

SKOOKUM JIM:  
Native and Non-Native Stories and Views  
About His Life and Times  
And the Klondike Gold Rush

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By Rab Wilkie and The Skookum Jim Friendship Center

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The literary contributions of Mrs. Angela Sidney, Mrs. Kitty Smith, and Mrs. Annie Ned, made available as a result of anthropologist Julie Cruickshank's long research and recent publications, are ample and evident; as are the information and stories compiled by the Skookum Jim Friendship Center over the years, which includes research and stories by Carcross Native historian, Johny Johns. Less evident in this report, but of equal significance, are the contributions of Pete Sidney who instigated the formation of the Skookum Jim Potlatch Society in the 1970s, and others who worked with him on this and on the Skookum Jim Oral History Project a few years earlier.

However, we are especially grateful to Frank Lacosse, the late Director of the Skookum Jim Friendship Center, who provided the original idea for more comprehensive research with the goal of publishing a book about Skookum Jim, the traditions of his people, and the organisation founded in his name. Frank's proposed title for this book, "The Man, the Clan, the Organisation", will surely continue to inspire and guide this project to completion.

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Rab Wilkie,

Whitehorse,  
March 20, 1992.

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INTRODUCTION  
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Skookum Jim Mason is undoubtedly the best known Indian figure in Yukon history, though in comparison with non-Native historical figures, very little is known about his life and background, at least to people other than his own. The main reason for this is that writers of history have mostly been non-Native, writing from their own perspective about their own people.

This state of affairs is beginning to change, largely as a result of interchanges between Native people and anthropologists who together have been working to translate oral traditions into literature, thus preparing the way for a more complete Yukon history. This trend has been reinforced more recently as a result of increasing literacy, and interest among Native individuals in recording their own past, which has been producing a growing number of written accounts in a variety of publications. However, this trend may be threatened to some extent by the advent of new means of communication.

The current expansion of Native communications into theatrical, film, and broadcasting media, though an exciting and valuable opportunity, may divert efforts from producing a much needed body of Native literature, historical and otherwise. This report may therefore help to fill the developmental gap between oral tradition and the emerging electronic tradition, and encourage others not to leave the vital link of a literary tradition unformed or weak.

Skookum Jim's name is well-known because he participated significantly in the main event of Yukon history: the Klondike Gold Rush of 1896-98, and has been recorded by chroniclers as one of the discoverers of gold on Bonanza Creek who initiated the sudden migration of thousands of prospectors to the area around Dawson City. This precipitated the creation of the Yukon Territory, the defining of Canada's northwestern boundaries with respect to the United States, and established mining as the prime Yukon industry. A less known fact about Skookum Jim is his part in the instigation of the smaller gold rush to the Kluane area in 1903, which brought increased settlement and development, and ultimately contributed to the routing of the Alaska Highway through the southwest rather than by way of Dawson.

What is not generally recognised or appreciated about Skookum Jim is the extent to which he fulfilled the roles of cultural ambassador, benefactor, and pioneer during a crucial and intense period of contact and adaptation involving disparate cultures. I hope the materials reproduced in this report will help to make this clear.

The scope of research has been limited mainly to the compilation and editing of previously published and currently available materials relating to Skookum Jim, forming a basis on which further research, including recorded interviews and oral histories, can proceed.

The narratives, documents, newspaper articles, other accounts, and especially the stories about Skookum Jim presented in the report are the most valuable historical and ethnographic items. They can and probably will in future be interpreted and explained in a variety of ways, though they may always remain most useful and interesting as things in themselves.

Throughout, I have included background and brief explanations to introduce different subjects, as well as my own commentaries and some analysis in an attempt to tie a wide range of topics together. Much of this is tentative and offered only as suggestions for future lines of enquiry and study by others who, hopefully, will be more informed and familiar with the content than myself.

The organisation of the report is shown in the table of contents, which may seem complex though it is essentially straight forward. The materials are presented in temporal order, representing Skookum Jim's family and cultural past, through periods in his early and later life, to the unfoldment after his demise of benefits accruing from his last wishes and legacy. In addition, there are substantial appendices containing a chronology of historical events, and biographical, ethnographic, and genealogical information about Skookum Jim's clan, relatives, and friends. I have also included a short section on George Carmack's dream which is tangential to Skookum Jim's life, but which may be a useful lead for future enquiry -- the role of dreams and myths in the lives of non-Native (as well as Native) Yukon people.

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PART ONE:                   BACKGROUND  
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I    IN THE BEGINNING:   TWO STORIES ABOUT CROW

Stories about crows or ravens are found all over the world, but in areas of western North America this bird is given special status by being identified with the creator of the world. The following stories, told by Mrs. Angela Sidney, may not seem to have a direct connection with Skookum Jim and events in his life, but, as for all Native people in the Yukon, stories about Crow were very familiar and an important influence in shaping their attitudes and ways of dealing with life.

Crow may be a powerful and magical being, but when wearing his human mask he reflects all the strengths and weaknesses of being human. In the many and various stories told about him, he can be intelligent and creative, but also sometimes stupid and destructive. He can be generous and benevolent, or greedy and cruel. But whenever he makes mistakes he suffers the consequences, and sooner or later learns from them.

The following stories are about how Crow arranged his birth, and subsequently released the sun, moon, and stars from a box, thereby bringing light to the world. These stories focus on Crow's child-like playfulness and curiosity, but also his cunning and irresistible will. Such qualities were essential for survival in the north, especially for a people faced with the invasion of a foreign culture like the one that peaked during the Klondike Gold Rush around the turn of the last century.

Skookum Jim was a lucky man because he found gold in the Klondike, but his good fortune didn't just happen -- it was earned, possibly because he took to heart the lessons in the stories his elders told him, and to some extent may have ended up emulating a childhood hero. Like Crow, when Skookum Jim saw an opportunity to try something new, such as Whiteman's ways and learning to prospect for gold, he did. This was, on a more modest scale, as daring and as powerful an act as opening the box that kept the sun. Instead of releasing daylight upon the world, Skookum Jim brought material wealth to the Yukon -- instead of celestial light, the light hidden in the earth as gold.

The Crow stories here are probably very close to what Skookum Jim heard as a child, because the story-teller is one of his relatives who learned her stories as passed down by elders she and Skookum Jim both knew. One of these was her mother, Maria John, who played a significant role in Skookum Jim's life. Maria, as will be seen in later accounts, tended him when he was ill in Dyea and found a frog licking his wound, and then at the end of his life when he lay dying in Carcross.

Other stories and accounts by Angela Sidney are presented throughout this report. They are invaluable because she was one of Skookum Jim's relatives and knew him when she was a young girl living in Carcross. More important, however, Mrs. Sidney was, until her passing in 1991 at the age of 89, the one of the foremost knowledge-holders and historians of her people.

The Birth of Crow

"One time there is a girl whose daddy is a very high man. They kept her in her bedroom all the time. Men try to marry her all the time but they say no, she's too good.

Crow wanted to be born. Wants to make the world. So he made himself into a pine needle. A slave always brings water to that girl. One time he brings water with pine needle in it. She turns it down. Makes him get fresh water. He brings it again. Again pine needle there. Four times he brings and each time its there. Finally, she gives up. She spits that pine needle out and drank the water. But it blew in her mouth and she swallowed it. Soon she's pregnant.

Her mother and daddy are mad. Her mother askes her, 'Who's that father'?

'No, I never know a man,' she say.

That baby starts to grow fast. That girl's father has the sun, moon, stars, daylight, hanging in his house. He's the only one has them. The world was all dark, all the time. The boy begged for them to play with.

Finally the father gives his grandchild sun to play with. He rolls it around. He plays with it, laughs, has lots of fun. Then he rolls it to the door and out it goes. "Oh!" he cries. He just pretends. He cries because that sun is lost.

'Give me moon to play with.' They say no at first. Like now if baby asks for sun, moon, you say, 'That's your grandfather's fire.' Finally they gave it to him.



One by one they gave him sun, moon, stars, daylight. He loses them all.

'Where does she get that child from? He loses everything,' her father say."

Crow Brings Light to the World

"Then Crow disappears. Has those things with him in a box. He walks around. Comes to river. Lots of animals are there: fox, wolf, wolverine, mink, rabbit. Everybody's fishing. That time animals all talk like people talk now. The world is dark.

'Give me fish,' Crow says. No-one pay any attention.

'Give me fish or I bring daylight.'

They laugh at him.

He's holding a box -- starts to open it and lets one ray out. Then they pay attention. He opens box a bit more. They're scared. Finally he broke that daylight box and throw it out. Those animals scatter, hide in the bush and turn into animals like now. Then the sun, moon, stars, daylight come out.

'Go to the skies,' Crow say. 'Now no one man owns it,' he say. 'It will be for everyone.'

He's right, what he say, that Crow."

[Sidney, in Cruickshank 1979: 59-60]

## II SHAGOON: FAMILY HISTORY

### Shagoon

"'Shagoon', which might be called the root concept in Tlingit culture, is a very complex notion. In its primary sense, it signified an individual's or a matrilineal group's ancestors, heritage, origin, and destiny. As one of de Laguna's [1972:813] informants explained, 'Shagoon could be future, could be past ... In the future ... like who is going to be born through us, and where we are going to move, and what's going to happen.' I was told by one elderly friend that shagoon meant 'my ancestors before me who know what is going to happen [to me and my matrikin]. The clan's totemic animals(s) as well as the crest(s) representing it were also called shagoon.

In addition, because the ancestral past and the clan's destiny were imbued with sacredness, shagoon was also used to refer to an impersonal and abstract supreme being, ... as well as the personified Creator in the guise of Raven ...

Most clans had one or several major crests and a number of secondary ones. The former were believed to have been acquired during the .. migration of clan ancestors from the interior to the coast ...

... The shagoon of a lineage or clan was passed down ... in the form of ancestral myths, songs, and dances, many of them depicting and describing the ancestors' exploits and crests. By learning about the history of one's matrilineal group through these media, a Tlingit internalised the essential attributes of his group's identity and became a mature person."

[Kan, 1989: 68-73]

### Skookum Jim's Shagoon

Skookum Jim's parents were Tagish people, but their matrilineal roots went further afield. Gus'duteen, Skookum Jim's mother, was of the Dakl'aweidi clan who came originally from Telegraph Creek, while Kaachgaawaa was Deisheetaan, originally from Angoon and Klukwan on the coast. Skookum Jim's ancestors therefore included Tahltan and Tlingit, but also maybe Tutchone and Tagish or whichever people lived in the area when the Dakl'aweidi first settled at the head of Marsh Lake (Tagish).

Since the matrilineages of his parents were the same as those of Angela Sidney's parents, for accounts of their shared family histories we can go to Mrs. Sidney:

## 1. Dakl'aweidi History

"[Skookum Jim's mother was] Dak'laweidi, which owns Killer Whale and is Wolf. Tagish Dak'laweidi came from Telegraph Creek ... at Ta|tan ...[which means 'flat country']

They had some trouble down there over a woman -- that's why they parted, why they moved away. They floated down the Stikine River to Wrangell. They were close to salt water when they saw a glacier coming down -- just touching the creek, like this. You can't go across in front of it. That glacier always falls down, makes a noise.

So they landed above it and started to talk about it: 'How are we going to get further down? That glacier might fall down and get us all killed!' So they don't know what to do. They didn't want to go back to Ta|tan because they made trouble with each other. That's why they're moving out. Finally, two old men decided to go -- to try it. Two little old men ready to die, I guess. "Send us through it. We're old now. We're no good to you people. If we die, you won't miss us much anyhow." That's what they told the rest of the younger people ... Those two little men had a boat of their own, so they must have gone under the glacier. I wish I could get up that way and find it!

When they're ready to take off, they made a song: 'Shove it out now!' This is the song they pushed them out with. They remember it [still] -- that's the song they separated on. [The Dakl'aweidi] people used to sing it if they're going to make a potlatch. I remember they sang it in 1912 when I was a little girl -- I was ten years old that time. They sang it just before they're going to spend money at that potlatch.

Those two men were going to make a sign if they got through safely. Here, they made it through! So they made a sign -- what kind of sign I don't know -- they made a sign when they landed safely on the other side of the glacier. So the rest went through, too.

When they reached Wrangell they camped on a gravel beach. That's where they got their name -- Dakl'aweidi ['gravel beach']. That's what they called themselves now -- I don't know what their name was before.

Before they started out again, they made another song: 'Way out to the sky I aim my boat.' Then that group split three ways: some went out to deep water, and some went to Yakutat. [The third group] came up the coast and went up the Chilkat River. They landed up there, and then they cut across country by Bear Creek Pass, and they landed in Tagish. That's where they make their home.

...It's Dakl'aweidi who own Tagish: they were the first to make their village here. That name passes through women, but the woman stays in the husband's ground ...

Some Dakl'aweidi went overland -- over the mountain to Pelly or Ross River[s] or someplace ..."

## 2. Deisheetaan History

"One time, long ago, a chief of the Deisheetaan nation -- that's us -- came in from Angoon. That chief's family sailed up the Chilkat River: they stayed there with Chilkat people and dried fish for the summer, maybe for two months. When they're going to head back, here that Chilkat chief's son has fallen in

love with that Deisheetaan chief's daughter! Well, they got married, Indian way. Her father and mother are from Angoon -- her father is a chief, too ...

Her children grew up around Taku River. [When they were grown] her three girls married [inland] to Tagish, to Teslin, to Telegraph Creek. One married to Dakl'aweidi here, in Tagish; one married to Yanyeidi, in Teslin; one married to Telegraph Creek; they call themselves Kaach.adi instead of Deisheetaan at Telegraph Creek, so we've got relatives there, too. Some people say there is a fourth daughter married into Pelly Banks, near Ross River; they use our Deisheetaan names up there so they must be related to us somehow. That's how we came to this country ...

When those daughters got married, people put moose skins for them to walk over to their husbands. Just think how many moose there must have been in those days! Then they potlatched those skins off to Wolf people. And then they killed three slaves. Those girls are all Crow.

Deisheetaan owns Beaver: just like the British have a flag, we have Beaver, and we have our own songs -- they belong to us. This is the story about it. They say there was a little lake behind Angoon. Beaver owned that place -- a beaver lake. Here, one time, somebody saved a little beaver and Deisheetaan people raised it. When it got big, that chief said to let it go. But Beaver dammed it up, they say -- he dammed up the creek, and when he did that, it raises the lake. He made tunnels all over the place, under the town. And when he slapped his tail and when he dived, the wave from that goes into the tunnel. And one time the town sank ... caved in ... too many holes. He made a great wave which drowned most people. That wave just about washed out Angoon.

So those who survived made a song about Beaver. The words of it are:

Who was smart enough to stop [advise against]  
this city at the sandy beach?  
Are you going to save your Crow?  
Is that why you're crying about it,  
Wolf, dear Wolf?

We own that song: it's like our flag ...

... Deisheetaan owns Carcross: Tukyeidi is part of Deisheetaan. Those Deisheetaan who married in this way, after a while they got children. That's the time they claimed this country. It was the women who came up here, who married up here, but it has to be a man who claims the country ... One nation owns it, not one person alone. We all own it. And we've got a song like that, too, just like national anthem. All nations have their own songs ...

In my time, Skookum Jim's father was the one [who] claimed Carcross for Deisheetaan. Kaachgaawaa was his name ... Naataase Heen is the Tlingit name for Carcross ... The oldest Deisheetaan should claim Carcross now -- that's my brother, Johnny Johns." [In 1992, the oldest Deisheetaan male is Pete Sidney, Angela's son.]

[Sidney, in Cruickshank 1990: 37-41]

According to Peter Johns, one of Angela Sidney's brothers interviewed in 1972, the hereditary chiefs of the Dakl'aweidi Wolf people of the Tagish-Carcross area were: Tagish Jim from [circa] 1900, Patsy Henderson from 1930, George Sidney

(Acting Chief from 1964, and William Atlin, the present chief since 1966. Jackie Good would be next in line since the death of John Atlin, William's brother, in 1991.

The Deisheetaan Crows haven't 'officially' chosen a chief since Tagish Charlie died in 1905 [Whitehorse Daily Evening News; 15Nov05], "... the Crows weren't on the ball. They forgot to elect their chiefs after Tagish Charlie."

[Peter Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

### 3. Skookum Jim's Family

Skookum Jim Mason, born into the Dakl'aweidi clan of Tagish in the 1850s, was originally given the clan name Keish, meaning "wolf". He was the son of the Tagish Deisheetaan chief, Kaachgaawaa, and his wife, Gus'duteen, whose people were from Tahltan country around Telegraph Creek. His father's father was a Tagish man whose Deisheetaan wife was one of three (or possibly four) daughters who married inland from Angoon on the coast. These were daughters of a union between a son of the Klukwan chief and the daughter of the chief of Angoon.

According to Angela Sidney [Sidney, 1983], Keish had at least seven siblings, an older brother and six sisters. His brother and his brother's wife and children all died leaving no descendants. Two of his sisters, as well as Keish himself, had no descendants beyond a first generation. As a result of contact with Europeans, epidemics became increasingly frequent among his people, causing many premature deaths.

The sisters of Keish who survived were Aage, Shaaw Tlaa, Kooyay, and Nadagaat' Tlaa. From these four Dakl'aweidi mothers, many people today can trace their clan lineage.

According to one document, Skookum Jim's first will of January, 11, 1904 [Phelps Papers], he included as a beneficiary another sister called Jenny, the wife of Henry T. Cook, a White prospector. Since her blood relationship with Skookum Jim has never been confirmed by his family, the use of the term, "sister", may be the result of confusion over Native kinship terms. Another sister, George Carmack's first wife, died soon after their marriage [Cruickshank 1991: 129].

Shaaw Tlaa got her English name, Kate, from George Carmack because he could not pronounce her Tlingit name. According to Carmack's biographer her name sounded like "Jeef Lot" [Johnson 1990: 47], but this rendering is suspect because it matches more closely "Jee|.aat" , a different Dakl'aweidi name given to two of Kate's relatives who were her contemporaries -- Florence Hammond, and Mary Sheldon Abner .

Aage, through marriage with Lunaatl', a |ukaax.adi man from the coast, had two daughters, Susie George and Louise. While Susie married on the coast and usually lived there, Louise remained at Tagish and married a Whiteman and former member of the North-West Mounted Police, Tom Dickson. From this union came the Dicksons, with daughters marrying and becoming Chambers, Jacquot, and James, passing on the inheritance of Dakl'aweidi clan membership to their offspring.

With a subsequent marriage to a prospector, Mr. Wilson, Aage became the first of her family to marry a White prospector and experience life on the creeks. From this union a daughter, Mary (or Minnie), was born, though Aage died soon after.

Shaaw Tlaa, in a second marriage, married another prospector, George Carmack from California who led the group that discovered gold on Bonanza Creek. They had one daughter, Graphie Gracie, who married Jacob Saftig, the brother of George's third wife, Marguerite Laimee. Graphie, originally named Aage by her mother, married Jacob in Seattle when she was 17, and had three children: Ernest -- called Keish by his grandfather, George Carmack, in honour of Skookum Jim, Marguerite, and James. This branch of Skookum Jim's family all reside in the United States

Kooyay, according to Angela Sidney, married Tlawch', her father's brother, and raised a large family which included Jikaak'w ("Old" Mrs. Scotty), Billy Smith,

Patsy Henderson, Dawson Charlie, and Gooch Tlaa. Of these children, Billy, who married Kitty, Patsy who married Edith, and possibly Gooch Tlaa who married John Bone, bore children who have descendants alive today, though the Dakla'weidi clan lineage would have been passed on only through Gooch Tlaa. Both Kitty Smith and Edith Henderson were Gaanax.adi and so passed this lineage on to their children. The surviving Henderson daughter, Lily, married Buck Dickson, a descendant of Aage, and so brought Gaanax.adi into the Dickson line of descent.

The fourth sister of Skookum Jim to produce descendants was Nadagaat' Tlaa. She married a Gaanax.adi man, Sheidax'ee, and had one daughter and two sons: Susie Joseph, Shakoon, and Sam Smith. During a trek over the Chilkoot Pass with her daughter, Nadagaat' Tlaa perished in a blizzard, though the girl was rescued by a man named Scully -- a partner of Sam McGee, whose name would later become associated with a character in a poem by Robert Service, ("The Cremation of Sam McGee"). [Wren, transcript on file at CYI, Curriculum Development Branch]

Susie was the only child of Nadagaat' Tlaa to have descendants and pass on her Dakl'aweidi clan membership. She married Billy Atlin of the Deisheetaan clan, and raised four children: Lucy (James) Wren, John Atlin, Mary Smarch, and William Atlin.

These then are the four branches of descent from Skookum Jim's family, stemming from the marriage of the Tagish chief, Kaachgaawaa, and Gus'duteen.

Skookum Jim's wife, Mary, was Lukaax.adi of the Raven or Crow moiety and born on the coast at Klukwan. Her Tlingit name was Daakuxda.eit ('Like a pearl'). . According to Johnny Johns [Skookum Jim Oral History Project, 1973] she was a sister of Jenny Mark[s] (Kultuyax See), the mother of Austin Hammond, a respected elder of the Haines area in Alaska.

## MEETING WHITEMEN

### First Encounters

For Indians in the Yukon the earliest contacts with Europeans, or with other Natives who had met Europeans, occurred about 200 to 250 years ago. The first Europeans to land near the Yukon, first on the Pacific then later on the Arctic coasts, were explorers from Russia, Spain, Britain, and the United States.

Russians seeking furs were the earliest arrivals, as they proceeded from the Aleutian Islands (about 1750) and down the coast to Sitka where they established their main base a few decades later. Their contacts with the coastal Tlingit stimulated trade, especially with the Chilkoot and Chilkat people who gained control of trade with Indians of the interior. The Tlingit kept such tight control over access routes, however, that there is no record of Europeans entering the area of present-day Yukon from the west until well into the 19th Century. By this time fur-trading posts had been established in the interior by the Hudson's Bay Company which had sent men in from the east, by-passing the coastal dead-lock, in order to counteract a potential Russian monopoly.

The Scottish explorer, Alexander Mackenzie, helped to open up the north-eastern approach to the Yukon for the British fur-traders. He learned about the region from some Gwich'in (Loucheux) people he met in 1789 when he reached the Arctic coast from the south, along the river that has been named after him; but the first incursions came later when traders of the Hudson's Bay Company sailed along the northern coast searching for a north-west passage in the 1820s and 1830s. The first journeys inland were made by Scots : John McLeod, who in 1831 came as far as Simpson Lake by way of Liard River; John Bell, who entered along the Peel in 1839; and Robert Campbell, who arrived the following year at Pelly River from Frances Lake. All were employed by the Hudson's Bay Company which was attempting to extend its trading empire into the Yukon basin where highly valued marten furs were plentiful. [McClellan, 1987: 63; Coates, 1991: 21-31]



The first trading post in the Yukon was established at Frances Lake in 1840 by Robert Campbell who had his crew build Glenlyon House, named after the seat of the Campbell clan in Scotland, and later changed to Fort Frances, for the purpose of trading with the local people who were probably the ancestors of the Kaska. Several years later, in 1848, Campbell established a larger and busier post, which he called Fort Selkirk, at the junction of the Pelly and Yukon Rivers. Fort Yukon had been built by Alexander Murray a year earlier, but its site, at the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers, as Murray had suspected, turned out to be in territory claimed by Russia. [Coutts, 1980: 112; McClellan, 1987: 64]

When Europeans eventually came into the territory, they approached from the east, establishing camps and trading posts along the way, meeting and interacting directly with representatives of virtually all Native communities in due course. However, the people and area least known to the Whites were the Tagish of the extreme southwest, even though the Tagish had been more closely influenced than any other Yukon group since the earliest period of European exploration.

The Russian fur-traders had been operating since the late 1700s along the coast, within several days journey from Tagish, but the Tlingit blockade prevented travel to and from the coast. The isolation of Tagish was not ended until the late 1800s when a few prospectors began entering the interior by way of the Chilkoot Pass, and then more dramatically in 1896-98 when the discovery of gold in the Klondike brought thousands of Europeans seeking wealth.

The Tagish community's long isolation, followed by this sudden and great influx of foreigners, resulted in it being subjected to the most disruptive and potentially traumatic changes experienced by any Yukon people. The story of Skookum Jim reflects these relatively late changes as they were experienced in one corner of the Yukon, but other people closer to the advancing perimeter of European influence had been telling stories about contacts for several generations.

The following story derives from Inuit-Indian-European contacts that show a remarkably wide-ranging series of geographical and cultural transactions. It is told by Rachel Dawson (1902-1976) of Fort Selkirk, who is unrelated to Skookum Jim, though she and her husband, George Dawson from Lake Leberge, were quite well-known around Carcross.

1. The Man from Greenland

"These Indians I talk about were from Greenland.  
Later they came over to Mackenzie.  
Then they came over to Selkirk, in the Yukon.

That man from Pelly, Suzay, his father and mother were over. the ones who came  
Those people saw the first Whiteman.  
Nobody see them before that.  
Those Indians had skin clothes, skin boat,  
still live the old way.

Suzay was little boy then.  
From Mackenzie they came -- his father, mother, five or six sisters, and one  
young Indian man not yet married.

Over on Mackenzie side this happened.  
That young man see Whiteman first.  
He saw big boat they have.  
That young man say he go to look at them.  
He went up there to see those Whitemen.

When he came back, he told his people about them.  
'They have white skin,' he says, 'I never see that before.  
They have nice boat. Nice hot water. All dress in suits.  
Wear shirt, wear hat.'

They're from England, I guess.  
They give him bath in that hot water, he say,  
put stuff on him that makes bubbles, all froth up.  
That's soap you know.  
They gave him clean clothes like theirs -- suit, hat,  
I guess, they throw out his skin clothes.

He's dressed in Whiteman's clothes when he comes back to them.  
He told them he's going to go with them white people  
and he's going to stay four years, back to their country.  
'One summer, one winter, one summer, one winter, one summer, one winter, one winter.'  
They bring him back then, he tells them. summer, one  
He sure trust those Whitemen alot, eh?

That time he's going to go with them, they all come to that camp to get  
him.  
Then they're gone.

After four years, everybody think about him, I guess.  
In four years time, that same boat comes back.  
They bring that boat back.  
They took him to England.

He tells about where he's been, strange place.  
They got house, fire inside.  
They cook inside there, like right in camp!  
Play music, dance.  
It's wonderful. He likes it.

They put up tree for Christmas, give each other  
presents.  
He had big story when he came home about that.

Then he bring home everything.  
Everyone gave him things.  
They just gave gifts to him --  
cloth for clothes, that calico, sweaters.  
He gave it all away to those Indians.  
He's very important man then.

After that, he stay in Mackenzie for good.  
He tell other Indians what he see.  
He told them all about what they do.  
Those people stayed in Mackenzie for good,  
never went back to Greenland.

The he get married later on,  
came over to Selkirk with those people,  
Suzay and his family.  
Peter Joe's sister -- I forget her name -- is one of them.  
All those, Joe's, come from Mackenzie --  
Mackenzie Joe, Francis Joe.

The Indians, they get along good with Whiteman;  
they never fight.  
Once white people come in, they were quite happy to have them.  
They didn't have no grub except what they bring in with them  
but Indians give them dry meat and dry fish to a lot of those white people.  
'They save our lives,' [white man] say.  
They teach them how to get along out in the woods.  
That's how they survive.  
They never fight like the Cree Indians, or Cheyenne.  
They just let it go.  
And now when they talk about the land in Yukon,  
they think they should get something for it.  
They're right.  
I hope they get it anyway."

## 2. Prospectors at Tagish

European-Tagish interactions brought great changes though at first they were deceptively tentative. Prospectors who journeyed to the Klondike during the Gold Rush could travel from the coast to Dawson without making any contact, aside from an occasional sighting, with the indigenous people. There were some exceptions. The following excerpt shows the notions and fears of some Whitemen, and how these were partially overcome by the eagerness of the local people to meet and trade. Also included are comments ascribed to the "Tagish chief", which could have meant Kaachgaawaa, Skookum Jim's father. If this identification is correct, his terse and ironic observation about the mad rush of prospectors represents the only words of his ever recorded.

[On the third of July, 1897, a group of prospectors set off very early one morning from Lake Bennett, en route to the goldfields. On the horizon they saw a few scattered sails of other voyageurs. Eventually, ...]

"... approaching the end of Lake Bennett, we saw Indians fishing near shore ... There would be more at Lake Tagish, as the Indians have a village there and several communal houses for use during the cold winter. ... they hold their famous potlatches and ceremonials at Tagish.

[At Caribou Crossing] the Indians along shore watched us curiously from a distance ...

The outlet of Lake Bennett was a connecting river of about a quarter of a mile. Nearing the end of this channel, we could see that we were fast coming into another body of water ... It must be lake Tagish.

...The cliffs of the east side were breathtakingly high -- sheer precipices towering several thousand feet skyward and rising directly from the water's edge. At their tops, these massive cliffs had formations resembling medieval fortresses with impregnable battlements and looked as though they had been carved by the mighty hand of Nature in a wild, combative, war-like mood.

The whole atmosphere was still. There wasn't a sound on the lake or a stir among the cliffs ... only the creaking of our heavy oars and the rhythmic dip and splash of the water to break the stillness, with an occasional far-off mournful cry of a bird or the sudden splash of fish ...

'Where could Indians live in such a country?' asked Stacey. "It's so desolate and barren, it looks as though the wrath of God had visited this lonely place.'

[Approaching Tagish, Ed Lung comments: 'The Indians here ...] are said to be related to the Chilkat and Chilkoot living along the Lynn Canal. In the past they were a very fierce tribe ... Even the Russians couldn't cope with them, and it is said that, secretly, these Indians continued some of their ancient ceremonials even though the American and Canadian governments have banned them by law.

I've heard they still have what they call their 'Cannibal Secret Society' ... To be initiated [they] are supposed to eat the flesh of a corpse! And that isn't all! Underneath the pillars holding up their communal houses, often they buried their slaves captured in war -- buried them alive and then dropped heavy foundation posts and timbers onto the poor, luckless captives ... took snips of

their hair before the ceremony, to be used on dance sticks afterwards as proof of the superior quality of their tribal house.'

'Great Scott!' said Jorgensen, 'Let's not stop at this lake!'

Suddenly, we saw Indians along the left bank. Simultaneously, they saw us and began shouting and running along the beach ... They wanted us to land, but Jorgensen and Stacey had another idea. They began rowing as fast as they could. When the Indians saw we were ignoring their shouts, several canoes filled with whooping Indians put out swiftly from shore.

'Shall I shoot?' shouted Stacey, who had suddenly put down his oars and was reaching for his gun.

'No,' I said, 'let me handle this. Let's see what they want.'

Suddenly, the Indians put down their paddles and sat perfectly still while their canoes skimmed over the water towards us. There was a dead silence.

'Now what?' said Stacey in alarm.

All at once each Indian reached down in his canoe and held up something. By this time the canoes were just a few feet away.

'It's fish, it's fish!' I laughed in relief ... 'They have fish to sell and some of it's dried ...'

'Trade fish! Trade fish! ... Money and tobacco!' the Indians chanted in peculiar, broken English, all speaking at once.

'Well, I'll be goldarned!' said Stacey, 'I'll gladly buy some fish and part with a plug of tobacco!'

[They landed at the insistence of the Indians' invitation, and later sat, around a campfire on the beach, eating broiled fresh fish. About thirty curious Indians hovered near and watched.]

They were too close for comfort, and the smell of drying fish on huge racks nearby, and the odor of perspiring Indians was almost overpowering and nearly took our breath and appetite away. Some sat gleefully smoking some of our tobacco ...

'Now we've had our supper,' we told the gaping Indians, 'we must be on our way. We can still make many miles before dark.'

'Too many white men in too much hurry,' said their chief [Kaachgaawaa ?] philosophically.

...with great relief, [we] continued down the river-outlet of Lake Tagish. The Indian squaws and children waved, the dogs barked, and the men held up their spears in a last salute."

[Ed Lung, in Martinsen 1976: 49-54]

### 3. Prospectors at Marsh Lake

The following incident is remembered by Johnny Joe of Marsh Lake, whose people are closely related to Skookum Jim's at Tagish and Carcross. Their communities are near each other, Tagish being situated in the middle, at the south end of the lake with the Marsh Lake people living towards the other extreme, some near the McClintock and Yukon Rivers. Carcross is situated west of Tagish, and all three communities lie along the route taken by prospectors during the Gold Rush, from the Pacific coast to Dawson. This route was the one taken by Ed Lung and his friends in the previous passages.

The McClintock and Yukon are situated within a few miles of each other at the north end of Marsh Lake, which may explain why some prospectors confused them, though the McClintock is a smaller stream and empties into the lake, while the Yukon obviously flows north towards Whitehorse, and eventually to the Klondike and beyond.

As this excerpt makes clear, Natives were not always eager to interact with Whitemen, particularly when invited to share their strange food. Mistrust sometimes arose on both sides. However, the apparently irrational fear and flight of Johnny Joe as a boy, when offered a plate of beans, does not seem so foolish in retrospect, since many of his people perished from Whiteman's diseases soon after. Instinctively, Johnny could have 'smelled danger' in the strange food offered to him.

The following is taken from an interview with Johnny Joe shortly before his passing in 1985, when he was over a hundred years old.

During the Gold Rush, Johnny Joe remembered one June after the ice on Marsh Lake opened up. For four days there was a steady parade of boats and rafts heading downriver towards Dawson. Some of the travellers went up the McClintock River by mistake and had to turn back when the water got too shallow.

"Some of the boats would stop along the beach of Marsh Lake to camp or make lunch. The Indian people would come close close to check them over. Once the kids were invited to a camp to try some of the Whiteman's food. Johnny, a young fellow at the time, was given a plate of beans. He smelled them, dropped the plate and ran away. He was scared to try them."

