

# NEVER ~ IN ANGER

PORTRAIT OF AN ESKIMO FAMILY



JEAN L. BRIGGS

# *Portrait of an Eskimo Family*

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*Never in Anger*

*Jean L. Briggs    **Never in Anger***

*For Dorothy, Doris, and Alfred  
who taught me how rewarding a  
picture puzzle world can be  
for Ben and Sol who put up  
with the scattered pieces  
and for Cora who inspired this  
particular solution*

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Jean L. Briggs

St. John's, Newfoundland  
September 1969

## Spelling and Pronunciation Note

The spelling used here is based on an attempt at phonemic analysis of the Utkuhikhalingmiut dialect, but for several reasons it is not completely consistent. First, the phonemic analysis is still incomplete. Moreover, for the sake of simplicity I have removed the glottal stop throughout, and in several instances in order to make familiar words recognizable I have anglicized spellings to bring them partially (though still not completely) into line with established usage. Thus, I have spelled *iklu* (snowhouse) as “*iglu*,” *qaplunaaq* (white man) as “*kapluna*,” and *Nattilingmiut* or *Nattilik* (the name of the Eskimo group that traditionally inhabited the Gjoa Haven area) as “*Netsilingmiut*” or “*Netsilik*.” Finally, in the case of certain names of English origin (Raigili, Rosi, Saarak, Peeterosi, Goti) that have not been completely incorporated into Utkuhikhalingmiut phonemic patterns, I have retained English phonemes to represent Utkuhikhalingmiut attempts to pronounce the foreign words.

With regard to pronunciation the following guidelines are offered. These are intended only to facilitate pronunciation of words occurring in the text; they do not constitute a technical linguistic analysis.

### Vowels

- a:* as in *father*
- ai:* like the *i* in *like*
- i:* Like the *ee* in *keel*, except that before and after *q* and *r* it is pronounced like the *e* in *bed*
- u:* like the *oo* in *pool*, except that before and after *q* and *r* it is pronounced like the *o* in *pole* or like the *au* in *Paul*

### Consonants

- h:* as in English, except that following *k* or *q* it is sometimes pronounced like English *s* or *sh*, and following *p* like English *s* (thus Utkuhikhalingmiut is pronounced Utkuhikshalingmiut and *tiphi* is *tipsi*)

- hl:* is a voiceless *l*, which has no English equivalent; it is formed by placing the tongue in the position for pronouncing *l* and exhaling
- j:* is usually pronounced like the English *r* (thus *ujjiq* and *hujuujaq* are pronounced *urriq* and *huruuraq*)
- k:* as in English, except that before *l* it is pronounced almost like English *g* (thus *ikliq* is pronounced *igliq*)
- ll:* something like English *dl* (thus *Allaq* is pronounced *Adlaq*)
- ng:* as in *sing*, never as in *hunger*
- p:* as in English, except that preceding *l* it is almost *b* (thus *qaplunaaq* or *kapluna* is pronounced *qablunaaq* or *kabluna*)
- q:* like French *kr* or *rk*
- r:* like the French *r* (except in proper names of English derivation, such as *Raigili*, *Rosi*, and *Saarak*, where it is pronounced like the English *r*)
- tt:* like the English *ch* (thus *Inuttiaq* is pronounced *Inuchiaq*)

## *People*

These households are also shown in chart form in Appendix III. The household numbers here correspond to those shown on the charts. All names are pseudonyms. Ages are approximate, as the Utku do not keep track of birthdays.

### *Household I*

*Piuvkaq*: Elder half-brother of Pala (Household II), probably more than seventy years old, the oldest man in Chantrey Inlet. He died during my first winter at Back River.

*Huluraq*: Piuvkaq's elderly wife, perhaps in her sixties. She died a few days before her husband.

*Maata*: Piuvkaq's only child by birth, a woman in her mid-twenties, twice widowed. After the death of her parents she moved away from Chantrey Inlet with her children and remarried.

*Pamiuq*: Piuvkaq's adopted son (really his grandson, the son of a deceased adopted daughter of Piuvkaq), about fourteen years old. He moved away with Maata.

*Qijuk*: Maata's daughter by her first marriage, about five years old.

*Rosi*: Maata's daughter by her second marriage, about three years old.

### *Household II*

*Pala*: Younger half-brother of Piuvkaq (Household I), perhaps in his mid-fifties or older; father-in-law and uncle (father's brother) of Inuttiaq (Household III).

*Mannik*: a young man of about twenty-five; Pala's eldest son and Inuttiaq's best friend.

*Amaaqtuq*: Pala's third daughter, about seventeen years old.

*Ukpik*: Pala's youngest son, about fourteen years old and away at boarding school during the first of the two winters I spent with the Utku.

*Akla*: Pala's youngest daughter, about ten years old.

### ***Household III***

*Inuttiaq*: a man of about forty; the Anglican lay leader of the Utku; son-in-law and nephew (brother's son) of Pala (Household II); husband of *Allaq*; my Eskimo father.

*Allaq*: a woman in her mid-thirties; *Inuttiaq*'s wife and Pala's eldest child; my Eskimo mother.

