuesten Lake. He has a son at Lower Post.

### **St. Pierre family**

*"St. Pierre (Izhihó) was head man of the Mackenzie people. His wife was Mezié. They had a son, Däboo, and two daughters Kätini (or Katrine) and Mary. Kätini married Philie Unëbel. Däboo was sent outside by Jim Mervyn and he died there of stomach disease."*

... as told by Catherine Germaine.  
[Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena. 1990.]

*"And later on [after the flu/diphtheria epidemic] St. Pierre and his wife and his daughter and his son, Phileeh. His son's name was Phileeh. They passed away on Hanson Lake. When he was there. They are buried around there at Hanson Lake... His son's name is Phileeh. St. Pierre. And St. Pierre's wife... I don't know if his wife's name is there, but his daughter's name are there and his son's name. From what my uncle told me, they lived, and trapped around Ladue Lake, Hanson Lake, McQuesten Lake and Rackla, with the Germaine, Germaine family. Then when the Germaine boys, like Cauley, Frank and Paul were going back to Keno one time, and they stopped at St. Pierre's camp and*

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<sup>35</sup> Interview with Father Henk Huijbers, OMI, Mayo, July 24, 1992, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Father Joseph Plaine, OMI, Whitehorse, December 18, 1993, by Brother Spruyt, OMI. [Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse]

*they were all sick. And they were all sick and they had bloated stomach... the boys went to, to Keno and brought the police, and that time I don't know if it was a doctor or somebody who knows something about medicine came there. But they were too late. They were just in their last stages of that sickness and they died. And ah, from my uncle Paul said, they didn't know. They figured it was some kind of poisoning. Maybe food poisoning or but there used to be prospectors and stuff in that area. I don't know."*

... as told by Catherine Germaine to Louise Profeit-LeBlanc, July 15, 1998.  
[Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

### **The Ferrell's**

*"We were well acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Ferrell. They operated the post at Lansing for several years and then moved to Mayo where they ran a general store. Mrs. Ferrell had some medical training and when they first arrived in the Yukon she had hoped to work at the hospital in Dawson... During their time at Lansing, George Crissfield brought his partner, Jim Christie, to the post. Mr. Christie had been mauled by a grizzly bear. Mrs. Ferrell, being quite handy surgically, patched the man up and set his broken bones. She had the hide of the grizzly that mauled Mr. Christie for many years."*

After Mr. Ferrell died some years later, he was buried in Mayo, and Mrs. Ferrell moved to Oregon.

... as told by Mary Harland (Ross) Rich.  
[Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena. 1990.]

### **The Mervyn's**

*"My father was James Hastings Mervyn. He came from Stratford, Ontario." He came north during the Klondike gold rush but by the time he got there, all the ground had been staked. He came to Duncan Creek when gold was discovered there. "He prospected on Duncan Creek for a while and then bought Lansing Post from a man named Ferrell. My father traded using metal tokens with his name on them instead of money.*

*"My mother, Julia, was a Lansing woman who had originally come from the Mackenzie River in the N.W.T. She had two sisters and two brothers. Senoah, the oldest (Norman Niddery's wife), lived in the Mayo district; Liza stayed in the N.W.T.; Pete, who was older than my mother, went back to the N.W.T.; and Fred, who was blind, lived in Carcross.*

*"I was born up in the Black Sands country at Margaret Lake. It was during winter and Dad put Mom in a toboggan and took her up there where a group of trappers lived. There was a woman there who helped Mom with my birth and*

later helped with the births of almost all of her 11 children. The children's names are Maggie, Florence, William 'Kaiser,' Jerry, Nora, Alice, David 'Dick,' Gordon, Carl, Norman 'Dinky,' and Alexander.

