

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Journal of the Light Station at Cape St. Elias Construction, 1915-1916

MS 274

1 Phase box
2 Journals, b&w photographs

Processed by: Sara Bornstein, Apr. 2013
Revised by: Jacki Swearingen, Apr. 2013

ACQUISITION: The collection was presented by District 17, U.S. Coast Guard May-June, 1959. Acc. # 12787. The collection was cataloged as VK 1025.S256 Vol. 1-2 Oversize until April 2013, when it was re-categorized as a manuscript collection.

ACCESS: The collection is unrestricted.

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

PROCESSING: One journal has had some restoration work done to its binding. The journals are stored in a custom phase box.

HISTORICAL NOTE

In October of 1913, Congress appropriated \$115,000 for the construction of a permanent lighthouse on Cape St. Elias.

A party of six men, supervised by engineer Harry Fuller, landed on Kayak Island on May 13, 1915, to set up camp and conduct a topographic survey of the site in preparation for the imminent construction of the lighthouse.

Superintendent Ralph Tinkham arrived at the island on June 1, 1915, from Ketchikan with lumber, skilled labor, provisions, and a cook. F.J. Dohrer would serve as the project foreman. Superintendent Tinkham spent five weeks on the cape finishing his designs for the station's structures and selecting their locations. The lighthouse was built on a terrace, forty-two feet above the water, and consisted of a two-story, twelve-foot-square tower attached to the southwest corner of the one-story, 25' X 36' fog signal building.

The Cape St. Elias Light Station was lighted September 16, 1916. It projected 300,000 candlepower with a range, due to its elevation, of about 15 nautical miles.

Information from:

LighthouseFriends.com - <http://www.lighthousefriends.com/light.asp?ID=830>

"Alaska Lighthouse Tales" by Shannon Lowry; Alaska Magazine, October 1990, Volume 56 No. 10, pgs. 30-45

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

This collection contains two journals that document the construction of the Cape St. Elias Light Station. One journal contains only penned records of each day's work. The other journal contains photographs with penned captions.

INVENTORY

1. Journal of the Construction of Cape St. Elias Lt. Sta.; May 13, 1915 to Fri., Sept 1, 1916
Superintendent's Files Journal of the Construction of Cape St. Elias Light Station
by F. J. Dohrer, Foreman and A. Lockner
[Most entries by F.J. Dohrer and J. Rison]
2. Cape St. Elias Light Station, Alaska. Photographic Record of Construction Season of 1915, from June 1 to September 1, 1915. [Most photos by R.R.Tinkham and F.J. Dohrer]
Identified portrait images include:
F. J. Dohrer, Temporary Foreman
R. R. Tinkham, Superintendent 16th District;
H. L. Fuller, Topographer
Tom Pierce, Cook