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Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Nowell, Frank H.

Frank H. Nowell Photograph Collection, 1901-1908

PCA 48

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Biographical Note

Frank H. Nowell was born Feb. 19, 1864 in Portsmouth, NH. He joined his father, Thomas Nowell, in their mining company, the Boston and Alaska Mining Company (later, the Nowell gold Mining Co.), on Douglas Island, Alaska, in 1886, where he performed the jobs of wholesaler, accountant, banker, agent, and manager. He married Elizabeth Helen Davis of Detroit, MI, and they moved to the west coast where he became purchasing agent for his father's company in Juneau.

By this time Frank had developed an interest in photography. He returned to Juneau, then went to Nome and worked for the Ames Mercantile Company. In 1900 he moved to Teller, Alaska, to open a branch of the company. Eventually he returned to Nome and opened a photograph studio. In 1907, Frank Nowell and six other photographers published a nine volume set of photograph booklets entitled, "The Art Work of Seattle and Alaska." During 1909, Nowell served as official photographer of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle. Subsequently, he established a photograph studio in Seattle which he operated for twenty-five years. He retired to his ranch near Seattle where he lived until his death in 1950 at the age of 86.[From: "Frank H. Nowell," by Donald Deschner, Alaska Review, vol. 3 p. 193-201.]

Scope and Contents

The subject matter of his photographs includes ethnic (Indians, Eskimos), portraits (mostly commercial but important historical personalities), scenic (including cities, towns, and military posts), and historical events.

Inventory

1. Main Street, Candle City, Alaska, Sept. 30, 1903. (#117)
2. U.S. Jail, Candle City, Alaska, Sept. 30, 1903, with three men standing in front of the log structure. (#147)
4. Four Cape Prince of Wales reindeer herders with reindeer.
5. Five Eskimo women showing their manner of carrying children in back of parka at Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska.
6. Four beauties (young Eskimo girls) of Cape Prince of Wales with sled reindeer of the American Missionary Association herd. (#38)
7. Cape York, Alaska, where tin mines were first discovered, with several people, two dog sled teams, and building in background.

http://www.library.alaska.gov/hist/hist_docs/finding_aids/PCA048.pdf
8. Bird's eye view of Deering, Alaska, Sept. 21, 1903. (#106)

9. "Garry's Business Block", Deering, Alaska, Sept. 25, 1903, with several people in front of stores. (#131)

10. Anna Ruhl's Road House, Deering, Alaska, Sept. 25, 1903, with group in front of building. (#132)


12. Eskimo skin boat, or "Oomiak", Grantley Harbor, Alaska, with natives in boat.

13. View of river bend, Williams Discovery, Inmachuk River, Alaska, Sept. 23, 1903. (#142)

14. Dashley group of mines, Inmachuk River, Alaska, Sept. 23, 1903, with several tents in the distance. (#107)

15. Hank Fries camp, Nellie group, Inmachuk, Sept. 24, 1903, with several tents on river bank and two men in a canoe. (#111)

16. Homestake camp on Inmachuk River, Sept. 23, 1903, with miners, their tents, and a boiler for steam thawing permafrost.

17. Dashley camp, Inmachuk River, Alaska, with seven men, one woman, horse and dogs in front of buildings.

18. Miners who left for Kobuk River on St. John Reily, Sept. 29, 1903. Crowd of men in front of the Keewalik Hotel. (#114)

19. Eskimo salmon dance at Nook (Teller), Alaska, showing dancers, instruments, and viewers by tents.

20. Two raised Eskimo graves, Teller Reindeer Station, Port Clarence, Alaska. (#94)

21. Teller Reindeer Station with Rev. T.L. Brevig, Supt., with several people in foreground. (#95)

22. Eskimo hunters preparing to butcher walrus. (Donor: Bernice D. Wirth)

23. Eskimo hand-made baskets with two Eskimo children on boardwalk. (#443) (Donor: Bernice D. Wirth)

24. Eskimo friends, Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska, 1905, showing two Eskimo girls. (#4075)

25. Eskimo woman with young child on her back by fish drying rack, ca. 1905. (#4292)

26. Eskimo mother and Child on Snake River Bridge, Nome, Alaska, 1904 (#1023)

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27. Keat-Kona, portrait of young Eskimo girl, 1905. (#4175)