*"There are only four of us left: Norman, Carl and I. David lives in Edmonton, Alberta; Norman is in Prince George, B.C.; I believe Carl lives in Aklavik, and I am in Whitehorse. My brothers Jerry and Kaiser drowned in the Stewart River [Jerry in the rapids above Fraser Falls on September 29, 1935]. Gordon was killed in a hit-and-run accident at Prince George and Alec died at a young age (17 or 18) of meningitis.*

*"I went to school for a year in Dawson and two years in Kaslo, B.C. I came back to Mayo and took Gordon McIntyre's commercial course. Dad built a house in Mayo while he was still running the post at Lansing (the house is now owned by Margaret and Dick Wallingham). Florence and I stayed there with the kids so they could go to school in Mayo." She married James Edward "Jim" Wood in 1935.*

*"In 1937 Dad left Lansing to go outside on business. Jimmy and I went up to look after the post while he was away and by the time we came down to Mayo again Dad had bought the Chateau Mayo hotel and store."*



**Flood at Lansing. Dinky in forefront**

Maggie Wood and her family moved to Whitehorse in 1941. Her father returned to Ontario and died there in 1957. After his death, her mother moved to Whitehorse

and remarried. She died in Whitehorse and is buried in Mayo. The Woods' son lives in Whitehorse and the daughter lives in California. Three of Mervyn's children (Louis, George and Roy) live in Whitehorse and a son lives in Mayo.

... as told by Margaret May "Maggie" Wood.  
[Mayo Historical Society. Gold and Galena. 1990.]

## **Lonny Johnny**

Lonny Johnny was born at Lansing. His father's father came from Fort Good Hope. Lonny Johnny's mother, Elizabeth, married a man from Inuvik, Johnny.<sup>37</sup>

*"They came down a long time ago, before me. One of them was my grandpa. My [paternal] grandpa came from Good Hope. My other [maternal] grandpa came from Fort McPherson. That was a long time ago. My [paternal] grandpa died at Lansing Creek. He trapped all over the place — at Wind River, Bonnet Plume, Snake River, Little Arctic River, Arctic Red River — all over, trapping. I was born at Lansing. My grandpa came from Good Hope with some dog teams, my daddy's dad. All of those people are dead now.*

*"This was a good country; that's why they came to Lansing. There was lots of moose at that time. They came with their boats to the mountains, and came down the Stewart River.... They were all together all the time. In the wintertime they trapped everywhere. In springtime they came down again and stayed at Lansing."*

... as told by Lonny Johnny.  
[McClellan, Catharine. Part of the Land, Part of the Water. 1987.]

"Lonnie Johnny's family came from Fort Good Hope in the Mackenzie River district and lived at Lansing Post. His father's name was Johni, and Johni had a brother named Lucas. His uncle was Alsän Mases, and Alsän had an older sister named Cecil. He had two sisters: the younger sister was Alphonsi, and the older one was Eliza Farr, who now lives in Dawson.

"Both his parents died of gunshot wounds. His father accidentally shot himself with a .22 rifle while hunting rabbits, and Lonnie's mother was accidentally shot in the chest by a man from Pelly while he was cleaning his .33 rifle in a cabin at Lansing."

Information provided by Paul Germaine. [Mayo Historical Society. Gold & Galena. 1990.]

## **Eliza Farr**

Eliza Farr's father, Fred Lightning, came from Alaska, and her mother (also Lonny Johnny's mother) was Elizabeth. Eliza Farr was born at Ladue Creek in 1920 and baptized at Fort Good Hope when she was two or three years old.

... as told by Eliza Farr to Louise Profeit-LeBlanc, July 16, 1998.  
[Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

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<sup>37</sup> Interview with Eliza Farr, Dawson City, July 16, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

## Ellen Olin

*"I was born at Lansing, but my dad came from Fort Good Hope. My parents came over from the Mackenzie to Lansing by trapping. They came over with a mooseskin boat. A lot of families came over together. When they moved to Lansing, they didn't want to go back. There was a big store there, a trading post. There was more animals this way too — lots.... There was some people from Lansing staying there before my parents came — some families.*

*"The owner of the store was a white person from Mayo [probably Jim Mervyn]. Sometimes a few people from Mayo went up that way when they were trapping. The (Lansing Indians) fished, hunted, and the fur they got by trapping they sold to trading post there and got food. A few families went back to the Mackenzie and never came back to Lansing. That was their country and they wanted to go back."*

... as told by Ellen Olin, translated by Catherine Olin.  
[McClellan, Catharine. Part of the Land, Part of the Water, p. 290.]

