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TITLE: Katherine G. Kane Manuscript, My Twenty Seven Years in Alaska and the Aleutians

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2013.049

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1909-1943 (bulk 1913-1937)

Extent: 0.25 linear feet

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Katherine G. Kane, Phinney S. Hunt, Carrie Jacobs-Bond, Schallerer's

Administrative/Biographical History:

According to her autobiography, Katherine Gertrude Kane worked as a teacher and public health nurse in rural Alaska from 1913-1938. A native of Iowa, she received her teachers' training at Benedictine Academy in North Dakota and began her career as a teacher in Idaho. After her sister's death, she adopted her niece and began looking for more lucrative career options. Wanting to expand her skills, she entered a nurse training program at Providence Hospital in Spokane, Washington. She relocated to Alaska in 1913 and was offered a position as a teacher at Nushagak, but opted instead to stay for one year near Kenai Lake to help operate a hunting lodge. In 1914, she moved up to Talkeetna to establish a school for local Native children. In 1917, she transferred to Susitna Station, where she taught and then helped care for residents during an outbreak of influenza in 1918. In 1919, she moved again, to Kokrines on the Yukon River, where she taught for five years. After a short stint in Anchorage at Emard's, she relocated to Akutan in 1923, and taught in that village for five years. She spent four months in Koggiung in the Bristol Bay region before heading west again, to Atka in the Aleutian Islands. After one year, she transferred to Copper Center in Southcentral Alaska, spending another year establishing a school there. In 1931, she left for Alitak, or Akhiok, on

Kodiak Island, remaining there until 1937. The memoir ends with her request for a one-year sabbatical from teaching and her return to Washington State.

Scope and Content Description:

The collection consists of a 255-page typescript manuscript written (probably in 1938) by Katherine G. Kane, titled *My Twenty Seven Years in Alaska and the Aleutians*. The text is illustrated with mounted photographs, including both snapshots and commercial images. Twelve additional photographs were enclosed in an accompanying envelope. The text contains transcriptions of correspondence, reports, and news articles pertaining to Kane's tenure in Alaska. The manuscript bears some penciled notes, possibly made by an editor to whom the manuscript had been offered for publication. Facing page 245 is a typescript poem, "I believe," signed and dated "Carrie Jacobs-Bond, 1943." For table of contents and list of photographs, see Detailed Description of Collection.

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:

Katherine G. Kane Manuscript, *My Twenty Seven Years in Alaska and the Aleutians*, Anchorage Museum, B2013.049

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information
Item found in collection.

Processing Note

Loose photos sleeved and numbered at end of series, placed in envelope at front of manuscript.

Note

Photocopy created and cataloged for general use as a copy 2.

SUBJECTS

Kane, Katherine G.

Jetté, Jules, 1864-1927

Education--Alaska—History

Teachers—Alaska

Dena'ina Indians—Social life and customs

Ahtena Indians—Social life and customs

Yupik Eskimos—Social life and customs

Koyukon Indians—Social life and customs

Aleuts—Social life and customs

Pacific Gulf Yupik Eskimos—Social life and customs

Influenza Epidemic, 1918-1919—Alaska—Susitna River Valley

Whaling—Alaska—Akutan

Talkeetna (Alaska)

Susitna River Valley (Alaska)

Kokrines (Alaska)

Yukon River (Yukon and Alaska)

Akutan (Alaska)

Atka (Alaska)

Attu Island (Alaska)

Copper Center (Alaska)

Bristol Bay Region (Alaska)

Kodiak Island (Alaska)

Aleutian Islands (Alaska)

Detailed Description of the Collection

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Chapter Two: Su-sit-na, Shining River [p. 9]

Chapter Three: Five Years on the Yukon [p. 20]

Chapter Four: Akutan Tragedy [p. 50]

Chapter Five: Summer School at Koggiung [p. 91]

Chapter Six: Atka in the Aleutians [p. 100]

Chapter Seven: Copper Center Goes to School Again [p. 120]

Chapter Eight: Alitak the Treeless, the Ordinary [p. 128]

Chapter Nine: Religious, Funeral, and Burial Customs of the Alaskan Indians [p. 165]

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Chapter Eleven: Marriage and Morality among the Alaskan Indians [p. 194]

Chapter Twelve: The Medicine Man [p. 209]

Chapter Thirteen: Short Sketches [p. 227]

Chapter Fourteen: Gleanings from a Whaling Station [p. 244]

Chapter Fifteen: Letters and Observations [p. 250]

