

## Winter Months Were Exciting Times For Our Ancestors

by Hargis Earlywine

The Snowmobile that bounces over snowbanks, like the beachbuggy does sand dunes in summer, is just a contrivance to enable a softer, less adaptive modern generation to rediscover winter excitements and satisfactions as their long-gone great grandparents (or much more remote ancestors) did.

It may be surprising news to many, if not most, persons today that a majority of adults in northern parts of Europe, and North America — also some corresponding geographical and climatical regions in other continents — indulging more freely in sports or recreations in cold months than in the warm seasons.

Summers were generally times for work necessary to survive and prosperity; few persons could afford then to indulge in play or non-supporting activities. On the other hand, cold months, with sleet, ice, snow, tended to force cessation of various kinds of normal activities outdoors. But they also provided

frozen ponds, lakes, rivers, roads, for enjoyment of skating, sleighing, or gliding with sails.

Commerce, or any kind of transportation, was broadened and expedited in cold months, paradoxically. In all zones where freezing occurred, the sleigh or its diminutive, the sled, became a popular vehicle for travel or simple enjoyment as an adventurous pastime. For before the second half of the 19th century in general highways for public coaches or private carriages were too few, bone-shaking or slow for ordinary folks to enjoy. Whereas a sleigh or sled was a vehicle almost any farmer or woodsman could build and, assuming he had a horse, mule, or even ox or bullock, his family could travel as freely, comfortably, and as fast in winter as his most affluent neighbor. A sled for "coasting" fashioned by his father was many a boy's favorite Christmas gift. (The "runners" were often hard oak, made glassily slick with rubbings of tallow.)

Emphatically, much passenger travel for a purpose other than pleasure and hauling of all sorts

always was easier in back-country regions in the frigid months than in spring, summer and autumn, when trails or roads were flooded, muddy, rutted, jolty, tiresome to beast and traveler, blown suffocatingly with dust.

### Mayor, 83, Keeps Tiny Store Running

QUICK, B.C. (CP) — Wadham Locke Paddon is the unofficial mayor of this tiny north-central British Columbia community.

Mr. Paddon is the active 83-year-old owner of Quick's general store and has been for 49 years. Although business is slow, Mr. Paddon says his small store will stay open as long as he and his wife Ella can keep going.

About a dozen families live here. Mr. Paddon says they shop for their groceries at Smithers, 18 miles northwest of here. But Mr. Paddon says he's happy to supply them with any small items they may need.

"If they need a can of beans or a box of cereal, I

Come cold months and all the young in spirit had reason to sing joyously: Dashing thro' the snow In a one-horse open sleigh O'er the fields we go Laughing all the way; Bells on bob-tail ring

What fun it is to ride and sing A sleighing song tonight!

This sentiment of James Pierpont in the 19th century, was matched by one on skating expressed by another youth of Puritan ancestry, Theodore Winthrop:

A bounding gallop is good Over wide plains; A wild free sail is good 'Mid gales and rains

A dashing dance is good Broad halls along, Clapping and whirling on Through a gay throng. But better than these When the great lakes freeze.

By the clear sharp light Of a starry night.

O'er the ice spinning With a long free sweep Cutting and ringing Forward we keep! On round and around With a sharp clear sweep To fly like a fish in the sea Ah this is the sport for me Wild free sails on were enjoyed from times in Scandinavian countries where hares, geese, ducks and quarry resorted to the raens of locomotion on ice covered waters in season.

Then for non-venturous, seldom there was fishing through the ice of ponds, streams, rivers, lakes, in the warm comfort of tents pitched over a chopped in the ice.

"A gum company gave me the clock in 1952 for buying 24 cases of gum," said Mr. Paddon. "The other day a stranger offered me a \$100 for it, but I wouldn't sell it for twice that much."

Check Weather  
Mr. Paddon's daily duties include keeping track of the weather, measuring rainfall and taking readings of the Bulkley River which flows by his place. These jobs bring him about \$25 a month and he has cabins which he rents.

