

Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

**Knutson, Arthur E.**

**Arthur Edward Knutson Photograph Collection, 1898-1940**

**PCA 536**

1 box  
6 folders

Processed by: Alea Oien, Apr. 2009  
Revised by: Anastasia Tarmann, July 2010  
Additions by: Sara Bornstein, Dec 2012  
Revised by: Jacki Swearingen, Aug. 2016

**ACQUISITION:** The collection was donated by Arthur Edward Knutson through his daughter, Kay McMurray, to the Alaska State Library Historical Collections August 11, 2006 and is accessioned as 2006-056. Kay McMurray is listed as the donor of record. Accession 2010-047 and 2010-062 were added later as Folders 2 & 3. Accession 2013-004 was added later as Folders 4-6.

**ACCESS:** The collection is unrestricted.

**COPYRIGHT:** Request for permission to publish or reproduce material from the collection should be discussed with the Librarian. Photocopying does not constitute permission to publish.

**PROCESSING:** This collection has been described at the item level. Many items have been placed in Mylar, into pH-neutral folders and into an archival box.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Arthur Edward Knutson was born, September 23, 1916, in Interior, South Dakota. He grew up on ranches in Nebraska. At age 19 he went to Edmonds, Washington. There he was hired to work on Yukon River steam boats in the summer. Arthur E. Knutson worked on the Stern Wheel steamer, "Yukon" as a deckhand during the summers of 1935-1939 and as second officer on the "Yukon" in the summer of 1940. In the 1940s and 1950s he worked at the Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Washington. In 1959 he went into municipal public works at Mountlake Terrace, Washington, and Kirkland, Washington. Arthur E. Knutson retired in 1981. He wrote several books about Stern Wheelers in Alaska, particularly on the Yukon River. The photographs in this collection were acquired during his research for his books.

## SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Miscellaneous views and research documents pertaining to early Alaskan and Canadian towns, people, steamboats, train accident, 1935-1940; Map of lower Yukon River, 1898-1899.

## SUBJECTS

Nome, Rex Beach, Steamboats, Sternwheelers, Mayo, Engine No. 320

## INVENTORY

### Folder 1

1. Sourdough Stampede Programme. Seattle Civic Roadhouse August 16, 1929. To Commemorate the Thirty-third Anniversary of the Discovery of Gold In the Klondike. *Sponsored by The Alaska-Yukon Order of Pioneers And Ladies of the Golden North.*
2. Mayo, Yukon Territory; Hotel Binet Bros. Merchants Store [in picture. People and other buildings also]
3. Mayo, Yukon Territory; Hotel Binet Bros. Merchants Store [in picture. People and other buildings also]
4. Mayo, Yukon Territory; Hotel Binet Bros. Merchants Store [in picture. People and other buildings also]
5. Eagle, Alaska - Yukon River Circle Tour; Eagle Trading Co. General Merchandise; A.Y.N. Co. [view of town and people]
6. Lower Yukon River. Alaska. 1898-1899. [Photo of hand drawn map]

7. Steamboat Row, St. Michael, July 28, 1899. 110. R. To L. Str. *Sybil*, Str. *City of Paris*, Str. *Messenger*.
8. No. 5 [Steamboat Row, St. Michael, July 28, 1899.] Str. *Aurora* No. 2 center foreground, Str. *Argo* over stern of *Aurora*, Str. *Indianapolis* left of *Aurora*, Str. *Arcade* small screw to left of *Aurora*, small dredge over bow of *Aurora* No.2 not identified.
9. [Steamboat "*Will H. Isom*"] Built at Ballard, Wash. in 1901. Capt. Smith. She was so big and expensive to operate that she made her maiden voyage and no other. She was left in the boneyard at St. Michael along with 15 others. Another 12 were left at Andreafsky.
10. Nome, Alaska [photo of a cabin with sign that says "Rex Beach Cabin, 1900. Erected by Pioneer Women."]
11. [Large locomotive hanging off side of railroad bridge above river.] Ike Heffentrager was a mechanics helper on the Alaska Railroad and remembers the accident as happening near Curry; between Curry and Talketna around 1930. One life was lost in the accident by scalding. The river is the Susitna. [signed] Art Knutson
12. *Australian*; Scene at Camp "H," Red Line Transportation Co.; H.C. Barley, Skaguay.
13. [Group of 18 men posing for photograph.] H.C. Barley, Skaguay.
14. A snow plow on the W.P.&Y.R. Photo by Barley, Skaguay. [View of train with snow plow on front and some employees standing around.] On reverse: Taken at Clifton Alaska after trip over White Pass Mts. W. Rogers Supt. (James Henry Rogers); C. Moriarity, Der Roadmaster (Charley Moriarity); R.B. Reading, Master Mechanic; J.H. Andrews, Conductor; Briggs, Engineer (Rotary); Toshey, Fireman (Rotary); S.W. Speer, Brakeman; Aughan [?], Brakeman; Sherer, Loco Engr.; Rev. St. Clair, Preacher.

