



LIBRARY
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Sheldon Jackson Manuscript Collection (Concerning Alaska, 1878-1908)

Collection Summary

Creator: Jackson, Sheldon, 1834-1909
Dates: 1878-1908
Extent: 38 Boxes (10.6 linear feet)
Language(s): English, French
Repository: Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries. Special Collections.

Chronology

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| 1834 May 18 | Born, Minaville, New York |
| 1855 | Graduated, Union College |
| 1855-1858 | Student, Princeton Theological Seminary |
| 1858 May 5 | Ordained, evangelist, Presbytery of Albany |
| 1858-1859 | Missionary, Choctaws |
| 1859-1864 | Home missionary, La Crescent, Minnesota |
| 1864-1869 | Pastor, Rochester |
| 1869-1870 | Superintendent, Western territories, Presbyterian Board of National Missions |
| 1870-1882 | Superintendent, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Montana, Presbyterian Board of National Missions |
| 1874 | Awarded honorary doctor of divinity, Hanover College |
| 1882-1884 | Business manager, Home Mission, New York City |
| 1884 | Superintendent, Alaska, Presbyterian Board of National Missions |
| 1885-1909 | United States general agent, education, Alaska |

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| 1897 | Moderator, General Assembly |
| 1909 May 2 | Died, Asheville, North Carolina |

Biographical Information

Sheldon Jackson was born in Minaville, Montgomery County, New York on 18 May 1834, graduated from Union College, Schenectady, New York in 1855, and from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1858. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Albany, New York that same year; and a year later was ordained an evangelist by that same Presbytery. For a year he was a missionary to the Choctaw Indians. From 1859-64 he was a home missionary in La Crescent, Minnesota. He served as a pastor in Rochester, Minnesota in 1864-69. From 1869-82 he was Superintendent of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions in the Western Territories (Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Montana). Jackson served as special government agent to gather and bring to the Indian School at Carlisle, Pennsylvania and elsewhere children of Pueblo, Pima, Papago and Apache tribes of New Mexico and Arizona. From 1882-1884 he was business manager of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, New York City. In 1884 he became superintendent for the Board of Home Missions in Alaska, and the following year took on the additional duties of United States Government General Agent for education in Alaska. He lived and worked in Alaska until 1908. He died in Asheville, North Carolina, May 2, 1909 and was buried in Minaville, New York.

Jackson received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Hanover College, Indiana in 1874 and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Union College, New York and from Richmond College, Ohio in 1897. He owned and edited the *Rocky Mountain Presbyterian* (published monthly in Denver, Colorado from 1872-82) and later the *North Star* (published monthly in Sitka, Alaska from 1887-92). During the summer of 1863 he served as an agent of the U.S. Christian Commission in the hospitals of the Army of the Cumberland. He was principal founder of the Woman's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, 1870-1879. In 1877 he became the first ordained missionary to Alaska. During his years in Alaska he established numerous schools and missions. In 1887 he founded the Alaskan Society of National History and Ethnology. He served as special agent of the U.S. government to survey the agricultural possibilities of the Yukon Territory. In 1883 he established the first canoe mail service in Alaska. In 1891-92 he was instrumental in introducing Siberian reindeer to Alaska as a supplementary food supply for the Eskimo population, and founded a reindeer mail service in 1898/1899. He was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1897. During the early years of the Alaska gold rush Jackson imported herds of Lapp reindeer to prevent starvation in the Yukon territory, and brought a colony of Laplanders to oversee

the herds. He belonged to more than forty religious, philanthropical, historical and scientific societies. During his career he was instrumental in organizing 88 churches. In May, 1858 he married Mary Voorhees, who died in 1908. Jackson died the following year in 1909. They had two daughters, Lesley and Elizabeth.

For a more detailed account of Jackson's career, including an assessment of his impact on the missionary movement in general and the early history of the Alaska Territory in particular, see the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (September, 1952), 139-158. This article also supplies a description of the collection of Dr. Jackson's papers in the Presbyterian Historical Society Library in Philadelphia, and a complete bibliography of his published writings. One may also consult the essay by Hermann N. Morse, "Sheldon Jackson (1834-1909): Christ's Fool and Seward's Folly" in Hugh T. Kerr (ed.), *Sons of the Prophets: Leaders in Protestantism from Princeton Seminary* (Princeton, 1963), 82-99. The major sources for the biographical information given above are the obituary published in the *Princeton Theological Seminary Bulletin* (Vol. 4, August 1910), and the entry that Dr. Jackson himself prepared for *Who's Who in America*, 1908-09 edition, pp. 977-78. See also the popular account by J. A. Lazell, *Alaskan Apostle: The Life Story of Sheldon Jackson* (New York, 1960).

