

Gwihdaii Guuzhik Gwiinzii T'ishi'in K'iighè' Niinzhuk Gwiinzii Gwihdaih

My Life Has Been Long
and Good Because of the
Good Things I Have Done



Leslie McCartney, Peter Kay Sr. vigwindak dinuutt'oo
By Leslie McCartney with Peter Kay, Sr.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Peter Kay Sr.'s story is based on a story he told and is published in *Our Whole Gwich'in Way of Life Has Changed / Gwich'in K'yuu Gwiidandà' Tthak Ejuk Gòonlih Stories from the People of the Land* by Leslie McCartney and Gwich'in Tribal Council, published by University of Alberta Press (2020).

Published by Gwich'in Tribal Council

Copyright © 2025 Leslie McCartney and Gwich'in Tribal Council

ISBN 978-1-896337-47-0

We wish to thank the following people for all their hard work on contributions to make this book possible.

ELDER:

Peter Kay, Sr.

FUNDERS:

Arctic Global Greengrants Fund

Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council

Canadian Heritage, Indigenous Languages & Cultural Program – Indigenous Language Component

Government of the Northwest Territories Community Literacy Development Fund

Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Language and Early Childhood Education

Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Culture & Heritage for their in-kind support of time

Snowchange Cooperative

University of Alaska Fairbanks for in-kind support of Leslie McCartney's time

GWICH'IN TEACHERS:

AnnaLee McLeod – Aklavik

Annabelle Tetlichy – Inuvik

Gladys Alexie – Fort McPherson

GWICH'IN TRANSLATORS:

Alestine Andre

Lisa Andre

Agnes Mitchell+

Eleanor Mitchell-Firth*

Karen Mitchell

Joanne Snowshoe

ILLUSTRATOR:

Linda Wright

With assistance from Dennis Wright and Alestine Andre

DESIGN AND PRINTING:

Outcrop Communications

Suite 203

5109 48 Street

Yellowknife, NT X1A 1N5

(867) 766-6700

info@outcrop.com

TEXT REVIEWERS AND ADMINISTRATION:

Alestine Andre

Arlyn Charlie

Kristi Benson

John Byrne

Ingrid Kraitsch

Sharon Snowshoe

Thank you to National Park Service, Denali National Park & Preserve for allowing us to use a portion of their 'Caribou Audio Clip' in the audio version of this book.

Thank you to Reverend Trimble Gilbert for allowing us to use his Red River Jig as recorded on Neets'all Gwich'in Fiddlers CD, copyright 2001 Gregory & Trimble Gilbert in the audio version of this book.



+ Audio reader for stories by Elders Antoine Andre, Caroline Andre, Pierre Benoit and Joan Nazon

* Audio reader for stories by Elders Mary Kendi, Mary Martha Firth, Peter Kay, Sr., and Alfred Semple

Gwihdaii Guuzhik

I'm living During that time

Gwiinzii t'ishi'in K'iighè'

Good I'm doing Because of that

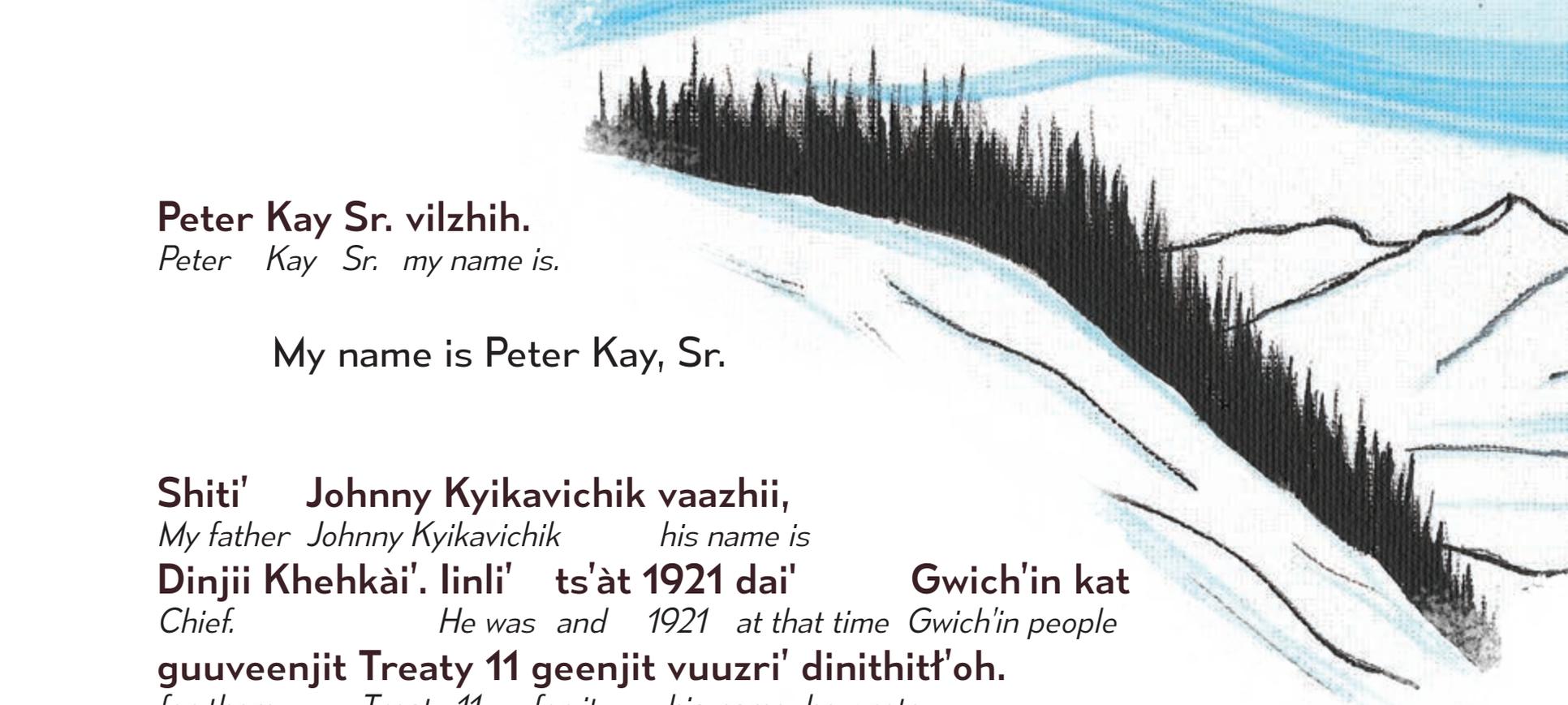
Niinzhuk Gwiinzii Gwihdaih

Long time Good I'm living

My Life Has Been Long and

Good Because of the

Good Things I Have Done



Peter Kay Sr. vilzhiih.

Peter Kay Sr. my name is.

My name is Peter Kay, Sr.

Shiti' Johnny Kyikavichik vaazhii,

My father Johnny Kyikavichik his name is

Dinjii Khehkàì'. linli' ts'àt 1921 dai' Gwich'in kat

Chief. He was and 1921 at that time Gwich'in people

guuveenjít Treaty 11 geenjit vuuzri' dinithitt'oh.

for them Treaty 11 for it his name he wrote.

My father was Chief Johnny Kyikavichik. He was one of the people who signed Treaty 11 for the Gwich'in people in 1921.

Van Tat gwats'àt t'iinch'u'.

Lake Among from he was.

He was from Old Crow.

Gwiingwan geenjit Johnny Kay vitr'ahnúh.

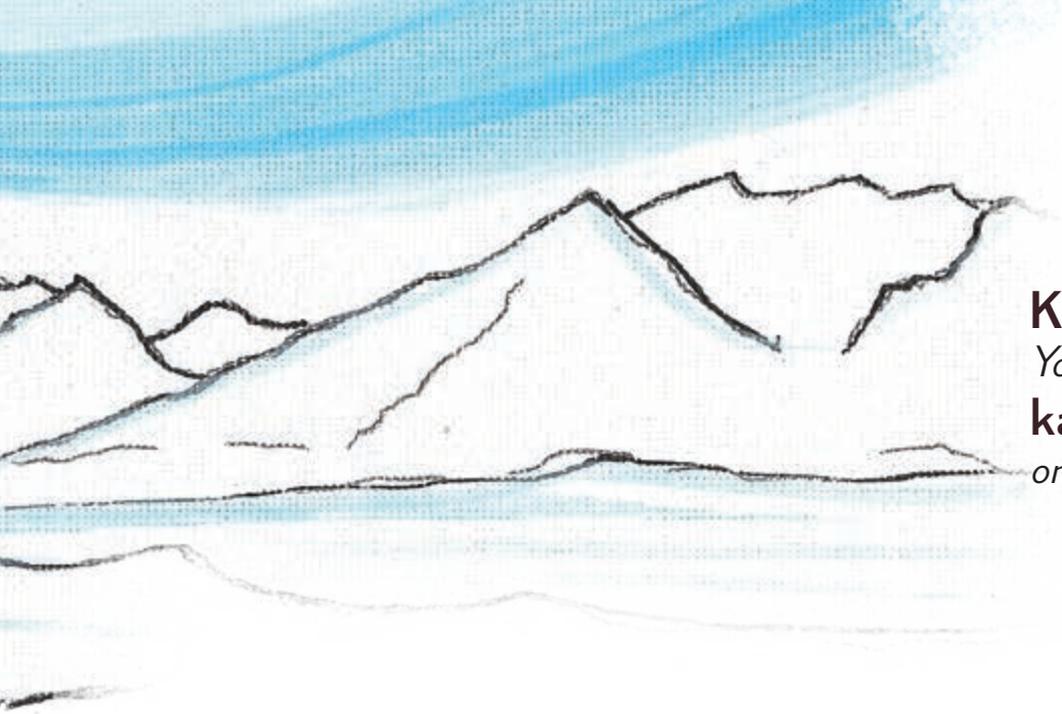
Short for Johnny Kay they called him.