**Lonny Johnny and James Bond (hunter)**



## The Archival Records — and what next?

### *Church records*

In 1908, the first missionary arrived at Lansing. A Catholic priest from Dawson, Father Godfrey Eichelsbacher, OMI, travelled to Lansing in 1908 and stayed among the people there for three weeks. He returned in 1910, and the following year, Father Joseph Schuster, OMI, also travelled to the area. In July 1912, Father Joseph Allard, OMI, joined Jim Mervyn, who had just brought four native people to the hospital in Dawson, and was returning to Lansing. Father Allard returned to Dawson in mid-August. On these trips, the priests were moved by the devotion and enthusiasm of the people for their religious faith.<sup>38</sup>

According to Father Huijbers, Father E. LeRay, OMI, went up the Stewart River in a pole boat and portaged around the falls to reach Lansing in about 1918. At that time there were over 100 native people there, and they had built a log meeting house where Father LeRay stayed and held ceremonies, mass and instruction. He spent two months there and went to Mayo for four weeks, then to Wernecke. Father Huijbers also said that Father A. Monet, OMI, visited Lansing, probably in the mid-1930s, and that Father Plaine was also a visitor there during the five years prior to Father Huijber's own time in the area beginning in 1947.<sup>39</sup>

During a 1992 interview, Father Huijbers explained that he compiled some information about Lansing and that he obtained the best material from records in the Northwest Territories. Sister Angela Shea, CND, in Mayo said that Father Huijbers had left material there that he had compiled in 1970. This information includes birth dates and band memberships throughout the territory. The Catholic church in Mayo also has a parish register with births, baptisms and marriages. Sister Angela has been very helpful in locating this material and has offered to make it available.

Brother Spruyt, OMI, in Whitehorse kindly provided information from an interview he had conducted with Father Joseph Plaine several years ago and other material that he had about Lansing.

There may also be information in church records in Dawson; however, Father Jean Paul Tanguay, OMI, said in an interview in 1989 that many records from Dawson were lost.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Morisset, Father E., OMI. "Notes on the Indian Village of Lansing (1898-1921 or 1922)," February 28, 1987. [Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse: unpublished manuscript.]

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Father Henk Huijbers, OMI, Mayo, July 24, 1992, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Father J-P. Tanguay, OMI, Whitehorse, November 8, 1989, by Helene Dobrowolsky. [Yukon Archives: SR 109-1]

Before pursuing church records in the Mackenzie River area, where Father Huijbers said he found so much valuable information, it would be worth having a clear idea of what he gathered in his research. In the 1992 interview, Father Huijbers commented that he discussed his research with Linda MacDonald, probably during the preparation of the Mayo Historical Society's Gold and Galena. Ms. MacDonald may also be able to help in piecing together the information. The dates in these records would be very helpful in interpreting some of the information in the oral history work outlined above, as it was often the case that people mentioned somebody dying during an epidemic or at a particular time, but it is not clear exactly when this took place. The dates and names would also be helpful in compiling genealogy information.

## **Government**

### **Surveyors**

Prior to Charles Camsell's and Joseph Keele's explorations of the upper reaches of the Stewart River in 1905, no topographic surveys had been done. In 1898, J. J. McArthur reached the mouth of Hess River and gleaned general information from prospectors coming downriver, including that Lansing Creek was a "considerable stream." R. G. McConnell had also explored the Stewart River, but he only travelled as far as Fraser Falls.

Keele described non-native activities in the area in his 1905 report: "There are no previous records of the river above this point [Fraser Falls] and very little appears to have been known about it previous to 1898. During this and the following year several prospectors crossed the divide from the Mackenzie side and descended the Stewart to the Yukon. In the same years large parties of gold seekers ascended the river, but very few of them went beyond Frazer falls as the reports brought down were not encouraging."

