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REPOSITORY NAME:
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Guide prepared by: Sara Piasecki, Photo Archivist

TITLE: Richard Maximus Bjorkman Photographs

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2008.004

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: circa 1884-1889

Extent: 47 items; 0.2 linear feet

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Richard Maximus Bjorkman

Administrative/Biographical History:
Richard Maximus Bjorkman was born in Sweden on November 18, 1859, to Marie Liedholm
and Hampus Bjorkman. In 1875, he ran away from home to join the Swedish Navy. Upon
discharge in 1882, he set out for San Francisco, and joined the crew of the clipper M.P. Grace.
In 1884, he joined the United States Navy and served on the presidential yacht Dispatch as well
as the Thetis. He left the service in 1890, but reenlisted in 1898 and served in the Spanish
American War on the Newark. After the war, he settled in Nebraska and remained there until
his death in 1949.

Scope and Content Description:
The collection consists of 45 black-and-white photographs mounted on board, taken during
Bjorkman’s service in the U.S. Navy, primarily with the U.S.S. Thetis during its summer 1888
cruise in Alaskan waters. There are also two news clippings about Bjorkman.

Arrangement: Not applicable

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:
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Preferred Citation:
Richard Maximus Bjorkman Photographs, Anchorage Museum, B2008.004

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information
Donated by grandson Vincent Feehan and wife Joan Feehan in 2008.

Processing Notes
News clippings photocopied onto acid free paper, originals discarded.

Separated Materials
Navy uniform donated along with photographs transferred to Collections.

Notes
Several photographs bear two similar captions, one often a clarification or correction of the other, possibly indicating the addition of information by one of Bjorkman’s heirs.

RELATED MATERIALS
2008.061.001

SUBJECTS
Bjorkman, Richard Maximus, 1859-1949
United States. Navy—Boats
United States. Navy—Military life
United States. Navy—Bands
Thetis (Auxiliary steamer)
Monongahela (Ship)
Ships—Alaska
Shipwrecks—Alaska
Sealing—Alaska
Alaska Natives—Boats
Alaska Natives—Dwellings
Alaska Natives—Clothing
Kodiak (Alaska)
Ukivok (Alaska)
Saint Paul Island (Alaska)
Sitka (Alaska)
Barrow, Point (Alaska)

Detailed Description of the Collection

.1 – Bunch of Alaskans. Some of the crew with a few of the Alaskan Eskimo. Bjorkman [Mattoi?] [This photo was taken during the 1888 summer cruise of the U.S.S. Thetis. Crewmen and Natives seated on the ground.]
.2 – Small boat in Alaskan waters [umiak]
.3 – An Alaskan village.
.4 – St. Paul church in Alaska [Kodiak]
.5 – Ship which was saved. It was smoking but another ship got there in time to save it. They pumped water out of it 10 days. [shows wreck of the whaling trader Jane Grey]
.6 – Indian hut. More Eskimo living quarters [This may be King Island]
.7 – Eskimo boys in Sunday clothes
.8 – Indian hut. Eskimo hut [shows a log cabin that was used by prospectors going up the Copper River]
.9 – Gleiser or iceberg. Glacier in the Arctic.
.10 – Another, killing them. Killing of seals in the Arctic and skinning of the fur skins
.11 – Another view of the killing. [shows killing of two-year-old seals]
.12 – Killing seals, driving them in a group and then clubd them. In the Arctic killing of seals after driving them in a group [seal killing grounds on St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs]
.13 – St. Paul Kodiak Island [i.e., St. Paul Island, Pribilofs]
.14 – Eskimo mud huts [shows Aleut barabaras on St. Paul Island]
.15 – Kayac Indian boat [shows two Native boats, a kayak in front and an umiak in back]
.16 – Eskimos on ship [Alaska Natives aboard the Thetis]
.17 – Eskimos on ship [Alaska Natives aboard the Thetis]
.18 – Another view of the sunken ship [men working on the wreck of the Jane Grey]
.19 – Another view of the sunken ship [three men standing on the deck of the Jane Grey. A pump is working on the bottom left corner. Probably taken in August 1888]
.20 – Digging coal in the Arctic [sailors loading sacks of coal onto a skiff for use on the Thetis]
.21 – Bringing the body of a missionary home after burial. Eskimos had killed him [crewmen of the Thetis with a coffin]
.22 – X’ind papa. Some of ships crew. Papa shown by check [Ships officers aboard the Thetis. The man under the check mark may be Richard Bjorkman. The man in the lower right corner is holding a sextant]
.23 – Saw mill at Sitka, Alaska
.24 – Eskimo family [Tlingit Indians at Sitka]
.25 – Drilling on board [crew members of the Thetis at rifle drill. The rifles are probably a derivative of the British Enfield rifle]
.26 – Indian hut. Living quarters of Alaskan Indians [interior of a Tlingit community house]
.27 – Another view of killing and skinning them. Skinning of the seals after killing by crew of the ship [shows men salting the fur of seals during a seal harvest. Location is probably St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs]

.28 – Eskimo dog team

.29 – Eskimo family on board ship [Native women with a child on board a ship at Point Barrow]

.30 – Ship which was saved by the ship which Papa ship was sent to Arctic waters to save. It was icebound. [shows the wreck of the whaling trader Jane Grey which was righted and pumped out by the U.S.S. Thetis and U.S.R.C. Bear in August 1888]

.31 – Another view of sunken ship pumping water of it. [shows the crew of the Thetis working on raising the whaling trader Jane Grey]

.32 – Eskimo men with the button on their lip are married men. [Inupiat of Point Barrow]

.33 – Digging coal in the Arctic for use on the ship. [shows men sacking coal to be used on the Thetis]

.34 – Eskimo family [Eskimo family from Kotzebue Sound region]

.35 – A bunch of officers were crossing the equator [taken circa March-December 1887 when the Thetis sailed from New York to Sitka, with a stop for repairs in San Francisco. Two guitars are on the table in the foreground]

.36 – Ships band [band of the Thetis]

.37 – Men mending the cloth. Crew on ship mending clothes & resting in warmer climate

.38 – A bout. Boxing by some of the ship’s crew.

.39 – Crossing equator. Under the Eng[?] Seal Exposition [sailors reclining on the deck of a ship]

.40 – Resting. Crew of ship resting in southern waters

.41 – Dressed ship Washington’s birthday, Mare Island Navy Yard. Monongahela U.S. Navy.

.42 – Port Townsend [sailing ship in the harbor at Port Townsend, Washington]

.43 – Sitka. [view of Sitka from the harbor, Baranof Castle on the left]

.44 – Coal mine in Alaska

.45 – N[?]a [bridge, possibly in Alaska]


.47 – News clipping. “Lincoln man recalls adventur some seafaring days.”

Guide written: January 30, 2013