

# ***Veteran Arctic Pioneer Passes***

Oliver D. Morris—trapper, fur trader and skipper of the “Ya-Butt”—died December 5, 1970 at the Tripler Army Hospital in Honolulu, Hawaii.

His son, Oliver D. Morris, Jr. brought his parents to join his family in Hawaii after his father was hospitalized in October, 1970. He wrote the following obituary:

“During his hospitalization in Fairbanks, Dad was visited by some old Eskimo friends from Pt. Barrow, Herbert and Marylou Leavitt, Bertha Leavitt and Loretta Kenton. Dad spoke more and more during the last month of his life about his years in the Arctic and his love

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# *Arctic Pioneer . . .*

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for the Eskimo people.

"Even though cancer had almost taken his voice, in a whisper he reminisced about his beloved Arctic. He spoke of Herschel Island, Cape Halkett, Demarcation Point, Wainright, Pt. Barrow and his trading posts.

"He spoke of the "Ya-Butt", his schooner that sailed up the MacKenzie and along the coast.

"He delivered my sister Cleo, who was born in Etipta Island, Canada, with a 'hunting knife in one hand and a medical book in the other.' 'It was just like gutting a rabbit.'

"Dad was a free spirit like the Arctic Wind. 'It is not the blood in his veins nor the color of the heart that counts. It is what is in the heart that matters.'

"Oliver D. Morris was born in Seattle, Washington, March 13, 1894. He first came to Alaska in 1910 to Nome, returned to the States for service in the first war. He and Mom were married by Captain Klinkinberg, owner of the "Maid of Orleans", on ship at Herschel Island in 1924."

He is survived by his wife Alice S. Morris; his son Oliver D., born at Pt. Barrow; his daughters, Mrs. Cleo C. Hensley of Nenana and Mrs. Charmaine Huffrich of Phoenix, Arizona; 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"He was an early day friend of Ben Eilson, Sir Hubert Wilkins, Will Rogers, Viljamar Stephenson, Captain Pederson and Charles Brower.

"His last wishes were for his ashes to be spread off the coast of Pt. Barrow. His son and good friend Sam Taalak of Pt. Barrow will honor his request in March of 1971."