**Addition to PCA 536** (*Accession 2010-047 & 2010-062*)

**Folder 2: Large Photographs**

15. [Front view of Steamer *Tanana*]
16. [Side view of Steamer *Tanana*?]
17. [Steamer *Tanana* sinking?]
18. [Unidentified]
19. The photograph is by Case & Draper and is titled: Snowman and its architects, summit, White Pass

**Folder 3: Arthur Knutson's Klondike Steamer Ships & Captains Research****Publications**

20. Pages from Looking Back on Juneau: The First Hundred Years by Trevor Davis  
Acknowledgement page to Occidental Hotel photograph, includes photograph of Steamer *Queen*. 16 pages.
21. Gung Ho! The Klondike: Art Tells Little Known Facts About Dawson City by Arthur E. Knutson

**Photographs**

Photograph Prints of Dawson [by Jesse Rust?]

*[Original Glass Plate Negatives housed in Glass Cabinet #1 in Vault]*

22. March 7, 1903. Boys starting for Tanana [Men stand with horses pulling loaded sleds.]
23. [Man standing in front of snow and frozen lake]
24. Boys starting for Tanana 3/7/03 [Dog pulling sled with crate labeled "Cascade Steam Laundry" outside Turkish Tub Baths building]
25. Take by J.W.R. + Dinner on the trail [Men and women eating on a rocky hillside]
26. *Str. Lafrance*. By Jesse
27. Hill side Dawson
28. [Boy sitting on bed reading sheet music]
29. [2 men and a dog stand by a tent and a sled in a snowy forest]
30. Dawson at Midnight. June 22, 1902
31. Rocky Cliff by Jesse Rust
32. [Boats and snow on shore of icy body of water]
33. Dawson at Midnight Jun 24, 02.

Notes and 3 Polaroid Photographs from the files of Arthur E. Knutson (*Accession #2010-062*)

34. Jesse Rust parents; Jesse Worthington Rust Sr.; Clara; Colleen River
35. Clyde Day. Jan. 21, 1987
36. Sourdough Jack Mabes 1986
37. Forrest & Gunvor Johnson. Interviewed 3/20/1985. Retired from Alaska Railroad
38. Note: Forrest Johnson has the following materials
  1. Story of the mysterious catastrophe of the S. S. *Yukon* February 9, 1942
  2. The Quake story in the Anchorage Daily times
  3. The Alaska Railroad Volumes I and II by Bernadine Le May Prince of 1558 pages

**Captains & Steamers**

*(Photo notes written on backs of photos by Arthur Knutson)*

- 39-40. 2 [Steamer] Master-Carpenter's Certificates. May 5, 1898 (Photocopies)

41-44. 4 [ship] Wreck Reports for *Pilgrim, City of Topeka, Mercury, Reub[en] L. Richardson* (Photocopies)

45-46. 2 Coastwise Vessels Entered lists. June & July 1898-1899 (Photocopies)

47. The White Pass & Yukon Route Local Freight Tariff between Skaguay, Alaska and All Stations on Line North of Skaguay, to White Horse, Y.T. inclusive Effective August 20th, 1901

48. The White Pass & Yukon Route Special Tariff on Hay, Oats, Feed and Bran between Skaguay, Alaska and All Stations named on back hereof, to and including White Horse, Y. T. Effective March 25, 1901

### **Captain Ralph Newcomb**

#### *Photographs:*

49. [Ship crew posing for photograph on board deck of ship] (Photograph print copy from Yukon Archives)

