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Taking a Strange Census

By JAMES-OLIVER CURWOOD

THE CENSUS outfit consisted of three men, two white and one Eskimo, a sledge and six dogs. The "work" ahead was to find out how many Eskimos and other human beings lived along the barren coast of Hudson's Bay...

There have been few undertakings more filled with the elements of romance and adventure, of hardship and the picturesque, than this taking of a census in a country of savagery and desolation, where human life is enumerated at just about the rate of one man, woman or child to every fifty square miles.

It had been estimated at Fort Churchill that in the hundred thousand square miles known as the "Churchill district" there would be about 2,500 people.

It was evening when the census outfit came upon the Eskimo village, a hundred and fifty miles up the coast. There were about thirty in the camp, and there was considerable excitement and pleasure at the arrival of the "white brothers," until the interpreter, meeting an old friend, let the cat out of the bag.

caribou herds so large that the barren was black with them farther than the eyes could see. He said that he had not seen a white man until he was a man grown himself, and that he had hunted the seal and the whale when the whales were so numerous that at almost any time one could see more than he had fingers on his two hands.

He spoke of a great Eskimo village, the greatest he had ever seen, where the igloos were built entirely of whale ribs and bones, and I tried to find if the ruins of the ancient Eskimo "city" near Victoria Island were a part of that great village; but he did not know where Victoria Island was and had never heard of it before.

Um-Gluu's inherent suspicion of the prying white man had an amusing parallel in the case of a village of Dog Ribs, far to the west. The census takers had worked their way through one hundred and eighty miles of desolation, and in all that distance had found but three "white people," half a dozen half-breeds and eighteen natives, when they struck the Dog Ribs.

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Meaning of Famous Names

By MRS. CHAMP CLARK

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mrs. Clark is one of the greatest authorities on nomenclature and history of famous families...



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people came to this country with Lord Baltimore—My mother was a McAfee, of a famous Scotch-Irish family.

Mr. Clark's mother was Aletha Jane Beauchamp. He was named James Beauchamp Clark. He found the name J. B. Clark so common in all post-offices that he kept everlastingly receiving the mail of somebody else.

Clark is an English name and means scholar, "one who can read and write." Originally reading and writing was a great accomplishment. Many could read and fight, but few were able to read and write.

Taft is an Irish name, which was originally Taaf. In Welsh it means "little river." Roosevelt is Dutch and means "rose garden." Bryan is Irish and means "noisy" or "vibrant."

Representative John Dalzell, of Pennsylvania, has a name which runs back to the jumping-off place. It is Scotch and means "I dare." Scotland never was conquered and in the old days there was continual fighting.

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of the "game," the people whom the government is seeking. Kogmollocks, Nunatimutes, Creeks, Chippewayans, half-breeds, French and Indians of a dozen different tribal names are now down in black and white in what is without doubt the world's most interesting and unusual census.

It had been estimated at Fort Churchill that in the hundred thousand square miles known as the "Churchill district" there would be about 2,500 people. As a matter of fact, the final count showed only 1,800, or one person to every fifty-five square miles. Of these people, inhabiting a country two and a half times as large as Ohio, there were only two hundred whites and half-breeds.

It was evening when the census outfit came upon the Eskimo village, a hundred and fifty miles up the coast. There were about thirty in the camp, and there was considerable excitement and pleasure at the arrival of the "white brothers," until the interpreter, meeting an old friend, let the cat out of the bag. Quickly the news passed that the white men had come to take the name of every man, woman and child, and that they were going to ask all sorts of questions, and a quiet and sullen gloom settled in every igloo. A short time previously two Eskimos had been arrested, and the conviction became general that the white men's intentions boded ill for the entire village. Both men and women shut themselves in their snow and ice houses, and the round, brown faces of the children peered forth suspiciously. They made no movement to appear at dawn, and only after a full hour's parleying with the "chief man" would he grant an interview. It took the combined efforts of white men and interpreter until noon, and numerous gifts, to convince him. When at last he was induced to call forth his people, it was found that several of the men had disappeared during the night.

The chief himself was the first to go down in the official census book. His name was Um-Gluu, as nearly as it can be spelled in English. He was a white-haired old patriarch, with a skin like creased brown parchment. When asked his age, he pointed to a man already middle-aged and held up two fingers, signifying that he was twice as old as the other. He must have been fully a hundred years old. Later I tried to get a story out of this old man. He talked briefly, answering questions in a dozen words, until I unfortunately asked him, through the interpreter, if he had ever heard anything about certain missing ships of half a century or more ago. He gave me one long, dull, suspicious look and would say nothing more after that. I drew my own conclusions. In a day long gone, I thought, Um-Gluu had had something to do with a ship that had disappeared, or perhaps he had played a part in the disappearance of more than one. Before I asked that question he told me that he could remember, when a young man, of seeing

There was something almost epic in these few flashlights caught of a life whose adventures might fill volumes the world would give much to know.