*Kamik*: *Inuttiaq*'s eldest daughter, about fourteen years old and away at school during both of the winters I spent at Back River.

*Raigili*: *Inuttiaq*'s second daughter, about six years old.

*Saarak*: *Inuttiaq*'s third daughter, about three years old.

*Qayaq*: *Inuttiaq*'s infant daughter, born while I was at Back River.

*Yiini*: This is the Utku pronunciation of my Christian name, Jean. I was *Inuttiaq*'s adopted daughter but I am, I think, about the same age as my mother, *Allaq*.

### ***Household IV***

*Ipuituq*: a young man in his mid-twenties, married to Pala's (Household II) second daughter, *Amaruq*. He is half-brother to *Qavvik* (Household VI).

*Amaruq*: Pala's second daughter, a woman in her mid-thirties; *Ipuituq*'s wife.

*Mitqut*: *Amaruq*'s daughter by a previous marriage; about thirteen years old and away at boarding school during my second winter at Back River.

(*Ipuituq* and *Amaruq* also had a daughter, who was born and died while I was at Back River. She is mentioned only once in the book.)

### ***Household V***

*Nilak*: like *Inuttiaq* (Household III), a man of about forty; a fairly distant relative of Pala (Household II) and *Inuttiaq* (refer to Chart I in Appendix III); husband of *Niqi*.

*Niqi*: Nilak's wife, a woman of about forty, with apparently sub-normal intelligence.

*Tiguaq*: Nilak's adopted daughter (really his deceased brother's daughter), about seventeen years old.

### **Household VI**

*Qavvik*: a man probably in his mid-fifties like Pala (Household II); a Garry Lake (Hanningajuq) Eskimo who married an Utku woman and almost always camps with the Utku, though his wife is now dead.

*Putuguk*: Qavvik's adopted son (really the son of Pala); a young man in his early twenties; husband of Kanayuq.

*Kanayuq*: a girl of about eighteen; Putuguk's wife, and a niece (brother's daughter) of Nilak's (Household V).

(*Qanak*: a son born to Putuguk and Kanayuq while I was at Back River. He is mentioned only once in the book, and not by name.)

### **Household VII**

*Kuuttig*: a man in his mid-twenties who was born an Utku but who has lived most of his adult life in Gjoa Haven. He is married to an Utku woman, the daughter of Pukig (Household VIII); they camped with the Utku during my first winter at Back River.

(*Uyaraq*: a woman in her early twenties; wife of Kuuttig and daughter of Pukig (Household VIII). She is not mentioned in the book.)

(Kuuttig and Uyaraq have two small children: Niaquq, a girl of about four and Nainnuaq, an infant boy, who are not mentioned in the book.)

### **Household VIII**

*Uyuqpa*: a Netsilik Eskimo, a man, probably about fifty, who is married to a Hanningajuq woman and who camped with the Utku during my first winter in Chantrey Inlet.

*Pukiq*: wife of Uyuqpa, an elderly Hanningajuq woman, probably in her sixties. By a previous marriage she is the mother of Uyaraq (Household VII), of Ipuituq (Household IV), and of Tutaq (see below under Others).

*Itqiliq*: Uyuqpa's son by a previous marriage; a boy of about eighteen, considered, like his father and brothers, to be a Netsilik Eskimo.

(*Qingak*: another son of Uyuqpa by his previous marriage; a boy of about fourteen. He is not mentioned in the book.)

*Ukhuk*: Uyuqpa's youngest son by his previous marriage; a boy of about eleven.

### ***Others Mentioned in the Book***

*Nattiq*: Nilak's brother, who lives in Gjoa Haven.

*Uunai*: wife of Nattiq.

*Tiriaq*: a boy of perhaps seventeen who was away at boarding school during my first winter at Back River; an orphaned nephew (brother's son) of Nilak (Household V). When home from school he usually lived either with Qavvik (Household VI) in Chantrey Inlet (because he is brother to the wife of Qavvik's adopted son, Putuguk), or with his uncle Nattiq in Gjoa Haven.

*Tutaq*: an unmarried man of about twenty; the youngest son of Pukiq (Household VIII). He lived sometimes with his mother's husband, Uyuqpa; sometimes with his sister's husband, Kuuttiq (Household VII); and sometimes with his brother, Ipuituq (Household IV).

*Nakliguhuktuq*: the Eskimo Anglican missionary in Gjoa Haven who oversees the religious life of the Utku; a man probably in his early forties. He and his wife sponsored my introduction to the Utku community and arranged for my adoption.

*Ikayuqtuq*: Nakliguhuktuq's wife, a woman in her mid-thirties.

*Note*: Of these people, the only ones who spoke any English were the school children: Pamiuq (Household I); Ukpik (House-



hold II); Kamik (Household III); Itqiliq, Qingak, and Ukhuk (Household VIII); Tiriaq and Tutaq, the two unattached young men; and Ikayuqtuq, wife of Nakliguhuktuq. Only Ikayuqtuq spoke it well and easily. However, everyone over the age of six and under the age of fifty or so, with the exception of Niqi (Household V), was literate in Eskimo syllabics.