50. Capt. Ralph Newcomb

51. [Capt. Ralph Newcomb?] (Photograph print copy from Yukon Archives)

52. *Bio:* "Captain Ralph Newcomb" from the files of Arthur E. Knutson [3 pages]

53-54. *Death notices:* 2 Photocopied newspaper "End of the Trail" notices for Capt. Ralph Newcomb

### **Captain Sydney Barrington**

55. *Death notice:* Photocopied "End of the Trail" notice for Captain Sydney Barrington

### **Captain Guy Street**

56. *Bio:* "Captain Guy Street" from the files of Arthur E. Knutson

### **Captain John McCann**

#### *Photographs:*

57. Facsimile of a record on a tree at the White Horse Rapids (2 copies)  
"John McCann, John Setterberg, and Dave Lowrey shot the rapids in the smallest boat that ever went through, on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 97. Boat 16ft long 3 ½ ft beam."

58. Capt. John McCann

59. Captain John McCann

60. [Boat Pilot and Steward pose with 2 women] (Photograph print copy from Yukon Archives)

61. Str. VERNE SWAIN Mississippi river boat Dad (Capt. McCann) started on.

62. 060 McCann Collection; Capt. John See McCann on right in front of Customs House in Eagle

63. *Bio*: "Captain John See McCann" from the files of Arthur E. Knutson [4 pages]

### **First Officer Fred Racy**

#### *Photographs:*

64. Man on right is Fred Racy  
 65. Fred Racy napping  
 66. Fred Racy napping

67. *Bio*: "First Officer Fred Racy" from the files of Arthur E. Knutson [1 page]

### **Captain Kenneth McLees**

68. *Bio*: "Captain Kenneth McLees" [1 page]

### **James Henry Rogers and Clifford J. Rogers**

#### *Photograph:*

69. [Flatbed rail cars, horses, men, and boxes beside river]

70. *Bio*: "From Times Pass" by Art Knutson

71. General Comments; Steamboat Fleets On The Yukon & Stikine River Systems, 1897-1901. [12 pages]

### **Steamer Yukon**

#### *Photograph & Photocopy with caption:*

72. [Steamer *Yukon*]  
 73. Steamer *Yukon* in a slough while the ice is passing down the river [photocopy, same as #72]  
 74. *Menu*: Steamer *Yukon* Menu, September 13, 1940

#### *Photocopies of Photographs:*

75. *Lavelle Young*, At Tanana. C.L.A. 1904 [2 copies]  
 76. Fairbanks Alaska. C.L.A. July 31, 1904  
 77. [No. 79 Hotel Thistle]  
 78. W H Harrison Photo [Gold dredge; 2 copies]  
 79. [11 people, men and women, standing and sitting in front of wooden structures that may be mining related]  
 80. N. C. Co. Str. *Saidie*. Photo by F. H. Nowell 2163

### **Steamer Zealandian**

#### *Photograph:*

81. Str. *Zealandian* in Lake Bennett (print copy from Provincial Archives of British Columbia)  
 82. *History*: "Steamer *Zealandian*" [3 pages]

83. *Postcard: A.N. Ry M69, Construction Train, Turnagain Arm section*

### **Steamer S. S. Bailey**

#### *Photograph:*

84. Bailey & Australian at Bennett 1898

85. *History: "Steamer S. S. Bailey"*

#### *Photographs:*

86. [S. S. Bailey] Built in 1899 on Lake Bennett. Length 118' beam 27.7'  
 87. [S. S. Bailey] Please credit Vancouver Public Library  
 88. North American Transportation & Trading Co. building[Steamer Landing (2 copies)]  
 89. [Men, boats, boxes on lake shore]  
 90. Str. Sarah at Eagle, Alaska. George Abdill Coll.  
 91. Lt. Schwatka on his float trip down the Yukon in 1883  
 92. [Unidentified water wheel boat pushing barge?]  
 93. [unidentified stern wheeler]  
 94. Will H. Isom [Stern wheeler]  
 95. Alaska Motor Stages [Auto on barge] (copied from Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society, Williamson Collection)  
 96. Hotel Healy Annex - St. Michael. Str. St. Michael Lower Left (Walter A. Durham Collection PCA 85-59A)  
 97. [Str. Lightning]  
 98. [Str. John Cudahy]

