

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Combest, Shelby B.

Shelby B. Combest Photograph Collection, ca. 1900-1920

PCA 308

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Shelby Combest was born on February 22, 1880. He spent some time prior to 1920 working at Treadwell as a mining engineer and was in charge of the cyanide plant there. In 1924 and 1925 he was superintendent of the cyanide plant at Chichagof and at the time of his death, was acting superintendent of the mine. He died in a fall down a chute on August 13, 1925, and was buried in Beach, Washington. His wife Mable [Mabel] was a niece of Alaskan photographer, Ed Andrews, and they had two daughters.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Combest photographed the Treadwell mine, Juneau and sites in southeast Alaska including Speel River and Snettisham. He also photographed the 1911 Valdez flood, Copper River & Northwestern Railway, and the Wrangell Mountains. There are a few views of Canada including the White Pass & Yukon route. The collection includes some photographs by Alaskan photographers Elbridge Merrill, L.H. Pedersen and others.

Shelby Combest's daughter, Susan, donated the collection of approximately 300 photographs to the library in February 1989.

[Added note: Jim Geraghty reviewed the collection in January, 2004 and offered further identification to some of the images. His notes have been added to the finding aid in brackets, followed by initials, JG.]

INVENTORY

JUNEAU, ALASKA

1. View from A.J.G.M. [Alaska Juneau Gold Mining] Co. Mill [Juneau from the side of Mt. Gastineau].
2. Juneau Looking towards Douglas [U.S. Courthouse at right].
3. Juneau [view of downtown area through trees].
4. Juneau [downtown residential area from Third to Seventh Streets].
5. Juneau [from Douglas Island hillside].
6. Juneau [harbor view from Gastineau Channel].
7. Juneau [view from Treadwell area in winter].
8. ALASK [Alaska] JUNEAU Gold Mining Co. Mill [from Gastineau Channel].
9. [Snow covered trees.]
10. [Looking over Douglas city hillside toward Alaska Gastineau Mining Co. mill in winter.]
11. [Looking over Douglas city toward Alaska Gastineau Mining Co. mill and Thane; winter view.]
12. [Looking past Treadwell toward Juneau from snowy hillside; winter view.]
13. [Four men posed on boardwalk; Treadwell? Man at right holds camera.]
14. [Flock of baby buggies for sale on a street corner.]
15. [Balances in glass cases on counter.]
16. [Deer on snowy bank.]
17. [Mining mill on steep hillside.][Cyanide plant at Mexican Alaskan; see #81, 82. JG]
18. [Side view of mill.] [Cyanide plant at Mexican Alaskan; see #81, 82. JG]

19. [Couple on Douglas Island hillside; Juneau in background.]
20. [Mine buildings above Gastineau Channel (?).]
21. [Wharves at Douglas city; Juneau in the background.]
22. [Douglas city from the water; winter view.]
23. [Beached boats at low tide near buildings.]
24. [Douglas; gulls sitting on floating poles in harbor.]
25. Christmas Tree (WP Lass) [Larss].
26. Steel Skeleton (Central Hoisting Plant), Treadwell.
27. [Mill buildings.]

TREADWELL

28. Supt. Kinzies' House [Douglas].
29. Supt. Kinzie['s] Yard.
30. Treadwell Dock. S.S. SPOKANE.
31. Treadwell Dock. S.S. METEOR.

SHEEP CREEK

32. Sheep Creek MT [winter view]. Blurred
33. Sluicing out for A.G.G.M. Co. Mill [overall view of Alaska Gastineau Gold Mining Co. mill].
34. Sheep Creek in distance [Douglas wharves in foreground].
35. Sheep Creek Bunk Houses. A.G.G.M. Co. [looking across water].

DOUGLAS VIEWS

36. [Man, two women and two children with dogs in front of houses.]

37. [Two women and two children in front of houses.]
38. [No photograph.]
39. [Looking down one lane dirt road between houses.]
40. [Looking down board road toward houses.]
41. Glory Hole [Treadwell pit].
42. Rexall Drug Store. Douglas.
43. Main Street, Douglas [men lined up on sidewalk].