He was called Johnny Kay for short.

Shahanh Beatrice Ross t'iinch'u'.

My mother Beatrice Ross she was.

My mother was Beatrice Ross.



K'eejit ih̄ii dàì' nikhwinanh
Young I am at that time our land
kak khehtak gwītsih.
on I am traveling.

As a young man I travelled
around our country.

Khyàh t'ih̄'in ts'àt nilzrih.
Traps I'm setting and I'm hunting.

I trapped and hunted.

Aii gwinjik gwihdaih.
That following I'm living.

That's what my
life was.

Geetak khaii guuzhik ezhuu kat
Sometimes winter during different people
shàh nagahdidat.
with me they travel.

Sometimes others
went with me during
the winter season.

Geetak shiti' shàh nahadik.
Sometimes my father with me he travel.

Sometimes my father
would come with me.

Aii gaa' gwiinlit thàn' gwatat
That even though many times alone on then land
khehtak dhàłtsaih.
I traveled.

But most of the time, I
travelled this land alone.

Nijin gwa'àn nachidadal, dinjii kat tthak
Where around we travel, people all
nihts'àt tr'igidinjih.
to each other they help.

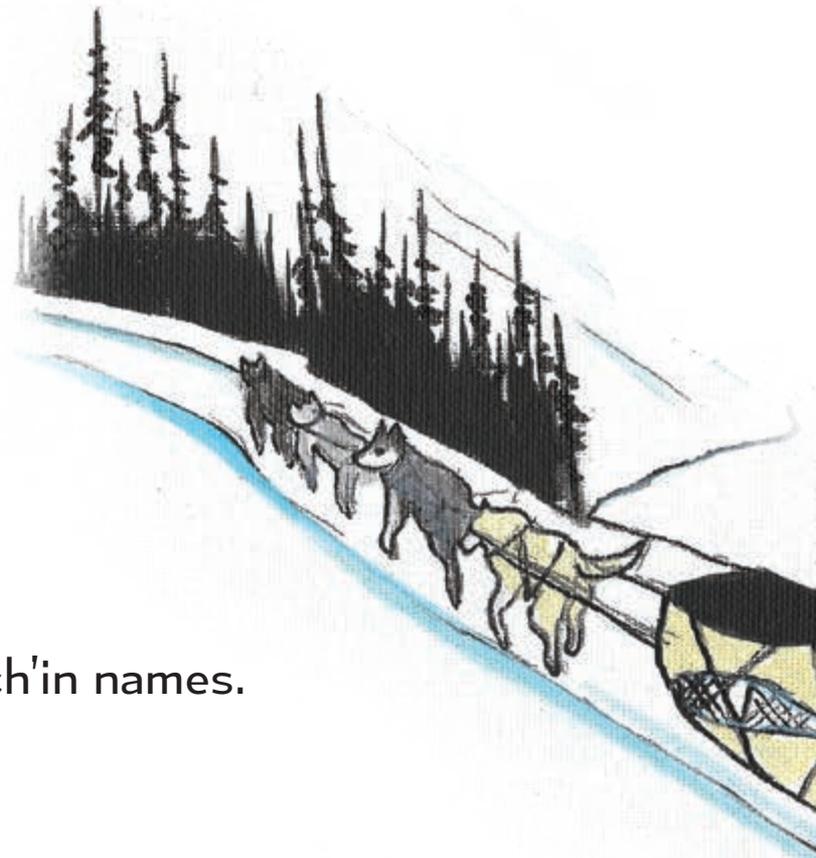
Where ever we went,
our people always
helped one another.

Tsiigehchik gwat'sàt Gwichah Gwich'in, Teetłit Gwich'in
Arctic Red River from Arctic Red River people Fort McPherson people
hàh ddhah tat nagahdinjik ganaldaih.
with mountains among they travel I remember.

I remember the days when the
Gwichya Gwich'in people from
Tsiigehchik used to travel the
mountains with us Teetłit Gwich'in.

Nan kak tthak Gwich'in ginjik
Land on all Gwich'in language
zhìt tr'igoozrih.
in they say the name.

All the places on the land have Gwich'in names.



Nan oozri' tthak nits'oo ezhik
Land its name all how at that place
goo'aii gwinjik tr'oozrih.
it is following they say its name.

And all the place names
mean something.

Nan kak han goonlii.
Land on river many.

There are so many rivers
that cross the land.

Scho Teetshik gwits'àt
Scho creek to
khehtak dhaatsai ganaldaih.
we traveled I remember.

I remember we would
travel to Scho Creek.

Divii Daaghoo Njik chan gitr'ahnuh.
Sheep making noise creek also they call it.

It is also called
Divii Daaghoo Njik.

Aii teetshik divii k'it tadhahchik
That creek sheep the same it makes a sound
k'iighè' akoo ts'àt tr'oozih.
because of that that way they say its name.

It is named this because it the creek
makes a sound like a sheep.





Zhi'dahnuu Njik gwits'àt
Noisy creek to
chan khehtak dhaatsaih.
also we traveled.

We would also go to
Zhi'dahnuu Njik.

Aii teechik chù' gwidàn
That creek its water loud
tadhaach'ik k'iighè' Uunjit k'yuu
it makes noise because of that white man way
Noisy Creek gitr'ahnuh.
Noisy Creek they call it.

In English, it is called
Noisy Creek because
of the loud sound the
water makes.

Han choo, Tsaih T'ak Njik
River big ocher drips out river
gitr'ahnuu jii han zhit niinlah.
they call it this river in it flows.

This river flows
into big river called
Tsaih T'ak Njik.



Tsaih ch'ahndit gò sheih zraii jii
Ocher sparkling or gravel black this
han gwinjik goo'aih.
river along it is there.

This river has
sparkling ochre or
black sand.

Jii k'iighè' Tsaih T'ak Njik
Because of this ocher drips out river
gitr'ahnuh.
they call it.

That is why it has
the name Tsaih
T'ak Njik.

Uu'ok kat nikhwits'àt gichuujiil dài
Outsiders to us they came at that time
Bonnet Plume River guuzri' gifttsaih,
Bonnet Plume River its name they made,
dinjii ihtee Old Bonnetplume vaazhii eenjit.
man one Old Bonnetplume his name is for.

When outsiders
came to our area,
they called it
Bonnet Plume River
after a man called
Old Bonnetplume.

Jii han gwinjik chii daat'oo
This river along rock valuable
kanitii aii eenjit vuuzri'
he is searching for for that his name
zhìt tr'igoozrih.
in they call it.

He prospected for gold
along this river so they
named the river after him.

Aii han Tsaih T'ak Njik
That river ocher drips out river
gitr'ahnuu gahgidandaih kwàh.
they call it they know not.

They did not know that we
already called the river
Tsaih T'ak Njik.

Gwichah Gwich'in ts'at
Arctic Red River people and
Teet'it Gwich'in kat khaii guuzhik
Fort McPherson people winter during
vadzaih nigaazrii geenjit shìk ezhik
caribou they hunt for that always there
gwits'at nagahdidat.
to they are going.

The Gwichya Gwich'in
people from Tsiigehtshik
and Teet'it Gwich'in from
Teet'it Zheh all used to
hunt and travel here in
search of caribou every
winter season.

Geetak Gyuu Dazhoo Njik
Sometimes worm hairy river
gwits'at nachidadaŋ.
to we go.

Sometimes we would go
to another big river called
Gyuu Dazhoo Njik.

Jii t'at hairy-worm-river gwithr'anuh.

This it is hairy-worm-river they call it.

This name means hairy-worm-river.

Anjoo kat aii van zhìt gyuu nichii

Elders that lake in it worm large

t'iinch'ù' k'iighè' Uunjìt k'yuu

it was because of that whiteman way

Snake River gitr'ahnuh.

Snake River they call it.

In English, it is called Snake River because the old people said that there used to be a big snake on the lake.