In the summer of 1937, A. C. Tuttle led a survey team in the Lansing Creek district to survey and map. No published report from this survey was found at the Yukon Archives, nor was one listed in the GSC index of publications.

### **Yukon Government, RCMP & Indian Affairs records**

In addition to the records referred to in this report, a number of other sources have been checked. The following government records have been reviewed either at the file level, based on previously made notes on the file contents, or in scanning the finding aids for these records: the Yukon Government's game records (YRG 1, Series 3 and 9); other Yukon Government records (YRG 1, Series 1, 2, 4-8, and 9-12, which include land titles and applications, fur trade permits, some RCMP reports, etc.); Yukon government records in the Yukon Records Office files; Yukon Indian Agency reports in the Department of Indian Affairs annual reports between 1914 and 1936 (an Indian Agent took office in the Yukon in 1914); and RCMP annual reports (1914-1920, after which the annual reports have no detailed, relevant information). Finding aids at the Yukon Archives for records in the Northern Affairs

Program, NWT & Yukon Branch (RG 85) have also been reviewed. Some of these records are on microfilm and available at the Yukon Archives, and others are also microfilmed but must be ordered from the National Archives in Ottawa (a process which takes over six weeks). Of the records available at the Yukon Archives, the following files have been looked at: vol. 749, f. 4413 (Census & population Yukon, 1921-1953); vol. 758, f. 4778 (Churches in the Yukon, 1925); vol. 663, f. 3842 (CR Settlemeir Report on Yukon Territory, 1912); vol. 663, f. 3854 (re. Smallpox, Dawson 1911); and vol. 889, f. 9355 (Mayo - monthly progress reports 1938). Several microfilm from the National Archives have been ordered but have not arrived. If useful information is found in these files after they arrive, it will be submitted to the Heritage Branch under separate cover.

### ***Photographs***

Few photographs of the Lansing area were found at the Yukon Archives. The Yukon Archives does not use "Lansing" as a subject heading, either as a place name or trading post. As a result, descriptions for individual collections were reviewed to find relevant photographs. All uncatalogued photograph collections were checked in this manner (i.e. looking for references to travel or spending time in the upper Stewart River area).

### ***Other institutions/organizations***

In response to a letter to the NWT Archives in Yellowknife, asking about information that they may have about Lansing and the people from Fort Good Hope, Peter Harding wrote on March 1: "We have scoured our databases looking for information on Lansing Post, the Upper Stewart River and Fort Good Hope from that period. One mention of Lansing and the Upper Stewart is in the Geological Survey of Canada's 1906 Annual Report by Charles Camsell and Joseph Keele. The book does not mention the Lansing Post, and is specifically scientific in nature. I'm afraid that's all the luck I've had. If you would like, I could forward any further mention of these topics to you. Good luck with your search." Nothing relevant was found on the NWT Archives' on-line database.

A search for organizations in the NWT (particularly in the Fort Good Hope area) was conducted, but only the Norman Wells Historical Centre appears and its focus is on the Canol Pipeline in the 1920s and 1940s.

The National Archives of Canada may have additional information, such as RCMP patrol reports and correspondence other than those mentioned in this report. They may also have photographs from surveying expeditions.

Information gathered by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc in Mayo and Whitehorse over the years has been incorporated into this report.

Sister Angela Shea, CND, in Mayo will be sending relevant information from the Catholic parish register to Louise Profeit-LeBlanc.

No contact was made with the Mayo Historical Society seeking their help, and this would be a valuable next step.



