

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Keithahn, Edward L., Photographer

Edward L. Keithahn Photograph Collection, 1923-1950s

PCA 360

1230 photographs

Processed by: G. Morton, I. Spartz
January 1996;
Kay Shelton, 2/2002

ACQUISITION: The first 1,000 photographs in the collection were donated in March 1995 on behalf of the Keithahn family by Richard Keithahn of Lopez Island, Washington. Photographs were added as a result of the 100-year anniversary of the Alaska State Museum celebration. (Acc. #1995-019, #2001-10).

ACCESS: The collection is available for viewing, however, the photographs may not be photocopied.

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

PROCESSING: The photographs are numbered. An inventory of the photos is primarily at the folder level and is arranged by subject or places. A few photographs are described at item level.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Edward Linnaeus Keithahn was born in Tenino, Washington on May 15, 1900. He served in World War I and attended the University of Washington. In 1923, he married Marie Antoinette (Toni) LaChance. That same year, the couple moved to Shishmaref where they taught at the BIA school. While in Shishmaref, he studied the local paleontology and the Eskimo language. In 1925, the Keithahns moved out of Alaska to continue their studies at the University of Washington. By 1928, the couple moved to Kake, Alaska to teach until their relocation to Hydaburg in 1933 and later to the Wrangell Institute in 1937. In 1941, Keithahn was appointed Curator of the Territorial Library and Museum, a position he held until his retirement in 1965. E.L. Keithahn died on September 26, 1970, in Eugene, Oregon. He wrote many articles and several books on Alaska including, *Igloo Tales*, *Monuments in Cedar*, and *Eskimo Adventures*. Toni Keithahn died in 1994. The couple had three children: Yvonne, Loretta Lou and Richard.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTES

The first 1,086 images were taken by Edward Keithahn while living and/or teaching in Shishmaref, Kake, Hydaburg, Wrangell and Juneau, from 1923-th 1940's. They include Tlingit and Hyda artifacts from the Alaska Territorial Museum, Alaska Natives and traditional activities, fishing, steamers, canneries, the Wrangell Institute. The collection also includes photos of Edward Keithahn.

The Shishmaref photographs (#714 – 936*), taken in 1923, were documented by the National Park Service (NPS) in their “Shared Beringen Heritage Program” in 1993-1994, during which Susie Fair interviewed Shishmaref residents who identified locations, activities and people. These interpretations were copied for the Historical Library in 2002. A little more than a dozen of the photographs were reproduced in the NPS publication, *Ublasau=First Light: Inupiaq Hunters And Herders In The Early Twentieth Century, Northern Seward Peninsula, Alaska* (E99.E7 U24 1996). The National Park Service file is at the library. The NPS numbers have been matched with the Library numbers in the book and the Interpretations and are noted on the back of each photograph.

Richard Keithahn and Loretta (Keithahn) Penrod, children of E.L. Keithahn, donated 17 photographs of E.L. Keithahn (#1214-1230) to the Alaska State Museum for the 100-year anniversary celebration in 2000. Copies of the photographs were added to this collection in February 2001 (Acc. #2001-10).

INVENTORY

Box 1.**Numbers****Subject**

1-4	Angoon, Alaska
5	Alaska Territorial Museum
6-10	Art: Tlingit-Haida
11-251	Artifacts-Alaska Territorial Museum
252-283	Artifacts-Tlingit Artwork
284-291	Bears/Bear Cubs
292-296	Birds
297-304	Blankets (Button, Tlingit Haida)
305-310	Boats
311-317	Boats-Fishing scenes
318-332	Boats-Steamers/Battleships
333-337	Boxes-Bentwood/Russian
338-342	Cannery/Canoes
343-353	Cemeteries
354-364	Fishing
365-367	Fox Farm
368-374	Glacier-Mendenhall (Museum artifacts shoot)
375-385	Graves

Box 2.**Numbers****Subject**

386-408	Haidas
409-431	Hydaburg
432-437	Hydaburg-reservoir
438-451	Juneau
452-490	Kake
491-500	Klukwan
501-503	Lakes
504-507	Marine Life/Mining
508-509	“Mummy of Mosquito Island”
510-514	People-identified
515-525	People-identified-Keithahn family
526-547	People-Native people of Hydaburg and Kake
547a-574	People-unidentified
575	Petersburg
576-627	Petroglyphs (near Wrangell)
628-649	Potlatch, June 3-4, 1940-Chief Shakes Island
650-651	Russian Orthodox Church
652-683	School children Kake/Hydaburg, 1930's
684-710a	Shakes, Chief VII, 1940

702-713a Shakes Island

Box 3.**Numbers****Subject**

714-776 Shishmaref (1)*
 777-866 Shishmaref (2)*
 867-936 Shishmaref (3)*
 937-942 Shishmaref (4) Serpentine Whaling Station
 943-945 Shishmaref (5) 1923 Whaling Station
 946-951 Shishmaref (6) Students/Reindeer
 952-953 Shrimping
 954-1045 Totem Poles
 1046-1059 Totem Poles-Kwakiutl Poles/Cemeteries. Alert Bay, B.C.
 1060-1072 Totem Poles-Miniature carved
 1073-1076 Totem Poles-Miscellaneous
 1077-1083 Towns and Villages (Southeast Alaska)
 1084-1086 Wrangell

Box 4.**Numbers****Subjects**

1087-1122 Wrangell-Totem Poles
 1123-1167 Wrangell Institute (school)-artwork/totem pole carving
 1168-1213 Wrangell Institute (school)-buildings/students

Richard Keithahn and Loretta (Keithahn) Penrod, children of E.L. Keithahn, loaned the following 17 photographs to the Alaska State Museum for the 100-year anniversary celebration in 2000. Copies of the photographs were added to this collection in February 2001 (Acc. #2001-10).