Gyuu zhoo k'iighè' Gyuu Dazhoo

Worm hairy because of that worm hairy

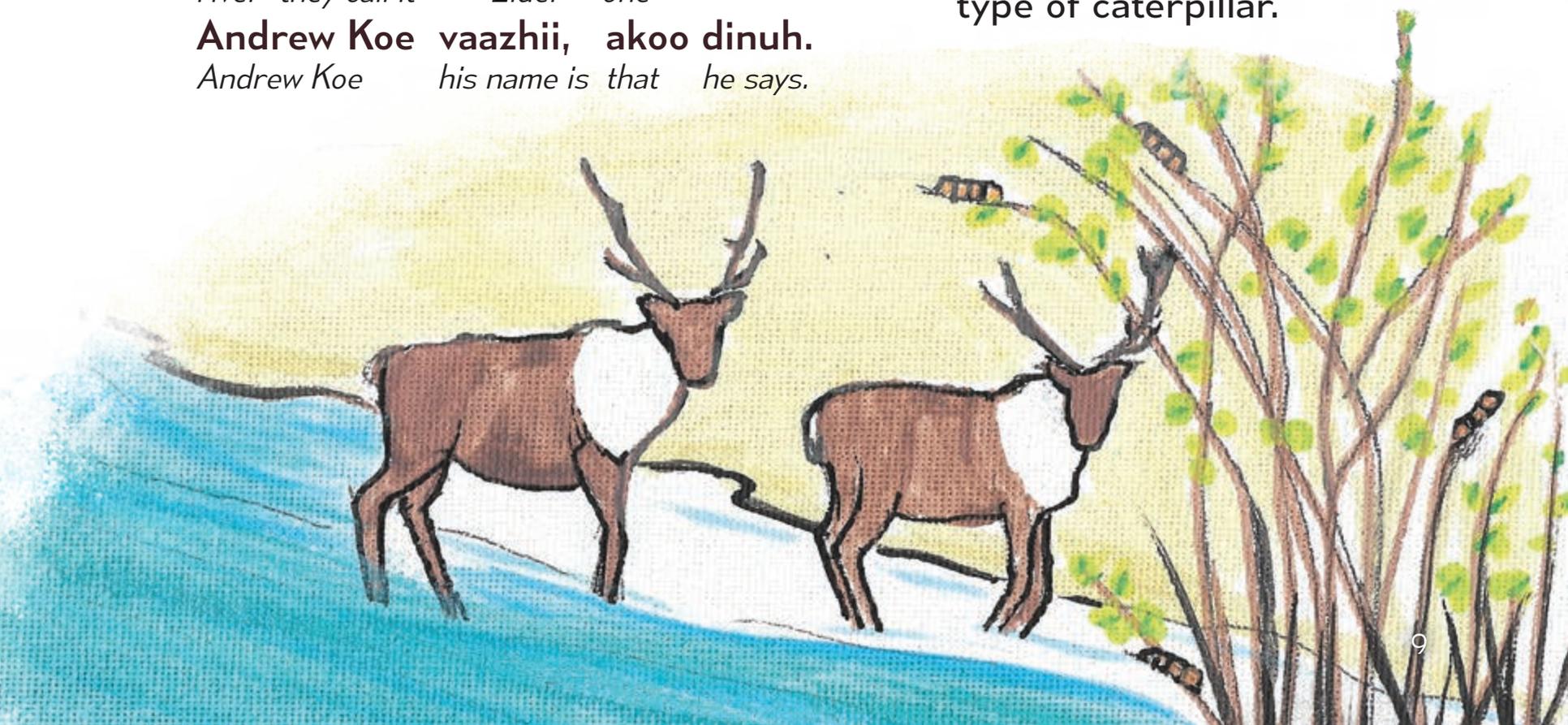
Njik gitr'ahnuu, Anjoo ihtee,

river they call it Elder one

Andrew Koe vaazhii, akoo dinuh.

Andrew Koe his name is that he says.

One Elder, Andrew Koe, said that it was called big-hairy worm after a type of caterpillar.





Gyuu zhoo jidii zraii nilih ts'at
Worm hairy something black it is and
vakak jithitsik gwijuudlih.
on it orange it is scattered.

The caterpillar is black with orange spots.

Daii guuzhik k'aii kak duuleh
Early summer during willow on maybe
gugugwah'aih.
it will be seen.

It can be found
on willows in the
early summer.

Gyuu Dazhoo Nijik gwidaai
Worm hairy river at the entrance
gehnjit ddhah choo goo'aii
above mountain big it is there
Vakak Deecha'aat'ik gitr'ahnuh.
on it caribou climbing they call it.

Up from the mouth of
Gyuu Dazhoo Nijik is
a big mountain called
Vakak Deecha'aat'ik.





Ezhik danh ddhah zhit gweedii

At that place mountain in opening

gwits'ik goo'aih.

narrow it is there.

It has a very narrow pass
in the mountain.

Vadzaih ezhik gwinjik ddhah gwits'àt

Caribou there along mountain to

nagitaa'oh, gwizhit taii gwiints'ik

they walk inside trail narrow

k'iighè' aii taii gwinjik

because of that that trail along

nihk'ih nagitaa'oh.

behind each other they walk.

At this place, the caribou
go up into the mountain
all in single file because
it is so narrow.

Vadzaih ezhik gwinjik nagitaa'oo
Caribou there along they walk
k'iighè' nikhwah gwich'in kat
because of that our people
ezhik goo'aii uuzri' gittsaih.
it is there its name they made.

That is why our people
named this place after
the caribou passing
through there.

Ezhik gwinjik vadzaih nagitaa'oo
There along caribou they walk
dài' nahàazrii geenjit ezhik
then we will hunt for there
gwits'àt chiididał.
to we go.

We would go there to
hunt caribou when they
were passing through
that place.



Han ihtak chan Nihch'ii Niinjii
River one too on both sides camping
Njik gitr'ahnuu, jii t'at across from
river they call it this across from
each other-camping-creek
each other-camping-creek
Uunjit k'yuu gitr'ahnuh.
whiteman way they call it.

Jii teetshik Gyuu Dazhoo Njik
This creek worm hairy river
gwizhit niinlah.
in it is flowing.

Nihch'ii Niinjii Njik ts'àt
Both sides camping river and
Gyuu Dazhoo Njik gehnjìt five miles
worm hairy river above five miles
dahthee, han gwitsal ezhik goo'aih.
that far, river small there it is there.

Deezhàh
Water running out the side of a mountain
gitr'ahnuh.
they call it.

Another river is called
Nihch'ii Niinjii Njik which
means across from each
other-camping-creek.

This creek flows into
Gyuu Dazhoo Njik.

From the mouth of
Nihch'ii Niinjii Njik up
through Gyuu Dazhoo
Njik about five miles,
there's a small river.

It's called Deezhàh.

Geetak khaiints'àn' guuzhik
Sometimes fall time during
shiti' Tr'atr'aataii Njik
my father trail laid out river
gwits'àt gwidal uunjih.
to things he is taking.

Sometimes in the fall, my
father would take a load
up to Tr'atr'aataii Njik.

Uunjit k'yuu Trail Creek gòo
White man way Trail Creek or
Trail River gitr'ahnuh.
Trail River they call it.

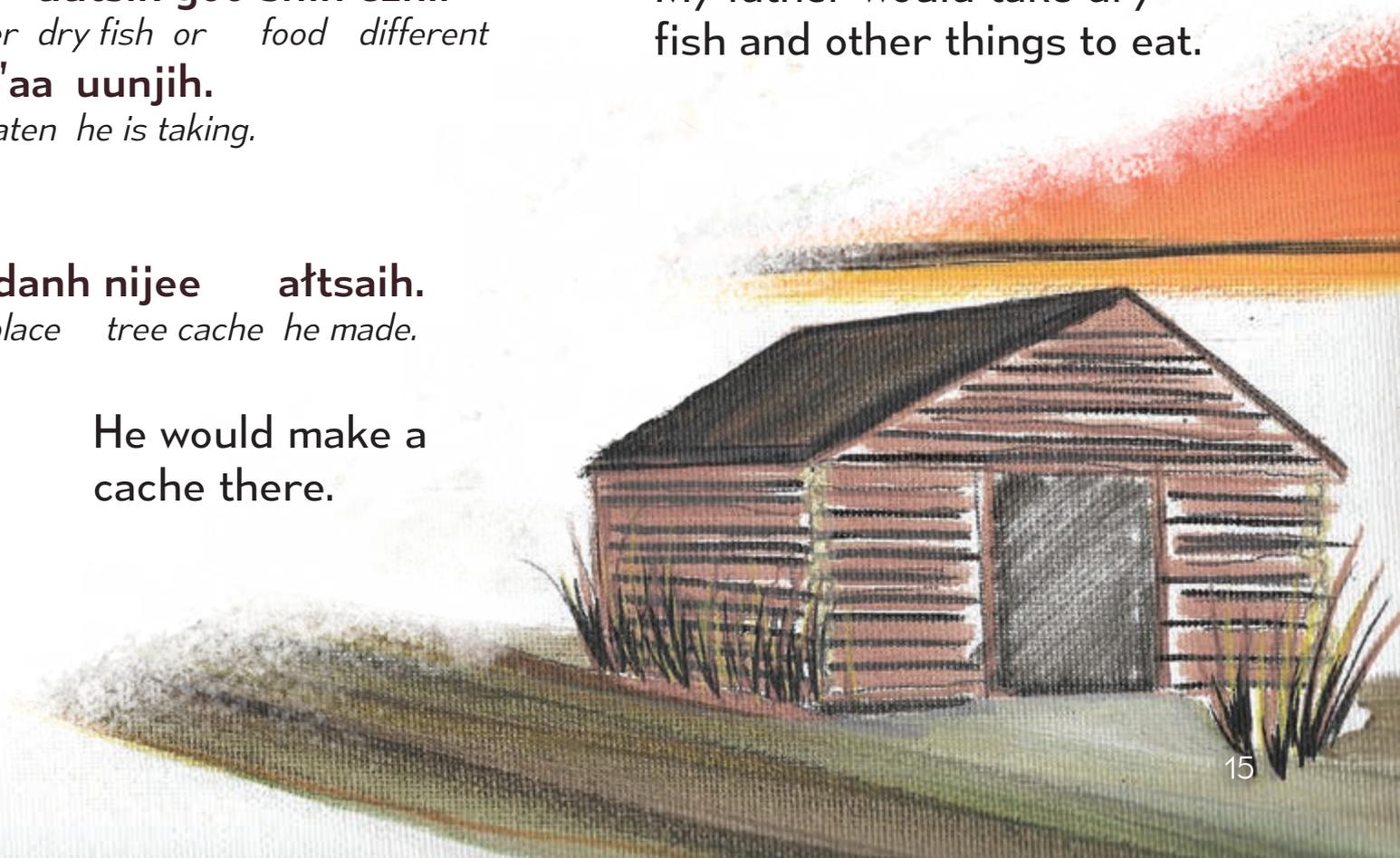
In English it is called
Trail Creek or Trail River.

