

Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

McNeil, Charles H.

Charles H. "Charlie" McNeil Papers, ca. 1898-1924

MS 202

1 box  
7 folders

Processed By: Kay Shelton  
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**ACQUISITION:** The Charles H. McNeil manuscript and photograph collection consists of donations from family members and researchers: Eleanor Brown (Acc.#2003-15) with photocopies of the Brown papers held by Janet Klein, Joanne E. Sargent Wolverton (Acc. # 2003-16), and photocopies of the Rexford Peterson genealogy and family photographs made available by Lake Clark National Park (Acc. #2003-17).

**ACCESS:** The collection is available for viewing, however, the photographs may not be photocopied. The McNeil-Sargent-Wolverton album is also on CD-ROM.

**COPYRIGHT:** Request for permission to publish or reproduce material from the collection should be discussed with the Librarian.

**PROCESSING:** The Brown donation was compared to photocopies made in the mid-1990s by researcher Janet Klein. Any original not received by the Library was copied from the Klein materials and its source noted.

The McNeil-Sargent-Wolverton albums were loaned for duplication. The albums were digitally photographed; also prints and 4 x 5" negatives were produced for selected images. The prints and negatives were numbered and housed in mylar. Letters in the scrapbook were photocopied on acid-free paper and placed in a file folder in the photograph collection.

## Biographical Note

- 11/13/1859 Born in LaCrosse, Wisconsin to Henry W. and Elsie Pruett McNeil
- 1865? – 1876? Elk Point, Union County, Dakota Territory; father died in 1872
- 1876 Family to Western Slope of Colorado, where mother Elsie marries Joseph Sargent
- 1887 Charles H. McNeil (age 28) marries Etta Isabelle Rexford, Delta CO
- 11/1897 Leaves Delta, Colorado for Alaska
- 1898-1924 McNeil in Alaska: first to Copper River and then to Cook Inlet and Bristol Bay. Camp at McNeil River established, perhaps around 1910 or 1911. Rest of time in Alaska spent in this area near Kamishak Bay. (McNeil describes his cabin as located on the "Little Kamishak River.") Dated noted in records:
- 1904 photo of "Savanooski Volcano" (Mt. Katmai?)
- 1911 Stakes gold claim at Paint River area, 17 miles from Kamishak Bay
- 1912 Photos of camp after the Katmai eruption
- 1914 and 1918 Agreements for mining with partners
- 1921 Oil and gas permit for Douglas River area: Douglas Dome Oil Claim
- 1923 Copper Claims, Tut-Ankamon Group
- 12/23/1924 Married Etta C. Kennedy; settles in California; no record of any return to Alaska
- 1940s Charlie H. McNeil writes to nephew Elbert E. Sargent about his days in Alaska, especially his search for gold and copper.
- 1947-1948 Nephew Elbert E. Sargent visits old camp both summers, hunting and fishing and takes pictures of trips.
- 12/20/1948 Charles H. McNeil dies in Atascadero, CA
- 1950-1960s Elbert E. Sargent lives in Alaska and with daughter Joanne explores Iliamna and Kamishak mining district.

*--Includes information contributed by donors Eleanor Brown, Rex Peterson, and Joanne E. Sargent Wolvoerton as well as researchers John Branson, Janet Klein, and Tom Walker (in his article "Charlie McNeil: explorer, miner, businessman," Anchorage Daily News. WE ALASKANS, September 6, 1992, p. K-5).*

## Scope and Content

The Charlie H. McNeil collection is a gathering of family records contributed by several branches of Charlie McNeil descendants. The collection--photographs, legal documents, letters, and ephemera--reflects his time in Alaska from 1898 through 1924 and includes evidence of his residence at Iliamna, his prospecting activities – gold, copper, and oil and gas and other money-making activities – stream watchman at Chenik, hunter and trapper. The collection is comprised of manuscript and photograph collections (MS 202 and PCA 442) and then arranged under the donor name:

- Brown Donation (MS202, folders 1-6, and PCA 442, folder 10)
- Sargent-Wolverton Donation of photograph albums (PCA 442, Folders 1-9)
- Rex Peterson Donation of family images and genealogy notes (photocopies, MS202, Folder 7).

## Inventory

The Brown papers consist of planning and legal documents concerning mining, oil and gas claims, fishing and hunting and a few letters regarding the claims. The Peterson papers are photocopies of the McNeil family photographs and genealogy. (Other papers, located in PCA442, Folder 2 and 3 (McNeil-Sargent-Wolverton album) include 1940s letters from McNeil to his nephew E.E. Sargent.)

### **Brown Donation: (MS 202, Folders 1-6; PCA 441, Folder 7)**

Folder 1: Receipts, Expenses, Shipping Licenses, 1905-1924:

Folder 2: Oil and Gas Claim, 1920-1925

Folder 3: Tut-Ankamon Claim, Jessie A. Haskins, 1925

Folder 4: Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence, including one postcard addressed to Mrs. E. C. Kennedy of Ridgeway, Colorado, postmarked May 10, 1915. Mostly business correspondence from 1923-1925

Folder 5: Reward/Ridgeway Claims, 1913-1925, Iliamna Recording District, Kamishak.

Folder 6: Research Files of notes (photocopies) from Janet Klein/Eleanor Brown/Tom Walker, including photocopies of Brown material that does not have originals.

### **Peterson Donation (MS 202, Folder 7)**

Folder 7: Photocopies of Rex Peterson's notes on family genealogy; images/photographs. [Lake Clark National Park has scanned prints of these.]