28. Eskimo woman "hitting the pipe", 1904. (#1219)

29. Portrait of an Eskimo child, 1906. (#5235)

30. Interior view of E5kitnos attending service at the Congregation Church Mission, Nome, Alaska, July 22, 1906. (#4991)

31. Winter view of First Ave., looking West, Nome, Alaska, March 25, 1907, with three people on snowbanks (#5420)

32. Front Street, Nome, Alaska, looking West, March 25, 1907, showing horses pulling freight on deep snow-piled street. (#5335)

33. Child by snowbank on Steadman Ave., Nome, Alaska, March 30, 1907. (#5346)

34. Nome ' Alaska, Post Office and Nowell Photographer building, with snowbank, ca. 1907.

35. Nome Brass Band, April 6, 1907, outside City Hall, and U.S. Marine Hospital. (#5354)


37. View of Nome, Alaska through snowbanks from Bering Sea, Winter 1906-07. (#5394)


40. S.S. Senator in ice jam in Bering Sea, June 15, 1908. (#6024)

41. Landing of steamer Corwin at edge of the ice, five miles from shore, with dog sleds on ice to meet ship.Nome, Alaska, June 1, 1907. (#5384)

42. J.A. Swartell putting up 1500 tons of ice on Snake River, with group of people and horse drawn sleigh. Nome, Alaska, Nov. 17, 1905. (#4569)

43. Mouth of Snake River, Nome, Alaska, May 22, 1907, showing four men standing on outcropping of ice, with Nome in background. (#5372)

44. Sunday excursion on the Seward Peninsula R.R., showing engine pulling several cars full of people, Aug. 12, 1906. (#5056)
45. Nome's quintet, four women and a man posing on a slab of ice, April 21, 1907. (#5367A)

46. Excursion party on Bering Sea, Nome, standing among blocks of ice, April 14, 1907. (two copies) (#5357B)

47. Excursionists on Bering Sea showing group of people and dog team, Nome, Alaska, April 21, 1907. (#5366)

48. Moonlight on Bering Sea at midnight, with wharf and large ships anchored offshore. Aug. 2, 1906. (#5035)

49. Moonlight on Bering Sea, with wharf, Aug. 15, 1905. (#4162)

50. Moonlight on Bering Sea, with wharf, Aug. 15, 1905. (#4163)

51. Portrait of a Malamute dog named Bob, owned by George Boucher. (#4942)

52. Young black bear, standing and drinking from a bottle. (#6071)

53. $1,000,000.00 in gold bricks; part of winters cleanup purchased by the Alaska Bank and Safe Deposit Co., Nome, Alaska, June 10, 1906. (#4926)

54. A stack of $1,200,000.00 in gold bricks and coin; part of winters Cleanup bought by the Miners and Merchants Bank of Nome, June 10, 1906. (#4924)

55. Young ladies Arctic Brotherhood basketball team, Nome, Alaska, 1906. (#4658)

56. Buildings at Kuzgampa Hot Springs, Kougarok, Alaska, July 11, 1907, with farm implements in yard. (Panorama composed of two views.) (#5605)

57. Group of men standing outside the Second Class Saloon after Nome fire, Sept. 13, 1905. (Print mounted on board)(#4403)

58. Eagle Hall, Nome, Alaska. The largest building in Nome 60 ft. x 140 ft. September 30th, 1906 (no.5256) [The Popular and Boynton and Nicholson Contractors & Builders to the right]


60. Nome Fire, September 13th, 1905. (no.4376) [Men and boys standing by hoses and debris]

61. Herr Oscar Iden - Zeller. The first white man to cross the Tsshaan Mtns. Siberia, on foot, 1905. (no.4346) [Portrait of Iden-Zeller, seated wearing fur parka, mitts and boots, pipe in mouth, holding a long fur trimmed cane? fur bag at his side]

