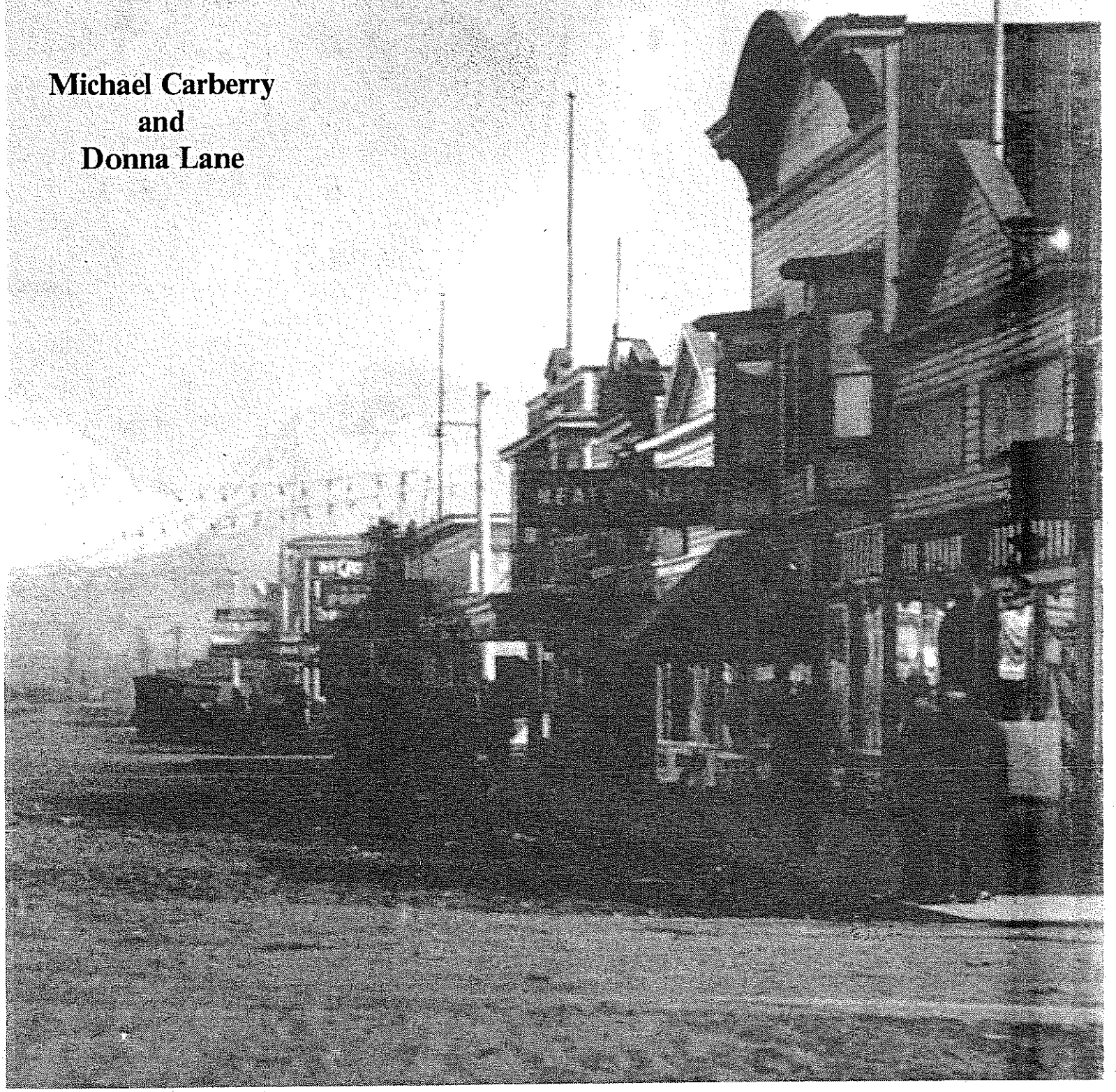
Patterns of the Past

An Inventory of Anchorage's Historic Resources

Michael Carberry
and
Donna Lane



PREFACE

Anchorage's history, although not old by traditional standards, is rich and varied. The development of the Municipality coincided with patterns of history. This inventory is organized according to such patterns as native habitation, mining, railroading, military, townsite development and aviation. With these "Patterns of the Past," a link between the remaining historic resources and the important themes of Anchorage history can be drawn. In each chapter an overview of the historic pattern is presented, and the associated historic resources are described and illustrated.

This inventory was compiled as a basic source of information about Anchorage's historic resources. In reading the following chapters it is hoped you will learn more about Anchorage's heritage: the buildings, sites and other resources which are visible reminders of our past. This inventory is written for all who are interested in Anchorage history. In particular, it has been compiled for those who make decisions regarding the preservation of historic buildings: the Landmarks Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission and Municipal Assembly.

Different views exist about what can be considered "historic." Historic buildings have traditionally been those associated with a famous individual or event. However, in recent years a growing interest has been shown in buildings notable for their architectural history or the method of their construction. In Anchorage, a relatively young community, some people may have a difficult time thinking of buildings, especially those built in the 1930's and 1940's, as being historic. However, Anchorage is fortunate to have the opportunity to preserve a representative portion of its "first generation" buildings. Ranging from log cabins to Fourth Avenue commercial buildings, these structures can provide lasting reminders of the roots, values and hopes from which the city has grown.

Few American communities can claim to have preserved any of their earliest structures. Anchorage still has such a chance. Unfortunately, virtually all the buildings of the pre-World War II era are threatened. Predominately located on the Original Townsite, such small-scale buildings cannot easily compete with the demands of higher economic use of land.

This *Patterns of the Past,* is an expanded edition resulting from more extensive research, more insight about Anchorage history and greater photographic documentation. Finding the 1920 tax records proved to be a great help in documenting the city's first generation buildings. These records served as stepping stones to other evidence regarding Anchorage's historic sites. Although this book has a greater number of inventoried properties, there have been significant losses since 1979. Such buildings as Providence Hospital, Central Grade School and handfuls of 1915-40 era houses have been demolished. Land use patterns have also shifted. In 1979 it was observed that slightly greater than fifty percent of Anchorage's early housing had been converted to office or business use. Today that figure is much higher. There have been preservation success stories. Clearest examples include the Fourth Avenue Theatre, Pioneer Schoolhouse, Potter Section House, City Hall, the Oscar Anderson House and the Old Federal Building. The goal of preservationists is to see that such a glimpse of the past does not fade. Hopefully this new inventory will encourage the reuse of older buildings and thus preserve them for future generations to enjoy.

Anchorage, 1916

PATTERNS OF THE PAST:
AN INVENTORY OF ANCHORAGE'S HISTORIC RESOURCES

By Michael Carberry and Donna Lane

Municipality of Anchorage
Community Planning Department
1986

PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

The historic photographs used in this book were derived from the sources listed on this page. Abbreviations are as follows:

AHFAM: Anchorage Museum of History and Art
ARR: Alaska Railroad
NA: National Archives
UAF: Archives at University of Alaska, Fairbanks
USC: U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

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The greater comprehensiveness of this edition was made possible because of the assistance of a number of architects, historians, and architectural historians who served as consultants to the Community Planning Department. I am particularly grateful to Dave Harvey, Paul Chattey, Steve Peterson and Mary Ellen Fossey for their research.

Many individuals assisted by providing information about Anchorage's history and historic sites. In that much of the material from the first volume has been retained, acknowledgement is again in order to the following persons: Mike Alex, Mrs. Victoria Amundsen, Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson, Joan Antonson, John Bagoy, Pete Bagoy, Bernice Bloomfield, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Braendel, Louise Bremner, Diane Brenner of the Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum. Sister Margaret Cantewell, T.W. Carrol, H.A. Faroe, Lannie Kari of the Alaska Native Language Center, Mike Kennedy, Bob Mitchell, Lois Kiehl, Virgil Knight, Steve McCutcheon, Bonnie McGee, Norma Marek, Mrs. Carl Martin, Al Mongin, Melva Pippel, Chris Raebick, Frank Reed, Charles Ricci, Robert and Antoninette Shalkop, Maria Skala, Mrs. Decema Kimball Andresen Slawson, Mrs. Pearl Smith, Mrs. Selma Smith, W.A. Smith, Mrs. Myrtle Stalnaker, Bruce Staser, Mrs. Louis Strutz, Mr. and Mrs. William Stolt, Cynthia and Barney Toohey, Mrs. Hazel Seaburg Warwick and Bert Wennerstrom. Their help has been most appreciated.

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Finally, I would like to thank my co-workers, Cathy Hammond, Mimi Meiser and Tom Nelson who proofread this edition and have made work in the Planning Department enjoyable over the years.

Michael Carberry

Ship Creek, 1912.

In addition to typical research avenues - archives, Sanborn Maps, city directories, recorder's files, newspapers and libraries - numerous individuals supplied information for this updated inventory. We stepped into people's homes and had gratifying interviews over cups of coffee. Phone calls were made to former residents who gladly shared memories. Family photograph albums were lent to use, providing reminders of the past and a irreplaceable visual geneology. Some conversations were held during a pause in snow shoveling and others took place in offices, kitchens, living rooms, parking lots, churches and bars.

Its impossible to make note of all the many people who helped me with the more recent research, but I wish to name a few: Lois Amundsen, Alice Aylward, Al Bailey, Renee Blahuta with the State Archieves in Fairbanks, Roderic Carpenter, Heidi Ely, Debbie Fullenwider, Ruth Fultz, Anna Heffentrager, Mrs. Harry Hill, Norma Hoyt, Russel Johnson, Vern and Pauline Johnson, Dora and Lester Klatt, Franklin Landstrom, Helen McDowell, Monsignor Murphy, Mike O'Neill, Geneva Peterson, Earl and Freddie Plumb, Joanne Rantala, James Reekie, Majorie Rutz, Doris Saario, Sydnee Stiver, Harold Van Nortwick and the Municipal Treasury Division, Catherine Weimer, Linda Crocker White and Lucy Whitehead.

A special thanks goes to my husband, Rod Jackson, who assisted and supported me in a great variety of ways throughout the project. I had a wonderful time compiling the information and thank everyone for sharing their memories, time and momentos.

Donna Lane

Jack and Nellie Brown's Cabin, Ship Creek, 1914.

CHAPTER 1: THE ORIGINAL TOWNSITE

BACKGROUND

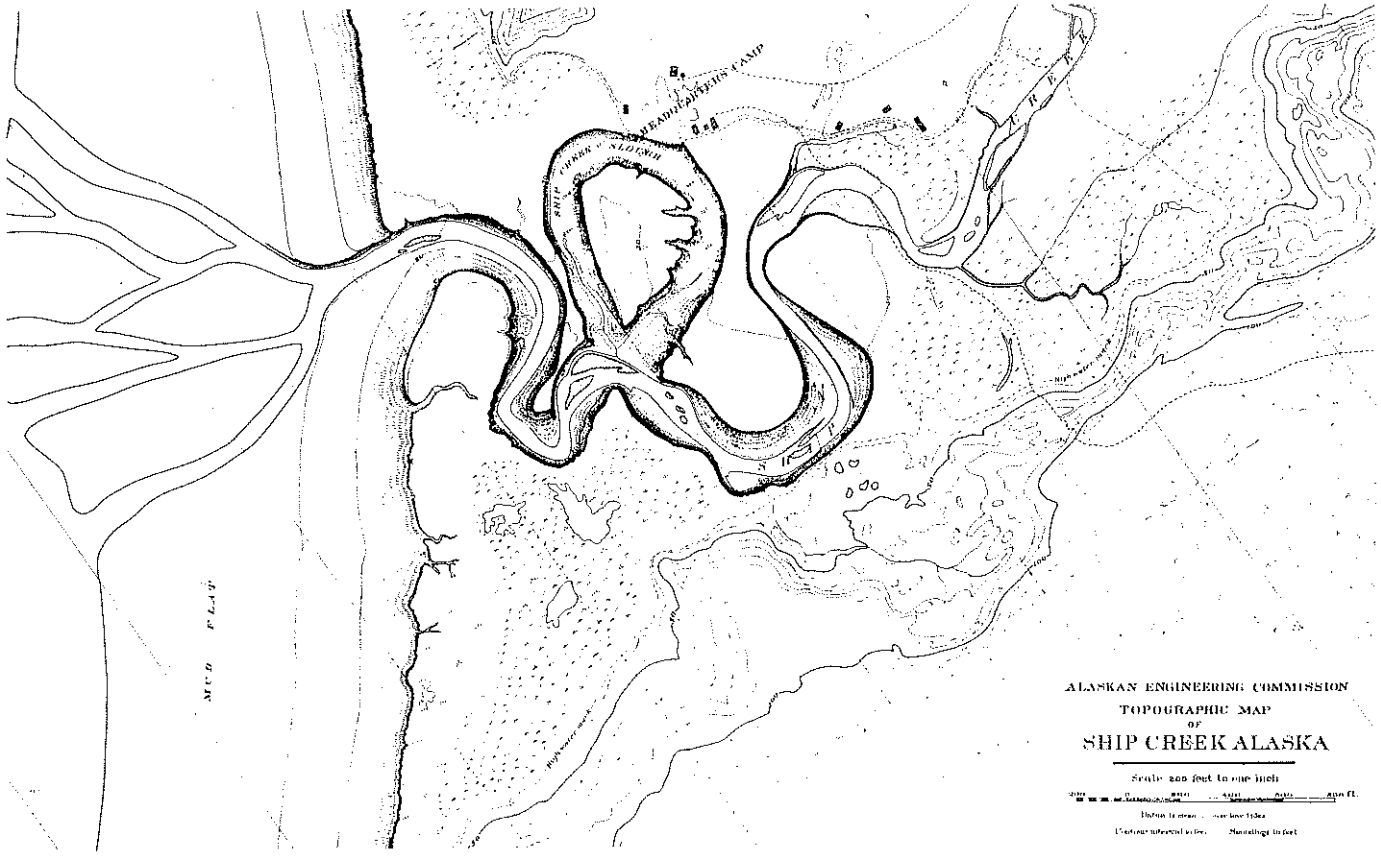
The Birth of Anchorage

Two centuries ago, British Captain James Cook sailed to the upper reaches of the Inlet in search of a continental passage. To the southeast of Fire Island, he anchored his ships, the *Resolution* and *Discovery*. There he observed that "the low land begins again on the north side of this river (Turnagain), and extends from the foot of the mountains, to the bank of the great river, forming before the river Turnagain a large bay . . ."[1] As far as is known those few words are the first historical reference to what has become Anchorage. Disappointed that the elusive passage had not been found, Cook sailed south to the open sea. He later lamented the loss of time spent in sailing the "Great River,"[2] yet he added "that the climate seemed to be as favorable for a settlement as any part of the world under the same degree of latitude."[3]

Today, those words seem prophetic. It took another 137 years before the city commenced its growth. However, since the birth of Anchorage in 1915, the settlement of that broad expanse of land, described early on by Cook, has been continuous.

The Anchorage bowl was virtually the same as it was in Cook's day, when the Alaska Engineering Commission (A.E.C.), the federal agency which built the railroad, came to Ship Creek in 1914. The Commission's survey staff found a handful of settlers and a few buildings in the area. The J.D. Whitneys had a homestead cabin about four miles up Ship Creek. Forester Keith McCullough had a cabin as did the other forester, Jack Brown, who lived near the mouth of Ship Creek with his wife, Nellie. Thomas Jeter had a small cabin just under Government Hill. Nearby was a log cabin, built in 1906 by Hitchkock and Weiremen with the intention of starting a saloon and roadhouse there.[4] About three miles north of Ship Creek, along the Shoreline, was a warehouse belonging to G.W. Palmer who had started the trading post at Knik around the turn of the century.[5]

Ship Creek became the field headquarters of the Commission in 1914. A few log buildings were constructed for the staff. Horses were corraled under a circus-like tent. Those in charge, William C. Edes, Thomas Riggs and Lieutenant Frederick Mears, left Alaska late that summer,



Ship Creek: The Alaska Engineering Commission's Camp in 1914.

Unloading at Ship Creek, 1915.

not fully knowing whether or not Ship Creek would become part of the railroad. Anticipating President Woodrow Wilson's favorable reaction to their engineering report, a small crew was left behind to build a large messhall and hospital during the winter.[6] It was not until April 9, 1915 that Wilson announced that the western route would be the line of Alaska's railroad. Yet speculation that Ship Creek was to be the starting point for railroad construction was cause enough for hundreds to pour into Ship Creek. By the time of the President's announcement, a temporary settlement had developed.

"Tent City," as the squatter's settlement is often called, began to form in March. Its location was on the north-side of the creek, underneath the plateau now called Government Hill. Waves of tents soon engulfed the existing log buildings. As one early writer described it: "The paraphernalia of the woodsman and the hardy pioneer had to suffice, and a thousand tents, in the beginning, as white as Alaska's snows, made the town site resemble an army camp."[7] By June, more than 2,000 souls packed the short-lived settlement.

Ship Creek followed a meandering course through the broad delta near its mouth. The A.E.C. found the site desirable because of the convenience it would afford in launching railroad construction to the Matanuska coal fields. Additionally, the site was roughly mid-way between Seward and Fairbanks. As a harbor, it did not have special advantages. From the start the problems of wide-ranging tides, siltation and the mud flats were well understood. Yet, the straight-line distance and negligible grade to the coal fields were deemed important.[8] Additionally, the flats between the two plateaus (the townsite and Government Hill) provided ample room for railyards, shops and warehouses.

Tent City, 1915.

Arrivals to Ship Creek came overland from Seward, Portage Bay or the interior. They also came by ships which sailed up Cook Inlet. The early large steamers – the *Mariposa*, the *Admiral Evans*, the *Alameda*, the *LaTouche* and the *Admiral Watson* – had to lie at *anchorage* in Knik Arm. From there rails, ties, lumber, equipment and passengers were taken to shore upon lighters and barges. Rail was laid right to the water's edge. Horse teams tugged the heavy loads to dry ground.

The tent town's brief life brought together sourdoughs from all over the Territory. The promise of railroad construction caused a stir like an old-home-week reunion. *The Cook Inlet Pioneer* (the forerunner of the *Anchorage Times*) reported: "Scores of old sourdoughs from all parts of Alaska as well as from the Northwest Territory . . . are here, these pioneer frontiersmen, from Nome, Fairbanks, Iditarod, Ruby, Dawson, Circle City, Juneau, . . . these hardy, independent resourceful pioneers compose, in a large part, the history makers of Alaska for the past score of years . . . Some of the pioneers are in business here; others are employed on the government railway; while yet others are sticking around, waiting for 'something to turn up,' "[9]

Jobs were not to "turn up" easily. The Commission did not hire large numbers of workers on a force account basis. An official notice discouraged outsiders: "Those going to Ship Creek, Alaska, with the idea of finding ready employment on the new work will be largely disappointed."[10] There was some dissension locally in that foreigners were getting too many contracts. Those laborers received their work under competitive bid and tackled some of the hardest work (see the Railroad Chapter). Even wages paid to the Commission's unskilled labor, 37½ cents per hour, were considerably lower than the going rate in the Territory.[11] There was not a lot of money to be made in working on the railroad.

The temporary tent camp's atmosphere was typical of many frontier towns. Besides tents, some would-be entrepreneurs erected more solid structures. Prairie and O'Connell built a pool room; W.S. Perkins erected a two-story roadhouse; "Skookum" Johnson built a hotel and A.G. Dickinson started a restaurant and bakery.[12] Others used tents to sell clothing, groceries, and even more tents and tarpaulins. Garbage was dumped on the outgoing tide. Potable water sold for five cents a bucket. The camp even had its own "Main Street" where businesses were set up on framed sections and skids – ready for the move to the townsite.

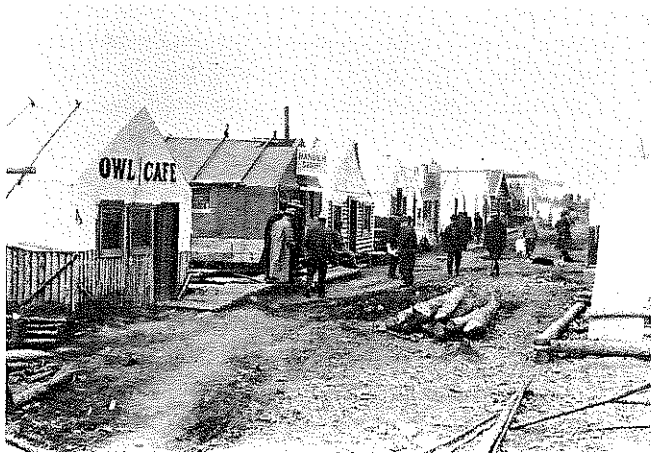
Townsite Planning

When Commissioner Frederick Mears arrived on April 26, 1915, he was immediately confronted with the disarray of the tent town. It would be another month before Andrew Christensen, who was to be responsible for the townsite layout and sale of lots, was to arrive. Once together, Mears and Christensen plunged headlong into the business of preparing the townsite for development.[13]

The townsite had been set aside during a cadastral survey of the region, undertaken in 1914 by the General Land Office. The land which was one and one-half miles to the north and south of Ship Creek and two miles eastward was withdrawn by presidential Executive Order.[14] The announcement that the townsite area had been reserved was delayed until the Congressional edition of the Commission's report to the President was published. Existence of the withdrawal order and the cadastral survey of Ship Creek appear to have been "one of the best kept secrets of the Wilson Administration."[15]

In late 1914, Christensen, chief of the Alaska field division of the General Land Office, pleaded with Washington to develop a policy for land disposal and development. His words went unheeded. When he arrived at Ship Creek on May 24, he was eager to carry out the town development orders that he had received in Juneau only weeks before. He and Mears worked closely together. Given the clamor for land and the extraordinary distance between the townsite and Washington, the formalities of step-by-step approval were dismissed.

"Main Street" in Tent City, 1915.



The plan was the most simplistic possible. A series of square blocks, separated in T-square precision by a grid system of streets, was superimposed on the plateau of Ship Creek. (Because of the severe slope of the bluff toward the basin, Christensen Road, named in honor of Andrew Christensen, was added in 1916 to run diagonally along the slope.) The townsite survey team was headed by J. Frank Warner, Examiner of Surveys for Alaska, and his assistant, Victor H. Wilhelm.[16] Initially, 240 acres were cleared. According to the plan, 121 blocks, each 300 feet square, were laid out. Sixty-foot wide streets formed the circulation system. Twenty-foot wide alleys bisected the blocks which were subdivided into twelve lots, each measuring 50 by 140 feet. By that plan approximately 1,400 lots were created initially. The plan was drawn to expedite the process of resettlement from "Tent City" to the plateau. Once

The Alaska Engineering Commission provided this photographic record of the new townsite as seen from Government Hill in 1915.

Early news accounts related the beauty of the townsite and the wonderful of Mt. McKinley in the distance. Yet, few measures were made to maintain the natural surroundings as the townsite was clear-cut in 1915.

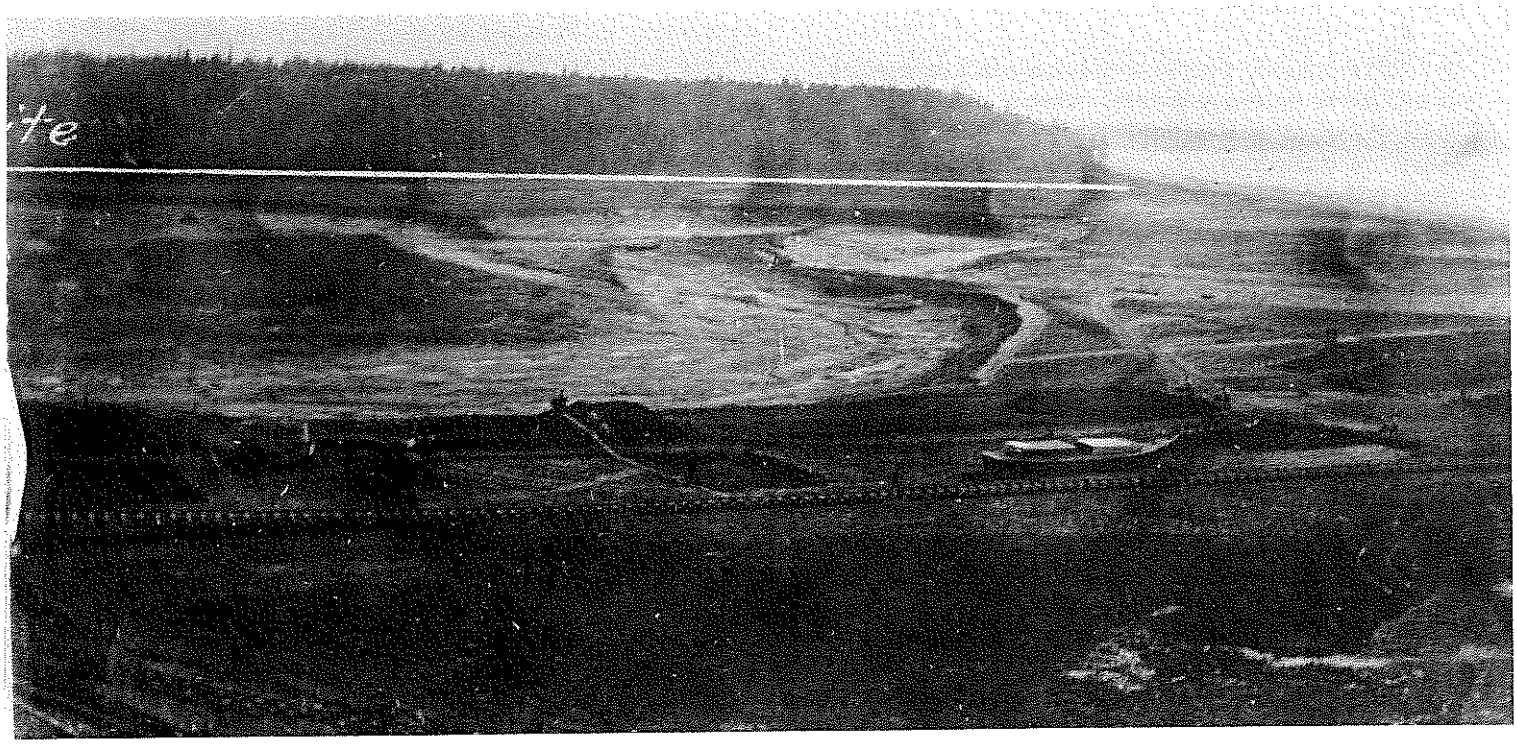
completed, the lots could be sold, permanent buildings established, and the A.E.C. could proceed with railroad construction.

The Anchorage plan was typical of railroad town planning in the western states and territories. With few exceptions, grid patterns were standardly used to lay out railroad towns.[17] Other townsites which had been laid out by the land office were similarly planned. The regularity of the plan and the sparcity of such amenities as parks, a civic center and radial highways brought criticism from the National Municipal League. One general criticism of land office personnel was that they were found to have "the most naive ignorance" of town planning. "They simply did not know that there was anything more than a T-square method of laying out towns."[18] Clay Tallman, General Land Office Commissioner, offered one of the few excuses for the plan as he explained that the town was urgently needed and rapidly laid out by those whose primary mission was railroad construction.[19]

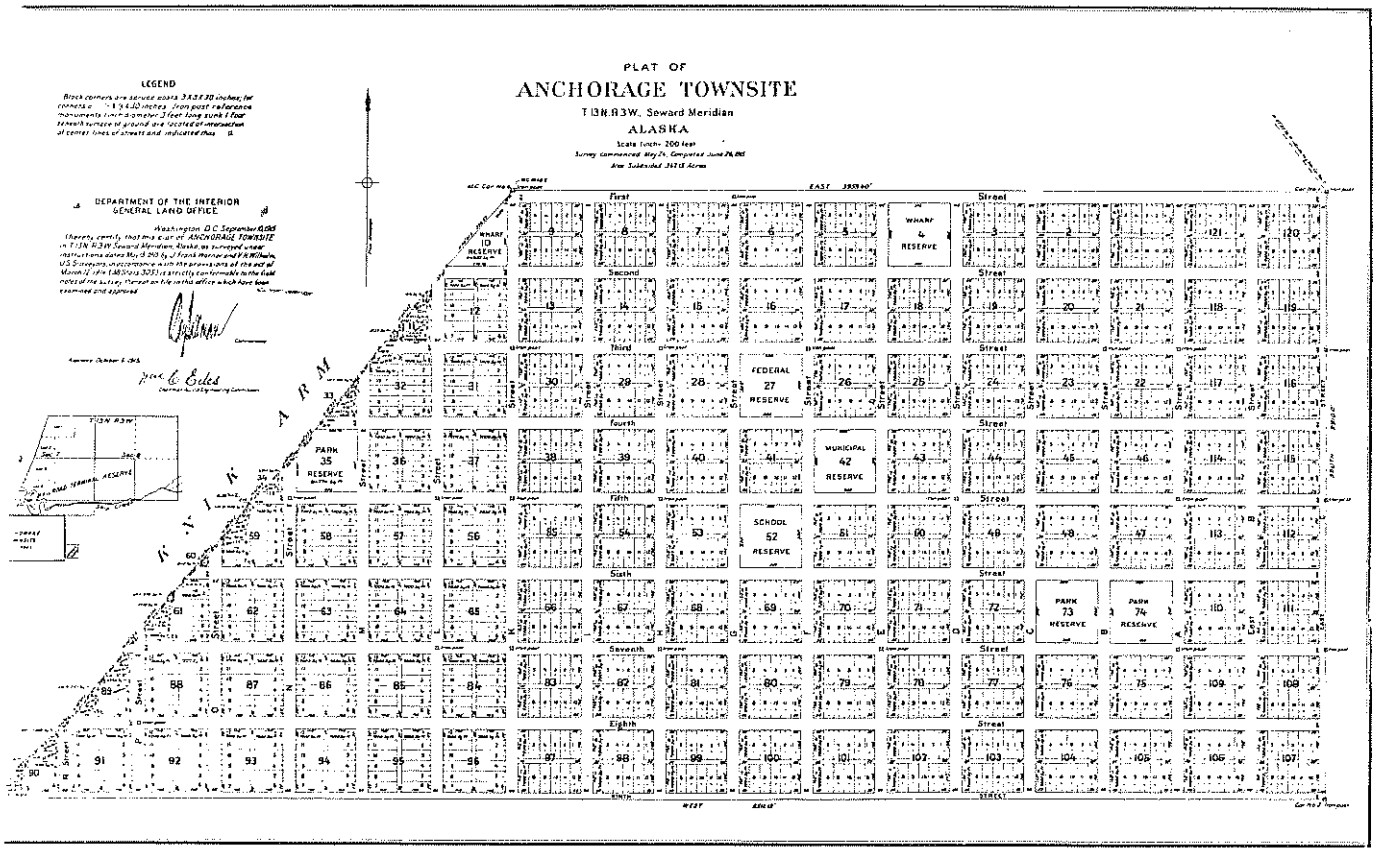
A few selected uses of the townsite land were prescribed as part of the plan or by the townsite regulations. Reserves were set aside for specific purposes.

The planned uses of the reserves have maintained, in most cases, since 1915. The Federal Reserve (the site of the Old Federal Building) still accommodates federal offices. The Municipal Reserve is the site of old City Hall and the Egan Convention Center. The School Reserve, no longer used for educational purposes, is the site of the Performing Arts Center. Elderberry Park was an original park reserve. Another original park reserve, Block 73 and 74, once contained the ball park. Today, the Museum and Public Safety Building are located there.

The largest of the reserves was the Terminal Reserve, set aside to provide railyard and dock space. Other reserves included the Federal Reserve, the Municipal Reserve, the School Reserve, Park Reserves, Wharf Reserves, Indian Possessions and the Cemetery Reserve. The fact that the Cemetery Reserve was nearly seventeen acres and much larger than the original park spaces brought this comment from a noted town planning expert: "Anchorage has been figured to be a place to die in, but not much of a place to live in."[20]



The first plan for Anchorage as drawn in 1915.



The townsite was not formally zoned. However, because Fourth Avenue was slated to be the core of commercial activity, lot appraisals were higher along that major street. Lots along Sixth and Seventh Avenues were earmarked for residential development.

Because prostitution was not be tolerated within the townsite, federal officials made provisions for "a restricted district" to the southeast of the town. There, "Montana Bessie," "Little Annie" and some thirty other members of "the line" pursued their livelihood. Faced with the impossible task of keeping the railroad town free of "the girls," the A.E.C. and Federal marshall agreed that the creation of the district would regulate illicit activities. Since liquor was prohibited from the town, the restricted district was also a haven for bootlegging. The district was short-lived because the area was subdivided in 1916.[21] Furthermore, many of the girls, finding that railroad workers did not have as much money as they envisioned, left town.[22] However, some moved into the townsite in the years which followed.

Despite shortcomings of the original townsite plan, it did hasten surveying and site preparation. The A.E.C. and the General Land Office, starting from scratch in early May 1915, laid out the townsite in two months. By midsummer, they were ready for the townsite auction.

The Townsite Auction

Swelling with population by early summer, Tent City was ready to burst at its seams. A townsite was desperately needed. Clearing and platting of the land was completed in six weeks . . . "a month sooner than at first anticipated."[23] Only one formality, the townsite regulations, stood between the people and lot ownership.

"Alaska Railroad Townsite Regulations," issued by President Wilson on June 19, 1915, set the conditions for the auction and use of land. The auction was one of the last details to be worked out. Many Ship Creek "squatters" favored a drawing. By the luck of the draw they felt that each man, richer or poorer, would have an equal chance to receive a prime location. However, the Land Office decided that "the lots are to be sold at public outcry, to the highest bidder."[24] The auction was used because it promoted investment for legitimate use. It was felt that the drawing system would cause speculation.[25]

Superintendent of the Sale, Andrew Christensen, was given broad powers of appraisal and the right to reject any bid. The minimum purchase price was $25 for a lot. Business sector lots in the vicinity of Fourth Avenue were appraised at higher prices. The successful bidder could pay in full, or put one-third down and pay in equal installments over five years. Patents were not to be issued until five years after the auction. Restricted uses included "manufacturing,

selling, or otherwise disposing of intoxicating liquors . . . gambling and prostitution."[26] The penalty for such activities was forfeiture of the lot.

The auction was to be held on July 9, 1915. However, because A.E.C. Chairman Edes was delayed in his trip from Seward, the auction was postponed until Saturday afternoon, July 10. Christensen stood on the auction platform at the foot of C Street[27] and told the crowd, variously estimated at 1,000 to 3,000 persons, that the town would be provided with utilities and other improvements. The auction scene became frenzied. "Spirited bidding on the part of those seeking business locations or home sites marked the proceeding."[28] The first lot (Lot 1, Block 44) was auctioned for $825. That price set the tone of the auction. Several lots sold for four times their appraised value. Business locations along Fourth Avenue were most expensive (see Commercial Buildings Section). As Christensen noted, even those who conspired to keep prices down "lost their heads." The result was that 655 lots were sold for approximately $150,000 at the first auction.[29] Not all lots went at high prices. Residential lots were acquired at rather modest prices, leading to a solid foundation for the community's development. A local editor noted: "A good price for business locations and a low price for residence property is what makes a center of population. It is a matter of congratulations that the residence lots in the new townsite sold for a minimum figure. They were in reach of everybody."[30]

Tennis anyone? The site of today's convention center in the 1920's.

Though there were to be more auctions, not only in Anchorage but at other A.E.C. townsites, none were as successful as that first one in Anchorage. After the August and November auctions, the latter in the cold and snow of early winter, Christensen exclaimed: "I could sell lots every day if I were in Anchorage, it seems that the demand for them never ceases."[31]

Andrew Christensen presided over the first auction on July 10, 1915.

Prior to the summer of 1915, the area which is now Anchorage was known by a variety of names, primarily "Ship Creek."[32] That name was used because the settlement expanded from the mouth of that stream. When larger boats began to ply the upper reaches of the inlet, the waters just off Ship Creek became known as "Knik Anchorage."[33] It was from this point that small craft could reach the town of Knik or the settlement of Ship Creek. With the settlement that accompanied the hear-say accounts of pending railroad construction, the term Knik Anchorage was used in varous published materials to pinpoint the location of the construction base. The lighters and smaller craft which unloaded supplies from the steamships gave rise to yet another name – Ship Creek Landing.

The U.S. Post Office Department was responsible for giving the town the name, "Anchorage." In April 1915, shortly after Wilson selected the route of the government railroad, preparations for establishing a Post Office were made. Roydon Chase was appointed postmaster. Mail was to be sent to "Anchorage." The *Valdez Daily Prospector* illustrates the insistence of the postal bureaucrats on this matter: "The Post Office Department has called Ship Creek, Anchorage, which will hereafter be the official name of the city as far as the Post Office Department is concerned."[34] Displeased, the A.E.C. protested saying that the name "would cause unnecessary confusion."[35] Their preference for "Ship Creek" was outgrown as maps and news accounts quickly adopted the word "Anchorage."

In early August 1915, citizens were given the opportunity to vote on the name of the town. Governor John F. Strong felt that "Matanuska" would be an appropriate name because the rail link to the Matanuska coal fields was an initial goal of the A.E.C. Other suggested names included: Alaska City, Ship Creek, Winalaska, Gateway, Anchorage, Terminal, Homestead and Lane.[36] Along with the election of school board members, the Chamber of Commerce conducted its own poll for the townsite name. Rather than Anchorage, the majority of voters chose "Alaska City."[37]

The Federal government must have concluded that another change would be unwarranted. Petitions of the Chamber to the A.E.C. proved to no avail. Anchorage was on the map to stay.

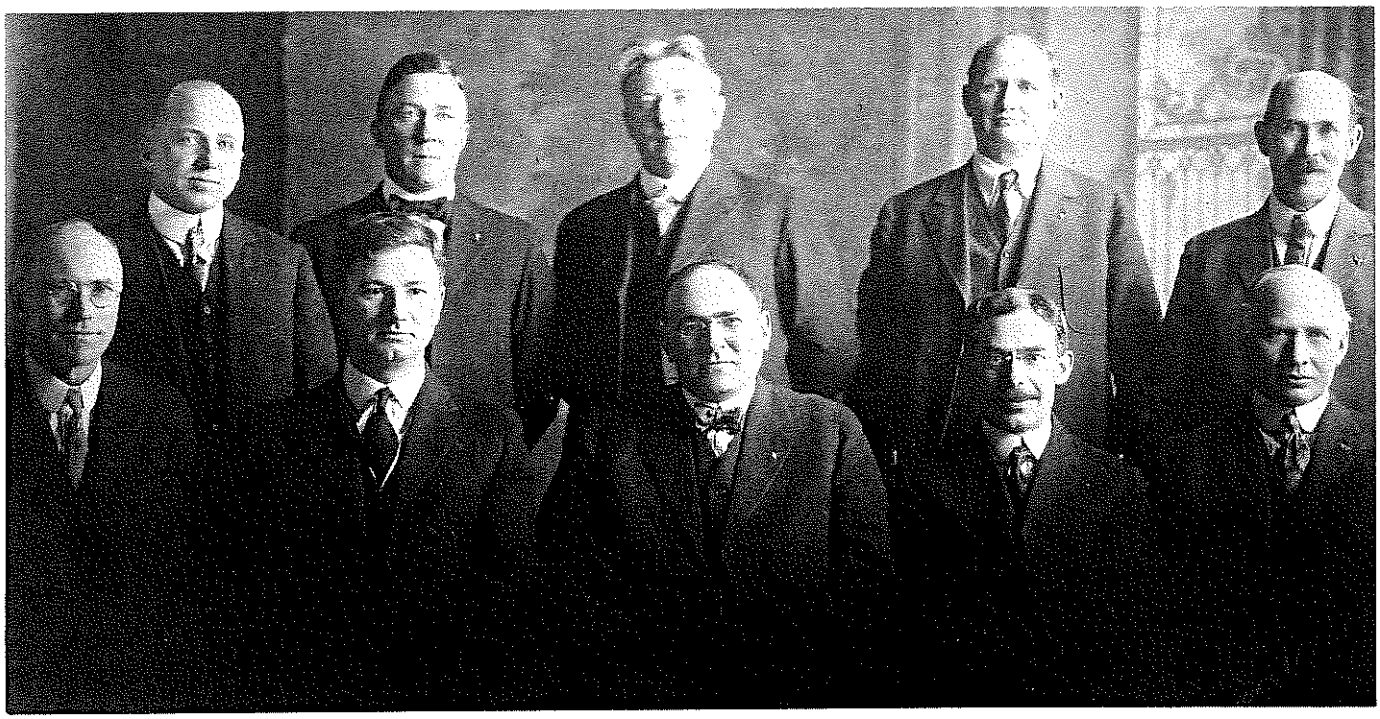
Placing freight onto a lighter at "Knik Anchorage."

During the first five years of Anchorage's existence, the town was managed by the Alaska Engineering Commission. In July 1915 J.A. Moore, who had been with the General Land Office in Juneau, was appointed temporary townsite manager.[38] His position was unusual because the federal government, which was so new to the railroad business, had become involved in a town's development and operation. The townsite manager's responsibilities were directed to oversee development of utility systems, to layout street grades and to uphold the townsite regulations.[39] After a year, Moore was reassigned to Juneau. J.G. Watts who had been townsite engineer took over as townsite manager. Like his predecessor, he was given the honorary title, "Mayor."

The A.E.C. realized that, with the responsibility that its administration entailed, it would have to extend water lines for both fire protection and sanitary reasons. Water line installation began in September 1915. Electricity was provided through the A.E.C.'s power plant in 1916. Given the plant's small capacity, use of electricity and extension of electric lines was subject to tight control. Telephone service began in the fall of 1915. A self-styled telephone expert arrived in Anchorage that summer with all the necessary equipment to establish a telephone system. Trouble was, he did not have the commission's permission to string his wire. The dilemma was solved when Chairman Mears purchased the equipment and had his personnel set up the system. The outhouses and cesspools of the early years began to be displaced in 1917 when a sewer system was started.[40]

Anchorage had no elected officials between 1915 and 1920. Townsite affairs were generally handled through the Townsite Manager's office. The office was responsible for collecting assessments which, like taxes, were used to provide services and improvements. The office also issued a file of regulations, ranging from garbage collection procedures to such edicts that dogteam drivers should keep off sidewalks. The Chamber of Commerce and the Commercial Club acted as unofficial advisors to the A.E.C. Their influence was substantial because most of the well-to-do merchants belonged to those organizations. In September 1917 an Advisory Council of seven local lot holders was elected. This council was created to have an elected body to act in capacities similar to a city council. However, its role was only advisory and the commercial interests continued to exert more influence in townsite matters.[41]

The federal role in operating the townsite ended in 1920. That spring, negotiations developed between the A.E.C. and the local interests. The A.E.C. was ready to dissolve its townsite management responsibilities. To encourage incorporation, the government officials promised to give the citizenry the schoolhouse and school reserve, the Municipal Reserve, the firehouse, the utilities, streets and sidewalks. Because citizens were not convinced that they were getting a bargain, the incorporation election was close. Two-thirds majority was necessary for incorporation, and to reach the necessary margin, certain blank ballots were thrown out by the district judge.[42] Anchorage was officially incorporated on November 23, 1920.



First city council in 1920. Left to right: A.C. Craig, Carl Martin (city engineer), Ralph Moyer, Joseph Conroy (city clerk), Leopold David (mayor), Sherman Duggan (attorney), John J. Longacre, Ike Bayles, Frank I. Reed and D.H. Williams.

Inventoried Buildings in the Original Townsite

Privately Built Frame Houses

1. The Oscar Anderson House
2. The Leopold David House
3. The Rager-Campbell House
4. The Cuddy House
5. The Hiebert House
6. The Snook-Loudermilch House*
7. The Nagley House
8. The Larson House
9. The Seeley House
10. The Mumford Apartments
11. The Kahden-Goetz House
12. The Busey House
13. The Carpenter House
14. The "Chickaloon" Apartments
15. The Wikholm-Landstrom House
16. The Hill-Hickel House
17. The Bliss House
18. The Lingo Apartments
19. 415-429 L Street
20. The Romig House
21. 424 and 428 East Third Avenue
22. The Luopa House
23. The Nygaard-Korhonen House
24. The Bishop-Harlacker House
25. The Elvig-Eckstrom House
26. The Seaburg House
27. The Brayford-Paulson House
28. The Christensen House
29. The Hanson House
30. The Socha House
31. The Olmstead-Hewell House
32. 825 West Sixth Avenue
33. The Johnstone & Cunningham Houses
34. The Pfeil House
35. The Wirum House
36. The Purvis House
37. The Vogt House
38. The Williams-Tryck House
39. The Nielsen-Weimer House
40. The Paddock House
41. The McCutcheon House
42. The Art Johnson House*
43. The Johnson-Markley House*
44. The Martin House
45. The Wennerstrom House
46. The Niemi House
47. The Park-Young House
48. The Vaara House
49. The Swank House*
50. The Sherwood-Bell House
51. The NC Company House*
52. The Prince House
53. The Pekkala-Savola House*
54. 810-826 West Seventh Avenue
55. The Amundsen House
56. The Bolmer Houses
57. The Anderson House: 629 K Street
58. The Anderson House: 634 K Street
59. The Peterson House
60. The Patterson House
61. The J. Vic Brown House
62. The K & J Apartments
63. The Rivers House
64. The Erickson Houses
65. The Kinsell House
66. The McDermott House
67. The Aho-Vernon House
68. The Dehon House
69. The Allenbaugh House
70. The Culver-Koslosky House*
71. The Plumb-Ely House
72. The Raynor & Niemi-O'Neill Houses
73. The Eikland House
74. The Aylward House
75. The Simco House

Railroad Housing

76. Cottage 20
77. Cottage 21: The Christensen House
78. Cottage 22: The Edes House
79. Cottage 23
80. Cottage 25
81. Cottage 26
82. Cottage 27

Log Cabins

83. The Cabins at Crawford Park
84. The Fowler Cabin
85. The Korhonen Cabin
86. The Fairclough Cabins
87. The Berg-Brown Cabin
88. The Belgard House
89. The Gus Anderson Cabins
90. The Niemi Cabin*
91. The Dout House
92. The Brunner House: 726 K Street
93. The Nightengale Cabins
94. The Bruner House: 836 West Seventh Avenue
95. The Blomquist-Reekie House
96. The Weber-Allman Cabin*
97. The Erickson-Martin Cabin
98. The Turner Cabin
99. The Jones-Erikkson House

*Original Location

Other Cabins: Not on this map

Bieri-Heffentrager Cabin
The Rutz House
Bootlegger Cove Cabin
The Amundsen Cabin
The Brown-Woodley Cabin
The La Rue-Roach Cabin
The Weber-Allman Cabin

Early Commercial Buildings

A. The Wendler Building
B. Kimball's Store
C. 328 West Fourth Avenue
D. 338 West Fourth Avenue
E. 509 West Fourth Avenue
F. Ship Creek Meat Market/Stewart's Photo
G. 531 and 541 West Fourth Avenue
H. The Reed Building
I. First National Bank
J. 420 G Street
K. 426 G Street
L. 701 West Fourth Avenue
M. 735 and 739 West Fourth Avenue
N. The Alaska Building
O. The Lathrop Building
P. Furber's Corner
Q. The Suomi Hall
R. 327 and 329 West Fifth Avenue
S. Club Paris
T. 122 West Fifth Avenue
U. Jack's Food Mart

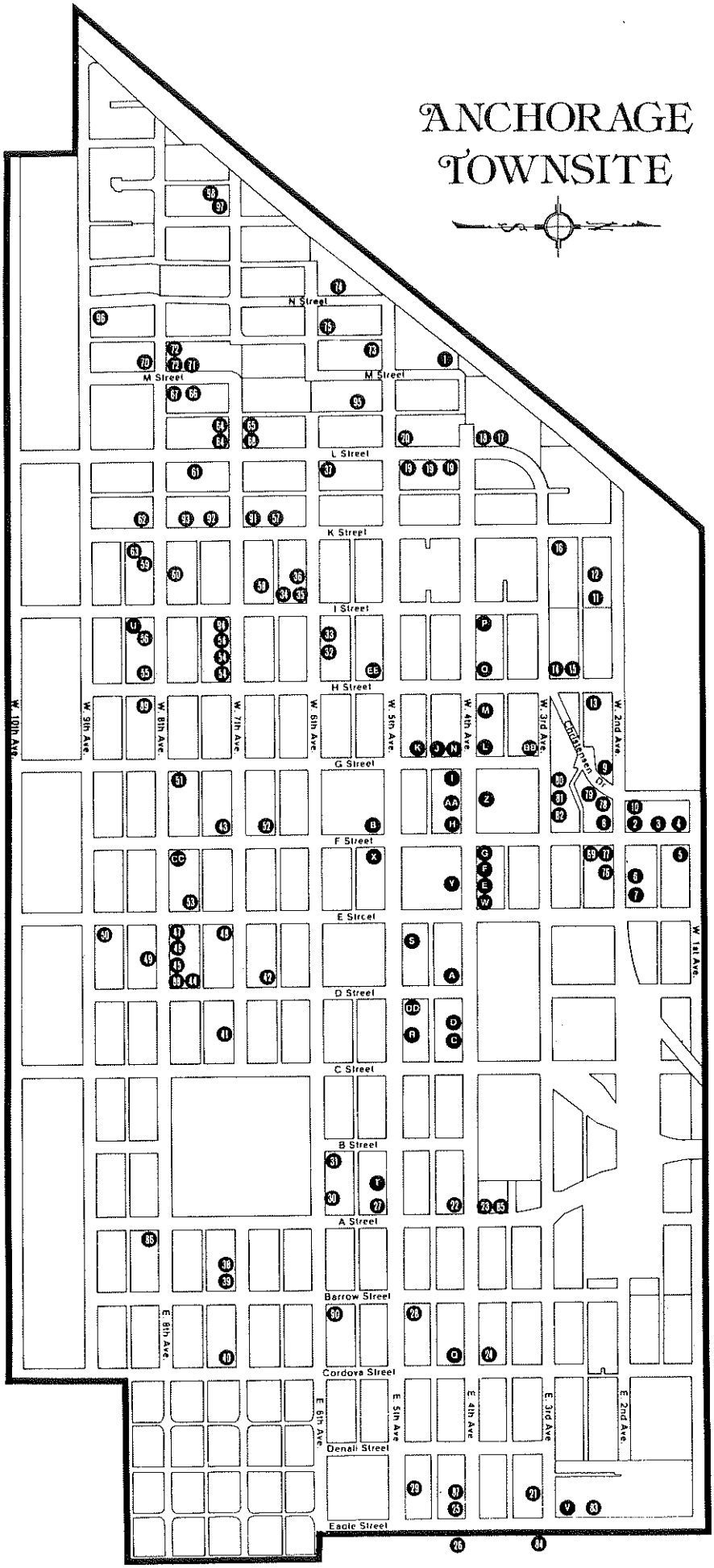
Educational Buildings

V. Pioneer School

Second Generation Buildings

W. The Anchorage Hotel Annex
X. The Alaska State Bank
Y. Old City Hall (Alaska Pacific Bank)
Z. The Federal Building
AA. The Fourth Avenue Theater
BB. The Central Building
CC. All Saint's Episcopal Church
DD. Loussac-Sogn Building
EE. Holy Family Cathedral

ANCHORAGE TOWNSITE



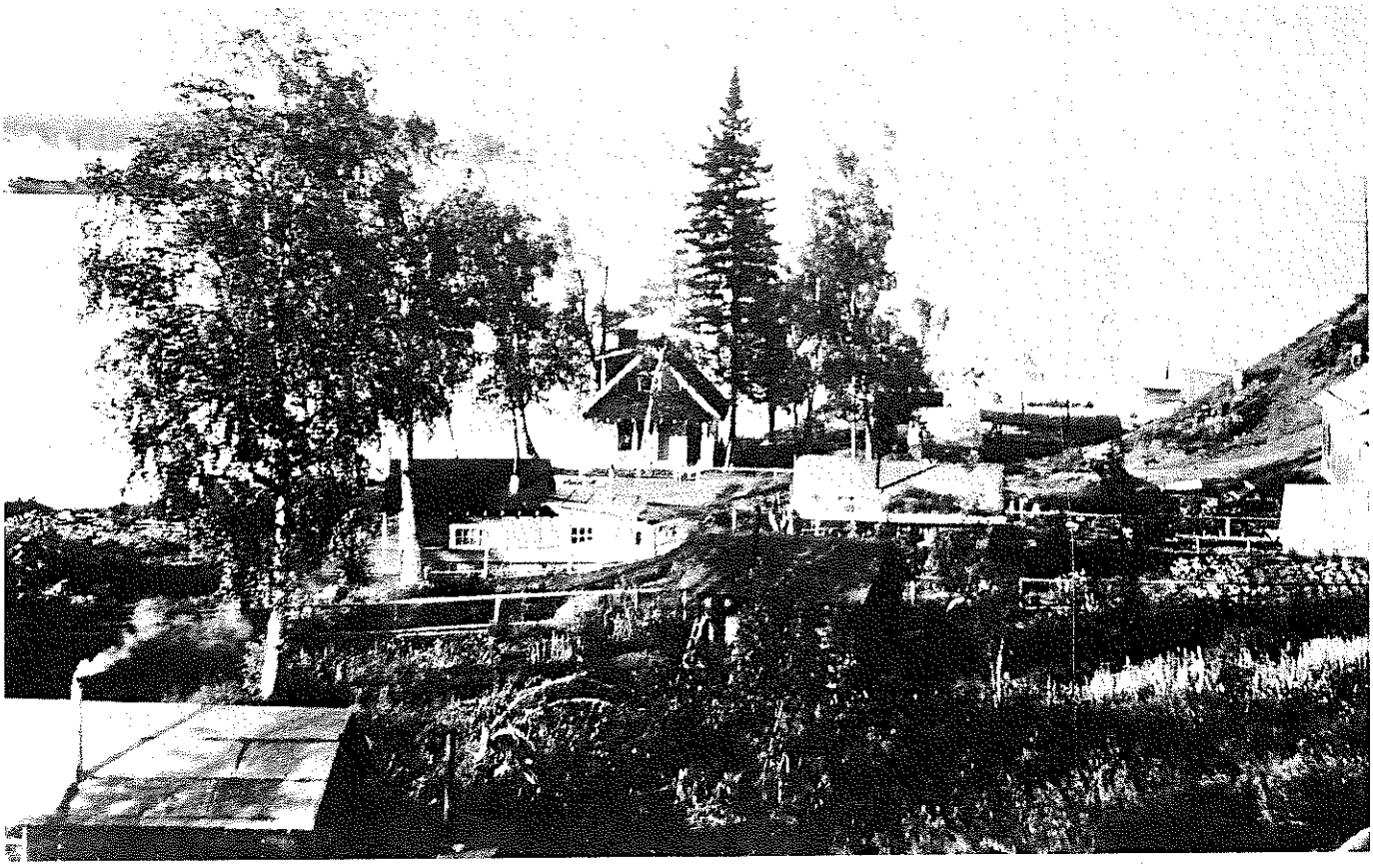
Privately Built Frame Houses

After the sale of lots, Anchorage's new citizens began establishing their businesses and homes. Much of the earliest housing was make-shift. During the summer of 1915, there was a lack of finished lumber, as well as time, for building permanent dwellings. Many families simply lived in their tents that first winter. These heavy, white canvas tents were typically placed over a frame floor and were heated by a wood stove.[1] Some were more fortunate in that they were able to construct one-room log dwellings during the late summer months. Few frame houses were built in 1915 on the original townsite. By the spring of 1916, as many as 6,000 had come to Anchorage in response to railroad construction and its associated opportunities.[2] Rents remained high that year, and housing was at a premium. One 1916 news account notes that "fully two-thirds of the population (lived) in tents or one-room cabins."[3] Once lumber arrived that summer there was a building boom for a year or two.

Knik, the small trading center across the Inlet, virtually dissolved during the first few years of Anchorage's growth. Many Knik residents moved to Anchorage to pursue the new economic opportunities. In a few cases, Knik houses were also shipped to Anchorage (for example, 918 West Tenth Avenue, 711 M Street and the old rectory of the Catholic Church).[4]

Between 1915 and 1940 housing styles gradually modified. Bungalows were built well into the 1930's. Some bungalows were prototypes of the style: porches complemented roof lines; brackets were added as trim; and dormers were prevalent. Other early houses were more austere and had limited decor. One common early housing type might be termed "Anchorage Shotgun." (Shotgun housing got its nickname from the story that one could blast a shotgun from the front doorway and hit every room, scattering buckshot to the back of the narrow house.) These narrow, one-story houses, oriented from the front to the rear of the lost, were typically constructed between 1916 and 1930.

During the 1930's new and larger housing forms were introduced. The one-and-one-half storied dwelling remained popular; however, the pitch of the roof was often steep and filled with sizeable dormers. Toward the 1940's, housing styles which were popular in the Lower 48 began to appear. These included Tudor, Cape Cod and modified ranch styles. Most of these houses were built without eaves – a telltale mark of the housing built between 1936 and 1945. The Art Moderne influence, with its flatroofed, steamlined form, also found its way to Anchorage. Federal



The Oscar Anderson house (center) was one of the first homes to be completed in Anchorage. This photo (courtesy of D.A. Cadden) was taken prior to 1920.

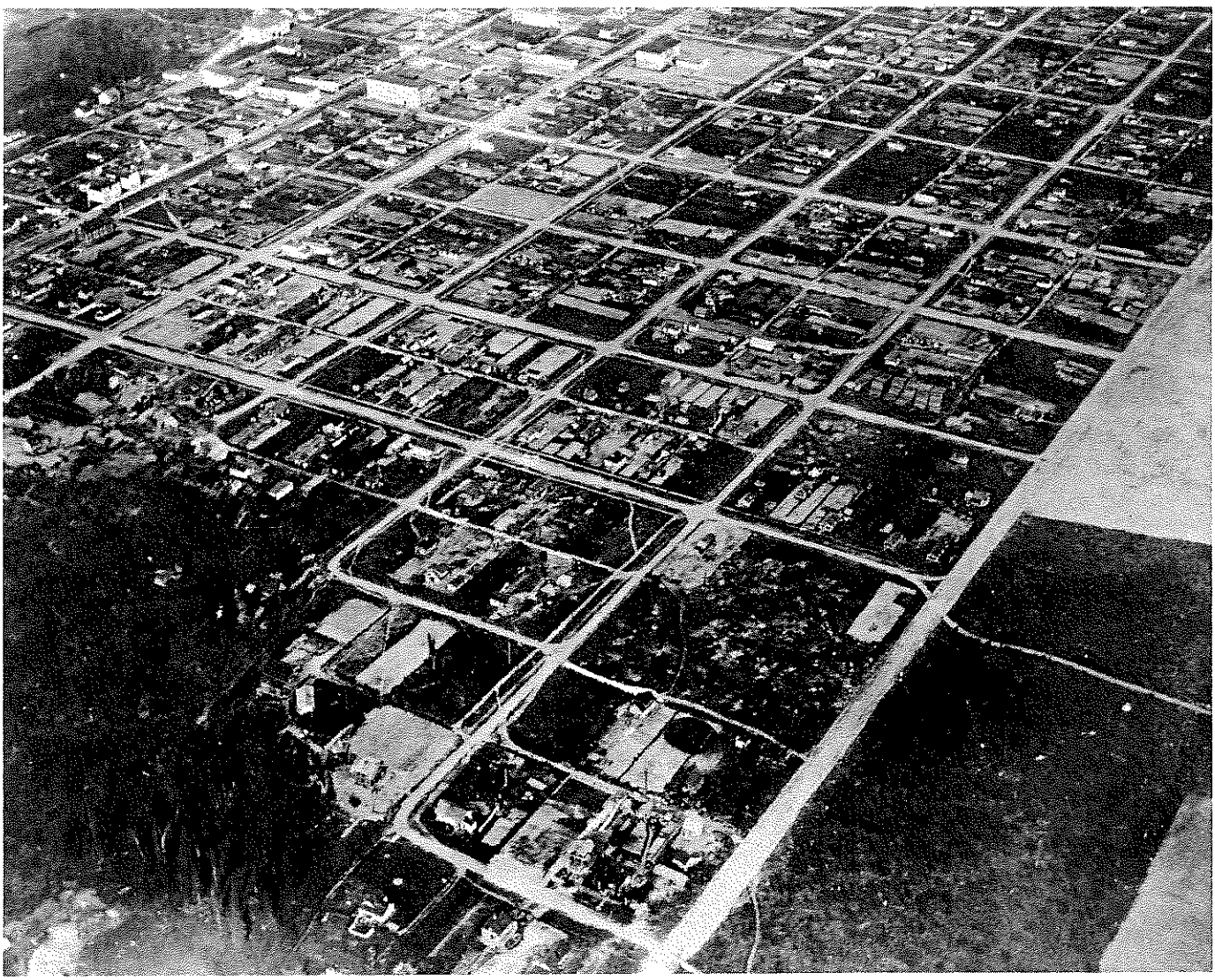
housing programs influenced some construction around 1940 (for example, 935 West Third Avenue).

Various materials were used as exterior siding. Shiplap was commonly used in the 1915-20 period. Most A.E.C. structures were covered with one-by-six-inch shiplap. Clapboard was another common material. Its size and form varied over the years. A rounded edge clapboard is found on some houses of the 1920's. Wood shingle was occasionally employed to cover entire structures or portions of them. Stucco was used in renovation efforts of older houses.

Modification was prevalent over the years. As ownership changed hands or as families grew, rooms and wings were added. Occasionally, a small house was moved to another lot and expanded into a larger residence. Among other more common modifications are the enclosure of the front porch to form an anteroom and the addition of dormers.

A host of home builders worked in Anchorage over the years. Among those of the 1915-30 era were Gerhard "Stucco" Johnson, Aaron Wicklund, John Wirum, Smith Higgins and W.L. Balch. During the 1930's and early 1940's the major contractors for housing were the firm of Dahl and Wandsted, and Jake Markley. Building suppliers, who were involved in some phases of construction, included Ray Larson, Harry Cribb, Cappy Faroe, Bliss Lumber, and the Northern Commercial Company.[5] Many homes were built by the owners themselves, especially railroaders who had mechanical or carpentry skills.

In the following sketches some of the most representative townsite dwellings are discussed. Two other sections which cover specific types of Anchorage dwellings – Alaska Engineering Commission Housing and Log Buildings – follow these descriptions.



Homes were scattered throughout much of the townsite. This mid- 1920s photograph depicts the west end of town. Ninth Avenue and N Street are in the foreground.

The Oscar Anderson House

This simple frame bungalow, built in 1915, is reputed to be the first residence completed following the townsite auction. Aaron Wicklund and "Stucco" Johnson, two local carpenters, constructed the house. It was similar in size to many other early Anchorage bungalows, measuring approximately twenty by forty feet, and having a height of one-and-one-half stories. A single dormer window faces west; additional upper floor bedroom windows were set under the front and rear gables. The roof was covered with wood shingles and brackets were used as a decorative touch along the roofline.

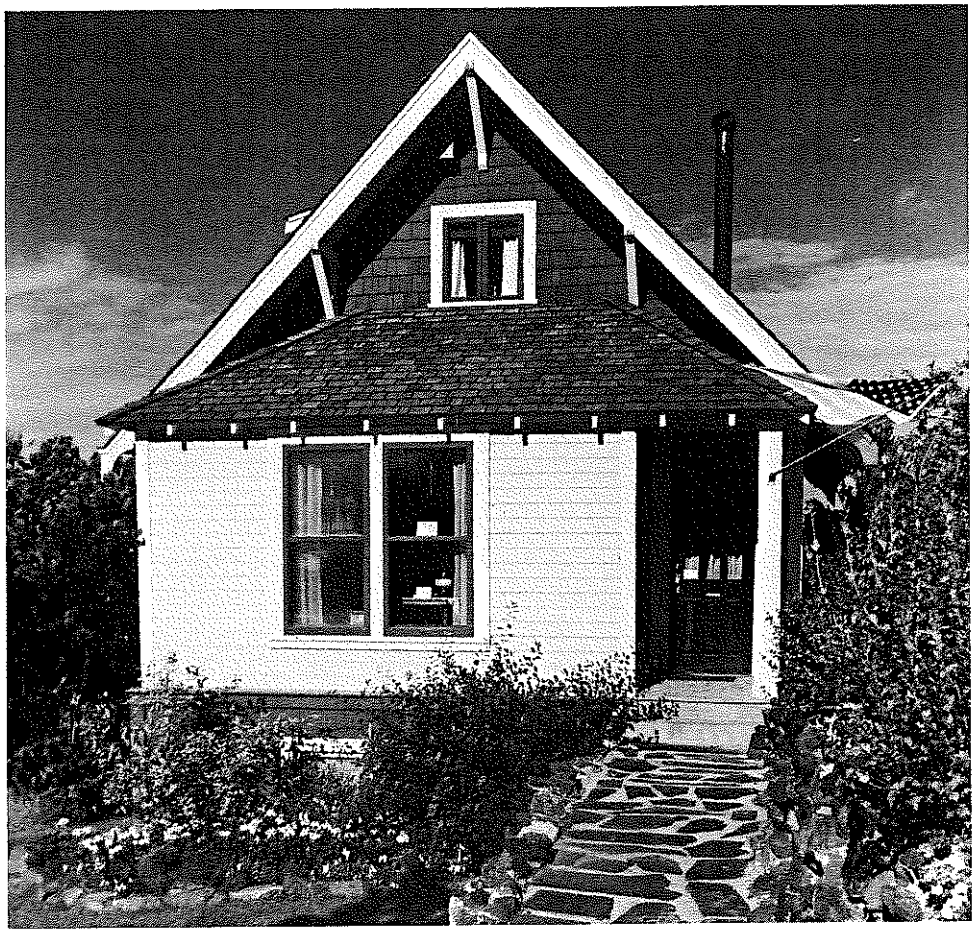
Originally, a porch ran across the front of the house. Later it was partially enclosed to add more living room space. Other first floor rooms include the bath, kitchen and dining room. One dining room wall is highlighted by original woodwork and cabinets, including a built-in buffet designed and constructed by Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson.

Oscar Anderson arrived at Ship Creek in the early spring of 1915. By his own account, he was the eighteenth person to set foot in "Tent City." Within a matter of weeks he went into business with a man named Jensen as the primary meat packer for the region. Their cold storage operation was first located at "Riverside," the temporary tent settlement. Anderson was a successful bidder in four instances during the initial auction on July 15, 1915. He rapidly erected a building on Fourth Avenue to which the Ship Creek Meat Market was initially relocated.

The living room of the Oscar Anderson House.

Anderson was one of the original owners of the Evan Jones Coal Company, started at Jonesville in 1921. Later, he became the company's president and general manager. Besides his interest in the meat and coal businesses, Anderson contributed to the town's development by giving his support to air transportation and newspaper publishing.[6]

The Anderson family lived in the house until 1974. His widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson, donated the house to the Municipality in 1976. The house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.



The Oscar Anderson House has been restored and is managed by Historic Anchorage, Inc.

605 West Second Avenue: The Leopold David House

Leopold David, an early civic leader and pioneer, had this substantial house built for himself and his family around 1917. Along with the houses of A.E.C. Commissioners Edes and Mears (see the Alaska Engineering Commission Houses), this residence can be regarded as the foremost of the pre-1920 era houses. Unlike the Edes House which has been extensively altered, and the Mears House which has been demolished, the Leopold David House has changed very little over the years.

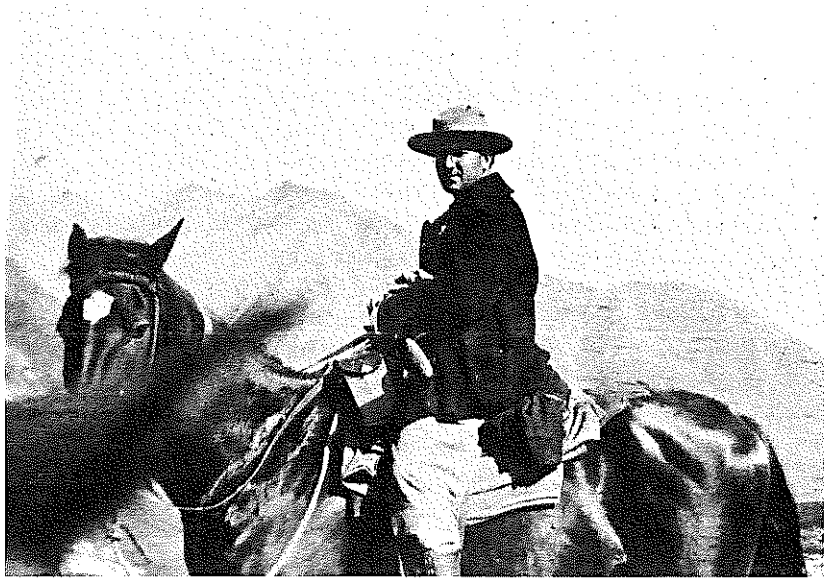
The one-and-one-half story house retains many details of the conventional bungalow style. Its bracketed front porch is mirrored by a similarly bracketed gabled roof. The gabled roof of the side porch is reflected in the wide dormer above it. The flared base of the house is sheathed with wood shingle while the walls are covered with clapboard. Rectangular lights accent the windows. A bay window adds another dimension to the front facade.

Originally, the house was tri-colored. The trim of the windows and eaves and the porch posts and brackets were white. The clapboard siding was a slightly darker color and the flared shingle skirting was very dark. Today the color scheme is very similar to the original and structural changes have only minimally impaired its architectural integrity. The side porch has been enclosed and a basement has been finished. The house is significant for both its architecture and its association with Leopold David. It is currently used as a law office.

The Leopold David House is now used as law offices

The Leopold David house was the home of Anchorage's first mayor and is a good example of the bungalow style.

Leopold David.



Leopold David[7]

Leopold David, Anchorage's first elected Mayor, had a long, productive career in governmental service. His life was a remarkable success story revolving around the theme of the young immigrant who finds good fortune in the new world. Born in Nordhausen, Germany in 1881, he was one of five children. His Jewish parents, looking for the prosperity that America might offer, immigrated to New York when Leopold was but a boy. Settling in Brooklyn, the family was ultimately split apart in the mid-1890's by the death of the parents.

Within a few years Leopold David joined the army. It was the army which brought him to Alaska. After serving in the Philippines during the rebellious aftermath of the Spanish-American War, he was reassigned to a totally different environment – Fort Egbert, Alaska. Arriving there in September 1904, Sergeant First Class David served as a pharmacist's assistant in the Hospital Corps. Alaska was to be his home for the remaining years of his life.

Upon his discharge in 1905, he settled in Seward. There, he became manager of the Seward Drug Company. Like many pharmacists of that time, his basic knowledge of medicinal substances brought him the title "Dr. David." In fact, newspaper advertisements listed him as "Physician and Surgeon." While working in Seward, he met Anna Karasek. She became his wife in 1909.

Expanding his horizons, David temporarily moved to Susitna Station in 1909 and served as the U.S. Marshal.[8] A year later, he settled in Knik. There he was appointed U.S. Commissioner,[9] a post in which he served until 1921. As Commissioner, he recorded legal instruments (deeds, mining claims and the like) and served as ex-officio probate judge. As those responsibilities did not require his full-time attention, he continued in the pharmacy business. It is believed that while living in Knik he studied law. He became a member of the Bar of the State of Washington. In 1921 he went into private law practice with L.V. Ray. David ran the Anchorage end of their firm.

David arrived at Ship Creek in May 1915 to see the bustling Tent City dissolve as the townsite developed. As the U.S. Commissioner and District Recorder his signature was affixed to virtually every land transaction. Apparently, he had turned away from the "medical" profession by then. News advertisements indicate his occupation as "Attorney at Law."

Well-liked and admired by those around him, David was active in community affairs. While in Knik, he headed the Chamber of Commerce and the Commercial Club. In Anchorage, he continued his membership in various fraternal organizations, including the Elks, the Moose Lodge, the Shriners and the Masons. David served as a trustee in the *Anchorage Daily Times* operation and became a director of the Bank of Anchorage. He often turned down his friends who asked him to run for public office. However, after Anchorage became incorporated, he relented to their desires. On November 29, 1920, he was elected to the first of three terms as Mayor of Anchorage. His terms were especially important to the City in that they marked the transition from federal management to local decision making.

David was only 43, seemingly at his prime, when heart disease claimed his life. He died on November 22, 1924. He and his wife are both buried in the Masonic section of Anchorage's Cemetery.

106 F Street: The Cuddy House

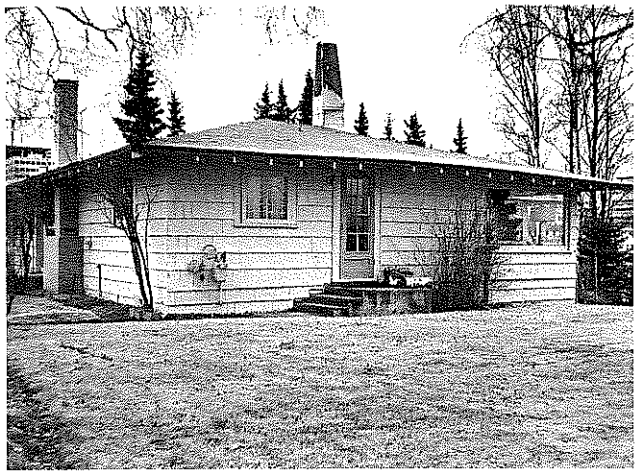
This one-story, shingle-sided house was home to Lucy and Warren Cuddy for many years. The original portion of the dwelling is a bungalow facing north. George Campbell purchased the lot for $250 in 1915. The structure was apparently built the following year and reportedly provided housing for military personnel and employees of the Alaska Railroad Hospital. In 1920, the year tax records were initiated, the property's ownership was listed under James S. Truitt, a local lawyer and judge. The Cuddys purchased the property in 1934 and it has remained in their family.

The Cuddys arrived in Anchorage in 1933. Warren Cuddy, an attorney, was closely associated with The First National Bank of Anchorage and became its president in 1941. His wife, Lucy, was elected to the Board of Directors and became chairman upon her husband's death in 1951.

Lucy Cuddy had originally come to Alaska to teach school in Valdez immediately after receiving her degree in education from the University of Arkansas. Throughout her life, she continued her great interest in the field of education and served on the University of Alaska's Board of Regents from 1956 to 1962. The Lucy Cuddy Center Building on the campus of Anchorage Community College is named in her honor.

With the growth of the Cuddy family, more space was needed and a ranch style expansion emerged over the years. The unpretentious house is a good example of a bungalow evolving with time. More importantly however, it draws significance from its association with Lucy and Warren Cuddy and the contributions they made to Alaska.

The Cuddy House.



126 F Street: The Rager-Campbell House

This shingle-sided, one-and-one-half story frame dwelling is a classic bungalow. Front and rear porches have been enclosed, but no other alterations have been made. The combination of gable roof and shed roof dormers is unusual but original to the structure.

The house was reportedly built by Ed Christensen, a local carpenter who constructed several houses on the townsite in 1917. W.A. Rystrom was the owner of the property that year and it is probable that the house was built as Rystrom's

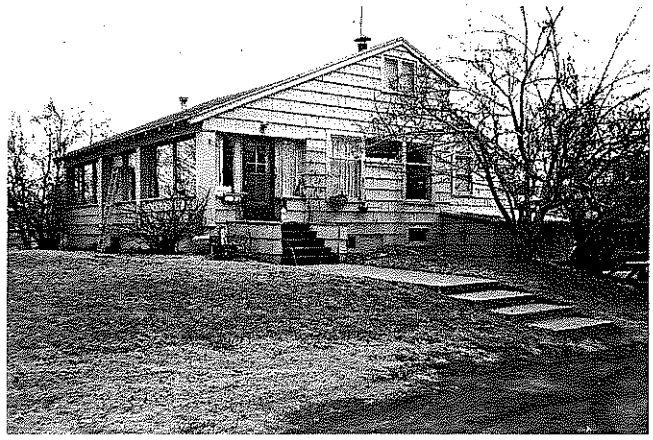
The Second Avenue and F Street neighborhood in the 1920s.

residence. By 1922, W.A. and Granvilla Rager had made the property their home. Rager worked as Anchorage's second U.S. Commissioner, succeeding Leopold David who had retired from that position. In 1928, the property was sold to Chris and Louise Eckmann. Eckmann, a furniture store owner on Fourth Avenue, was also active in civic affairs. He was elected Mayor of Anchorage in 1926 and served on the City Council from 1924-25 and 1933-34. Leif Strand owned the property for a short time; he also served on the City Council (1938-39). In 1944, John and Nola Campbell came to Anchorage and purchased the house. Originally from Minnesota, the Campbells had come to Talkeetna and worked a successful mining venture at the Collinsville Mine. Along with one of his mining partners, Carl Durand, the Campbells opened the Canteen Bar near the northeast corner of Fourth Avenue and C Street. Nola Campbell author of *Talkeetna Cronies*, still owns and maintains this fine bungalow.

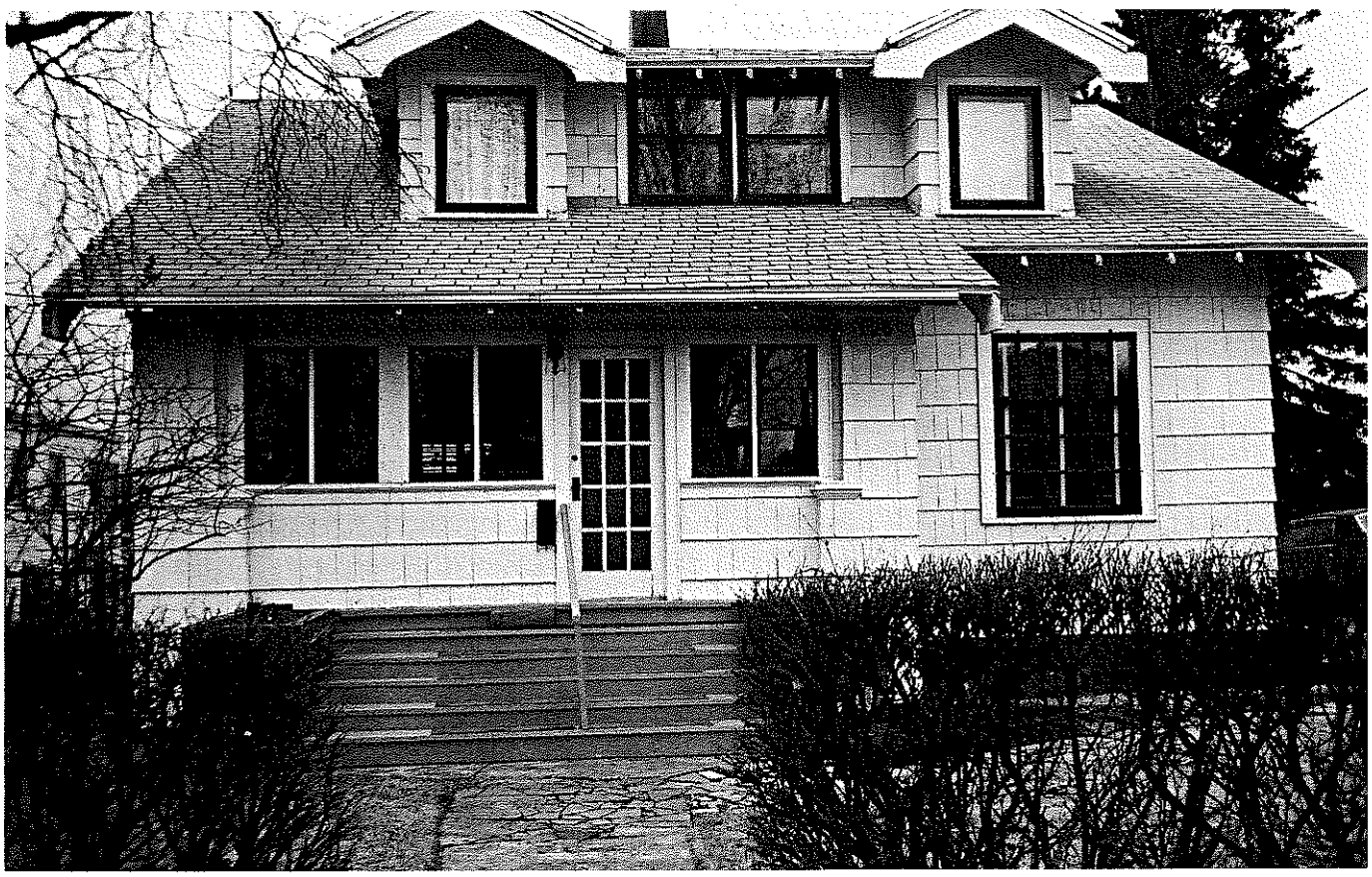
111 F Street: The Hiebert House

This early, shingle-sided frame house is unusual in that it is reminiscent of "salt-box" and bungalow architectural styles. William L. Balch purchased the lot in 1915, and apparently built the house within a year or two. Balch worked as a local contractor and builder in partnership with P.J. McDonald. The house next door at 121 F Street, which has been considerably modified, also dates from this early era. Both houses stood on Lot 6, Block 5. P.J. McDonald resided in one of them.

The Hiebert House.



H.P. Allen purchased Lot 6 in 1922. A few years later he subdivided the south portion of the lot and sold the house at 121 F Street to A.C. Craig. Warren and Lucy Cuddy (see the Cuddy House description) owned the house for one year before selling to R.D. Bragaw in 1937. Bragaw served as clerk for the City of Anchorage and owned a photography studio, Bragaw's Photo. He was elected president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1927 and 1932 and served on the first utility board, 1943-44. Wells B. Ervin bought the property from Bragaw in 1942. Also active in local affairs, Ervin served on the City Council in 1938-39 and 1944-45, served as president of the Chamber of Commerce from 1935-37, and was Mayor of Anchorage in 1946.



The Rager-Campbell House.

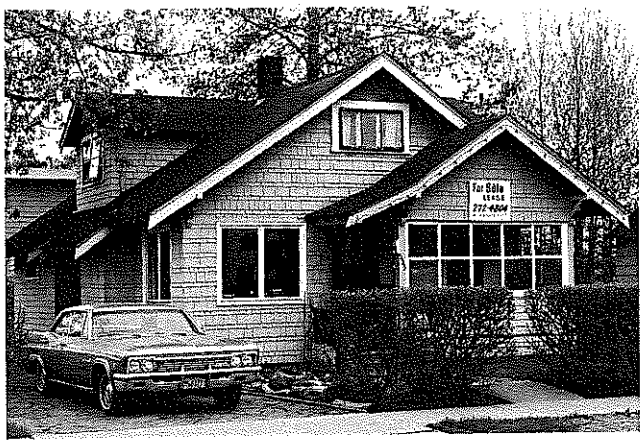
Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Hiebert, the present owners, purchased the house at 111 F Street from Ervin in 1949. A.J. Hiebert, an electrical engineer, played a significant role in the development of radio and television production in Alaska. He came to Anchorage from Fairbanks, where he was an assistant engineer for the local radio station from 1939-47. After arriving in Anchorage in 1947, he designed KENI radio station and became station manager in 1949. Four years later, he established Northern Television and Alaska's first television station, KTVA-TV. He later founded Alaska's first FM station, KNIK-FM and became president of the Alaska Broadcasting System.

The elements of the dwelling's original architecture have not been lost over the years. Alterations have been complementary to the primary structure. Large single sash windows were used in enclosing the porch to take advantage of views of the Inlet. With its hillside location, the Ervins put in a poured concrete basement, which has been expanded and remodeled to provide additional living space. The shed roof garage has also been converted into living space. The house stands as an intriguing example of early Anchorage architecture.

The Snook-Loudermilch House

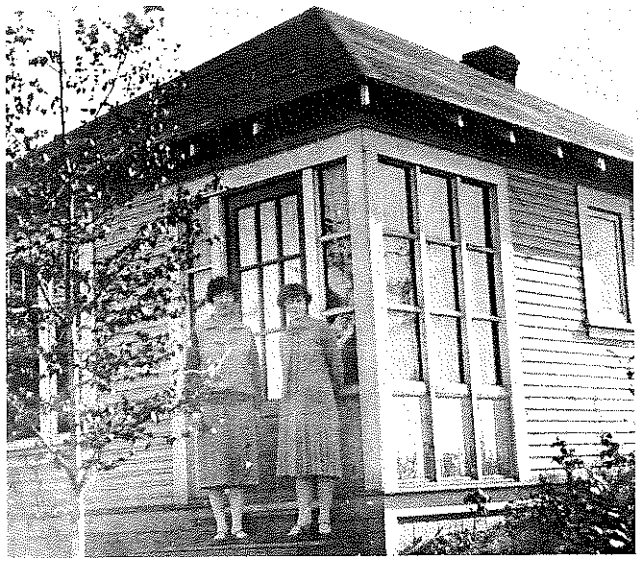
R.C. Loudermilch came to Anchorage during the early years of the town's development. Initially, he worked as Post Office Assistant and later as a medical assistant at the A.E.C. hospital. Around 1920, he established a mortuary which he ran for over twenty years. He was a City Council member in the late-1920's.

W.C. Snook apparently was the original owner of the house. Snook, a teacher with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, sold the house to Loudermilch in 1924. The home stood at 535 West Second Avenue. (It was moved in 1976 and is stored, awaiting restoration.)This one-and-one-half story bungalow is a good example of the modest housing of the successful businessman. The shingle-covered residence contains three bedrooms, living



The Snook-Loudermilch House originally stood near the corner of Second Avenue and F Street.

The Nagley House.



room, dining area and kitchen. Large dormers form a cross-gable roof. Brackets were added for decorative purposes at the corners and on the porch posts. The extent of modifications - enclosure of the porch and modernization of the kitchen - has been minimal.

529 West Second Avenue: The Nagley House

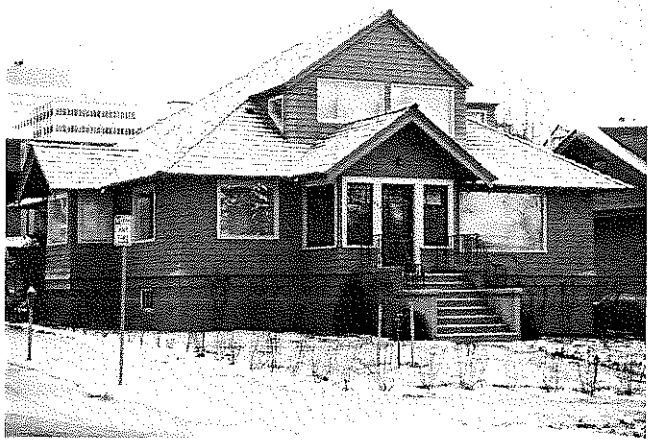
This shingle-covered wood-framed dwelling originally stood where the Westward Hilton Hotel is today. Horace W. and Gessamine Nagley purchased the lot on which the house currently sits in 1945. Two years later they moved the small bungalow down the hill to its present location. They rented the property to Lou Liston, owner of Hewitt's Drugs at Fourth Avenue and E Street, who resided there between 1947 and 1953.

The house has not changed much over the years. The one-story dwelling is narrow in width and has no hallway space: one room leads into another. The hip roof on the front facade is meshed with a medium-pitched roof toward the rear. Vertical wood shingles cover the building.

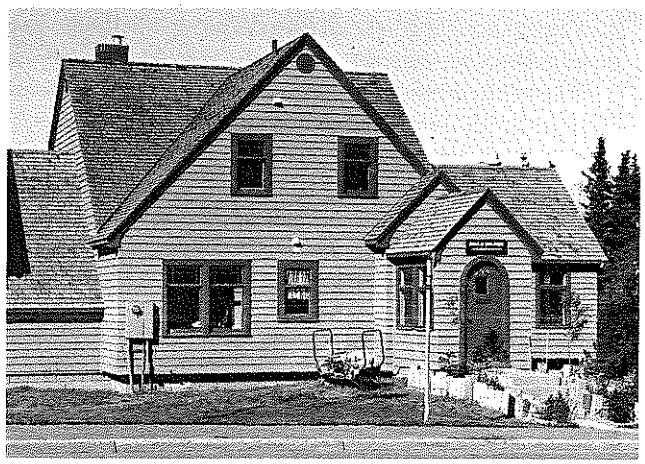
600 West Second Avenue: The Larson House

Ray C. Larson, one of the town's first building suppliers and contractors, personally oversaw the construction of this house. Built to be his home, this one-and-one-half story, square plan bungalow was constructed in 1932. The valuation of the property jumped from $450 to $5,000 that year, evidence of the substantial improvement. The house featured a hip roof with intersecting gable dormers. The extended rafters, decorative sash windows and complementarily-scaled arctic entry are characteristic of the larger homes of the 1930's. The Larsons lived in the house for more than twenty years. In addition to running his supply business at Fifth and K Street, Larson constructed several other buildings in Anchorage. A good example is the Seeley House, built for his daughter and son-in-

The Larson House.



The Seeley House.



law at 700 West Second Avenue. During the late 1960s, Esther Byrnes purchased the Larson house and operated Byrnes Realty in it. The house maintains much of its original appearance, having had few alterations over the years.

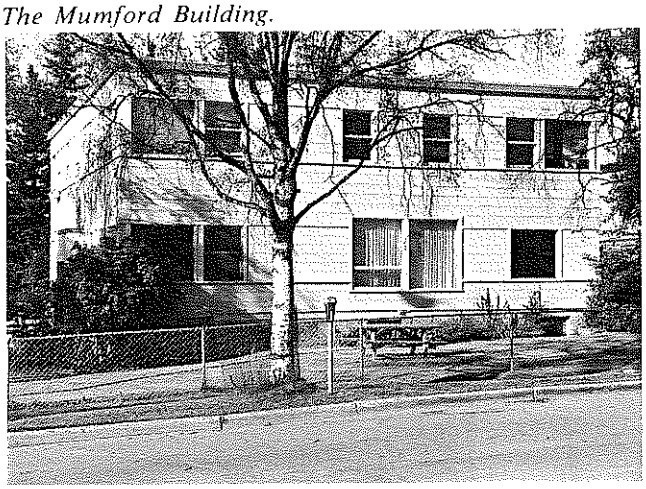
700 West Second Avenue: The Seeley House

The eclectic nature of this 1930's dwelling has been further highlighted with additions in the past year. In 1936, George Mumford, a local banker, sold the unimproved property on which the building now rests to L.J. Seeley, an Anchorage dentist. The Seeleys were a old Anchorage family. J.C. Seeley, father of the original owner of this building, came to Anchorage in its developing years, working as the district accountant for the Alaska Engineering Commission. L.J. Seeley had the house constructed in 1936. The contractor who oversaw its construction was Ray C. Larson, Seeley's father-in-law and a long-time local building supplier.

The house sits on one of the larger lots within the neighborhood. Its 8,100 square feet were created when Christensen Drive was platted to connect to the railroad yards. The steeply-pitched, intersecting gable roofs and absence of eaves are some of the distinctive features of the 1930-era residence. The lead and glass windows, used abundantly throughout the house, are a mark of the better-built homes constructed in that period. The complementary exterior remodeling was designed by Jay Davies, Architects at Work. The interior design is the work of Carolyn Banta. The former residence is now used as law offices.

A view looking up F Street in the 1920s.

The Mumford Building.

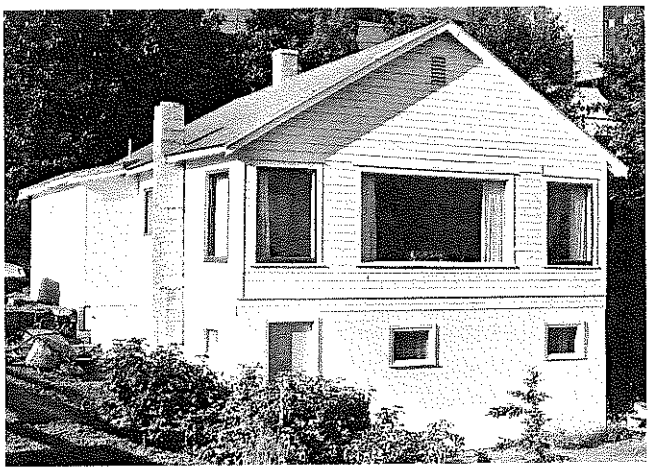


135 Christensen Drive: The Mumford Building

Incorporated into this rectangular two-and-one-half-story structure is a bungalow which dates from 1916. Constructed as an apartment building in 1949, it also has been used for office purposes. The building is unusual to the neighborhood because all nearby structures were originally single-family dwelling units. The small bungalow, which is part of the southeast corner of the building, belonged to A. A. Shonbeck in early years.

Shonbeck, a general merchandise store owner, was highly involved in civic endeavors in Anchorage. He was active in the Chamber of Commerce, serving as its president in 1922. He served on the City Council in 1923-24 and in 1932-33. Shonbeck saw Anchorage's potential as an aviation center and played a significant role in establishing the first airfield. Three years later he helped establish the first commercial airline service.

George Mumford, who worked for the National Bank of Alaska from 1923 to the 1950's, oversaw the construction of this apartment and office building. It was owned by his family until recent years.



The Kahden-Goetz House.

910 Second Avenue: The Kahden-Goetz House

This one-story, wood frame residence has a rectangular plan and is clad in wood siding. The flared gable roof extends to cover the corner entrance and a narrow addition on the west. The wood-framed windows offer excellent views of the inlet, port and mountains.

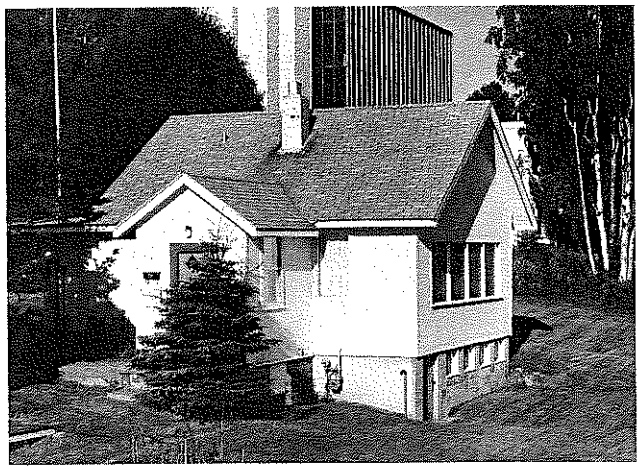
The lot, like much of the nearby property, was initially purchased at auction but reverted back to the federal government. It remained governmental property until the late 1930's. In May of 1938, John Kahden, who lived next door at 918 Second Avenue and worked for the Alaska Railroad, purchased the lot. One year later he built the house.

Kahden's house had a T-shape plan with a breakfast area projecting from the center of the north facade. John Goetz, who bought the residence in 1959, enclosed two corners of the house during his first year of ownership. The existing structure, still owned by Goetz, is much the same as originally constructed 45 years ago.

918 Second Avenue: The Busey House

This one-story wood frame house was built around 1916 by W.W. Busey, who owned a transfer company and hauled freight in early Anchorage. Busey owned the property until 1937 when he sold it to John Kahden, a warehouseman for the Alaska Railroad. Kahden lived there until the early 1950's. During his residence he greatly improved the original structure and built the next door house.

Sheathed in wood siding, the rectangular house has a gable roof with a wide overhang and an interior brick chimney. A gable-roofed entry is centered on the east facade. The majority of the windows are wood framed, sash-type windows. Alterations include the addition of a full basement, a back room and replacement of some glass with picture windows. The original simple gable cottage is still visible.



The Busey House.

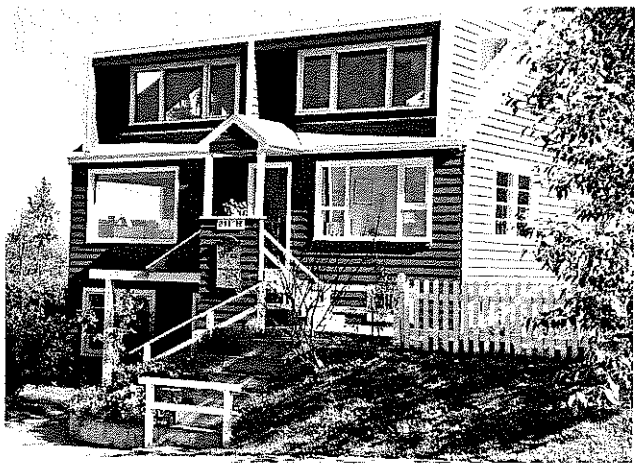
211 H Street: The Carpenter House

In 1947 Roderic Carpenter obtained a 99-year lease from the ARR to build a residence on railroad reserve land. Three years later he drew up the plans and retained Burtil Davies as his contractor to build this house. Carpenter wanted an extremely solid house; consequently, he imported and used larger-than-standard fir structural members throughout his residence. The interior features mahogany trim and oak floors.

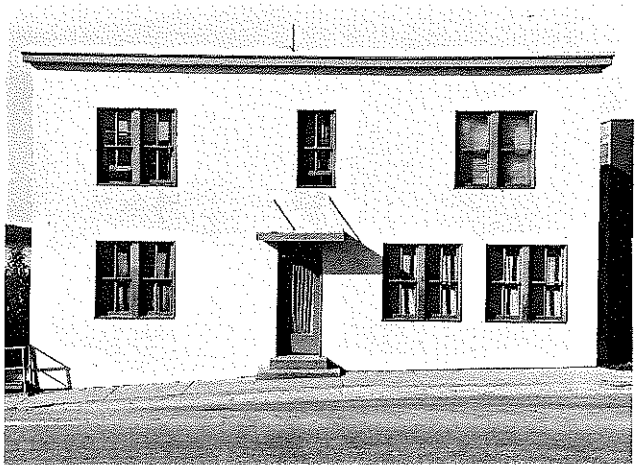
In the early 1950's, Roderic Carpenter and his neighbor, Theodore Landoe, got delegate Bob Bartlett to introduce a preferential bill to Congress to allow purchase of the lots their houses were built on from the federal government. The bill was approved in 1952.[10]

Roderic Carpenter and his family lived in the house for 32 years. He worked for the ARR as a coach painter and became paint foreman. He was very active in the Elks and Coast Guard Auxiliary and served as District Commodore in 1979-80.

The Carpenters made no major changes to the building during their residency. The large dormer and polygonal windows have been recent alterations made by the law firm that currently owns the building.

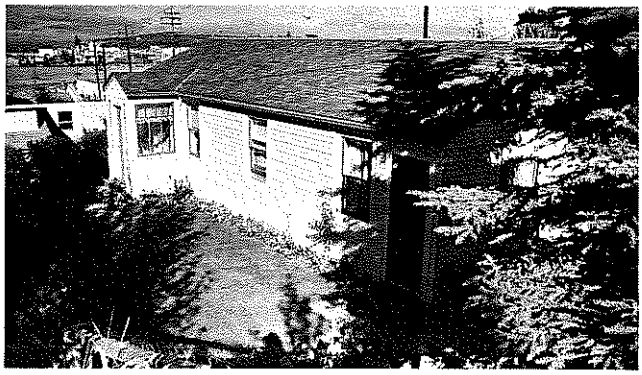


The Carpenter House.



The "Chickaloon" Apartments.

The Wikholm-Landstrom House.



813 and 813½ Third Avenue: The "Chickaloon" Apartments and the Wikholm-Landstrom House

Eser Wikholm, an early Anchorage architect, purchased this property in July of 1916 and erected a small rental structure on the north end of the lot. This building may have been built in two stages, but by sometime in 1917 it consisted of four, two-room units and was purchased by A.J. Landstrom to be used as his home.[11]

The residence is a rectangular one-story frame structure. It has a gable roof, enclosed eaves and an exterior chimney. The off-center entry is flanked by wood-framed windows; its single wood door is flanked by sidelights. This front entry and a similar rear porch were added by the Landstroms in the 1930's and mid-1940's, as was the garage. The building sits within an attractive and well kept yard which boasts an arched arbor and carefully cultivated trees and shrubs, all enclosed by a wood and wire fence.

The residence sat alone on the property until 1935 when A.J. Landstrom erected the apartment building which fronts on Third Avenue. The two-story building originally had been built in Chickaloon and was used as an office building. The town of Chickaloon was constructed by the ARR in the 1920's when coal was in high demand. By the mid-1930's this demand had died and Chickaloon stood empty, so the ARR took sealed bids and auctioned off the buildings. The structure at 813 Second Avenue, occasionally referred to as the "Honeymoon Apartments", was cut in pieces and moved by rail into Anchorage where it was assembled on a full basement at its present location. Its original hip roof was replaced by the flat roof and basic alterations were undertaken to create seven apartments.[12] This three-bay wood frame structure is covered with stucco. Square in plan, it is two-stories tall and has a simple cornice and a flat roof. The entrance door and all interior doors have transoms.

A.J. Landstrom came to the United States from Sweden in the 1890's. Working as a miner he made his way across the country and arrived in Nome in 1900 where he continued mining. In 1915 he moved himself and his new wife, Elizabeth, to Anchorage and began employment as a car repairman for the ARR. The Landstrom family has continued to reside in Anchorage and has made contributions in several fields including property management, medicine and banking.

The Hill-Hickel House.

935 Third Avenue: The Hill-Hickel House

Harry Hill purchased this property in 1935 and soon had the existing pitched-roof residence built into the steep slope. At this time there were no architects in Alaska so the Hills purchased plans for a "Tom Thumb House" for $5.00 from *Better Homes and Gardens*.[13] They hired Herman Johnson, an Anchorage contractor, to build it. The house remained in the Hill family until the late 1950's when it was purchased by Walter Hickel. It served as Mr. Hickel's campaign headquarters in his successful bid for governor of Alaska (1966), and as headquarters for Keith Miller's successful gubernatorial campaign (1969). It is still owned by Hickel Investment Company.

The main structure is a one-and-one-half story, frame structure with wood siding and a steep gable roof having two arched dormers and an interior brick chimney. Nicely detailed, the curved window heads are repeated in the arched entrance door. All windows on the main facade contain original leaded panes and are protected by aluminum awnings added by Walter Hickel. The small, flat-roofed addition to the east was added by Don Hill in 1956 and was used as a family room. The original greenhouse, located on the lowest level, was enclosed under the addition and became additional basement.

After serving as Secretary of the Interior, 1969-70, Governor Hickel returned to Anchorage. Planning to use the house as his office, he completely redid the interior, removing the kitchen but retaining the original fireplace, narrow stairway and the casement and leaded windows. The majority of the north facade windows were replaced with large, single fixed panes to take advantage of the excellent view. During this time, the brick wainscotting was applied to the front facade.

Harry Hill was a long time Alaskan and held many prominent positions. He was president of the Evan Jones Coal Company and later, president of the Lathrop Company. His son Don, who resided in the house during the 1950's, also became president of the Lathrop Company.

Harry Hill further served the community as city councilman, honorary British Consul, and by being on the Power Commission. The Municipal Hill Building is named for him.

The Bliss House.

326 L Street: The Bliss House

Situated next to Resolution Park, this long low building originally served as an apartment house. Chester M. Murphy had the frame structure built in 1915, not long after creation of the townsite. Its original dimensions were 18 feet by 68 feet.[14] In 1924, H.L. Bliss purchased the structure to use as his residence. The Blisses lived there for many years. Eventually they rented out rooms and the building was known as the Bliss Apartments.

Bliss worked as a carpenter doing cabinetry, mill and shop work. In the mid-1930s he went into partnership with Ray C. Larson and ran a lumber supply yard. It was called Columbia Lumber and was located at Fourth Avenue and K Streets. Mrs. Bliss was very active in the Anchorage Garden Club. Her garden was a showpiece that made her known throughout town.

