



**ALTA MARIE**—Fairbanks flood of August 14, 1967 brings together two people and inspires a song and a record album. Recovering from a respiratory ailment caused by the flood, Alta Marie meets her future husband, a tall Tlingit Indian singer and composer, Richard Dick of Skagway. Romance blossomed and they were married early this year. The jacket cover of the album was designed by the singer himself, who is also a painter of Tlingit arts and crafts. The album is available for sale either from Richard Dick or from the Blue Bonnet Recording Studios. The addresses are contained in the story below. —Photo by JIMMY BEDFORD

## Fairbanks Flood Plays Cupid; Inspires Love Songs for Album

With all the misery it brought to thousands of people, the great Fairbanks flood of August 14, 1967, nevertheless, sparked an ember and fanned it into an unusual romance and love—and a song was born.

Richard Dick, a tall Tlingit Indian never knew that his future wife, Alta Marie, was going through the miserable discomforts of the flood in Fairbanks

as he labored on the docks of the White Pass-Yukon Railway in Skagway as a longshoreman.

When he was not working on the docks, Richard Dick took his electric guitar to the "Days of the '98 Show" local people of the historic Skagway town performed for the tourists.

Dick is the descendant of the Eagle Clan of the Tlingits and the part he performs in the '98 Show is known as the "Eagles' Days of the '98 Show." Here he sings the songs he composed and renders them in English and in his native Tlingit language.

In time, Dick's Eagles' Days became a feature attraction and he has sung his way into the hearts of many tourists. It has been estimated that he has played before 300,000 people during the ten years he has performed in the Skagway tourist attraction.

Many of the tourists had asked for record albums by Richard Dick but he had never made any until last June 1, when the long playing album entitled, "Alta Marie," was released.

### FLOOD VICTIM

Alta Marie came to Alaska during the summer of 1967 "seeking adventure."

"And adventure I did find!" recalled Alta Marie. "After spending several days at Eielson Air Force Base where I was evacuated during the flood, Civil Defense flew many of us to Anchorage. I retraced my steps to Juneau, and came to Skagway earlier than planned to get to Whitehorse."

"Although," Alta Marie continued, "the flood was cataclysmic for the residents of Fairbanks, and disconcerting to

tourists, if it hadn't been that I was caught in it, I would not have met Richard."

Alta Marie had traveled to Alaska from her home city of Fort Worth, Texas seeking adventure and, unexpectedly, it ended up in marriage between Richard Dick and herself.

"We have had a most interesting ten months of married life," she said. "Having lived in a city of a half million all my life, I am very fond of the easy-going yet full life that Skagway has to offer."

The jacket of the record album, "Alta Marie," recounted the meeting of the two future man and wife:

"The catastrophic flood in Fairbanks August 14, 1967, is the calamity which brought Alta and Richard together. As a tourist, who lost all her personal effects, she survived the harrowing experiences of the flooded city only to contract a respi-

(Continued on page 6)

# Flood Plays Cupid . . .

(Continued from page 1)

tory illness that forced her to recuperate a week in Skagway.

"While attending the '98 Show, she was greatly impressed with the tall Tlingit Indian singer. Romance blossomed, and on January 19, 1968, they were married in Skagway."

Richard Dick is a stylist who performs his compositions in a deep, resonant voice.

He is believed to be the first of his people to compose, sing in English and Tlingit and accompany himself on his electric guitar. Besides performing in hundreds of Skagway's '98 Show, Richard Dick has performed in night clubs, on radio and television in Juneau, Fairbanks, and Whitehorse, Y.T.

Dick is also a painter, specializing in Tlingit arts and crafts. He has symbolic paintings hung at the Heritage Hall in Fort Worth, Texas and has exhibited in Wrangell and Juneau.

The LP album, "Alta Marie," was cut at the Blue Bonnet Recording Studios, 1041 Isbell Road, Fort Worth, Texas. It is a two-sided 33 1/3 RPM hi-fidelity.

Side one of the record album contains: YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU; DON'T EVER LEAVE ME; IN THE VALLEY OF THE

WIND; and ALTA MARIE.

Side two: I LOVE YOU SO MUCH IT HURTS ME; COME HOME TO SKAGWAY VALLEY; I LOVE YOU SO MUCH I COULD DIE; and DON'T YOU KNOW.

All of the songs are composed by Richard Dick.

The album can be ordered from Richard Dick, 2705 Mission, Fort Worth, Texas 76109; or Richard Dick, P.O. Box 226, Skagway, Alaska 99840.

The Richard Dick family has plans and hopes of contributing to the community of Skagway. Mrs. Dick writes:

"Our fondest hope is to build some day, a community house here in Skagway, where authentic songs, dances and stories may be kept alive, as well as handicrafts.

"All in all, I love Alaska, as do my four children, Karen, 18 years old, Cheryl, 17 years, Bianca, 14 years old and William, 11 years old. Richard has two children, Betty 20 years old and a son Gilbert 19 years old.

"If we, altogether, are able to contribute to the community and society in which we live in some small way, then our marriage has been truly a compounded happiness for us."