Guide to Collection

Brenneman, Franklin R., Collector
Franklin R. Brenneman Photographs & Letters, 1903-1922
PCA 336

2 boxes
5 folders
1 album (392 photographs)

Processed by: Kay Shelton, May-June 1992
Inventory by: Sandy Johnston, Feb. 2017
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ACCESS: The photos may be viewed. However, because of their fragile condition, they may not be photocopied.

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PROCESSING: The photos are numbered. Interleaving was inserted between album pages. A finding aid is available.
**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

Franklin Russell Brenneman came to Alaska in 1900 and staked a claim on Kodiak Island. Eventually, he went to Katalla where he invested into the first oil well. In 1907, he became a U.S. Marshall at Katalla and later was head Marshall for the Third Judicial District in Valdez, a position he held until 1922. He died in 1940 in Long Beach, California. Mr. Brenneman was a childhood friend of Thomas R. Marshall who went on to become Vice President of the United States under Woodrow Wilson.

**FAMILY HISTORY OF FRANK & HELEN BRENNEMAN**

This is the family history of FRANKLIN RUSSELL BRENNEMAN, wife (ANNA) HELEN PETERSEN and their children Thomas Russell, Elinor Marjorie, Dorothy, and Bernice.

The following information was compiled from conversations with Elinor Marjorie Brenneman-Cockburn-Singleton, newspaper articles, letters, and family memorabilia, by Mrs. Dorothy J. Daw, April 1992, only daughter of Elinor Marjorie Singleton.

FRANKLIN RUSSELL BRENNEMAN was born in Columbia City, Indiana, March 21, 1876, and died in Long Beach, California in 1941 at the age of 64, one month before his 55 birthday.

He served for 2 years in the U.S. Army and was in the Spanish-American War in Cuba - he was discharged March 4, 1899. After that he was one of the many who traveled to Alaska in 1900 to find his fortune in gold. He did find and stake out a gold mine on Kodiak Island, which did produce some gold, but not the fortune he was after. The small fortune that he did collect came when he began investing in Alaska oil. His first investment was Katalla's first oil well in 1903. He became a U.S. Marshall in Katalla in approximately 1907 or 1908, subsequently he became head U.S. Marshal of the Third Judicial District in Valdez (the most populated area), and maintained that position until March 8, 1922 (when President Woodrow Wilson was voted out of office) when he retired and the family moved to Long Beach, California. He was a childhood friend of Thomas R. Marshall who was Governor of Indiana during that period and then went on to become Vice President of the United States under President Woodrow Wilson. It is presumed that he received and maintained his position through that friendship.

While living in Alaska, Frank Brenneman was a member of the Elks Club in Anchorage and a Mason - at the time of his death he was a 32nd degree Mason.

(ANNA) HELEN PETERSEN (more popularly known as Helen Petersen) was born February 13, 1892 in Schleswig-Holstein/Jutland, Denmark (an area which is now part of Germany), and died in Long Beach, California at the age of 30 on September 1, 1922, two months after the death of her daughter Dorothy who had drowned in a riptide at the foot of Cherry Ave. in Long Beach, California and not 6 months after Frank had retired.

Helen's parents moved to Nome, Alaska when she was very young. They subsequently moved to Cordova f or a short period, then finally settled in Katalla where they owned the Katalla laundry-steam baths, and hotel.
Frank Brenneman met Helen Petersen in Katalla, Alaska when she was 14 years of age, and fell in love with her almost instantly. Her parents said that she was too young to marry and that Frank did not have a steady job. Her father told Frank that if he still wanted to marry Helen in a couple of years they would talk about it then. Frank saw Helen periodically during the next 2 years, proved to her father that he was he not only financially secure, but that he had a steady job (U.S. Marshal). They were married in Katalla when she was just 16 years old.

Frank and Helen had 4 children:

Thomas Russell Brenneman, born February 10, 1909 (in Helen's 6th month of pregnancy and 3 days before her 17th birthday), in Katella, Alaska
Died February 12, 1909 (2-1/2 days old)

Helen had a miscarriage the morning of March 18, 1910. She was hit in the back the night before at a St. Patrick's Day dance.