The one-story building has a T-plan with an attached garage on the north. It appears to have been added to several times and "brick-like" shingles and composition roof shingles have replaced (or covered) the original siding and roofing. In recent years the building has been converted from residential use to office use.

The Lingo House as it appeared in the 1950s.

330 L Street: The Lingo House

George Lingo, administrator of the Territorial Land Office, had this substantial structure built in 1936 or 1937 to serve as both his residence and rental apartments. He retained contractors McPherson and Pongratz for its construction.

Eclecticism (the adaptation of period styles) influenced the design of this two-and-a-half-story, three-bay structure. Colonial features predominate. These include the multiple lights (or panes) of its windows, the shutters, corner boards, cornices and front door flanked with fluted pilasters. More whimsically designed were the round windows and rounded porch roof. Its basic Colonial elements and large size mark it as one of the most impressive frame buildings in the downtown area. Basically rectangular in shape, it has an enclosed one-story, flat-roofed porch with large windows on the inlet side and a one-story, flat-roofed, square addition on the north. Neither are original to the home.

Over the years, the use of the building has changed periodically. In the 1940's it was George Lingo's residence and an apartment building. From the late 1940's through the early 1960's Doctors Asa Martin and Howard Romig rented the building and operated the Alaska Medical and Surgical Clinic. Law offices are currently located there.

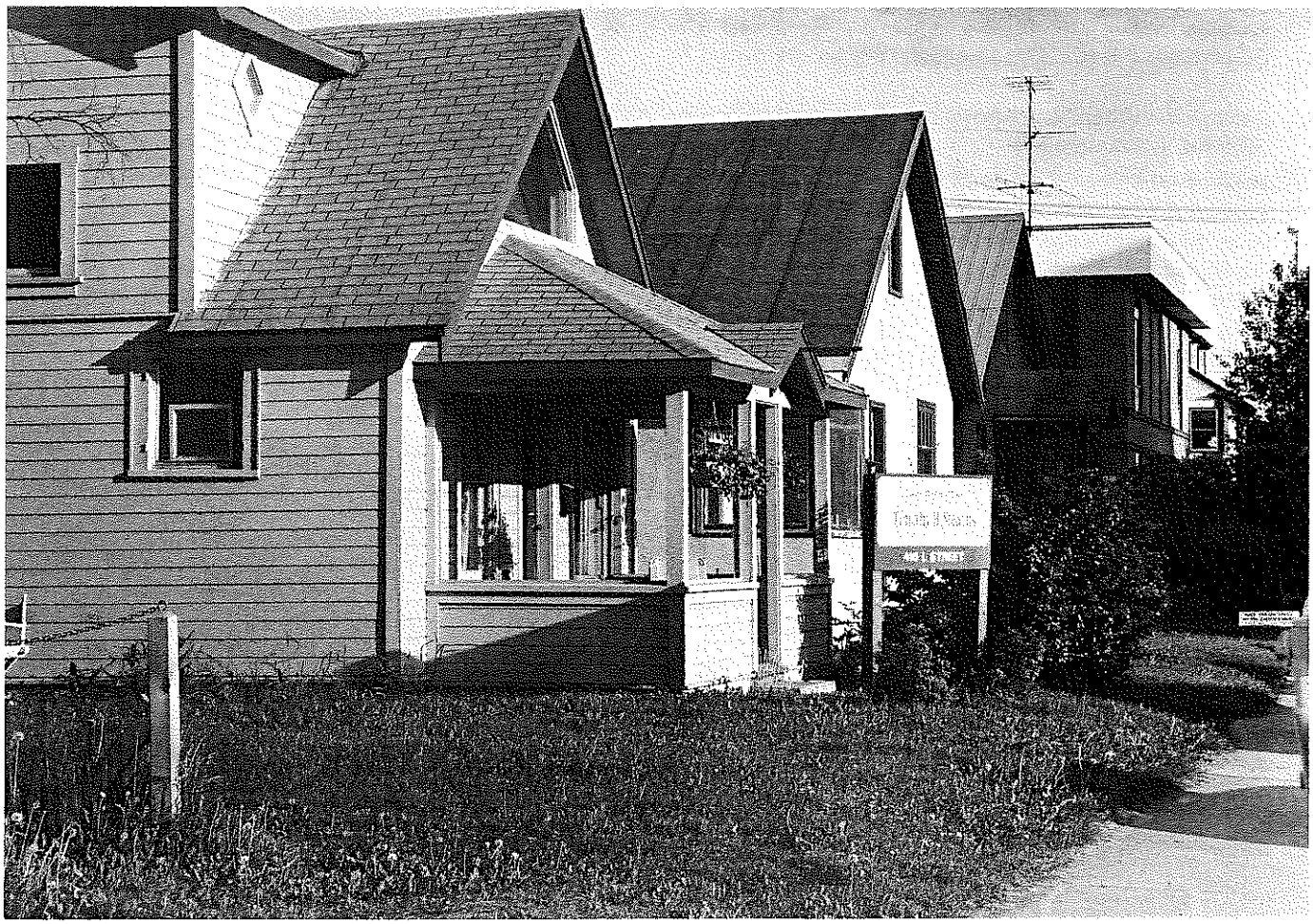
415 L Street

This wood frame house was built around 1921 when J.E. Boynton owned the property. Janet and Howard McRae, who homesteaded in Spenard (McRae Road is named for them), bought the residence in the mid-1920's. He worked as a machinist for the ARR and she worked as a nurse. They sold to Wilbur Morris, an electrician for the Municipality, in 1932 or 1933. Morris added the large dormers and rented out the house while he owned it for three years. Later owners included Roy and Madge Bunce and Esther Opp.

The original house is a typical one-and-one-half-story gable house with a rectangular floor plan. It has an open, hip-roofed entry porch with a sheathed balustrade. The dormers create a cruxiform roof plan and are large in comparison to the scale of the structure. Although two polygonal windows have been added in relatively recent years, it still reflects its 1930's appearance.

419 L Street: The Carlson-Kuvara House

This modest one-and-a-half-story frame cottage is approximately seventy years old. Ed Carlson, owner of the Inlet Hotel on K Street, purchased the lot in 1915 for $280.00. Within a



415-429 L Street.

year or two he erected the existing frame dwelling. Carlson resided at the hotel for most of these years and leased the house. In the late 1930's, Bob and Violet Kuvara, owners of the Frisco Cafe & Bar, purchased the house. They lived there until the early 1950's.

The house remains much the same as originally built. The corner porch has been enclosed and the original flush wood siding (still visible on the rear entry and the front porch) has been covered with stucco. However, the overall shape of the house, the original wood-framed windows with decorative transoms, and the gable roof line have been maintained.

429 L Street: The Smith House

This lot contained four frame dwellings by 1917. They remained in place until the mid-1930's when John Lofdahl built the present one-and-one-half-story gable cottage for William and Selma Smith.[15] The Smiths lived there for almost fifty years. The house has not been altered and still retains its handsome entryway complete with sidelights and large windows with decorative muntins.

William Smith came to Alaska in 1910. He carried mail by horse and dog sled between Seward, Sunrise and Hope. After WWI, and until his retirement in 1950, he was initially a fireman and then long-time engineer for the ARR. He was also active in the Elks and Pioneers of Alaska. Selma Smith arrived in Anchorage in 1915. After attending Anchorage schools she became a teacher and taught at various posts within the state. She was very active in numerous community and public endeavors, served on the School Board and worked for the Municipality for 19 years.

424 and 428 East Third Avenue

These two houses were probably built by Harry Katz in the early 1940's. They have long been used as rental property.

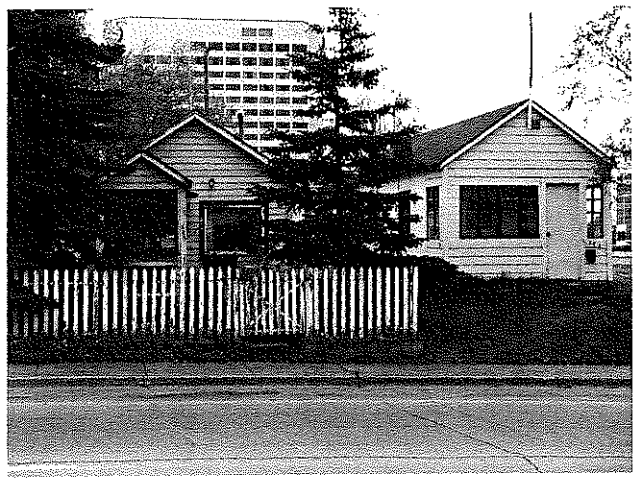
Apparently identical when constructed, the gable entry of the western house has been incorporated into the front room. Both have multi-paned windows, interior chimnies and wood siding. Known as "shotgun" style houses, they have a very simple plan: one room in width and several rooms in depth. Various other examples of this style exist in Anchorage such as the two located at 836 and 838 West Seventh Avenue.

440 L Street: Romig House

This lot stood empty until the early 1940's. Dr. Howard Romig bought the property in 1939-40 and hired Bill Manley to design his residence. It was one of the first Anchorage homes designed by an architect.[16] Herman Johnson was the builder and the house was finished in 1941. Few alterations have been made to this two-and-a-half-story frame house. The dormer on the west facade was added in the 1950's, the garage was converted to living space, and the concrete sidewalk and patio added.

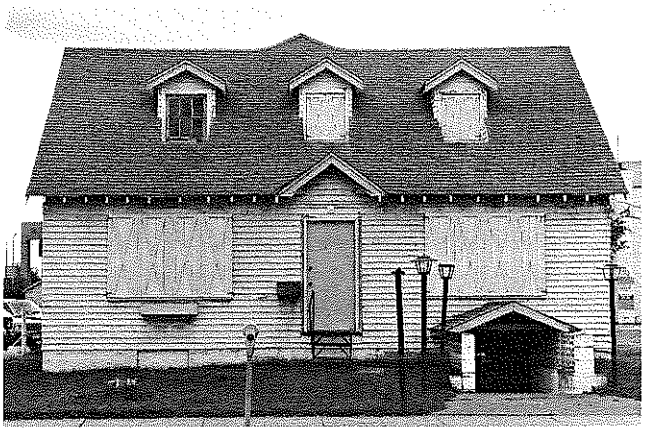
Dr. Howard Romig, son of Dr. J. H. Romig, "the dogteam Doctor," began practicing medicine in Anchorage in the early 1930's. Together with Dr. Asa Martin, he started the Alaska Medical and Surgical Clinic in the late 1940's. The clinic is still in operation today. The structure served as a family residence for many years; today it houses commercial concerns.

The Romig House.



424-428 East Third Avenue.

The Luopa House.



120 West Fourth Avenue: The Luopa House

Two structures sit on Lot 3, Block 46. The small frame dwelling on the alley dates from the early 1920's or before. Early owners included Paul Swanson, Harriet Redwood and E. McPhee who ran the "McPhee and Taylor" grocery store near Fourth Avenue and D Street. McPhee owned the property for more than ten years. In 1939 he sold it to William Luopa, a Finn who had been raised in Fairbanks. Luopa worked as a carpenter and in 1942 he used those skills in building the one-and-a-half-story house that faces Fourth Avenue.[17] In the mid-1940's the property was sold to J.C. Morris, owner of one of the oldest insurance companies in Anchorage. The house became a rental property at this time hotel, boarding house, residence - and has continued to be such.

133 East Fourth Avenue: The Nygaard-Korhonen House

This early frame house has not been altered and is well preserved. It was built in the early 1920's by Ollie Nygaard, a railroad carpenter and seasonal fisherman. After his death, Olie Korhonen bought the property. Korhonen also worked as a carpenter for the Alaska Railroad. He built the small, dove-tailed cabin at the rear of the lot.[18]

The Nygaard-Korhonen House.

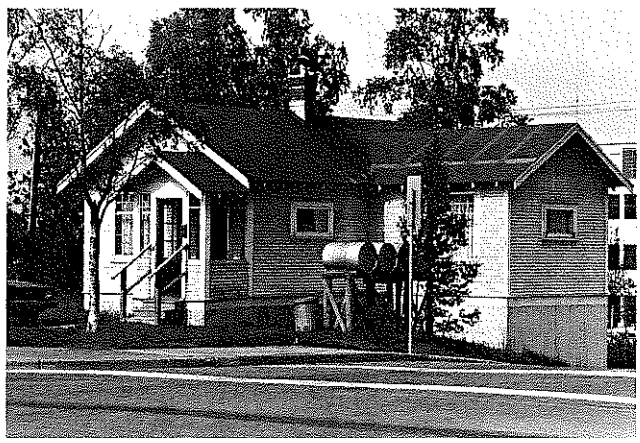
247 East Fourth Avenue:
The Bishop-Harlacker House

J. W. Bishop purchased this corner lot at auction for $90.00. Within a few years he had erected the frame residence on Fourth Avenue. Bishop owned the property until the late 1920's. It then went through several owners and was used primarily as a rental property. In the early 1930's, Margaret and Emil Harlacker rented the house. (For many previous years, they had raised their family next door at 225 Fourth Avenue.) In 1937 they purchased the corner property, remaining owners for more than 35 years. Emil Harlacker had come to Anchorage in 1922 from southeast Alaska. He worked as foreman for the General Fish Company and also for Emard's Cannery.

Although improvements have been made on the interior, the small frame house has retained its original exterior appearance of a simple one-story gable house with partial basement and semi-attached garage. The off-center gable entry with glass-paneled door and sidelights add charm to the structure.

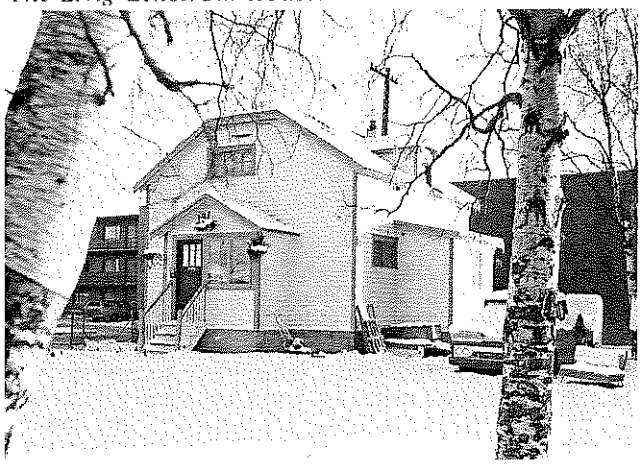
444 East Fourth Avenue: The Elvig-Eckstrom House

Hans Elvig, a carpenter, built this two story, clapboard-covered house in the mid-1930's.[19] The Scandinavian background of Elvig appears to have influenced its construction, particularly visible in the clipped gable features of both the roof and dormers. After Elvig, a succession of families occupied the house: John Fulton, a boilermaker for the ARR; Bernard Holman, a civil engineer with the U.S. District Engineers, and his wife, a concert pianist; and Tim and Anna Eckstrom. Tim Eckstrom had come to Anchorage from Cordova where he worked for the Copper River and Northwest Railroad. The Eckstroms paid $7,500 for the house in 1942. So delighted were they with the Anchorage climate relative to that of rainy Cordova, they landscaped and fenced the yard, and planted lilac trees and an abundance of flowers.[20]



The Bishop-Harlacker House.

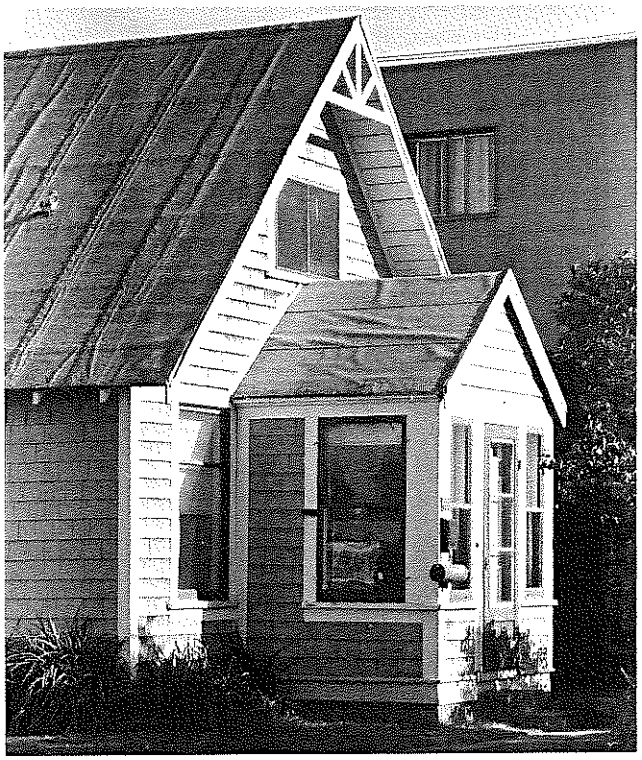
The Elvig-Eckstrom House.



409 Eagle Street: The Seaburg House

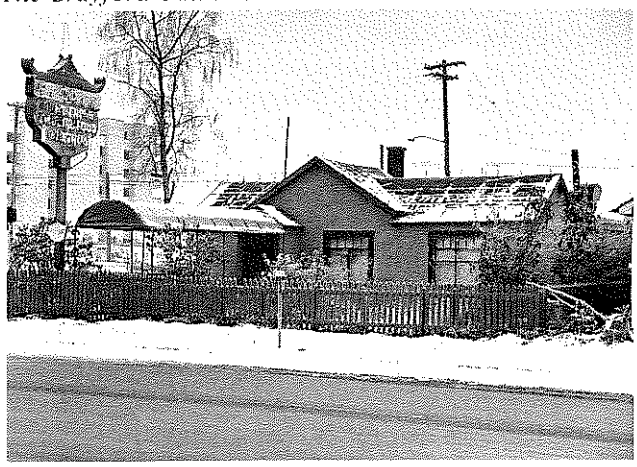
Gus Seaburg, an AEC employee, built this house around 1920. The Seaburg family lived on Government Hill for the majority of the year and used the Eagle Street residence as a summer home. In those years, the house stood where Fourth Avenue is today. The avenue did not extend beyond the large lots of the East Addition until the late 1940's.[21]

The building is handsome and has attractive detailing. The enclosed gable entry with the single wood door flanked by windows is both comfortable looking and inviting. Wide wood window frames, corner boards and fascia boards are painted a contrasting color and accent the wood shingle siding. The stick-work spokes under the eaves were not a common ornamentation for Anchorage and serve to call attention to the house. It is still used as a residence.



The Seaburg House.

The Brayford-Paulson House.



100 West Fifth Avenue: The Brayford-Paulson House

This house was built by Richard Carlisle in 1915. Frederick Brayford, an engineer for the ARR, purchased it the same year.[22] The Frederick Brayford family lived there until 1934. In that year the elder Brayfords sold the house to their son and daughter-in-law and moved to Fairbanks. In 1938 the Cecil Brayfords sold the property to Chris and Sophie Paulson. Paulson, a seasonal fisherman, owned interest in various commercial enterprises including the Union Club on Fourth Avenue. With the exception of the long wing added on the back, the small gable house has not been altered. Although presently vacant, it has been used as a Chinese restaurant in recent decades.

203 East Fifth Avenue: The Christensen House

This one-story frame dwelling is a late but classic example of the Craftsman bungalow style. Although some of its features have been altered recently during conversion of the building into a dental office, its broadly pitched gable roof, overhanging eaves, angular brackets and porch are hallmarks of this functional and unpretentious style.

The Christensen House

The residence was constructed by Ed Christensen who lived there with his wife in 1933. Christensen was an Anchorage carpenter, construction superintendent, and contractor. He built a number of homes throughout Anchorage, including the Rager-Campbell House at 126 F Street. He and his wife, Ella, lived here for many years, eventually selling to Earl Stenehgem in 1959. In addition to its current use as an orthodontist office, it has served as a women's apparel shop, called "Twin Peaks", and a servicemen's center.

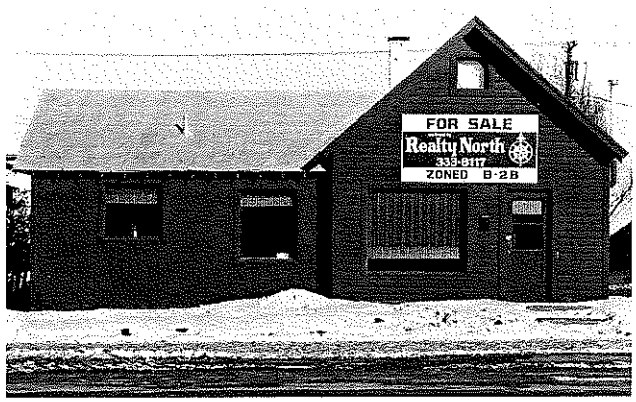
423 East Fifth Avenue: The Hanson House

Mrs. Christina Hanson won this parcel at auction in July, 1916, and soon had the existing one-story, frame house constructed. Other owners, including Tillie Lee, Nels Klevin, Charles and Martha Roslund and George Whiting have lived there. Charles Roslund and George Whiting were ARR employees while Martha Roslund was a Matanuska Valley Pioneer.

The house has not been altered. A simple T-plan with a shed addition, gable roof with wide eaves and interior chimney, it is typical of many early Anchorage residences.

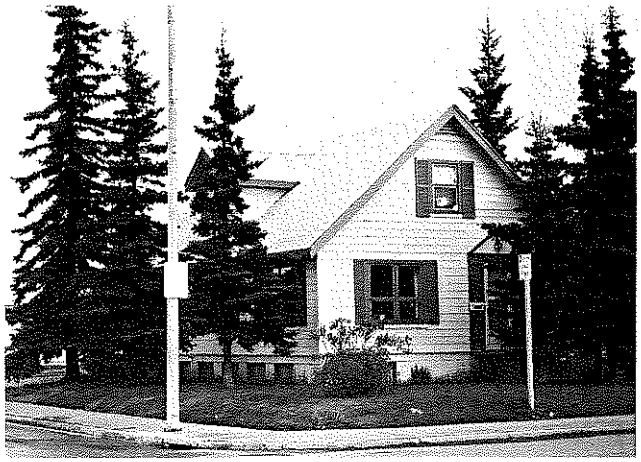
131 West Sixth Avenue: The Socha House

Stanley Socha, a jack-of-all-trades, designed and constructed the two-story stucco apartment house in 1943-44. At the time, he was living in the frame house with clapboard siding which he had built on the alley in 1940-41. He began construction of the apartment building by moving a 1927 house he originally built on Fourth Avenue to the Sixth Street lot and removing the second floor.[23] The first floor was secured to a new basement and a new, flat-roofed second floor constructed. It was originally built to be an apartment house and continues to be used as one today. The exterior has not been altered.



The Hanson House.

The Olmstead-Hewell House.



145 West Sixth Avenue: The Olmstead-Hewell House

Vernon Olmstead built this one-and-one-half-story house in 1937.[24] For many years it was used by the Anchorage Lutheran Church as their parsonage. The house burned in the early 1960's and the interior was gutted. Vernon Hewell, a carpenter who relocated to Anchorage from Valdez due to the earthquake, redid the interior and added the shutters on the sash windows.[25] He may also have added the gable outlined above the front entry which gives a porch-like appearance.

835 West Sixth Avenue: The Daisy Barn

Frank Johanson and Gus Bjonstad purchased the lot upon which this house sits for $165 in 1915. Johanson, an AEC employee and owner of the Central Hotel, built this house the following year. The house typifies early Anchorage homes with its steeply pitched gable roof and shed dormers, extended rafters and roof brackets. Contemporary alterations include facade bay windows, second floor picture windows and simulated brick siding. In recent years, the Daisy Barn, a flower shop, has operated at the location.

The Socha House.

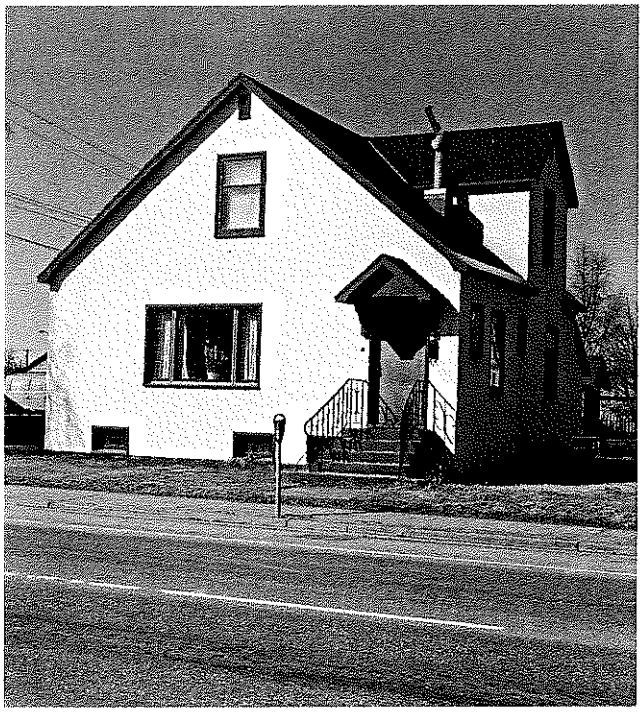
835-845 West Sixth Avenue: The Cunningham and Johnstone Houses

The one-story, narrow frame houses at 835 West Sixth Avenue are typical of Anchorage "Shotgun" style buildings. Inexpensive and quickly erected, this type of structure has one room leading to another without a hallway. Both of these particular houses have shiplap siding, extended eaves and exposed rafter ends. Although they were built approximately ten years apart, it is difficult, with the exception of the windows, to notice appreciable differences. The house to the east was constructed prior to 1920. It may have been built for Elizabeth Jaeger who purchased the property in 1916. The household having the longest association with this residence is that of W.C. and Alice Cunningham. The Cunninghams, who owned the house during the 1930's and 1940's, are said to have maintained an extremely attractive garden around the building.

The house to the west was built in 1932. City tax records show that in that year Gertrude Johnstone had a "modern dwelling" constructed on the lot, increasing the property value from $300 to $1,500. She resided there until the late 1940's. In recent years the houses have been joined together via an enclosed, diagonal walkway to facilitate operation as a restuarant.

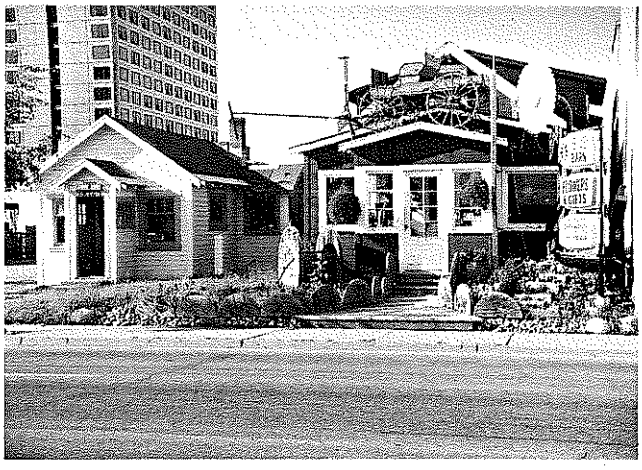
618 I Street: The Pfeil House

Emil Pfeil built this stucco-covered, frame residence as his family's home in 1935. Pfeil worked as a blacksmith with the Alaska Railroad.[26] The steep pitch of the roof and dormers are its most distinguishing exterior features. It is still used as a residence.



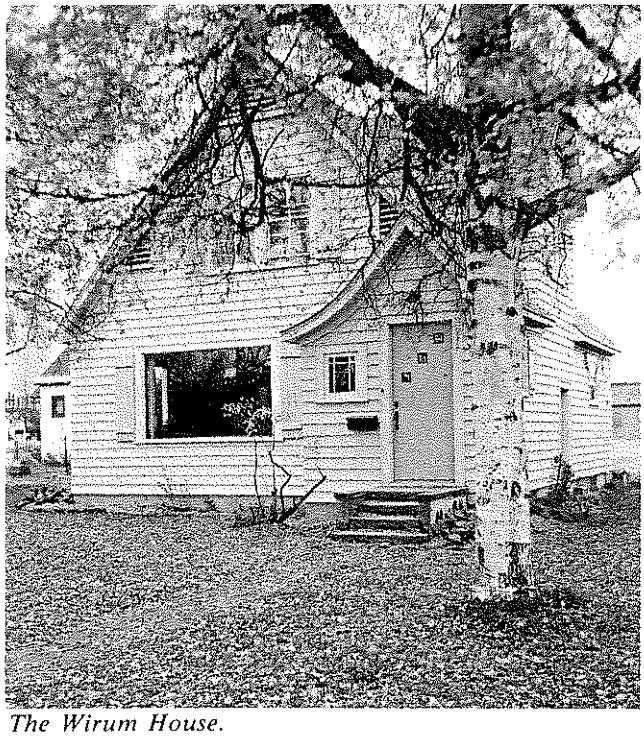
The Pfeil House.

835-845 West Sixth Avenue



912 West Sixth Avenue: The Wirum House

John Wirum constructed this house as his personal residence in 1932. Wirum worked as a carpenter in Anchorage from 1916 to the 1940's, and was also a cabinet maker for the Alaska Railroad.[27] The house portrays Wirum's craftsmanship, especially in such details as the Tudor-style porch and the interior woodwork. Unusual to Anchorage are the large dormers which greatly expand the space within the upper half-story. These dormers form a steeply-pitched, cross-gable roof. The clapboard exterior is well-maintained. Some windows have been refilled with thermopane. The former residence is now used as a law office.



The Wirum House.

920 West Sixth Avenue: The Purvis House

George Purvis, an early Anchorage architect and builder, originally resided in this bungalow.[28] Purvis may have designed or bought the plans for the house. A set of residential construction drawings could be purchased for as little as five dollars in 1917, the year this building was constructed.[29] The structure is a classic example of the bungalow architectural style.

True to the style, the house features a large veranda which runs the width of the front facade. The veranda is supported by shingle-covered piers and wooden porch posts. A simple balustrade extends between the porch piers. Above the entrance is a small gable roof which channels rain and snow from the walk. The moderately-pitched roof of the house provides an upper half-story with gables oriented to the sides of the lot. Windows are set under the eaves. An outside stairway entrance has been added.

The woodwork of the house is exceptional. Shingle was used as a sheathing material. Rectangular and diamond patterned lights are framed within the windows. Built-in book shelves and cabinets - left in natural finish - highlight interior walls.

Notable early buildings which were designed by Purvis include the Empress Theatre and the original Lathrop Building (at Fourth Avenue and H Street). The Hornings lived in the house from the early 1920's to late 1930's. Thereafter Frank Berry, the city's engineer, and his family resided in the house until the late 1960's. The house is presently used as office space.

The Vogt House.

545 L Street: The Vogt House

This house was built in the early 1920's. The stucco-covered house was the home of Ralph Vogt, a barber. It has undergone various modifications, including the addition of rooms and interior remodeling, but it remains representative of the vernacular housing of the 1920's. It is currently used for office purposes.

The Purvis House.

The Neighborhood East of A Street

As Anchorage developed, neighborhoods began to differentiate. In addition to the commercial and warehouse districts, there were the Second Avenue and F Street neighborhood, called "Snob Hollow" by some because the town leaders and AEC executives lived there; the Government Hill cottages where ARR employees resided; and "Bachelor Town", the low-lying area west of M Street. Each such area developed distinct qualities that set it apart from adjacent blocks. Another such environ was located east of A Street and south of Sixth Street. Many older structures still exist here, and one can gain a feeling for the mid-century Anchorage streetscape it represents.

The original residents of this neighborhood were transient. Its early nickname, "Bohunk Town", was a reference to the eastern European origins of the railroader construction workers who lived there.[30] Many had come to Anchorage after similar employment in constructing Canada's Grand Trunk rail line. These workers cleared the right-of-way, blasted rock, and accomplished other semi-skilled labor.

Early housing types consisted of tents, scattered frame shacks and tiny log cabins, but much of the land remained unimproved for years. Numerous instances exist of lots won at auction but forfeited to the federal government. As late as 1940 the area was considered "way out in the boonies," and remained relatively undeveloped.[31]

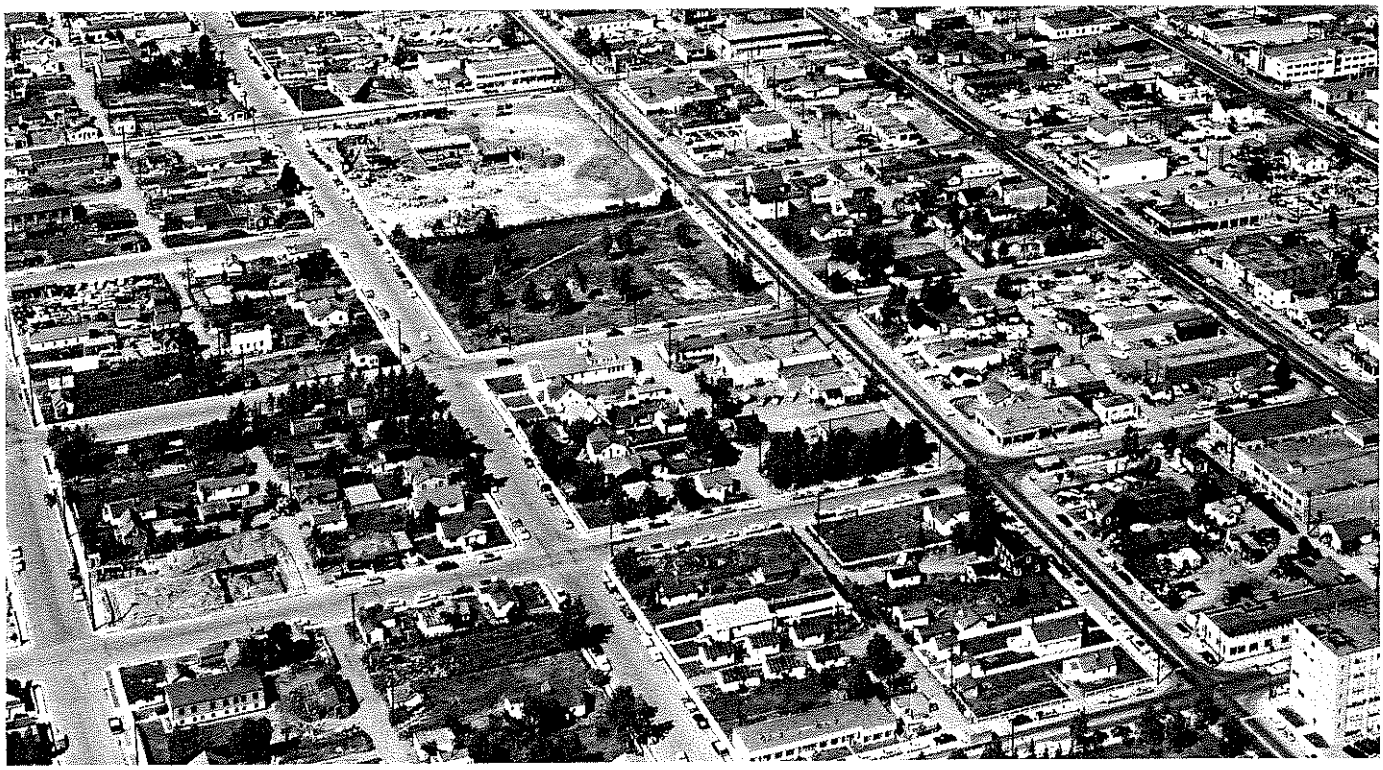
Most of the existing houses date from the early 1940's. Earlier structures were demolished. While far from identical in either appearance or manner of construction (some houses were built new, others were constructed by moving a small building on site and enlarging it over several years), the resulting neighborhood had a homogeneous look to it. The majority of the houses were one-story or one-and-one-half-story frame houses with gable roofs. With either a rectangular or L-shaped floor plan, they were usually sited in well landscaped yards and shared similar street setbacks.

The Stiver House

This one-and-one-half-story bungalow was constructed in 1939 by Jacob Markley, long time Anchorage resident and builder.[32] The house was owned by the Markleys until 1946 when it was sold to Lyle Anderson. Anderson sold the house to Harry Stiver in 1953. The original location of the house was 123 East Seventh Avenue. It was donated by the Stiver family to the Municipality in 1981 and is currently in storage.

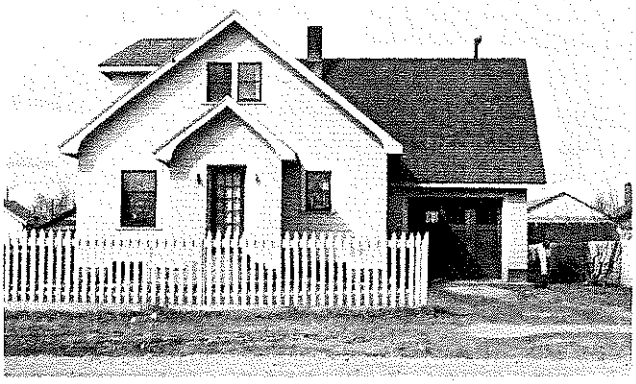
Markley's fine carpentry skills are reflected in the detailing of this house. These include: well-proportioned roof dormers, boxed cornices on the eaves and verges, projecting entranceway with curved concrete steps, sturdy oak floors, and an attached garage, unusual for houses constructed at that time in Anchorage. Unfortunately the garage was not moved with the rest of the house.

William Marquardt, a master carpenter and father of Mrs. Gladys "Petee" Stiver, remodeled the interior of the house circa 1954.[33] The attic was made into an apartment, and several years later the basement was remodeled into separate living quarters. No alterations were made to the exterior save for extensive landscaping.



An air view of the neighborhood around A Street taken in the 1950s.

The Stiver House in the 1940s.



Harry Stiver was the Circulation Manager for the Anchorage Times from 1946 - 1964. A professional ice skater, he managed the Municipal ice arena and taught skating at various local schools. Petee Stiver owned the Anchorage Welcoming Club and was involved in numerous civic activities.

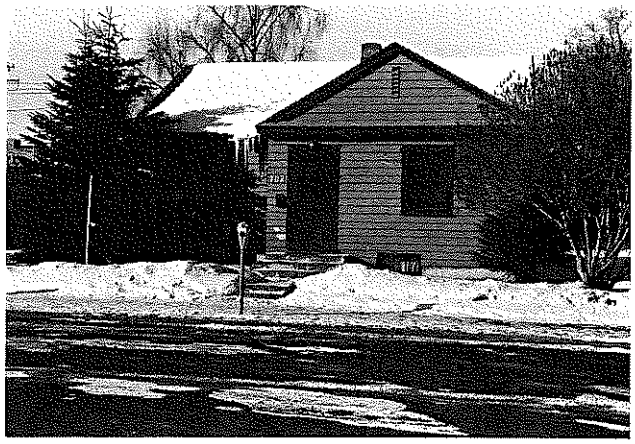
136 East Eighth Avenue: The Williams-Tryck House

The original portion of this neat one-story frame house was constructed in the early 1940's when Charles Williams owned the property. Otto Huggins, who worked in the Third Avenue jail, bought the long and narrow, two-room house in the late 1940's. In February of 1951 he sold it to William and Florence Tryck. Both long-time Alaskans, William Tryck was born in Ruby, Alaska, and raised in Wasilla while Florence Tryck had moved to the state with the second wave of Matanuska Valley Colonists in 1937.

They immediately began adding to the small structure to create the existing house. A kitchen was added to the rear of the building and a 12 foot by 30 foot wing containing bedrooms was constructed on the side. Maple hardwood flooring was added and all windows were changed.

The Williams-Tryck House.

The Nielsen-Weimer House.



Maintaining their agricultural interests, the Trycks also added the large garden and greenhouse. Although the alterations more than doubled the size of the original house, the spaces have remained snug and cozy living areas.

Other dwellings of the early 1940's located in the neighborhood includes: 628 and 810 Barrow, 114 and 737 East Eighth Avenue and 111, 124, 129, 134, and 137 East Seventh Avenue.

702 Barrow Street: The Nielsen-Weimer House

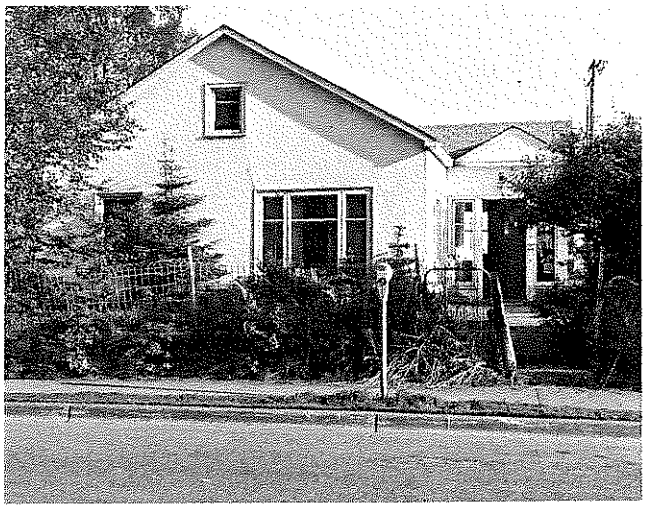
This modest, one-story frame house was built about 1941 by Einer Nielsen. The simple gable rectangle with projecting gable wing has not been altered over the years. The boxed cornice at eave line, vergeboards and wood-framed windows offer simple accents to the facades. In 1948, Robert and Catherine Weimer purchased the home. Although they lived in town, Weimer made his living by farming 160 acres in the Sand Lake area. In 1935 he purchased the land from a homesteader and grew vegetables - principally potatoes, turnips and rutabagas - for approximately 30 years. The produce was initially sold to the military bases, and later, delivered to local grocery stores. In 1954, the Weimers sold the Barrow Street house to the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The house is a private residence today.

226 East Seventh Avenue: The Paddock House

This large, linear, one-story stucco house was constructed in two stages. Harold Paddock, owner of Paddock Paint Store on the north side of Fourth Avenue, purchased the Presbyterian Manse in 1940. He moved it from its original location on the corner of F Street and Fifth Avenue to 226 East Seventh Avenue.[34] It was operated as a boarding house until 1946 when Harold and Florence Paddock moved into the structure.

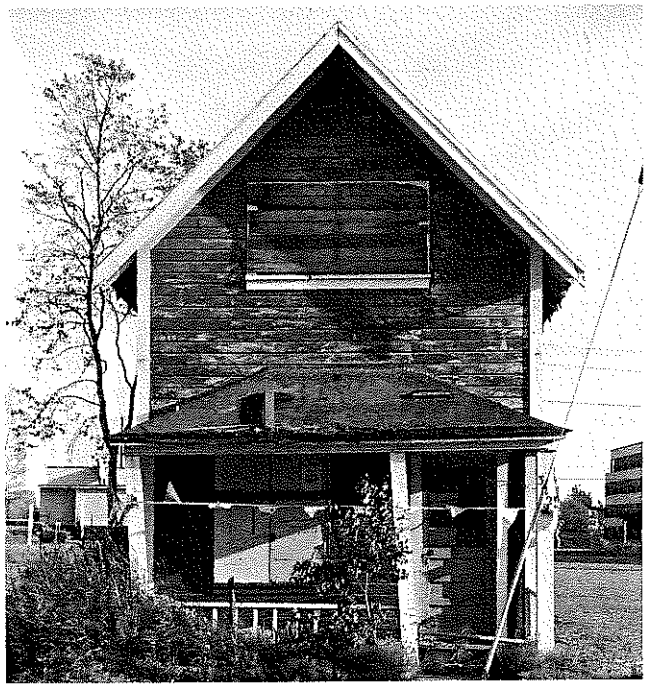
The Paddocks decided to alter the simple rectangular shape of the house. A friend designed the alterations and they hired Les Harvey, a carpenter, and Adolf Anderson, a builder, to complete the construction. Additional floor space was created, the roof changed, and both porches and the large windows were added.

The Paddock House.



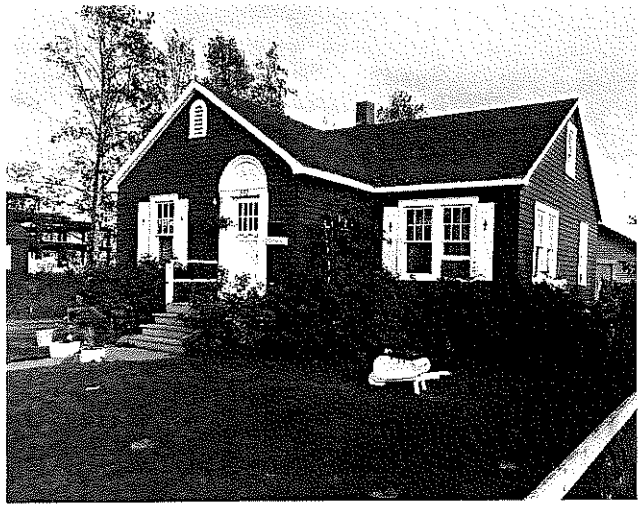
The McCutcheon (Humphrey) House[35]

The significance this one-and-one-half story residence is derived from its association with the McCutchons, a pioneer Anchorage family noted in Alaskan political history. The house was constructed in 1921-22 by Smith Higgins, a well-known Anchorage builder and teamster. Unlike bungalow styles which were predominate in early Anchorage, this house was higher and narrower, reminiscent of a typical nineteenth century farm house transplanted to the town. Herbert H. and Claire McCutcheon purchased the house around 1927. McCutcheon had come from Cordova in the spring of 1915 to work on Alaska Railroad construction. He was already a familiar figure in the territory, having previous experience in railroading and mining, starting in Nome at the turn-of-the-century when he worked as a miner at Golovin Bay. He stayed at Golovin to tend a general store but another gold rush drew him to Bristol Bay in 1908-09. When that stampede had run its



The McCutcheon House.

The Johnson House as it appeared in its original site.



course, McCutcheon became U.S. Road Commissioner for the Copper River and the Northwestern Railroad. During that time, he met and married Clara Kreuger at Chitina in 1910. They lived in Vancouver, B.C., where McCutcheon worked for the British Columbia Railroad before coming to Ship Creek with the land rush that proceeded the development of the Alaska Railroad. He was a railroad employee from 1915 to 1938. His tenure with the Alaska Railroad included the job of section foreman at Whitney and yardmaster at Anchorage.

H. H. McCutcheon was influential in local and territorial politics. His first elected office was a term on the Anchorage City Council, 1929-30. During that period he was instrumental in helping to establish Merrill Field, the city's first substantial airport. In 1931, he began his tenure in the Territorial House of Representatives, rising to Speaker of the House, 1941-43. He was elected to the Territorial Senate in 1943 and served in that capacity until his death in 1945. His sons followed similar political footsteps. Steve McCutcheon took over his father's senate seat in 1946 and served in the Territorial House from 1947-48. He served in the Senate again from 1949-53 and was a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1955-56. Stan McCutcheon served in the House 1943-47, 1949-53 and 1955-57. Jerry McCutcheon was involved in the 1968 presidential campaign, organizing the local Hubert Humphrey headquarters at the family's house. The house has been vacant since 1969.

The Johnson House

The residence is a good example of the eclectic single-family house which was characteristic of the late 1930's. Its design, featuring shallow eaves, false shutters and clapboard siding, was selected from a builder's catalogue. A round arch rests atop modest pilasters, decoratively framing the front door. The house was built for Robert Ferris by Herman Johnson in 1936. Ferris rented the property to Carl Johnson that first year. Johnson was a partner in Northern Transfer Company which bought the house in 1946. A year later the Johnsons became the sole owners of the property and continued to live there until 1983.

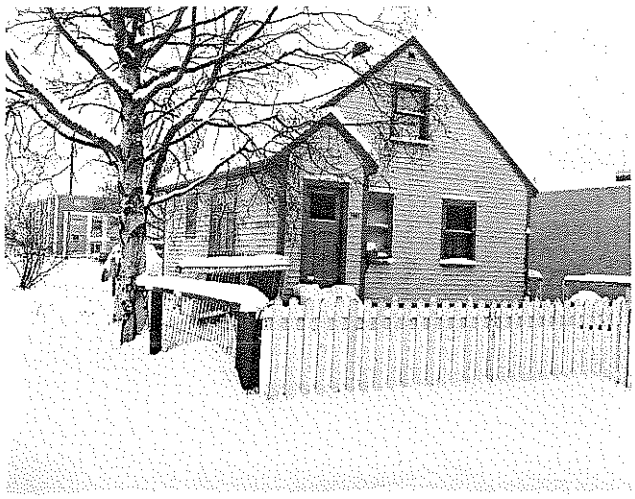
630 D Street: The Martin House

This bungalow is actually two houses in one. The earlier portion, built around 1915, was originally located in the "restricted district." It was moved to its present site around 1920 at which time Carl Martin built a more substantial dwelling around the relocated portion. Stucco has been plastered upon the frame house. Its scale is typical of many early Anchorage homes. The Martins continually resided in the house until 1982.

Martin was an early homesteader in the Matanuska Valley before coming to Anchorage. The heavy crop surplus of 1917 financially depressed many farmers, including the Martins, who then moved to Anchorage. Martin worked for the Northern Commercial Company and also assisted in developing the city's water system. Martin served six terms as a City Council member between 1929 and 1935. During that time he was instrumental in advancing the aviation business in Anchorage, particularly in the development of Merrill Field.[37]

The garden in the side yard was tended by Mrs. Martin for decades. Its ornamental trees and flowers have been a notable landscape feature for more than sixty years.

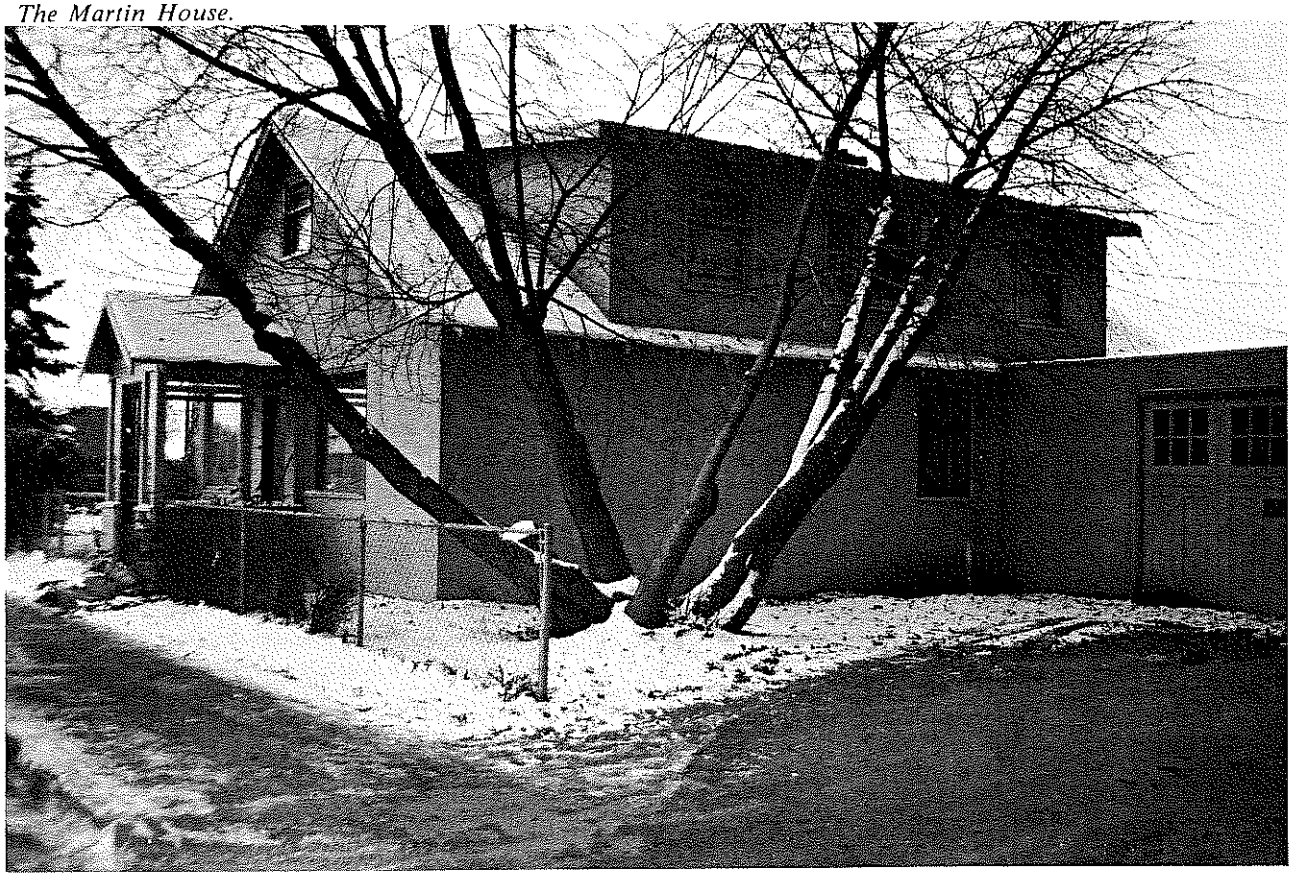
The Johnson-Markley House.



The Johnson-Markley House

This small residence was built in 1938 by Dorothy Johnson, an Alaska Railroad employee. The design for the home was selected from a builder's catalogue and Herman Johnson, owner of Cribbs Construction Company, built the cottage-like residence.[38] The eight hundred square foot, one-and-one-half story residence exhibits typical features of its era: extremely shallow eaves, a simply decorded entry and a two-tone color scheme (in this case brown trim against a cream background). Jacob Markley, a carpenter who built many Anchorage houses in the late 1930's and 1940's, married Dorothy Johnson in 1942. They owned the house until 1960. The house was donated by Hunt corporate interests in 1981 and relocated.

The Martin House.



724 D Street

This modest frame house, originally owned by Ed McNalley, a house painter and decorator, was built around 1918. Minnie and Robert Albritton, an accountant for the ARR, owned and occupied it until the mid-1930's when it was purchased by Clarence Brannon. He owned it for ten years during which time he added a room and rented to both Hugh Savage, a sign painter for the ARR, and Carl and Louise Martin. Other owners includes: Velma Allds and Florence Hoffman.

This structure is typical of many of the simple bungalows found in Anchorage. The open, corner porch, sheathed balustrade, bracketed roof eaves and shiplap siding are common features in the well-built homes of the era. The house has not been altered on the exterior and has been well maintained. It is still used as a residence.

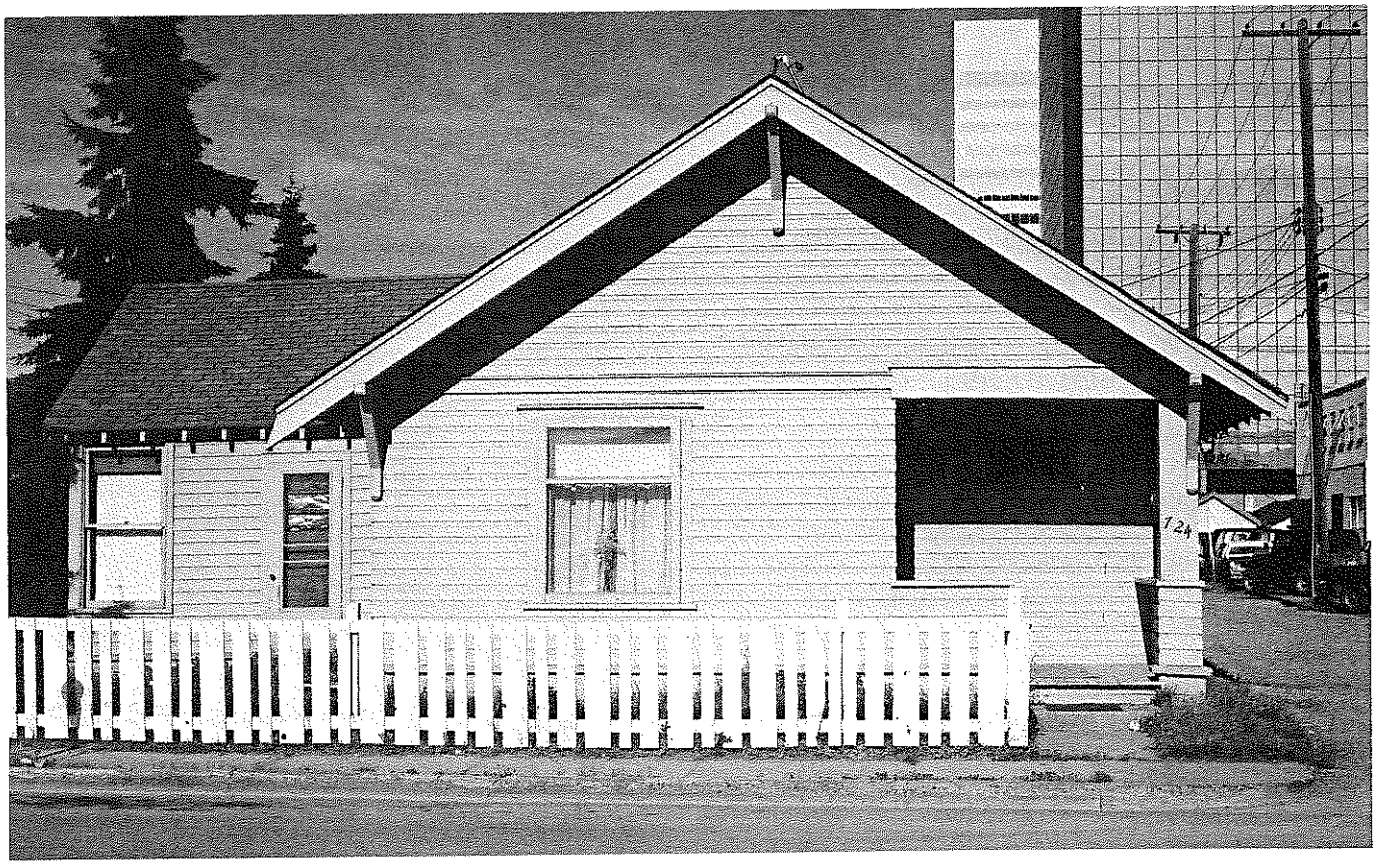
The Vaara House.

During the 1930's, larger and more varied housing forms began to appear. The style of a house at 444 East Fourth Avenue may have been adapted from Vaara's residence.

444 West Seventh Avenue: The Vaara House

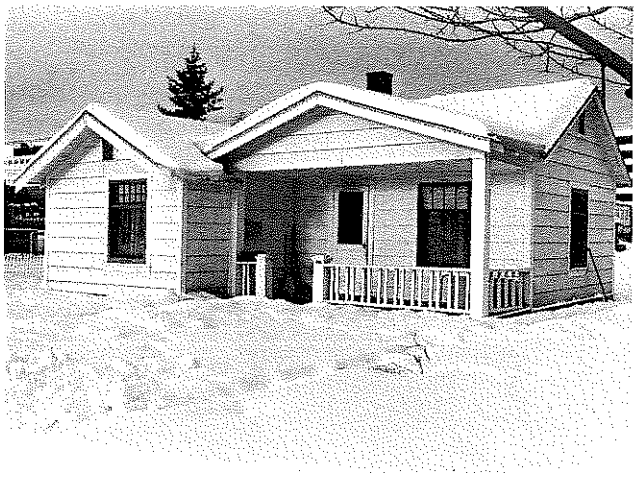
George Vaara, Anchorage businessman and mayor, constructed this two-story frame residence in 1933. The Scandinavian influence is reflected in the clipped-gable roof line and narrow front facade. The house was constructed over the basement of an earlier structure located on the site. The clapboard-sided building with front and rear arctic entries is notable as one of the "second generation" Anchorage houses.

George Vaara came to Anchorage in 1933 and operated a grocery business and a variety store.[36] He also established the first Pepsi-Cola franchise in Anchorage. He became mayor of the city in 1940. He owned the property for approximately three years, selling to George Jenkins who in turn sold to Vernon and Pauline Johnson. The residence is currently used for office purposes.



724 D Street.

The Wennerstrom House.



415 West Eighth Avenue: The Wennerstrom House

This tidy, one story residence has long been the home of Bert and Mae Wennerstrom. It was built in two sections. The first part which included one room and a kitchen was built in 1917 by Ray Scott, an early editor. A dining and living room were added in the early 1920's. The Wennerstroms moved into the house in 1927. Besides a concrete foundation, another modification was the addition of asbestos shingle siding. Along with the other houses on the block, it forms a good picture of an early Anchorage neighborhood.

Wennerstrom came to Anchorage in 1917 and worked for the Alaska Railroad for over 40 years. He was instrumental in the operation of Anchorage's first radio station, KFQD; he not only helped in its financing, but also created a series of Swedish monologues. Both he and his wife Mae have long been active in Anchorage's civic and cultural services.

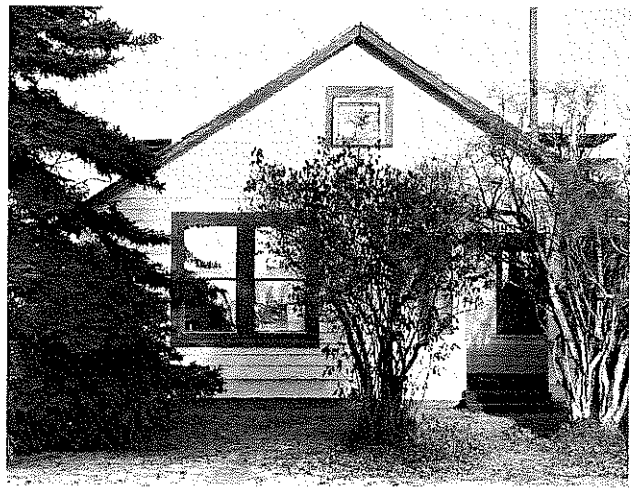
417 West Eighth Avenue: The Niemi House

The house at 417 West Eighth Avenue was also built in two parts. It was owned by August Niemi who lived in Eska and operated a roominghouse, pool hall and general store. Prior to Eska, Niemi had varying stints in construction and mining, ranging from Cuba to the Panama Canal to Juneau's Treadwell Mines.[40]

School in Eska only went through the eighth grade so, one-by-one, the six Niemi children moved into Anchorage to complete their education. Niemi purchased a small three-room log structure in the early 1920's to provide a home for his Anchorage-based children. By 1928 he had enlarged the original structure with additional first and second floor space and by digging a partial basement.

Mrs. Niemi moved to Anchorage in the mid-1920's to be with her children. August followed a few years later and created the Anchorage Hardware at Fourth Avenue and D Street. Active in the Finnish community, he donated the property at Fifth Avenue and Cordova Street for use for the Finnish Community Hall.

The Niemi House.

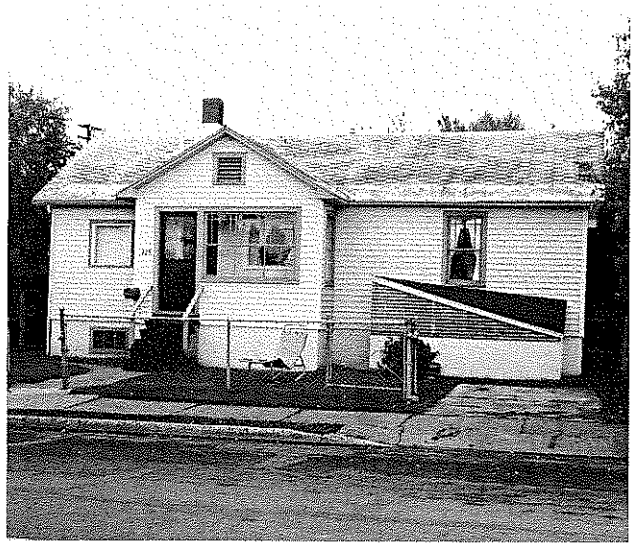


Except for minor interior changes, the house has not been altered. It remains a one-story frame structure with a gable roof and dormers. Rectangular in plan, it has a small, inset corner porch on the front and a shed addition at the rear.

429 West Eighth Avenue: The Park-Young House

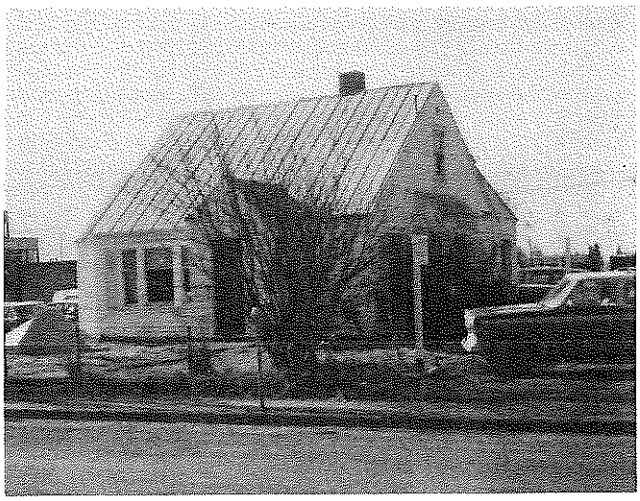
James Park, an AEC employee, purchased this lot in July of 1916. He built the original portion of the house circa 1918. It had a simple rectangular plan. Adolf Young, a brakeman conductor for the ARR, bought the property in 1919.[68] In the late 1920's, he raised the house and added the basement, rear wing and front porch. Beatrice and Noren Anderson, a "field or location" engineer for the ARR, bought the property from Young in 1947.[41]

The house has not been altered since the late 1920's. Still sheathed with wood siding, it is a simple frame house built with an L-shaped plan. The central gable entrance has a large three-section window with decorative muntins and an off-center wood and glass door.



The Park-Young House.

The Swank House.

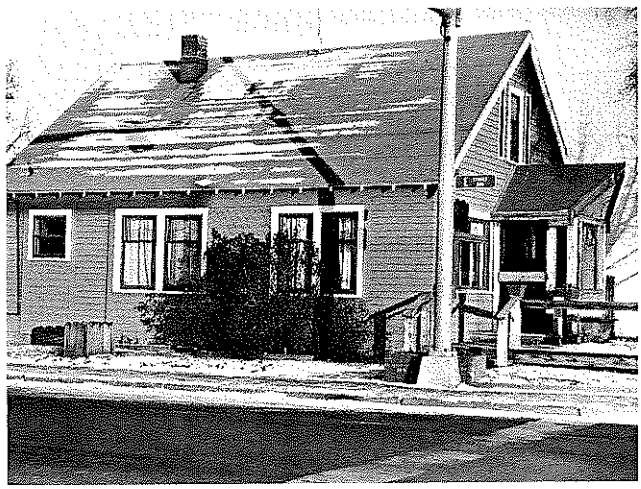


The Swank House

This one-and-one-half story, clapboard-covered residence was built for Harold Swank and his family in 1937. Swank worked as a baker for North Pole Bakery. The small house was adapted from the type of Cape Cod styling which had been popularized in such magazines as "Better Homes and Gardens" of the era. Herman Johnson, owner of Cribbs Construction Company, built the house with the assistance of Jacob Markley and Bill Stolt. The house was moved from 426 West Eighth Avenue in 1981 to avoid demolition.

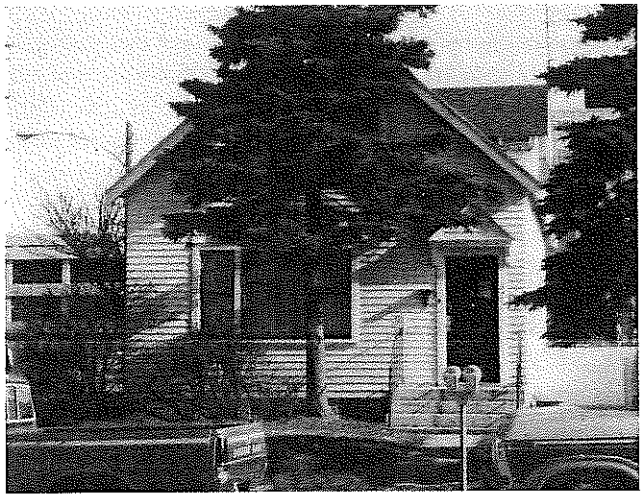
445 West Ninth Avenue: The Sherwood-Bell House

This red frame house looks like an Alaska Engineering Commission house. Although it is not, the visual similarity may be attributed to the fact that its first owner, J.R. Sherwood,[42] was a railroader. Earl C. (Curly) Bell bought the house from Sherwood in the early 1940's and resided there for roughly two decades. Built in 1937, it features brackets and dormers more frequently seen on earlier homes. In 1977 the interior woodwork was handsomely restored and the exterior slightly renovated via the addition of an enclosed front entryway and porch.



The Sherwood-Bell House.

Northern Commercial Company House.

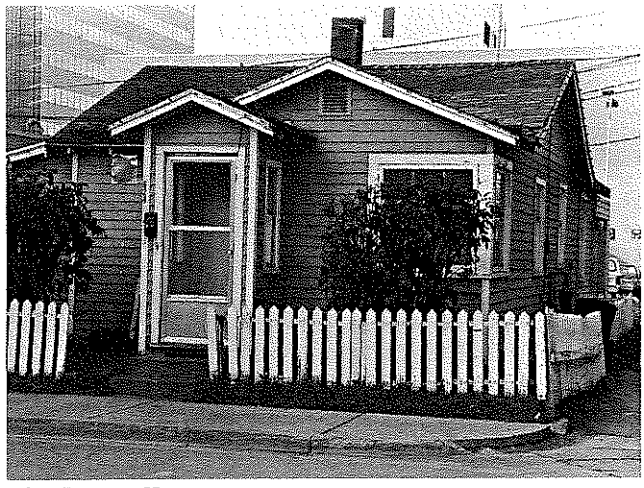


Northern Commercial Company House[43]

This clapboard-covered house originally stood near the corner of Fifth Avenue and H Street. Built in 1920, its first owner was E. McVritty. The dormers of the cross gable roof add light and space to the second floor. The entry is modestly highlighted by a simple gable porch roof, a touch not typically found in early Anchorage homes. In 1944, the house was moved when the Northern Commercial Company decided to expand their operation between Fourth and Fifth Avenues. The corner lot at Eighth Avenue and G Street became the second site for the residence. The Northern Commercial Company retained ownership of the dwelling and used it to provide housing for Jack Ferguson, the Northern Commercial Company manager. In 1981 the house was relocated again as part of the Municipality's preservation program.

624 F Street: The Prince House

This house can be described as an "Anchorage Shotgun" dwelling. The front portion dates from around 1920. The longer portion to the rear is an addition.[44] Glenn and Bernadine Prince were its long-time residents. Bernadine Prince is noted for her two volume chronology: *The Alaska Railroad in Pictures, 1914-1964.*



The Prince House.

The Pekkala-Savola-O'Neill House

The original portion of this frame house was built prior to 1920. Mrs. Eriika Pekkala lived here in the 1920's. She married Emil Savola who built additional rooms prior to 1930. The Savolas lived at this address and on their homestead near Green Lake (see the homestead section of this report).

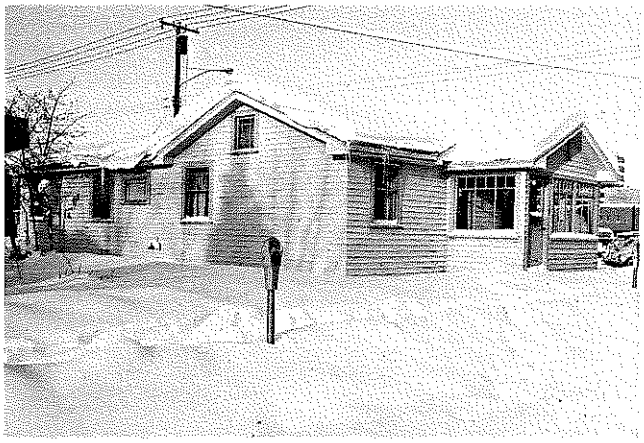
Florence and Harry O'Neill purchased the house in December of 1941 and are probably responsible for glassing the front porch and improving the rear porch. Harry O'Neill had lived in Cordova since 1906, working on the Copper River Railroad and later becoming a partner in Blum & O'Neill, the largest commercial company in Cordova.[45] He moved to Anchorage in 1935 and continued in the mercantile business with a grocery store, the D & D Bar and Cafe located on Fourth Avenue, and the Brown Jug Liquor Stores. The first offices for this chain were located in the basement of the house. The wood-framed windows with inset panes, the glass-enclosed entry porch and the gable end returns highlight this clapboard-sided house.

This house was originally located at 726 E Street but is now in storage awaiting relocation.

810 - 828 West Seventh Avenue[46]

There are few areas intact enough in Anchorage to provide a sense of what early residential streets were like. The 400 block of West Eighth Avenue, the 100 block of East Seventh Avenue and the 800 block of West Seventh Avenue are three of the few remaining blocks. The houses on West Seventh Avenue were built between 1916 and 1920.

The Pekkala-Savola-O'Neill House.



The small frame house at 810 West Seventh Avenue was built around 1917 for William England. After England there was a series of owners and occupants including: Mrs. L. Patching, W.C. Barnhill, L. H. Keist, Ivy Lathrop and Edward, Gloria and Peggy Hile.

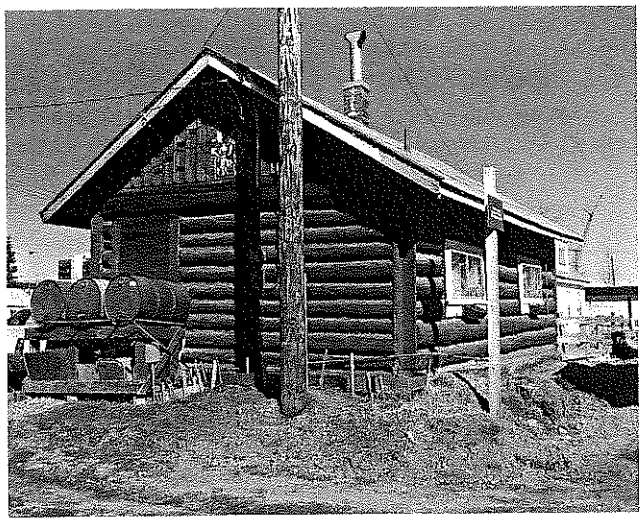
The similarly-scaled house next door, 816 West Seventh Avenue, was built around 1919. Early owners were Scotty Watson and Ed Miller. Charles and Angele Spaulding purchased the home in 1921 and remained owners for more than thirty years. Spaulding was a hard rock miner at Lucky Shot Mine.

The most substantial of the homes is the tidy one-story bungalow at 820 West Seventh Avenue. As is true of other local bungalows, the porch reflects the gable roofline of the house. Frederick A. Martin, manager of the Elks Club, had it built for his family around 1920. In the late 1920's, Fred Curran, an ARR

810-828 West Seventh Avenue.

The Amundsen House.

The Amundsen Cabin.



employee, lived there for several years. The owner with the longest association was Otis Harrington, an ARR engineer, who lived there for fifteen years.

The house at 828 West Seventh Avenue was originally the home of Neil Wanamaker. Built prior to 1920, it has been modified with various additions over the years. Later owners include Arthur M. Lecoump, a contractor who also worked as an engineer for the ARR, and John Manley who worked his way through the ARR bureauracy to become general manager of the organization.

Although far from identical, these houses are similar in size, roof slope, style and choice of materials. All are one-story frame structures with gable roofs and wood siding. Some alterations have been made - a corner porch enclosed, a shed addition added, modern windows installed - but the sense of a simple, modest neighborhood remains.

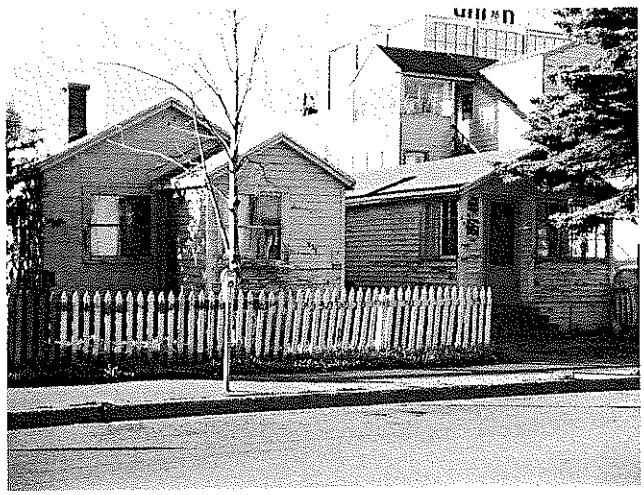
810 and 810 1/2 West Eighth Avenue:
The Amundsen House and Cabin

The Amundsen house and cabin shared a lot in the west end of town until 1982 when the cabin was donated to the Municipality and was placed in storage. In 1915 Ernest Amundsen, with the help of his friends Tony Dimond and Anthony Wendler, laid the round logs of the cabin on the front portion of the lot. Thirteen years later it was moved to the rear of the lot and a small log house was moved from "the line" to the original cabin site. Initially living in the cabin, the Amundsen family moved into the house, enlarging it at various times with frame additions until approximately 1933. Family members continued to live in it until 1982. The house is currently used for commercial purposes.[47]

The cabin is a one-story rectangular structure with an interior chimney. It is constructed of whole-cut hemlock and spruce logs with mortared chinking. The low-pitched gable roof has projecting eaves and plain verges. A vertical lattice-like wood veneer sheaths the upper portion of both gable facades. Like a number of other cabins in Anchorage, the corners of the cabin are set with vertical braces rather than joined by notching. Although small, a living room, kitchen, bath and bedroom were included. After the Amundsens moved into the house, the cabin was used for coal storage, a children's playhouse, a chicken coop and as rental property.

The existing house has an L-plan with gable roof, large shed-roofed dormer and central chimney. It is sheathed with wood siding and has wood-framed windows. The gable entry is enclosed with wood siding and large, decorative side windows. The exterior has not been altered since 1933.

Amundsen came to Skagway and Valdez in 1905. He devoted his time to freighting and prospecting for nearly a decade. He arrived in Anchorage as the townsite was about to spring to life. After a year's work as a laborer, he moved to Kodiak where he fished and ran a salting plant. In 1922, after marrying Victoria Lampe, he returned to Anchorage. He continued his jack-of-all-trades livelihood, eventually becoming postmaster and police chief in the latter years of his life.



836 - 838 West Eighth Avenue.

836 and 838 West Eighth Avenue: The Bolmer Houses

The two, narrow frame houses that share the lot are typical examples of the Anchorage "shotgun" style house found scattered around the city. Both are gable structures one-story high and one room wide that appear to have been added onto several times. Usually found in pairs on a single lot, such structures are the very simplest of houses. These particular two day from before 1920. They were owned for many years by E.J. Bolmer, one of Anchorage's early black residents. Ed Bolmer operated a shoeshine stand in Block 26 on Fourth Avenue (see the description regarding 533 West Fourth Avenue).

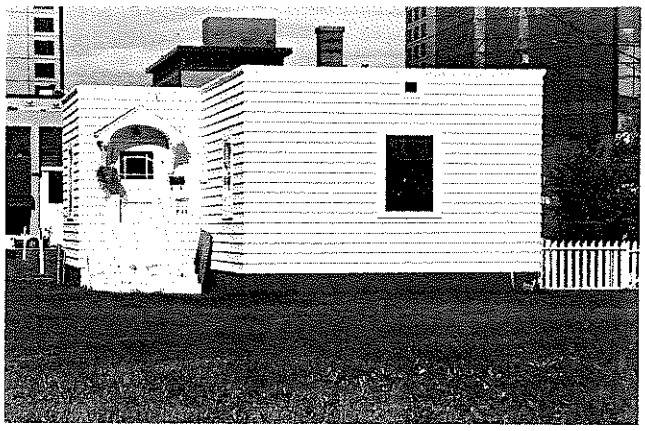
629 K Street: The Rex Anderson House

This corner lot sold on August 26, 1915, and was patented to Victor Stewart and A. W. Balzimer six years later. However, the one-story, flat-roofed residence was not built until 1941 or 1942, a year after George Anderson bought the property from George Ross, who had owned it for more than twenty years. George Anderson built the house for his son Rex who resided there with his family for many years while he was employed as a welder.[48]

Although ownership has changed, the house has not been altered. It retains its original, simple appearance and almost appears unfinished due to its plainness and lack of detail. The bracketed gable canopy over the wood entrance door is its single decorative feature.

634 K Street: The George Anderson House [49]

Hidden behind the large trees is a one-story structure with brick chimney, wood lap siding and gable roof. It is the former home of George Anderson, a long-time employee of the Anchorage Commercial Company, which was later known as the Northern Commercial (or N.C.) Company. Anderson bought the lot with a small frame dwelling from M. J. Conroy in 1926. He made major alterations circa 1930 and continued to live there until the 1950's. The flat roof addition which wraps the south and east facade is a recent alteration.



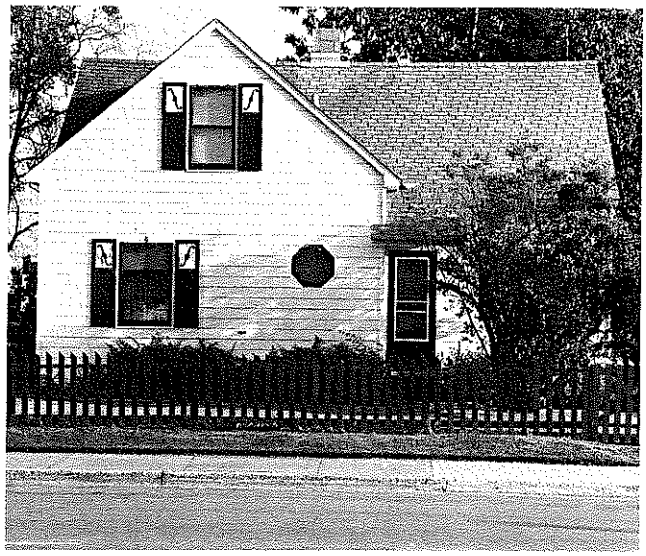
The Rex Anderson House.

The George Anderson House.

934 West Eighth Avenue: The Peterson House[50]

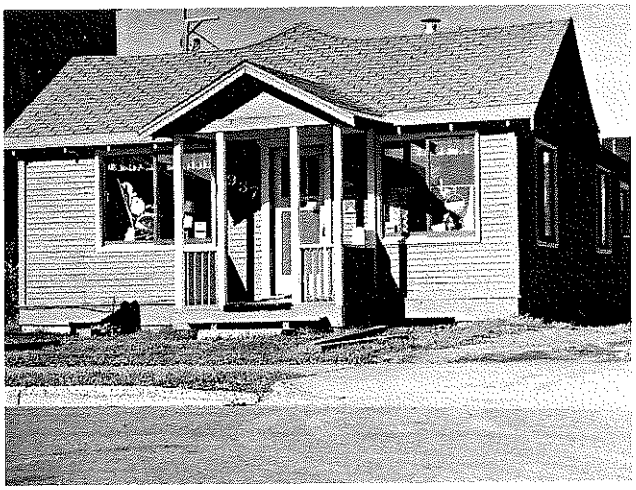
Construction of this one-and-one-half-story, frame house was begun in 1944; however, war-time shortages delayed completion until 1948. George Peterson, an electrician, built it with a friend who was a carpenter. The Petersons lived in a small frame garage they moved from the front to the rear of the lot during the four year delay . . . a long time to live under those conditions.

In order to obtain an FHA loan, an architect had to approve house plans. So, with plans drawn by George and Geneva Peterson, and construction underway, William Manley was retained to okay the design. The octagonal window resulted as Manley insisted the bathroom had to have a window. The large gables with fascia board returns and flared eaves, wide wood siding, and decorative shutters create a handsome residence. The shutters, incidently, were handmade by Peterson from furniture crates. Such as was the creativity caused by wartime rationing.



The Peterson House.

The Patterson House.



937 West Eighth Avenue: The Patterson House

The small frame house at 937 Eighth Avenue was built prior to 1920, perhaps by Jean Jackson, the original property owner. David Patterson purchased it in 1921 and lived there with his family until the mid-1940's. The rear wing was enlarged by Patterson in approximately the early 1930's.

Patterson was involved in a number of ventures: he picked up garbage, had rental property, plowed snow and sold lumber. The lumber was cut by Patterson from homestead land and stored across Eighth Avenue from his house. Once the land was cleared of available timber, he would purchase another homestead and repeat the process.[51] The Patterson home is a gable house with a rectangular floorplan. It has drop siding, open roof eaves and a gable entry supported by posts and an open balustrade. It is currently used as a construction company office.

The J. Vic Brown House.

727 L Street: The J. Vic Brown House

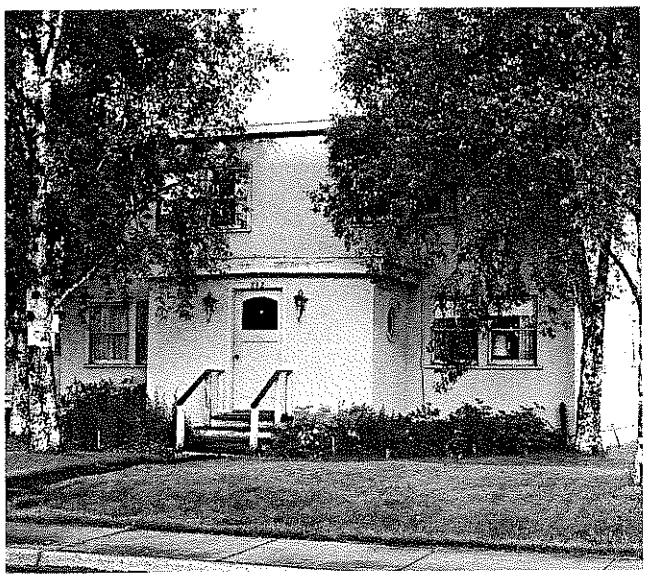
This stucco-covered building was, successively, the home of O. J. Wicklander, Frances Strickland and E. M. Culbertson in the 1920's and early 1930's. J. Vic Brown, a prominent Anchorage jeweler, bought the house in 1934. It remained in the Brown's family for more than twenty years.

The original house, dating from before 1920, was a simple rectangle with gable roof and wood siding. This lap siding is visible on the front porch, which unlike many houses in Anchorage, has not been enclosed. The square, chamfered porch posts and sash windows of six by nine panes lend an Early American flavor to the dwelling.

Mrs. Strickland added the basement and it is believed the Brown family added the large dormers.[52] The house may have been added onto on several other occasions. This former residence is presently used as a real estate office.

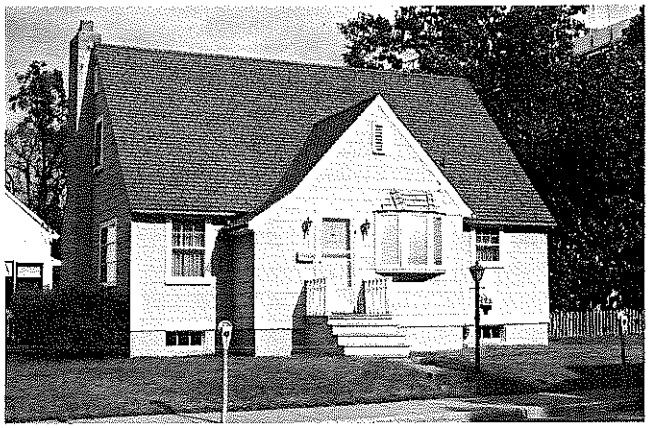
812 and 818 K Street: The K & J Apartments[53]

These unaltered, two-story stucco apartment houses were built 1944-45 by the K & J Construction Company. The two partners were Major Kesgard, a carpenter, and Orville Jordet, who was also a partner in the Hoyt Motor Company located on Fifth Avenue. The two men designed the buildings and used a combination of new and used materials to construct them. Jordet purchased all the improvements on Caines Head Island, an abandoned military installation located offshore of Seward, and used the materials to begin construction. The firm was in business for approximately five years, specializing in housing development.



The K & J Apartments.

The Rivers House.



811 K Street: The Rivers House

This steep-roofed gable house was constructed around 1942 by Ray Adams. During the war Victor and Edna Rivers purchased the home and became long time owners. Vic Rivers was a consulting engineer and active in politics. He served three terms as Territorial Senator, was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, served on the Statehood Committee, and was a gubernatorial candidate.

Square in plan, the house has an asymmetrical gable entry, wood-framed sash windows, a daylight basement and an exterior end chimney. Other than asbestos shingles and the bay window, it remains unaltered.

1102 and 1104 West Seventh Avenue: The Erickson Houses

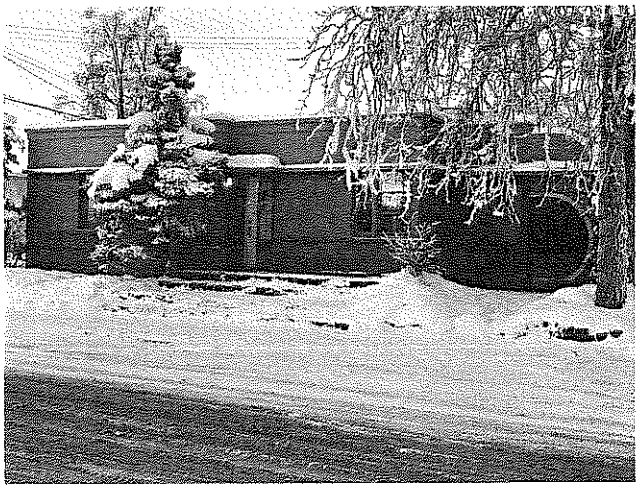
Arne Erickson built both of these houses in the mid-1920's. Erickson, a successful gold miner (see Crow Creek Mine in the Mining Chapter), was also a clockmaker and skilled carpenter. He lived in the corner residence during the winter months and spent his summers at his mine above Girdwood. The house next door was his rental unit.

Erickson's house, 1102 West Seventh Avenue, a one-and-one-half story bungalow, is one of the few frame houses in the original townsite that is entirely covered with wood shingle. It has two major entryways. A gabled entrance, decorated by brackets, is located on the Seventh Avenue side while an enclosed, rectangular porch faces L Street. A door, with side windows, provides access to the roof of this porch. Brackets trim each corner and eave of the house.

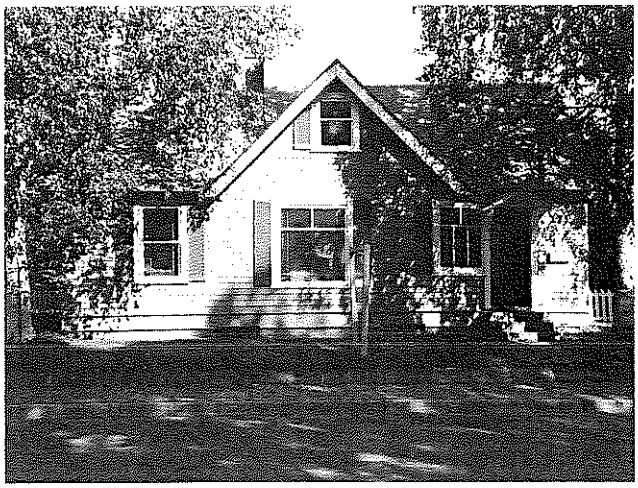
The house at 1104 West Seventh is similar in scale, color and trim. The one-story house is covered with rounded clapboard. Similar to Erickson's personal house, brackets ornament the porch, eaves and corners of the dwelling. Rectangular lights are set within the sash windows.

The Erickson House.

The Kinsell House.



The Aho-Vernon House.

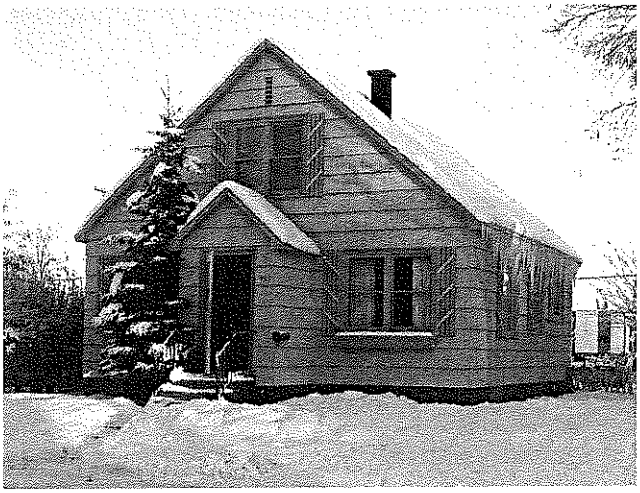


1107 West Seventh Avenue: The Kinsell House

This flat-roofed house was the first of the Art Moderne housing in Anchorage. (Art Moderne is noted by its streamlined appearance.)It was built in 1939 for W.L. Kinsell, the head of the railroad's mechanical department. William Manley, a local architect, probably designed the home.[54] The exterior has a smooth, concrete-like appearance, but is actually painted wood siding. The interior originally included beaded board paneling on both walls and ceiling, and softwood floors.[55] In 1978, the architectural firm of Ralph Alley and Associates provided renovation plans for the house at the request of the current owner, Robert Goldberg. The most prominent alteration was the enclosure of the garage door with a semi-circular window. The use of color and stonework in the renovation was appropriate to the original lines of the house. The house is now used as a law office.

727 M Street: The McDermott House

This house is a good example of the kind of residential architecture which developed in Anchorage during the late 1930's and early 1940's. Oliver Dahl and Ed Wanstead constructed this home for Francis and Ella McDermott in 1941. The prominent features of the two-story eclectic cottage are its steeply pitched gable roof, boxed cornice eaves and cedar shingle siding. Ornamental shutters provide a detail which was popular at the time of its construction. McDermott was manager of Anchorage Independent Lumber Company from 1943 to 1945. The original features of the house are almost entirely intact.



The McDermott House.

737 M Street: The Aho-Vernon House

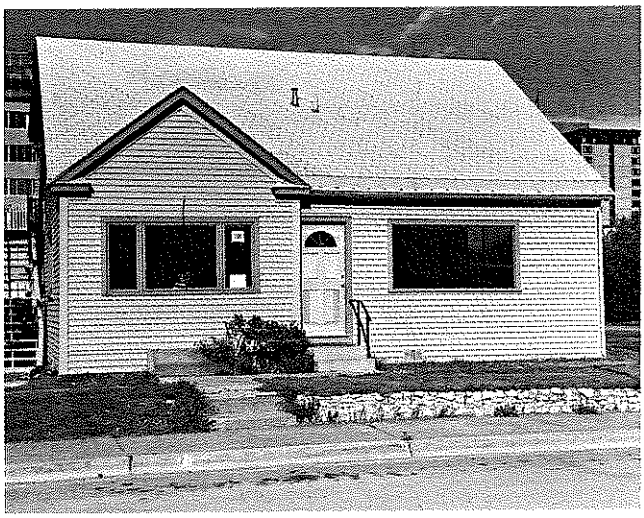
This modest one-and-one-half-story dwelling was reportedly built by "Stardust" Thompson prior to 1920. Like many early cottages, it is wood framed, has extended eaves and rafters, clapboard siding and a modest porch. Thompson built this house for John Aho, a Finnish immigrant, who made his livelihood working for the Alaska Railroad. He also worked as a prospector and carpenter, assisting Cap Lathrop in the construction of the Fourth Avenue Theater. Lathrop purchased Aho's property in 1925, and sold it to Harold Libby, who lived there for only a few years. Reginald and Elizabeth Vernon purchased the property in 1932 and lived there until the early 1950's. Vernon worked as a baker for the Alaska Railroad and the North Pole Bakery.[56]

1101 West Seventh Avenue: The Dehon House

This large one-and-one-half-story house on the corner of M Street and Seventh Avenue was probably constructed in 1916-1917 by Eli Dehon and Elijah Ramsey. They operated a laundry business at this location, though not necessarily in this frame structure.[57]

The business, associated with Pioneer Laundry on Fourth Avenue, was totally owned by May Dehon by 1921. The entire operation was moved to Fourth Avenue and Dehon sold this corner dwelling to Benjamin Mozee in 1924-25. Mozee, a former Mayor of Tanana, was District Superintendent of the Alaska Reindeer, Medical & School Service while he owned the house. He later went on to serve nineteen years as an U.S. Marshall.

The Dehon House.



Edgar Tarwater bought the house in approximately 1936 and lived there until his death in 1944. Tarwater had served as a Territorial Representative by the time he purchased the house. He is well remembered in Anchorage as both a banker associated with the Bank of Anchorage and as a real estate and insurance agent. He was active in numerous civic endeavors and founded the Anchorage Golf Club.[58]

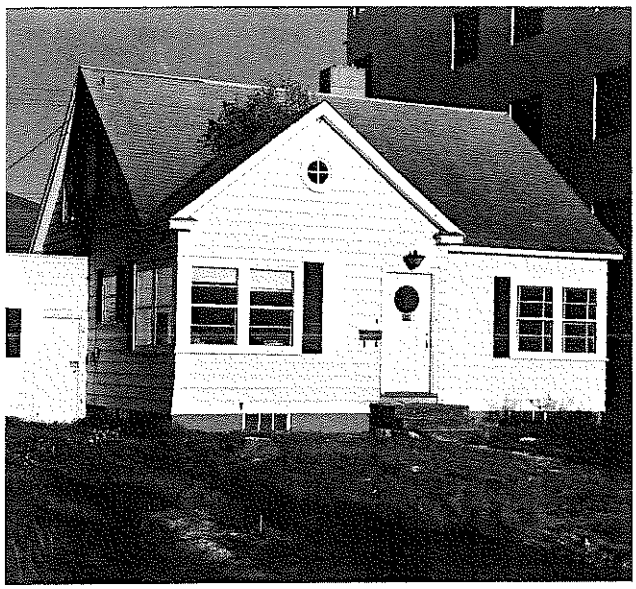
The gable house has an off-center gable entrance with verge returns. One enters through two single wood doors, each protected by a gable canopy supported on brackets. The most obvious alteration to the exterior of the structure is the large, two-story shed addition on the rear. It was added in the 1960's by Roland Lane when his architectural office was located there.[59]

The Allenbaugh House

James Allenbaugh, a Knik resident before Anchorage came into existence, relocated this house, as well as his family, to 711 M Street around 1916.[60] The exterior sheathing of the house is typical of frontier Alaska. Vertical board and batten siding

The Allenbaugh House.

The Culver-Koslosky House.



cover the lower level while large, rough cut boards cover the upper portion in clapboard fashion. The house, whose date of construction precedes the founding of Anchorage, was auctioned to Dr. Kenneth Richardson in 1983 and moved to the rear of his property at 542 Second Avenue.

The Culver-Koslosky House

The lot upon which this Cape Cod style house sits was forfeited early and remained vacant until 1935. At that time, William and Mildred Culver purchased the property from the federal government for $25. Three years later they built this one-and-one-half-story Cape Cod style residence. Its decorative shutters, rear dormer, and off-set gable roofs are features which were often incorporated into the housing of the 1930's. Harold and Henrietta Koslosky purchased the property in 1946 and lived there for many years. Originally operating clothing stores on Fourth Avenue, their family clothing business has expanded with the growth of the city.

726 M Street: The Plumb-Ely House[61]

When construction of 726 M Street began in 1932, it was the second house on the block. Les Plumb bought his lot for $150 from Albert Johnson, a passenger and freight car builder for the ARR. The original Plumb house was quite small and rooms were added by Les and his son, Earl, over the next several years.

A remarkable amount of effort and care was expended on the structure and the resulting house is very distinctive. Strongly influenced by southern architectural styles (the Plumbs moved to Anchorage from Florida in 1929), the house was stucco over frame and had an arched entrance door, interior arches and a crennelated two-story tower. (Original plans included a tile roof.) Other unique features included hand stenciling using native ferns, hand-built cabinets and oak flooring.

The Plumb-Ely House in the 1940s.

Les Plumb was a mason by trade. Although he worked for the municipal water department, he is responsible for many residential additions and fireplaces in Anchorage. Gertrude Plumb was a talented, self-taught, figure skater. She taught skating and gave frequent exhibitions. Mrs. Plumb continued to live in the house until the early 1950's.

Keith and Alice Fuller resided in the house until the 1964 earthquake forced them to move. After standing empty for two years it was purchased by Robert and Heidi Ely, the current owners. Although they have greatly expanded the house, care has been taken to maintain the cozy, secure interior spaces of the original house. The exposed bird's eye maple ceiling in the living room, numerous archways, and masonry fireplace with adjacent built-in desk are some of the original details that remain.

The Raynor House.

1207 And 1215 West Eighth Avenue:
The Raynor and Niemi-O'Neill Houses

These two lots, originally running east-west, were replatted to run north-south in 1937 and the two existing houses were built. Apparently the same architect designed both homes and they were built by the same builder. Sid Raynor, manager of Lathrop theatres in Anchorage, had the corner house at 1207 West Eighth Avenue constructed.[62]

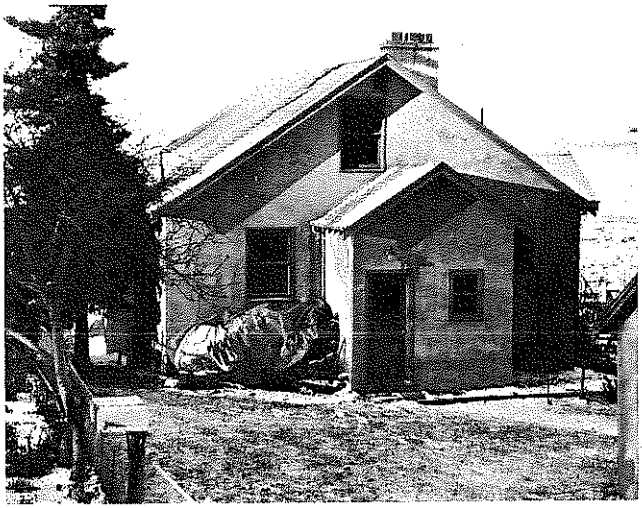
The house at 1215 West Eighth Avenue was the home of William J. Niemi. Niemi graduated from Anchorage High School in 1921. He made his livelihood as an engineer with the Alaska Road Commission, the predecessor of the Department of Transportation. The Niemis lived there until the mid-1940's when Mike and Onnolee O'Neill purchased the house.

Born in Cordova, Mike O'Neill came to Anchorage in 1937 and continued his long involvement with the mercantile business. In 1952, the O'Neills sold the house to Elmer Elwin, a builder, who made additions to the rear of the house and built the two-car garage.

Both houses are one-and-a-half-story, frame gable houses with shuttered windows, dormers and central entries. Substantial in size, they are virtually unaltered and have been been impeccably maintained.

The Neimi-O'Neill House.

The Eikland House.



1212 West Fifth Avenue: The Eikland House

Although the lot this house stands on was purchased at one of the early auctions, no structure was built for many years; perhaps because of the extreme slope of the terrain. The existing frame and stucco house was built by Olav Eikland in the late 1940's. The entire two-and-one-half-story house and garage were built at the same time.[63] Enclosed entrances are located on three sides of the gable house.

Olav Eikland was a carpenter known for his fine work. The interior finishes of 1212 West Fifth Avenue are reputed to be beautiful. He worked both self-employed and for the Louie Wansted Constructon Company.

530 N Street: The Aylward House

Looking at this substantial, two-story frame house, one would never guess its construction history. In 1939, Dan and Alice Aylward bought a small, one bedroom frame house from Nick Gaikima for $15.00. On July 4 of that year they moved the house from its original location on P Street to the existing lot. The Aylwards had paid $15.00 to lease the lot from the ARR; later they secured a patent signed by Franklin Roosevelt for the property. The Aylwards lived there until 1954.[64]

A partial basement was excavated immediately for the relocated structure. Additions forming the first floor of the existing house were made in the spring of 1939. A second floor, huge livingroom (16 feet by 20 feet) and garage were added in the mid-1940's. The house is sheathed with wood lap siding and is distinctive with a two-story gable entrance and a large shed-roofed dormer. The house has remained unaltered.

