

Writing Home From Pangnirtung

Mrs. Frances Fisher, Lumby, British Columbia, forwarded the following letter, excerpts of which describe life at Pangnirtung on Cumberland Peninsula, Baffin Island, Northwest Territories. The author, ex-S/Sgt. T.A. Bolstad who was just a young constable at the time, served with the Force until his retirement on May 3, 1950, and became a member of the Okanagan Division of the Veterans' Association. Bolstad died April 29, 1990, at Oliver, British Columbia.—Ed.

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September 1, 1931

Dear Mother, Dad and Gene,

The old wisecrack about the ship coming in has finally come true for our small crowd at Pang (sic). The least welcome thing was not my mail, so I might as well start off by thanking you all for your letters and the parcel; Gene's letter and the drawings were among the best.

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As you all seem very interested in this new life of mine, I will endeavour to give you a few highlights of the past year. To begin with, I must say that all the talk of hardships and suffering in the North is rubbish. Of all the parts of Canada that I have been in, this country takes first place for

climate and things of interest. Every new day holds a chance for some novel experience or event, and there is therefore a spice about the country that is not found outside. Only now and again does a person feel a few moments of lonesomeness, wishing to leave for a few days, but the country and most of the people in it do not allow this state to last. Time passes with a speed seldom never encountered anywhere else.

These following facts about the weather will undoubtedly startle you. When you probably experienced several occasions of -50°F weather and below, the lowest we registered on (only) one occasion was -44°F, and seldom did the mercury drop lower than -32°F. On January 2, 1931, the temperature was 48°F, and on several occasions during midwinter, the readings were between 15 and 20°F. On the other hand, when you people swelter in the heat, which sends your old thermometer up around 100°F, we sit around quite comfortable in about 55°F; our highest this year being 63°F. From this you will readily see where we have a decided advantage over all the rich people who go South in the winter and North in the summer, for we can sit in one place and enjoy a good moderate temperature all year round without going to the bother of moving.

Another item which will probably surprise you is the comfort with which winter trips are made. All winter clothing for such trips is made of deerskins and is extremely comfortable. A complete issue of clothing consists of an outside "kooletak"