Elinor Marjorie Brenneman, born July 1, 1911, in Katalla, Alaska
She currently resides in Long Beach, California

Dorothy Brenneman, born October 22, 1913, in Valdez, Alaska
Died July 6, 1922 at 8 years of age by drowning in Long Beach, California

Bernice Brenneman, born December 16, 1919 in Valdez, Alaska
Whereabouts unknown.

Helen was a member of the Eastern Star in Valdez.

After the defeat of President Wilson a new U.S. Marshall was appointed. Frank Brenneman had accumulated sufficient monies by that time to retire, and the family then moved to Long Beach, California, where they had vacationed several times and had other Alaska friends.

Frank Brenneman was devastated by the death of his wife and daughter Dorothy in 1922, and lost approximately $100,000.00 in bad oil investments in California. After the loss of most of his money he went to work for the Superior Courts of Long Beach, California, and became supervisor over the Superior Court bailiffs, juries, and prisoners brought to Long Beach for trial. He worked there until his death in 1940 from cancer (almost 20 years).

Some of their closest Alaskan friends were:

John Bouse, Senior Deputy Marshal under Frank Brenneman (he moved to San Francisco and became a U.S. Marshal there)

Col. Crittenden, his wife Molly, there daughter May Harrington and her children Jack, Perry and Mary Jane (Long Beach, CA).

George and Jewel Strixner, son Don and daughter Frances (Bellflower, CA).

Della Rothkranz (Long Beach, CA)
SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

The Franklin Russell Brenneman photographs and papers include one photo album plus letters and various family papers which reflect his and his family's activities in Valdez and Katalla from 1903 through 1922, plus a few items concerning the family after their move to Long Beach, California, in 1922. The photo album contains snapshots of family and friends plus photographs purchased by the compiler. Photographs of interest are the first oil well at Katalla, Wood Island Mission, Judge Fred M. Brown (Valdez, Alaska), John Bouse, Orca Cannery (Cordova, Alaska), Valdez fire (1915), McCarthy Jail, Knik Roadhouse.

The papers include letters written to Mr. Brenneman while he was U. S. Marshal, and one to him in 1922 from his senior deputy, John Bouse, which details the persons and activities in Valdez since Mr. Brenneman's departure. Other items are two small notebooks or diaries kept by Mrs. Brenneman and legal papers relating to his discharge after the Spanish-American war and his petition in California courts to establish his daughters' births as well as obituaries and memorial books on family members.

INVENTORY

BOX 1: Personal Papers

Folder 1: Franklin Russell Brenneman Correspondence File: incoming and outgoing mail, arranged chronologically (13 items)


4. Letter from James A. Reed, of Missouri, chairman of the Committee on Manufactures, U.S. Senate, dated 9/10/13.


11. FRB to U.S. Senator Harry S. New, 6/11/1921


**Folder 2:** [Anna] Helen Petersen Brenneman Diaries and mementos, 1910 1914? (4 items)

14. On Cover: *James J. Kelley Art Palace*: important family and historic events, such as birth and death of all her children and friends, the beaching of the S.S. Portland, birth of someone's kittens

15. On Cover: *Pierce's Memorandum and Account Book*: similar to above

16. 1 small red leather card holder - No. 20, from Anchorage Elks Lodge No. 1351 for wife of F.R. Brenneman, dated 4/1/1922

17. 2 receipts from the Valdez Eastern Star to Anna H. Benneman, dated 11/26/1921

**Folder 3: Other Family documents**

18. FRB discharge papers from the Army, dated 11/11/1899

19. Memorial record: Dorothy Brenneman

20. Memorial record: Mrs. Helen Brenneman

21. Petition papers in the Superior Court of the State of California in and for the County of Los Angeles, "In the matter of the petition of Franklin R. Brenneman, to establish fact of birth of his daughters, Elinor Margerie Brenneman and Bernice Brenneman.

22. Selective service pin

**Folder 4:** Publications and clippings

23. *By-laws; Scottish Rite Bodies, Valley of Juneau, Orient of Alaska, July, 1921*

24-25. Newspaper clippings:
"Well-known resident dies early Sunday" (re: Mrs. B.F. Brenneman, mother of FRB)
"Brenneman, Attache of Courts, Dies" (FRB obituary)

**Folder 5:** Two audio-cassettes (items 26-27) of conversations with Elinor Marjorie Brenneman-Cockbum-Singleton, recorded by Mrs. Dorothy J. Daw, her only daughter, April 1992.