TREADWELL

44. A View [looking over rooftops toward Mayflower Island; see also 94]. Blurred
45. Natives [Indian women selling basketry on boardwalk].
46. Cyanide Dance [hall decorated with banner saying "Happy New Year"].
47. 4th of July Potatoe [Potato] Race.
48. Dog Team [pulling wagon on boardwalk past crowd of men].
49. ? [Four women and a man; 3/4 length portrait].
50. Cook Houe [house] [young man in apron standing outside long building].
51. Cook Houe [house] [man walking past].
52. [AMY coming into shore.]
53. [FOX; side view.]
54. [LONE FISHERMAN on Gastineau Channel; side view.]
55. DIXIE [looking down at two women seated on roof of boat at dock].

REFINERY AT TREADWELL

56. Reverberatory furnace [interior view].
57. Blast furnace [interior view].
58. \$180,000.00 Amalgam Gold [gold bullion and balance].
59. \$140,000.00 Cyanide Bullion [and balance].
60. Faber Du Faur Furnaces [interior view].
61. Merrill Presses [man at center].
62. Reverberatory Furnace [man with cart loaded with gold bullion].
63. Muffle Furnace [man seated at center].

TREADWELL

64. Tube Mill. Cyanide Plant [interior view of machinery].
65. Dorr Classifier. Cyanide Plant [interior view]. Blurred
66. Kelley filter Press. Cyanide Plant.
67. Pachucas. Cyanide Plant [large vats in building].
68. Refinery [exterior view of cyanide plant].
69. Cyanide Plant [exterior view].
70. Bullion To Mint [three men on exterior platform with heavy box on cart].
71. Office. Cyanide Plant [three men around desk].
72. Merrill Presses [interior view].
73. Mexican Hoist [interior view].
74. [\$1]180,000.00 Clean up, Mill Bullion [similar to 581.
75. Central Hoist [overall view].
76. Central Hoist and Bins [overall view].

77. Central Hoist Bins.
78. Treadwell Bunk Houses [exterior view].
79. 700 Mill [exterior view].
80. R.B. Hoist House [overall view].
81. Cyanide Plant [exterior view].
82. Cyanide Plant [overall exterior view].
83. Club House [exterior view].
84. R.B. Mill [view from the beach].
85. Concrete Bin [construction area].
86. Mexican Oil Tank [on beach; Juneau in background].
87. [Five boys lined up on porch in Douglas; Mayflower Island?]
88. [Man standing on beach log looking at some wreckage.]
89. [Small boat approaching shore.]
90. [Ball game with large crowd around field.]
91. [The Nowell Gold Mining Co. mill.] [Sheep Creek Valley. JG]
92. [Looking down steep tram rails toward mine buildings in steep valley.][Sheep Creek Valley. JG]
93. Treadwell, Alaska [overall view from hill above mine, looking north]. (no. 27)
94. Treadwell [similar to 441.
95. Treadwell Boarding House [bird's eye view].
96. Sheep Creek [overall view over Douglas and Gastineau Channel in winter].
97. Ball Grounds.

98. Alaska Mexican Mill [overall view across water].
99. Glory Hole [Treadwell complex across the water].
100. 700 Mill [view from beach].
101. Ready Bullion Mill [overall view across water].

NUGGET CREEK

102. Mendenhall Glacier [distant view across gravel bed].
103. Mendenhall Glacier [face; river bed in foreground].
104. Foot of Glacier.
105. Nugget creek breaking out under Glacier.
106. Derrick at Dam site [winter scene].
107. Derrick in pit.
108. Derrick in pit. Blurred view
109. Saw Mill.

MENDENHALL GLACIER

110. General View.
111. Nugget Creek [emerging from glacier].
112. River [and glacier].
113. Mendenhall River [turbulent water beneath glacier].