63. Holy Cross Hospital, Nome, Alaska. (no.5564) [front view, with boy standing at bottom of right staircase and two girls peeking out a ground floor window]

64. Lightering Passengers from "S.S. Victoria" July 2nd., 1907 (no.5432 ½) Passengers and baggage crowded on flat bottom barge NCL Co. No. 6. Two steamers and navigation light in view

65. Party on board S.S. PRESIDENT enroute to Nome, Alaska. June 11th, 1907 (no.5408) [men and women seated on deck]

66. Arctic Brothers on board S.S. "PRESIDENT" enroute to Nome, Alaska. (no.5410)

67. John J. Sesnon Co. Dock., Nome, Alaska 1904. [Waterfront view showing a large crowd standing on the dock with buildings behind]

68. Three Friends Mining Co.'s dredge and tailing pile, October 1, 1905. (no.4510)

69. Three Friends Mining Co., Solomon River, Alaska October 1st, 1905. (no.4511) [Dredge and tailings in view]

70. [Arctic whaler, perhaps the ALEXANDER?, trapped in ice]

71. Snowdrifts near Grand Central Pass on Seward Peninsula, R.R. Nome, Alaska. June 20th, 1907. [Four men standing on railroad cars with snow banks on either side]

72. [Portrait of Charles D. Garfield, Collector of Customs at Nome, ca. 1904-1909]

73. Passenger train over Nome River Bridge Seward Peninsula [Railway]. Nome, Alaska (no.4984) [Passengers and baggage on flat car attached to one engine, logs on flat car attached to second engine approaching from opposite direction]

74. Largest nuggets ever found in Alaska. Owned by Pioneer Mining Co. from Anvik Creek, Nome 1904. [Three nuggets left weight 108 oz., value $1998., center weight 182 oz., value $3367; right weight 97 oz. value $1794.001

75. Party aboard S.S. PRESIDENT enroute to Nome, Alaska, June 11, 1907. (no-5403) [Unidentified group of men]

76. "CORWIN" on ice off Yukon River,, June 1st., 1908. (no.6028)

77. [Man wearing white top hat and long fur coat, holding sign 420 Juneau and cane in left hand., reindeer on rope in right hand.]
78. Excursion party on Bering Sea one mile from shore, Nome, Alaska, Feb. 25, 1906. (No. 5357?)

79. Excursion party on Bering Sea one mile from shore, Nome, Alaska, Feb. 25, 1906. [Includes people standing on ice flow and 2 dog teams.] (No. 4606).


81. Same title, lacks clarity in part of view.

82. Young ladies basket-ball team, Nome, Alaska, 1906. [A B on basketball with five ladies side by side.]

83. N H S basketball team, champions '05 – '06. [Five ladies standing back of each other, Nome High School.]

84. Winter dumps on Little Creek, Nome, Alaska, April 22, 1906. [Mining camp.] (No. 4722).

85. Winter dumps on Little Creek, Nome, Alaska, in the distance, April 22, 1906. (No. 4726).

86. Sunday excursion on the Seward Peninsula R. R., August 12, 1906. [Engine No. 6 with many people in open cars.] (No. 5056).

87. A. B. Hall decorated for the Easter Ball, Nome, Alaska, April 1st, 1907. (No. 5342).

88. West dump of Alra Mining Co., Nome, June 20, 1907 [with men and women on platform.] (No. 5388A).

89. Alra Mining Co.'s works looking southeast.

90. East dump of the Alra Mining Co.

91. Cooks and dishwashers of the Alra Mining Co., members of Third Beach, Union no. 1 - Independent [group by buildings and tent.]

92. [Ice jam on Bering Sea shore.] unsigned.


94. Ice jam on waterfront, Nome, Alaska, Jan. 5th, 1907, [showing stores and buildings in background.] (No. 5304).

95. Ground sluicing winter dump of SOiffert and Gibson, Nome, May 1908. [Seven men on mound of dirt, hosing it down into a sluicebox.] (No. 6015).

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96. [Two rows of men dressed in business suits. The name of each man is printed on the photo. Judge Wickersham in center of first row.] (No. 6204).

97. [Herd of reindeer, one man and dog in background.]

