

## Episcopal chapel at Tanana



Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

**Collection Name:** Lawyer and Cora Rivenburg Photograph Collection, 1910-1912

**Identifier:** UAF-1994-70-363

**Title:** Episcopal chapel at Tanana  
Title from caption. Photograph of St. James Episcopal Church.

**Description:** Narrative in photo album reads:  
"A beautiful Indian Episcopal chapel at Tanana. Archdeacon  
Stuck was over all Indian work."

**Creator:** Rivenburg, Lawyer

**Subject.TGM:** Chapels  
Episcopal churches  
Log buildings

**Corporate Name:** St. James' Episcopal Church (Tanana)

**Location:** Tanana (Alaska)

**Region:** Interior Alaska

**Time Period:** 1896 to 1913

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Type:</b>                | <u>Collection</u><br><u>Image (Photographs)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Ordering &amp; Use:</b>  | For information on ordering and using this material:<br><a href="http://www.uaf.edu/library/apr/photo_use_forms.html">http://www.uaf.edu/library/apr/photo_use_forms.html</a><br>Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, Elmer E. Rasmuson<br>Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks. |
| <b>Holding Institution:</b> | <a href="mailto:fyapr@uaf.edu">mailto:fyapr@uaf.edu</a> --(907) 474-6594--PO Box 756808,<br>Fairbanks, AK 99775-6808.                                                                                                                                                                |

### **More about the Mission of Our Savior:**

*No Sir Christopher Wren gave his vision and powers to the planning of these Alaska houses of God. And however awe-inspiring St. Paul's Cathedral may be in its beauty and grandeur, there is a wondrous beauty to the simple fanes that raise heavenward in the bright Alaska summers, or the chill air of the long winters. . . . The time will come in the Interior when we shall desire to construct buildings of frame or stone, but up to the present time, the place and spirit of the country seem to demand the log construction.*

— *The Alaska Churchman*  
“Temples of the North”  
November 1919

The Tanana Indians' contact with Western missionaries initially came from Canada through the Church of England. They established a mission 1851 at the mouth of the Tozitna River—a point some 11 miles downriver from Tanana. There, a village of some 200 Indians and a trading post manned by Arthur Harper meant regular river traffic and human contact. History books have several names for the post: Harper's Station, Fort Adamas, and Old Station have all been listed as the location for the original mission.

The Canadian mission was 33 years old in 1884 when the American Congress passed legislation to set up a civil government in Alaska and the Presbyterian Rev. Dr. Sheldon Jackson was appointed General Agent for Education. Jackson was charged to establish an educational system for all children, regardless of race, on the meager budget of \$25,000. His territory was so large that its land mass equaled one-fifth of the continental United States. So Jackson relied on the then-common custom of funding missionary schools through government contracts. To stretch his budget, he divided Alaska into geographic segments and invited church groups to open and operate schools. Since the Church of England was already working along the Yukon, that area was assigned to the Episcopal Church.

But it wasn't until 1891 that the Methodist Episcopalians laid claim on the old mission at Fort Adams. That year Rev. Jules Prevost joined English priest T. H. Canham, and they

worked together for a year before Canham returned to Canada, leaving the missionary field solely in the hands of the American.

In the fall of 1896, Rev. Prevost hosted newly appointed Bishop Peter Trimble Rowe, who held his first confirmation service in Alaska while he was visiting St. James Mission. During the visit, the two men decided the mission should be moved to a more favorable location, and promptly selected a prime spot—the junction of the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. It was already a traditional meeting place for the local people, who called it Nuchalawoyya, or “Where the Two Great Rivers Meet.” There the Native population traded, discussed problems, settled hunting boundaries, celebrated special occasions, and then departed for their transient lives.

Rowe and Prevost cleared a 100-by-300-foot area on a bluff near the junction and relocated a log cabin from the old mission. A year later, a sawmill was placed near the clearing and another cabin was built.

“In 1899,” wrote Bishop Rowe, “the Mission was transferred to the present site, named the Mission of our Savior, St. James’ being given to the Mission for white people, three miles away. The beautiful Church, given by Miss Mary Rhineland King, was built. There was erected a sawmill. The Mission suffered serious losses by two fires, destroying all the property excepting the Church and the sawmill.”

Rev. Prevost used the new site as a home base when he traveled the river network in his small steamboat, the *Northern Light*—a gift from his “Philadelphia friends.” Prevost also was the editor of a semi-annual newspaper, the “Yukon Press,” the first paper printed in the Interior. He resigned in 1906, after working in the area for 15 years. At that time there were 13 Native houses, a sawmill, a school, and three larger houses built near the big log church with the delicate white window frames. With Rowe’s help, Prevost had built a community in the wilderness.

