

Fond memories of steamboat fruit

by Elizabeth Parent ©

It was a great day when the steamboat *Wallace Langley* brought us our groceries. We would sit for hours hoping to spot its plume of smoke around the last bend to my village Crooked Creek. We got so excited when it came, docked, and unloaded our share of its precious cargo.

By the time the boat arrived, the larders were low and we were ready for the apples, oranges, grapefruits and "fresh stuff" (as fresh vegetables for salad were called).

Apples and oranges were lov-

ingly stored in the cellar to be carefully rationed to hold us over for as long as possible into the long cold winter ahead.

Many years later, on my first trip outside, it came as a shock to me that apples and oranges didn't grow in the same places. We drove past apple orchards but nary an orange one. The orange trees were hundreds of miles south, in a

warmer climate. Since we got these fruits together, in my child's mind, they should grow together.

Editor's Note: Elizabeth A. Parent (Athabascan/Yupik) is professor and chair of American Indian Studies at San Francisco State University. She founded the Pretty Baby Contest in the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics and served on the Board of the Tundra Times.