**BOX 2:** Photograph Album, 1 folder, 2 envelopes - 396 b&w photographs

2. Ashby’s birthday [group of children]
8. Helen Brenneman.
10. Wood Island Mission.
11. Reck (sic) Wreck of the Armania which the Sampson had to stop for.
12. Frank & Helen Brenneman.
14. (?) Island [fur pelts lining a fence]
15. Bob Grey & Elinor B.
16. [Shoreline picture]
18. First Xmas tree in Catalla [Katalla], Alaska. 1903.
22. Helen B.
23. Helen B. when first married.
24. Nome, Alaska 1901. [Seven young girls in dresses standing with woman in front of building]
26. Elinor B.
27. Frank Brenneman – Daddy.
28. Elinor B.
30. Helen Peterson & Father.
32. [2 small boys in overalls and hats, holding American flags]
33. Boating, 1903 [2 people in a row boat]
34. Kodiak, Alaska.
35. Frank B.
36. [Unidentified man in an office]
38. S.S. Portland.
39. [Unidentified steamship]
40. [Building with storefront, cow in back]
41. [Men on dock, near small boat]
42. Pioneer Hotel potato field, Knik, Alaska.
44. Elinor Brenneman.
45. Helen Petersen.
46. Grandpa Petersen.
47. [Fox pens]
48. Frank Brenneman.
49. [Unidentified man]
50. [2 men - unidentified]
51. Frank B.
52. Frank B., Brenie (nickname)
53. Ball game at Katalla.
54. “Dora”
55. Helen B. – (?) 
56. Sitka, Alaska.
57. Helen & Frank B. 1907. Our first home-Katalla.
59. [3 children holding geese]
60. Frank B. – Valdez. 3 hours hunt [man with string of ducks] 
61. Henry & Effie Leaster[?]
62. [Man holding cat]
63. [Native woman standing by boat propped up on land.]
64. [Man perched on top of pole, 3 bear cubs climbing up to him]
65. Grandpa & Grandma Petersen.
66. Loading supplys (sic) for camp Four on Lake Eyak, Copper River Railway Co., E.A. Hegg.
67. Fox ranch.
68. [Black Fox in pen]
69. Harry Brown with courts, Valdez.
71. Frank B. had money from oil. 1st oil well, Katalla 1903.
72. Oats grown in Knik, Alaska.
73. [Selling black fox pelts]
74a. Frank B.
74. [Faded picture of house]
75. Nome Alaska 1903 [4th of July?]
76. [Car with 2 men, 2 women]
77. [Woman and dog crossing stream on a log]
78. Brenneman Family home, Valdez 1914 [House with picket fence]
79. [Faded picture of a church?]
80. Bird’s nest.
81. Breaking trail [man in snowshoes ahead of dog sled team]
82. Our dining room. Valdez, Alaska. 1913.
85. [Buildings on a waterfront- unidentified]
86. [Geese] 7-12-07.
93. [Unidentified ship]
95. [Irises]
96. Orca cannery, Orca P.P. & N. Co.
97. John Bouse.
98. Perry Is. 1906.
99. Valdez, Crittenden, Col.
100. [Unknown glacier]
101. [Unknown ship]
102. Elinor-Helen.
103. September Nome, Alaska. [small native boy]
104. U.S. Census taker, Valdez, Alaska. [on dog sled]
107. L- Brenneman’s housekeeper.
109. Dorothy B.
110. Valdez, Alaska.
111. Seward, Alaska.
112. “The Big Feed” at a dance given by the Natives at Catalla (sic) [Katalla], Alaska. Jan. 1, 1904. Evans Photo.
113. [3 men near log cabin, dog in foreground]
114. Elinor B.
115. [Group of people on small boat tied to a dock]
119. [Man playing poker]
121. Helen, Elinor, housekeeper, Frank.
122. Elinor & mother Helen B. Sweetness.
123. Brenneman home, Valdez. [interior]
125. Butch Glasbunner.
126. Helen B. & Bones [dog]
127. [Two women and boy standing in fenced in area, man on outside. Faded photo]
128. Strafford. [Man dressed like clown with wizard hat]
130. Front Street, Katalla, Alaska. LaVoy.
131. [Group of buildings]
132. Skating.
133. Katalla Alaska. LaVoy
134. Mountain climbers.
135. Brenie B. & Joe Hill.
136. Getting a tour. [Ice-skating]
137. Helen B.
138. We Three. L-Elinor B., C-Bernice B., R-Dorothy B.
139. Billy Carless
140. Frank B.
141. [Man and dog on a bridge]
142. Helen & Elinor.
143. [Woman in a garden]
144. [Helen & Elinor]
145. Dorothy B.