Dan Aylward was a carpenter. He came to Alaska in 1935 from Minnesota and settled in Anchorage three years later. Initially he worked in the ARR warehouse and then later as superintendent for Bliss Construction Co. In 1948 he began Dan Aylward Construction Company with Paul Joseph as his partner.

The Aylward House.

1229 West Sixth Avenue: The Simco House

Elmer Simco bought this forfeited property from the federal government in 1938. Simco was a trapper, guide and carpenter. He began building the large, one-and-one-half-story frame house in 1939 and completed it two years later.[65] Although Simco had no architectural training, his excellent carpentry skill, sense of proportion and use of building fabric is reflected in this attractive residence.

The gable house is basically square in plan with two enclosed gable entries. The front door is flanked by sidelights and windows featuring decorative glass. Large dormers, fascia boards with simple peak ornamentation, an interior chimney, exposed rafters, lap siding and cornerboards are some of the architectural details that combine to make this a handsome residence.

The Simco House.

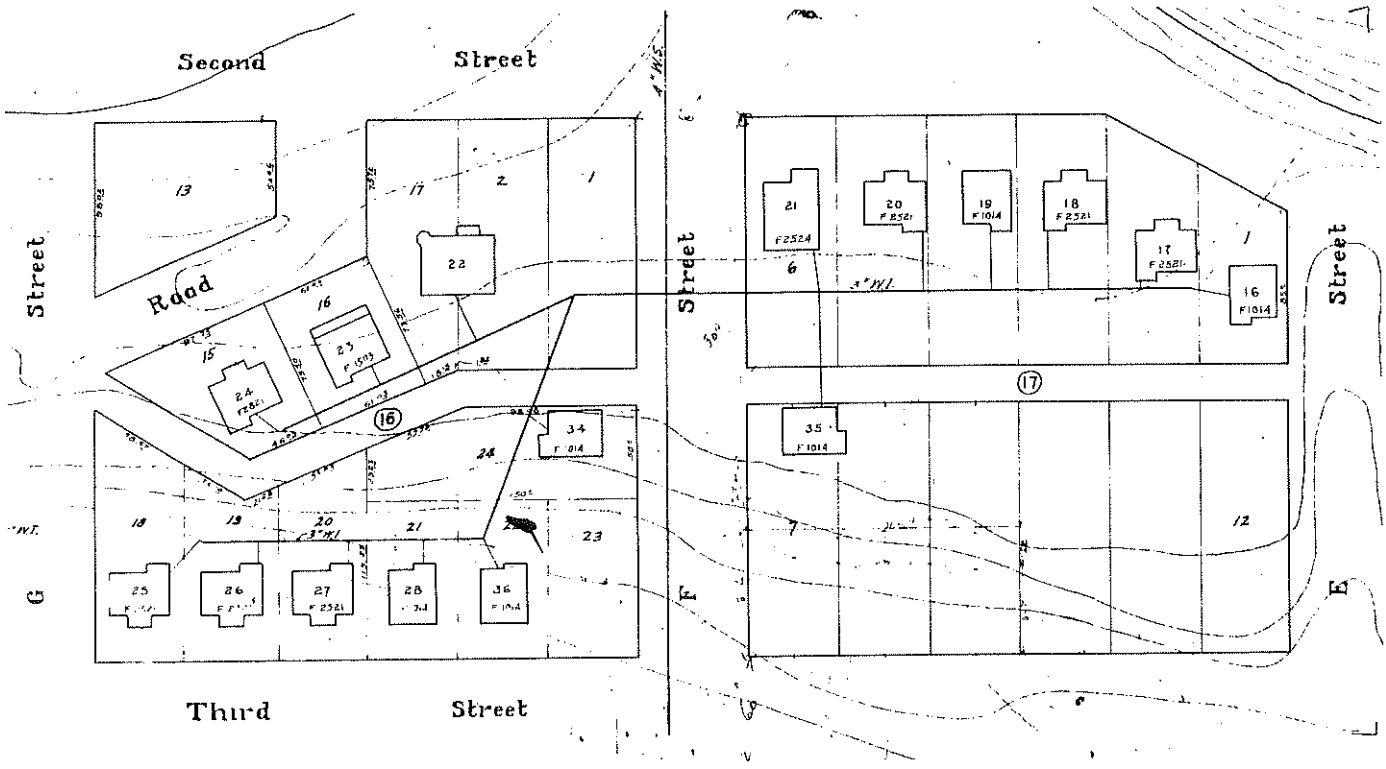
Alaska Engineering Commission Housing

The Alaska Engineering Commission (A.E.C.) provided good housing for its employees during the railroad construction era in Anchorage - 1915 to 1932. "Cottages" (as the houses were called) were built in two locations. The first set of fourteen residences was built in 1915 on Government Hill (see Chapter 3). The second set was built on the Original Townsite in 1916 after the A.E.C. decided to move its headquarters from Seward to Anchorage. By February, 1917, a month after the administrative functions had been established in Anchorage, the houses were occupied.[1] The reasoning of the Commission in developing the housing is most clearly explained in a government report: "Providing of ample sanitary housing facilities for employees was wise and was necessary for returning ample working forces, the maintenance of proper morale amongst the workers employed on the enterprise and necessary to the preservation of the health, and the maintenance of order in the new communities."[2]

Townsite housing was built on Blocks 15, 16, and 17 which were in close proximity to the A.E.C. headquarters and to the town's amenities, and on Block 21 which was next to the hospital. A news writer of the period illustrates the reasoning behind their location: "We have no doubt whatever that those who reside on Government Hill would prefer to live on this side of the creek, within the town limits, because the schools, the churches, the dancing halls, and picture shows, etc. are located here."[3]

In all, nineteen houses were built for A.E.C. personnel on the townsite. H.U.M. Higgins of the Alaska Engineering Commission may have been responsible for their design as his initials appear on drawings of proposed bungalows, and many of the constructed cottages are similar to his prototypical plans.[4] Two plans (file drawings F2521 and F1014) were used repeatedly in developing the cottages. The larger houses, those of Edes, Mears, Christensen, DeLong and Reedy, were one-of-a-kind residences and were based on separate, individual plans.

By early August, 1916, the housing plans were completed, the building materials had been received, and contracts for construction were released. One of the major contractors was W.L. Balch, who was responsible for construction of the seven A.E.C. cottages on Block 17.[5] Another contractor, John Wirum, built other A.E.C. houses.



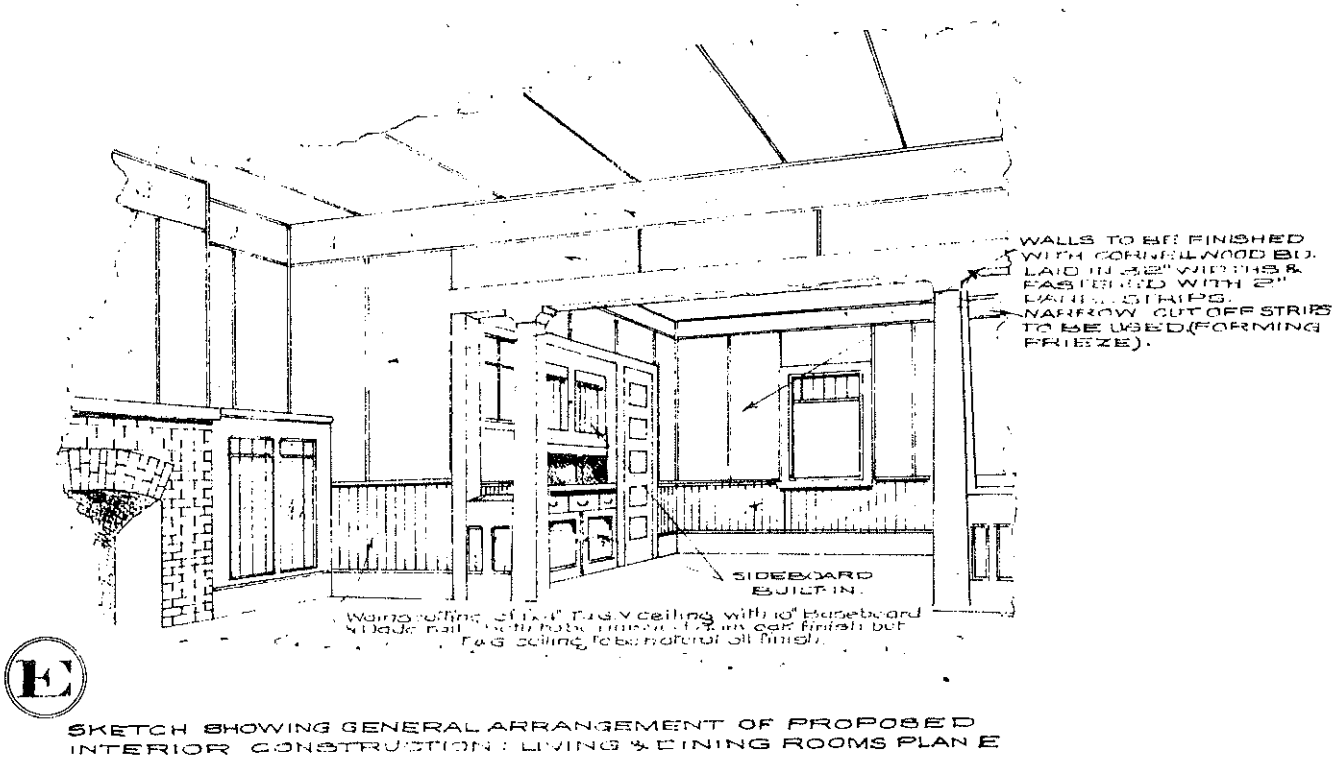
This map shows the original layout of the A.E.C. cottages

The A.E.C.'s Cottage Directory[6] showed twenty occupied dwellings in February, 1917. The original occupants were:

House Number	Original Occupant
16	F.U. Mayhew
17	W.B. Clayton
18	C. Watson
19	J.H. Robinson
20	M.L. Gerber
21	A. Christensen
23	W. DeLong
24	T.L. Murphy
25	J.G. Watts
26	Dr. C.C. Benedict
27	F.C. Kobely
28	R.D. Chase
29	Capt. F. Mears
30	Dr. E.S. Reedy
31	Dr. J.B. Beeson
32	W.T.C. Smith
33	C.H. Thompson
34	E.R. Arbuckle
35	F. Lilyman
36	K.K. Kuney

The cottages on the southeast corner of Second Avenue and F Street under construction.

Five examples survive of the seven designs originally constructed.[7] All surviving cottages have been modified in one way or another. The most common alteration was the enclosure of the front porch. The enclosed porch provided a warm entryway and was a practical response to Alaska's climate. Another common modification was the addition of dormers which provided more room and light to the one-and-one-half story dwellings. Building materials were similar in all styles, especially the use of shiplap siding, beaded board, and sash windows which frequently had numerous lights. In the following descriptions, the extant residences are identified.



Proposed interior of the living and dining area of a prototype A.E.C. cottage.

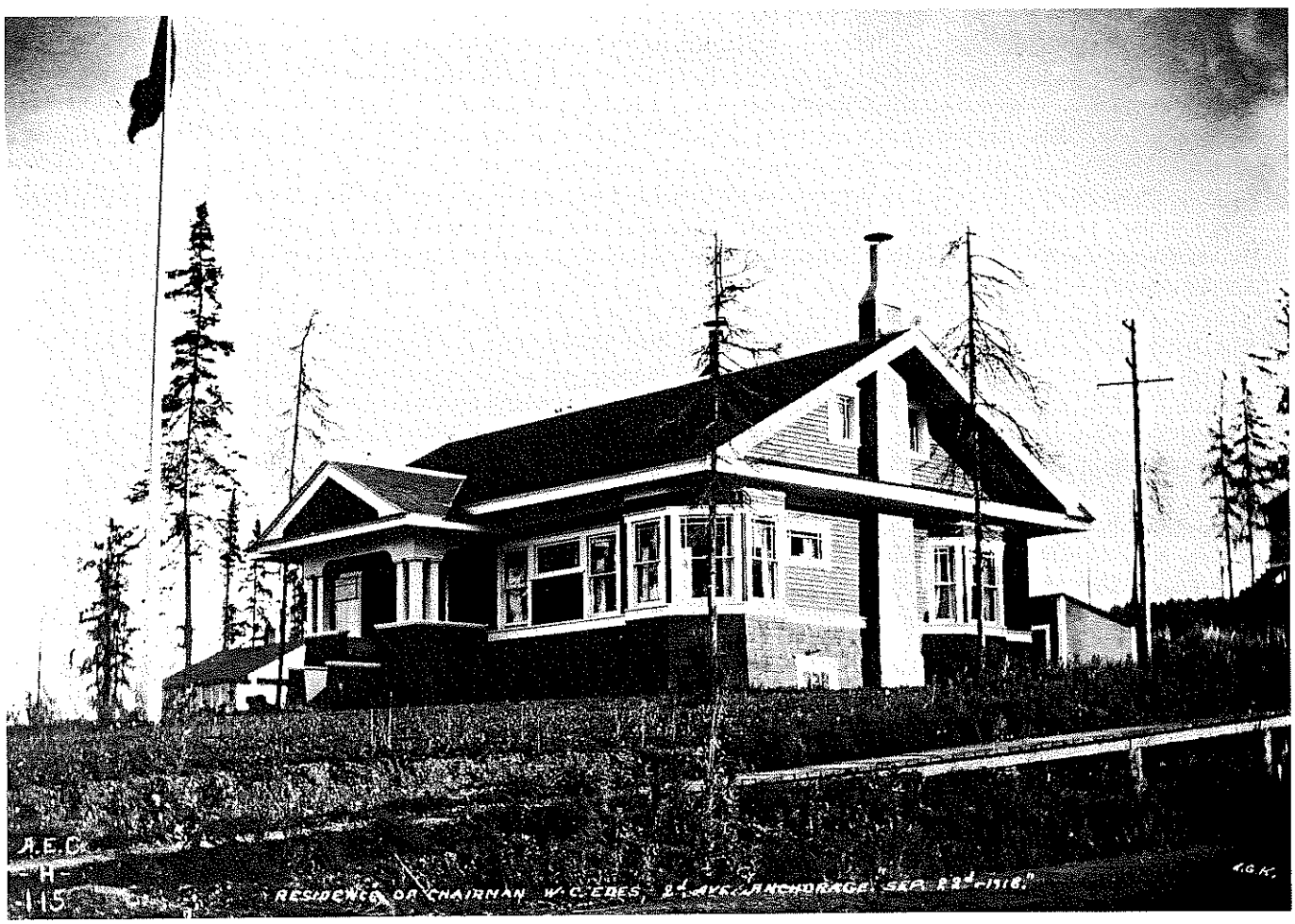
610 West Second Avenue: The Edes House

The A.E.C. built this large house for its Chairman, William C. Edes, at the time administrative offices were transferred to Anchorage. Upon completion in 1917, the house was among the most imposing in the townsite. Its location, straddling two lots on a slight knoll at Second Avenue and Christensen Road, gave an added dimension to its prominence. It was known in the railroad era as Cottage 22.

However, this house was hardly a "cottage." Besides being larger than the other A.E.C. housing (with the exception of the Mears-Ohlson House, demolished in 1972), this one-and-one-half story residence had unique design features: handsome pedimented gables with wide overhanging eaves, wide trim accenting windows and rooflines, a flared base, gabled porch, and large bay windows located on two corners. Rectangular lights with decorative muntins were set within the frames of the upper portion of large sash windows. A basement was apparently part of the original structure.

The house has been severely modified. A long shed dormer has been set within the gable roof and an enclosed, two-story rectangular porch and stairwell have been added to the facade. A parking lot now covers the front yard. The original contrasting color scheme - white against dark - which highlighted architectural details, has been replaced by a single color of paint. Structurally, with the exception of the original porch, the house appears intact. No longer a residence, the building is now used as an office.

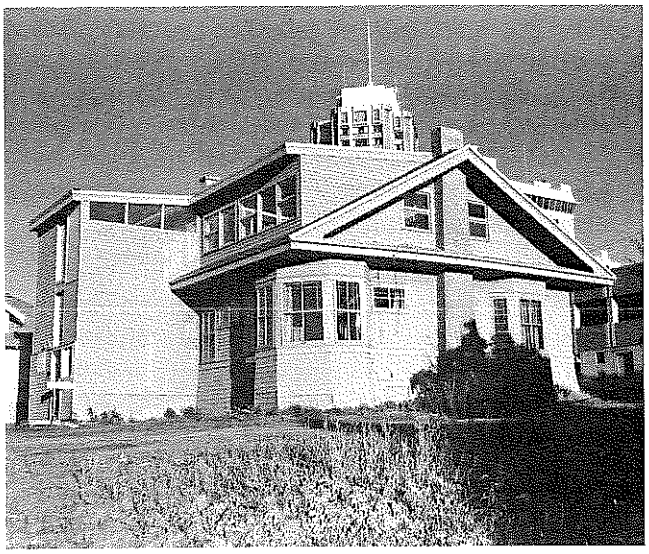
Commissioner Edes House as it appeared during construction in June 1917.



The Edes House as it appeared in 1918.

Edes at Ship Creek in 1914.

The Edes House as it appears today.



William C. Edes

William C. Edes, the first Chairman of the Alaska Engineering Commission played key roles in developing the Alaska Railroad. As head of the survey party in 1914, he was instrumental in selecting the route. As chief engineer, and foremost of the Commissioners, he oversaw development of much of the line. Edes, a railroad man to the bone, was highly respected for his experience as a locating and construction engineer. Appointed to the project at 58 years of age, he brought a thorough knowledge of railroad building, as well as needed, level-headed wisdom, to the project.

Born in Boston in 1856, Edes graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before his twentieth birthday. Upon graduation, he began a long career almost exclusively characterized by railroad construction in the western portions of the country. After a brief stint with the Spring Valley Water Company (California), he joined a location party with the Southern Pacific Railway. With the exception of private engineering practice from 1882-1886, railroad development absorbed his remaining professional years. During the period 1886 to 1896, Edes located and supervised construction of many miles of the Southern Pacific System. In 1896 he became the chief assistant engineer of the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad. At the turn of the century, he returned to the Southern Pacific Railroad, first working in construction of the mountain lines and later as district engineer. Before his appointment to the Alaska Engineering Commission, Edes also served as chief engineer of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Edes was an easy-mannered administrator. His patience offset the reactionary, firey temperament of Federick Mears, his fellow Commissioner. Edes maintained an amicable working relationship with the Interior Department Secretary, Franklin K. Lane, to whom the A.E.C. was responsible. His relationship with Lane and congressional leaders was a needed asset in acquiring timely appropriations for the railroad. The Chairman was not overbearing in dealing with others. However, he did keep a firm grip on construction details, economizing wherever possible and carefully watching the actions of his subordinates.

Originally, A.E.C. administrative offices were at Seward. Edes ran the headquarters there in 1915 and 1916. His first major task was the rehabilitation of the old Alaska Northern Railway. In 1917, the headquarters was moved to Anchorage. At that time the residence on Second Avenue was built for Edes and his family. In actuality, Edes worked in Alaska six months of the year. Four of the remaining months were spent in Washington. The rest of the time was devoted to travel.

As chief administrator, Edes survived labor strikes, construction problems and the political headaches associated with the government railway. Over the years of his association with the A.E.C., his health began to fail him. In 1918, he spent much of the time outside Alaska. During the Congressional hearing of 1919, Edes was struck with a severe case of influenza. "Too weak to walk across the room," he was unable to participate in the discussion involving an increase in the Commission's authorization. The next few months were difficult ones for Edes. His illness supported congressional suspicions that Edes did not have firm control of the project. On August 29, 1919, Edes resigned as Chairman and Chief Engineer. He was retained as a consulting engineer; however, his role thereafter was a minor one.

Perhaps the most unfortunate note in the life of this railroader is that he did not live to see the railroad's completion. He died in San Francisco on March 26, 1922.[8]

Andrew Christensen[9]

Among the most common yesteryear photographs of Anchorage are those of the townsite auction. Shown in such pictures standing high on a platform above the crowd, was the mustachioed Andrew Christensen, who auctioned Anchorage's townsite lots.

Christensen worked for the General Land Office in 1915. As chief of the Alaska field division, he was given the responsibility of Superintendent of Sales. He oversaw the series of auctions in Anchorage as well as other railroad townsites.

Born in 1879, Christensen was reared in Nebraska. He had a varied career, many years of which were spent with the Federal government. Starting out with the Railway Mail Service in 1901, he advanced and was transferred to Washington, D.C. While working there, he studied law and obtained his degree. After a brief stint in private practice, he joined the staff of the General Land Office. The year was 1908 and the Alaska coal land frauds were about to surface. In 1909, he was assigned as a government attorney to the case and thus began his distinguished "Alaskan" career. Within a year he was named chief of the Alaska field division.

With the development of the railroad, Christensen worked closely with the A.E.C. Not only was he instrumental in land sales, but he was also involved in townsite development. He became Anchorage's unofficial townsite advisor. In actuality the A.E.C. and the land office were performing parallel functions as far as townsite matters were concerned. In 1916, Christensen was reassigned to work exclusively with the A.E.C. as manager of the newly-created Land and Industrial Department. His major role was agricultural and industrial development. Additionally, Christensen became a troubleshooter. He had to deal with bootlegging, prostitution and gambling, and even became administrator of the Anchorage school system in late 1916. When Commissioner Mears returned to active duty with the army in 1918, Christensen assumed charge of the Anchorage Division. Thus he oversaw the finishing touches of railroad construction in the South Central region.

Besides Cottage 21 at 542 West Second Avenue, Christensen Road remains as a reminder of this man's contributions to the development of Anchorage.

Cottage 21, originally the home of Andrew Christensen, has not changed much since 1916.

542 West Second Avenue (Cottage 21)

This cottage was originally occupied by Andrew Christensen, head of the A.E.C.'s Land and Industrial Department. Christensen also supervised the townsite auctions (see the following biography).

The hip-roofed house remains much the same as it did when it was first occupied in 1917. Built according to File Drawing No. 2524, it was the only one of its kind. Unlike other cottages, its open front porch has not been enclosed. A small shed has been added to the rear entrance. The original shiplap exterior has been covered with aluminum siding. Leaded glass was added in place of the original windows. These are minor changes. The structure remains a prime example of A.E.C. housing.

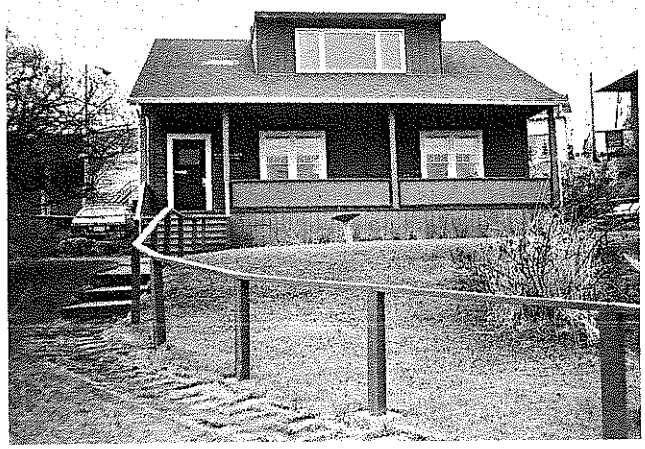
The Andrew Christensen House and Cottage 20 following rehabilitation by Dr. Kenneth Richardson.

The cottages on Block 17 as they appeared in September, 1916.

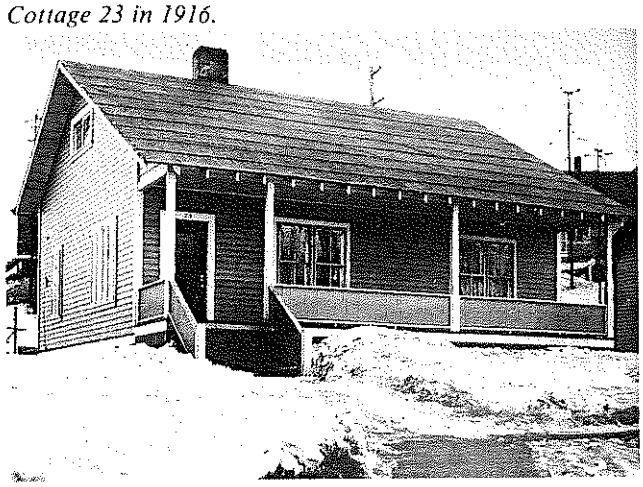
618 Christensen Drive: Cottage 23

This cottage was first occupied in 1917 by Walter DeLong, A.E.C. general storekeeper. It was the only house constructed by the A.E.C. according to File Drawing No. 1503. After serving a number of A.E.C. personnel as a rental unit, it was sold in 1930 to Harry Hamill. The cottage is much the same as it was originally. Its veranda, which extends across the entire facade, is intact. Such details as window frames, front door and siding have not been changed. The major alteration is the large shed dormer which was added to the building in the mid-1970's. This window area provides both additional space and an excellent view from the upper half story. No longer residential in use, the house now serves as law office space.

618 Christensen Drive today.

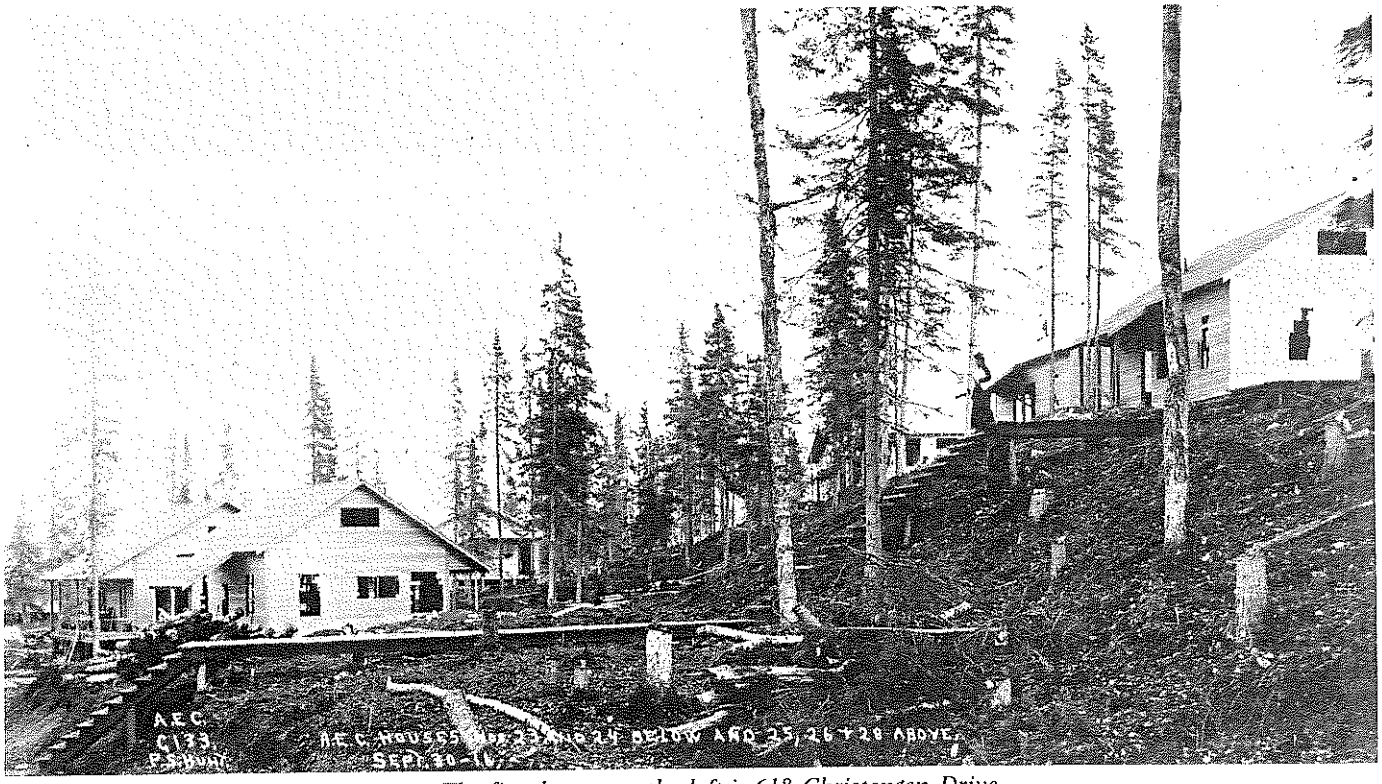


Cottage 23 in 1916.



Cottages 20, 25, 26 and 27

These one-and-one-half story cottages were all built according to the same plan (file drawing 1521) in the fall of 1916. They were among the most modest of the A.E.C. cottages. The gable roofline was partially extended to form a simple shed-roofed porch and shiplap siding and sash windows were common to all of them. These four still exist on their original lots. A fifth one with an identical floor plan has been moved to Forest Park Drive.



Cottage 23 and 24 under construction. The first house on the left is 618 Christensen Drive.

Examples of both styles, F2521 and F1014, were located on Third Avenue, behind the old Federal Building. The two houses on the left are still there.

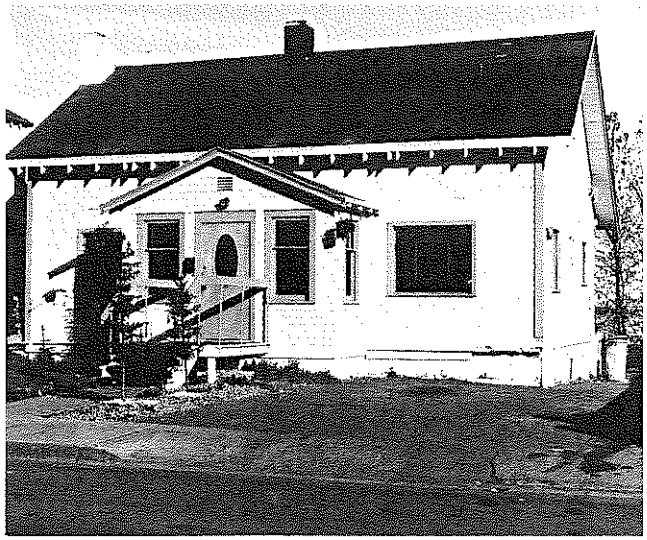
Cottage 26 was the house of the Longacre family for many years.

Cottage 20 is located at 534 West Second Avenue. It was originally rented to M.L. Garbor, an A.E.C. draftsman. George Colwell bought the house in 1935. A few additions were made over the years and a gable roof replaced the original shed-roofed porch. The house is presently used as an ophthalmologist's office.

Cottages 25, 26 and 27 are still on West Third Avenue between F Street and the Elks Club. Cottage 25 was first rented to J.G. Watts, townsite manager. Later it was transferred to the Signal Corps. Its roofline has been severely modified. It is still a federally-owned property, currently housing the U.S. Coast Guard.

Cottage 26 was originally the home of Dr. C.C. Benedict, A.E.C. health officer. Later John Longacre, the railroad's electrical engineer, started renting the cottage and eventually purchased it. The porch has been modified.[12] A dormer has been set within the north face of the roof and a garage has been attached. Asbestos siding now covers the shiplap. It is currently used for office space.

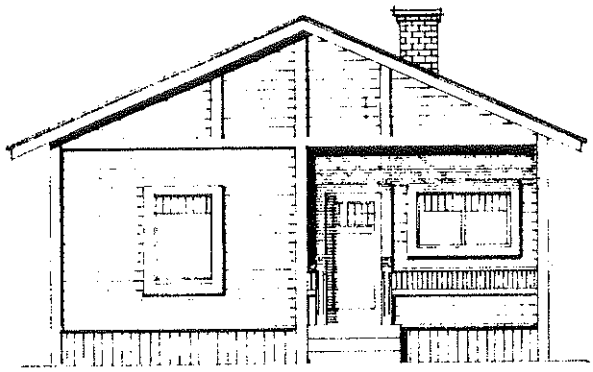
Cottage 27 is now used as the Marx Bros. Cafe.



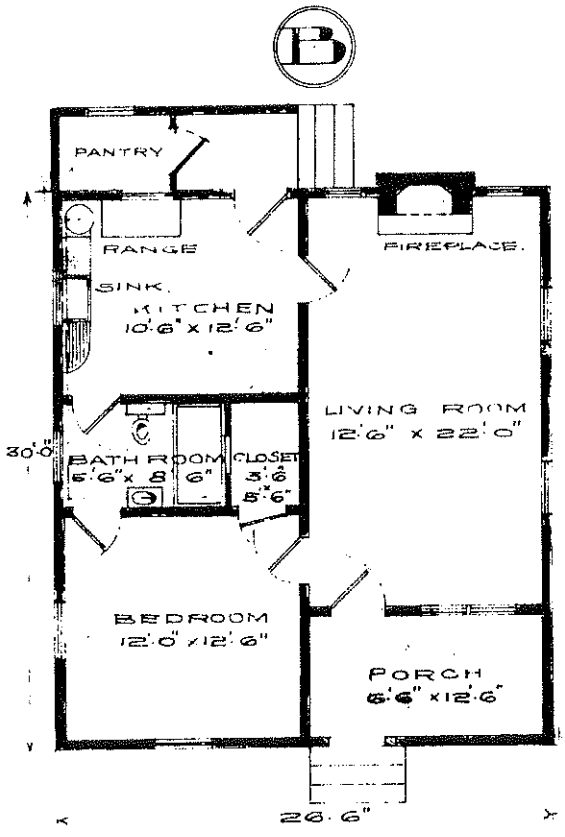
Cottage 27 retains much of its original form, but like its neighbors, its shed-roofed porch has been modified. The original roof shape was a poor design for Anchorage's winters as it caused accumulated snow and ice to slide onto the entrance walk. Gable-roofed porches eliminated this unpleasant situation and are undoubtedly an early alteration. Cottage 27 was originally rented to F.C. Kobely, an A.E.C. property clerk. Martin Lockwood purchased the house from the railroad in 1935. A fireplace has been added to the house and thermopane windows have replaced the original sash windows. The house is used as a restaurant.

Cottages 19, 35 and 36

Of the half dozen cottages which were built according to file drawing F1014, only three are known to still exist. All of these were built in 1916-17. None of the three houses are on their original sites, and all have been modified. The original structure was a four-room bungalow which included a living room, two bedrooms and a kitchen. A porch was indented into the facade. The front door led directly to the living room, and the other rooms adjoined this space. A pantry or similarly-scaled room was attached to the back of the cottage and provided a rear entrance.



B. ELEVATION, ALTERNATIVE 3 ROOM BUNGALOW.

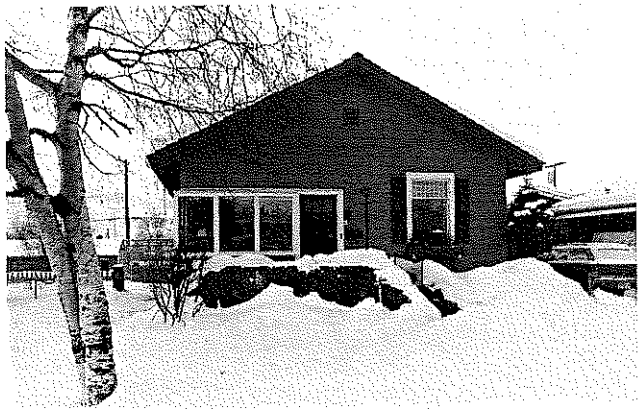


B. ALTERNATIVE PLAN, 3 ROOM, BUNGALOW.

Prototype drawings of a style similar to Cottages 19, 35 and 36. (Source: ARR).

The cottages built according to file drawing 1014 were like this example, Cottage 28.

1428 Inlet Place is an old A.E.C. Cottage.



Cottage 19 is situated on the west side of Old Seward Highway, about a mile south of Dimond Center. It was originally rented to J.H. Robinson when it was located on Second Avenue. After it was sold by the A.E.C. around 1930, it was reportedly skidded to Third Avenue and used as a bar. It was moved to its present location in the early 1950's and is used as a residence. Its porch has been enclosed, but otherwise, it is much the same as it was originally.

Cottage 36 was originally located along Third Avenue near F Street. It was relocated to 502 L Street and remained there for many years. In 1981 it was donated to the Municipality and is currently in storage. Fred Lilyman, Superintendent of A.E.C.'s Employment Bureau, first rented this house. It has been greatly modified by various additions.

Cottage 35 was relocated from Block 17 to 1428 Inlet Place in the early 1960's. It was originally the home of A.E.C.'s Right-of-Way Engineer, K.K. Kuney. The Robert Atwood family lived in the house for a short while after he became editor of the Anchorage Daily Times. The house has undergone a few alterations, including the addition of rooms, enclosure of the front porch and new siding. It is well maintained and is still used as a residence.

An Overview of the Use of Logs

Of all the building styles in Anchorage, the log cabin is readily identified as being the most Alaskan. Log construction has been used in this region for centuries. The Tanaina, the Athabaskan Indians of Cook Inlet, built their permanent houses of log. The exposed portion of the barabara, the Tanaina's semi-subterranean house, was constructed of horizontal logs supported by vertical posts.[1] Later, their houses were built of log entirely above ground. By the late 1800's saddle notching was used by the Tanaina. "These logs are so fashioned that the under side, hollowed out, fits down tight, almost air-tight, upon the rounded surface of the timber next below."[2]

As Russians intermarried with the Tanaina, their culture, including methods of log construction, was adopted. Russian influence is apparent in the construction of the church and other buildings at Eklutna, and at other scattered sites.

In the late-nineteenth century prospectors and miners came into the region and log construction was used in many types of buildings. No one particular style prevailed as miners were from various parts of the continent. At Hope - a "gateway" to the Municipality's mining history - a fine collection of log structures still exists.

A few log structures survive from the mining and trapping era on the north side of Turnagain Arm. They are generally constructed from large round logs stripped of bark and saddle notched. The blacksmith shop at Crow Creek Mine and the Porter-Knox Cabin are examples of this type of construction.

The railroad construction crews built their camp shelters of log. They typically saddle notched them. Unfortunately, they often used cottonwood and left the bark on the logs. Consequently, the wood rapidly deteriorated and only a few foundations of these cabins still exist.

Log structures were frequently built during the early years of Anchorage. Many of the substantial buildings of the headquarters camp of the Alaska Engineering Commission at Ship Creek were built of log in 1914. Early Anchorage residents, especially those of Scandinavian descent, built log homes. Similarly, early homesteaders constructed their "prove-up shelters" of log. The influence of log building, "the folk architecture of Anchorage," continues to the present time.

Log cabins and dog teams were often seen in early Anchorage.

Types of Log Construction Methods

Anchorage's log buildings have been crafted in a number of different ways. The various types of notches and shapes of finished logs often reflect the differences in cultural background of those who constructed log cabins. Finns, Russians as well as newcomers from the American West used the ax in various ways to craft their log homes.

There were a few variations in the means in which logs were prepared. Generally, they were left whole. However, in a few instances the axmanship of squaring the logs was undertaken. The logs were rarely squared at top and bottom. A later adaptation employed the use of logs which had been sawed squared on three sides and left round on the exposed side. Many of the 1940-era cabins were built with that type of construction. Logs were usually dried out before assembling a cabin. To do otherwise could leave sizable gaps in the walls as the wood shrank.

The question of dating log cabins by their notching has been entertained by the scholars who have studied log construction. In Scandinavia, it is possible to date log buildings as the refinements in notching techniques are clear indications of the construction period. The experience of dating American log cabins has been poor because regional influences and various cross-cultural patterns distort the time span of log cabin building.

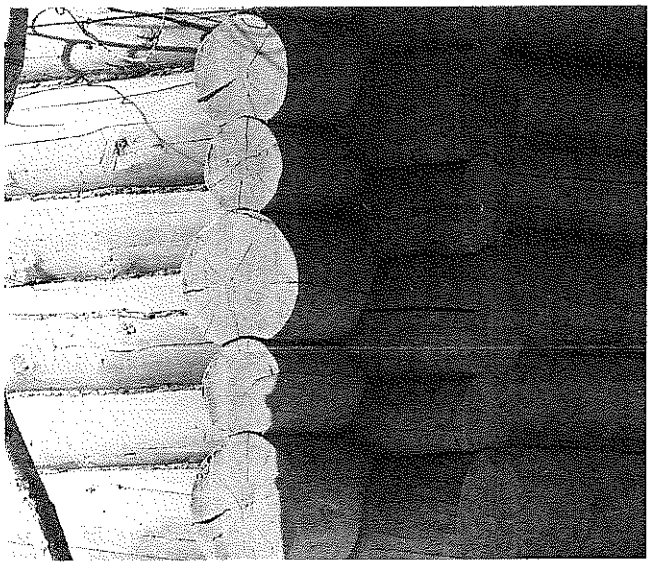
There are a number of log cabins which date back to the 1915-18 period. Logs were readily available building materials. (Framing, although occasionally sawed locally, was often brought in from Seattle.) Almost all the existing log structures were built as homes. Some still exist in their natural condition; others have been painted; and some have been stuccoed or covered with shingles. The following types of notches can be found in Anchorage-area log buildings.[4]

Saddle notching: This is the simplest method of notching. It was generally used with round logs. The notch forms a cup-like joint by which logs were lapped one atop another. Notches could be cut on the top, bottom or on both sides of the log to form the joint. Saddle notching was a rather common means of log construction here.

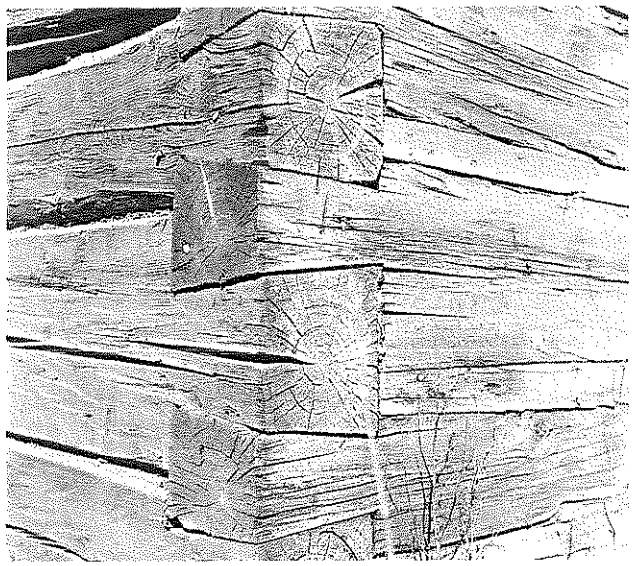
Dovetailed notching: This self-descriptive term refers to the fan-like cut which forms a tight fitting joint and square corners. The shape of the dovetail slopes away from the joint in order to shed water. The technique required a great deal of skill in the use of the ax. The dovetailed joint was used with both round log construction and square hewn construction. As it represents the height of Scandinavian log craft, Anchorage buildings of this type were invariably built by Finns, Russians, Swedes or people of similar ancestral background.

The Blomquist Cabin in 1916.

Saddle notching.



Dovetailed notching.



Square notching: This notch is not particularly sturdy because the logs do not overlap. Square notched logs are often reinforced with pegs or spikes. Not apparently common in Anchorage, some of the vertically reinforced corners may cover square notched logs.

Half notching: This notch is similar to the square notch. However, the half notch usually forms a slightly tighter joint.

Double notching: This was a widely used construction method in western states. Used on both round and square logs, it forms a relatively snug fit. The double notch is uncommon here in Anchorage.

Other types of joints: Vertical planks were often used as covering and reinforced components at the corners of log buildings. Some boards cover notched logs. While in a number of cases the boards are used to reinforce unnotched logs.

In the early 1940's the prototype of the Anchorage log cabin was developed. Such cabins are formed by logs which were sawed square on top, bottom and interior sides. They generally do not have any notches. Instead they are widely overlapped; the ends stick out in both patterned and uneven lengths. Such builders as Virgil Knight and Judd Fowler compared ideas about the problems of log construction. If a cabin was built with freshly cut spruce, they found that the shrinkage would result in gapping holes which welcomed the winter drafts. Knight found that dry spruce which was grooved along its length could be fitted atop a similarly grooved log with a metal strip imbedded into its length. The metal strips formed air-tight joints between the logs. The square interior side was usually insulated and then paneled to provide the wamth of natural wood homes.[5] Variations on this construction method have been used in many cabins which were built in the 1940's and 1950's.

Half notching.

Dovetailed notching on round logs.

The Bieri-Heffentrager House.

The Bieri-Heffentrager House

The Bieri-Heffentrager House is a fine example of early log construction. The one-and-one-half-story dwelling was built in 1919 for S. Volsky by Sam Bieri, a carpenter of Scandinavian descent who made his livelihood working for the ARR. Upon completion of the structure, Volsky decided not to occupy the house. He sold the house and lot to Bieri who owned it for approximately twelve years.[6] During much of this time Bieri was living in Sutton and rented the house to various tenants.[7]

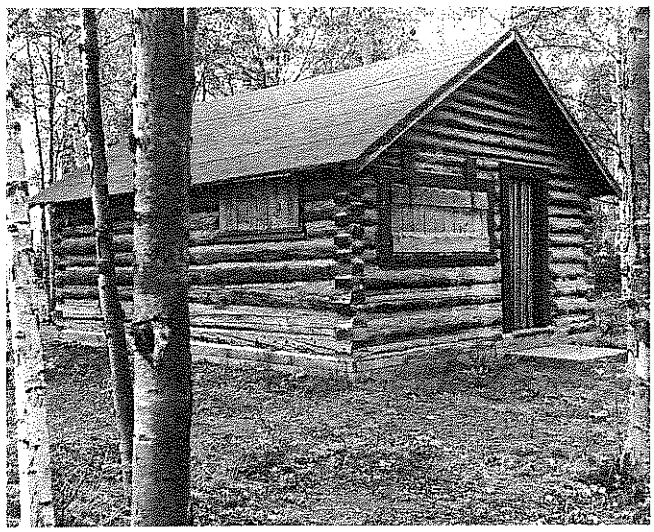
Bieri's carpentry skill is pronounced in the details of the house. Straight as railroad ties, the hand-hewn spruce logs form solid walls. The logs reach the second story where they give way to frame and wood shingle, a popular way in which larger cabins were finished. Some of the era's most representative details are included in the cabin. Among them are sash windows, shingle siding (painted green) and brackets under the eaves.

The overall dimensions of the house are 20 feet by 24 feet. A living room, kitchen and small bath are located downstairs. Upstairs three bedrooms are set under the pitched roof. It appears that originally the house had both front and back porches. In approximately 1931, Ike and Anna Heffentrager purchased the house. Although they made a number of improvements to the interior during the thirty years they owned the property, the exterior remained unaltered except for the addition of two windows. Heffentrager worked as a blacksmith for the ARR and made the alterations himself. He added partitions, finished the bedrooms and kitchen cabinets and recovered the walls above Bieri's wainscotting. He put in the cesspool and bathroom and replaced the original hand pump with an electric one.[8]

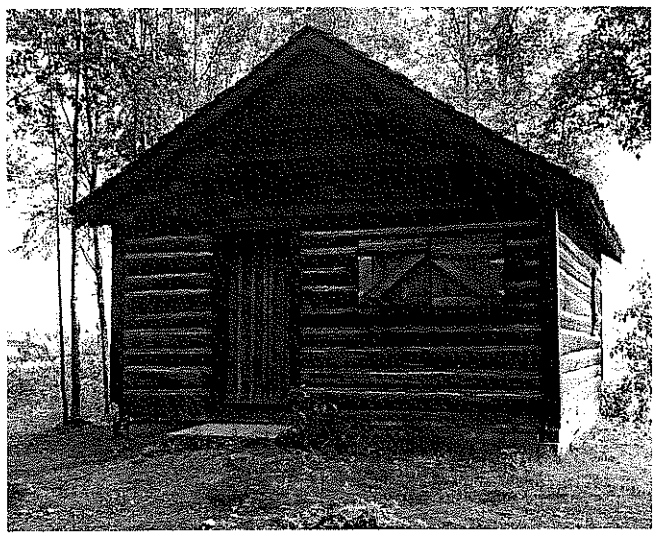
The Cabins at Crawford Park

Just one room in size, these cabins are typical of the log dwellings which were built during the railroad construction era. Both date from the 1915-1916 period. They were moved to the park in the early 1970's. The cabin which is farther from Eagle Street originally stood at the corner of Seventh Avenue and K Street (933 West Seventh Avenue). Its round logs are joined by a combination of half notches and square notches. Its dimensions are approximately fourteen by eighteen feet. L.D. Roach, a long-time Alaskan lawyer and former city judge, owned the cabin for a number of years. Reportedly, Anchorage's first postmaster also resided there. The cabin was donated to the Municipality by Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Franke.

The other cabin once stood near the intersection of Eighth Avenue and I Street (837 West Eighth Avenue). The original builder is not known. It is constructed of square hewn logs and vertical post supports. Cora B. Legalt purchased it in 1926 and lived there for many years.



This cabin, which originally stood at 933 West Seventh Avenue, features both half notches and square notches.



This square-hewn log cabin has been relocated to Crawford Memorial Park.

305 Eagle Street: The Fowler Cabin

Located diagonally across from the Pioneer School is a good example of the style of cabin popular in the 1940's. This particular one was built in 1943 by Judd Fowler. The logs are unnotched and are criss-crossed at the ends. They are sawed square on three sides and a metal sheath is embedded along the horizontal surface to prevent drafts from penetrating into the interior. Similar construction was carried out by Virgil Knight on his former house at 1234 R Street.

133 1/2 East Fourth Avenue: The Korhonen Cabin

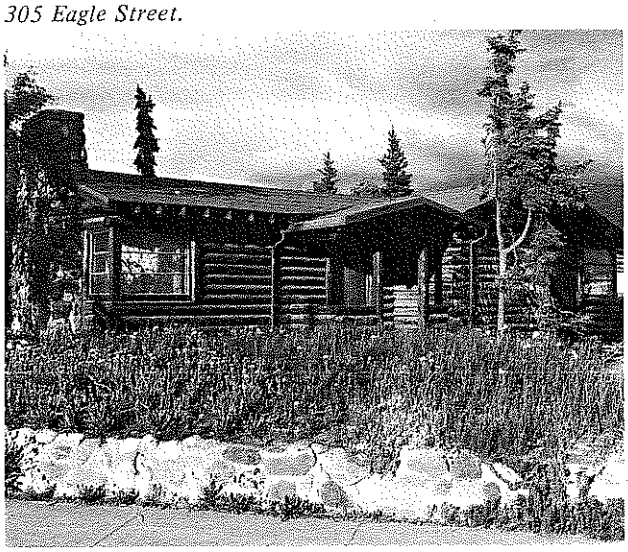
This small cabin looks like a one-room school house which, in fact, it was at one time. It was built by Olie Korhonen who also owned the house at the front of the lot. The cabin originally may have been located west of the runway of Elmendorf AFB, Korhonen's former homestead.[9] (In some cases homestead structures were dismantled and moved to town.) The cabin may have been rebuilt at its present location during the War. It is an excellent example of the square-hewn, dovetailed log building technique. Very few cabins constructed in this manner still exist. The cabin was previously used as a Montessori School, but has been used as a garage in recent years.

100-108 East Eighth Avenue : The Fairclough Cabins

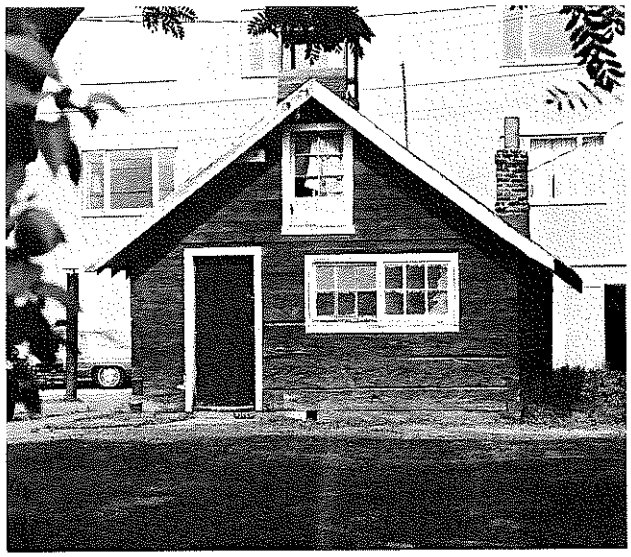
These five cabins were built around 1939 by Bill Fairclough, a homesteader who lived in the Sand Lake area.[10] Similar cabins were located on a second corner of the intersection. Fairclough rented them for $10.00/month. Round logs were used in construction of the cabins and the attached sheds that are currently covered with siding. The frame entries were added in the mid-1960's.

The Berg-Brown Cabin.

305 Eagle Street.



The Korhonen Cabin.



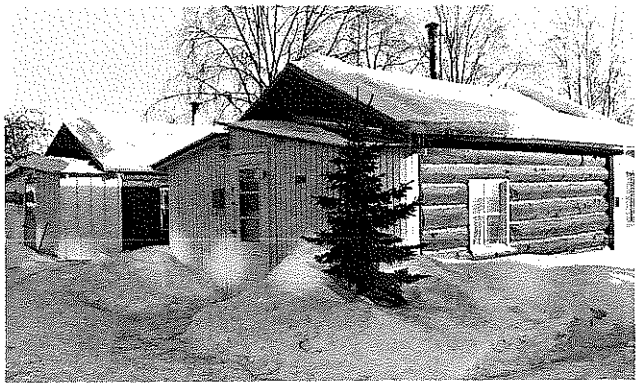
430 East Fourth Avenue: The Berg-Brown Cabin

This small log cabin was built circa 1916 by Cora Berg. From 1925 until 1930 it was the home of Jack and Nellie Brown. The Browns have been considered the earliest residents of Anchorage. Jack Brown came to Ship Creek in 1912 as a forester for the Chugach National Forest. This particular cabin was probably their second residence. (Their original cabin was reportedly moved from a location near lower Ship Creek to the westward end of the townsite.) They later lived on Government Hill.

After 1930 the Tuomi family owned and lived in the structure. The Tuomis were active in the Finnish community and homesteaded on Loop Road. Tuomi Lake (near Green Lake on Elmendorf Air Force Base) is named for the family.

Little ax-work went into the construction of the cabin. Instead, a saw was used to cut the even length logs and used again to form the notches.

The Fairclough Cabins.



403 West Eighth Avenue: The Belgard House

This two story residence was built in 1916 or 1917 and was one of the first houses in the neighborhood. It is constructed of large, 14"-15" diameter round logs. It may have been built by J.A. McLaughlin who purchased the lot from the original owner, William Stevens, in December, 1915.

Early owners included T.B. Watson; Ed McNalley, house-painter and painting contractor; band leader and music teacher Ed Berutto; Mrs. Paul Swanson; Kenneth Laughlin, who taught piano and was the Empress Theater organist, and Earl Woods, an airplane mechanic. Legend has it that the house was a speakeasy at one time. In 1938, Fred Belgard, a telegrapher for the Signal Corps and later, chief dispatcher for the ARR, and his wife Eletta, purchased the property for approximately $2,500.00.[11]

Improvements by the Belgards included a basement dug in 1940 using a home-made trolley car, the garage, a central heating system employing a Sourdough Stove, and the stucco-ing of the logs.[12] The large, fixed-pane windows have been added since the Belgards sold the house in the mid-1950's.

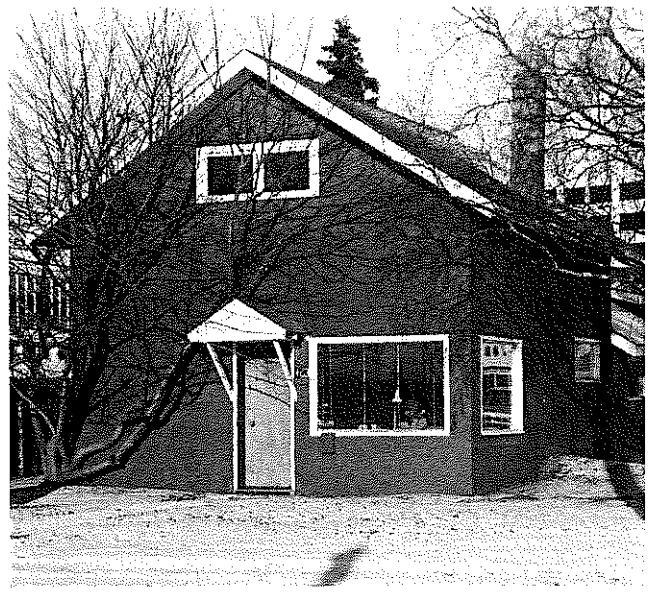
801 and 807 H Street: The Gus Anderson Cabins

These small, shingle-covered cabins were built in 1920-21 by A.T. "Gus" Anderson, a well-known local carpenter. Both are L-shaped with lateral wings and have arctic entry vestibules. Edward McElligott, a long time Anchorage grocer, bought the one-story, 801 H Street home from Anderson in 1931. The one-and-one-half story cabin at 807 H Street was purchased from Anderson's estate by Marie Holder in 1933. Both houses were moved in recent years when ARCO expanded their facilities.

213 East Sixth Avenue

The Niemi Cabin

The construction of this two-story log house is unusual because notches were not used in joining the logs. Instead, each log was cut diagonally and joined with a large bolt at the corner. The house was built by Matt Niemi, a carpenter of Finnish decent. It is belived he also built the two smaller bungalows that formerly sat behind the house. Niemi bought the logs which were used in constructing this house from Emil Savola when the military took over the Green Lake area. The site of Savola's homestead in 1942. The logs had formed Savola's barn. The cabin, whose logs date from the 1920's, was built during the war years. The original address of this log house was 213 East Sixth Avenue. The house has been relocated due to proposed construction of the State Office Building.



The Belgard House.

642 K Street : The Dout House

The brightly colored clapboard of this house actually covers a log structure. The house, which replaced an early frame structure, was built in 1931-32 for Paddy Waxon and was probably used as a rental property as Waxon owned a considerable amount of Anchorage real estate.[13] In 1936-37 Harry Dout, an ARR employee, bought the property and lived there with his family for many years.The house has an inviting appearance. Its architectural lines are highlighted by wood-framed windows and fascia boards, corner boards, and drip boards. The two entry porches have enclosed gables and have multi-paned windows. The building is currently used for commercial purposes.

726 K Street : The Bruner House

Frank Bruner started building this handsome log residence around 1950.[14] Construction proceeded slowly over three years because Bruner, a carpenter for Shaw, Edwards & Goodman, only worked on it in his spare time.

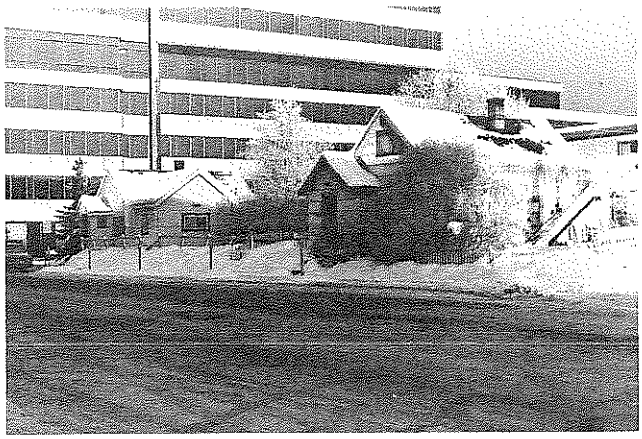
The house is built of three-sided house logs purchased in Palmer. It flares out slightly at ground level. It is excellently detailed inside and out. The interior has rustic spruce paneling, mahogany and birch doors, oak flooring and wood trim. The main house had two bedrooms: two rental apartments were located in the basement. The stones for the handsome fireplace chimney were gathered from riverbeds within a sixty-mile radius of Anchorage. The windows have wood frames with logs framing them. Although painted white for many years, it has been refinished to the natural appearance it originally enjoyed. The structure is used for commercial purposes.

736 and 738 K Street: The Nightengale Cabins

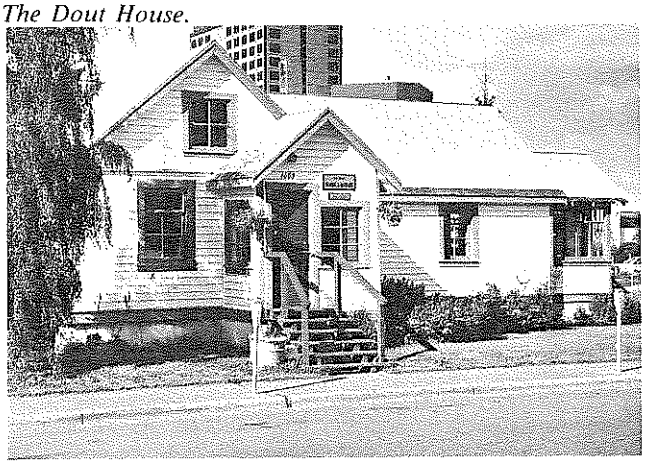
These narrow, one-story log cabins were built during the early years of townsite development when finished lumber was expensive and not readily available. It is probable that Marius Benson and John Larson, original owners of the property, built the cabins. The structures have medium-pitched gable roofs, narrow eaves and exposed rafter ends. The round logs are chinked with mortar, and like many other early Anchorage cabins, are joined at the corners with vertical, squared timber posts rather than by notching. Benson and Larson were "stationmen" for the Alaska Engineering Commission and had contracts to oversee construction for a portion of the rail line. Benson also worked as a teamster for the Alaska Transfer Company.

In 1932, Ed and Henry Nightengale purchased the property and retained ownership for almost fifty years. Ed Nightengale worked for the Alaska Railroad, but also moonlighted as a musician in local nightclubs and participated in the city orchestra.

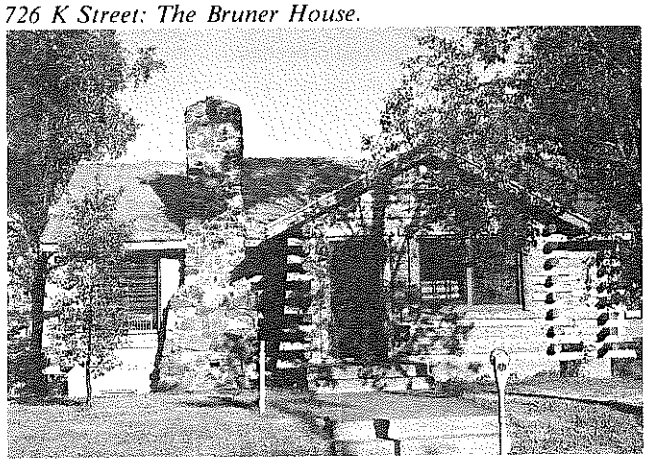
801 and 807 H Street.



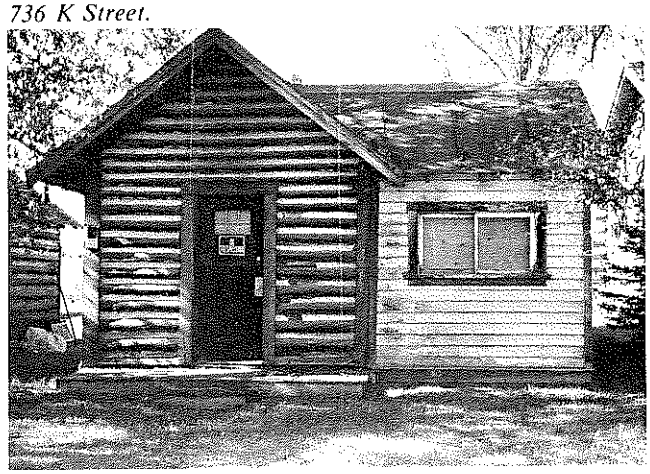
The Dout House.



726 K Street: The Bruner House.



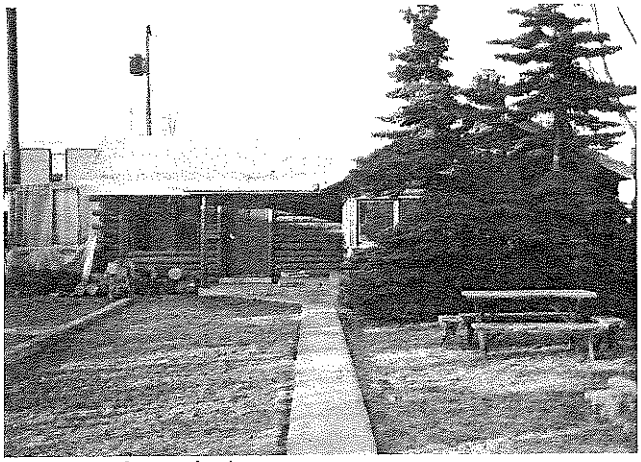
736 K Street.



836 West Seventh Avenue : The Bruner House

After purchasing the vacant lot from Cora Legault in 1943, Jack and Dorothy Bruner built this one-story log residence the same year.[15] Its log construction is typical of the era. Logs, squared on three sides and peeled by Dorothy Bruner, were laid horizontally and spiked together. They rest on concrete piers.

The original house had just four rooms; the wing to the east was added by later owners. Stones for the original chimney were hand picked and hauled from Eagle River and other river beds. The two large chimneys and long, low lines of the house make this residence a distinctive structure.



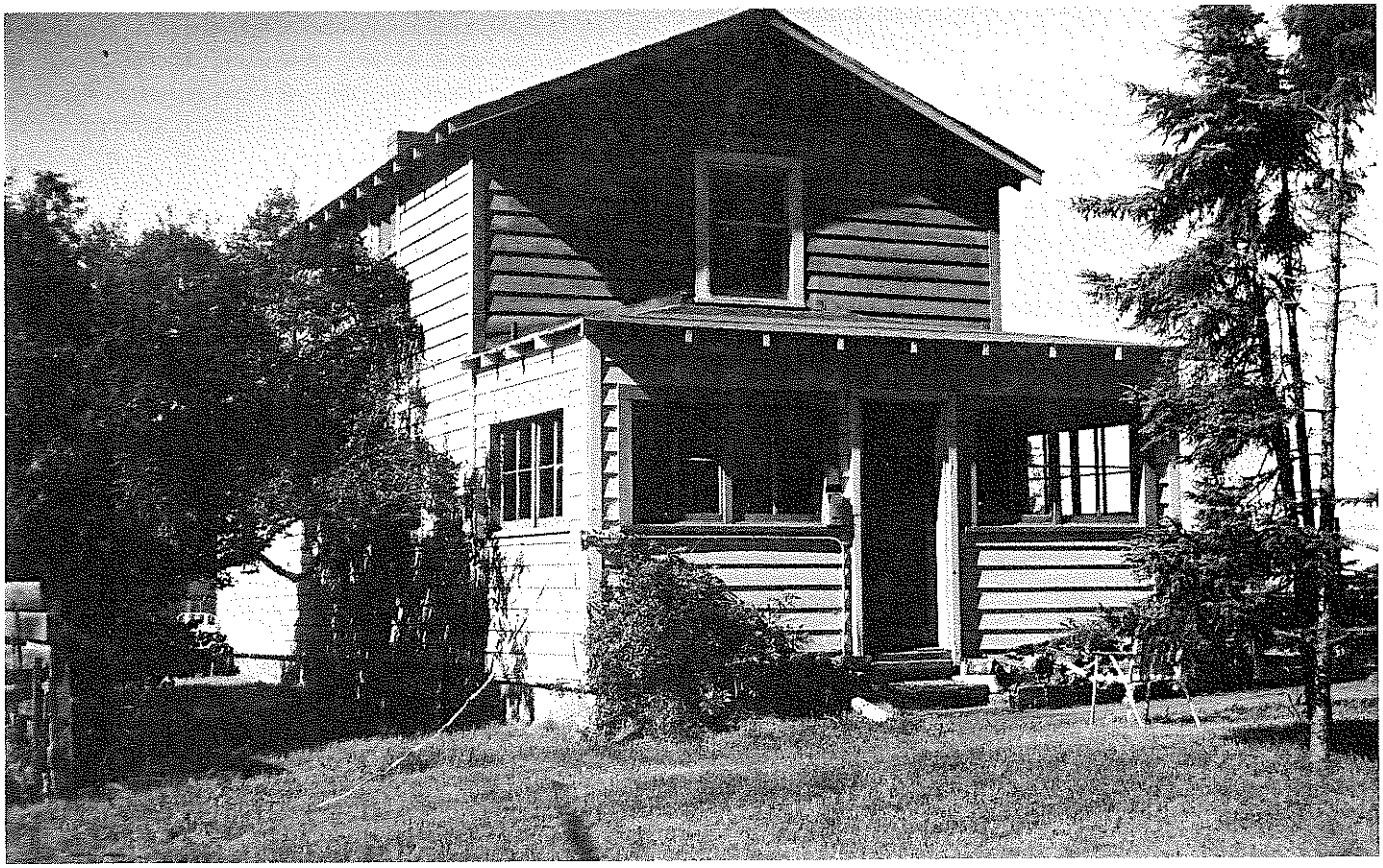
836 West Seventh Avenue.

521 M Street: The Blomquist-Reekie House

The house at 521 M Street was one of four identical round log residences built by Issac Blomquist in 1915. Originally from Sweden, Blomquist had lived in Alaska for a number of years, working in both Valdez and Knik prior to moving to Anchorage. Blomquist won six lots on Block 57 at the 1915 auction, and being a carpenter (he worked on the construction of the Wendler Building), was able to erect the four log structures from spruce trees taken from the sites. He and his wife, and his daughter and her family, lived in two of them. The other two, including 521 M Street, were sold.[16]

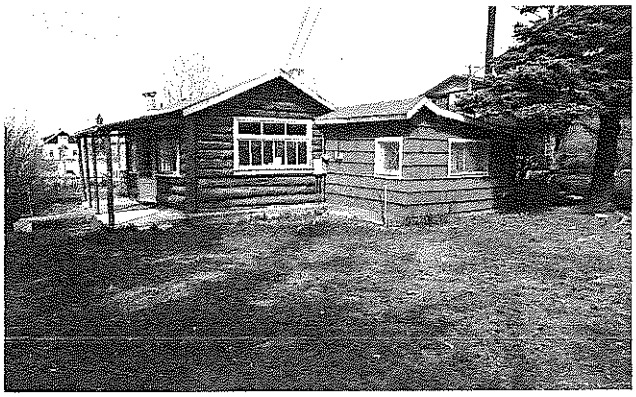
After several owners, the house was purchased by John Reekie in 1928. Reekie, originally from Scotland, worked for the ARR as a welder and pipe fitter. Martin Peterson bought the house in 1930. However, he sold it within a year to Arthur Reekie, John's brother, who then lived there for more than twenty years.

The two-story log structure has a simple rectangular plan and gable roof. An enclosed, one-story porch runs across the east facade and provides the main access to the residence. The building was probably sided in the 1930's by Arthur Reekie who also excavated a basement with the help of his brother.[17]



The Blomquist-Reekie House.

The Weber-Allman Cabin.



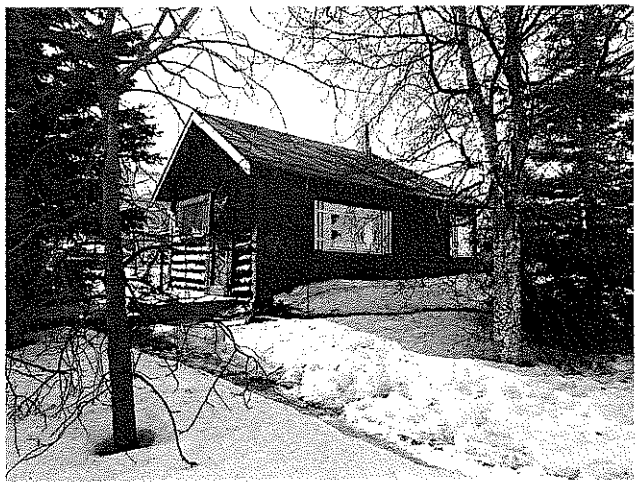
The Weber-Allman Cabin

This small log cabin was built by Phil Weber in 1917-1918. Round logs were used in its construction and were joined at the corners with vertical timber posts. The original moss chinking has been replaced with mortar. A frame addition was once attached to the rear of the cabin and a porch spanned the entire front facade. Both were removed in relocating the structure.

Phil Weber and his wife Adelle walked to Ship Creek from Seward in 1915. He worked for the Alaska Engineering Commission. From 1917 to 1925 he was an assistant storekeeper for the railroad. Jack and Olga Allman purchased the property in 1928 and lived in the cabin until 1942. Allman was a section foreman at Campbell Station. The cabin was relocated from its Ninth Avenue and N Street lot in response to office construction.

701 O Street: The Erickson-Martin Cabin

Partially hidden behind a cluster of spruce on the corner lot, is a cabin built in 1916 by John Erickson and Issac Martin.[18] The original cabin probably contained two or three small rooms and had a simple gable appearance. John Fisher, a bachelor who worked at a variety of odd jobs, bought the property in 1938-39 and made major additions in 1942. Fisher did a little of everything: he worked as a handyman, custodian, wood cutter, miner, and also raised mink. It is likely that he constructed both the hip roof and shed roof additions. The cabin has been painted barn-red. Its rounded logs are covered at the corners by vertical planks called corner boards. In the 1940's, Cecil and Paula Wells, bookkeeper for Stolt's Electric Co., bought the property. They remain the owners.



701 O Street .

710 O Street: The Turner Cabin

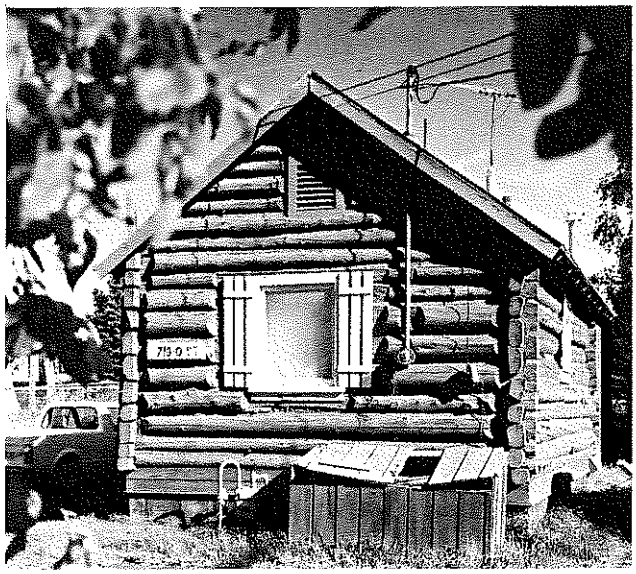
This small barn-red log cabin is constructed of round logs which, unusual to Anchorage, are joined by double notching. Local legend has it that the cabin was a way station by which bootleggers brought in liquor from the inlet.

Two cabins were originally on the lot. Their construction dates are unknown. The first owner of the lot, Ludwig Olsen, may have built one in 1916, the year he purchased the lot.[19] Another possibility is that the cabin sat on or near the railroad's H line. There were a number of cabins in the Bootlegger's Cove area when the railroad survey was completed around 1915. Some of them may have been moved and placed at conforming right angles to the platted lots.

By 1921, the lot had two cabins and was owned by Robert Hartman and Gilbert Turner. The second cabin was relocated or demolished in 1930, just after Turner became sole owner, a position he retained for more than twenty years.

Gilbert Turner was a bachelor, as were many of his neighbors. In fact, this area was known as Bachelor Town due to the high incidence of unmarried men living there.[20] Turner was a fisherman and mink raiser, at times raising as many as 200 mink. He fed them salmon caught in nets stretched in the inlet just back of his cabin.

The cabin contains the only example of double notching that has been found in Anchorage.



710 O Street.

717 M Street: The Jones-Erikkson House[21]

Resembling a bungalow in style with its roof-line dormers, this log cabin was built in 1915 by Smith Higgins. C.G. Jones first owned the dwelling. He sold the property to G. Stone in 1918. Elmer Erikkson, a local tailor, lived in the house for decades before selling to the current owners, the Sweets, in 1956. In 1927, the round logs were rechinked with cement and a concrete foundation was laid. The logs are supported with vertical braces at the corners. The second floor joists are notched through the horizontal logs and are exposed on the front facade. The upper portion of the cabin is frame covered with wood shingles. Pole rafters support the roof. The house is a very fine example of log construction.

The Jones-Erikkson House.

1112 East Sixth Avenue: The Brown-Woodley Cabin

This log house evidences extraordinary craftsmanship in its construction. It was built by an old man brought from the Interior to do the work. Finished around 1940, it took two-and-one-half years to build. The highly skilled carpenter hand-fashioned the saddle notched logs. By cutting the underside of the spruce logs he was able to tightly wedge them next to the cork insulation.

The house and its interior were designed by May Brown. She and her husband, Chet, were its first residents. He was a bush pilot who flew out of Merrill Field. Art Woodley, another pilot in the developing era of Alaska aviation, was the second owner of the home. The L-shaped log house stood virtually alone in the east end of the town. Only a row of apple trees separated the structure from Merrill Field.

The interior is especially handsome. The natural finishes of the woodwork are notable. Pine paneling is featured throughout most of the rooms. The living room with its wide-oak flooring, cross-beamed ceiling and stone fireplace has an extremely comfortable appearance. The house has not changed very much over the years. Reportedly, the kitchen has been expanded and an enclosed storm porch, made of log-like material, added at the front entrance.

1028 East Eighth Avenue: The LaRue-Roach Cabin[22]

This spacious cabin originally stood between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, just west of G Street (Lot 11, Block 99). It was reportedly built by "Frenchie" La Rue in 1917. Pat Miller and George Lynch owned the property in early years. They sold it to E.F. Belmont in 1921. Joe Prairie acquired the property and sold it to L.D. (Cappy) Roach in 1931. Roach, an Anchorage lawyer, resided there for more than ten years. The First United Methodist Church bought the cabin in 1946 and met there for nearly a decade. It was moved to its present location in 1956.

Round logs form the walls of the first floor. On the front half, they are supported by vertical posts at the corners. The logs of the low addition to the rear are joined by saddle notching. The second story is frame construction. The cabin, which is solid and well-maintained, stands as a good example of the Anchorage round log, two-story cabin.

The Brown-Woodley Cabin.

The LaRue-Roach Cabin.

Looking east from Fourth Avenue and E Street around 1916.

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Fourth Avenue has always been considered the "Main Street" of Anchorage. Within six weeks after the first auction, 145 business structures were built on the townsite: 92 were along Fourth Avenue. Eleven buildings in the town were two stories high, and nine of these aligned Fourth Avenue.[1] A few substantial businesses such as Kimball's Store were erected along Fifth Avenue, but such commercial buildings were rare.

Why did Fourth Avenue become Anchorage's major street? Some say "it just happened." However, a review of its location in relation to the land disposition in 1915 offers some basic clues to its intense development. The street was the obvious choice for commercial establishments. It was the closest street to the terminal yards atop the level ground of the plateau. Similarly, it was the closest street to "Tent City" that had lots on both sides of the street open to sale. (Even though First, Second and Third Avenues were nearer the terminal yards, major portions of those streets were set aside for governmental purposes.) A portion of Fourth Avenue was "designated as the business district."[2] Two blocks were withheld from public sale along Fourth Avenue. The importance of these future uses -the Federal Reserve and Municipal Reserve - suggested that the eighty-foot-wide street would become the center of day-to-day activities.

Such factors must have had a bearing on the development decisions of local merchants. During the first auction, lots along Fourth Avenue were bought for considerably more money than elsewhere in the townsite. Whereas the average price for all townsite lots was only $225, the first bids on Fourth Avenue property averaged $548 per lot. Along the heart of the avenue (between C and F Streets), corner lots typically sold between $800-$10,005[4] — twice the appraised value. Following the auction a local editor wrote: "While perhaps local residents did not anticipate the fancy prices that were paid for lots, it is better that there should have been an eager demand than a lack of interest and consequent cheap prices. The one means faith and optimism and the other doubt and pessimism. And confidence is a large contributing factor that builds a center of population."[5]

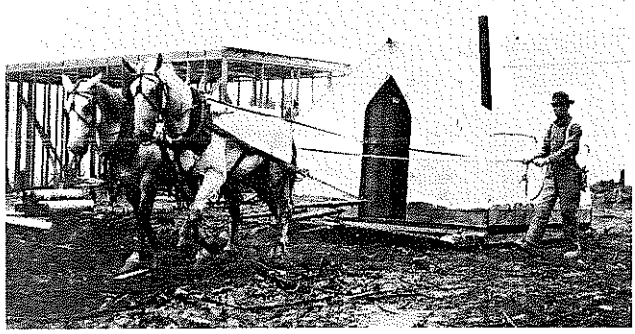
Many of the original lot owners lived in "Tent City" when the townsite was being surveyed. As the new lots were staked, these future residents were encouraged "to visit the townsite and to go over the ground as thoroughly as possible so as to become informed."[6] Merchants were eager to move into a permanent location on the plateau. To hasten the opening of the townsite they urged the completion of the survey "to relieve chaotic business conditions prevailing" at the temporary Ship Creek settlement.[7]

Prior to the first auction, interested businessmen had stockpiled construction supplies and were ready to build immediately. The avenue quickly began to exhibit its commercial enterprises. Some were merely tent-covered frame structures. Others, such as Brown and Hawkins, the Byrne Building, the Lathrop Building, the Carrol Building and the Wendler Building, were substantial establishments. Thus, Fourth Avenue was established as the main street of Anchorage by the first snowfall.

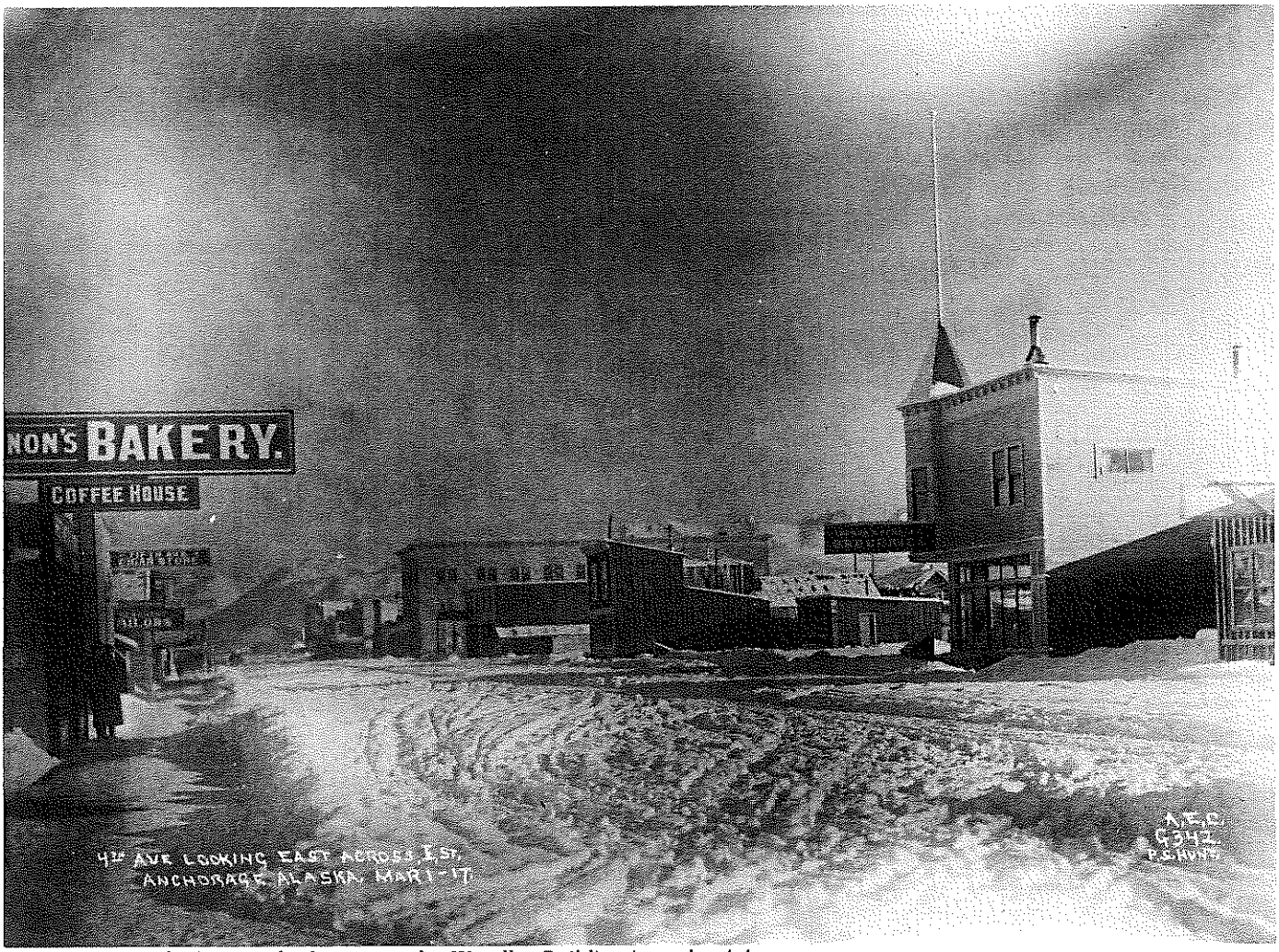
The building marked "Felix Brown's" still stands at the southeast corner of Fourth Avenue and D Street. It was originally a haberdashery.

Not all of Fourth Avenue businesses were frame in the early days. Tent City businesses, were reestablished on the new town's main street.

Mobile operation in 1915. One of the Tent City structures being relocated to the new townsite.



In the next year many more permanent buildings were erected where tents and log structures had been. Although a few, new buildings were constructed from time to time, the character of Fourth Avenue did not change appreciably for twenty to thirty years. In the late 1930's new, more modern buildings began to change the face of Fourth Avenue. Like many of America's "Main Streets," store front changes have been numerous. Unlike other cities, the avenue has had to contend with a major earthquake which prompted redevelopment almost overnight. Despite the many changes, a number of early Anchorage buildings can still be found along Fourth Avenue.



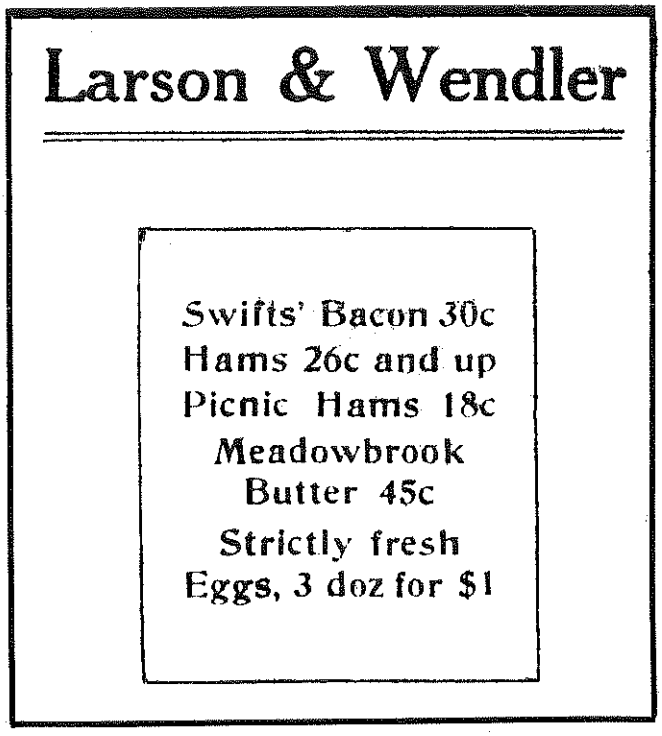
A view of Fourth Avenue, looking east: the Wendler Building is to the right.

The Wendler Building (Club 25)

The Wendler Building was built in the late summer of 1915. By November A.J. Wendler and R.C. Larson had started their partnership calling it Larson and Wendler Groceries. The building housed both a store and a residence: the store was downstairs and the Wendlers lived upstairs. Although Larson moved out of the business in the early years, the building continued to be owned by a Wendler until 1983. For almost forty years, Mrs. Myrtle (Wendler) Stalnaker, the daughter of A.J. Wendler, owned and operated a restaurant in the building. The structure was donated to the Municipality in 1983 with the provision that it be relocated. It has been moved to the corner of Fourth Avenue and D Street from its original location on Fourth Avenue at I Street in order to maintain both its location on Anchorage's main commercial street and its corner orientation.

The building has always been unique in Anchorage. Unlike the vast majority of Fourth Avenue businesses, it was not false-fronted and of box-like construction. Moreover, the Wendler Building had an extra touch that set it apart - its corner turret. A Victorian design feature popularized in the late-nineteenth century, the corner turret was embraced by many businessmen

Larson and Wendler's Grocery, like so many of the early merchants, used the Daily Times to advertise their goods.



The Wendler Building, 1915. "Club 25" was originally a grocery.

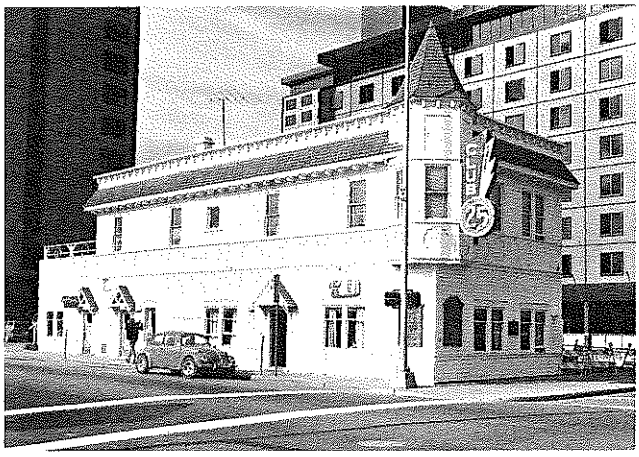
in the Pacific Northwest as it gave visual prominence to a corner establishment. Most northern frontier towns (for example, Skagway, Juneau, Dawson and Valdez) had their share of turreted corner buildings. Yet, the railroad town of Anchorage had but one turreted structure - the Wendler Building.

The turret on the Wendler Building is polygonal in plan and has a tent roof. Three windows are encased in its three exposed sides. Originally, the entrance to the grocery was a set of doors located under the turret. Large plate glass windows with glass transoms provided an ample view of the stock on the ground floor of the store. Like most early Anchorage stores, the building is covered with shiplap. Beneath the cornice is a series of dentils which run along the entire roofline. The shiplap, the roofline and the turret remain original to the building.

In the mid-1930's the store was converted to use as an apartment building. This conversion necessitated a number of changes. The interior was refinished with mahogany woodwork and divided into a series of rooms. Because of downstairs apartments, the store-front windows and the corner entrance were enclosed.

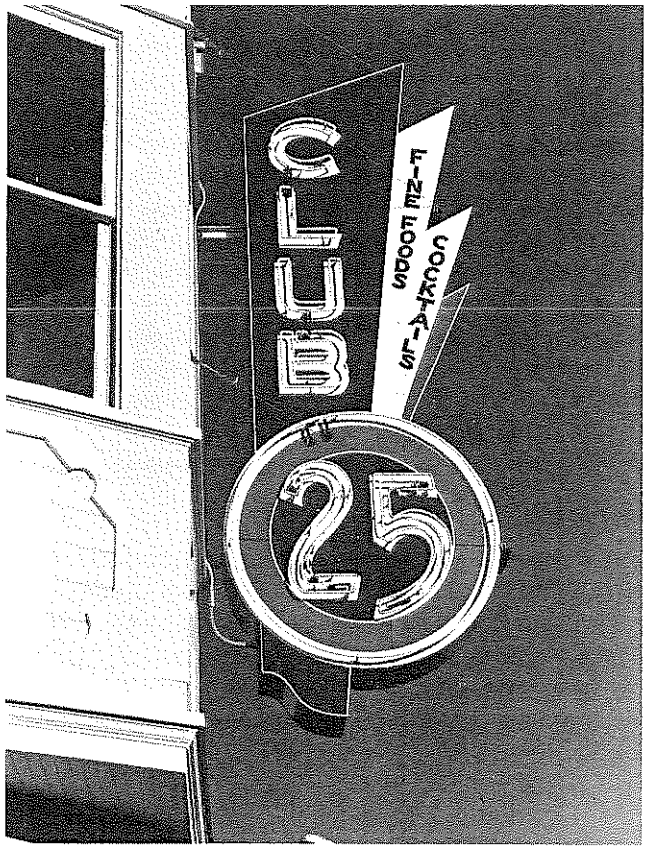
Over the course of years the facade has received additional slight alteration. A pent roof, also highlighted by dentils, was affixed along the upper portion of the second story. A small side portico and polygonal braces - both reminiscent of "stick architecture" - have also been added.

The building has been known as Club 25 for thirty years. In 1948 Mrs. Stalnaker, along with other Anchorage women, went to Dallas for a bowling tournament. They were treated so well by their twenty-five hostesses that Mrs. Stalnaker was left with a deep impression of the cordiality. Returning to Anchorage she felt that the hospitality of those hostesses should be duplicated for women here. Thus, she opened Club



The Wendler Building prior to its relocation.

The corner turret, a holdover from the Victorian era, is unique to the Wendler Building.



25 as a special place for the women of Anchorage. After the first year, the membership requirements were dropped and gentlemen were also served. Club 25 will once again operate as a restaurant after restoration.

Besides its extraordinary character as one of the few remaining 1915 commercial buildings, the structure is notable for its association with A.J. Wendler. Of German descent, Wendler was an early Anchorage civic leader. Reared in Michigan, he moved to Oregon where he worked for a number of years. After coming to Alaska in the early part of the century, he settled in Valdez where he ran a brewery until the prohibition movement caused it to close. With the announcement of railroad construction and town development, he moved his family to Anchorage. In the townsite auction Mrs. Wendler paid $555 for the lot upon which the grocery was to be built. As Larson and Wendler had already stockpiled lumber for the construction, a crew of carpenters completed the store in the early fall. Soon, groceries were being sold.

A.J. Wendler was very active in community affairs during those early years. He was president of the Chamber of Commerce, 1915-1916, serving to expand the growth of that business association. He was clerk of the first school board, and along with his wife, was instrumental in the building of the first school (now known as Pioneer Hall). Because there was no policy regarding schools for Anchorage, a federally-created town, Wendler and others had no small task in organizing the first educational facilities. Wendler Junior High School is named in his honor.

Kimball's Store: 500 West Fifth Avenue

Kimball's Store is representative of the early commercial establishments of Anchorage. The store - certainly one of Anchorage's oldest - was constructed in August and September of 1915. It was built for Irving L. Kimball who had bought the property at the first townsite auction in July. The Kimballs went into business selling general merchandise in November, 1915. Although the merchandise has changed, the Kimball Building looks much the same as it did then. Continuous family ownership has been a major factor in the preservation of the early store-front character of this building. The present owner is Mrs. Decema Kimball Andresen Slawson.

The Kimball Building, although typical in some respects (false-front, frame construction and rectangular appearance), was a structure unto its own. Unusual to Anchorage, it was constructed with two stories facing the side street (E Street). The roof is pitched diagonally to the west and thus the store is actually one-and-one-half stories. It was one of the few retail establishments on Fifth Avenue in the early years: most commercial outlets lined Fourth Avenue. When nearing completion, the building was described as presenting "an imposing and substantial appearance."[8] The false-front, two-story facade, and corner location, provide a solid form and make an attractive beginning for the row of similarly-scaled buildings of the block.

Irving L. Kimball had worked in Alaska for many years before coming to Anchorage. A native of Pennsylvania, he moved west to Portland, Oregon. In 1898 he began sailing aboard a trading ship under Captain Barett to the western Alaskan coast. In the gold rush days of Nome, they supplied the boom town (with, among other things, an Ivers and Pond piano ...it was the era of the honky-tonk saloon). He spent nearly two years in Barrow after being shipwrecked. Eventually, he returned to Nome where he was taken "Outside" aboard the steamer Dora. Back in Portland, he married Della Carpenter.

The Kimballs returned to Alaska, settling at Resurrection Bay in 1902. There he ran a trading post in conjunction with the Alaska Central Railway's development. Within a year this port became designated as Seward. The trading post was the start of many years of merchandising. From 1907 to 1915 the family lived on LaTouche Island. There Kimball ran a general store located halfway down the island from the copper mines. When the Anaconda interests in South America began to underprice American copper, hard times began for the Guggenheim-Kennecott mines. The family was ready to move again.

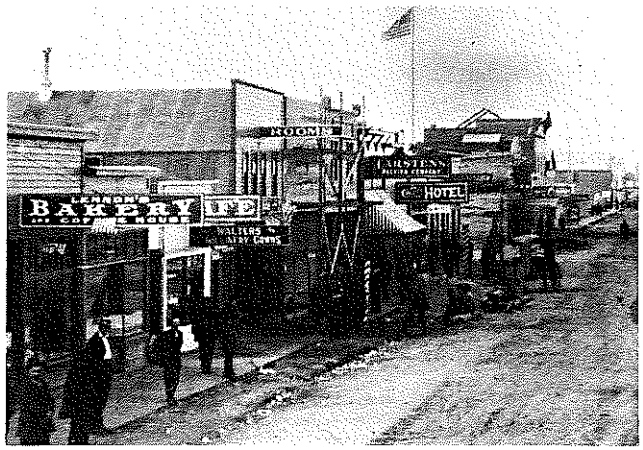
With the announcement of the railroad project, Kimball brought his family to Anchorage. They lived in "Tent City"

The Kimball Building, 1915. The appearance of this building is very much like it was upon completion in September of 1915. Dry goods have been sold for sixty-three years at this location.

Irving L. Kimball stands amidst his merchandise during his first year of business.

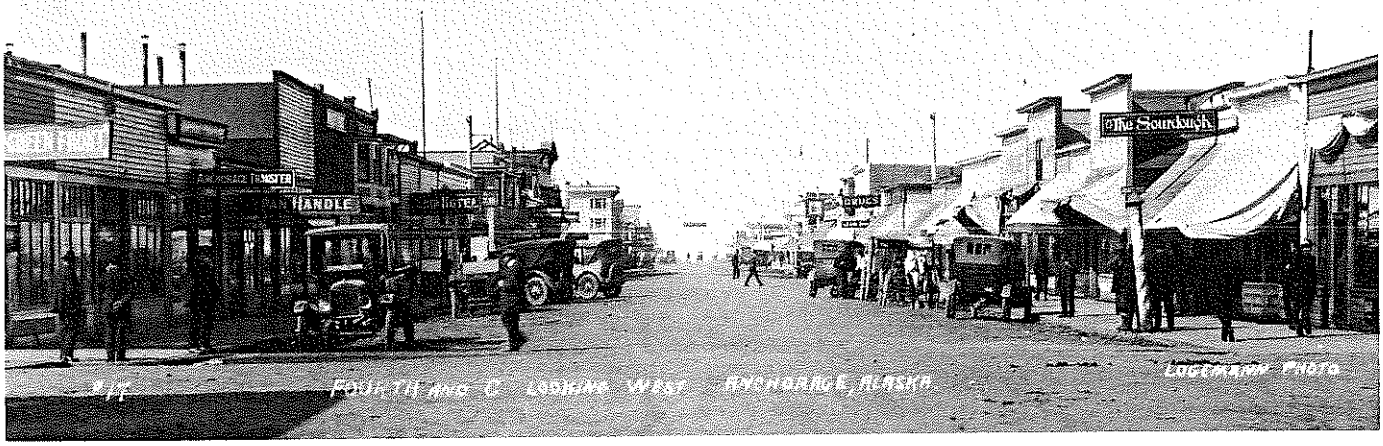
until the auction. Kimball won Lot 1, Block 51 - the site for his store - for $500. He moved the family's tent to the backside of the lot while the Kimball Building was being constructed. Later the family lived in the residence which adjoined the rear portion of the store. Mr. Kimball operated the business until his death in 1921. The family continued to sell general merchandise. In 1935 groceries were discontinued:dry goods and hardware were maintained as the line of business. In 1958, with the passing of Mrs. Kimball, the store was divided into two portions. The dry goods business continued in one-half, while a paint store developed in the other.[9]

Partitioning of the building into two shops was accomplished with minimal destruction of the original facade. The basic change was the creation of two entrances instead of one. The large glass storefront (the glass remains encased in wooded, not aluminum frames) and the false-front facade have been retained. Kimball's Dry Goods currently shares the building with a coffee emporium known as the Gold Pan. This latter shop complements the history of the building. Its teas and coffees are sold from counters which were brought from Valdez following the 1964 Earthquake and date from the early part of this century.



Looking down Block 44 (between C and D Streets) in 1918. Note Conley's Hotel: the building is still there.

"Fourth and C looking west," this shot was taken around 1920. The Ship Hotel and the building west of it are still there. The buildings to the right were lost in the 1964 earthquake.



328 West Fourth Avenue

The building now occupied by Pioneer Loan Company was constructed around 1916. The false-fronted structure originally contained the Conly Hotel.[10] Within two or three years, the name was changed to Ship Hotel. The 1922 Sanborn Map shows that twenty-three rooms formed the Hotel. The Ship Hotel continued in business for many years. H. A. Faroe ran a building supply business at the location in the 1940's.[11] Pioneer Loan Company moved in after the 1964 earthquake. Still used for commercial purposes, two shops are now located in the building.

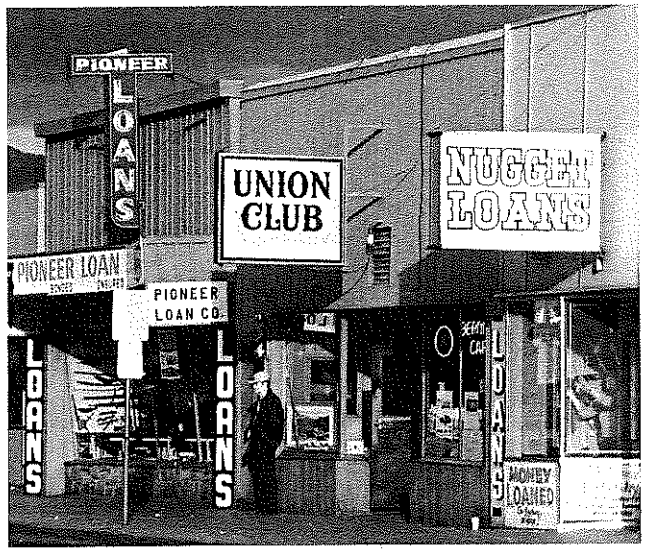
Although there has been moderate store-front changes, the scale, false-front facade and interior floor plan provide a sense of what commercial buildings were like in the early era of the town's development.

328 to 346 West Fourth. These three locations date back to 1915-1918. All three are still in existence.

338 West Fourth Avenue

The portion of this building fronting on Fourth Avenue (that is, the western half of Lot 5, Block 44) was constructed around 1916. According to municipal tax records, it was originally the Alaska Pool Hall and continued to operate until 1934 when the building was expanded. It was then known as the Alaska Cigar Store and was depicted on insurance maps as a news and variety store.

Joseph Smitbauer, who had purchased the property at the original townsite auction for $475.00, continued to own it until his death in the mid-1930's. Z.J. Loussac bought the property from the Smitbauer estate in 1940 and sold it to Bert Shock and Chris Poulsen within two years. They made substantial improvements, operating the Union Club in this building for more than thirty years. In 1984, the name was changed to the Pearl. Like the Pioneer Loan Company, the false-front of this building is representative of early commercial buildings. Over time, the details of the facade, such as the decorative cornice, have been removed.



The store fronts on these two buildings have been altered over time; however, they are among the earliest buildings on Fourth Avenue.

