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TITLE: Alaska Gastineau Mining Company Collection

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2000.004

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1912-1914

Extent: 1.5 linear feet

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Winter & Pond

Administrative/Biographical History: The Alaska Gastineau Mining Company was one of several large lode gold mining operations in the vicinity of Juneau, Alaska and operated from 1912-1921. It was an ambitious venture that included a two-mile railroad tunnel through Mount Roberts, connecting the Perseverance mine camp in a valley behind Juneau to a mill overlooking Gastineau Channel at the new town of Thane—named for the brilliant young promoter and general manager of the venture, Bart Thane. The mines, mill, and support facilities were powered by hydroelectric dams to the north, at Salmon Creek, and to the south, at Annex Creek. Bunkhouses, mess halls that could feed over 300 at once, powerhouses, a machine shop, foundry, wharves, warehouses, some fifty cottages for employees with families, and even a schoolhouse were all indications of the confidence the Alaska Gastineau’s managers and investors had in a bright future for the company.

However, the whole enterprise failed within a few years. Although designed to handle low-grade ore in high volumes—up to 12,000 tons per day, the most of any mill that ever operated in the Juneau area—ore quality was lower than expected and profits were unattainable. Adding to difficulties, the mill, which was designed to handle dry ore, was clogged by increasingly wet ore that stuck to machinery like cement. A final blow came when the U.S. entered World War I in 1917 and many mine employees enlisted, making labor scarce and forcing slow-downs in operations. The mill operated at reduced capacity until operations finally ceased on June 2,
1921. Mining and milling machinery was dismantled and sold. Today, other than the hydroelectric dams which still provide power to Juneau, and the mill’s concrete foundations hidden in the trees near Thane, there is little left of the Alaska Gastineau Mining Company.

This collection documents construction of the mine camp, tunnel portal, and mill and support facilities at Thane in Volume 1. The construction of a 170-foot high concrete dam, powerhouses, and support facilities at Salmon Creek are covered in Volume 2. The collection also includes a folder with separate photographs of the Annex Creek hydroelectric facility, located twelve miles to the south of the mill.

Many of the photographs have captions and are attributed to Winter & Pond, professional photographers in Juneau from 1893 until the early 1940s. Lloyd Winter and E. Percy Pond were the photographers and proprietors. Since most photographs document construction, and are dated, it seems likely the firm was hired by Alaska Gastineau and also compiled these albums. What their purpose was—whether to create a record for the company or to inspire potential investors—is unknown.¹

Scope and Content Description: Collection consists of 321 black & white photographs pasted into two photograph albums measuring 40 x 29 cm (16 x 11 inches) and a folder of 8 loose black & white photographs. Thirteen panoramic photographs are included in the albums.

Arrangement: Album is in original order.

**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. The Anchorage Museum does not necessarily hold copyright to all of the materials in the collections. In some cases, permission for use may require seeking additional authorization from the copyright owners.

Preferred Citation: Alaska Gastineau Mining Company Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2000.004

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information: Collection was purchased by the Museum from High Latitude, Bainbridge Island, WA in 1995.

RELATED MATERIALS

The Alaska State Library in Juneau holds a major collection on the lode mines of Juneau that duplicates some images in this collection. A finding aid and inventory of the Alaska Electric Light & Power Company Collection, 1912-1945, PCA 140, is at: http://www.library.state.ak.us/hist/hist_docs/finding_aids/PCA140.doc

SUBJECTS

Alaska Gastineau Mining Company
Northwestern (Steamship)
Gold mines and mining—Alaska—Juneau
Power plants—Alaska—Juneau
Railroads—Alaska
Locomotives
Hydroelectric power plants—Alaska
Dams—Alaska
Thane (Alaska)
Juneau (Alaska)

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Album 1—Sheep Creek Division

