

Call Number: PPC .C76

**Crocker Land Expedition field photographs, circa 1913-1917**

American Museum of Natural History  
Special Collections-Library  
Central Park West at 79<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10024

## COLLECTION INFORMATION

Repository: American Museum of Natural History, Special Collections-Library  
Central Park West at 79<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10024

Collection: Crocker Land Expedition field photographs

Creator: MacMillan, Donald Baxter, 1874-1970; Hovey, Edmund Otis, 1862-1924;  
Crocker Land Expedition (1913-1917)

Inclusive Dates: circa 1913-1917

Manuscript Call Number: PPC .C76

Extent: .25 linear feet (1 box)

Physical Description: 73 individually-sleeved black and white photographic prints

Condition: Good

Prepared by/Date: Traci Faughnan, November 2011

Revised by/Date:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Donald Baxter MacMillan was born in Provincetown, Massachusetts in 1874 and moved to Freeport, Maine in 1889 where he earned a degree in geology at Bowdoin College. Having a life-long interest in science and seafaring, Mr. MacMillan worked as a teacher and founded a summer camp in Maine that aimed to teach boys seamanship and navigation. In the early 1900's, he made the acquaintance of Rear Admiral Robert Peary, a fellow Bowdoin graduate, when he rescued nine shipwrecked people from Casco Bay.

In 1908, Mr. MacMillan joined the Peary North Pole Expedition as an assistant to Admiral Peary. Over the next 46 years, Mr. MacMillan made over 30 expeditions to the Arctic and chartered over 300,000 miles of new territory, performed scientific research and studied the native people of Greenland and Northern Canada. He was influential in introducing the use of radios, airplanes, and electricity to Arctic exploration. Mr. MacMillan's contributions to the study of the Arctic also include films, thousands of photographs, and a dictionary of the Inuktituk language. In his later years, he served in the United States Navy during both World War I and World War II and continued to be influential in Arctic exploration until his death in 1970.

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

During a 1905-1906 Arctic expedition, Rear Admiral Robert Peary believed he discovered a previously unknown landmass off the western coast of Ellesmere Island in Northern Canada and named it after the expedition's benefactor, George Crocker. In early 1912, Donald Baxter MacMillan and George Borup, who was assistant curator of geology at the American Museum of Natural History, began preparations to co-lead an expedition in search of Crocker Land; however Mr. Borup unexpectedly died in the spring of 1912. Plans for the expedition were postponed until the following year, while a new team was organized and additional financial support was raised from the University of Illinois and the American Geographical Society. The final team consisted of Donald B. MacMillan, leader and ethnologist; Fitzhugh Green, engineer and physicist; W. Elmer Ekblaw, geologist and botanist; Maurice C. Tanquary, Ph.D., zoologist; Harrison J. Hunt, M.D., surgeon; Jerome Lee Allen, wireless operator; and Jonathan C. Small, mechanic and general aid. The AMNH Curator, Edmund Otis Hovey, served as Chairman of the Committee in Charge.

When the expedition team departed from the Brooklyn Navy Yard aboard the SS "Diana" on July 2, 1913 their mission was to discover the location of Crocker Land, as well as, perform scientific research in geology, botany, ornithology, meteorology, and ethnology in the Arctic. In the spring of 1914, Mr. MacMillan and Mr. Green travelled over 400 miles across ice and land from their headquarters in Etah, Greenland to finally locate Crocker Land; however, they discovered that the purported landmass was only a mirage.

The AMNH received letters from the expedition team requesting a relief ship be sent to retrieve them in the summer of 1915. The schooner "George B. Cluett" was sent with Dr. Hovey in charge of the mission in July 1915. However, extremely bad ice conditions made sea travel difficult and delayed the return of Dr. Hovey, Mr. MacMillan, Dr. Hunt, and Mr. Small with the expedition collections and equipment for two years. Dr. Tanquary, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Ekblaw were able to sledge to Southern Greenland in the winter of 1916 and return to New York, by way of Copenhagen.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

This collection is a small subset of copies of prints from the larger Photographic Collection no. 14 – Crocker Land Expedition field photographs. The photographs in this collection are individually sleeved and arranged in four series.

Folder 1 consists of 4 photographs that were taken prior to departure for the Arctic and include images of the S.S. “Diana” in the Brooklyn Navy Yard and group portraits of the expedition team.

Folder 2 is divided into two sets. The first set, 2a, is comprised of 22 photographs of the landscape and topography. Locations within Greenland that are captured in these images include Etah, Saunders Island, Brother John’s Glacier, Humboldt Glacier, North Star Bay, Wolstenholme Sound, Lake Alida, and Foulke Fjord. The second set, 2b, contains 6 images of the team in the field and around the headquarters camp in Etah, Greenland. Other locations include Cape Alexander, Nerke, and Foulke Fjord.