509 West Fourth Avenue: Ellen's Jewelers

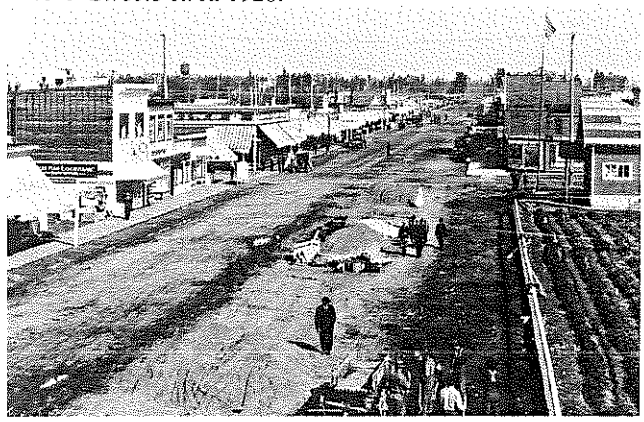
Fred Laubner bought lot 11 in 1915 from Marie Miller and divided it into east and west portions.[12] He retained ownership of the eastern portion of the lot and built a two-story building. The upper floor was used as professional offices. E.S. Hewitt leased the first floor as an office and business machine outlet. Already established in Juneau, Hewitt opened his Anchorage branch store at this location in 1916.[13] It was a two-story building with large glass store windows. The upper facade had three windows and a modest cornice.

Chovin Supply Co., selling electrical merchandise, opened here in the mid-1920's. Chovin leased to R.L. Watson in 1930 and later sold to him in 1936. Watson also operated an electrical store. Lois Gilman purchased the building in 1943. She operated Lois' Beauty Shop on the second floor and Gilman's Bakery on the ground floor.[14] In a reflection of Art Deco design, the facade of the bakery was covered in white title in the mid-1940's. In the mid-1950's E. C. and Robert Rutherford began a clothing store here. The current store, Ellen's Jewelers, began in the mid-1960's in this 1916 structure.

531 West Fourth Avenue:
Ship Creek Meat Market/Stewart's Photo

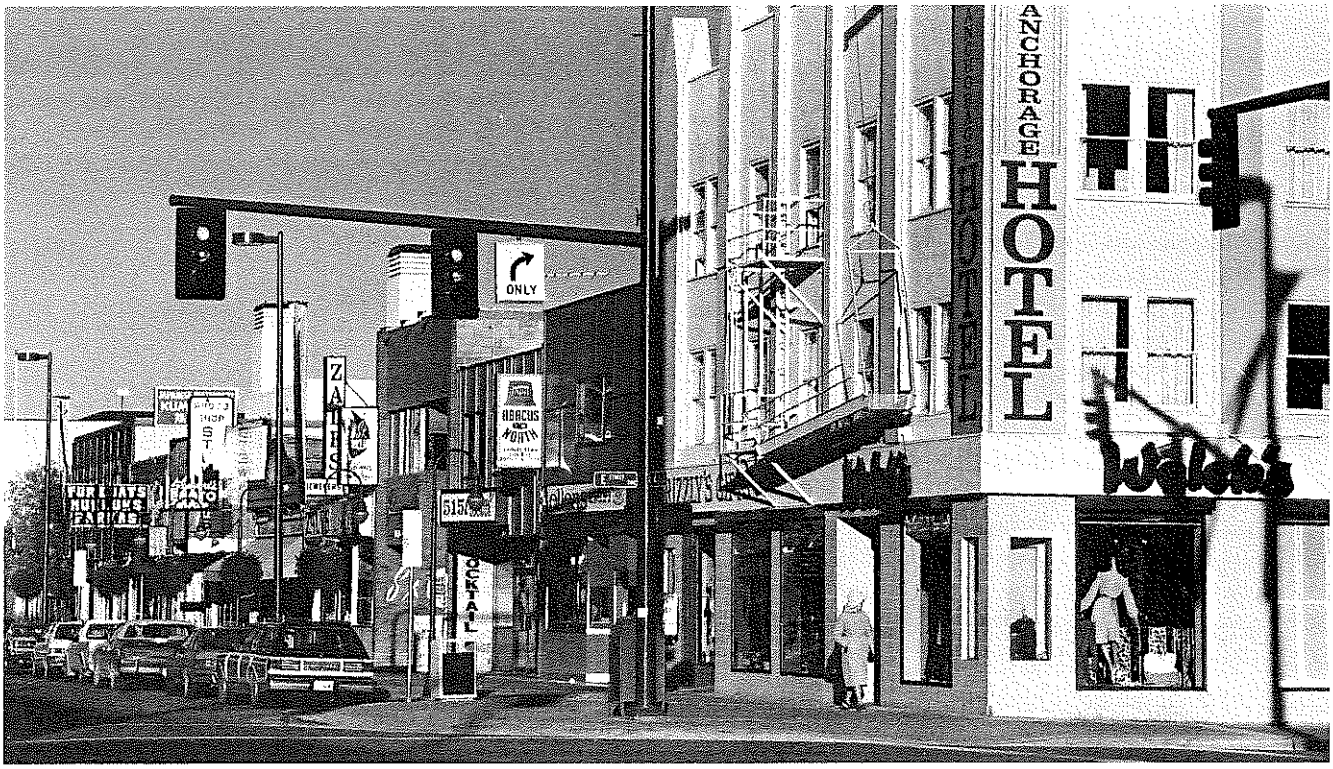
The two, long-time operating establishments in this location have been Ship Creek Meat Market and Stewarts' Photo. The building apparently dates from around 1920. By 1922 Simpson's Pool Hall was offering entertainment under the ownership of Matt Raich.[15] Three years later, Michael Skrivan

E to F Streets circa 1920.



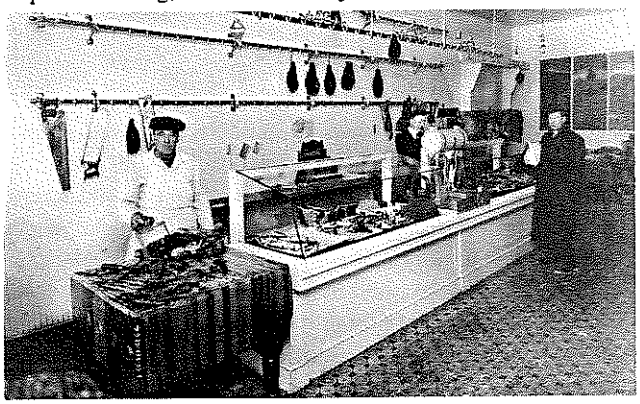
purchased the property and opened the City Market. In 1927, Oscar Anderson, who had first established a meat market in Tent City, became Skrivan's partner. Anderson moved his enterprise, then located one block to the east, to this location. The new operation was still called Ship Creek Meat Market. Skrivan managed the market and Vern Johnson and Frank Brant were butchers.[16] Anderson, who was involved in a number of enterprises, spent much of his time at the Evan Jones Coal Mine in Eska (for more information about Oscar Anderson, see the Anderson House).

Skrivan left Alaska in the 1940's, selling his interest to Keith Lesh and Jack Barrett, owners of the adjacent Food Center. The Ship Creek Meat Market and the Food Center remained in business until the late 1950's.[17] Farrell's Flowers and Candy operated their business here for several years until the present tenant, Stewart's Photo, began leasing in 1964.



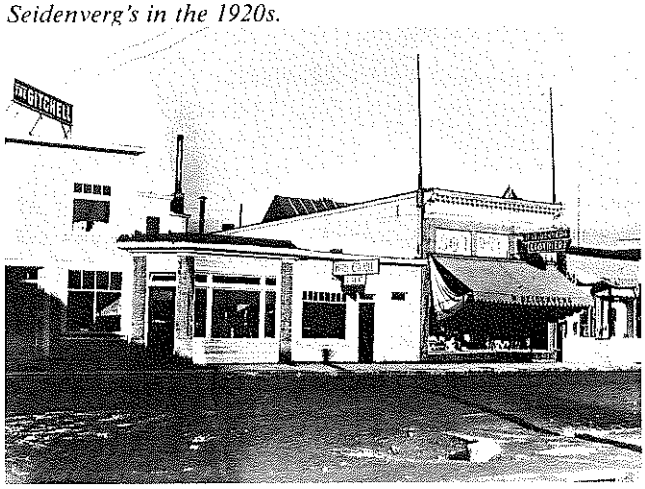
Fourth Avenue, E to F Streets as it appeared in 1985.

The site of these two buildings was purchased for $765.00 by Ray T. Larson and Mrs. H. A. Wendler following the March 1916 auction.[18] The lot (Lot 8, Block 26) was split into east and west halves not long after the original purchase. Henry C. Dohrman purchased the west half and built the structure at 541 West Fourth Avenue in 1917. Harry Seidenverg began his clothing store there that year. He was the first of several clothing merchants to operate at this location. The two-story, commercial structure featured three windows under a roofline cornice. At ground level large plate glass display windows offered a glimpse of merchandise to be sold. Other clothing merchants who operated at this site include: Will Clayson, who bought the property in 1921; a second edition of the Seidenverg store; Lee's Mens Wear, starting in 1949; and Koslosky's Clothing Store, located here from the post earthquake era to the late 1970's. The original facade, with its clapboard siding, cornice and ample window space, was representative of the frontier town's "Main Street". That facade has been covered by metallic siding in the last few decades. A jewelry store and fur store currently share this structure.



Oscar Anderson (at block) and Louis Jensen and unknown customer in Ship Creek Market.

Seidenverg's in the 1920s.



The east portion of the site remained largely vacant for many years. The exception was the small shoeshine stand, "25¢ a shine", run by Ed Bolmer, one of Anchorage's first black residents.[19] It remained in operation until the mid-1930's. A.J. Brovillard, who purchased the property in 1922, sold his holding to D.E. Hewitt in 1936. Hewitt leased the property to Keith Lesh and Jack Barrett in 1938, initially for six months at $125 per month.[20] They built a building and started the Food Center. In the early 1940's they bought a half interest in the adjacent Ship Creek Meat Market and opened a connecting arch between the two buildings. Like its neighbor at 541 West Fourth Avenue, metallic siding has been placed over the front facade of the Food Center building and its use has been converted over a period of time.

Seidenverg Clothiers.

614 West Fourth Avenue: The Reed Building

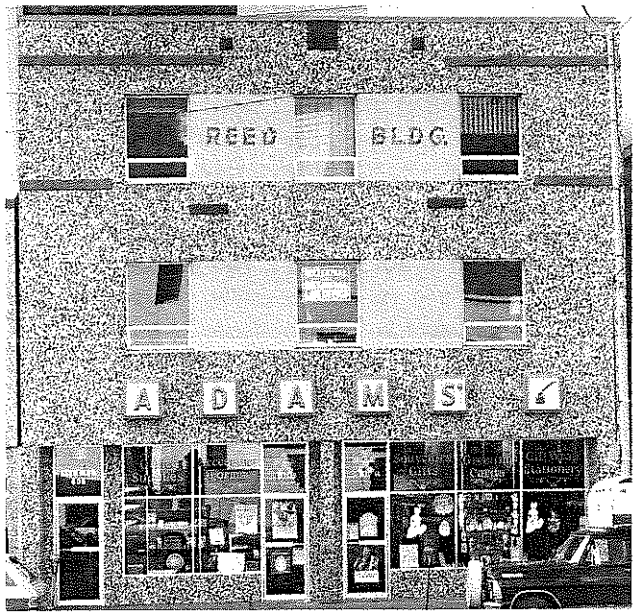
The three-bay, three-story, reinforced concrete building was constructed in 1923 by the Independent Order of Oddfellows. Prior to purchase by Frank and Paul Reed in the fall of 1945, the building was I.O.O.F. Lodge 8A for more than 20 years. Construction of this structure was financed via combination of cash and a $30,000 bond issue.[21] The original building had a partial basement and a partial third story: the majority of the second floor space was a full two-story height. The fraternal lodge's meeting hall occupied this second floor space while offices filled the top floor. The Bank of Anchorage was the initial ground floor occupant.

The building stayed in the Reed family for 35 years. They remodeled the interior circa 1947, organizing office spaces and removing the bank's vaults. Additional alterations took place in the 1960's. The first and third floor cornices were removed, a full basement was added, the third floor was extended the full length of the building, the storefront doors and windows were updated and recessed, and the front facade, previously stucco, was covered with tile.[22]

Tenants of this building have been varied over its long life. A restaurant, stationery story and several attorneys have long occupied space. Other tenants have ranged from offices of the Governor to the Anchorage Times, and an art studio to engineering and contracting firms. The building was sold in 1981 to Commercial Stationers, Inc.

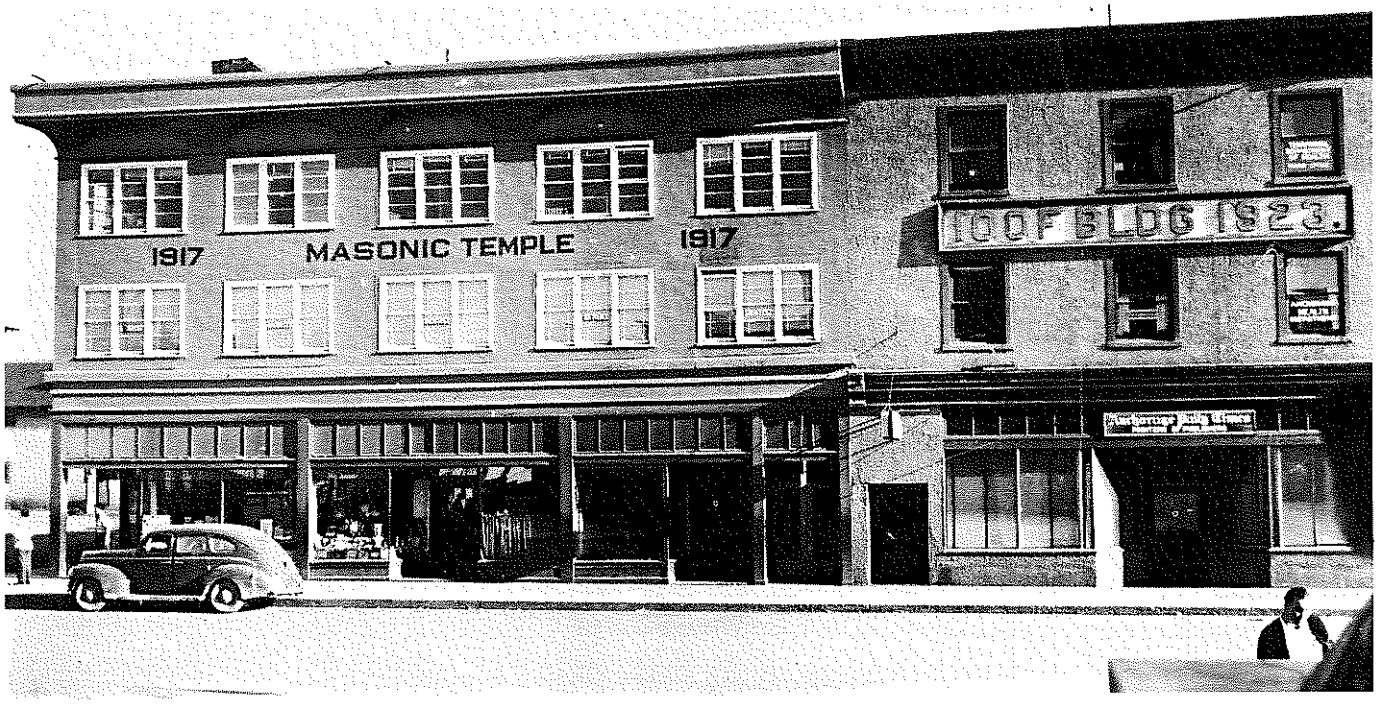
The Reed family has been active in the development of Anchorage. They have made particular contributions to hotel, utility and finance fields (see the Eklutna Power Plant for more information about the Reeds).

The Reed Building as it appears today.



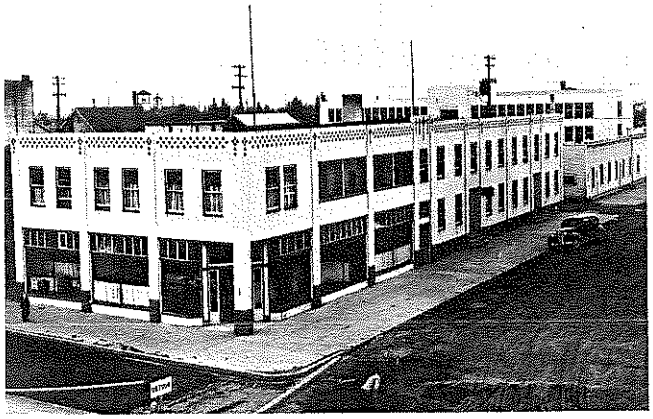
420 G Street

The Canton Chinese Restaurant is a relative newcomer to this structure. Almost square in shape, the one-story building dates back to the first years of the town's development when it was used as a law office. Gerry Murphy was one of the first attorneys to occupy the space. Later, Tom Price turned from the plumbing business to the legal profession and moved into the building in the early 1920's. Price served as Territorial Representative and Senator and was the U.S. Commissioner for this district for many years.



The International Order of Odd Fellows (or Reed Building) prior to facade changes.

First National Bank in the early 1940s.



The bank today.

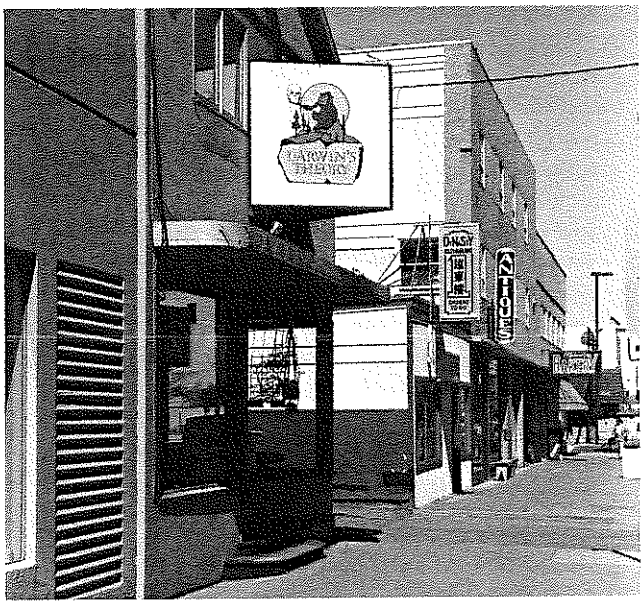
646 West Fourth Avenue:
The First National Bank of Anchorage

By 1916 the Bon Marche clothing store occupied the southeast corner of G Street and Fourth Avenue. It was a two-story concrete building with retail on the ground floor and offices above. Square in plan, it occupied only the northern end of the lot. In 1922, The First National Bank of Anchorage, founded by former Idaho candy maker Winfield Ervin, opened its doors in the same building.[23] A "cigar and tobacco" store shared the structure. The original bank building had a corner entrance and large display windows with transoms. The structure was stuccoed and had pilasters which drew one's eyes up to the decorative banding on the parapet.

In the 1930's, a two-story apartment building filling the rest of the lot was constructed. It was attached to the bank and bore a similar facade design. The apartments were used as residential apartments and professional offices. As the bank grew, it expanded into Eckmann's Furniture Store, located immediately adjacent to the east, and later into the apartments. A second floor was added over Eckmann's for bank use in the early 1960's. A drive-in bank and parking garage were constructed across the alley in 1962. The existing eight-story tower was built atop the drive-in structure in 1964, immediately after the earthquake. With this construction, The First National Bank of Anchorage was one of the first businesses to make a firm commitment to the future of the city after the disastrous earthquake.

The Bon Marche originally occupied the building which has long been the home to First National Bank.

420 and 426 G Street.



426 G Street

This building is said to have been built in the late 1930s. It doubled as a store with a residence upstairs. Ruthie's 49'er was in there between 1949 and the early 1980s. In recent years another tavern, Darwin's Theory, has operated at this G Street location.

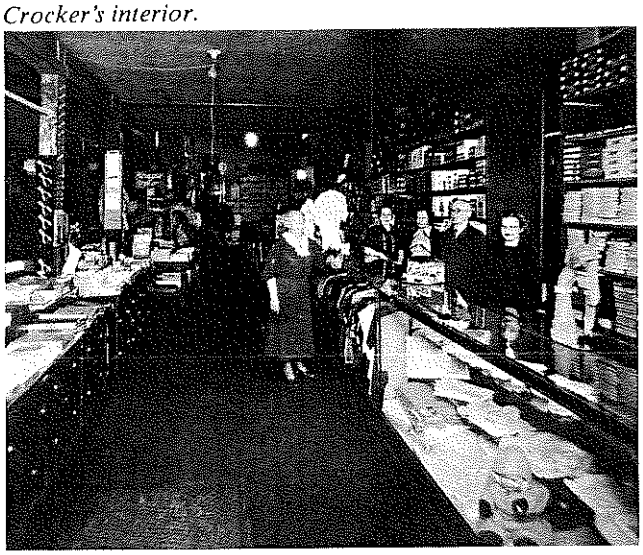
The Crocker Building: 701 West Fourth Avenue

After several years in Alaska, Ulysses Grant Crocker arrived in Anchorage in 1915. He had worked in Cordova and Valdez, mined on the Koyukuk River, and was employed by the Alaska Railroad prior to opening his merchandising store. He began his business in 1915. It was then located on Fourth Avenue west of the Lathrop Building.[24] He sold furniture and manufactured and sold canvas items - awnings, wing covers and fuselage, mattresses, tents and tarps. The enterprise soon developed into one of the earliest department stores in Anchorage.

In 1917 Crocker moved his business to the corner of Fourth Avenue and G Street and into a building he moved onto the lot. This original building has been added to twice. The Crocker family lived in the rear of the second floor and the store occupied the rest of the structure.[25] The canvas portion of the business operated on the second floor. Toys, jewelry, clothing and notions were for sale on the first floor; and pillows, blankets and sheets were available in the basement. Miners and trappers, as well as townspeople, were outfitted at Crocker's, an establishment recognized for its wide variety of merchandise. A small frame structure located on the alley was used as rental property. In the late 1930's this house was moved to the Bootlegger's Cove area. A renovated railroad car was relocated to the site. It became a diner run by Nellie Brown.

Fourth Avenue looking west, the Reed Building is the second from the left. The building which once housed Crocker's is now Arbys.

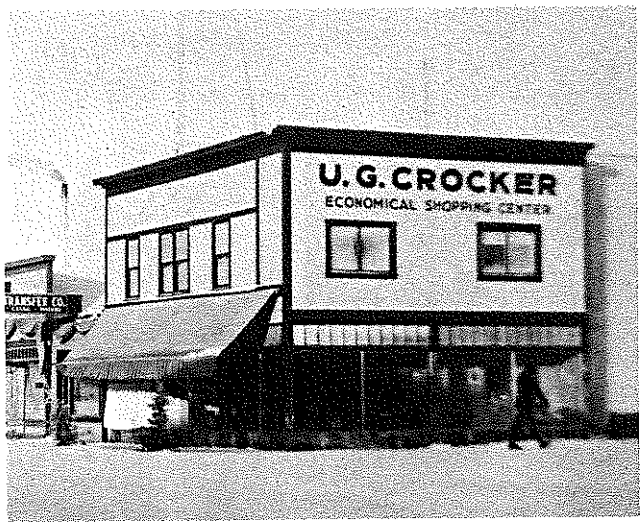
Crocker's interior.



During the mid-1940's, the basement of Crocker's Department Store became a bar named the South Seas. Walt Grohnert managed it while Walter Hickel bartended and worked as bouncer. Crocker's Department Store continued until 1954. Since then the Crocker family has leased the building. Berts Drug, which had been located directly across the street in the Alaska Building, leased it from 1954 until the late 1960's. Arby's occupies the ground floor and lawyer's offices are located on the second floor today. The top of the original stucco structure remains visible above the Arby facade.

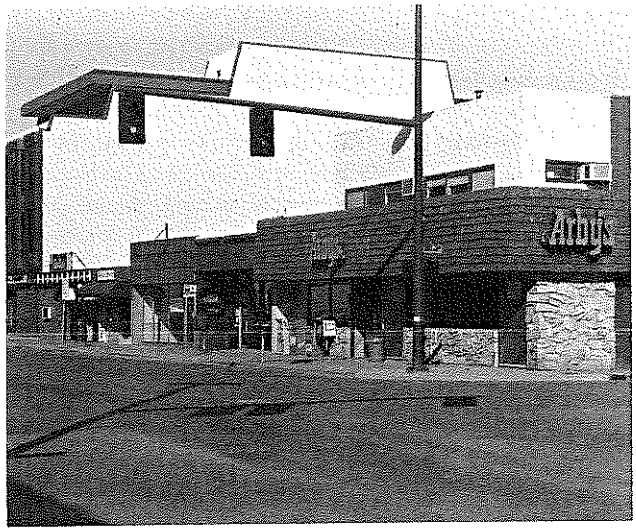
735 and 739 West Fourth Avenue:
Dan's Camera and the Pioneer Club

The existing structures on this lot incorporate much earlier buildings. The structure which houses Dan's Camera Repair and the Alaska Sportsman Barber Shop was built before 1920. The building is a one-story gable structure with a false storefront facade. The shed addition at the rear is the original coal storage room.[26]



Crocker's in the 1920s.

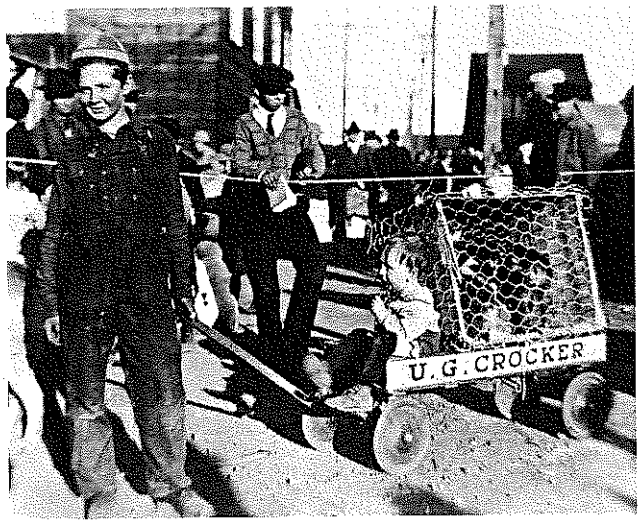
The block as it appears today.



The property was owned by businesswoman Ollie Gray for decades and many well-known local enterprises leased the building. Ira Losey's bakery, the Merchants Cafe and one of the town's earliest cafeterias operated from this site. In the 1950's the building was divided: a barber shop and a typewriter repair service were located there. Dan's Camera Repair moved in in the 1960's. The office machine shop is currently located in the rear of the building.

The Pioneer Laundry operated in the west half of the lot from before 1920 until approximately 1950. Eli and May Dehon originally owned the business. They later sold it to the Dool family who then ran it for many years.

The north end of the original laundry was concrete and still exists. It is believed the heavy laundering equipment was located there.[27] The original laundry building facing Fourth Avenue was frame. It was torn down in the early 1950's and the Pioneer Club built in 1952. Charles "Tiny" Shields, a miner from Hope, and Joe Woitek, formerly a tailor at the New Method Cleaners located in the same block, were the first owners. The bar has gone through a succession of owners.



A touch of Crocker advertising.

700 West Fourth Avenue : The Alaska Building

Constructed in 1915, the Alaska Building was, along with the Empress Theatre, the first of Anchorage's concrete buildings. On the ground level were three establishments. The foremost was the Bank of Anchorage which was on the corner. A real estate office and the Edison Music Shop were also located there. On the second floor were three offices. Waller and Duggan were at the east end. Dr. M.S. Coble, a physician, received his patients in the central portion. Strye, an early Anchorage photographer, had his studio at the west end of the building. Later tenants included Alex Liska, chiropractor, Bert's Drugstore, a barber shop and Gladys Swank's Art and Gift Shop, but none are located there today. The Pacific Steamship Company had a one-story office which adjoined the Alaska Building along the G Street side.[28]

By 1916 Anchorage standards, the roof line of the Alaska Building was streamlined. A lip of an eave and a very modest series of dentils adorned the parapet which ran along both G Street and Fourth Avenue. The trip of the second-story windows appears to have been of molded concrete. Large storefront windows and decorative transom windows were featured at the ground floor level making the lower facade practically all glass.

In 1923, J.B. Gottstein bought the building and other property on the lot for $28,000.[29] The structure is sometimes referred to as the Gottstein Building, but the words "Alaska Building," can still be found above a G Street entrance. Under Gottstein's ownership a wing was attached along G Street.

The Alaska Building.

The building has since been covered with stucco and aluminum window frames have replaced the wood frames and transom windows. Consequently, its original appearance is largely hidden.

The Alaska Building as it appeared in 1916.

The Lathrop Building: 801 West Fourth Avenue

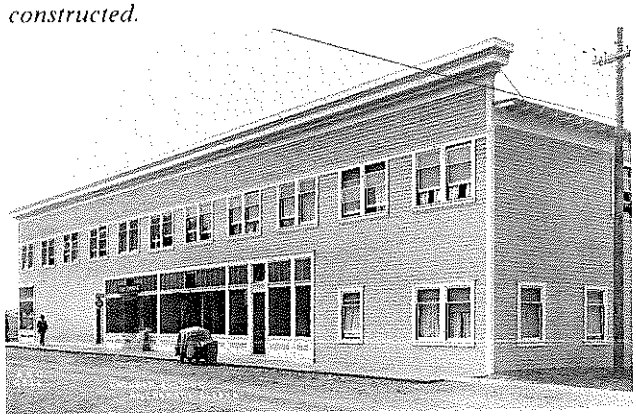
Austin E. ("Cap") Lathrop wasted no time in entering the Anchorage business world. He set up his Alaska Transfer Company office in the Lathrop Building which was known as the Empress Building in the early years. The first floor of the structure was constructed in 1915. It was described as follows:

> "Captain Austen (sic) Lathrop enjoys the distinction of erecting the most commodious building in the new town. It is located at the corner of Fourth Avenue and H Street and contains five fine, roomy store spaces, already leased for various businesses. The building is substantially made. The floor is the best ever placed in an Alaska building."[30]

In the fall of 1916, a second story was added to the building. That project was supervised by George Purvis, an architect and contractor.[31] Offices and apartments were placed upstairs. Lathrop lived in one of the apartments[32] and the rest were rented. They were the first apartments in town to have electric heat.

Over the years businesses occupying the building have changed. The major tenant the first year was Mrs. T.D. Corlew whose dress shop faced Fourth Avenue. By 1917 a drug store shared the first floor space. During the 1930's Harry Proctor's grocery was on the first floor. The Piggly Wiggly Market was there during the 1950's. The building continues to be used for retail and office purposes.

This shot of its facade shows how the cornice was constructed.



The Lathrop Building. The removal of the cornices and the covering of the original shiplap siding obscure it s identity.

The Lathrop Building, 1915-1917, George Purvis, architect. The first story of Cap Lathrop's building was constructed in 1915 while the second story was added two years later.

Furber's Corner.

242 East Fifth Avenue: The Suomi Hall

The Finnish Social Hall was originally located on Eagle Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. The building was moved in the late 1930's to its present location, a lot donated by August Neimi "for as long as it is used for the Suomi Hall."[33]

The wedge-like shape of the facade was a design feature occasionally employed on some of the era's buildings. The Suomi Hall (also known as the Finnish Hall), served as a meeting facility and dance hall for Finnish residents. During the 1930's there was a relatively large Finnish population in the Anchorage area. As many as three dozen families, in addition to individuals who sojourned to Anchorage to work for awhile, were Finnish immigrants. They made contributions in many sectors of the region's commerce including railroading, mining, agriculture and fishing.

In recent years the building has been used for commercial purposes. In view of planned State Office Building use of this site, the original Suomi Hall must be relocated again.

327 West Fifth Avenue and 329 West Fifth Avenue

The metallic blue facade of the Trading Post and the Fur Factory marks the location of two early Anchorge buildings. The exact year in which these structures were built is not known. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company mapped the early structures as lodging and bunkhouse. The lot was split into two parts in 1915 and two restaurants developed there. "Skookum" Johnson built a twenty-four by thirty foot frame restaurant on part of the lot. H. Bartlett and J. F. Olson built a twenty by forty foot restaurant on the lot as well. One, possibly both of these structures, are integrated into the fabric of the two stores now operating at the locations.

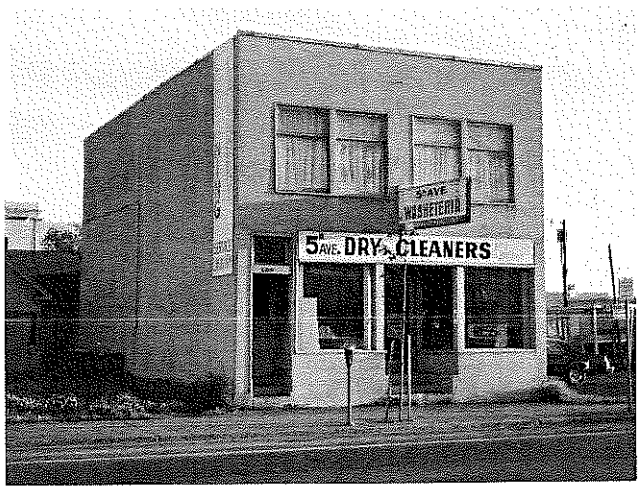
Furber's Corner: 845 West Fourth Avenue

This gas station was one of the first ones in Anchorage. In the earliest years gas could be purchased at such places as Wendler's Grocery. Later, service stations developed. This station, long known as Gil's Garage, functioned as a complete auto repairing and service facility. Built in the mid-1920's, it was operated by Oscar S. Gill. (Gill served as Mayor from 1934-35). It represents a classic in service station design - the corner garage. Originally an enclosed, square building, the drive-through area was an early alteration. Taking advantage of access from each street, the gas pumps were placed under the corner eave. A repair well was sunk in the concrete floor and garage doors provided entrances on both the Fourth Avenue and I Street sides of the building.

Old Suomi Hall, 1932.

Skookum Johnson's Restaurant.

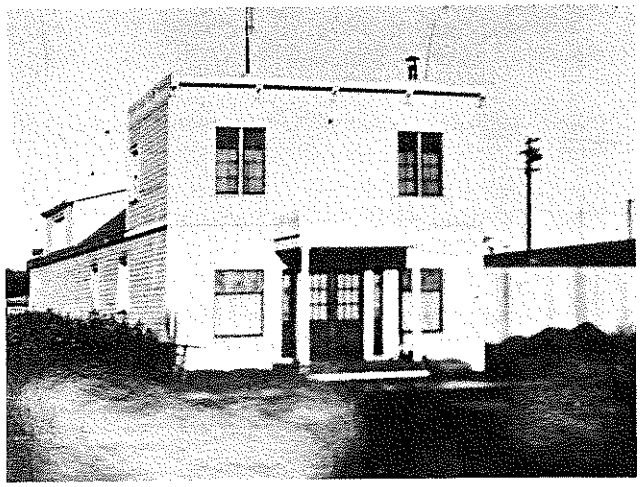
Fifth Avenue Dry Cleaners was previously D.H. Williams Funeral Parlor, located on Fourth Avenue.



417 West Fifth Avenue: Club Paris

This building was constructed in 1936 when Fred Carlquist and Bill Drew bought the property and had a mortuary constructed. Hugo Menzel soon purchased an interest in the business and lived with his family in a second floor apartment above the funeral parlor. In addition to being morticians, Carlquist worked as a jeweler and Menzel was the chief file clerk at the Alaska Railroad.

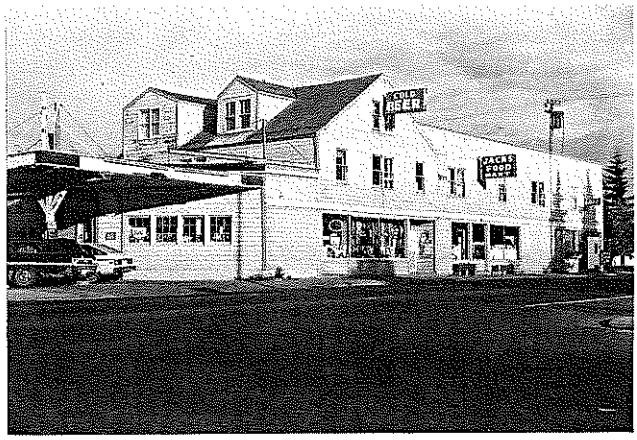
With the creation of Club Paris Restaurant, the appearance of this building changed dramatically. The original facade was a late example of frontier commercial architecture: a bracketed cornice, which is still partially visible at the roofline, and multi-paned windows faced Fifth Avenue. Very unusual to Anchorage was the Georgian influence of the one-story front portico supported by rounded columns. Most of the original details have been lost with the conversion to a restaurant. However, the changes made under Club Paris management -the neon Eiffel Tower decor, the "deep sea" motif and dark paneling of the interior are reminiscent of 1950 Anchorage.



Club Paris as it appeared in the 1930s.

122 West Fifth Avenue

The building in which Fifth Avenue Dry Cleaners is now located originally sat at 730 West Fourth Avenue. Built around 1920, it was D.H. William's funeral parlor in the 1920's and 1930's. In 1943 Jim McGinty moved it to its present site and renovated it. Although now stuccoed, the building is a good example of the material, fabric and scale of the early commercial establishment.



Jack's Foodmart.

807, 815 and 835 I Street: Liquor Store, Jacks Food Mart and The Bread Factory

The frame structure that comprises the three above addresses spans the entire side of a block. It was built by Wren (Slim) and Esther Fultz. Wren worked as a carpenter on the military bases and with his wife's help built the structure in his spare time. The northern portion is the original structure and was built in 1943. It contained a gas station leased to Standard Oil, a grocery store, and apartments on the second and third floors. The Fultzes lived in the "penthouse" apartment and rented the other units. After John Bartells, who had lived in an adjacent frame residence, sold his portion of the lot in 1946, a wing was added toward the alley.

With expansion, a cafe, liquor store, and six apartments with an in-building laundry were put into operation. The Fultzes continued to own the property and manage the liquor store until 1963-64. They initially ran the service station and grocery store but soon leased to others. Jacks Food Mart has been located there for approximately twenty-five years.

The building contains a great variety of architectural elements and can be described as eclectic. The majority of the building is covered with wood siding but two facades are stuccoed. The original portion has a shingled gable roof with gable dormers while the later section has a flat roof. Windows are double hung, or fixed pane, storefront style.

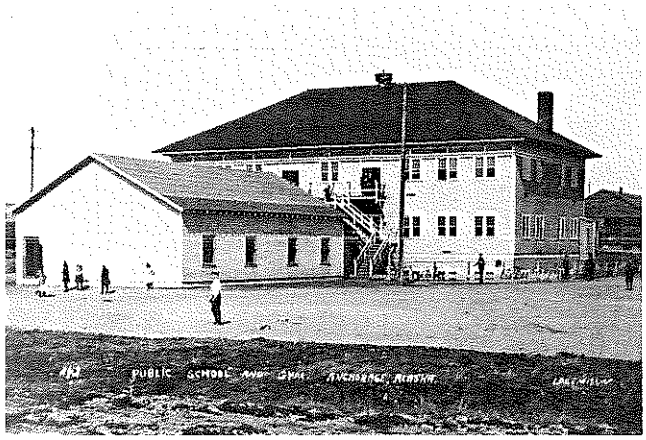
The Pioneer School

The provisions for townsite management were drawn up so hastily during the summer of 1915 that the Alaska Engineering Commission overlooked means by which a school could be financed. When the lots were sold, it was understood that the lots could be assessed to finance such public services as water and sewer utilities, fire protection and garbage pick-up. Somehow, schools had not been included in the list of items for which assessments could be made. Because Anchorage was a government town, the Commission had to accept the responsibility for public education.

The dilemma of providing a school took months to solve. In June 1915, before the first auction, the local editor called for a school. "If we are to retain the families, and they compose the backbone of any community, we must provide the children with adequate school facilities. It is highly important that this should be done without undue delay . . ."[1]

Under the laws which affected school operation in the territory, Anchorage was to receive few benefits. The so-called Nelson Law of 1905 provided financing through the "Alaska Fund" for schools in non-incorporated areas. However, that fund was based on local receipts from federal licenses on business located in unincorporated areas – a large part of which was liquor licensing. It has been pointed out that because Anchorage did not have any saloons that the territorial governor was probably reluctant to give the government town those funds. Had he done so, Anchorage would have received far more than its share.[2] Not more than a thousand dollars were received from the territory that first year.[3]

Orah Dee Clark.



Anchorage's second school was torn down in 1938

In August 1915 a school board was elected to oversee the development of a school and the hiring of teachers. Its members were: A.J. Wendler, Mrs. W.T. Normile, and M. Finkelstein.[4]

The question of who was to finance the school remained unanswered. With the interest in public education, the Women's Club was formed that first summer.[5] Also formed that first year was the Parent-Teacher's Association.[6]

Finally, in late September the federal government solved the problem through the efforts of Commissioners William C. Edes and Frederick Mears. By their request, the Comptroller General issued funds for the construction of what we now call Pioneer School. That first allocation of Treasury Department funds was made possible as the broad power of the Alaska Railroad Act was liberally interpreted. A year later Secretary Franklin K. Lane, U.S. Department of the Interior, was reluctant to provide federal dollars for school operation. When the teachers had not been paid for months and a school shutdown was threatened, the federal government once again provided for the school's operation during the 1916-1917 school year.[7]

Andrew Christensen, the Townsite Manager, was ordered by Edes to take over the responsibility of "school director in addition to your other duties."[8] He inherited three major problems: personnel, the construction of a new school, and permanent financing.

The school board was apparently relieved when Christensen took over. The services of Mrs. W.T. Normile and Mr. A.J. Wendler during the first year had been admirable. Starting from nothing, they had developed the school and oversaw its operation. However, by the middle of the fall term of 1917, enrollment had doubled to over 200 pupils and management problems were surfacing.

Christensen first had to deal with a principal and teacher. The principal had transferred the teacher from her high school room to oversee the third and fourth grades. Upon the teacher's complaint, Christensen restored her former position, and gave both of them a stern lecture. The teacher was told "to stop gossiping, complaining, and criticizing, and to bring her work up to standard." The principal was directed that he "must quit going to the pool halls and must get down to business."[9] Besides the petty bickering, there was a severe teacher shortage. One teacher had seventy primary students and was teaching them in half-day shifts.[10]

Because of the expanded population, a new school was desperately needed. The Pioneer School as well as rented space was still in use until the second school was finished in December 1917. The Commission, still resolving the permanent fund question, had built the second school as well. Upon completion, they donated the $45,000 school building to the school district free of charge.[11]

During the spring of 1917, the Commission helped to resolve the permanent fund question. Congressional approval was given to an act which provided that 50 percent of future lot sales could be allocated to school and other capital improvements. This paved the way for construction of the second school.

Another congressional action – modification of the Organic Act of 1912, enabled the territorial legislature to deal with school financing. Christensen found the lawmakers willing to set up a tax levy system to finance public education. The bill also provided measures for school board and school districting. Through an election in the summer of 1917, the Anchorage School Board was set up on a permanent basis.[12]

The new school was built on the School Reserve. The two-story, frame structure served both elementary and high school students for many years. High school classes were small. The Class of 1924 had a total of three graduates. In 1930 a separate high school was built on the south side of the reserve. In 1938 the second school was torn down to make way for the Central Grade School. That concrete school (now the City Hall Annex) was the last of the central elementary school facilities. With the growth of the city, new schools began to spring up across an expanding Anchorage.

Pioneer School, 1915. This building was Anchorage's first school. It was built by the Alaska Engineering Commission in the late summer of 1915. It served roughly 90 students during the one and one-half years that it was used.

Because of the lack of provisions for school facilities in the townsite development, the Pioneer School, as it has come to be called, was not completed until November 1915. The Alaska Engineering Commission constructed the building to serve about 90 pupils during the first school year. The most notable of the first five teachers, Miss Orah Dee Clark, also acted as principal that year. She was "identified with every movement towards the school's progress and by her consistent work has aided materially in making the school year an avowed success." [13] She served in Anchorage as a teacher until her retirement in 1944. (Clark Junior High School is named after her.)

In its era, the school was labeled "entirely inadequate," "insanitary," and was characteristically "of an order of the early eighteenth century." The school lacked paint, restrooms, running water, a satisfactory heating system, and a solid foundation. The unheated, outdoor toilets did not meet townsite standards.[14] Despite the shortcomings, the school was able to launch public education in Anchorage.

The first school was used until December 1916. A midterm of the second year, the new school was completed. The old school was used from time to time in later years when extra classroom space was needed.

The two-story building probably contained four classrooms during its short-lived operation. Main entrances to the schoolhouse were at the corners. Two doors also provided exits from the upstairs classrooms. Each classroom would have had about four large sash windows to provide light and ventilation; the upper sash of each window is small with a border of square panes.

The Pioneers of Alaska, the renowned organization of long-term Alaskans, took over the building after the second school had been completed. It was reportedly moved to Sixth and F Street where it became the Pioneers' meeting facility. The building served in that capacity for almost 50 years. Thus, "Pioneer Hall" became well engrained as the name of the building.

The foundation of the school was severely damaged in the Earthquake. Through the efforts of the Anchorage Women's Club, it was saved from demolition and moved to its present Third Avenue and Eagle Street location in 1965. That site is known as the Ben Crawford Memorial Park. (The Crawfords were very active in the preservation of the school.) Today the facility is operated by the Municipality as a public meeting place.

An Anchorage classroom in 1918.

Cemetery Reserve

Executive Order 2836 was signed on April 10, 1918 by President Woodrow Wilson. It provided for the subdivision of the Cemetery Reserve into lots and tracts. The lots were to total at least half the size of the reserve and were to be "burial lots of a suitable size which shall be open to burial privileges by the public without charge for the land" while the tracts were to be sold at an appraised value to "religious or fraternal organizations qualified to hold title to real estate." Upon incorporation, which occurred November 26, 1921, the City of Anchorage would receive patent to all remaining unsold land.

Surveyed during late April and early May by F.W. Williamson, the subdivision survey plat, USS 1257, was accepted January 19, 1921. It delineated twenty tracts totaling 16.39 acres. Seven tracts were reserved but no appraisal or sale occurred for several years. The original seven tracts included:

Tract 1 . . . . . International Order of Odd Fellows

Tract 2 . . . . Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks

Tracts 5 and 6 . . . . . Catholic Church

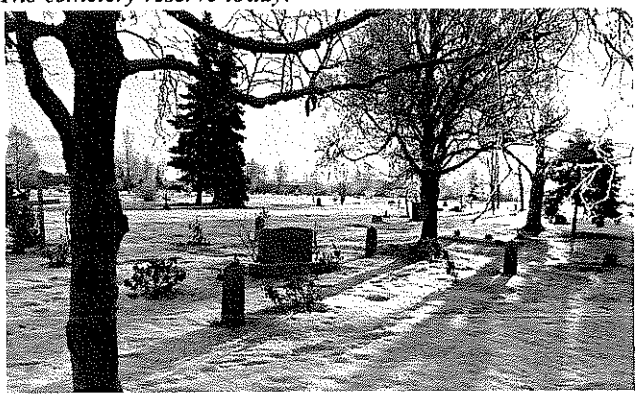
Tract 9 . . . . . Masons

Tract 10 . . . . . Pioneers

Tract 12 . . . . . Loyal Order of Moose

Before any sales were made, two other tracts, Tract 11 (Pioneers) and Tract 20 (American Legion) were reserved. The tracts averaged approximately half an acre. An appraisal price of $10.00 a piece was set in the fall of 1923 and sales probably transpired the following year.

The cemetery reserve today.



Block 1, 2, 3, 4, and 17 of the East Addition were later reserved to the city to enlarge the Cemetery Reserve. In 1947, a portion of the Cemetery Reserve was transferred to the city for utility substation purposes. A. J. Koenig, the City Manager at that time, described the cemetery as having much unused land still covered with trees and shrubs. The rectilinear design of the cemetery was in keeping with the city's early layout and in keeping with the cadastral engineering practices of the Alaska Engineering Commission. The cemetery is still divided into a series of twenty tracts. Modest roadways and pathways separate each of the tracts, forming a grid network within the landscaped lawn. A wrought-iron fence now encloses the cemetery and the entire setting is maintained by the Municipality.

Memorial ceremony at the cemetery, 1917.

4th Avenue Theatre, 1947.

The late 1930's and early 1940's were marked by very substantial changes in the public buildings of Anchorage. The major new buildings of the era, the City Hall (1936), the Central Grade School (1938), Providence Hospital (1938) and the Federal Building (1939) represented unmistakable refinement in architectural style and in public service. Their much larger size and solid form were significant departures from the early frame structures which had served similar purposes. Perhaps their impressiveness is lost to many who pass by them today; however, at the time of their construction they were splendid examples of civic architecture. With their creation, Anchorage was ushered into the era of modern architecture.

Anchorage experienced a major growth spurt from 1936 to the post World War II years. In 1939 the Anchorage area population was slightly over 4,000 persons. The city was third in size among Alaskan cities (behind Juneau and Ketchikan). Yet in less than a decade its population tripled and Anchorage became the largest of Alaskan cities.

Anchorage was still much like "Small Town, America" – unpaved streets, an absence of traffic lights, and a predominant winter darkness without street lights. City services were rudimentary, but adequate. For instance, in 1938 the police chief, who did not have a squad car, used a stop-watch to verify speeding traffic – a split second too soon between city blocks was cause for a speed trap. A year later changes started at a rapid pace. Such firsts as a squad car, a full-time accountant, street lights, traffic lights, chlorinated water and a paved Fourth Avenue were simple, but exceptional improvements.

The most significant impact on the developing town came with decisions of the federal government. The Civil Aeronautics Board saw that Anchorage's location was ideal for air transport and radio communication. The Corps of Engineers in cooperation with the Alaska Railroad under Colonel Ohlson mapped the rail route from Portage to Whittier – a kind of death knell to Seward, Anchorage's long-time rival. The federal government was expanding its role in Anchorage by the New Deal programs, by establishing agency headquarters here, and by switching the District Court from Valdez to Anchorage. Most importantly, Alaska was envisioned as being a vital link in the nation's air defense system. Elmendorf Field became a primary part of that system and was a boost to the area's population growth.

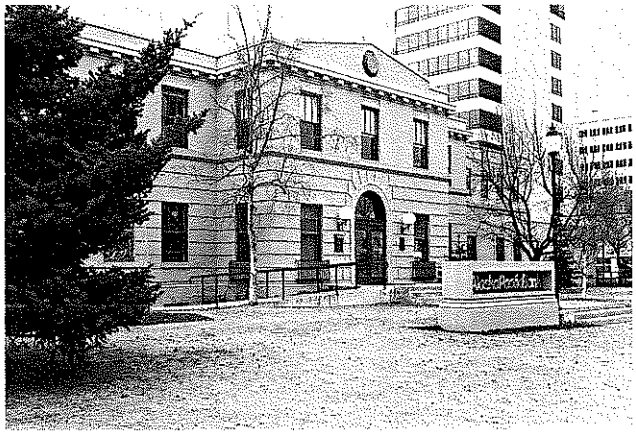
The changes in the architectural fabric of the town were a manifestation of the greater responsibility which Anchorage came to accept in the development of the territory. The town, born in promise some twenty years earlier, had reached its adolescence. Anchorage was on the verge of becoming the major city of Alaska.

Anchorage, c. 1938. The community was still largely confined to the original townsite. In the next ten years it would expand and the face of Fourth Avenue would begin to change.

The City Hall

Anchorage's City Hall was the first of the era's concrete edifices to be constructed. Designed by E. Ellsworth Sedille, a resident architect, it was a marvelous addition to Fourth Avenue in the fall of 1936. "The building is unique for Alaskan construction in the combined use of floor tile, acoustic ceilings, linoleum flooring... steel sash, stenciled ceilings, indirect lighting, birch doors, and fireproof construction," said Henry Wolff, engineer for the Public Works Administration (PWA). It was built for $75,000, nearly half of which was paid for by the PWA[1]. The contractor was Gastineau Construction Company. The details of the building, though made of concrete, retain elements of classical architecture. Examples are the dentils of the cornices, the simulated rustication of the exterior walls and the circular arched entrance.

Old City Hall has been restored by Alaska Pacific Bank.



The building is significant for two reasons - as a symbol of local government and as part of the city's architectural heritage. The City Hall is the counterpart of what the old courthouse is to the counties in the Lower 48; it represents the center of governmental affairs. During the early years of its use, nearly every operation of the City was provided office space. In 1936 the City Hall included the Mayor's Office, the Clerk's office, the telephone switchboard, the City Council chambers, the Police Chief's office., the City Engineer's office, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Utilities, the library, three jail cells, a "tank room" for overnight drunks, a caretaker's apartment and firemen's quarters[2]. Following City-Borough consolidation, City Hall became the administrative headquarters for the Municipality.

The building was leased to Alaska Pacific Bank Corporation in 1980. The interior was handsomely remodeled as a 1930's-era bank and office space. This well-done remodeling won a National Trust for Historic Preservation Honor Award for Alaska Pacific Bank.

City Hall as it appeared in 1936.

The Anchorage Hotel Annex

This addition to the original Anchorage Hotel was a clear departure from the frame frontier-style which characterized the city's early hotels. The annex is an electic variation of Late Gothic Revival Style, featuring pinnacles rising from pilasters symmetrically placed along the building's south and east facades. The gothic theme, however, is not repeated in the lobby and retail store fronts which line the first floor nor in the hotel windows of the second and third levels. Instead of arches, the ground level is composed of wood frame commercial show windows and rectangular sash windows are set in the upper stories.

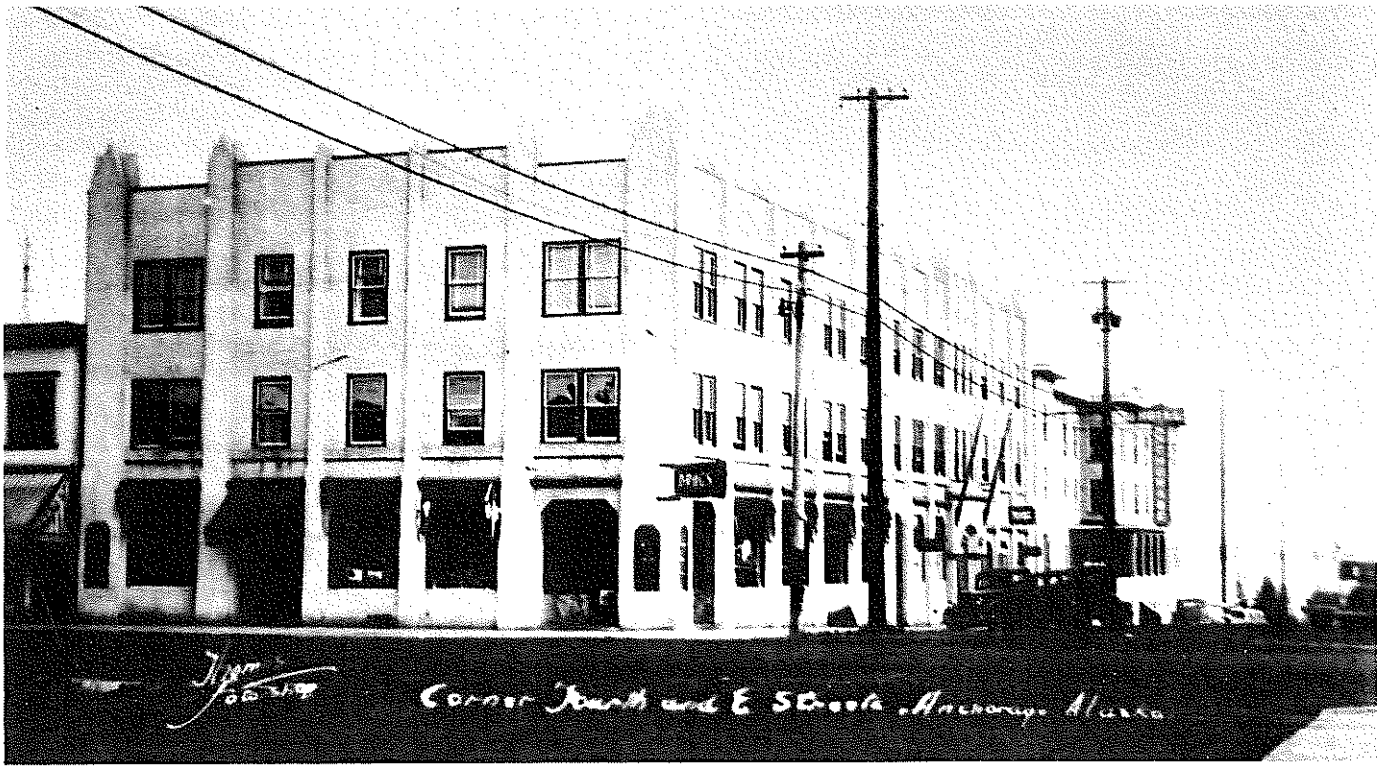
The original Anchorage Hotel, which stood on the northeast corner of the block, began operation in 1916. Frank Reed owned the hotel from 1917 to 1936, the year annex construction began. Reed began the planning and permit process for the annex, but sold the hotel to A.B. Cummings, former manager of the Alaska Railroad Hotel at Curry, before ground was broken. Reportedly, E.I. Sedille was the architect. The expanded hotel opened in November, 1936.Loussac's Drug Store, Welch's Dress Shop, Carlequist Jewelers, a barber shop, the lobby and a banquet room originally occupied the first floor. Twenty-four hotel rooms were located on the second floor while the third floor was divided into twelve private apartments. The building originally had a corner entrance, but it was enclosed when the drug store moved out. The stucco-covered building represents the early use of eclectic architectural forms, moving away from the original frame construction and into the "Second Generation" of Anchorage buildings.

442 West Fifth Avenue.

442 West Fifth Avenue: Alaska State Bank

In 1936-37 Edwin Glover built the Glover Building on the corner of Fifth Avenue and E Street. The building originally housed one of the early Anchorage garages that offered all-around services and showcased new automobiles. Glover and Company remained in business until the late 1940's. A clothing store then leased the building for several years until bank president, Ben Crawford, bought the building.

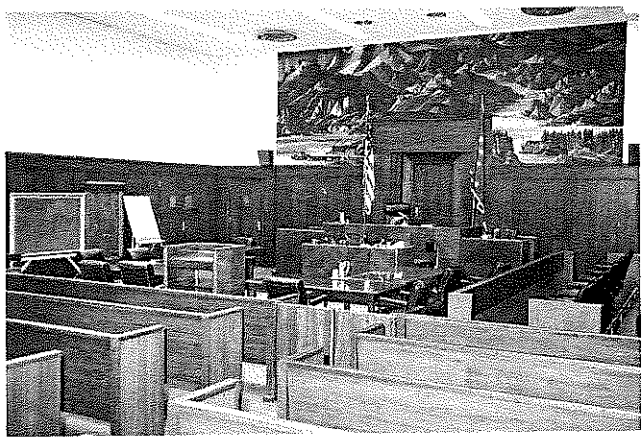
The Alaska State Bank (then known as the City National Bank) established their main office on the ground floor in April of 1953. Offices and apartments continued to be located on the second floor until the bank expanded to that floor around 1970. Although the bank has modified the interior, the exterior of the building remains largely unaltered from its mid-1930's appearance.



The Anchorage Hotel Annex in the 1940s.

The building boom which Anchorage had experienced in the late 1930's was capped with the start of construction of the Federal Building in 1939. This building, which many Anchorage citizens now call "the Old Post Office," stands as the foremost example of that era's federally funded, public buildings in Anchorage, if not all Alaska. Architecturally, it might best be described as "New Deal Concrete" and represents the purest form of modern architecture which had been developed in Anchorage at that time. Its poured concrete, rectilinear form was a highlight in the townsite as an advancement in both construction and design techniques.

The history of the building is interwoven to its site. When the Alaska Engineering Commission chose the Ship Creek location as a major site in the construction of the Alaska Railroad, a simplistic town plan was drawn and thereby the Anchorage townsite was created. The plan designated a "Federal Reserve," and that site was quickly developed. A post office sprung into operation that summer of 1915 as Anchorage's first public building. Soon to follow were the federal marshall's office and a territorial jail. Those three structures remained the extent of development on the Federal Reserve until 1939 when the present structure was built.



The Federal Building. The federal district courtroom is the most distinguished of the interior rooms. The mural was a WPA project.

Given the space needs for postal services, continuing federal agency expansion and the condition of the original post office, Anchorage citizens, especially the Chamber of Commerce, started clamoring for a new Federal Building as early as the late 1920's. Delegate Anthony J. Dimond, the Territorial Representative to Congress, pressed hard for the funding; it was finally appropriated through the Treasury Department's Procurement Division in 1938. That summer, Postmaster General Farley, who had come to Alaska to study air mail feasibility, broke ground for the building. It was an unofficial ceremony as the actual plans had not yet been finished.[3] The building was actually constructed from 1939 to 1940.

The Federal Building has changed very little in appearance since it was first completed. The original plans called for a U-shaped complex which would contain three main floors (ground level, first and second) plus penthouses which are extensions of the tower-like entrances at the southeast and southwest corners. The building was intended to be perfectly symmetrical.[4] The original wings, extending back along 'F' and 'G' Streets were alike and duplicated the form of the central portion of the building. The most distinctive features of these concrete forms are the relatively long, vertical windows which tend to visually ease the mass of the structure. The original setback and landscaping accentuate the building as an important feature of the townscape of Anchorage's Central Business District.

Near the end of the first phase of construction (1939-40), it was realized that more space was required to accommodate the needs of the locally operating federal agencies. Thus, the first of a few expansions took place: the west wing was extended along the 'G' Street side of the block in 1941. A plan, which was cited at that time, called for the eventual enclosure of the block through a series of expansion which would form a quadrangular complex with an interior courtyard.[5] Whatever the reason, that plan was not realized.

In that era of economic depression, Federal involvement in the affairs and development of Alaska could mean economic stability. The Federal Building, as a symbol of federal agencies, judiciary and postal services, was a major psychological boost to the citizens of Anchorage. In short, as a local editor said, "It meant Uncle Sam was here to stay!"[6]

Of the original agencies which occupied the building, some (e.g. the Civilian Conservation Corps) no longer exist, others, (e.g. the Extension Service) have relocated; still, the Postal Service and the Federal District Court are major tenants. Although the building was once called "United States Post Office and Courthouse," it now bears the attractive gold letters, "Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse."

The design of the Federal Building was coordinated through the Public Buildings Branch of the Treasury Department's Procurement Division. The architects associated with the Federal Building were Louis A. Simon, supervising architect, and Gilbert Stanley Underwood, consulting architect. These architects are notable in the sense of the prodigious program to which they were attached and the prolific number of government buildings which they helped to create.

Simon, a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, had a long career (1896-1941) with the U.S. Treasury Department. In 1933 he was appointed supervising architect, Public Buildings Administration; consequently, his name has come to be ingrained on many cornerstones of U.S. federal buildings. During the early 1930's he was sent to Europe to study the applicability of the emerging techniques of modern architecture to the design and con-

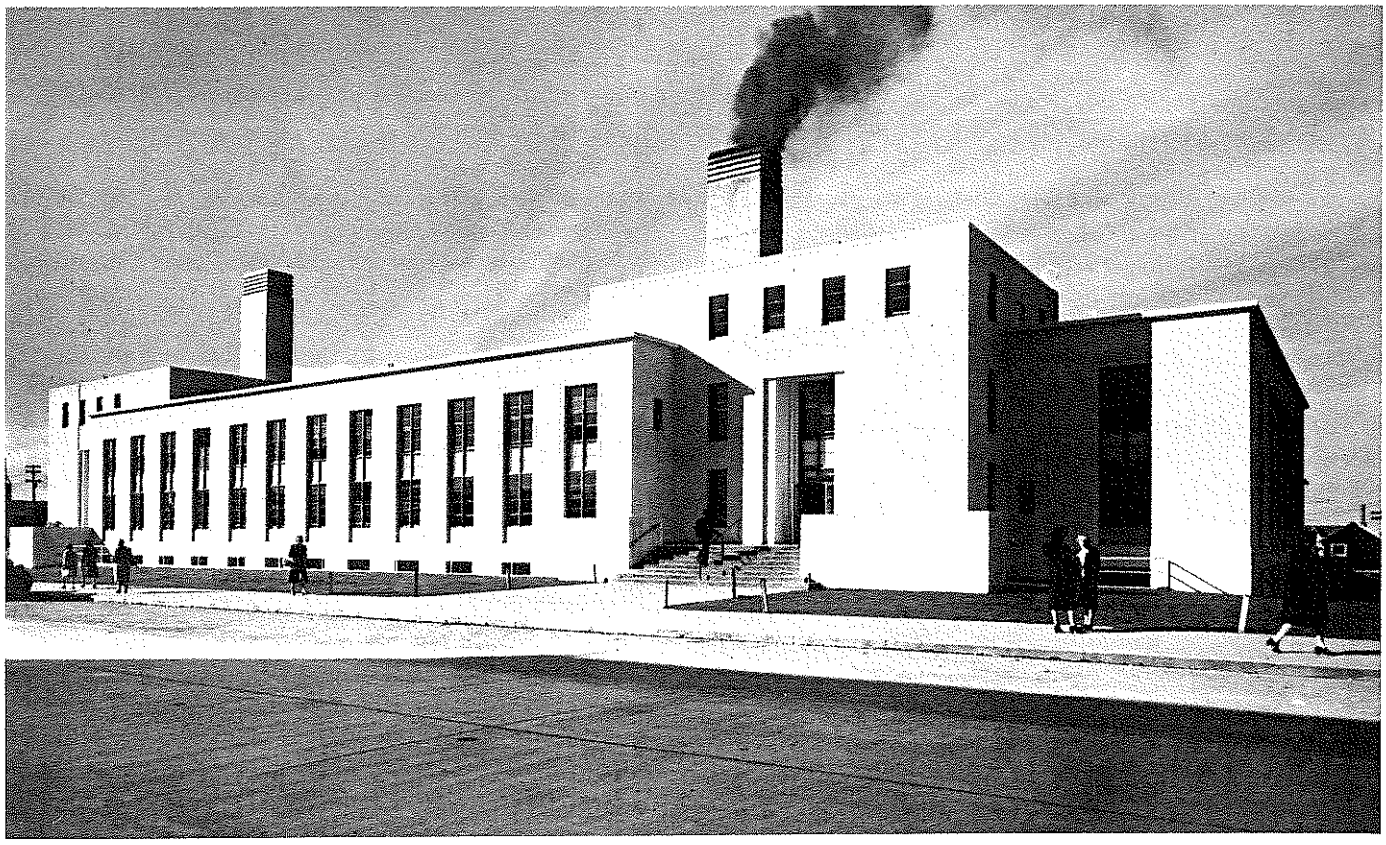
struction of needed U.S. government buildings. Underwood had a distinguished career as a consulting architect and rose to national prominence. Educated at Yale and Harvard, he worked for many years on the West Coast in consultation with the Union Pacific Railroad and the U.S. Treasury Department. Among Underwood's more notable architectural achievements are the San Francisco Mint, the Federal Building in Los Angeles and the first building of the U.S. State Department's complex in Washington, D.C.

The most noteworthy aspect of the interior of the Federal Building is the original Federal District courtroom. The woodwork, although not exceptional, is dignified. The decorative gem of that room is the WPA mural behind the judge's dais. The mural was painted through a collaborative effort of two emerging artists, Richard Haines of Iowa and Arthur Kerrick of Minnesota. They probably crossed paths in art school in Minneapolis. Their entry for the WPA contest won them the commission to paint the interesting mural. In it they captured the essence of the Alaskan landscape: the soaring mountains, the aquamarine glaciers, the sea, the fisheries and forest. The mural is one of two or three which were produced in the territory at that time.

Beyond architectural history, the Federal Building has a story to tell about the agencies who have been tenants there, and more importantly, about those Alaskans who have played a prominent role in territorial and state history. The original tenancy of the building included: the Post Office; the Third District Court; the U.S. Marshal's Office; the Division of Investigation, U.S. Department of Interior; the Division of Fire Control; the Civilian Conservation Corps; the Extension Service; the U.S. Signal Corps; and the Alaska Railroad.[7] Each had their own separate impact on this Alaskan region, whether in developing communication and transportation or in establishing law and order.

The list of individuals whose court offices or congressional offices have been in the building reads as a substantial portion of *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics.* As to the judiciary, it was Judge Simon Hellenthal who played a prominent role in having the Federal District Court relocated in Anchorage from Valdez; this Alaskan pioneer presided over the court until 1945. Anthony J. Dimond followed Hellenthal to the courtroom dais. Dimond made extraordinary contributions to Alaska: first, as Mayor of Valdez, then as a Territorial Senator, and finally, as the Alaskan delegate to the U.S. Congress (1932-1945). Dimond completed his public service career within the courtroom of the Federal Building.

As the symbol of federal government in Anchorage, the Federal Building was a major focal point in the spirited ceremonies which followed the Congressional passage of the statehood legislation. The facade of the building was literally engulfed by the "49th State Flag" during those celebrated moments in 1958. After statehood the Congressional contingents moved into the Federal building to man field offices for the Alaskan people. The first senators, Bob Bartlett and Ernest Gruening, initiated this practice on a seasonal basis during periods of congressional recess.

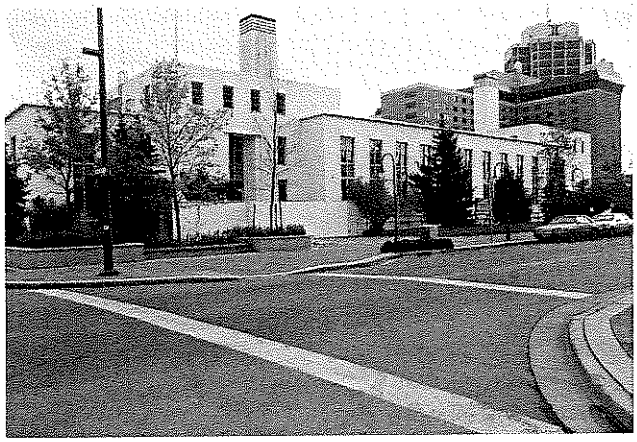


The Federal Building, 1939. Gilbert Stanley Underwood, architect. This was the most modern building in Anchorage when it was completed. It is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

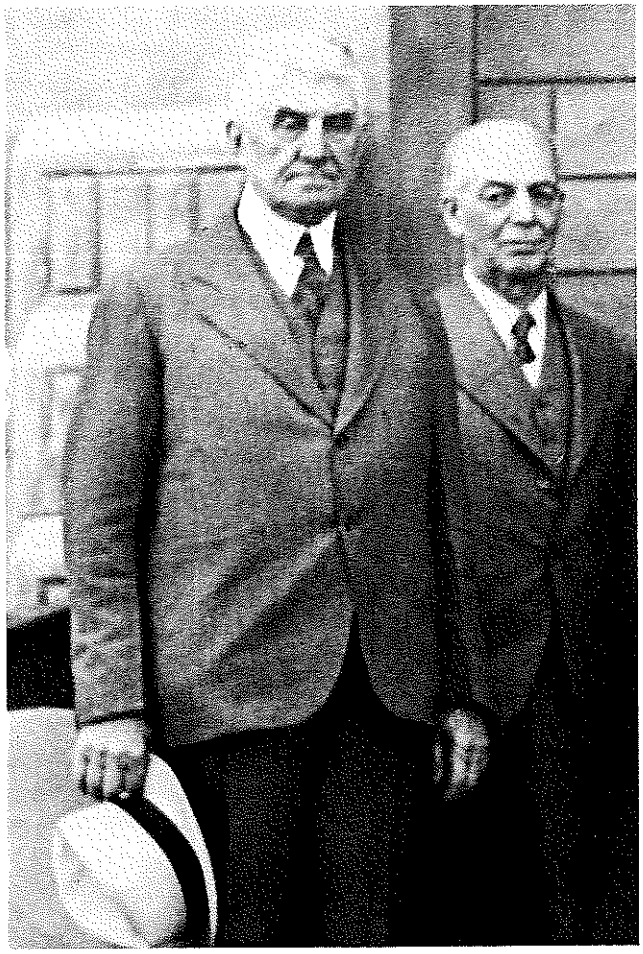
The last of post office and court facilities have been relocated in the last five years. The building is currently being adapted for new uses through the General Services Administration. The National Park Service will reopen their visitor information services there and the Municipality will open its downtown branch library there. The Federal Building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Although the building was once labeled "United States Post Office and Courthouse," those letters have since been covered. Senators Ted Stevens and Mike Gravel and Representative Don Young maintained offices in the building during the 1970's.

The Federal Building today.



Cap Lathrop with Fairbanks Daily News - Miner editor, C. W. Snedden.



The 4th Avenue Theatre

The 4th Avenue Theatre achieved instant acclaim upon the spring day in 1947 when it opened its doors and "The Jolson Story" flashed across its marquee. "The theatre is a landmark in the transition of Anchorage from a frontier community to a city of permanence. It is a landmark in the development of a city in which families live, work, play and die."[8] Such was the accord of the *Daily Times* editorial upon its gala opening. As the gem of Alaskan theatres, the mammoth edifice has maintained its stature as a major Anchorage building. In consideration of its interior and exterior, the building represents the foremost of Art Deco buildings in Anchorage.

B. Marcus Priteca and A.A. Porreca, Seattle-based architects, designed the structure in the early 1940's. C. William Hufeisen was responsible for the construction project, one of the longest in the Municipality's history. Groundbreaking and foundation work began in 1941, but the war demanded that raw materials go toward defense purposes. A four-year delay set in before concrete and steel could once again be melded to form the exterior shell. The delay was probably a worthwhile one as it is told that Cap Lathrop who was the mastermind in the development of many of Alaska's theatres, including this one, had renewed thoughts about this project. In the interim of war years, he extended his plans for the interior. The result was astonishing.

The interior of the 4th Avenue Theatre brings the building alive. The murals – a very rich collection of Alaskana – are an exquisite lining to the heart of the building. There are three sets of them. A huge, floor-to-ceiling pair that depicts the commercial and industrial growth of Alaska helps to frame the stage. Another one, a resplendent view of Mt. McKinley, brightens the lobby. A third set forms a panel of individual wildlife blocks above the stairway to the balcony.

The genuises behind the murals were A.B. Heinsbergen and Frank Bouman, interior decorators from Los Angeles. Heinsbergen, a Dutch-born artist, was apprenticed in his early teens as an artist. By the time he was eighteen he was in business for himself, embarking on a lengthy career in creating murals and interior decoration. By his own count he has decorated 751 theatres on this continent as well as state capitols, city halls, hotels, restaurants and churches.

Cap Lathrop: The Man Behind the Theatre

Fourth Avenue Theatre stands in testimony to Cap Lathrop – not as a monument to him, but as a monument made by him. Lathrop was visionary. His achievements in transportation, broadcasting, construction and coal mining were instrumental steps in severing the territory from a frontier past, toward a progressive future.

Austin "Cap" Lathrop, the son of a Michigan farmer, was born in 1865.[9] He left school in the ninth grade and moved to Wisconsin with his family. In 1889 he went to Seattle and began a contracting business in the wake of the city's devastating fire. Lathrop continued in the building industry and profited in the construction in the Anacortes-Fidalgo City Railroad. His prosperity was ruined in the depression of 1893, consequently Lathrop began looking for new opportunities.

The year 1895 was an especially important one for Cap as it marked the beginning of his Alaskan ventures. The spark that ignited Lathrop's interest in Alaska was a conversation with Captain Kelly, a salted, maritime man and long-time acquaintance of Lathrop. Kelly talked of the placer gold which had been found in the Turnagain Arm section of Alaska. Lathrop became very interested, not in the lure of golden dreams, but in the opportunities that shipping and freighting could bring during a gold rush. Through a loan from A.E. Barton of the Fry Meat Packing House, Lathrop, Kelley and John O'Neill bought the L.J. Perry, a small two-masted schooner. Their initial voyage to Cook Inlet led to years of steady success.

Around 1910 Lathrop started the Alaska Transfer Company in Cordova. Like other Cordova citizens, it is reported that Lathrop became increasingly embittered about the closing of the coal fields. Alaskans had to import coal when more than enough of the fuel was nearby. Their displeasure came to a head in 1911 when tons of imported coal were dumped into Cordova Bay. Lathrop is said to have been instrumental in this "coal party." The effort helped to have the desired effect; within three years the coal lands were open.

Lathrop's political philosophy was tempered during his bitter experiences in resource development and the consequent resource withdrawals. Later when statehood movement arose, he was leery about the idea – he seemed more comfortable with Alaska independence. He did not stand on the sidelines of politics. His offices and representation included: the Territorial House, 1921-1923; the Republican National Committee, 1928-1932, 1949-1950; and the University's Board of Regents, 1932-1950.[10]

In 1915 Lathrop brought his Alaska Transfer Company to Anchorage and located his offices in the Lathrop Building (at Fourth Avenue and H Street, where Legal Pizza is now). After the second story of the building was completed about a year later, Cap lived in one of the apartments upstairs.[11]

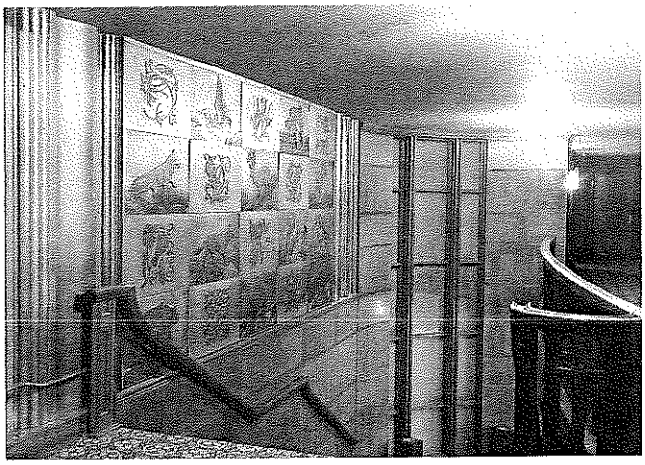
A chain of theatres was formed by Lathrop in the mid-teens. The motion picture was an eagerly devoured form of entertainment in the northland, and provided a social outlet which could routinely be enjoyed. He delighted in bringing happiness to the children of the rustic Alaskan towns; on holidays he would often open his theatres to the kids for free movies. Starting with the Empress at Cordova in 1915, Lathrop developed a chain of theatres in Alaska. Other theatres included Anchorages' Empress (1916), and the Lacey and Empress Theatres at Fairbanks (1929). Besides building move houses, he became involved in the film industry as well. As president of the Alaska Motion Picture Corporation he oversaw the 1923 production of "The Last of the Cheechakos."

His later years saw the further expansion of his economic domain; he became owner of the *Fairbanks Daily Newsminer*, the Healy River Coal Mine and he pioneered the development of the broadcasting industry in Alaska. KFAR in Fairbanks and KENI were forerunners of what was to become the Midnight Sun Broadcasting Company.

His employees were devoted ones and, although ill-tempered on occasion, he was devoted to them. Harry Hill began working for Lathrop in 1924 and his son, Don Hill, continues to work in the lineage of the Lathrop Company. His secretaries, first Ruby DeGraff, and later, Miriam Dickey worked with him over 31 years. Al Bramstedt, who came to work for Lathrop at KFAR, and rose to the top management spot of Midnight Sun, brings some light to the Lathrop personality: "He was very colorful, and had a lot of charm. He was very popular with the wives of his employees, as with every employee. He could be the most cantankerous man on earth, and then turn around half an hour later and be the most charming, gallant, and the most courtly individual you ever knew. He was a man of different moods, and I think he used his temper at the right time in business for emphasis. A lot of people never learned to be comfortable with him because they were afraid – they didn't know him that well."

Cap Lathrop was an active man well into his eighties. As late as 1950, the year he died, he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention and could still make the rounds to his various concerns. While at the Suntrana Mine on July 26, a railroad accident took Lathrop's life. Alaska had lost a foremost citizen – one of the first of her self-made men who stayed to invest in her future.

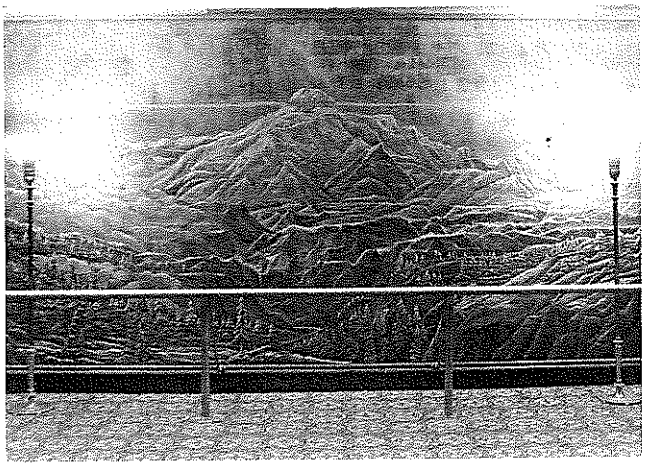
The wildlife mural highlights the balcony stairway.



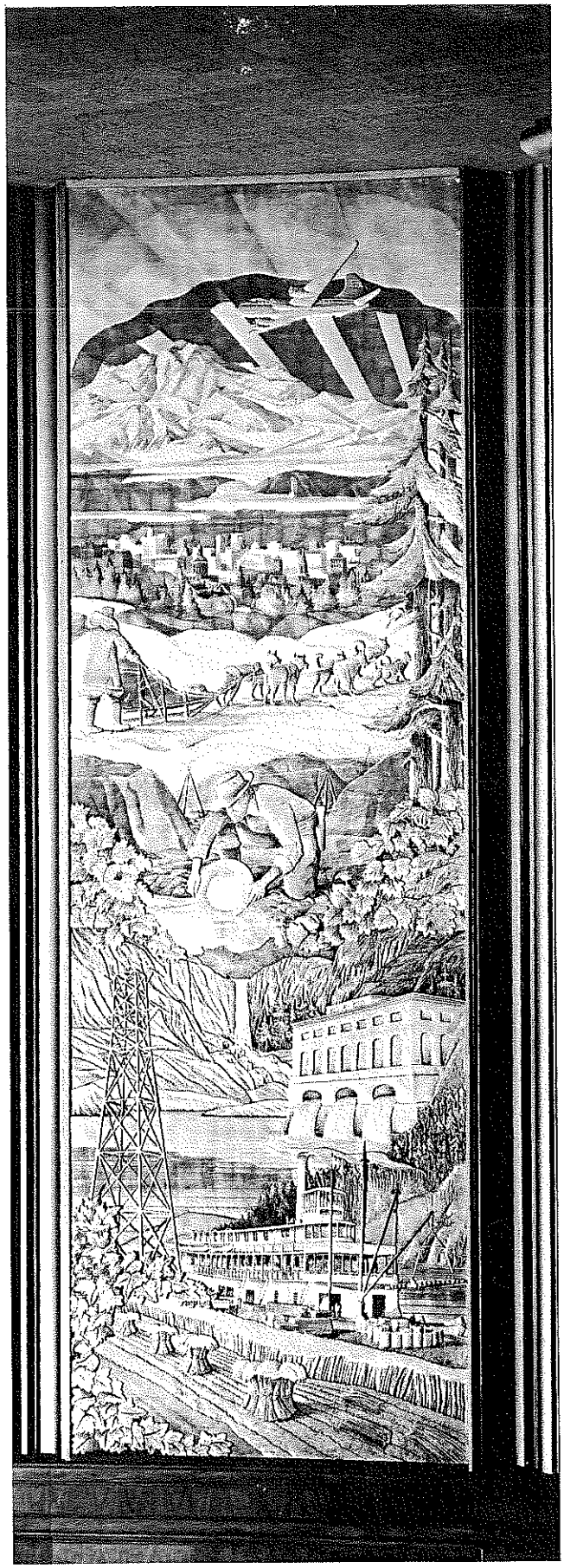
Frank Bouman who has worked with the Heinsbergen firm for some 45 years, was responsible for the 4th Avenue Theatre decor. In Heinsbergen's words, Bouman "worked on the murals extensively . . . installed them and supervised the entire decorative scheme."[12]

Each of the murals is different in the means in which it was executed, although a silver and gold bas-relief texture is common to all. The magnificent pair of panels in the theatre itself is a collage of the mining, hydroelectric farming, steamboating and aviation history of the state. Upon the theatre's opening one initial observer commented: "Touring the theatre's ultra-gorgeous interior is like walking through a kaleidoscope."[13] Variations in color included a predominantly warm rose accented by light blues and chartruse – the initial color scheme.[14]

The film patron paid eighty cents in that first year of the theatre's operation. It certainly entitled him to more than a movie. In those restless moments before the projectors began to roll, a casual look to the ceiling would bring the familiar Big Dipper and North Star to view in a configuration of twinkling star-like lights. Additional lighting was provided by large colorful glass baubles. Those large red, orange and yellow globes hang about midway down each aisle. The seating is structured to provide straight aisles and unobstructed sight lines. This was accomplished by providing an overly-large chair at the ends of alternating rows.

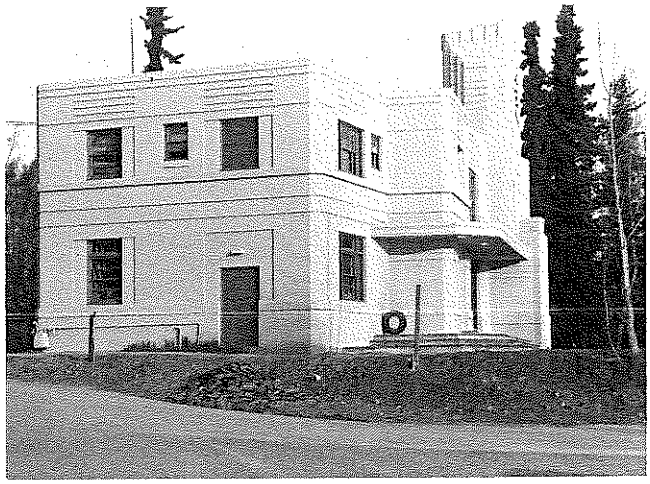


A Mount McKinley mural is featured in the lobby.



The 4th Avenue Theatre. Frank Bouman designed this mural and the interior features of the theatre.

KENI Radio Station, built in 1947, was another of Lathrop's projects.



KENI Radio Station, located at 1777 Forest Park Drive, was also designed by Porreca. The station was built in 1947-48 under Al Swalling. KENI went on the air in May that year to become the second Anchorage radio station. It was built for Cap Lathrop and became part of the Midnight Sun Broadcasting Company System. The cast concrete structure is most impressive when viewed from its north facade. That face of the building is a good example of the Art Deco Style. The station's walnut interior is very impressive. Lathrop wanted to retain professional, reliable personnel. Thus he included three apartment units within the station for KENI engineers and broadcasters.[15] The building is still the KENI headquarters.

308 G Street: The Central Building

The Central Building was built at a cost of $120,000.00 by Oscar Anderson and Edward Coffey soon after World War II.[24] The three-story stucco building has a simple cornice with three incised, decorative bands immediately below it. The first floor is visually divided from the second floor by a sign panel with similar incised bands. These decorative elements emphasize the horizontal dimensions of the building. Simple, but fine wood detailing and brass fittings are used throughout the interior of the building.

The main building is entered via a pair of centered, steel and glass doors with the building's name displayed above on the glass transom. Six, single metal and glass doors with transoms, each flanked by large plate glass display windows, provide access to the individual stores that occupy the ground floor.

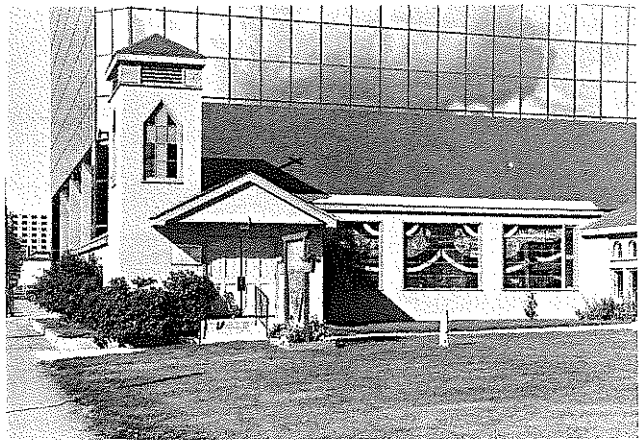
Neither the use of the building nor the overall physical appearance has changed over the years. The building continues to provide retail and office space today as it has in the past. Former tenants have included retail stores such as Betty Ferris' dress shop and a jewelry store, while offices have included an airlines office and the law office of J. Gerald Williams, first State Attorney General (1949-59).

The Central Building.

545 West Eighth Avenue: All Saints Episcopal Church

The first portion of All Saints Episcopal Church was built in 1949 by the Maynard Smith Construction Company. The architect was a noted earthquake authority named Bergamini.[18] He designed buildings world-wide for the Episcopal Church and is known to have designed St. Lukes Hospital in Tokyo.

This stucco building is the third Episcopal Church in Anchorage. A 1915 frame building constructed near Tent City was the first one. The second church was built in 1926 on the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and F Street. In 1949, the reinforced, poured concrete basement and rectory of the third church were built. The underground level served as the worship area until 1952-53 when the upper portion was erected. The lower level then became the parish hall. In 1971, window wells were dug and windows added to the parish hall for the first time. It is believed the two stained glass windows in the rear of the sanctuary were originally used in both of the earlier churches.



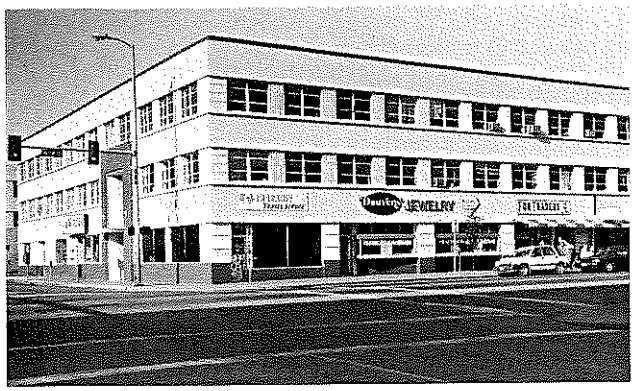
All Saints Episcopal Church.

Loussac-Sogn Building

This Art Moderne retail and office building was built at the direction of Z.J. Loussac and Dr. Harold Sogn in 1946. The three-story concrete building is highlighted by the two-story main entrance on D Street and the polished stone base which sets off the retail establishments at ground level. The flat-roofed structure is softened with rounded corners, string cornices and streamlined moldings. Originally designed as a medical clinic, the decision was made to add office space, resulting in the three-story building. Sitting on two city lots, the building measures one hundred by one hundred and forty feet. The Art Moderne details are equally pronounced in the interior. Streamlining and simple moldings are characteristic of the building.

William A. Manley, architect of the building, came to Anchorage in 1937. Born in Elma, Washington in 1904, he studied architecture at the University of Idaho. His contributions to Anchorage architecture are particularly noteworthy: one of the few practicing architects prior to the war, he remained to invest his skills in the construction of the community. Before his retirement in 1976, Manley served as a member of the Territorial Board of Architectural and Engineering Examiners and designed a number of notable buildings on the Anchorage landscape, including Grant Hall at Alaska Pacific University, West High School, Ursa Major and Minor Elementary Schools, the Simpson and Commerce Building and the Armed Forces YMCA.

Loussac-Sogn Building in the late 1940s.



Loussac-Sogn Building today.

The Loussac Building.

Located across the alley from the Loussac-Sogn Building is another cast concrete structure, the Loussac Building. Construction as an apartment building in 1940, the three-story structure has been altered over the years to include commerical and offices uses. The words, "The Loussac Building," are recessed in concrete above the first level; however, they have been obscured for many years by store-front signs.

Russian-born Z.J. Loussac came to Anchorage in 1916, opening a drug store on Fourth Avenue. He had been in and out of Alaska since the early 1900's, mining gold at Nome and at Iditarod, and opening his first pharmacy in Juneau in 1913. With the success of the local drug stores, Loussac stayed in Anchorage. He helped organize the Evan Jones Coal Company, became active in civic affairs and ran a daily tabloid called "Loussac's Daily Gossip: Cents and Sense." Following the construction of the Loussac-Sogn Building, he retired, devoting more time to civic affairs. He was president of the Rotary, Chamber of Commerce and Pioneers of Alaska. In 1947, he was elected Mayor of Anchorage, holding the office for two terms. In his latter years, he established the Loussac Foundation to promote scientific and cultural activities in the Anchorage area - the most visible beneficiary being the Z.J. Loussac Public Library.

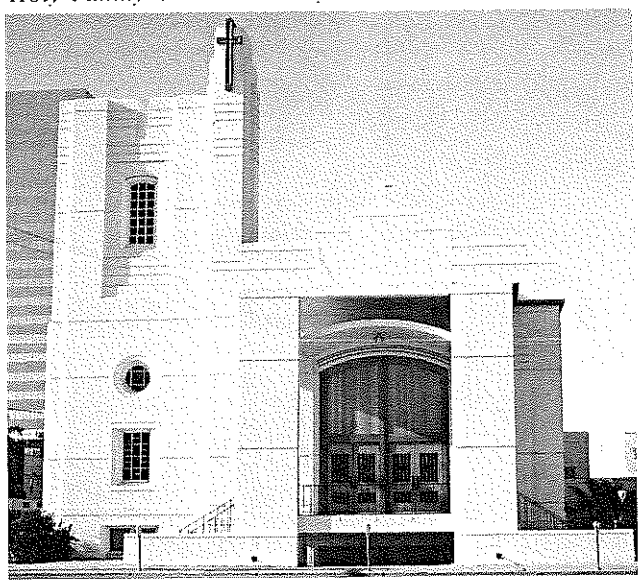
Dr. Harold Sogn came to Alaska with his parents in the 1920's. As a young man, his ambition turned toward his practice of medicine and he nurtured this interest working in Loussac's pharmacy and as a lab assistant at the railroad hospital. Following undergraduate education at the University of Washington, he worked for three years for Dr.Haverstock in Seward and then went to Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons, receiving his medical degree in 1937. He set up his Anchorage practice in 1940, becoming known as the "baby doctor" during the post-war "Baby Boom" era. As a partner of Loussac, he opened the New Doctor's Clinic on the first floor of the Loussac-Sogn Building. Working with him were Dr. George Hale, Dr. Vernon Cates, Dr.Thomas Bradon, Dr. Ray Coffin, Dr. Russell Jackson and Dr. William Ive.

Today the Loussac-Sogn Building retains virtually all the Art Moderne elements which were incorporated into its 1946 construction. The first floor of the building has been reorganized for retail uses while the second and third floor remain in office use.

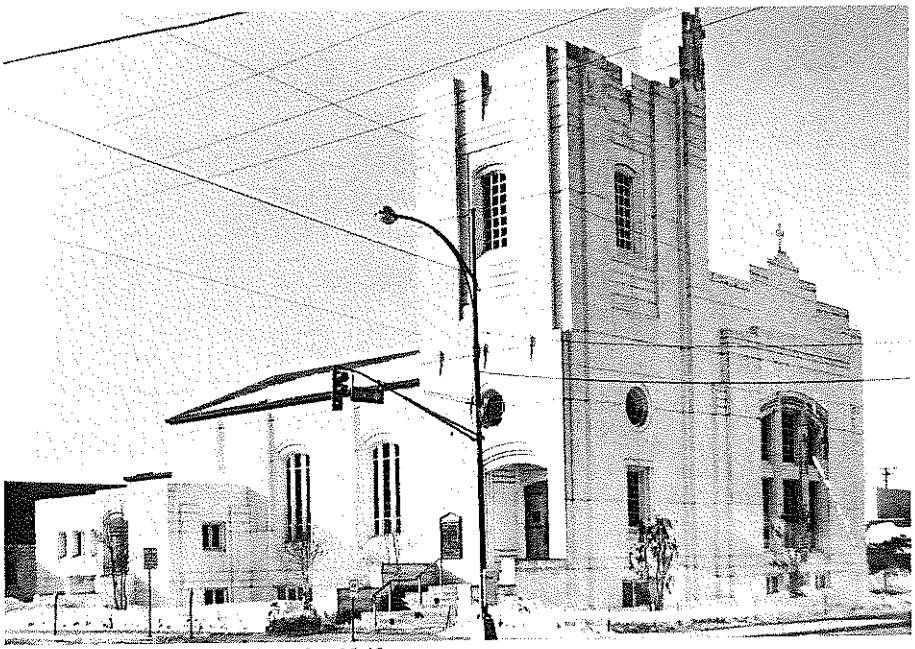
Holy Family Cathedral

The original Holy Family Parish was a frame structure with pressed tin siding, gable roof and steeple. One-story in height, it was moved from Knik and erected over a basement just south of the present cathedral site. During early years, the congregation was small (ten people at mass was not unusual) and the church building was large enough to house both rectory and sanctuary. By the late 1930's, however, the population of Anchorage and surrounding areas had dramatically increased, and so had the size of the congregation. A larger building was needed, so Father Dermott O'Flanagan organized a special building fund committee with Ed McElligot as chairman. The goal was to raise $40,000 to build the new building.[17] World War II intervened and additional funding drives and raffles were required. A. A. Porreca was retained as the architect.[18] Construction of the building began in the mid-1940's. The local firm of C. William Hufeisen built the large concrete structure over several years due to intermittent construction funds. The basement was built first, roofed over and services were held in it for at least a year before construction could proceed on the building proper. The poured concrete floor is purported to have been the largest covered span in the state at the time.[19] The tower foundation has 40 inch thick poured concrete walls. (The church and Fourth Avenue Theatre were the first two designated bomb shelters within the townsite). The building was finished in the late 1940's but the interior was not completed until 1952. Audrey Clawson, a parishioner, designed the interior. Alex and Julian Block, two other parishioners and owners of a woodworking company called "Block Built," constructed the original pews. These were replaced in 1953, and relocated to local churches. Alex Block finished the handsome interior woodwork. The original church was used for a variety of activities - bookstore, Holy Family Credit Union, meeting rooms - until it burned around 1968.

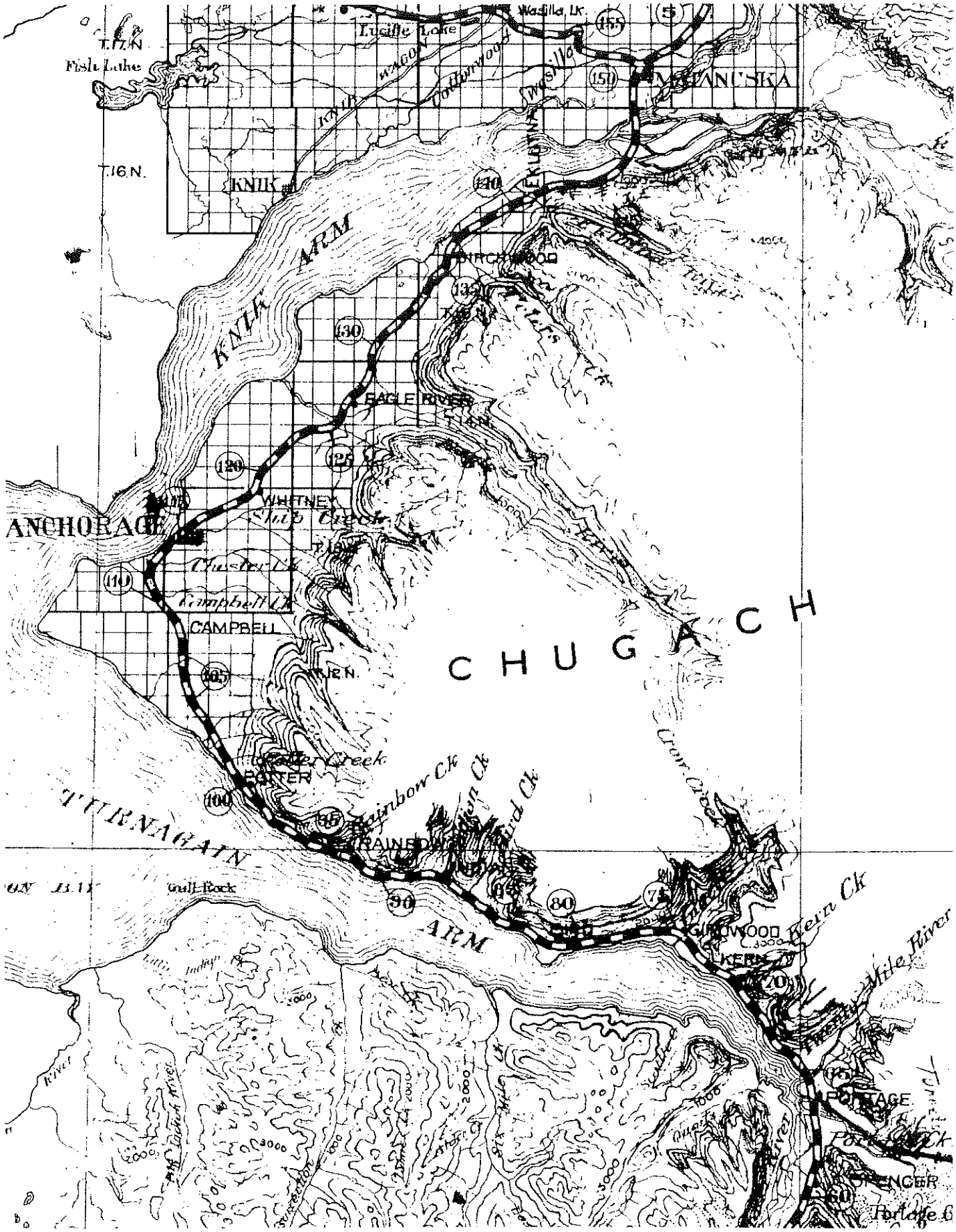
Holy Family Cathedral today.



Several modifications have occurred to the building. In 1966 the hierarchal function of the church was elevated in that the Archdiocese of Anchorage was created. At that time, the newly ordained Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan arrived from Albany and the church became formally designated Holy Family Cathedral. The original entrance was located on the east side of the tower. It was moved to the north facade in the late 1960's to accommodate processions and liturgical functions which are associated with a cathedral and which were needed to meet church functions following Vatican II. The north-facing portico, designed by Jim Bruce of McIntire-Pendergrast, was added. This exterior alteration necessitated some interior modification. The building maintained a natural grey concrete finish until 1970 when Father Murphy, Pastor of the church, had it painted white. The highlight in the cathedral's recent history was the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1981. In celebration, the exterior chimes were added to the cathedral and ring hourly, recalling that momentous event.



Holy Family Cathedral in the 1940s.



This map, dating from 1920, shows the location of many of the camps and sections of the Alaska Railroad in the Anchorage area.

CHAPTER 2: RAILROADING, MARITIME AND POWER FACILITIES

THE ALASKA RAILROAD

Background

Anchorage's history is interwoven with Alaska Railroad history. This is especially true during the first ten years of the city's development. Anchorage originated as a railroad town. Initially, the Alaskan Engineering Commission, which developed the railroad, envisioned the Ship Creek site as a major construction camp and terminal location. Seasonal navigation permitted the unloading of construction materials and surplus Canal Zone equipment at Ship Creek. The Commissioner's first goal — to reach the Matanuska coal fields — could most easily be facilitated by linking Ship Creek with the coal beds beyond the Matanuska River. Secondly, "the Anchorage" was well located in relation to the railbelt. From the mouth of Ship Creek construction could be coordinated north to Broad Pass and south along Turnagain Arm. Its centrality to the entire railway — and the fact that inflated land prices blossomed in Seward — were causes in the establishment of Anchorage as the railroad's headquarters. Since January 1, 1917, the day that the administrative functions were transferred from Seward, the headquarters of the railroad have been maintained at the Ship Creek town.