Then disease came. Six people at Marsh Lake died at one time, probably of flu. His mother was one of them. The bodies were cremated and the bones were placed in old Hudson's Bay Company trunks and set into grave houses.

[Johnny Joe, in Charlie; Ye Sa To Communication  
Society 1989: 29-33]

IV AN OUTLINE OF SKOOKUM JIM'S LIFE

A Chilkoot Packer

By the time Keish was in his late twenties (1882), interest in the Yukon as gold country was increasing. Miners from the Cassiar fields who had come from Juneau over the Chilkoot Pass had begun the first successful placer mining in the Yukon Valley, at Cassiar Bar. By 1885 gold had been found on the Stewart River, and over 200 prospectors were making the trek over the Pass from Dyea in the spring, usually returning by autumn. Since the prospector needed help to get their supplies up over the Chilkoot Pass, they hired local Tlingit and Tagish people as packers.

Formerly, passage and trade across the Chilkoot had been tightly controlled by the coastal Tlingit but, as Frederick Schwatka noted in 1883, their monopoly had relaxed somewhat and the inland Tagish were going to the coast.

Among the prospectors travelling to the interior and passing by Caribou Crossing (Carcross) and the village of Tagish in 1885 were George Carmack and his companions, the Day Brothers. George was from California, 24 years old, and his father had participated into the California gold rush of 1849. He and his fellow gold-seekers explored down through Marsh Lake and as far as Miles Canyon before returning to Dyea.

The following year when Keish came to Dyea with his nephew, Kaa Goox, and others from their village, they worked as packers and met George Carmack for the first time. He was working for John Healy at his trading post, and also as a Chilkoot packer.

During this same year, the first promising gold finds were found along the Klondike River by Joseph Ladue and two friends, and in the autumn a major strike was made at Fortymile, a tributary of the Yukon River near the Alaskan border.

News of this discovery, and impending starvation for all the miners flocking to the site, reached Dyea in March in dramatic and tragic fashion. An Indian of the area, called Bob, and Tom Williams, a riverboat man with little experience of land-travel in winter, volunteered to make the difficult journey to Healy's post to advise the trader of the situation and the need for extra supplies. By the time they reached the Chilkoot they were exhausted, out of food, and their dogs were dead. Tom was too weak to continue so Bob pulled him by sled 26 miles down into Dyea. Tom died within two days, but news of the strike was passed on.

While these events were unfolding, Keish was wintering at home in Tagish with his guest, George Carmack, and possibly no-one in the village learned the news until later in the spring when some went to Dyea. About this time George was living with one of Keish's sisters, probably the one he called "Jenny", but she died of an illness and another marriage was arranged. Her mother, according to custom, advised another daughter, Shaaw Tlaa, who had been living on the coast and had recently lost her husband to illness, to marry George. This she did, and became known as Kate Carmack.

The year 1887 was a significant one, historically, socially, and personally, for Keish, his friends, and his people. As the weather warmed, Keish, George, and

Charlie were among those who travelled to the coast. Preceding them by several weeks, news of the strike at Fortymile had arrived and so had Bernard Moore, who in later years would write a book [Moore, 1968] with one of the earliest and most vivid descriptions of Keish in his pre-Klondike days.

Within the next few months over 500 prospectors made their way over the Chilkoot Pass and headed for Fortymile. William Ogilvie, the Canadian Government surveyor and future Commissioner of the Yukon Territory, arrived and hired Carmack in early June to organise a group of about 120 packers, which included Keish, Charlie and many others from Tagish, to carry his equipment and supplies over to Bennett Lake. Later that summer, George Dawson, one of Canada's foremost pioneer geologists and natural scientists, led an expedition through Tagish country. Also, during the period of Ogilvie's climb into the interior, Keish was hired by William Moore to guide him through the White Pass, in anticipation of using this easier route to the interior for a railroad. By 1900, the White Pass & Yukon Railroad was built, linking Skagway with Whitehorse.

Keish Becomes "Skookum Jim"

As Ogilvie records, 1887 was the year in which Keish became known as Skookum Jim, ("skookum" meaning "strong" in the Chinook trade jargon used along the Northwest Coast), for his feat of carrying 156 lbs. of bacon over the Chilkoot Pass for him -- almost double the load that most prospectors carried.

After that summer, in which George Carmack began a trading venture that took him to Tagish, the people from the village built a cabin in Dyea for Kate and her new husband. George and Kate remained there that winter while Skookum Jim, Charlie, and the others returned as usual to Tagish.

In the spring they re-grouped on the coast, and worked again as Chilkoot packers. Later, as jobs diminished, Jim and Charlie decided to go with George on a prospecting trip that took them along the Yukon River as far as the Big Salmon River and its two major forks. There they met some people from Pelly country who showed them some gold nuggets they'd found. With the idea of returning in the spring, the trio returned in September to Tagish.

That winter, 1888-89, the three men, and probably their wives, lived and trapped together in the region northwest from Caribou Crossing, perhaps in the Wheaton River valley. In March they journeyed to Dyea to sell their furs, then set off for the Big Salmon River to prospect. They travelled as a small band, comprised very likely of three couples -- Skookum Jim and Daakuxda.eit (Mary), Charlie and Sadusge (Annie), and George and Shaaw Tlaa (Kate).

In his memoirs, George wrote that on this trip Mary dropped and broke her mirror on a rock, and that he warned Jim that he (Jim) would have seven years bad luck. As it turned out, after an incident later that led to the parting of their ways, Keish and the others did not see George and Kate again for exactly that length of time.

When they all arrived at the forks of the Salmon River, George insisted on prospecting further into Pelly country, but Jim and Charlie refused, saying there was a bad spirit in the hills. Some Pelly people had warned them of this, probably because they'd had trouble previously from strangers coming into their lands, but Jim and Charlie didn't tell George how they came by their aversion. The group decided to split up. While George and Kate went on to Fortymile,



where George thought he could find a Whiteman who would make a less superstitious partner, Jim and the others returned to Tagish.

"Seven Years Bad Luck"

During the seven years that George and Kate lived away from Tagish, they stayed at Fortymile on and off for about three years, where George worked two gold claims without much success and continued winter trapping, hunting, and trading from Fort Yukon to Rampart House. When the claims were exhausted, they moved up the Yukon River to within twenty miles of Five Finger Rapids where they established a trading post. Many years later, the town of Carmacks would be sited nearby.

In the late summer of 1892, George met Bishop Bompas on a riverboat and learned that some workers were needed to help build a new church at Fort Selkirk. So Carmack began dividing his time between his post and sawing lumber with Joseph Ladue at Fortymile and Selkirk. In the autumn, he brought Kate, who was then pregnant, to Fort Selkirk, where in January their daughter, Graphie Grace was born. In the spring they returned to their post where he continued to mine a coal seam he'd found. Two years later Carmack met Bob Henderson when he stopped at the post on his first trip down the Yukon River.

According to some accounts, during those years at the trading post, George was settling in quite comfortably. He installed an organ, which he played during long winter nights, and built up a small library of books and periodicals on topics that included current science and literature. He was a self-educated man, an occasional poet, and even named his daughter after a character in a novel he had borrowed from the Reverend T.H. Canham at Selkirk.

Skookum Jim and his family at Tagish, meanwhile, knew nothing about Kate and George. Until 1896, when events began to take a more dramatic turn, life went on fairly quietly. Daakuxdu.eit gave birth to a baby daughter, Daisy, in 1891, as did Jim's sister, Aage, who had married Mr. Wilson. The Wilsons named their daughter Mary, possibly in deference to Daakuxdu.eit who had been given that name too.

Skookum Jim's bare-handed killing of a bear near Dyea [Moore 1968, 156-59] dates from this period -- 1892, shortly after Daisy's birth.

Three years later, Skookum Jim and his relatives experienced a death in the family when Aage died. Of six sisters he once had, only three now remained -- Kate, Kooyay and Nadagaat' Tlaa. This was a serious situation. The continuing life of the community depended on women and mothers. So many prospectors coming into their lands brought advantages and opportunities, but also grave dangers from diseases against which the native people had little defence. During those years the people were dying in alarming numbers. With the number of women in Skookum Jim's family quickly diminishing, and the whereabouts of one unknown, her welfare became a grave concern.

But George Carmack was missed too, especially by Jim and Charlie who had learned as much from him as he had from them, and likely they came to regret their earlier disagreement and separation. They missed the excitement of prospecting for gold. For two main reasons, then, -- family and personal, Skookum Jim and Charlie were in the group that was organised to go downriver in search of Kate and George Carmack. Koo|seen, Charlie's younger brother, accompanied them, though in the beginning there were others who turned back. Tagish John and his wife, Maria, travelled with them as far as Lake LeBerge, but Maria became distraught when she looked back up the lake and saw a mountain that somehow reminded her of her old mother being alone with no-one to care for her over the winter.

In later years, it was said that the wives of Jim and Charlie, Mary and Annie, went with them, though they were not mentioned in the accounts of the men involved in the discovery of gold. For example, when Koo|seen, later given the name Patsy Henderson by Carmack, described their expedition he spoke only of Jim and Charlie -- the two "old folk" sitting down in the boat for the whole journey while he rowed them all the way to the Klondike River.

Discovery of Gold in the Klondike

Towards the end of July the trio finally met George and Kate near the mouth of the Klondike where they were living with a group of local natives. George had just returned from Fortymile with a grubstake and planned to go fishing and prospecting along the Klondike. A few days later they met Bob Henderson on his way to Fortymile, and he told George of his good prospects on a Klondike tributary he had named Gold Bottom. He invited George to check out his claim, but insulted Jim and Charlie by saying that he didn't want "any damned Siwashes" on his property. Hearing Henderson use this term for Natives in such a mean way upset Carmack as much as it did his friends. Carmack was proud that he was often called "Siwash George" by White prospectors.

A few weeks later, George, Jim, and Charlie found Gold Bottom and did visit Henderson's camp, but Henderson was no friendlier than before to Jim and Charlie, so the three of them returned the way they had come. It was on this return journey that they made their famous strike, finding in Rabbit Creek the large nugget of gold that started the Klondike Gold Rush. Carmack organised their claim-staking the next day, August 17, re-named the creek Bonanza, and on September 24 recorded their claims at Fortymile.

Who actually found the gold nugget on Bonanza Creek has been a subject of argument since the two Tagish men and Carmack came down from the hills with different accounts of the discovery. William Ogilvie carefully interviewed and re-interviewed all the people most directly involved, and came away believing Jim's and Charlie's version that Jim had been the discoverer, but many miners believed Carmack when he claimed that honour. There is, however, a third version, told later by Kate Carmack that she was the one who found the nugget and showed it to her brother, Skookum Jim.

The three men worked their claims all that winter. When William Ogilvie conducted another survey, Jim's claim was found to be 61 feet too large, so the extra bit was given to Patsy who had it recorded, March 1, 1897, under the name "Tagish Paddy". He had just turned eighteen and was therefore legally eligible to file. Before long, though, he sold his claim for a very reasonable sum.

By the spring of 1898, just prior to the arrival of some 30,000 other prospectors, they had their first big pay-off, amounting to about \$150,000. They then leased out their claims to other miners and set off on a celebratory voyage to the outside world. They left Dawson by boat and arrived at St. Michael in mid-August before sailing across the Pacific Ocean to Seattle.

#### Seattle and After

After visiting Seattle, the group travelled to San Francisco, then on to the ranch owned by George's sister, Rose, and her husband James Watson. Jim and Charlie didn't stay long. They found ranch life boring, and when they began shooting squirrels and bringing them to the kitchen, Rose was taken aback. In the spring of the following year, George and Kate left Graphie in the care of Mrs. Watson and also returned to the Yukon. By this time Jim had begun construction on his house in Carcross, the first wood-frame house in the area, and the first to be built entirely from lumber from Outside. Charlie, too, had plans for a large house.

Towards the end of that July, 1899, Jim and Mary Mason with Dawson Charlie, as he was then known by his people, and his wife, Annie, set off for Seattle to buy materials and furnishings. Two days after they left, George and Kate departed

with eight-year-old Mary Wilson, their ultimate destination being the Watson's ranch in California.

At this time, relationships with George Carmack were becoming strained, and gradually he broke off all ties with the people from Tagish, including Kate, though he was determined to keep Graphie. He wanted to return to the United States and use his fortune to enjoy all that his society had to offer him, a dream that he had always cherished. Kate much preferred Carcross to southern cities, and probably resented George's expectations that she fit in with White urban life. After much struggle and bitterness they separated.

Jim and Charlie made the most of their visits to Seattle, but had no intentions of living anywhere other than at home around Carcross. What disturbed Carmack most, though, was the attention his wife and relatives attracted from the press who relished the often intoxicated antics of some of the richest "wild Indians" in North America. For George, who was trying to establish a good reputation and favourable business connections with his investments in hotels and mining properties, this kind of publicity he preferred to avoid.

In 1900, George left Kate, terminated his partnership with Skookum Jim, and married another woman. Jim and Charlie came down from the Yukon for a special meeting with George in his lawyer's office in Seattle where legal ownership of all their Bonanza claims were signed over to Jim. After that, they never saw George again.

Kate, who had been living in California, returned to Seattle with Graphie and Mary in the spring of 1901. There they met Charlie who escorted them back to Carcross. Kate was penniless, so Skookum Jim had a cabin built for her and the two girls, and looked after their needs.

Jim and Charlie continued prospecting as well as the traditional life-style of hunting and trapping. As a result of a gold discovery they made in 1903 near Kluane Lake, a minor gold-rush was started. This led to the establishing of Silver City that year, and the construction of the Kluane-Whitehorse wagon road -- the precursor of that part of the Alaska Highway that was routed from Whitehorse to Haines Junction.

Jim sold his claims on Bonanza in 1904 to the Lewes River Mining and Dredging Company for \$65,000 and never returned to the Klondike. The year after, he and his wife separated. She returned to her people on the coast while he continued to live in Carcross. His family considered another marriage for him with a young girl from the Champagne area, later to become known as Mrs. Annie Ned, but after a brief courtship she rejected him because she did not like his unconventional ways and drinking habits. She married one of his friends, Paddy Smith, soon after.

Meanwhile, Skookum Jim paid tuition fees for Graphie to attend the mission school in Whitehorse where she lived with Bishop Stringer and his family. In 1909, when she was 16, her father invited her to visit Seattle, and may have had her taken away from mother without her knowledge or permission. She did not return for ten years, and within a year of her arrival in Seattle, married her step-mother's brother, Jacob Saftig.

## Last Years and Final Illness

The year that Graphie was taken away, Dawson Charlie died. He was returning home across the Carcross railway bridge after a night of festivities when he fell into river and drowned. His body was found soon after by Skookum Jim and one of his friends. Though Charlie's death may have been an accident, brought on from having had too much to drink, rumours persisted that it might have been more like murder. Someone reported hearing a sleigh heading through darkness for the bridge just after Charlie left to go home.

The potlatch that Skookum Jim and other Wolf people sponsored in 1912, held partly as a memorial for Dawson Charlie, became known as 'the last big potlatch'. There was no other one of comparable impact held afterwards in Carcross for at least sixty years. It was held in November and guests arrived, converging on the Indian village from all over the southern Yukon.

During the winter of 1915-16, Skookum Jim undertook his last journey, travelling alone by toboggan, assisted only by his favourite dog, Dan -- a large black canine, possibly a Labrador. They went over into Tahltan country, the home of his mother's people around Telegraph Creek, following trails to Dease Lake, then back up to Atlin, and Teslin from where he needed assistance to get home to Tagish. He was by then very ill.

Skookum Jim's final will was prepared in April, 1916, under the direction of officials, including his lawyer, Willard Phelps. Though some friends and relatives were also present, they were forbidden to enter Jim's bedroom until the document was signed. Jim left the hospital in Whitehorse and returned home, where he was cared for by his daughter, Daisy, and other members of his family, including Angela Sidney, then fourteen years old, Tagish John and Maria. He died on the 11th of July at the age of about 60 years.

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PART THREE: NARRATIVES AND STORIES ABOUT SKOOKUM JIM  
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V DREAMS AND MYTHS: OUTSIDE TIME

Skookum Jim's Animal and Spirit Helpers

An important series of events in Skookum Jim's life, which had a subtle but direct influence on the discovery of gold and the start of the Gold Rush, has not been mentioned in books until recently. These events, experienced by Jim in waking and dream states, involved a frog, and the spirit-being, Wealth Woman. By helping a frog escape almost certain death, Skookum Jim received a "frog-helper" who cured him of a severe wound, and later appeared in a dream to show him the way to his fortune.

The exact chronological sequence of Skookum Jim's experiences are difficult to ascertain, though they all happened before his journey north to the Klondike in 1896. His rescue of the frog at Dyea, however, probably occurred first.

The accounts are vague about time and dates but they can provide insight into the psychology and world-view prevalent in aboriginal society before the advent of European settlement. Non-Native elements are almost absent in these stories, even though their actions occur during a period of increasing cultural contacts. This archaic quality is not uncommon in important dreams and communications with the world of spirits, and though they manifest as reflections of deep traditions and the distant past, they can turn out to be highly relevant to life in the present.

(Indians, of course, were not the only people who dreamed of good fortune during the waning years of the last century. Many prospectors had little else to sustain them. For the description of a dream as important to the discovery of gold as Skookum Jim's, see Appendix B, which considers his White partner's, George Carmack's, dream about a golden salmon, and its possible relationship to ancient Celtic myths and legends.)

## 1. Mrs. Angela Sidney's Story

### The Stranded Frog

Long before Dyea became a town, people used to go there. Skookum Jim's family built a house there and lived in it sometimes all year. One time, in the fall, when the ground was already frozen, Skookum Jim was returning to the house after relieving himself outside when he heard a sound like pouring sand. He stopped and listened. It seemed to be coming from the ditch bordering the cabin.

He went over and looked into the ditch and sure enough that's where the sound was coming from. A big frog was stuck there, a long way from water, trying to get out. So Skookum Jim found a board and used it to help the frog get out. It crawled onto the board and he carried it to the creek and let it go.

### Skookum Jim's Wound

About a year later, around wintertime, Skookum Jim got kicked in the stomach by a man who was drunk. His wound festered and eventually broke open. He was so sick during this time that he couldn't move around and had to stay in bed. That's when Maria John was looking after him, though she also had four kids to care for.

Maria's husband, Tagish John, was Skookum Jim's cousin, and in those days the three of them used to pack supplies for prospectors over the Chilkoot Pass. So at this time, when Skookum was sick, the others were probably away packing.

One morning in June, when the sun was already up, Maria heard Skookum Jim calling her from his tent, so she jumped up out of bed and went to see him. He had pulled his bandages off to air his wound and cool off because it was so hot, and had fallen asleep again, but then a tickling sensation woke him up. When he looked to see what it was, he discovered a frog licking his wound. Mrs. John saw it, got a board or something, and took the frog away. It stayed on too, didn't try to jump off.

She took some of her silk thread, beads, and swan's down and laid them all around the frog, as was the custom, then took it down to the creek to let it go. That was payment to the frog from Skookum Jim because frogs were believed to bring healing. And sure enough, within a few days he began to feel better, and his wound started healing too. He was up and about within a week or so.

### Skookum Jim's Dream

Some time later, Skookum Jim was at Tagish and wanted to see if his mother in Carcross was okay. That time it wasn't called Carcross, but in Tlingit, Naataase Heen: "water running through the narrows", or in Tagish, Todezaane: "wind always blowing". It was late fall, the ground was frozen, but snow hadn't fallen yet.

He started out, travelling quickly through the pass, called Shash Zeitigi ("grizzly bear throat") because the north wind is always blowing through there. About halfway, by present day Crag Lake, he stopped at a camp-site to rest.

He fell asleep and had a dream.

"That's the time he dreamed nice looking lady came to him --

gee, she's just pure -- just like you can see through her,  
just like shining, gold shining.

He said that lady told him  
'I come for you,  
I want you to come with me.  
I come for you now.  
I want you to marry me,' she said.

And my uncle said,  
'No, I can't marry you.  
I got wife already.  
My wife and children are in Tagish.'  
That's what he dreamed he told this lady, he said.

'Well,' she said,  
'If you can't go with me, I'll give you my walking stick.'  
So he took it.  
He tells her, 'Thank you.'

'You saved me one time,' she said.  
I was almost starving and I was just about going to die.  
And here you saved me one time.  
And I'm the one that saved you too when you were sick.  
When you were sick, I saved you.  
I helped you.  
I medicined you.  
That's why you got better.'  
That's what that lady's supposed to tell him because he dreamed that.

And that lady told him when she gave him that walking stick:  
'You're going to find the bottom of this walking stick.  
You're going to find it this way.'  
So he looked at it, and gee, everything shining, looks like gold.  
'Look this way,' she said, pointing to Atlin, 'Look this way.'  
He looks and sees just like a searchlight coming up.  
'That's not for you though; that's for somebody else.  
You go down this way and you're going to have your luck, your  
walking stick," [indicating down the Yukon River].  
That's what that lady is supposed to tell him."

When he woke up in the morning, he was covered with snow about a foot deep.  
Obviously it had snowed during the night. He got up, had breakfast, and  
continued on his way to Carcross. He arrived that same night and he found that  
his mother and everybody else were fine. She had lots of wood and plenty to  
eat. (His father may have died by then, because he isn't mentioned in this  
story.)

Skookum Jim stayed just one night, then returned to Tagish by the route he'd  
come, camping for one night in the same place. He thought the whole trip had  
taken him four days. But his family at Tagish asked him why he'd been gone so  
long -- eleven days.

Skookum Jim forgot his dream, but about a year later he went down the river to  
the Klondike and discovered gold. Sometime after that he remembered his dream.



Pete Sidney, Angela's son, who heard it from Maria John (his grandmother) as Angela did, tells the story about Skookum Jim's dream a bit differently. He relates that the whitefish were piled high from the late fall fishing at Tagish when Skookum Jim set out for Carcross to see his mother. He was in such a hurry as he strode through the bush that he got quite hot after a while and had to remove his coat. By the time he got to a meadow near Crag Lake he was tired, so he sat down against a tree and fell asleep. When he awoke he was covered with a foot of snow, and when he got to Carcross that evening he was told that snow had fallen two days ago, so he suddenly realised that he had slept through a whole day.

In his dream, he found himself in the cabin of an old woman who fed him fish eggs, a great delicacy. Then, (presumably before pointing north towards the Klondike), she indicated that Skookum Jim could find good luck in the east or north-east, towards Teslin and the Cassiar Mountains. That was why he went prospecting in that area years later. He went with a crew and a keg of whiskey, but came back three days later when the whiskey ran out.

[Pete Sidney 1991, personal communication]

#### Mrs. Annie Ned's Story

Mrs. Annie Ned is, as Mrs. Angela Sidney was, one of the Yukon's most respected Native elders and story-tellers, and, with over a hundred years of experience, she is still a primary source of cultural wisdom and inspiration for her people.

Originally, her people came from Hutshi, a Southern Tutchone community located in a valley to the northwest of Whitehorse, which later moved south to the area around Champagne. She is not directly related to Skookum Jim, though she knew him as a young girl when, around 1905, their families considered marrying her to him -- a prospect she rejected because she did not find him suitable. Soon after, however, she married one of Skookum Jim's friends, which presented opportunities to get to know him better in a larger social context, as for example when they and others went hunting or visiting together.

Mrs. Ned's version of Skookum Jim's dream is markedly different from Mrs. Sidney's, since the figure who seems responsible for bestowing luck is the frog-father, not mentioned in the latter. There are several possible explanations for the difference. Skookum Jim described his dream to at least a few people, and they in turn told others, so variations and different emphases would naturally have developed. Also, he himself, would probably have related his dream a little differently each time. It is therefore difficult to sort out from the versions extant which elements are accurate representations, which are elaboration, and which are brought in from similar themes found in traditional stories or the experiences of individuals other than Skookum Jim.

When Mrs. Annie Ned was a girl in her early teens, several years after the Gold Rush, Skookum Jim told her about the frog and his dream when she visited Carcross. Just about every night he was drinking, but she was interested in his stories about how he found gold in the Klondike. He said it all happened as a result of certain events that happened to him many years ago at Dyea.

He'd found a little frog in a ditch. He picked up the frog and carried it a long way to find some water. When he found water, he put the frog down and left it there. Then much later, he had a dream.

In the dream a girl came to him and told him that her daddy wanted to meet him. He went with her to a big house, and as he got to the door it opened for him and let him in. Inside he met her daddy.

'You helped my daughter?' the girl's father asked.

'Yes,' Skookum Jim replied.

And the father said, 'That's my daughter you brought back home -- that little frog, so I want to give you something. Take a look at this house. It's going to be yours.'

Then the frog-father gave Skookum Jim a hat, just like the one Jim was wearing as he told Annie the story.

'And you've got to clean yourself up before you go looking for gold. Don't get into fights, and be careful where you go.' The frogs were going to guide him.

So, according to Skookum Jim, he got rich because he helped that little frog. In the dream the frog-father seemed to be very wealthy in the frog world and told Skookum Jim he was going to give him good luck, and that he would have a house like his.

[Mrs. Annie (Johnny) Ned, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

### 3. Wealth Woman

The frog, and the lady of Jim's dream, are understood by his people to be the same being, or different aspects of the same being, who may be perceived as the Spirit of Nature and Life, in her turn, an aspect of the Creator. The lesson that may be gained from these stories, the elders imply, is that if one cultivates good or appropriate relationships with other beings, rewards may naturally follow.

Skookum Jim's experiences with Wealth Woman were not unique, except that in his case they led to great fame. Encounters with the Lady may have been quite rare, but others came upon her, with varying results, and told others what happened. Some of these stories were known by Angela Sidney and told to Julie Cruickshank, and among them was another one about Jim who, with Charlie and Patsy, heard the Lady's crying child. This may have happened before his dream or even before he rescued the frog.

#### How Wealth Woman Came to Be

The belief in a female spirit of Good Luck is not unique to Yukon Indians since her existence has been perceived in many cultures around the world since ancient times, -- as Fortuna by Romans, Laxmi by Hindus, or simply as Lady Luck by aircraft gunners of the First World War. Stories about her by Tlingit and Tagish people, however, show how long and intimately she has participated in their world. The following story of her origin takes us back into myth-time, -- 'in no time at all'!

A long time ago there were two young friends. Each of these boys had a girlfriend whom they would visit on certain nights, but they had never met the other's girlfriend. Then one night, one of the boys became very curious, so his friend told him that he could catch a glimpse of his girl-friend, Spark, if he climbed onto the roof of a certain house.

He did this, and when he came down his friend asked him if he'd gone to see his own girlfriend that night, and was told that he hadn't because it wasn't the time for it. But this answer didn't satisfy Spark's boyfriend so he taunted the other boy by saying that he'd been to visit his girl, Spark, and to prove it he let his buddy feel where he was wet. (He'd wet himself with seaweed to fool him.)

The trick worked, and off the other fellow went to see his girlfriend, not realising he was being followed. He walked along a trail to a small lake, then out to a point. From the branch of a tree he took some moose-hoof bells he'd made, and rang them, whereupon a mat floated up from under the water. He then jumped onto the mat and sank down into the lake. After seeing this, the other boy ran home and got into bed before his friend returned.

The next night, Spark's boyfriend went to the lake and did what his friend had done. As he sunk to the bottom of the lake, a door appeared before him and opened, and a woman stood there and asked what he wanted. He told her husband had sent him. She didn't like that and wouldn't let him in, so he asked to be floated back up to the surface.

However, two children, who were in the habit of jumping up on their father and playing with him before he left, jumped up on him. He grabbed them, but they

scratched him so much he dropped them. Yet when he went back up, they followed him all the way back to camp.

At the camp they took his eyes out and killed him. They did that to everybody else in the village except to their father and one other woman who was back in the woods a bit with her baby.

Every morning that baby would cry and her mother would get up to nurse him. Then one morning she saw these two children with long finger-nails who tried to go for her baby's eyes. She beat them off, but then they pulled out a bag made of handkerchiefs in which they kept their victims' eyeballs ('kawakhi'), and threw it into the fire to cook before eating them. Seeing this, the woman called for her husband, but heard no answer. She ran over to him, asking him what these children are, and found him dead with his eye-sockets full of blood.

She went all through the village, finding corpses everywhere until she found the children's father still alive. He went with her, found his children, picked them up, and asked them what they were doing up there.

He took his children home and asked his wife why they had done what they'd done, to which she replied that a man had come and told her that he'd been sent, by the father, to get his children. 'That's a lie,' he said.

Afterwards, the man and the woman with the baby went through the village and tended to all the bodies.

When they had finished, the man announced he was going to turn 'takhwad': 'Whoever hears me chopping wood is going to become rich. That person only has to pick up my wood-chips, the ones that curl, to become wealthy.'

And the woman announced that she was going to turn into Good Luck Lady -- Tl'anaxeedakw. She got out her uncle's trunk and from it took some marten furs with which to wrap her baby, put long beads on his packing sack, dressing him up in the finest way. Then she turned into Good Luck Lady, saying, 'Whoever sees me, or hears my baby crying, is going to be rich.' And then she went off into the forest.

And so it is that if anyone hears her baby crying, they have to catch up to her, take her baby away, and not give him back until she defecates four golden balls. In this way that person will become rich.

[Angela Sidney in Cruickshank 1979, 134-137]

Encounters with Tl'anaxeedakw (Wealth Woman)

"When people go to Skagway, they always camp at that little lake back of the house at Bennett [on the White Pass It's too little to have a name, that lake. section railway].

They were camping there on the lakeside when they heard Skookum Jim heard it -- then Dawson Charlie heard it. Here they got up to go after it. Patsy [Henderson] went with them -- he went a little way, but he got scared, started crying kid yet. -- he was still a

'Crazy me,' he tells us later.  
'That's why I never get rich.'

And they tried to chase it around -- around the lake.  
It kept disappearing.  
That's why their money didn't last after they found gold.  
They found money alright, but it didn't last.

The night was pitch dark.  
You know September, how dark it gets at nights?  
And you know how bushy that place is!

Grandma Hammond, Aandaax'w, said she heard that baby too.  
She heard it, but she never tried.  
She thought it was her sister coming, and here, no! -- nobody showed up.  
So when it quit, she started to cry -- she told us herself.  
That's around Bennett.  
But she used to make money like everything, sewing you know.

My mother said they went to Ptarmigan Mountain, back of Tagish.  
K'asbaa Dze|e', in Tagish language; X'eis'awaa Shaayi, in Tlingit.

In the evening they went to bed.  
Fire started to go down a little bit.  
They didn't have tent or anything -- it was just open.  
They got a fly tent, though.  
They dried some meat.  
All of a sudden, at night time, baby started to cry.  
'Waa, Waa, Waa,' and they hear what mother making a noise.  
They got up, sat up, told each other,  
'You hear that noise?'  
My brother Johnny heard it.

That's why he's lucky all the time.

[Sidney in Cruickshank, 1981: 128]

#### A Note About Frogs

The significance of the frog in Skookum Jim's experiences can be better appreciated by knowing something of its role and reputation among the Indians of the Yukon, particularly in earlier times.

"Among the Inland Tlingit, the frog is a crest animal of both KogwhItan and Ickitan sibs, [especially the latter]. This highly respected crest animal is, however, still so evil in some of its aspects, that a white man, who teased some Teslin Indian women with frogs, went temporarily crazy soon after."

Most Natives have never seen frogs, and women generally fear them, but there is some ambivalence. The frog has a position like the owl, and is an animal shaman in Southern Tutchone and Tagish beliefs.

"Frogs bring bad luck and ordinarily must not be hunted, and [yet] if someone is sick and 'you really offer [it] frog things ... like you pay the Indian doctor' it will help the sick person... If it is unable to make a cure, according to the

Tutchone, when nobody is looking, the frog will bring back to camp any beads which may have been offered to it. If the returned beads are found, the patient is filled with despair, for it means that he is doomed to die.

[One time, a girl was sent to find a frog to cure her mother.] When she brought it back, an older woman 'talked to it and made the frog lay its hand on the sick place, [the mother's eye,] and she blew and said, 'Let the sun go down with it.' Then they put the frog down on a lot of loose beads and said, 'This is your pay.' ... [The] girl returned the frog to water, giving it more beads and ceremonial down. As long as she watched, the frog remained motionless. Next day there was no trace of the frog, beads, or down [which was auspicious.]"

The mother, however, was still sick, so the woman tried to 'hexwa' her daughter for 'frog healing-power' just after her puberty seclusion:

"...[A] frog was put on top of the daughter's head so its power would 'go through' into her hands and she would be able to 'feel sickness'".

The girl put her hands on her mother's eyes and blew, but this didn't work.

"But some people do acquire the frog as 'yek' (spirit helper) and, indeed, the whole Klondike Gold Rush may ultimately be attributed to the frog-helper who appeared to Skookum Jim of the Tagish [Indians], after he had helpfully returned a stranded frog to a damp place. In Jim's dreams the frog's eyes glittered just like gold nuggets ..."

[McClellan 1963, 178,179]

## VI STORIES ABOUT HIS EARLY YEARS

### Whiteman's Grub

Food is often a focus in stories about early contact between Indians and Whites, though issues about food naturally pre-date the historical period. In the 1960s when anthropologist Roger McDonnell was doing fieldwork with Kaska people in north-eastern British Columbia, he heard that long ago, before Whitemen arrived, if a travelling group of people encountered strangers they might approach them with extreme caution. They would offer them food, and if it wasn't eaten, they would strongly suspect that the strangers were not human beings. They were possibly cannibals, and to be avoided at all costs. Food-sharing was an 'acid test' for determining compatibility between peoples, and other beings. [Roger McDonnell 1983, personal communication]

Extreme suspicions among peoples of the north-west coast about Europeans and their food were reduced over many years of increasing contacts and familiarity. For many individuals old fears became the subject of humour, and stories often demonstrated their willingness to try 'Whiteman's grub', with sometimes surprising results.