Shiti' uutsik gòo shìh ezhii
My father dry fish or food different
tr'ihee'aa uunjih.
will be eaten he is taking.

My father would take dry
fish and other things to eat.

Ezhik danh nijee ałtsaih.
At that place tree cache he made.

He would make a
cache there.



Ezhik danh shìh k'anaatii

At that place food keeping

geenjìt gwiinzih.

for good.

It was a safe place to
keep the extra food.

Aii t'ee Gyuu Dazhoo Njik gwa'àn

After that worm hairy river around there

khyah t'aa'in, naazrih ts'àt

traps we set we are hunting and

khehtak aatsih.

we are traveling.

We would then
trap, hunt and
travel around
Gyuu Dazhoo Njik.

Gòo ihłat dàì' ezhik gwa'àn vadzaih kwàh.

But one time around there caribou nothing.

But one time he found
no caribou there.

Ats'andoo ddhah tat Teet'it Gwinjik

Eventually mountain among Peel River

gwa'àn vadzaih nataa'oo gwinuh.

around there caribou it is walking they said.

Soon word came that
there was caribou on
the Teet'it Gwinjik
side of the mountains.

Tthak kat vadzaih eenjit ezhik

Everyone caribou for it there

gwinji' gichuujił.

up to they went.

But one time he found
no caribou there.

Tr'atr'aataii Njik danh shiti' nijee
Trail laid out river there my father tree cache
ałtsaii gwinjik dinjii kat nagehdinjik
he made along people they are traveling
dài' aii shih t'agijahch'uh.
at that time that food they are using it.

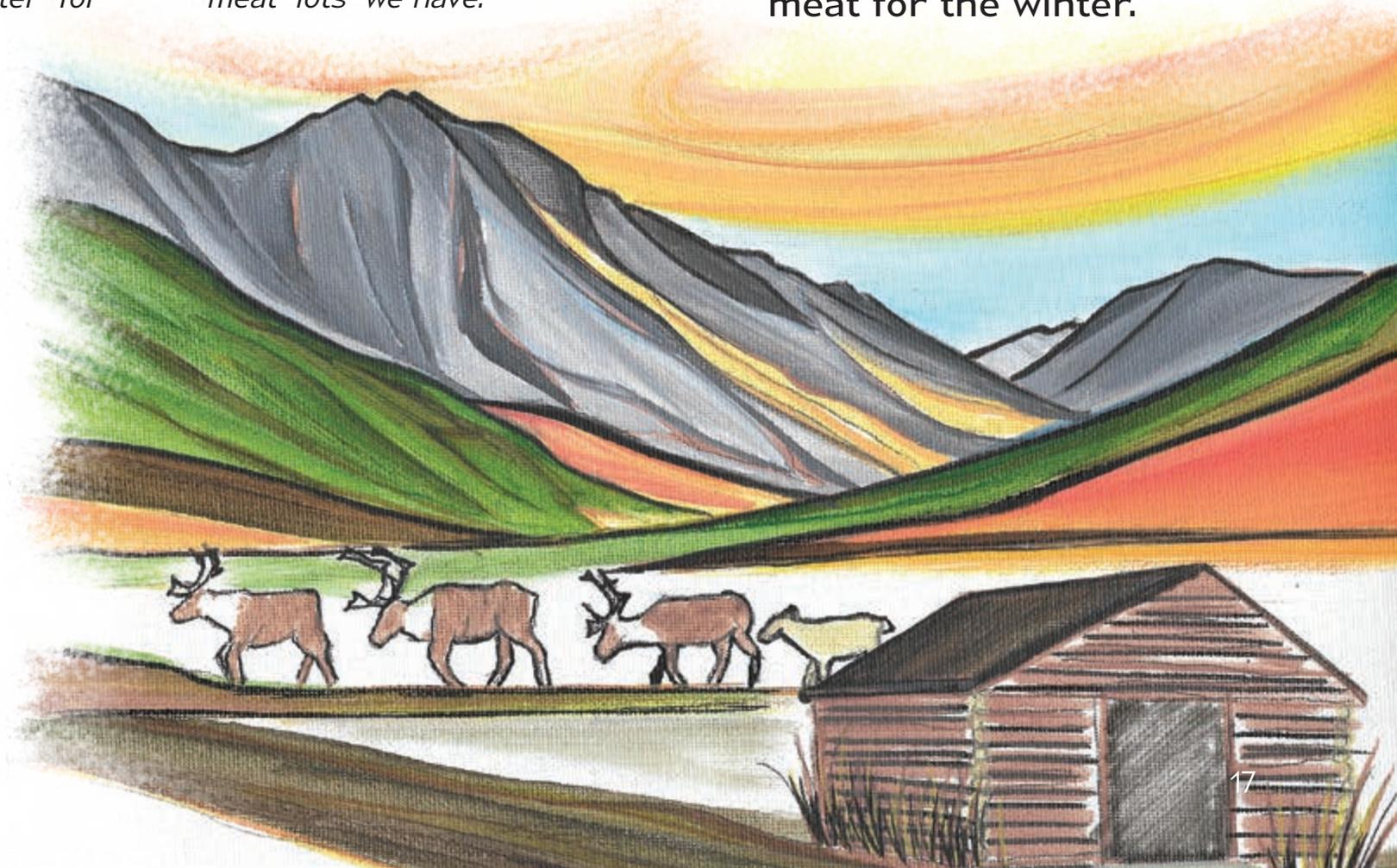
My father's supplies at
Tr'atr'aataii Njik were
then used as people
travelled past his cache.

Ezhik khaiints'àn' vadzaih leii iidaghan.
That fall caribou lots we killed.

We got many caribou
that fall.

Khaii geenjit nilii leii iidi'inh.
Winter for meat lots we have.

We then had lots of
meat for the winter.





Sreendit ihłat dinjii
Spring time one time men
tih kat guuvah khyàh
three of them with them traps
t'it'inh.
I'm setting.

One spring, I was out
trapping with three
other men.

Echee Zrii tr'oochit drin goo'aih.
Eagle month first day it was there.

It was the first of March.

Dzan katr'idi'in nigwiniindhat.
Muskrat hunting it began.

Muskrat season was open.

Teet'it Gwinjik, Ehdiitat
Peel River among the timber stands
gwits'àt chidhiidijiṭ.
to we went.

We went down Teet'it
Gwinjik to Ehdiitat.

Ehdiitat, Uunjit k'yuu,
Among the timber stands whiteman way
among the timber stands gwinuh.
among the timber stands the say.

Ehdiitat means among
the timber stands.

Uunjit k'yuu Mackenzie Delta gitr'ahnuh.
Whiteman way Mackenzie Delta they call it.

In English, it is called
the Mackenzie Delta.

Ezhik gwa'àn dzan goonlii.
There around muskrat many.

There were lots of
muskrats there.

Dzan nahaazrii geenjit ezhik
Muskrat we are hunting for there
gwits'àt chidhiidijiṭ.
to we went.

We went there to
hunt muskrats.

Nanigwalii Drin gwits'at

Easter Day to

nyahgwan gweedhah.

short it is happening.

It was getting close
to Easter.

Nanigwalii Drin geenjit dinjii kat

Easter Day for people

tthak zheh gwits'at nagahdidat.

all town to they go.

People always went to
town to celebrate Easter.

Gisrii ninyaanjik ts'at Teet'it Zheh

We got ready and Fort McPherson

gwits'at chidhiidijit.

to we went.

So, we got ourselves
ready and we went to
Teet'it Zheh.



