

too young to be with adults for a lot of things you would like to do.

Some days at thirteen you feel like being a tomboy, and running around in old clothes, jumping fences, stealing apples, tripping the postman, picking someone's flowers, and getting really dirty.

Other days you feel very grown-up, and enjoy getting dressed up, using some of mother's make-up, wearing white gloves, and behaving like a lady. The problem seems to be that adults expect this to go on all the time, and, after all, at thirteen a girl is not ready to settle down and begin behaving every day, and every hour.

Another thing, girls of thirteen are expected to be able to do more things around the house, run errands without complaining, do a lot of things without being told, not harassing their brothers, and not being saucy to their parents. It just seems that neither the thirteen-year-old nor the parents know which way to go at the age of thirteen.

I can remember going to a wedding at that age, two years ago, when a relative of ours was married, and everyone there could do things like dance, and I couldn't, and drink wine, which I couldn't, and speak in groups, which I couldn't, and I found the whole event, to which I had looked forward with such anticipation, to be a terrible drag.

I hope I can remember what it was like at thirteen because I want to be able to tell my daughter to expect it to be a trying experience. They aren't kidding when they say it is the 'awkward age', and I think it is especially painful for a girl.

Perhaps boys have the same trouble, but it appears that they are allowed to stay tomboys longer than girls, and a boy of thirteen isn't expected to be all grown up all at once. They can have fun and get fairly dirty because they play sports and no one minds, but a girl just has a very bad time of it!

School Bus in the Dark

Chris Watts was twelve years old more than a decade ago. He was born in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, but by the time he was twelve, he was in Whitehorse in the Yukon. He is now a Foreign Service Officer with the Canadian Department of External Affairs.

Whitehorse had about twelve thousand people and was a very mixed bag. There were public servants, an army base (where I lived) and an air force base. It was the administrative centre of the territory and head office for mining companies, transportation companies and service industries.

Our school came under the British Columbia school system. The Yukon wasn't populous enough to have its own system. There was one great big school right in the centre of town. The army base was up on a hill, a two-mile hill, and we drove down to school in buses. Everyone went to that school which went from zero to grade twelve.

The summer in Whitehorse — what there was of it — was the most fun, if one could forget the mosquitoes. I think my greatest joy was exploring the countryside. I'm an inveterate tourist and the whole family loved to travel.

In the winter we left for school in the dark and came home in the dark. Because of the dark it always seemed so much colder. I used to deliver papers (always in the darkness in the dead of winter). The paper came out every second week, and you collected your money when you delivered your paper. Having to stand outdoors in the middle

of winter you just froze. I don't know now how I managed to keep it up.

Winter lasted a long time. Snow came in October and didn't disappear until May. Occasionally you'd get a Chinook wind from British Columbia which was very pleasant, but because the mountains were very close it brought with it plenty of snow. The Chinook could come any time and would warm things up for a couple of days, in the winter up to 10° or 20°F [-12.2° or -6.6°C]. There was one day when Whitehorse was the warmest spot in North America — one freak winter day when even Miami was colder than Whitehorse. The temperature that day was probably in the forties.

Things were expensive in Whitehorse. Food was very expensive. We didn't buy fresh milk; we had powdered milk and I hated it.

In the wintertime my parents used to go curling. You couldn't go skating very much; it was just too cold. We just played outside the way kids do.

We were told to bring our TV with us from Winnipeg, but you had to buy a special connection to hook it up. We never did, so we lived without it. Radio became a very large part of our lives. For some reason the station was very big on British programs, so we were brought up on a lot of those.

There were quite a few kids my own age around, but as a kid I was pretty much of a loner. Being in the army you were always moving around, and