

The Little Towns of Bethlehem

For unto us in Aklavik is born a child, in Attawapiskat, Gaspe, Cornerbrook Newfoundland. And a son is given, in Westaskiwin, Bella Coola, Flin Flon.

And the future of the whole earth is placed upon the shoulders of the daughter of Tuktoyaktuk, Tignish, Swan Lake.

And the place of their birth is called Vermilion, Temiskaming, Nain, Picture Butte.

An angel of the Lord appears in the night sky over Rankin Inlet, over Iqaluit, saying:

This shall be the sign: you will find the babe wrapped in cast-off flannel, lying on a bed of straw, in Esther, Alberta, in a winter feeding stall, an open boxcar, outside Kindersley, Saskatchewan.

And sure, several hours north from Hogg's Hollow, just this side of Englehart, you see one, sleeping in its mother's arms on the soft shoulder, where their car broke down.

And the dark highway shines imperishable life, while helping them beneath these northern lights and driving on, through Cochrane, Kapuskasing, Hearst, past Nipigon, and on to the little town of Emo, Rainy River Region,

and least among the little dots that lie scattered as stars and litter the map of Northwest Ontario, where they're expecting you, as in so many other of these least likely dots this expectation also is; in Miniota, Pickle Lake, Ohsweken, Glace Bay.

For unto us. For into all, this night is born a child, this night bearing each, and the places of their birth, and nativity is given every name.

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