Ezhik k'aiidadal dàì' Tsiigehtshik gwats'àt

There we arrived at that time Arctic Red River from

Gwichah Gwich'in kat ezhik t'igiinch'uh.

Arctic Red River people there they are.

When we arrived there, the
Gwichya Gwich'in people from
Tsiigehtshik were also there.

Guuja ts'àt guudaazhii kat gahnah'aa

Their friends and their family they will see

geenjit Teet'it Zheh gwits'àt gichuujił.

for Fort McPherson to they went.

They had come to Teet'it Zheh to
visit friends and family.

Guulat kat Tsiigehtshik gwits'ee gichuujił ts'àt

Some of them Arctic Red River back to they went and

guulat kat tth'aih ezhik gwa'an t'igiinch'uh.

some of them still there around they are.

Some had gone back to Tsiigehtshik
but some were still in town.

Shinaghan ihᑦee

Elderly woman one of

Teetᑦ'it Gwich'in kat eenihēh.

Fort McPherson people she is visiting.

There was an old lady
from Tsiigehtshik
visiting people in
Teetᑦ'it Zheh.

Sarah Nahzaii vaazhih.

Sarah Nahzaii her name is.

Her name was
Sarah Na'dzhaii.

Vidinjii Emile Choo vaazhih.

Her husband Emile Big his name is.

Her husband was
Emile Choo.

Khahts'at ihᑦat Gwichah Gwich'in kat

Evening one Arctic Red River People

tthak Tsiigehtshik gwits'ee gichithijit.

all Arctic Red River back to they went.

One evening, everyone
from Tsiigehtshik
left to go back to
their community.

Gòo' aii shinaghan diiyah heedyaa

But that elderly woman with them she will sit

geenjit khè' didhich'it.

for that she stayed behind.

But the old woman
stayed behind to visit
more people.

Teetł'it Zheh k'anaiidadal d'ài'
Fort McPherson we arrived at that time
jii gah'iidandaih kwàh.
this we know not.

When we arrived in
Teetł'it Zheh, we didn't
know this.

Sarah Nahzaii shiti' eenidhizhih.
Sarah Nahzaii my father she went to him.

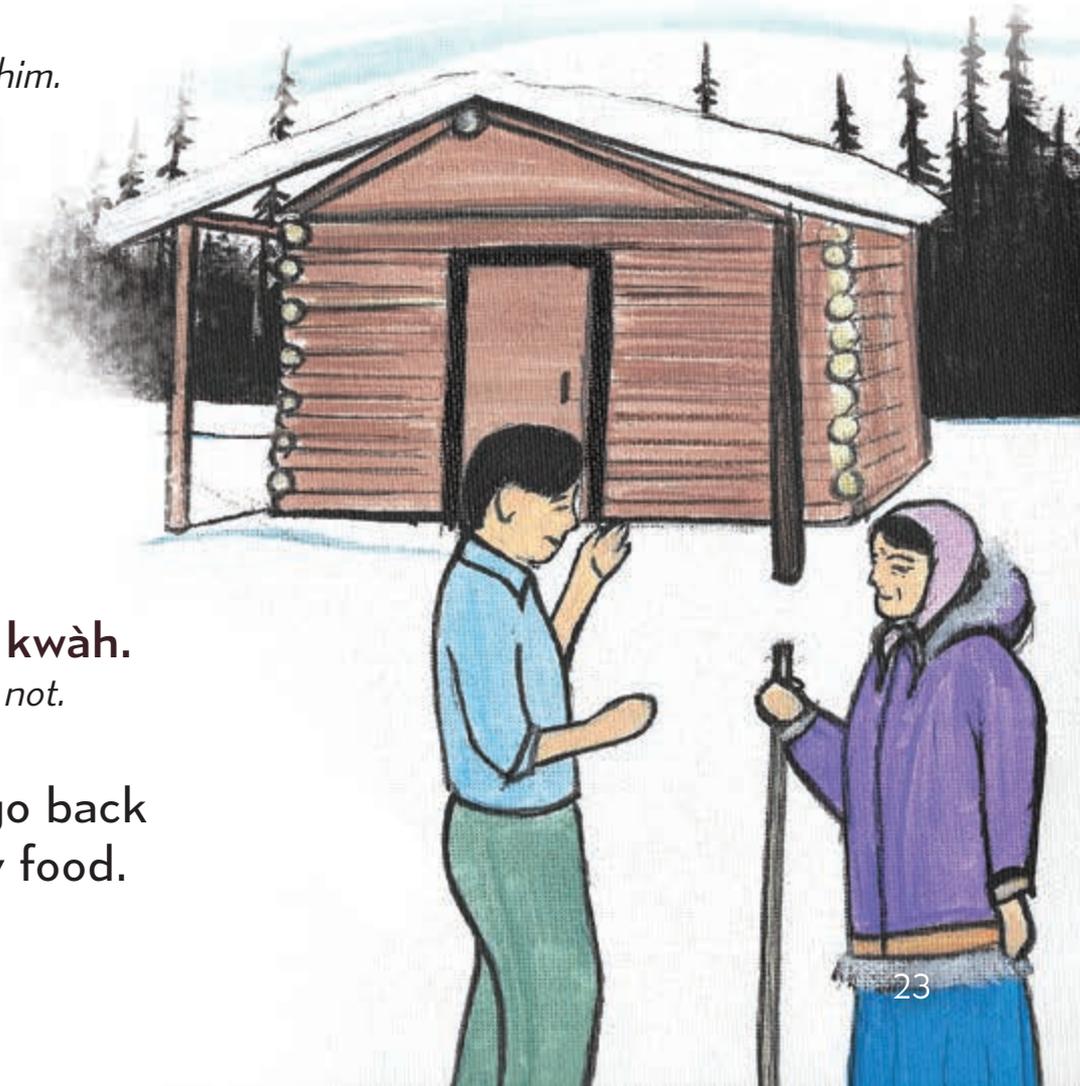
Sarah Na'dzhaii went to
see my father.

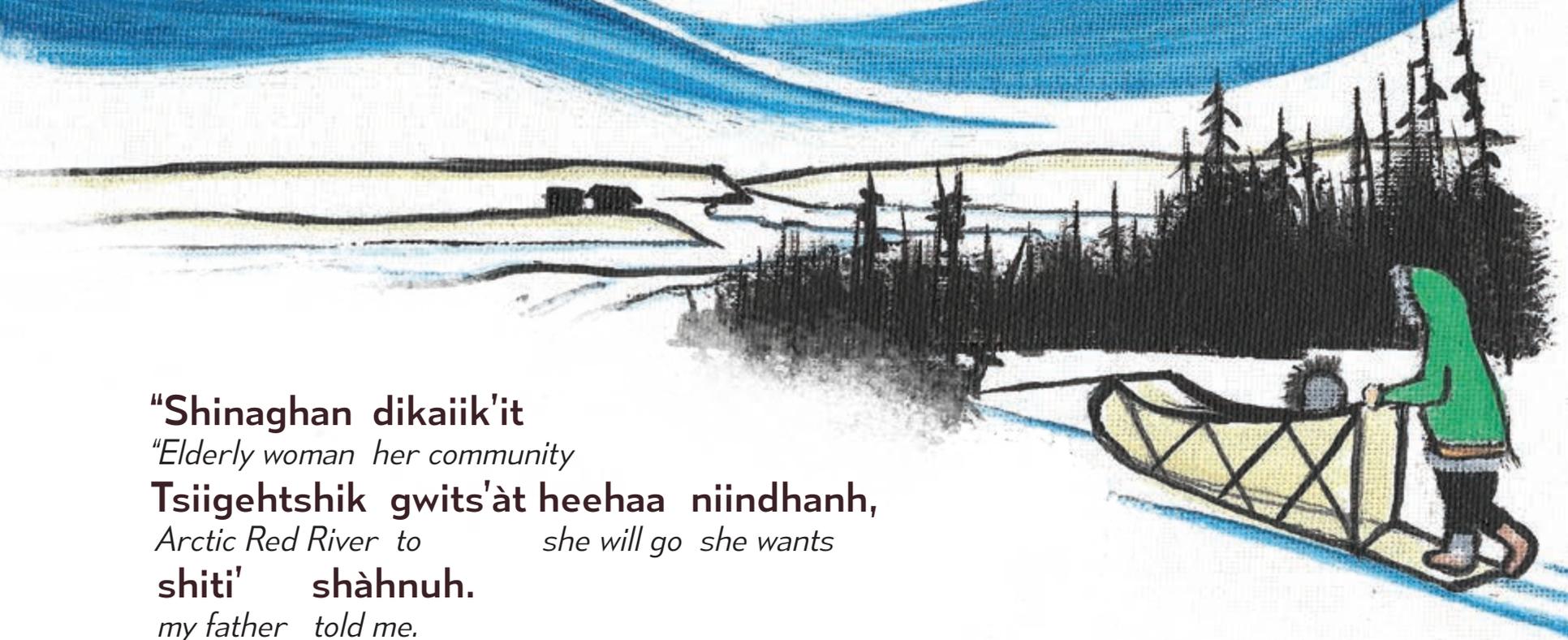
Tthàn' Tsiigehtshik gwits'ee hihshaa
Alone Arctic Red River back to I will go
ganaljat, shiti' ahnuh.
I am afraid of it my father she told him.