.1—8/19/12 [wharf on pilings, view from water]
.2—8/19/12 [view from wharf to building above beach]
.3—8/19/12 [wharf on pilings, view from shore]
.4—8/19/12 [view up pedestrian boardwalk to structures in woods]
.5—8/19/12 [view down railroad railway to wharf, men working, structures at Treadwell on Douglas Island in background]
.6—8/19/12 [two men standing in front of building housing winch]
.7—8/19/12 [view from wharf up railway; see also .23]
.8—8/19/12 [view down railway to wharf, structures at Treadwell on Douglas Island in background]
.9—8/19/12 [man examining railroad car loaded with lumber, derailed?]
.10—8/19/12 [piles of lumber next to railway, saddle tank locomotive and men in background]
.11—8/19/12 [railway on mountainside, buildings in valley below]
.12—8/19/12 [railway and platform, piles of lumber]
.13—8/19/12 [railway with divided tracks, piles of lumber]
14—8/19/12 [buildings on mountainside, one with lettering: THE NOWELL GOLD MINING CO.]
15—8/19/12 [same buildings as .14, different view]
16—8/19/12 [same buildings as .14, different view]
17—8/19/12 [rear view of saddle tank locomotive on railway, piles of lumber]
18—8/19/12 [view from creek bottom of railway and buildings; old bridge in foreground]
19—8/19/12 [pond below elevated railroad railway]
20—9/11/12 [flume, railway, buildings]
21—9/11/12 [buildings on shore]
22—9/11/12 [machinery inside building; see .54]
23—9/11/12 [cable spools and rails on dock, shingled building on shore, same location as .7 and others]
24—9/11/12 [cars on railway]
25—9/11/12 [wharf loaded with construction materials, high tide, looking across Gastineau Channel to Douglas Island]
26—9/11/12 [saddle tank locomotive, three men, one of them holding surveying instruments]
27—9/11/12 [men shingling roof of building next to railroad tracks]
28—9/11/12 [stretch of straight railroad track next to men working on power poles]
29—9/11/12 [locomotive with rail cars on trestle, same location as .27]
30—9/11/12 [several half-completed buildings in mountain valley]
31—9/11/12 [different view of .27]
32—[building under construction]
33—9/11/12 [new frame building, no windows in openings]
34—10/4/12, New warehouse, Sheep Creek wharf [rail ties stacked at end]
35—9/11/12 [buildings under construction]
36—10/4/12, Sheep Creek-Juneau Roadway [plank road above beach]
37—10/4/12, Compressor & power house, Sheep Creek adit camp + mess house
38—10/4/12, Starting Sheep Creek adit [ore rail car, men working at timbered opening into mountainside]
39—10/4/12, Repairing old tunnel, starting Sheep Creek adit
40—10/4/12, Lodging house & club room, Sheep Creek adit camp
41—10/4/12 [buildings in valley]
42—[end of wharf, exposed at low tide]
43—[wharf on pilings at low tide, looking towards buildings on shore]
44—[wharf, buildings on shore]
45—[old and new wharves, Sheep Creek]
46—11/14/12 [wharf, roadway to Juneau?]  
47—11/14/12 [view from hillside down to Sheep Creek wharf]
48—11/14/12 [Sheep Creek portal camp with fresh snow, water pipeline in foreground?] 
49—11/14/12 [rock dump and buildings in mountain valley]
50—4/3/13 [buildings and wharf, Sheep Creek]
51—4/3/13 [panorama of expanded Sheep Creek wharf; photo credit : W.P.Co. (Winter & Pond Company)]
52—8/3/13 [cottages and tent cabins on shore next to plank road]
53—8/3/13, Powder and oil warehouse
54—11/14/12, Gas plant, power supply division [equipment inside building; see .22]
.55—[buildings and wooden tanks on shore]
.56—12/1/12, Gas plant, power supply division
.57—Mine camp12/1/12
.58—Mine camp12/1/12
.59—12/7/13 [overview of Sheep Creek wharf, boat at dock]
.60—12/1/12 [panorama of Sheep Creek wharf complex, taken from end of old wharf]
.61—5/10/13 [panorama of Sheep Creek wharf showing rooming houses, taken from mid-channel]
.62—5/6/13, View of enlarged wharf
.63—5/10/13, panorama from hillside above Sheep Creek wharf showing “Warehouse #2,” “Warehouse #1,” “Wood-working shop,” “300 men dining room,” and several “50-men rooming houses”
.64—5/10/13 [view from water with burn piles from clearing hillside behind wharf]
.65—5/10/13, Wood-working shop
.66—5/10/13, 300 men dining room
.67—5/6/13, 300 men dining room and wood-working shop
.68—5/10/13, Construction of temporary compressor bldg.
.69—5/10/13, Cottages
.70—5/10/13, [cottage, bricks stacked in front]
.71—5/10/13, One of the six rooming houses
.72—5/10/13, [rooming houses under construction; caption on image indicates “gas plant” with arrow, behind the photographer]