The two stories that follow, about Skookum Jim's attempts to familiarise himself with products of the Whiteman's culture in the early days, were often told by his nephew, Johnny Johns (1898-1988), a renowned Carcross hunting-guide and raconteur who remembered his uncle well.

Johnny was born to Maria John, and was therefore a Deisheetaan Crow like his sister, Angela Sidney. Though not as well known in print as Angela, Johnny made

considerable contributions to the oral history of his people, as is evident throughout this report. He not only told many stories and had some recorded, he undertook significant and original research on behalf of the pioneering oral history project organised by the Skookum Jim Friendship Center in the early 1970s. In his later years he was regarded as the chief or head man of the Deisheetaan clan in Carcross.

#### 1. Jim Buys Beans

"I remember another bean story, and Skookum Jim was mixed up in this story too. Of course I wasn't there, this was before my time, but these stories are handed down.

This happened at Dyea, Alaska -- before they called it Alaska, and I guess before they called Yukon, Yukon.

Dyea is near Skagway, one of the first ports they used to head into the Klondike. But this is before the events of the Klondike days.

Skookum Jim was at Dyea. He and many others used to take in their furs to sell there. At the post there was a white trader named Mason. Mr. Mason, everybody called him, and I think that's how Skookum Jim got his name, James Mason. I think, and I'm pretty sure too.

So this time Skookum Jim and his family, some relatives and many others, they came down to Dyea to trade in their furs to Mr. Mason at the trading post. It could have been 1894 or 95. They'd camp there for a while. Sometimes they would go down to visit friends at Juneau or Haines, and they'd paddle down in their war canoes, and this and that.

One day at Dyea, while his wife was away for awhile, he wanted to boil himself a pot of good home-made beans. So he went down to Mr. Mason at the trading post to get some beans. He sees a big pile of beans there in a barrel, so he says, 'This!'

Mr. Mason poured him out some beans with the dipper. 'How much?' he asked.

'This much ... Enough.' Then Skookum Jim sees some salt pork there in another barrel. He got some pork, then he goes home to his tent, and put them on his stove. Going to have a pot of beans for supper.

This was early in the day, and he started boiling his beans. Usually, brown beans you know, you change the water once only, but when it came time to change it, the water was extra dark. So he changed it again. He poured that out and put in some fresh water and cooked it some more. The water still got black, so he changed the water again. He was doing that all day, and the beans were also not getting soft.

Then late in the evening he sampled one bean. It didn't taste like a bean and was just as tough as could be. So then he thought he'd better get some help, some advice. He went over to his neighbour's tent where there was a young woman and her husband living. This happened to be Mrs. Johnson, and Billy Johnson.

'Mr. Mason sold me some beans,' he says, 'funny kind of beans. Don't taste like beans, and I changed water in those beans ten times today and still the water

gets black, and they're still tough. So I wish you'd come over and see what it is, what kind of beans these are.'

So Mrs. Johnson says she'll go over right away, and turns out these are coffee beans. That was it. He ruined a lot of coffee beans and then got no use out of them."

## 2. Jim Buys Soap

"This happened in Dyea too. Skookum Jim had a lot of dirty clothes, and no woman around to wash them so he took the job himself. He had no soap, so away he goes down to Mr. Mason at the trading post.

When he gets to the post, he looks around and looks around, but he saw no soap. In those days they sold soap in big hunks, great big hunks, 50-pound hunks, you know. He knew that. He'd bought soap before. So he just pointed to this hunk here, and says, 'Mr. Mason, that much.' He described it with his hands. Mr. Mason cut off a hunk and gave it to him.

Skookum Jim goes home where he has hot water already on the Yukon stove, boiling away. So he shaved off a lot of his soap and put it into the water, then he shoved in his clothes and boiled it a while. He got the scrubbing board out and ... a hand-made one he had, the story goes. One he made himself out of a piece of poplar. (I made one myself, I know how it's done.) So anyway, he scrubbed and he scrubbed, but the clothes seemed not to get any cleaner at all. They got greasier and greasier the more he washed.

He couldn't figure it out. He tried and tried again. He changed the water, and the same thing was happening. The he thought he'd go over to the neighbour's for a break -- Mrs. Johnson again.

He says, 'I don't know what kind of soap Mr. Mason sold me. I put lots of soap in but my clothes won't get clean. They just get greasier and slippery as can be, so I wish you'd come over and see.'

So Mrs. Johnson goes over to Skookum Jim's place, the next tent over, and asks him, 'Where's your soap?'

'Right there,' he says, 'what's left of it.' And she sees it's a big hunk of cheese he's using.

So it wasn't Mr. Mason's fault, because Skookum Jim didn't ask for soap. He didn't know the name for soap in those days and just pointed. And that's the Mr. Mason, Skookum Jim and the soap story at Dyea, Alaska."

[J. Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

## Stories By Whitemen

Much of the available material about Skookum Jim derives from Native oral histories detailing events in his life from 1896 to 1916, from the Klondike Discovery to the time of his death. From the earlier period of his life there are far fewer stories, but they are vivid and significant. Both Indian and Whitemen's stories from this period have an almost legendary quality about them,



the Indian stories telling about his spirit and animal helpers and the accounts by Whitemen, about Skookum Jim's extraordinary prowess and character.

## 1. Carrying the Bacon

William Ogilvie, a Government surveyor who was later appointed Commissioner of the Yukon, was one of the first Whitemen to meet Skookum Jim. He was favourably impressed not just by his physical strength, but also by his personal honesty and goodness as a human being. Ogilvie counted Jim as a friend, and before leaving the Yukon made a point of visiting Jim in Carcross to talk over old times.

(The following excerpt retains Ogilvie's spellings of 'Carmac' for 'Carmack', and the earlier convention of spelling 'Chilkoot' and 'Chilkat' with 'c' instead of 'k'. However, his extremely long paragraphs, not an unusual practice in his time, have been broken [ / ] at suitable places to make reading easier. This stylistic amendment is followed in other excerpts from his and also George Carmack's writings later in this report.)

"When I first entered the country in 1887, I found Carmac at Dyea Pass. He was then closely associated with the Tagish, or Stick Indians, as they were called. It was understood between these and the Chilcoot and Chilcat, or coast, Indians that the country north of the summit of the pass belonged to the Sticks, and all the coast to the south of it to the coast tribes. Carmac spoke both languages in a limited way, and had considerable influence with the Sticks. I employed him to help me over the pass and through his influence got a good deal of assist from his Indian friends./

Skookum Jim and [Dawson] Charlie were both there and packed for me. Skookum Jim well earned his sobriquet of 'Skookum' or 'strong' for he carried 156 lbs. of bacon over the pass for me at a single trip. This might be considered a load anywhere on any roads, but over the stony moraine of a glacier, as the first half of the distance is, and then up a steep pass, climbing more than 3000 feet in six or seven miles, some of it so steep that the hands have to be use to assist one up, certainly is a stiff test of strength and endurance./

After we crossed the summit and while building our boat I employed Jim in various capacities, and always found him reliable, truthful, and competent to do any work I gave him. Afterwards, while working on his claim on Bonanza, I had more experience of him, and it only corroborated the opinion I have expressed of his character.

[Ogilvie 1913, 132-134]

Ogilvie's survey required him to take seven tons of equipment and supplies over the Chilkoot. He employed 120 Indian packers, including Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, and George Carmack, and also William Moore, who had made and lost a fortune in the Cassiar fields. While Ogilvie went over the Chilkoot, Moore persuaded a "Chilkoot Indian named Jim" to breach the traditional native secrecy about these routes and guide him over a parallel pass, which he named after Thomas White, Minister of the Interior. [Report of the NWMP, 1894, c, 77.] -- 'Chilkoot Jim' was actually Skookum Jim, as Bernard Moore made clear in the following passages.

## 2. Skookum Jim and the Two Bears

"One day in the summer of 1892, while bound for Haines Mission with two men, one named Murphy, and the other 'Skookum Jim', of Klondike fame, the latter

succeeded in getting two bears; a tremendous brown one, and the other a two-thirds grown black." [Moore 1968, 19]

[Moore goes on to recount how Jim came to be with them: ] "... I noticed a lone Indian swiftly shooting down the current in a small canoe. On his paddling up alongside of my sloop, I recognised him to be my old friend Skookum Jim, or Stick Jim, as my father used to call him; ... (who had) gone through the White Pass with my father in June 1887.

Well, Jim gave me to understand that he would like to accompany me to Chilkat. So we hauled his tiny canoe on board the sloop and started on our way again, calling into Skagway for a few moments on our way down the Lynn Canal and seeing that our log house and everything there was all right.

We pulled out of Skagway Bay again, and proceeded on down the channel with a light, fair, northerly breeze, gliding along slowly. I was at the helm and Jim and Murphy were lying under the thwarts, napping. When we were down on the channel about four miles below Skagway, near a waterfall, Jim awoke and sat up, and in a little while he was looking intently ahead toward our port shore a few hundred feet away. Suddenly Jim became very excited and remarked, 'I see a bear two.'

Murphy and I looked intently, but could see no bears. But Jim, I could see at once by his earnestness, could not be mistaken, and knowing him to be one of the best hunters in the country I believed that he did see two bears on the beach quite a distance ahead.

He begged me to land a sloop at the steep, rocky shore. This could easily be done, for there was no sea on at all. We moored our sloop, lowered the sail, and let Jim out with his little canoe to paddle quietly along close to the shore for some distance to get nearer the two bears.

Before he started I said. 'Now, Jim, I will remain here one hour. If by that time we do not hear from you or see you, I will hoist sail and leave.'

Well, he left, taking his rifle and only four cartridges, and went skimming on down, paddling quietly and hugging the shore closely. Murphy and I proceeded to cook dinner on our little canner charcoal stove, and after finishing dinner we smoked for a while. By this time I thought we ought to hear something from Jim. I unshipped the tiller and began to pound loudly on the gunwale of the sloop to give Jim a warning -- if he was within hearing distance -- that we intended to start again, or to get an answer by way of a gun shot or a shot from him. But no answer came.

We also shouted, with the same results. So we hoisted sail, let go of our shore lines, and swung out from shore. Then, when we were just getting underway and while I was looking way up the mountain -- for I knew that bears, if Jim really saw any, would make for the hills if he did not get them before they had time to do so -- I noticed a moving object; but it was so far up the side of the mountain that I could not believe it was Jim.

However, watching intently, I could see the object bending over and stooping, then at times it would disappear altogether. But soon I could see that it was our Jim. He was rolling, pulling, and tugging at a jet-black object which then, of course, I knew must be a black bear, one apparently half-grown.

Murphy and I hurried up to assist him. The mountainside was quite steep, so that we could roll and drag the bear downhill especially now that there were three of us.

During all the time that had elapsed since Jim had left our sloop with his little canoe -- over an hour -- we had not heard a gunshot, and I noticed that Jim's clothes were badly torn in several places and he had scratches on his hands and blood on them. I remarked on his condition, and he said that when the two bears sighted him they at first made for the mountain. Not wishing to take any chances on firing at too long range, he followed them nearly to the snowline and shot and killed the black bear first, and then shot and wounded a very large brown bear.

I said, 'Well, where is the brown bear?'

'Down hill in bushes, but not dead yet,' Jim replied, pointing toward a clump of underbrush a hundred feet or so from the water's edge. Then he told us about his hand-to-hand fight with the big brown bear, and showed us the claw marks on his hands [from] ramming the gun into the bear's throat and striking him on the head with heavy stones, and so forth.

Murphy and I could hardly believe all of this could have happened, especially in only about an hour and a half. But the evidence was right there before us.

After considerable work, the three of us got the black bear down and loaded it into the sloop. We then followed Jim up the beach a way, after he first took a few more cartridges from the sloop, my little dog Buck following at our heels, sniffing then barking excitedly. I took along a Colt revolver, the only firearm I had at that time.

On nearing a clump of trees and underbrush I heard a great noise of snorting and moaning, and heard the bushes cracking and swaying. Jim quietly leaned forward, parted the bushes, took aim and fired just the one shot. Then the three of us stood still to listen, but the big brown bear lay there, within forty feet of us, still and dead this time.

We went up to it, and my little terrier jumped around and barked loudly and commenced to nip and pull the dead bear's ears. I was surprised too see such a large bear. Both it and the black one had beautiful coats. Jim showed me places on the bear's head where he had bruised him with rocks and slashed him with his knife. ... These brown or cinnamon bears are, as most people know, more precious than the black.

...Jim, of course, felt that he ought to have the proceeds from the sale of the hides. So knowing that he had hunted and killed them and risked his life in doing so, I readily acceded to his request.

He now pleaded for me to run the sloop up into the Chilkoot Inlet north of the Haines Mission and land there on the gravel beach to skin the two bears, quarter the meat and stow it all snugly away under the the foredeck of the sloop. This we did. Jim asked this for the reason, as he explained, that he, being a Stick Indian, the coast or Chilkoot Indians -- if they found out that he had killed these two bears in their territory ... -- would make Jim pay them a royalty. This condition, of course, I knew ...

Again we started on our way out of the Chilkoot Inlet without any of the coast Indians seeing our prizes and arrived quietly back in Chilkat late in the

evening, Jim smuggled his two fine bear skins, one at a time, up to Captain Healey's branch store where they were stowed away for a while till Jim could stretch and dry them.

Jim received \$40 for the two skins. This was a cheap price, but under the circumstances Jim did not care to dicker too much and Johnny Healey, as we all knew, was not in Alaska for his health either. We all ate fresh bear meat for a few days. I also gave some to Captain Healey, and some to Mrs. Dickinson, a great friend of my wife's."

[Moore, 1968: 156-159]

### 3. Carmack Meets Jim and Charlie

George Carmack's story about meeting Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie, began as a 'tall tale' and gradually changed, as its author continued to revise it, into a more 'factual' account of what happened to him. This is the reverse of what often happens in 'the making of a legend,' in which an event becomes glorified and imaginatively added to as the original story gets handed down from generation to generation.

George Carmack's first encounters with Indians of the far Northwest occurred when he spent a short time at Sitka as a U.S. Marine, and a few years later when he came to Dyea to begin his search for gold. This we know from letters he was in the habit of writing to his sister, Rose Watson, in California. [Johnson, 1991]. But the first meeting that made a deep and lasting impression on him was with the two men from Tagish, Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie.

Carmack's memoirs were published in 1933 by his third wife eleven years after his death. However, earlier copies of his manuscripts [G.T. Snow mss., nd.] show that his story underwent some remarkable revisions. His account of the meeting with Jim and Charlie seems to have been changed from a grand tale of rescue from certain death in a blizzard while he was hiking near Lake Leberge, to the vaguest mention of meeting them at Dyea before joining them on a packing trip over the Chilkoot Pass. In this later version Carmack implies that the meeting itself was not nearly so memorable as their arrival together at the summit, when Jim shared with him the serene and magnificent view of his country.

The contrast between his earlier and later accounts is so extreme that it is possible that either Carmack drastically revised his aims and thinking, or the first story was written by someone else. Yet, there is enough similar material in all versions of Carmack's story to indicate that the common thread of his own experiences, real and imagined, ties them together.

If there was another hand at work in the earlier versions of the story, it would have been that of George T. Snow, who was collecting manuscripts of fellow Yukon pioneers in order to compile a history of the Yukon valley, or of Jack McQuesten who also contributed to the project. Carmack's wife, Marguerite, is said to have done some editing, though presumably this was restricted to excising references to her husband's life with his Tagish wife, Kate, and their daughter Graphie. [Johnson, 1991: 156]

The earliest version of Carmack's meeting with Jim and Charlie appears to be an inspired fiction. If Carmack was the sole author, he wrote from two points of view -- as the narrator, an anonymous prospector, and his own. While the narrator camps with friends by the Yukon River, they meet George Carmack with

Jim and Charlie coming downriver, and in the course of events George relates his story, describing how the two Indians once saved his life.

A) An Early Version

"'Now I want to tell you boys,' said Carmack, 'that them two Injuns came into my life in a way that I kin never forget. Three years ago, towards the end of October, I was prospecting on the upper river, between Whitehorse and Lake Leberge. I was back in the hills about 30 miles from the river, and was gettin' ready to make the back trip, ... a real [hard] snowstorm broke loose, tearin' and swirlin' through the air, blottin' out everything except the rock on which I was standin'. It seemed like Godalmighty and all His angels and helpers was shovelin' snow into His dump box, and that the sluice boxes was dischargin' their tailin's over a ten inch grade. Say boys! I dont' scare a hul lot, but when I found myself lost in that blizzard, without a compass and without any grub, bedding, or rifle, say, I purty near funk'd .

... as I lay in front of that fire, thinkin' maybe my time had come. I was wonderin' where in hell I'd go to when I cashed in. I didn't pray, 'cause I thought Godalmighty has His hands too full tendin' to all them religious cheechakos in the big cities to pay any attention to a poor devil of a gold chaser like me.

... I was chilled plumb to the bone, ans I couldn't hardly git up, I was that stiff and sore. I had started my fire between two big windfalls, the flames has just reached the dry tops, and they began to blaze up, like as if the doors of hell had just been opened. It looked like the woods would catch fire sure, but I was kinda out of my head and didn't care a damn WHAT happened.

... I just laid there lookin' up at the roarin' blaze, the sparks flyin' all around me like the showers from half a dozen skyrockets, and lightin' up every tree and rock in the neighbourhood. I was gettin' warm and comfortable from the heat, so I rolled over with my back to the fire and went fast asleep again.

I woke up suddenly with a sharp pain in my shoulder as though I had been bit by some animal. I struck wildly at my shoulder and burned my hand on a live coal that had burned a hole in my shirt. Some of the trees were on fire, but the wind was blowin' away from me in the direction of the fire, so I was safe for a while. I was awfull thirsty, so I crawled over to some slush snow, and sucked and sucked at it 'til I just bloated up like toad. When I couldn't hold any more, I crawled back to my dry spot and laid down again.

My head began to ache purty badly and I couldn't sleep any more, so I laid there tossin' and jabberin' and watchin' the blaze shoot up from the tree-tops. I guess I musta been outa my head purty much, because I kept talkin' and shoutin' to the burnin' trees, like they was livin' giants who wanted to grab me in their fiery arms. I kept this up till the sun was high up overhead, then I got sick at the stomach and tried to get up. When I got up on my knees I keeled over like a dead man. I guess I musta fainted.

When I come to, there was two Injuns bendin' over me. One of them was pilin' snow on my bare chest, and the other was takin' off my wet 'moccassins'. I just watched 'em and didn't say a word. When the Injun that was puttin' snow on my chest saw that my eyes was open, he brushed the snow off me and put his foxfur cap over my chest, then he took a strip of soft moose skin from around his waist, and with it he tied the cap across my chest and under my arms.

The other Injun had my moccassins off and was wrappin' my feet in blanket socks. After he got a pair of dry mucklucks on my feet, he asked me if I thought I could walk about a mile to where their toboggan was cached. I said I'd try, so with their help I got to my feet, but I couldn't stand up alone.

They laid me down again and put their snowshoes on, then the smaller of the two Injuns picked me up and boosted me on to the other feller's shoulders, and away we went, the little feller in the lead, breakin' trail, while the big Injun was packin' me along like I didn't weigh any more 'n a side of bacon.

In about a half an hour we came to the cache, the little feller pulled down a light toboggan from the limbs of a cottonwood tree, and after unleashin' it, he took the things out of it and set 'em at one side, then he laid a wolfskin robe over the bottom of the toboggan, and the big feller laid me down on it as carefully as though I was a baby. In a coupla minutes they had a fire a-goin'. They handed me a tin cup of hot tea and a rabbit leg. I drunk two cups of the

hot tea and et about half of the rabbit leg. I seemed to have lost my appetite after my long fast, but I sure made up for it a little later.

The big Injun, that's Skukum Jim here, told me that him and 'Tagish Charley' had been lookin' over their trapline when they noticed the smoke comin' up through the trees a coupla miles away. So they went over to see about it, and that's the way they came to find me.

When night came, Jim wrapped me up in the robe after untyin' the fur cap from my chest, threw an extra blanket over me, and fixed a bed on a pile of spruce boughs for him and Charley. They had another wolf robe and a blanket.

The next mornin' after a breakfast of dried salmon and hot tea, we started for the Tagish village where Jim and Charley lived. It took us four days to get there, with Jim and Charley takin' turn about at breakin' trail and draggin' me on the toboggan. I was purty sick and couldn't do nothin' to help.

Well, after we got there, they put me in a comfortable cabin and took care of me. I was sick over two months, but they kept me supplied with everything I needed, so got well again and stayed with them for a year and a half. They taught me to trap and hunt, and to take care of myself in the winter.

Now they kin call me 'Siwash George' all they damn please, but there ain't any white men that ever done anything whiter than them despised Siwashes done for me, and I used to be what they call a white man now.'

He spoke the last sentence with some bitterness, and grim-faced and teeth set as though to challenge a contradiction, looked around at his auditors."

[G.T. Snow mss., n.d.]

#### B) A Later Version

The preceding version did not satisfy Carmack, and in later revisions his style was more stringent, less colloquial, and the telling of events not nearly as dramatic. He also tried to stick closer to the facts, as he remembered them.

"These two Indians came into my life in a way I can never forget. Seven years before, when I was prospecting on the upper river, I got short of provisions, and went three days without anything to eat. I was getting weak and sick from hunger and exposure, [when] these Indians found me and took me to their camp, fed me and took care of me until I got well. I stayed at their camp for the rest of the season, and they taught me how to hunt and trap." [G.T. Snow mss., n.d.]

'Lying George', as he was called by other prospectors before he struck it rich, had really been, in his youth at least, an imaginative romantic who played around with words and facts in an attempt to express his emotions. In writing and re-writing his memoirs he tried to improve the balance between facts and inspiration, but in so doing may have sacrificed much of the latter.

#### C) The Final Version



By the time of writing his final draft the vivid tale about meeting Jim and Charlie, who appeared out of nowhere as angels of mercy, was gone. Instead, Carmack simply yet eloquently evoked an image of standing with Skookum Jim at the summit of the Pass as they looked out over the landscape.

"These two Indians came into my life in a way I can never forget. Ten years before, when I was packing over the Chilkoot Pass, I got acquainted with Skookum Jim, who was also packing over the pass. I was very much impressed by his sturdy independent nature; although of a taciturn disposition, he never refused to give me information about the country when I asked for it and occasionally a piece of sound advice that has helped me wonderfully to battle the hardships of the North.

One day after climbing from the 'Stone House' for over two hours with hundred-pound packs on our backs, we finally reached the apex of the Chilkoot Pass where we took off our packs and rested. It was a very warm day and the sun was blazing. A light northwest wind began to filter across the summit, cooling the heat-waves in its course. The weird hush, the scintillations of the ice-crystals on the surrounding glaciers, the towering giants of embattled rocks thrusting up their hoary heads toward the dome of Heaven, gave one a feeling of intense awe. It was an impressive sight. The black slate sawtooth range dividing Lake Bennett and Lake Atlin stood out in bold relief. The sentinel hills that stood guard around the lakes appeared close enough to be the foothills of the mountains on which we sat.

Suddenly, Skookum Jim rose and stood looking toward the hills with steady eyes. His head was bare and his shirt was unbuttoned at the throat exposing his great chest and neck of bronze ... , there was something in his attitude which suggested the silent strength of the North. With a graceful wave of his hand over the scene that lay before us, he said:

'Dis Inchen illahee. Hiyu skookum illahee. Hiyu clean, all same sky.'

To which I replied: 'Yes, Jim, it's Indian country. It's a good land. Plenty clean, like the sky.'

Carmack's earlier 'lie' was not as sublime and unfettered as his later 'truth', but to ignore it would be to miss the complete journey of his personal quest, from youthful loneliness and desperation to the exaltation and calm he remembered, in later years, that came with sharing the beauty of the land with one of its original inhabitants. The magic of gold, he may ultimately have realised, was not that it brought one to the Klondike or material riches, but to the kind of partnership that transcends personal differences and cultures.

Carmack's story is a very useful personal documentation of contact between cultures. His fictions are as important as his facts because his 'lies' portray his inner experience and tell the story of his life's quest.

## VII THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD ON BONANZA CREEK

### Accounts by Indian Men

Most people living in south-western Yukon near the turn of the century first heard about the discovery of gold in the Klondike by word of mouth, often from individuals at some remove from the source of the news. Johnny Fraser, however, heard the story from Skookum Jim himself, and Patsy Henderson, who was not present at the moment of discovery, but took part in just about every other aspect of the undertaking, had his version to relate. Their stories, therefore, are of particular interest to anyone trying to piece together the exact circumstances of this major event in Yukon history.

Accounts by these men must be compared, nevertheless, with those of Angela Sidney and Kitty Smith who tell the story of the gold-strike from their own perspectives as women, and as a result of hearing it from Kate Carmack, a member of the group of discoverers even though her role in the discovery itself has never been agreed upon.

Finally, Native accounts can be compared with those of George Carmack, Skookum Jim's partner, and William Ogilvie, who gave the best informed reports of any non-Natives. Carmack, along with Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie, was present at the time of the big strike, and Ogilvie as Government recorder, interviewed the participants soon after.

Though all versions of the strike have many things in common, there has never been total agreement on who found the gold nugget that started the Gold Rush. From the time of the reports to Ogilvie, Carmack always maintained that it was he who found the nugget, while Jim and Charlie claimed that it was Jim. Ogilvie himself believed the two Tagish men rather than Carmack whom he distrusted, and the accounts of Kitty Smith and Angela Sidney, based on Kate Carmack's story, both describe Jim as the discoverer. It would seem, then, that the weight of opinion is stacked against Carmack's claim, though the dispute derives essentially from the disagreement between two people -- Carmack and Jim.

## 1. Johnny Fraser 's Account

Johnny Fraser, born in 1872 near Champagne, was a friend of Skookum Jim and, like a number of other Native people, got involved in placer-mining after Jim and Dawson Charlie discovered gold in creeks near Kluane Lake in 1903, following their success in the Klondike. Prospectors flocked to Kluane in a minor gold rush, and in due course Johnny was advised by a Whiteman to participate. He bought a claim on Bullion Creek but soon sold it to Dawson Charlie for \$300, who found, as Johnny had suspected, that it was worthless. In subsequent years, however, Johnny continued to prospect and worked a claim in the Dalton Post area.

"Another time, when I was staying by Little Atlin Lake, Billy Smith came to visit. Charlie Jackson was there too. And Billy told us about Skookum Jim's Klondike discovery, as Jim told him.

When Skookum Jim went down to the creek for a drink, and saw some shiny stuff, at first he couldn't bring himself to put his hand in to pick it up. He didn't know for sure what it was. Nobody did. When he showed it to George, though, George knew right away. Dawson Charlie came to look at it, and was about to pick it up out of Jim's hand, and Jim said, 'Don't touch it! No, no.' He took off his hat and dumped the gold in it, and then they all went back to the creek.

Patsy Henderson staked a claim too, but sold it right away for \$10,000. He knew he would lose it because he was too young to stake legally."

[J. Fraser, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

## 2. Patsy Henderson's Story

Patsy Henderson, originally named Koo|seen, was a Dakl'aweidi Wolf like his uncle, Skookum Jim. At the age of seventeen, he and his older brother, Dawson Charlie, went with Jim from Tagish to the Klondike. While his two older relatives went prospecting with George Carmack, Koo|seen stayed at their camp at the junction of the Klondike and Yukon Rivers with Kate to tend the fishing nets and dogs. After the strike and staking of claims, Koo|seen went up with Kate and her daughter to live and work on the site with the rest of the party. Several months later, when he turned eighteen and was old enough to stake a claim for himself, he did, though he sold it soon after. About this time George Carmack gave him, at his request, his English name, Patsy Henderson.

Later, Patsy married Edith, a Gaanax.adi girl, and about 1930 he became the leader of the Carcross Dakl'aweidi, a position he took over from Tagish Jim, and held until his death in 1964. During this time he often told the story of the discovery of gold in the Klondike, and became a familiar figure at the Carcross train depot as he welcomed and entertained arriving tourists.

"... When George Carmack first came to live in Tagish, around 1894 ...

...he don't understand which way the Indians live. Pretty soon, the first year he stay amongst the Indians, George Carmack, he know which way Indians live, that time. He don't work for nobody, and nobody boss him. Boss himself. He like that.

After a while, he went down the river. From Tagish, go down river. When he left here, he tell us, 'I go down river. If I don't like it -- I'm going to come back next summer.' And he tell us like that when he left. Him and his wife go down the river ... He don't come back for two [?] years [and] we got no way to hear him. Sometimes we see somebody come up the river. We ask them, 'You see George Carmack someplace?' 'No.' They don't know George Carmack. Nobody know. Well, we miss him, George Carmack. We miss him, [that's why] we start here from Tagish, go down river [in a row-boat], look for George.

We don't look for gold, we don't know gold that time. We start from here, go down river look for George -- Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, and me... I think we left the first of July ...

... The two old people, they sit down in the boat. Me, I row all the way down -  
- 550 miles!"

When they came to Miles Canyon their boat was nearly half full of water, so they landed, made a fire to dry themselves, and Patsy went to hunt for rabbits. He shot five and brought them back for supper. Along the length of the river they saw no Whitemen. Here and there though, they did meet other Indians, as they did at Lake Leberge, and finally, near the mouth of the Klondike River. There, they had to speak English to be understood because they didn't understand the local language. George was living with these Indians. He was the only Whiteman amongst them, and he liked it that way.

"Well, we told George, 'We come look for you.'

And George says, 'Too bad you fellows come down a long ways to look for me.' ... [Then] he says we can't get back now till Wintertime. When the river froze, we try to get back ... with a dogteam."

They stayed, built a fish-trap, and dried fish for the dogs' winter journey. George told them about Bob Henderson who he met some months ago, coming upriver, and who said he'd found gold the previous fall.

"George, Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, Bob Henderson, and myself -- first people in Klondike -- we find gold. Five of us. But all of these people, they die. All die except me. That time when we find Klondike and gold, I'm just a kid that time. I'm an old man now ...

George said, 'That man, he went this way months ago -- Bob Henderson. Let's go look for him. Maybe he found lots of gold.'" [So they did, but Patsy stayed at the camp to tend the dogs and fish-trap.]

According to Patsy, Dawson Charlie was first to find some gold, a ten-cent nugget, on Rabbit Creek, about eight miles from the camp. Then they went up what was to become Eldorado Creek, but found no gold at all. Patsy prospected and 'played around' these creeks often before all the other prospectors arrived, but didn't see any gold.

The trio found Bob Henderson, and stayed one night at Gold Bottom. Later, when returning by another creek, about a quarter of the way along, below Russell Falls, they rested ...

"... One man go down the creek, drink water. Skookum Jim, he's the man. Go down the creek, drunk water. When he took a drink of water, he sees gold on the rock ... When he get through ... he call George: 'George! Come down here. Bring down gold-pan and shovel. We try here.'

So George come down the creek, and when he come down, ... [Jim] says, 'Look here George, just like a gold here. See that rock?'

'Well,' George says, 'that's gold!' And he put the gold-pan there. He put the gravel in the pan, and he pan him. First pan, and good pan. Good coarse gold. And he tried down below. Lot of gold. And he try way above -- lot of gold. Then George says, 'I guess we got a good place here. We're going to stake a claim.'"

They moved camp up to Bonanza Creek, and started work September 1st for three weeks. They took out about \$1440, then went back to Fortymile a second time for winter food and supplies. That's what started the rush. The first time they went in to record the claims only a few prospectors left for the Klondike.

[P. Henderson, SJFC Oral History Project 1973;  
transcript of CBC Radio interview: about 1960]

Accounts By Indian Women

Women of Tagish and Carcross heard the story of the discovery from a different point of view, as told by Kate Carmack, and understood its events in the context of the social and traditional life of their communities.

### 1. Kitty Smith's Account

Mrs. Kitty Smith was born about 1890, a Gaanax.adi Crow whose mother came from the Tagish people of Marsh Lake, and whose father was a Dakl'aweidi Tlingit from the coast. She married into Skookum Jim's family when she married her second husband, Billy Smith, who was Skookum Jim's nephew and a brother of Dawson Charlie and Patsy Henderson.

"Like other women from the southern Yukon who tell this story, [Kitty] heard the details from her husband's maternal aunt, Kate Carmack, and retells it from Kate's perspective. According to Mrs. Smith, Kate made the whole expedition possible because of her skills as a competent and efficient woman."

[Cruikshank, 1990: 167]

"Skookum Jim, Keish, is my husband's uncle. Dawson Charlie, that's my old man's own brother. Billy was too young ... to stake when they found Dawson. Patsy went and Billy wanted to go, but he got left. Nobody knows that time what gold is anyway - Skookum Jim didn't know either. But his brother-in-law, George Carmack, he knows.

George Carmack, he comes from outside, from California. But he came to Yukon, - he wanted to see Yukon, you know. He didn't have much money; his partner was a rich man, though. They went to Fortymile [River], near Dawson. That's the place that George Carmack's partner quit him. What do you think of that? George Carmack came back, walked all the way from Fortymile. He's sure doing good! He came back, and that's how far he made it - to Carcross, Tagish.

In Tagish, there were lots of people - Indians. They knew some white men. Skookum Jim's sister was young girl, that time. George Carmack said to Skookum Jim, 'How about I'm going to marry your sister? Then I'm going to be like Indian.' Well, it's all right. 'You're going to teach me trapping. You're going to teach me everything'. He doesn't go back anymore to Skagway, nothing.

Well, they live there, they're doing good. Somebody comes to him: 'I'm going to pay you. You come down[river] with me'. That's good luck, that one! His wife went with him - Kate Carmack. They go down river, way down to Dawson, way down to Fortymile. They work there. That other man broke his leg. They took him to doctor. Well, he can't do anything now; he gave George Carmack money, about five hundred.