She told my father
that she was afraid to
make the trip back to
Tsiigehtshik by herself.

Gwits'ee naheedyaa veenjit
Back to she will go for her
gugoontrii ts'àt shìh di'inh kwàh.
it is difficult and food she has not.

It was hard for her to go back
and she had hardly any food.





"Shinaghan dikaiik'it

"Elderly woman her community

Tsiigehtshik gwits'àt heehaa niindhanh,

Arctic Red River to she will go she wants

shiti' shàhnuh.

my father told me.

My father came to me and said, "The old woman wants to go back to her community, to Tsiigehtshik.

Dikaiik'it gwits'àt uuhiindal

Her community to you will take her

nihthanh.

I want.

I want you to take her home.

Nihkàa vanh dàì' vàh nachiindih."

Tomorrow early morning with her you go."

Leave with her early tomorrow morning."

Ezhik dàì' shiti' ƭaii nizii di'inh.

At that time my father dogs good he had.

My father had a good dog team those days.

"Tsiigehchik gwits'at uuniinjih.
"Arctic Red River to you take her.

"Take her back across
to Tsiigehchik.

Shilik kat hah gwits'at uuniinjih.
My dogs with to you take her.

Use my dog team to
take her back.

Aii geeghee faii ihtak uuniinjih.
That besides dog one you take it.

Take an extra dog
with you.

Nilik ihtak shilik hah uuniinjih.
Your dog one my dogs with you take it.

Take one of your dogs
with my dog team.

Shinaghan nilii gaii leii vits'an dhaftsaih.
Elderly woman meat dry lots hers I made.

I gave the old woman
quite a bit of dry meat.

Vizhii hah vikaiik'it gwits'ee
Her food with her community back to
uuniinjih," nuh.
you take her," he said.

Take her and her food
back to her community,"
he said.





Aii gehndoo vanh dàì',
That after early morning,
vinilii gài tthak dizhinaiilih.
her meat dry all I put it in.

Early the next
morning, I packed all
her dry meat.

Shinaghan dachaavaŋ zhiinzhih.
Elderly woman sled she went in.

The old woman got
into the sled.

Hineedhaa geenjit ts'àt vinaonjidhiŋjik.
She will be warm for that blanket I wrapped it around her.

I put a blanket around her to keep her warm.

Gwiiyeendoo gwiinzii vina'oojidhiŋjik.
Way more good I wrapped it around her.

I wrapped her up real good.

Zhik v`ah tr'eenishizhih.
There with her I left.

Then, away I went with her.

Tsiigehtshik gwits'`at taii kak
Arctic Red River to trail on
chidhiidi'oh.
we went.

We began our journey
back across the trail to
Tsiigehtshik.

Vilik kat nikhwik'ih gah'ał.
Her dogs behind us they are running.

Her dogs were running
behind us.

Aii drin guuzhik kxanh naiida'ał.
That day during fast we are going.

We travelled fast that day.

Teetł'it Zheh ts'`at Tsiigehtshik
Fort McPherson and Arctic Red River
gwitł'at ihłat goo'aih.
in the middle one place it is there.

Half way between Teetł'it
Zheh and Tsiigehtshik
there is a place.

Neeghaii Zhòo Njik gitr'ahnuh.
Frog hairy creek they call it.

It is called Neeghaii
Zhòo Njik.

Uunjit k'yuu frog-hairy-creek gitr'ahnuh.

Whiteman way frog-hairy-creek they call it.

The name means frog-hairy-creek.

Teetshik tsal leii vizhit niinlaii

Creek small many in it it flows

k'iighe jidii zhoo gitr'ahnuh.

because of that something hairy they call it.

It is called hairy because of all the little creeks that feed into it.

Uunjit k'yuu Frog Creek gitr'ahnuh.

Whiteman way Frog Creek they call it.

The English people call it Frog Creek.

Jii teetshik Neeghaii Zhoo

This creek frog hairy

Choo gwats'àt niinlaih.

big to it is flowing.

This creek flows from Naghaii Zhoo Choo.

Geetak Nerejo Lake gitr'ahnuh.

Sometimes Nerejo Lake they call it.

It is also sometimes called Nerejo Lake.

Dempster highway 5 kilometres south

Dempster highway 5 kilometres south

danh Neeghaii Zhoo Choo goo'aih.

there frog hairy big it is there.

Naghaii Zhoo Choo is a large lake about 5 kilometres south of the Dempster Highway.

Neeghaii Zhòo Njik, Neeghaii Zhòo Vàn gwits'at
Frog Hairy Creek Frog Hairy Lake to
niinlaii ts'at Teetł'it Gwinjik gwizhìt niinlaih.
it is flowing and Peel River in it it is flowing.

Neeghaii Zhòo Njik flows through to Neeghaii Zhòo Vàn and then into Teetł'it Gwinjik.

Neeghaii Zhòo Njik, Neeghaii Zhòo Vàn gwizhit
Frog hairy creek frog hairy lake in it
niinlaii, danh kwank'it goo'aih.
it is flowing, there a camp it is there.

Right where Neeghaii Zhòo Njik empties into Neeghaii Zhòo Vàn, there is a camp.



Ezhik k'anaiididal d'ài',
There we arrived at that time,
Old Modeste ts'àt vitr'iinjoo
Old Modeste and his wife
Macarena, ezhik t'igiinch'uh.
Macarena, there they were there.

litsii tsal gidi'inh.
Stove small they had.

Vizhit ich'uu tsal vik'eeghee
Oven small on the side
goo'aih.
it is there.

Ezhik d'ài' Old Modeste
There at that time Old Modeste
ƭuk itch'uh.
fish he is roasting.

Vizhit ich'uu gwats'at khayjkkaih.
Oven from he took it out.

When we got there,
Old Modeste and his
wife, Macarena, were
camping there.

They had this little stove.

It had a small oven
on the side.

Old Modeste
had just finished
roasting a fish.

He was just taking
it out of the oven.





Oh! Ezhik dàì' ii'àl duuyeh ganaldehy!

Oh! At that time I ate never I forget!

Oh! I will never
forget that meal!

Gwiiyeendoo gwiinzih.

Way more it is good.

It was so good.

Shi'tr'ah'ał.

I was fed.

He fed me.

Shinaghan chan vi'tr'ah'ał.

Elderly woman too she was fed.

He fed the
old woman.

Inidhiididih gwits'àt iida'àl'!

We were full to it we ate!

We ate until
we were full!

"Nikhwizhuh dhohtsaii

A really good meal for us you both made

geenjìt mahsi' choo,"

for that thank you very much,"

Old Modeste ts'àt Macarena

Old Modeste and Macarena

guuvaadinuh.

we told them.

"Mahsi' choo
for feeding
us," we said to
Old Modeste
and Macarena.



Aii t'ee nachidhiidi'oh.
That after we left.

Then, we continued
on our journey.

Taii gwiinizii goo'aih.
Trail good it is there.

It was a very good trail.

Łaii nizii iidi'inh.
Dogs good we have.

We had good dog team.

Ezhik khahts'àt Tsiigehtshik k'anaiidi'oh.
There evening Arctic Red River we arrived.

That evening we
arrived in Tsiigehtshik.



Shinaghan vikaiik'it gwits'àt
Elderly woman her community to
ninanit'chii geenjit shòh nilih.
I took her back for that happy she is.

The old woman was very happy
that I brought her home.

"Mahsi' choo, mahsi' choo,"
"Thank you very much thank you very much,"
gwiinlit shàhnuh.
many times she told me.

"Mahsi' choo, mahsi' choo," she
kept saying to me.



“Shikaiik’it neeshinyahchii geenjit
“My community you brought me back for that
mahsi’ choo nihthan ts’at geenjit
thank you very much I want and for that
shòh ihłih.”
happy I am.”

“I am so thankful and
happy you brought
me home.”

Ezhik khahts’at Tsiigehtshik
That night Arctic Red River
nidhiihah.
I camped.

