

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center
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Guide prepared by: Ivy Turinsky, Archivist

TITLE: CIHS Henton

COLLECTION NUMBER: B1970.009

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: circa 1964

Extent: 1 item

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Ward W. Wells

Administrative/Biographical History:

Fred Henton was born in 1889/1890. He traveled Alaska as a mail-carrier, game guide, prospector, explorer, and dog musher. Henton became a stowaway on the S. S. "Corwin" in 1905, arriving in Sit̄asuaq (Nome), Iñupiaq territory at just 15 years old. In 1913, he took charge of the 42 sled dogs traveling with the Stefansson Canadian Arctic expedition. He was on board the whaling ship "Karluk" when it became trapped in ice and was one of few crewmembers to survive the ordeal. He had a lodge at Kanatak, Alutiiq/Sugpiaq territory and chartered Qikertaq (Kodiak Island), Alutiiq/Sugpiaq territory on foot, a project which took 9 years. From 1942-44, Henton ran the Van Glider Hotel in Qutalleq (Seward), Alutiiq/Sugpiaq territory. Later in his life, he established a lodge at the confluence of the Kenai and Russian Rivers on the Kenai Peninsula. Fred Henton lived to be at least 74 years old, as recorded in 1963, but his exact date of death is unknown.

Ward Wallace Wells, Jr. (1920-1982) was born in Rich Lake, Wisconsin. He arrived first in Dzánti K'ihéeni (Juneau), Lingít Aaní with his first wife Virginia in 1946 and moved to Dgheyaytnu (Anchorage), Dena'ina Eñena the following year where he opened a photography studio on Fifth Avenue and G Street. Wells was active for the next thirty years, shooting commercial activities throughout the state, taking portraits, and building an extensive file of

stock photographs, including images of business activities, new buildings, portraits, Fur Rendezvous, the Anchorage Symphony, and the 1964 earthquake. He also traveled extensively for work and captured many significant images of communities in northern and western Alaska. His work was featured in national magazines like Life and Time, as well as in the press and on national television. He maintained an active studio and was well known throughout the state until his death in 1982.

Scope and Content Description:

This collection consists of one mounted portrait of Fred A. Henton. The photographer is Ward W. Wells.

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.

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Preferred Citation: CIHS Henton, Anchorage Museum, B1970.009

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

Donated by Ward W. Wells to the Cook Inlet Historical Society April 17, 1970. Transferred to the Anchorage Museum.

Processing Note

Museum accession number 1970.021. Item stored in oversized materials.

RELATED MATERIALS

B1965.011 CIHS Henton

B1965.018 Fred Henton Collection

B1971.032 Henton Memorabilia

B1983.091 Ward Wells Collection

SUBJECTS

Henton, Fred A. (1889-1963)

Wells, Ward W. (1920-1982)

Detailed Description of the Collection

Box 1, Folder 1

.1 – [studio portrait of Fred A. Henton. Photographer, Ward W. Wells. Same as B1965.011]

Guide written: August 28, 2003

Guide updated: June 24, 2026