By 1947, the Mission of Our Savior was quietly standing empty. Another thirty-three years would pass before it would be declared an historical site and the new generation of community leaders would start renovating the building that was so much a part of their history. The mission is now on the National Register of Historic Places. It is also listed in the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey, which is maintained by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

## **Links:**

Alaska travel photos by Henk Binnendijk:  
<http://henkbinnendijk.tripod.com/fairbanks/id21.html>

State of Alaska community profile:  
<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CIS.cfm>

Tanana Tribal Council:

<http://uaf-db.uaf.edu/Jukebox/TananaJBX/HTML/Tanana.htm>

Episcopal Diocese of Alaska:

[http://home.gci.net/~episcopalak/interior\\_deanery.htm](http://home.gci.net/~episcopalak/interior_deanery.htm)

National Register of Historic Places:

<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/AK/Yukon-Koyukuk/districts.html>

### **More reading:**

Be sure to check for availability online through **your local library** catalog at <http://sled.alaska.edu/library.html>. For the statewide **Alaska Library Network** catalog, go to <http://sled.alaska.edu/library.html> and click on **ALNCat**.

## **The man of Alaska,**

**Peter Trimble Rowe,**

Thomas bp **Jenkins**

1943

**English** Book xvi p., ll., 340p., illus, col front., plates, ports. 23 cm.

New York, Morehouse-Gorham co.,

### **Libraries with Item:**

| <b><u>Location</u></b> | <b><u>Library</u></b>                                   | <b><u>Code</u></b> |
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| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>A HOLMES JOHNSON MEM LIBR</b></a>        | XZ#                |
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| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL LIBR</b></a>         | XYZ                |
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| AK                     | <b>HAINES COOP LIBR</b>                                 | Q2R                |
| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>ILISAGVIK COL, TUZZY CONSOR LIBR</b></a> | X#7                |
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| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>KETCHIKAN PUB LIBR</b></a>               | Q2Z                |
| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>KETTLESON MEM LIBR</b></a>               | Q2V                |
| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>PALMER PUB LIBR</b></a>                  | XZV                |
| AK                     | <a href="#"><b>SEWARD COMMUN LIBR</b></a>               | X@3                |
| AK                     | <b>SHELDON JACKSON COL</b>                              | Q2X                |
| AK                     | <b>SKAGWAY PUB LIBR</b>                                 | Q6M                |

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| AK | <a href="#">UNIV OF ALASKA, SE KETCHIKAN CAM LIBR</a> | Q3J |
| AK | <a href="#">UNIV OF ALASKA, SE, JUNEAU</a>            | Y4Z |
| AK | <a href="#">VALDEZ CONSORTIUM LIBR</a>                | X#2 |
| AK | <a href="#">WASILLA PUB LIBR</a>                      | XZZ |

## The Alaskan missions of the Episcopal Church.

A brief sketch, historical and descriptive,

Hudson **Stuck**

1920

**English** Book 179 p. illus., map, 19 cm.

N.Y., Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society,

### Libraries with Item:

| <a href="#">Location</a> | <a href="#">Library</a>                               | <a href="#">Code</a> |
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| AK                       | <a href="#">ALASKA STATE LIBR</a>                     | ALK                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL LIBR</a>              | XYZ                  |
| AK                       | <b>ANCHORAGE MUS OF HIST &amp; ART LIBR</b>           | XY6                  |
| AK                       | <b>SHELDON JACKSON COL</b>                            | Q2X                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">UNIV OF ALASKA, ELMER E RASMUSON LIBR</a> | UAF                  |

## Some facts about Alaska and its missions /

Welles Mortimer **Partridge**; Peter Trimble **Rowe**, Bishop

1900

**English** Book 46 p. : ill. ; 23 cm.

Peabody, Mass. : C.H. Shepard,

### Libraries with Item:

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## The Yukon country /

Peter Trimble **Rowe**; Theodore L **Flood**

1899

**English** Article p. 355-360 ; 26 cm.

Meadville, Pa. : T.L. Flood, ed. and Propr.,

### Libraries with Item:

| <a href="#">Location</a> | <a href="#">Library</a>           | <a href="#">Code</a> |
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| AK                       | <a href="#">ALASKA STATE LIBR</a> | ALK                  |

## Peter Trimble Rowe :

### Trailbreaker /

Mary Cox

1959

**English** Book [19] : illus. ; 22 cm.

New York : National Council,

### Libraries with Item:

| <a href="#">Location</a> | <a href="#">Library</a>                       | <a href="#">Code</a> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| AK                       | <a href="#">FAIRBANKS N STAR BOROUGH LIBR</a> | X#4                  |

## Alaskan churchman.

St. Matthew's Mission (Fairbanks, Alaska); Episcopal Church.; Episcopal Church.