Um-Gluu's inherent suspicion of the prying white man had an amusing parallel in the case of a village of Dog Ribs, far to the west. The census takers had worked their way through one hundred and eighty miles of desolation, and in all that distance had found but three white people, half a dozen half-breeds and eighteen natives, when they struck the Dog Ribs. Once upon a time an enterprising white man had sold the Dog Ribs the secret of a simple brew which produced a "glorious" drunk, and wherever the opportunity was offered the Royal Northwest Mounted Police came hot on the trail of the redskin brewers. So it happened that when the census takers came with their official-looking books and their many questions, the Dog Ribs shook in their boots, so to speak. But Red Eye, as the people of a neighboring post had nicknamed the Dog Rib chief, did not, like Um-Gluu, go into his tepee and pout. He received the white men with open arms and pitched their tent a hundred yards from the Indian camp, "so that his white brothers would sleep well," he assured them. The taking of the census in this particular spot looked like an easy thing, and the census takers lay themselves down to sleep with hearts filled with gratitude toward Red Eye and stomachs filled with his choicest fish and venison. But when they awakened in the morning, Red Eye and his camp were gone. They had departed during the night, tepees and all, in their canoes.

The census figures and investigations which have been carried along with them show some curious facts about wilderness life. More than one modern Methuselah has been found between the fifty-eighth degree and the Arctic Sea, and in most instances only an estimate of their ages can be made. At the upper end of Reindeer Lake I met a Chippewayan who claimed to be a hundred and fifteen years old, and he looked it. How he lived, so parchment-like and dried up, was a mystery; but live he did, and he could still paddle his canoe ten miles a day. While men of extreme age are not uncommon, and especially along the northern coast, it is a singular fact that few very old women have been found. Life seems most tenacious from the age of twenty-five on. It is a Cree proverb that if a child lives "to smoke with men" he is sure of a long life. The people of the wild places very rarely marry out of age. I personally know of but one instance where a middle-aged Indian or Eskimo took a young wife. In the event of an Indian of the far northern tribes losing his wife when he himself is middle-aged, he takes another wife only in about one case out of twenty. The ratio of the Eskimo is somewhat less.

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Branchamp Clark. He found his name as J. B. Clark so common in all post-offices that he kept everlastingly receiving the mail of somebody else. He avoided the "James" and used "Beauchamp" Clark, but the boys insisted upon calling it "Bo-Champ"—sometimes they got only so far as "Bo." So Mr. Clark, who is always original, took the matter of abbreviation into his own hands, and from that time on it has been Champ Clark.

Clark is an English name and means scholar, "one who can read and write." Originally reading and writing was a great accomplishment. Many could read and fight, but few were able to read and write. A man who possessed the latter acquirement was known as clerk—pronounced over there "clark"—and that was handed down Clark.

Taft is an Irish name, which was originally Taft. In Welsh it means "littleriver." Roosevelt is Dutch and means "rose garden." Bryan is Irish and means "noisy" or "vibrant." Former Speaker Cannon possesses a Presbyterian name. Most members of his family before him were Presbyterians, but he belongs to the Friends' Society. Cannon signifies a "big gun," a "law."

Representative John Dalzell, of Pennsylvania, has a name which runs back to the jumping-off place. It is Scotch and means "I dare." Scotland never was conquered and in the old days there was continual fighting. If there was nobody else to fight, the Scots fought each other. In one of the principalities a king's man had been murdered. He was hanged in the public square, stark naked. The men were too badly frightened to touch his body. Finally one brave young Scotchman advanced, cut down the body, and as he did so said, "Dal-zell" (I dare). He was knighted for his courage and became Lord Dalzell. In the latter's time "Auld Robin Gray," a famous Scotch ballad, was written. It was generally understood that Lady Dufferin wrote it, but she could never be made to admit the coauthorship. Lord Dalzell pressed her hardest and said, hoping to force an admission, "Aye, nae Scottish woman wrote it, or she ne'er would (in the song) have made a crown (something over one dollar in our money) equal a pound (five dollars)." It was a delightful thrust at a Scot's business acumen, but Lady Dufferin did not confess.

Representative Sereno E. Payne's family name had a curious origin. It is supposed to be the same word as "pagan" and to have been handed down from the old Roman days when those who worshipped gods were known as "pagans." "Pagan" is said to have been softened into the present name "Payne."

The ancestors of former Representative Charles Henry Grosvenor, of Ohio, belonged to the English nobility. They came over with William the Conqueror, as did the Herndons. The latter orig-

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