

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Longworth, Francis Champion

Francis Champion Longworth Photograph Collection, 1942-1943

PCA 531

72 b&w photographs

Processed by: James Simard, July 2009

Updated by: Jacki Swearingen, Nov 2012

ACQUISITION: The collection is the donation of Aline Longworth Dix of Mays Landing, NJ. Ms Dix is the daughter of Francis Champion Longworth. Acc.# 2009-030.

ACCESS: The collection is unrestricted.

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

PROCESSING: Photographs were organized and digitized by donor. The photographs were unnumbered. The processor numbered the photographs by matching each of the donors numbered, written descriptions with a photograph. The 8mm motion picture film accompanying these images constitute a separate collection, Av 006.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Francis Champion Longworth was in Alaska with his brother Richard Doughty Longworth in the mid 1920s. When Pearl Harbor was attacked, Francis was living in Moon Creek, Custer County, Montana. At 40, he was "too old for the military" so joined the Army Engineers. Their project was to cut the survey line from Dunbar, 33 miles southwest of Fairbanks, to Teller for the construction of a railroad. Said railroad would permit protection from invasion by the Axis onto North America. Dated April 20, 1943, the War Department issued a Citation for Merit for the extraordinary work done in temperatures as low as -70 degrees F. in the winter of 1942-1943.

Francis Longworth was an amateur photographer who shot motion picture and still film during the course of this work.

A Citation for Merit was issued to Francis Longworth:

WAR DEPARTMENT
UNITED STATES ENGINEER-OFFICE
SEATTLE WASHINGTON April 20, 1943
Subject: Citation for Merit
To: Francis C. Longworth

- 1. I wish to express the appreciation of the Engineer Department to you and the other field employees engaged on the railroad location survey, Dunbar to Teller, Alaska, for the successful completion of a difficult and hazardous task.*
- 2. The work was carried on during the winter months, 1942-43, in the most severe, weather in many years. Much of the work was done in temperatures of 40 and 50 degrees below zero in order to push the job through. Temperatures as low as 70 degrees, blizzards, and other extremes of weather were endured.*
- 3. The successful accomplishment of this survey, in spite of the constant dangers of traveling over unknown ground, over treacherous river ice and overflows, with the possibility of entire parties being cut off from camp by sudden blizzards, must be attributed to the-alertness, courage and tenacity of all party members, as well as to the leadership furnished by the party chiefs.*
- 4. It is my opinion that the difficulties and hardships experienced in carrying on this work were beyond the ordinary call of duty, and that you and your fellow employees deserve the highest commendation for seeing the-job through.*

(s) R. Park
R. Park, Colonel,
Corps of Engineers,
District Engineer

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Collection documents the activities of the Army Corps of Engineers survey party whose assignment was to survey a possible railroad location between Dunbar and Teller, Alaska during the winter of 1942-43.

INVENTORY

Note: FCL refers to Francis C. Longworth

1. FCL second from right in camp [No photograph, see #7]
2. FCL with moose antlers - pic #14
3. Fresh bread at cook's tent - pic #5
4. FCL bathing in camp - pic #8
5. Fresh fish for dinner - pic #6
6. Freight sled carrying gasoline being pulled by dozer
7. Dup. of 1. above but reversed FCL 2nd on left - pic #7
8. Sled dog (no negative)
9. Dogs & sled (no neg.)
10. 14 men in winter '42-'43 FCL 3rd from right (no neg.)
11. Dogs, sled & puppy (no neg.)
12. Howling dog (no neg.)
13. Yukon River scene - pic #1
14. Dup. of 3 above (this is lighter) [No photograph]
15. Cutting survey line
16. Dup. of 4 above (this is lighter) [No photograph]
17. FCL bathing - this is lighter [No photograph]

