

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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Guide prepared by: Chloe Nielsen, Archivist

TITLE: CIHS Marston

COLLECTION NUMBER: B1966.017

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: c. 1940s, 1963

Extent: 1 postcard, 1 letter

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Heurlin, Magnus Colcord "Rusty"; O'Brien, Lawrence F.

Administrative/Biographical History:

Ernest Gruening (1887-1974) served as the governor of Alaska from 1939-1953. He also served as an Alaskan senator from statehood, 1959, to 1969. Gruening is credited as the catalyst to statehood.¹

M. C. "Rusty" Heurlin was born in Kristianstad, Sweden, to American parents and was raised in Massachusetts, where he took art classes at the Fenway School of Illustration in Boston. Though he arrived in Valdez, Alaska, in 1916, he served in WWI in Europe and afterward spent time in Westport, Connecticut, working for New York magazines before returning to the Fairbanks area in 1924. He settled in Ester until his death in 1986. Heurlin favored Alaska Natives as artistic subjects and spent four whaling seasons in Barrow, where he learned about the Inupiaq culture he went onto document in his painting career. Heurlin received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Alaska in 1971.²

¹ "Ernest Gruening," Wikipedia, revised 7 January 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Gruening.

² Kesler Woodward, "Magnus Colcord 'Rusty' Heurlin, 1895-1986," in *A Sense of Wonder* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Museum, 1995), 17.

Marvin R. "Muktuk" Marston (1889-1980) was born in Tyler, Washington. He worked as a long-shoreman at Nome in 1906, then enlisted in the Illinois National Guard in 1910, where he served for 3 years. Marston then worked "in brokerage, insurance, land development and petroleum search in the Midwest, California, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania." In 1941, he was commissioned to serve as major in the Army Air Corps and was stationed in Alaska, where he focused on recruiting Indigenous Alaskans into the Alaska Territorial Guard. Marston gained the "nickname 'Muktuk'" in a contest with a village chief." Marston then served as a delegate to the Alaska Constitutional Convention in 1956.³

Lawrence "Larry" F. O'Brien was appointed in 1961 by President Kennedy to serve as the special assistant to the president for congressional relations and personnel. He also managed President Kennedy's activities in 1962 on behalf of the Democratic Party during its election campaigns. O'Brien continued to work as the special assistant for President Johnson after Kennedy's assassination, per the President's request, until 1965, when he was appointed the U.S. Postmaster General.⁴

Scope and Content Description:

The Marston collection consists of a postcard of a reproduction of a painting by "Rusty" Heurlin portraying M. R. Marston with a dog sled. Also in the collection is a letter from Lawrence F. O'Brien to Senator Ernest Gruening.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use.

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

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Preferred Citation: CIHS Marston, Anchorage Museum, B1966.17

³ "The Memorial Service: Marvin R. 'Muktuk' Maston, 1889-1980," 1980.

⁴ "Larry O'Brien," Wikipedia, revised 19 December 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larry_O%27Brien.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information:
Donated by M. R. Marston on August 1, 1966.

RELATED MATERIALS

B1955.002 CIHS Marston Poster

SUBJECTS

Alaska. Territorial Guard
Dogsledding
Heurlin, M. C. "Rusty"
Marston, Muktuk
Postcards
World War II

Detailed Description of the Collection

.1 – Yukon Trail, color postcard, ca. 1940s

Painting by Capt. Hurlin [M.C. "Rusty" Heurlin], formerly of Alaska Territorial Guard at Barrow. It depicts Major Muktuk Marston in 1942 on one of his many trips by dog team through the arctic northland enlisting [Indigenous Alaskans] in the Alaska Territorial Guard, the forerunner of today's famed Alaska National Guard Scouts.

.2 – [Letter from Lawrence F. Obrien, Special Assistant to the President, to Sen. Ernest Gruening], May 2, 1963

Guide written: January 25, 2022