

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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TITLE: Claire L. Wilcox Collection

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2009.026

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1918-1920

Extent: 29 items

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Claire L. Wilcox, Lomen Bros.

Administrative/Biographical History:

Claire L. Wilcox was born March 23, 1894, in Wisconsin. She was a BIA schoolteacher in Shungnak during 1918-1920. She was married briefly to Henry Oefstos of Shungnak. Wilcox died November 23, 1986, in California.

Scope and Content Description:

The collection consists of 27 photographs and two clippings created or collected by Wilcox while in Shungnak.

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:

Claire L. Wilcox Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2009.026

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

Donated by grand-niece Roberta Bailey in 2001. Accessioned and processed by Museum staff in 2009.

Processing Note

Photos removed from scrapbook prior to donation. Newspaper clippings photocopied; originals discarded.

SUBJECTS

Wilcox, Claire L., 1894-1986

Teachers—Alaska

Education—Alaska

Reindeer herding—Alaska

Shungnak (Alaska)

Kobuk (Alaska)

Detailed Description of the Collection

Photographs

.1 – [two men whipsawing lumber outdoors in winter. Cf. .22]

.2 – 11 teams taking equipment to gold camp at Cal. Creek [distant view of dog teams on frozen river]

.3 – Trading post, school, housing [small panoramic of village in winter, with buildings numbered in ink 1-6; at AFN 2013, location confirmed as Shungnak, including trading post, school, and houses]

.4 – Snow bound 3-18-20 [building nearly buried in snow]

- .5 – Half of door red [on verso:] Schoolhouse and me. In background is Native cabin. Gasoline drum standing in front of schoolhouse. Kitchen marked X. [Claire wearing fur parka with geometric decoration]
- .6 – Al-lek-sie [young Alaska Native boy wearing fur parka and snowshoes]
- .7 – Shungnak one stormy day, 3-18-20 [on verso:] Pupils I teach [school children posed outside log building]
- .8 – Mrs. Ferguson, Hank, Claire [three people standing in a clearing in winter]
- .9 – Twins, white father [two young Alaska Native girls posed outdoors in winter, both wearing parkas and mukluks, log cabin in background]
- .10 – Easter Sunday Apr. 12, Ferguson’s cabin (Beaverton, Ore.) [two women standing in snow above dug-out entrance to cabin, snowshoes in snow at left with washtub and shovels, outbuilding in background]
- .11 – [Alaska Native man wearing caribou parka and pants leading two reindeer]
- .12 – W.F. & team. H.O. [on verso:] California Creek above Kobuk River [large dog team stopped in camp, buildings in background]
- .13 – 100 ft. deep [scenic with snow, mountains; print marked with “x” and “2.” Cf. .14]
- .14 – Easter, April 4th, 1920 [on verso:] That’s the best Easter I’ve ever put in. Mr. Ferguson wanted a view of the upper creek and the place where they 1st struck gold [scenic of mountains in winter; print marked with “x”, “+”, and “1.”]
- .15 – Ol-look [Alaska Native child posed outdoors in winter]
- .16 – [Alaska Native man wearing Western style clothing leading two reindeer, buildings in background]
- .17 – The run-away, 3-20-’20 [on verso:] Shungnak, Alaska [sled dog racing; print marked with “x” and numbers 1-3]
- .18 – [two log buildings in winter, several children outdoors with large flagpole, date in manuscript at lower left “3-23-20”; at AFN 2013, location confirmed as Shungnak, with old schoolhouse that burned down]
- .19 – [Alaska Native girl wearing print parka posed next to log building in winter]
- .20 – Frost [man and woman wearing skin parkas and boots standing outdoors, snowshoes propped in snow behind them, mountains in distance; at AFN 2013, location identified as Kobuk, people tentatively identified as Charley Wood and one of the Cleveland girls; at AFN 2014, identity confirmed for Charley Wood]
- .21 – Olive Sheldon or Ka-schar-nak [Alaska Native girl wearing Western style coat and dress and mukluks posed outdoors]
- .22 – Whip-sawing lbr. [two men whipsawing lumber outdoors in winter. Cf. .1]
- .23 – The Lucky 13 [school children posed outside schoolhouse in winter; print labeled in manuscript “School House” and two children numbered 1-2]
- .24 – 1. Pe-luk or Nothing, 2. Nu-na or Ground, 3. Tik-ik or Finger [three Alaska Native children wearing print parkas with fur trim and mukluks posed outdoors]
- .25 – Just like we will dress, also our reindeer specimen and sled in background. This is just like we will look. Mama. Aug. 12th 1919 [Photographic postcard. Man wearing mukluks and skin parka trimmed with fur leading a single reindeer, sled in background at right; at AFN 2014, location tentatively identified as Teller. At AFN 2015, location tentatively identified as reindeer fair at Noorvik or Shungnak, man as possibly surname Kakaruk or Garnie]

.26 – On the trail, Pilgrim River, Alaska. Lomen Bros., Nome, #612 [on verso:] This is like our country will look and the way we will travel. Always have a Native guide. Notice back to sled. 8-12-'19. Mama [Photographic postcard. Two people stopped on frozen river with four reindeer pulling sleds]

.27 – W.S. [on verso:] #1 Hank Oefstos, #2 Claire L. Wilcox. Drying salmon for dog feed [large group of Alaska Native men and women preparing fish in wooded area in winter, tents in background]

Ephemera

- Clipping. "Delco Light Operates Successfully at 50° Below Zero." *Delco-Light Sales Bulletin* [no date]. "In a government school house in Shungnak, Alaska, 750 miles northeast of Nome, Delco-Light has proved its ability to operate satisfactorily under the most severe climatic conditions. The wiring material was delayed in reaching Shungnak with the plant and Mr. H.M. Oefstos, who was in charge of the school melted lead shot and poured it in cracks in the floor, making enough wire to give him light under the regular wire arrived. We quote Mr. Oefstos below regarding his experiences. The photographs show scenes around Shungnak."
- Clipping. "Passengers of lost schooner White Mountain arrive." *Nome Nugget*, Saturday August 7, 1920.

Guide updated: November 5, 2015