

Library gains Parks papers

Two collections of historical papers documenting early days in Alaska were recently donated to the Alaska State Historical Library.

The Governor Parks collection (Manuscript No. 91) was donated by his niece Betty Valentine of Piedmont, California. The collection provides insight into the life of an Alaska pioneer and Territorial governor. Parks, who died in 1984 a few weeks short of his 101 birthday, spent 77 years in Alaska.

Included in the collection are a

scrapbook of newspaper clippings and articles kept by the Governor's mother; a daily journal kept by Parks in 1916 when he worked for the U.S. General Land Office; correspondence; a history of Alaska's flag; various certificates of appointments, awards and honors; and about 600 photographs.

The Frank and Brownie Caldwell collection of papers and photographs documenting their 1905 trip from Indiana to Alaska

(Continued on Page Fourteen)

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(Continued from Page Nine)

was donated by the Caldwell family. Dr. M.J. Caldwell, the family historian from Leesburg, Florida, helped organize and document the materials.

Frank Caldwell was an advance man and lecture manager for Rev. John P.D. John, a Methodist minister who wanted to bring religion to Alaska's gold camps.

During their 1905 trip Frank and his bride Brownie visited major communities in Southeast Alaska and traveled by Yukon River steamer to Circle City and then on to Nome. Brownie Caldwell took many photographs, later used by her husband in a travelogue lecture series.

One of Caldwell's lectures concerned Eli Smith, an Alaska mail carrier who mushed his dog team

8,000 miles from Nome to Washington, D.C. on a bet. This exploit and the Caldwells' 1905 trip are well documented by newspaper clippings, letters, photographs and other scrapbook materials.

For more information about these and other collections contact Phyllis DeMuth, librarian, Alaska Historical Library, Pouch G, Juneau 99811.