So ... they live one winter, Kate Carmack and him, her husband. He's got wife. He's all right! She does EVERYTHING, that Indian woman, you know - hunts, just like nothing, sets snares for rabbits. That's what they eat. I know her: that's my auntie, Kate Carmack, my old man's mother's sister.

Skookum Jim worries about his sister, you know. 'Oh, my. Going to get lost. Don't want to get lost, my sister'. That's what he says; he talks about it all winter.

Dawson Charlie tells him: 'I guess we go down to look for her. We're going to bring her back,' he tells his uncle.

Billy, though, Dawson Charlie's brother, he's the same size as that grandchild who looks after me: 'Billy, I want him to look after me here.' His mother, Jikaak'w, says that. He kills game already, Billy, does everything. 'You can't take them all to Dawson, that way. It's good enough that Patsy goes,' his mother says. She's Dawson Charlie's mother too.

They fixed their boat. As soon as the ice goes out, they go down. They take lots of grub from Skagway - they don't think they're going to find their brother-in-law. Finally, they were going to go back, talk about it. 'We're going to go back, all of us, in this little boat. Easy, we make it.'

Here, the same time, George Carmack tells his wife the same thing: 'We're going to go back.'

One lady, Dawson people, gave them fish. She cut it up. Kate Carmack - that's how they lived there all winter. They got sugar, I guess, down there at Fortymile store. Kate Carmack kills rabbits, lynx, does that way. She's got one little girl now, Graffie. [Note: Her father's spelling was: 'Graphie', from a character in a novel he had read and enjoyed.]

Springtime now. They're staying at narrow place. You can see boats from there: 'August, we're going to try it - we'll make it back.' Kate Carmack sews, she looks around: 'Gee, boat coming ... new boat, too ... coming this way.' They've got a little camp, you know. She tells me about that, Kate Carmack. There's a bed right there ... fixed it just that way. Somebody gives them a moose skin - they put it underneath. They're even got stove. 'They're coming onto shore.'

George is cutting a little wood. He gets up.

'Ha!' Patsy sees his auntie.

Kate hollers for her husband, George Carmack. 'Come quick!' she says.

Skookum Jim is there - Dawson Charlie - Patsy Henderson. George runs down, grabs Skookum Jim. Gee, it's his people! Yeah! They're going to go back now. Going to go back. Going to look first for bull moose. They got lots of grub - I don't know how long they stayed there.

Patsy nearly got shot there, too. He's working on that gun: he's going to clean it, but a shell is in it. He doesn't know it! This time everybody knows everything, but that time, not much. It doesn't go through, though, just on top. Fortymile doctor was there. They're going to go back pretty soon now.

Dawson Charlie says, 'We want to kill moose here, to make it dried. The we'll go back. That way is good. Some hungry people tell me that way is good.'

George said, 'One man he killed us moose. That way we're pretty good.' His wife is kind woman. Dawson Indian, I guess.

They hunt now. Night-time, they came back. It's dark too, they said. Skookum Jim, he's got light - a candle. He got a can, put it in - that's the kind they've got. Dawson Charlie, he shot a bull moose, so they cook meat -- big eat! They fall asleep - they eat too much!



Skookum Jim wakes up. Carmack is sleeping, Dawson Charlie too ... Patsy too. He wants a drink of water ... He tells me this, you know ... He's got hat; he wants to drink with that one. The teapot is full of tea. That's why he goes down, puts his hat in the river that way. He see something up there ... 'Is that copper?' He drinks water, looks again. Same big as beans, you know -- bigger than beans ... heavy.

He takes off. He doesn't know gold much, Skookum Jim. Nobody knows much gold. But George, he knows! He goes back. Dawson Charlie wakes up. 'I found something,' Jim tells him, Indian way. 'Don't know what is that. What does it look like?'

'Copper,' [Charlie] says.

'Make George wake up now - it doesn't look like copper. Heavy, too.' George wakes up.

'You wake up good?'

'Yeah.'

'What is that, this one? That creek I found it.'

That's gold! Where's their sleep now! That tea is still there. They don't drink much, though! 'You see now gold!' George tells them - runs down to creek.

Kate Carmack tells me all that. They just go look for her. They're not looking for gold!

When they got back to Carcross, George got another girl. She made him crazy - a white lady. He quits his wife, Kate. George Carmack has got sister. That sister's husband [James Watson] tells my auntie, Kate Carmack, 'Your husband got another woman. If you want to use your money, you can stay with us [in California].' Some days he comes back he comes back, stays two or three days. Then ... gone. That little girl, Graffie, he gets grub for her. Then he goes again. She knows something is wrong, his wife. Her brother-in-law tells her.

George puts his clothes in a suitcase. He took that little girl, his daughter. One man tells him, 'I'm going to help you if you want to go back. Go in a boat from Carcross.' Dawson Charlie stays there. Skookum Jim stays there. They look for gold again. George wants to go back [to Seattle]. 'You go down to that place in the morning. I'll meet you at that place,' man tells him. He does that. Goes down, drinks coffee ... takes his suitcase and puts it in the boat. The the boat goes - I don't know how many days it gets to Skagway ... They never came back.

My auntie, Kate Carmack, stayed in Carcross till she died, flu. She didn't get her money, her share, though. She can't know, can't read.

Billy, my husband, used to be Skookum Jim's bodyguard. He got a gun and he guards the boat for Jim when he's got gold. He got crazy, Skookum Jim, you know - shouldn't be like that. His wife quit him ... If your husband, he finds gold, shouldn't quit him. Dawson Charlie's wife same like that - married white man - Shorty Austin. Mrs. Patsy [Henderson] told me, 'You fellows are crazy. What you want to change your husband for?' Lots of women did that, run off with white man."

## 2. Angela Sidney's Account

"In the first place, he wasn't looking for gold.  
Skookum Jim went downriver to look for his two sisters  
because they missed them.

They were gone two years already --  
no telegram, nothing.

He doesn't know if his two sisters are alive or not.  
That's why he thought he'd go down the river, too--  
to see if he can find his sisters, Aage and Kate.  
They were strict about that kind of thing, the old

people.

He took his wife and his two nephews --  
Dawson Charlie and Patsy Henderson.

My father turned to my mother and he said [looking  
'See that Chilih Dze|e?' [mountain near Lake Lebarge]  
and she started to cry.

back]

'Why are you crying?'

'I'm just thinking about your poor crippled mother, and  
mother.

your sister and my

Who is going to cut wood for them?  
Who is going to help them get water?  
They're sick and helpless.'

And so my father and mother [Tagish John and Maria]  
turned around and went back --  
otherwise they might have found the gold, too.  
Bad luck, eh?  
But maybe it was just as well ...  
All those men who found gold split up with their wives.

When they got to Klondike River,  
that's where they started to dry salmon.  
And that's when they came to George Carmack's camp.  
Well, Kate and her husband were drying salmon, too --  
They've just been living on fish, but they're starting  
meat.

to get hungry for

They decide to go hunt, go shoot the game.  
At the same time, they're prospecting, too.  
When they got to Bob Henderson's place,  
he talked to George about it, but he said they couldn't  
'Because you've got two Indians with you.'  
So they came right back, other side -- they make fire  
Patsy's home, I guess, looking after the women and the  
Here, Skookum Jim just saw this shiny thing sitting on  
So he picked it up and looked at it.  
It was a nugget worth fifty cents.  
He looked... looked...

stake,

then.

camp.  
top of a rock.

'George, George, come down.  
I'll show you something.'

'That's gold!'

They pan in a frying pan, find nuggets everywhere...  
'We found our fortune now!' George said.  
They started staking right away.

They say that after Dawson Charlie found that gold he poured  
nuggets into the coffin.  
And he said, 'My sons, I gave them hard time, trying to rustle for this  
gold.'  
So he thought he'd put some gold away with them.  
That's why he did that.

And Skookum Jim, too, he poured some gold on his sister,  
Susie's mother.  
One bag he poured, whole thing into their coffin.  
His sister died while she was travelling over the summit.  
All of a sudden, I guess, north wind started to blow.  
The girl fell down -- well, what's she going to do?  
Her mother can't leave her!  
She fell down, too.  
They were still alive when somebody found them.  
But after they brought them into the house,  
that's when they died."

[Sidney, in Cruickshank, 1990: 63-65]

#### Accounts by Whitemen

Native people, who were perhaps friends or relatives of Skookum Jim, were inclined to believe the version of events on Bonanza Creek that they heard from their own people, rather than Carmack's claim that he, not Jim, had found the big nugget -- if they heard that version at all. But even some non-Natives, familiar with both claims of first discovery, believed Jim and Charlie, as William Ogilvie, the surveyor for the Canadian Government, did.

#### 1. William Ogilvie's Account

"At the mouth of the Klondike [Robert Henderson] saw George Washington Carmac[k], whom story has connected prominently with the discovery of [gold on] the Klondike ... Henderson, in accordance with the unwritten miners' code, told Carmac of the discovery he had made on Gold Bottom, and invited him to come up and stake. Carmac was then engaged in salmon-fishing with his Indian friends and associates, the male members of whom were Skookum .. Jim, and Tagish ... Charlie. As Henderson tells the story, Carmac promised to take it in, and take his Indian associates with him, but to this Henderson strongly objected, saying he did not want his creek to be staked by a lot of natives, more especially natives from the upper river. Carmac seemed to be offended by the objection, so they parted./

I have this story essentially the same from both Henderson and Carmac, the latter, of course, laying a little stress on the objection to the Indians. I have had long interviews with both Jim and Charlie, and some of the others camped with them on the Klondike at that time, and reduced the purport of our talks to writing. As I have said, both Henderson and Carmac gave me the same story about Henderson having told Carmac of the new discovery, and the Indians

assured me that they knew 'Bob', as they call Henderson, told George, as they called Carmac, of it and asked him to go and stake on it; that much, therefore, may be assumed without doubt. The stories told me by the Indians may be questioned, but they were very sincere in their tone and assertions when telling me. I took the precaution to interview them separately and afterwards get them all together and criticize and discuss the narrative of each .../

Put in as concise terms as I can frame it, Jim's story tells us that he, Charlie, and George were, as we know, camped at the mouth of the Klondike fishing, but as a straight fish diet becomes monotonous in time, in order to procure some variety it was agreed that they would get out some logs, take them down to Fortymile, and sell them to the saw-mill there ... Much depended on Jim in this work, and he did a good deal of examination in the woods around the place to find the best and most convenient logs. This work took him some distance up a creek afterwards known as Bonanza ... He informed me he found some very good logs ... at various places, and in order to learn whether or not they could be floated down to the Yukon, he had to make a close examination of the creek bed. In doing this he said he found some colours of gold at various places in the gravel, and particularly at where claim sixty-six below discovery was afterwards located he found what he considered very fair prospects. He told the fishing camp of this find, but it did not arouse much interest. Jim, according to his own story, was anxious to further investigate, but as George was chief councillor in the camp and did not appear much interested in the matter it was allowed to drop temporarily.

About twenty days after Henderson called at the camp, George told him to get ready for a tramp to find Bob. [The three men] started up Bonanza on the quest, with [prospecting] tools ... for a prolonged stay away from camp, and such provisions as their means afforded ...

A short distance below where they afterwards made discovery, both Jim and Charlie told me they, while panning during a rest, found a ten-cent pan ... It was decided [among the trio] that if the Gold Bottom trials failed they would devote further attention to this place ...

As they did not find any prospect approaching in value the ten-cent pan on Bonanza, they remained a very short time at Henderson's camp ... Before they got far down [Bonanza] their provisions were entirely exhausted, and as they prospected on their way down, and Jim was hunting for meat, their progress was slow ... Jim at last, when they were all too tired and weak to do further prospecting, got a moose ...

... Jim says he called on the others, whom he had left some distance away, to come to him. While waiting for them to come he looked in the sand of the creek where he had gone to get a drink, taking with him a bit of the moose. He found gold, he said, in greater quantities than he had ever seen before. When the others joined him the moose was cooked, and they had a feed. Then he showed them the gold in the sand. They remained two days at this place panning, and testing the gravel up and down the creek in the vicinity. After satisfying themselves that they had the best spot, and decided to stake and record there, they got into a dispute as to who should stake discovery claim, Jim claiming it by right of discovery, and Carmac claiming it, Jim says, on the ground that an Indian would not be allowed to record it. Jim says the difficulty was finally settled by agreement that Carmac was to stake and to record discovery claim, and assign half of it, or a half-interest in it to Jim ..."

Ogilvie goes on to say that they staked their claims on August 17, then while Skookum Jim stayed to guard them, George and Charlie set off that morning for Fortymile with a raft of logs to sell.

"The country all around there was alive with men looking for the Henderson discovery", since Henderson had earlier told everyone he encountered about Gold Bottom, and within three days of the discovery on Bonanza seven other claims had been staked there by other prospectors who had either stumbled on their own finds or heard about the good prospects from Carmac and Charlie.

Because Henderson did not hear of the Bonanza discovery until after much of the creek had already been staked, he missed out completely. He also lost the right to claim discovery on Gold Bottom since another miner, Andrew Hunker, got to the recording office in Fortymile to register his claim on the same creek before Henderson did.

[Ogilvie 1913, 130-132]

## 2. George Carmack's Account

One of the reasons that George Carmack's claim to being the discoverer of Bonanza gold has maintained its credibility is that he, unlike the Indians, was literate. Not only could he write, he had imagination and a romantic style that could inspire others of his kind to believe him. However, it may long remain a question whether his love of the Yukon was as true as his regard for facts.

"[On the return journey from Henderson's camp on Gold Bottom] we finally struck our creek at the head of the south fork. We followed it down to where the north fork came in, [and] this branch I followed up for about a quarter of a mile. I could not get any gold in either of these forks, but in the north fork, out of a pan full of gravel I got a third of a pan of ruby and black sand. There was very little water this far up, [but] there were a number of small pools along the creek which were swarming with grayling, so we did not go hungry.

After going a couple of miles further down the creek I began to get a little gold, then I became more careful in my prospecting, following around each bend in the creek looking from bedrock. About half a mile below the forks of the creek that we had followed up before, we were walking along a high bank on the right limit where the creek made a sharp bend to the right and hard up against the hill. I was ahead and about fifty feet up from the water's edge. I stepped and looked down the bank [w]here I saw a long narrow strip of bed-rock, about a hundred feet and from ten to twelve feet wide. Now! Here was the very thing I had been looking for, so waiting until my two companions caught up to me, I pointed down to the strip of bed-rock and said, 'Look down there boys. If this creek is good for anything at all, we surely ought to find gold down there.'/

Throwing off my pack, I walked down to the rim. As soon as I reached it, I stopped and looked down ... my heart skipped a beat, I rubbed my eyes with the back of my hand to wipe away a misty film that enveloped my pupils, then I reached down and picked up a nugget about the size of a dime ... I put it between [my teeth] and bit it like a schoolboy who had found a quarter in the garbage can. I looked up at my two companions, who had discarded their packs, and were sitting on the bank watching me. I held up the nugget between my thumb

and forefinger and shouted, 'Hiyu gold! Bring down the pan and shovel, hi yak.'/

Charlie grabbed the pan and shovel and started down on the run, tripped and fell, and would have rolled into the creek if I had not caught him. I took the shovel and dug up some of the loose bed-rock. In turning over some of the flat pieces, I could see the raw gold laying thick between the flakey slabs, like cheese sandwiches ... I got about a quarter of an ounce in th[e] pan, mostly coarse gold./

I walked back to the rim and set the gold-pan on the ground, then as near as I can remember, three full-grown men tried to see how big d--n fools they could make of themselves. [We] did a war-dance around that gold-pan .. a combination war-dance .. Scotch hornpipe, Indian foxtrot, syncopated Irish jig, and a sort of Siwash hula-hula. Then we sat down to rest and smoke ...

After roasting some of our bear meat and making a pot of tea, we ate our supper, then we sat around the fire and smoked out pipes. After the pipes were out, the two Indians sitting with their blankets over their shoulders, their lean bronze features lit up by the bright gleaming camp-fire, began to chant a wild weird song of praise to the Great Spirit. They sang of the many journeys we had made together over silent lakes and rivers, of the burning summers and freezing winters, the silent trails, the hunting of the moose and caribou, of our feasts and famines, .. even of the weird shadows of the tall spruce trees around our camp-fire, [and] ending with a loud gladsome burst, of our Great Discovery. Then they rolled themselves in their blankets and were soon playing the tired man's duet./

The flames of the camp fire then went out, [and] I sat gazing at the glowing bed of coals, thinking of the eleven years of nerve-racking toil, floundering through snowdrifts, crossing over dangerous glaciers, climbing over almost impossible mountain ranges, with a heart-breaking pack on my shoulders, [etc., etc. ...], until this treasure chest I had unearthed lay unlocked before me. Already my brain was occupied with half-formed projects for the future: a trip around the world with a congenial companion, a beautiful home with well-kept lawns ..., a sum invested in government bonds -- the income of which would be sufficient to enable me to enjoy the good things of life ... and keep me comfortable for the balance of my life.

I was getting sleepy, so I rolled into my blankets and lay looking up at the scintillating stars, gleaming in the great arching dome of the unclouded Yukon sky: the Great Dipper nearly overhead, circling through the vast expanse; a falling meteor flashed .. across the heavens and disappeared. Then I fell into a dreamless sleep."

[G.T. Snow Collection; Carmack ms., nd.]

#### Towards An Overview

From all these stories and different points of view, historians and writers have tried to deduce an accurate chronicle, or to find an answer to unsolved questions such as 'Who found gold on Bonanza Creek?' Others have been more intent on simply presenting as clearly as possible an impartial and objective account. Historians Ken Coates and Allen Wright attempt to describe the whole episode in this manner. The gist of their views, with some direct quotes, follows:

The discovery was not an accident, and almost inevitable because so many prospectors knew it was somewhere and were looking for it -- the mother lode. Some gold had been found on the Stewart River in 1885, and near Fortymile soon after. Hundreds of prospectors came every summer to look. They knew that since the gold found was alluvial, found in flecks, grains, and small nuggets in stream beds, at some earlier time it had been washed down from somewhere. From previous experiences in California in 1849, and British Columbia in 1859, they knew that there were rich diggings to be found in the Yukon.

The four men involved in the discovery were all veterans of the north, all seasoned and tough. As well as the two Indians from Tagish, Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie, there was ...

"... George Washington Carmack [who] had prospected in Alaska ... before coming to the Yukon. Carmack was unusual among the miners in that he was free of racial prejudice against Indians, ... and got along with the Indians well enough that the miners called him 'Siwash George'. The term was an insult. 'Siwash' was a derogatory term for an Indian, and Carmack was generally considered to be a 'squaw man'." [Coates 1988, 102].

"[Robert Henderson of Nova Scotia had been looking for gold for 24 years. He ...] had once fallen off a log while cutting trees to bridge a stream, impaled his calf on the stump of a sapling, hung upside down 'like a quarter of beef,' for four or five minutes, freed himself, crawled to his tent, and was back at work within two weeks.

In July 1896 Carmack, his family, and his two partners were at the site of what would become Dawson, at the junction of the Klondike and Yukon Rivers. They were fishing for salmon and drying it for dog-food when Henderson appeared. He had been prospecting with some other men on the small creeks that fed the Klondike River, and, as the unwritten code of the miners required him to do, he told Carmack that he had found promising traces of gold on Gold Bottom Creek. Carmack asked him if there would be a chance for him to stake a claim and get in on the prospects. Henderson replied that Carmack was welcome, but not his brothers-in-law; that there was no place at Gold Bottom for any 'damned Siwashes.' His prejudice was to cost him dearly, for [Jim and Charlie] heard the remark and resented it."

[Coates 1988, 103,104]

In early August the Tagish trio poled their boat up the Klondike for a mile or two, then walked up Rabbit Creek, panning in the shallows as they went. The weather was perfect. They passed a smaller creek flowing into Rabbit Creek from the south, trekked over 'The Dome' separating the creeks, and visited Henderson's camp at Gold Bottom.

Carmack later claimed he asked Henderson to join them at Rabbit Creek and Henderson refused. Henderson denied that, and claimed that Carmack had promised to tell him if he found anything worthwhile. At Gold Bottom Henderson again insulted the Indians by refusing to sell them tobacco. "His obstinacy cost him a fortune", Carmack wrote later in his life. [Carmack, 1933]

The Tagish trio returned to Rabbit Creek, called "Tha-Tat-Dik" ("Muffler Creek") by the local people [Coutts 1980:27], and there, on August 16, 1896, 'they became the stuff of legend'. Panning up and down the stream, the men found encouraging traces of gold. Then in a place where the bedrock was exposed, one of the men found a nugget about the size of a dime. They turned over loose pieces of rock, and saw more gold lying in the cracks. The men whooped for joy, danced about for a few minutes, then quickly panned enough gold to fill an empty shotgun shell, and made camp for the night.

The next morning Carmack blazed a tree with his axe, and wrote out his notice of claim:

"To Whom it May Concern:

I do this day, locate and claim, by right of discovery, five hundred feet, running up stream from this notice. Located this 17th day of August, 1896. GW Carmack."



Under mining regulations, claims made in creeks were 550' wide, from 'rim-rock to rim-rock' of the creek. Carmack as official discoverer, could make two claims, and his partners one each. With a tape measure the men staked these out. As on all Klondike creeks these were numbered One Above (upstream) Discovery, One Below, etc.

Though Carmack stated that he was the one who found the first nugget, Skookum Jim and Charlie told the surveyor, William Ogilvie that Jim had, but that Carmack had persuaded him to put the extra claim in Carmack's name, since the white miners would not recognise him as a legitimate discoverer. After the four claims were staked, Carmack ripped a piece of birch bark from a tree and used it to make a sign: "I name this creek Bonanza. GC"

The trio broke camp and went down the Yukon to Fortymile to sell some logs. On the way they met a number of prospectors and told them the news, but didn't walk over the dome to tell Henderson. Most prospectors did not believe them, because Carmack had a reputation for 'stretching the truth', -- until shown the evidence. The discoverers were laughed at again in Fortymile, and not until they made another trip to register their claims a month later did men desert the town for Bonanza Creek.

[Coates 1988, 107-109].

"Unaware of all this, Henderson kept to Gold Bottom for another three weeks, by which time all the best prospects had been staked. He did stake a claim on Hunker nearby, which might have been profitable, but did not work it, preferring to search for another Bonanza. Perhaps like some miners he had a psychological will to lose. He left the Yukon with a thousand dollars in gold, and that was stolen from him before he reached the south. Because he was popular in the north, and because he had in truth pointed the way to riches ... the federal govt gave him a pension of \$200/month. He prospected in northwestern Canada almost until the day he died, 1933, but never struck it rich."

[Wright, 1980: 295]

Though claims on Bonanza did well, the richest were soon found on a small tributary that the miners named El Dorado. Each original claim eventually produced over one million dollars, and the fifty or so others, at least half a million; in total, about 30 million dollars, from a creek no more than five miles long, (about \$875 million Canadian in 1988). More gold had been found in California and South Africa, but not concentrated in such small areas.

[Coates, 1988: 102-110]

But What About the Women?

After hearing many different stories about the Klondike Discovery, some people have suspected that there is something amiss, especially in the argument about who discovered the first nugget. The men, as usual, had very little (actually nothing) to say about the women's roles in the whole adventure, and if Kate, or Mary Mason who some say accompanied Jim to the Klondike, was with them at the time, perhaps the nugget was discovered by one of them. At least one Native woman has pointed out that if Skookum Jim's or George's wife was there at the time, she would have been the one to have gone to the creek for water for her husband, as was the custom, and she would therefore have been the one who found the nugget. This would have been especially likely if it had been Jim who wanted water since he was the son of a chief. [Personal communication from Louise Profeit-LeBlanc, 1992.]

Some people, however, may prefer to be as diplomatic as Patsy Henderson was when he gave credit of discovery to all the men: Robert Henderson, Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, and George Carmack; but include as well the women, whose roles were vital and perhaps pivotal to the outcome.

Yet others, may point to the dreams of Skookum Jim and George Carmack. Without those dreams maybe none of their group would have found the gold. And where did they come from? Who gave those dreams to Jim and George? Maybe Wealth Woman should get the credit ... for showing them where to look. She knew all the time!

## VIII THE HEYDAYS

With the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek, Skookum Jim and company became rich. Despite the disagreement about who found gold first, the men shared fairly evenly in the proceeds from their work, and with their families began to celebrate, invest, and spend their good fortunes. One of the first things they did was to embark on a grand tour of the west coast, sailing from Alaska to Seattle and California.

The stories from this period and until Skookum Jim's demise in 1916 are numerous, and come from a variety of sources. The following sections present material from periods that have been characterised as: Skookum Jim's "Heydays", when he spent most of his time working his claim and travelling; "After the Gold Rush" of 1896-98, when his partnership with Carmack ended and he sold his property in the Klondike to return to live in Carcross; "Back in Carcross", consisting of some of the most interesting and humorous stories, when Skookum Jim had more or less settled back in with his people, but continued to maintain ties with non-Native society; and finally, his "Last Years", in which he ventured forth on his last major journey.

The stories in these sections come from a wide range of sources that include Native oral histories, newspaper articles, and the published works of non-Native authors. One of the most significant contributions is from Billy Johnson whose background has not been previously described.

The Johnson narrative, about his travels with Skookum, Billy Smith, and a non-Native who used to be a policeman in Carcross, is based on an interview recorded by Johnny Johns and his wife, Anita, in 1972 when they were doing research for the Skookum Jim Oral History Project.

Billy Johnson was born in the Carcross area, and in the Native way of recognising certain kinds of kinship referred to Skookum Jim and his sister, Kate, as "uncle" and "aunt", as he did to Dawson Charlie and Jenny Cook. At Dyea, Billy and his wife were neighbours of Skookum Jim in the pre-Klondike days, and Billy packed supplies over the Chilkoot Pass with Jim and Charlie when they all worked for William Ogilvie. During the small gold-mining boom around Kluane Lake, started by his relatives, Billy worked a claim at Bullion Creek.

### Klondike Stories

#### 1. Jim's Generosity

After the fall of 1896, during their first winter they had a neighbour who built a cabin and prospected up on the bench claim. He had no money and no food, this Whiteman. All he had was a seven-pound sack of rolled oats. He was a pretty good fellow, so Skookum Jim would feed him -- lots of meals: moose meat, dried salmon, and fresh fish, that Skookum Jim bought from the Natives around Moosehide. So this man wintered nicely. He survived.

In the course of time, another miner arrived. He was a Whiteman, married to a Native woman from around Tagish -- Jenny. His name was [Henry] Cook. By the summer of 1897, he and Skookum Jim were pretty friendly. They heard of a stampede in Alaska near Fairbanks. Skookum Jim gave Mr. Cook \$50,000 to prospect.

Cook didn't take his wife, and she (and Skookum Jim) never saw him again.

[J. Johns, SJFC Oral History Project 1973]

## 2. "King George's Man"

One day, a White prospector, Ed Lung was sitting in a Dawson saloon with friends when an old miner, noticing two men enter, says:

"'Look who's coming!'

They were dressed in white man's clothes -- red plaid shirts, loud ties, and black trousers tucked into heavy brown shoes ... black hats with red hatbands, and across their chests dangled heavy watch-chains with double rows of yellow nuggets.

'It's Skookum Jim and Tagish [Dawson] Charlie, the wealthiest Indians in the North,' said the miner closest to me. 'They're relatives of George Carmack, one of the Bonanza kings, ...[but] they drink too much, a real worry to Carmack.'

'All right now, let's have a drink!' yelled Skookum Jim as he strode to the bar and threw down a thick sack of gold. 'Come on, let's everyone drink to our King George! We're his men. Drink to King George!'

'Now my turn!' shouted Tagish Charlie as he strode to the bar and threw down his sack of gold, and a second round of drinks was quickly swallowed up.

'Now, all sing George Carmack song,' shouted Charlie as he raised his voice in a peculiar nasal tone and began leading a song wich everyone seemed to know, and which repeated praises of Carmack's discovery of gold ... over and over in a continuous round. Each stanza seemed to begin with 'I wonder why. I wonder why,' [and told of] how George Carmack had wandered over the North from Chilkoot to St. Michael, enduring long cold winters, and finished up by announcing Carmack was worth a million and the oldtimers 'they were broke'. Then the song repeated the chorus, ('I wonder why, I wonder why ...') with the miners nearly raising the roof. [See p.140]

All at once, the door flew open and in strode a rather tall, black-whiskered man ... Taking each Indian firmly by the shoulders, he escorted them quickly out of the saloon and marched them away.

'It's George Carmack!' gasped one of the miners, 'and he'll try to get them to go up on the Bonanza or send them back up the river toward their own villages.'

[Martinsen 1976, 56/96]

## 3. The " King's Woodpile"

A biographer of George Carmack, James Albert Johnson, recorded the following anecdote in 1956. The husband of Mrs. Boss was related to Chief Jim Boss of Lake LeBerge whose aunt, Mrs. Dennis, married a brother of Kaachgaawaa, Skookum Jim's father.

Skookum Jim and Charlie had sold a half-interest in their claims to a mining partner, G.D. Bentley, who looked after daily operations of their mine. As a result Jim was free to spend much time in the saloons.

"All too often the Mounties jailed him for being drunk and disorderly. Jail inmates were usually put to work chopping firewood for the police barracks. Jim

spent many days in the Dawson jail, where he acquired the dubious distinction of being the best dressed man working on the 'King's woodpile.'"

On one occasion a Mountie asked Jim how many times he had been arrested.

'One thousand times,' Jim answered.

'One thousand times?' echoed the disbelieving Mountie.

'Yes. What's the matter? You jealous?' Jim said.'

[Johnson 1990, 130]

## Seattle Stories

### 1. Comparing Versions

#### A) Skookum Jim on the Ocean

##### Billy Johnson's Story

"Skookum Jim, he had a good time before he left this world. He go around the whole water too ... just go around the world. They go to Seattle, and Skookum Jim, he's the only man who doesn't get sea-sick. The boat rocks, and they can't see land anywhere. No mountains. They stayed in their cabins and kept their doors closed. The other people are throwing up, but not Skookum Jim. He's drinking all the time.

That's what Skookum Jim told Billy Smith, and Billy told me. Skookum Jim laughed at everybody else getting sick. But he thought, in general, that people were smart not to drink."

[B. Johnson, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

#### Johnny Johns' Story

"In the summer of 1898, after two years on Bonanza Creek, Skookum Jim sold out. Then they all took a steamer down the Yukon to St. Michael on the Bering Strait, and from there sailed across the ocean to Seattle. Most of the time on the open sea Skookum Jim was half-drunk and didn't mind the rough sailing, but the others were not as lucky.

One time, Skookum Jim says to Dawson Charlie and Patsy, 'You watch out which way we're going. Keep track of the sun. Night time, you keep track of the stars. You know which stars we travel by at this time of year. Because we don't know ... we don't know. They might run us off the world. Fall off.'"

[J. Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

#### James Albert Johnson's Story

"After 13 years away from home, George Carmack decided to go to California, with his family, and invited Jim, Charlie, and Patsy. They went by steamer, the Porteus B. Weare, from Dawson to St. Michael, where they arrived in mid-August. In Dawson they stayed at the Healy Hotel, and turned over their gold to the steamship company for safe-keeping.

Skookum Jim insisted on keeping in his possession a large canvas poke of gold dust weighing about 36 pounds and worth about \$10,000. Carmack advised him to keep it in the hotel safe, but Jim mistrusted strangers and kept the heavy sack in his hotel room.

The Tagish were drinking at every opportunity. Kate had a fondness for liquor, and although Carmack kept close watch on her, she occasionally managed to steal a bottle of whiskey from Jim while he was sleeping it off. Their excessive drinking at St. Michael embarrassed and exasperated Carmack, but he managed to get them aboard the Roanoke, with a great feeling of relief.

The ship left St. Michael on August 22, bound for Seattle. Soon after it put to sea, Skookum Jim inspected his heavy poke of gold. It had been tampered with. Someone had emptied the sack, put back in a bottom layer of gold dust, then several pounds of ordinary BB shot, and topped that with another layer of gold dust. Almost half the original contents had disappeared. Carmack estimated Jim's loss at about \$4,000 and concluded that the theft occurred in Jim's hotel room while the Indian was in a drunken stupor.

[The first morning at sea, Carmack was one of only eight passengers at breakfast, the other 192 were presumably seasick.]

While in St. Michael's, Patsy had purchased a vial of liquid seasick remedy, sold to him by a Chinese waiter who peddled Oriental nostrums on the side. Following the instructions of his Chinese friend, Patsy carefully applied a single drop of the medicine to the tip of his tongue and felt so much better

that he was able to appear in the dining room for lunch. [Charlie took some in the afternoon, and it worked for him too.]"

[Johnson 1990, 98-99]

#### B) Throwing Money Away

##### Johnny Johns' Story

"Skookum Jim was in a big Seattle hotel and liked to watch the crowds of people in the street below. He has lots of loose gold around, so he threw some out the window, along with lots of silver money and dollar bills. The people on the street would almost fight for it, and pretty soon just went crazy. So the hotel people called the police, and had them stop Skookum Jim from doing that. He sat up there and laughed. He had a good time, enjoyed it all."

[J.Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

##### James Albert Johnson's Story

"One day when Charlie was alone in his hotel room, quietly nursing a bottle and idly looking out the fifth-floor window, he had a sudden inspiration. He sent a bellboy out to the bank to obtain \$500 in half-dollar coins. Then he amused himself by tossing

handful after handful out the window. There was a mad scramble in the street, men dived from the sidewalk to grab for them. Traffic became snarled. The police were called and Charlie was orderd to cease and desist or go for a ride in the paddy wagon."

