

19th century human figure and chain



19th century ivory figure with suspension cord of leather-covered sinew, 9 cm



Ivory attachment/chain with seal head and tail, baleen eyes and nostrils, 18 cm

Provenance: Sotheby's American Indian Art Sale No. 5096, October 22, 1983

Collected in Alaska during the period of 1864-1867 by Captain George W. Klinefelter when he was a member of the American Division of the Western Union "North Pacific Telegraph Expedition", charged with laying two submarine cables spanning Bering Strait, the first from Cape Nome in Alaska (then Russian America) to Plover Bay in Siberia, and another connecting cable across Anadyr Bay in Siberia to the mouth of the Anadyr River and southward toward Petropavlosk. After the final success of the Atlantic cable (that had failed on five previous attempts beginning in 1857) made the work of the Western Telegraph Expedition obsolete, it was recalled in early 1867 by Western Union, even though they had already spent over three million dollars on it. The cease-work order did not reach the Russian-America Division until mid summer, and by September work by all divisions had ceased, but many supplies remained on-site in anticipation of the eventual failure of the Atlantic cable, which however never occurred. Klinefelter was apparently based in Port Clarence ("Libbysville"), Russian America (*The Esquimaux*, July 7, 1867, p. 42; see below).

The Esquimaux.

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LIBBYSVILLE, PORT CLARENCE, R. A., SUNDAY, JULY 7, 1867.

NO. 10.

The Esquimaux.

LIBBYSVILLE, PORT CLARENCE, R. A., }
Sunday, July 7, '67. }

THE ESQUIMAUX will be published on the first Sunday in each month, and is devoted to the interests of the foreign population in and around Libbysville. It will contain a summary of passing events, and all intelligence of interest to the denizens of this neighborhood. Original and selected miscellany, correspondence, &c., will form a prominent feature. The terms of subscription will be nothing for the first year, and if the enterprise meets with encouragement, this price will be increased double after the expiration of its first anniversary.

OFFICE:—Main Building, Libbysville, R. A.

J. J. HARRINGTON,.....*Editor and Proprietor.*

Poetry.

We were Boys Together.

BY G. P. MORRIS.

We were boys together,
And never can forget
The schoolhouse near the heather,
In childhood where we met;
Nor the green home to memory dear,
Its sorrows and its joys,
Which called the transient smile or tear
When you and I were boys.

We were youths together,
And castles build in air,
Your heart was like a feather
While mine was dashed with care.
To you came wealth with manhood's prime,
To me it brought alloys
Ne'er imaged in the primrose time
When you and I were boys.

We were old men together;
The friends we loved of yore
With leaves of autumn weather
Are gone forevermore.
How blessed to age the impulse given
The hope time ne'er destroys,
Which led our thoughts from earth to heaven
When you and I were boys.

CHILDHOOD.—Let the world talk of happiness, of friendship and love, but the days of innocent childhood are the happiest moments of our life. The friends of those days were the truest, and the love of those youthful hours the purest, holiest affection that 'ere mortal can enjoy. Where can you find a friend like your schoolmate, who when the noontide came would share with you his rustic luncheon, 'neath the cool shade of the green spreading oaks. Where find a love like the little lass who, when

the daily studies were ended, would allow you to take her satchel, and together on the homeward path pick the wild flowers from their native heath, and how proud you would feel when you received one from her dear hand, and then, how she would put forth her pretty red lips when you, blushing and sighing, asked her for the parting kiss, the seal of innocence! Oh! the remembrance of that kiss makes one feel as if he had a taste of lands beyond the skies. And dost remember when the summons came to quit the simple, peaceful village, where you had spent your boyhood's happy hours, and mix in the busy strife of life, how tears streamed down her rosy cheek; and when you swore to write to her, to ever remain true to your early love, what a radiance shone o'er her youthful countenance. Now lurking back through the dim vision of years, think you not, at that time, an angel had stayed from heaven and was beside you? Those vows! how were they kept? Distance effaced them from your memory till, when years afterward, in the far off busy city, you heard that the belle of your native village, the sweetheart of your youth was married, and then how the old time came o'er you, and in your inmost heart you wished the prize had been yours. Oh! happy, innocent, peaceful childhood, once past, ne'er again can you return except in dreams, and then how sad the awakening to the knowledge that you were but dreaming. But there is a second childhood, far beyond our earthly vision, in the land which knows no sorrow, no pain, and where we will be as happy as we were in our youthful days. Let us all strive to go there and enjoy our eternal childhood with God.

KING'S ISLAND.—This rocky place, called by the natives O-kee-buck, was visited by Capt. Libby on his late trip. While there, several Indians became drunk, and attacked the boat while moored at the landing, throwing everything overboard; but some sober ones interfered, and further trouble was prevented—they saving the articles from the water. The Esquimaux are like all other savages when they have whiskey in them; they are ready for all kinds of mischief. This island is very rocky, and presents nothing but precipitous bluffs along the coast. There are about two hundred and fifty inhabitants; they are smaller in stature than those on this side, and much more filthy in their habits. The houses are built of walrus hides; and, perched among the rocks, are difficult of access. No wood is found in the vicinity, and they use oil for what little cooking is necessary. Most of their food is, however, eaten raw.

