

# William Thomas Lopp papers, 1893-1939

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Lopp, William Thomas, 1864-1939
<b>Title</b>	William Thomas Lopp papers
<b>Dates</b>	1893-1939 (inclusive) 1893 1939
<b>Quantity</b>	3.0 linear feet, (6 containers)
<b>Collection Number</b>	Ax 058
<b>Summary</b>	William Thomas Lopp (1864-1939) dedicated himself to improving the lives of Alaskan natives by establishing a Reindeer Station in Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska, and by holding various government posts in education. During his career he established sixty-six schools, five hospitals and sanitation systems, and increased prosperity in the coastal villages of northern Alaska. The collection includes journals, correspondence, and writings related to his work.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives.</a> UO Libraries--SCUA 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 <a href="mailto:spcarref@uoregon.edu">spcarref@uoregon.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Collection is open to the public.  Collection must be used in Special Collections & University Archives Reading Room.
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Sponsor</b>	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## Historical Note

William Thomas Lopp was born June 21, 1864 to Jacob C. and Lucinda Trotter Lopp in Harrison County, Indiana. He worked for six years as a teacher and principal in various Indiana schools, and was a superintendent and elder in the Presbyterian Church. He earned a B.A. at Indiana's Hanover College in 1888.

In July 1890 Lopp arrived at Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska to teach at a mission school. Here he met Ellen Louise Kittredge, another trained teacher, and they married in 1892. Both dedicated themselves to learning the Eskimo languages and to understanding Eskimo lifeways. Seeing that Eskimo food sources were endangered by the encroachments of the burgeoning American and Canadian fishing industry, Lopp promoted reindeer herding among the native Alaskans as an alternative means of subsistence. In 1892 reindeer were brought over from Siberia and a Reindeer Station was established,

of which Lopp was superintendent. He became known to the native whalers and fishermen of Alaska as the "Reindeer Man" and "Tomgorah," meaning "Tom-the-good-man."

In 1902 the Lopp family relocated to Seattle, although Lopp traveled between Seattle, Alaska and Washington D.C., working to improve the lives of Alaskan natives. He became superintendent of government schools (Native) and reindeer, northern district, of Alaska in 1904, and left that post in 1909. In 1910 he became chief of the Alaska division of the U.S. Bureau of Education, a post he held until 1923, after which he was superintendent of education of Natives of Alaska for two years. In 1925 he became a reindeer expert for Hudson's Bay Company. In 1936, Lopp conducted a survey of the native Alaskan reindeer industry for the Indian Rights Association.

Throughout his years working with native Alaskans Lopp encouraged them to follow and care for the growing reindeer herds, assuring them and their children adequate food, clothing, and income. He developed the "endless chain" system of apprenticing young Eskimos to older reindeer herders and then giving the younger men a percentage of the increased herd. During his career Lopp established sixty-six schools, five hospitals and sanitation systems, and increased prosperity in the coastal villages of northern Alaska. William Thomas Lopp died on April 10, 1939, survived by his wife Ellen and eight children.

## Content Description

The collection contains materials relating to William Thomas Lopp's experiences on the Alaskan frontier. The collection is divided into six series: Journals (1893-1936), Correspondence (1893-1939), Manuscripts, Subject Files, Printed Material, and Photographs.

Journals comprises notes from overland journeys and explorations.

Correspondence is divided into three subseries: General; Personal; and Eskimo letters. General correspondence is arranged chronologically, as is the series of personal correspondence.

Manuscripts contains Lopp's notes for and drafts of various articles and publications. Of note within this section is the Log of the Overland Relief Expedition upon which Lopp's book, *The Great Reindeer Drive*, was based.

Subject Files contains correspondence and notes relating to the Indian Rights Association and the Hudson's Bay Reindeer Investigation. There is also documentation, in the form of correspondence, documents and newspaper clippings, of the Lomen Controversy. (The Lomens were a powerful family who cheated the Indians of Alaska out of their land and reindeer herd rights.) This section also contains a folder of notes and memoranda on reindeer and another with notes on Eskimo language.

Printed Material includes newspaper clippings, newsletters, publications of the Commissioner of Education (Alaska office), reports of the governor of Alaska, a *National Geographic* article ("Reindeer in Alaska"), and various government documents. Reindeer herding figures can be found in the publications from the Alaska Office of the Commissioner of Education and reports from the Governor of Alaska.

The Photographs contains Lopp's collection of photographs of predominately Eskimo scenes, portraits and Alaskan landscapes also depicts Alaskan coastal life.

## Use of the Collection

## Restrictions on Use

Property rights reside with Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries. Copyright resides with the creators of the documents or their heirs. All requests for permission to publish collection materials must be submitted to Special Collections & University Archives. The reader must also obtain permission of the copyright holder.

Archival may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal and/or state right to privacy laws and other regulations.

Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in this collection without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g. a cause of action for invasion of privacy may arise if facts concerning an individual's private life are published that would be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person) for which the University of Oregon assumes no responsibility.

If a researcher finds sensitive personal information in a collection, please bring it to the attention of the reading room staff.

## Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], William Thomas Lopp Papers, Ax 058, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon.

## Administrative Information

### Arrangement

Collection is organized into the following series: Journals; Correspondence; Manuscripts; Subject Files; Printed Material; and Photographs.