[Johnson, 1990: 101]

## 2. Other Seattle Stories

### The Variety Show

"They took Jim to see a variety show one night. They were all sitting down watching the show, and there was this big fat woman out on the stage, telling jokes. They figured she must have weighed 600 pounds. And I guess somebody must have put the woman wise to Skookum Jim, because one of her tricks was to come down the aisles, grab some man and give a good hug and kiss, and she left the stage and waddled down the aisle to Skookum Jim. She wanted to hug and kiss him, but Jim was scared of such a big woman, and says, 'Oh, no-no-no, don't touch me! Please, please don't touch me. I got a wife at home. I got a wife who'll tell. No, no, I don't want a kiss! I don't want a kiss.'

The whole house roared."

[J.Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

### Kate's Campfire

"One day when they were shopping at the markets, Kate, who was tired of eating restaurant food, Whiteman's grub, saw meat hanging in a butcher's shop. So she went in and told the butcher she wanted a side of beef-ribs -- a whole side! It looked nice to her. Okay. The butcher had it wrapped up for her, and delivered to the hotel.

Outside the hotel, Kate made a pile of boxes, pieces of wood, and so on; broke up the boxes and built a nice big fire. She stuck the ribs on a long stick over the fire, and had a real good campfire roast.

My golly, somebody saw the fire and called the fire department. But when they arrived and saw her sitting there just as peaceful as could be, roasting her ribs, they didn't have the heart to put her fire out, so they stood by until her ribs were all cooked, and she walked back with them into the hotel."

[J.Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

### A Newspaper Story (July, 1899)

"While George Carmack went off for few days to supervise some building on one of his mining properties, Kate, who'd been drinking, went to visit Jim [and Charlie at their] hotel, only a few blocks away. She and Jim ended up spending the night in jail for being drunk and disorderly, as reported in The Seattle Post-Intelligencer:

[Johnson 1990,107]



"... Mrs. George W. Carmack ... was arrested while executing an aboriginal Yukon war dance in the second floor corridor of the Seattle Hotel yesterday evening at about six o'clock.

... So much for the debasing tendencies of great wealth and the firewater of the white man. ... the possession of mere wealth could not preserve [Skookum Jim] from being thrown into a dungeon to sleep off his liquor just though he were an ordinary waterfront Siwash.

[Kate's visit to see Jim and Charlie was ...] ill-timed. She found Skookum Jim in tow of a number of gamblers who were priming him with liquor for the purpose, it is said, of getting him in a card game when the right stage of drunkenness was reached. Before the management of the hotel became aware of the fact these men had smuggled in a gallon demijohn and had partially accomplished their object in making Jim drunk.

But it was Jim's wife and the unfortunate Mrs. Carmack who suffered most fully the consequences of their indulgence. Before the supply of liquor was shut off, Mrs. Carmack and her sister-in-law had ceased to discuss Klondike cooking recipes, sub-Arctic management of servants and the utility of polar bear skins in crazy quilts and had strayed into fields far less profitable for argument.

What was the cause of it is hard to say, but the inevitable quarrel finally came and Mrs. Carmack, remembering the valorous deeds of her forefathers, made a swift grab for her sister's scalp lock ... etc.

Skookum Jim, who had umpired the fight from the top of a table, declared it a draw but took sides against Mrs. Carmack to the extent of throwing her out of the room and locking the door. From sundry sounds to each the public from the inside it was judged that the Skookum Jim family then indulged in a little set-to on their own account.

In the meantime the exiled Mrs. Carmack, crooning a wild and warlike melody and punctuating the pauses in the tempo with bits of Indian profanity, started out on a hunt for her absent spouse ... and she began to break in the doors indiscriminately in her search.

The alarmed guests summoned a detachment of bell boys who were able to do nothing with the jealous woman. Fighting with the strength of a wild animal, she was carried down to the entrance of the hotel ... and dragged ... to the patrol wagon ...

Skookum Jim soon joined his sister at the jail. The last seen of him he was peacefully sleeping on the floor with his arm thrown affectionately around the neck of a drunk picked up at the Mug Saloon."

[Seattle Post-Intelligencer, July 26, 1899]

## IX AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

### Skookum Jim's House

One of the first things Skookum Jim did after he became rich was to build a house in Carcross. Though it was known as his house, according to tradition it also belonged to his clan, the Dakl'aweidi Wolf people, and since their main totem animal is the Killer Whale, it was called Killer Whale House.

"Finally, they left Seattle. George had wanted to take Skookum Jim down to San Francisco. They had been taking in everything there was to see, and everything that money could buy, but Jim was lonesome for his country, so they headed north instead. This would be around the beginning of 1899.

In Vancouver they heard that a railway was being built from Skagway to Whitehorse -- the White Pass & Yukon Railway, so Skookum Jim bought a lot of building materials because he planned on building a house at Dyea. He knew a lot of people there, many friends, where he and his family often lived. And he figured he'd build another home at Carcross. So he bought all this building material and furniture, and had it shipped by boat to Skagway.

Some of the lumber was taken to Dyea where he built a house. There he entertained his friends, his wife's people. He was a big-shot and looked up to, but he was never a man that tried to show off or anything like that. He was simple and humble.

When the railroad got to Bennett in 1899, he decided to move back to Carcross. All the lumber was taken to Bennett on the train. Bennett was the end of the line, but construction work was happening along Lake Bennett, and between Carcross and Whitehorse. The White Pass barges, horses and wagons, carried supplies down the lake. He had no way to get his lumber to Carcross, so he hired some young Indian boys who cut a lot of dried logs and made a big raft. They loaded all the material on the raft and sailed it to Caribou Crossing, [Carcross.] There's one person still living who worked on that raft deal, and that's Billy Johnson.

Skookum Jim was happy to be back in Carcross, and with all this lumber from down south -- fir lumber, all the fancy trimmings, mouldings and everything. In those days this was very expensive. Good furniture, big brass beds, and so on. And pretty soon he had a big potlatch to celebrate his return.

After he had his house built in Carcross, he did quite a bit of prospecting in the areas of the Wheaton and Watson Rivers. He and Dawson Charlie bought expensive horses from Outside -- not just common saddle horses, trained race horses! But these were too high-strung. Finally they sold them and got slower types of horses for prospecting. "

[J.Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

#### The Kluane Gold Rush

A little known episode in Skookum Jim's life involved a second, smaller gold-rush to creeks near Kluane Lake which was responsible for opening up this region to settlement by non-Natives and access by road -- eventually the Alaska Highway. However, there are conflicting and incomplete reports about Skookum Jim's role in the original discovery. Some sources indicate that it was made on Ruby Creek, another that it was Fourth of July Creek, and while Jim's part is thought to be important, it seems that Dawson Charlie recorded the first claim.

According to one source, Dawson Charlie staked the discovery claim on Fourth of July Creek on July 4, 1903 -- establishing his legal right to the first payable gold in the district [Coutts, 1980: 104]. Two days later, W.H. Weisdepp staked the discovery claim on a nearby stream which he named Ruby Creek [Coutts, 1980: 227]. Then, according to the Whitehorse Star [1903, July 27], some time in July an Indian arrived in Whitehorse with some gold from this area, and informed other Indians who immediately left to check the prospects. When they returned ten days later to record several claims, about 500 other people set off for Kluane.

Other sources report different facts or emphasise different aspects of the situation:

"In 1903 Skookum Jim started a gold rush all by himself. He was known as such a good prospector that people used to try to follow him around and stake where he was staking. So this time, I remember, he thought he'd sneak off in the night from Whitehorse to a place called Ruby Creek, and when folks got wind of it they darn near went mad, rushing to follow him.

I heard about it from a Whiteman, and it seems this Whiteman and his friends managed to overtake Jim and travelled with him, and they told how they got him to put on his chief's costumes that he was carrying all bundled up, and tell stories."

[Martin, 1983]

"The creeks there produced a lot of gold, but nothing like in the Klondike. At Fourth of July Creek some people talked Skookum Jim into bringing in a boiler from Whitehorse, to pump water out. It took a four-horse team to do this. They picked the horses from other teams that were used to haul peat. It was in the Fall, and the journey was 175 miles, but the ground was frozen and covered with snow, so that made things a bit easier. Still, they had to cut timber to get through. There was no road then. Eventually they got the boiler set up, and they had a crew of men that knew there business.

It cost \$100,000 for that deal. But they dug down, timbered the shaft, and hit bedrock 90 feet below. But they had to give up because the water was coming too fast, and the pumps couldn't handle it. The boiler was still there in the thirties, I saw it. And it must still be there, because one of my grandsons said he saw it recently."

[J.Johns, SJFC Oral History, 1973]

#### Historical Notes

"The news of [Jim's & Charlie's] discovery on Ruby Creek initiated the stampede of some 500-600 prospectors to the Kluane district between 1903 and 1904 ... Bullion Creek, on the southwest corner of Kluane Lake, proved to be the most productive area, and attracted some 1200 miners to the region. By 1904, 2000 claims had been staked..." [Gotthardt, 1989: 3]

"By 1905 Silver City was the terminus of the government constructed Whitehorse-Kluane wagon road. By 1915, mining became sporadic & was replaced by hunting, trapping, and guiding as principal economic activities. By 1924 Silver City and

other mining in the Kluane area was abandoned."  
27-28]

[Gotthardt, 1989:

"The present route of the Alaska Highway in large part parallels the route ...portions of the wagon road are still visible near the present Alaska Highway, particularly along the Dezadeash River between Canyon and Haines Junction."

[Gotthardt, 1989: 7; Stevenson 1979: 21-22]

#### Potlatches

The Potlatch had been a strong tradition among most peoples of the Northwest Coast though it almost died out in many places, particularly farther south where White people were more populous and more capable of enforcing laws they had made to outlaw Native customs like the potlatch. In the Yukon potlatches were still held into the early 1900s, but with decreasing frequency as a result of the erosion of Native customs and the decline of the Native population. There were fewer and fewer old people who could remember the old ways.

After what many people around Carcross remembered as "The Last Big Potlatch", held for Dawson Charlie in 1912, with Skookum Jim as the major benefactor, more than half a century went by before the custom was re-instituted and once again became an integral and regular part of community life.

"'Potlatch' now means a feast or a party of some kind. Actually, 'potlatch' is a word from the Chinook trade jargon that was used up and down the Pacific Coast in the Nineteenth Century ... a mixture of English, French, and several Indian languages ... In Chinook, to potlatch means to give.

The Coast Tlingit and southern Yukon Indians around the turn of the century used the word 'potlatch' especially for the memorial ceremony held one or two years after someone's death. At this ceremony, the people in the moiety opposite that of a dead person carried out their last duties for the dead person's matrilineal relatives and then were given their final payments."

[McClellan, 1987: 215]

As can be seen from the following notice published in a Whitehorse newspaper, the local White population had only an inkling about the nature of a potlatch, and thought it must be some kind of "harvest dance".

#### 1. Whitehorse, 1905

"Indian Pow-Wow: The Indians are having a big pow-wow in their village just across the river from town and last night they kept up their dancing and weird festivities until a late hour. The local tribe is entertaining visitors from Atlin and from points down the river.

Jim Boss of Laberge, and Woodtick William of Atlin, appear to be leaders in the festivities which are said to be slated to continue for several days and nights. As a number of the bucks have but lately returned from a big hunt, the celebration is somewhat the nature of a harvest dance."

[Whitehorse Daily Evening Star, Oct 18, 1905]

## 2. The Carcross Potlatch of 1912

"[Skookum Jim] was spending a lot of money in all his doings. One of the things he was mixed up in, (not alone, but he put in more money than anyone else,) was the potlatch of 1912. It was the last big potlatch in Carcross. He invited the people from Champagne, Aishihik, Marsh Lake, Whitehorse -- from all over. I remember it well because I was 14 at the time.

Everybody walked, so my gosh, when they got near two miles from Carcross they started shooting off their rifles, just like a war had begun. There must have been seventy-five Natives, and they were shooting right through the Whiteman's side of town, and across the bridge. There was one policeman, and he couldn't stop them. They kept going, right through -- squaws, kids, dogs, and all.

When they got to the Indian village across the river where they were guests, and the Wolf people took care of them. They were looking after Skookum Jim's and Dawson Charlie's big homes. The potlatch lasted for two weeks, and all these people were fed -- breakfast, lunch, and dinner for that long.

I remember my dad dug up one hundred trade blankets. So did Skookum Jim. And Patsy gathered fifty, besides cash. Skookum Jim put in maybe \$2000, Patsy about \$500, and then all the Wolf people put in too. Matthew Watson, the general merchant, took a nice photograph, and it's still for sale as a postcard. He didn't donate any money -- he made money off of the potlatch. No Whiteman was supposed to be there, but Mr. Watson talked himself into it, just to take that picture."

[J.Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

## 3. Other's Memories of Potlatches

Mrs. Kitty Smith:

Kitty's mother came from Marsh Lake, her father and his people from Dalton Post and the coast.

Kitty attended two potlatches as a little girl and remembers her people describing a third one at Carcross. Two men arrived in Canyon Creek from Carcross with the news that a potlatch was being organised for Dawson Charlie by wealthy people like Skookum Jim, Patsy Henderson, and Tagish Jim. Crow people were selecting the guests from all over. Kitty saw some them practicing their dances at Canyon Creek. The best dancers were chosen to attend the festivities. Moose John, Link John, and Big Lake Charlie, were among the guests.

The Hutchi potlatch was held by Link John and his brother, and included guests from Tagish, Carcross, (including Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie,) Dalton Post, Little Salmon, and Selkirk. At the potlatch held at Dalton Post, Kitty was given a new name.

[Skookum Jim Potlatch Society 1977, 28-31]

Mrs. Suzie Fred:

Suzie's mother came from Whitehorse, her father from Carcross, and she was born in Whitehorse where she has lived all her life.

She remembers as a small girl being at the potlatch in Carcross, all the people dancing around, just as they were shown on a post card (printed from a photograph) that was for sale in stores in later years. Gifts included blankets and rolls of cloth material -- 'tsasaw'. The blankets, which were quite thin, were cut up into strips and distributed, one to each guest.

Her father held another potlatch in Whitehorse, to which, according to tradition, all the guest walked. This potlatch was held in the 'new' Indian village at the north end of the town, after they had been re-located from the old one, 'Moccassin or Whiskey Flats' where the bridge is now. She recalls a third potlatch that was held there, and the people dancing in their button blankets.

[Skookum Jim Potlatch Society 1977, 32-33]

Mrs. Annie Ned:

Annie Ned, the mother of Elijah Smith, was at the potlatch in Carcross and remembers seeing Tagish John, Billy Bone, Tagish Jim -- her father's people. The gifts included moose meat, groceries -- 'white man grub'.  
[Skookum Jim Potlatch Society, 1977]

X        BACK IN CARCROSS

Women's Stories, Men's Stories

Nearly all Native stories told about Skookum Jim reflect the many and varied experiences of a people during a time of great cultural change and adaptation. The stories fall into two main categories -- those told by women, and those told by men. Most of the women's stories, re-counted earlier, deal with traditions and social factors that keep the life of a community cohesive strong. This section, devoted to men's stories, may serve to amplify their unique tendencies, as evinced in previous sections, such as the focus on humour, and delight in new phenomena and challenges.

We know from history that life was desperate in manyways as people died off in untold numbers from foreign diseases, [Coates 1991, 102-107] and traditions were eroded by swift and powerful events, but sadness and anger -- negative emotions -- are often understated in stories, or give way to wisdom and laughter.

By listening to the women speak we may sense, perhaps profoundly, something of the experience of their people and traditions, and the losses felt along the way. Yet, in hearing these stories, we know that all has not been lost. An essence of the life and wisdom of their people has been well-kept and remains a source for renewal.

By listening to the men, whose stories so often are just plain funny, or full of wonder and glee, we might take heart that curiosity and a sense of adventure seem inexhaustible.

Johnny Johns on Skookum Jim

The following narratives and stories are based on recorded interviews with Johnny Johns, a younger relative of Skookum Jim and brother of Angela Sidney. Their mother, Maria John, cared for Jim in Dyea when he was ill from a wound in his abdomen. Johnny was in his seventies at the time of the interviews, and was well-known internationally as a hunting guide, and locally as an historian of his people.

"You might say that Skookum Jim's story was unusual for an Indian at that time, and it was a bit strange for a native person then to have that much ambition. But if you know a bit about the background, it makes more sense.

The inland Indians, like Jim's people in Tagish, used to be controlled by the coast Indians, the Chilkats. Y'see, the Chilkats didn't want the inland Indians to trade directly with the Whites. They wanted to be able to sell the Whiteman's trade goods to the inland Indians for more that they paid, and so they wouldn't let the inland Indians come through the passes to the coast.

Now, the Tagish Indians knew this wasn't fair, but there wasn't a thing they could do about it, so they built up a whole lot of bitterness and resentment. In Skookum Jim it seems that this resentment against being poor made him want real badly to get rich.



Another thing that made it natural for a Tagish Indian to try to get rich was that they were always seeing Whitemen ... and it seemed to them that the Whites had a sort of endless wealth, and that they weren't sharing in it ... The Indians [wanted to] get some of that wealth for themselves.

Jim was an ambitious guy alright, but he wasn't the kind of man who'd spend all his time trying to make a fortune. He knew there was a time for everything: time for prospecting and trapping and living the hard life, and time too for relaxing and loving, and drinking as much as he felt inclined.

There's lots of stories about Jim's drinking ... but what a lot of people don't understand is that the drinking side [was] just one side. Sure he drank a lot when he was in Carcross, and it seems that's what his people there remember most about him, but he only spent a bit of his time there, and he was mostly there just to rest up and have fun. The rest of the time, when he was out prospecting and trapping, he had to have all his wits about him ...

[One] thing I remember [he did], just for the fun of it and to make us kids laugh, was to break off branches and hold them to his head, then come running into our camp [while] making noises like a bull moose, and rubbing his 'horns' against a tree.

And he used to talk all the time: talk, talk, talk, and sing, sing, sing -- a song that never made any sense. He'd sing to my dad, [Tagish John]: 'Oh John, oh John, come down to the Kulip, oh John, oh John.' That was his song, I remember it well. Didn't make no sense, but he must have liked the sound of it.

One other thing about Jim's drinking that always struck me, was how he could stop drinking and stay real sober when he had to, not like a lot of drinkers. Like when he was on his prospecting trips, and when he was doing business dealings. I talked to Jim's lawyer, Phelps, many times and never heard him mention his drinking -- just said how he was a 'good Indian'.

He loved to spend money and treat people, Skookum Jim did. I remember reading in a newspaper how much he enjoyed the 'novel distinction' -- that's what they called it, of being a rich man, and how he spent money with both hands, [Klondike News, V1(1), April, 1898]. He did too -- spent as much as he could on his houses and on entertaining people in them: his own people at Carcross, and his wife's people at Dyea. Used to hire white cooks from Outside so he could have fancy dinners for his friends and for the bigshots he knew.

I can remember he had a lot of trouble with his cooks, probably because he'd hire them if they were sort of classy or because he liked them, whether or not they knew cooking."

[Martin, 1983]

## 1. Jim's Cooks

### Mrs. Hose and the Moose Feet

"After his days in the Klondike, Skookum Jim had a White woman as his cook. Her name was Mrs. Hose, and her job was to go with Skookum Jim all the time. One of the things that I remember well was when we went to Squaw Point in the Tagish

Lake area. The men all went out hunting and killed eight moose. I was just a kid then, carrying a .22 .

In those days when you killed moose, you dried the meat right away. You came back to the main camp with a little bit of the meat, and then the whole group -- dogs, kids, women, and all, -- moved up near the kill site to set up another camp. So we made the new camp at the timberline. There were no tents, just fly sheets. And the women cut up the meat, smoked and dried it.

Some women showed Mrs. Hose all the good eats on the moose, like tripe, the feet, nose, and all that. She loved all that grub, but what she liked most was moose feet. You boil them until they're tender. Of course these days you can pickle them, and we often do, but didn't back then.

But Mrs. Hose just loved those moose feet. When finally we moved camp back to the lake, the men relayed their packs, full of this half-dried moose meat, down the slope. (There were seven or eight families on the move here.) And Mrs. Hose, she loved moose feet so much that all the moose feet that came her way she'd take over and stuff in her pack. Her pack load was all moose feet, except for her little eiderdown on top."

## Skookum Jim's Englishman

'Later on, Skookum Jim picked up another cook in Vancouver or Seattle. He was an Englishman who claimed to be a prospector. Skookum Jim wanted a good prospector for a partner, so he said he'd pay all expenses, and the Englishman said he could cook too. That suited Skookum Jim just fine.

Now this was after the Klondike Discovery, in the year 1905 or so. Eventually, he brings this Englishman up by boat. The steamers were running regularly by then to Dyea and Skagway. They got to Skagway, and Skookum Jim puts him on a train and they get back to Carcross.

So they prospected around a little, this and that, but Skookum Jim seems to be doing all the camp-cooking, which he was pretty good at. Finally they got back to town, and Skookum decided to celebrate. So one day he tells his cook, "Howabout we have some beans tonight? You know, good old-fashioned beans -- dried beans. You cook it. Put a lot of bacon in it, and onions ... you know."

"Okay," his cook says, "okay."

Then Skookum went out to visit his friends, this and that. He came back feeling pretty good and had a little white man hootch in him. So he says, "How's the beans cook?"

Cook says, "Good. I've cooked them. But haven't tried them yet." Skookum Jim sat down and the cook laid the place in front of him, poured out the beans, and they rattled onto his soup-plate. Skookum Jim looked at these beans, took a spoon and sampled some. They were as hard as rocks.

"How you cook these beans," he asks.

The Englishman says, "I fried them."

"I can't eat them that way," Skookum says, "is that the way you cook at home, old man? Is that the way you cook beans?"

The Englishman says, "I don't know. I've never fried beans before."

Then towards Christmas, because at that time of the year everyone eats turkey, Skookum Jim gets the biggest turkey you could buy in Carcross, and brings it home. (His credit was good.) And he tells the Englishman, "You get all the trimmings. Go over to old Fat McPhee's store and get the trimmings. Then you cook the turkey. I'm going to have some friends down for dinner tonight.

Englishman says, "Okay, Jim. Okay." Skookum Jim goes downtown and meets some of his pals, has a few drinks, and this and that. He got a little bit half-high and happy, then returns home that evening.

"Hello Cook. How's the turkey?"

The Englishman says, "Turkey's cooked fine. Okay."

Then Skookum Jim says, "Pretty soon all my friends coming in." Well actually, they're already coming in, and Skookum has Christmas cheer there on the table, his 'likka'. (When he went to a bar he never asked for any brand, he always asked for 'likka', so they gave him 'likka'.) Anyway, finally Skookum says, "Put the grub on the table, Cook." (Some of his friends are still arriving.)

Ans so the cook puts the turkey on the table. But Skookum Jim notices there's no brown on this turkey at all. And no stuffing either.

"How you cook this turkey, Cook?"

"I boiled it," the cook says. And he hadn't even taken the guts out or nothing.

Jim says, "Is that the way you cook turkey at home?"

"Well," the cook says, "I've never cooked Christmas turkey before, Jim. I'm very sorry, did I make a mistake?"

Jim says, "The guts is in that turkey yet. Who's going to eat that?"

Well, that was that Englishman cook Skookum Jim has as a prospector, partner, and friend. Skookum says, "I think you damn poor cook. I think I catch myself another squaw."'

## 2. Jim's Drinking Habits

### A Christmas in Whitehorse

'One year, just before Christmas, Skookum Jim told his friends and relatives in Carcross he was going to Whitehorse to spend the holidays with his big-shot friends. Well, as it turned out, he didn't get round to his big-shot friends, but he had a lot of other friends -- poor people. So he went to visit them and brought them some liquor. They had a few drinks and everyone got pretty high. After a while, Skookum fell asleep on the bed.

Towards morning he was getting cold, so he got up and went to get some wood for the stove. The wood-box was empty. He couldn't find wood anywhere, but he saw a big box over in the corner. It was full of potatoes. So he poured a bunch of potatoes in the stove. Then he saw a can of kerosene next to the door, so he poured that over the potatoes, lit a match and threw it in. He has a good fire -- thawed himself out.

The next night he was drunk again in someone's home. He fell asleep, and when he woke up in the night, he couldn't find the lamp. He was feeling his way around in the dark when he came upon this person with long hair lying fast asleep. So he crawled into bed and started loving this person up. And after a while this person wakes up, says, "Oh what a loving man, what a loving man. Who ARE you?"

And Skookum Jim says, "Skookum Jim. Who are YOU?" He thought the person was a she, but it turns out to be an old, old man with long hair, and blind besides. This proves Skookum Jim's great love!'

### The Fire at Ten-Mile Point

'Now, Skookum Jim had quite a sense of humour. He liked his jokes and was always kidding people, but this time what happened wasn't so funny. I was about ... oh, ten years old I would say. We were going out Spring bear-hunting. He had lots of money but he still liked to go hunting and enjoyed the outdoors life. So he took my dad, Tagish John, and me, and we went with our dog teams from Carcross down the lake on Spring ice. But my gosh, the ice was bad. When we got to Ten-Mile Point, we couldn't make a landing. The ice in the

middle of the lake was good, but the shore ice is always bad. This was when I learned about that ice business.

My dad always told me that if the ice is bad and you can't make shore, head for a point. You have a chance there because anywhere a point sticks out into the lake there's always some shallow water. So my god, we headed for that point. We had two dog teams -- Skookum Jim's, and my dad and I had the other one. And my gosh, we both broke through the ice, but we made shore.

At Ten-Mile there were a lot of old cabins, good cabins, built by Bill Anderson. Hay was cut and stored there in those days, for cattle and horses. One cabin we looked into was almost full of hay, but it had a good stove so we decided to stay there. There was hay on the beds and a lot scattered on the floor. Then Skookum Jim brought out some of the liquor he always packed along. ("Likka", he called it.)

Well, he had lots of it, but dad wasn't drinking, and I was too young to drink and was against it anyway. So we built a fire in the stove, and my dad says to Skookum Jim, "We're going to get some fresh rabbits for supper tonight. You stay here, you watch everything." Skookum Jim says, "Okay, okay, Cousin." He says that in Indian language. Then we went hunting for rabbits.

We went up on the hillside, here and there, and we got a few rabbits. Then, my gosh, we came to an open place there and saw a big smoke down at the cabin. Daddy says there's a fire down there, so we ran down as fast as we could, and the whole cabin was on fire -- nothing but a red blaze inside.

We hollered and hollered. We thought that was the end of Skookum Jim. My father just damn near cried, and I felt awful bad too. Poor Uncle, burnt up there, and we couldn't do anything. We kept on hollering for him. But finally we got away from the heat, and untied the dogs that were tied not too far from the cabin. Then we hollered some more, and pretty soon we heard an answer. Down by the beach, here was Skookum Jim. He had a bottle in his hand and he was singing a song ... just having a good time.

He says, "It's okay. I saved myself so you should be awful happy. The heck with all that stuff that was burned up. That's okay." All our groceries and bedding were burned, and all our camping supplies. But what I really felt bad about was my jacket that Mrs. Billy Bone had made for me -- a white sheepskin jacket, tanned and decorated with porcupine quills in all different colours. I've not had one like that since. The first one I had, and the last; and it's almost a lost art today.

We were happy Skookum Jim was still alive. He says, "What the heck, we'll buy more grub tomorrow when we go back to Carcross. We'll finish our bear-hunting yet."

## Prohibition in Carcross

'Uncle Skookum Jim was in town when prohibition came to Carcross. The North-West Mounted Police took over the old Caribou Hotel, grabbed all the liquor, and brought it down to the White Pass & Yukon railroad bridge -- right out into the middle there, and broke each bottle on the tracks. Cases and cases and cases of whiskey.

So Skookum Jim, he paddles out there in his canoe, just below where they were dumping all this whiskey. He anchored himself there with a cup in his hand, and he was drinking the liquor out of the river under the bridge. [Naataase Heen] is the Indian name for this river.)

Here was Skookum Jim, drinking a lot of water, but very little liquor, I guess, mixed up in it. But it wasn't that he wanted liquor that much. He was a joker and just wanted to have some fun. The Police were breaking up all those bottles, and Jim was trying to get closer to the liquor being poured off the bridge, taking one drink after another. They couldn't put him in jail for drinking, Carcross River. It was mostly pure water with very little flavour!'

### 3. Squirrels Get Skookum Jim's Cache

'After the Klondike, Skookum Jim had lots of money, but his way of life was hunting and trapping. He liked the outdoors, so he continued his expeditions -- probably not the real hard way, but he did keep at it. This time, he happened to be trapping around the north end of Big Atlin Lake. The winter trapping season was coming to an end, but he has been invited out to Teslin country to do some Spring beaver-hunting. Arrangements had probably been made the Summer before. So when he left the lake, he left all his gear there -- traps, tent, stove, and quite a bit of money. Lots of it was in \$20 gold pieces.

I remember when I was a kid I saw a lot of \$20 gold pieces, also \$10, \$5, and then there were \$2.50 gold pieces. So he had this heavy gold money, and some paper money as well, which he cached in a big tree. He put up a small platform and covered it with canvas. He put in his winter clothes that he wouldn't need, too. Then he parked his dogs with a friend and headed for Teslin country. The snow was just about gone.

In those days it took you probably five or six days of hard travelling by foot. Today it takes you only about three hours driving along the road. But then, time didn't mean anything. People would go and stay two years for a visit. And that's what he did.

A couple of years later he returned, and looked for his cache. And my gosh, here were gold pieces lying all over the ground -- \$5, \$20, \$10 coins scattered here, there, and everywhere. Some, squirrels had covered with leaves and twigs, or taken to their holes. And his clothes were all chewed up, as well as his paper money. Chewed to shreds. He managed to salvage some gold, but of the paper money, none at all!

[The preceding stories are paraphrased from:  
Johnny Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

## Other Stories

### 1. Skookum Jim's Grief

[Johnny Fraser remembered Billy Smith telling him when ...] 'One day he went across the railway bridge into the Whiteman's side of Carcross, and there he saw Skookum Jim crying. Well, Billy stopped and asked him why he was crying.

"What's the matter, Jim?" But boy, he's still crying, yet pretty soon he stops.

"Now, I'm going to tell you what's wrong: My mother-in-law died and I'm really sorry. That's what I say."

"Oh, you don't need to worry about it. She was too old anyway. You think she's going to live forever?"

Skookum Jim got mad at Billy. "Go! You go away," and he walked off along the railway.'

[Johnny Fraser, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

### 2. The Train-Tunnel Story

'One time, on the Fourth of July, we were on the train, coming back from Skagway after a good time. We drank, but not too much by gosh. Skookum Jim was sitting down in the coach with his partner. They were talking and had a big bottle between them. Then on the other side of the summit, pretty close to Customs, the section boy came up and asked him, "You wanna fight, Skookum Jim?"

Jim says, "Yes," and tripped him so he fell over. It was the boy's own fault. Then my god, a policeman came.

"What are you doing there? You want to fight Skookum Jim? He's been raised up in this country. You'll go to jail! Don't bother Skookum Jim. We'll be watching you."

The suddenly the train went into the tunnel and it got very dark. Jim told Billy Smith to watch out. "I'll be watching," Billy said. But one of the guys, maybe Sam Smith, grabbed the bottle, and some of them ran into the next coach while others stood guard. They drank the liquor and threw the bottle away.



Pretty soon the train arrived at Customs, and by this time Skookum Jim saw that the bottle was gone. "Hey!" he said to his partner, "You steal my whiskey."

"Somebody did it, Jim, but not me."

Skookum Jim gave ME hell, then, but I didn't do it. Oh yeah, lots of times he gave me hell. That policeman would too.'

[Billy Johnson, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

### 3. Prospecting Near Teslin

Skookum Jim was a good man, though. I worked for him lots of times, once prospecting around Teslin. I was just coming back from Dawson and arrived at the wharf in Whitehorse, and Skookum Jim was there, waiting. He was staying in Whitehorse and he came to meet me.

"Hello," he said, and we shook hands. "I've been waiting for you."

"You've been waiting for me? What are you going to do?" He said he was going away out to Teslin country and wanted to take me.

"I know you're a good man and a good worker. I gonna give you five dollars a day." Billy Smith and another man, a policeman, they would get paid that too.

We went by steamboat, The Gleaner, from Carcross to Atlin around the first of July, and walked the rest of the way. Along the way I shot game with my .30-.30. Billy and I had a barrel of whiskey cached, and we picked that up. We prospected around and found a little gold, but not much. Someone rowed us across Teslin Lake. There was a south wind, I remember, and we stayed with the Indian people there. There were a lot of them, some I knew. A Mr. Fox ...

We stayed one week. We got a boat, someone loaned us a big dog, then we went prospecting. Straight up towards Sheep Mountain.

One night we saw something swimming across the lake. It was a porcupine. We didn't kill him. We talked to him the Indian way: "Oh, Grandpa, are you gonna give us some luck? You'll be on the beach pretty soon now." He stopped swimming and floated along there, that porcupine. I guess they hear. "Now go ahead. You start swimming again."

Yes, honest to God, the porcupine started swimming again. The white man with us, the policeman, he saw us talking to it. "Gee, you people talk Indian to a porcupine? He doesn't understand you!"

But the porcupine hears. You could tell, because he stopped swimming. He just floated along. The we told him we were going, and he started to swim again.

After that we went up Scotaheen Creek, and the sun came out. We took the boat to a warm place by a canyon and camped. It's a place where Indians have been camping for a very long time. They call it Toos Kwan, so Mr. Fox and other people at Teslin told us. We saw lots of salmon in the water, just chopping through, by golly. We watched them. The salmon were everywhere. So we put up a net, but when we pulled it out next morning -- nothing. No salmon, just some other kind of fish. 'Kwad', we call it. Silver salmon. It's about the size of a trout. You find them Outside, like at Skagway. Lot's there.