146. Helen, Bones[dog], & Frank B.


148. Elinor.

149. Helen B. & Elinor, 16 months

150. Elinor & Daddy.


152. [Little girl sitting on a stump]


155. Frank B.

156. Elinor & Helen.


158. Taller than her daddy. 1912. Elinor & Frank B.

159. Helen – Dorothy – Elinor B.

160. Frank B., Helen B. Sit up Bones [dog]

161. Elinor’s first steps.


163. Ernest Miller.

164. Helen Brenneman & family (written on photo- girl with kittens) Frank B. neice (sic) [niece] written under photo.

165. [Photo of infant, Helen Brenneman]

166. Coal mine tunnel, Katalla.

167. Brenneman Dining Rm – Valdez 1913.

168. Valdez Alaska.

169. Dorothy & Frank B.
171. Helena, Montana. Age 5 yr.
173. [Group of men, one with a shovel]
175. [Ship grounded-unidentified]
178. [Dorothy]
179. Sunday school children of Congregational Church Valdez Alaska (Jenner)
180. [Dorothy – Elinor]
183. [Woman and girl reading a book (The Freethinkers Pictorial Text Book) together]
185. Pansies, grown in Mrs. Kopp’s garden, Karluk Alaska.
186. Peary Is. 1906.
187. [Juneau from the harbor, boat “Cornelia Cook” in foreground. B.M. Behrends Bankers Merchant sign on building]
188. Katalla, Helen – Elinor – Frank – Bones [dog], 1911
189. Katalla 1903.
190. Copper River Delta. 1903. Evans Photo.
191. Helen Brenneman cousin.
192. Elinor B.
194. Elinor B.

195. Elinor age 10 months. Elinor & Frank B.

196. Nome breakwater.


198. [House surrounded by pole fence]

199. Standard 10-36. 20,000 [oil rig]

200. Kodiak [group of men in front of a building]

201. Courthouse Valdez.

202. Altar Kodiak Russian Church Kodiak, Alaska. JHS.

203. [Crucifix plaque] Brought to Kodiak in 1794 by Father Herman. JHS.

204. [Altar] Russian Church Kodiak Alaska.

205. Unalaska, Alaska.

206. Kodiak Russian Church. JHS.

207. …Contractor Welch, “Walking Boss” Jimmie Daugherty, Supt. Paul Buckley…

208. Kodiak Russian Church brought by Father Herman 1794 [several religious objects] JHS.

209. Mrs. Silverman, Kodiak.

210. Elinor & her mother, Valdez Alaska 1914.

211. Judge Brown, Frank B.

212-215. Dorothy Brenneman eighteen months old.

216. Frank [looking at seals]

217. [4 men on beach teasing seal]


219. Mrs. Saling.

220. [Woman on horse]

221. Helen Brenneman and Columbia City cousin.

223-225.  [Seals on a beach]

226.  [Seal curled up on a beach]


228.  Elinor Brenneman. 4 yrs.

229.  Helen B. & Dorothy B.

230.  [3 girls]

231.  [Seals on the rocks]

232.  [Man holding seal carcass by the tail]

233.  [Seals on the rocks]

234.  [Shed]


236.  Things taken on dock for safety 1915.


239.  Elinor B., Frank B.

240.  [Large group posing for photo]

241-244.  [Seals on rocks]


246.  [Buildings on a waterfront- unidentified]

247.  Elinor’s Sunday school class, Valdez.

248.  Little girl Dorothy, Elinor second from R.

249.  [Seals on rocks]

