

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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TITLE: Chitina Precinct Court Documents

COLLECTION NUMBER: B1968.008

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1917-1920

Extent: 1 folder

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): U.S. Department of Justice, District of Alaska

Administrative/Biographical History:

“The United States Attorney's office for the District of Alaska has had a rich and interesting history. In 1868, "Seward's Folly" quickly became a national treasure with the discovery of gold and other natural resources. Waves of settlers and fortune hunters arrived, some of whom were intent on breaking the law. The treaty that ceded the land from Russia did not provide for any laws, however, and the territory remained unregulated in its first year of American possession. The Act of July 27, 1868 extended jurisdiction of the United States District Courts of Washington, Oregon, and California to include the people and lands of Alaska. Minor offenses were tried before military courts administered by the United States Army and Navy, and Major offenders were transported to the United States District Court in Portland, Oregon.

In 1884, Congress enacted the legislation which defined the territory of Alaska as a civil and judicial district with its seat at Sitka. Court sessions were held at Wrangell and in other such places as the judge deemed expedient. The Act of March 3, 1891 extended appellate jurisdiction of Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to include Alaska. The District Court located at Sitka had administrative responsibility for the entire territory, as the territory was later divided

into several divisions. The first United States Attorneys in Alaska operated under this territorial system and were based in Sitka. One of the earliest exceptions to this court session in Sitka was the water lane circuit. In this perhaps unique situation for an Office of the United States Attorney, a session of the district court was administered on board the revenue cutter, Bear, a ship that transported the court up and down the coast of Alaska.

In 1900, provision was made for removal of the territorial capital from Sitka to Juneau. At the same time the district was divided into three divisions with courts meeting at Juneau, Nome, and Eagle (later moved to Fairbanks). In 1909, a fourth division came into existence. The first two division remained the same with the headquarters of the third division being moved to Valdez (later moved to Anchorage in 1943), and the newly created fourth meeting at Fairbanks. Each division had its own United States Attorney appointed by the President. This organization of the courts remained until statehood in 1959 when the unified District of Alaska was created.”¹

Scope and Content Description:

This collection consists of legal documents (e.g., warrants, complaints) pertaining to 6 distinct civil and criminal cases, as well as accompanying letters and envelopes. All cases took place in the District of Alaska’s third precinct, Chitina Precinct.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use.

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

The Anchorage Museum is the owner of the materials and makes available reproductions for research, publication, and other uses. Written permission must be obtained from the Anchorage Museum before any reproduction use. This collection is in the public domain.

Preferred Citation: Chitina Precinct Court Documents, Anchorage Museum, B1968.8

¹ “About the District of Alaska,” *The United States Attorney’s Office, District of Alaska*, updated July 8, 2021, https://www.justice.gov/usao-ak/about_us.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

This collection was donated to the Cook Inlet Historical Society by Ethel Ross Oliver on July 1, 1968. CIHS then transferred the collection to the Museum.

Processing Note

Upon accession to the Museum, this collection was given the number 1968.9.85A-F. During description in 2022, each item was numbered 1-20 at item-level within the existing collection B1968.008.

RELATED MATERIALS

B1967.025 Chitina Papers

SUBJECTS

Commercial crimes

Crime

Dockets

Guardianship

Mentally ill

Mineral industries

Prohibition

Warrants (Law)

Detailed Description of the Collection

- .01 – No. 38 Louis Widing vs. A. Upman Civil Action Civil Docket [envelope]
- .02 – [Letter to McCarthy Meat & Grocery Co. from A. Upman], March 15, 1917
- .03 – [Letter to Jos. Feaster. Esq., Deputy U.S. Marshal, from Q.J. Brightwell [?], Deputy U.S. Marhsal], March 13, 1917
- .04 – [Letter to Mr. W.M. O'Connor, U.S. Commissioner, from W.J. Feaster, U.S. Marshal], March 14, 1917
- .05 – [Notice of Attachment and Garnishment for Louis Widing and Warren Nelson vs. A. Upman case; with attestations by Q.J. Brightwell [?]], March 12, 1917
- .06 – [photocopy of .02-.05]
- .07 – No. 41 Walter Risch Plaintiff vs. Dan Creek Mining Co. Defendant Civil Docket Page [envelope]

- .08 – No. 41 Walter Risch Plaintiff [vs.] The Dan Creek Mining Company Defendant Disputation of Dismissal Filed the 16th day of May 1917 W. O'Connor Commissioner [document indicating the case has been dismissed May 16, 1917, signed by plaintiff attorney Frank H. Foster, defendant attorney D. Casper [?], and plaintiff Walter Risch]
- .09 – No. 41 Walter Risch Plaintiff vs. Dan Creek Mining Co. Defendant Complaint Filed May 10, 1917
- .10 – Summons [on Dan Creek Mining Company for breach of contract], May 10, 1917
- .11 - Statement of George Marlham [?] [pertaining to the Walter Risch vs. Dan Creek Mining Co. case], undated
- .12 – [photocopy of .08-.11]
- .13 – No. 19 In The Matter of The Guardianship of Olive Walter alias Mollie Parks, November 24, 1917
- .14 – 217 United States vs. Paddy Dolan [?] Docket [envelope]
- .15 – Warrant of Arrest [for Paddy Dolan for violation of section 15 of the Prohibition Act], March 11, 1918
- .16 – Complaint [against Paddy Dolan by James Millsap for violation of the Prohibition Act], March 11, 1918
- .17 – [Handwritten receipt of Dolan's costs]
- .18 – [photocopies of .15-.16]
- .19 – [2-page letter to Judge C. Parker Smith from Donohoe & Dimond attorneys and counselors at law], May 29, 1920
- .20 – [14-page account of case no. 46, United States vs. Clarence Blank], October 25, 1920

Guide written: April 25, 2022