Photographs, mounted

- .1 – facing p. 1. [Author’s caption:] The author, Miss Katherine G. Kane
- .2 – facing p. 4. [Author’s caption:] Going to Susitna on the river steamer, Omneca. [On photo:] Str. Omineca, Anchorage, Alaska, A.E.C. G513 P.S. Hunt
- .3 – facing p. 9. [On photo:] Business section of Susitna Station, Alaska. A.E.C. G639 P.S. Hunt
- .4 – between p. 9-10. [Author’s caption:] My niece Loretta at Susitna
- .5 – between p. 9-10. [Author’s caption:] My school at Susitna, the author in the white uniform
- .6 – between p. 9-10. [Author’s caption:] Hitting the trail for the gold strike at Cache Creek [On photo:] St. Patrick’s Day, 1909, Susitna Station, Alaska
- .7 – facing p. 20. [Author’s caption:] The way they catch fish on the Tanana. [On photo:] Fish wheel, Tanana River, Alaska
- .8 – facing p. 20. [Author’s caption:] The river steamer Alaska on the Yukon
- .9 – facing p. 29. [Author’s caption:] The school at Kokrines as I found it
- .10 – facing p. 29. [Author’s caption:] The school at Kokrines as I left it
- .11 – facing p. 30. [Author’s caption:] Stern wheelers run on the mighty Yukon. [On photo:] On the Yukon River, Alaska
- .12 – facing p. 31. [Author’s caption:] The Roman Catholic mission at Kokrines, Father Jette’s church
- .13 – facing p. 31. [Author’s caption:] Indian cache at Kokrines
- .14 – facing p. 32. [Author’s caption:] My pupils at the Kokrines school
- .15 – facing p. 32. [Author’s caption:] Hunters returning with the “bacon”
- .16 – facing p. 35. [Author’s caption:] Snow even covered the cabins at Kokrines
- .17 – facing p. 35. [Author’s caption:] Spring break-up on the Yukon
- .18 – facing p. 36. [Author’s caption:] Boy and dogs at Kokrines
- .19 – facing p. 36. [Author’s caption:] Reindeer herd at Melozia on the Yukon [Melozi or Melozikakat?]
- .20 – facing p. 51. [Author’s caption:] Steamer Starr in distress on the Kodiak-Seward run
- .21 – facing p. 51 [Author’s caption:] Visiting at the whaling station at Akutan
- .22 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] Full-blooded Aleut men, adults at Akutan [at AFN 2014, man at left tentatively identified as Arthur Stepetin Sr.; at AFN 2015, man in center tentatively identified as John Tcheripanoff]
- .23 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] Full-blooded Aleut women, adults and babes [at AFN 2016, woman at right identified as relative of Zacharofs; at AFN 2023, the individual on the top right of group was identified as a relative of the Zacharofs]
- .24 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] Full-blooded Aleut children, note the smiles on their faces
- .25 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] My school children and myself at Akutan [At AFN 2015, boy in center rear identified as a McGlashan; at AFN 2023, an individual in the middle of the group at the top was identified as possibly a member of the McGlashan family]
- .26 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] My school takes a hike over to Lazy Bay

.27 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] My school house and myself at Akutan

.28 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] Half breed children of Norwegian and Aleut parentage. No Russian blood here. The cannery boats bring the Norwegian fishermen here [at AFN 2015, identified as McGlashan children with mother, Matrona “Matty” McGlashan]

.29 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] Akutan village, note the church in the background

.30 – between p. 77-78. [Author’s caption:] Christmas tree at Akutan

.31 – between p. 77-78. [Author’s caption:] Note the various reactions of the children towards the camera

.32 – between p. 77-78. [Author’s caption:] “The carrying of the stars” at Christmas time

.33 – between p. 77-78. [Author’s caption:] Christmas at the government school at Akutan

.34 – between p. 91-92. [Author’s caption:] On board the motor ship Boxer bound for Koggiung

.35 – between p. 91-92. [Author’s caption:] My school at Koggiung has a visitor

.36 – between p. 91-92. [Author’s caption:] A good view of my summer school at Koggiung

.37 – facing p. 100. [Author’s caption:] The village of Atka

.38 – facing p. 100. [Author’s caption:] My school at Atka had lighthouse windows

.39 – facing p. 100. [Author’s caption:] The village of Attu, closely related to Atka by blood and geography [On photo:] Attu [second copy in loose photos]