Albert Pelland, Norman Mervyn, Alex VanBibber, Lieutenant Hammond, Keizer Mervyn, Lonny Johnny  
Bottom: Norman Nedry's Cabin. Lansing Post



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Fraser Falls Picnic

***Oral history***

Interview with Alice Buyck, Mayo, July 14, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc.  
[Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

Interview with Catherine Germaine, Mayo, July 15, 1998, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc.  
[Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

Interview with Jenny Germaine, July 13, 1998, Mayo, by Louise Profeit-LeBlanc.  
[Heritage Branch, Yukon government]

Interview with Flora Harper, McCauley Lodge, Whitehorse, August 25, 1998, by  
Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

Interview with Father Henk Huijbers, OMI, Mayo, July 24, 1992, by Louise Profeit-  
LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

Interview with Dave Moses, at his homestead at Crooked Creek, July 21, 1998, by  
Louise Profeit-LeBlanc. [Heritage Branch, Yukon Government]

Interview with Father Joseph Plaine, OMI, Oblate Centre, Whitehorse, December  
18, 1993, by Brother Spruyt. [Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse]

Interview with Father Jean Paul Tanguay, OMI, Whitehorse, November 8, 1989, by Helene Dobrowolsky. [Yukon Archives: SR 109-1]



Three Kimbel brothers, Joe MacIntosh, Jim Mervyn (with suspenders and hat)

Bottom: W. Wilson. Upper Lansing Creek



## Appendix

### *Photographs*

1. Epic Expedition Marks Pipeline Survey — Lt. Bill Hammond 4th from left, hired five men to guide him across the back bone of the continent on a 560-mile, 42-day trip through uncharted wilderness in temperatures that dipped to 65 below zero (F). The list reads like an all-star team of Yukon trappers and guides — experts in their field. Left to Right: Albert Pelland, Norman Mervyn, Alex Van Bibber, Hammond, Kaiser Mervyn, and Lonny Johnny. Feb. 18, 1943. [Yukon Archives: Alex Van Bibber Collection, acc. 92/28, PHO 434, #1]
2. “Lonny Johnny born on the Mackenzie River, but raised at Lansing, on the headwaters of the Upper Stewart at left. Kaiser Mervyn, raised at Lansing where his father ran a trading post, second from left. Alex Van Bibber, raised on the Upper Macmillan and Pelly rivers third from left, and Lt. Bill Hammond of the United States Army Engineers. Photo taken at Lansing Creek during expedition to Fort Norman and Norman Wells from Mayo in 1943.” [Yukon Archives: Alex Van Bibber Collection, acc. 92/28, PHO 434, #7] [caption list for this accession is attached]
3. Norman’s trap cabin at Lansing. Norman was born a few feet from this cabin. [Yukon Archives: Bond, James. From Out of the Yukon. 1948.]
4. “[Father Henk Huijbers with] Atsitso and Taja.” [ca. 1948] [Yukon Archives: Barry O’Neill Collection, acc. 88/120, PHO 366, #22a]
5. “Irene Mervyn, Darlene (the baby) & Davis Johnson at the back of the 1st St. Jude’s.” [ca. 1950s] [Yukon Archives: Father Jean Paul Tanguay Collection, acc. 88/150, PHO 372, #42]
6. Frank Germaine, his wife (Jenny) holding a baby, and Helen Olin (third from left) at Fraser Falls, n.d. [Yukon Archives: David Hager Collection, acc. 80/22, #8870]
7. Chief Alfred Moses and Alice, [ca. 1930s]. [Yukon Archives: William Hare Collection, acc. 82/418, #6953]
8. “Indian Stephen,” n.d. [is this Steven Louis?]. [Yukon Archives: William Hare Collection, acc. 82/418, #6851]
9. Selected pages from: Cruikshank, Julie and Jim Robb. Their Own Yukon: A photographic history by Yukon Indian people.

10. [Large gathering of First Nations people with Father Joseph Allard at Lansing, ca. 1912]. [Yukon Archives: Father Jean Paul Tanguay Collection, acc. 86/107, oversized photograph, MCD#3]

***Written material***

11. "Patrol report of Corporal F. H. Thompson, Mayo Landing to Lansing Creek," Mayo Landing Detachment, August 27, 1911, in Royal Northwest Mounted Police Annual Report 1911. Ottawa: 1912, pp. 228-229.
12. Three RCMP reports re. Alison Mazie. [Yukon Archives: GOV 2842, YRG 1, Series 7, vol. 33, pt. 8]



**Mrs. Julie Mervyn and children at Lansing  
Bottom: Mervyn boys. Lansing**