NUGGET CREEK

114. Mendenhal [Mendenhall] Glacier [crevasses].
115. Mendenhal [Mendenhall] Glacier [distant aerial view].

116. Bunk House.
117. Pipe Line Tunnel [on hillside; trestle in foreground]. [Wrong photo above caption. Sawmill. See #109]
118. Nugget Creek.
119. Mendenhall Glacier Crevasse.
120. Falls on Creek.
121. Moraine [moraine] looking across rock flats toward mountains].
122. Stave Pipe Line [general view. as in "barrel stave."].
123. Nugget Creek [valley].
124. Tunnel [two men leaning on ore car near adit].

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125. Tease Falls.
126. Tease Creek.
127. First Cabin at Speel (Nov. 18, 1913).
128. Looking out Speel Inlet.
129. Signal Peak [snow covered].
130. Lime Ridge [snowy peak beyond river valley].
131. Goat Mountain [winter scene].
132. No. 2 Lake [from forested shore].

SPEEL RIVER

133. General Views [snowy mountains beyond water].
134. Looking towards Tease Lake [snowy mountains in background].

135. Mount Long [winter view].
136. Mallard Cove [snowy mountains beyond water].
137. Tease Creek.
138. Tease Harbor [snowy mountains across water].
139. Tease Creek [overall view].
140. Tease Lake.
141. Crater Lake [snow-covered lake and mountains].
142. Damsite, Crater Lake [looking across snow covered lake].
143. Damsite, Crater Lake [winter view].
144. Damsite, Speel River [winter view].
145. Speel Cabins [at edge of water].
146. Speel Cabins [same as 1451].
147. Anchor Cove [boat in still water at foot of snowy Mountainside].
148. Speel River [same as 1361].

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149. Goat Meat [four men with dead mountain goat in snow].
150. Chas. Hayes [man standing next to survey tripod in snow near sign reading, "Speel River Tunnel Location and Water Diversion"]-
151. On Signal Peak [two men standing in snowfield near snowshoes].
152. On Signal Peak [similar to 1511.]
153. Long Lake [overall view into steep mountains].
154. Moon Light [snowy mountain and water].

155. Camp at Speel [three men standing at forest edge].
156. Finish of Survey at Speel [distant view of three men on snowy shore].
157. Goat Cliff [view across water].
158. Mouth of Speel River [overall view].
159. Indian Lake.
160. Looking out Snettisham Inlet [overall winter view].
161. Speel Inlet [view across water].
162. Snettisham Inlet [view across water].
163. Snettisham Inlet [view across water].
164. Taku Inlet [view across water].
165. Mountain Goat [and kid on slope above lake].
166. Rock Ptarmigan.
167. Taku Inlet [view across water].
168. Laboratory at Treadwell [interior view].
169. Snettisham [man, woman and dog on porch of house].
170. Snettisham [man and woman on porch of house].
171. Douglas [snowy street scene; post office at right].
172. Treadwell [from beach].

VALDEZ DURING FLOOD OF 1911

173. [People on boardwalk debris in flooded town].
174. [Wrecked houses in floodwaters.]
175. [Large number of men and women on boardwalks in flooded town.]

176. [Houses in rushing waters.]
177. Flood picture [flooded houses]. Blurred view
178. Flood Picture [rushing river].
179. Dock at Valdez [winter scene. Possibly Fort Liscum]
180. [Johnson & Kingman assay office.]

ALASKA VIEWS - INTERIOR

181. Mt. Blackburn. Alt.16,140 ft.
182. Mt. Regal. Alt.13,400 Ft. [hazy view].
183. Limestone Greenstone Contact [bare mountains and scarred rock].
184. Mt. Drum. Altitude 12,002 Feet.
185. Mt. Wrangell in Eruption. Alt.14,004 Ft. [plume in distance].
186. Spirit Mountain, 10000', Copper River.
187. Unnamed Mountains at head of Klavesna River.
188. Copper River, 125 Mile. Blurred view
189. Unnamed falls along Fairbanks Trail.
190. Falls on Cheshnina River.
191. Bear Creek Falls.
192. Mt. Drum. 12,002'.
193. Abercrombie Canyon. CRNW. R.R.[Copper River & Northwestern Railroad; river view].
194. Conglomerate Mountain. Head of Chitina River. Blurred view
195. Kotsmuna Falls. CRNW RR [Copper River & Northwestern Railroad].