.73—5/10/13, [plant road above beach, buildings same as in .55; caption on image indicates “beach camp” with arrow, behind the photographer]
.74—5/6/13, Experimental plant. Looking down Sheep Creek.
.75—5/6/13, Experimental plant – looking up Sheep Creek. [one building with lettering: “THE NOWELL GOLD MINING CO.”]
.76—[panorama of Sheep Creek wharf with captions: “Warehouse #2,” “Warehouse #1,” “Wood-working Shop,” and “Dining Room”]
.77—7/3/13, Lower floor experimental mill [interior with heavy machinery, anvil, and small blacksmith’s forge]
.78—7/3/13, Upper floor experimental mill [interior with ore crushing machinery]
.79—9/9/13 [floating piledriver at wharf]
.80—9/9/13 [floating piledriver and small boats at Sheep Creek wharf, Treadwell complex on Douglas Island across Gastineau Channel in background]
.81—9/9/13 [wharf with building lettered “A.G. M.CO. EXPLOSIVES,” fuel drums stacked around building]
.82—9/9/13, Clearing off mill site [hydraulic monitor in operation, flushing away overburden on hillside above Sheep Creek wharf]
.83—9/9/13 [Sheep Creek cottages]
.84—9/9/13 [Sheep Creek cottages]
.85—10/6/13 [two men standing near rails, caption identifying them as “R. Semple [?], Construction Foreman” and B. Olson, Grade Foreman”]
.86—10/6/13, Rock grade, machine shop site
.87—10/6/13 [view of Sheep Creek wharf complex from the south]
.88—Dining room at beach camp [interior view with tables set; photo credited to Winter & Pond]
.89—12/30/13 [interior of kitchen; photo credited to Winter & Pond]
.90—10/6/13 [panorama showing Sheep Creek wharf complex from mid-channel; photo credited to Winter & Pond]
.91—12/30/13 [view from Sheep Creek wharf showing beginning of construction on hillside above for “Crusher” and “6000 ton mill foundation roll (or mill?) and concentrator section”; photo credited to Winter & Pond]
.92—12/30/13 [Sheep Creek wharf buildings]
.93—12/30/13 Cutting and foundation for __________?
.94—12/30/13 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.95—12/30/13 [overview of multiple rail tracks]
.96—12/30/13 [rail tracks in upper valley, near timberline]
.97—Sheep Creek Milling Plant, April 1, 1914 [panorama from end of Sheep Creek wharf showing Juneau, Planked road to Juneau, Gas engine plant, Rooming houses, Boarding house, Carpenter shop, Machine shop, Warehouse #2, Warehouse #1, Store, Cottages, Treadwell power plant, and on hill above, Roll and concentrating plant, Coarse crushing plant, Railroad to mine, and Experimental mill.]
.98—1/4/14 [sic—should be 4/1/14] [rooming houses]
.99—4/1/14 [view of northern Sheep Creek wharf buildings, taken from upper deck of a ship tied to the wharf?]
.100—4/1/14 [view of southern Sheep Creek wharf buildings, taken from upper deck of a ship tied to the wharf?]
.101—4/1/14 [interior of machine shop?]
.102—4/1/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction, with automobile on wharf; compare .94 taken three months earlier]
.103—[mill construction, “DuPont Dynamite” box in foreground]
.104—[mill foundation construction]
.105—[mill foundation construction, Treadwell mine complex and town of Douglas in distance]
.106—6/7/14 [mill foundation construction, Treadwell mine complex and town of Douglas in distance]
.107—6/7/14 [steel girders in place during mill construction]
.108—6/7/14 [mill construction]
.109—same as .106
.110—6/7/14 [men working, mill construction]
.111—6/7/14 [mill construction]
.112—6/7/14 [overview of Alaska Gastineau mill construction, taken from middle of Gastineau Channel]
.113—7/16/14 [interior of machine shop (?), anvil in foreground]
.114—7/16/14 [interior of machine shop (?), truck with solid tires in background, overhead hoist labeled: “Maris Brothers. Philada. ______Capacity 12 Tons”]
.115—7/16/14 [lumber, girders, equipment stacked on Sheep Creek wharf]
.116—7/16/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.117—7/16/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.118—7/16/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.119—8/28/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.120—8/28/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.121—8/28/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.122—8/28/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.123—9/19/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction]
.124—9/19/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction, compare .120 taken from same spot]
.125—9/19/14 [Alaska Gastineau mill construction, upper level; two workmen in center are fitting a girder in place]