98. [Left profile of Eskimo man wearing a fur parka with fur tote bag on back.] (No. 4311).


100. Scotty Allen returning from Valdez loaded with telephones for the Alaska Cooperative Telephone Co., Nome, Alaska, April 16, 1906. [Team of dogs at rest with man behind sled.] (No. 4720).


102. Albert Fink's dog team, Nome, Alaska. [Team of dogs with 2 men beside sled.] (No. 4801).


104. Capt. "Amundsen" arrives in Nome, Aug. 31, 1906 on his ship "Gjoa" after 3 years in Arctic. Determined Magnetic Pole and found Northwest Passage, 1906. [Ship with men on deck, all sails down.] (No. 5161).


106. Bar formed by storm Sept. 18, 1920 [1906], showing lowest water ever known in Nome. [Nome buildings to left of shore.] (No. 5223).

107. Islands of volcanic origin in Bering Sea. [left to right] Castle Rock 1779; Perry Isl. 1906; Fire Isl. 1883. (No. 5238).


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111. [Darling and Dean Hardware Store with delivery wagon in front. Group of men between store and wagon.] Nome, July 20, 1907. (No. 5426).


113. Eggs of Crowbill Duck from Sledge Island, Nome, Alaska. [Large collection of speckled eggs.] (No. 5497.)

114. King Island, Bering Sea, Alaska, July 29th 1907. [Small buildings visible on top of island.] (No. 5516).

115. Big Bend of Kougarok River and Coarse Gold Creek. [Panorama showing the river and the creek with a small group of buildings and tents between.] (Nos. 5730 and 5731).


117. [Full face portrait of Eskimo woman weaving fur parka; tattoos visible from mouth to chin.] (No. 5962).

118. Walrus asleep on an ice floe in Bering Sea. (No. 5967).

119. Walrus hunters in Bering Sea. [Four men standing beside several walrus; one man with a knife, another a gun.] (No. 5966.)

120. Eskimos hunting walrus in Bering Sea. [Four men shooting at walrus on ice floe.] (No. 5968).

121. Members Grand Lodge, Radiator Rest. Nome, Alaska, June 7, 1908. [Two rows of men behind a table and "Buster" the dog who was their mascot.] (No. 6006).


123. [Highway crossing over Nome River where old railroad crossed. An unsigned Nowell photo.]

124. [Group of seven men holding harpoons and rifles, on and by a captured walrus. Kayak to right of walrus. 1908.]

125. [Eleven men beside small boat "Diamond." and three kayaks. Two rows of walrus in foreground. 1908.]

126. Dutch Harbor, Alaska. [Picture taken from the water; buildings to the left; two sailing vessels at dock.]
127.  Bird's-eye view of Unalaska. [Buildings of Unalaska on far side of the beach, including Russian Church.]

_The following 10 pictures (#128 through #137) are from the Bancroft Library collection and may not be reproduced without permission from that library._

128.  [Early Fairbanks showing stores along the Chena Slough.  Logs in background.] (#6145)

129.  [Early Fairbanks showing stores and homes along the Chena Slough.  Continuation of #128] (#6146)

130.  [Masonic Temple, Fairbanks with 2 story log cabin house on right.  Group of men on wooden sidewalk in front of temple building] (#6199)

131.  [Group of 4 adults and 4 children digging potatoes.  Probably Fairbanks area] (#6193)

132.  Main Street, Ft. Wrangle, Alaska. [Group of men and women standing on wooden street, buildings right, left, and background.] (#475)


134.  Auk - Si - Eager, Ft. Wrangle [Wrangell], Ak. 1904. [Indian woman seated on a box decorated with designs, totem behind her] (#477)

135.  Yukaskin and Datoat, Wrangle [Wrangell], 1904. [Two Indian women seated on a wooden walk.] (#478)

136.  Skag ish - stin, 108 years old. 1904. [Full length portrait of Skag ish - stin seated in a doorway]


139.  Siberian Eskimo and Mazinka House, Whaten(?), Siberia [Eight women and children beside large skin house]. #1052.

140.  "Too many cooks spoil the B____" [three Eskimo women and a baby cooking over an open fire; tents and buildings beyond]. 1904. #1049

141.  Kow-Ear-Nuk [Eskimo woman standing on beach with fish on rack behind her]. 1905. #4076.

142.  Eskimos Natural Pack [five women, with backs to camera, carrying babies in parkas]. 1905. #4091.
143. Indian Witch Doctor [or Sha-man] healing a sick woman [woman lying on furs; man in nature costume kneeling beside her]. Photo print by Nowell of Case and Draper photo. 1906.