18. Dup. of 13 above - this is darker [No photograph]
19. Man & dog team pulling sled (no neg.)
20. Dog at wanigan's door (no neg.)
21. Dog
22. 6 men & dozer (dark) - pic # 5
23. Man plowing snow - pics #2 & 10
- 23a. Man plowing snow - pics #2 & 10
24. Man on dozer behind snow pile - pic #3
- 24a. Man on dozer behind snow pile - pic #3
25. Stuck dozer - pic #4 & 9
- 25a. Stuck dozer - pic #4 & 9
26. Stuck dozer & 4 men (too dark)
27. Dozer pulling freight sled, 3 men - pic #6
28. Man pointing down, freight sled of fuel, oil - pic #7
29. Dozer pulling wanigan - pic #8
- 29a. Dozer pulling wanigan
30. Stuck dozer - dup #25, too dark
31. Dup. of #23[Man plowing snow - pics #2 & 10]
32. Idling dozer
- 32a. Idling dozer
33. Idling dozer - dup.
34. Wanigan encampment - pic #13 & 23
- 34a. Wanigan encampment - pic #13 & 23

- 34b. Wanigan encampment - pic #13 & 23
35. Tent in snow, dozer pulling wanigan on left in distance - pic #14
- 35a. Tent in snow, dozer pulling wanigan on left in distance - pic #14
36. 4 men, dozer, wanigan, freight sled - pic #15
- 36a. 4 men, dozer, wanigan, freight sled - pic #15
37. Dozer setting a wanigan, 5 men - pic #16
38. Wanigan camp
39. Welding a dozer, dog sled, wanigans, 2 men - pic #18
40. Smoke rising from wanigans - HEAT'S On!! - pic #19
41. Fresh snow, man (no coat) - pic #20
42. Dup. of 36 above-lighter - pic-#21
43. Wanigan encampment, ski plane ?NC13462? - pic #22
44. Wanigan encampment [No photograph found to match description]
- Yukon River envelope:
45. Pack horses, dog, 2 men - pic #24
46. 14 men dining, tent with canteen hanging - pic #25
47. Dup. of 2 above too dark [No photograph]
48. 5 tents, dog, 6 men, pack horse - pic #27
49. FCL & pack horse - pic #28
50. Beaver dam on creek? - pic #29
51. 5 men relaxing, writing, smoking a pipe; sign says Boar's Nest
52. Dog in creek - pic #31

53. 21 men-FCL-2nd from left front, white shirt - pic #32
54. A-frame in wilderness - rifle by door??? - pic #33
55. Taku Trading Co. & natives - pic #34
56. Man on horse leading pack horses - pic #35
57. 7 men -FCL in white shirt - pic #36
58. 2 men at table, sleeping dog, supplies packed up - pic #37
59. Yukon River, village on hill - pic #38
60. Float plane arriving at camp - pic #39
61. Pack dog - rabbit in hole? - pic #40
62. Yukon River scene - pic #41
63. 3 men, pack horse, survey pole - pic #42
64. Survey line cut - pic #43
65. *Hazel B No. 2 Wrangell AK on life ring* - pic #44
66. Dup. of 15 above - pic #45 [No photograph]
67. Native family (?) & pack dogs
68. American men, natives, house or store?
69. 3 native men in camp -tents are white?
70. [Man and dog walking on snow path, trees in background]
71. Francis C. Longworth 1920s ?, Alaska, April 1923

ITEMIZED LIST OF PHOTOGRAHS & NEGATIVES

1. Small photo taken from plane over Cassiar Mtns. FCL's distinct printing on back matches the envelopes.
2. Envelope titled dogs & teams: 8 photos, no negatives (old photos)

3. Wanigans: 7 negatives, 3 old photos
4. Bulldozers & freight sleds: 10 negatives, 6 old photos
5. Yukon River: 30 negatives, no pictures
6. 53 Re-prints made in July 2009 of all negatives; no prints made of dog teams; duplicates of a couple.
7. One (1) CD contained all pictures & reprints. Dogs are on CD.

INVENTORY OF ORIGINAL NEGATIVES

Negatives stored in freezer in Vault

Box 1 of 1

Negatives available for numbers: 2-7, 13, 15, 22-23, 25-29, 32, 34, 36-41, 43, 45, 46, 48-65, 67-69