1900s-1980

**English** Serial Publication : Periodical : Quarterly (every 3 months) v. : ill. ; 22-30 cm.

Fairbanks, Alaska : St. Matthew's Mission,

### Libraries with Item:

| <a href="#">Location</a> | <a href="#">Library</a>                               | <a href="#">Local Holdings</a>           | <a href="#">Code</a> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| AK                       | <a href="#">ALASKA STATE LIBR</a>                     | <a href="#">Vol.8, no.1-Vol.75, n...</a> | ALK                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL LIBR</a>              | <a href="#">v.71(1)-v.75(4) Mar 1...</a> | XYZ                  |
| AK                       | <b>KUSKOKWIM CONSORTIUM LIBR</b>                      |                                          | XY7                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">UNIV OF ALASKA, ELMER E RASMUSON LIBR</a> | <a href="#">v.1,no.1-v.22,no.4,v....</a> | UAF                  |

## Index :

**Alaskan churchman, volumes 1-50.**

1954-1990?

**English**  Book [136] p. ; 28 cm.

[S.l. : s.n.,

### Libraries with Item:

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| AK                       | <a href="#">UNIV OF ALASKA, ELMER E RASMUSON LIBR</a> | UAF                  |

## Travels among the Dena : exploring Alaska's Yukon Valley /

Frederica De Laguna

2000

**English** Book xxi, 369 p. : ill., maps ; 27 cm.

Seattle : University of Washington Press, ; ISBN: 029597902X (alk. paper)

### Libraries with Item:

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| AK                       | <a href="#">FAIRBANKS N STAR BOROUGH LIBR</a>          | X#4                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">JUNEAU PUB LIBR</a>                        | Q2L                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">KENAI COMMUN LIBR</a>                      | XZ\$                 |
| AK                       | <a href="#">KETTLESON MEM LIBR</a>                     | Q2V                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">NORTHWEST CAM UNIV OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS</a> | X\$8                 |
| AK                       | <a href="#">PALMER PUB LIBR</a>                        | XZV                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">PETERSBURG PUB LIBR</a>                    | Q2T                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">SEWARD COMMUN LIBR</a>                     | X@3                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">UNIV OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE</a>              | UAA                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">VALDEZ CONSORTIUM LIBR</a>                 | X#2                  |

## The Upper Tanana Indians.

Robert A McKennan

1959

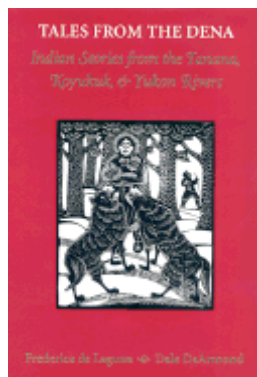
**English** Book 226 p. illus., maps. 25 cm.

New Haven, Dept. of Anthropology, Yale University,

### Libraries with Item:

| <a href="#">Location</a> | <a href="#">Library</a>                         | <a href="#">Code</a> |
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| AK                       | <b>JUNEAU FOREST SERV LIBR</b>                  | Q2P                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">JUNEAU PUB LIBR</a>                 | Q2L                  |
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## Tales from the Dena :

Indian stories from the Tanana, Koyukuk, & Yukon rivers /

Frederica **De Laguna**; Norman **Reynolds**; Dale **DeArmond**

1995

**English** Book xx, 352 p. : ill., maps ; 25 cm.

Seattle : University of Washington Press, ; ISBN: 029597429X (alk. paper) 0295974354 (pbk. : alk. paper)

### Libraries with Item:

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| AK                       | <b>ANCHORAGE MUS OF HIST &amp; ART LIBR</b>   | XY6                  |
| AK                       | <a href="#">ANCHORAGE SCH DIST</a>            | XY4                  |
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| AK                       | <a href="#">FORT WAINWRIGHT POST LIBR</a>     | V91                  |
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| AK                       | <a href="#">KENAI COMMUN LIBR</a>             | XZ\$                 |
| AK                       | <a href="#">KENAI PENINSULA COL, UAA</a>      | X@5                  |
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| AK                       | <a href="#">KODIAK COL LIBR</a>               | XZ@                  |



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