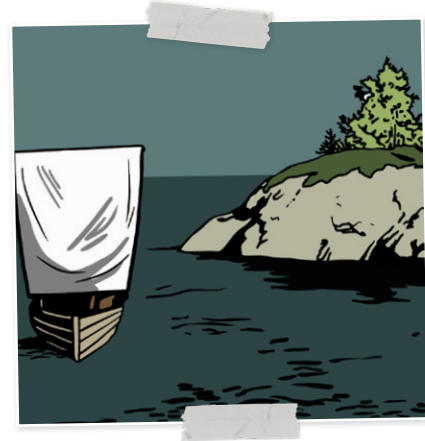


DOCUMENT E

CHIEF ISAAC RESISTS

NAME: _____



BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Chief Isaac was a well-known Chief of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (Hän) during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1896, when thousands of people migrated to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in homeland. This made the Hän people a small minority compared to the tens of thousands of newcomers.

Chief Isaac resisted the demise of the traditional ways and opposed the destruction of the natural resources, especially the overhunting of caribou herds and the logging of the forests.

WORD BANK

Potlatch: a gift-giving feast or ceremony.

AS TOLD BY PRINCESS PAT ISAAC:

"The Tr'ondek Hewch'in, or Klondike band of Han, came under intense pressure to change during the Klondike gold rush. One change desired by the Canadian Government was abolition of the **potlatch**. In 1884, government amended the Indian Act, making participation in the potlatch a misdemeanor.

Responding to this prohibition, Chief Isaac of Moosehide 'took' many of the Han songs and dances associated with the potlatch and left them with the descendants of relatives and friends who now live in the village of Northway, Tetlin, Tanacross, and Dot Lake. According to stories told by residents of Tanacross, Dot Lake, Tetlin, and Dawson, Chief Isaac gave the songs, dances, and a dance stick called a 'ganhook' or 'ganho' to the people of the upper Tanana region. These songs have been retained in people's memories until today, and some of them are still actively performed."

Source: Isaac, J. (2009). Chief Isaac's People of the River, "Culture and Religion." chiefisaac.com/family_stories.html