**Album 2—Power Supply Division: Salmon Creek**

.126—8/17/12 [floating dock construction in front of future powerplant]
.127—8/17/12 [men excavating using wheelbarrows]
.128—8/17/12 [dock construction]
.129—8/17/12 [dock construction]
.129—8/17/12 [railroad tracks, leading to Salmon Creek dam site]
.130—8/17/12 [railroad tracks]
.131—8/17/12 [railroad tracks]
.132—8/17/12 [railroad winch]
.133—8/17/12 [sawmill and railroad tracks]
.134—8/17/12 [railroad winch and operators]
.135—8/17/12 [sawmill]
.136—8/17/12 [sawmill, three men using cant hooks or peavies to roll a large beam]
.137—8/17/12 [men walking along railroad tracks, tent camp in background]
.138—8/17/12 [tent camp and railroad tracks]
.139—8/17/12 [men walking along railroad tracks]
.140—8/17/12 [lumber stacked along railroad tracks]
.141—8/17/12 [workmen roughing in new railroad tracks]
.142—8/17/12 [railroad tracks]
.143—8/17/12 [men excavating hillside, for railroad tracks?]
.144—8/17/12 [clearing through forest, for railroad tracks?]
.145—8/18/12 [railroad tracks and tent camp]
.146—8/18/12 [men with pipe section on railroad tracks from floating dock]
.147—8/18/12 [railroad tracks]
.148—8/18/12 [railroad tracks, stacked lumber]
.149—8/18/12 [railroad trestle]
.150—8/18/12 [railroad trestle]
.151—8/18/12 [railroad trestle]
.152—9/11/12 [floating dock with railroad tracks, buildings on shore]
.153—9/11/12 [worker and wagon with machinery next to railroad tracks]
.154—9/11/12 [buildings on shore, stacked pipe sections]
.155—9/11/12 [railroad tracks through forest]
.156—9/11/12 [railroad tracks on trestle]
.157—9/11/12 [railroad tracks crossing creek]
.158—9/11/12 [railroad tracks]
.159—9/11/12 [horses pulling empty tram car with two men riding, creek down below]
.160—9/11/12 [railroad tracks]
161—9/11/12 [horses pulling empty rail car with two men riding]
162—9/11/12 [construction at end of railroad tracks]
163—9/11/12 [excavation for railroad tracks]
164—9/11/12 [railroad track construction]
165—9/11/12 [railroad track construction]
166—9/11/12 [excavation for railroad tracks]
167—9/11/12 [railroad track construction]
168—9/11/12 [railroad track construction]
169—9/11/12 [dam across creek and tent camp with workers]
170—9/11/12 [tent camp in woods]
171—10/7/12, Beach camp and railroad
172—10/7/12, Piling foundation, lower power house
173—10/7/12, Cut for pipe tracks
174—10/7/12, Laying and riveting pipe
175—10/7/12, Cut for pipe tracks
176—10/7/12, Building 4 x 6 flume
177—10/7/12, Laying flume
178—10/7/12, Laying bottom of flume
179—10/7/12, Last rock cut on flume grade
180—10/7/12, Permanent b[unk?] h[ouse?] lower flume intake
181—10/7/12, Preparing dam site
182—10/7/12, Clearing of dam site
183—[snow-covered flume]
184—[snow-covered flume on trestle]
185—[snow-covered flume]
186—[snow-covered flume]
187—[snow-covered flume]
188—[sawmill, snow]
189—[flume under construction next to railroad tracks]
190—[bunkhouse, flume under construction]
191—[construction site]
192—[construction site]
