

Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Journal of a Woman Visitor to Southeast Alaska, ca. 1890

MS 4-7-4

1 folder original journal, incomplete  
1 folder photocopies

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**ACQUISITION:** This collection was purchased in September, 1985, from Jack Lubiner of New York City, who discovered the small journal at a flea market and instantly recognized its significance for researchers of Alaska history.

**ACCESS:** The journal is handwritten in ink on the back of a check register. The condition is fragile, and it must be handled with extreme care. Access should optimally be through the photocopied and online versions.

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

**PROCESSING:** When Jack Lubiner initially purchased the journal, it had been used as a scrapbook, with newspaper pictures pasted to the pages. When he noticed the handwritten notes underneath, he peeled the photographs off, under water, to reveal the journal entries.

## SUMMARY

The collection contains journal entries related to a woman's voyage to southeast Alaska. The first entry begins in Tacoma, Washington, described by the author as, "the termination of the Pacific Coast of the Northern Pacific Railroad and our place of embarkation for Alaska." From Tacoma, the ship, likely a Pacific Steamship Company vessel, sailed to Seattle, Nanaimo (British Columbia), and on to Wrangell, Juneau, Haines, Glacier Bay, Sitka, Killisnoo, and other Native villages along the route. The beginning and end of the journal are missing; therefore, it is not known where the woman called home, but she mentions locations in England in her writing.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

By 1890, the Pacific Coast Steamship Company's "Inside Passage Tour" was a popular voyage, and wealthy tourists traveled in luxury aboard the well-appointed ships. Entrepreneurs, like Captain James Carroll, saw the opportunity to market shore excursions to the tourists. One of his projects was to build a wooden walkway across the moraine at Muir Glacier. Photographs from that era show tourists posed in front of the glacier's face, the walls of ice towering above them. In addition to Alaska's natural wonders, there were a multitude of cultural opportunities for steamship passengers. They could view Native Alaskan totem poles and other forms of art, purchasing handiwork as souvenirs. Other stops on the tours included salmon canneries, gold mines, schools, and churches.

## CONTENTS NOTES

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1-3	Pacific coast travel.
4	Vessel loads coal at Nanaimo for trip plus 700 tons for Sitka. Buys at \$4.00/ton and sells in Sitka for \$12-00.
5	Indian burial ground.
6-7	Pacific coast.
8-10	Wrangell Narrows-Fort Wrangle described; Indian cookery, totems, native dance and clothing.

- 11 Black stained faces of Indian woman. Reasons for black stain to protect skin from burning while fishing, mourning; also protect from gnats and mosquitoes.
- 12-13 Juneau; "French Pete", Treadwell, mines in area.
- 13-14 Pyramid Harbor, salmon cannery, Chilkat Indians, sale of Indian goods, bartering left to women.
- 14-17 Muir Glacier, Glacier Bay, climbing on the glacier, Davidson Glacier.
- 17-19 Sitka, buildings.
- 19-20 Description of Mrs. Tom, a Tlingit woman noted for her trading skills.
- 21-22 Russian Orthodox Church visit.
- 22-24 Visit to the Rancherie or Tlingit homes, description of Chief Annahootz, his home and family.
- 24-25 Hoo-chi-noo, Pacific Steamship Co., Sheldon Jackson, Presbyterian Church, schools.
- 26-28 Indian River bridges built by Lt. Gilman, description of the forest, climate artists on ship.
- 29 Depart Sitka, stop at Killisnoo herring oil factory sells oil for 25¢ per gallon to Indians for preserving berries.