Folder 3 consists of 26 photographs of the expedition team members and Eskimos in the field and around headquarters in Etah. Other locations include Foulke Fjord, Nerke, Cape Alexander, Brother John’s Glacier, Saunders Island, and an Eskimo summer camp at North Star Bay. This series also includes images of the team collecting specimens such as walrus heads and the hide of a caribou.

Folder 4 contains 15 photographs of ethnographic portraits (focusing primarily on women and children), an Eskimo summer camp and a Danish mission at North Star Bay.

## **SEPARATED MATERIAL**

Call number: Photographic Collection no. 14

Title: Crocker Land Expedition field photographs.

This is a collection of photographs taken during the Crocker Land Expedition from 1913-1917. The collection includes images of Northern Greenland and Canada, as well as anthropological studies of the Inuit culture.

## **RELATED MATERIAL**

Call numbers: GG-1 and GG-4

The AMNH Library Rare Book Collection contains field note books and journals that were maintained by Jerome Lee Allen, Fitzhugh Green, Harrison J. Hunt, and, Donald B. MacMillan during the Crocker Land Expedition.

Call number: DR 028C

Title: American Museum of Natural History Crocker Land Expedition financial records, 1912-1922.

Author: Crocker Land Expedition (1913-1917).

This is a collection of the financial records of the Crocker Land Expedition.

Call number: MSS .B67

Title: Correspondence, 1908-1912.

Author: Borup, George, 1885-1912.

This is a collection of George Borup’s correspondence and relates to his work in Arctic exploration. Due to his intended role as co-leader of the Crocker Land

Expedition, prior to his death, some materials may refer to the planning of the expedition.

Call number MSS .C76

Title: Papers, ca. 1911-1922.

Author: Crocker Land Expedition (1913-1917).

This collection mainly consists of correspondence between the expedition staff, representatives of the sponsoring institutions, incumbents of corporations involved, and interested individuals.

Call number: G-5 pt.1 and pt.2

Title: Practical astronomy, Crocker Land Expedition of the American Museum of Natural History and the American Geographical Society, 1913-1915.

Author: Green, Fitzhugh, 1888-1947.

This collection is comprised of astronomical observations made in Northern Greenland towards the end of the Crocker Land Expedition.

Department of Mammology Library, Field note book collection. (Notebook number 54)

Title: Field note books, Crocker Land Expedition, 1916-1917.

Author: Hovey, Edmund Otis, 1862-1924.

This field notebook was maintained by Edmund Otis Hovey during his two-year visit to Greenland and includes a specimen catalog, notes, and a 1917 letter from Fitzhugh Green to Hovey discussing World War I.

Call number: 17-G

Title: Manuscript material on the Crocker Land Expedition.

Author: Hovey, Edmund Otis, 1862-1924.

This is a collection of manuscripts relating to the Crocker Land Expedition. It includes a summary account, journal, and field notes.

Call number: unprocessed collection

Title: E.O. Hovey papers.

Author: Hovey, Edmund Otis, 1862-1924.

This is an unprocessed collection consisting of two boxes of Dr. Edmund Otis Hovey's papers. One box contains materials related to the Crocker Land Expedition.

For further details on Crocker Land related archival material, please see "Crocker Land Resource Guide" available online at

<http://images.library.amnh.org/hiddencollections/resources/crocker-land-resource-guides/>

#### **ARRANGEMENT NOTE**

This collection was previously arranged through a USDE grant-funded project in the 1980s. At this time the photographs were grouped in sets titled "Series A", "Series B", etc. This arrangement has been kept, however the descriptive titles have been supplied to replace the previous "Series" designation.

### **ACCESS CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS**

Requests to use the collection should be made in advance to the Senior Special Collections Librarian, who may be contacted at 212-769-5420 or at [speccol@amnh.org](mailto:speccol@amnh.org)

### **PREFERRED CITATION**

American Museum of Natural History, Crocker Land Expedition field photographs, circa 1913-1917. PPC .C76.

### **SUBJECTS**

#### **PERSONAL NAME**

Ekblaw, Walter Elmer, 1882-1949  
Tanquary, Maurice Cole, 1881-1944  
Small, Jonathan "Jot" Cook

#### **TOPICAL TERMS**

Arctic regions--Discovery and exploration  
Etah, Greenland  
Inuit -- Greenland  
Inuit -- Canada, Northern  
New York Naval Shipyard  
North Star Bay (Greenland)  
Scientific expeditions -- Arctic regions.  
S.S. "Diana"  
U.S. Navy Yard (Brooklyn, New York, N.Y.)

## CONTAINER LIST

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	1	Sailing to the Arctic. 1913 July 2.
1	2a	Arctic landscape, undated.
1	2b	Expedition team traveling through the Arctic, undated.
1	3	Expedition team and Eskimos, undated.
1	4	Ethnographic portraits, undated.