The Indian tribes of the plains have formed a confederation to exterminate the whites, and a number of massacres have happened in consequence.

Our readers and the public generally will at once perceive the benefits of extending to *The Esquimaux* their patronage. It is the only journal circulated in this territory, and none other is published north of Victoria, B. C., on this continent, or China in the Eastern Hemisphere, between the parallels of longitude 130° east and 120° west of Greenwich, nearly half the globe. It is the official organ for all matters connected with the Western Union Telegraph, Russian Extension, in the vast extent of country to be traversed by this gigantic enterprise of the 19th century, and it therefore is a better medium for advertisers, than any paper published in the world.

The Esquimaux.

LIBBYVILLE, PORT CLARENCE, R. A., SUNDAY, JULY 7, 1867.

Our Arctic Home.

This is the last number of THE ESQUIMAUX which will bear the name of Libbyville as its place of publication. It has been deserted, and the party who passed the winter within its cheerful boundaries are gone. The work for which they journeyed here has been abandoned, and there is now nothing to keep them from their homes. There are recollections around its isolated walls, which in after life will make many an hour pass pleasant while relating to them, and friendships have originated here which will last for all time. What we have suffered in the past, and its privations has shown us the true worth of man, which only such occasions bring forth. Thankful to an all-merciful Providence, we have escaped the great peril which at one time seemed so inevitable. The great number who ventured out through an unknown, desolate country, and among heathen Esquimaux in search of food, have returned in safety, and passed through dangers which they thought were beyond their powers of withstanding. We bid good bye to Libbyville, and leave the work of our hands, and the footprints of civilization, to return to their original elements, and become a prey to the drear power of the Arctic seasons, and ravages of the wily natives. On the front of the Tower House is painted, "Libby Station. Established September 17th, 1866. Vacated July 2, 1867." And the following, posted in the main chamber, tells the story:

To all whom it may concern: Libby Station was established in September 17th, 1866, and vacated July 2d, 1867. The party who wintered here suffered such privations as can only be experienced in this almost eternal frozen region. The work they accomplished was such as only the white man is capable of. They faced the bitter cold storms of winter, and lived on food which the natives of the country use for their subsistence, and from which the appetites of the civilized shrink. They built 22 miles of telegraph line, and hoped that, as they had the honor of sending the first message ever transmitted

in Russian America, to see the completion of a work whose bond would encompass the world, and transmute thousands of miles of distance into but a moment's span of time. They leave with regret, having spent many happy hours in each others' society, lived, feasted and suffered together, and the remembrance of their sojourn in this isolated region will last while they are blessed with life. Two who came with us leave their bones beneath the frozen sod, and will no more return to greet the loved ones who look in vain for their presence in the home circle. To such as may come after us, either to finish the work begun so prosperously by ourselves, we would say that they have our best wishes, and may the hours pass pleasantly with them until such times as they are placed in hourly communication, or enjoy the great benefits of a large civilized community:

D B Libby,	C Tourtellot,
Geo W Klinefelter,	W Bird,
W A Walker,	Ed Brook,
T J Rodgers,	Eli Hewston,
R Caldwell,	A Robinson,
J J Harrington,	D Gahagan,
H F Dyer,	Jud Watson,
M L Slavan, (deceased)	P Lawlor,
Daniel Shea,	Geo S Smith,
Thos W Webster,	J H Rickman,
J C McClure,	D W Bracy,
J E Goble,	Geo West,
F Herzog,	A P Hare,
O de'Bendleben,	W H Billadoe,
David Kilpatrick,	Geo Perrin,
Wm Curry,	John Palmer,
Chris Berry,	Jas Buck,
T W Yates,	H Spaars,
M McMahon,	Geo O'Callaghan, (deceased)
R Connor,	Mayounak, (native)
	W Yates.

The Abandonment of the Work.

The W. U. T. Co.'s bark *Clara Bell*, Capt. John Norton, arrived on the 28th ult. with dates from San Francisco to May 24th. The work on the W. U. T. Co.'s Overland Line has been suspended, and all the parties ordered home. On board was Maj. Wright, who settles all business in this part of the world. This is strange news to us, for all looked forward to the successful completion of the Trans-continental Telegraph, and the reason for its suspension is a mystery; but private advices seem to point to the continued working of the Atlantic Cable as the true cause. The erected line will not be disturbed; but everything else portable will be transhipped to San Francisco.

THIS ISSUE.—On referring to the date, etc., of this paper, it will be thought that it is published at Libbyville, July 7th; while in reality it is issued at Plover Bay, E. S., July 14th. The business necessary in consequence of our departure, prevented publication on the regular date. It will hereafter make its appearance at this place.