So the four of us went on. We poled across and pulled the boat up on the other side of the lake, and walked along the beach. We saw lots of moose, and caught a young one, about two years old, and cooked the head first, as usual. That white man, he looked at us. "You gonna cook it that way!?"

We said, "Yes, so you gonna know him next time." That's what we told that Mounted Policeman. (He used to be a policeman in Carcross. Another policeman there was Mr. Nee.)

Later, we went further on, way up. We got to another beach. We'd left our boat behind so we tried to make a raft so we could travel back faster. We prospected up there too, but found nothing at all. So anyway, Billy says we should go back on the raft, two at a time, and we can do some fishing along the way. He makes us laugh, that Billy Smith. He's got such a sense of humour. He says, "You go first." And Skookum Jim looks at his partner, the policeman, and says, "Yati?" [or 'Hati' ?] (That's Indian for 'partner'.)

And the policeman says, "Okay Jim, okay. Shall I go first with Billy Johnson?" So the two of us started out on the raft.

"Look out!" Jim yelled, but it was too late, and there we were stuck on top of that rock. Oh, we had a hard time straightening out, getting off. But, you see, the other two didn't help us much. Jim didn't tell us what to look out FOR. We didn't see anything.

After a while we split up. Billy Smith and I went back down to Teslin Lake, and Jim went on prospecting with the white man. We got back to the old camping place and stayed two nights. I cooked some yeast bread. We weren't in a hurry. Jim told us to take out time. Then we saw some people on the beach. "My god, somebody there!" They were from Teslin, and one of them was Chief Johnson, Matthew Johnson. (He danced at the Sourdough Rendezvous recently.)

We went up to them, and since they had no matches and no grub, we gave them what we had. We sat down with them, and my god, we see smoke away up One Sheep Mountain, across the boundary line in B.C. We told them we had more food cached -- a two-year-old moose chopped up and smoked, and that we were going to get it and come back.

We went to the mountain and found Skookum Jim, who was feeling happy because they'd found gold in a creek coming down from the mountain. I did some prospecting then too, but it was already September and we had to head back before the freeze.

We got to Teslin Post, owned by Tom Smith. The only other store was Taylor's. Some people had gone off on their trap-lines, so we decided to go trapping too. We all went down to Atlin, walking by the foot-road. We were expecting Tom Smith's boat to arrive, and sure enough it came. It was a small boat that could carry about five tons. He came whistling into shore and landed by Taylor's store. A good store that. On the other side was Mr. Drury's store.

We met Tom Smith and shook hands. "Got any luck there?" he asked us.

"No, nothing," Jim replied. And we told him we wanted to head back to Whitehorse on one of his boats going to Dawson.

"I won't charge you too much, Jim, 'cause you prospect. Say \$100: \$25 for each of you." I said okay, and Jim gave him the money. He also gave Billy and me \$5 right there, and 6\$ to the policeman because he cooked.

We helped Tom Smith, loading his boat, then told him we were ready to go anytime. He said, "Okay, I don't wanna be late. We go."

"Toot! Toot!"

We steamed all the way down to the wood camp where a white man cut wood. We cut some wood there too. I forget that man's name. The wood-chopper -- a good

little man. Then we went to Teslin Post. We had to get there in time to catch the boat to Whitehorse. We helped unload the boat, and when we finished we went over to shake hands with Tom Smith.

"Hope I meet you in Whitehorse sometime," he tells us. : "You go along there to the telegraph office at half past nine tonight. See the man there, and he'll make sure you get on the boat to Whitehorse." We went outside and looked down the lake, and by gosh, we saw a light far away in the distance. We told the operator what we saw, and he said the boat would arrive in half an hour, and my god, sure enough the boat came.

We had a coal-oil lamp that we were carrying around, and my god, the captain saw us and tooted. "My gosh," we said, "it's gonna stop. Yeah." And it landed, and a plank was put down onto the beach. We ran over there, and shouted at the captain, "That's all! Just the four of us, that's all. Pull out, pull her out." So we went back to Whitehorse on the big steamboat. Way down the lake. "Toot! Toot!" We called goodbye to the operator at the telegraph office.

(In those days there weren't any telephones, nothing. Just that telegraph. You tapped it with your finger.)

Then about ten o'clock we were getting close to town. We were talking about not getting any sleep the night before. Oh gee, the people were noisy. Pretty near 400 people on board. Well, my golly, we came into Whitehorse. "Toot!" We came to the White Pass railroad station.

Well, we ran over the beach into town, and stayed in a Japanese hotel, run by a fellow named Charlie. We took our blankets in there because we were dead tired. There had been no place to sleep on the boat. We sat all night in the bow. And talk about gambling ...

At the hotel, they took Skookum Jim upstairs -- him and his partner, the white policeman. They went with Phelps, the lawyer. He was going to pay us. That's why we were at that hotel. When we got there, Skookum Jim says, "They gonna pay us you know? Come on, go with us." So we went up to the lawyer's room, and sat down over by the wall. Phelps, he sat down by a big box full of money -- Skookum Jim's money. Well, they paid us \$800 each. Billy Smith and me. And the policeman got more, I guess, pretty near \$400 more.

In the morning, Skookum Jim says to us, "Let's go to Seattle." But no, no, we don't want to go. And he says, "What do you say boys? Let's go."

We said, "No, we don't want to go to that place," and sat down. Last time he went, Skookum Jim got lost.

But he said, "Come with me and you won't get lost."

We wanted to see the country some time, and we did, later. It's no big deal. If you just go down to Skagway, you don't see nothing. Oh, we went to Seattle. Skookum Jim went, with his cook. He'd left his wife by then. Mrs. Hose, his cook, looked after Daisy.

"No, I'm not going to have my wife no more," Skookum Jim said, "-- too much trouble. She give me a hard time." And Mrs. Hose, she hoped that he would like her.

[Billy Johnson, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

## XI LAST YEARS

### The Journey South

"Skookum Jim was a wanderer. He and his wife had separated and he was on his own, so about 1914 he headed for Telegraph Creek country. The only way to get there was by the way of Atlin by boat, so that's how he went, then walked 220 miles along the telegraph line, which was put in around 1898. He'd heard stories of gold. It wasn't that he wanted gold, more that he loved the life of prospecting and knew a little about it now.

He prospected along different creeks in the Telegraph Creek area, and made friends with the Natives, who were distantly related to him. They all call you Brother down there. He was there nearly two years, then he headed northeast towards Dease Lake, and finally Lower Post. He went by the old Indian and trader route.

So in the Winter of 1915-16, there he was, travelling from Dease Lake. His only companion was his great big dog he called Dan, who pulled his toboggan while Jim snowshoed ahead, heading back towards his home town. But on this trip he was a sick man. Yet he kept on going.

Along the trail, here and there, people helped him. He travelled all Winter, stopping at one place and the next for a while, and eventually got to Teslin country. Everybody knew him there. Smart Sidney brought him into Teslin with a long string of dogs. He didn't ask for pay because Jim wasn't well. He was glad to help out. And then, he brought him all the way into Tagish.

I remember what happened then. I was 18-years-old at the time. Skookum Jim was happy to see my dad. They were cousins. Skookum Jim said to him, "I'm glad to be back. I'm a sick man, and I want to die in my hometown -- Carcross, [Naataase Heen]. That's where I want to die."

We offered to take him to the hospital in Whitehorse right away, but he said, "No. I want to visit here. I'll stay two weeks with you, and then with my dad and my mother." We were staying in Carcross all Winter and had a lot of food and everything. I was trapping, with a bit of help from my dad. He was getting old, so I did most of the work. I used Skookum Jim's gun, a .25-.35, which had gold-rimmed sights on it, and I could really shoot the necks off wood-grouse with it. He'd said to me, "Anything I got, you can use it, sonny boy."

After two weeks, finally we talked it over that he should go to the hospital, and he agreed, so I hooked up my dogs. We left Dan behind. I have a picture of him somewhere in my collection. He was a beautiful, big black dog with a white collar. Skookum gave Dan to my dad, saying, "I'm not going to need this dog no more."

I put Skookum on the sleigh, wrapped him up good, and took him across Tagish Lake and Windy Arm to Carcross. Of course I couldn't get him on the train to Whitehorse right away. He had to do a little visiting first. He went to see his sister, Kate Carmack, and all his friends and relatives. He said he wanted to stay a month.

A month later, in April or May, I came back to Carcross and he was still there, and I told him, "You should go to the hospital," because he was a sick man. I got him on a White Pass & Yukon train, and he went to the General Hospital in Whitehorse. That's the last time I saw him alive."

[Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

"Makes a real sad story, Jim's death does, 'cause he just wasn't ready for it -- had so much more living to do. He kept in touch with his lawyer those last months, getting his affairs settled and whatnot, and his lawyer told me about it. Fine man, that lawyer was. Phelps was his name -- first lawyer in the Yukon, and he was my lawyer too before he died. He told me how he suggested to Jim that he go to the Hot Springs, after they found out he had kidney trouble, (Bright's Disease, they called it.)

Jim got fed up there with not doing nothing and went to Skagway. Well, Jim was writing letters about how bad he was, and how couldn't eat, and Phelps got worried about him being in such a wet climate, so he got Daisy to come up from the States and bring her Dad back to Whitehorse.

They put Skookum Jim back in hospital in Whitehorse -- that was when he made his last will, but he couldn't stand that either. [He] wanted to be back with his own people when he died. By May, then, he was back in Carcross with Daisy to tend ... him, and with people coming from all over to see him. He just went steadily downhill, wasn't long before he couldn't walk and was unconscious part of the time. Even so ... he took care of ordering ... his own coffin and burying clothes."

[Martin, 1983]

#### Last Days in Carcross

"[In spring, 1916,] we went back to Carcross early, because my father's cousin, Skookum Jim, was sick. We went to Carcross in April and we stayed there all spring until he died. Daisy used to call me, day time, to sit with her father - during the night, she watched him, nursed him. When Skookum Jim got sick, Daisy came to look after him ...

She tells me to watch Uncle, give him water - it was just like babysitting ...

After he died, she stayed about a month - then she went back."

[A.Sidney, in Cruickshank 1990, 101]



=====  
PART FOUR: SKOOKUM JIM'S LEGACY  
=====

XII MATTERS OF ESTATE

Last Will and Testament

1. Mary Martin's Account

In her report for the Skookum Jim Friendship Center, 1983, Mary Martin employed the literary device of a Native narrator to convey well-researched information. The narrator is apparently modelled after Johnny Johns and based largely on transcripts of interviews with him and other Tagish/Carcross elders, as well as data from the letters collected by Skookum Jim's lawyer, Willard Phelps (Senior), on file with Yukon Archives, which are also the main resource for James Albert Johnson's account.

"But Skookum Jim didn't only spend his money on impressing people. He spent a lot just being good to people too. Us kids used to think of him sort of like a Santa Claus ... It was his being so generous that made him lose all that money grubstaking his friends. Seems he trusted people [too much]. ... Skookum Jim was just the kind of fellow that did things to extremes.

[He loved spending money] but more than anything else he loved his little girl, Daisy, and he wanted to make sure there's always be money to look after her. Well he talked the whole thing over with his lawyer, and between them they came up with a plan that's see to Daisy's having enough for her schooling and all her other needs. That was in 1905 when Daisy was ten years old, and the plan ... was to put most of the money Jim had left in ... a trust fund.

Now that means that the money's entrusted to someone else, and all Jim can get hold of is the interest from whatever they decide to invest the money in. So Jim put \$20,000 in that fund. He lived mostly on what he earned trapping, and every now and then he'd ask for some of the interest money. Daisy lived partly on that ... too, but it never seemed enough to her, not for her style of living.

Jim wanted Daisy to have his money after he died, then her kids after her. He wasn't too sure though what he wanted to happen to it if Daisy dies without any kids. So when one of the trustees of his fund suggested that if that happened, the money should be kept right there in the fund for the use of any Yukon Indian who really needed it. Why, he [Jim] thought that was a fine idea. That's what his last will said then: that so long as Daisy lived, the fund couldn't be touched, and what she needed to get by on would come from the interest; then if she had kids, she could leave the money to ... them and that'd be the end of it. If she dies without any kids though, some money'd be taken out of the fund for some of Jim's .. close friends, and the rest would be kept .. with the interest going to help Native folks who needed it.

Seems that everyone but Skookum Jim was upset about that will business. Phelps and Jim's other White friends thought all his people in Carcross were after some of his money, and THEY thought the Whites were after it!

... Kate Carmack and some of his other relatives [knew] he was leaving them money, [but] they never did understand they wouldn't get it 'till after Daisy

died. [They] always thought they'd been cheated. By the time Daisy did die, they were all gone too, except Patsy Henderson, so he's the only one who ever got any money.

Jim didn't leave much behind except his money, and what he did was willed to Daisy. The Bishop, [who] was in charge of seeing that the will was followed, ... sold Jim's house for Daisy and gave her the \$200 ... it sold for. That house should rightly have been kept for Jim's people, the Wolf people, and lucky enough it was bought by someone who just hung onto it until the Wolves could get enough money together to buy it back.

About the only other thing Jim left behind was his gold nugget watch chain. He made [it] himself out of nuggets he took off his claim, with gold letters on it, and a diamond [Skookum Jim Government File]. He really prized it, kept it with him all the time ... but it was sold too, and for next to nothing. Seems the guys looking after Jim's estate wanted to convert everything to cash, [and] didn't realise that something like that watch [chain] is too valuable to have a price put on it.

I should tell you, I guess, about the funny business that went on with Jim's watch, and about where the Wolf people finally got the money to buy Jim's house. I think what happened was that Jim, when he was down in Telegraph Creek, gave some guy \$200 and his watch to .. buy Jim groceries, and this guy -- Willie Kulihan was his name, took off with them. Jim complained about them being stolen, but this wasn't too long before he took sick and died, and nothing was done about it. A few years later, 1920s must have been, the chief of the Indians in Telegraph Creek got after this Kulihan guy, and got him to send the \$200 to Jim's people in Carcross ... It was this money they used to buy the house.

So Jim bought his own house, y'see, since it was his money. As for the watch, I think Willie Kulihan must've sold it to some guy named Chambers, and Daisy bought it back from him before she died. So after all that, it finally got back into the trustees' hands again, only to get sold."

[Martin, 1983]

## 2. James Albert Johnson's Account

"Church officials in Whitehorse, aware of Jim's frailties as well as his concern for the welfare of his wife and daughter, persuaded him to sign a series of wills, and later to establish a trust fund. The first will, dated January 11, 1904, bequeathed \$5000 to his wife and appointed a guardian for nine-year-old Daisy. The balance of the estate was bequeathed to Daisy when she reached the age of 21. Jim also requested that his executors look after the education of his daughter so she could take her place in the white man's society.

Jim set up the trust fund church officials had sought, depositing \$20,000 to provide for his daughter and help other Indians after her death. Daisy remained at school in Whitehorse and Jim continued to support her with income from the fund."

On April 4, 1916, Skookum Jim signed another will, the final one, using his legal name of James Mason. His trustees were instructed to pay \$1000 each to Kate, Patsy Henderson, & his cousin, Cariboo John; and \$500 to Tagish Jim. The

fund that had paid for Daisy's education, the Daisy Mason Trust, was to be known as the Skookum Jim Indian Fund.

"[The fund trustees were instructed that ...] the income from said trust fund shall be devoted towards furnishing medical attendance, supplying necessities and comforts to Indians in the Yukon Territory and towards assisting needy and deserving Indians in said Territory in any way or manner said Trustees may deem best."

The bishop of the Anglican church in the Yukon and the commissioner of the Yukon Territory and their respective successors were made trustees of the will and trust fund.

"Daisy Mason died in 1938, but her father's trust fund, wisely managed by church trustees, continued to grow. In [1961], in accordance with Skookum Jim's instructions that the money be used for the benefit of the Indians of the Yukon valley, a portion of the money was used to begin construction of the Skookum Jim Friendship Center in Whitehorse. Today it is a place of great informality where Yukon Indians can drop in at any time ... The sign on the door tells it all: 'Welcome to Skookie's.'"

[Johnson 1990, 131-134]

### 3. The Bishop's Account

In response to enquiries from members of Skookum Jim's family, Angela Sidney and Johnny Johns, and from the Council of Yukon Indians (CYI), about the Skookum Jim Indian Fund, the Right Reverend R. C. Ferris, Bishop of Yukon, stated the following in a letter to the CYI on November 22, 1989:

"Although Skookum Jim did name various legacies in his Will of 1916, unfortunately there was not sufficient residue in the Estate to pay the beneficiaries. The Will was clear that these legacies were only to be paid if sufficient funds became available during the lifetime of the beneficiaries.

In 1905, Skookum Jim had established a Trust for his daughter, Daisy Mason. In 1938 Daisy Mason died and the terms of that Trust directed the Trustees to distribute the money in accordance with terms of Skookum Jim's Will.

By this time Tagish [Caribou] John and several others of the beneficiaries had died and under the terms of the Will those legacies were cancelled.

The proceeds of the Skookum Jim Indian Fund were used to build the Skookum Jim Indian Friendship Center in [1961], and to assist with a major renovation in 1984. The interest of the Fund continues to be paid annually to the Skookum Jim Center.

This use of The Fund creates a lasting, worthwhile and visible reminder of Skookum Jim. It is unfortunate that the Estate was too small to pay the stated legacy to Tagish .. John and others. It is unfortunate if there is still a lingering sense of disappointment about this some 73 years later. Under the terms of The Will, the descendants of the beneficiaries have never been eligible for a benefit.

It must be remembered that the present Skookum Jim Indian Fund has come from "The Daisy Mason Trust", and not directly from the Estate of Skookum Jim."

[Document on file at the Skookum Jim Friendship Center]

#### A Short History of The Skookum Jim Friendship Center

The Skookum Jim Friendship Center had its beginnings in the early 1960s with plans to build an Indian meeting house in Whitehorse. Plans to build this center were announced on January 31, 1961, in a letter by Commissioner F.H. Collins that was read at a meeting of the Yukon Indian Advancement Society. The meeting house was to be "non-denominational" and "to provide accommodation for Indian people where matters of business and social interest" could be discussed. During that year, construction begun.

The funding for what was to become Skookum Jim Memorial Hall came from the trust fund Skookum Jim Mason had established for "furnishing medical attendance supplying necessities and comforts to Indians in the Yukon Territory" and "assisting .. needy and deserving [Yukon] Indians ... in any way or manner said trustees may deem best." The appointees of this fund were the Bishop of the Anglican Church in the Yukon, the Commissioner of the Territory, and their respective successors or representatives. By 1960, interest in the fund had accumulated to about \$70,000, half of which was to go towards building the hall. The land on which the hall was built was donated by the Territorial Government.

Commissioner F.H.Collins received credit for initiating and supporting the project, though he encountered hostility when he appointed an all-White Operating Committee. However, one of its members, W.E. Grant of Indian Affairs, finally persuaded the board of trustees to appoint two Native members. These first Native members were Norman Shorty and Clara Tizya.

The Hall was completed in 1962, the Operating Committee held its first meeting February 7, and Skookum Jim Memorial Hall was officially opened on March 26 of that year. Funding for its operation came from an annual grant of \$1200 from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, and from interest accruing to Skookum Jim's trust fund which amounted to about \$500 annually. The hall was open on a part-time basis for activities such as special events, dances, and meetings.

Around the time that the first full-time Director, Harry LaValley, was hired, the hall was being used mainly as a meeting place for Natives and their guests, for various clubs, and provided space for a baby clinic, a square-dancing group, and the Yukon's first kindergarten. It was also the headquarters of the Yukon Indian Advancement Association.

Following LaValley's resignation, Gordon and Irene Tootoosis, a Cree couple from Saskatchewan, were hired as Executive Directors. Their term was relatively brief, and

following difficult times and a temporary closure in 1968, John Hoyt, who had been working with the Whitehorse Indian Band, became the Executive Director.

Hoyt began work to restore the hall, its operations, and membership. Two more Natives were appointed to the Committee, and shortly after, Bob Charlie became its Chairman. Hoyt, meanwhile, oversaw the development of many sports teams, encouraged their entry into the local minor leagues, re-established the kindergarten, began renovations on the building, and improved the organisation's financial situation.

During this period of re-vitalisation and development, Hoyt investigated the Indian-Metis Friendship Centers movement, begun in the late 1950s, which had grown out of the need for liaison between law courts and Natives. However, the Centers' goals also included many in common with those of Skookum Jim Hall, for example, providing cultural, recreational, social, and educational services. It was therefore decided that Skookum Jim Hall join the National Association of Friendship Centers, and as a result was designated as the Indian-Metis Friendship Center for Whitehorse.

Membership required some changes in funding and increasing Native representation on the Operating Committee, so a cost-sharing arrangement was negotiated with the Federal and Territorial Governments, and membership on the Committee on the basis of position, i.e. Judge of the Territorial Court, Superintendent of the Yukon Indian Agency, etc., was eliminated in favour of membership based on individual merit. The number of Committee members was increased from ten to sixteen, and by 1970, ten of these were Natives.

Having accomplished a great deal, Hoyt resigned as Director in the summer of 1970 to pursue political office, and following a year of many administrative changes, Jeffrey Choy'hee, originally from Hawaii, became Director in the autumn of 1971. Under Choy'hee the Center was registered under the local Societies' Ordinance, and the nature of the Operating Committee was significantly altered. Instead of its members being appointed by the Trustees -- the Anglican Bishop or the Commissioner of the Territory, they were to be elected by the people who used and participated in the activities of the Center -- by the general membership. In other words, the organisation became more democratic and community-based. This newly re-structured organisation held an Annual General Meeting in the spring of 1972 and elected its first Board of Directors. During this period the organisation became known as the Skookum Jim Memorial Hall Friendship Center.

Choy'hee outlined a five-year plan of action, each year focussing on a specific area for development. These areas included internal matters, then cultural awareness programs, development of communications with the local and outlying communities, and counselling and referral services including the implementation of the Native Alcohol Awareness and Counselling Program (NAACP), which was successful enough to establish its independence from the Center.

The Center also emphasised community development programs, and interactions with other community organisations. It sponsored the creation of Them'mah Day Care Center, and helped to establish and worked with the Association of Non-status Indians (YANSI), Crossroads Halfway House, Yukon Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, and the Yukon Outreach Program.

During the last of the five years of the plan, attention was turned more to social and recreational programs, then in 1976-77, Pete Sidney, A Tlingit Native of Carcross, was hired as an Executive Director trainee, and became the

Director in March, 1977, when Choy'hee resigned to work solely with the Yukon Native Courtworkers. That year NAACP and the summer camp were continued, and the Potlatch Society was set up to research oral history about potlatch ceremonies.

In 1979, Yvonne Kisoun, originally from Inuvik, became Executive Director, and proceed to turn the Center more into "a people's place". She introduced a library, more recreational activities, and moose stew lunches; the Center was kept open in the evenings for for films, coffee houses, and so forth; and the involvement of families and elders was encouraged. In 1982, Hilda Hellaby was honoured for her years of diligent work on the Board of Directors.

Stan Boychuk assumed the directorship in 1982, set up a program for training in carpentry and construction the following year, and began extensive and innovative renovations on the Center's building with the help of trainees from the various Indian bands of the Yukon. Also, research on the history of Skookum Jim and the Center was undertaken by a summer student, and programs dealing with substance abuse and providing cultural and recreational alternatives were explored.

[Martin, 1983]

The newly renovated building was completed in 1984, and opened in February on the occasion of the Friendship Center's 22nd birthday. Subsequent to Stan Boychuk's tenure as Director, Frank Lacosse, an Ojibway metis originally from Ontario and a former counsellor at Crossroads Treatment Center, has served as Director, as has most recently Ruby Van Bibber, originally from Fort Selkirk. Through their efforts and influence, during the latter part of the 1980s and continuing to the present, the activities of the Center have been inspired by a strong focus on the spiritual roots of Native culture. Today, with the support of its directors, staff, membership, and the community at large, the Skookum Jim Friendship Center is more deeply attuned to its history and the benevolent will of its founder-in-spirit -- Skookum Jim Mason, and adapting with confidence to the remarkable social and cultural changes being wrought in our times.





She must've realised how important it was to the carrying out of Jim's will whether or not she had kids, since she not only made a sworn statement that she'd never had any, but got herself examined by a doctor to prove it. Anyway, Daisy's body was brought back to Carcross, and she's buried there with her people. She got along better with her Carcross relatives when she was older, and used to wish she was back with them when she was feeling low in Seattle, so it's right that she's there with them now." [Martin 1983]

"After [Skookum Jim] died, [Daisy] stayed about a month - then she went back. She wasn't married then. She used to say she'd like to get married into this country. But there was no man [of the Wolf clan]. Jack Shakoon was the only one who was single. 'I wouldn't mind staying with him,' she said. We told [him, but he said,] - 'Who wants to marry a white lady anyway? She acts white lady too much.' So she went back to Seattle; after that she got married. She passed her motherhood by the time she got married though - that's why she never had children.

I saw [Daisy's] grandmother in Haines one time and she asked about [her]. 'She used to be your people, your sister. She died amongst you people. One of you fellows might as well name one of your kids after her.' But we never did, not one of us. We never used anybody's name [from another clan]. We used our own names all the time. Saayna.aat was her name. Nobody knows how Daisy died, but her husband brought her back to Carcross. She wanted to be buried beside her father in Carcross."

[Sidney in Cruickshank, 1990, 101]

Skookum Jim married a coastal Tlingit woman from the |ukaax.adi Raven clan, so Daisy, like her mother, had a |ukaax.adi name, Saayna.aat.

[Cruickshank, 1990: 363,n45]

After Skookum Jim found gold, he sent Daisy to school in Seattle. She studied acting briefly in California and made periodic trips back to Carcross, especially when her father became ill at the end of his life, but she was ambivalent about her place, or lack of it, in Carcross. She died in 1937.

(Phelps Papers; Cruickshank 1990: 363,n44]

"The last time she was in the Yukon was in 1930, 'cause I was the last one [who] was with her the morning she was leaving Carcross. I had to give her some money that morning from Mr. Phelps, [her lawyer] ... She told me to go and see him, she wanted some money, and Phelps told me to tell her to come over before the train ... and he'd have some money for her ... and that's the last time I seen her alive ...

[Her body came back several years later, there was no potlatch, and her funeral ...] was handled by the missionary. We didn't even know it was her funeral. I was just invited to a funeral through the church. They didn't notify us. None of us knew that she died or [that] they [had] brought her body back. We were just invited to go to church for someone's funeral, then we found out it was her. Her husband came up with her then. His name was Miller [or Mullen] ... white man ... He stayed one or two days, that's all, and then he went ...

[Peter Johns, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

Kate Carmack

Shaaw Tlaa, later known as Kate, was one of Skookum Jim's sisters. She married Kul'tus, a Deisheetaan man, and lived with him on the coast. When he died quite young, Shaaw Tlaa's mother advised her to return home to Tagish and marry George Carmack. His wife, whom he called 'Jenny', another of Skookum Jim's sisters, had just died as well. When George married Shaaw Tlaa, he began calling her 'Kate', they lived around Tagish and Dyea then went north to Fortymile and the junction of the Salmon and Nordenskiold Rivers. There they established a trading post, which later developed into the town of Carmacks, and in nearby Fort Selkirk Kate bore her first and only child, Graphie Gracie, in 1893.

Seven years after they had left Tagish, they were joined by Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, and Ku|seen, and went on to the Klondike. In 1899, following the discovery of gold, Kate went with her daughter and her sister's daughter, Mary Wilson, to live in California, initially at her husband's sister's ranch. During this time George separated from her, married another woman, and Kate returned to the Yukon with the two girls in 1901. They lived in Carcross in a cabin that Skookum Jim built for them. After Graphie left for Seattle in 1909, Kate lived alone until 1920, when she died in the worldwide influenza epidemic that struck the Yukon after the First World War.

"... Kate seems to have been neglected by most gold rush chroniclers. For almost forty years her grave was unmarked and even the date of her death was not known exactly.

... she (died) in Carcross, March 29, 1920 of influenza. According to church records, she was 63 years old. With medical missionary A. Grasett Smith officiating, Kate was buried March 31, 1920, at the east end of pine-covered Carcross Cemetary. The weather beaten wooden fence around her grave is right next to Skookum Jim and near Tagish Charlie's. Their graves are both marked.

It was not until May this year [May 18, 1959] anyone tried to find Kate's grave. Sparking the search was Carcross balladeer Tom Brooks, a long-time Yukon resident. Asked to point out the spot exactly was another Carcross resident, Jimmy Scotty. Born Jimmy James at Wolf Lake, B.C. [near Juneau], he is a fine looking old man with a clear memory.

He came to Caribou Crossing in 1905, [and was about 12 years old at the time of the gold rush]. He remembers well the terrible flu epidemic which struck the north shortly after it swept the rest of the country...

Maybe because of the many fatalities in the epidemic, Kate's death was overlooked. But it seems the only reason nobody found the grave before was simply that nobody asked Jimmy ...

... Kate Carmack this year will finally be rewarded recognition. Her grave will be marked, probably first with a wooden cross and later with a permanent stone marker, as part of Carcross tourist promotion activities. Money to set up a headstone will be allocated out of funds left over from the 1958 Jubilee budget ...

On July 1, 1968, (9 years later), Carcross Residential School Principal Michael Gibbs stood by the graveside and the story of Kate Carmack was told again. The occasion ... was the dedication of of a handsome new headstone ... As a 1967 Centennial Project the Carcross Community Club, with assistance from the Alaska Sportsman magazine and the Whitehorse Star, had aroused interest in a fund to restore and suitably the site. Money collected was matched by a grant from the Yukon Government. The next year, on Dominion Day, the new marker was dedicated by the Bishop of Yukon, Rt. Rev. John T. Frame in the presence of some of the old Carcross families, including Tom Smarch, Vicky Johnson, Joe James, Alice Peterson, Kitty Grant, Mrs. Simmons, Nellie Watson and the staff of the residential school.

The headstone was inscribed: "KATE CARMACKS 1857 - 1920 Gold I Bring to Crown Him Again," surmounted by an engraved Killer Whale.

[Bogart, Whitehorse Star, 1990]

Graphie Gracie Carmack

Graphie Gracie Carmack was born in Fort Selkirk to Kate and George Carmack on January 11, 1893, and died at the age of 70 in 1963 in California. She was Skookum Jim's niece, her mother being Jim's sister, and at the time of the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek was three-and-a-half years old. At the age of 16 she was brought to Seattle to live with her father, George Carmack, and his new wife, Marguerite. She married Jacob Saftig, Marguerite's brother, a

year later, with whom she had three children, the first being Ernest. She later divorced, moved to California, and remarried twice.

[Johnson 1990, 155]

Two Stories:

"Graphie Carmack inherited her father's love of roaming. One sunny day, Graphie, Jim's daughter Daisy and another Tagish girl named Sha-kuni sneaked aboard the White Pass & Yukon train at Cracross and rode the 43 miles to Whitehorse without being approached by the conductor. A Mountie found the children wandering around town and took them to police headquarters, where they spent the night. In the morning, they returned to Carcross on the train.

In 1905, Skookum Jim paid the annual tuition fee of \$300 for Graphie to attend mission school at Whitehorse, where she lived with the Reverend Isaac O. Stringer and his family. One day Graphie persuaded the Stringer girl, also twelve, to accompany her on a visit to the red-light district of Whitehorse. The girls of the line were pleased to have such unusual visitors, even more so when they learned that one girl was the daughter of a clergyman. The girls returned home wearing wide, frilly hats and loaded down with gifts of candy, cookies and an assortment of hair ribbons. When Mrs. Stringer learned the source of all these luxuries, she grabbed all the gifts and threw them on the fire."

[Johnson 1990, 127]

"Following his financial success, Carmack arranged to have his and Kate's daughter [Graphie Gracie] sent south to the U.S. without her mother's knowledge. This callous removal of a child from her mother's matrilineage was still deeply troubling to women in the community of Carcross when I first heard this story in the early 1970s." [Cruikshank 1990, 168]

Ernest Saftig

Ernest Saftig is one of Skookum Jim's grand-nephews, a member of the American branch of his family that descends from Jim's sister, Kate. He was given Skookum Jim's Indian name, Keish, by his parents, though he never met Jim himself. In 1990 he was invited to a meeting of the Yukon Order of Pioneers, and was interviewed by the Whitehorse Star.

Presently a resident of Newport Beach, California, Saftig is a grandson of Kate and George Carmack, and a son of Graphie Gracie Carmack and Jacob Saftig. He was a friend of the late actor, John Wayne, and is a veteran of World War Two and campaigns in the Pacific when he served in American naval intelligence. Now in retirement, he occasionally assists Orange County Sheriff's Office with recruitment, and on border patrols.

"Until he was 11, Saftig grew up in George's back pocket on his gold mine in the Cascades... [He] taught him bush skills and gave him an education that's stood him in good stead since... He got about one year's school out of Bonanza Creek [profits]. After that he was on his own.

Because of his experience in the South Pacific, Saftig was sent to Hollywood to be a technical advisor on John Ford's movie, 'They Were Expendable'. That's

where he met John Wayne. [They invested in a mining property together, and] were friends thereafter."

[Davidson, Whitehorse Star, 1990]

Patsy Henderson

Patsy Henderson was Skookum Jim's cousin, since Patsy was the son of his father's brother, Tlawch', but also a nephew because Patsy was the son of Jim's sister, Kooyay, who had married Tlawch' in conformity to custom and requirements of that time. Patsy was born near Tagish in 1879, and died on February 11, 1966 at Whitehorse General Hospital at the age of 87, and was buried at Carcross Cemetary alongside Skookum Jim, Dawson Charlie, and Kate Carmack.

