

The many changes that have occurred in the Canadian North during recent years have affected almost every aspect of the lives of the Inuit who, to most people, are known as Eskimos (a word coined by Indians meaning "eater of raw flesh"). They prefer to be known as Inuit, "the people". The singular is Inuk, "person". Their language is Inuktitut.

Only about 100,000 Inuit are in existence, about 23,000 of whom live in Canada. The others are in the United States, Denmark and the U.S.S.R. Canadian Inuit live in small communities in the Mackenzie Delta and on the mainland coast of the Northwest Territories, the Arctic Islands, the shores of Hudson and Ungava Bays, and in Labrador. The communities are situated for the most part on bays, river mouths, inlets or fiords, reflecting a past life that was largely tied to marine harvesting-fishing, gathering and hunting. The settlements are situated in three jurisdictions: the Northwest Territories, Quebec and Newfoundland.

Early records and archaeological finds indicate that the Inuit of Canada once ranged farther south than they do today, especially on the Atlantic seaboard. Early in the seventeenth century they were reported to be living along the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and they occupied the whole coast of Labrador. In the Hudson Bay region they

do not seem to have appeared farther south than Cape Jones in the east and Churchill in the west.

The original Inuit were chiefly a coastal people, who fished and hunted seals, walrus, polar bears and whales. The Caribou, or Inland, Inuit inhabited the barrens and lived on caribou meat, and fish caught in the numerous lakes. The Inland population made their fires with shrubs and cooked with a mixture of caribou backfat and tundra moss, using this in a soapstone vessel, instead of the seal blubber used by the coastal groups. They rarely visited the sea—in fact, some of them lived their whole lives without seeing salt water.

For over 4,000 years, the Inuit or their predecessors, through four cultural sequences, have inhabited Canada's Arctic regions. Several Icelandic sagas describe encounters with people who are thought to have been Eskimos, and early European explorers of the Arctic occasionally came across people of the same type. The European explorers introduced the natives to a money economy and brought with them many new goods. This influence, however, was transitory. The real development of Canada's Arctic began much later than that of other Arctic lands. While Inuit in other countries were already trading with whites, many Canadian Inuit remained completely unaware that any men existed except them-