Before the Alaskan Engineering Commission embarked upon its mission to link Seward with Interior Alaska, more than a dozen railroading ventures transpired in the Great Land. By the turn of the century, Washington's political forces, as well as the industrial "robber barons," realized that a railroad was necessary to the development of Alaska. Only a few of the rail lines actually were successful. The Copper River and Northwestern, and the White Pass and Yukon were most notable. In 1898 Congress passed a homesteading and railroading act to "open up" Alaska. The provisions for private railroad development were relatively meager and, unlike the provisions for railroad development in the western states, did not financially benefit railroad interests.

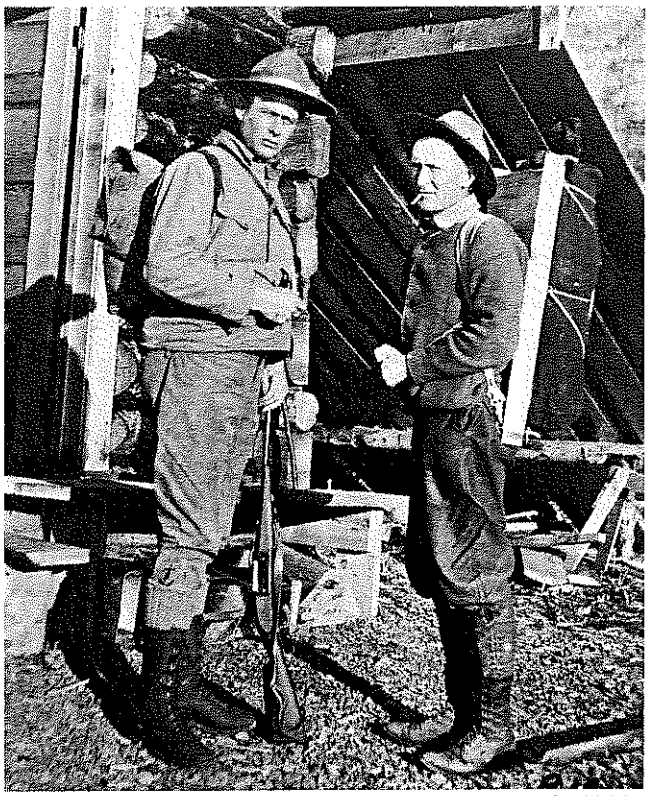
The formation of what became the Alaska Railroad started in 1902 when the Alaska Central Railway was created. That organization was the brainchild of John E. Ballaine, a newspaper and real estate man from Seattle. Ballaine saw an immense opportunity in opening a trans-Alaska route to the Yukon. Choosing Resurrection Bay (Seward) as his terminal. He started building the rail line in 1903. The route

The first train leaving the depot in 1916.

chosen was essentially the same as that studied by the A.E.C. a dozen years later. The rigorous topography of the Kenai, a lack of capital and the closure of the coal fields brought financial chaos to the Alaska Central. In 1909 its bond holders foreclosed the bankrupt company. However, it was reorganized as the Alaska Northern. The new railroad company pushed the line around the end of Turnagain Arm to Kern Creek. There construction ceased. The rails of the Alaska Northern lay rusting when the A.E.C. investigated the route in 1914. Over, $5.2 million had been spent on the route. It was ultimately purchased for $1.2 million.

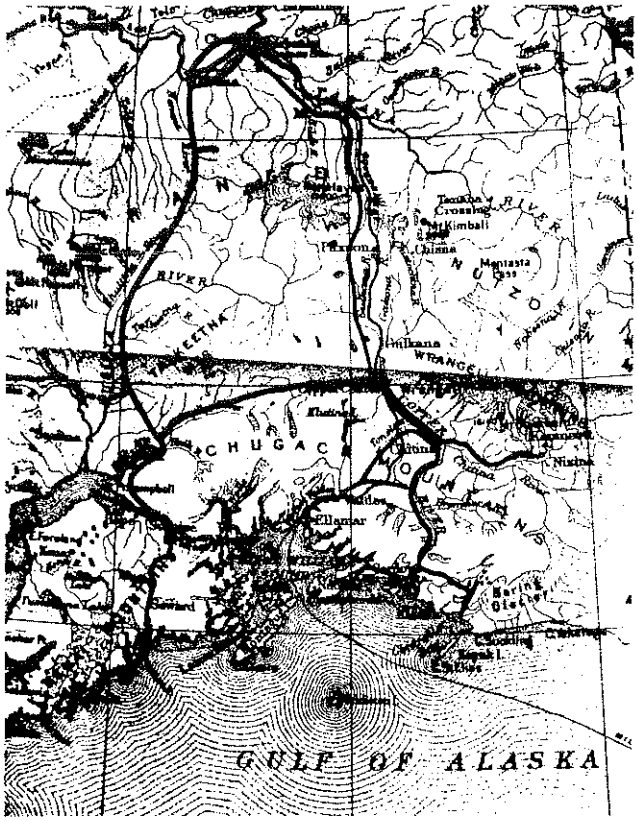
A true Alaskan railroad – one which would link the interior with the sea – awaited the full support of the Federal government.

The Federal interest in developing a railroad in Alaska expanded under President Howard Taft. In 1911 his Secretary of the Interior, Walter L. Fisher, advocated that the Federal government should purchase the Alaska Northern to open up the rich South Central region. In turn Taft requested that Congress provide for the construction and government ownership of a railroad in Alaska. In August 1912, under the same act which provided Alaskans "home rule," the President was given the authority to appoint a Commission to study the railroad question. Specifically, the Commission would report what routes would best "develop the country and resources thereof for the use of the people of the United States."[1]



Frederick Mears and Thomas Riggs at Ship Creek, 1914.

A.E.C. Survey Map, 1915. This map shows the location of the two proposed lines. With the selection of the "Western route," Anchorage's destiny was largely determined.



Taft's Commission was known as the Alaska Railroad Commission. Its four members – Alfred H. Brooks, the respected geologist; Major Jay J. Marrow, Army Corps of Engineers; Leonard M. Cox, a civil engineer with the Navy; and Colin M. Ingersoll, a private consulting engineer, made a hasty, whirlwind survey during the fall of 1912. A few months later, the Commission presented its report to the lame duck president. In it they recommended two lines: one which would extend the Copper River and Northwestern to Fairbanks and another which would link the Alaska Northern line with the Innoko-Iditarod mining district. No decisions were made. The railroad question remained unanswered.

Woodrow Wilson became Taft's successor as president. During his first year in office one particular speech foretold the role his administration would have in developing the Alaska Railroad:

> Alaska, as a storehouse, should be unlocked. One key to it is a system of railways . . . These the Government should itself build and administer, and the ports and terminals it should itself control in the interest of all who wish to use them for the service and development of the country and its people.[2]

With the profound interest of his Interior Secretary, Franklin K. Lane, the Alaska delegate, James Wickersham, and various congressmen, the necessary support for the railroad mounted. The Alaska Railroad bill was overwhelmingly passed in Congress (283 to 86 in the House, and 46 to 16 in the Senate).[3] The bill authorized the president to locate, construct and operate a railroad by which the Pacific could be united with the navigable waters of interior Alaska. Its major limitations were that the railway could not exceed one thousand miles in length and restricted the maximum expenditure for its development to $35 million.

In order to carry out the project, Wilson created the Alaska Engineering Commission (A.E.C.). With Secretary Lane acting as advisor, he appointed two railroaders and one Alaskan to the Commission. Serving as Chairman was William C. Edes, a renowned locating engineer who had worked in the west for many years. Frederick Mears, chief engineer on the Panama Railroad, was the other railroad expert. The third member was Thomas Riggs, a mining engineer and surveyor who had broad experience in Alaska. (He was later to become governor of the Territory). In carrying out their work in the summer of 1914, "the most elaborate single survey in Alaska up to that time,"[4] they set their headquarters camps at Ship Creek.

The A.E.C. studied two primary routes that year. Given less attention was the Copper River and Northwestern route. That Cordova-based route had been examined rather thoroughly by the former Alaska Railroad Commission in 1912. Greater emphasis was placed on the so-called "western" or "Susitna" route. Its basic alignment was the present Seward to Fairbanks railbelt. The Commission carried out extensive ground location surveys for over 120 miles of that route. (Excellent sets of maps of this survey are kept in the Alaska Railroad engineering files, Anchorage.) In addition to the main route, auxiliary links such as the Portage Bay (Whittier) to Turnagain Arm line and the Matanuska branch were studied. The Commission was especially impressed with the opportunity for diversified development which, they felt, was achievable along the western route. Farming in the Mat-Su Valley, mining in the Kenai and Willow Creek Districts, and grazing and mining in the Fairbanks area augered well for the future. Of immediate promise was the Matanuska coal fields. They reasoned that Ship Creek could be easily tied by rail to the coal fields. The resource was but seventy-five miles away over an easy grade of 0.4 percent.

The rail yards around 1920.

The A.E.C. submitted its report to the president on February 11, 1915. No recommendations were made. In their own words:

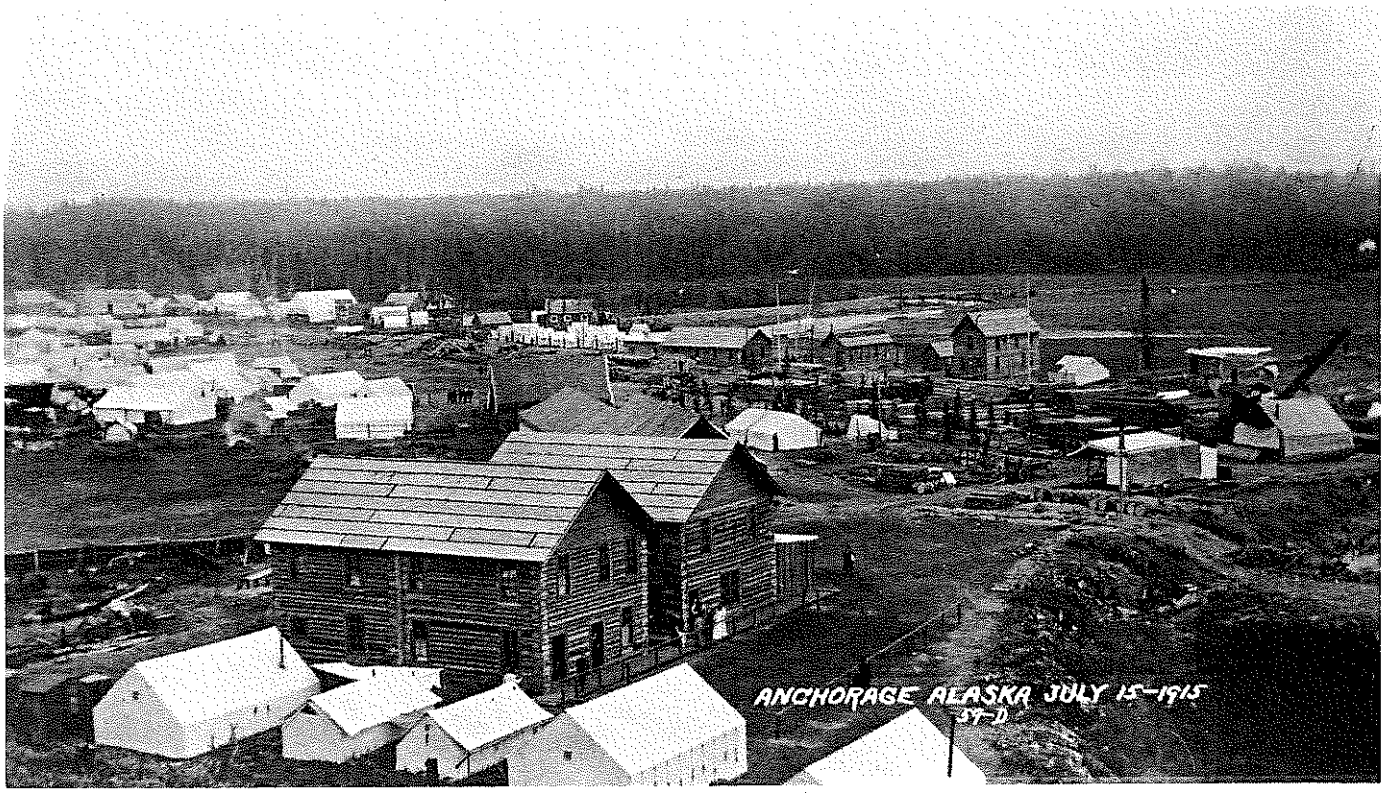
> This Commission is essentially an engineering one organized to handle the subject along technical lines. In selecting a route other questions besides strictly engineering ones are to be considered. The Commission has understood that their special mission was to collect the evidence and present it in as impartial form as possible, knowing it would be weighed carefully and acted upon wisely.[5]

Wilson did not make his formal decision on the choice of routes until April 10. However, word of the impending development of the western route spread. Within a week of the A.E.C. report, Alaska's governor J. F. A. Strong, in a letter to a friend, wrote: "I am unofficially advised that work will begin this spring on a line between Ship Creek in Cook Inlet to the Matanuska coal fields."[6] The proposed work on that branch was outlined by March. Mears and other A.E.C. personnel were organizing supplies and buying equipment in Seattle weeks before Wilson's announcement. By the time of Wilson's decisions to construct the railroad on western route and to purchase the Alaska Northern, hundreds of persons had arrived at Ship Creek ready to work.

Mears disembarked from the steamer, the *Mariposa,* at Ship Creek in late April 1915. With him he brought newly hired A.E.C. personnel, $40,000 worth of equipment to initiate construction, and lighters and barges to facilitate unloading the supplies. Instead of finding the handful of cabins which he had left the previous summer, Mears was confronted with hundreds of tents and temporary shelters of those who were awaiting the start of construction. (For more information about "Tent City," see Chapter 1.)

Ship Creek had taken on more apparent importance than what the A.E.C. originally envisioned. The main line of the railroad was to run some four miles away (diagonally across the Anchorage bowl in a line from Potter to the vicinity of Whitney). Yet because the coal fields were foremost in the first phase of the project, people from all over the territory had arrived to take part in the government's venture. The tent town had to be removed (it sat right below the bluff of Government Hill), the railroad terminal yards were to be built in the same spot.

With creation of the townsite, people began permanent homes and businesses. Tent City slowly evaporated. The A.E.C. began to expand its facilities in what officially became known as the Terminal Reserve. Log buildings gave way to new frame buildings. By the fall of 1916 a depot, commissary, warehouses, various shops, offices and a power plant had been constructed. Anchorage's rapid growth, size and general importance made it apparent that the main line should be put through the terminal yards. In 1916 the rails were laid from Potter to Campbell across Chester Creek to join the "Ship Creek spur line." This route then became the main line. The town's position on the railroad map became more prominent than ever. The yards at Anchorage were to become the heart of the railroad.



Ship Creek, 1915. The headquarters of the Alaska Engineering Commission are in the foreground. The ridge is what became the Original Townsite.

RAILROAD FACILITIES IN THE YARDS

The railroad yards and adjoining waterfront are a complex mass of maritime, industrial and transportation-related facilities. The lower Ship Creek basin has been markedly altered over the years. The creek itself was rechanneled in the 1920's. Originally, it ran in a wide arch which would have nearly touched the present-day depot. Marshy ground surrounded it. Its straight-line realignment permitted one of many landfill projects.

Similarly, filling has created land for docks, tank farms and storage areas. The area belongs to the Alaska Railroad, although much of the land is leased to private concerns. The creek still empties into the Inlet where it has since 1914.

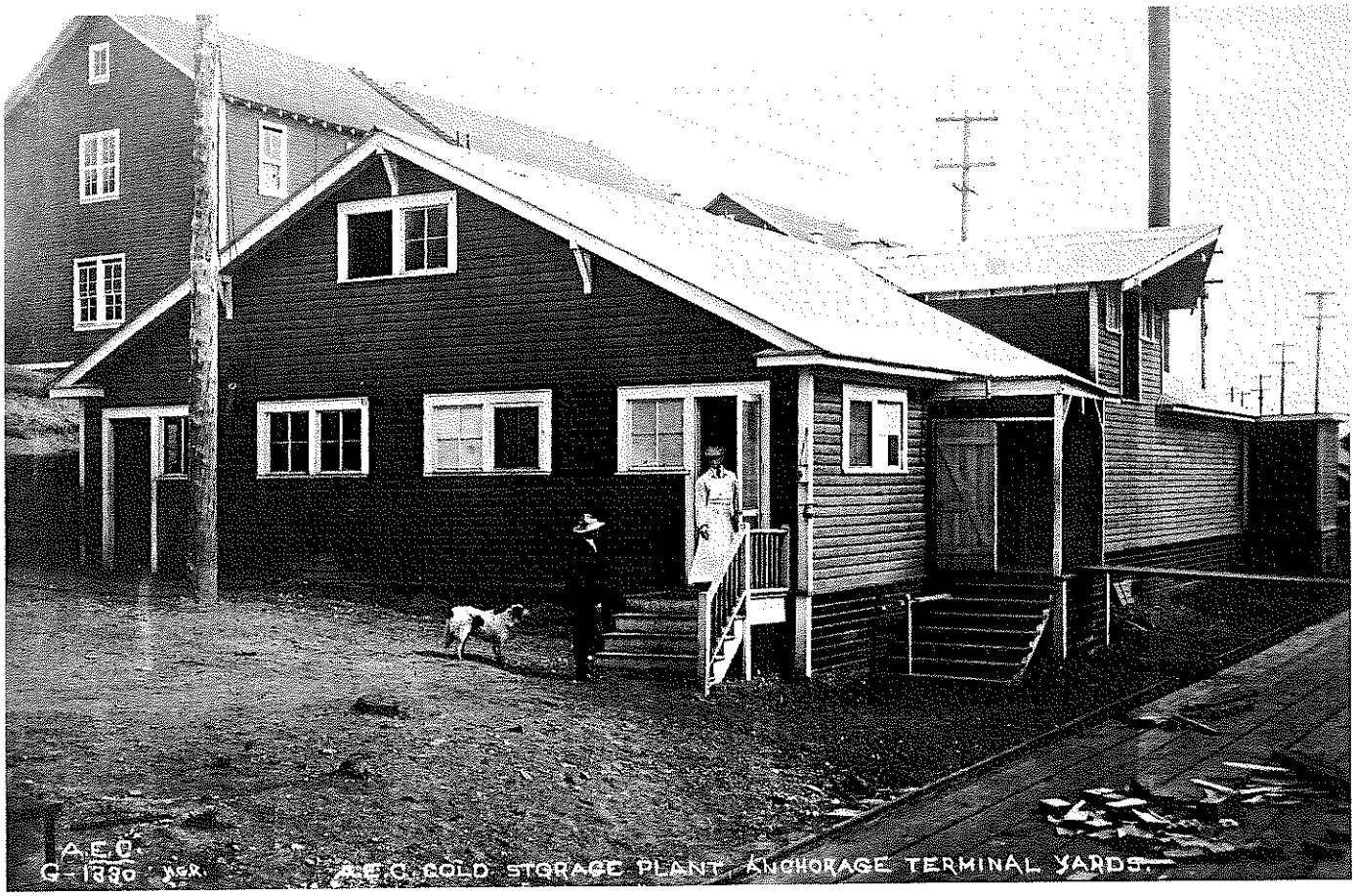
Along with changes in the basin's landscape came changes in the types and quality of buildings, the dock facilities and roads. McNally and Maitland's early dock site (south of Ship Creek) is now a landfill. The old road which ran down C Street, crossed the yards and edged diagonally up Government Hill, is long gone. Most of the early buildings are gone as well. Fire consumed many. Others were moved. During the late 1930's and 1940's there was a widespread building program. The majority of railroad buildings date from that era.

The Cold Storage Plant

Built in 1916 by the Alaskan Engineering Commission, the Cold Storage Plant served the Alaska Railroad for decades. It has always been located in Ship Creek basin; however, it was originally situated farther west.

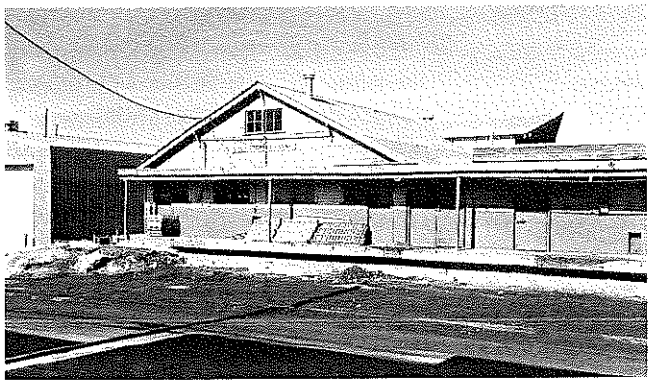
The plant is eighty by forty feet. Its ground floor is about nine feet high. An attic space has a ceiling height of eight feet. Access to the attic is provided through a door under a large, protruding dormer. Windows are set to either side of the attic door. Originally, a small shed (eight by sixteen feet) was attached to the backside of the plant. It is no longer part of the structure. Platforms are presently attached to both the front and rear of the building.[7]

The building was divided into five refrigerated compartments. In the front of the building were two rooms. One served as an office and entryway; the other contained the motorized equipment, including an ice machine. The floors and walls were insulated with sawdust and woodshavings. A cross section of the walls would have been as follows: shiplap siding, wall board, sawdust, and tongue-and-groove siding. The compartments were refrigerated by coils which ran at floor level. A solid, insulated door provided access on the right side of the building.[8]



The Cold Storage Plant, 1916. Once located below the brow of Government Hill, this plant has been moved to Warehouse Avenue.

The plant is still used as a cold storage facility; a major addition has been attached to the right side of the building.



The cold storage plant was taken over under contract by the Northern Commercial Company (NCC) in May of 1929.[9] It was operated by NCC until July 1, 1934, when the Alaska Railroad Stores Department assumed responsibility for its operation.[10] It probably would have gone out of business in 1939 when a new cold storage plant was completed; however, a fire destroyed the new one.

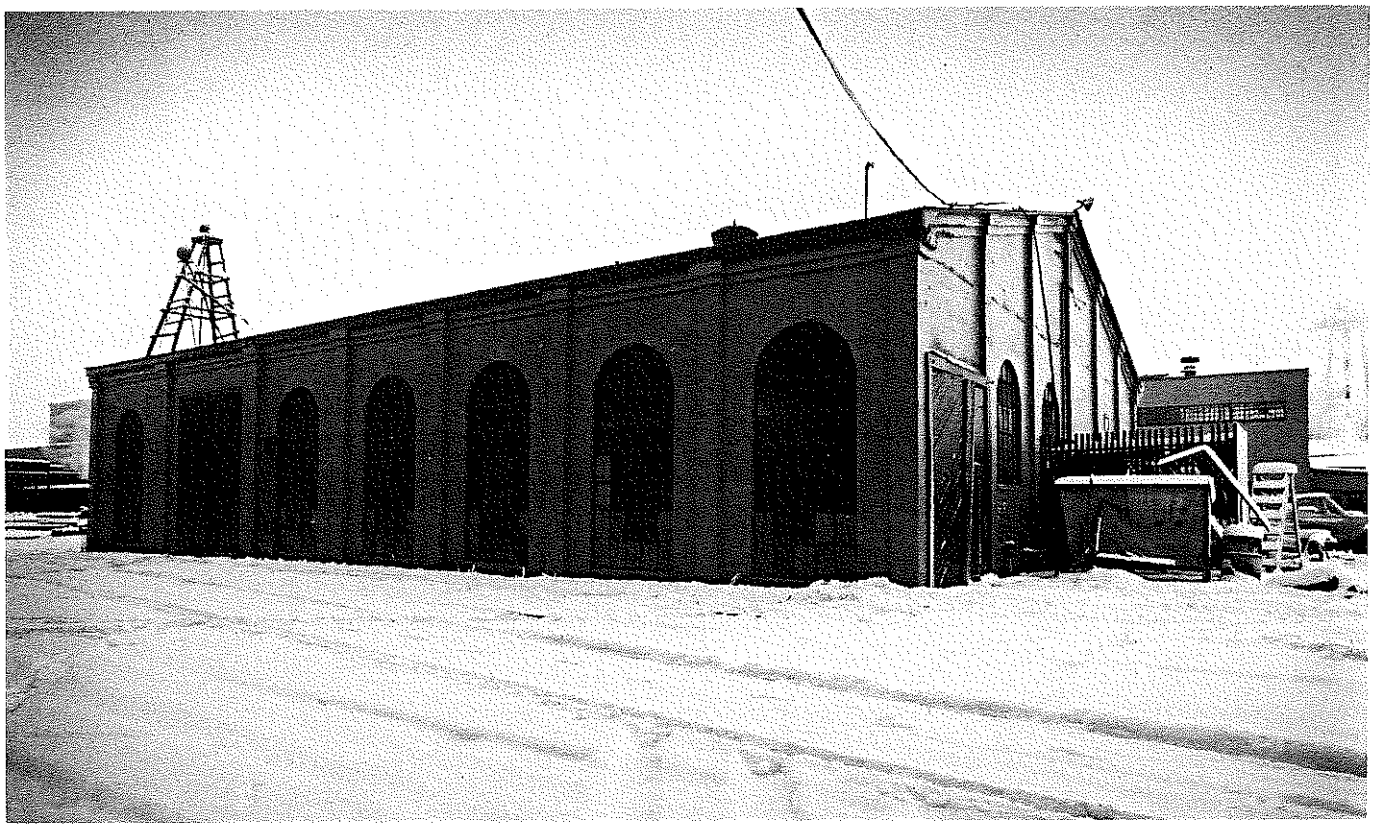
The cold storage plant is one of the few buildings left from the Alaska Engineering Commission era. It is a good example of the construction techniques used in warehouse-type buildings. The building now sits on one of the industrial tracts along Warehouse Avenue. Today the plant is privately operated; however, it is still used as a cold storage facility.

The Power Plant

In the early 1920's a fire devastated the original frame power plant. Caught in winter without power, the Alaskan Engineering Commission had to quickly actualize plans for a "fireproof" building. Thus a concrete structure was built to house the boilers and generators of the steam plant. (Its initial exterior appeared to be made of sheet metal.)[11] One alternative which was considered was hydroelectric power. It was at this time that John Longacre, the A.E.C.'s electrical engineer, saw that the Eklutna dam project was feasible. Yet, he knew it would also take too long to develop.[12] Thus, the new steam plant was built to take care of the immediate needs of the railroad and the City of Anchorage. (The city began to lease the light, power and telephone plants in 1921. Power was distributed by Anchorage Public Utilities.)

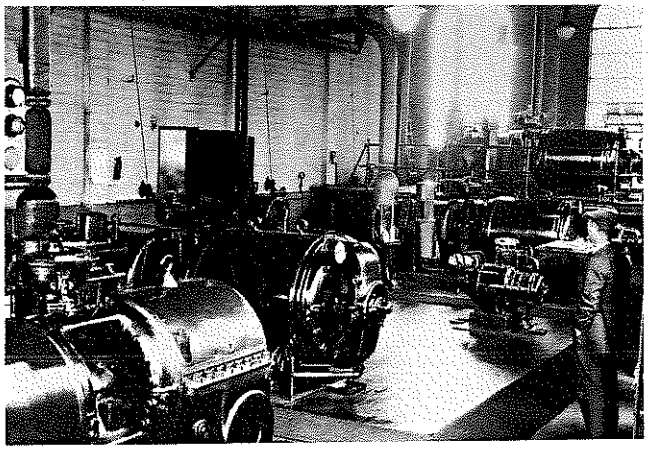
The plant is constructed of hollow tile walls whose exterior finish is concrete. The walls are 22 feet high. The dimensions of the building are approximately 72 by 87 feet. The interior was originally divided into two sections. One contained the boilers, while the engine and generating units were in the other section.[13]

The facility operated steadily until the end of the 1920's. It provided power to the railroad and to the city of Anchorage as well. Roughly $50,000 a year was collected through



The Power Plant. Built by the A.E.C. in the early 1920's, it served both the railroad and Anchorage until the completion of the Eklutna Power Plant (1929).

The source of the town's electricity, 1920s.



the sale of power.[14] The plant was not the most efficient. When the Eklutna power project was completed in 1929, the railroad agreed to use power supplied by the Anchorage Light and Power Company. The hydroelectric facility was able to produce electricity cheaper than the railroad could itself. After switching to the Eklutna system, the power plant was briefly used as central heating facility for the railroad.

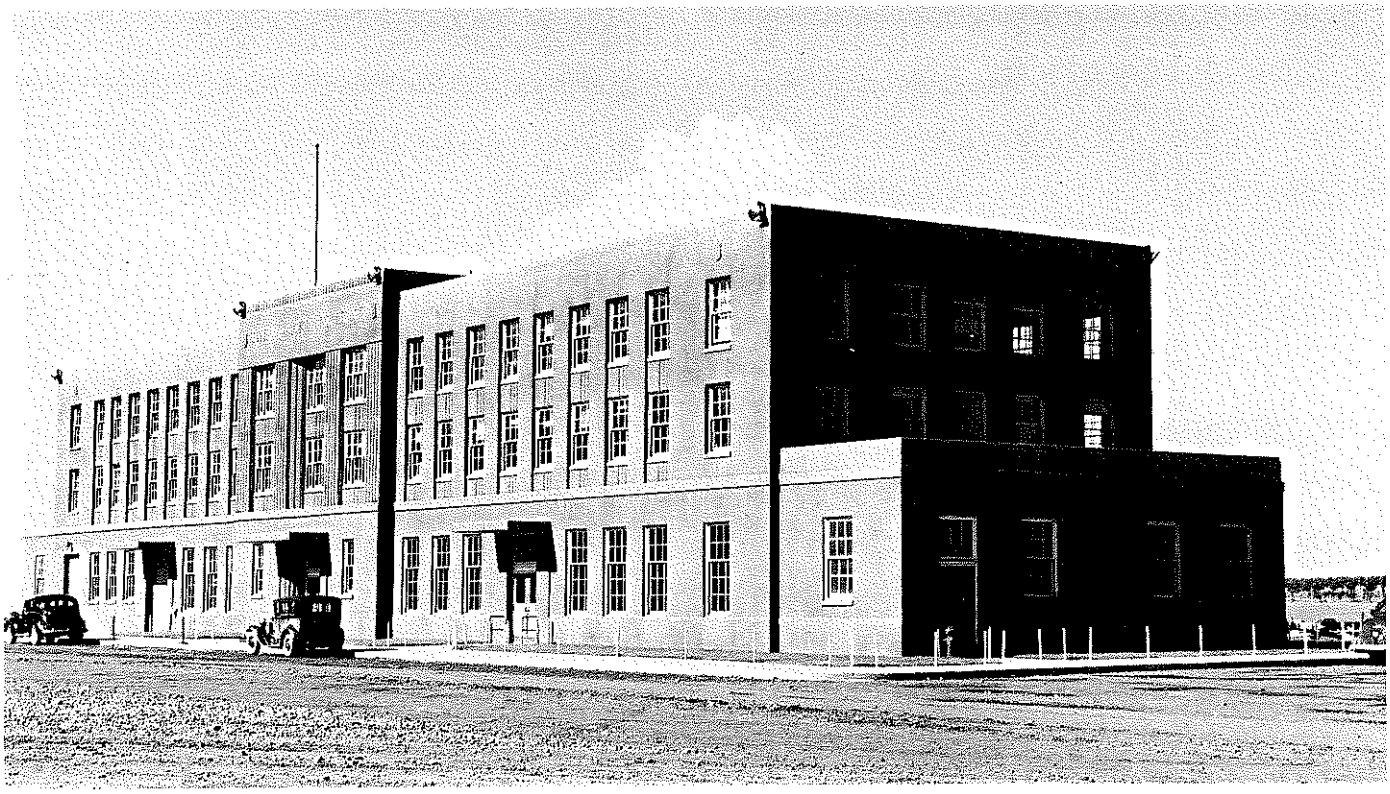
Of all the buildings in the Ship Creek basin, the power plant is one which received particular Congressional attention. The 1920's marked a period when the railroad was particularly vulnerable to Congressional attack because of the problems it had in operating profitably. Senator Robert B. Howell of Nebraska practically made a one-man campaign to bring the Alaska Railroad's accounts into the black.[15]

His criticism was directed to many aspects of the railroad's operation, including electrical power. He misrepresented the railroad's purchasing agreement from the Anchorage Light and Power Company, failing to note the change in production rates which favored the railroad. He criticized the loss of revenues which had been the railroad's when it operated the power plant. He also found that the use of the power plant as a central heating facility was exorbitantly expensive. Of these charges, only the last was accurate.

Howell's criticism of the power costs resulted in a new agreement by which Colonel Ohlson received a further reduced rate from the Anchorage Light and Power Company. In 1930, before Howell and his "Select Committee on Investigation of the Alaska Railroad" arrived in Anchorage, the underground steam lines were found to leak and to be poorly insulated; consequently, the central heating system was quickly eliminated. Coal stoves were installed in individual buildings, to satisfy the efficiency question.

Besides major rate changes, the Howell Committee recommended: "That business efficiency, which is inseparable from successful management, and of which the railroad has not always been the beneficiary be enforced, together with strict economy and the husbanding of every resource."[16] Ohlson, it must be noted, did manage very efficiently in the years ahead. In fact, by 1938 the railroad turned a surplus. Power was just one aspect of his economy.

The plant continued as a standby facility to be used if the Eklutna plant or the transmission lines failed. Today it is used as a shop facility by the railroad.



The Alaska Railroad Depot, 1940s.

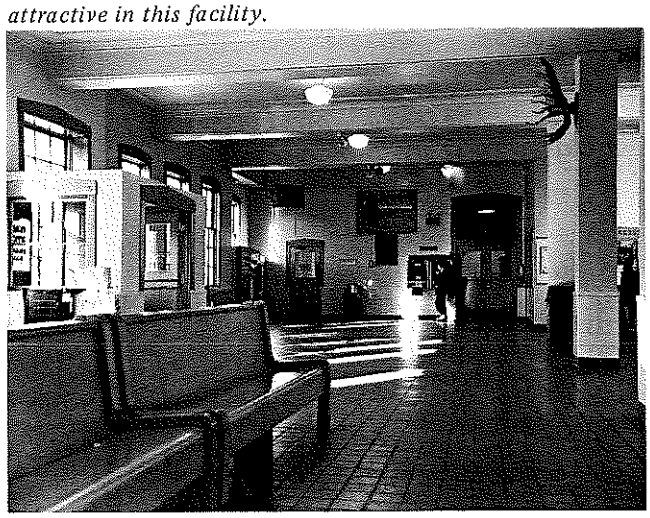
The Alaska Railroad Depot

By the early 1940's the Alaska Railroad was in need of a new depot and general office building. Long-time manager, Otto Ohlson, had seen his staff shuffled from the terminal site to the Federal Building and back again in the course of a few years. The reality of a new building was understood in 1941 when plans rolled off the drawing boards and the depot began to take shape. The J.B. Warrack Company completed the three-story building in September 1942 at a cost of $261,000.[17]

The cast concrete structure has been expanded over the years. The original building was approximately 46 by 220 feet. New wings, two stories in height, were added in 1948. Their symmetry is complementary to the entire structure. There is a hint of Neo-Classical style about the depot, although it is more modern and Spartan than earlier twentieth-century examples. The ground floor (which is fifteen feet high) is set off from the upper floors by a belt course which encircles the building. A modernistic rendition of a portico forms the main entrance; its fluted moldings are a counterpart to the more traditional columns. The molded words, "The Alaska Railroad," are a slight embellishment. Twelve- and fifteen-pane sash windows are in keeping with the more traditional style.

The lobby of the depot is especially impressive. Extra measures were taken to provide interesting details, particularly in cornices and light maple woodwork. Its openness and high ceiling provide further distinction. The waiting room, the baggage room and ticket office are on the ground floor.

Interior of the depot. The light woodwork is especially attractive in this facility.



The second and third floors were more starkly finished. Many of the upstairs rooms have been paneled. The engineering, accounting and management sections of the railroad originally formed this, the "headquarters" section of the building. Among the major individual offices were those of the general manager, the chief engineer, the bridge engineer, the wire chief, the train master, the chief accountant and general road master. Today, a similar set of offices exist in the expanded facility.

As the major depot and headquarters, the building is important as a symbol of the Alaska Railroad. Its architecture — functional and solid in form — emphasizes its role.

The Alaska Railroad Depot, 1942. Built by the J.B. Warrack Company, this building also serves as the administrative headquarters of the railroad.

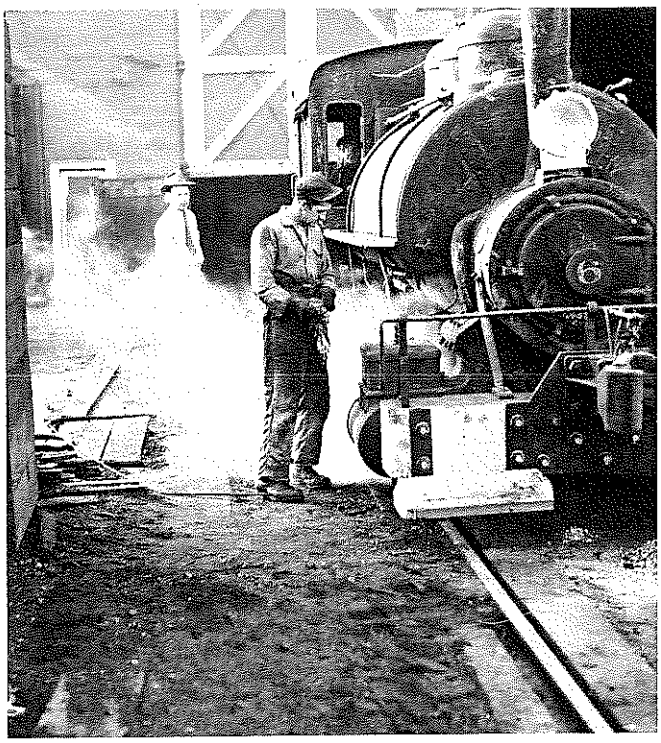
The Engine Repair Shop

This huge structure, measuring 320 by 230 feet, is the largest of all the railroad's buildings. Originally the building served as a wartime structure at the Kaiser (Remington) Shell Plant near Denver, Colo. Following World War II Col. J.P. Johnson, general manager of the railroad, purchased the building from the War Assets Department. Over 1,000 tons of steel framing forms its structural components. It was dismantled, loaded on new-purchased rail cars, and shipped to Anchorage via Seattle. Morrison-Knudsen Company, and Sparling Steel Co. of Seattle, were responsible for the dismantlement and assembly of the building. Brought to Anchorage in 1948, the structure provided 60,000 square feet of repair space to the railroad.[18] It continues to be used as the engine repair shop.

"Alaska Railroad Number One"

The small locomotive on the monument in front of the Alaska Railroad Depot was built by Davenport Locomotive Works of Davenport, Iowa. During the early 1900's, it was used in the construction of the Panama Canal. The original "Number 1," which has probably been scrapped, had fire box problems and was condemned in 1927. Railroad personnel felt that a substitute should be procured. Three railroaders went to the "Old Panama Shed" where the used parts of the Canal Zone equipment was stored. There, in one of the large crates, they came across a narrow-gauge locomotive. It was hauled down to the shop, rebuilt as a standard-gauge locomotive, and used in shop service in the late 1920's.[19]

The Engine Repair Shop in the late 1940s.



Alaska Railroad 1. Previously used in building the Panama Canal, this small locomotive was pulled out of storage in the late 1920's and used briefly in shop service.

Moth-balled for awhile, it was pulled out on special occasions. The first was the dedication of the Aurora Streamliner Service in 1947. Its second special occasion was the 1948 Fur Rendezvous. It came to its resting place in 1952 as part of the ceremonies of the Alaska Railroad which culminated the railroad's rehabilitation program.

Engine 556

This locomotive is the same type as the last steam locomotive to operate on the Alaska Railroad. Built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works for foreign service with the U.S. Army, it was placed in operation in the fall of 1943. It was a consolidation type, similar to the other 500 series locomotives that were already in operation. Locomotive 556 is one of three which still exist. Its "twin," Locomotive 557, has been relocated and is reused at Moses Lake, Washington. This series of engines was designed for war purposes as "throw away" models. However, as John Cooper, Director of the Alaska Historical and Transportation Museum, notes, the class "far outlasted and outperformed their design specifications." In 1959, it was retired to the Park Strip as a gift of the railroad to the city "as a reminder of the steam era that contributed so much to the economic development of Anchorage and central Alaska."[20]

Alaska Railroad 1 being set in place.

Locomotive 556. This locomotive, one of the last steam engines on the railroad, was given to the city of Anchorage in 1959.

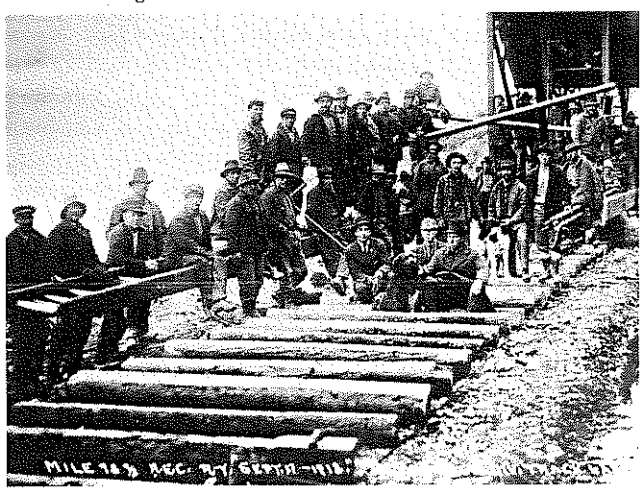
Construction Along Turnagain Arm

Within the Anchorage Division, the A.E.C. created the Turnagain District to coordinate construction along the arm. The work there was the most difficult of any in the entire division. Turnagain Arm presented sheer rocky slopes, tremendous snowslide hazards, not to mention the wide-ranging tides and vagaries of the northern climate.

The construction along Turnagain Arm took about two years to complete. Much of the work was done by stationmen. "Under this method, a number of the men associate themselves together as partners, taking short pieces of work at a certain price at per cubic yard for grading, or per acre for clearing and grubbing. Each man signs the contract for doing the work and becomes equally interested in it as a co-partner or small contractor."[21] A station amounted to a mile of right-of-way. Usually, the stationmen would take on a series of stations under one contract. The crew of eight to ten men would prepare their portion of the line for the laying of rail. Many members of these crews, especially in the Anchorage Division, were foreigners. "Bohunks" (those of Eastern European desent) performed much of the labor. Scandinavians were also well represented.

Work proceeded year-round because the blasting of rock did not depend upon weather conditions. Trails (see the Johnson Trail in the Trails Chapter), wharfs and buildings were constructed to facilitate the development of the railroad line. The work was extremely rugged. At times the A.E.C. was forced to use its own crews in excavating the dangerous slopes. This was because stationmen would balk at contracting for the most difficult rock work. Along the thirty miles of line between Kern and Potter "over 4,000,000 cubic yards of rock was hand-drilled and hand excavated at an average cost of $1.35 per cubic yard." Besides the station work, snowsheds and bridges had to be constructed. (Snowsheds, built in avalanche-prone areas, once stood at A.R.R. milepost 75.9, 76, 76.3 and 76.5. With the rerouting of the line in the late 1930's these sheds were eliminated.) These improvements, constructed by the A.E.C., were under separate contracts. The cost of putting a line along Turnagain Arm averaged $110,000 per mile. The last spike on the Turnagain Arm line was driven by Chairman Edes in 1918[22].

Stationmen along Turnagain Arm. These construction workers, many of whom were foreigners, completed most the Anchorage area work.



Construction camp at Rainbow Creek.

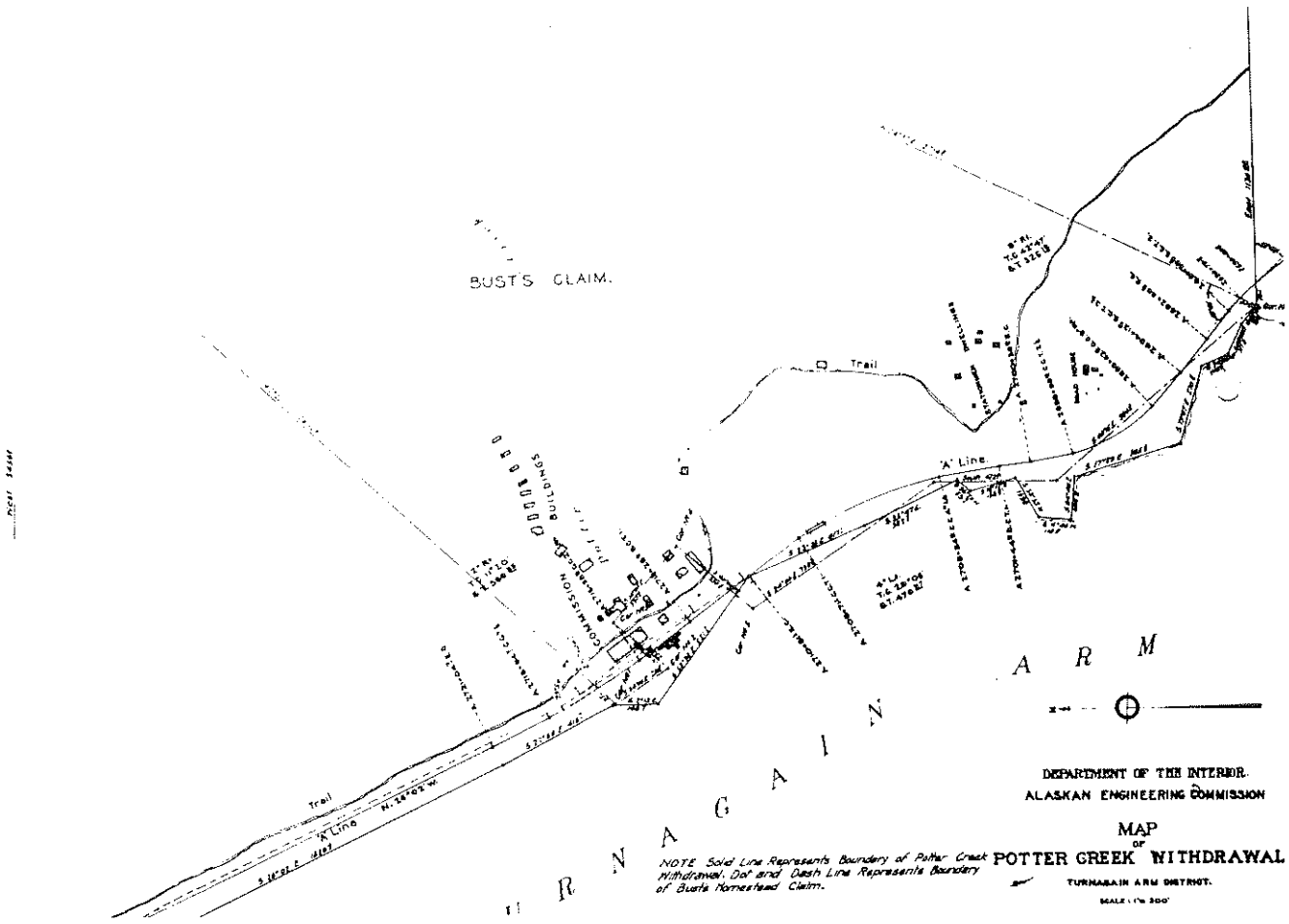
Construction camps were set up to facilitate the project. The former camps of the Alaska Northern Railway, built prior to 1910, were refitted for use by the station. The camps were located at Potter, Sheep Creek (the present McHugh Creek Wayside), old McHugh Creek, Rainbow, Falls Creek, Indian and Bird Point.[23] Although the A.E.C. built major facilities such as housing and warehousing at Potter and a wharf at Rainbow, many of the camp buildings were log. Only slight traces remain of these cabins. A description related by long-time railroader Anton Anderson captures what these cabins were like.

> Tents without floors, pole bunks covered with wild hay for mattresses and no bedding (you packed your own) were the accommodations then available . . . . At some locations along the access winter trails or tote roads, crude log houses chinked with moss were hastily constructed. Roofs on such houses were made of strong poles laid with very little pitch, then covered with bark, hay and moss and capped with an overall covering of two or three feet deep of topsoil or earth. Door hinges were ingeniously made out of bent nails, or leather from old boot tops and homemade wooden latches held the doors shut (Alaska was then a land without locks or policemen). Flour sacks covered the opening where windows should have been. Such trail accommodations were a combination cook house, storeroom, dining room, social hall and bunk house. The bunks were built out of poles in tiers across both ends of the room, similar in arrangement to post office boxes. They usually were four feet square and eight feet in depth and were known as "muzzle loaders" (the extra two feet was for duffle storage). It was no uncommon sight to find four tiers of such bunks, six bunks wide at each end of the room. Two coal oil lamps suspended from the ceiling provided illumination to the group who gathered around the central heating stove, or climbed up and down the crude ladders to and from their muzzle loading bunks . . .[25]

In the following sketches various camps are described.

Bird Creek, November 1917.

Potter Construction Camp. This map depicts the layout of the District Engineer's Headquarters Camp of 1917. The "Johnson Trail" is also shown.



Construction Camps Along Turnagain Arm

Potter. A base camp was set up at Potter Creek in 1916 as headquarters for the district engineer and his clerical and construction assistants. Warehouses, residences, a messhall and a handful of log buildings formed the camp. Barges were able to supply the camp with needed construction materials. The "Johnson Trail" linked Potter with the other camps to the southeast. The camp was used during 1916-1917. Rail had been laid to Falls Creek by December 1917. The Potter camp was then abandoned and reestablished at Falls Creek.[26] The section house which still stands at Potter was not part of the original camp; it is discussed in the following section.

Sheep Creek. The parking areas of McHugh Creek Wayside are the location of the Sheep Creek camp which operated in 1916-1918. (The original McHugh Creek was located about 2 miles southeast.) A field hospital was built at Sheep Creek and used in the emergencies associated with heavy railroad construction. Severe accident victims were transported to Anchorage without undue delay.[27] The only remains in the camp are faint foundation marks. Upon close examination traces of the foundations can be seen between the two parking lots. About four hundred feet west of the wayside, the remains of a cabin have been located. It may have been used as part of the railroad construction activity.

Old McHugh Creek. The knob and hollow above Beluga Point form the terrain where this camp was located. A handful of cabin foundations can still be found. All are in poor condition. It is presumed that most of these cabins were used by station men in constructing the railroad.

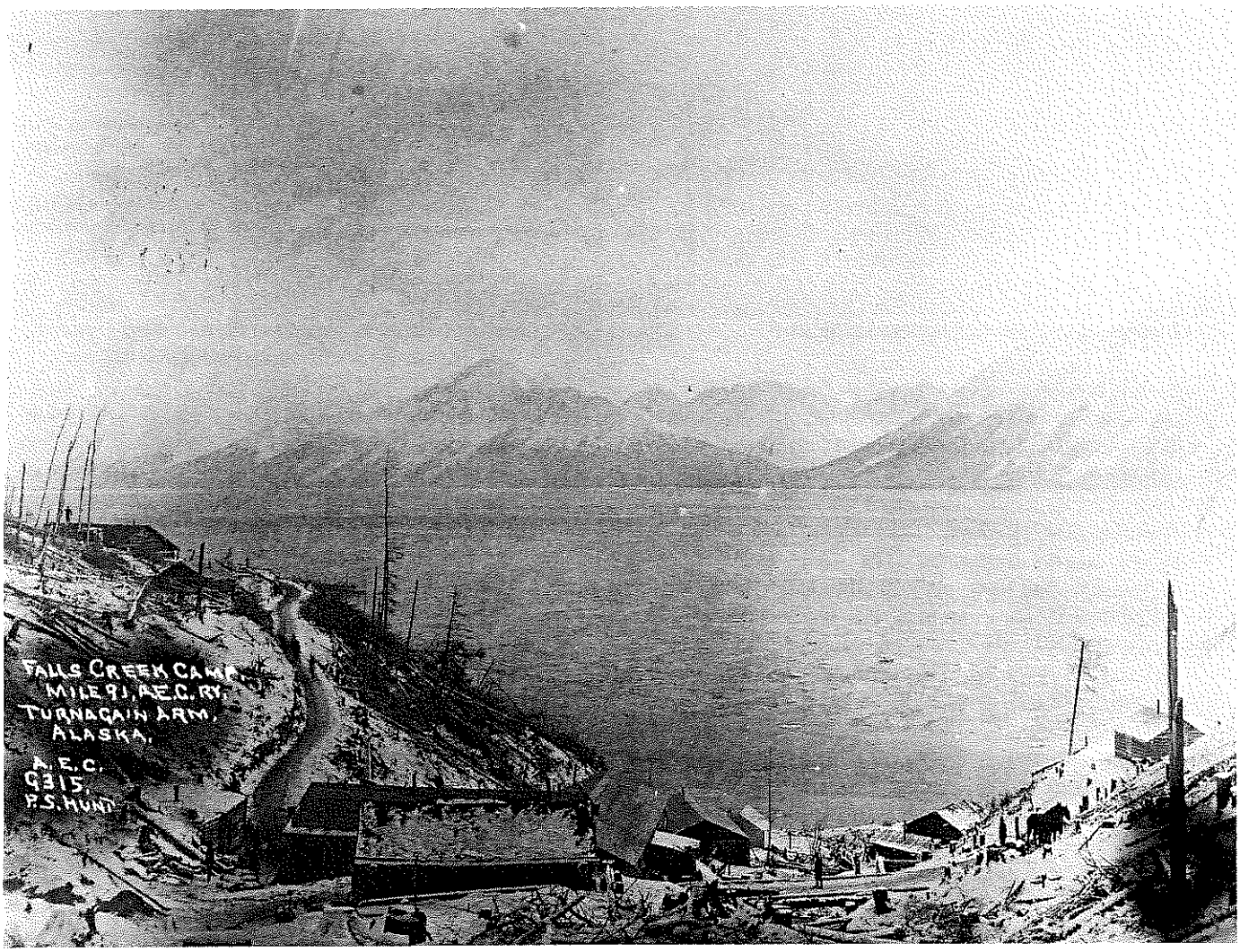
Sheep Creek Camp, c. 1917. This camp is located at the present site of McHugh Creek Wayside. The creek has since been renamed.

Rainbow. The Alaska Northern had an advance survey crew camping at this location as early as 1910.[28] The A.E.C. selected the rounded knoll as one of their major construction camps. A supply warehouse and dock were built there as were numerous log buildings.[29] From August 1918 until the completion of the line, the district headquarters were maintained at Rainbow. Some evidence of the cabin locations can be recognized. The Johnson Trail ran through the camp. A series of switchbacks joined the camp with the tide-level dock.

Falls Creek. From December 1917 to August 1918 Falls Creek was the headquarters camp of the district engineer. Four-horse roadteams were stationed at this camp. The horses were used to carry construction materials over the Johnson Trail.[30] A dilapidated cabin is located about 400 feet above the highway. The roof of the 15 x 16-foot structure, which may have been part of the railroad camp, has collapsed.

Bird Point. The railroad survey of 1914 depicts a roadhouse, a workhouse and two cabins at the eastern end of the point. The roadhouse stood there as late as the 1940's. The A.E.C. operated a sawmill there in 1917 to cut timber for construction of the causeway which led north along Turnagain Arm. A construction camp was formed there as well. Log buildings and tent frame structures formed the camp. None of those structures still exist. The foundation of the old section house which operated until the 1950's is located not far from the present railroad line. The construction camp was probably in the same vicinity.

Kern. Kern or Kern Creek (as it was sometimes called) was the terminus of the Alaska Northern Railroad. Before the A.E.C. completed the line, occasional trains and gas cars had been shuttled from Seward to this point 70.5 miles away. A number of buildings existed there over the years. The 1914 A.E.C. survey maps show a handful of buildings clustered not far from the creek. During the construction era Kern was part of the Seward division.



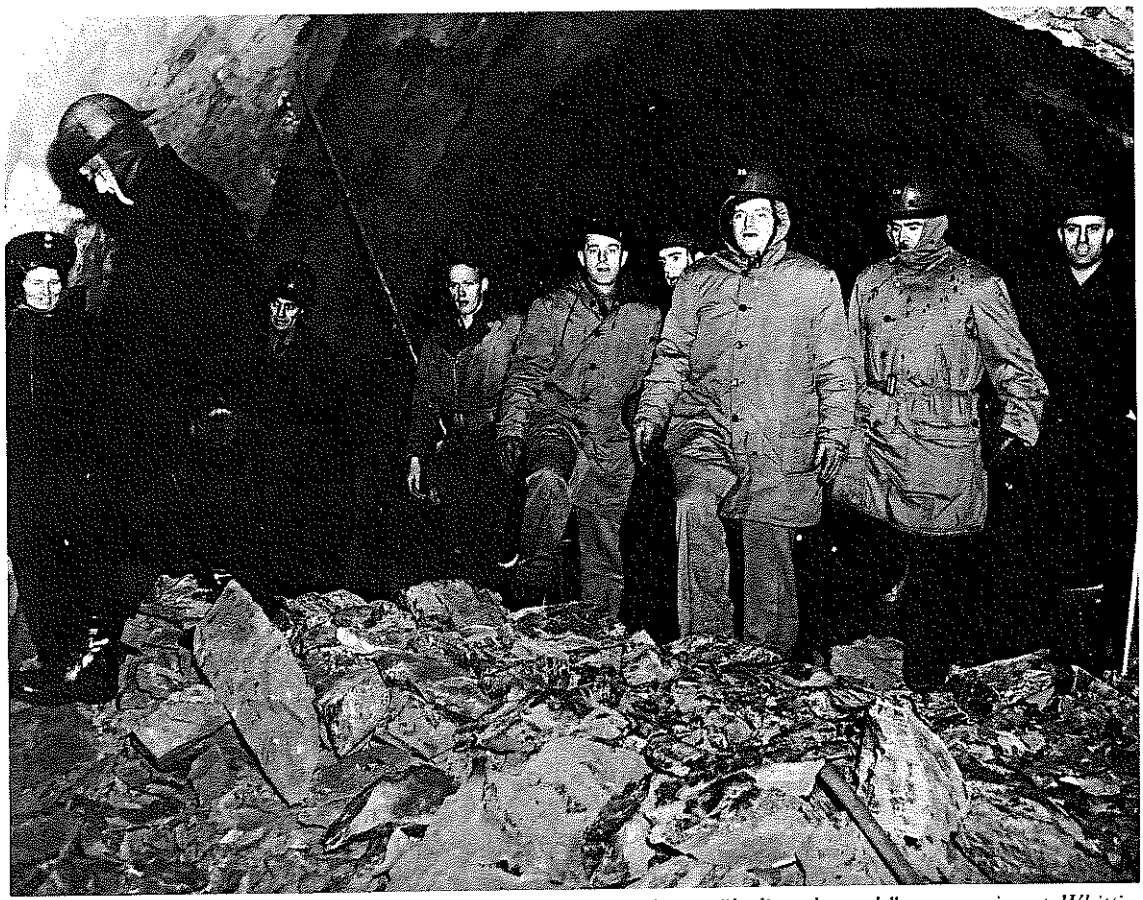
Falls Creek, 1917. Note the construction road - "the Johnson Trail" - heading down the Arm.

As early as 1902, a route between the Passage Canal and Turnagain Arm was considered as the possible enterance to the region. John E. Ballaine, head of the Alaska Central Railroad, rejected the idea because the cost of tunneling through the mountains there would be too expensive. Furthermore, the glacier was viewed as potential operational headache if it were to advance farther (at the time it completely blocked Bear Valley). In 1914 the advance party of the Alaska Engineering Commission once again considered the Prince William Sound terminus. Although the Portage route would cut roughly fifty miles of track (and maintenance) off the line, the Alaska Northern Route was selected. When Colonel Ohlson became the head of the railroad in 1926, he soothed the minds of Seward's population declaring: "The Seward gateway has come to remain. While we could shorten the line somewhat, Seward is on the map, and we would have difficulty getting away from it."[32] Yet, a decade later Ohlson was convinced that the maintenance and transportation costs were not worth keeping Seward as the terminal city. However, because of strong opposition by the citizenry of Seward, the project was set aside until the demands of national defense brought military support to the project.

The military depended on the railroad for its transportation needs. In 1940, a War Department study concluded that the Passage Canal Line would be safer from enemy attack. (Particularly vulnerable on the Seward Line was the Loop District where trestles could be easily bombed.) With War Department support, funds for the project were appropriated by Congress. President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the route in April 1941.

The Corps of Engineers contracted with West Construction Company of Boston to complete the tunnels. In November 1942, the "Holing Through Ceremonies" were celebrated. By the following June, track had been laid over the 14-mile route and the first trains rolled into Whittier.

Besides West Construction Company, General Simon B. Buckner, head of the Alaska Defense Command, Colonel Talley of the Corps, and F.A. Hansen and Anton A. Anderson of the Alaska Railroad were instrumental in completing the project. Most notably, the credit of realizing the new route must go to Ohlson. Because of the war he stayed with the railroad well past retirement age. At the end of 1945, the 75-year-old manager, having served in that capacity for seventeen years, bid the railroad farewell. The Whittier cut-off was his "greatest, and his final, triumph."[33]



Major General Simon B. Buckner and Colonel B.B. Talley during "holing through" ceremonies at Whittier Tunnel, 1942.

Section Houses

With completion of the railroad line, sections were established to ensure that the track would be maintained. Former railroad construction camps were generally used as locations for section houses. A string of section houses, "as thick as fleas on a dog's back in the early days," were built along the length of the railway. A section foreman, his wife (or cook) and his crew members resided in the house. Various outbuildings such as additional bunk space, car sheds, tool sheds and water tanks might be located nearby. The houses were built according to a variety of standard plans. Certain styles can usually be attributed to a certain date.

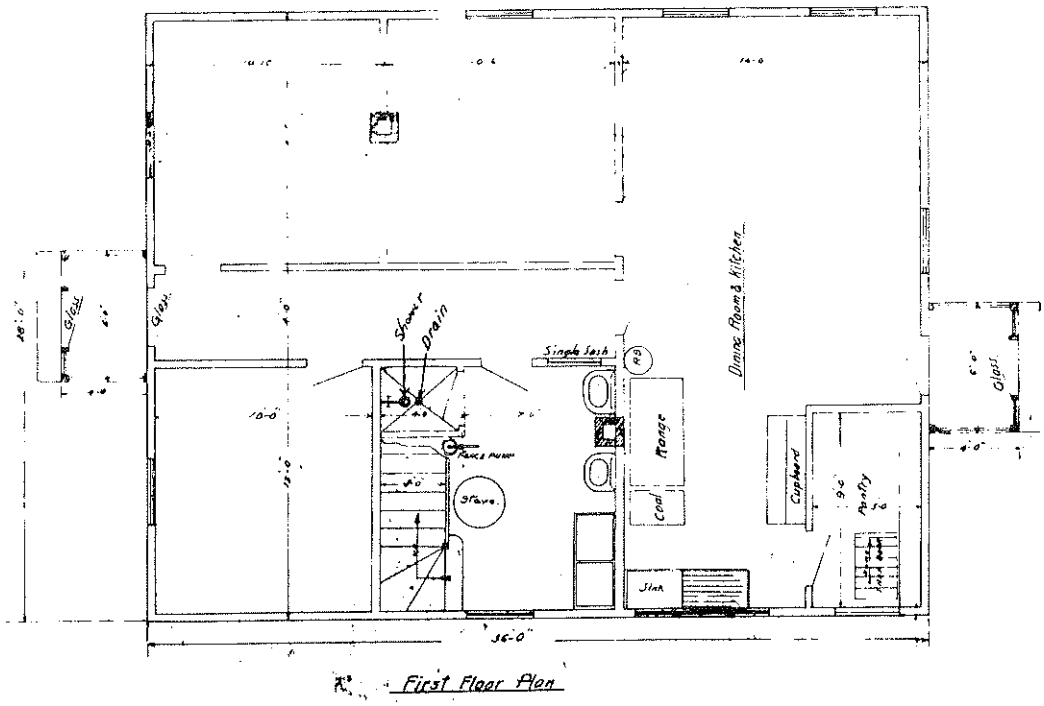
The section foreman and his crew (gandy dancers as they were sometimes called) were responsible for a designated length of track – the so-called section. The length between sections varied depending upon snowslide hazards, the terrain, grades and similar factors. The section foreman typically had a crew of six to eight crew members working for him. During the summer the crew might be larger. At that time the grading, leveling, alignment and similar maintenance functions were carried out. In winter crews were generally smaller. A "track walker" was necessary to make sure that the railway was clear of boulders, snowslides and other obstructions.

Besides their role as maintenance quarters, the section houses usually served as flag stops along the line. Thus limited passenger and mail service was available through the section houses.

Within the geographic limits of the Municipality there were as many as fourteen sections during the earlier years of the railroad's operation. Starting at the southern end of the railway, section houses were located at Moraine, Portage, Kern, Girdwood, Bird Point, Indian, Rainbow, Potter, Campbell, Anchorage, Whitney, Eagle River, Birchwood and Eklutna. Some have been moved; others have been lost to fire; only one of the older ones, the Potter Section House, exists on its original site. In the following description Anchorage-area section houses are identified.

Potter Section House. Built by the Alaska Railroad in 1929, this section house is the only one of its type remaining along the rail belt.

Potter Section House, floor plan. This drawing, taken from the 1929 plans, depicts the basic layout of the first floor.



The Potter Section House

This section house is reportedly the only one of its type that is left along the railway. Built in 1929, it was in continuous use until the late-1970's. Three other section houses (believed to be of the same design) were also built that year. They were located at Divide, Indian and Sherman and are no longer a part of the Alaska Railroad system.

This one-and-one-half-story frame house is twenty-eight by thirty-six feet. Similar entrances are located at the ends of the building. Two four-pane sash windows are located to either side of the main entrance. The back entrance has only one window adjacent to the door. Two identical windows are set above each door. The building is covered with shiplap.

The original plans called for a spacious kitchen and dining room (14 x 27 feet), washroom and three other rooms (each about 10 x 12 feet) on the ground floor. The upstairs contains a large hall (16 x 35 feet). For years, this space reportedly served as a waiting room for passengers. It also has been used as a bunkroom. Small, closet-like rooms are located under the eaves. Nearby are two outbuildings - a car shed and tool shed. [35]

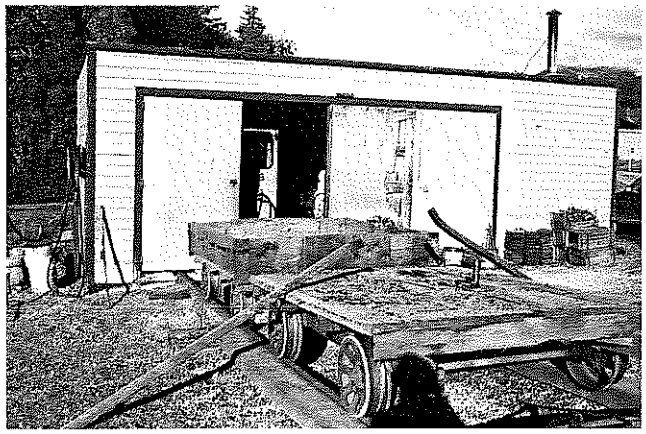
Originally, the Potter section met with the Rainbow and Campbell sections. With the discontinuation of those and other sections, the Potter crew came to oversee the maintenance of an area whose intermediary points were between Anchorage and Girdwood.

In July, 1978, the section was closed. Maintenance of the track in the area is handled by crews originating in Anchorage. The section was declared surplus and taken over by the Alaska Division of Parks. Plans are underway to use the house as an interpretive and visitor facility in conjunction with Chugach State Park.

The Girdwood Section House

Girdwood functioned as a construction camp during 1917-18 when the AEC worked in laying rail along Turnagain Arm. The section was created in 1918. Apparently the present section house dates from the 1920s. Stock construction drawings (circa 1923) were used to build a number of similar section houses along the railbelt. According to a 1975 report of the Office of History and Archaeology (Series Number 15), this section house which had been located at Kern was re-established at Girdwood in 1940. The nearby car shed was moved from Bird to Girdwood in 1956.[38]

Car shed at Girdwood. Typical of the car sheds on the railroad, this one sits near the Section House.



Girdwood Section House, c. 1940. Originally located at Kern, this structure was moved to Girdwood following the completion of Seward Highway.

The standard section house was a frame structure. A number of them are said to exist along the line. The houses were 26 feet wide and 42 feet long. Interior space arrangements varied depending on the foreman's marital status. If unmarried, the foreman had one bedroom, while the cook had the other. If married, the section foreman and his wife had two rooms to themselves; typically, one was used as a bedroom, the other served as a living room. The section crew slept in the "bullpen," a large bunkroom for the five to ten crew members; located at the opposite end of the building. Two rooms separated the bunkroom from the foreman's quarters. Showers and waterclosets adjoined the "bullpen"while the kitchen and dining area formed the room next to the foreman's side[21]. The Girdwood section is still maintained.

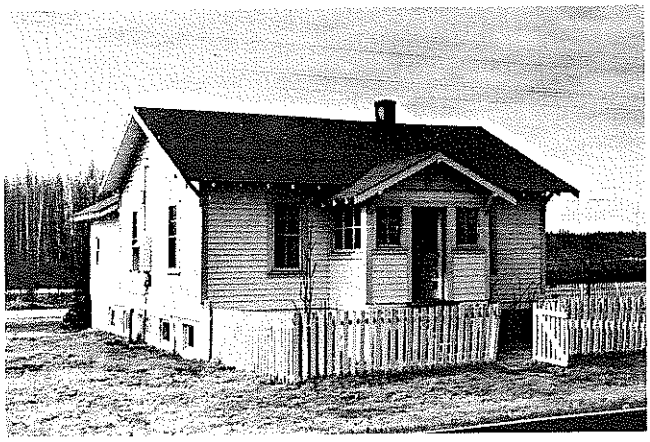
A car shed sits alongside the track about 200 feet away from the section house. It protects the small mechanized car to which is used by the section foreman and his crew in maintaining track.[38]

The Whitney Section House

This section house is now located at the State Transportation Museum in Palmer. Built around 1917, it is reportedly the first section house which was built to serve the railroad. It stood at Whitney for nearly sixty years. (Whitney can be found on Elmendorf AFB. No buildings stand there anymore. A sign marked "Whitney" still marks the section house site.) The one-story frame building was saved from demolition largely through the efforts of Jerry McCutcheon, a son of Whitney's first section foreman.

H.H. McCutcheon (later active in territorial politics) came to Anchorage in May 1915. His first job was laying track from the mouth of Ship Creek, north through the terminal yards, and beyond toward Eagle River. A primary goal of the railroad at that time was to reach the Matanuska coal fields. Eagle River was reached in 1915, although the completion of the high trestle across the gorge would have to wait another year. By August 1916 rail had been laid to Moose Creek, and the first coal train rolled into Anchorage. With that segment of the line finished, section crews were needed to maintain it. McCutcheon got the foreman's job at Whitney (named after Bud Whitney who homesteaded about a mile farther up Whitney Road). The foreman and his family first lived in the back portion of the bunkhouse. The crew lived in the front. As foreman, McCutcheon oversaw the maintenance of that section until the early 1930's. Thereafter, he became yardmaster at Anchorage.

The section originally ran from a point just north of the terminal yards to the Eagle River bridge. A section house there doubled as a guard house for Army personnel who were assigned to protect the bridge. The Eagle River section was discontinued in the years following World War I. The length of the Whitney section was then extended. Like so many sections of the railroad, the Whitney section was closed in 1975. That year the section house was moved to Palmer.



Whitney Section House, c. 1917. Once located at Whitney, this early section house now is part of the State Transportation Museum at Palmer.

The Birchwood Station, 1916. This depot was moved from Birchwood in 1931. Now a gift shop, it is located north of Wasilla.

The Birchwood Station

Similar to the Whitney Section House, the old Birchwood Station was moved from the Anchorage area. In this case, however, the station was moved in 1931.[39] The building came to rest at Willow. Remaining there for many years, it was ultimately sold to private interests. The building, now called "The Idea Shop," sits alongside the Parks Highway about five miles north of Wasilla.

This station building was constructed in 1916. Featuring a bay window, extended eaves and sizable platform, it fits the image of the era's small railroad station. Dimensionally, the building is approximately sixteen by fifty feet. Originally, a kitchen adjoined the building to the rear. The downstairs contained a freight (or bunk) room, a living room, an agent's bedroom, a waiting room and an office. Two bedrooms were upstairs.[40]

When located at Birchwood, a section crew was quartered in the building. Also located at Birchwood was a water tank – a mighty, big necessity in the days of steam locomotives. Such tanks were not located at every section but at needed points up and down the line. Exactly why a station was located at Birchwood in 1916 is not known. As few settlers resided in the area, it could not have served many people. Given the sparcity of railroad bussiness, it is not surprising that it was moved.

MARITIME

The Docks at the Mouth of Ship Creek

Dock facilities have been located at the mouth of Ship Creek since 1915. At that time, steamships which were to supply the A.E.C. and town merchants had to anchor in the inlet. In order to facilitate the unloading of freight: "A very serviceable dock was constructed on the north bank of Ship Creek near the mouth. In front of the dock was constructed a gridiron, over which the barges were floated at high tide and on which they safely rested at low tide, thus avoiding any difficulty in unloading. A 15-ton derrick, operated by hoisting engine, was equipped for unloading the barge."[41] It was designated Dock No. 1. With the opening of Ocean Dock this early dock took on a secondary role.

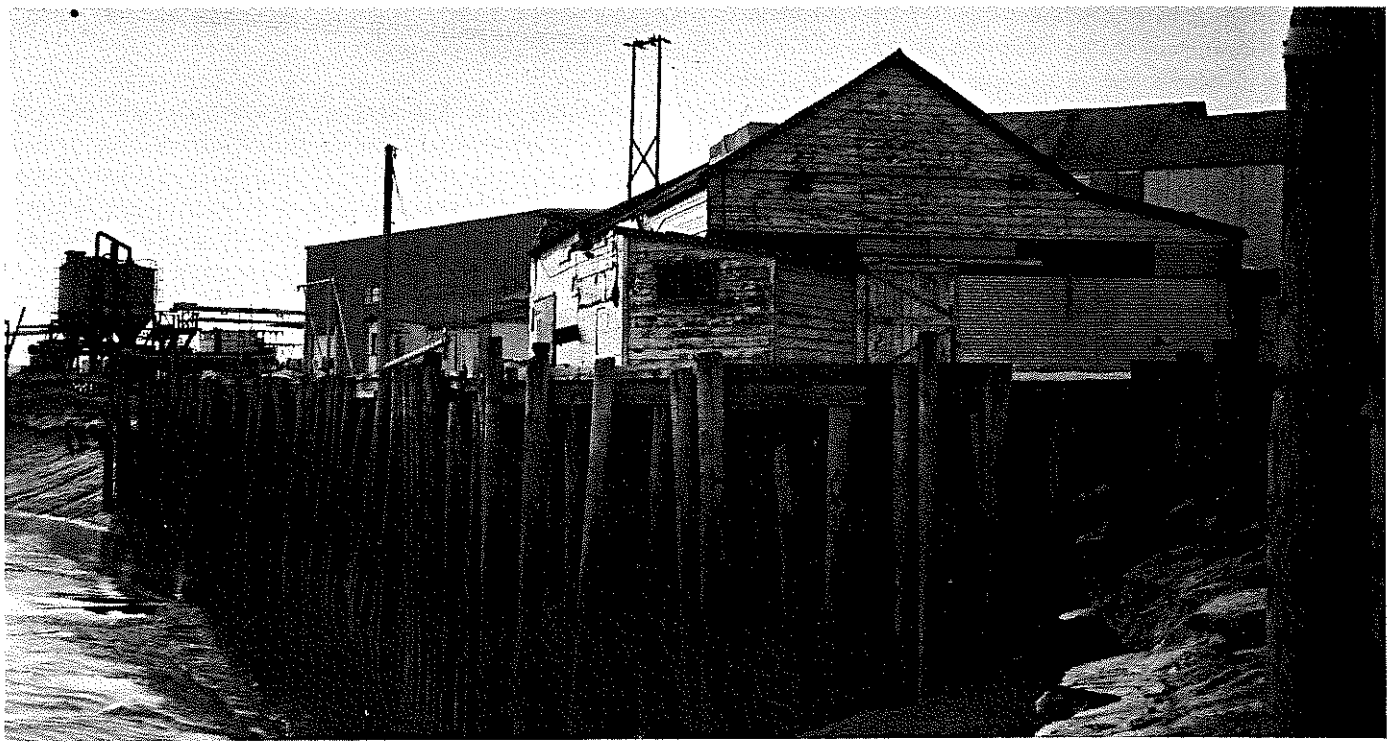
By the mid-1920's, Ocean Dock had been closed. A new dock was needed to accommodate the smaller boats which served the communities of the inlet. The Anchorage City Council joined with the railroad in an agreement to share the costs of building such a dock. The railroad completed the project in 1927; however, the city council "disapproved of its construction and refused to pay."[42] This facility was originally called the City Dock. In latter years, it was also known as the A.R.R. Dock.[43]

In the same vicinity as City Dock were the cannery docks. The mouth of Ship Creek was bustling with maritime activity for many years – at least on a seasonal basis. The "mosquito fleet" was launched from the docks at Ship Creek and the docks of the Marine Ways. The Marine Ways

Ship Creek, 1918. Before the commercial canneries were started in the 1920's. Fish was packed at the mouth of Ship Creek for AEC personnel.

were built to store boats in winter. They were located just north of the mouth of Ship Creek (the area has been landfilled). The "mosquito fleet" included barges, launches and even the stern-wheeler *Jane.* Earliest members of the fleet included the *Swan* (run by Nick Gickema), the *Seagull* (run by Cap Maehl), the *Progress* (run by Jack Brown), and the *Traveler* (run by Captain S.S. Cramer). With creation of city dock in 1927, the smaller craft continued to use the facility. Among those who served the inlet during the 1920's and 1930's were Heine Berger and Jack Anderson.

Today, pilings and portions of the old docks can be seen along the north bank. The one cannery which still operates at the location, Whitney-Fidalgo, still maintains a dock. The scows of Whitney-Fidalgo, which used to pull the salmon catch to the docks, are presently stored in the adjoining boatyard. The bright yellow, flat-bottomed vessels were symbolic of the maritime industry in upper Cook Inlet.



The ARR docks and cannery docks have been used since at least 1928.

Ocean Dock

During the first few years of Anchorage's existence, ocean-going ships had to employ barges and lighters to unload their tons of merchandise. Only a temporary wharf existed to serve the smaller craft. Even at high tide the mud flats were much too shallow for the larger ships. To realize the shipping and commercial potential of the Ship Creek site, the commissioners felt that an adequate dock was necessary.

The problems of the waterfront, such as its high tides, ice pans and rapid siltation, were seen as barriers to overcome. The A.E.C. brought in a consultant to study port development. His report was overly pessimistic. Looking for another expert, they settled upon William Gerig. A respected, scholarly individual, Gerig outlined plans for an extended dock to the north of the terminal yards. It was to be approximately a thousand yards long. Gerig was retained to oversee its development.[44]

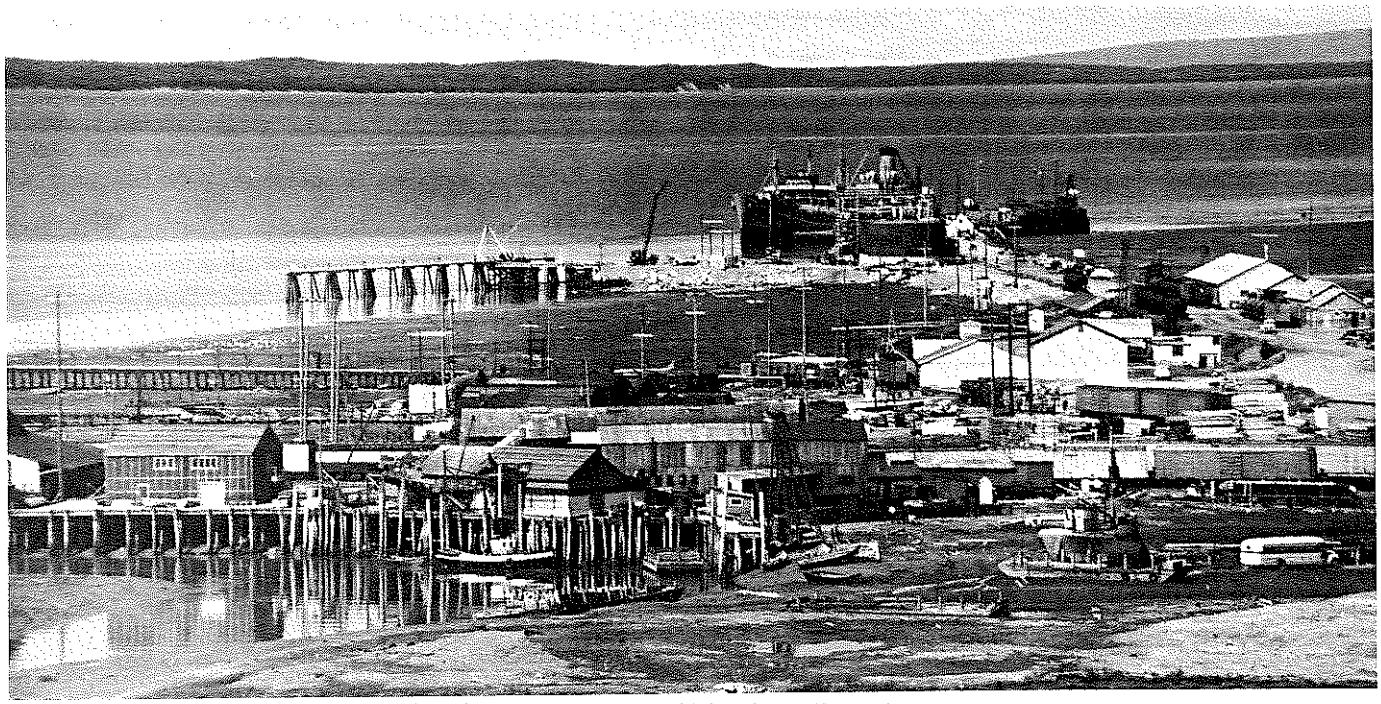
Construction began in the summer of 1918. A barge called *the Sperm* was refitted as a dredge and, by filling, a narrow strip began to form. Pilings were set and dredging continued the next year. On September 16, 1919, the *S.S. Anyox* became the first oceangoing vessel to use the dock. The occasion resulted in a large turnout "to see the sight for which Anchorage has been impatiently waiting for over three years . . ."[45] The time-savings in unloading was appreciable. For example, another of the early ships, the *S.S. Admiral Watson,* was emptied of 525 tons of cargo in less than fourteen hours.[46] Loaded aboard flatcars, railroad supplies were moved into the terminal yards. Local merchandise was carried across Ship Creek to the townsite which was about one and one-half miles away.

Ocean Dock was a success – perhaps too much of one. Because steamships were able to tie in directly at Anchorage, they were able to avoid the high railroad rates between Seward and Anchorage. The railroad estimated that it lost over $28,000 per year to the steamships which used the port facility. The railroad management believed that closing the port would add new revenue to the railroad. To avoid a flap with the steamship companies, new rates were negotiated to ease the expense of the Seward-Anchorage haul. In the fall of 1924, Noel Smith, the railroad manager, closed Ocean Dock.[47] Thereafter, the dock was minimally maintained. It was to be used only in case of emergencies or to export large mineral shipments.

Heavy use of the dock did not occur again until World War II. Guards were placed at the terminal facility. The Army wanted to use the most efficient means to unload its 10,000-ton transports. The dock served their purposes. Remnants of the Army's facilities – a dock house and quonset hut – can still be seen at the end of the neck of land.

After the war, concerted efforts were made by Anchorage citizens to develop a port facility. The city, in conjunction with the Corps of Engineers, saw to it that a port was constructed.

Ocean Dock is no longer a 1,000-yard mole. Dredging and filling have taken place around much of it. Ocean Dock Road leads out to what remains of the dock. A railroad spur and the former military buildings are the most prominent features of the former dock.



Emard's Cannery and Ocean Dock. This photo, taken around 1960, shows Emard's Cannery in the foreground. The land around Ocean Dock, leading out to the large ship, was beginning to be filled.

Emard's Cannery

Within the cluster of buildings presently operated by Whitney-Fidalgo are a group of structures which were part of Emard's Cannery. The site, a parcel which is leased by the Alaska Railroad, has had a cannery located upon it since the 1920's. Adjacent to the east side of the cannery buildings is the old City Dock (ARR Dock). Now marked by pilings and rickety framing, the docks were long used in conjunction with the cannery.

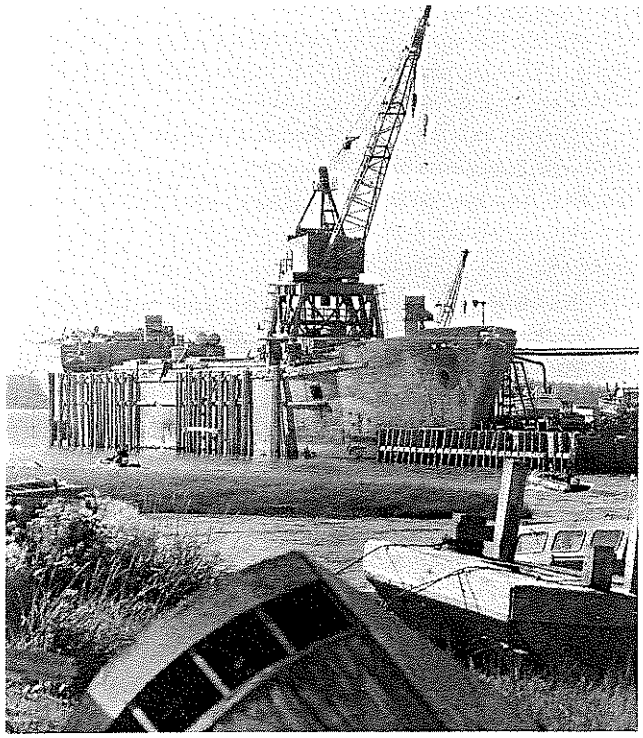
H.J. Emard started his cannery in the 1920's. A lease for the parcel next to docks was arranged in 1928. (A.B. Gorman and Co. had used the site as a cannery for a few years prior to 1928.) Emard had come to Anchorage around 1916. He managed the city's telephone system during the first few years of the town's development.

Emard's Packing Company, as it was also known, was the largest of the Anchorage canneries. The other major cannery was the General Fish Company. It too, was located along the mouth of Ship Creek. During a season, Emard employed between 250 and 300 persons. They packed about 50,000 cases of salmon each year during the late 1930's. Emard was particularly successful in the canning business. In contrast to other area canners, he would market the salmon himself, eliminating the charges of the middleman.[50]

The heyday of salmon fishing in the inlet lasted for more than a half-century. In recent years, fishing activity has diminished in the upper inlet. At one point in time Emard's scows could be seen all along the shores of the inlet, as far south as Tyonek on the west and Swanson River on the east. During the season they would be brought dockside at the cannery to unload the catch. This year marks the first time that the scows were not deployed.[51]

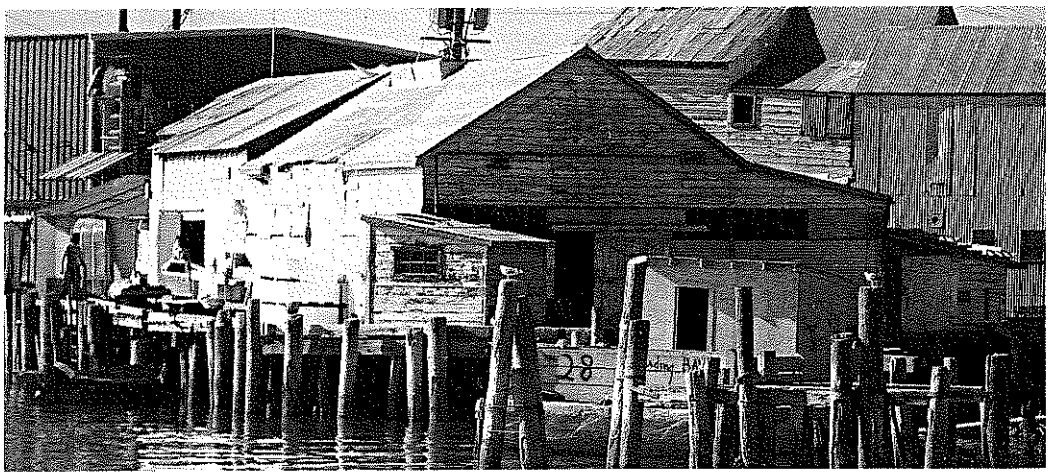
Although Emard sold his plant following the Earthquake era, Whitney-Fidalgo still maintains a cannery operation at the Ship Creek site. Likewise the dock space is still used by the cannery.

The Limestone.



The Limestone

This Second World War vessel was originally a supply ship which was intended for a one-way mission to the South Pacific. Unlike her 500 sister ships which were blasted to form breakwater material, the *Limestone* returned to the West Coast carrying war-related goods. Resting on San Francisco's waterfront as surplus, she merely collected barnacles. Anchorage businessman, Ken Hinchey, saw a possibility in renewing her as a concrete storage facility. He purchased the *Limestone* for $40,000 and had her towed to Anchorage in 1960. He dug a snug hole for her alongside his mud flat lease. Waiting for the right tide, she was guided to her resting place along Ship Creek. Prior to her relocation, concrete was brought to Anchorage in bagged form. Soon, she was receiving bulk concrete – a first for Anchorage.[52] The *Limestone* continues to serve as a concrete storage structure.



Emard's Cannery started operating at the mouth of Ship Creek in the 1920s.

The Old Eklutna Power Plant
(The Anchorage Light and Power Company)

The Old Eklutna Power Plant was the first hydroelectric plant in this region of Alaska. Completed in 1929, it served Anchorage until 1956 when the electrical demands of a growing Anchorage exceeded its capacity. Many of the original components of the half-century-old, vacant plant are in good condition. They remain as evidence of the engineering and management endeavors associated with the project.[53]

The Storage Dam and the Diversion Dam. At the northwest end of Eklutna Lake a storage dam was constructed to provide year-round water flow to the power house, some nine miles away. This original earthen dam collapsed before the plant began operation. Temporary retaining structures were used until 1941, when a concrete-reinforced dam was completed. About seven miles downstream, a diversion dam was built on the Eklutna River. This concrete arch dam is 61 feet high and 98 feet long on the crest. The crown of the base is eight feet thick and the top is five feet thick. Its spillway crest was designed to pass 6,000 cubic feet of water per second.

The Tunnel and Penstock. At the northern abutment of the diversion dam a tunnel was built to channel the water to the power house. The tunnel is 1,900 feet long, seven feet wide, eight feet high, and has a drop of 16.2 feet along its length. It was cut out of bedrock, with only the last seventy feet being concrete-lined, and is protected by a trash rack covering about 100 square feet. At its terminus, a concrete-reinforced valve house protected the 54-inch butterfly valve used to cut off water flow for turbine repair. The penstock, a 54-inch steel pipe, meets the tunnel approximately 870 feet from the power house. Necessary water pressure was reached as the water was forced from the tunnel into the much smaller penstock.

The Power House. When the plant was finished in 1929, the operation included a 1,500-horsepower Pelton water turbine and a General Electric standard 2,300-volt (3-phase, 60-cycle alternating current) generator. The capacity of the Eklutna plant doubled in 1935, when identical turbine and generating units were installed. This equipment was removed when the plant shut down in 1956. The power plant building, however, has not changed over the years and remains intact. Its reinforced concrete walls measure 61 by 27 feet. Atop the walls are steel trusses which support the

Eklutna Power Plant, 1929. Realized through the efforts of Frank Reed, Sr., the Anchorage Light and Power Company supplied electricity to Anchorage until the 1950's.

asbestos shingle roof. Large galvanized steel-framed windows are prominent features. The largest entrance is a truck-sized garage doorway with a steel rolling door. Above this entrance is an arched window. A set of small doors provide pedestrian access. A crane runway overhead in the main building was used to move heavy machinery. Two concrete lean-to additions are attached to the sides of the main building. The northside addition which was built in the early 1950's, housed the switchboard and office facilities. The other lean-to was used as a tool and supply room; it appears to be part of the original fabric of the plant.

Other Buildings. Because of the size of the operation, it was necessary for full-time personnel to reside at the plant site. Four cottages, a bunkhouse, a messhall, a tool house, a blacksmith shop and various garages served in the operation of the plant. None of them exist today.

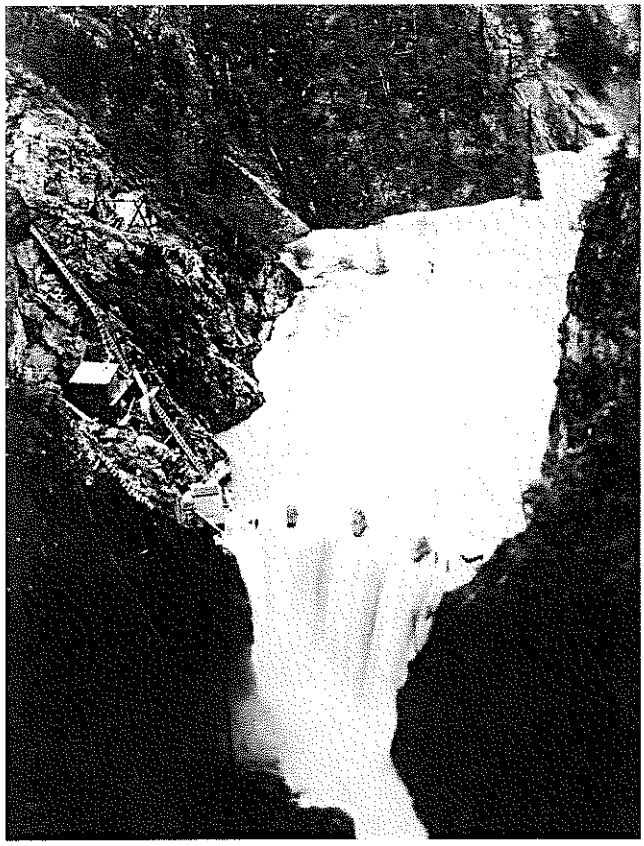
The Eklutna Power Plant was realized through the efforts of local citizens, especially Frank I. Reed, Sr. The idea that hydroelectric power production from the Eklutna Lake source was feasible belonged to an electrial engineer with the Alaska Railroad, John J. Longacre. Yet the promotion and creation of the project was accomplished largely by Reed. Reed was a self-made financial success. After gold mining at Nome in 1903, starting a dredge operation at Cache Creek in 1913, and timber cutting in the south-central Alaskan region in 1915, he settled in Anchorage. He became the owner and manager of the Anchorage Hotel, one of his life-long concerns. His other major concern was the Eklutna Power Plant.

His application to the Federal Power Commission was approved March 8, 1923, and he was issued a license to undertake power development. The land on which the power plant now sits was withdrawn by Presidential Executive Order on December 5, 1927. In October 1928, Reed was extended a fifty-year license for the project. Two weeks later he transferred that license to the Anchorage Light and Power Company, Inc.

He went to San Francisco to gain monetary support for the project. There, he interested Russell-Colvin in financing the project. Through a sale of bonds, $750,000 was raised for the project. Letters of intent from both the city and railroad to use the power were instrumental in successful financing. Reed originally owned thirty percent of the stock. Later when Russell-Colvin went bankrupt in the Depression, Reed was able to amass sixty percent of the stock.

Even though construction began in July of 1928, it was not until October that the major units of the project – the dams, penstock, powerhouse, and substations – were begun. The Jasper-Stacy Company of San Francisco carried out the work on these facilities. On September 9, 1929, the power plant at Eklutna was tested, and problems were found with the diversion dam's wasteway. It was not until January 1930 that full-time production began.[54, 55]

The initial 1,500-horsepower capacity was doubled in 1935 with an additional turbine and generating unit. Having long been operated with temporary storage dams at Eklutna Lake, the project was improved in 1941 when the steel and concrete reinforced storage dam was completed. On October 25, 1943, the City of Anchorage purchased the Eklutna Project from the Anchorage Power and Light Company for almost $1.1 million. The City continued the operation of the power plant until 1954 when the Bureau of Reclamation bought the rights and facilities in anticipation of the opening of the new Eklutna Power Project; power production continued until 1956 when the much larger Eklutna Project was in full operation. All equipment was removed from the old plant shortly after being shut down.



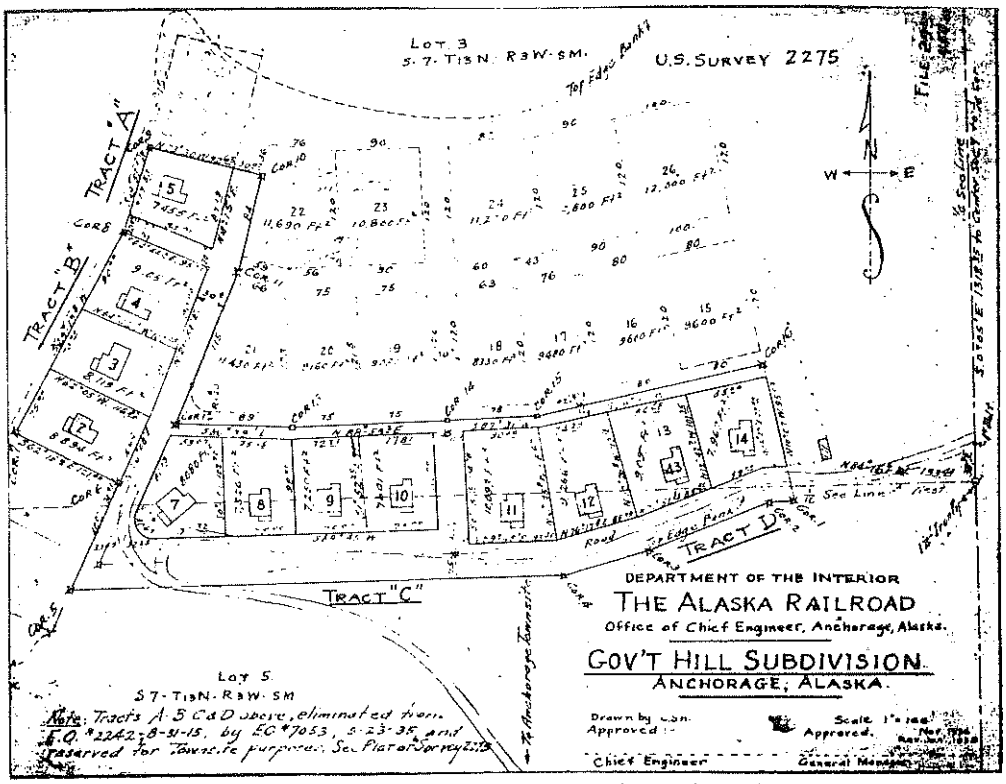
The diversion dam for the Eklutna Power Plant. Located on the Eklutna River, this dam maintained adequate water flow to the plant.

The development of the Eklutna project in the 1920's was in keeping with the progressive, modernistic thinking of those who created Anchorage. The Alaska Engineering Commission was just completing the railroad to tap coal and other resources of the subcontinent when the dreams of Frank Reed were being formed about the Eklutna Project. When the project was completed by the end of the decade, it marked the first time that another of the region's basic resources, its water power, had been tapped. The facility was able to serve Anchorage for over a quarter of a century – a time during which the town grew from a budding railroad town to the largest of Alaskan cities.

Old Glenn Highway Bridge
Eklutna River Bridge (Old Glenn Highway)

This three bay, spandrel arch bridge was built over Eklutna River in 1935 as part of the original road construction joining the Matanuska Valley with Anchorage. Now known as Old Glenn Highway, the road became a welcome connection for the newly-formed Matanuska colony. The bridge rests approximately 45 feet above the stream formed by the confluence of Eklutna River and Thunder Bird Creek. The spandrel arch is 170 feet long and rests on concrete footings. The two other spans, approximately 35 feet and 50 feet long, connect the edges of the ravine to the arch. In 1950, with expansion of the highway, the bridge was widened to 24 feet. The structure is now owned by Eklutna, Inc.

Eklutna River Bridge.



The layout of Government Hill as depicted in the first plat of the early 1930s.

This photograph was taken in 1915 or 1916, years before Harvard Avenue was created.

CHAPTER 3: EARLY SUBDIVISIONS

GOVERNMENT HILL

The Alaska Engineering Commission Cottages

Government Hill was one of the first residential areas of Anchorage to develop. Along with the authorization to lay out and sell lots for a townsite, government officials gave the go-ahead to construct housing for their permanent employees. So during the late summer of 1915, thirteen cottages were built atop the bluff to the north of the terminal yards.

The earliest newspaper reference to the location simply called the site "the plateau north of the flat."[1] Not long thereafter, however, "Government Hill" became the area's place name. Two stories surround the origin of the name. One explanation is derived from the fact that the first residents were government employees. The other story is associated with former Panama Canal workers. As the "Big Ditch" had just been completed, a number of Canal people came to Alaska to work on the railroad. The plateau above the yards is said to have reminded them of a similar site called Government Hill in the Canal Zone. In turn, it is said, they nicknamed the plateau "Government Hill."[2]

Whatever the origin, the name had stuck by the time the cottages were ready for occupancy in October 1915. "What is known as the 'Government Hill' addition to Anchorage is rapidly becoming one of the most beautiful residential sections of the future city of Alaska."[3]

Of the thirteen houses which were originally built, twelve still exist on the Hill. Cottage Number 6 is no longer there. It was the home of Commissioner Frederick Mears for about two years before he moved over to the Christiansen Road area. That larger, more elongated cottage was moved about 1927 or 1928.[4] It was moved to College.

The other dozen cottages were basically identical. Dimensionally, they were one-and-a-half stories and measured 23 by 34 feet. Each had three rooms, plus a kitchen, a bathroom, and a veranda in front[5]. The exterior was covered with clapboard and had sash windows. Behind each cottage was a coal shed.

Today a few of the cottages are much the same as they were originally. Others have undergone alterations – ranging from slight to extensive. The cottages in the 200 block

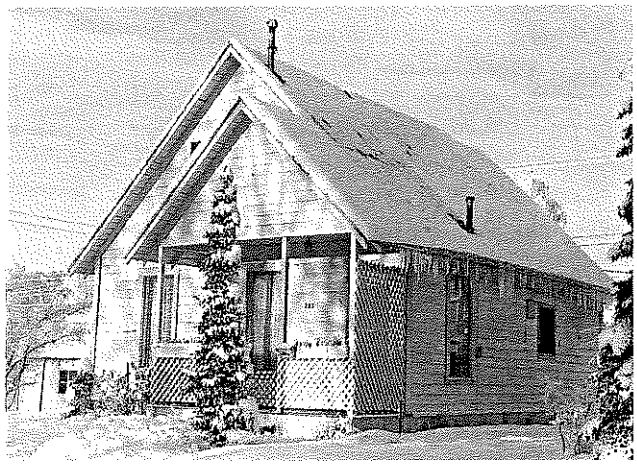
Government Hill, 1915. These are the same houses which still exist along Harvard Avenue. They were built for the government railroad employees in 1915.

of Harvard Avenue retain many of their original features. The false-brick siding of the two in the center of that block probably hides the original clapboard. Another house, 900 Delaney Street, reflects a 1940-era, Tudor-style remodeling. The cottage at 349 Harvard Avenue (formerly the home of Jack and Nellie Brown) has been remodeled; its new form is a complementary one to the shape and scale of the original cottage.