144. The queen of Siberia and her house in Whaten(?), Siberia [young woman seated, right, beside tent. Three men to her left]. 1907.

145. McKinley St. Valdez, Alaska [wooden buildings on either side of dirt street; people on planked sidewalk]. #495.

146. [Full length, full face portrait of young Eskimo man wearing fur parka, hat and boots.] #4414.

147. Dyer and Keen's record trip from Seattle to Nome, Alaska in 35 days. April 10th, 1906 [dogs in harness; two men beside-sled]. #4713.


149. A sled reindeer and his driver [driver leading reindeer with rope]. #5314.

150. Broadway, Skagway, Alaska, May 20th, 1898 [teams of horses and people on dirt street]. #2203.


152. [Bishop Rome(?); man in robe with full sleeves and dark stole.]

153. [One story wooden house; white picket fence.] #6198.

154. Interior of Church, Nome, on Easter [Flower arrangements around pulpit]. #2164.

155. [Exterior view of St. Peters-By-The-Sea Episcopal Church with See house behind it.] #6386.

156. [Juneau houses including Behrends house, left.]


*Numbers 159-212 were donated by Lorraine Lineer of Sacramento, California in October 1993.*

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161. Eskimo igloo at Whalen, Siberia [group of Eskimos and a white couple posed outside of a skin tent] F.H. Nowell, Nome 1907. 5506


166. Eskimo woman from Cape Prince of Wales. [Mother and child portrait.] F.H. Nowell, Nome, 1907. 5551 ½.


171. [Unidentified portrait of a young Eskimo girl, showing a tattooed chin.] Copyright 1905, F.H. Nowell. Nome.

172. [Unidentified portrait of a middle-aged Eskimo woman, showing a tattooed chin.] Copyright 1905 by F.H. Nowell, Nome. 4294


175. The Queen of Siberia and her home, Whalen, Siberia. [Same as 148-144.] F.H. Nowell, Nome, 1902. 5514.

177. Little and Big Diomede Islands, showing dividing line between America and Asia. [Scenic view of the Diomede Islands with a line indicating the border.] F.H. Nowell, Nome 1907. 5504.


180. [Unidentified locomotive wedged between snow drifts, Nome?]


182. Among the ice. Jan. 5th 1902. [Two men and one young boy posed amidst the snow in Nome?] F.H. Nowell, 5301.

183. Wreck of Nome Wharf caused by ice- Jan. 4th 1907. [Scene of wreckage of the wharf and ice break up.] F.H. Nowell. 5304 1/2.


188. [Nome fire aftermath? No identification.] 5393.


190. [Unidentified scene. Nome fire aftermath?]


192. Fink and Smith returning from polar bear hunt in the Arctic. Distance traveled 1000 miles. [View of two dog teams posed on the flats near Nome.] Copyright by F.H. Nowell. Nome 1906. 4691.

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193. [Three people posed with a dog team on the ice?]

194. [Dog team posed near ice floes.]

195. [Eskimo man posed with a reindeer.]


199. S.S. OHIO at Nompatek (?) collision with ice June 12 1907. [View of vessel's stern above the water line.] F.H. Nowell.


201. [Unidentified mining dredge.]


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213. [Sled dog team (some dogs appear to be howling) hooked to sled with an empty sled behind the first one. Three natives dressed in furs on sled and standing. Village (Nome?) partially buried by snow in background.] Copyright by F.H. Nowell, Nome, 1906. [Photo from backlog, no known provenance, added 1/8/2002.] (Located in PCA/Panorama X-Oversize, Map Case in Vault)