### **Steamers Stag Hound & Game Cock**

99. *History: "Steamer Stag Hound"*

#### *Photographs:*

100. "Stag Hound" riverboat (Oregon Historical Society)  
 101. Str. Game Cock at Astoria, after buckling on Columbia River bar - Capt. Burt Hodges commanding, 1898 during gold rush to Alaska (WPA4, Clatsop County, Photo #984)  
 102. Mr. Hale and Mr. Kern on Texas deck looking over the "Game Cock" and "Stag Hound." After the boats were wrecked on the Columbia bar, Daniel Kern bought the "Stag Hound" revamped her for towing and renamed her the "Hercules" in 1906.  
 103. Str. "Stag Hound" rebuilt as tug "Hercules" 1906 by Hale Hiennan & Kern. Later after jettys were built - sold to Shaver Transportation Co. 1918

### Whitehorse & Skagway

104. Otto Steiner's notes regarding the Whitehorse Rapids  
 105. American Yukon Navigation Company Statement of Wages and Employees Tax Under Social Security Act for A. E. Knutson

106. Menu – The Chef’s Dinner; White Pass & Yukon Route; Steamer Yukon; R.W. Newcomb, Master at Dawson; Friday the Thirteenth Day of September 1940 (*Menu not found in collection 8/10/16 jas*)

107. Postcard of historic boats Whitehorse and Casca on fire

Photographs:

108. [Unidentified Sailor]

109. Nenana, Alaska

110. *The Land of the Midnight Sun: White Pass and Yukon Route* booklet

111. Roster: Skagway Lodge No. 431, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks; Compiled Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1909

112. Note found in research files of Arthur E. Knutson. “Burdette Milton and Harold Calley walked the lake to call for help when the Yukon sank.”

**Addition to PCA 536** (*Accession 2013-004*)

**Folder 4: Photos from the files of Arthur E. Knutson**

Govt. Shipyard at Nenana

[W. T. Preston steamer]

[Crowd outside Eagle Trading Co. building] [2 copies]

[Crowd outside Eagle Trading Co. and Northern Commercial Co. buildings]

[3 unidentified men with navy caps sit on beach]

[Man in steamer engine room?]

[Crew? Group of laborers? pose on dock in front of steamers]

[Winter scene of man on tractor with treads, with lumber and cabin in background]

[Steamer captains? Crew? In navy uniforms pose on deck of steamer]

[Empty dining room of steamer]

[Steamer]

[Seattle No 1 steamer at port]

[Columbian steamer]

[Selkirk steamer]

[4 steamers: Columbian, Sybil, Yukon[?]]

[Canadian steamer with men on top deck]

[Northern Commercial Co. building with steamer at shoreline]

[Steamer at shoreline]

[S. S. Bailey steamer]

[2 steamers at dock?] [2 copies]

[Milwaukee steamer with houses, barge, and steamer in background]

[Steamers and shoreline]

[Row of cabins on hillside along shoreline]

[Steamer stuck in ice?]

[2 men working on ships]  
 [3 steamers grounded in a river?]  
 [Crowds on decks of Whitehorse steamer tied to Stewart ship with men standing on shore alongside the boats]  
 [Looking down at steamers at shoreline]  
 [Yukon steamer]  
 [3 steamers at port with slayed animals or sealife? in foreground. Includes Alaska? and Yukon steamers.]  
 [Men and machinery in front of steamer]  
 [Group of young adult males with buckets]  
 [Group of men and young adult males pose with steamers in background]  
 [4 men pose on sidewalk]

**Folder 5: Photos Furnished to John Booth for videos:**

[Unidentified photos: mostly lumber yard, Arctic Circle, Eagle]

The steamer Keno is now tied up at the warehouse awaiting the hungry fellows. (6)

Two extra shots. [First image: Whitehorse steamer tied up at dock. Second image: Smaller Dawson barge? In foreground with 2 steamers in background.] (8)

Captain John See McCann in full uniform astern of the steamer Yukon pilot house. (9)

I will run in some extras here. Cam Smith second from left, Bill Deury in suit, Gordon Anderson on right- Cam's total crew. The other two are extras in the M.V. Toon. (10)

The video has some good shots of meeting the train in Nenana. George Black's launch Kusko that eventually up the steamers out of business. (11)