1214 E.L. Keithahn "examining yet another pipe." (RE.K)
 1215 E.L. Keithahn shortly after assuming the position of Librarian and Curator of the Alaska Historical Library and Museum, ca. 1940.
 1216 E.L. Keithahn with Museum visitors, 1951 (?) (photo by Malcolm Greany)
 1217 E.L. Keithahn with Secretary of the Interior, Fred Seaton, examining the Museum's mineral display, July 1958
 1218-1222 E.L. Keithahn with school children looking at Museum artifacts, 1951 ("He could engage a class." R.E.K.). "The Lincoln Totem (#1218) salvaged by the Civilian Conservation Corps, has been a favorite of Museum visitors since 1941." (Curator, Alaska State Museum)

- 1223 E.L. Keithahn with Gov. William Egan and former Territorial Governor and U.S. Senator, Ernest Gruening
- 1224 E.L. Keithahn with Presidential Candidate Thomas Dewey petting the Museum's moose
- 1225 E.L. Keithahn with Henry Roden (photo by Malcolm Greany)
- 1226 E.L. Keithahn with Gov. Mike Stepovich, 1958 (?)
- 1227 E.L. Keithahn with Col. Roy Riegel, (photo by Joe Werner)
- 1228 E.L. Keithahn and Rotary International pole, low man and high man
- 1229 E.L. Keithahn in the basement of his home at Norway Point, Juneau, 1954
- 1230 E.L. Keithahn on the tundra, Shishmaref, during his stint there as a teacher in 1926
- Soboleff photographs (duplicates: originals in PCA 1)
 Duplicates
 Negatives not printed/empty photo envelopes.

Photographs identified by Haida elders Woodrow Morrison, Sr. and Claude Morrison, of Hydaburg, and Fred Hamilton of Craig (interviewed by Steve Henrikson, May 27, 1999). Other comments by Steve Henrikson, Curator of Collections, Alaska State Museum.

360-297: Mr. and Mrs. Billy Hamilton, Haida residents of Hydaburg, displaying button blanket and bentwood bowl. Similar to PCA 360-298.

360-298: Mr. and Mrs. Billy Hamilton, Haida residents of Hydaburg, displaying several artifacts. According to Keithahn, the beaded "flag" represents the North Wind, and is currently in the collection of the Alaska State Museum (catalog number 11-B- 1 713). This photo was published in *Monuments in Cedar* by Edward L. Keithahn (Bonanza Books, New York, page 94).

360-299: Haida girls displaying a button robe at Hydaburg (1-r): unknown, Irene Nathan (?)

360-337: Photo of two girls in front of seven Chinese camphorwood chests, of the type brought to Alaska during the maritime fur trade of the early 19th century. This photo (and a similar version without the girls, also in PCA 360, was taken in Kake around 1930 by Edward L. Keithahn, and published in his book *Monuments in Cedar* (Bonanza Publishing Company, New York, page 34).

360-511: Haida students at Hydaburg (1-r): Helen Sanderson, Leena George.

360-526: Haida students in Hydaburg (1-r): _____ George (sister of Fred George) Helen Sanderson, Helen Grant.

360-527: Helen Grant, Haida student, in Hydaburg

- 360-528: Haida students in Hydaburg, (1-r): Verly Imhoff, Rachel Skulka, Anna Peele
- 360-534: Haida students in Hydaburg, (1-r): Irene Williams, Helen Grant, unknown, unknown, Edwin Baronovich.
- 360-535: Haida workers at Hydaburg, (1-r): Jimmie Nathan, Patterson Edenshaw, Rufus Edenshaw, Guidian Duncan (a teacher).
- 360-537: Mr. Hawksworth with unidentified native at Hydaburg(?). See also PCA 360-551.
- 360-549: Two unidentified people in a dugout skiff, Hydaburg. In the background in Dan Nathan's house and smokehouse, and Johnnie Brown's smokehouse (see attached copy of photo).
- 360-551: School teachers/administrators (?) at Hydaburg (?). Mr. and Mrs. Hawksworth are at far left, and the rest are unidentified.
- 360-590: Haida students with unidentified teacher at Hydaburg, (1-r): Margaret Morrison Cogo, unidentified teacher, Josephine George.
- 360-993: The "Old Witch Totem Pole" in front of the Nugget Shop, Juneau, Alaska. This Haida pole is originally from Sukkwan. The pole is currently on display in the atrium of the State Office Building in Juneau, and is in the collection of the Alaska State Museum (catalog number II-B-1632). This photo was used in *Monuments in Cedar* by Edward L. Keithahn, (Roy Anderson, Publisher, Ketchikan, 1945, p. 152).
- 360-1005: Group of workmen in front of the old school building in Hydaburg. Carved eagle is now displayed in the ANB Hall in Hydaburg. Individuals shown in the photo are as follows (see attached copy of photo): Boyd Nicatla, Henry Haldane, "Big Nix," David Jason, Jimmy Nathan, Willis Bell, "Kitelee," Woodrow Morrison, Sr., Delbert Nix, Brady Edenshaw, Ben Nathan, Sherman Alexander, Fred Grant, James Edenshaw, Alfred Skillai, Louis Kitcoon, Petterson Edenshaw.

INVENTORY OF ORIGINAL NEGATIVES

Negatives stored in freezer in Vault

1 Box – Combined with PCA 354 (“The Grand Tour”)