

**REFERENCE CODE:** AkAMH

**REPOSITORY NAME:**

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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 below.

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:

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:

Katherine G. Kane Manuscript, *My Twenty Seven Years in Alaska and the Aleutians*, Anchorage Museum, B2013.49

## **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 end of manuscript.

## Note

Photocopy created and cataloged for general, non-circulating library access, call # F909 .K36.

This collection contains outdated language and harmful sentiments that do not reflect the mission and goals of the Anchorage Museum. Additionally, there contains descriptions of abusive and predatory behavior, as well as descriptions of Indigenous community gatherings and activities that may be misrepresented and/or contain culturally sensitive information. At the time of this Finding Aid update, it is unknown to the Archivist whether those practices are considered open or closed. We consent to input and recommendations as we work on decolonizing our collections.

The following materials in the collection have been restricted due to sensitive content:  
.56, Chapter 9 (pages 165-180), Chapter 12 (pages 209-226).

## RELATED MATERIALS

B1990.003 Alyce E. Anderson Photographs  
B2004.002 Stiffler Collection  
B2006.001 Mary Jane Sausser Collection  
B2008.005 Chester and Leah Webster Peterson Collection  
B2009.026 Claire L. Wilcox Collection  
B2012.031 Rupert A. Moon Collection  
B2014.012 Charles W. Wray Negatives  
B2019.003 Eklutna and Anvik Collection

## SUBJECTS

Kane, Katherine G.  
Jetté, Jules, 1864-1927  
Education — Alaska — History  
Teachers — Alaska  
Dena'ina (Indigenous people) — Alaska  
Ahtna (Indigenous people) — Alaska  
Yup'ik (Indigenous people) — Alaska  
Koyukon (Indigenous people) — Alaska  
Unanga̋ (Indigenous people) — Alaska  
Siberian Yupik (Indigenous people) — Alaska  
Influenza Epidemic, 1918-1919 — Alaska — Susitna River Valley  
Whaling — Alaska — Akutan  
K'dalkitnu / Talkeetna (Alaska)  
Susitna River Valley (Alaska)  
Łoyh Denlekk'es Denh / Kokrines (Alaska)  
Yookkene / Yukon River (Yukon and Alaska)  
Achan-ingiiga / Akutan (Alaska)  
At̋a̋ / Atka (Alaska)  
Atan / Attu Island (Alaska)

Tl'atitcae'e Copper Center (Alaska)  
Bristol Bay Region (Alaska)  
Qikertaq / Kodiak Island (Alaska)  
Aleutian Islands (Alaska)  
United States – Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)  
Potlatch  
Roadhouses – Alaska  
Canneries  
Cannery workers  
Alaska Railroad  
Northern Commercial Company

Detailed Description of the Collection

### **Table of Contents**

#### **Chapter One: Beginnings [p. 1]**

Introduction of the author, brief education in nursing, Alaskan vocabulary and definitions, Talkeetna school, interactions with Chief Nicholi and family, descriptions of local white people, community work, and church happenings.

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

About Susitna village, 1918 Influenza Epidemic – efforts to seek help, lives lost, burial preparations, letters regarding flu and orphan aid.

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

Journey to new posting at Kokrines school – modes of transportation, people met, roadhouse lodgings, meals and community gatherings, week layover in Fairbanks, and arrival at Kokrines, teaching in the community, and travels into Anchorage.

Descriptions of Kokrines community and Indigenous people, including details about leather and beadwork, language, dogsled travel, potlatch, songs, foods, and funerary ceremony.

#### **Chapter Four: Akutan Tragedy [p. 50]**

Teaching appointment in Akutan, Morningside Hospital, canneries and Filipino cannery workers, Cook Inlet and Kodiak areas, arrival at Akutan, observations about Akutan people and community, illnesses, alcohol use, student academics and industrial work, drownings and following funerary preparations.

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

Teaching appointment in Koggiung, canneries near Bristol Bay area, living arrangements, fixing up the school, medical care, reindeer herding, alcohol use in the community, teaching, Christmas preparations, and fund-raising event featuring talents of culturally-diverse cannery workers, departing Koggiung.

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

Transfer to school in Atka, accommodations, impressions of the students, descriptions of the environment, Northern Commercial Co. and local salmon industry, fur prices, bidarkas, baskets, Unalaska Russian church and religious activity, Atka economy, Indigenous leadership, and buildings in the community.

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

Teaching appointment in Copper Center, descriptions of students and Indigenous community, the schoolhouse, Alaska Road Commission presence, the Christmas season, and Village Council.

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

Journey to Alitak school appointment in 1931. Descriptions of the Indigenous community, school building, landscape, trapping, brown bear, reindeer herd, beach mining for gold, Greek orthodox religion, residents, teacher from Eklutna Industrial School, healthcare in Copper Center, school activities, Pacific American Fisheries, Christmas festivities, fur trapping, petroglyphs, correspondence with Otto Geist, Greek Orthodox religion, alcohol use and temperance, food preservation, and the adoption of Patsy Jean.

Chapter Nine: [Restricted due to sensitive content]

Chapter Ten: Totems and Legends of the Alaskan Indians [p. 181]

Perceptions of Indigenous Alaskan stories and similarities to other religious stories, a retelling of How Raven Stole the Sun and Cannibal Giant, and stories and identity as told through totem poles.

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

Perceptions of Indigenous attitudes about marriage and sex, predatory behavior of white men towards Indigenous girls, descriptions of social practices that author did not approve of, involvement of Father Jules Jette with marriages, and fertility.

Chapter Twelve: [Restricted due to sensitive content]

Chapter Thirteen: Short Sketches [p. 227]

A series of poems and short stories about the author's experiences and acquaintances in various regions of Alaska.

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

Descriptions of whales in the North Pacific ocean, whaling at Akutan, and hunting and butchering whales for a variety of products.

Chapter Fifteen: Letters and Observations [p. 250]

Observations on Alaska and Akutan in particular.

**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:] [Indigenous] 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 [Indigenous, likely Unangan] 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 [Indigenous, likely Unangan] women, adults and babes [at AFN 2016, woman at right identified as relative of Zacharofs]
- .24 – between p. 59-60. [Author’s caption:] Full-blooded [Indigenous, likely Unangan] 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]
- .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 [Indigenous, likely Unangan] parentage. No Russian blood here. The cannery boats bring the Norwegian fishermen here [at AFN 2015, identified as McGlashan children with mother, Matriona “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 [Indigenous] 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 [Indigenous people]

.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 [Indigenous community], the airplane comes to Alitak for the first time

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

.50-.52 – facing p. 148. [Author’s caption:] Petroglyphs 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 – **[Restricted due to sensitive content]**

.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 – [Katherine Kane and schoolchildren outside Koggiung school]
- .70 – [Schoolchildren outside Koggiung school, similar to .69]
- .71 – [group portrait outside Copper Center schoolhouse] [Katherine in white on far right. Similar to .41.]
- .72 – On back: John B. [illegible], Unalaska, Alaska. Schallerer's Alaska Shop, Seward, Alaska [Photographic postcard. Group portrait of visiting bishop and parishioners at Unalaska. Similar to .58]
- .73 – July 1936 [Katherine Kane with young girl outside house, possibly daughter Patsy Jean, Anchorage?]
- .74 – [musicians on deck of ship, including guitars and banjo, possibly the *U.S.S. Boxer*?]

Guide updated: October 26, 2016

Guide updated: September 2, 2025