196. Copper River Near Chitina.
197. On S.S. ADMIRAL SAMPSON Looking in Towards Valdez [two men at rail, center].
198. Woods Canyon, Copper River.
199. Falls on Cheshnina River, 265 ft.
200. Silver Lode on Kotsina River [two men on rocky slope].
201. Divide between Kotsina & Kluesna rivers [two men on sharp rocky ridge].
202. Clear Creek Copper [two men on steep rocky slope].
203. Mt. Wrangell, 14006'.
204. Mt. Wrangell from Chetaslina River [distant view].
205. Camp on Mt. Wrangell, 10000 ft. [gear on ground]. Blurred view
206. Mt. Wrangell in Eruption [similar to 1851.
207. Chitina [looking across water toward town]. Blurred view
208. Mouth of Kotsina River.
209. Christensen & Cappel [two men standing outside a business].
210. Clear Creek Divide.
211. G. T. Cappel [standing outside the Windsor(?)].
212. Clear Creek Copper [two men on rocky slope].
213. Mile 109 C.R.N.W. R.R. [four men at small beach camp].
214. Mt. Eyak (Cordova) [road and buildings in foreground]. Faded view
215. 13 mile tangent. C.R.N.W. R.R. [looking down railroad tracks].
216. Shoupe Glacier [looking across water].

217. Looking in towards Valdez [across water].
218. Mt. Drum, 12002 ft. [looking down rocky streambed].
219. An iron Mountain. 12%.
220. Goat Creek. Blurred view
221. Copper River (Near Libenstad).
222. Lake Eyak (Near Cordova) [two men in suits on steep bank]. Blurred view
223. Kluvesna Camp [at edge of river]. Blurred view
224. Kotsina Flats.
225. Nizina [five people with dog team and sled near town].
226. Chititu [three men and two packhorses on high ridge]. Blurred view
227. Childs Glacier (Copper River).
228. Mount Sanford. Alt. 16208 ft.
229. [Clear Creek Copper; two men on slope, similar to 202.1
230. [Steep river bank.]
231. [Man on small raft at water's edge.] Blurred view

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232. Cordova Dock [the NORTHWESTERN at dock].
233. Spike Island (Cordova Bay) [distant view].
234. View of Flats.
235. Marine View.
236. Sumdum [view across water].
237. S.S. SEATTLE [side view].

238. Light house.
239. [The ALMA, decorated with trees and boughs].
240. [Gulls on railing.]
241. [Gulls on railing.]
242. [Treadwell from the wharves.]
243. [Treadwell building; note the rail-riding cycle at right, unique to Treadwell.]
244. W.P.Y. Ry. [man sitting at edge of canyon by White Pass & Yukon Railroad tracks]. L.H.P. (no. 880)
245. Sawtooth Mtn., W.P.Y. Ry. [White Pass & Yukon Railroad] L.H.P. (no. 991)
246. Dance Hall, Bennett, B.C. [building ruins and flowers]. L.H.P. (no. 1329)
247. Scene, W.P.Y. Ry. M. 16 [Mile 16, White Pass & Yukon Railroad; overall mountain view]. L.H.P. (no. 986)
248. Lewis River, Y.T. at M. 104, W.P.Y. Ry. [White Pass & Yukon Railroad, bird's eye view]. L.H.P. (no. 857)
249. [Inspiration Point, White Pass & Yukon Railroad.] L.H.P. (no. 990)
250. Summit White Pass, Canada, W.P.Y. Ry. [White Pass & Yukon Railroad, buildings at end of long lake]. L.H.P. (no. 985)
251. Miles Canyon, Lewis River, Y.T. L.H.P. (no. 859)
252. Lake Bennett, Y.T. [mountains and reflection]. L.H.P. (no. 1346-C)
253. W.P. & Y. Ry., Lake Linderman [Lindeman], B.C. [overall view]. L.H.P. (no. 1332)
254. Sunrise on Lake Bennett, Y.T. W.P. & Y.RY. [White Pass & Yukon Railroad] M. 53 [Mile 53] L.H.P. (no. 1345)
255. [Same as 245.1]
256. Taku Glacier, Alaska [beached icebergs in foreground]. L.H.P. (no. 796)