Mr. Paddon said he's always busy, getting up at 7 a.m. and working till dark every day.

"In the summer time gardening takes a lot of time and now I'm getting in wood for the winter. There is a lot of work in keeping the place clean. Something always needs repair, too."

Mr. Paddon, who has lived in the Bulkley Valley since 1919, first lived in Victoria, the Gulf Islands and the Okanagan.

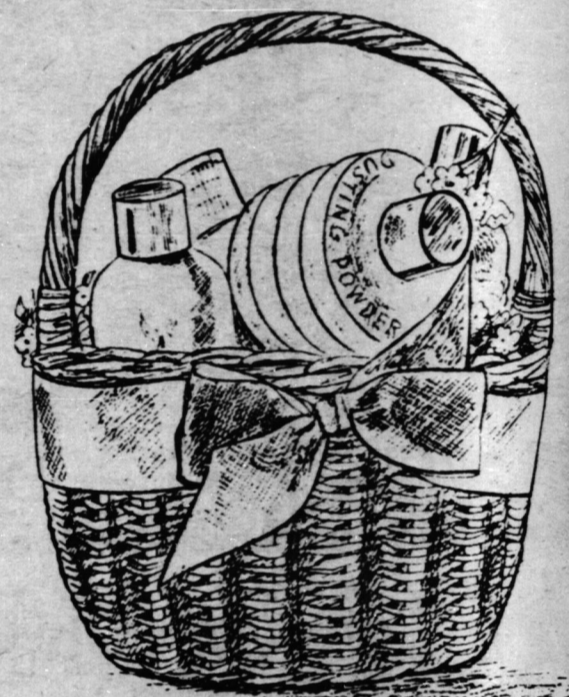
"I worked with the CNR, did the ranger's job at Burns Lake and came here after the public works people built a bridge in 1921," he said.

He has 10 acres of land, but claims to have once owned 800 which he sold to farmers.

Mr. Paddon said he was "more or less forced into opening a general store," adding, "I began by supplying feed for the farmers and I went on from there."

Mr. Paddon is not sure how the town got its name. "The name may have come from the Grand Truck Pacific Railway people when they put a line through here years ago."

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## Nova Scotia Sisters In Calcutta

HALIFAX (CP) — Two Nova Scotia nursing sisters spend the next six months looking after lepers, orphans and

people dying destitute in Calcutta. Sister Margaret MacDonald of Sydney and Sister Susan Duggan of East

Dover, 1971 graduates of the Halifax Infirmary School of Nursing, answered a call for volunteers from Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Mother Teresa, a Yugoslav nun, won this year's Pope John XXIII Peace Prize for her 20 years of work among the sick and

poor in Northern India. Christmas Edition, Thursday, December 2, 1971 - 31

In Calcutta she operates a hospital for the dying, destitute, a home for abandoned children and a hospital for lepers. She has decided to take a group of her nursing sisters

to East Pakistan to minister to the needs of the homeless and sick in that strife-torn country.

To free her Indian sisters for the Pakistan mission, she asked for 20 North America volunteers to work in Calcutta.

The Nova Scotia sisters expect to spend at least six months and perhaps a year in India. When they return home, they expect to be replaced by two other sisters from Halifax.

### CHOOSING LOG


Ash was the wood chosen for some of the first Yule logs, because Christmas lore said that the Christ Child had been bathed and dried before an ash-wood fire.

Christmas should be a happy time for children. Yet, for many Christmas is a time of sadness. Perhaps it's because their dreams haven't come true. They feel that maybe Christmas is only for others, not for them. But their dreams can come true — for The Salvation Army, through you, can bring a measure of happiness to less fortunate children.



The sleigh-ride was cold month equivalent of hay-ride for lively spirits in olden times, with progress heralded resoundingly by horn, and chaperones following (extreme right) discreetly.

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