### Processing Note

Collection processed by staff.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Inventory

Box1, Folder1

### Biographical Materials

Box1, Folder2

## Journals, 1893-1936

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Box	Folder		
1	3	journal	July 1893- January 1894
1	3	journal	August 1894- June 1899
1	4	journal	February 1897- May 1898
1	4	Journal [see also 3/13]	February 1898- November 1898
1	4	journal	December 1900- September 1901
1	5	journal	June 1904- December 1904
1	5	journal	January 1905- October 1905
1	5	journal	June 1906- September 1906
1	5	journal	November 1907- March 1908
1	5	journal	1911
1	6	journal	1923
1	6	journal	[1923?]
1	6	journal	January 1926- October 1926
1	6	journal	August 1926- December 1926

Container(s)		Description	Dates
1	6	journal	[1928?]
1	7	journal	1934-1935
1	7	journal	1936
1	7	Excerpt of 1898 log dated April 1936	1936
1	8	Hunting logs	

## Correspondence, 1893-1939

Container(s)		Description	Dates
<b>General correspondence</b>			
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>		
1	9	General correspondence	1893 1898-1902
1	10	General correspondence	1903-1904
1	11	General correspondence	1905-1906
2	1	General correspondence	1907
2	2	General correspondence	January 1908- July 1908
2	3	General correspondence	August 1908- December 1908
2	4	General correspondence	1909
2	5	General correspondence	1910-1911
2	6	General correspondence	1912-1914
2	7	General correspondence	1917-1920
2	8	General correspondence	1921-1923

Container(s)		Description	Dates
2	9	General correspondence	1924
2	10	General correspondence	1925
2	11	General correspondence	1926-1927
2	12	General correspondence	1928-1932
2	13	General correspondence	1933-1939

### Personal correspondence

Box	Folder		
2	14	American Missionary Association	1898-1907
2	15	Letters to Mrs. Ellen Louise Lopp (wife)	1904-1927
3	1	Neda Thornton	1900-1903 1927-1937
3	2	Sheldon Jackson	1902-1906
3	3	Clarence Andrews	1924-1927
3	4	Melba Call	1924-1936
3	5	Mrs. J.P. Newell	1936-1938
3	6	Other fragments and undated letters	

### Eskimo letters

**1936-1938**

Box	Folder		
3	7	A	
3	8	B-N	
3	9	O-R	
3	10	S	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3 11	T-U, fragments and undated letters	

## Manuscripts

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box	Folder	
3 12	Pioneer Education in Northwest Alaska (3 drafts), Pauperism in England and United States, The Reindeer Industry as a Practical Industrial (Vocational)?, Education for the Eskimos of Alaska, How Do Alaskan Natives Fare?	
3 13	Log of the Overland Relief Expedition (served as basis for The Great Reindeer Drive), excerpts from log	
3 14	Notes from log; Story of the Relief Expedition (draft version of The Great Reindeer Drive)	
3 15	Notes on The Great Trek Lopp appears to have been comparing the Doubleday, Doren & Co. publication about a 1929-1935 reindeer trek to his 1898 rescue trek.	

## Subject files

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>Indian Rights Association</b>		
Box	Folder	
4 1	Correspondence [1 of 4]	1932-1938
4 2	Correspondence [2 of 4]	1932-1938
4 3	Correspondence [3 of 4]	1932-1938
4 4	Correspondence [4 of 4]	1932-1938
4 5	Notes	
4 6	Hudson's Bay Reindeer Investigation, Correspondence and documents	1920-1936

Container(s)		Description	Dates
4	7	Hudson's Bay Reindeer Investigation, Correspondence and documents	1920-1936
<b>The Lomen Controversy</b>			
Box	Folder		
4	8	Correspondence and notes [1 of 2]	1917-1935
4	9	Correspondence and notes [2 of 2]	1917-1935
4	10	Newspaper clippings, brochure, documents	
5	1	Reindeer industry notes	
5	2	Eskimo vocabulary	
5	3	Bureau of Education Alaska Division, personnel applications	
5	4	Miscellaneous bills and receipts	

## Printed Material

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Box	Folder		
5	5	Newspaper clippings, newspapers and newsletters	
5	6	Newsletters: <i>Nome Gold Digger</i> (1899); <i>The Thlinget</i> (1911); <i>The News Letter</i> (1912); <i>Kake Weekly Progress</i> (1933); <i>Chitina Bulletin</i> (1933)	
5		Publications of the Commissioner of Education, (Alaska office)	1890-1922
6		Reports of the Governor of Alaska	1903-1935
	Folder		



Container(s)	Description	Dates
6 1	"Reindeer in Alaska," G.H. Grosvenor of <i>National Geographic</i> (reprint)	1903
6 2	Government documents	1936-1937

## Photographs

Container(s)	Description
Box	Folder
6 3	Buildings
6 4	Eskimos
6 5	Ships
6 6	Non-nature settlers
6 7	Alaska landscape scenes
6 8	Log structure
6 9	Eskimo school children; Ship at sea; J. Dewey Saper

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Alaska--Discovery and exploration  
 Alaska--Photographs  
 Educators--Alaska  
 Eskimos--Alaska--Social life and customs  
 Missionaries--Alaska--Prince of Wales, Cape  
 Reindeer herding--Alaska  
 Reindeer industry--Alaska

### Personal Names :

Lopp, William Thomas, 1864-1939--Archives

Finding aid prepared by Finding aid prepared by Mary Anteaux and Rose M. Nunez  
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