250.  [Man taking picture of a seal]

251.  [Seals on rocks]
252. [Rapids]


255. Valdez [house]

256-257. [Unidentified community on waterfront]

258. [Native man with 2 children]

259. [Huts along a river]

260. [Native man holding strings of fish]

261. [Paper gold heart] Short line to Fairbanks. Valdez, the Key to the Golden Heart of Alaska


264. [Group of men in field]

265. [3 men, 2 children]

266. [4 men and a dog]

267. The Railroad Kitchen [railroad camp?]

268. [Man and woman posing on rocks in stream]

269. [Caravan of cars]

270. [Group posed on side of stream]

271. [Waterfall]

272. Helen Brenneman.

273. [Pile of crates in a field]

274. Mr. Smo[?] Road House.


276. [Group sitting on steps]
277.  [Town- photo out of focus]
278.  R-Elinor & Dorothy-L, 1916]
280.  L-Dorothy, R-Elinor.
281.  Dorothy Carless 1917.
282.  [Building on pilings]
284.  [Man in graveyard]
285.  [Men sitting on piles of boxes on a boat deck, drinking]
286.  Helen Matson. Family housekeeper, Valdez.
287.  [Men sitting on a beach, drinking]
288-289.  [Men hauling boxes]
290.  [Caribou]
292.  [Caribou]
293.  [Horse drawn sled laden with boxes]
294.  “The Misses Eleanor and Dorothy Brenneman [Clipping about Eleanor (sic) and Dorothy Brenneman]
296.  Whale.
297.  Elinor & Dorothy – Valdez.
298.  [Native woman, child and dog]
299.  [4 people standing on porch of U.S. Marshall building]
300.  Frank B., Helen B., Elinor B., Dorothy B.
301.  Dorothy – Elinor.
302. Helen & Fran.


304. “McCulloch”

305. John Bouse.

306. “Admiral Evans”

307. [2 women with rifles in front of wall of bear hides]

308. Mrs. Molly Crittenden, her mother, father, sister and Elinor Brenneman – 1915. Long Beach, CA.

309. Petersburg.

310. Elinor B. at Aunt Molly Crittenden’s home Long Beach, CA 1915.

311. Dorothy-Helen-Elinor. Dorothy & Elinor at play.

312. [Valdez- looking down street. Similar to #269]

313-323. [Farm shots-unidentified]

324. [Shipyard]

325. [Woman and horse]

326. Helen Matson, housekeeper.

327-342. [Unidentified people]


344-348. [Unidentified people]

349. Frank & Helen B.

350. Roberta Ferguson.

351. [Dogs]


356. [Girl with horse]

357. Dorothy & Elinor Brenneman. Valdez Alaska 1916.

358-359. Dorothy Brenneman. Valdez. 1916. [on horse]


361. Elinor B. – Frank B.

362. [Nurse with baby]

363. Frank B. – John Bouse – Helen B.

364. [Unidentified group of kids]

365. Frank B. – John Bouse – Helen B.

366. Elinor B. – Dorothy B.

367. Helen Matson, housekeeper.

368. Skagway dock- “Alameda” tied up.

369. [Unknown family portrait]

370. Helen B. – John Bouse, [playing tennis].

371. [Playing tennis. Double exposure]

372. [2 children]

373. Elinor B. – Helen B. – Dorothy B.


381. Valdez, Alaska. Photo by “Cameron”

383. Pullen House, Skagway Alaska.

384. [Unidentified group on beach]

385. Helen B.

386. Helen Brenneman.

387. John Bouse.


389. Father Duncan’s grave, Metlakatla.

390. [Graveyard]


Folder: #393-394

393. Helen Petersen’s name second from right on blackboard. Teddy Roosevelt (sic)[Roosevelt], President. Nome. Bridge School, Nome, Alaska, United States of America. [Class picture]


Envelope: #395

395. Helen Peterson’s[Petersen’s] schoolroom in Nome. Teddy Roosevelt(sic) [Roosevelt], President.

Envelope: #396

396. “Ten minutes allowed for board work.” Helen Petersen’s name second from left on blackboard – Nome. Teddy Roosevelt(sic) [Roosevelt], President.