193—[construction site]
194—[construction site]
195—[railroad tracks and pipeline]
196—[railroad tracks, kegs]
197—[construction site]
198—[flume construction]
199—[log dam, bunkhouse]
200—[construction camp in forest]
201—[railroad tracks, bunkhouse]
202—[power house?]
203—12/12/12 [power house buildings?]
204—[railroad tracks and sawmill]
205—[railroad tracks, buildings—at dam site?]
206—[railroad tracks, buildings—at dam site?]
At least two 0-4-0 locomotives were used for switching, one at the beach and one at the upper end of the railroad, near the dam. Howard Clifford, *Alaska/Yukon Railroads: An Illustrated History* (Arlington, WA: Oso Publishing, 1999), pp. 225 and 228.
The Salmon Creek Railway was a 36-inch narrow gauge and used a two-truck Lima Shay locomotive during construction. This was the only known Shay to have operated in Alaska; it was scrapped in 1940. Clifford, pp. 225 and 228.
.284—6/19/13, Upper dam site [panorama]
.285—7/19/13, Salmon Creek dam site [panorama]
.286—7/12/13 [dam construction site]
.287—7/12/13 [dam construction site]
.288—7/12/13 [dam construction site, conveyor belt, smoking brush fires]
.289—8/8/13 [dam construction site, looking upstream to where reservoir is now]
.290—8/8/13 [dam construction site]
.291—9/8/13 [dam construction site]
.292—8/31/13 [dam construction site, concrete dam starting to rise]
.293—9/8/13 [dam construction site]
.294—8/31/13 [pipeline and rails]
.295—8/31/13 [concrete dam rising]
.296—8/31/13 [concrete dam rising]
.297—8/31/13 [concrete dam rising]
.298—9/25/13 [view down railroad from dam construction site]
.299—9/25/13, Bagley scraper hauling in sand and gravel
.300—Shay locomotive pushing 20 tons of concrete up 7% grade
.301—9/25/13, Upper power station
.302—9/25/13 [railroad, pipeline, creek]
.304—B. S. Roberts. Foreman of dam construction. [standing in front of opening through base of dam for railroad]
.305—9/25/13, Shay locomotive pushing 20 tons of cement up 7% grade to dam construction camp. [arrow points to dam site]
.306—[pipeline, dam in distance]
.307—[mountain valley—looking upstream from dam site?]
.308—[dam construction, men pouring concrete]
.309—[dam construction]
.310—9/25/13 [dam construction, view from reservoir side looking downstream]
.311—9/25/13 [pipe sections on ground, lower end of pipeline?]
.312—9/25/13 [dam construction]
.313a—9/25/13 [dam construction]
.313b—10/6/13 [barge, wharf, powerhouse, cottages]
.314—1/5/14, #1 Power plant [interior with turbine]
.315—1/5/13 [sic—should be 1/5/14], #1 Power plant [interior with turbine]
.316—1/5/14, #2 Power plant [interior with turbines]
.317—1/5/14, #2 Power plant [interior with turbines]
.318—1/5/14 [overview of upper power station complex]
.319—[dam construction]
.320—6/8/14 [dam construction, view from reservoir side]
.321—6/8/14 [dam construction, view from downstream side]

Folder 1

.322—Perseverance Division, 3/24/14, Main Station #10 Level [inside view of mine]
.323—[inside power plant?]