His Indian name was Ku|seen, his English name being given to him by George Carmack at the time of their Klondike adventures when Patsy was seventeen . Patsy's wife, Edith, who died in 1976, was the sister of Mrs. Frank Williams. They had two daughters, Irene, who died in her teens, and Lily, who married Buck Dickson, a grandson of Aage, one of Skookum Jim's sisters.

[Sidney, 1983]

In the early 1930s Patsy had used the old Scott Hotel in Carcross as a lecture hall until a fire razed both the hotel and the local school.

"...For the past few years the hotel has been partly used as a lecture room for Mr. Patsy Henderson, and a tea room... He lost almost everything in connection with his lectures, including many old relics of the north..."

[Whitehorse Star, July 17, 1936]

[Patsy and Edith met with visiting tourists,  
politicians, dignitaries, royalty: ]

"At the MacBride Museum in 1959, when presenting the Hendersons to Queen Elizabeth II, Museum founder Bill MacBride said, 'As you look at Patsy Henderson you can reach out a hand to touch the history of the Yukon. Patsy is the last living member of the group which started the Klondike rush.'"

[Whitehorse Star, Feb 14, 1966]

"Whether on the train station platform in Carcross or at his little cabin on the other side of the narrows Patsy continued to tell the story of the Discovery until his death in 1966. A handsome man with snow white hair and twinkle in his eye, his memory still brings a smile to the face of those who knew his Puckish sense of humour and indomitable spirit."

[Al Johnson, author of Carmack of the Klondike, recalled one such example:]

'In 1970 I wanted to make a trip over the Chilkoot Pass and come back on the train. I went to the Seattle office of the White Pass railroad to get a train schedule, and when I was all through I saw in the office of the manager Frank Downey a beautiful oil portrait of Patsy Henderson.

I said, 'My gosh that's Patsy Henderson, did you know him?' Downey said, 'Yes, I certainly did. When I was a passenger agent at Skagway I hired him to come down to the station at Carcross, when the train was in, and tell the story of the discovery on Bonanza. This he did and I paid him five dollars a week.' Frank laughed at this point and I when I asked why? he continued, 'This went on for several years and finally Patsy sent word he wanted to see me, so I got on the train and went up to Carcross and there was Patsy at the station.'

'I listened to him make his speil to the tourists and when he got through I said, "Well Patsy, what did you want to see me about?" and Patsy said, "You know Frank, the price of flour going up, bacon's going up, sugar going up and now even the price of bullshit going up, cause from now on I gotta have \$7.50."'

'And I said to Frank Downey "What did you do?" and Frank said, "I gave it to him."''

[Whitehorse Star, Oct 2, 1990]

Dawson Charlie

Dawson Charlie (Kaa Goox) was about ten years younger than Skookum Jim, and also a member of the Dakla'aweidi Wolf clan. In European terms he was Skookum Jim's nephew since he was the son of Jim's younger sister, Kooyay, the wife of Tlawch. As was the custom, Charlie spent a lot of time with his uncle, who acted as a kind of teacher or guardian, and accompanied him everywhere -- down to Dyea to trade and pack supplies for prospectors, on hunting and fishing expeditions, and later as far as the Klondike where they discovered and mined gold together. Two of Charlie's brothers were Billy Smith who married Kitty, and Patsy Henderson who accompanied Charlie and Skookum Jim to the Klondike in 1896.

Part of Dawson Charlie's historical importance is that he was the first Yukon Indian to have the right to vote. As a result of participating in the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek he became quite wealthy and famous, and when he applied for Canadian citizenship, (under the name of Charley Henderson), he was granted this distinction by a special act in parliament. This was very unusual at the time because indigenous peoples were not considered citizens, and were subjected to "restrictions and disabilities" under the Indian Act, which, among other things, did not allow them to vote or legally buy liquor.

He was described as "a man of considerable means" who did not "follow the Indian mode of life", who was "intelligent, capable, temperate in habits, and a good citizen"

[Whitehorse Daily Evening News, 12Jul04]

Just before Christmas two years later, however, his liquor privileges were cancelled, and he was "returned to his pristine condition" -- in the eyes of Canadian law. [Whitehorse Weekly Star, 01Jan09]

There was some argument about how much, or often, Dawson Charlie drank. Some said only a little, others, said a lot; but the truth is perhaps somewhere in-between. He didn't drink constantly, though he could have afforded to, but when he did, his thirst was extravagant. According to the Weekly Star, he was arrested and fined for being intoxicated three or four times a year. [Whitehorse Weekly Star, 27Jul06]

The discovery of gold and the wealth that this brought, along with a drastic change in lifestyle and habits, created much stress in Charlie's and Jim's relationships with some of their people, particularly with their wives. By 1905 both couples had separated, despite the men's attempts to persuade their partners to return. Dawson Charlie had a home in Whitehorse, but when his wife, Annie, came to town she refused to stay with him, preferring a local hotel. There were also rumours that there was another man involved, a Whiteman, who was intent on attracting the attentions of both Annie and Mary Mason so that he could somehow access their purported fortunes.

[Whitehorse Daily Evening Star, 07Apr05]



#### The Two Charlies:

"The man involved in the discovery of Klondike gold with Skookum Jim was his nephew, Kaa Goox, a member of the Dakl'aweidi clan, who was nicknamed 'Dawson Charlie' by his friends and relatives after the discovery because the gold rush led to the creation of Dawson City. However, because he came from Tagish, he is often called 'Tagish Charlie' in written accounts of the gold rush (for example, in Pierre Berton's popular account, Klondike). This causes confusion because an entirely different man, Yei|doogu, (also known as Xoonk'i Eesh), from the Deisheetan clan, already had the name 'Tagish Charlie' ... To clarify this distinction, two headstones, prominently displaying their different crests, have been placed on each man's grave in the Carcross cemetery - a Wolf for Dawson Charlie and a Crow for Tagish Charlie."

[Cruickshank 1990, 360,n11]

Actually, Kaa Goox was known as Tagish Charlie outside Carcross from the time he packed supplies over the Chilkoot Pass for William Ogilvie.

When Natives from Tagish began using English names, to help Whitemen who found it difficult to pronounce or remember names in the Indian languages, some confusion developed. "Charlie" (as well as "Jim" and "Joe"), was apparently a name given to more than one man from Tagish who came to Dyea to trade or pack supplies. It may be that sometimes a distinction was made between Skookum Jim's nephew and the other "Tagish Charlie" by referring jokingly to the former as "Cultus ('crazy/bad') Charlie", as the rival coast Tlingits called him.

[Johnson 1990, 43]

During his days in the Klondike, however, the name Tagish Charlie began to stick, because no doubt he disliked being called "Cultus", and there was no other Charlie from Tagish in the area.

#### Dawson Charlie's Death:

Dawson Charlie drowned early on Saturday, December 26, 1909, when he fell off the railway bridge in Carcross into the river. He had been out drinking and celebrating Christmas with friends, and was returning home.

[Whitehorse Weekly Star, 01Jan09]

"Now, the stories most often say that he fell in 'cause of being drunk, but there's some doubt about that. Y'see, the night Charlie died he's got in an argument with a tough young fellow [at John Scott's hotel]. I can't remember his name, but he was real tough, and the two of them were both drunk, and they got real mad at each other. So anyway, later on the woman who lived over the White Pass depot, (her husband ran the depot), ... heard a sleigh head down to the railway bridge and come back after a while, and she heard something hitting the ice while the sleigh was there. Now this happened to be just the time Charlie would have been on the bridge, so some people think that this young fellow ... murdered him.

... The hotel [he owned] was left to his wife, [Annie]. He was a good man too, [an] honest man. [He] had a big frame house over the river, and used to treat people, give dinners and this and that. Never did as much as Skookum Jim though, never had as much ambition, I guess.

[Martin, 1983].

Just a little more than a day after his fall from the bridge, on Sunday morning, his body was discovered and retrieved by Skookum Jim and another Carcross Indian. Though Dawson Charlie was separated from his wife, his two children, a six-year old son and an eight-year-old daughter, were living with him when he died, [but they died too, soon after.] [Whitehorse Weekly Star, 01Jan09]

Mrs. Angela Sidney

Angela Sidney was born in Carcross on January 4, 1902, to Tagish John, and Maria Shakoon, and died at the age of 89 on July 17, 1991 in Whitehorse at 12:10 am. Angela was related to Skookum Jim through both sides of his family: her mother, was a daughter of Jim's cousin, Kashadanda, on his father's side; and her father was Jim's cousin, and son of his aunt, Guna, on his mother's side.

[Sidney, 1983]

"Angela Sidney, a Tagish-Tlingit elder renowned as the historian and storyteller of her people, died early this morning at Whitehorse General Hospital.

Sidney... was the founder of the annual Northern Storytelling Festival, which began in 1988. She received the Order of Canada in 1986, and put together several books of Indian History and stories. It was also Sidney who gave a Tagish name to the Yukon College campus -- Ayamdigut Hall.

'In the background of our people, people were designated to do different things, and she was our historian,' Tagish-Tlingit Chief Doris MacLean said in an interview this morning.

'She was very dear to us, and she wanted to make sure we knew our history, our songs, and our legends.'

... She received the Order of Canada for her work documenting oral history and community work.

'When Yukon College was relocated from beside the Yukon River downtown, to the hill overlooking the city center, Sidney was asked to name the building,' said

Louise Profeit-LeBlanc, who herself is quite involved in preserving Indian history and culture, [and knew Mrs. Sidney as a fourth cousin].

'She gave the college the Tagish name "Ayamdigut", which means "She got up and moved," ... in memory of her father, who moved a traditional longhouse from the water's edge -- piece by piece -- during a flood around the turn of the century... Spiritually ... the name means those who go to the college will move with knowledge.'

Two years after naming the building, there was still nothing to recognise the name. It was Sidney, through Profeit-LeBlanc, who pushed the government to erect a plaque.

'Because a name-giving ceremony is not to be taken lightly,' Profeit-LeBlanc said.

In the early 1980s, [Julie] Cruikshank accompanied Sidney to a story-telling festival in Toronto. Sidney returned with the desire to have the same thing in the Yukon, and eventually saw her dream come to fruition. /She was known as the chief of the festival.

...Whitehorse artist Jim Robb first met Sidney some 30 years ago. He's recorded her conversations and photographed her, and plans to write something about her some day...

She is survived by her son, Peter Sidney, her daughter, Ida Calmegane, her sister, Dora Wedge, 16 grandchildren, 34 great grandchildren and five great great grandchildren.

She is predeceased by her husband, George Sidney, her daughter, Mabel Baker, and her brothers, Peter Johns, and Johnny Johns [who died in 1988]."

[Tobin, Whitehorse Star, July 17, 1991]

Mrs. Kitty Smith

"Kitty Smith was born in approximately 1890 ... near the mouth of the Alsek River ... Her father, Takata (his English name was Pardon), ... [had a ] Tlingit mother had married inland to the Yukon. His Dakl'awedi ancestry made him a member of the Wolf moiety. Kitty's mother, Tatl'erma, was a Tagish Athapaskan woman of the Crow moiety who grew up ... around Marsh Lake. Kitty's parents had met in the course of Tlingit-Athapaskan trade, and Takata brought Tatl'erma and her father, Shadanaak, to live with his people at Dalton Post."

[Cruickshank, 1990: 159]

"[My mamma] says my dad met her on a trading trip at Marsh Lake. When he saw that Marsh Lake woman, he married her. My grandma, Kat'oa, saw my mother and liked the look of her -- nice-looking woman, I guess. They paid them blankets, paid them guns. Then [my Marsh Lake grandpa] gave his daughter, and my mother stayed with them for good.

[K. Smith, in Cruickshank, 1990:175]

Mrs. Smith started living at Robinson in 1916 (the year Skookum Jim died) with Billy Smith. She worked four years at Dawson Charlie's hotel in Carcross.

[Cruickshank, 1990: 231]

Mrs. Annie Ned

Mrs. Ned is well-known in the Yukon as a respected elder, and in 1991 received the Order of Canada, partly as a result of her efforts over the years in encouraging interest, especially among young people, in their Native heritage and culture.

When she was a young girl, she was briefly courted by Skookum Jim, "but rejected him because his life was already taking a direction generated by unexpected wealth and attention. Instead, she married Paddy Smith" with whom she had eight children.

[Cruickshank, 1990, 265]

"Before I got married, Skookum Jim wants to marry me. But he drinks too much. Who's going to stand for that? I'm a girl then. Soon I got engaged to my husband, [Paddy Smith]."

[Cruikshank 1990, 323]

'Her grandfather didn't like the idea of Skookum Jim marrying her, and her father did, but at first she didn't know what was in their minds. Her family then was living at Joe-Joe, now Mendenhall. One time she had been visiting her grandmother by a lake about 15 miles away when she decided to go back for something. She took the Bullion Creek foot-trail, and when she got back to Joe-Joe there was someone in the house.

"Who's that?" she thought. It turned out to be Skookum Jim and his friend, Sam Smith, who used to go around with him. She continued on to her aunt Susie Henderson's place to get what she wanted, but had trouble opening the door. Then suddenly Skookum Jim was behind her, saying, "How can we open this door? Oh, I know -- I'll break it down."

Annie wished later that she'd known something at the time about what was going on.

Well, anyway, she went back to her grandmother's and laid around for many days. She didn't know how long. Finally she went back to Joe-Joe, and Skookum Jim was still there.

She didn't want to marry him because he drank too much and she didn't drink at all -- not at that age, when she was about fourteen ... and not later either.

[Paraphrase of: Mrs. Annie (Johnny) Ned, SJFC Oral History Project, 1973]

"When Skookum Jim found gold, that's the time that everything changed. This time we can't do it now, can't travel around. People stay where they stay."

[Ned, in Cruickshank, 1990: 281]

"...everything changed. White people came to this country. White people learned everything from the Indians. Now they want the whole thing, the LAND! I've got 64 grandchildren in this Yukon. I worry about them, what's going to happen? White people, where's their grandpa? their grandma? Indians should have their own lands.

[Ned, in Cruickshank, 1990: 338]

Johnny and Julia Joe

Johnny Joe was born about 1873-78 at Hutchi, 35 miles east of Champagne, and died November 22, 1985.

When Johnny's father died, the Marsh Lake chief told his mother, along with her son and his grandmother, to move to Marsh Lake. This was in the 1880s when Johnny was a small boy. The family loaded up their pack dogs and walked to their new home. The chief was Marsh Lake Jackie, Julia's grandfather.

Johnny and Jackie McIntosh had a licence to sell fish and moose meat to the Burns meat company. At another time, his partner was Jack Shakoon. Johnny's

first wife, who died of tuberculosis, was Louise Dawson, sister of George Dawson of Whitehorse.

Julia was born February 12, 1907, of Tagish Kwan, but lost her language when she went to school.

The Marsh Lake chief had 9 children (5 girls, 4 boys). Julia's mother was the oldest girl, then Jenny Ericson, Bessie Burns, Sadie Baker, Mary Billy. The boys were Slim Jim, Joe Jackie, (?), and Jackie McIntosh, the youngest.

Julia's mother died when she was five years old, and she went to Choutla Residential School for 10 years. She was confirmed by Bishop Stringer in 1922, and named her first son after the Bishop's oldest boy, Randall. She married Johnny Joe in 1926, having been chosen in the Indian way to be his wife. They had 9 children (5 boys, 4 girls) who were raised at Marsh Lake.

[Charlie, Ye Sa to Communication Society, 1989: 29-33]

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B) FORGOTTEN MYTHS OF WHITEMEN

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George Carmack's Dream: A Song of Higher Water

While the subject of this report is Skookum Jim and his people, it is difficult not to include materials representing George Carmack's personal views and experiences. Though not of the land or its people, he was, for a period at least, intimately associated with them. Of particular interest is how he, unlike most of his people, came to feel at home in the far north, with the Indians as well as the land. This affinity may be explained in part by his intuitive temperament which brought him so easily into attunement with the environment. And no doubt his fascination and apparently growing respect for dreams, omens, and symbols, were probably supported by his Indian friends.

1. The Golden Salmon

Skookum Jim was not the only member of the Bonanza group to have an important dream. His partner, George Carmack had one that inspired him to fish for salmon at the mouth of the Klondike River. A few weeks later, Jim, Charlie, and Koo|seen found him there easily as their boat came by from Tagish. Carmack described these events later in his memoirs, early and later versions of which are on file at Yukon Archives.

As he revised his memoirs Carmack often simplified parts of his story which in earlier versions were more detailed and imaginative, but sometimes he re-worked his descriptions to elaborate or emphasise experiences previously only mentioned in passing. The passages below are from later than earlier accounts which show how he came to regard his dream with greater interest. His dream in the first instance seems less important than omens occurring before and after, and from reading his later efforts, one can see that his earlier descriptions omit significant details. It is difficult to tell whether Carmack's memory improved or became more inventive, but a fair assumption might be that his dream of the golden salmon acquired greater significance.

"[In the spring of 1896 ...] After the ice cleared out of the river I loaded my boat ready to pull out, but could not make up my mind which way to go, so I concluded to leave it to chance: heads, up the river to the Salmon; tails, down to Fortymile. So, taking a silver dollar out of my pocket, (I had not many left,) I flipped it high in the air. It came down flat with the American Eagle on top, so I went down to Fortymile.

I was still undecided just what to do, but soon after reaching Fortymile I had a very peculiar dream. I dreamt I was fishing in a small stream and caught two very large salmon, so that gave me the idea to go up to the Klondike and catch salmon for the market ...

Now on going up the river another very peculiar thing occurred. While poling along close to the bank, a little yellow-breasted bird flew down and lit on the boat at my feet. I picked it up and it sat in my hand and looked around. It did not at all seem to be frightened. Then I said to Cooper, 'Well, what do you know about that? This is an omen, and I believe it means good luck.' With that the bird flew back up on the bank, lit on a bush, and began to sing."

In an earlier version he had introduced this sequence of events with a gloriously over-written description of a dawn he witnessed at Fort Selkirk, displaying a sensitive and energetic imagination that he later tried to suppress or control. Continuing on from the divine "miracle of night into day", he wrote:

"As I watched the flaming banners thrust forth their streamers of scintillating fire above the mountains, I felt my blood begin to tingle with new life and strength. I had a premonition that something unusual was going to take place in my life. Right then and there I made up my mind to take action ... so taking a silver dollar out of my pocket, (that was all the cheechako money I had,) I flipped the dollar into the air, and it came down tails. I immediately loaded my boat, got into the stern with the paddle, and was off down the river to test whatever fate had in store for me. When I arrived at Fortymile, I was still undecided what to do.

That night I had a very vivid dream. I dreamed that I was sitting on the bank of a small stream of water, watching the grayling shoot the rapids. Suddenly the grayling began to scatter, and two very large King Salmon shot up the stream in a flurry of foaming water and came to a dead stop in front of the bank where I was sitting. They were two beautiful fish, but I noticed that instead of having scales like salmon, they were covered with an armour of bright gold nuggets and gold pieces for eyes. As I reached out my hand to grasp one of the fish, I awoke [and found that I had] a death grip on my right ear ...



This dream took such a hold on my imagination that I slept no more that night. I lay there in my blankets thinking ... I finally came to the conclusion that the interpretation of my dream was to go fishing for salmon ..."

As a result of this dream Carmack went to the mouth of the Klondike which was known to be a good fishing spot for salmon, and towards the end of July was found there by Jim, Charlie, and Koo|seen who had in their turn been influenced, at some level, to go north in response to Jim's dream of the Frog Lady.

Carmack related only that:

"... their medicine told them to hunt me up and they would have good luck as their luck had been bad ever since we parted on the Salmon seven years before."

[G.T. Snow ms., n.d.]

## 2. On Mythic Dimensions

References to dreams and omens are usually more common in Native stories than in the chronicles of Whitemen which tend to emphasise facts, however leavened with colourful descriptions, but as can be seen from Carmack's accounts, he was one Whiteman who did 'believe in magic'. Evidently, omens and dreams of both Natives and Whites were key psychological factors in some events of the Gold Rush.

Even Robert Henderson, who encouraged Carmack to prospect by the Klondike, named his creek 'Gold Bottom' from a daydream he had about digging down to find a layer of gold like a street of the New Jerusalem. Henderson, it seems, was strongly influenced by his Christian beliefs [Berton, 1972, 46].

Dreams, however, connected the Native to his past and cultural roots to a greater and more conscious extent than for the non-Native. Dreams were more likely to be recognised as aspects of traditional myths and stories finding expression in daily life. The borders between waking reality, dream, and myths, were tentative and permeable; and mythic elements in dreams could more easily give access to a shared and deep sense of identity with the past, as well as provide more reliable guidance for the present.

Whitemen, like George Carmack and Robert Henderson, dreamed or daydreamed, but could not make the same kind of connections with myth that Skookum Jim and his elders did. Yet in retrospect, we might discover some things in Carmack's dream that indicate a mythic element linked to his own European cultural past, a link not as evident as the New Jerusalem of Henderson's fancy, but perhaps more authentic -- in the sense of being closer to his racial or tribal roots, in fact to the aboriginal component latent in Carmack's mind.

At this level of 'aboriginality' there may be found much closer affinities between Europeans and Indians than surface appearances offer; and if Native myths, such as those about Wealth Woman, seem to play a major role in the story of the Klondike, so might European mythic themes, even though they have gone unrecognised.

The following observations of similarities among George Carmack's dream, his Yukon experiences, and old Irish stories may indicate a fertile area for future study.

Carmack's ethnic origins are uncertain, though his surname hints at an Irish source -- perhaps from McCormack or McCormick, meaning 'son of Cormac'. Cormac was a legendary wise King of Tara in Ireland, 'whose hospitality was so prodigious that his royal revenue was soon exhausted'. There is a story about 'Cormac's Adventures in the Land Of Promise' in which he finds in the palace of the gods a fountain with five streams flowing from it [Matthews 1991, 44]. Cormac was also said to have obtained a sacred cup from paradise which would break if three lies were told over it, and would become whole again if three truths were told [Matthews 1990, 137], all of which seems to reflect something of George's Yukon adventures.

### 3. The George Carmack Song

In another story, about Fionn, an archetypal hero, salmon plays a major role as it did in Carmack's dream. By fishing a salmon from the river Boyne, Fionn attained great wisdom [Matthews 1991, 32]. In another tale, Oengus, a young god, overcomes the cunning and venerable knowledge of old Druids with his youthful insights and enthusiasm [Matthews 1991, 48], -- a theme taken up by Dawson miners in 'The George Carmack Song', in which they relished the idea of Carmack having found gold where the oldtimers had said it was not to be found:

"George Carmack on Bonanza Creek  
Went out to look for gold.  
I wonder why, I wonder why.

Old timers said it was no use,  
The water was too cold.  
I wonder why, I wonder why.

They said that he might search the creek  
Until the world did end.  
I wonder why, I wonder why.

And not enough of gold he'd find  
A postage stamp to send.  
I wonder why, I wonder why.

They said the willows on that creek  
the other way would bend.  
I wonder why, I wonder why."

[Klondike News, April 1, 1898.]

Also, there is the story of Mabon, the Wondrous Youth, who disappears for a time and is destined not to re-emerge until after a period of devastation and despair. He is finally found by Culhwch [Kulhoox] and others who set out to look for him, and are led by a salmon to discover him, bound by golden fetters [Matthews 1990, 69]. Here we might see parallels with Carmack's early version of his first encounter with Skookum Jim when Jim rescued him from certain death, and Jim's later search for him following an absence of seven years.

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C) THE TAGISH-TLINGIT ALPHABET

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Vowels

Consonants

Short Long

a	aa	plain stops:	d	dl	dz	j	g	g
e	ei	aspirated stops:	t	tl	ts	ch	k	k
i	ee	glottal stops:	t'	tl'	ts'	ch'	k'	k'
u	oo	plain fricatives:	l	s	sh	x	x	
		glottal fricatives:	l'	s'		x'	x'	
		other:	m	n		y	w	h

High tone: [ `v, `vv ]

[Source: Adapted from Tlingit Literacy Workshop, January 23-25, 1984, pp. 6-7, Yukon Native Languages Project (now Yukon Native Language Center), Box 2799, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 5K4.]

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D)                   ALPHABETICAL LIST OF PERSONAL NAMES

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English and Indian Names

English Name	Indian Name	Clan	Moiety
Abner, Mr.	Chanaa	X	Crow
Abner, Mary	Jee .aat	DK	Wolf
Atlin, Billy	Kaa Goox Eesh Tlawch'	DS	Crow
Atlin Joe	Tleisha.oox	YN	Wolf
Atlin, John	Kajineek'	DK	Wolf
Atlin, William	Daaxjooltsaak	DK	Wolf
Austin, Annie	Sadusge	DS	Crow
Baker, Charlene	Seki	DK	Wolf
Baker, Dorothy	Dak'alaa Maa	DK	Wolf
Baker, Eric	Aaneedeiduhein Esh Kiye Yei  Shaan	DS	Crow
Baker, Jack	Ch'itwu	DK	Wolf
Baker, John	Gooch Ooxu	DK	Wolf
Baker, Kenny	Yei  Naawu	DS	Crow
Baker, Mabel	Anaats'as ee Sadusge	DS	Crow
Baker, Maria	a.oos Tlaa Yei  Doogu	DS	Crow
Baker, Melvin	Shaanak'w	DS	Crow
Baker, Neil	Kaa Goox Eesh Tlawch'	DS	Crow
Baker, Norma	Kaas.aat	DS	Crow

Baker, Richard	Kult'us Tl'uku		DS	Crow
Baker, Ricky	Haandeyei		DK	Wolf
Baker, Russell	Hinshuxa Yei  X'anak		DS	Crow
Baker, Sadie	Dak'alaa Maa		DK	Wolf
Beattie, Butch	Yaandu.ein		DK	Wolf
Beattie, Darrell	Tashooch		DK	Wolf
Beaufield, Ethel Hammond	Kaayaa.aa		DK	Wolf
Billy, Mrs. Whitehorse	Shaan Tlein X'aaka tseix		DK	Wolf
Bone, Bill	Gooch Naawu	DK		Wolf
Bone, John	Kayaani Kutl'ootl		GN	Crow
Boss, Jim	Kashxoot		DK	Wolf
Burns, Bessie	Kusdze  Shaaw Tlaa		DK	Wolf
Burns, John	Gooch Ooxu	DK		Wolf
Burns, Sadie	Dak'alaa Maa		DK	Wolf
Burns Jr., Slim	Ch'itwu		DK	Wolf
Carmack, Kate	Shaaw Tlaa		DK	Wolf
Charlie, Dawson	Kaa Goox		DK	Wolf
Charlie, Tagish	Xoonk'i Eesh Yei  Doogu		DS	Crow
Dennis, Mr. (Bert)	Aak'e Eesh	X		Crow
Dennis, Mrs.	Hunxu.aat		DK	Wolf
Dickson, Buck	Keish		DK	Wolf
Flin, Ginny	Shangei Tlaa		DK	Wolf
George, Susie	Kaa aa		DK	Wolf
Good, Jackie	Tlakwshaan		DK	Wolf

Gordon, Tommy	Gooch Ooxu Kaax X'waa 'i	DK	Wolf
Hammond, David	Hinshook	DS	Crow
Hammond Jr., David	Tseexwaa	DK	Wolf
Hammond, Ethel	Kaayaa.aa	DK	Wolf
Hammond, Florence	Aanyamdu.oo Jee .aat	DS	Crow
Hammond, Helen	Aage	DK	Wolf
Hammond, Isabel	Kaneegweik	DS	Crow
Hammond, Joseph	Ch'it Teixi	CH	Wolf
Hammond, Mary = Mrs. Dyea John	Aandaax'w	DS	Crow
Hammond, Phyllis	Guna	DK	Wolf
Hammond, Sophie	a.oos	DS	Crow
Hammond, Willie	Kaachgaawaa	DK	Wolf
Hayden, Beatrice Lowe	Shaax'i Saani	DS	Crow
Henderson, Edith = Mrs. Patsy	Kidinch'ilaa	GN	Crow
Henderson, Irene	Shawatk'i	GN	Crow
Henderson, Patsy	Koo seen	DK	Wolf
Jackie, Joe	Shx'a.eeti	DK	Wolf
Jacquot, Ruth	ade'	DK	Wolf
James, Jimmy Scotty	Yei k'idaa	GN	Crow
James, Mary	Gooch Tlaa	DK	Wolf
Jim, Ginny Mrs. Tagish Jim	Tasht'oh Maa	GN	Crow
Jim, Scotty	Shgaati	GN	Crow
Jim, Slim	Ch'itwu	DK	Wolf
Jim, Tagish	Kaxootsk'i	DK	Wolf
Joe, Annie	Sakinyaa Sa.eek'	DS	Crow

Joe, Atlin	Tleisha.oox	YN	Wolf	
Joe, John	K'ah'aata		GN	Crow
Joe, Julia	Shich'ulee Maa	DK	Wolf	
John, Dyea	Tsooneix	KG	Wolf	
John, Marsh Lake	Chootl' Gooch Ooxu	DK	Wolf	
John, Mrs. Dyea = Mary Hammond	Aandaax'w	DS	Crow	
John, Kitty	Kaa.itdesadu.axch	DK	Wolf	
John, Maria	Kaax'anshee  a.oos Tlaa	DS	Crow	
John, Tagish	Haadeyei  Kajineek'		DK	Wolf
Johns, Ada	Kaa.itdesadu.axch Tashooch Tlaa	DK	Wolf	
Johns, Art	Ts'eiwat Xina	YN	Wolf	
Johns, Agnes	Daaxkeix Dusch'aadle		DK	Wolf
Johns, Charlie	Keinas.ax		DK	Wolf
Johns, Clifford	Yaandu.ein	DK	Wolf	
Johns, Frances	Ku'aa  Maa	DK	Wolf	
Johns, Howard	Kajineek		DK	Wolf
Johns, Johnny	Yei  Shaan	DS	Crow	
Johns, Leslie	Yei k'i Geigi		DS	Crow
Johns Sr., Peter	Kaanax Kuwoox' Xoonk'i Eesh Yei  Doogu	DK	Wolf	
Joseph, Susie	Nadagaat'		DK	Wolf
Lebarge, Jenny	Ku'aa  Maa	DK	Wolf	
Lindstrom, Shirley	Adax.ayamdagoot	DK	Wolf	
Little Joe	Kane ' K'atsk'u	DK	Wolf	
Lowe, Angela	Xwaansan		DS	Crow



Lowe, Doug	Tagooch		YY		Wolf
Lowe Jr., Doug	Skwaan			DS	Crow
Lowe, Georgianne	a.oos			DS	Crow
Lowe, Ida	Kaax'anshee  a.oos Tlaa			DS	Crow
Lowe, Laura	Katlenk'			DS	Crow
Lowe, Nancy	Yei  Shaan Tlaa	DS			Crow
Lowe, Phyllis	Kuna .aat			DS	Crow
MacDonald, Annie	Sa.eek'			DS	Crow
McIntosh, Jackie	Kaxanaa			DK	Wolf
McIntosh, (Mr.?)	Kaatadaa			GN	Crow
McIntosh, Mrs.	Kuk'eit e  Maa			DK	Wolf
MacLean, Doris	Guna			DK	Wolf
Marsh Lake Chief	Gunaatak'			GN	Crow
Marsh Lake John	Chootl' Gooch Ooxu			DK	Wolf
Mason, Daisy	Saayna.aat			X	Crow
Mason, Mary =Mrs. Skookum Jim	Daakuxda.eit Sadusge			X	Crow
Mason, Skookum Jim	Keish			DK	Wolf
Peters, Tom	Yei  Naawu	DS			Crow
Pope, Betty	Seki			DK	Wolf
Scarf, Jessie	Yadultin			DK	Wolf
Scotty, Clara	Saatleindu.oo			DK	Wolf
Scotty, Old	Shgaati			GN	Crow
Scotty, Old Mrs.	Jikaak'w			DK	Wolf
Sheldon, Jeffrey	Shdakaak			DK	Wolf
Shenkel, Clara (Johns)	Saatleindu.oo			DK	Wolf
Sidney, Angela	Ch'oonhehte' Maa Stoow	DS			Crow

Sidney, Charlotte	Jikaak'w		DK		Wolf
Sidney, Gary	doos		DK		Wolf
Sidney, George	Gweix Keshduk Tleixteen		YN		Wolf
Sidney Jr., George	Hinshuxa Skwaan			DS	Crow
Sidney, Pete	Hinkweik Hinsheesh			DS	Crow
Sidney, Sandra	Kaatook'u			DK	Wolf
Sidney, Vivian	Nadagaat'			DK	Wolf
Smarch, Mary	Yeikunasheen			DK	Wolf
Smith, Billy	Kane '			DK	Wolf
Smith, Kitty	K'oxyaa K'a gwach			GN	Crow
Smith, Sam	anezet Ta'		DK		Wolf
Smith, Daisy Jim	Xwaa		GN		Crow
Wedge, David	Shaadaax'			DS	Crow
Wedge, Dora	Kashadanda Keikandagan Yaajindahein		DS		Crow
Wedge, Mark	Aaneedeiduhein			DS	Crow
Williams, Jeffrey	Gooch Naawu		DK		Wolf

Wilson, Mrs. (Louise)	Aage		DK	Wolf
Wren, Lucy	Gooch Tlaa	DK		Wolf
[?], Kitty	Tashooch Tlaa		DK	Wolf
--, Edward (Son of Sadusge)	Yei  S'aagi		DS	Crow

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Indian Names and Their Translations

(From: Haa Shagoon, Sidney, 1983)