Scope and Content

This collection of Sheldon Jackson papers for the years 1878-1908 consists mainly of material relating to his missionary work in Alaska. It contains correspondence, reports, published and other written material by or about Sheldon Jackson.

Subjects

Jackson, Sheldon, 1834-1909--Archives.

Princeton Theological Seminary--Alumni and alumnae--Archives.

Missionaries--Alaska--Archives.

Princeton Theological Seminary. Library. Manuscript collections.

Administrative Information

Processing Information

This collection was donated to the Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries, by Sheldon Jackson's daughter, Miss Elizabeth Jackson, in 1950.

Access

There are no special restrictions to access of this collection. It may be examined by library patrons under the normal rules and conditions of Special Collections.

Use of Materials

The following is the acceptable citation for publication: The Sheldon Jackson Manuscript Collection. Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Library.

Related Material

An additional collection of Sheldon Jackson's correspondence has been published on microfilm by the Presbyterian Historical Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is entitled *Correspondence of Sheldon Jackson Relating to Pioneer Presbyterian Missions West of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and in Alaska: 1856-1908* and is available from the Society. It is based on another collection of Jackson material, the original of which was deposited at the Presbyterian Historical Society with duplicate copies being deposited at the Library of Congress and Princeton Theological Seminary.

Arrangement

This collection is divided into three series. Series I, *Correspondence to and from Sheldon Jackson*, contains correspondence and materials related to schools in Alaska, correspondence concerning women's work and home missions, and carbon copies of typewritten letters from 1889-1908. These letters are arranged in chronological order, and an index precedes each volume of the correspondence.

Series II, *Published and Miscellaneous Papers by Jackson*, holds the complete files of the monthly newspaper, *The North Star*. This newspaper was "published in the interest of schools and missions in Alaska" by Sheldon Jackson at Sitka,

Alaska from December 1887 through December 1892. These files total 230 pages, together with 90 leaves of plates and 14 pencil drawings detailing life in late 19th century Alaska. Box 28 holds four file-folders of miscellaneous material by or about Sheldon Jackson.

Series III, *Correspondence Labeled "Pioneer Missions" and Published Reports*, includes 22 volumes of pioneer missions correspondence. The frontispiece in each volume of correspondence reads: "Preserved and copied by Sheldon Jackson, Washington, D. C., 1904." Volumes 21 and 22 were compiled in the year 1908, as indicated by their frontispieces. The full, official title of each is, *Correspondence Relating to Pioneer Presbyterian Missions West of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and in Alaska: 1856-1908*. Each volume (except # 17, half-size) runs to approximately 400 pages of typescript. Some letters are to and from Sheldon Jackson or members of his family. Many are letters between and among other missionaries of the era, most if not all of who were probably known personally by Jackson. Several volumes contain copies of Jackson's prefatory note entitled "The Reason Why." This explains his motive and method for compiling these volumes. All the volumes are available in microfilm in the archives of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The reports on the introduction of reindeer into Alaska at the end of the collection are written by Jackson, and reprinted for subsequent sessions of the Senate. At the time, Jackson was the head of education in Alaska. One volume on the state of education in Alaska is also included in Box 36.

Contents

Series I: Correspondence to and from Sheldon Jackson

Box 1: Correspondence: Women's Work - Home Missions

1:1 (84 pages) Mar. 1878 - May 1879

Box 2-6: Correspondence: On Alaskan Schools

2:1 May - Oct.'85 (500)

3:1 Oct.'85 - Apr.'86 (501)

4:1 Apr. - Jul.'86 (498)

5:1 Jun.'86 - Apr.'87 (501)

6:1 Apr.'87 - Nov.'88 (497)

