

1860 – 1912

nwt history

1860

Living and Learning in New Ways

- First School in the NWT opens at Fort Simpson.

Traditional Aboriginal learning existed for thousands of years in the NWT. After contact, however, education changed. Missionaries moved North to teach Aboriginal people. A vital part of this mission was educating young Dene and Inuvialuit children. The first of these schools, intended to fulfill this purpose, was established in Fort Simpson in 1860. As with future residential schools, children were removed from families and communities to spend their school years at a school residence. The last residential school closed in the NWT in 1995.



photo provided by: NWT Archives

1889-1907

Mackenzie Delta Whaling

- The rise and fall of Herschel Island.

The arrival of American whalers at Herschel Island in 1889 would change forever the lives of the Mackenzie Delta Inuit. By 1894, 15 ships and 1000 men were wintering at Herschel Island. Inuit hunters supplied the crew with huge quantities of wild meat. Inuit families were introduced to baseball, and manufactured trade goods, as well as alcohol, crime and disastrous diseases. When the whaling industry collapsed in 1907, most whalers abandoned the Arctic, leaving the Aboriginal people dependent on trade goods and the land depleted in wildlife.



photo provided by: University of Alaska Archives

1899 & 1921

Treaty 8 and Treaty 11

- "As Long As This Land Shall Last"

The land that is now the Northwest Territories is covered by two treaties: Treaty 8 and Treaty 11. The Inuvialuit never took treaty with the Canadian Government. All Dene groups in the NWT did sign either Treaty 8 or 11. In these treaties, the Dene agreed to share their land with non-Aboriginals for payments and services such as medical assistance and education. These treaties are signed between nations (in this case Canada and the Dene) and were to protect the way of life and culture of the Dene for 'as long as the land shall last'.



photo provided by: NWT Archives

1860

1867

1869-70

1870 & 1880

1886

1889-1907

1890s

1898

1898

1899 & 1921

1905

1912

British North America Act and Confederation of Canada.

The Hudson's Bay Company surrenders its rights to Rupert's Land back to Great Britain; the area is transferred to Canada in 1870. Trade is opened to anyone.

Manitoba carved out of NWT; Creation of NWT. (1870)

Arctic Archipelago added to the NWT. (1880)

The Distributor is the first steamboat on the Mackenzie River.

With the disappearance of the Buffalo, the trade in muskox robes flourishes providing wealth for people in the NWT.

Klondike gold rush.

Yukon becomes a territory.

Gold discovered in Yellowknife.

Saskatchewan and Alberta created out of NWT.

Hudson's Bay Company opens post at Aklavik allowing opening of trade with western arctic Inuit. It is the first permanent move north by HBC in 72 years.

Northern boundaries of Provinces established.