The string of houses was not situated according to a plat. Eight of the cottages were built along what was to become Harvard Avenue. Another four were built on the west end of the bluff. The railroad survey team which located them "put the cottages where they thought were nice places and just numbered them. No lots, no street mapping."[6] The first plat of the Government Hill cottages was made in 1934 by Charles S. Harvard. He took "surveyor's license" and marked the major east-west street, Harvard Avenue. Other streets, with the exception of Manor Avenue, were named after former railroad employees.[7]

Over the years numerous occupants have lived in and then vacated these "Government cottages." They were rented to railroad employees for many years. In the 1940's they were sold to the occupants. Today, persons of railroad, as well as many other backgrounds, reside in them.

Typical Government Hill cottage, 1915. The cottages, with the exception of Mears, were virtually the same.



Cottage 11. Built in 1915, this particular cottage is much the same as it was originally.

Government Hill. Looking east from Brown's Point this is about the same perspective as the photo taken in 1915.

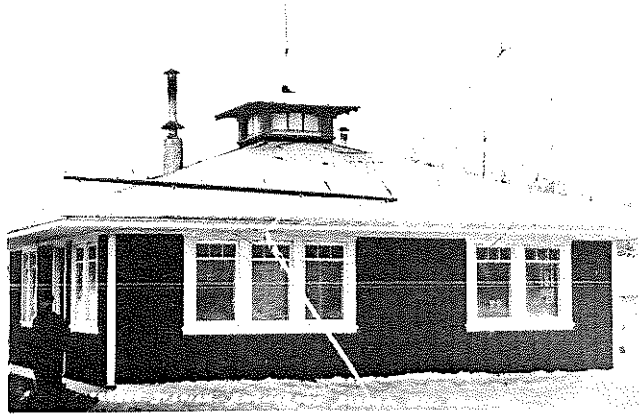
132 Manor Avenue: The Wireless Station

Besides the cottages, the only other building on Government Hill for more than two decades was the wireless station. It was built by the Alaska Engineering Commission in 1917 to replace a temporary station located within the rail yards. This new location was chosen in order to extend and improve receiving capabilities.

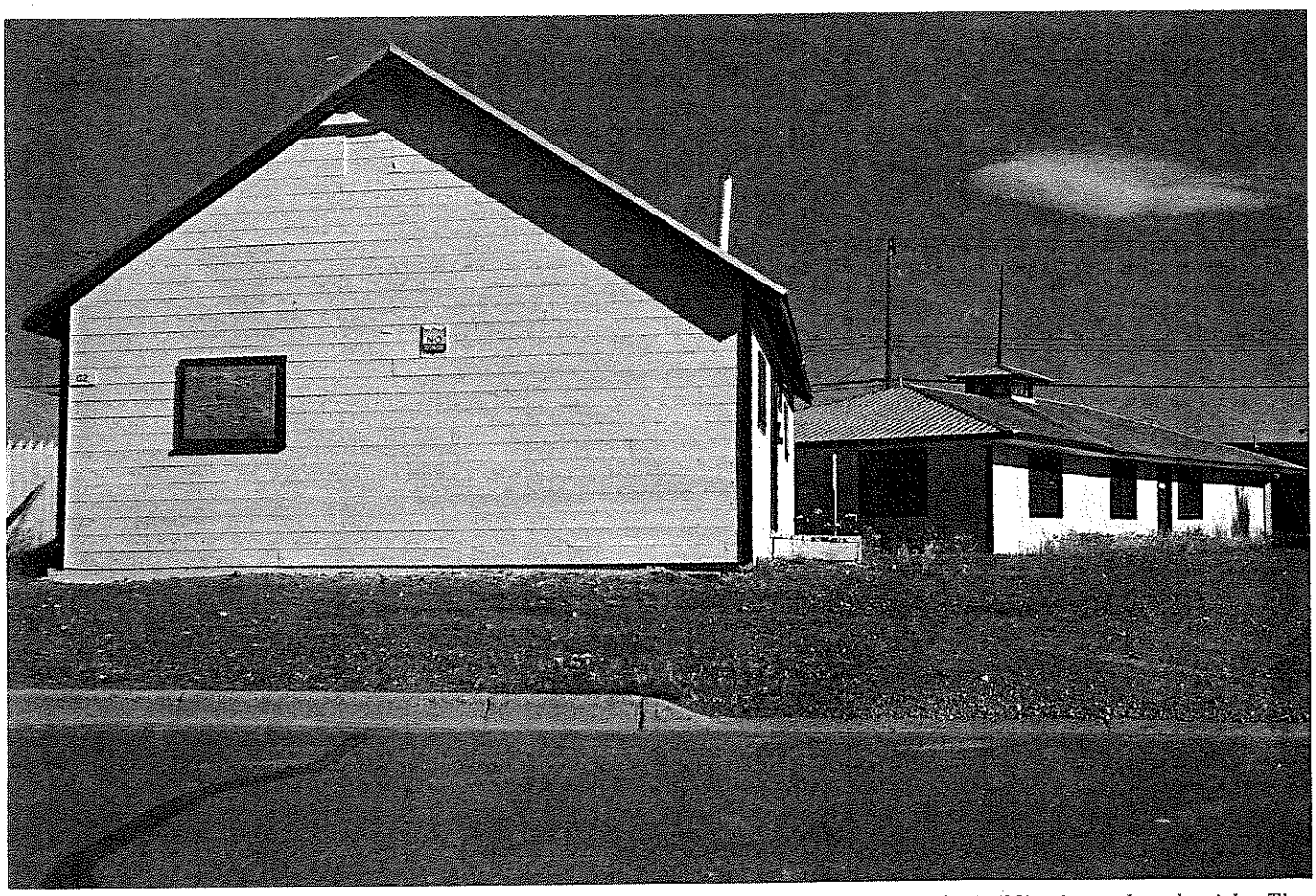
The original building was 28 feet by 28 feet, its hip roof crowned by a central cupola supporting a mast. A frame structure with board and batten siding, it consisted of an operating room, generating room and living quarters for two men. The operating room contained receivers, amplifiers and a 2-KW 500-cycle transmitter. The building was initially powered by the alternating plant in the railroad terminal, but soon supplied its own power.[8] A six-wire aerial with a spread of 30 feet by 400 feet was erected on two, 200 foot fir masts. This aerial provided an operating radius of 500 miles, reaching Kodiak Island, the Alaskan peninsula and offshore boats.

The original building has been enlarged at two different times and doubled in size; the cupola has been recentered. Two ancillary buildings were constructed, perhaps in the war years or later. They are sited so that a courtyard is formed between them.

The Wireless Station, 1917. This station provided Anchorage with its outside communication for many years.



Communication between Anchorage and the "Lower 48" was quite restricted until the AEC built the wireless station. From 1917 to late 1931, this receiving and transmitting station served as Anchorage's sole communication link with the outside world. In 1921, service was provided to the public for the first time; prior to this date only governmental agencies had use of the system.[9] The Signal Corps took over operation of the station in 1923, but the railroad continued to maintain the equipment.[10] The buildings are currently owned by the U.S. Geological Survey. They are used to store well cores and drill samples from exploratory work conducted within Alaska.



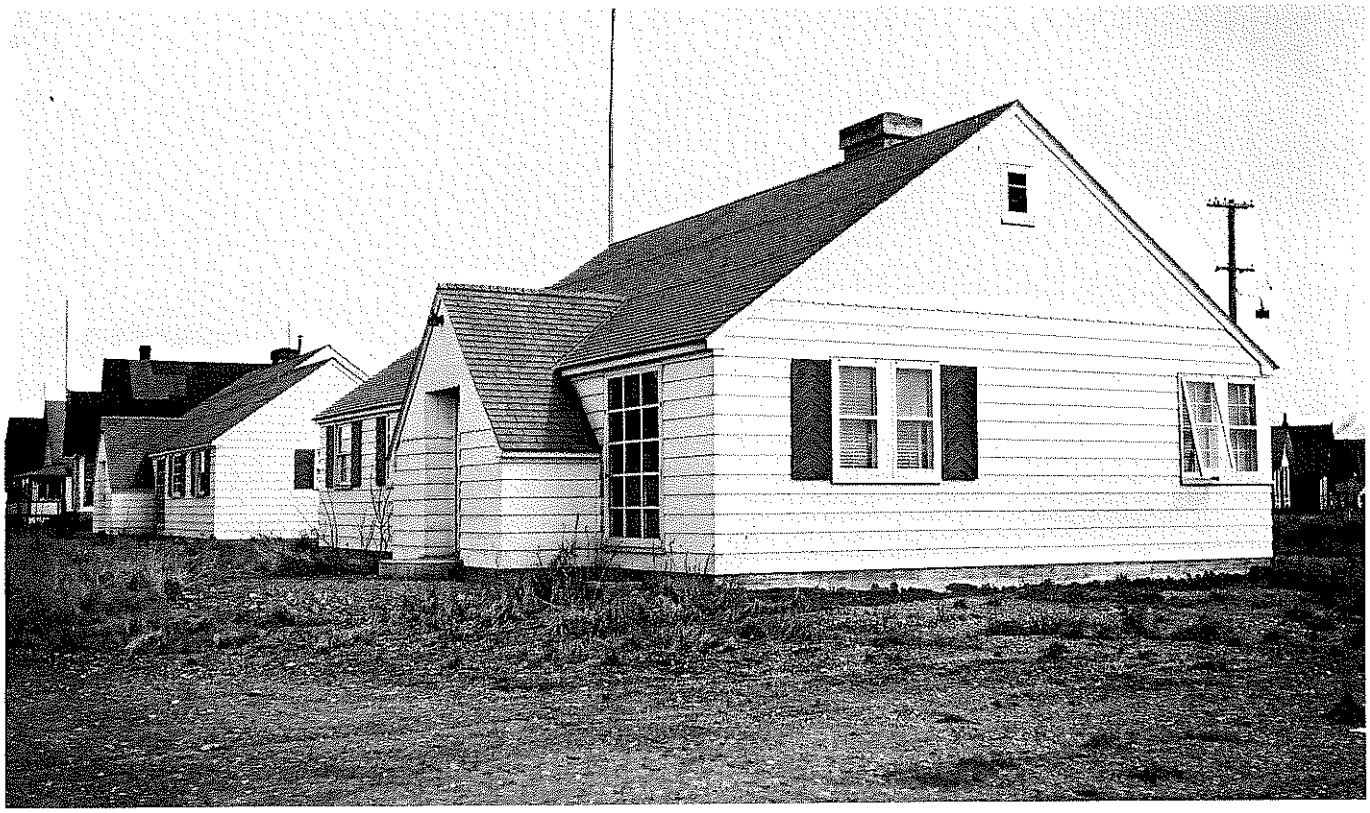
The Old Wireless Station was expanded in the late-1930's. The cupola is still apparent atop the building located to the right. The complex of buildings is presently used by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Brown's Point Cottages

These two Cape Cod style cottages provided housing for the families of the Area Engineer of Alaska and the Resident Engineer, Fort Richardson. Their design was selected by the Area Engineer, B. B. Talley, who had lived in similarly designed houses while at Mud Mountain Dam near Fort Lewis, Washington. The two identical houses sit with the front facades facing Knik Arm. Each has two large bedrooms, spacious living room, a dining room, kitchen and garage. Talley resided in the house at the end of the Point. Captain Craig Smyser, the Resident Engineer of Fort Richardson, lived in the other. Reportedly, anti-aircraft batteries were placed on the site shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The housing is a reminder of the increased role that the Army was to take in the development of installations throughout Alaska. Both were built as forerunners to the future construction of Fort Richardson.

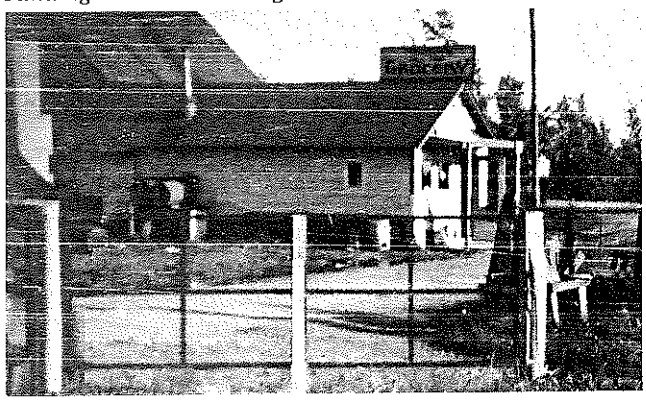
The houses were built by the Corps of Engineers on the Point in 1941. The land was owned by the Alaska Railroad. Talley and Colonel Otto F. Ohlson, the ARR manager, were close friends and it was by mutual agreement that the site was chosen. Brown's Point is named for Jack and Nellie Brown who came to Ship Creek in 1912.

Major Talley, later Brigadier General Talley, arrived in Alaska to supervise construction of the airfield at Yakutat in September of 1940. Upon completion of that task, he was reassigned to the Engineer Corps, Seattle District and sent back to Anchorage to be the Alaska Area Engineer. While in this role Talley supervised the completion of Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Field as well as Ladd Field near Fairbanks. In 1941 Talley was ordered to Washington D.C. by Brigadier General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr. to help expedite the approval of a strategic airfield on Unimak Island. With approval of that request, Talley moved his engineering company from Yakutat to Unimak, providing a new air base which was in a more vital position to defend against the threatening Japanese Imperial Command. Following Pearl Harbor, Talley's command increased dramatically. He oversaw the work of 14,000 troops in the Army's engineering units during the Aleutian campaign. Rising to Lieutenant Colonel, he was designated Officer-in-Charge of military construction in Alaska. In addition to the airfields, his responsibilities included tunneling and the creation of Whittier. Talley was ordered to depart Alaska in June 1943. He left as full Colonel and became Deputy Chief of Staff G-5 for the Army's Fifth Corps. In this capacity he was responsible for developing the operation plan for the "D-Day" landing at Omaha Beach. Talley retired as Brigadier General in 1956. In more recent years he has served as a consultant planner of Brazil's new capital, Brazilia, and also played an active role regarding the planning of Willow. Brigadier General Talley continues to reside in Alaska, making his home near Kachemak Bay.

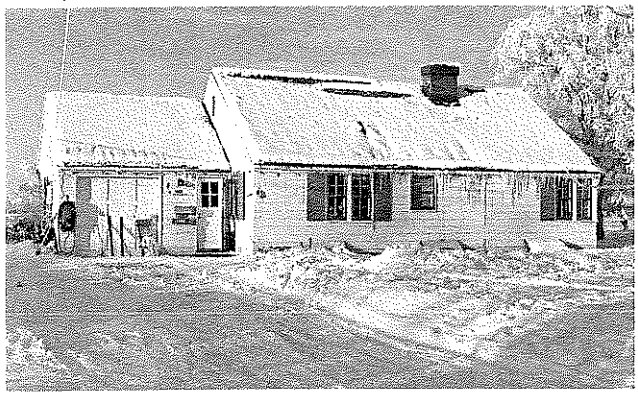


In this early photograph one can see that the Brown's Point Cottages face the Inlet.

This grocery store once operated on Government Hill. The building still stands along Colwell Street.



One of the Brown's Point Cottages today.



Other Buildings of Interest

Two other housing types stand out. The more prominent are the duplexes along Manor Avenue and Brown Street. These "Neo-Colonial" buildings were constructed in the mid-1940's to serve as two-family units for Alaska Railroad personnel.[12] Their scale, color and placement lend a pleasing quality to the west end of Manor Avenue. Some have undergone slight modification in recent years.

About ten quonset huts can be found on Government Hill. They are the surviving examples of several dozen huts which were erected to alleviate the housing shortage during World War II. After the war the government allowed persons living in the quonsets to purchase the interior shell. Thus, the person owned his improvements. Eventually, both the quonset and the land were sold.

The small building in the side yard of 255 Harvard Avenue was a "Mom 'n Pop" grocery during the 1940's. It was run by the Thompsons who lived next door. Railroad personnel ordered a month's worth of groceries through the Commissary, but they still needed perishables. The small grocery answered that need.[13]

The Place of Government Hill in Anchorage History

Government Hill was not officially a part of Anchorage until the city annexed it in 1946. By that time hundreds of people lived there. The additions of the duplexes and block after block of quonsets had practically developed the whole plateau. Still, the original cottages held their place as a very identifiable section of the Hill. They continue to do so today.

Although the cottages were the modest dwellings of government personnel, they are important to the historic fabric of Government Hill. They are examples of the housing of the first A.E.C. officials and represent the earliest houses of Anchorage's railroad past. From a visual standpoint, they are also important. Some retain much of their original appearance but in a larger sense, the cottages anchor the ridgeline of Government Hill. Although alterations have occurred, the shapes and scale of the houses along Harvard Avenue have been retained. In looking across a very changed Ship Creek Basin, the neat row of cottages helps to mark Government Hill's place in Anchorage's history.

Quonset huts were erected over much of the plateau to relieve the wartime housing shortage. A few of these structures (c. 1943) are still found on the Hill.

The federal government had these units constructed for its employees in the mid-1940s.

THE SOUTH ADDITION

Background

The suburban growth of Anchorage started in 1916 with the South and East Additions to the townsite. The South Addition began at Ninth Avenue with the string of blocks now known as the Park Strip. Those blocks were originally platted for lot development. However, in 1917, they were reserved for park and fire protection purposes. The Park Strip has acted as a buffer ever since, distinguishing the residential character of the South Addition from the downtown area.

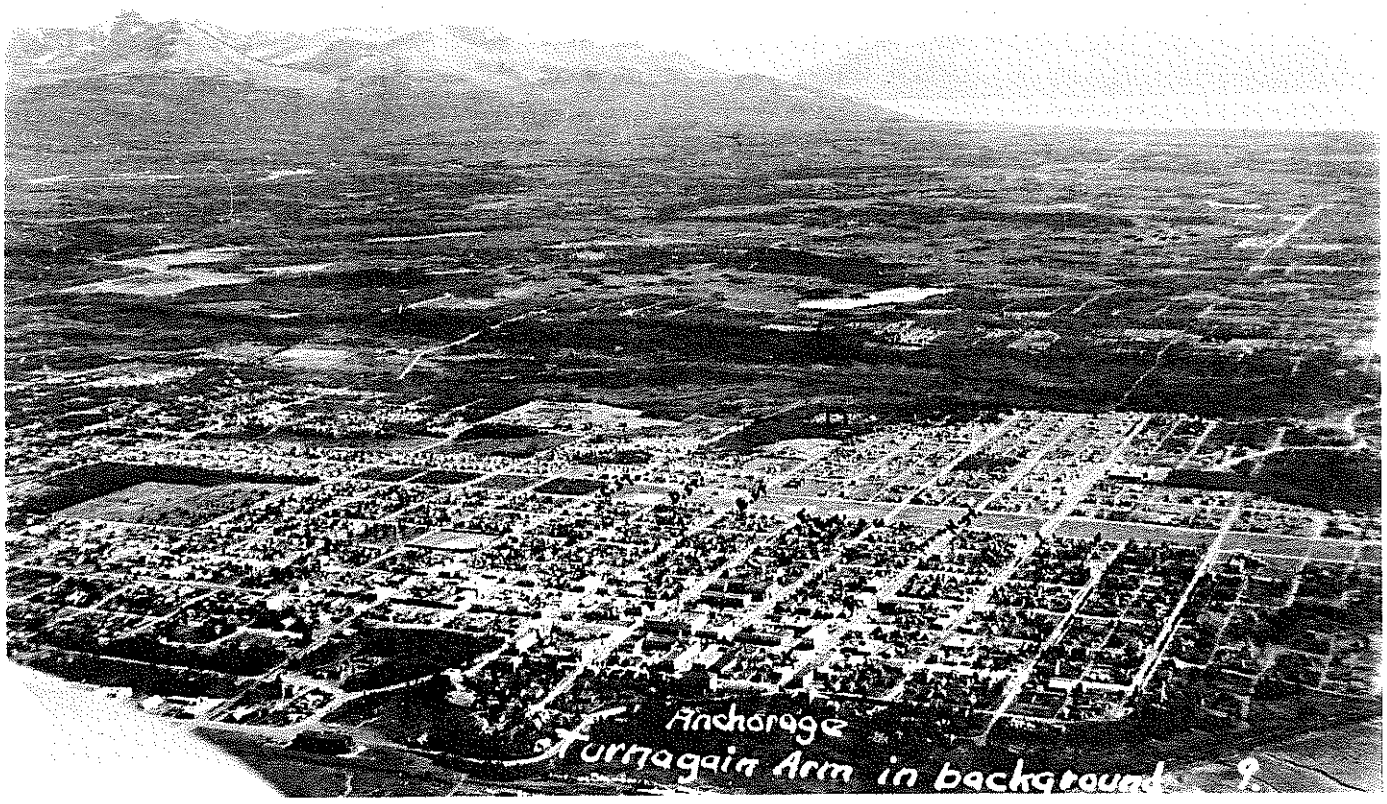
The first lots to be sold in the South Addition were the one-acre tracts which were platted between 10th and 11th Avenues to the south, and between P Street and the railroad to the west. Those homesites were typically purchased for $200 to $300.[14] Few homes were actually built on those lots in the early years. An exception is the neat bungalow at 916 P Street.

The remaining tracts of the South Addition were typically 5 or 8.3 acres. The Alaska Engineering Commission wanted to encourage agricultural development of those parcels. Thus, the subdivision of tracts containing two acres or more was prohibited by Presidential Executive Order in 1917.[15]

By 1919 when some of the tracts were sold, the restricted use, the distance from town and the lagging economic conditions combined to limit the apparent value of the property. Some of these 5- and 8.3-acre parcels were sold for as little as $25.00.[16]

Fur farming was recognized as a profitable industry here in the 1930's. Seattle buyers were in the market for many types of fur. Some farming did develop in the area; however, it was predominantly fox and mink farming. A.W. Bennett, who ran a fur farm in the South Addition, related the positive aspects of Anchorage fur farming: "Chief among the attributes is the temperate weather, cold enough in winter to insure prime pelts and warm enough during pupping season to protect the young animals."[17] The fishing industry of Cook Inlet (as a source of animal food) and the railroad transportation also benefited the industry. Some of the fur farmers included Ed Everett, Ray Lockhead, Fred Kroesing and Bennett.

In some clearings, vegetable gardens were planted and dairying was practiced. The Strutz family and Patty Welch had dairy cows. They supplied Anchorage residents with milk for a number of years.



This airview, dating from the late 1940's, shows the extent of the South Addition and Third Addition beyond the Park Strip.

The area retained a predominantly wooded, rural appearance until the latter part of the 1930's. Despite the original Executive Order to prevent subdivision, the practicality of housing needs led to a change in that regulation. A 1939 *Daily Times* article explained the new thrust of housing development as a result of "inflated property values closer to the center of the city have forced prospective builders to seek new building areas on the outskirts of town."[18] An expression for the trend became, "Go south, young home builder."[19]

New houses began to spring up prior to World War II. Many are excellent examples of that era's housing. Tudor-styling, the salt-box, the Cape Cod and other popular designs were seemingly taken out of the pages of housing articles and brought to reality in the South Addition. The *Anchorage Daily Times* ran a series on home designs. Remarkably, the homes of the "Better Housing Section" seem to have found a place in the South Addition and another major subdivision of the time, the Third Division.

Housing development continued under Federal authorities during the war. Safehaven was as a Civil Aeronautics authority project. Similarly, the two-story units along H and I Streets, and further to the east, along 11th Avenue, were built for federal employees.

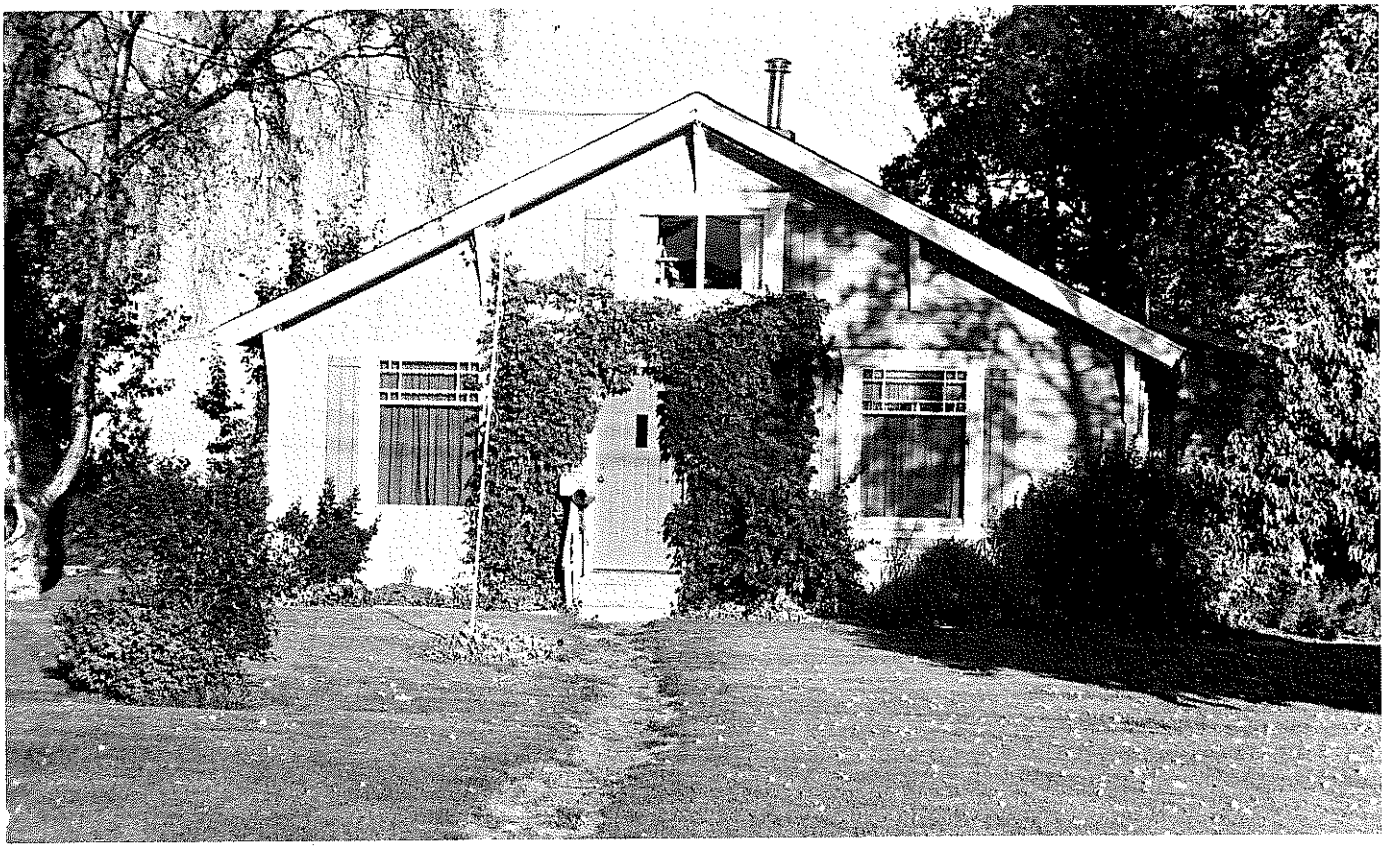
Today, the South Addition contains an interesting mixture of housing styles. Log homes, frame homes, flat roofs and hipped roofs are all part of the varied picture. Yet, there is a similarity of scale throughout many blocks of the area.

The scale is reinforced – in most cases – by standard setbacks, by the one- and two-story housing units, by the sidewalks and by the tree-lined streets. In short, those factors combine to lend a sense of neighborhood to many of the residential blocks of the South Addition.

In the following descriptions some of the housing and older facilities of the South Addition are discussed. The descriptions include only a portion of the housing. The sense of neighborhood in the area is drawn from many more attractive homes than what is represented here.

916 P Street (The Louis Strutz House)

This trim bungalow sits on a pleasingly landscaped lot west of the Park Strip. Sherman Duggan, an early Anchorage lawyer, reportedly had it built around 1918. Mr. and Mrs. Louis Strutz bought it as their family's home in 1924. As it sat on one of South Addition's acre lots, there was ample room for a garden, chickens and a number of dairy cows. Mr. Strutz originally came to Anchorage with the 21st Infantry and later worked for the railroad. The house has been slightly modified years ago when the front porch was enclosed. The lower facade, including the door and window framing, was extended forward and the sides were reframed. Otherwise this handsomely trimmed residence is much the same as it was originally.[20] The obvious care which has gone into its maintenance marks it as one of the most attractive examples of early Anchorage housing.



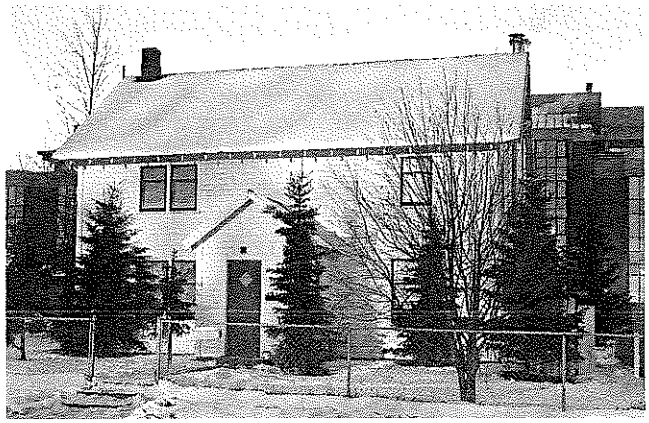
Built around 1918, this house has long been occupied by the Louis Strutz family.

The Oscar Gill House

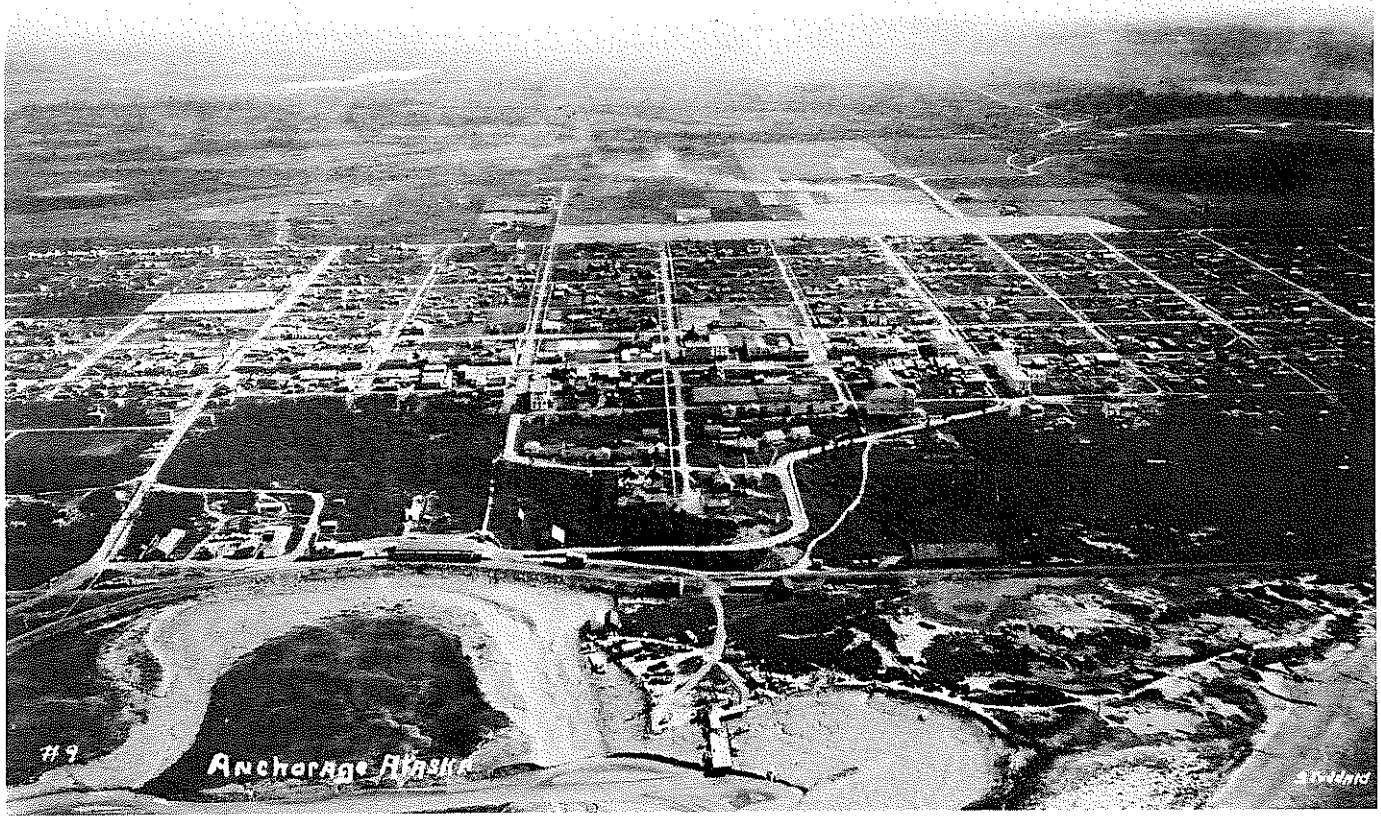
This two-story, clapboard-covered residence was moved from Knik and reconstructed in Anchorage's South Addition in 1916. It originally stood where the Pioneer Home is now located. That tract formed the first subdivision to the original townsite. The "farmhouse architecture" of Gill's residence was unusual for Anchorage.

Gill came to ship creek in 1915 to work on railroad construction. He and his wife, the former Emma Gohrmann, were familiar figures in South Central Alaska. They arrived in Seward in 1907 and moved to Susitna two years later, where they established a sawmill. With gold discoveries at Iditarod and Innoko, the Gills relocated to Knik, the trade center which served the interior. Via his dog team, Gill became a mail carrier along the Iditarod Trail. Following the railroad boom, they bought a one-acre home site in the South Addition and had their home reassembled in that rural setting. Gill established himself as a prominent member of Anchorage's business community. From 1916 to 1923 he ran a lighterage business under contract with the Alaska Engineering Commission, transporting supplies to the docks at Ship Creek and to Knik. In 1923 he established an auto garage at the corner of Fourth Avenue and I Street, one of the first service stations in the town. His politicial activities were varied: serving on the school board, city council and as three-term mayor (1932, 1934-36). His interests expanded to territorial issues, resulting in election to the Territorial House in 1945. There, he became the Speaker of the House prior to his death in 1947.

The Oscar Gil House first stood in Knik before being moved to its present location.



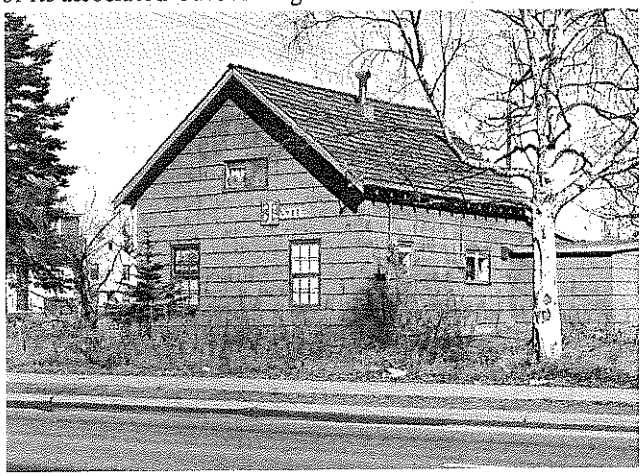
In 1928 the Gills sold their south Anchorage home to Charles Peterson, and moved closer to their garage. Peterson, a contractor for the Alaska Railroad, owned the house until the late 1930's. The house was relocated in response to the construction of Pioneer House.



This view of Anchorage, taken in the 1920s, shows the townsite, aviation field (now the "Park Strip") and small farm plots, south of town.

842 West 13th Avenue (Patty Welch's Homesite)

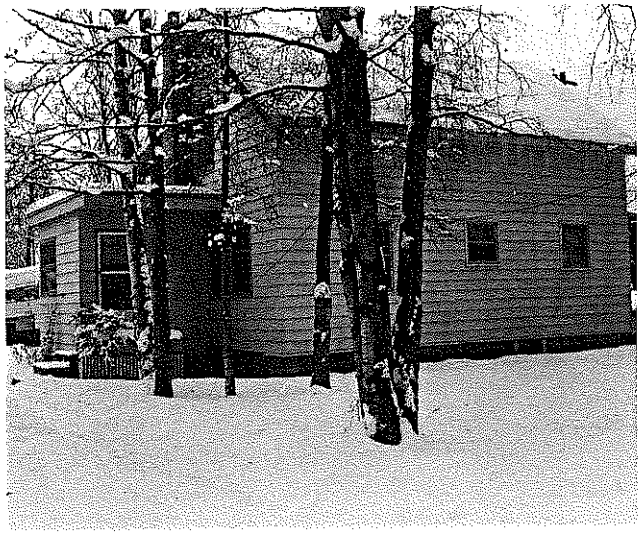
During the 1920's and 1930's, when the South Addition was primarily woodland and farmland, this was one of the few houses in the area. It belonged to Patty Welch who operated a small dairy and pig farm. Welch probably built the house around 1918 when the South Addition was opened up as "suburban" land. The one-and-one-half-story house was constructed of frame. It is not believed that any of its associated outbuildings still exist.



Patty Welch was one of the early Anchorage dairymen; his home still stands at 842 West 13th Avenue.

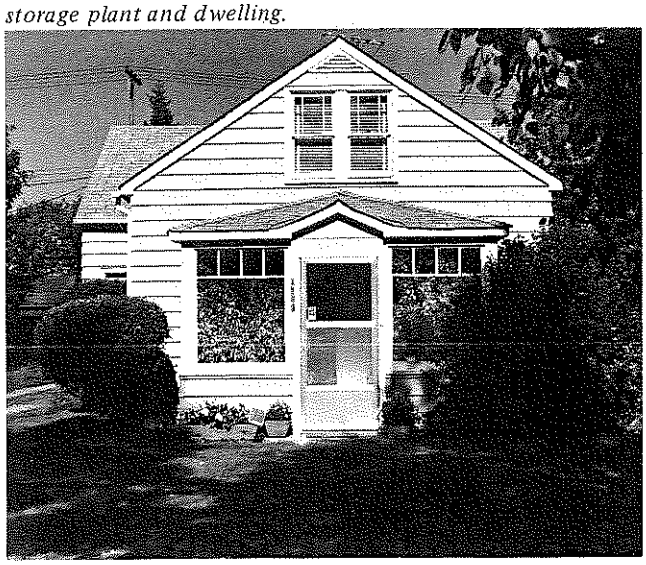
1644 West 11th Avenue

The tidy frame house at the corner of 11th Avenue and S Street was built around 1927. The property was reportedly owned by A.W. Bennett who started a fur farm there around 1930. The Nagley family purchased the property from Bennett. In turn, the Imlachs, the present owners, started residing there in 1942.[21]



During the 1930's this house, originally the home of A.W. Bennett, a fur farmer, was virtually the only one in the western side of the South Addition.

Ray Lockhead originally used this building as both his cold storage plant and dwelling.



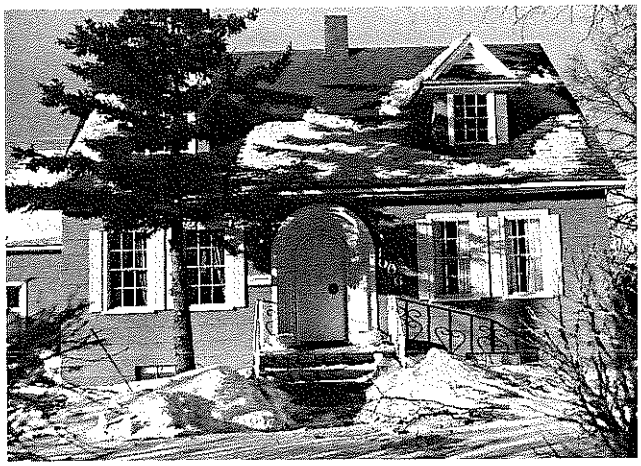
1401 and 1417 West 11th Avenue (Ray Lockhead's Fur Farm)

Ray Lockhead ran a mink farm on his acreage in the South Addition during the 1930's and 1940's. He also worked for the railroad for many years. The house at 1417 West 11th Avenue served the dual purpose of dwelling and cold storage plant. Lockhead stored his furs behind the ten inches of cork insulation of the first-floor walls. He lived in a small apartment above that facility. The structure has since been converted into a residence by the Mareks.

In 1946 Lockhead retired from the railroad. He had suffered a stroke and was paralyzed on one side. Still, his handicap was not to stop him. Within the next year, 1947, he had completed his new home at 1401 West 11th Avenue entirely through his own efforts.[22] The frame dwelling is one-and-one-half stories. Its dormers, storm porch and interior woodwork are the most prominent features of this comfortable, modest home. The present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Hugh W. Fleischer.

Lockhead built this tidy house after retiring from the railroad.

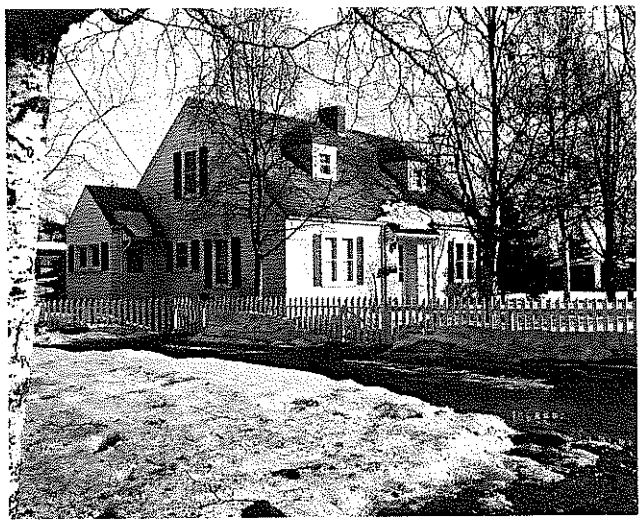
A.A. Shonbeck had this house built in the late 1930's.



1006 G Street

The tan house behind the hedgerow at 10th Avenue and G Street was built in the late 1930's. A.A. Shonbeck, one of Anchorage's most successful businessmen of the early era, was the first owner.[24] Although there are other comfortable homes in the surrounding blocks, this particular house is a remarkably good example of American housing of the prewar period.

The tan asbestos shingles of the exterior are complemented by the brown shingle roof. The one and one-half-story building is capped with dormer windows. The entrance way, a decreasing series of arches, is formed in concrete. A detached garage, indicative of the role that the automobile would play in daily life, is finished in similar material to the house.



This "Cape Cod" at 1109 E Street, reflects a popular American housing style of the prewar era.

1109 E Street (The Jack Coats Home)

One of the first persons to build in "the suburbia" of the South Addition was Jack Coats. His handsome Cape Cod was constructed in 1938 by Bert Davies, a local contractor who built a number of the comfortable homes during the prewar years. Coats worked for the Alaska Road Commission[25].

The white frame home appears as if it were transplanted to Anchorage from the woods of Cape Cod. Complete with white picket fence and detached garage, it was very representative of the kind of residential architecture of its day. The house is covered with clapboard. Dormers mark the second-floor rooms. The extension of the roof, in saltbox style, provides additional space for the back portion of the downstairs. In particular, the kitchen and dining room, with its attractive leaded-glass bay window, were made quite roomy. The woodwork of the interior, natural in finish, is a notable mark of the carpentry that went into the home's construction. Jack Coates still owns the house.

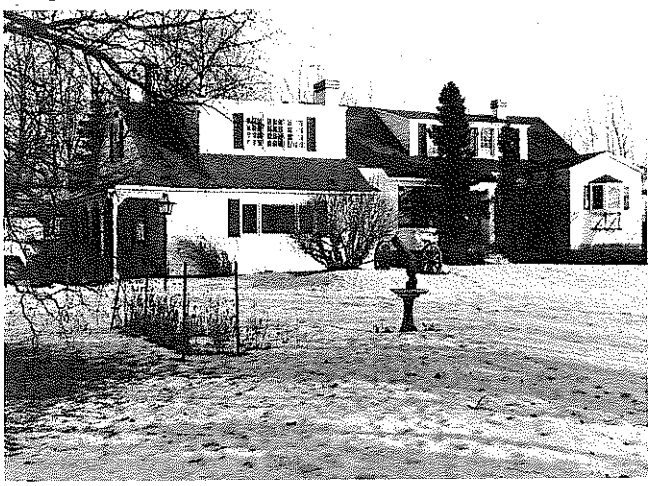
1424 West 11th Avenue

This attractive house was constructed in 1937. William L. Conover, an Anchorage businessman, was the original owner. It was built by Bert Davies, a local contractor.[26]

The large storm porch features a Tudor-style roof. Besides the sweeping roof, the entrance is highlighted by an elliptical arch window and side lights (panes). The home originally stood three blocks away. It was moved to its present location in the last few years.

Originally the home of W.L. Conover, this house is typical of the Tudor ornamentation which was popular in the 1940 era.

Although two additional wings have been added to "Blueberry Hill," the basic Cape Cod appearance can still be recognized.

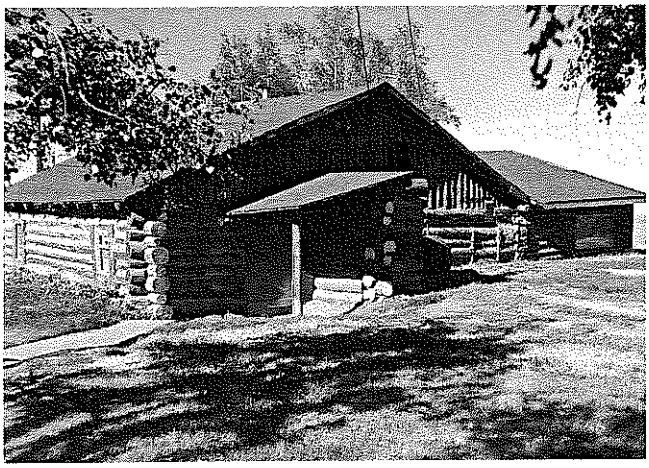


1219 U Street (Blueberry Hill)

The central portion of this attractive home was constructed about 1940. The original portion is an Alaskan adaptation of the Cape Cod style, although there are a number of varied features not in keeping with that New England style. These include the elongated dormer on the front roof, the large picture window and the position of the fireplace on the side of the house.

Two lateral additions, one side in the 1960's and the other in the 1970's, have extended the length of this house. Both wings complement the original design.

Eddie Orr lived there in the earlier years following the completion of the house. Dr. Toohey resided there in the 1940's. The name "Blueberry Hill" was given to the property by the Barrie White family, the present owners, as a reminder of their New England farm. The totem in the yard was carved by Mrs. White to depict the history of the White family.[27]

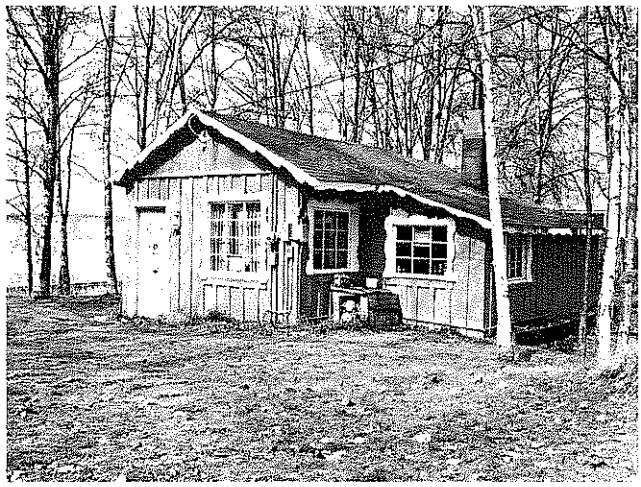


The cabin located across the tracks in Bootlegger Cove was built by soldiers during World War II.

1845 Bootlegger Cove Drive: The Southerland House

This small cottage-like residence was constructed by Gus Southerland in the mid-1940's. Due to the war-caused building materials shortage, Southerland had to locate materials wherever possible. His house construction was inventive: no two windows were the same dimension. The one-story gable house is anchored to squared-off logs laid on the ground. Its barn-red board and batten siding and white trim add to its image as a cottage in the woods. Southerland lived there until 1948 when he sold the property.

The Southerland House.



Bootlegger Cove Cabin

This low-profile log cabin is built on railroad reserve land. Construction began in the early 1940's with a lease from the Alaska Railroad. The lessee never finished the cabin. WWII began, and the military took over the property.

A submarine net was stretched into the Cook Inlet off this point of land. Soldiers were stationed at the site to man a machine gun to be used in the event of Japanese attack.[30] The circular gun placement still can be seen near the cabin. The soldiers apparently used the unfinished cabin as was and did not make improvements to it.

After the war, Bud Tout, a mechanical engineer with the ARR, leased the land and finished the cabin, making it liveable. The saddle-notched cabin was built in two sections. Both sections are intact today, although they have irregularly settled over the years. The land continues to be leased from the railroad and the cabin is still used for residential purposes.

Safehaven

The neat rows of one-story apartments were constructed in 1942 for Civil Aeronautic Authority (CAA) personnel. Housing was severely restricted during the war years. The CAA undertook a number of projects throughout Alaska to meet the employees' housing needs. The project in the vicinity of 11th Avenue and P Street was the first of the major CAA housing projects in Anchorage. The site design was carried out by CAA personnel. The units were built on-site by a local contractor. The name, "Safehaven," was given at that time.

In 1956-57, the apartments were sold; a type of cooperative-condominium arrangement was secured for their maintenance. The name, "Safehaven," was dubbed at that time. Under the terms of the sale, continuing to the present, purchasers must live in their apartment. Thus, the benefits and maintenance of the nicely landscaped units are cooperatively enjoyed.[29]

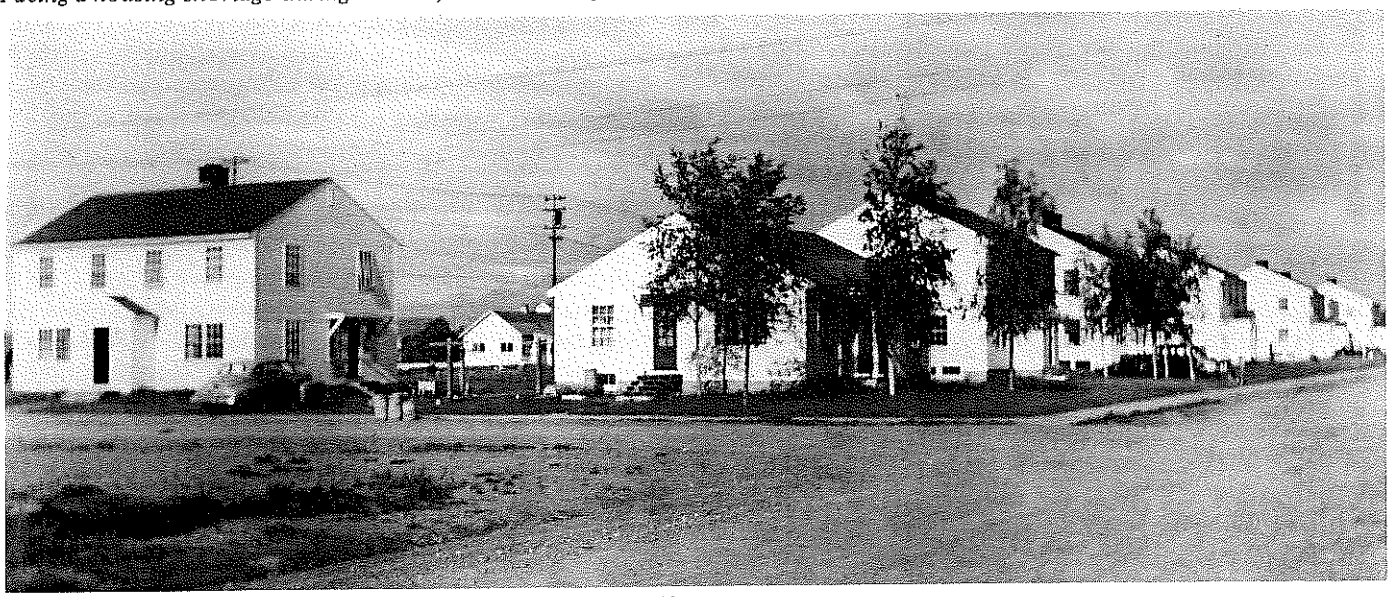
Other Government Housing

Besides Safehaven, the Federal government also constructed the similarly designed, two-story duplexes. Two groups of them, one along H and I Streets, and another along 11th Avenue near D and E Streets, can be seen in the South Addition. (A similar set is along Manor Avenue on Government Hill.) All these units were built about 1945.

A standard design was repeatedly used in developing these family units. Each has a wooden-shingle, saddleback roof. Various sidings are represented today, including large, wooden shingles, a blend of horizontal and vertical framing, and aluminum. Most have storm porches. Their twelve-pane, sash windows give the units a colonial appearance.

The cluster in the H and I Street vicinity was primarily constructed for C.A.A. employees. The ones along 11th Street were nicknamed "the Cumulus Chateaus" because Weather Bureau personnel lived in them.[30]

Facing a housing shortage during the war, CAA built Safehaven to meet the needs of its employees.



FAA duplexes along I Street as photographed in the late 1940s.

934 S Street: The Rutz House

The tall, one-and-one-half-story log structure that commands a panoramic view of Mt. Susitna and the Cook Inlet, is a fine example of ingenuity combined with determination. Marjorie Stevens (now Mrs. Ted Rutz) bought two adjoining plots from Louis Strutz in the late 1930's. By 1940 she had drawn up plans for a log residence. but found it impossible to locate an available carpenter: due to the war, skilled carpenters were scare.

She struck a bargain with soldiers stationed at Ft. Richardson who had spare time. Stevens would tell them how to build the house and would supply plenty of steak, turkey and beer, and the soldiers would do the construction. Work began on the poured concrete basement in August of 1940 and slowly progressed until the house was "more or less finished" by October 1941. The area was heavily wooded and full of devils-club when Mrs. Stevens and her daughter moved in. Access to the house was limited. Stevens paid $450 to a bulldozer operator to extend Ninth Street.[31]

The siting of this unconventional house makes it appear larger than the actual 30 feet by 30 feet dimensions. Clinging to the east side of a hill, and partially hidden by large spruce trees, the gable-roofed house has dormers, two chimneys, multi-paned windows, and a large picture window which faces west. A sundeck and greenhouse atop the carport were added in the early 1960's.

THE THIRD ADDITION

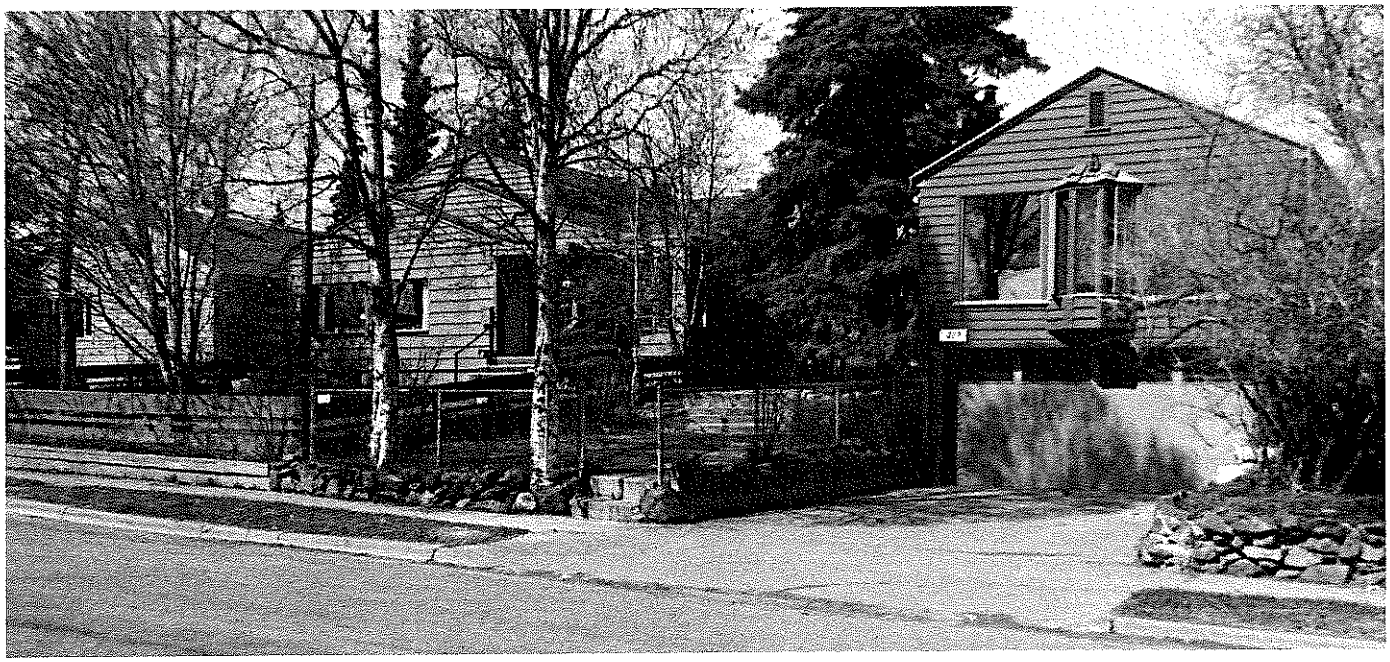
Like the South Addition, much of this area developed in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Redevelopment has changed the earlier character of many blocks. However, Block 13

The Rutz House.

still retains the essence of a single-family residential neighborhood. That block is surrounded by 10th and 11th Avenues and A and Cordova Streets. The tree-lined streets and the variety of neatly scaled houses are representative of the era's "suburban" neighborhood.

The home of Bob and Tillie Reeve, at 209 East 11th Avenue, is the most notable in terms of historic association. Reeve, "the Glacier Pilot," enjoyed a most colorful career in Alaskan aviation. He served in developing the territory's aviation industry prior to the Second World War, then assisted the military in the war effort, and ultimately was successful in developing his own airlines, Reeve Aleutian Airways.

Another exceptional pilot, Ray Peterson, lived next door to Reeve, at 217 East 11th Avenue. In that other pilots lived on the block in the 1940's, the housing might be characterized as "Pilots' Row."



"Pilots Row" along East 11th Avenue.

The East Addition

The East Addition was laid out in 1916. Lots were also sold that year. There were three types of lots: "townsite" sized lots (50 by 140 feet), one acre lots, and five acre lots. The townsite sized lots adjoined the original townsite; the others were farther removed with all five acre lots located east of Gambell Street. The differences in the original lot size tended to shape the land use patterns of the area. Close to town, the small lots were developed similarly to townsite lots. (Houses and log cabins in this area have been included in the residential section of Chapter 1.) The one acre lots were subdivided in very small parcels or developed with larger buildings. Where five acre lots originally existed, the use of large parcels is still maintained, primarily in auto dealerships.

One particularly tight-knit group of houses is located on the 200 block of **Denali Street**. That small lane was subdivided around 1940. The area was originally part of the East Addition. By subdividing the one acre lots, roughly twenty small parcels were created. Each measures 33 by 56 feet. Most of the houses date from the 1940's. The only exception is 234 Denali Street. That gambrel roofed house is structurally made of log. It reportedly belonged to one of the area's dairymen in earlier years.[31]

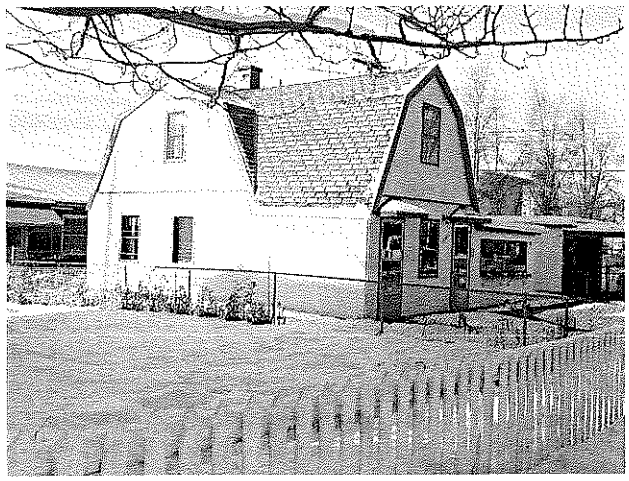
SPENARD

The large geographic area known as Spenard was subdivided following World War II. Homesteads, such as McCrae's, formed the subdivision patterns. Some of the houses of the late 1940's included those of Charles Ricci at 3010 Lois Drive, John Conboy at 2809 West 33rd Avenue, and Ned Sands on Spenard Road. Land was purchased from the homesteaders themselves or through those in the real estate business such as Suggits and Weiman. The Federal Housing Administration had not emerged as a financial institution in the Territory at the time of most of Spenard's development.[32] That fact, coupled with the absence of building regulations, has given the area dispersed and varied housing patterns. Information about Joe Spenard, for whom the area is named, and Lake Spenard is provided in Chapter 10.

2208 Eureka Road: The Wharton House

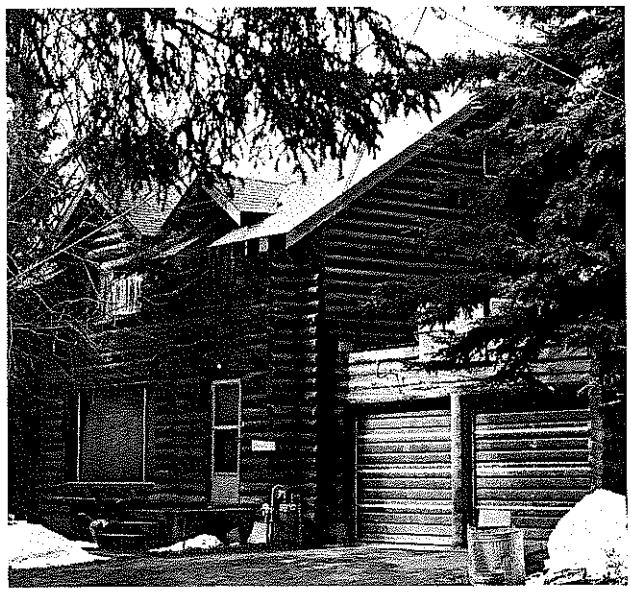
Thomas Wharton built the handsome two-story log home on Eureka Street in 1948. Wharton, a plumber, arrived in Anchorage in the early 1940's and directed the heating and water division at the new Elmendorf Air Field. In 1945 and

234 Denali Street.



1954 he purchased two tracts of the William McKinney Homestead. He designed and built this house over a two to three year span. He and his wife lived there for twenty-five years. In the late 1950's he built the adjacent trailer court, completing the construction and utility installation himself.

The residence has not been altered. It is extremely well constructed and survived the earthquake with very minor damage. Wharton used over-sized construction materials: floor joists are 2 x 12's, and 2 x 4 studs, in addition to eight inch diameter logs, form the walls. The flat-roofed, attached two-car garage with sundeck, open roof eaves, gable dormers, and notched corners are original to the house, as is the greenhouse and other outbuildings. The interior is sheetrocked and mahogany woodwork is used throughout.



The Wharton House.

CHAPTER 4: TRAILS

Trails and exploration routes are threads in the patchwork of our history whose importance is found in both their transportation role and in the historic sites associated with them. Anchorage has a rich trail history. Turnagain Arm and the mountains north of it presented obstacles to travel which were the most difficult in this region of Alaska. Because of those difficulties, routes were often improved and new routes were sought to make travel safer.

In the following sections the geography and history of such travel ways are examined. The terms "route" and "trail" are used regularly throughout the following sketches — they do *not* necessarily have the same meaning. As a rule, a "trail" is used to describe and identifiable and easily traveled pathway. On the other hand, "route" describes a general alignment. Routes include the travel ways used in various explorations, broader areas such as the Portage Pass and shorelines. Routes also include the places where segments of trail once were but have been lost to development or other landscape change.

Portage Pass

Although it is now nearly impossible to cross — and certainly not advisable — the valley now occupied by Portage Glacier, which has crept back towards its mountain origins in the last sixty years, was so named because it provided a portage between those two major Alaskan waterways.[1] The route over Portage Pass was primarily one of winter-time use because foot or sled travel were necessary when blocks of ice made navigation of the Inlet too dangerous. Summer-time gave travelers an opportunity to reach the mining towns and trading centers of the Inlet by small craft until freezing weather ended that possibility. Then the ice-free, deep-water basins of Resurrection Bay and Portage Bay (i.e., the Passage Canal) served travelers who entered the region.

Portage Lake at the time of the Alaska Engineering Commission reconnaissance.

Portage Pass. Members of the Army's Expedition 3 crossing the glacier in 1898.

The route over Portage Glacier belongs to prehistory, having long been used by Indian and Eskimo cultures. Legends revolve around Tanaina and Chugachigmiut Eskimo warfare. Portage Glacier provided the means by which each other's territory was reached.[2]

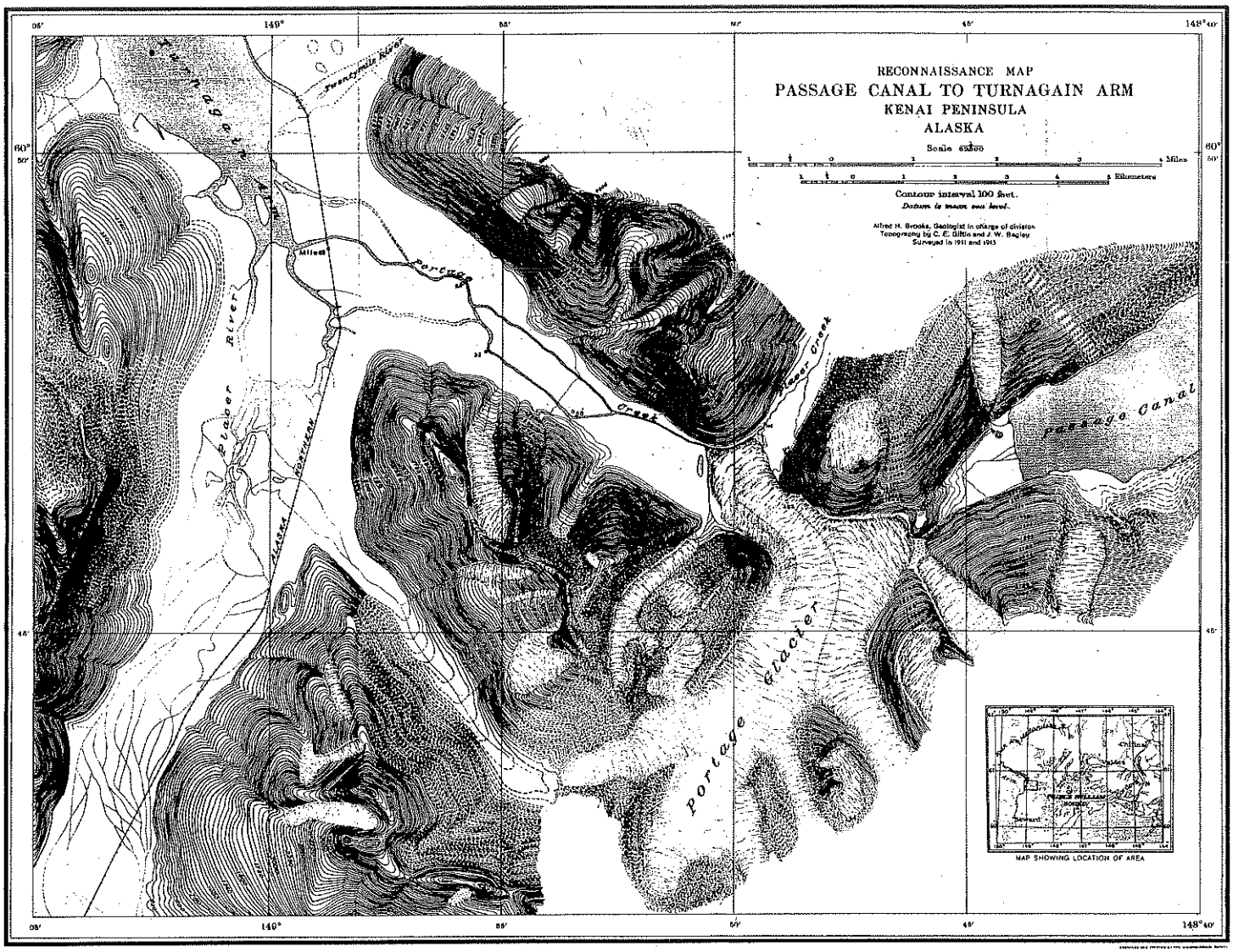
Captain George Vancouver's 1794 exploration of the Alaskan coast provides the first historical insight into the use of the Portage Route. In early May 1794, while anchored near the head of Cook Inlet, Vancouver sent one of his assistants, George Whidbey, "with two boats . . . to examine the river Turnagain."[3] Whidbey navigated past tips of land whose names (placed upon the features by Vancouver) have become engrained in Anchorage geography – Point MacKenzie, Point Woronzow (sic) and Point Campbell.

While Whidbey and his mates were biding their way with ice floes and tides, a group of Russians visited Vancouver's Ship of War, the *Discovery*. Vancouver then learned "that our anchorage was not in a river, but in an arm of the sea."[4] Likewise, he learned that the head of Turnagain Arm provided portage to other Russian settlements in Prince William Sound.

> We also understood, that the river Turnagain terminated not far within its entrance, where they had walked over a hill or mountain that occupied the space of fifteen or sixteen verst (about 12 miles), and that they had there descended into an arm of the sea that had communication with Prince William's sound; across which isthmus is the route, by which they stated that all their intercourse between the Russian settlements, in this and that extensive inlet, was now carried on . . . Throughout the whole of this conversation, they seemed to use every endeavour to impress us with an idea, that the American continent and adjacent islands, as far to the eastward as the meridian of Kayes Island, belonged exclusively to the Russian empire.[6]

Portage Pass vicinity, looking west from the pass.

Portage Glacier as it appeared in 1913.



Upon Whidbey's return it was confirmed that the body of water was not a river. Whidbey had to turn back with the tide before he could actually go to the farthest extension of "this arm . . . no longer entitled to the name of a river."[6] Consequently, he never had the opportunity to see the terrain of what is now the Portage Valley while on Turnagain Arm.

One month later while in Prince William Sound, Vancouver repeated similar exploratory measures. Whidbey departed to survey the western reaches of the Sound while another member of the *Discovery's* party, Johnstone, made a complementary survey in the eastern end of the sound. Their experiences leave no doubt that the Portage valley was used by natives and Russians alike. Vancouver relates that Johnstone witnessed a party of natives delivering skins and a message to the Russians with whom he was staying. "They (Johnstone and his men) clearly understood that the strangers had come immediately from Groosgincloose, or Cook's Inlet, and *that they, with their canoes, had crossed the isthmus overland that separates this sound from Turnagain Arm.*"[7] Vancouver, while at the Russian settlement at Port Etches, encountered another indication of the portage.

> A party of about twenty Russians visited the ships on Sunday afternoon from port Etches, in one of their large skin canoes, conducted by the same person who had been the leader of the party that had visited us amongst the ice in the upper part of Cook's inlet. I understood from him, that on his quitting the ship they had proceeded up Turnagain arm, and from thence had crossed the isthmus by land and gone to port Etches, where he had remained ever since.[8]

The most fascinating account of the route, however, was that of Whidbey who traveled to the end of the Passage Canal. Vancouver writes of what Whidbey had found:

> Here they had approached within twelve miles of the spot where Mr. Whidbey had ended his examination of Turnagain arm. The intermediate space was the isthmus so frequently alluded to before, on either side of which the country was composed of what appeared to him to be lofty, barren, impassable mountains, enveloped in perpetual snow; but the isthmus itself was a valley of some breadth, which, though it contained elevated land, was very free from snow, and appeared to be perfectly easy of access . . . for his further satisfaction, (he) was very desirous of finding the road or path by which the intercourse was carried on; and although he was unsuccessful in ascertaining this, yet it did not appear to him that any particular track was necessary, as the valley has a tolerably even surface, was nearly destitue of any vegetable productions, and was equally passable in all directions.[9]

Thus it appears that the Portage Pass was not blocked by glacial advance at the time of Whidbey's survey! In 1914 Tarr and Martin set forth such a conclusion. "Although admitting a reasonable doubt that Whidbey may not have known a valley glacier when he saw one, we feel rather certain that a great advance had taken place."[10] Today's glaciologists draw the same conclusion that "prior to 1800 the glacier did not block the route through Portage Pass."[11] If the present trend of thinning and retreat continues, they predict that by the year 2020 Portage Glacier will once again unveil itself from Portage Pass.

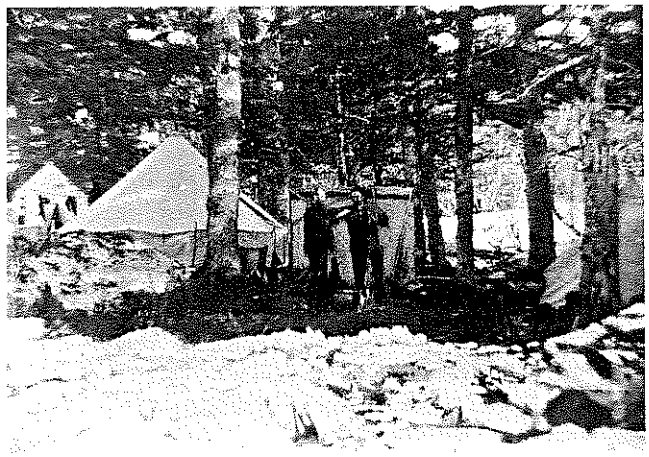
It was not until Ivan Petroff journeyed through the region in taking the 1880 census that another account of the valley was recorded. His description, a "glacial formation forms the portage route between Chugach bay (i.e. Prince William Sound) and Cook's Inlet," leave no doubt that the glacier was extensive.[12]

With discoveries of gold in the Resurrection Creek area in 1873 and 1894 thousands of fortune hunters migrated to the upper Kenai Peninsula. Portage Glacier was a major route as it allowed the prospector to cross in spring. Thus he could be actively mining by the time warm weather began. During the spring of 1896, at the height of mining activity, hundreds of persons were arriving daily; in the month of May about 400 traveled across the glacier to reach the gold fields.[13] The miners had little difficulty in using this route with the exception of getting their provisions over the east crest of the glacier: "This climb (to the 1100-foot level) is the only serious obstacle to the portage, and in order to surmount it with heavily loaded sleds, it is usually necessary to resort to a system of ropes and pulleys."[14] Once on the glacier, a trail could be easily followed during fair weather.

Occasional storms could make the passage into a snow blinding, wind tunnel. Such was the horror in March 1897, that Charles Botcher, Charles A. Blackstone and G.W. Malingue encountered while enroute to Portage Bay to meet their Seattle-bound steamer. When they did not arrive in the Puget Sound port, Blackstone's friend, George Hall, came north to search for them. The note he found on Blackstone's body more than adequately depicts the tragedy:

> "Saturday, April 4th, 1897 – This is to certify that Botcher froze to death on Tuesday night. J.W. Malingue died on Wednesday forenoon, being frozen so badly. C.A. Blackstone had his ears, nose and four fingers on his right hand and two on his left hand frozen an inch back. The storm . . . overtook us within an hour of the summit and . . . drove everything we had over the cliff except blankets and moose hide, which we all crawled under. Supposed to have been 40 degrees below zero. On Friday I started for Salt Water. I don't know how I got there without outfit. On Saturday afternoon I gathered up everything. Have enough grub for ten days, providing bad weather does not set in. Sport was blown over the cliff. I think I can hear him howl once in a while."[15]

Blackstone never reached tide water as he lost his direction and went deeper into the ice fields. Blackstone Glacier is his memorial.

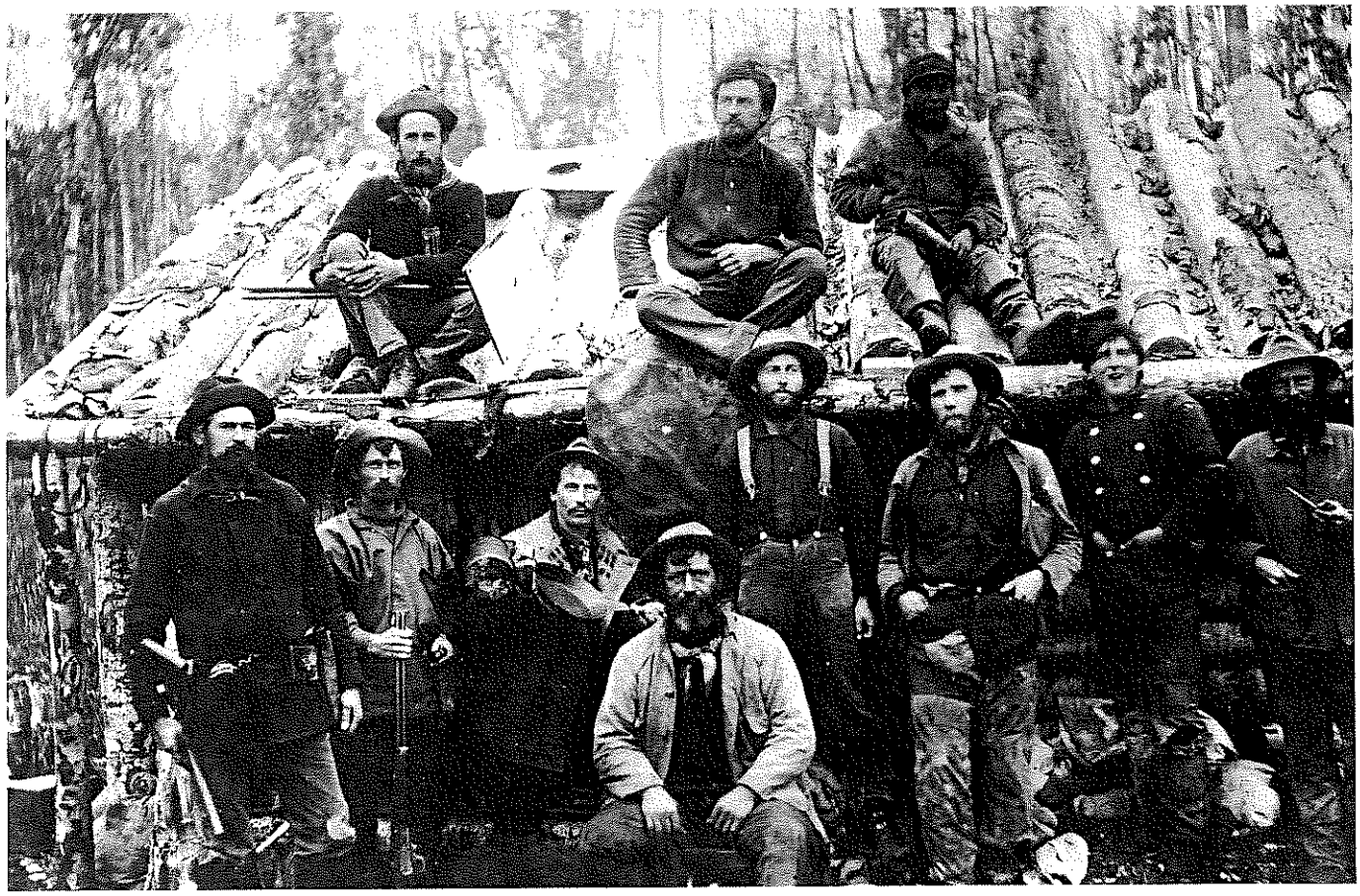


Expedition 3 at Portage Bay (the vicinity of Whittier). In May members of the expedition set up camp from which they crossed Portage Glacier. Luther Kelly and members of his party broke camp here and traveled over Billings Glacier to the Twentymile River Basin.

An 1898 U.S. Army expedition under Captain Edwin Forbes Glenn marks another historical highlight in the use of the glacier route. Known as Expedition 3, Glenn and his command explored this region to report on transportation routes, potential sites for military bases and natural resources. The valley west of Portage Bay (the Passage Canal) served as their base camp in April and May 1898. A number of trips across the Glacier were made by members of Glenn's party. Lieutenant J.C. Castner's experience is illustrative: "On May 10 I left camp at Portage Bay and proceeded over the glacier . . . to secure guides for and information about the country at the head of Cook Inlet . . . we had little difficulty in crossing the five miles of glacier which prevents the Kenai Peninsula from being an island. Snowshoes were only necessary for the first two miles, after which the hard, frozen trail held our weight."[16] After breaking camp at Portage Bay, Expedition 3 undertook a number of exploratory missions; one of them under Kelly is described in the next section.

Portage Pass. In 1914 the Alaska Engineering Commission studied the feasibility of the Portage-Passage Canal rail link. Here W.C. Guerin's party are moving camp across the glacier.

With a slowdown in mining activity and the completion of the railroad line from Seward to Kern Creek, the Portage Glacier route became less frequently used. In 1914 the Alaska Engineering Commission surveyors recognized Portage Bay as a possible terminus for the government's railroad. A number of the higher cadre, including W.C. Guerin, crossed the glacier during that mapping effort.[17] Ultimately, the dilapidated Alaska Northern Railway and its terminus at Seward were chosen by the Commission. It was not until World War II when the tunnels and railway to Whittier were constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that travel between Prince William Sound and Turnagain Arm became possible on a permanent basis.



Members of Captain Glenn's Expedition 3. Disgusted that they were missing Spanish-American War action, this party of soldiers and civilian guides recorded many of the possible routes through the region.

The Kelly Trail

The name of this trail is derived from Captain E.F. Glenn's report: "A trip to the Tanana Region, 1898." In that summary Glenn calls this route from Prince William Sound to Knik Arm "The Kelly Trail" and "Mr. Kelly's Trail."[18] The man behind that name was Luther S. Kelly who served as a guide on the Army's Expedition 3. His mission was to find a route from Portage Bay (the Passage Canal) to Cook Inlet which could be used year-round. Whereas Portage Glacier presented a relatively easy wintertime means to reach upper Turnagain Arm, its crevasses could be perilous during the mild months. Thus Kelly was to explore possible routes for a summer trail.

Kelly broke camp on Cabin Creek (i.e., Billings Creek) on May 20, 1897. From there he investigated two means to cross over into the Twentymile River basin. The lowest and less difficult pass was not initially pursued as it was shrouded in fog and snow. That pass leads down the South Fork to Carmen Lake. A few days later it was traversed: "The ascent and descent of the pass, through the range from Portage Bay, does not present any great difficulty for establishing a practicable pack or wagon route . . . and there are no glaciers to interfere with a permanent route over this pass."[19] The other pass was slightly farther up the creek and crossed over into the drainage of upper Carmen River. On May 30 and 31, Kelly and the four enlisted men moved their camp to the vicinity of Carmen Lake. Along with a soldier by the name of Lampe, Kelly spent the next ten days pursuing the forks of Twentymile River only to find rugged glaciers and impassable canyons. By mid-June Kelly had ascended the western branch of the river. It was not an easy trip, "high water . . . tag alder bogs, heat and mosquito pest in all its fury assailed us." Ultimately, his quest was fulfilled. "To the west I found a pass leading to Winner Creek, a tributary of California Creek (sic) which appears to be the only available pass for a continuance of route from Portage Bay to Knik Arm."[20] His "California Creek" was in reality Glacier Creek which, as he had previously discovered, led to Crow Pass and into the Eagle River Valley.

Variations to this general route have also been traveled. Obviously, it was not Kelly's intention to establish a trail but to discover a trail route. The Billings Creek – Lake Carmen route was repeatedly used to reach the head of Turnagain Arm. The western end of "the Kelly Trail" was firmly established when Axel Linblad constructed a well-built trail along Winner Creek to his mining claims. In 1931 the Forest Service, moving eastward, extended Linblad's work across the pass to the Twentymile River.[21] Anyone considering hiking or skiing along this route can expect very rough going as the trail from Winner Creek to Twentymile River is no longer maintained by the Forest Service and the Billings Creek to Cabin Creek was merely a route, not an established trail.

The Iditarod Trail

The Iditarod! The sounds and visions of mining, mushing and mailruns are aroused as that word is mentioned. Its legends continue to unfold as late winter brings another episode of the famous dog race from Anchorage to Nome. The trail was more than the Anchorage-to-Nome route. With a look to the early part of this century, the story of this remarkable segment of Alaskan geography can be traced.

The Iditarod was, in actuality, a series of routes which were developed as exploration took place and economic incentives, invariably gold, presented themselves. A number of related names have described the same route. Among those names are the "Nome-Seward Trail," the "Iditarod-Seward Trail," the "Winter Mail Trail" and the "Seward Trail."

The name Iditarod is derived from a mining town which was about 450 miles from Anchorage; a few buildings are left there as ghost-like reminders of its placer gold past. Iditarod and the surrounding Innoko region blossomed as gold fields from 1909 to 1912. The catalyst to the gold rush was the prospecting success of John Beaton and Harry Dychman. On December 25, 1908 they had a most Merry Christmas as they discovered placer gold on the Iditarod River.

Captain Edwin Forbes Glenn led Expedition 3 in 1898-1899. Numerous routes to the Alaskan interior were studied, including the Portage Pass route, the Crow Pass route and the Kelly Trail.

During the early 1900's, before track had been laid to Kern, a corduroy bed (that is, a road of log slats or boards) provided a decent trail around the end of the Arm and onward toward Girdwood. From the north side of the Arm, two branches of the trail crossed the mountains – one at Crow Creek Pass and another at Indian Creek Pass. Because each has its own separate history, they are discussed in the following subsections. Both branches of trail skirted Knik Arm and ran along the level, frozen marshy ground toward Eklutna. A number of roadhouses were opened to travelers in this stretch, including those of W.D. Elliot and H. Watson.[24] From Eklutna the trail crossed the upper end of Knik Arm and twisted back to its northwesterly course toward the town of Knik.

With the creation of Anchorage, a branch of the "Seward-Iditarod" trail was linked to the town from the northeast. It ran parallel to Knik Arm before turning eastward by Tuomi Lake and Otter Lake.[25] This route is now part of Elmendorf and Fort Richardson. In the vicinity of Eagle River this trail met with a number of trails and wagon roads which were in existence by 1915.

The Crow Pass Branch of the Iditarod. Portions of this route, those up Glacier Creek and Crow Creek, were traveled as early as 1896 when prospecting started in the area. However, prospectors were looking for gold, not transportation routes. Walter C. Mendenhall, the Geologist to the 1898 Army Expedition makes this point clear: "We were in the upper valley of Crow Creek, and could get no information from Mr. Davidson (who was doing hydraulic work at the vicinity of the Girdwood property) or his men as to what waters we should reach across the divide . . . the prospectors knew nothing about the country beyond, so little was the geography of the district known."[26] Mendenhall, along with Luther S. Kelly (see The Kelly Trail) and a packer by the name of C.C. Smith, solved the mystery as they climbed through the Crow Creek Valley, crossed through the pass and began their descent down the Yukla.[27] Mendenhall's description of that trip is interesting. He talks of the white mountain sheep in groups of twenty-five or more, the hunting shacks of the Indians and the mosquitos, "so countless in numbers" and "so patient and vicious in attack." After Smith turned back they continued down the upper valley, "a miniature Yosemite," and hiked on to the mouth of the river. There, they "found a party of Indians in camp," who took them across the Arm to the North American Trading and Transportation Company's store at Knik. Soon thereafter they were able to catch up with other members of the expedition.[28]

Crow Pass as seen in 1906.

Mushing down Fourth Avenue. Between 1915 and 1918 (when the railroad was completed) Anchorage was enjoined to the Seward-Iditarod Trail. These mushers are heading out Fourth Avenue with a couple hundred thousand dollars' worth of gold dust.

During the early 1900's the Crow Pass trail was used as a winter route and mail trail to Knik. As of 1906 this route was referred to by the Seward *Weekly Gateway* as the "Old Crow Creek Trail" that "is still available." The article continued: "The trouble with this trail is that it is very steep near the summit and snowslides are dangerous. It is unsafe for one man to travel it alone. On this trail it is 10 miles from timber to timber."[29] The completion of the trail between Girdwood and Indian Creek in the summer and fall of 1908 provided a longer, but less steep route. Thus the Crow Pass Trail was disfavored for a few years. However, W.L. Goodwin, the Road Commission's Superintendent, oversaw the construction of a new, rerouted trail through Crow Pass during the summer of 1911. He noted that the Crow Pass route had only one mile of tough going versus the five along the Indian Creek-Ship Creek route and that it was 15 to 20 miles shorter.[30] The trail was designed to carry four-horse teams.[31] Even with the completion of that project, the Indian Creek route came to be more frequently used because of the high winds and snowslide danger at Crow Pass.

By 1931 the trail had become overgrown, washed out, and impassable to summer travelers.[32] Today a good trail is maintained by the Forest Service as is one of their modern cabins at Crow Pass. Besides the switchbacks of the old trail along the sides of Jewel Mountain, traces of the old lode mines can be seen in that truly magnificent, upland country.

The Indian Creek Branch of the Iditarod. This route formed the other branch of the Seward-Iditarod Trail that ran through the Anchorage area. Whereas the Crow Creek route skipped north from Girdwood, the alignment of this trail dictated that the traveler continue along the Arm, past Bird Creek, to Indian Creek. There the trail ran meanderingly up the creek to Indian Creek Pass and beyond to the headwaters of Ship Creek. Most travelers would have turned north to skirt the mountains on their way to the head of Knik Arm; however, with the settlement of Ship Creek and the building of Anchorage, the trail ran the entire length of Ship Creek to the boom-town.[33]

In 1906 the general course of this trail was prescribed by the Alaska Central Railway "far in advance of actual railroad building." A "bobsled road" or "snow trail" was laid for this wintertime circuit between the end of the railroad at mile 46 and mile 75 (Girdwood). From there the trail ran along the beach and through the woods. It was recommended to be used only by those on foot as the rocky beaches would tear up the sleds. At Indian Creek two options were presented: the 1906 traveler could continue along the beach to Campbell Point or go up to the creek to the divide.[34]

Two years later this route was improved as a new trail was built from Girdwood to Indian to make it "much easier and

safer."[35] By 1909 a list of roadhouses and mileage points between Seward and Iditarod began to appear. The table of distances which was compiled by W.L. Goodwin of the Alaska Road Commission is illustrative.[36]

A TABLE OF DISTANCES BETWEEN SEWARD AND KNIK

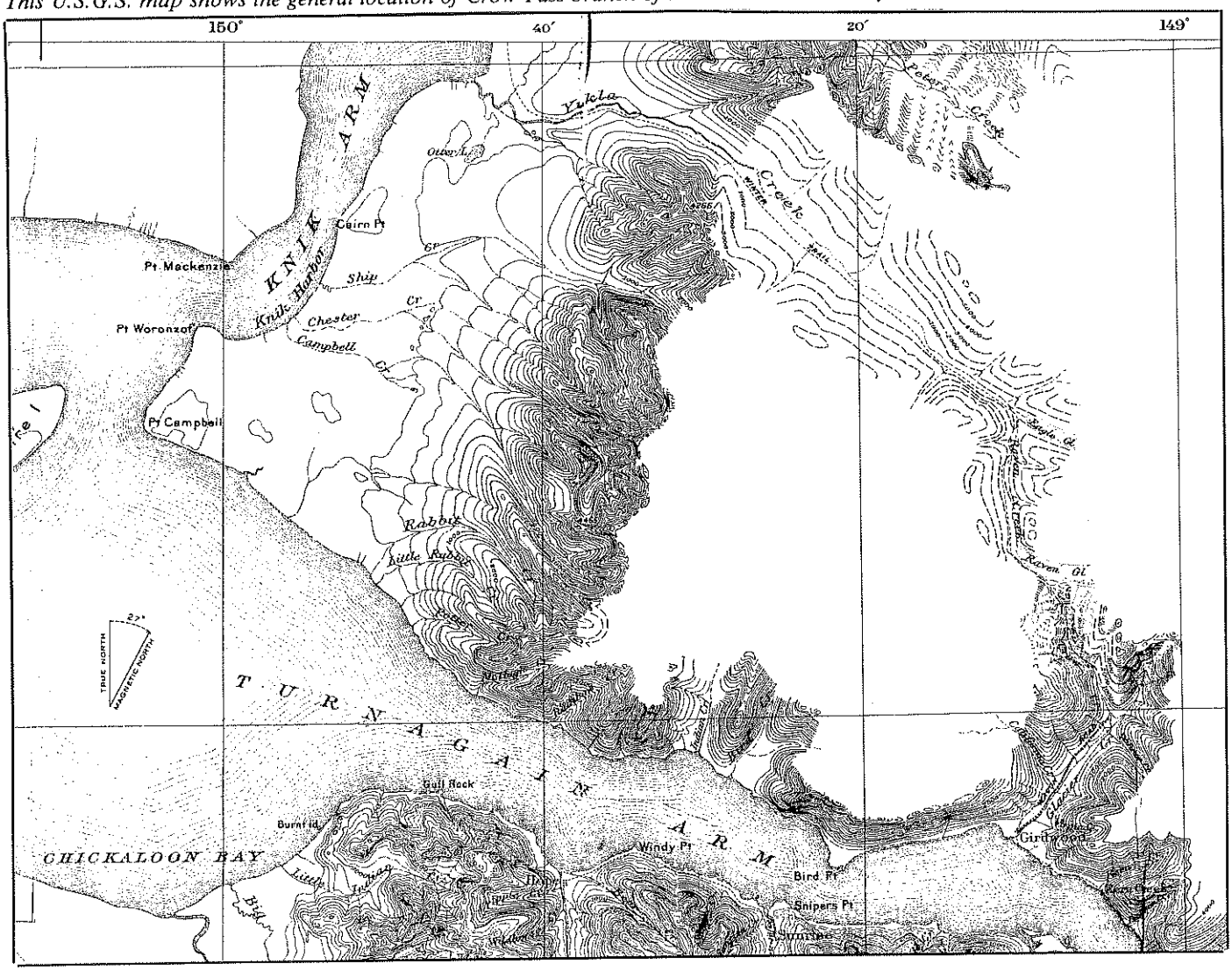
Station	Distance to next station	Distance from Seward
Seward	68.00	0
Kern Creek	4.00	68.00
Glacier Creek (Girdwood)	12.50	72.00
Bird Creek Roadhouse	7.47	84.50
Summit Indian Pass	5.33	91.97
Sibley's Tent Roadhouse	15.49	97.30
Eagle River Roadhouse	17.33	112.79
Old Knik (Eklutna)	10.55	130.12
Knik	–	140.67

Such a roadhouse as Sibley's – a tent – would not have stood the test of time. His "roadhouse" or one similar to it was described by Gideon who hiked the Indian Creek trail in 1915.

> A chap known only as "Fat" went up to the timber line on the Anchorage side of the pass and built a "roadhouse," if such it could be called – cotton-wood pole structure which no self-respecting farmer would use for a stable. But Fat was smart. He knew what those blizzards were like on the Pass and he knew they were frequent. Therefore he reasoned that if he should build a shelter at timber line a goodly percentage of those traveling away from Anchorage would be compelled to stop.[37]

Few roadhouses are left in the Anchorage region. The one listed at Knik is still in existence and provides a glimpse of what a roadhouse was like. Often only a room in size, travelers could find both food and shelter at these trailside havens. Generally the roadhouses were at distances of a half-day to a day's travel apart. The prices for accommodations varied according to the location. A range from fifty cents to one dollar and a half for meals and from fifty cents to one dollar for beds was encountered. Dog houses and feed were also provided by roadhouse managers.

This U.S.G.S. map shows the general location of Crow Pass branch of the Iditarod in the early 1900s.



Regardless of the security of the roadhouse, trail conditions along the Indian Creek route could be cursedly rugged. Even long-time mushers such as L.A. Snell and J.T. Snell, two brothers from Dawson, found that conditions on the pass could be tough. An account of their troubles described the trail over the divide as "the hardest place of mushing they had encountered during several winters in the northland . . . the high wind . . . drifted the snow and entirely obliterated the trail and all guiding marks." The brothers were not able to reach the safety of a roadhouse until after dark and only by probing their way along the route with their walking sticks.[38]

This winter trail was improved by the Alaska Engineering Commission in 1915 so that service between Seward and Anchorage could be "kept up to a standard that will prove satisfactory to all concerned."[39] Col. H.E. Revelle was responsible for mail service over the Seward-Iditarod Trail. During the first winter after Anchorage's development, A.G. Another route with a similar name, the Johnson Pas Trail, the mail between Bird Creek and Anchorage. They used double-enders to carry the load and had an extra dog team at Bird Creek which could be used in case of emergency.[40] The early telegraph line between Anchorage and Seward was strung along this trail in 1915; glass insulators and other remnants of the system can still be seen. When the railroad was completed along Turnagain Arm in 1918, mail and travelers alike were carried by train. The use of this and other Turnagain Arm trails decreased markedly in the years thereafter.

Other Trails Along Turnagain Arm

Such trails as the Iditarod and its branch which went over the Indian Creek Pass formed part of the trail system which ran along the north side of Turnagain Arm. Various improvements, including the rerouting of trails, were made from 1906 to 1917. Railroad construction, under the Alaska Northern Railway and later the Alaska Engineering Commission, resulted in a number of new trails. Some segments, such as the "sled trail" between Girdwood and Kern, were used primarily in hauling equipment and supplies.[41] Many portions of the original trails are ill-defined now. Railroad and highway construction, snowslides and vegetative changes have combined to obliterate parts of these early transportation routes. Still, there are slices of trail which can easily be hiked. They provide beautiful views of the Inlet as well as a sense of the past.

The Iditarod near Eklutna. Here an A.E.C. survey party are hiking from Eklutna in 1915.

Horse drawn wagon on the Johnson Trail during the construction era.

The Johnson Trail

This trail which ran along the mountainside between Potter and Indian Creek was primarily used in railroad construction. The name "Johnson" has been placed upon this trail in recent years by Chugach State Park personnel. The meaning behind the name is not clear; however, as it is now posted on trail markers, it will probably carry such a designation in future years. One can speculate that it could have association with Mrs. Johnson's roadhouse which is said to have been located at Potter.[42] That roadhouse no longer exists. A number of Johsons had mining claims on the north side of Turnagain Arm, yet it is doubtful that the trail would have been named for anyone of those early prospectors. Another route with a similar name, the Johnson Pass Trail, is located on the Kenai Peninsula. Although it formed a segment of the Iditarod route between Seward and the Arm, it should not be confused with this trail. Other names for the Johnson Trail include the Great Northern Trail, Turnagain Trail and the Telegraph Trail.[43]

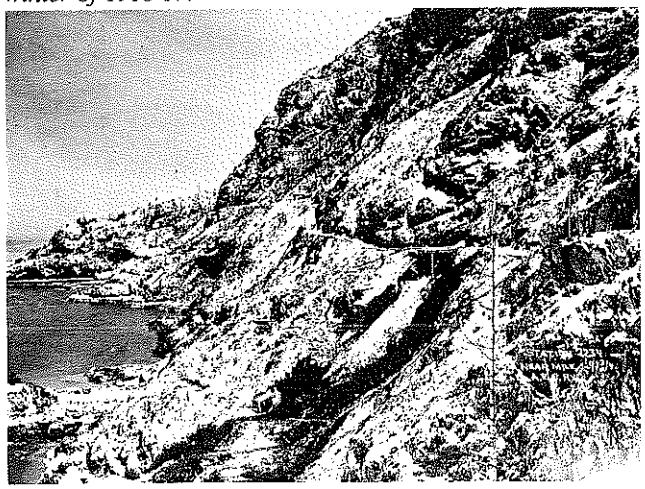
With the projection that a railroad line would be laid along the Arm, the Alaska Central Railway improved the route to Knik in 1905 and 1906. One leg of their trail building included a segment between Indian Creek and Campbell point which was made "available only for foot travelers, being impassable even for dog sleds."[44] The alignment of that trail would have been parallel to or the same as the improved trails which were constructed later.

The Alaska Engineering Commission made a number of improvements in this route in constructing the railroad. The trail was necessary as a means to supply the construction camps. By December 1916 the trail between Potter and Indian Creek had been cleared. It was then possible "to ride a horse through to Indian Creek."[45] Telegraph service over the Ship Creek-Indian Creek line was often disrupted by inclement weather and falling trees. In the spring of 1917 a new line was laid along Turnagain Arm. Strands of the copper wire remain along the trail between Potter and Rainbow. The remains of a cabin which was probably used in constructing the line or as a temporary communications station can be seen about two-thirds of the way between Potter Creek Road and McHugh Creek Wayside..

The Johnson Trail passes by a number of the sites of the railroad construction camps. Occasionally, remnants of cabins and sheds can be seen. The Alaska Northern Railway sent out advance survey parties which laid out such camps at Rainbow, old McHugh Creek and Sheep Creek. These camps were improved by the Alaska Engineering Commission during the 1916-1918 construction period.

Today this trail can be clearly followed from Potter Creek to Rainbow. Access to the trail is available from the road at Potter Creek or from the upper ends of the McHugh Creek parking areas. The route is basically level; however, sharp drops along the rock face of Turnagain Arm are occasionally encountered between McHugh and Rainbow. Those sections are few while the major portion of the trail runs through spruce, willow and cottonwood forest. Summer brings a profusion of wildflowers and some thick pockets of Devil's Club. That camouflage of vegetation tends to hide the remains of the railroad camps. However, a number of cabin foundations are still in existence.

The Johnson Trail as photographed by P.S. Hunt in the winter of 1916-17.

