

# Kayaks, Bow drills, Harpoons



*Canadian Eskimo Artifacts* is a lush catalog of a people in tune. It includes reproductions of tools and artifacts you can buy, if you're a museum or educational institution, with meticulous descriptions of how they were or are used, and how they fit in Eskimo life. The catalog, a record gathered by Father F. Van de Velde, OMI, who has lived in the Arctic since 1937, is a small education by itself, equally good for children or adults. This and other catalogs are available from dealers who handle the works of Canadian Arctic Producers, Ltd. See the next article (**And Other Things From the North**) for more information.

Included in *Canadian Eskimo Artifacts* are: BLOW HOLE HUNTING KIT. Thirty-eight pieces described in a detailed narrative that would be ruined by a short excerpt here. Fr. Van de Velde writes: "In my opinion, seal hunting is not a trade but an art. This explains why some Eskimos remain mediocre throughout their lives, while others continue to hunt seal with remarkable easiness. It is an honorable distinction to be known as a good hunter. One who has gained the nickname of *netjersortunnuark*, and who is spoken of even after death, is a phenomenon, or since we

are talking of art, a genius, to catch the seal at the "aglu." "

ISLERVIK—THE TOOL KIT, including the *pitikserak* (bow drill), *kiligark* (bowl bottom scraper), *kringusark* (for splitting wood, bone, or hide), *kajut* (an adze), *narrorsorvik* (for straightening arrows and harpoons), and *komaksiut* (a comb for catching lice).

NETJILIK KAYAK—the kayak, which in former times played such a fundamental part in the Eskimos' life, but now has all but disappeared, having been replaced by modern canoes and power boats. The Pelly Bay kayak described in the catalog was used exclusively for caribou hunting at the nadlork (swimming passage). In other areas it

was employed in hunting whales and other sea animals. In hunting whales the technique was to slip up on the beast's head, harpoon him, and back away in a hurry. The line was attached to an *awatark* (seal-skin float).

PITIKSIK—The Bow, with accessories. This is the Pelly Bay variety, made from wood, muskox horn, or caribou antler (the most common material in the past). The bow normally was held horizontally.

ANNORAK—CLOTHES, including inner and outer parkas, trousers, socks, boots, and mittens. The skins of about eight caribou were required to dress a man fully for winter.

## Netjilik Kayak