.40 – facing p. 101. [Author’s caption:] When Chief Zoachney visits my school at Atka, we have our picture taken [Chief Makary Zaachney with students]

.41 – facing p. 120. [Author’s caption:] The village of Copper Center congregates together with my school [at AFN 2013, boy seated in center tentatively identified as Robert Marshall. At AFN 2016, girl fourth from left in second row tentatively identified as Adena Kindgren]

.42 – between p. 128-129. [Author’s caption:] The entrance to Alitak Bay looks like this

.43 – between p. 128-129. [Author’s caption:] I look out the school house window and see twin peaks across the bay

.44 – between p. 128-129. [Author’s caption:] Rear view of Alitak village

.45 – between p. 128-129. [Author’s caption:] The Indian dormitories at the P.A.F. cannery

.46 – between p. 128-129. [Author’s caption:] Trap Point. Seven miles from Alitak school. Great fishing grounds for Alitak Indians

.47 – between p. 128-129. [Author’s caption:] Dead Bay near Alitak. Gold is found here on the beaches

.48 – facing p. 129. [Author’s caption:] To the astonishment of the Indians, the airplane comes to Alitak for the first time

.49 – facing p. 129. [Author’s caption:] Cape Alitak, where the petrographs are found

.50-.52 – facing p. 148. [Author’s caption:] Petrographs found on the rocks on Cape Alitak, hints of an earlier civilization [petroglyphs] [second copy of .51 and 2 additional copies of .52 in loose photos]

.53 – facing p. 161. [Author’s caption:] My adopted daughter, Patsy Jean

.54 – facing p. 165. [Author’s caption:] On board the Coast Guard cutter Brant with Commissioner Bell and ladies. The author is third from the left

.55 – facing p. 164. [Author’s caption:] Greek Orthodox church at Kodiak, note the three barred cross of St. Peter

- .56 – facing p. 164. [Author’s caption:] Indian funeral on the Yukon River [at AFN 2016, location tentatively identified as Tanana or Kokrines]
- .57 – facing p. 168. [Author’s caption:] Interior of the Greek Orthodox Catholic Church at Akutan, note the ikons etc.
- .58 – facing p. 168. [Author’s caption:] The bishop visits his flock at Unalaska [at AFN 2015, priest in rear at left tentatively identified as Father Makari Baranoff, woman at left under archway as Maria Yatchmeneff, man second from right under archway as Chief Alexei Yatchmeneff, woman in front of pillar at rear as possibly Helen Merculieff]
- .59 – facing p. 193. [Author’s caption:] Wedding at Unalaska. At the wedding feast bride and groom eat from the same dish [at AFN 2015, man front left identified as a McGlashan, bride as Zenia, groom as Casey [?]]
- .60 – facing p. 193. [Author’s caption:] Katie Tcheripanoff and Gregior Prokoptoff at home after their marriage
- .61 – facing p. 193. [Author’s caption:] Child marriage at Akutan. The bride is 13; the groom nearly 40
- .62 – facing p. 194. [Author’s caption:] Wedding at Akutan. The god mother wears a veil
- .63 – between p. 244-245. [Author’s caption:] The whale boat Tanalac makes a kill. Harpooning a hum[p]back whale near Akutan. [On photo:] Harpooning
- .64 – between p. 244-245. [Author’s caption:] A sulphur bottom whale drawn up on the slip. [On photo:] Sulphur bottom
- .65 – between p. 244-245. [Author’s caption:] Blue whale 96 feet long. [On photo:] Blue whale 96 ft. long
- .66 – between p. 244-245. [Author’s caption:] Sperm whale at Akutan. [On photo:] Sperm

Photographs, loose

- .67 – [group portrait outside Kokrines schoolhouse]
- .68 – [steamship *Starr* in distress]
- .69 – [group portrait outside Koggiung schoolhouse]
- .70 – [similar to .69]
- .71 – [group portrait outside Copper Center schoolhouse]
- .72 – [Photographic postcard, stamped “Schallerer’s Alaska Shop, Seward, Alaska.” Stamp placed over earlier stamp, “John [?], Unalaska, Alaska.” Group portrait of bishop and parishioners at Unalaska. At AFN 2023, the building in the background was identified as the Church of the Holy Ascension in Unalaska.]
- .73 – July 1936 [Katherine Kane with young girl outside house, Anchorage?]
- .74 – [musicians on deck of ship, including guitars and banjo, possibly the *Boxer*?]

Guide updated: October 26, 2016; July 16, 2025