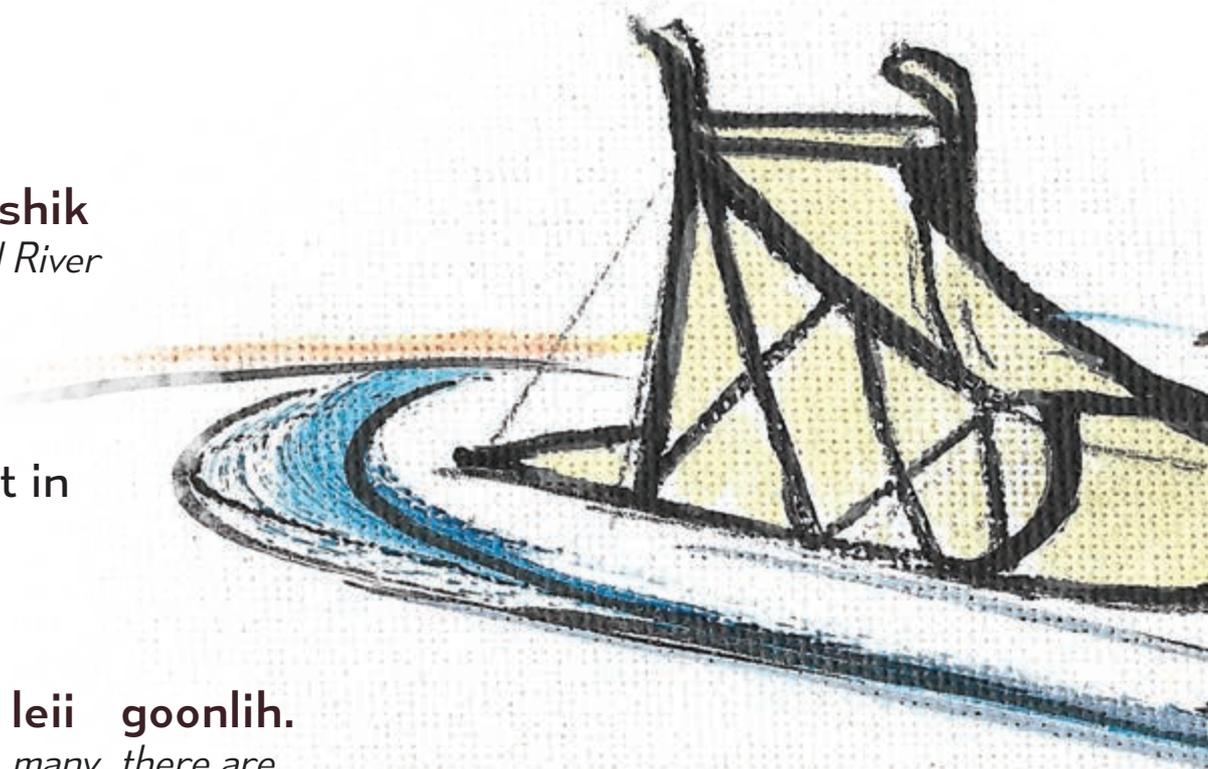
I spent the night in
Tsiigehtshik.

Ezhik shijaa kat leii goonlih.
There my friends many there are.

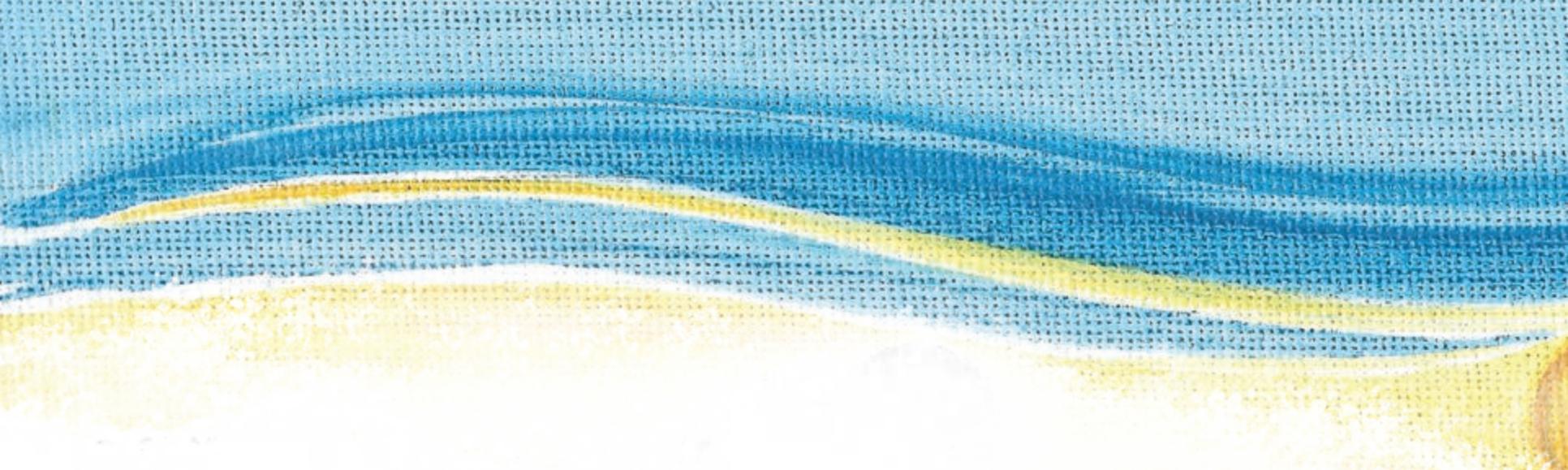
I had many friends there.

Gehndoo drin shijaa kat guuveenidhiizhiih.
After that day my friends I visited them.

I spent the next day visiting
with my friends.







Gehndoo drin shilik tŕ'yah
After that day my dogs harness
zhit niniilih ts'àt Teet'it Zheh
in I put them and Fort McPherson
gwits'ee chidhishizhieh.
back to I went.

The day after that, I hitched
up my dog team and came
back to Teet'it Zheh.

Shinaghan veenjít jii
Elderly woman for her this
tthak dishi'in'.
all I did.

All this, I did for this
old woman.

Shiti' dashahnuu vik'it
My father what he told me like him
t'ishi'in geenjit shòh nilih.
I did for that happy he is.

My father was very happy
that I did as he asked.



Shinaghan vikaiik'it gwits'ee
Elderly woman her community back to
neenit'chih geenjit shòh nilih.
I took her back for that happy she is.

He was happy I got the old woman home.

Jii k'iighè' gik'iniljik.
This because of I learned.

From this I learned lessons.

Shiti' taii gwinjik shih diiyeenjìt
My father trail along food for others
ekhè' uunuh.
he left it there.

My father helped others by leaving food on the trail.

Gwihdaii tthak uu'ok gwits'àt tr'inihjii kanihtih.

I'm living all others to I'm helping I try.

During my own lifetime, I always tried to do
a good deed for someone else.

Duuleh aii k'iighè' niinzhuk gwihdaih.

Maybe that because of it long time I'm living.

Maybe that's why I lived this long.

Shitr'iinjoo chan, niinzhuk gwindaih.

My wife too, long time she is living.

My wife too, she has lived a long time.

Adanh chan uu'òk gwits'àt gwiinzii t'idi'in.

Her too others to them good she is doing.

She also did many good things for people.



Gwihdaii guuzhik gwiinzii t'ishi'in k'iighè'
I'm living during that time good I'm doing because of that
niinzhuk gwiinzii gwihdaih.
long time good I'm living.

My life has been long and good because
of the good things I have done.



You can now find these places online in the Gwich'in Place Names Atlas.

GLOSSARY OF PLACE NAMES AND TERMS:

Bear Creek is also called Scho Creek or Divii Daaghoo Njik literally means "sheep-making noise-creek," or Sheep Creek. It is also sometimes called Scho Creek/Bear Creek. This place name refers to a creek that flows into the Rat River. This river is an important travel corridor and is well known to be a caribou and sheep hunting area. "Divii Daaghoo Njik," ID 1018, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMDE4Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODU1NTY1MH0=0>.

Bonnet Plume River is Tsaih Tł'ak Njik. It literally means "ochre-sparkling (or dark) river or Black sands-river." This river was named after Old Bonnetplume, who prospected gold along the river, particularly at its headwaters. Old Bonnetplume was also known as Nee-she; his English name was Andrew. Andrew was Paul and Alfred Bonnetplume's father. "Tsaih Tł'ak Njik," ID 1323, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzZlZiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODU3NjYwOX0=0>.

Divii Daaghoo Njik is also called Bear Creek, Scho Creek or Sheep Creek. It literally means "sheep-making noise-creek," or Sheep Creek. It is also sometimes called Scho Creek/Bear Creek. This place name refers to a creek that flows into the Rat River. This river is an important travel corridor and is well known to be a caribou and sheep hunting area. "Divii Daaghoo Njik," ID 1018, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMDE4Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODYxODE2OX0=>.

Ehdiitat means among the timber stands. In English it is known as the Mackenzie Delta. "Ehdiitat," ID 1736, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xNzMyIiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODYONDc3N30=>.

Fort McPherson is known as Teetł'it Zheh in Gwich'in. It is the name for the present-day community of Fort McPherson. Teetł'it Zheh means head of the waters-town. The original fur trade post was called Peel River Post (Zheh Gwajàt). It was moved from Zheh Gwajàt to today's location about 1850. This new location was selected by the Gwich'in because the view from the hill known as Chii Tsal Dik allowed them to see a long distance downriver. This was important at the time because they were battling with the Siglit. The Siglit were an Inuit group who lived between the Mackenzie Delta and the Arctic coast at the time. Later the Peel River Post was renamed Fort McPherson in honour of Murdoch McPherson. He was the chief trader for the Hudson's Bay Company at

that time. "Teet'it Zheh," ID 1964, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNIbmFtZS4xOTY0Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODY3MjgwMX0=>.