257. Taku Glacier, Alaska [similar to 2561. L.H.P. (no. 790)
258. U.S. Mail, Seward-Susitna, Alaska, c1913 [men and dog team on snowy shore]. L.H. Pedersen (no. 670)
259. "Flirting in Alaska," Taku Glacier, c1914 [man raising his hat to an iceberg]. L.H. Pedersen (no. 794)
260. [Snowy peaks and reflection.] L.H.P. (no. 685)
261. [Same as 260.1
262. Phoenix Peak, Res. [Resurrection] Bay, Alaska. L.H.P. (no. 683)
263. "Mush on, you huskies" [two men with dog team and loaded sled]. L.H.P. (no. 665)
264. M. 8. W.P.Y. Ry. [cascading stream at Mile 8, White Pass & Yukon Railway route]. L.H.P. (no. 882)
265. Miles Canyon and old tramway from W.P.Y. Ry. track. L.H.P. (no. 860)
266. Lynn Canal, Alaska [view from steep Mountainside]. L.H.P. (no. 1179)
267. M. 6., W.P.Y. Ry., Alaska [steep mountain and tracks]. L.H.P. (no. 874)
268. Clifton, W.P.Y. Ry. Alaska [rock overhang alongside rail tracks]. L.H.P. (no. 993)
269. View on the old trail. W.P.Y. Ry. [cascades under high trestle]. L.H.P. (no. 978)
270. [Pitch Fork Falls on White Pass & Yukon Route.] L.H.P. (no. 997)
271. Denver Glacier, Alaska. L.H. Pedersen (no. 1044)
272. Historic White Pass City, and Dead Horse Gulch looking toward the summit. W.P.Y. Ry. L.H.P. (no. 999)
273. Juneau, Alaska, 1915 [looking northwest over downtown area].
274. White Horse, Y.T. [(sic) street scene; partly masked]. L.H.P. (no. 855)
275. Thane, Alaska, Aug. 1915 [view across water]. [Alaska Gastineau Mill. JG]

276. Juneau, End of Tunnel [view into an Alaska Juneau Gold Mining Co. adit]. L.H.P. (no. 1242)
277. Interior, 700 Mill, Treadwell, Alaska. L.H.P. (no. 1264)
278. S.S. NORTHWESTERN, Alaskan Coast. After a Storm [two men on heavily iced deck]. Thwaites (no. 4004)
279. [Forest scene.]
280. [Tidewater glacier.]
281. [Fenced garden and shed on beach.]
282. [Rock at the edge of a glacier.]
283. [Large tidewater glacier from a beach.]
284. [Rear view of the sailboat FAVORITE underway.]
285. Thane, Alaska, Aug. 1915 [view across water; steamship at dock].

286. Douglas, Alaska, After the Fire, Mar. 9, 1911 [street scene].
287. Gold Creek Flood, Sept. 27, 1918 [Juneau; three people standing on flooded ruins].
288. PRINCESS SOPHIA on Vanderbilt Reef, Oct. 24, 1918. Total loss with 343 lives, Oct. 27, 1918. W.H. Case (no. 1) Retouched
289. Mt. McKinley [Wonder Lake in foreground].
290. [Sitka Trading Co. building.] Merrill
291. [Sitka from beach across the water.] Merrill
292. [Scenic view of Mt. Edgecumbe framed by trees.] Merrill
293. [Skagway; man and woman in dog powered cart with pedestrian in front of the Arctic Brotherhood Hall.]
294. [Small boat in front of Taku Glacier.]
295. [Scenic view of boat on calm water.] Fisher Studio
296. [Forested stream view.] Merrill
297. [Winter forest trail.] Merrill
298. [Scenic view of snow capped mountains and calm water.] Merrill
299. [Large pipe or cylindrical equipment.] [Tubemill, see #64, 66. JG]
300. [Dog team and water wagon; winter street scene.]
301. [Rocky mountaintops.] Merrill

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