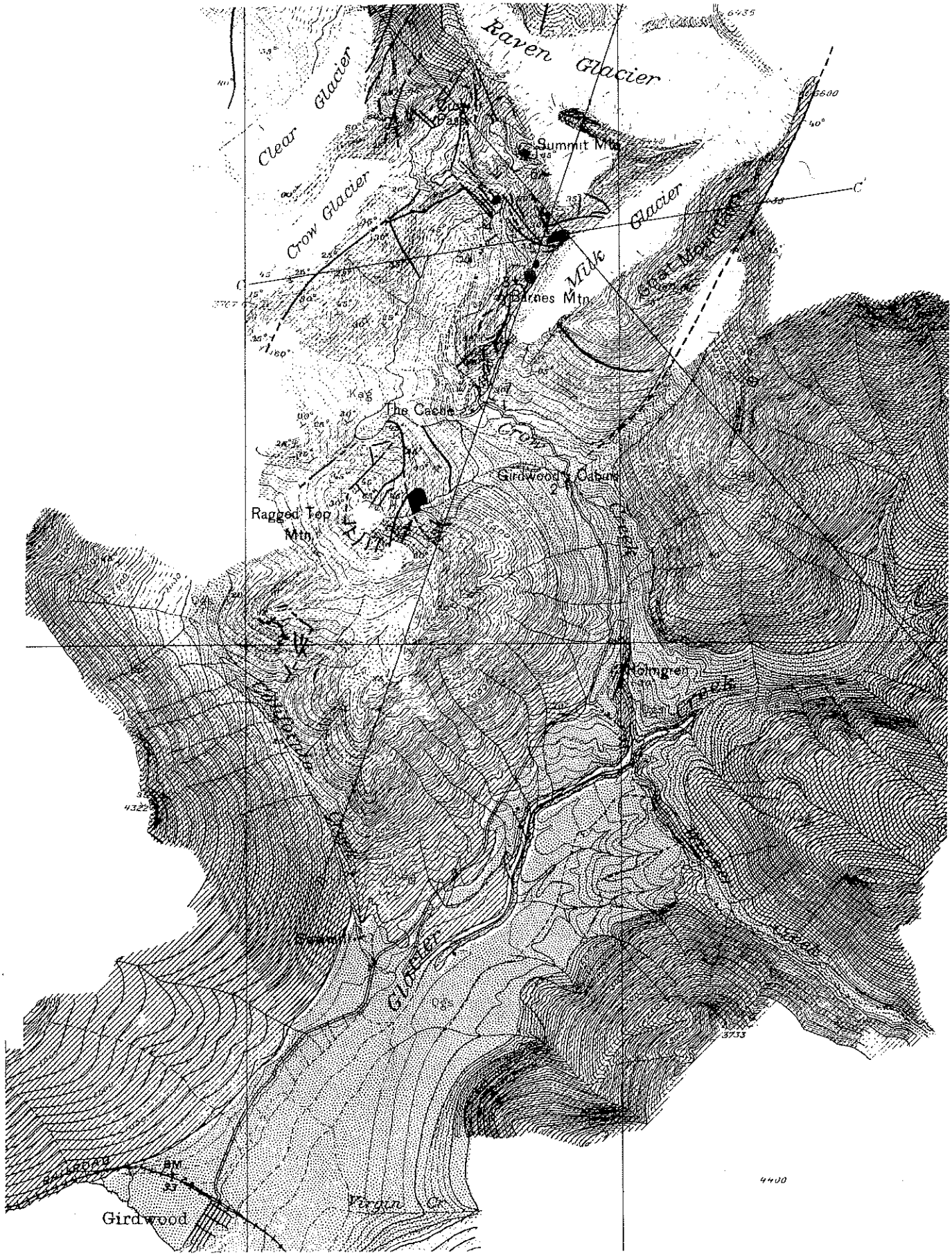


The Ship Creek Trail. This trail or route is a continuation of the Indian Creek Trail. Once over the Indian Creek Pass travelers would continue down out of the mountains. Iditarod travelers would travel headed back to the northeast to go around Knik Arm. After 1915 many more travelers journeyed down Ship Creek to the railroad town. This route winds out of the present Arctic Valley area, runs through the military reservation and emerges in the lower Ship Creek basin. When the Ship Creek Greenbelt becomes a reality, the majority of Indian Creek - Ship Creek route will be intact.

The Potter Creek Trail. This trail, also known as the Potter Trail, crossed the Bowl in a north-northeasterly direction. At Potter (named for a trapper who resided there around the turn of the century)[47] this trail connected with the Johnson Trail. It probably was the same route described by an early Seward *Weekly Gateway*: from "mile 105 . . . it follows the railroad survey near a considerable distance from the beach . . . and double enders can traverse it with a little clearing in places."[48]

Other Trails, Roads, and Routes. Before closing this section a couple other routes should be mentioned. A number of trails ran up such watersheds as the South Fork of Campbell Creek and Rabbit Creek.[49]

These were probably used as local access routes and seldom used in crossing the Chugach. There was also a Government Pack Trail which followed a general route along the present Alaska Railroad right-of-way. The earliest roads leading into or out of Anchorage were wagon roads. One ran to the northeast and generally followed the railroad alignment. The other road ran to Joe Spenard's homestead, near the lake which bears his name.



Crow Creek Mining Area, 1931. This map shows: (1) the Crow Creek Mine (marked by the word Holmgren); (2) the Girdwood property; (3) the Jewel Mine; (4) the Monarch Mine; (5) the Brenner Prospect and (6) the Bahrenberg claims.

CHAPTER 5: MINING

Introduction

The use of minerals in the Cook Inlet region can be traced to prehistoric times. Eskimos (of the Late Third Kachemak Bay culture) traded for copper with Cook Inlet Athapaskans who had probably acquired their supply from the Copper River Indians. That Eskimo culture is believed responsible for the cave drawings which were printed in red hematite (an iron ore) at various Cook Inlet sites. Athapaskans are known to have used copper to fashion knives and projectile points. Most of the copper which was used by the Tanaina, the Athapaskans of Cook Inlet area, appears to be of Copper River origin. Although gold beads were reputed to have been worn by the native women of Cook Inlet, archaeologists have not cited any such finds.[1]

The first historical references to mining in this region are written about the activities of Peter Doroshin, a graduate of the Russian Imperial Mining School at St. Petersburg. He led mineral explorations on the Kenai Peninsula from 1849 to 1852, and in doing so, he found placer gold along the Russian River.[2] Prospecting was presumably dormant on the Kenai in the next thirty-odd years until Joseph Cooper discovered gold in 1884. Still, that did not cause any immediate boom. Then about 1888 a man by the name of King set out from Kenai to prospect on the upper part of the peninsula. Captain Swanson, who provided him a grubstake, must have been pleasantly surprised when King returned two years later with four pokes of gold.[3] Word about gold spread slowly but steadily. The successful prospecting and placer mining of 1894 brought about a minor rush. During the next two years, it is estimated that about 2,500 men, and an additional few women, came to the upper Kenai.[4]

Branching out from the claims in the vicinity of Hope and Sunrise, prospecting logically spilled across onto the north side of Turnagain Arm. In 1895 Christopher Spillum, F.J. Perry and Fred Crewe staked the first claims on California Creek. That creek was but one of many creeks and mountain valleys which came to be prospected. The gravel beds and adjoining mountain sides of Winner Creek, Bird Creek, Indian Creek, Penguin Creek, Rainbow Creek, Twentymile River and even Portage Glacier were subjected to the pick, shovel and pan of the prospector.[5] Claims were filed at Sunrise City during the 1890's.[6] As the mining activity on the northern side of Turnagain Arm grew, a recording office was established at Knik (Leopold David served as the U.S. Commissioner there, in the early 1900s (see page 15, **The Leopold David House**). The names of some mining claims, the Golden North, the Big Nugget, the Treasure Box and the Sure Thing, are recorded tidbits of poetry which echo the optimism of the early prospector. Then again, such claims as the Last Chance reveal that more desperate circumstances were anticipated in the Turnagain mining ventures.

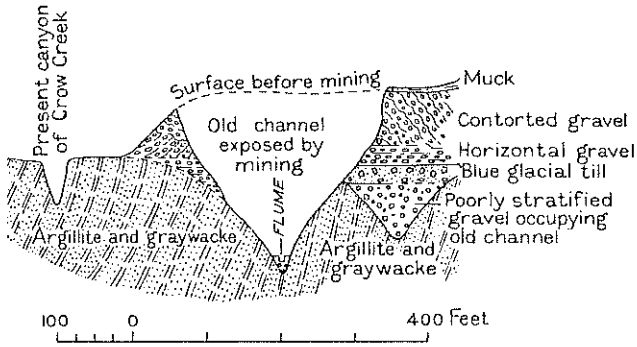
The notoriety and the fortunes of the gold mining episodes of this region are certainly not equal to those of the Klondike or Iditarod. However, mining activities along Turnagain Arm were remarkably persistent forces lasting from 1890's to the 1940's. In a small sense, placer and lode gold mining helped spark the development of the region.

Crow Creek Mine

Crow Creek Mine is the major remnant of the mining activity which transpired in the Anchorage area. The mine is important not only because of mining buildings, associated equipment and geologic features which are so well preserved, but also because of the magnitude of the placer operation during its heyday. The mining activities took place just above the "canyon" near the confluence of Crow Creek and Glacier Creek. The gold deposits in the gravel there were relatively rich. The nuggets and flakes were laid down in a series of deposits which resulted from a long succession of glacial advance and retreat. The ice which formed in the Glacier Creek drainage way acted as a glacial dam and thus served in building up the gravel deposits.[7] Mining efforts were directed toward the sluicing of that gravel to free the placer gold.

The history of the first few years of mining on Crow Creek is sketchy. Chris Spillum and his associates are said to have been the earliest group to work claims there. The first claims were reportedly made in 1897. A year later, W.C. Mendenhall, a geologist with the military exploration led by Captain Edwin F. Glenn, reported that mining on the creek was in its incipient stages. The mining methods quickly

switched from pick and shovel labor to hydraulic operations. A group of eight partners, known in the valley as the "Crow Creek Boys," operated the hydraulic works in 1904.[8] These "boys" probably included Andrew Nisbet, K.A. Schlifer, Paul Buckley, Dante Barton, W.C. Jack, George W. Davis, D.E. Oldham, Chris Spillum, S.W. Wimble and G.W. Davies. They owned one or more of the Pathfinder, Three C's and Weaver Claims of lower Crow Creek, and they were stockholders in the Crow Creek Consolidated Mining Company which operated until 1906.[9] The following year that company sold out to D.H. Nutter, C.M. Nutter and R.B. Dawson. It was known as the Nutter-Dawson Company until 1912 when they incorporated (under the laws of the State of Washington) as the Crow Creek Gold Mining Company.[10, 11]

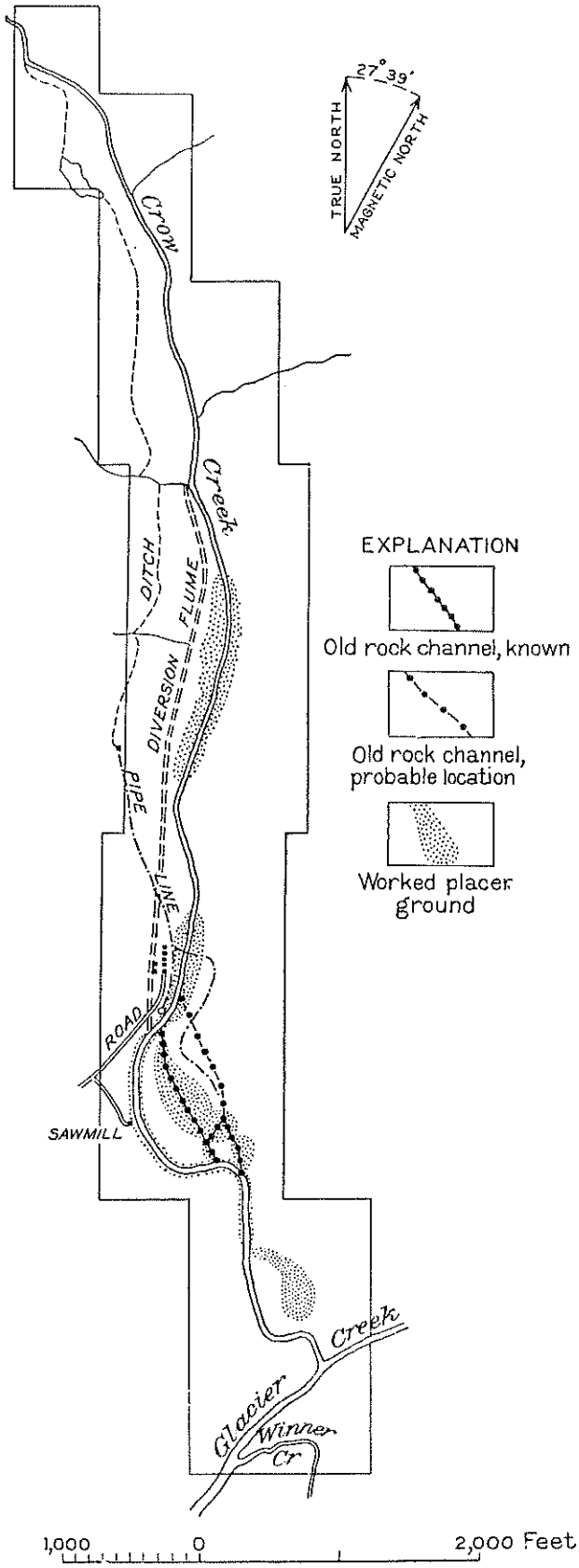


Crow Creek Mine. The hydraulic giants had made huge cuts in the old canyon. This 1915 illustration shows the 250-foot cut. Source U.S.G.S. Bulletin 642.

During the early 1900's it was the most productive camp of the Turnagain-Knik region.[12] The glacially deposited gravels were as much as 250 feet thick along the claims there, yet through the use of a diversion ditch, headys, pipe and hydraulic giants, those gravels were excavated and sluiced for over 1,000 feet along the creek. The accounts of Paul Gideon, a young mine engineering student from the University of Washington, are some of the very few which depict the operation at Crow Creek. He worked there in 1914 and 1915 and later recorded his Alaskan Experience in *The Wandering Boy.*

> This hydraulic giant was merely a six-inch nozzle on the end of a pipe about ten feet long . . . it would have been virtually impossible to have moved the rig had it not been for an ingenious device at the nozzle. The nozzle was mounted in a universal joint, allowing for a small horizontal and vertical movement and controlling this movement by means of a short handle about two feet long. The man operating the giant – the "piper" as he was called – could then swing this enormous weight around with one hand simply by moving the handle on the nozzle in the direction he wished to throw the stream. The nozzle would be deflected slightly and the force of the water rushing out of it would carry the pipe around in the direction opposite to the deflection. Sometimes a saddle was installed on the pipe and the piper rode the thing like he would a horse. When that ditch full of water finally squeezed itself out through a six-inch hole, it did so with the

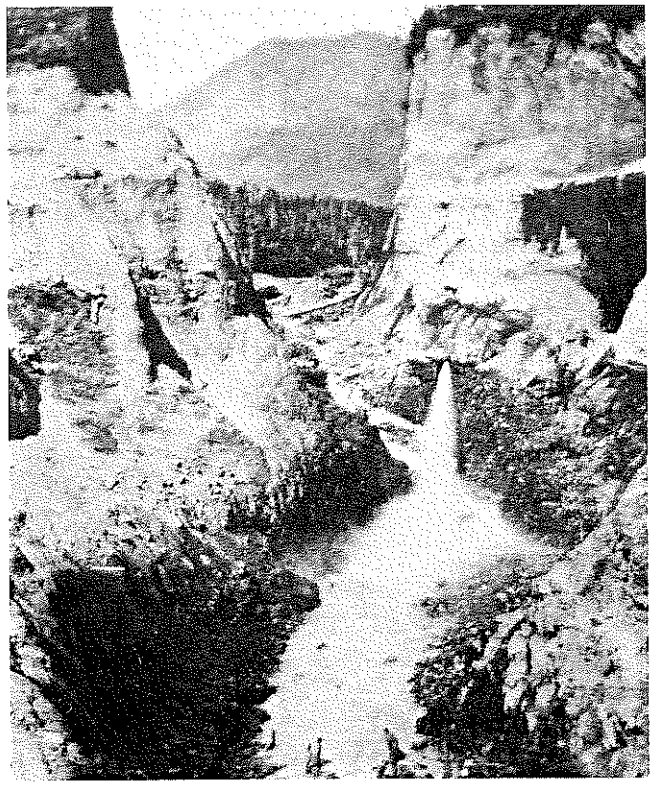
Crow Creek Mine. This collection of buildings form one of the largest placer mining camps in the southcentral region.



Crow Creek Mine. Map, drawn about 1915, shows the location of the diversion flume, pipe, buildings and placer ground. Source: U.S.G.S. Bulletin 642.

> power of a good many horses . . . the water came out of the nozzle of the hydraulic giant in a six-inch stream with a force inconceivable. This mighty stream was what washed the gravel into the mouth of the flume. There was a goodly percentage of enormous boulders mixed with the pay dirt, and these, of course, had to be sluiced out of the way along with the rest.[13]

The gorge which resulted from this enormous flushing is still apparent today. Scattered sections of pipe and other hydraulic equipment bear witness to the mammoth task.



Crow Creek Mine, early 20th century. This large cut was part of the early mining operation in Crow Creek.

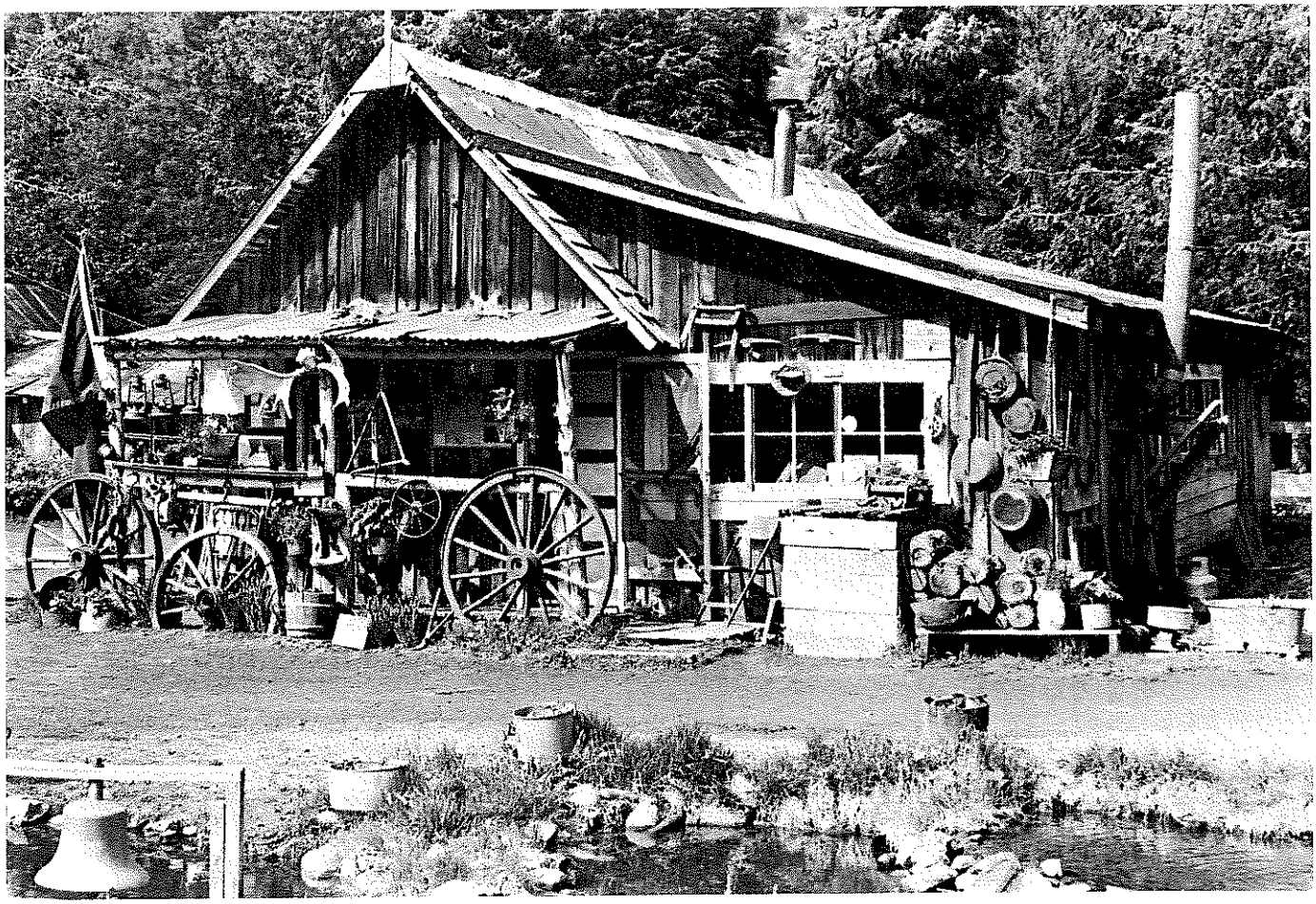
The gold saving apparatus was a series of sluice boxes over 200 feet in length; each box was about 12 feet long and four to five feet square. The first three or four boxes were watertight as gold, heavier than the associated gravel, would fall out in the initial washing. The remaining framework was used to carry off the tailings.

Hemlock and spruce were used as lining and as riffles. Again *The Wandering Boy* relates a marvelous description of how the gold was ultimately collected from the sluice boxes:

> Gold doesn't travel far even in fast water but settles behind the first projection that will form a pocket of still water. Wear and tear was

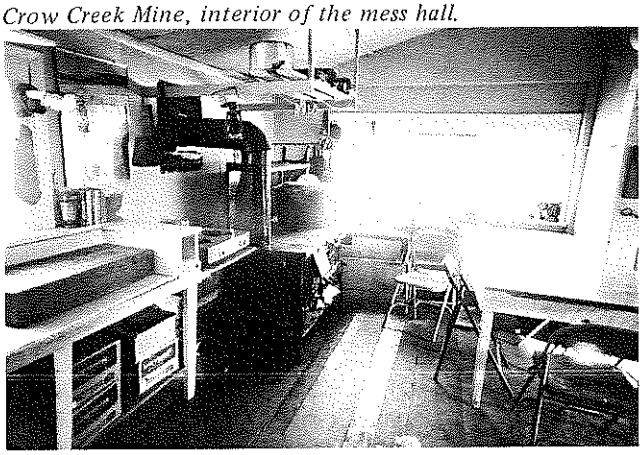
terrific, as that gravel-laden water acted as a perfect grinding compound, and the hemlock blocks had to be constantly replaced. At clean-up time the blocks were . . . tossed out on the bank to dry . . . Later they would be split up and burned in the body of a wheelbarrow and the ashes panned out. When these blocks were taken out of the flume the bottom would be covered with a fine black gravel. A very small stream of water was then turned into the cut, one that would barely cover the bottom of the flume and just strong enough to move the gravel slightly. Several men with brooms then started sweeping the gravel uphill against that fine stream of water. It looked like somebody must be crazy but as the gravel was brushed ahead and then washed back down again, a most astonishing thing began to happen. A yellow line appeared at the top edge of the gravel on the bottom of the flume. The men kept on sweeping and the line kept widening, first an inch or so, then several inches, then a foot or more until finally several feet of the flume bottom was a thin sheet of solid gold particles of all sizes. Standing there on that carpet was a thrill you'd never forget, and when you reached down and let a handful run through your fingers – Alaska had you.[4]

In the season of 1915 the operation was altered because of the danger of the diversion ditch spilling over the placer workings and because substantial gold bearing deposits were located under the ditch and pipe. Thus a sawmill was built and a diversion flume of about 3,400 feet in length was constructed. The sluice line was 1,800 feet long then, consisting of boxes five feet wide and four feet deep. Between 20 and 30 men were employed that season. They worked ten hours each day and were compensated between $105 and $120 each month (plus board).[15] In the 1920's the ownership again changed hands. In 1921 the Crow Creek Mining Co., represented by J.B. Wood, President, and D.H. Nutter, Secretary, transferred both real and personal property associated with the mine to Paul Denkert of Seattle, Washington. Personal property included a sawmill, giants and boxes, flumes, blacksmith shop, messhall and equipment, bunkhouse and furniture, one frame log warehouse, and related mining items. From the precinct records it appears that Denkert was not actively involved in the mining himself.



Crow Creek Mine, the mess hall, c. 1898. Originally the manager's place, this building was expanded in the 1920's and used as a mess hall.

Crow Creek Mine, interior of the mess hall.

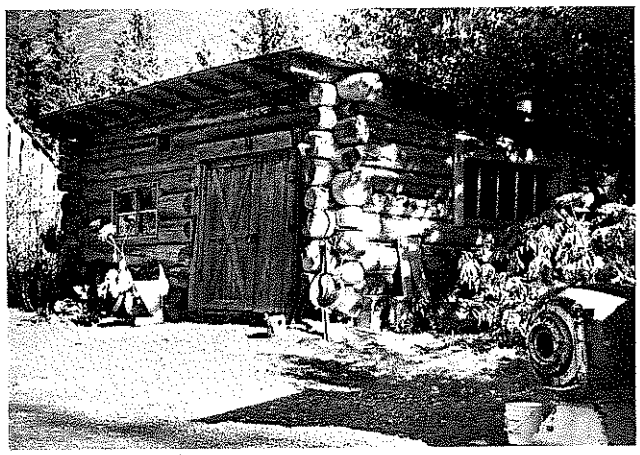


In 1922 Arne S. Erickson was hired to supervise the operations. His association with the mine continued into the 1970's. Erickson worked with John E. Holmgren who became the owner in 1925. During the early 1930's the claims were known as the Holmgren-Erickson property, operated through the Crow Creek Gold Mining Company. Erickson acquired the deed to the property in 1933, and continued to operate the mine until 1938 when labor costs almost equaled production costs. A record of the total production at the mine would be difficult, if not impossible, to establish; the Erickson's reported that about $40,000 worth of gold was an average take during the years in which they were associated with the mine. [16]

The mine was opened to the public in 1967 as one of the activities of the Alaska Purchase Centennial — an example of a mining operation and its associated buildings were visitors could sluice and pan. That opportunity still is presented today through the Tooheys who reside in the manager's house and oversee the part-time and recreational mining.

The buildings which were associated with the Crow Creek Mine or Erickson Mine, as it is often called today, were built over a succession of years starting around 1898. By 1906 there were about fifteen buildings at the mine including a two-story messhouse, a log cabin, a commissary, a manager's house, bunkhouses, a machine shop, a blacksmith shop, a sawmill, a stable and a bathhouse.[17] In 1915 an expanded sawmilling operation was undertaken to construct the wooden diversion flume which rerouted the waters of Crow Creek and permitted the mining of the gravel beds of the creek. Snow slides along the steep slopes of the valley removed any traces of that flume. Scattered section of diversion pipe still lie in the drainage basin.

During the 1920's the large messhall burned down. The manager's house was expanded and made into a new messhall, and a new manager's house was constructed. Few changes took place in the ensuing years until the sixties, during which time a tool shed was constructed and an additional room was added to the manager's house. The tool shed and a new bunkhouse are made out of the same type of framing as the earliest buildings and complement the material fabric of the site.

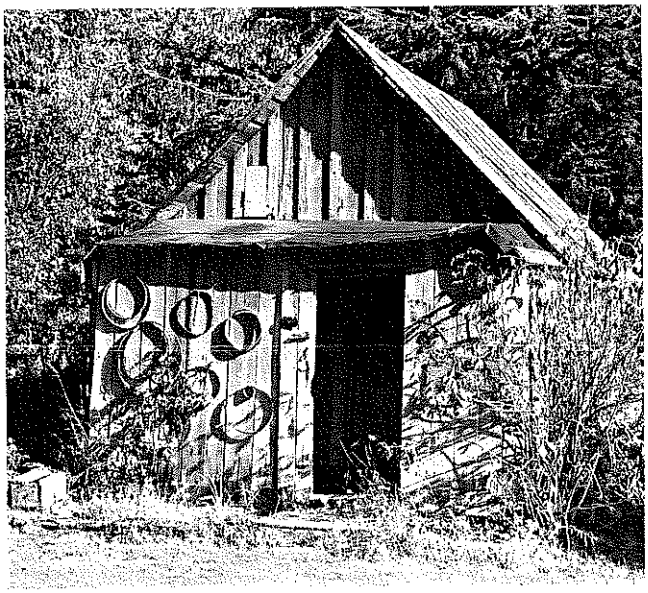


Crow Creek Mine, the blacksmith shop, c. 1898.

Crow Creek Mine, the commissary, c. 1898.

Today Crow Creek Mine presents a remarkable collection of buildings which are associated with the placer mining. Still in existence from the earliest period (1898-1906) are: the commissary, blacksmith shop, the original manager's house (later converted to the messhall), a four man bunkhouse, an ice house, a tool shed and smokehouse. Remaining from the 1920's are the manager's house and the second messhall. The sense of mining history does not end with the exterior of these buildings. The messhall is still equipped with a Lang cooking stove and cooking utensils. The kitchen of the manager's house is similarly furnished. The blacksmith

Crow Creek Mine, the four-man bunkhouse.



shop retains some of the implements associated with hydraulic mining. The four-man bunkhouse has a single woodstove with bunkbeds on either side of the structure. The newer tool shed, which was built around the time of the Alaska Purchase Centennial, contains sluice boxes, pans and shovels which are lent to modern-day tinhorns in their search for "color." The site is not supplied with electricity nor other utilities. With the interior decor, woodstoves and lanterns, the atmosphere of a mining camp is much intact.

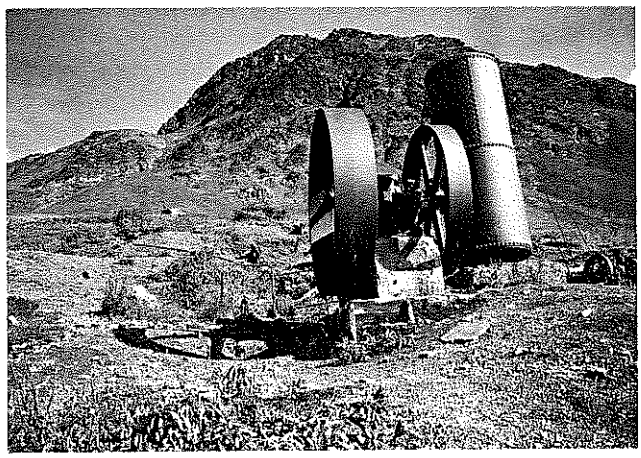
Within a couple hundred yards of the site is Crow Creek. Pipe, couplings and related hydraulic equipment are remnants of the former operation. Piles of boulders tell the story of that which could not be sluiced away. The V-shaped gorge itself is the mark of an incredible human endeavor, suggesting the extensiveness of the earlier hydraulic operation.

The mine's buildings and its history are important in offering residents and tourists a glimpse of what the mining era was like and what it had to do with the settlement of the region. That the mine's buildings are still standing is, in itself, remarkable. This fact can be attributed to the continuous residency at the site. Very few other buildings are still around which hint of the area's mining history. Old sites have typically been pilfered and vandalized. The Crow Creek Mine has the most representative collection of mine buildings in the Municipality.

The Monarch Mine

The Monarch Mine was the largest lode mine in the Turnagain Arm area. However, the monetary returns of the mine were insubstantial. The backbreaking labor of hard-rock mining in the upper Crow Creek Valley was time spent in a quest which never paid for more than wages and development. H.I. Staser, long-time owner of the mill, felt his "Eldorado" would be found in the quartz streaks of those mountains. Although Billy Murry, a major stockholder, would raise cain about the lack of dividends each year, profits were not forthcoming. Yet Staser was an optimist. He would jaw to his crew, "Hell boys there's a million dollars in there and we're going to get it out."[18] The truth of the matter is that any million dollars was in his wishful thinking. The paystreaks on those lode claims were irregular, not overly rich, and their gold was not easily separated.

In the early years of mining in lower Crow Creek, prospectors and geologists felt the gold in the creek beds were of local origin. As one geologist put it: "The stream gold deposits are formed . . . by breaking down and decomposition of mineralized veins in the country rock."[19] Even though prospecting had started in the valley as early as 1896, it was not until 1909 that Conrad Hores discovered the vein deposits. (It is remarkable that the veins were not discovered previous to 1909. Many a gold seeker would have traveled right by the quartz veins while on the Iditarod trail.)



The Monarch Mine. The compressor and related equipment are the most notable physical evidence still in existence at the site.

In the summer of 1910, Hores and his associates recorded a series of adjacent claims, including the Ruth, the Anna, the Styles, the Eagle, the Tony, the Edlund, the Stella and the Agra. Underground development began late that summer and was carried on actively in the next few years. Hores and partners transferred all those claims to E.J. Barnes in March 1912 for $50,000, a princely sum for that era. The set of claims became known as the Barnes Property. They were controlled by the Alaska Gold Exploration and Develop-

ment Corporation. After the sale, development was negligible for many years. U.S.G.S. investigators reported that no mining was being done in 1915.[20]

The property changed hands several times between 1915 and 1929 when H.I. Staser acquired rights to the property. From Staser's observation that the mine "has had a checkered history, spiced with high finance, wildcatting, and mismanagement," it would appear that he would have been leery of investing in the Crow Creek venture.[21] Yet Staser, the Federal Marshal for this Judicial District at that time, borrowed some $10,000 and developed a considerable operation there during the thirties. He had received title from the Monarch Mining Company, Inc. and, in turn, formed the Crow Creek Gold Corporation. The surface veins were rich enough to pay back his loan within a year or so, yet the veins were unpredictable, crisscrossed and sometimes became pencil-lead thin. The associated silver and sulphides made amalgamating processes difficult. In short, a fortune was not to be had at Monarch Mine.[22]

In 1930 a co-partnership was formed with the Angustino Mining Company. That company was led by Bruno Angustino, an Italian immigrant who had a work force of six Italian-Americans. They too suffered the disappointment that marginal hard rock mining could so cruelly bring. After tunneling about 400 feet upward toward the gold-bearing veins, they had to abandon the project because of massive water seepage. Their economic return was nil.

By 1933 the Crow Creek Gold Corporation was in operation alone. Staser had a crew of about six men. An Irish old-timer, O'Reilly by name, served as blacksmith. A handful of Swedes, including Larssen, Johansen and Nelson, made up the bulk of the crew; they had skied overland from Kennecott to come to the Girdwood area. "Anyone of 'em could do the work of two average men."

Their facilities included bunkhouses, a mess house, blacksmith shop, powder magazines and mill buildings. Some equipment such as the compressor were salvaged from the nearby Jewel Mine which was almost completely wiped out in a snowslide in the late twenties. A tram was used between the Monarch Mine's buildings and the former Jewel Mine tunnels for the short span of seasons. A crumpled cable still lies over the scattered slate of Jewel Mountain, marking the line between the tunnels and processing facilities.

Vandalism and arson have taken their toll. None of the early structures remain standing. However, remnants of the equipment still can be seen in the upper valley. Scattered on the bench below Barnes Mountain are the compressor, the wheels of the Denver Quartz Mill and parts of the tramway. Foundations of the bunkhouse, the magazine and mill buildings are evident. Remains of a flume, cables and ore buckets can also be seen. On the mountainsides the rust-colored tailings mark where tunnels once were. As a whole this evidence helps to tell the story of the mining process.

The ore was extracted from a series of shafts, adits and winzes which had been blasted out of the mountains. In tunneling, a well-placed blast would break away up to six feet of rock. After removal of surrounding rock, the ore itself would be extracted and dumped into an ore bin near the shafts. (Part of a bin or platform still can be seen on the mountain.) A gate on the ore bin would be opened to fill an ore bucket with about a half ton of ore. The bucket was sent down along a 600 foot cable. A "monkey line" was used to guide the lode along the tramway.

The Monarch Mine. These buildings were constructed in the 1930's. They were lost to vandalism and arson in the early 1960's. Shown above is the set of processing buildings and the bunkhouse.

The processing of the ore took place in a series of buildings. After coming down the gravity tram, the ore was unloaded into another bin. Then it was sent through a crusher which provided manageable chunks of ore. The ore was fed into a Denver Quartz Mill. (That mill was somewhat unusual for Alaskan operations as most mills used huge steel stamps or balls to pulverize the chunks of ore.) It consisted of large heavy rollers which sat crisscrossed from each other and revolved in a circular trough which was about six feet in diameter. The rollers or wheels weighed about a half ton each. To the outside of the disc-like trough was a screen which encircled the mill. By placing quicksilver in the mill

the concentrates of gold would be collected on the screen as an amalgam. Some eighty percent of gold was retrieved at this point. Conjuring the notion of the alchemists' wizardry, the amalgam was placed in a retort, heated, and in turn, the quicksilver was separated from the gold. An acid bath would return the gold's rich color. Then it would be bagged and shipped to Seattle to be assayed.

Smaller amounts of gold slipped through the screen and were retrievable on the copper plates or the collecting tables. Again, quicksilver was the agent which made such collection possible. Gold had to be "free" (that is, separated from the quartz) to be collected. If it was attached to quartz it would pass through the concentrating tables. The termination of the process was the packing of the quartz fragments which remained after crushing, milling and concentration. Such leftovers were taken down to Girdwood and sent to the smelter at Tacoma.[23]

The mine ceased its active operation at the start of World War II. H.I. Staser died of a heart attack at the mine in the early part of 1940 as he was preparing for that year's operation. His death and the federal regulations which governed mining in wartime were the final blows to the Monarch Mine. Joe Danich acquired the claims and attempted to reopen the mine after the war. The poor economics of the venture, including the rundown equipment and the going price for gold, were all too obvious to Danich. He bid the mine farewell in the late-forties.[24] Thus, the skeletal remains of the mine, which are still an interesting picture on a summer day, have been lying dormant for nearly thirty years.

The Bahrenberg Cabin

This one-room, frame cabin lies up in a small bowl near the headwaters of Crow Creek and not too far from Raven Glacier. It was built by Henry Bahrenberg, probably around 1926 when Bahrenberg restaked the claims there.[25] The original claim, known as the Treasure Box, was filed by James Patchell in September 1910. Bahrenberg, who called his claims the Hottentot, worked up there for at least 15 to 20 years and maintained a cabin in Girdwood as well.

His lode mine was "the crudest operation you'd ever see." At least two tunnels were worked; one was into the west side of Jewel Mountain, another was located in the craggy rock face to the northwest of his cabin. An arrasta, a bowl-like pit in which large round boulders were rolled over the ore, was employed to break down the gold-laden quartz.[26] Bahrenberg sacked his gold in burlap ore bags and sent it

Bahrenberg's Cabin, c. 1926. Held down by guide wires, this cabin was the seasonal quarters of Henry Bahrenberg who worked the Hottentot claims near Crow Pass in the 1920's and 1930's.

down the steep upper-reaches of Crow Creek by means of a windlass. He would then carry the ore out by backpack or dogsled to reach the tractor road which led to Girdwood.[27] Bahrenberg was wise to the ways of the land, not only as a miner but as a trapper as well. His roast beaver, cranberries and fluffy sourdough bread were a reported treat in the culinary art of the day.[28]

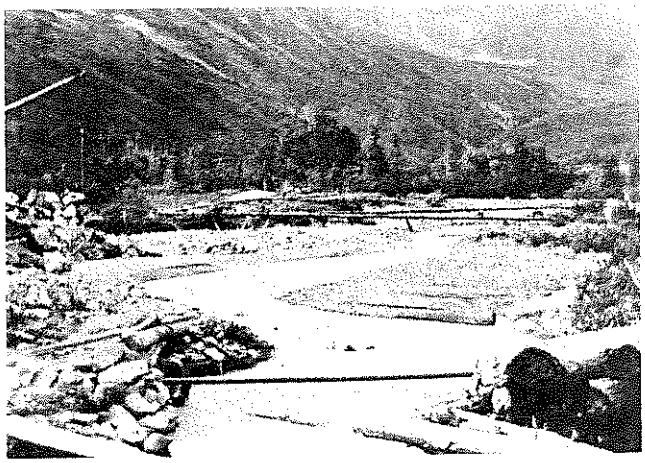
The cabin is held down by cables as the winds of Crow Pass are severe. Bahrenberg willed his cabin and claims to Judge Dimond upon his death. Later, the cabin was given to the Anchorage Mountaineering Club. If it is to remain as part of the landscape, measures should be taken to stabilize the structure. Presently it is very much exposed to the elements. Its floor, walls, roof, windows and doors are in need of reinforcement and patching. The cabin is located within the Chugach National Forest.

The Brenner Prospect

This site was owned and operated by Clyde Brenner during the 1920's and 1930's. It was located south of the Monarch Mine, only about 40 yards over the hill. Two veins were to be found at the prospect which was at creek level. Brenner dug tunnels slanting upward through the outcropping of the veins.[29] He was reportedly a good friend of Bahrenberg; each was known to share each other's company and distilled spirits. As a contractor for the Alaska Engineering Commission, Brenner assisted in blasting rock for the right-of-way along Turnagain Arm. Except for a few timbers, nothing remains at this site.

The Girdwood Property

This site is located about seven miles from the Seward Highway at the point where Crow Creek Road crosses Crow Creek. Although U.S.G.S. maps mark the site with the word "ruins," only huge piles of boulders remain as obvious signs of James Girdwood's hydraulic mining activity. More information about this site can be found in the Girdwood Townsite description.

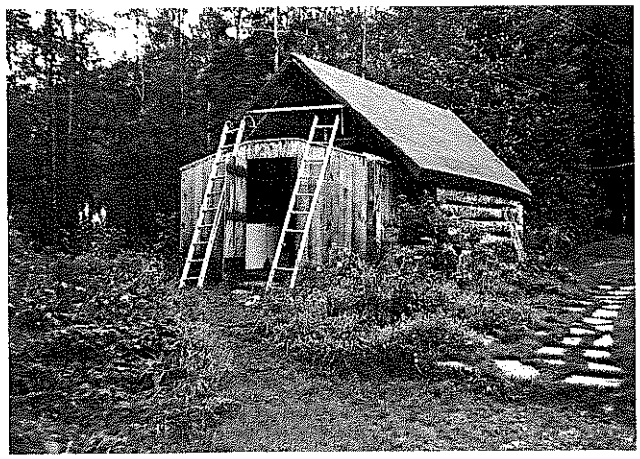


This photo is believed to be of the Girdwood property on upper Crow Creek.

Axel Linblad Cabin (at California Creek)

There are probably a couple of "Linblad" cabins in the valleys which adjoin Glacier Creek as Axel Linblad was a long-time prospector and miner in the vicinity. This particular dovetailed log cabin is located on the north side of California Creek near the Crow Creek Road. It is believed the cabin was built around 1908 and that Axel Linblad lived in it in the 1920's.[30] A sawmill once stood not far upstream.

Linblad was truly a pioneer. He prospected in the Sunrise District in the 1890's. It was there that he became hardened to the Alaskan winter: frostbite claimed his fingers after he tumbled into the icy waters of Sixmile Creek.[31] In later years a bit of creative surgery provided a slot between his thumb and the stump of an index finger so that he could use a knife and a pen. Loss of his fingers did not sway Linblad, nor did the scuffle that is rumored to have cost him an ear to the chops of an irritated, and voracious, sourdough. Linblad carried on mining in the Girdwood Valley for years. In the early part of this century he managed Colonel Girdwood's mine on Crow Creek. He also worked on his own prospects as the next description indicates.



The Axel Linblad Cabins, Girdwood vicinity. This cabin, located just off Crow Creek Road beyond California Creek, is said to have been Linblad's.

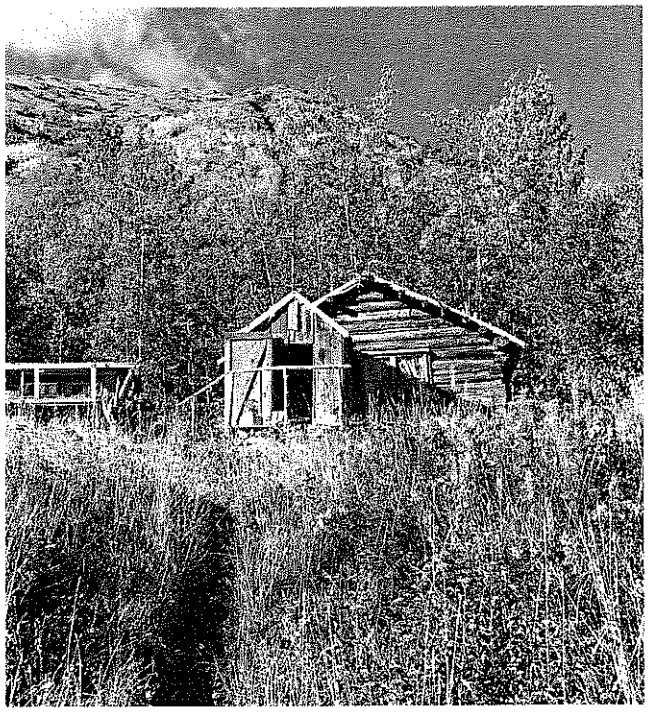
Harvey Nelson, timekeeper for Morrison-Knutson Construction Company during construction of the Seward Highway, lived in the cabin in the late 1940's and early 1950's. In the early 1950's Edith Lincoln moved to Girdwood to teach school. She lived in the cabin and eventually bought it from Nelson's estate. After she married and her family grew, a 16 foot by 20 foot addition was attached and the cabin became a bedroom. This addition has been removed and stands nearby in the woods.

The Linblad Cabin (on Winner Creek)

Alex Linblad also worked a number of claims on Winner Creek, including the Gumbo and the Golden North.[32] The trail which is parallel to the southside of Winner Creek was constructed by Linblad (see Kelly Trail, page 146). A cabin is sited on a 1931 U.S.G.S. map at a point about one and a quarter miles from the mouth of Winner Creek.[33] Local sources say that this cabin was Linblad's and that remains of it can be seen upon hiking the trail.

The Porter-Knox Cabin

This well-preserved log structure sits on a small hill about a stone's throw from the Seward Highway. It was a miner's cabin, lived in by James Porter for many years before Knox acquired the property some two decades ago. Attached to the cabin is a bunkhouse which was built at a later period in time; nearby is a worndown blacksmith shop; a sauna bathhouse stands behind the cabin – a recent addition by the present tenant, Jerry Metcalf. Mining started at the site in the early 1900's. Capps. a U.S.G.S. investigator, reported in 1915 that "at a point near the beach, one mile west of Indian Creek, one man has been engaged in prospecting for a number of years." He went on to say that a ditch one and a half miles long was being dug to draw needed water from Indian Creek.[34] The ditch was completed and can be traced along the mountainside to the northeast of the cabin. At least three shafts were developed as evidence of their entrances still exists. The year of construction of the cabin has not been established. The logs of the structure have been slightly charred which might indicate that the cabin was constructed from the timber which was burned when huge fires swept the Turnagain slopes. That is said to have occurred during railroad construction. Porter mined the claims there on a part-time basis. Upon selling the property, he moved back to Ketchikan.



The Porter-Knox Cabin, c. 1910. This half-notched, rounded-log cabin provided shelter for those miners who worked the lode site near Indian Creek.

Lode Site at Bird Point

Bird Point juts out into Turnagain Arm at about mile post 80 on the Alaska Railroad. It has also been called Hunter's Point in years gone by. Capps mentions a lode mining operation on the point; it became inoperable in the early 1900's as the shaft, being below tide level, was abruptly flooded.[35] Later Clyde Brenner built a log bulwark along the shore in an attempt to continue mining there.[36]

Other Mining Sites

Other streams and mountain valleys were prospected, and some mining activity took place along such water courses as Bird Creek, Indian Creek and Peterson Creek. Some evidence of those activities such as a sluice-box, pipe and cabin foundations remain. The following sketches describe a few of the short-lived mining operations.[37]

California Creek: After the initial prospecting by Chris Spillum and his partners, a few thousand dollars worth of gold was taken out in 1896 and 1897. In the following years many others went up the stream bed to do assessment work. In sinking test pits they concluded that mining would not be economically feasible. A sawmill operation was created not far upstream from Crow Creek Road. Timber from the mill was used in a number of the mines of the area.

Raven Creek: In 1929 claims were staked there; however, the owner died in an accident, and no work was done.

Eagle River: The "Mayflower Lode" was a short-lived prospect found by J.P. Frisbie, William Murray and M.S. McMelan in 1911. The development work there was primarily directed toward silver mining. Early U.S.G.S. investigators report that little work was done.

Peters Creek: Two cabins were built far upstream in conjunction with the lode mine operations nearby. One cabin was located in the main valley of Peters Creek, "near the point at which it emerges from beneath the glacier." To the northeast, a tunnel was cut into the quartz vein at the 1,100-foot level of the mountainside. Another cabin, also "several miles from the nearest available timber," was built about 2,000 feet above the other cabin. At the 2,500-foot level, a number of tunnels had been cut.

Girdwood Townsite

Girdwood was born just before the turn of the century during the flurry of the mining activities which permeated the Kenai Peninsula and Turnagain Arm regions. Similar to Hope and Sunrise, but on a slightly smaller scale, Girdwood was a settlement where bed, food and drink could be found, and staples could be purchased by travelers and miners alike.

Situated on Turnagain Arm, its location was harmonious to its role as a supply point and road stop. During the warmer months it was accessible to the small craft which plied Cook Inlet. Then the "Captains" of the Arm, such as Cap Lathrop and Cap Maehl, could bring in a crew of miners and a season's worth of goods. (Cap was a common title on the Inlet. "Anyone who operated anything that could float was called Cap.")[1] After the Alaska Northern Railway reached Kern Creek in 1910, boats and a trail linked Girdwood with that railhead which was only four miles to the southeast.[2]

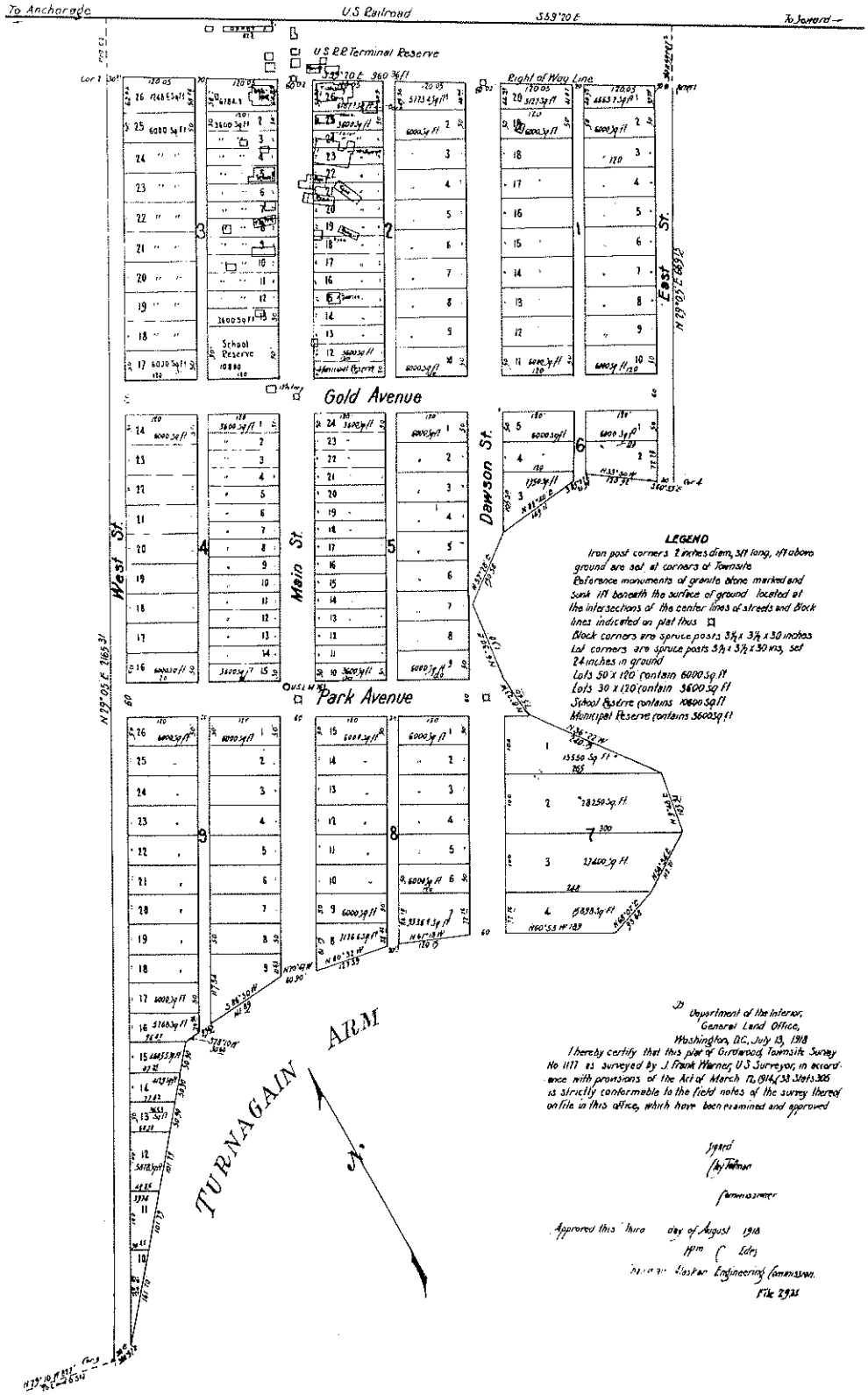
Besides the boat and rail connections, major trails also led to Girdwood. The most famous of these trails is the Iditarod. The roadhouses at Girdwood catered to the travelers who came off these routes. From Girdwood, the traveler could select from two routes to move on to the interior. One option was the steep, sometimes treacherous, Crow Pass route which led to the Eagle River Valley. The other route continued along the Arm to Indian Creek where trail access to the Ship Creek basin provided a longer but more gradual means to reach Knik Arm. (See Chapter 5 for more information about the Iditarod.)

Perhaps the foremost aspect of Girdwood's location was its proximity to gold-bearing streams and mountains. The village sat near the mouth of Glacier Creek. Although that creek was not noted for its placer gold, California Creek, Winner Creek, and especially, Crow Creek were important in the development of mining in the Girdwood vicinity. It was the small town of Girdwood which served as a supply and transport center for the various hydraulic and lode mines of the hinterland.

Mining became a steadfast, but seasonal occupation, for a few hardy fortune seekers. It appears that some of the miners had cabins near their claims and down near the Girdwood village as well. Miners, like Henry Bahrenberg and Axel Linblad, worked various claims in the reaches of Crow and Winner Creek. They would come down to recess at their valley cabin and to partake of the hospitality of roadhouse company. Miners often stayed in Girdwood during midwinter months when daylight was minimal. Even lode miners who worked underground found that the short daylight hours limited what could be accomplished during the dead of winter.[3]

Girdwood as it appeared around 1906.

Girdwood townsite, 1916. The small row of cabins and other buildings had already been built along what came to be platted as Main Street. The townsite never developed according to this regular layout.

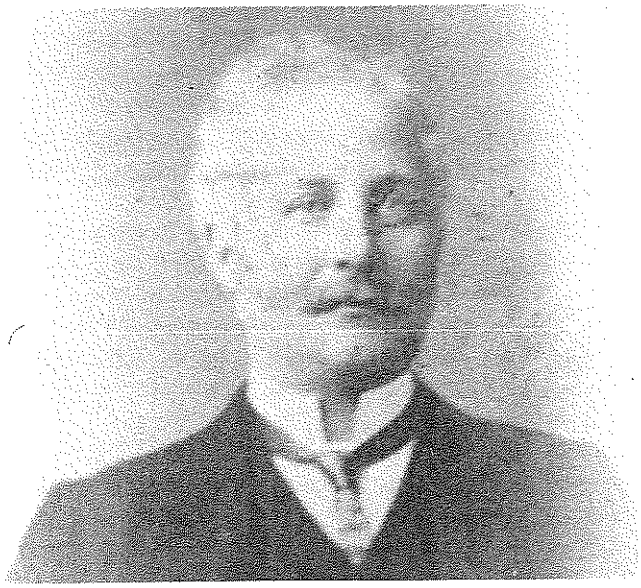


Over time a number of establishments, some built of log, some built of frame, were constructed to form the nucleus of the village. C.R. Booth operated a roadhouse; a lodging house was operated by Mr. A. Watson. The Alaska Central Railroad had a supply store there. A post office, which came into operation in 1907, was managed by Postmaster Emil W. Young. Joseph Reno continued the roadhouse business until 1924 when his building was destroyed by fire.[4] Another roadhouse was built and was run by Sam Tansy in the 1930's. The roadhouses were looked upon with some disdain by the Alaska Railroad management since it was not uncommon for a crew of workers to imbibe heartily while stopping in Girdwood.[5]

In 1916 the Alaska Engineering Commission, under the townsite laws of the Territory, laid out a very regular street pattern for the village. The street names, Dawson Avenue, Gold Street, and Easy Street, were suggestive of the fanciful thinking – the golden dreams of the Girdwood Valley. Some early photographs do not indicate that a regular town layout ever came into existence. In fact, only Gold Street – the original lane – became a reality. Girdwood retained the flavor of a northern frontier settlement. So much so, that in 1923 the Alaska Moving Pictures Corporation selected the Glacier Creek town as the location for "The Cheechakos," starring silent film stars, Eva Gordon and Alec Luce.

Today, only the skeleton of the townsite exists. The few crisscrossed lanes of unpaved road between Seward Highway and the railroad mark the site where the old town once stood. The 1964 Earthquake resulted in massive subsidence in the area along the mouth of Glacier Creek. The quake also triggered a fire which engulfed a couple of the larger buildings. Following that disaster a couple of the buildings were moved to higher ground. Crow Creek Mercantile is such a structure. At the far end of the lane two of the earlier structures still exist. The house on the left is over thirty-five years old; it was the home of Joe Danich, a long-time miner. The small, rectangular building on the right was the living quarters of H.I. Staser. It served as his Girdwood base during the years he operated the Monarch Mine.

Colonel Girdwood.



The settlement at Girdwood in the early 1900s.

James E. Girdwood

Girdwood draws its name from Colonel James E. Girdwood who prospected and developed mining claims on Crow Creek. He was born in Belfast in 1862, and immigrated to New York some twenty years later. Starting as a salesman for the Irish linen distributors, McCrum, Watson and Marcer, he worked his way up to become an entrepreneur of the linen goods business – reportedly controlling over half the American market. In 1894 he sold his interests to his New York associates with the understanding that he would never return to the linen business. In turn, he headed west.

Although James Girdwood was never in military service, he somehow managed to acquire the title "Colonel" during his years of northern adventure. He arrived in Alaska in 1896. Within a year or two, he filed the Annex, Omega, Alpha and Little Gussie claims on Crow Creek. These claims were known as the Girdwood property. By 1905 his substantial hydraulic mining outfit, the Crow Creek Alaska Hydraulic Gold Mining Company, was operating high in the Crow Creek Valley. Cabins had been built and such mining equipment as a five-ton derrick and large giant had been brought in to undertake the mammoth task of removing the boulders in the stream beds there. About 50,000 yards of gravel were removed that year in order to acquire those flakes and nuggets known as placer gold.

The operation was too demanding. The huge boulders made mining impractical. Additionally, the practice of dumping the tailings into the creek brought legal problems; a court injunction eventually closed the operation. After 1908, little mining activity took place at the location. A short-lived effort to raise capital to revive the mine in the mid-1920's failed.

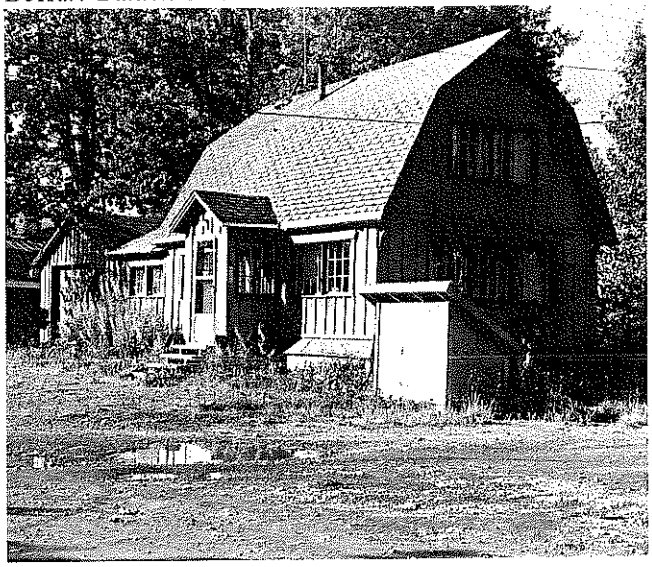
Today the site can, upon close examination, be seen where Crow Creek Road crosses the bridge over the creek near Glacier Gulch. Large piles of boulders near the bridge are the only reminders that a mining operation took place there.

James Girdwood became active in copper mining on Latouche Island about 1903. In 1907 he formed a corporation, the Latouche Copper Mining Company, which he administered as its president and operated out of New York. His Crow Creek mine was renamed the Girdwood Hydraulic Gold Mines, and operated as a subsidy of the copper mine. About 1921 the Ladysmith Corporation bought the Latouche claims; in turn they were sold to the Kennecott Copper Company.

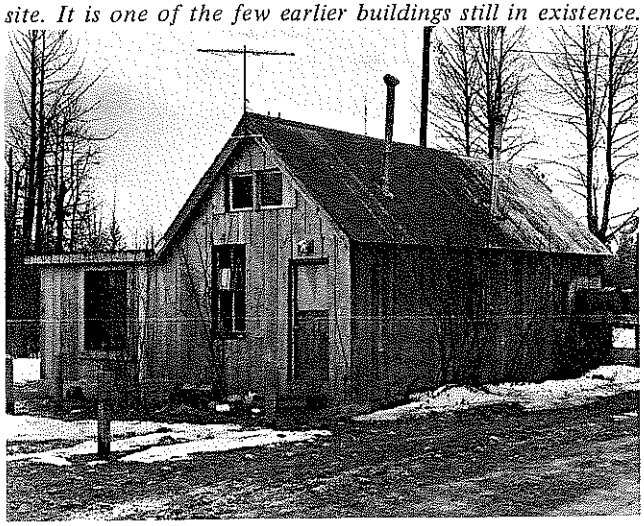
Colonel Girdwood returned east and died in 1928 at his home, "Clonaver," in West Orange, New Jersey.[6, 7]

Girdwood's "Main Street" in the 1930's By this time the townsite had been platted, utility poles were in; however, the overall number of buildings had not changed much. A few of the buildings of this era still exist.

DeHart-Danich House.



H.I. Staser's office, c. 1933. As owner of the Monarch Mine, Staser had a combination office-cabin in the townsite. It is one of the few earlier buildings still in existence.



The DeHart-Danich House

This distinctive, two-story house with a gambrel roof was probably built in the 1930's, but not on its present location. The board and batten siding conceals railroad tie construction.[8]

Don DeHart worked for the Alaska Railroad and scavenged used ties from around Kern and Bird Point. Around 1950 the DeHarts moved to the Slana-Tok area where DeHart worked as a guide. They sold the house to Joe Danich, a long time miner, manager of the Monarch Mine, and Anchorage bar owner. Concurrent with purchasing the residence, Danich bought the "Little Dipper," the local roadhouse. The lodge burned down in the 1964 earthquake and Danich moved his house from its original site, which was closer to the highway, to the site of the lodge.

Danich completely remodeled the interior and probably added the attached garage and siding in the early 1950's. The basic shape, insulation troughs, and railroad timbers remain from the original structure.

The Reino family, we presume . . . operators of the roadhouse at Girdwood.

Old School House.

Old Schoolhouse

This modest one-room structure was the first schoolhouse in Girdwood. By the late 1940's, several Girdwood families had children of school age, but no teacher and no school building. At that time the Territory of Alaska would supply a paid teacher to communities which provided a school structure and supplies and had a minimum of six school-aged children.

Girdwood raised money to buy building materials by holding pie socials in the community hall and showing movies in the "Little Dipper", the local roadhouse. Once materials were purchased, the townspeople built the schoolhouse. One family took in a foster child in order to reach the required minimum number of children.

The simple one-story gable building was erected in the old townsite but was moved to its present location after the 1964 earthquake. The building has not been altered except for removal of an attached shed/ porch. The porch was on the rear of the building and formerly housed the pump. The building was used as a library after a new school was built, but now stands vacant.

Houses by Old School Site.

Houses by Old School Site

Not much is known about these buildings, but two of them may have been built by Axel Linblad. They are simple frame, one-story gable structures, and have served as a residence and storage building for as long as anyone can remember. Although patched and repaired repeatedly over the years, neither has been altered very much.

During the 1940's, Henry Bahrenberg, a minor and trapper, lived in the cabin with the shed porch. Bahrenberg died in the late 1940's and the property went to Bill Sproat, ARR section crew hand, who lived there for more than five years. His estate was purchased around 1960 by Carl Lynn who remains the owner.

Portage

Much of the story of Portage is directly tied to the transportation history of this region. The valleys drained by Portage Creek and the Placer River were gateways to the Upper Cook Inlet area. The name, "Portage," is derived from the centuries-old use of the pass which allowed travel between Turnagain Arm and Prince William Sound. The Tanaina Indian place name for Portage Pass is *ulchena chiqadelt.* Its translation, "where the Chugach Eskimos come," provides insight to the historic use of the pass. Both natives and Russians were routinely traveling through the pass by the 1790's. Presumably, it served as a travel way for countless years before the advent of European contact. With Vancouver's voyage of 1794 and the 1898 Army Expedition, its historical use became well documented. (The Portage Pass has been described in greater detail in the Trails chapter of this report.)

Besides the route over Portage Pass another widely-used route crossed through the Portage Flats. This north-south route had primarily served in bringing winter travelers through the area while en route to or from Resurrection Bay. By 1900 a route had been established whereby the Sunrise area was linked to Knik and Susitna. The trail skirted the shoreline of Turnagain Arm. A large portion of the trail was a corduroy roadbed (that is, it was surfaced with logs).[8] With the gold strikes of 1902 in the Yentna River District and of 1906 in the Willow Creek District, the trail link became more pronounced. A 1904 survey shows this trail as an extension of the Alaska Central Railway.[9] This trail became a segment of what has come to be called the Iditarod.

The development of the Portage area came with the advent of railroading. The Alaska Central Railroad was built only 42 miles out of Seward before going into bankruptcy in 1909. Thus, in the early 1900's, the trail was still the major means by which the northern side of Turnagain Arm was reached. Even when the Alaska Northern Railway pushed the route through to Kern around 1910, the rail right-of-way became a primary means by which dog sledders and foot travelers reached the interior. This was because few trains passed over the Alaskan Northern as that railroad was a financial disaster.

Railroad buildings have not fared well in the Portage vicinity. A 1913 map of the area shows a Twentymile River Station at the head of Turnagain Arm.[10] The exact location of the station, which would have been operated by the Alaska Northern Railway, is not known. The earlier stations and section houses of the Alaska Railroad have been lost to fires and the earthquake. A flag-stop, known as "Moraine," existed at mile 62.5. The section house and group house there were reportedly destroyed by fire in 1930. The small station at the Whittier cut-off is the third one in that vicinity. The others were lost in the 1960's, the first in the Earthquake and the next in a fire.[11, 12]

With the creation of Anchorage many people traveled over the railway and trails between Seward and Ship Creek. In 1916 a roadhouse was built for those travelers at Portage. The cabin is no longer standing and its exact location is unknown.

Portage. Subsidence, caused by the 1964 Earthquake, has resulted in the deterioration of the townsite buildings and has killed the spruce which once grew in the area.

The Earthquake was responsible for the most dramatic changes in Portage. The remnants of houses, the Portage Garage and other commercial establishments can be seen in the tidal flats west of Seward Highway. Most those buildings were constructed from 1947, when the highway was completed from Portage to Girdwood, to 1964, when the Earthquake took its toll. In 1948 the Portage townsite was surveyed. In the following years as many as twenty buildings were erected and the area attained a population of about seventy people. The Earthquake changed the picture dramatically. A post-Earthquake article described Portage as "almost a total loss."[13]

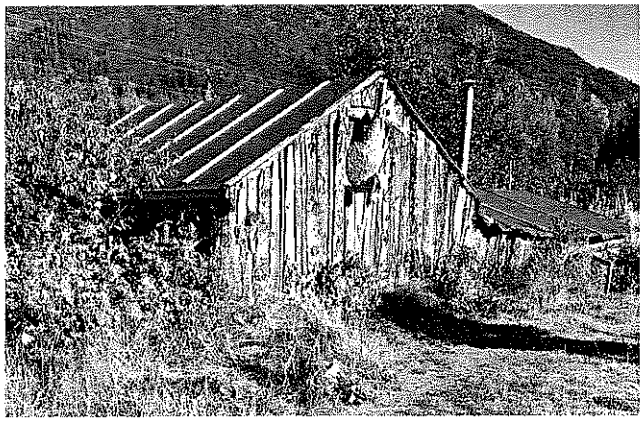
Although there was damage by vibration and ground fissures, the destruction at Portage was primarily due to subsidence. The ground level was lowered as much as seven feet.[14] All the buildings which had been above the high tide level prior to the Earthquake were subjected to inundation. With the next high tides, Portage residents, realizing that they would be continually flooded, moved some buildings to Bird and Indian.[14]

However, many buildings were left to the whimsy of wind and tide. Like the bleak trunks of spruce which died as salt water flushed their roots, the buildings are slowly deteriorating. The scene of skeletal trees and weathered building fragments are somber reminders of the Earthquake's devastation.

The Bird House

Without a doubt, the Bird House is the most curious, out-of-the-ordinary log lair of the Municipality. This structure is, in actuality, a combination of two cabins. Their rustc logs conceal the zany interior and impassioned memorabilia of what is now the internationally famous Bird House Bar. Semisubterranian, it may be the only watering hole which features a sawdusted, sloping floor, and has a history to boot.

The original log building there is said to have been built by a Bird Creek prospector in 1903. As was typical of the era, the cabin probably served as the base from which he ran his



The Bird House, c. 1903.

Portage 1964. After the Earthquake, the town was described as "almost a total loss." As the Seward Highway bridges were destroyed, it could be reached only by air.

trap line during the winter. During the railroad construction era, 1916-1917, three additional log buildings were erected, including a bunkhouse, a cook house and stable. They were abandoned around 1918 when the railroad was completed along the Arm. During the 1920's, Gus Bystedt began working placer claims along Bird Creek and homesteaded the site where the original cabin stands. Eventually, he joined the older structure with the remaining railroad era cabin. The structure later became the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Betty and Earl Mathewson. In 1963 Cliff Brandt purchased the cabin and created the Bird House Bar. The present owner is Richard Delak.[19]

Sawmills and Logging

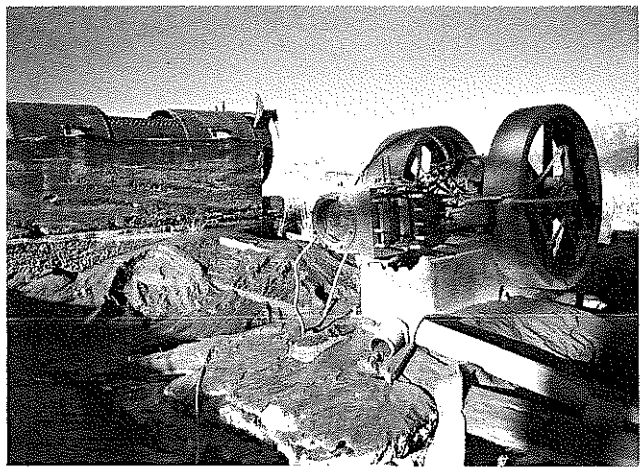
Twentymile River: The timber of the Twentymile River basin was cut appreciably in the first half of this century. On the west side of the river, just upstream from the highway, are the remains of two sawmilling operations. The two cabins were probably constructed in the 1930's. The one to the west served as living quarters, while the other appears to have been an equipment shed. "Diamond Jim" Redmond worked there awhile, as did Ortie Hough.[15]

About 50 yards away, rusting in the silt, are a large boiler and other broken-down sawmill machinery. It is possible that they were operated during the early railroad construction era. (If so, the machinery could have been used in cutting bridge work and ties during the Alaska Northern Railway era, 1910-11. This possibility, however, is conjecture.) As of 1940 that equipment was already in disrepair and badly rusted.[16]

The subsidence of the area has resulted in further deterioration of the two small buildings and the older equipment.

Two logging camps have been reported further up Twentymile River. One, known as "Bird's Camp," was located about two miles upstream on the north side of the river. Another was operated by Redmond in the late 1940's. A sixty-foot-long building was constructed in conjunction with Diamond Jim's camp. Remains of the logging camp, if any, would be located on the third stream which flows into the river from the east.[17]

Twentymile River Sawmills. This equipment was used in the earlier part of the century.

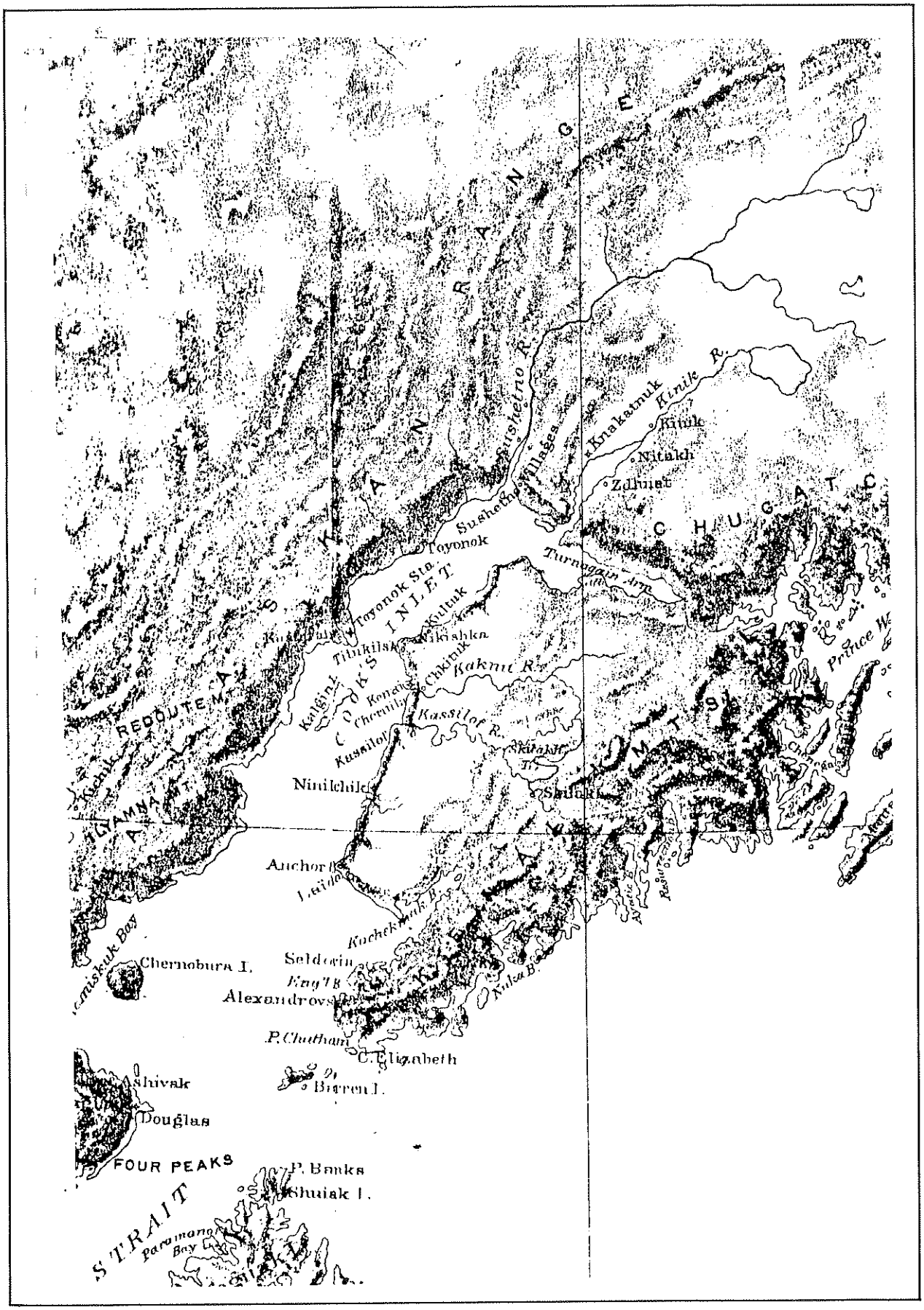


The Bird Creek Sawmill: Along the west side of Bird Creek are a number of cabin foundations which belonged to the Bird Creek Lumber Co. A large boiler lies rusted and detached in the creek bed; it was probably used in running the sawmill machinery. L.W. Turner and R.H. Fleming ran the sawmill there in 1915. After Turner retired in 1916, Fleming continued as manager. The lumber was used in railroad construction and it was sent to Anchorage by barges for local building purposes.[18]

Other Sawmill Sites: There were a variety of other sawmills along the north side of Turnagain. One was located on the west side of Virgin Creek. At California Creek there was another. Two sawmills were built at Indian Creek. The first was lost to fire in 1918. According to the *Alaska Railroad Record,* arson may have been the cause. Its replacement also served in providing lumber for railroad construction purposes. Little, if any, evidence is left of these sites.

Roadhouses

There were roadhouses at Potter, Girdwood, Eagle River (on the Crow Pass Trail), Bird Point, Bird Creek, Indian Creek, Indian Creek Pass and Potter. None of these are belived to be in existence anymore.



Ivan Petroff, an agent for the U.S. Census Bureau, prepared this map as part of his efforts in enumerating Alaskan population in 1880.

Eklutna Village

Eklutna is probably best known for its Russian Orthodox Church, Old Saint Nicholas, and the colorful graveyard nearby. Its history is a rich blend of the Tanaina Indian and Russian Missionary past.

The people of Eklutna are Tanainas. That culture is part of the broader Athapaskan Indian group. The Tanainas have lived in the Cook Inlet Region for centuries. (Other names which have been used to identify these people are "the Dena'ina," "the Tinnats-khotana," and "the Kenaitze," the term used by the Russians.)[1] The Tanaina are linked by blood, language and culture. They lived in scattered villages at such places as Katchemak Bay, Kenai, Lake Iliamna, Lake Clark, the Stony River and the Susitna Valley. The village of Eklutna is one of several villages which were located in the Knik Arm vicinity. It is the only native village left in the Municipality.

Like other Tanaina, the Eklutna people turned to the Inlet and its associated streams as sources of food. With the summer salmon runs, fish camps were set up to harvest a major portion of the year's food supply. Because the number of fish and sea mammal sources are less in the Upper Inlet, these northern Tanaina were necessarily adept at hunting.

Eklutna was a permanent (or winter) settlement. During the summer months the villagers moved down the Arm to Ship Creek and Fire Island to fish from their traditional camps.[2] In the fall they would return to Eklutna for the winter months. Then they would trap and hunt, especially the Eklutna Lake area.

The village has had other names besides Eklutna. The Tanaina word for the village is *Eydlughet,* which means "at plural objects."[3] The anglicized variation of that word, Ikluat, has been used by De Laguna.[4] When Ivan Petroff, Special Agent for the Census Bureau, recorded the villages along the south side of Knik Arm, he listed Kinik, Nitakh and Zdluiat.[5] (Nitakh was listed in the vicinity of Eklutna. It was probably misplaced geographically by Petroff. Zdluiat is another variation of the word, Eklutna.) During the early part of this century Eklutna was called Old Knik (occasionally spelled Old Kinik).[6]

The traditional house of the Tanaina was dug partially below ground. The upper section of such houses was made of log. These were known as barabaras. Attached to the barabara were additional rooms: sweat houses, sleeping rooms, and menstrual huts.[7] None of the existing houses at Eklutna are of this type.

Saint Nicholas Church, 1916.

With the construction of the railroad, the influx of white civilization brought several epidemics to the village. Smallpox or measles ravaged the people in 1916, and flu took a heavy toll in 1918.[8]

In 1924 the Eklutna Industrial School was built and maintained by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Education. It was established as a home for an initial group of 26 native children from various Indian villages who were left orphans by the death of their parents by the flu epidemic. Within two years the school enrollment had doubled and children were waiting for admission. In 1936 about 328,000 acres were withdrawn "for the use and benefit of the Eklutna Industrial School until the matter of permanent withdrawal as a reservation can be taken up." The school was closed in 1945. It was moved to Seward and later to Sitka. The buildings were purchased by the railroad and used for storage. The last building was razed in 1975.[9] Nothing remains near the school site except the shells of quonset huts, used by the military, and an abandoned root cellar. A post office had been established at Eklutna in 1926. Its operation was discontinued in 1945 with the closing of the school.[10]

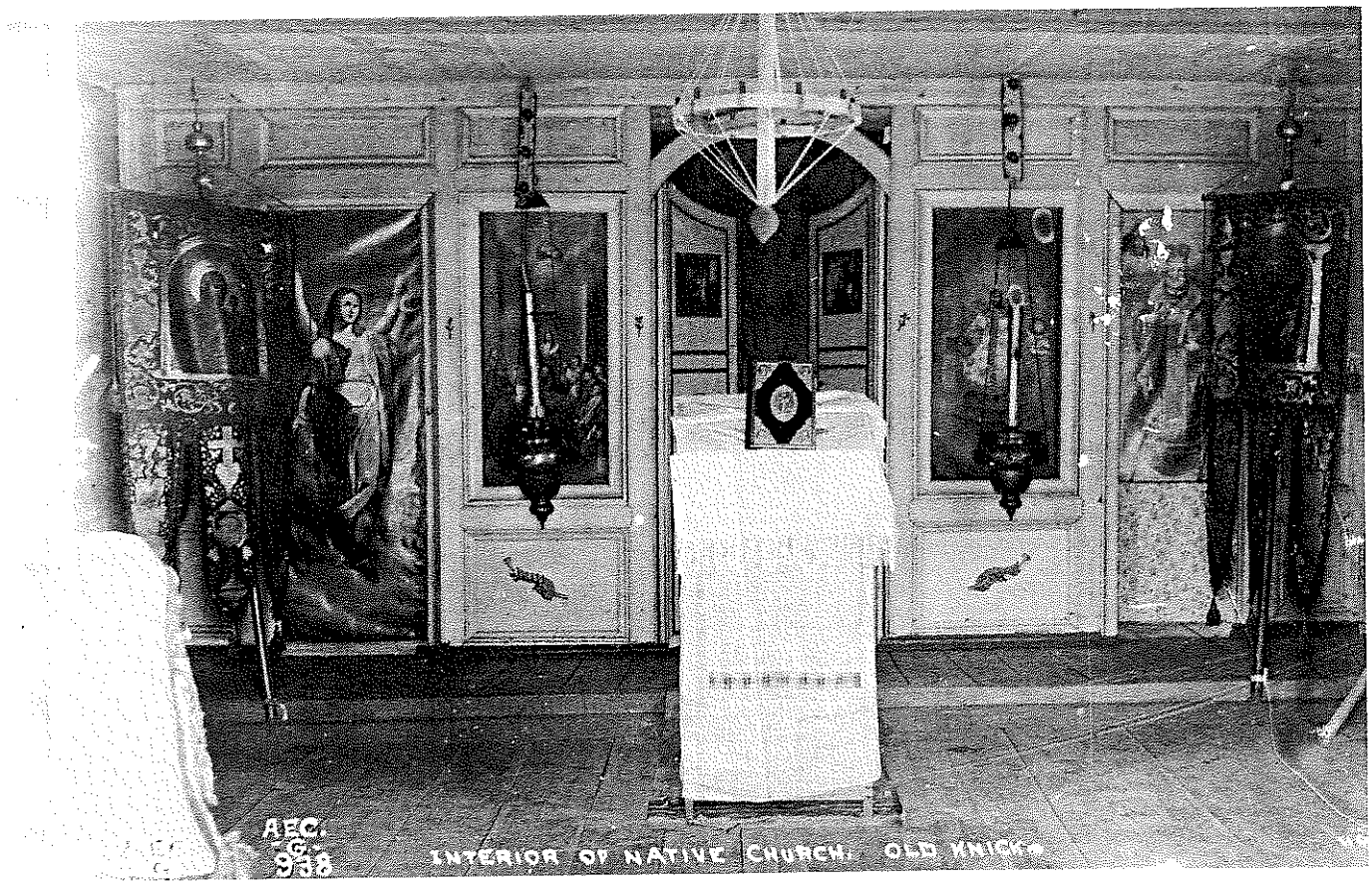
The population of the village has been declining. The earliest known population estimates of the Eklutna vicinity are those of Petroff. During the census of the early 1880's, the combined population for the three villages of the Eklutna vicinity was seventy-seven.[11] In 1890 the population of "Kinik" and other area villages was between 200 and 300.[12] During the census of 1930, 158 persons were reported to live at Eklutna.[13] About 35 persons live there today.[14]

Old St. Nicholas Church

This Orthodox church and the adjoining graveyard are of outstanding importance in their historical association with native culture and Russian missionary movement. In fact, the church and the associated religious customs of the Eklutna people are the major evidence of missionary history within the Municipality.

Local tradition places the date of construction around 1870.[15] Hand-hewn logs were used in the construction of the church. Unlike other log work in Anchorage, the logs were fitted together with round V-notches at the corners. An early photograph (c. 1916) shows that the logs extended some one to two feet beyond the corners. They have since been squared to provide a slight overlap at the corners of the front facade.

The church was restored in 1977 by the people of Eklutna. A shed roof was reconstructed on an open frame to serve as the traditional bell tower. Greek crosses adorn the top of the bell tower and the roof at the rear of the church. Some parts of the original logs were replaced during restoration, especially at the corners.



The interior of Saint Nicholas Church as it appeared in 1916.

The church itself is approximately 26 by 16 feet. On the longer sides of the building, logs are half-notched together to create the length of the building. On the south facade two, twelve-pane, sash windows face the new Orthodox church. That church, with its onion dome was built in 1962 by Mike Alex, the late chief of the village.

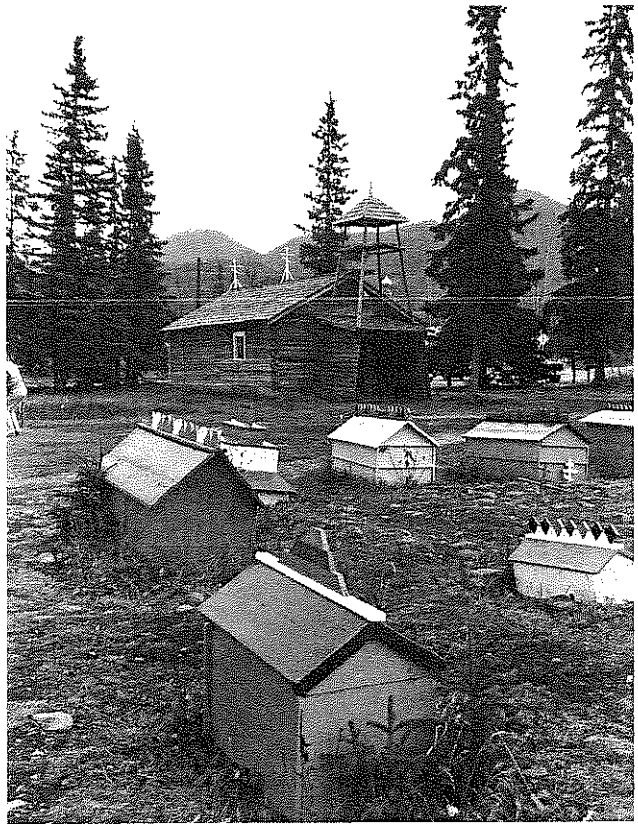
The interior was also restored in the past year. The floor is plank puncheon. The log walls were covered with a white gauze. The interior space, though small, is laid out in traditional Orthodox fashion. A screen decorated with attractive icons separates the space into two sections. Behind the screen is a smaller section containing the altar. There, the mass was celebrated by the priest. The parishioners were enjoined to the service in the other section. During much of the mass, they are out of view of the inner sanctuary.

The history associated with Old Saint Nicholas predates the church of itself. Within the broad scope of Russian Missionary movement, the story can be traced back almost two centuries ago. In 1793 Catherine the Great, the Russian Empress, was petitioned by Siberian merchants Gregor Shelikof and Ivan Golikof to appoint missionaries to serve among the Alaskan natives.[16] The request was granted by her decree of December 31, 1793. The next summer Archimandrite Ioassaf and eighteen clergymen and servitors "were selected by order of the empress to spread the Word of God in America."[17]

The clergy overcame initial hostilities of the natives and the indifference of the *promyshlennik* (the Russian fur hunters) to establish a number of missions across the subcontinent. The first church was built at Kodiak around 1795. About the same time the missionaries began to reach the people of Cook Inlet.[18] By 1861 seven churches and thirty-five chapels could be counted in Russian Ameria.[19] With the transfer of Alaska to the United States in 1867, the Russian Orthodox Church continued its efforts and remained, for another ten years, as the only Christian church in Alaska. It is claimed that more than 10,000 natives converted to the Russian Orthodox Church by 1880. Among those were 937 Tanaina (Kenaitze); undoubtedly, the ancestors of the people of Eklutna were among these converts.[20]

The impact upon the native culture by the Russian Missionary movement was substantial. Adaptations in religion, building techniques and language can clearly be identified. The timing and the surrounding story of Russian Missionary contact with the people of Eklutna may well be lost in the passage of time. It is known that the Church was there in 1904. Its log construction indicates that the estimated date of construction, 1870, may be conservative.[21] Regardless of its age, the church is symbolically important for its religious and historical associations.

Old Saint Nicholas Church following restoration with Spirit House in the foreground.



The Graveyard of Eklutna

The nearby graveyard, dotted with the colorful spirit houses, marks a blend of native and missionary influences. According to the native tradition, the small house is placed over the grave after forty days. During the first forty days after burial, a blanket is placed over the grave to provide warmth to the departed. Food was also placed on the grave at regular mealtimes. This custom is no longer adhered to. As the late chief of Eklutna recounted, "time makes people forget."[22] The spirit house was placed over the blanket and the departed possessions were placed inside to remain with the spirit.

Some houses are topped with a small Orthodox cross. (The upper bar of the cross represents the inscription of Christ as King of the Jews. The middle bar stands for the outstretched arms of Christ. The diagonal bar, known as the footrest has two meanings: the physical suffering of the Savior, and symbolically, the forces of good and evil – the repentant thief who ascended to heaven and the unrepentant thief who sank into hell.)[23] Those crosses mark the graves of persons who had converted to the Orthodox faith. The brilliant colors and designs of the spirit houses are merely decorative.[24]

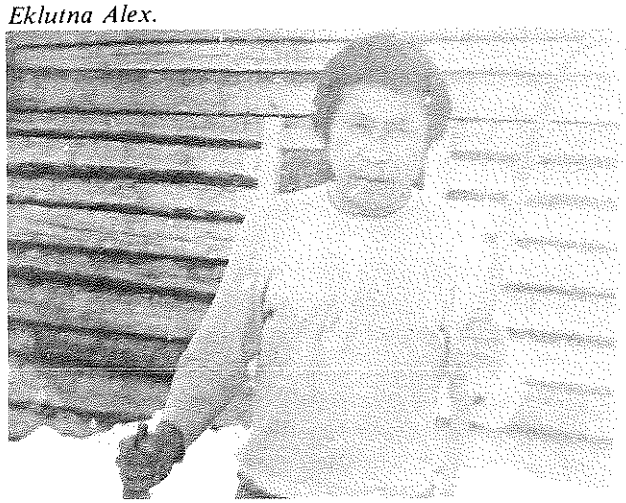
Eklutna Alex Cabin

Eklutna Alex was the chief and shaman of the Eklutna Indians during the first half of the twentieth century. The derivation of his name is unclear. He may have been named by Russian missionaries, but he was called Chadda, or "grandfather" by all. Dying in approximately 1950, he was the last chief able to live a traditional life style. He fished at Ship Creek before Anchorage began, and later at Fire Island. He gathered gull eggs from the Inlet flats and hunted the nearby woods. The forest also yielded edible and useful plants to this knowledgeable man: birch bark from which to make baskets, wood to carve into furniture, timber to form into boats and devil's club and lily tubers to eat. Always active, he cured the ills of his neighbors and settled their disputes.

The original portion of this cabin was built in 1932. A root cellar is purported to lie below the structure. The house replaced an earlier, nearby one that became uninhabtable. Eklutna Alex lived the rest of his life here. As the home of the tribal chief and shaman it was the scene of numerous potlatches and other ceremonies. Once a very imposing structure, the roof has recently fallen in and is currently in delapidated condition. However, the hours of skilled labor that were involved in its construction are still evident.

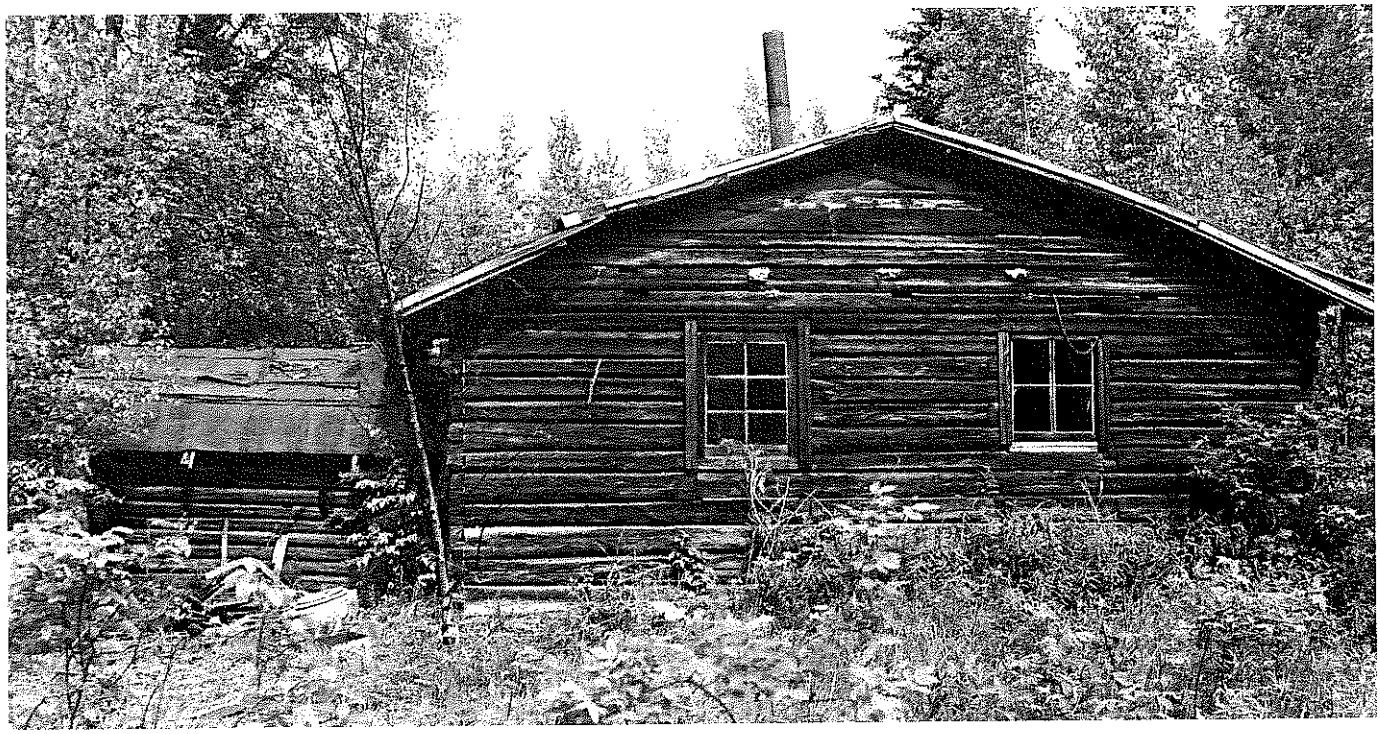
The main structure is a long and broad rectangle built at two time periods. The earlier section was constructed with the help of his sons. The bottom three logs are large, round members. The remainder of the walls are formed with large, square-hewn timbers. Moss and burlap were used for chinking. The corners are cut into tenons; they are lapped and are flushed. Although the roof is missing, the large spikes that held the rafters in place are evident.

Eklutna Alex.



Construction dates for the newer portion are unknown. All the logs in the section are square, and the corners are formed with flush dovetail joints. Saw marks are visible on some of the notches. A gable-roofed entry, constructed of smaller diameter round logs, is attached at right angles to this portion of the house and appears to have been added at a later date. The corners of the entry are lapped and notched on the upper side to cup the next log. Several of the logs used in the construction of the two more recent portions were originally used in other structures. The house has several multi-paned windows, all with fixed glass.

Near the house is an abandoned food cache, fallen on its side and slowly becoming undiscernable from the woodlands growing around it. Some of these trees were planted when the house was built.



Eklutna Alex Cabin.

Mike Alex Cabin

Mike Alex was the last of the traditional Eklutna Chiefs. He built this modest cabin in anticipation of his marriage. Together with his wife, Nellie, he raised thirteen children. The cabin was expanded in the 1930s to accommodate the large family. The original section of the cabin was constructed of eight-inch diameter logs running the length of the cabin. The logs are joined with tenoned corners, cut by hand saw. The addition to the cabin was constructed by six-inch logs, trimmed on three sides and set in place with lapped corner joints. A smaller arctic entry provides protection to the front door of the cabin. Together with the two churches, the cabin helps form the nucleus of the village.

Mike Alex was a Nulchina, or "Sky Clansman." His parents were from nearby villages. Matrona, his mother, was born in Susitna, and Eklutna Alex, his father, was born near Bodenberg Butte. Over his life time, Mike Alex saw the hunting and fishing culture of the village give way to twentieth century economic adaptation. With the construction of the Alaska Railroad, creation of the Army and Air Force bases, expansion of Anchorage and passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the life styles of the villagers were greatly altered. Mike Alex played a predominant role in the transition of the village. On one hand, he continued to maintain his ancestral heritage, fishing at Fire Island, holding onto the Tanaina language, and, as Chief, helped to hold the village together. However, he also accepted the changes that were to alter Eklutna and became a section foreman for the Alaska Railroad. He saw the traditional tribal structure give way to the village council.

A significant portion of his life was devoted to the Russian Orthodox Church. The new Saint Nicholas Church was built by Mike Alex as a fulfillment of a promise made while recovering from a heart attack in 1953. His strength and recovery and his vision to build the church were the result of a visit by church leader Metropolitan Leonty, who blessed him and encouraged him to continue his important work in the church. Additionally, he spearheaded the restoration of the Old Saint Nicholas Church. In the later years of his life, he assisted the University of Alaska in teaching bilingual courses at Lime Village, Soldoltna and Tyonek and helped to perpetuate his Tanaina language with recordings of vocabulary, stories and oral history. With his death in 1977, Mike Alex was buried at the village cemetery. This cabin and the churches stand as reminders of his contributions during seventy years of cultural transition.

Former Tanaina Villages

There were other Tanaina villages and camps in the Anchorage area. As stated earlier, it is believed that Zdluiat (as identified by Petroff) is another name for Eklutna.[25] Anchorage itself was called Qatuk'e'usht (or Xa'tikiuct) by the people of Kenai. As De Laguna suggests, "there may have been an older village here."[26] The Tanaina were known to have fish camps near the mouth of Ship Creek. In the early days of Anchorage existence, cabins and the remains of cabins were noted to exist in the Ship Creek and Bootlegger Cove area.

An important site is that of Niteh which in Tanaina means "among islands." This is an old village which has been abandoned since the 1930's. It was located on the Matanuska River southeast of the bridge.[27]

Mike Alex Cabin.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Very few archaeological investigations have taken place in the Anchorage area. In the past, some archaeologists have felt that the less productive marine environment, especially in Turnagain Arm, would have thwarted native habitation. Recent investigations offer solid evidence to the contrary.

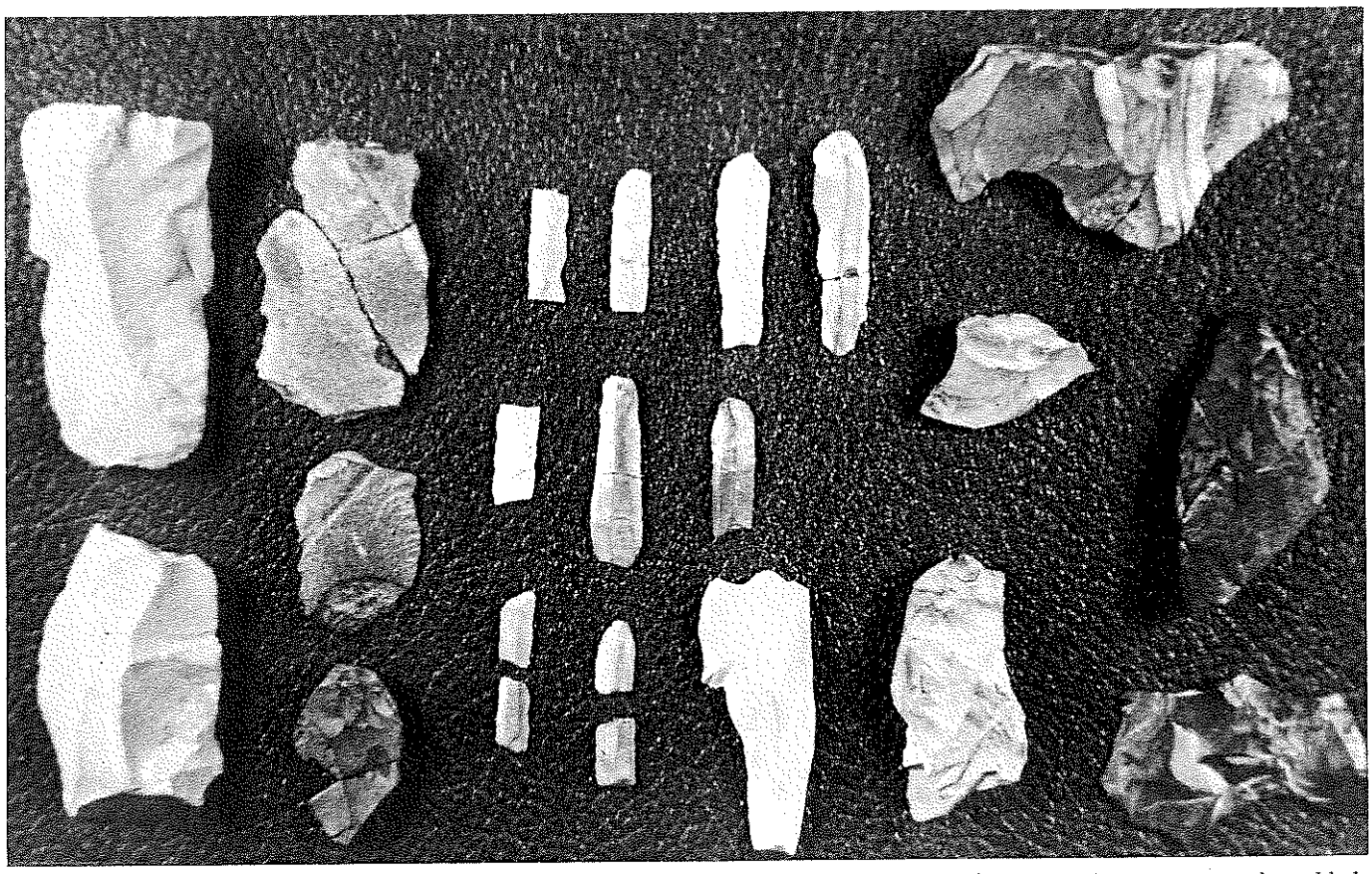
Of particular interest in Cook Inlet archaeological research has been the investigation of those cultural groups which have occupied the region over time. Both archaeological and historical evidence show that Eskimo people have lived in the lower Inlet. More recent research has identified Eskimo habitation in other areas of the Inlet. Dumond and Mace suggest that the Eskimo were in the Upper Inlet at least seasonally for some time A.D. 1000 to a date as late as A.D. 1700. They conclude that the Tanaina moved in between A.D. 1650 and 1780.[28] (The Tanaina were here at the time of Captain James Cook expedition in 1778.) It is generally recognized that the Tanaina are relative late-comers to the region. Just how late remains a question which will undoubtedly be the subject of further investigation.

Reger's research at Beluga Point has been a major contribution in the understanding of Upper Inlet occupation.[29] The artifacts of the various stratigraphic components of the site suggest a number of cultural occupations over a wide range of centuries, starting millenniums before the birth of Christ.

