

# "Big Bang" Theory

by M.V. Thompson

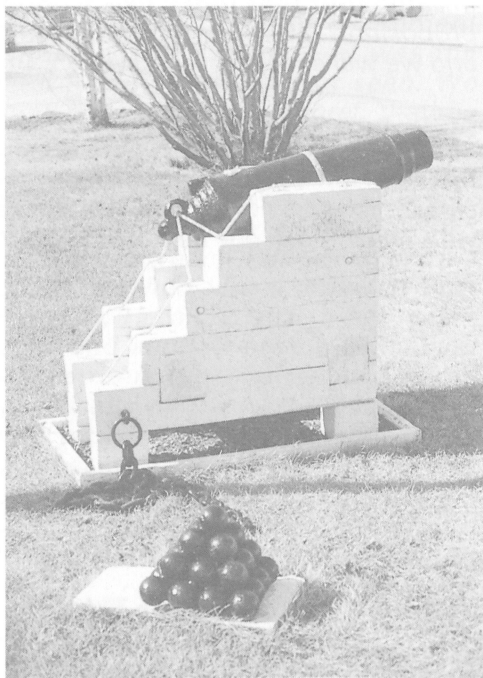
Our readers may recall the "G" Division dispatch entitled, **"BLAST FROM THE PAST"**, on p. 53 of Vol. 56 No. 2, Spring 1991, of the "Quarterly" concerning the history of the cannon located at Inuvik Sub-Division, Northwest Territories. At that point, little was known about the actual history of the gun, which has reportedly been on its current site since 1964.

The best information, at that time, had it that the cannon probably came from a Norwegian whaling vessel, *circa* 1860. The item concluded with the request asking that anyone with any information on the origin of the enigmatic artillery piece should come forward and shed a little light on its shadowy past.

Well, Inuvik's entreaty has not gone unheard. The "Quarterly" has learned that Supt. Clare J. Dent (retired), President of the Nova Scotia Division of the RCMP Veterans' Association, was among the party that had originally discovered the cannon on Herschel Island and brought it to Inuvik via single-engine Otter. Dent is very familiar with some aspects of the gun's origin and was able to provide some interesting facts and speculations as to its history, along with some amusing related anecdotes.

Dent's first assignment upon being commissioned was Officer Commanding, Inuvik Sub-Division, where he served from 1967 to 1970. During this period he visited Herschel Island to inspect an abandoned RCMP detachment building which the Force had turned over to Menzies Fisheries

of Vancouver, British Columbia. To the best of his recollection, the others in the party were an RCMP pilot (name unknown), Sgt. R. James, NCO i/c Inuvik Detachment, Cst. J. Kaminski and his new bride, Lorraine.



The cannon on its mounting at Inuvik Sub-Division.

During the short-lived Arctic summer, Herschel Island is miraculously transformed, almost overnight, into a paradise equal to any tropical island, and the members of the party soon became engrossed in sight-seeing and enjoying the pristine beauty of the Arctic landscape. While strolling along the beach, Sgt. James stubbed his toe on what he surmised to be a