The first Casca sunk in 30 Mile River, June 1910 the passengers all got onto the barge for safety. The vessel was raised to be used again but was put out of service at the end of that season and the hull can still be seen at lower Lebarge. (12)

Captain Jack Williams taking the first Casca, with two barges, through Five Finger rapids a very unusual feat. This is spring of the year as ice can be seen along the shore. (13)

Crew picking up the cable in Five Fingers. The deckhand at the top is aboard the barge. The mate is helping with the turns on the winch head. The line is through the challs (spelling?) on the vow of the boat. (14)

First Mate Fred Racy on right with a crew member. You never saw Fred dressed like this except in Whitehorse in the spring. (16)

[Missing photo] Approaching the ice in Lake Lebarge. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] A view across the lake with a steamer in the distance. The life line shows well in this picture. [3<sup>rd</sup> picture] Lake Lebarge ice. (17)

A view from the steamer Yukon pilot house. The gang plank is suspended overhead from the boom. (18)

[Missing photo] A trail in the ice. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] another (19)

[1<sup>st</sup> photo] Fred Racy taking his daily nap with the freight hauling chains hung up to his right. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] A little better view of the hooks, Deckhand Leonard Hauck from Nebraska. (20)

[1<sup>st</sup> photo] The three truckers at the top bringing the empty chain back aboard. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] A loaded truck coming aboard on his own. (22)

Porcupine Paul sitting on top of a truck load of wood. (24)

[1<sup>st</sup> photo] The deck force of the steamer Yukon. Brother Francis on left, then Porcupine, Art, Leonard Hauck, Connie Johansen, in front Bernard Hingsten, Sam?, in back on left Eina Savela the accordion player, Art Stevens, Willie [?]ennely, Susie Paul. Tied up at the Nenana dock. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] The barge was sunk at 40 Mile, lower right the corner of the barge is under water. The towing tackle block, lower right is awash. I am down in the hold but for what? (25)

[Missing photo] A tractor hauling wood at Sheep Creek. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] Horses are in use here. (26)

[1<sup>st</sup> photo] Art Knutson being lowered with a line. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] Newt Reddington hitting the rubber. (Art's cousin). (27)

[1<sup>st</sup> photo] Newt Reddington hitting the rubber. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] Eina Savela hitting the rubber (28)

[Missing photo] A level plank at Smith's woodpile near the Arctic Circle. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] Bringing the planks back aboard, the tree men are carrying a "double ender". Note the combination to hold up the other end of the gang plank. (29)

[Missing photo] Flooded woodpile at Sheep Creek, August 1938. Fred Racy is measuring water depth with a sounding pole described in this video. That is me loading the first truck. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] Cedar Tursen, in center, is relaying soundings to the wheel house. Sam Martin, fireman on left, Francis Knutson, and Clifford Rogers, son of C. J. Rogers Sr. of White Pass & Yukon Route. (30)

[3 photographs] Steamer Klondike sank at lower end of Thirty Mile 1936. Cann Smith's MV Loon is shown in lower picture. (31)

[missing photo] Art Knutson in center of boat, running the engine whiel the pilot does some sounding. [2<sup>nd</sup> photo] Sam Martin at the controls in the engine room. (32)

[?] A level bank at Smith's wood pile between Fort Yukon and circle City. (246/133)

Photocopy of newspaper political comic.

**Folder 6: S. S. Denali Collectors Menus with Josephine Crumrine Husky painting covers**

"Wolf" January 18, 1953 Captain Henry Burns

"Smokey" January 19, 1953 Captain Henry Burns

"Rye" January 19, 1953 Captain Henry Burns

"Mageik" January 20, 1953 Captain Henry Burns

"Cheechako" February 28, 1953 Captain Ben Aspen

"Jack" March 1, 1953 Captain Ben Aspen

"Blizzard" March 1, 1953 Captain Ben Aspen

Seattle Times article "Like death of an old friend," January 17, 1971

**Photograph:** "Driving the Last Spike in the W. D. & Y. R. at Caribou July 1900."

**INVENTORY OF ORIGINAL GLASS PLATE NEGATIVES**

Stored in Glass Cabinet #1 in vault

**Box 1 of 1**

**12** - 4x5 inch glass plate negatives (# **22 - 33**: see Finding Aid - Folder 3 - Photographs for descriptions)