Box 7-26: Correspondence: Letters

- 7:1 May '89 - Apr.'90 (389)
- 8:1 Nov.'90 - Dec.'92 (492)
- 9:1 May '92 - Oct.'95 (490)
- 10:1 May '92 - Oct.'95 (500)
- 11:1 Nov.'95 - Feb.'97 (500)
- 12:1 Feb.'97 - Oct.'98 (499)
- 13:1 Oct.'98 - Feb.'99 (501)
- 14:1 Feb.'99 - Jan.'01 (500)
- 15:1 Feb.'99 - Jan.'01 (498)
- 16:1 Jan.'01 - Oct.'02 (502)
- 17:1 Jan.'01 - Oct.'02 (503)
- 18:1 Oct.'02 - Jan.'04 (500)
- 19:1 Oct.'02 - Jan.'04 (493)
- 20:1 Jan.'04 - Apr.'05 (500)
- 21:1 Jan.'04 - Apr.'05 (498)
- 22:1 Apr.'05 - Mar.'06 (493)
- 23:1 Apr.'05 - Mar.'06 (500)
- 24:1 Mar.'06 - Jul.'07 (500)
- 25:1 Mar.'06 - Jul.'07 (499)
- 26:1 Jul.'07 - Jun.'08 (384)

Series II: Published and Miscellaneous Papers

Box 27: *The North Star* newspaper

- 27:1 27:1 Dec.'87 - Dec.'92 (230)

Box 28: Miscellaneous Papers, 1877-1908

- 28:1 "Sheldon Jackson, Special Papers Relating to Early Church History in Alaska"

a: An offprint of the *Bulletin de la Societ  Nationale d'Acclimation de France* (July, 1921). On p. 113 it is noted that Jackson was presented (posthumously) with the Society's award.

b: A handwritten list by Jackson (?) of "Historic Letters" written between June 1881 and March 1896. This list would appear to be incomplete

since it is associated with eleven letters written to Jackson between 1881 and 1908. There is also one check receipt.

28:2 "Sheldon Jackson, Miscellaneous Correspondence." This comprises 48 letters (some in the form of reports, memoranda, etc.) written by or to Jackson, or by/to members of his family, which range in date from the late 1840s until 1951. The collection contains the following:

a: A report regarding Eskimos (1903).

b: A memo regarding Jackson's 50th anniversary of his ordination (1908).

c: A report on reindeer (1907).

d: A letter supporting Jackson after a legal suit (1907).

e: Correspondence from Union College (Schenectady, N.Y.) from which Jackson graduated in 1855. (1905).

f: Letter of introduction from the U.S. Dept of State issued to Jackson when he purchased reindeer in Scandinavia.

g: Several documents (1886) regarding a "character attack" on Jackson in the New York World newspaper.

h: Memoranda on missionary work in Minnesota (?).

i: A letter to Miss Lesley Jackson from the Director of Sheldon Jackson College (Sitka, Alaska) thanking her for a donation of Jackson memorabilia.

j: Correspondence of various kinds.

k: Copies of three letters written in support of Jackson defending him against legal action during his missionary years in Alaska.

28:3 "Sheldon Jackson, Papers Relating to the Museum of Sitka"

a: A handwritten draft (by Jackson?) of a "Constitution" establishing the "Alaskan Society of Sitka". This is signed by what appears to be the initial members of that Society. dated 1 August 1887

b: An outline of that Society's structure handwritten on an envelope.

c: Two letters to Jackson. dated 1895

d: A receipt for hardware bought in San Francisco in 1895.

28:4 "Sheldon Jackson, Miscellaneous Papers and Mementos"

a: A handwritten account, entitled "Pioneer Missions, 1877" of Jackson's trip on horseback from Iowa to Arizona and on to the West Coast. It is written in the first person singular on the reverse side of stationary belonging to the "Office of the *Rocky Mountain Presbyterian*,"

a newspaper founded and edited by Jackson in Denver, Colorado (1872-1882). The individual pages are joined end-to-end. The account is signed by Jackson.

b: Various papers concerning Union College.

c: An envelope of newspaper clippings concerning (*inter alia*) the "Alaska Grand Jury and Education," dated 1899

d: Another envelope of miscellaneous clippings.

e: Jackson *curriculum vitae* (in his own handwriting) for the Princeton Seminary *Biographical Catalogue*.

f: A fold-out table of salaries received by Jackson between 1858-1908.

g: A collection of train tickets.

h: A receipt from the Library of Congress for Jackson material donated on 3 December 1917 by Miss Lesley Jackson. The receipt is signed by Herbert Putnam, then Librarian of Congress.