Gyuu Dazhoo Njik means Worm-hairy-river. In English it is called Snake River. The Snake River flows into the Peel River. This river is called Gyuu dazhoo njik because at the head of the river there is a lake and the oldtimers say that there used to be a big snake on the lake. According to Andrew Koe "the 'big hairy worm' after which Snake River is named, is a type of caterpillar. It is black with orange spots. It can be found on willows in the early summer. "Gyuu Dazhoo Njik," ID 1313, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNIbmFtZS4xMzEzIiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODcwOTY4MH0=>.

Gwichya Gwich'in means "flat land" (Gwichya) inhabitants of an area (Gwich'in). This name is given to the people who live in the Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie River) area where the land is flat.

Mackenzie Delta, known as Ehdiitat in Gwich'in means among the timber stands. "Ehdiitat," ID 1736, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNIbmFtZS4xNzM2Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODc0ODkzNn0=>.

Naghii Zhoo Choo means frog-hairy-big. It is sometimes called Nerejo Lake. It is a large lake about 3 miles (5 km) south of the Dempster Highway between Tsiigehtskik and (Fort McPherson). "Naghii Zhoo Choo," ID 1946, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNIbmFtZS4xOTQ2Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODgxNjk1Mn0=>.

Neeghii Zhòo Njik is known in English as Frog Creek. Neeghii Zhòo Njik means frog-hairy creek. It is called 'hairy' because of the many little tributaries that feed into the upper reaches of this river. This creek flows from Neeghii Zhòo Choo through Neyando Lake and into the Peel River. "Neeghii Zhòo Njik," ID 1487, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNIbmFtZS4xNDg3Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODg1MDAzMn0=>.

Neeghii Zhòo Vàn is also called Neyando Lake or Niendo Lake. This lake is located about 3 miles (5 kilometres) north of the Dempster Highway between Tsiigehtskik and Teet'it Zheh (Fort McPherson). "Neeghii Zhòo Vàn," ID 1489, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNIbmFtZS4xNDg5Iiwicyl6MTcwMjgyODg4MDgyNH0=>.

Nerejo Lake is also known as Naghaii Zhoo Choo. It means frog-hairy-big. It is sometimes called Nerejo Lake. It is a large lake about 3 miles (5 km) south of the Dempster Highway between Tsiigehtshik and Teet'it Zheh (Fort McPherson). "Naghaii Zhoo Choo," ID 1946, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xOTQ2liwicyl6MTcwMjgyODkyNjIzOX0=>.

Neyando Lake or Niendo Lake is called Neeghaii Zhòo Vàn. This lake is located about 3 miles (5 kilometres) north of the Dempster Highway between Tsiigehtskik and Teet'it Zheh (Fort McPherson). "Neeghaii Zhòo Vàn," ID 1489, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xNDg5liwicyl6MTcwMjgyODk1NzI5NH0=>.

Nihch'ii Niinjii Njik literally means "across from each other-camping-creek." This place name refers to a creek that flows into the Snake River, about twenty-four kilometres above the mouth of the Snake River. "Nihch'ii Niinjii Njik," ID 1315, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzE1liwicyl6MTcwMjgyODk4Mjc0M30=>.

Noisy Creek is known as Zhi'dahnuu Njik. It literally means "making noise-creek." This river flows into the Bonnet Plume River from the south. It is called Noisy Creek because of the sound of the water. It is a fast flowing river with strong water and there is always noise. The water in this river almost never freezes. "Zhi'dahnuu Njik," ID 1325, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzI1liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTAxMjIzOH0=>.

Peel River is known as Teet'it Gwinjik in Gwich'in. It means head of the waters-along the course of. "Teet'it Gwinjik," ID 1951, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xOTUxliwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTAzNTg4Nn0=>.

Scho Creek is also called Bear Creek or Divii Daaghoo Njik literally means "sheep-making noise-creek," or Sheep Creek. It is also sometimes called Scho Creek/Bear Creek. This place name refers to a creek that flows into the Rat River. This river is an important travel corridor and is well known to be a caribou and sheep hunting area. "Divii Daaghoo Njik," ID 1018, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0IjoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMDE4liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTA3ODAyOX0=>.

Snake River is called Gyuu Dazhoo Njik in Gwich'in. It means Worm-hairy-river. In English it is called Snake River. The Snake River flows into the Peel River. This river is called Gyuu dazhoo njik because at the head of the river there is a lake and the oldtimers say that there used to be a big snake on the lake. According to Andrew Koe the 'big hairy worm' after which Snake River is named, is a type of caterpillar. It is black with orange spots. It can be found on willows in the early summer. "Gyuu Dazhoo Njik," ID 1313, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzEzliwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTewMjl0Nn0=>.

Teet't Gwich'in are the people from the Teet'it Zheh (Fort McPherson) area.

Teet'it Gwinjik means head of the waters-along the course of. In English, this river is known as Peel River. "Teet'it Gwinjik," ID 1951, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xOTUxliwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTEzMTY2OX0=>.

Teet'it Zheh is the Gwich'in name for the present-day community of Fort McPherson. Teet'it Zheh means head of the waters-town. The original fur trade post was called Peel River Post (Zheh Gwajät). It was moved from Zheh Gwajät to today's location about 1850. This new location was selected by the Gwich'in because the view from the hill known as Chii Tsal Dik allowed them to see a long distance downriver. This was important at the time because they were battling with the Siglit. The Siglit were an Inuit group who lived between the Mackenzie Delta and the Arctic coast at the time. Later the Peel River Post was renamed Fort McPherson in honour of Murdoch McPherson. He was the chief trader for the Hudson's Bay Company at that time. "Teet'it Zheh," ID 1964, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xOTY0liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTE5NjUwMX0=>.

Trail River (or Trail Creek) is known as Tr'atr'aataii Njik. It is a river that flows from the Richardson Mountains into the Peel River between Caribou River and Road River. This route was used by the Gwich'in for hunting and trapping. "Tr'atr'aataii Njik," ID 2004, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4yMDA0liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTlyOTMyNH0=>.

Tr'atr'aataii Njik is a river that flows from the Richardson Mountains into the Peel River between Caribou River and Road River. This route was used by the Gwich'in for hunting and trapping. "Tr'atr'aataii Njik," ID 2004, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4yMDA0liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTlyOTMyNH0=>.

Tsaih Tt'ak Njik literally means "ochre-sparkling (or dark) river or Black sands-river." This river was named after Old Bonnetplume, who prospected gold along the river, particularly at its headwaters. Old Bonnetplume was also known as Nee-she; his English name was Andrew. Andrew was Paul and Alfred Bonnetplume's father. "Tsaih Tt'ak Njik," ID 1323, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzIzliwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTI3NTlwNH0=>.

Tsiigehtshik literally means "at the mouth of iron river." It is shown on maps today as Tsiigehtchic. Tsiigehtshik is the proper orthography of this place name. It was formally also called Arctic Red River. It is the Gwich'in community found at the confluence of the Arctic Red River and the Mackenzie River. "Tsiigehtshik," ID 1697, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xNjk3liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTMwOTgxMn0=>.

Vakak Deecha'aatt'ik means "on-(caribou) running over the side." In English, the mountain range is called the Trevor Range. It is a narrow range so the caribou go up into this mountain range in single file. This is why the people named the place after the caribou. "Vakak Deecha'aatt'ik," ID 1316, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzE2liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTM0NjgxMn0=>.

Zhi'dahnuu Njik literally means "making noise-creek." This river flows into the Bonnet Plume River from the south. It is called Noisy Creek because of the sound of the water. It is a fast flowing river with strong water and there is always noise. The water in this river almost never freezes. "Zhi'dahnuu Njik," ID 1325, Gwich'in Place Names Atlas, <https://atlas.gwichin.ca/index.html#eyJ0ljoieClslmkiOiJnd2ljaGluLnBsYWNlbnFtZS4xMzI1liwicyl6MTcwMjgyOTM3MUYwNX0=>.

Jii gwandak tr'oohadhahch'aa geenjit jii
This story it will be listened to for this
thumb drive gwakak diinch'uh.
thumb drive on it it is.

The thumb drive enclosed here will allow you
to listen and read along to this story.

This story talks about the Gwich'in values of:

Yiinjinih̄etr'ichil'eh (Respect)

Chigwijuu'ee Tri'igwindaii (Honesty)

Yiinjitr'ichil'eh (Honour)

Zhuh Ghat T'igwidich'uu (Kindness)

Nihk'atr'inaatii (Sharing and Caring)

This story talks about Gwich'in Principles of:

Our Elders play a crucial role as teachers. They are keepers of our knowledge, history, language, protocol and culture.

Our Youth are the future of our Nation. We must listen and hear their perspectives and provide opportunities for them to learn, understand and develop into our future leaders.

Our way of life is based on a unique and special economic and spiritual relationship between each other and the land, air and water.

The preservation and respect for the land are essential to the well-being and subsistence lifestyle of our people and our culture.

Our family history and linkages to our relatives in the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska is important to our identity.

Cross-cultural understanding and awareness between Gwich'in and non-Gwich'in, is essential in building a new relationship based on respect, reconciliation and cooperation.



ISBN 978-1-896337-47-0