Indian Name	Translation	English Name	Clan
Aage	Daughter of the lake ? [Johnson, 1990 p 63]	Mrs. Wilson (Louise) Helen Hammond	DK
Aak'e Eesh	Good father	Mr. Dennis	LX
Aandaax'w	Around the city	Mrs. Dyea John [or Mary (Grandma) Hammond]	DS
Aaneedeiduhein	You own your own beaver crest in your own country	Eric Baker Mark Wedge	DS
Aanyamdu.oo	They bury her with it	Florence Hammond	DS
Adax. ayamdagoot	It got up and went away from there	Shirley Lindstrom	DK
Anaats'as ee*	Always smiling	Mabel Baker	DS
Anaxoo Maa*		--	GN
Chanaa		Mr. Abner	X
Chootl'		Marsh Lake John	@ DK
Ch'itwu	White bird (?)	-- Slim Jim Jack Baker Slim Burns Jr.	@ DK
Ch'it teixi	Boiled bird	Joseph Hammond	CH

Ch'onehte'				
Maa *	Dead tree mother	Angela Sidney	DS	
Daaktank	Bring it from the beach	--	KG	
Daakuxda.eit	Like a pearl (in an oyster)	Mary Mason Mrs. Skookum Jim	X	
Daaxjooltsaak	Hands held close to the sides of the body	William Atlin	DK	
Daaxkeix		Agnes Johns	DK	
Daaxtsees Maa*		--	DK	
Dak'ala Maa*	White spot mother	--	DK	
		Sadie Baker Dorothy Baker Sadie Burns		
Dusch'aadle*		Agnes Johns	DK	
Dzagwaa*		--		GN
Esh Kiye*		Eric Baker	DS	
Eyeindaa Maa*	Watching eye mother	--	DK	
Guna*	Cold springtime	(Tagish John's mother)	DK	
		Phyllis Hammond Doris MacLean		
Gus'duteen	See the clouds	--	DK	
Gweix		George Sidney	YN	
Gooch Naawu	Dead wolf	Bill Bone Jeffrey Williams	DK	
Gooch Ooxu	Wolf teeth	Tommy Gordon	DK	
		Marsh Lake John @ John Baker John Burns		
Gooch Tlaa		(Dawson Charlie's sister)		DK
		Mary James Lucy Wren		
Gunaatak'		Marsh Lake Chief@	GN	
Haandeyei	Come here crow	--	DK	
		Tagish John Ricky Baker	DK	

Hinkweik			Pete Sidney	DS	
			(2 sons of Sadusge)		
Hinsheesh	A kind of weed floating in water		Pete Sidney	DS	
			(2 sons of Sadusge)		
Hinshook	Laughing water		David Hammond		DS
Hinshuxa	Crow eats around the back		George Sidney Jr.	DS	
			Russell Baker		
Hunxu.aat	? Oldest brother's aunt		Mrs. Dennis	DK	
Hunyis	For selling		--		DK
Jee .aat	Your own auntie		Florence Hammond	DK	
			Mary Abner		
Jikaak'w			Old Mrs. Scottie	DK	
			Charlotte Sidney		
Kaanax Kuwoox'	Too wide [ridge-pole of Killer Whale house]		Peter Johns Sr.	DK	
Kaayaa.aat	? Ice gives way		Ethel Hammond		
			Beaufield	DK	
Ka .ens	?		(Skookum Jim's son)		X
Kane '			Billy Smith	DK	
Kane '					
K'atsk'u	Little Kane '		Little Joe	DK	
Kashadanda*	When the sun rises shining		--		DS
			Dora Wedge		
Kashxoot			Jim Boss		DK
Kaxootsk'i			Tagish Jim	DK	
Kayaani	? Leaves/foilage		John Bone		GN
Keikandagan	Coming up shining	--		DS	
			Dora Wedge		
Keinas.ax	Coming up noisy [ice in narrows]		Charley Johns		DK
Keish	? One wolf		Skookum Jim Mason	DK	
			Buck Dickson		

Keshduk		George Sidney	YN
Kidinch'ilaa*	Sun's rays	Edith Henderson (or Mrs. Patsy)	GN
Koo seen ?		Patsy Henderson	DK
Kooyay ?		--	DK
Kuk'ei e	Maa* Travelling all over mother	Mrs. McIntosh @	DK
Kult'us		(First husband of Kate Carmack)	DS
Kuna .aat		Phyllis Lowe	DS
Kusdze  *		Bessie Burns @	DK
Kutl'ootl		John Bone	GN
Ku'aat	Maa Chewing mother	Jenny Labarge Francis Johns	DK
K'ah'aata' %	Pointing arrows father	John Joe @	GN
K'oxyaa		Kitty Smith	GN
Kaachgaawaa		(Skookum Jim's father) Willie Hammond	DS
Kaadzaasxee		--	GN
Kaa Goox	Male slave	Dawson Charlie	DK
Kaa Goox Eesh	Male's slave's father	Billy Atlin Neil Baker	DS
Kaa Goox Tlaa	Male slave's mother	--	DK
Kaajineek'	Dirty hands	Tagish John John Atlin Howard Johns	DK
Kaakiyaa	Up high	(Son of Teeska)	X
Kaa aa		Susie George	DK
Kaas.aat	Man's auntie	Norma Baker	DS
Kaatadaa	Over the top of a person	McIntosh	GN
Kaatook'u	A person's little mind/ the way one feels like doing	Sandra Sidney	DK

Kaatu ak'e	Making one;s mind feel good	--	DK
Kaax'anshee		Maria John DS Ida Lowe	
Kaa.itdesadu. axch	One hears one's voice following behind	Kitty Johns DK Ada Johns	
Kaax X'waa i	Sawbill duck feathers	Tommy Gordon DK (Father of Tash 'oh Maa)	
Kaneegweik		(Deceased sister of Angela Sidney) DS Isabel Hammond	
Ka lenk'	Big rock	Laura Lowe DS	
Kaxanaa	Gift received	Jackie McIntosh @	DK
Kuwakaan	Deer	--	DK
K'a gwach		Kitty Smith GN	
ade'		Ruth Jacquot DK (Dtr. of Kooyay)	
anezet Ta'*		Sam Smith DK	
a.oos	Busy/playful	Sophie Hammond DS Georgianne Lowe	
a.oos Tlaa	Busy/playful mother	Maria John DS Ida Lowe Maria Baker	
doos		Gary Sidney DK	
Lunaatl'		--	X
.aanteix	Doesn't sleep with it	(Mother of Jimmy Kane)	DK
Nadagaat'		Susie Joseph DK Vivian Sidney	
Nadagaat' Tlaa		--	DK
Saatleindu.oo	One has a big name	Clara Scotty DK Clara Johns Shenkel	

Saayna.aat	Name coming through	Daisy Mason	X	
Sadusge	One magnifies his voice	Mrs. Annie Austin Mabel Baker	DS	
Sakinyaa		Annie Joe Carol Baker		DS
Sa.eek	Female with a brother or lots of brothers	Annie Joe Annie MacDonald	DS	
Seki *		(Mother of Julia Joe) Betty Pope Charlene Baker		DK
Sgeinaa		--		X
Shaadaax'	Around the mountain	David Wedge	DS	
Shakoon	Mountain bird	-- (Son of Nadagaat' Tlaa)		DK
Shaanak'w		Melvin Baker		DS
Shaan Tlein	Big old person	-- Mrs. Whitehorse Billy @		DK
Shaaw Tlaa	Mouldy mother	Kate Carmack Bessie Burns	DK	
Shaax'i Saani	Little girls	Beatrice Lowe Hayden		DS
Shangei Tlaa		Ginny Flin	DK	
Shawatk'i		Irene Henderson	GN	
Shdakaak		Jeffrey Sheldon @ (Brother of Slim Jim @)		DK
Sheidaxee	Horn	-- (Brother of Daisy Smith)		GN
Shgaati *		Old Scotty (Clara Scotty's stepfather) Scotty Jim (Brother of Daisy Smith)	GN	



Shich'ulee *	Expecting		Julia Joe @	DK
Shich'ulee Maa *	Expecting mother	--		DK
Shuwuteen	End of string [YN name allowed]		(Dtr. of Wandasa)	DK
Shx'a.eeti	Leftover food for Wolf people		Joe Jackie @	DK
Skaaydu.oo			(Mother of George Sidney )	YN
Skwaan			(Son of Sa.eek Sr.) (Son of Sakinyaa) Doug Lowe Jr. George Sidney Jr.	DS
Stoow		--	Angela Sidney	DS
Tagooch	Name of rock at Telegraph Creek		Doug Lowe	YY
Tasht'oh Maa*	Arrow nest mother		Mrs. Tagish Jim Ginny	GN
Tashooch *	Stone sitting in water	--	DK Darrell Beattie	
Tashooch Tlaa*	Mother of Tashooch		Kitty Ada John	DK
Teeska			(Wife of Tlakwshaan)	X
Tusaxa  *			-- --	DK
Tlakwshaan	Always old	--	DK Jackie Good	
	Dry branch on a living tree		-- Billy Atlin Neil Baker	DS
Tleisha.oox	Having one tooth	Atlin Joe		YN
Tleixteen			George Sidney	YN
Tl'uku			(Brother of Sa.eek') (Brother of Kult'us) Richard Baker	DS

Tseexwaa ?		David Hammond Jr.	DK	
Tsooneix		Dyea John		KG
Ts'eiwat		Art Johns		YN
Wandasa		Leberge Chief		GN
Xina		Art Johns (Father of Mrs. Austin)		YN
Xoonk'i Eesh	Northwind father	Tagish Charlie Peter Johns	DS	
Xwaa		Daisy Jim Smith	GN	
Xwaansan		Angela Lowe		DS
X'aaka tseix	Kicking the point of land	Mrs. Whitehorse Billy Sr.		DK
Yaajindahein		Dora Wedge	DS	
Yaanasguk	Noise made by a certain kind of bird flying	--		X
Yaandu.ein		(Son of Guna) Clifford Johns Butch Beattie	DK	

Yadultin ?	One watches his/its face	(Mother of Clara Scotty ) Jessie Scarf	DK
Yeikunasheen?	Going down looking	Mary Smarch	DK
Yei  Doogu	Crow skin	(Father of George Sidney) Tagish Charlie Peter Johns Melvin Baker	DS
Yei  Naawu	Dead crow	Kenny Baker Tom Peters	DS
Yei  S'aagi	Crow bone	(Son of Aandaax'w) Edward (Son of Sadusge)	DS
Yei  Shaan	Old crow	-- Johnny Johns Eric Baker	DS
Yei  Shaan Tlaa	Mother of Yei  Shaan	Nancy Lowe	DS
Yei  X'anak	What you're supposed to eat, I eat first	Russell Baker	DS
Yei k'i Geigi	Poor crow	Leslie Johns	DS
Yei k'idaa	Crows in a line	Jimmy Scotty James	GN

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E) SKOOKUM JIM'S FAMILY TREE

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The following pages show two lists of Skookum Jim's relatives and their relationships to him in European kinship terms, along with clan (or sib) memberships. The first section displays all descendants of his father's mother, a woman of Tagish descended from Tlingit aristocracies of Angoon and Klukwan. The second section shows the descendants of Skookum Jim's mother's mother, a Tahltan from Telegraph Creek.

Skookum Jim, his siblings, and their descendants appear in both lists, naturally, since they descend from the union of both lineages through Gus'duteen and Kaachgaawaa. Other individuals appear in both lists as a result of other inter-marriages. For example, the Tahltan Dakl'aweidi lineage linked with the Tlingit Deisheetaan through the marriages of: Guna and Tl'uku, Shakoon and Kashadanda, and Kooyay and Tlawch'.

The names and information, provided mainly by Angela Sidney, given here and in Appendix D all pertain to individuals of these two and their four sub-lineages. There are of course other inter-marriages amongst them, but these are not as closely connected with Skookum Jim.

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F) CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS: 1834 - 1992  
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- 1834 #Robert Campbell, first White to find gold in Yukon.
- 1837 ^Queen Victoria succedes to throne of England.
- 1844 ^Samuel Morse invents telegraph.
- 1847-49 #California gold rush.
- 1850s \*Skookum Jim Mason (Keish) b., Tagish.
- 1855 \*Hannah Rosella (Rose) Carmack b., CA.
- 1858 <Ottawa becomes capital of Canada.
- 1859 <B.C. gold rush.
- 1860 ^Internal combustion engine invented (Lenoir).  
^Potato famine in Ireland; emigration to N. America.  
\*George Washington Carmack b., Contra Costa County, CA; 24Sep; parents: Hannah & Perry.
- 1861-65 ^U.S. Civil War.
- 1863 ~Hannah Carmack d., CA.
- 1865 ^Assassination of Lincoln; slavery in U.S. abolished.  
^First oil pipeline; Pennsylvania.  
\*J. Bernard Moore, (of Wm Moore), b., New Westminster, B.C.; 06Sep.
- 1866 \*Dawson Charlie b.
- 1866-8? \*Kate Carmack b., Tagish.
- 1867 #Alaska sold by Russia to U.S.  
<Confederation of Canada; 01Jul.
- 1869 <Riel Rebellion.
- 1870 <Former territories of Hudson's Bay Co., including North-Western Territory, transferred to 15Jul. Canada;
- 1871 ~Perry Carmack d., of apoplexy; CA.
- 1873-8 \*Johnny Joe b., Hutchi.
- 1876 \*Jimmy (Scotty) James b. near Juneau?
- 1879 \*Patsy Henderson b., near Tagish.

- 1881 \*George enters U.S. Marine Corps; Oct.
- 1882 \*George (as Marine) arr. Sitka; Mar.  
 #Cassiar miners from Juneau cross Chilkoot Pass & set up "first successful mining" in Yukon Valley.  
 \*George deserts Marines to see ill sister; Fall.
- 1883 \*Jenny Lebarge b., Marsh Lake.  
 #Fredrick Schwatka notes that some Tagish Indians are going to the coast, the Tlingits having relaxed their monopoly somewhat.
- 1885 #Joe Ladue camps at Rabbit Ck. while moose-hunting.  
 #Gold found on Stewart R.  
 \*George leaves San Francisco for Juneau; 31Mar, 10:00h.  
 \*George, Day Brothers & other prospectors reach Taiya R., (Dyea); 19May, heading for Yukon  
 \*George & partners at Marsh Lake; 04Jul; Reach Miles Canyon & return to Dyea.
- 1886 \*200+ prospectors enter Yukon from Dyea; usually returning by Fall.  
 \*Skookum Jim & Dawson Charlie meet George Carmack at Dyea.  
 #Gold discovered at 40Mile; Fall.
- 1886-7 #George's first winter at Tagish.
- 1887 #GM Dawson expedition  
 \*J.B. Moore arr. Skagway; 21Mar.  
 \*500 miners enter Yukon from Skagway, going to 40Mile; Spring.  
 \*George Carmack employed by John J. Healy at Dyea.  
 \*William Ogilvie & party arr. Haines; 24May.  
 \*(Ogilvie's packers (including Jim, George, & Charlie,) start for Chilkoot summit; 06Jun.  
 \*Tagish people build cabin for George & Kate at Dyea; Fall.
- 1888 \*Skookum Jim & Dawson return to Dyea from Tagish; May.  
 \*Trio prospect to Big Salmon/Yukon Rs. by mid-August; return to Tagish; Sep.
- 1889 \*George & Kate arrive at Fortymile.  
 \*George & Kate go trapping, via Fort Yukon to Rampart House (Aug), where they winter in Indian village.
- 1890-93 \*Annie Ned b. Hutchi.
- ca.1890 \*Kitty Smith b. mouth of Alskek R.

- 1890            \*George & Kate return to sell furs at Fort Yukon,  
then back to Fortymile where he stakes claim            on Nugget  
Gulch; Spring.
- 1891            \*George builds cabin at Fortymile.  
\*Daisy Mason b. [Cruikshank]  
\*Mary (Minnie) Wilson b., Tagish.
- 1892            \*Johnny Fraser b. near Champagne.  
\*George's claim exhausted so he & Kate go to Big  
Salmon/Yukon R., est. trading post; Spring.  
\*Skookum Jim kills two bears near Dyea.  
\*George goes to Fort Selkirk, helps Rev. T.H.  
Canham build St. Andrews Anglican church;  
while pregnant Kate tends post; Summer.  
\*George returns to close post & take Kate to  
Selkirk; Fall, Winter.
- 1893            \*Graphie Grace Carmack ("Aage") b., Fort Selkirk;            11  
Jan.  
\*Carmack family returns to post; Spring; George  
mines coal seam.  
#Arthur Harper est. Ogilvie post with Joe Ladue in  
charge.
- 1894            \*Bob Henderson in Colorado informed of Yukon gold  
prospects by brother Henry who is returning  
from the north; Bob leaves for Yukon.  
#Inspector Constantine arr. FortmMile.  
\*George meets Bob Henderson at Carmack's post  
during Bob's first trip down Yukon.  
~William Redford is working first profitable claim  
in Klondike area, Quartz Creek.  
\*Bob Henderson with two friends arr. Sixtymile  
from Chilkoot Pass; Jul.
- 1895            \*Bob Henderson works for Redford on Quartz Crk.  
\*Kate's sister, Mrs. Wilson d.  
#Provisional District of Yukon created; 02 Oct.
- 1896            ^First modern olympics; Athens.  
<Wilfrid Laurier, first French-Canadian prime  
minister.  
\*G.T.Snow authorised by Yukon Order of Pioneers to  
compile history of Yukon valley; Circle City,            07Jan.



\*George goes to Fortymile to settle accounts; May.  
   - has dream about a golden salmon; June.  
   - grubstaked by Al Mayo at Fortymile; 01Jul.  
   - goes with Lou Cooper to Klondike/Yukon R.;  
   01Jul.  
 \*Jim, Charlie, & Ku|sin (Patsy) show up; late Jul.  
 \*George, Jim, Charlie meet Bob Henderson at  
 Klondike R.; July.  
 \*Gold discovered on Bonanza Cr. by Jim, George, &  
 Charlie; Aug 16.  
 \*George, Charlie, & Patsy take logs to Fortymile;  
 Jim guards claim; 18Aug.; George announces  
 find at Bill McPhee's saloon; returns to Bonanza.  
   \*Claims recorded at Fortymile during 2nd visit;  
   24Sep.  
   #Joe Ladue stakes site of Dawson; Sep.  
   \*Freeze-up; 13Oct.  
   \*Jim's claim re-surveyed & found 61' too big;  
 Winter.

1897        ^Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.  
              ^Spanish-American War.  
              #Solar eclipse, 29Jul, 5 am.  
              \*Jim gives \$50,000 to Henry Cook to prospect near  
 Fairbanks.  
              \*Extra piece of Jim's claim staked by Patsy  
                  ("Tagish Paddy"); 01Mar.  
              #Boundaries of Yukon defined; 18Dec.  
              \*Charlie's claim sold for \$13,750, still leaving  
              one claim each.

1898        ^Boer War.  
              #Construction of White Pass & Yukon railway  
              begins; summer.  
              \*Children of Maria & Tagish John d., Dyea  
              \*Trio's first big pay-off: \$150,000; claims leased  
 out; Spring.  
              #Yukon Territory created, separate from North-West  
 Territory; 13Jun.  
              #Wm. Ogilvie appointed Commissioner; 04Jul.  
              \*Marguerite (Saftig) Laimee arr. Dawson from  
 Australia; Jul.  
              \*Johnny Johns b., Atlin; 10Jul.  
              \*Jim & group leave St. Michael bound for Seattle  
              on Roanoke; 22Aug.  
              \*Jim & group arrive Seattle; 30Aug.  
              \*Jim & group goes to George's sister's ranch near  
              Hollister, California, via train to San  
              Francisco; Sep.; Jim & Charlie leave soon  
              after.

1898-9      ~Guna d., Bennett

1899        ^Marconi invents radio.  
              \*Prospector killed by Indians at McClintock R.;  
              suspects advised to give themselves up to  
              police by Jim Boss.

\*George leaves ranch for Yukon; Graphie left with his sister, Rose; Mar.  
 \*George arrives Skagway; 03Apr; by sled to Dawson.  
 \*J. Hutman given Power of Attorney for George's claim; Jun.; then for all 3 claims, though no legal record for transaction with Jim's claim.  
 \*Jim builds house in Carcross; Spring.  
 \*Jim & Charlie with their wives arrive Seattle to buy furnishings; 21 Jul.  
 \*George & Kate with Mary Wilson (age 8) arrive Seattle; 23Jul.  
 \*White Pass & Yukon railway reaches Bennett.

1900 <Canadian troops sent to South Africa; Canada participates in first foreign war.  
 ^Freud publishes "Interpretation of Dreams"  
 \*Tagish Charlie is Crow chief of Carcross.  
 \*Tagish Jim becomes Wolf chief of Carcross  
 #Indian Residential Reserve #2, Moosehide est.  
 \*George arr. Dawson; Kate & Graphie left with Rose in California; Spring.  
 \*Marguerite meets George at Dawson dinner party; George proposes; 20Jun.  
 - They leave Dawson; Jul.  
 - arrive Seattle; 14Jul;  
 - George informs Kate from San Francisco about their separation.  
 \*Last spike of WP&Y Railway, Carcross; 29Jul.  
 \*George meets Jim & Charlie for last time in Seattle to terminate their partnership; ownership of claims passed to Jim; mid-Aug.  
 \*Kate sues for divorce; 01Oct.  
 #First elections in Yukon held; 17Oct.  
 \*George & Marguerite marry; 30Oct.  
 \*Kate's suit dismissed due to lack of evidence of marriage; 28Nov.; Graphie & Mary returned to Kate.

1901 ^Edward VII succedes to throne at death of Queen Victoria.  
 \*Kate files for maintenance; 13Jan; no trial  
 \*Kate's suit abandoned; she, Graphie & Mary, meet Charlie in Seattle and return to Yukon; Jul.  
 \*Jim builds cabin in Carcross for Kate & girls; provides financial support.  
 \*George files deposition that Kate was about 20 years when he met her in 1887.  
 ~Sophie Hammond b.

1902 \*Angela Sidney b., near Carcross; 04Jan.  
 #Chief Jim Boss asks Federal Govt. to consider treaty negotiations involving land for Leberge Indians; 13Jan.

1903 \*Gold at Ruby Cr., Kluane, found by Skookum Jim & Dawson Charlie; starts a gold rush.

#Silver City, Kluane est.  
 \*Jim & Mary officially married; 11Jul.

1904 #Whitehorse - Kluane wagon road built.  
 \*Skookum Jim's first will; 11Jan.  
 \*Jim sells his Bonanza claims to Lewes River Mining & Dredging Co. for \$65,000; 20May; never returning to Klondike.  
 \*Dawson Charlie is made a Canadian citizen by special proclamation in Ottawa, giving him the legal right to drink & vote; 12Jul.

1905 \*Isaac Stringer becomes Anglican Bishop of Yukon  
 \*Jim visits Skagway in an attempt at reconciliation with his wife, Mary, who has left him for a Whiteman; Feb.  
 \*Jim prepares 2nd will; 05 Apr.  
 \*Jimmy (Scotty) James arrives Carcross from coast (Juneau area).  
 #Boundary with Alaska Panhandle finalised; 25 March.  
 ~Potlatch held by Jim Boss & Woodtick William of Atlin, at Indian village in Whitehorse; 18Jul.  
 \*Tagish Charlie d., Carcross; 15Nov, of 'consumption'.  
 \*Jim pays tuition for Graphie to go to mission school in Whitehorse where she lives with Bishop Stringer & family.  
 \*IRR #4, Carcross established.

1905-6 ~David John b., (of Maria John).

1906 \*Dawson Charlie interdicted, losing rights of citizenship; 21Dec.  
 ~Kow'h-kha, Teslin chief d.; his nephew, Billy Johnson (of Teslin) assumes name and title.  
 \*J.B. Moore leaves Alaska for U.S.  
 ~John Baker's father arrives Yukon from Nashville

-1907 #Indian village at Whitehorse exists on east side of river.

1907 ~Julia Joe b.; 12Feb.

1908 ~Peter Johns b., (of Maria John).

1908-9 ~Kashadanda d.

1909 \*Graphie invited to Seattle by her father; stays 10 years before visiting Yukon.  
 #First wholly elected Territorial council; W.L.  
 \*Phelps, represents Whitehorse; 28Jun.  
 (Phelps in office to 1920, 1925-34, 1940-44.)  
 \*Dawson Charlie drowns in river at Carcross; early morning, 26Dec.

- 1910            ^King George V succedes to throne.  
                  \*Graphie & Jacob Saftig marry in Seattle; 30Jun.  
                  ~Mrs. Dennis d., (b. Haines)  
                  ~Marsh Lake John d.
- 1911            #Indian village at Whitehorse moved across river.  
                  \*Marguerite & Jacob visit Kate in Carcross; Fall.
- 1912            ~Julia Joe's mother d.  
                  ~Dora John b., (of Maria John).  
                  \*Skookum Jim's big potlatch at Carcross; Nov.
- 1913? ~Lily Henderson b., (of Edith Henderson).
- 1913            ~Gunaatak d.; 31Dec.  
                  \*Jim's prepares (last) journey: Telegraph Cr.  
                         - visits Seattle to secure an outfit; 03Mar.  
                         - in Telegraph Cr. 14Nov.
- 1914 \*W.B. Clark, medical doctor, retained by  
                  government; Whitehorse.
- 1914            \*Patsy & Edith Henderson working on a fox farm  
                  near Carcross.  
                  #John Hawksley, first full-time Indian Agent.  
                  ~Dtr. of Angela Sidney b. & d.(at 4 mos.).  
                  \*George files his will; 17Feb.  
                  #Teslin: Taylor & Drury cut off credit to Indians;  
                  relief required before Christmas.
- 1915            \*Jim, in Telegraph Creek, has money sent by his  
                  lawyer; Jan.
- 1916-24        #Beaver-trapping closure by government.
- 1916            ~Kitty & Billy Smith move to Robinson.  
                  \*Jim, in Whitehorse hospital for treatment, leaves  
                  for hotsprings at Hoonah; 07Feb.  
                  \*Jim's final will; 04April.  
                  \*Skookum Jim d.; 11Jul.  
                  ~Dora John d., (of Maria John); 29Jul.  
                  ~(Alice) Dora Wedge b.; 29Jul.

1917 \*Angela & George Sidney marry; Jul.  
 [?] ~Peter Sidney b., (of Angela Sidney); 13Apr.  
 ~Johnny Johns goes into business as hunting guide.  
 \*George buys gold claims at Westville, California;  
 good yields; 17Aug(!).

1918 ~Billy Williams' potlatch in Atlin is attended by  
 Patsy Henderson, Tagish John, and Tahltan  
 chief.  
 #Sinking of Princess Sophie in Lynn Canal, 353  
 people perish (8% of the region's White  
 population); 25Oct.

1919 \*J.B. Moore d., San Francisco.

1920 \*Daisy visits from Berkeley.  
 \*Deaths from influenza epidemic:  
 \*Kate Carmack d., Carcross; 29Mar, buried  
 31Mar.  
 \*Tagish John d., 31Mar.  
 ~Baby dtr. of Ginny & Shakoon.  
 ~Mary Philips d.  
 ~Billy Bone d., Carcross.  
 \*Johnny Johns hears about sale of Skookum Jim's  
 house in Carcross; Fall.

1921 #Indian village at Whitehorse moved north of town.

1922 \*George Carmack d., Vancouver; 05Jun, 05:45h;  
 funeral at Masonic Temple, Seattle; 09Jul.

1924 #Silver City abandoned.  
 \*Sam Smith & Big Lake Jim discover gold near  
 Little Atlin Lake.

1926 ~Julia and Johnny Joe married.  
 \*Out of court agreement with Marguerite & Graphie  
 about George's will; 26Feb.  
 ~Jackie Mackintosh killed by Pelly Jim,  
 Whitehorse.

1927 ~Martin Kane killed by Paddy Duncan, Champagne.

1927-8 #Gold at Squaw Crk; resurgence of mining in Kluane  
 to mid 1930s.

1929 ~David John d., (of Maria John).

1930 \*Patsy Henderson becomes Wolf chief of Carcross.  
 \*Daisy Mason visits Yukon for last time.

1933 \*Bob Henderson d.  
 \*Marguerite publishes (her censored version of) George's booklet, "My Experiences in the Yukon).  
 #John Hawksley retires.

1936 ^King George VI succedes to throne.

1937 \*Daisy Mason d.; Sep/Oct.

1941 #IRR #13, Teslin Post established.

1942 \*Marguerite (Saftig) Carmack d., Auburn, California; 30Jan, 10:50h.  
 #U.S. Army ordered to begin work on construction of Alaska Highway; 14Feb.  
 #Billy Smith guides Highway trail-blazers, Watson Lake to Teslin.  
 #Alaska Military Highway offically opened; 20Nov.

1943 Deaths from illness:  
 ~Beatrice Sidney d., (adopted by Angela),  
 ~Two dtrs. of Daisy Smith d.  
 ~Sister of Daisy Sheldon d.  
 ~Johnny (Taku) James d.

1948 #Alaska Highway opened to unrestricted traffic.

1951 #Decision to move Yukon capital from Dawson to Whitehorse; 22Feb.

1952 ^Queen Elizabeth II succedes to throne.

1953 #Whitehorse becomes capital of Yukon; 01Apr.

1956 #IRR #5, Six-Mile Creek (Marsh Lake) established.

1959 \*Patsy & Edith Henderson presented to Queen Elizabeth at MacBride Museum, Whitehorse.  
 \*Kate Camack's grave "found" in Carcross cemetary, with help from Jimmy Scotty James.

1963 \*Graphie Grace (Carmack) Rogers d., California.

1964 \*George Sidney becomes acting Wolf chief, Carcross.

1966 \*Patsy Henderson d.; 11Feb, Whitehorse; buried at Carcross.  
 ~William Atlin becomes Wolf chief of Carcross.

1968 \*Kate Carmack's gravesite restoration & headstone ceremony; Carcross.

1970s ~Johnny Smith (of Kitty Smith), chief of Whitehorse Indian Band

1971           \*George Sidney d.  
1972? ~David Hammond d.  
1976           ~Edith Henderson d.  
1981-88       ~Johnny Smith (of Kitty Smith), chief - Kwanlin  
              Dun  
1985           \*Johnny Joe d.; 22 Nov.  
1988           \*Johnny Johns d.; 18 Jan.  
1991           ~John Atlin d., Carcross.  
              ~Henry Wren d., Carcross.  
              \*Angela Sidney d., 17Jul, 00:10h, Whitehorse.  
              ~Elijah Smith d., Ross River; (son of Mrs. Annie  
              Ned.)

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CODE

Events related to:

\* Skookum Jim; personally  
~ Skookum Jim's relatives and friends  
# Yukon history  
< Canadian history  
^ World history

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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The materials presented in this report are mainly derived from previously published works and publicly available documents. Aside from discussions with various members of Skookum Jim's family and others, aimed at clarifying some key issues and gathering certain items of useful information, collecting new materials or previously unrecorded oral histories and stories was not attempted. The focus has been on representing, as completely as possible, the information about Skookum Jim that has been produced during the last hundred years or so. It is hoped that this compilation will act as a valuable resource for future research.

There are numerous avenues that such research could take. Concerning Skookum Jim, there are undoubtedly anecdotes, stories, and other information familiar to his many descendants and relatives that have not yet been published or recorded. The recording of interviews and stories, particularly with elders of his people, is an important priority, especially since the very few who remember Skookum Jim, his friends, and events at the turn of the last century, will not be with us for much longer.

Annie Ned, presently living in Haines Junction; Daisy Smith, Julia Joe, Pete Sidney, and Richard Dickson, in Whitehorse; Jackie Good, Lucy Wren, William and Winnie Atlin, Dora Wedge, Ida Calmegane, in Carcross; and Elizabeth Nyman in Atlin; are some elders who should be considered for the purposes of interviewing. As well there are a number of other members of the family, and research specialists who can provide invaluable assistance. Clara Schinkel at the Council of Yukon Indians, Louise Profeit-LeBlanc at the Yukon Heritage Branch, Patrick James in Carcross, and Maria Benoit at the Carcross-Tagish First Nation administration office, are some resource persons who are recommended.

In addition to information about Skookum Jim himself, further research into the culture and history of his people would reveal in greater detail ways in which he and his closest associates exemplified and were personally affected by their backgrounds. Other major areas of interest are Skookum Jim's legacy which led to the establishment of the Skookum Jim Friendship Center, and the Center's role in attempting to fulfil the last wishes of its founder-in-spirit by contributing to the welfare of Native people and Yukon society in general.



Certain events and issues in Skookum Jim's life remain unclear and may be clarified by further research. The uncertainty about who found the gold nugget on Bonanza Creek may always elude resolution, but other questions, such as who initiated the Kluane gold rush may prove less mysterious.

Regarding the disappearance and eventual locations of Skookum Jim's possessions there are questions and routes to be traced. What 'costume', for example, did Johnny Johns refer to when he said that Skookum Jim took it with him to Kluane, and what happened to it afterwards?

There is much information available about Skookum Jim's family and clan relationships in around Carcross, in large part through the genealogical data provided by Angela Sidney, though extensions of this to include other families of the area would benefit researchers interested in kinships. Connections with coastal Tlingit relatives, the Tlingit of Teslin and Atlin, and with Skookum Jim's mother's people of the Telegraph Creek region, would also be of interest.

Various individuals, usually non-Native, turn up as relative strangers in stories about Skookum Jim and remain unknown, though their roles were sometimes important in his life. Who, for example, were his cooks -- Mrs. Hose, and the Englishman from Vancouver? What were their backgrounds and what became of them later? Who was the policeman employed by Jim for his Teslin expedition, and was he the one who married into his family -- Tom Dickson?

Basically, the areas of focus for further research will be determined by different kinds of questions coming from two different directions: from Skookum Jim's people, wishing to learn more about their own past and inter-relatedness; and from others, perhaps mostly non-Native, who will see Skookum Jim's life from outside, as it were, and formulate a more universal or historical perspective. This report offers resource materials useful for both approaches, and hopefully for synthetical developments which will in the end prove most rewarding.

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1990            "Patsy Henderson is dead". Star Memories;  
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