i: A Certificate of Commission proclaiming Jackson as a representative of Alaska at the International Exposition in Mexico City. dated 9 October 1896

j: A subpoena issued to Jackson. 5 May 1885

k: A commemorative certificate issued to Jackson in 1901 for organizing the Department of the Interior exhibit at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. [NB: It was while attending that Exposition that President William McKinley was assassinated].

l: Indictment papers entitled "The United States vs. Sheldon Jackson Trial" issued when Jackson obstructed the construction of a public road in Alaska.

m: A handwritten report on "Education in Alaska 1893-94."

n: An undated typescript of a travelogue.

o: Certificate attesting Jackson's membership in the Alaska Society of Natural History and Ethnology.

p: A Special Passport issued to Jackson by the then Secretary of State John Sherman on 22 December 1897. Jackson needed the passport for travel in Europe connected with the purchase of reindeer to feed "gold-rushers" stranded in the Klondike that winter.

Series III: Correspondence Labeled "Pioneer Missions" (including published reports)

Boxes 29-38: Correspondence Relating to Pioneer Presbyterian Missions, (29-36) and Reports Concerning Education and the Introduction of Reindeer into Alaska (36-38), 1856-1908

- 29:1 *Vol. 1:* Indian Territory, Western Wisconsin, Minnesota 1856-1867
- 29:2 *Vol. 2,* : Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Montana, Utah, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado 1868-Aug. 1869
- 29:3 *Vol. 3,* : Iowa, Nebraska, New Mexico, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado Aug. 1869-1870
- 29:4 *Vol. 4,* : New Mexico, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska 1871-Oct. 1873
- 30:1 *Vol. 5,* : Arizona, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico 1873-1875
- 30:2 *Vol. 6,* : Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico 1875-1876
- 30:3 *Vol. 7,* : Idaho, Utah, Alaska, Nevada, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Washington 1877-1878
- 31:1 *Vol. 8,* : Idaho, Utah, Alaska, Nevada, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Washington, Woman's Executive Committee of Home Missions April-Nov. 1878
- 31:2 *Vol. 9,* : same as previous volume 1878-1879
- 31:3 *Vol. 10,* : same as previous volume 1880
- 32:1 *Vol. 11,* : Idaho, Utah, Alaska, Nevada, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Washington, Woman's Executive Committee of Home Missions 1881
- 32:2 *Vol. 12,* : same as previous volume 1882
- 32:3 *Vol. 13,* : same as previous volume 1883-1884
- 33:1 *Vol. 14,* : Idaho, Utah, Alaska, Nevada, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Washington, Woman's Executive Committee of Home Missions 1885-1887
- 33:2 *Vol. 15,* : same as previous volume 1888-July 1891
- 34:1 *Vol. 16,* : Alaska, Reindeer, Home Missions, Woman's Executive Committee of Home Missions Aug. 1891-1893
- 34:2 *Vol. 17,* : Alaska, Siberia, Reindeer, Home Missions, Presbyterian College, Utah 1894-1896
- 34:3 *Vol. 18,* : Alaska, Siberia, Home Missions, Moderatorship, Reindeer, Lapland, Relief Expedition, Presbyterian College, Utah 1897-1898

- 35:1 *Vol.19*, : Alaska, Reindeer, Home Missions, Presbyterian College, Utah
1899-Mar. 1901
- 35:2 *Vol.20*, : same as previous volume April 1901-1903
- 35:3 *Vol.21*, : Alaska, Reindeer for Labrador, Prayer Meeting Monument,
Miscellaneous 1903-June 1905
- 36:1 *Vol.22*, : Churchill Report, Reindeer for Labrador, Miscellaneous,
Golden Wedding, Retirement July 1904-1908
- 36:2 *Report on Education in Alaska with Maps and Illustrations*, 1886
edition, by Sheldon Jackson. Washington: Government Printing Office.
1886
- 36:3 *In the Senate of the United States: Report on Introduction of Domestic
Reindeer into Alaska with Maps and Illustrations*, 1894 edition, by
Sheldon Jackson. Washington: Government Printing Office. 1894
- 36:4 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*, 1895 edition,
printed in 1896. 1895
- 36:5 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1896
- 36:6 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1897
- 37:1 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1898
- 37:2 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1899
- 37:3 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1900
- 37:4 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1901
- 37:5 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1902
- 38:1 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1903
- 38:2 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1904
- 38:3 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*. 1905
- 38:4 *Report on Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska*,1906. (Printed
in 1908.)
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