



*Nora Corley
Murchison:
An Appreciation*

With the marriage of Nora Theresa Corley to John T. Murchison on St. Patrick's Day 1972 the Arctic Institute lost one of its earliest and most valuable staff members. A charter member of AINA and a polar enthusiast from her university days in McGill's Geography Department and Library School, she arrived finally at the Montreal headquarters of the Institute in October 1954, very much by choice; and at a time of budgets which only barely distinguished staff from the amateur volunteers, she brought a dedicated professionalism to the task of creating a first-rate research facility. Having acquired a sound basic collection from her predecessor, she began the enormous task of cataloguing and cross-indexing the entire collection single handed, while expanding and completing coverage. It must have been a great satisfaction to her when the catalogue was published by G. K. Hall in 1968 as a research tool.

Perhaps only those who use the Library can fully understand how accessible the collection has become, both intellectually and physically, and how extensive is the coverage. Many arctic expeditions have begun and ended in the AINA Library; many field workers have been and are dependent upon the resources; literally hundreds of research officers, university teachers and students have learned to depend upon Nora's knowledge of the literature and its availability. In the

final analysis her labours created and shaped the largest capital and research resource of AINA and what is surely the most enduring of its many facilities.

In addition to this major achievement she somehow found time for scholarship: finishing an M.A. in Geography, publishing original research, and contributing to the Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Among many activities she provided material to the Northern Service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and gave a large sector of her private life to various library associations, contributing regular reviews to the Library Journal and serving as a Chapter President of the Special Libraries Association and Chairman of their Geography and Map Division. She travelled and corresponded widely, acquiring friends around the world, keeping most of them for AINA.

In spite of all this rather earnest-sounding activity, and sheer hard work, there is also a profound femininity and a lively sense of fun. The Library was often the scene of quite unconventional gaiety, and it was sometimes surprising to see who could melt when Nora's daemon was loosed. She leaves a happy working Library and takes with her the gratitude, affection, and good wishes of all those she helped. For many of them "Nora" is a significant part of that quite special aura "The Institute."

Michael Marsden