De Laguna's archaeological research in Cook Inlet (1934)[30] and Osgood's ethnographic study of the Tanaina (1937)[31] are the classic investigations of the region's prehistory and native culture. Since their time various anthropological studies have been undertaken in the Anchorage area. These include: a survey at Point Woronzof by West, [32] a survey of archaeological sites at state park waysides by Dixon and Johnson,[33] an examination of archaeological sites in the Upper Kenai by Kent and others,[34] archaeological surveys along Turnagain Arm by Reger and Antonson,[35] the previously mentioned study of Dumond and Mace, archaeological surveys of Point Campbell and Point Woronzof by Reger,[36] and linguistic studies by Kari.[37]

The Beluga Point Site

The Beluga Point Site has been identified as "the most important archaeological site known at this time in the upper Cook Inlet area."[38] Its importance is derived from



Beluga Point Component 1 artifacts, dating from 6,500 to 9,000 years ago. From the left in vertical rows are: two large blades (row 1); two groove stones and a core tablet (row 2); microblades (rows 3 and 4); microblades and a blade-like flint (rows 5 and 6); and core tablets, core tablet fragments and a biface (rows 7 and 8).

the stratified nature of the soils and the evidence of various occupational levels. By comparison and by radiocarbon dating, the materials which have been collected from Beluga Point are estimated to range in age from 800 years ago to a period estimated between 6,500 to 9,000 years ago. Information gained from investigators of the site have been important in understanding the region's prehistory. Further, the evidence may be of value in explaining the riddle of native migrations in the Cook Inlet Region.

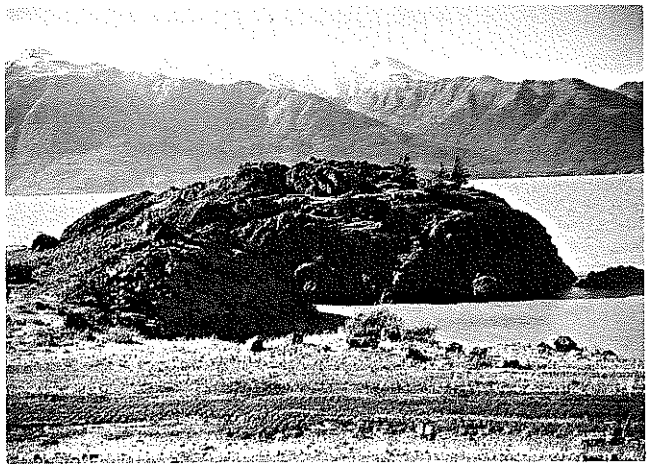
Beluga Point is a rocky promontory that juts out into Turnagain Arm about a mile south of McHugh Creek Wayside. Located outside of railroad and highway right-of-way, it is part of Chugach State Park. This site has been sliced by a bulldozer. Thus, two separate areas can be identified. They are called Beluga Point North and Beluga Point South by those who have studied the site.

Thus far Beluga Point North has yielded the most information. Preliminary interpretations have pointed toward three distinct components. Material from Component I, the lowermost and oldest cultural component, appears to be in the range of 6,500 to 9,000 years old. The collection from Component I includes core and blade material, primarily microblades. The artifacts appear to be related to those associated with the Denali Complex. Component II has provided the largest samples of any level. Artifacts in this component include stemmed points, lanceolate points and scrapers. The points (compared to the Takli Birch artifacts collected from the Alaska Peninsula), indicate an age estimate of 3,000 - 4,000 years.

Component III, which contains the most recent materials, can be further subdivided by stratigraphic criteria into sections a and b. Component III-a contains a slate point, a stone biface, a notched stone weight and a gravel-filled stone hearth. Component III-b contains slate point blanks, chipped adze bits, a bifacial blank, a scraper, whetstones, a notched stone weight, a piece of copper which appears to be cold hammered, and a stone-ringed hearth. By radiocarbon (C-14) dating, Component III-a dates from approximately 800 years ago. The material from Component III-b yielded a C-14 date which indicated that the artifacts are approximately 600 years old.

The south end of Beluga Point is composed of four stratigraphic levels. Two have yielded material which is culturally significant, and those do not appear to correspond to artifacts of the north side. An undiagnostic scraper which was found in the lowest level has been radiocarbon dated to be approximately 4,100 years old. The next oldest component included ground points, a scraper, an end blade and a burin-like groover. These artifacts compare favorably with Norton material and are estimated to be 2,000 to 2,500 years old.[59]

Douglas R. Reger, archaeologist with Alaska's Office of History and Archaeology, can be credited with much of the research of the Beluga Point Site. This site has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Beluga Point. The promontory once extended in a more regular slope to the north. Major archaeological evidence dating back 6,000 years has been found here. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Point Woronzof Sites

Along the bluff facing Fire Island, there is evidence of native occupation. A graveyard exists in the meadow near the bluff. (The top of a spirit house was still there in recent years.) The remaining logs of a sweathouse are near the shoreline. It is probable that the sweathouse is of comparatively recent origin (dating from 1900).

There were as many as six houses along the bluff facing Fire Island. This could have been a permanent (winter) camp at one point in time. The remaining evidence ofthese dwellings are house pits. One was investigated under the supervision of Dr. Fredrick H. West in 1967. Reger has also studied the area.

It is reported that the Tanaina, from various Cook Inlet localities, came to Point Woronzof on a seasonal basis for many years.[40]

Archaeological Site: ANC-55

This site is located on top of a knob which is about 180 meters southeast of Beluga Point. It is a small site (estimated to be about 25 square meters), not larger than the top of the knob. A retouched flake was unearthed in shallow soil (at a depth of 5-10 cm); however, diagnostic artifacts have not been found. That flake was found as part of the State's archaeological survey.[41]

Archaeological Site: ANC-78

This small site is located near Mile 112.3 Seward Highway. It is situated within both rail and highway right-of-way. Consequent to railroad construction, much of the site has been destroyed. One semidiagnostic artifact, a medial section of a point or knife, was found at the site. Its characteristics are comparable to similar artifacts of various time periods and cannot be associated with any one period in particular.[42]

TANAINA PLACE NAMES

Tanaina (or Dena'ina) place names are intriguing indications of native man's interaction with the land. The place names listed in this section have been compiled through the research of Dr. James Kari of the Alaska Native Language Center. Kari's research on the place names in this area was based on interviews with the late John Stump, the late Mike Alex, Bailey Theodore of Knik and Mike Theodore of Eklutna. Two excellent sources of Tanaina places names are: *The Heritage of Eklutna: Mike Alex, 1908-1977* and *Dena'ina Noun Dictionary*. Both were written by Kari.

Because place names assist in understanding Tanaina lifeways and history, they are reproduced in this report. By preserving place names a portion of Tanaina history can be better understood. Tanaina place names are quite ancient; most probably are several centuries old, if not older.[43] The culture is one in which there was strong dependency on the sea and land. Thus the names serve as records of their fishing, hunting and traveling.

Some names such as the Tanaina word for Fire Island, *Nutu'liy* meaning *extends in water*, are descriptive terms of landscape features. Other names reveal segments of the Tanaina lifestyle. Examples include: *K'qiydulghakt* meaning *where they put up fish*, and *Tak'at* meaning *dip net platform*. Still other names serve as references to historical episodes, for example, *Ultsena huts'ilyut* meaning *where we dug up Aleuts*.

Ts'anlikaq: mouth of Peter's Creek.

Tanaina names can be used for designating geographic features which are yet unnamed. Specific Tanaina place names which might be considered in designating unnamed geographic feature can be anglicized. By doing so the general public could pronounce them. For example, the phonetic word, *K'qiydulghakt,* could be simplified by using the anglicized term, *Kaydulrak.* The pronounciation would not be identical, but would be as close as an English speaker could approximate it. In the list which follows the anglicized version (suggested by James Kari) for unnamed geographic features is presented in italics.

At present there is only one name of Tanaina origin in the Anchorage area – Eklutna.

A LIST OF ANCHORAGE PLACE NAMES

The following list represents a collection of Tanaina place names for geographic features in the Anchorage area. The credit for this compilation rests with Dr. James Kari, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska.[44] The names have been reproduced with Dr. Kari's approval from *The Heritage of Eklutna: Mike Alex, 1908-1977.*

Each place name on the list includes the following information: 1) the Tanaina place name; 2) the translation in parentheses; 3) the geographic feature; and 4) in the case of those geographic features which are yet to be named, suggested anglicized versions are presented.

Ts'atanhtnu *(trail comes out creek)* – Matanuska River.
Ts'atanhtnu, trail comes out, refers to the Matanuska River Trail which led to the Copper River country. The Ahtnas would descend to Knik Arm to visit with their friends and relatives, and in historic times, to trade at Niteh or Knik.

Niteh *(among islands)* – old village on Matanuska River southeast of bridge.
Niteh was an important village, occupied until the 1930's by the Ezi family. The Niteh people used the Knik River and Palmer areas for their hunting and fishing.

Hninayka, hninay'iyka *(stick in big)* – hill at junction of Glenn Highway and Old Palmer Highway.
A village site was located east of this hill.

Bentulik'alasi *(dogs driven up)* – ridge leading to Twin Peaks. **Bentulikalasi** is the anglicized version.

Eydlughet *(by plural objects)* – Eklutna Village.
The name Eklutna is anglicized from Eydluytnu, meaning "by several objects, river," which is the name for Eklutna River. Eydlughet, meaning "by several objects," refers to the several hills around the flat north of the river mouth. An old story tells how these hills were formed.

Eydlisla *(big plural objects)* – north hill on Eklutna Flat. **Idlishla** is the anglicized version.

Eydlika *(big plural objects)* – hill with quarry on Eklutna Flat. **Idlika** is the anglicized version.

Eydluytnu *(plural objects river)* – Eklutna River.

Tsiskatnu *(big ochre creeek)* – Thunderbird Creek.

Snutnadzeni *(stand off steep)* – Mt. Eklutna.

Kuy'insla *(little heart)* – small peak off Mt. Eklutna. **Kuyinshla** is the anglicized version.
Looking up from Eklutna village this small peak looks like a heart tucked among the mountains.

Kuy'insla Betnu *(little heart creek)* – small creek into Thunderbird Creek. **Kuyinshla Betnu** is the anglicized version.

Ghetgge Daydlent *(above it flows)* – small creek crosses Eklutna Lake Road at Chugach Park boundary. **Getge daydlent** is the anglicized version.

Bensla *(little lake)* – Lake Barbara.

Huts'iydelq'uht *(where we build a fire for ourselves)* – creek from Bentułik'alasi across Eklutna Lake Road.
This was a campsite on the trail to Eklutna Lake which was an important resource area to the Eklutna people. A detailed system of place names is associated with the geographic features along the east side of the lake.

Łatsq'a *(clay hole)* – Twin Peaks. **Lachkatnu** is the anglicized version.
This was a prime hunting area. Sheep were attracted to the creek.

Łatsq'atnu *(clay hole creek)* – creek from Twin Peaks to foot of Eklutna Lake.

Dnasan *(a man stands)* – pinnacle between Twin Peaks. **Denasan** is the anglicized version.
This name refers to an overcropping of rocks that appears to be a man.

Eydlu Bena *(plural objects lake)* – Eklutna Lake.

Ben Q'estsiq' *(lake outlet)* – outlet of Eklutna Lake.

Łatsda *(mud place)* – sheep lick south of Eklutna Lake Outlet.

Ts'insla – rocks on north side of Eklutna Lake before Yuditnu. **Chinshla** is the anglicized version.

Yudi Qeneh *(golden eagle house)* – Black Peak? mountain up Yuditnu. **Yudi Keneh** is the anglicized version.

Yuditnu *(golden eagle creek)* – creek at large point on north shore of Eklutna Lake.

Sdayłent *(point flows)* – creek halfway up Eklutna Lake on north shore. **Sdaylent** is the anglicized version.

Qunsa Qeneh *(ground squirrel house)* – hill 3000' high past Sdaylent. **Konsha Kench** is the anglicized version.

Nudzi Qeneh *(sheep house)* – Bold Peak (left side at head of lake).

Bendilent *(lake it flows to)* – head of Eklutna Lake, creek from Eklutna Glacier.
Eklutna Alex and his family built a hunting camp at this site. It was long used by the Alex family.

Nuhałts'k'eldelt *(we carry packs)* – start of east fork trail, head of Eklutna Lake. **Nuhachkeldeth** is the anglicized version.
This refers to an unnamed creek whose associated trail provided access to the surrounding sheep hunting area.

Niłtanikda Betnu *(leaning creek)* – East Fork Creek, head of Eklutna Lake.

Niltani Niltanikda *(leaning)* – Hill 3,000' high on left going up east fork trail.

Nuhdaltunt *(extends between)* – Mountain, 6,410' high at head of Eklutna Lake to southeast.

This mountain was another sheep hunting area. A trail led around the mountain and connected with the Eagle River drainage basin. Like the system of trails within the Chugach State Park, the Tanaina had numerous connecting trails through the Chugach.

Snutnadzenai T'ugh Daydliyi Ben *(Mt. Eklutna beneath are lakes)* – Mirror Lake and Edmonds Lake.

Ts'anlikaq' *(flows out mouth)* – Peters Creek mouth.

K'anakatnu – Upper Peters Creek.

Htestighitun Betnu *(pass trail creek)* – Peters Creek.

Qintali Betnu *(wide ridge creek)* – Little Peters Creek.

Qintali *(wide ridge)* – Mountain, 4,755' high above Chugiak.

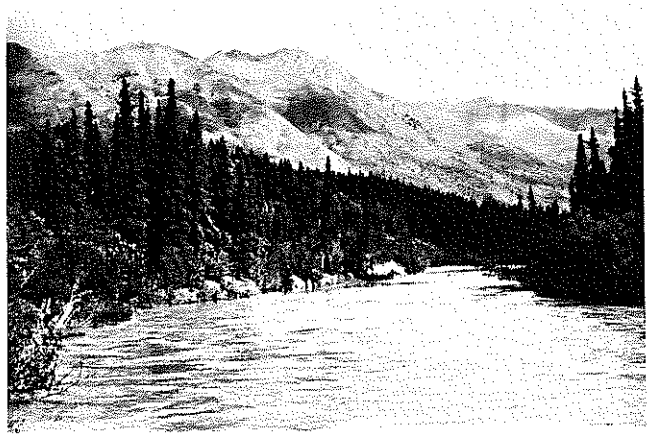
Dkenyi Betnu *(underground cache creek)* – creek from north into Peters Creek.

Tuq'eyghił'ut *(birch extends to water)* – point on beach at Birchwood between Fire Creek and Peters Creek. **Tukeygithut** is the anglicized version.

Ts'eneltas Betnu *(we sleep creek)* – Fire Creek.

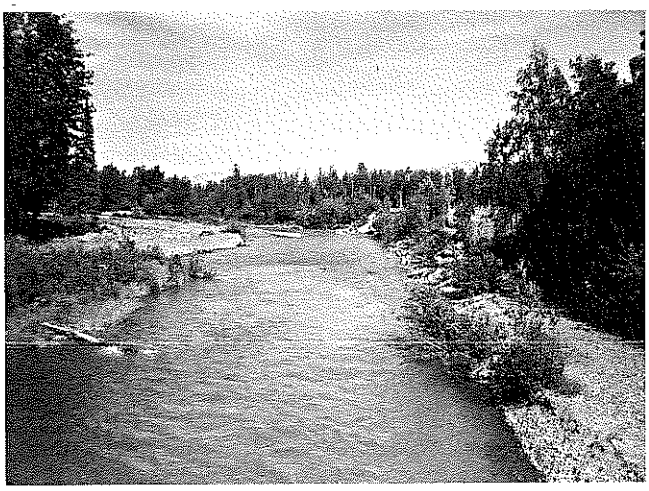
Ts'eneltas Bena *(we sleep lake)* – Fire Lake.

Benka'a *(big lake)* – Lake Clunie.



Nuk'elehitnu: Eagle River

Dgheyaytnu: Ship Creek.



K'qiydulghakt *(where they put up fish)* – point north of Eagle Bay, "Whitney."
This name refers to a fishing location at this unnamed point. **Kaydulrak** is the anglicized version.

K'eɬtaydeght *(high place)* – bluff and point two miles north of Eagle River mouth. **Kethtaydat** is the anglicized version.

Tsaɬtl'u – gully half mile north of Eagle River mouth. **Chathlu** is the anglicized name.

Nuk'elehitnu *(spawn again creek)* – Eagle River.
Luther Kelly used the term "Yukla-hitna" in describing this river in 1898. Kelly's commander, Captain E.F. Glenn, abbreviated the name to Yukla Creek. (For more information about Kelly and Glenn, see the Trails Chapter.)

K'ults'ey *(wind against it)* – Mt. Magnificent.

K'ults'eytnu *(wind against it creek)* – Meadow Creek.

Ɬiq'ata Bugh *(fish soup shore)* – creek from Mt. Yukla 18 miles up Eagle River. **Likatabo** is the anglicized version.

Nantutsaghala *(?-pack)* – mountain at head of Eagle River on south side. **Nantucharala** is the anglicized version.

Ts'ak'dinlen'at *(where it flows out)* – small creek from Green Lake.
This was important fishing site on Knik Arm. The Alex family fished here annually until 1918.

Dgheyaytnu *(needlefish creek)* – Ship Creek.
The creek was named by the Tanaina for its run of needlefish (or sticklebacks). This was an important fish site for Knik people well into this century.

Tak'at *(dipnet platform)* – bank on beach at Ocean Dock.
It is said a pole fish fence was built here and a fisherman would stand out on it and dip net salmon.

Tak'at Qenuts'en *(dipnet dock across from)* – one-fourth mile from dock toward Anchorage.

Tsanstnu *(grass creek)* – Chester Creek.

Nen Ghiɬgedi *(land rotten)* – bank between Chester Creek and Pt. Woronzof. **Nen githgedi** is the anglicized version.

Niɬkidal'iy *(joined together)* – Lake Spenard and Lake Hood.

Ts'atanaltsegh *(yellow water flows out)* – Fish Creek.

Nuts'istunt *(wind protected)* – Pt. Woronzof.

Nutuɬ'iy *(extends in water)* – Fire Island.

Tudzedza *(swirling water)* – West Point on Fire Island.

Ultsena Huts'ilyut *(where Aleuts we dug up)* – Campbell Point.
This name commemorates a prehistoric war with the Prince William Sound Eskimo (called "Aleuts") that came from the Whittier area. The Eskimos raided in Knik Arm and stole a chief's wife. She tricked the leader of the war party and set him up for an ambush that took place at this location.

Qin Tseghitnu – Campbell Creek.

Qin Tseghi *(ridge crying)?* – Tanaina Peak (?).
This name may mean "crying ridge." It is the only Dena'ina name for a mountain in Anchorage Bowl that has been salvaged.

Ggeh Betnu *(rabbit creek)* – Rabbit Creek.

Q'isqa Dghelay *(banjo snowshoe mountain)* – This may be McHugh Peak.

Ultsena Tits'qiluq *(Aleuts we killed/cremated)* – the exact location is not certain.
This might be Lake Otis or a mountain near Potter Marsh.

Tutl'uh *(back water)* – Turnagain Arm.

Nuti Edileni *(saltwater it flows into)* – Indian Creek.
Indian Creek and Bird Creek were reached by trails from Eklutna.

Esbaytnu *(mountain goat creek)* – Bird Creek.

Ulchena Ch'aqedelt *(where the Chugach Eskimos come)* – Portage Pass.

Note: the use of "l" in the preceding list is a linguistic tool to assist those familiar with the phonetics of the Tanaina language.

The "?'s" used above denote a lack of complete confidence about the name of a feature.

CHAPTER 8: HOMESTEADING

Background[1]

Homesteading was used as a tool by the Federal government to open up land within the public domain to settlement. The practice began with the Homestead Act of 1862. It lasted well over a century, ending in Alaska – the Last Frontier – over a decade after Statehood.

In 1898 Congress extended homesteading to Alaska under Public Law 95.[2] Known as the Alaska Homestead Law, it included most provisions of the 1862 law and the Soldiers' Additional Rights Statutes. It differed from the 1862 statute in that a homesteader was limited to eighty acres, half that allowed in the rest of the country.[3] This limited acreage became a source of discontent and was changed within a few years.

Another source of irritaion was the survey requirement. The Alaska Homestead Law limited entry to surveyed land. In 1898 only a scant portion of Alaska had been surveyed. Associated with this problem was the lack of base lines from which surveys could be carried out. Soldiers and sailors could, under the Additional Rights Statutes, settle on unsurveyed land. However, the cost of surveying had to be borne by the veteran. Surveys were expensive at the turn of the century. Surveyors charged $15 to $20 per day plus travel expenses. Given the remoteness of the land[4] and the inflated costs of transportation during the Klondike era, the surveying provisions made homesteading almost impossible.

In 1903 Congress amended the Alaska Homestead Law to expand the maximum acreage to 320 acres.[5] Another provision of this law required a rectangular survey. Each homestead had to be located along north-south coordinates and marked at appropriate corners. The increase in acreage resulted as a response to the unsuitability of Alaskan land for agriculture.[6] Charles C. Georgeson, director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, gave his support to the increased size. The larger size would benefit stock raising which, in Georgeson's view, would be the leading form of agriculture.[7]

The homesteading requirements remained the same until 1912. That year Congress passed the Three Year Homestead Law.[8] Its provisions reduced the length of residence, specified the amount of acreage to be cultivated, and changed the requirements for leaves of absence. Under that law a residence had to be built within the first six months of homesteading. Settlers had contended that the five year residence requirement of the early laws was a hardship. In

Daisy and Bud Whitney.

turn, the residence requirement was reduced to three years. Leaves of absence were also restricted. A homesteader had to notify the General Land Office of his absence which could be no longer than five months per year. Commutation was introduced as another means by which the homesteader could prove up. By this provision a homesteader could pay for his land at the end of the second year.

The most significant changes under the Three Year Homestead Act were the cultivation requirements. The law required cultivation of one-sixteenth of the homestead by the beginning of the second year of entry and not less than one-eighth beginning with the third year of entry.[9] On a 320 acre homestead, forty acres would have to be cleared and cultivated over the first two years. Given the short season and the rugged, often forested terrain, it was extremely difficult to comply. In 1913 the first territorial legislature called for a reduction in the maximum acreage. Andrew Christensen, Field Representative for the General Land Office, also supported the change. In his reports to the commissioner, he noted the difficulty in meeting the

cultivation requirement and advised that the maximum homestead size be reduced to 160 acres. His other argument for the change was that "land suitable for cultivation in Alaska was located in valleys in limited areas and it does not take a great many homesteads of 320 acre tracts to take up all available land in each valley, and as it is impossible for them to cultivate more than a few acres, it will result in tieing up the balance of land in each entry for many years to come."[10]

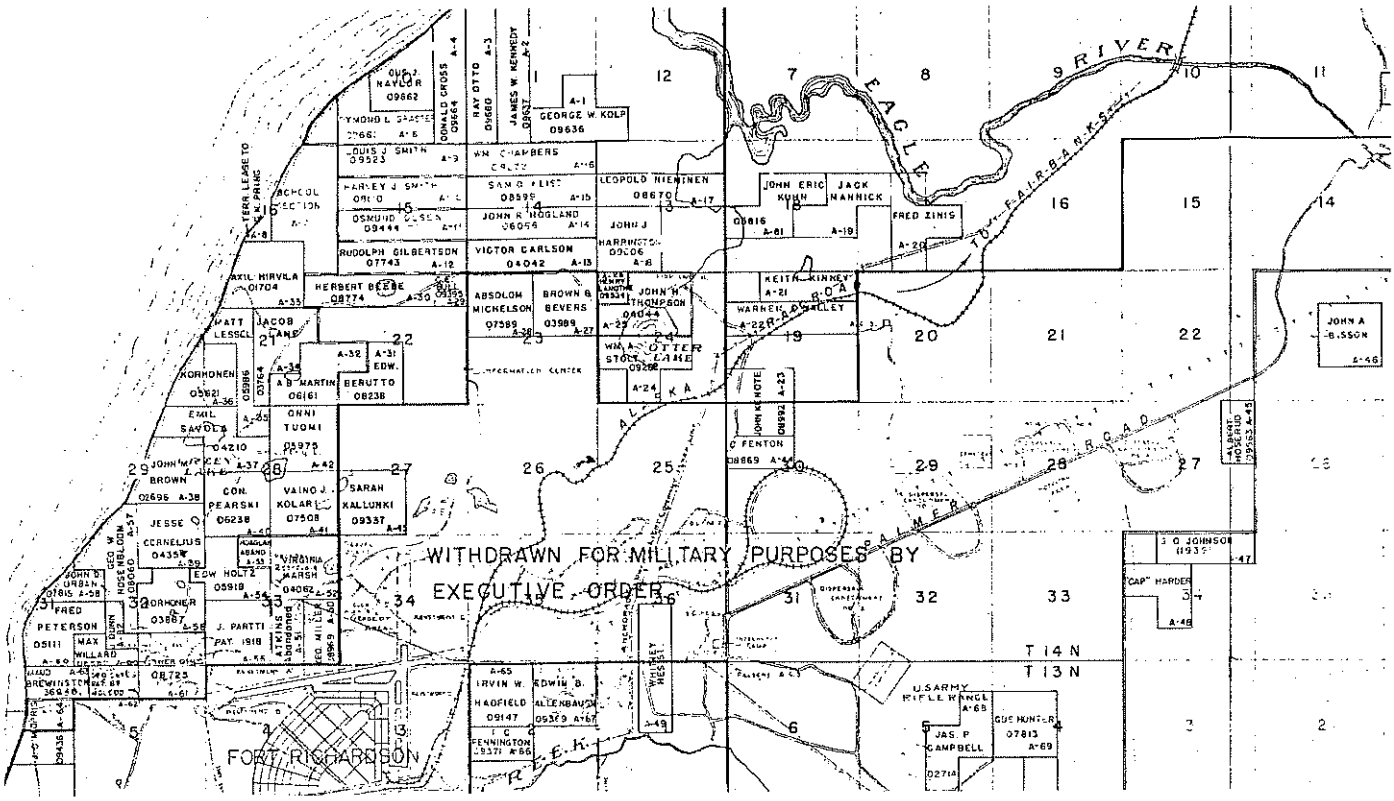
The statistics of the time pointed to the lack of success of the homesteading program. Of the initial entries, only a third went to final proof. In 1916 James Wickersham, Alaskan Delegate to Congress, proposed a bill to decrease the maximum size to 160 acres of surveyed or unsurveyed land. With passage of the bill, there were no further changes in the acreage requirements. It was under this law that many of the early homesteads in the Anchorage area were started.

The problems associated with the harsh climate led to another change in 1919. Under Public Law 257 an amendment provided for options in the length of residence. Instead of residing on the homestead for seven months for each of the first three years, the homesteader could choose six months residence for each of four years or five months residence for each of five years. Thus, a homesteader could leave his land for six or seven months at a time. This provision was taken advantage of by many Alaskan homesteaders who worked on a seasonal basis. In Anchorage this provision allowed homesteaders to live in town for a greater portion of the year while proving up on their homestead.

In 1934 Congress passed the Taylor Grazing Act which in effect ended homesteading in the Lower Forty-eight. Alaska really did become "The Last Frontier." The Territory was the only area in which large segments of Federal land were still open to entry.

Following the Second World War, amendments were made to the Soldiers and Sailors Additional Rights Statutes. Ex-military personnel had always benefited by the "Additional Rights" provisions. In 1947 Congress passed Public Law 82. This act permitted veterans with at least ninety days service to substitute up to two years of their military service in place of residence and cultivation requirements. In effect it allowed the veteran to gain title to his homestead land within a year. There were a number of homesteads throughout the Anchorage area that were acquired under this law.

With statehood, it was felt that homesteading should be phased out. In practicality homesteading ended in the 1960's with the Interior Department's land freeze. Under Public Land Order 5418, handed down in 1974, the remaining unreserved public lands were officially closed to homesteading. Thus the Federal role in homesteading ceased in the Last Frontier.



This map outlines the various homesteads on the land between Ship Creek and Eagle River. The U.S. Army acquired the land for military purposes in the early 1940's (source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).

Homesteading in Anchorage

In the spring of 1915, as Anchorage was coming into existence, homesteading had barely started in the area. J.D. Whitney was legitimately homesteading. His "ranch" (as homesteads were called then) was located toward the upper end of Ship Creek.[11] Whitney road was his connection to the townsite. The only other homesteader was Thomas Jeter. He had settled near the mouth of Ship Creek around 1912. Jeter, as it turned out, was really squatting. Not having filed for the parcel of land he selected, he lost a court battle to retain his homestead.[12] The real boom in homesteading did not occur until railroad construction was well underway.

Jeter's cabin at the mouth of Ship Creek in 1914.

Looking beyond Anchorage, the early homesteading picture was slightly different. After the Homestead Act was amended in 1903, a couple of homesteaders began to settle in the Knik area. With the discovery of gold in the region, more and more people came into the Matanuska Valley. It is estimated that by 1910 there were 500 settlers in the Valley. In 1912 a rectangular land survey was begun throughout the region. Although it was not completed for a number of years, it facilitated homesteading in that baselines were established. On the eve of the railroad's construction (1914), over 130 homesteads had been entered according to the Commissioner's records at Knik.[13] Many of these homesteads were referred to as ranches; however, horses were the only livestock. Most homesteading was limited "to gardening and potato growing by men who looked upon their tracts as occasional residences between periods of employment and mining, trapping, freighting and prospecting. Most of them were bachelors, accustomed to life in sparsely settled regions and familiar with the techniques necessary for living with that mixture of occupations."[14] There was enough interest in agriculture in the spring of 1915 that the Matanuska Farmer's Association was formed. With the coming of the railroad, homesteaders tended to cluster near the rail belt. It was after 1915 that the boom in homesteading can be traced in the Anchorage Bowl area.

Whitney bringing pork to market.

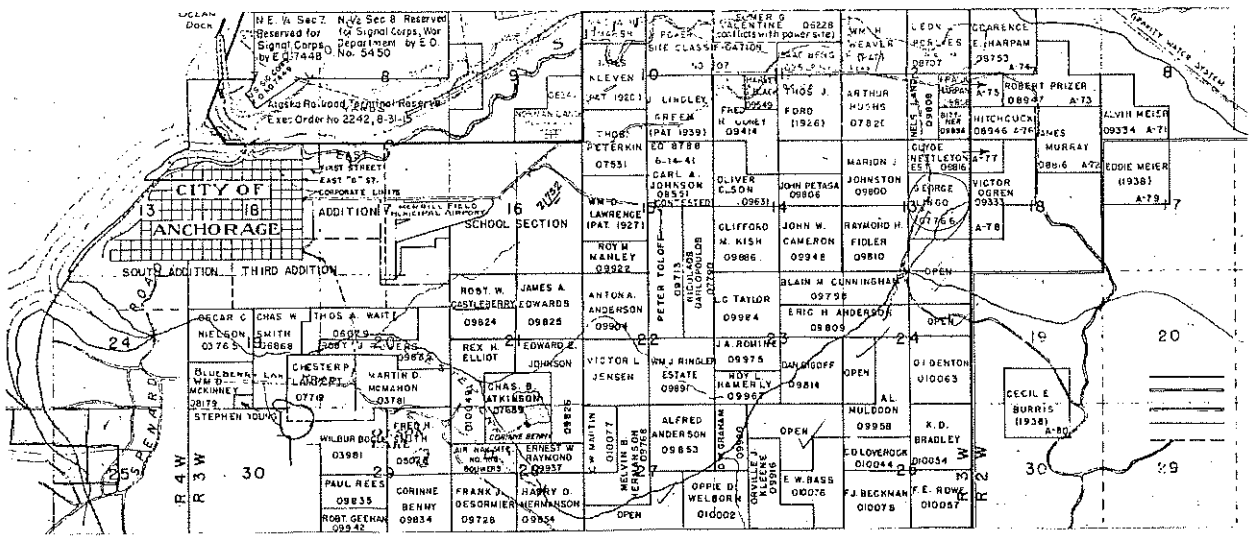
With the railroad three positive measures were brought about which encouraged homesteading. First, the rectangular land survey was completed along the rail belt. This provided a systematic layout under which homestead land could be entered. Second, in 1916 the Alaska Engineering Commission created a Land and Industrial Department. This agency promoted agricultural development through homesteading. Third, the growth of Anchorage and other railroad communities provided a market for the produce of the homesteaders.

The prospects were bright for a season or two. Some settlers moved down from the valley closer to the Anchorage market. By 1917 it was estimated that roughly 400 settlers were homesteading in Anchorage or the valley. Anchorage had a population of 5,000 to 6,000 people at the time. The townsites of Matanuska and Wasilla were beginning to be settled as well. The Matanuska Experimental Station was also started that same year. It appeared that the agricultural industry would expand.

When the United States entered World War I, agricultural development was stymied in Alaska. Virtually overnight thousands left for war or war-related jobs. Between 1917 and 1920, the number of homesteaders in the region was reduced in half. Roughly 200 homesteaders were left in 1920. The year 1917 was particularly disastrous for homesteaders. Anticipating the large market, homesteaders produced substantial amounts of potatoes and vegetables that year. Over 1,300 tons of potatoes alone were reportedly raises that year. When the population left for war, a ruinous surplus resulted. Even the livestock could not consume the excess potatoes.

Following the war, the prosperity of the Lower Forty-eight was not enjoyed in Alaska. Although mining regained much of its earlier status, agriculture was neglected. Many of the settlers who remained on their homesteads worked as

This map depicts homesteads in the Anchorage bowl as they were in the early 1940's (source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).



part-time farmers. In the Anchorage area, there were many homesteaders who were railroaders first and farmers secondarily. The average improved acreage on homesteads was only 15.8 acres in 1923. Farmers produced only a small portion of the consumed produce. The volume of imports was high. Outside produce could typically be imported and marketed cheaper than it could be produced by the local homesteaders. Compounding the problem, Anchorage businessmen looked disfavorably on local produce.[16] It took decades for this negative view to be overcome.

Between 1929 and 1933 the railroad promoted a public relations campaign in the farming regions of the Lower Forty-eight to attract homesteaders. N.D. Snodgrass of the Matanuska Experimental Station worked with Colonel Otto Ohlson in promoting settlement along the railroad.[17] Scandinavians were especially sought. Despite the efforts to develop agriculture through homesteading, there was only scant success. In view of the several hundred homesteaders who entered the program, their success – measured by patented homesteads, cleared acreage and farm production – was very limited.

World War II greatly affected homesteading. Besides bringing entries to a standstill, military development called for the use of thousands of acres of land, many of which were being homesteaded. The area north of Ship Creek which is now Elmendorf Air Force Base and Ft. Richardson had been settled for decades by homesteaders. Many of the homesteaders there were of Finnish extraction.[18] Their cabins and out-buildings reflected their craftsmanship in log construction. In 1940 the War Department began purchasing the land and buildings of these homesteaders for military purposes. By 1943 all of the homestead land had been made part of the military reservation. Today there is little evidence that homesteading took place within military boundaries.

Following World War II, homesteading picked up considerably. Homesteads were taken up in the Anchorage bowl area as far south as Rabbit Creek. Homesteading also spread in the Eagle River - Chugiak area. A number of the homesteaders were veterans who gained patents to their land within a year or so. The vast majority of these homesteaders had full time jobs. In 1949 there were only three farmers who devoted their entire time to the operation of their farms. Furthermore, investment in farm equipment was minimal. Those homesteaders who did not enter as veterans still had to meet the cultivation requirements. Of the homesteaders who did farm, most grew potatoes. Farming activities included hog production, poultry production, dairying, old-fashioned mixed farming and truck gardening. Most of these operations were on a part-time basis.[19]

By the early 1960's virtually all of the land which was eligible for homesteading had been entered. Homestead after homestead had given way to subdivision. Patterns of the early homesteads lent themselves to patterns of development. Today few homesteads remain untouched by new development.

What does remain from the homesteading era are examples of homes and outbuildings. Built over a wide span of years, these buildings represent various types of construction. Among them are log cabins, frame residences and crudely constructed "prove-up" shelters. In the following description, some of the older homestead residences within particular sections of Anchorage are identified. Included are examples of residences in the Bowl and Eagle River.

The Smith Homestead House.

The Lyn Ary Homestead Cabin.

The Charles W. Smith Homestead House (100 24th Place)[20]

Just east of Fireweed Lane and C Street is the land which once comprised the Smith homestead. Wedged between Burrough's and the apartments on 24th Place is the Smith's homestead house. The frame structure was built in 1926-1927. Much of the original building is intact; however, its porch has been enclosed to form an added room.

Charles Smith came to Alaska to work for the Alaska Railroad around 1920. He had been a railroader for many years. His long experience included stints with the Union Pacific and the Alaska Northern. He and his wife, Pearl, first lived in Nenana. Once assigned to Anchorage in the mid-1920's, Smith took over the land previously homesteaded by Atwater. They lived in a tent frame structure for two years while Smith built the house in his spare time. He continued to work with the railroad. The family had a garden and cow for their own needs.

In the mid-1920's there were few other settlers out that way. Spenard Road was the only route to the plateau beyond Chester Creek. Borrowing a bulldozer from the railroad, Smith cut the east-west road to join Spenard Road. That road is the present Fireweed Lane.

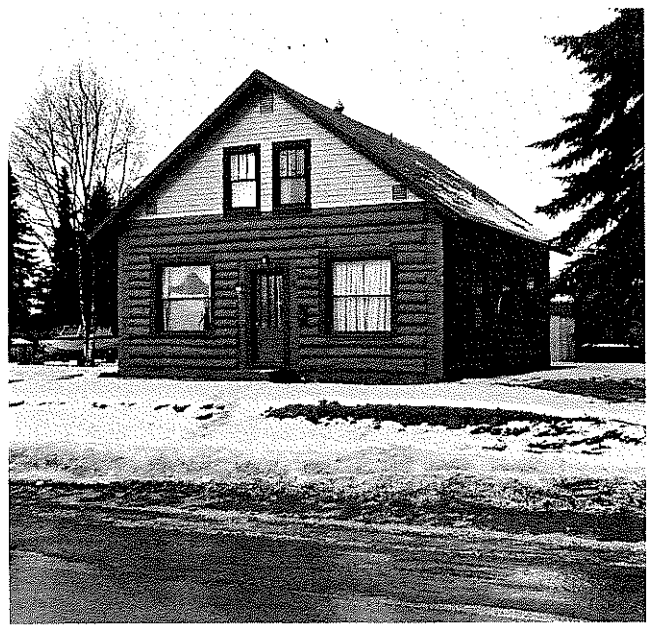
The Lyn Ary Homestead House (3007 West 32nd Avenue)

Lyn Ary was a Russian immigrant who made his way across the United States before coming to Alaska.[21] He homsteaded the tract of land near the park which now bears his name. The first floor level of this house formed his homestead cabin. It is believed that the cabin was constructed around 1920. The second story of this house is a latter addition. The square hewn, dovetail logs of the original portion are the mark of Ary's fine axmanship. The house was damaged severely during the 1964 Earthquake. It went down in the Turnagain Slide. Following the quake it was moved to its present location and renovated.

The Thomas Peterkin Homestead House (4311 East Third Avenue)

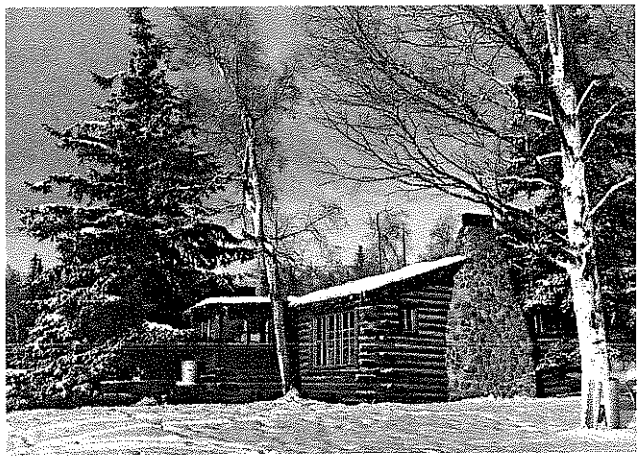
Thomas Peterkin began homesteading in the Mountain View area during the mid-1930's. Peterkin came to Anchorage in 1915. He worked as a fireman for the Alaska Railroad. Before being permanently assigned to Anchorage, Peterkin worked at Curry, Healy and Nenana. He ran a dairy in the East Addition for many years before settling in the Mountain View area.[22]

This log house is a good example of the well built, permanent homestead cabin. The one and one-half storied house was completed in 1937. Its round logs are notched by very tight dovetail joints. Peterkin's homestead adjoined the Lang and Klevin homesteads. The house originally sat where the Mountain View Shopping Center now stands.[23]



The Thomas Peterkin Homestead Cabin.

Nottviet's cabin.



The Emil Savola Homestead Cabin

Emil Savola homesteaded the tract of land in the Green Lake vicinity for over two decades before the military bought the land in 1942. Savola, a Finnish immigrant, worked for the Alaska Railroad as a carpenter. He came to Alaska in 1917 after working in Winnepeg. He began homesteading at Green Lake around 1920.[24]

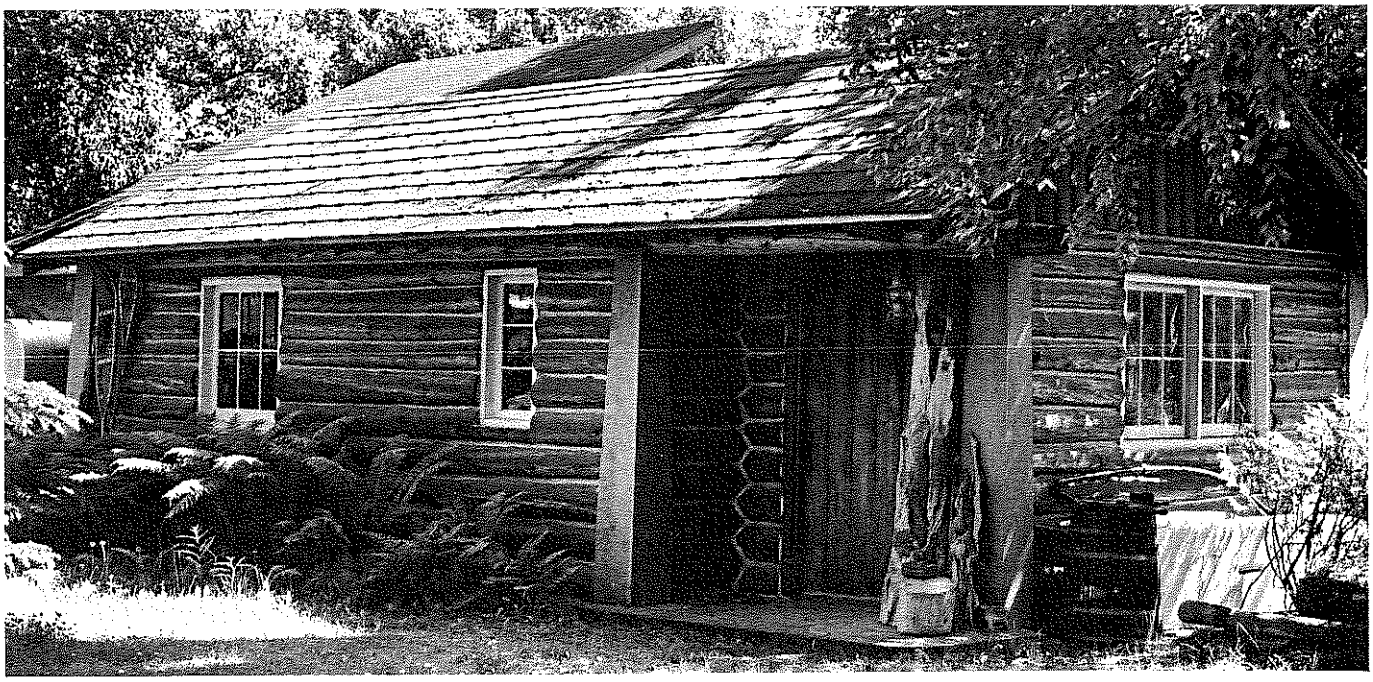
The cabin on the hill (Building 52-560), south of Green Lake, is the second of the Savola homestead cabins. In 1931 his first cabin was lost to fire, a tragedy in which his wife and daughter perished. Savola built the walls and structural components of the existing cabin in the 1930's. However, he did not finish the cabin by the time of the military's acquisition. The log work on the cabin is exceptional. The round logs are tightly joined by full dovetail joints. Window casings are firmly set within beveled sections. A gambrel roof completed the one and one-half storied cabin. The U.S. Air Force now owns the cabin and uses it for recreation purposes.[25]

None of the original outbuildings survive. A log barn stood to the west of the house. Its logs were sold when the military took over. Matt Niemi used them to build the house at 213 East Sixth Avenue.

Part of the log cabin across the lake (Building 52-650) was built by Iver Nottviet. Savola subdivided his homestead by laying out lots around the lake. Nottviet had sold a lot in 1941. The land and the cabin were acquired by the military.

The Emil Savola Homestead Cabin.

The Klatt Homestead Cabin.



The Klatt Homestead

Lester and Dora Klatt came from California to Anchorage in 1947. They moved to their land on April 14 of the same year. What is now eight miles from their home to downtown Anchorage was then eighteen difficult miles over corduroy convenience roads, where they existed, and along trails "from one high spot to the next", after the roads ended. Like most homesteaders, the Klatts initially supported their farm by working in town. Lester was employed by the school district and also did sheet metal work.

The boundaries of their land, fixed in a 1916 survey, contained 11.6 acres more than the 160 set for homesteading. The additional acreage resulted from the original surveyor's error in the rough terrain. Homesteaders had to take their "land as surveyed," but were only entitled to prove up on 160 acres. Thus, the Klatts were required to purchase the additional acreage at $1.25 per acre.[26]

Their first priority was to build a cabin before winter and move out of their tent. A horse dragged logs cut from their property and their 16 foot by 24 foot cabin began to take shape. The foundation consisted of five logs laid directly on the ground. Saddleback-notched logs were carefully fitted to form tight joints. The windows, originally uninsulated and single glazed, were converted to thermal (double) glazing when Lester carefully added a second thickness of glass, leaving an air space between the glazing. Copper nails held down large asbestos shingles, laid in Dutch lap. The framed gable ends were covered with vertical redwood siding.

A temporary wood floor was replaced by a concrete slab when the hand-dug basement was excavated in 1949. Heat initially was supplied by a wood stove, but in 1950 Lester Klatt built a large and very handsome, semicircular fireplace with stone hearth and thick stone mantle. A small, oil space heater has been more recently added in the basement,but the fireplace is still the main source of heat. The existing ceiling, added in the mid-1970's, is made of narrow tongue and groove members. It conceals the original brown kraft paper nailed to the rafters.

Detailing has made the cabin particularly handsome. When electricity became available, wiring was carefully concealed in the log joints. A heavy board and batten log door, fitted with large strap hinges, provides entry to the living area. A secondary entrance via a plank board and batten door opens onto the kitchen.

For several years the Klatts hauled water from Campbell Creek. Hand digging for a well began in the summer of 1948, but the well was not operational until approximately 1951. Using 48" slab cribbing for reinforcement, they dug to a depth of 46 feet. At that level there was "not enough water to use as a water source, but too much to continue by hand." They used a six inch casing and drilled to a depth of 96 feet. The water was piped through the poured concrete walls of the basement and up into the kitchen.[27]

In addition to the well house, the Klatts built a frame chicken house and garage. Other outbuildings include two greenhouses brought from Anchorage which formed the beginning of the Country Gardens Nursery owned by the Klatts. In the mid-1950's, with the birth of their third child, the Klatts began to consider the need for a larger home. Realizing the difficulty involved in expanding a log home, they decided to create their home from the chicken house and garage. Over the years they have continued to add to this home which is adjacent to their homesteading cabin. A modern, but sympathetic addition is currently being built on the east facade of the cabin.

The Nyberg - Pippel Home

In 1937 Lars Nyberg started homesteading in the relatively flat valley where "downtown" Eagle River is today. Nyberg worked for the railroad. The story is told that he was able to unload frame building materials next to the railroad tracks. After carting them one and one-half miles to his homesite – not far from the Old Palmer Highway – he built a tidy, frame house. In the more traditional homesteading fashion, he erected a square-hewn, log garage nearby.

Walter and Melva Pippel bought the homestead acreage in 1943. Mr. Pippel, in the words of his wife, was "100 percent farmer. He had an art about his farming, He was like a poet who writes poems, or a painter who paints pictures. It was born in him. He had that art. Everything he touched would grow."[28]

The Eagle River farm was not his first one in Alaska. The Pippel's came to Alaska from Minnesota as part of the Matanuska Colony project in 1935. Pippel quickly cleared his valley land, produced acres of crops and, in the process, acquired the reputation of a dedicated farmer. In 1936 a colony official wrote of Pippel: "Tickled to death to be here. Couldn't drive him out. Will make good and an asset to the project."[29] In fact, he became quite an advocate of the project. Responding to Senator Elmer Thomas' critism that the project was worthless, Pippel fired a letter to Washington:

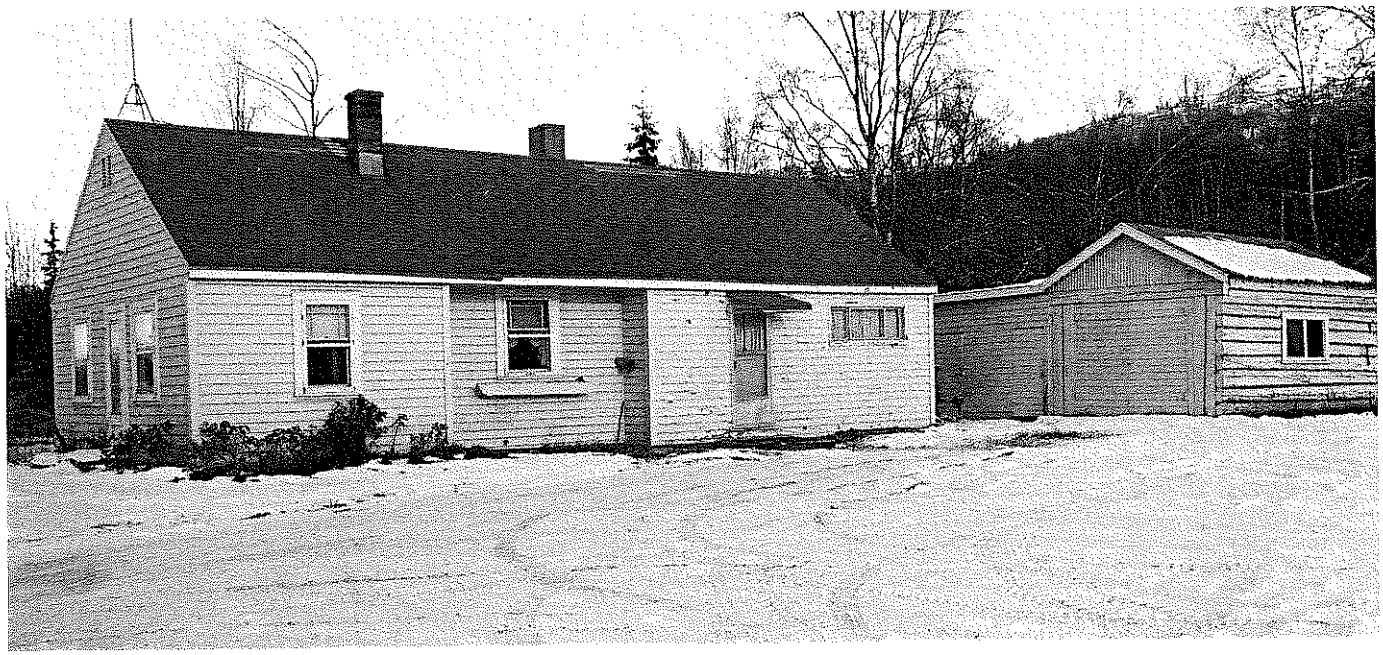
> Of all the groundless and asinine statements that have been made about agriculture in this Valley, this last one by Senator Thomas wins the cup. My first year in the Matanuska Valley has thoroughly convinced me that climate, soil and other conditions tend to make this one of the safest and surest spots under the United States flag for a farmer to make his home and ply his vocation. . .
> If Senator Thomas had come here to see the Valley instead of spending 15 minutes on the depot platform shaking hands with the big shots, he could have come out and visited my farm. I have six acres of garden here that are worth more to me than the 80 acre truck farm I worked for years just outside of Minneapolis. . .[30]

His positive sentiments about the project soured in the next few years. Continuing to work hard, he began to market his produce in Fairbanks and Anchorage. To do so, he bypassed the Co-operative of the colony. He resigned from the board of directors and criticized their marketing policies. Moreover, he fought the resale restrictions which were placed on his property. (Colonists could only resell to colonists.) Pippel became known as "the Rebel."

Government officials and Pippel became involved in series of law suits, the major issue being the right to market independently. Secretary Harold L. Ickes, Department of the Interior, wanted to process the case through the courts to clarify the position of the Co-operative. With the case unduly dragging on, a settlement was made out of court. Pippel accepted seven thousand dollars and agreed to leave the territory. He went back to Minnesota in 1939.[31]

The Pippel issue had drawn national attention. The press focused upon the role of individualism versus collectivism. Some likened the Matanuska project to Soviet farming. One particularly pointed article, "Cabbages and Commissars," helps tell the story:

> I find – to put it bluntly – that collectivism, following the Soviet pattern with the utmost fidelity, has come to the Matanuska Valley. Collectivism – and dismal failure. . . From the beginning, just one colonist, and one only, has



The Nyberg-Pippel homestead house and log garage.

made a living farming;. . . He has succeeded because he is a levelheaded, hard-working, old-fashioned American farmer, able and willing to stand on his own feet. . .
(The reference was to Walter Pippel.)
With tactics warranted to bring a nod of approval from Stalin himself, the other reluctant and unhappy colonists of Roosevelt's Alaskan adventure have been herded into agreements which leave them entirely at the mercy of the local New Deal commissars."[32]

Alaska had become a dream to the Pippel family. They yearned to return, and within two years, they did so. Spenard was still farmland at the time, and Pippel ran a hog and vegetable farm there. While living in Spenard, Pippel purchased the Nyberg farm. For awhile he ran both the Spenard and Eagle River operation; however, in 1947 they moved permanently to the old Nyberg place.

Long-time, Anchorage-area people probably can recall the splendid farm and the roadside vegetable stand of the Pippels. "Fifty acres of vegetables – radishes, turnips, cabbage, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower – just everything" filled the field across the highway. Mr. Pippel farmed until the mid-1960's when a stroke curtailed his labors. He passed away in 1969.

The Pippels built additional rooms onto the Nyberg place. The side close to the road is the original portion. The hardwood floors, the tidy cupboards and the old range are interior features which have been well maintained. Melva Pippel still resides at the house.[33]

The original Braendel cabin.

The Braendel Homestead House

Arthur Braendel and his wife, Eleanor, built a log cabin on their Eagle River homestead in late 1947 and early 1948. Like many Alaskans, the Braendels have added rooms to form an expanded residence. Today, the original cabin is used as the kitchen and dining area and is enclosed by the living room and bedrooms. The living room with its vaulted ceiling is indicative of the Braendel's lifestyle and interests. Instruments, including a grand piano, reflect the musical pursuits of the Braendels – who are charter members of the Anchorage Symphony. Grizzly bear and Dall sheep trophies, taken by their sons, provide a sense of the outdoors.

Arthur W. Braendel came to Anchorage following World War II to work as a mechanical engineer for the Civil Aeronautics Administration. Late in 1946, he went "outside" and married Eleanor. After returning to Anchorage, the Braendels found that good housing was difficult to find. They decided to homestead and build a cabin. Along with Frank Brink, his future neighbor, Braendel surveyed his homestead and filed with the Bureau of Land Management. Under the veteran's provisions, the Braendels were able to gain title to the land within a year. Although cultivation was not required of veterans, the Braendels have tended a garden and raised goats while homesteading. Today, their property is still largely woodland, and their homestead on Meadow Creek is the only one of the early Eagle River homesteads which is not subdivided.[34]

The Brink Homestead

Frank Brink began homesteading with his wife Jo in 1947. He and his neighbor, Art Braendel, staked their land together. Brink was reared in Pennsylvania, educated in Tennessee, and served in the Navy in WW II. Following the war he came to Anchorage to work for KFQD radio. He later assisted in the establishment of KENI radio and KTVA television. Brink was a driving force behind the development of the performing arts in Alaska. Under his direction a number of laudable plays were staged. The foremost was a 1951 production of *South Pacific*; at the time, the play was a Broadway hit. A Naval officer approached Rogers and Hammerstein to release the rights to produce *South Pacific* at Kodiak. To the Navy's surprise, permission was granted. Brink, who had been called back into the Navy, became the director. It was the first of many successful productions.

Back in Anchorage in the early 1950's, Brink was instrumental in pulling together broad interest in community theatre. Famous personalities were brought in to work with Anchorage citizens; Will Rogers, Jr. and Boris Karloff were among them. A community theatre was established in a huge Quonset hut (the location is the present intersection of Northern Lights Boulevard and Minnesota Avenue).

Among the more notable plays were *Arsenic and Old Lace, The King and I, Tea House of the August Moon* and *The Miracle Worker*.

Brink was a playwright as well. His *Cry of the Wild Ram* (a historical sketch about Baranov) is still produced annually in Kodiak. Another piece, *Song of the Great Land*, won various national honors.[35]

The homestead cabin on Meadow Creek was the first of a handful of homes that Brink built in Anchorage. The cabin is exceptional. Unlike some homestead shelters of the era, this cabin more than met the prove-up standard. It was substantial. It was, in the true sense of the word, a home.

Large round logs were tightly saddlenotched to form the walls. Its dimensions are roughly twenty by forty feet. The roof line is slightly reminiscent of a Swiss alpine home – lots of exposed woodwork, extended eaves and a steep pitch. Unusual to the cabin are the large windows. Brink carried in surplus sets of frames to form a twenty-foot wide picture window.

The Brinks resided in the Anchorage area until recent years. They currently live outside.[36]

Brink's cabin.

CHAPTER 9: EARLY AVIATION FACILITIES

Introduction

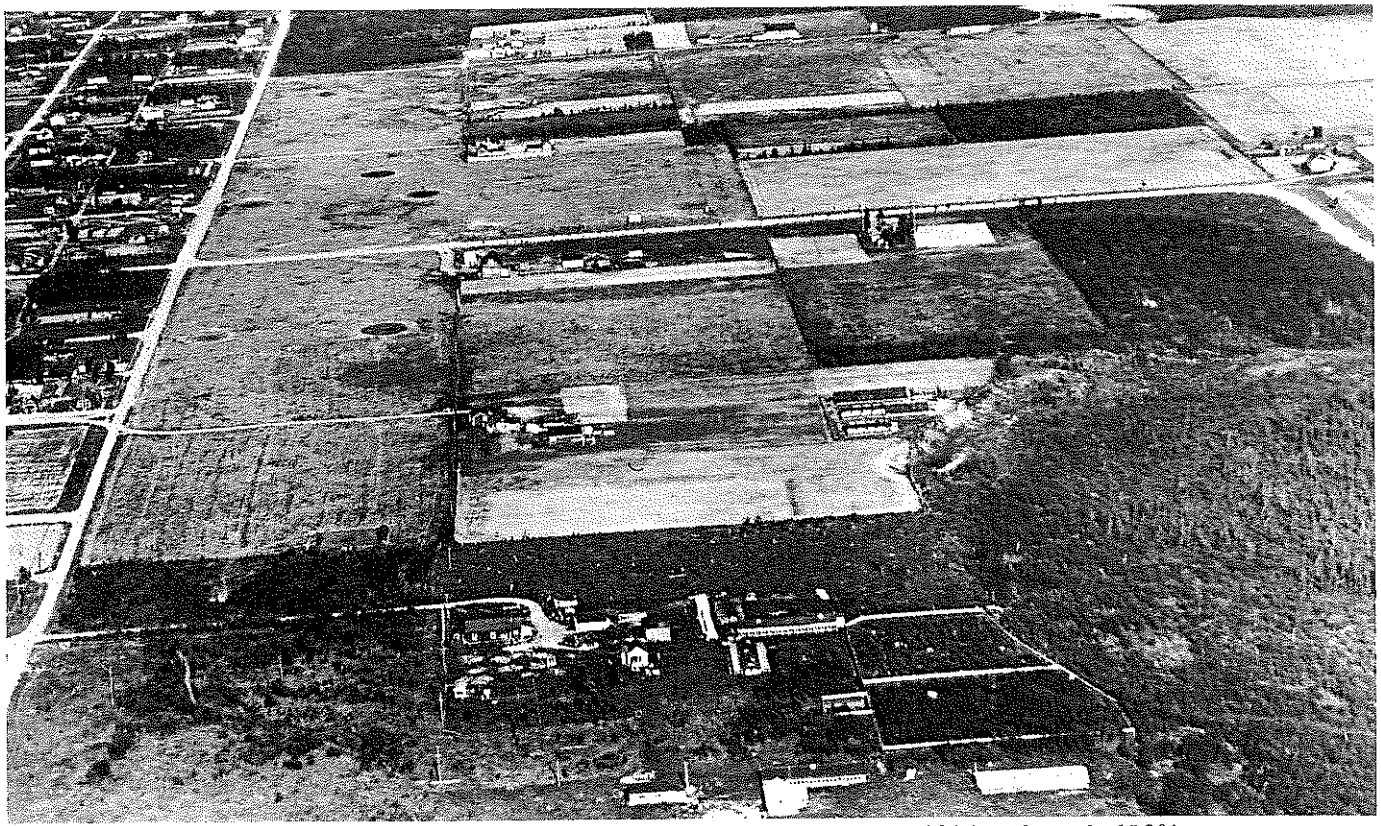
Anchorage has enjoyed the designation, "Air Crossroads of the World," for a couple of decades. However, it took years of technological advance before its enviable position in global air traffic could be realized. Aviation began in Anchorage in 1922. That summer Ottis Hammontree flew a worn Boeing amphibian, powered by a Hall-Scott engine, to the Ship Creek town.[1] That event preceded the use of the first aviation field by a couple of years. It would be almost a decade before Merrill Field was in full operation. Elmendorf Air Base was but a dream, some twenty years distant. International Airport was beyond the stretch of the imagination.

Hammontree's Boeing ended up in the Inlet. Yet others, such as Noel Wien, Russ Merrill, Ray Petersen and Bob Reeve, were to enter the aviation scene. Their endeavors greatly expanded aviation within the territory. Rightfully, they and others like them have a place in Anchorage air history. In the following sketches, the airfields and related facilities of the first few decades of Anchorage aviation are discussed. (For information about military aviation, you are encouraged to read the Elmendorf Air Base Chapter.)

The Park Strip (Delaney Park)

Remembered by a number of Anchorage's pioneers, the "Park Strip" was the city's first airfield. The series of blocks between Ninth and Tenth Avenues was set aside in 1917 as a firebreak and for park purposes. It provided a buffer between the town and the heavily wooded area to the south. Although Alaskan aviation began in 1914 when aviator James Martin flew in Fairbanks' Fourth of July celebration, it was not until the early 1920's that the potential of aviation was realized. Anchorage citizens were deeply interested in linking air technology to the town. In May 1923 virtually the whole town stepped forward to clear the brush and stumps of the fifteen-acre strip to create an airfield. The event was unique in the annals of Anchorage history.

> It was one occasion when everybody worked, and there were no shirkers. The highest Alaskan Engineering Commission official threw his shoulder under the fulcrum with the brawny, big upstanding private in the industrial ranks. Men whose hands had not been soiled by anything heavier than a pen for many years, grappled the mattock



The Park Strip, cleared as an aviation field in 1923. "Aeroplanes" used the field from 1924 to the early-1930's.

> or the axe and shook the kinks out of his flabby muscles. Ladies with rakes and other implements cleared away the small debris while others piled it upon the small mountain of stumps ready for the torch.[2]

Within the course of two days, the people celebrated with a barbecue. Anchorage had its first aviation field. However, it was to be another year before it was put to use.

Noel Wien's "J-One" was the first plane to fly off the Park Strip.

In June 1924 Noel Wien and his mechanic, W.B. Yunker, came over the rails from Seward with a crate containing a "J-One" standard plane. They assembled the plane here and began a series of "joy-rides" carrying Anchorage residents. Those were the first flights from the aviation field. (The first aerial photography of the city was taken at this time by Guy Cameron of Bragaw Studios.) The owner of the craft was James Rodebaugh who consented to have "Anchorage" painted on the side of the airplane – a kind of civic advertisement at the time.[3]

Those initial days of flight from the "Park Strip" were to be short-lived. Rodebaugh guaranteed Wien $300 per month for an aviation job in Fairbanks that summer. Wien was asked by Rodebaugh to fly the plane to Fairbanks. On July 6, 1924, Wien and Yunker gunned the 150-horsepower Hispano-Suiza engine and flew off from the "Park Strip" toward Fairbanks. The mission, despite the visibility of the railroad line being obscured by forest fires, was a successful

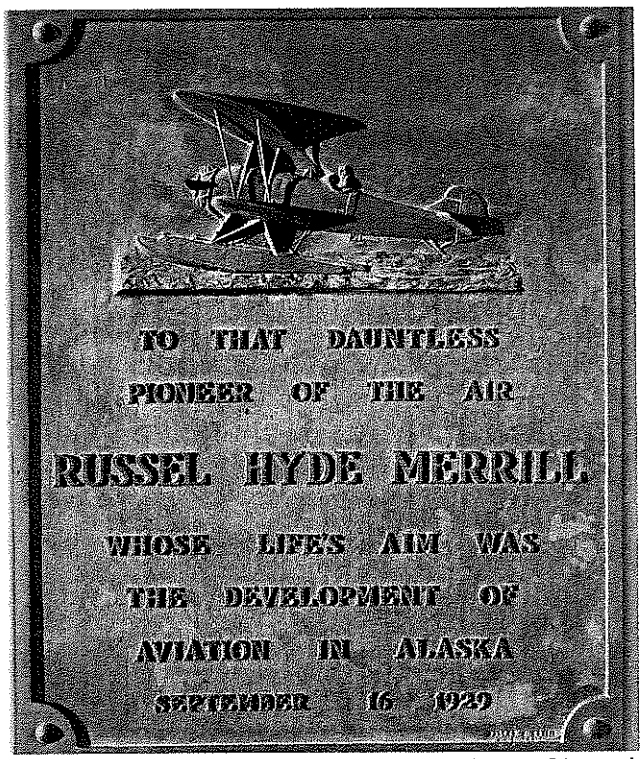
Anchorage Air Transport, Inc.'s Anchorage No. 1 was piloted by Russ Merrill.

one. Wien's flight marked the first time that the Anchorage-to-Fairbanks trip had been made.[4] The "Park Strip" was also home to the first local airlines company. Anchorage Air Transport, Inc. was formed in 1926 with Art Shonbeck, Oscar Anderson, Gus Gelles and Ray Southworth as its directors. Russ Merrill was their first pilot.[5]

The aviation field was used for about seven years. Even when Merrill Field was completed, spring breakup forced pilots to use the more solid town strip. During the 1920's the field doubled as a golf course. Even as late as 1939, Providence Hospital officials cited that the golf course could be used in emergency situations to bring patients in from the bush. During World War II, military barracks were set up on the west end of the grassy plot. By that time it had become a dividing line between the original townsite and the new subdivisions to the south. Today the strip is officially known as Delaney Park in honor of James J. Delaney who was Mayor of Anchorage from 1929 to 1931.

Merrill Field

In 1929 Anchorage's first runway (the Park Strip) became the "old aviation field" as the City Council realized that "it was not possible to enlarge it to meet our needs."[6] A special committee, consisting of Oscar S. Gill, H.H. McCutcheon and Carl E. Martin, was appointed to work with aviation officials and the Territorial Highway Engineer to select a new site. That summer it was agreed that the "Aviation Field" (as it was known at that time) should be laid out on the east end of town. Portions of two home-



The dedication plaque, c. 1930. The Anchorage Women's Club saw to it that the field was dedicated in memory of Russ Merrill. This plaque now hangs on the new tower.

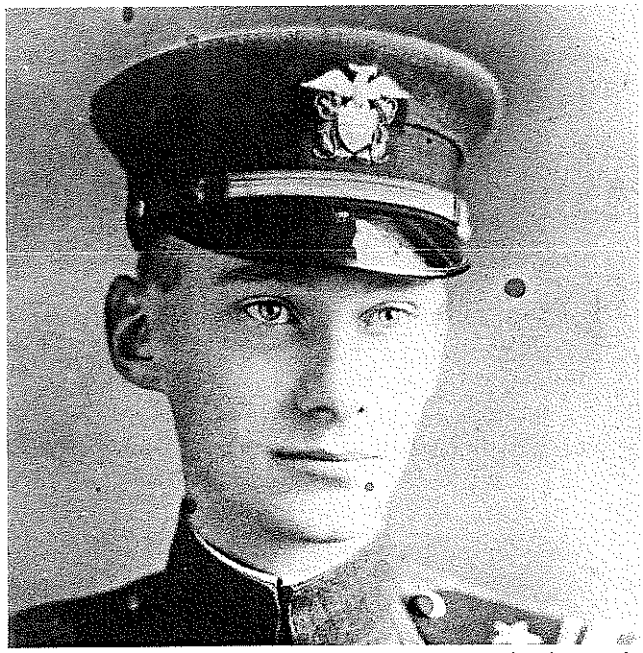
steads were purchased by the City and the remainder of the land was released for airport purposes by President Herbert Hoover.[7]

Clearing and plowing took place that summer through efforts of the City. The next year the Alaska Road Commission assisted in packing the sod and putting it to seed. On July 4, 1930, Matt Nieminnen took the honor of the first landing as he lowered his Alaskan Airways Waco 10 onto the newly mowed field.[8] The "old aviation field" was occasionally used thereafter. In fact, in May of 1931, the Council had to order Alaskan Airways to "discontinue the use of the Golf Course as a landing field."[9]

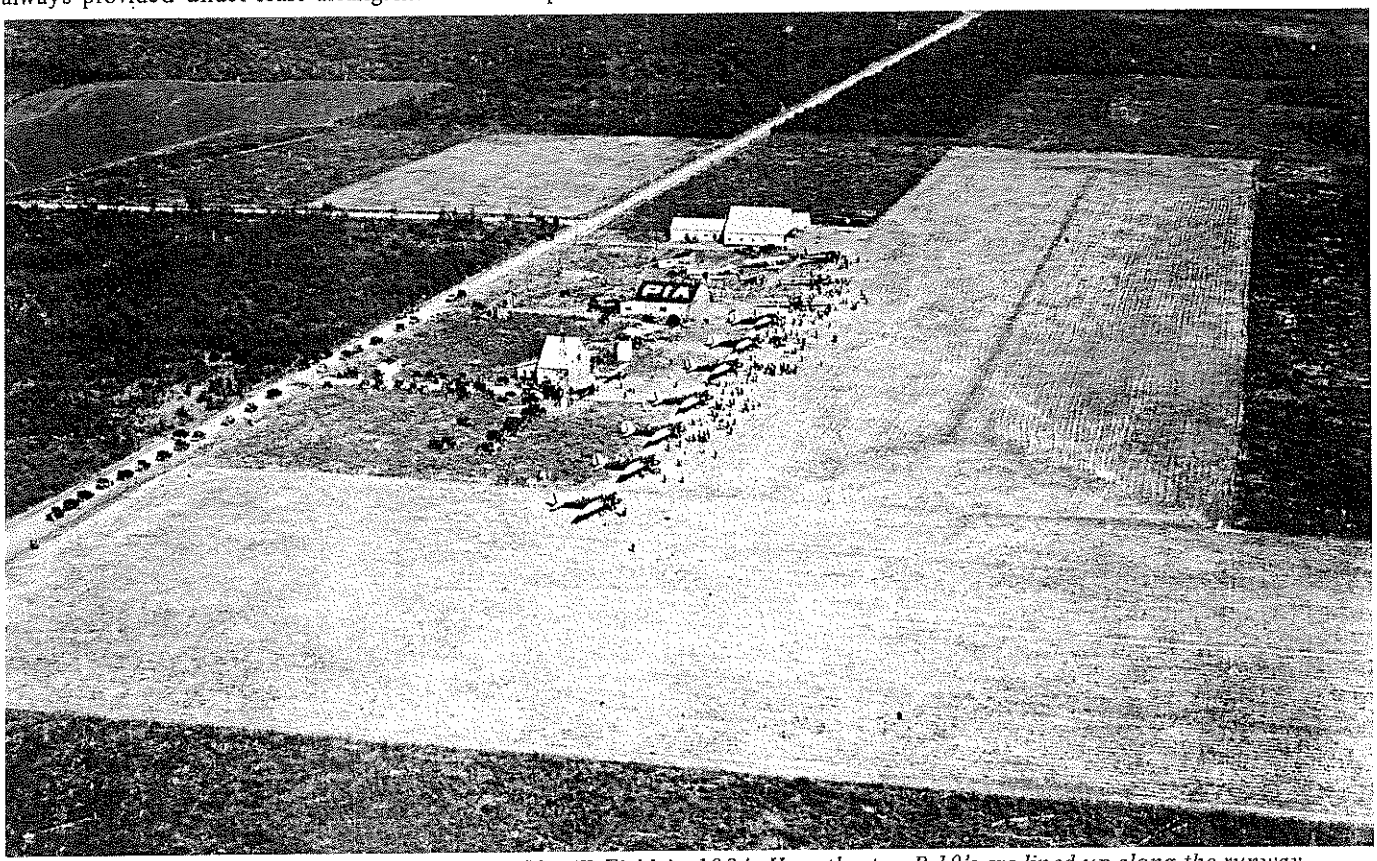
In the spring of 1930 the Anchorage Women's Club presented a resolution to name the new field after Russell Hyde Merrill, an Anchorage pilot who had just lost his life the year before. That resolution was endorsed by the Territorial Board of Road Commissioners.[10] After the idea was adopted by the City Council, the field was dedicated as "Merrill Field." In 1931 the Women's Club also saw to it that a tower and beacon were erected.

Growth of related air facilities was slow but steady. Alaskan Airways moved their sheet metal hangar, which had been along Tenth Avenue, to Merrill Field in the late summer of 1930.[11] By the mid-1930's, a handful of buildings was standing along the north side of the runway. (That land was always provided under lease arrangement to the operators.

Russ Merrill



The City did not initially receive title to the land; it only had the right to use it as an airfield.) Among the operations at the field in 1934-35 were Bowman Airway, McGee Airways, Star Air Service and Woodley Airways. None of the buildings associated with those early operations are believed to be in existence.[12]



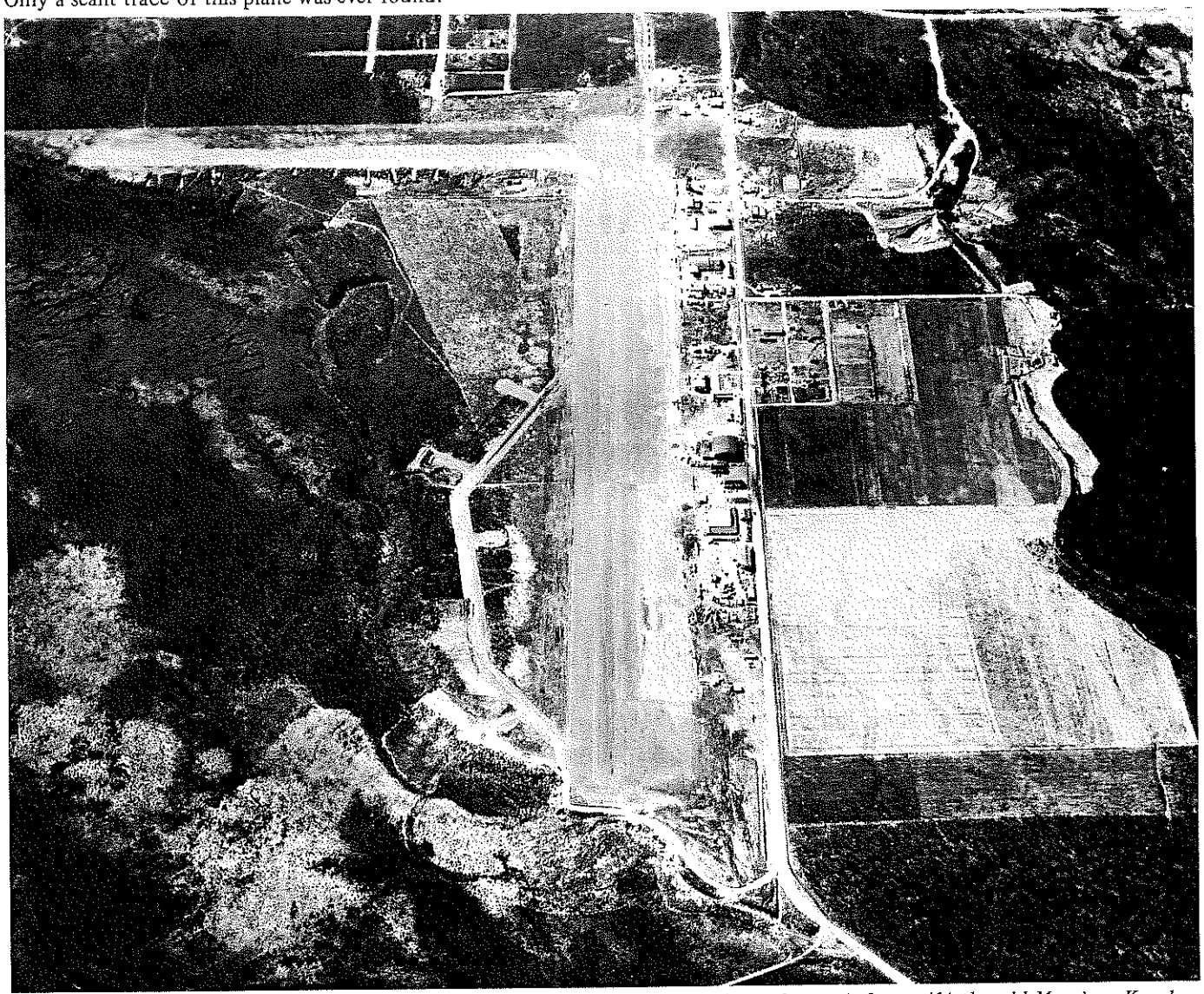
Hap Arnold led an Army Air Corps mission to Merrill Field in 1934. Here the ten B-10's are lined up along the runway.

Russell Hyde Merrill

The man for whom Merrill Field was named was truly an Alaskan aviation pioneer. Russ Merrill's initial venture into Alaskan skies was marked by his arrival in Juneau in 1925. Although James Martin launched Alaskan aviation some ten years earlier (with his 1914 Fairbanks airshow), not many more than a handful of men had flown in the Territory by the time of Merrill's arrival. Merrill became a pacesetter in the fledging enterprise. He recorded a number of firsts, including his 1925 single craft flight across the Gulf of Alaska, the main run from Nenana to Nome and finding the Alaska Range pass that bears his name.

Born in Des Moines, Iowa on April 8, 1894, he attended Grinnell College before transferring to Cornell University. World War I beckoned him into the Navy. There he received his first taste of flying as a Naval aviator. With the War's end he finished his chemistry degree at Cornell, graduating in 1919. He moved to the Pacific Northwest where, while in the paper industry, he continued flying.

After the initial stint in Alaska in 1925, he returned the following year and piloted passengers and goods across the bush. Taken by the Great Land, he brought his wife and two sons to Anchorage the following year. He worked for the Anchorage Air Transport Corporation. The next two years were spent in countless miles of flight across the vast subcontinent. He became noted for his ability to fly in varying weather and under exhausting conditions. On September 16, 1929, he returned to Anchorage after flying a hunting party up north. Another job awaited him upon that return. He loaded the needed heavy equipment in his aircraft and was on his way to Akiak, a Kuskokwim village. It was to be his last flight. Merrill disappeared in crossing Cook Inlet. Only a scant trace of this plane was ever found.[14]



Merrill Field as it appeared in 1946. The major buildings still in existence from this period are: (1) the old Morrison-Knudsen buildings; (2) the old Alaska Airlines hangar; and (3) the Flight Service Station.

Besides the civilian operation, there are two significant instances of military use. The first occurred in the summer of 1934, when Hap Arnold and those under his command flew ten B-10's to Anchorage. Merrill Field was their base of operations while they undertook aerial reconnaissance of the Cook Inlet area. With the decision to build Ft. Richardson, the Army Air Corps, under Major Everett S. Davis, used Merrill Field until Elmendorf Field was completed.

During the war years, a number of new facilities were constructed, including the Morrison-Knudsen complex and the Civil Aeronautics Administration Flight Service Center. In 1943 there were 15,878 operations at the field. During the late war years, the field is said to have been busier than LaGuardia Field in New York. By 1950 the number of operations had surged to over 150,000.[13] Today there are about 353,000 takeoffs and landings annually.

The Civil Aeronautics Authority and The Flight Service Station

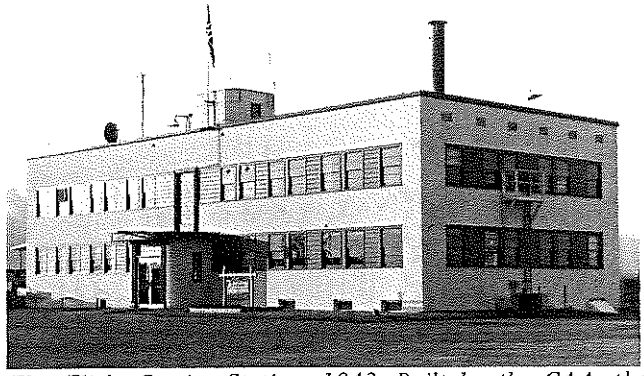
The federal government's role in Alaskan aviation began in the 1930's. Given the immense landscape of Alaska, aviation was widely recognized as the means to link the towns and villages of the Territory. In October 1938 representatives of the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA) met with personnel of the Army Air Corps, the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics, the Coast Guard's Aviation Division and the Department of the Interior's Division of Territory to discuss plans for developing a system of airports in Alaska. The consensus at the meeting was that the military importance alone was sufficient to justify federal participation in the cost of the airports. As a result the Civil Aeronautics Authority proceeded with a request of the Bureau of the Budget for appropriations to construct airports and a communication system.[15] The first federal appropriation came a year later.

In 1939 Marshall Hoppin was selected as the first Regional Administrator for CAA in Alaska. He arrived in Anchorage that summer (setting up an office in the old railroad headquarters) and had fifteen personnel under him to oversee the creation of Alaskan Aviation System. Hoppin relates the objective: "The CAA was in Alaska first to serve the military and their objectives in the defense of Alaska, remembering CAA's mission was also to determine the airways and airports program were to be properly located to serve commercial aviation, then and in the future."[16] Hoppin, and his agency, worked closely with General Simon B. Buckner, Colonel Gaffney, Colonel Everett S. Davis and other military personnel in coordinating air facility development. The army built most of the Aleutian facilities while the CAA concentrated its efforts on the mainland.

It was a formidable task in overcoming the distances, the extremes of temperature and the arctic soil conditions. Costs were expected to run fifty to one hundred percent higher. "Materials were brought in by airplane, dog sled or river barges; and first-rate lumber – unavailable on the tundra – had to be shipped in from Seattle. CAA's unofficial motto became: There is nothing impossible. It only takes a little longer."[17]

Among the airports CAA built were: Nome, Kotzebue, McGrath, Iliamna, Farewell, Summit, Ruby, Lake Minchumina, Annette Island, Cape Yakataga, Cordova, Unalakleet, Gustavus, Kenai, Big Delta, Wales, Aniak, Gambell, Fairbanks, Northway, Dillingham, Gulkana, Skwentna, Bethel, Galena, and Moses Point.

Airports were not the only contribution of CAA to Alaskan aviation. In 1939, there were no air communications in the territory with the exception of radioed weather reports. Those reports were terribly unreliable. A system of stations was built by CAA to transmit weather conditions and to assist in air-to-ground, ground-to-air communications. Only four Alaska pilots were certified for instrument flying in 1939. Many bush pilots, long independent with their own flying instincts, felt CAA was trying to put them out of business. CAA held a conference that first year to acquaint them with their mission in Alaska – to make it safe to fly, even in overcast weather.[18] By 1941 fourteen airfields had been created and the rudiments which enabled instrument flying were in place.



The Flight Service Station, 1943. Built by the CAA, the building has continuously served as a flight service facility.

The CAA's Flight Service Station at Merrill was a major facility in the Territory. Altogether there were about forty flight service stations in Alaska. These were located across the mainland and partway out onto the Aleutians. The Anchorage facility, built under force account by CAA personnel, opened in the fall of 1943. It was the largest flight service station, serving as a relay center by which flight information between various stations could be sent. The building originally contained the Anchorage Flight Service Station, the Weather Bureau, the Flight Inspection Office, Air Traffic Control, the General Inspection Office and Flight Standards Office.[19]

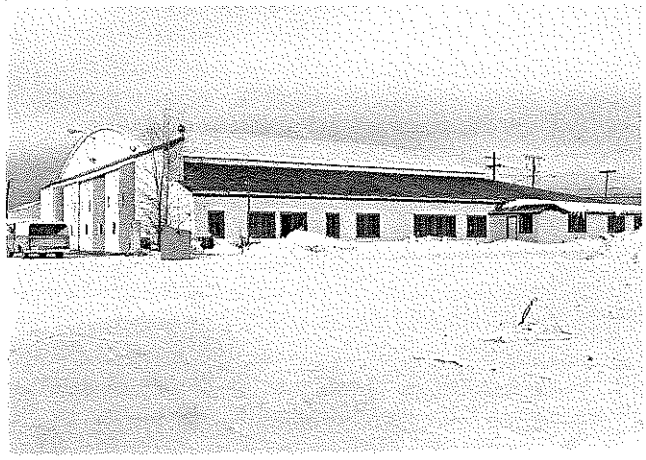
Today the flight service station is in very active use. The regional flight service station is on the first floor while the international flight service station is upstairs. Also upstairs are thirty teletypes which automatically relay Alaskan weather via satellite to Kansas City; in turn, it is placed in a standard format and returned to the Merrill Field facility within minutes. Whereas the early operation was largely carried out by semimanual methods, today computerization and automation have revamped the operation of this facility.

Morrison-Knudson's Buildings

During World War II there was a rapid expansion of air facilities throughout Alaska. Air bases were to be built as part of the nation's defense system. Morrison-Knudson (M-K), an engineering and construction firm out of Boise, Idaho, played a large role as a contractor for the Civil Aeronautics authority. As the largest of all contracting outfits at the time, M-K constructed many of the airfields including those at Northway, Fairbanks, Gulkana, Galena, Aniak and McGrath.

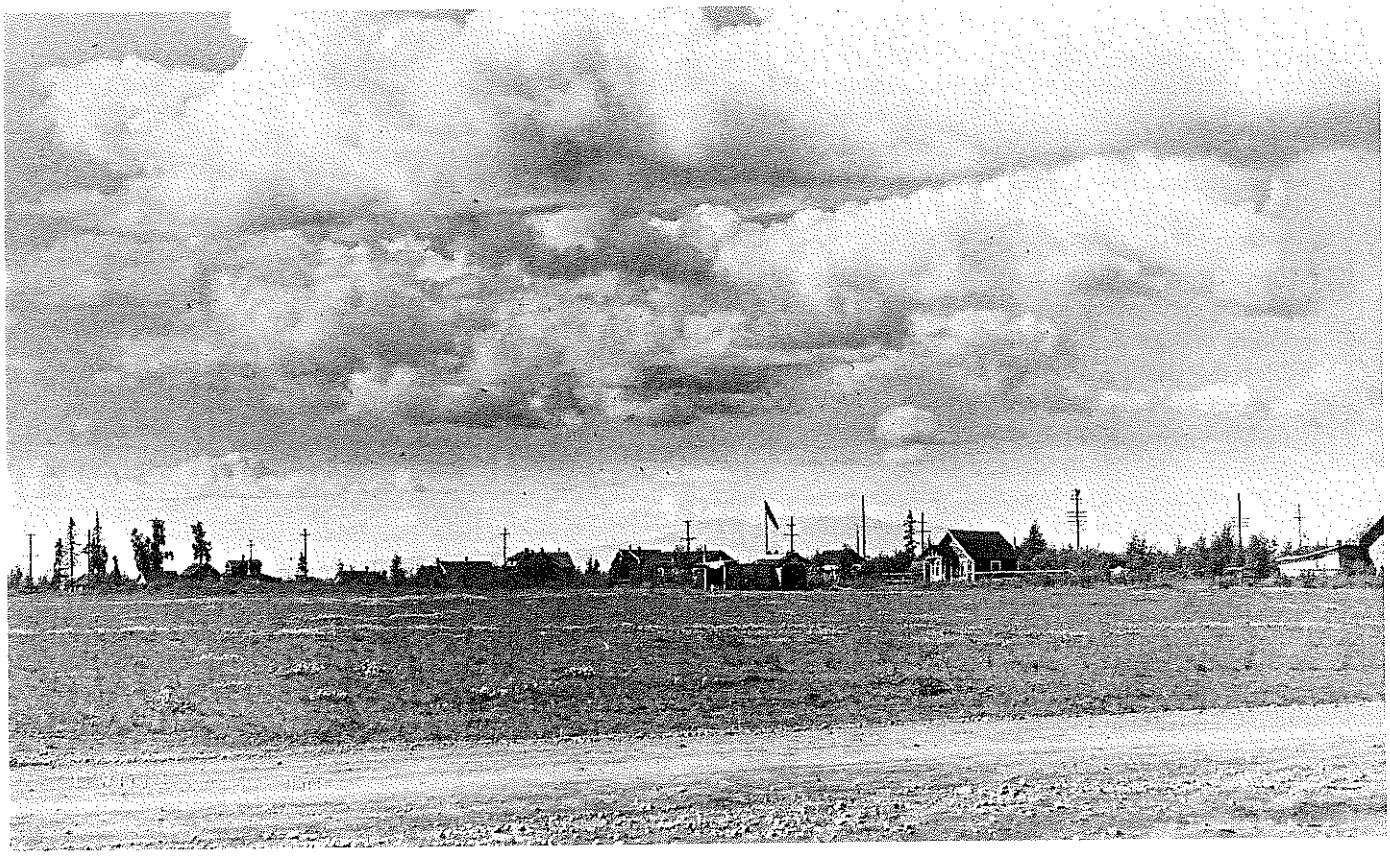
Merrill Field served as M-K's headquarters from which equipment and men were sent to the various projects. Along the north side of the runway the major portion of their complex still stands. The hangar now used by the community college was built around 1944. It replaced M-K's original hangar which burned down in 1944. Built atop the same concrete floor, its one-quarter-inch asbestos walls offer a good deal of fireproofing.

The old Morrison-Knudsen hangar, c. 1944. This structure was built after a fire destroyed the engineering firm's original hangar. The community college now uses the facility as part of their flight school.



Two sets of barracks were built by M-K. Altogether about twenty-five men were housed in them. The Inlet Inn has converted those two barracks into part of their motel units. M-K's messhall, which stood near the barracks, has been torn down.[20]

During the initial years when Reeve was building Reeve Aleutian Airways, he farmed his aircraft maintenance out to Pacific Airmotive. In 1950 when Reeve's airline business was in the midst of a crucial period, Pacific Airmotive was folding its Alaskan operation. Reeve then bought the company, and with the purchase, inherited the equipment shed (now Reeve Airmotive) and the nearby hanger.[21]



Merrill Field in the 1930s.

The old Morrison-Knudsen barracks, c. 1943, now sit at 9th Avenue and Eagle Street.

M-K played a large part in the defense and development of the Territory during the war. They were largely a self-sufficient outfit. They flew their own planes. They flew in their own equipment and men. And they carried out the projects through their own efforts. M-K had a fleet of twenty-two aircraft. One of those planes, a Boeing 80-A, is now part of the Transportation Museum at Palmer.

Lake Hood-Lake Spenard

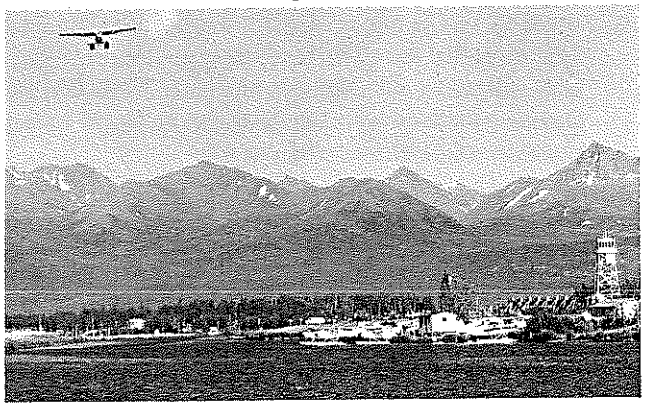
The floatplane base at Lake Hood-Lake Spenard is acknowledged to be the busiest operation of its kind in the world. The canal between the two lakes, which made the large-scale operation possible, was dug in 1939-40. The colorful history associated with the lakes can be traced back to the years before Anchorage was created.

The lakes (like all of what is now Anchorage) were part of the Chugach National Forest when that reserve was created in 1909. That spring Thomas Jeter built a cabin near Lake Spenard (it was called Jeter Lake at first). He lived there for about five years until he was compelled, under court order, to give up his land. Jeter had built his cabin and made his improvements on Forest Reserve land which was not open to homesteading at that time.[22]

Not long after Jeter lost the court battle, the area was opened to homesteading. Joe Spenard began an out-of-the-ordinary homestead there. His improvements included a full-scale resort with a roadhouse, bathhouses and bathing beach. (The small park and beach at Lake Spenard are

Joe Spenard's resort in summer.

Lake Spenard-Lake Hood, 1978. The control tower has been relocated to the State Transportation Museum.



similarly situated to Spenard's resort.) Joe was not an ordinary individual. His notoriety as one who enjoyed a "good time" had already been established during the initial year of Anchorage's growth. At the time he ran "City Express," a delivery service. An early *Anchorage Daily Times* captures some of his personality: "Joe Spenard caused considerable excitement Saturday afternoon when he attempted to drive his yellow car through the doors of the Robarts pool hall. He made the attempt for a box of cigars promised him by Jack Robarts if he accomplished the feat; otherwise he was to pay the damages. Joe is still smoking his pipe."[25]

Joe Spenard opened his resort in August 1916. The lake continued to be a primary recreation area for many years thereafter. In 1923 President Warren G. Harding, while in Alaska to dedicate the Alaska Railroad, sojourned for a short afternoon at Lake Spenard.[26]

With the growth of aviation in the Territory, the floatplane became a steadfast means by which the bush could be linked with the towns of Alaska. Lake Spenard and Lake Hood were probably first used in the late 1920's. The limitation of the lakes was that their length prohibited larger loads. In order to increase the loads a longer takeoff space was necessary. Previous to the completion of the Lake Hood-Lake Spenard Canal, planes took off from Knik Arm at the proper tide level. Goods were loaded while the aircraft was on the arm.[27] In the late 1930's a number of solutions to the floatplane base problem were studied. (Some felt that a floatplane facility could be created by building a dam next to Merrill Field. That proposal ran into opposition from those homesteaders whose land would be flooded.) The Lake Spenard project had been "long advocated by aviation men."

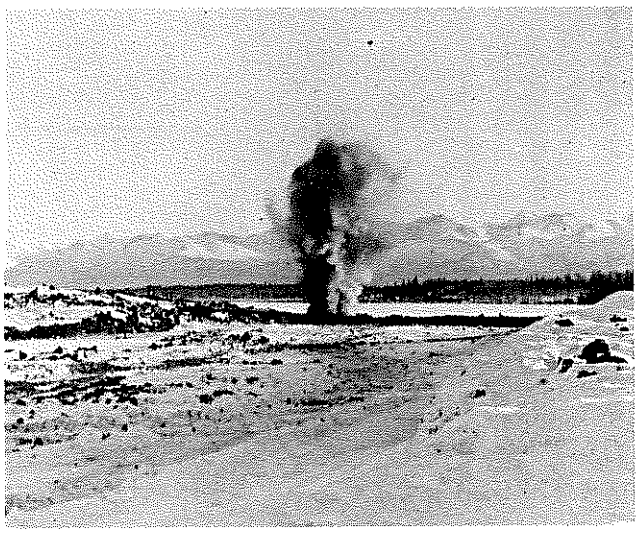
The canal which joined the two lakes was constructed in 1939-40 through the Alaska Road Commission.[28] Some of the labor was reportedly performed Civilian Conservation Corps.[29] The construction required the removal of 75,000 cubic yards of earth over the 1,800-foot-long canal. It was dug to a depth of about four feet and a width of 200 feet. In later years various bays were created to expand to "docking" facilities for aircraft.

The first company air service off the lakes was that of Sea Airmotive which began under Ward Gay in 1943. A quonset hut offered enough protection to keep his Jay Three Cub operating. Among the approximate half-dozen other aircraft which operated off the lake at the time were a Bellanca, a Taylor craft, a T-craft and J-R Stimson. In those days there were only two other buildings at the lake: Adolph's and Helen Vail's place (later known as the Idle Hour). Both have burned down.[30]

Over the years various "docking" bays were created to expand the aircraft facilities. The small, pitched-roofed sheds are primarily for fuel storage. Besides the canal itself, a parallel runway was developed by which planes could land on wheels. Afterwards the switch to floats could be made. That runway was located on the south side of the canal. It was known as the Spenard Strip.

During the 1940's aircraft operators had no control tower by which flight assistance could be received. With the inauguration of service at International Airport in 1951, the need for air traffic control became more acute. The Lake Hood Tower was installed at the floatplane base in 1955. That tower was first used at Yakutat during World War II. It was moved to Anchorage around 1950 to serve at the International Airport before its use at Lake Hood. (That tower was dismantled during the spring of 1978. It will probably be reassembled at the Transportation Museum in Palmer.)[31]

With the presence of the tower, statistics on flight operations began to be assembled. During 1955, the first year of recordkeeping, there were 46,180 operations at Lake Hood-Lake Spenard. The trend has been toward increased figures each year. During 1977 there were over 74,000 operations of the facility.



Creation of the canal which joins the two lakes took place in 1939.

CHAPTER 10: ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE

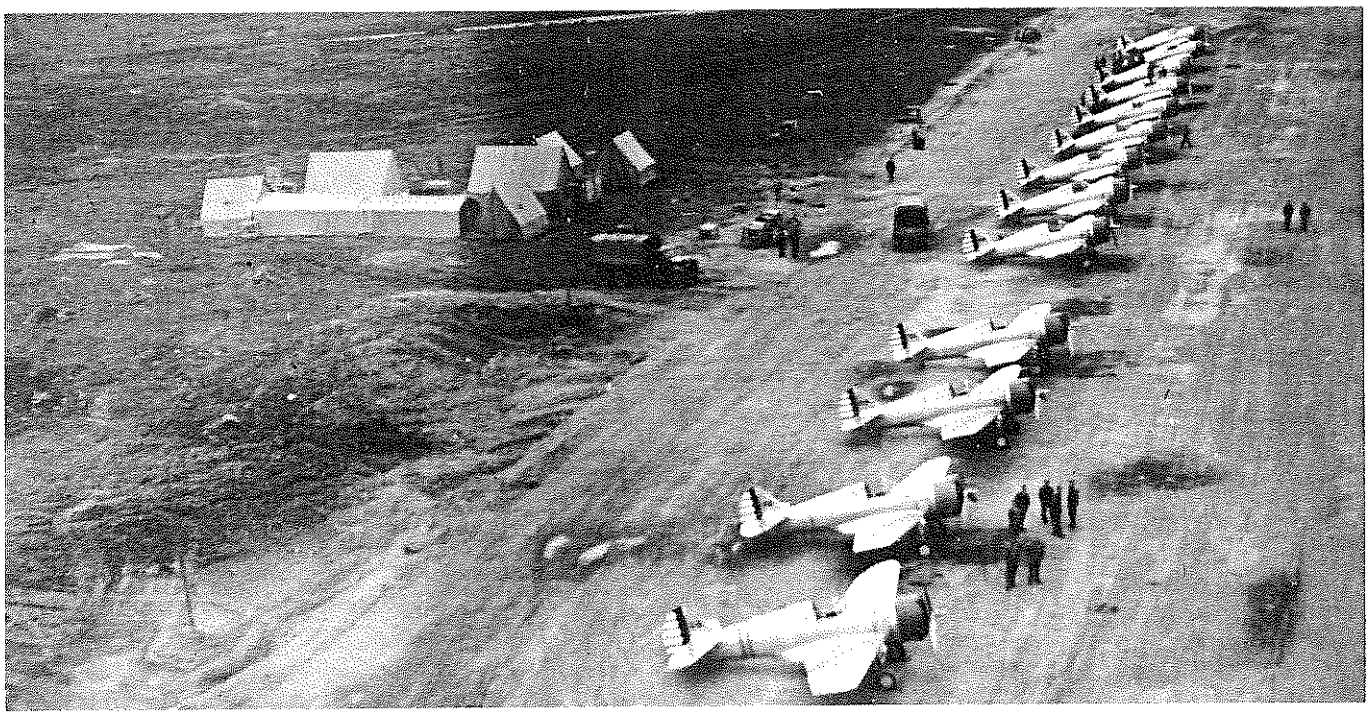
A variety of marginally-related events led to the creation of Elmendorf Air Force Base. One might consider the August 1934 reconnaissance mission of Lt. Colonel Henry H. (Hap) Arnold as the forerunner of these events. Arnold led a squadron of ten B-10 bombers to Merrill Field that summer and undertook aerial photographic missions in south central Alaska. Known as "The Alaska Flight," the mission was established to prove the capability of the B-10 and to look for possible airfield sites in Alaska. Based at Weeks Field, Fairbanks, thousands of miles were covered via aerial photography, including areas near Fairbanks, Valdez, Haines and Anchorage.

That same year when Japan announced its major disarmament program, Alaska's Congressional Delegate Anthony J. Dimond urged the U.S. House to defend the northern Pacific by strengthening the defensive position of Alaska. Pointing out the strategic location of Alaska in relation to the Orient, he told Congress: "Establish bases at Anchorage or Fairbanks, also in the Aleutians. I say to you, defend the United States by defending Alaska."[1] Further, he introduced a bill which would have authorized $10,000,000 for an air base in Alaska. After referral to the House Military Committee, the bill died.

In 1935 the case for an Army Air Corps base was once again brought before the House. Brigadier General William (Billy) Mitchell, who had served in the early 1900's in constructing the Washington Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System (WAMCATS), forcefully spoke in favor of air bases in Alaska before Congress. He prophesied of the role that air power would play in military operations, and he proclaimed the importance of Alaska's position in world-wide affairs. "Japan is our dangerous enemy in the Pacific. They won't attack Panama. They will come right here to Alaska. Alaska is the most central place in the world for aircraft, and that is true either of Europe, Asia, or North America. I believe, in the future he who holds Alaska will hold the world."[2]

With Dimond's persistent efforts and Mitchell's timely rhetoric, Congress authorized the development of a U.S. Army Air Corps base in Alaska on August 12, 1935. This was accomplished through the Wilcox Act which outlined approval of air bases for six strategic areas including Alaska. While authorization for an air base was one thing, an appropriation of funds with which an air base could be built was an entirely different matter. By the end of the decade, funds had still not been set aside.

In 1939 funding for a cold weather testing station at Fairbanks (Ladd Field) was approved, yet the air base funds which would ultimately create Elmendorf were not forthcoming. A new round of requests for the air base began. General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, Major General Arnold, then Chief of the Air Corps, Delegate Dimond, and others testified



The P-36S of the 18th Tactical Fighter Squadron on Elmendorf Field, 1941.

to the necessity of such an air base before the Appropriation Committee of the House. Their request seemed to go well. However, the initial 12.7-million-dollar appropriation had been deleted when the House voted on the bill in April 1940. During the time in which that military appropriations bill was being considered by the Senate, Adolf Hitler indirectly echoed the importance of an air base to the defense of the United States when he overran Norway and Denmark. Thus, in May, the Senate restored the Anchorage air base and the House concurred. Elmendorf Field and Ft. Richardson were to become realities.

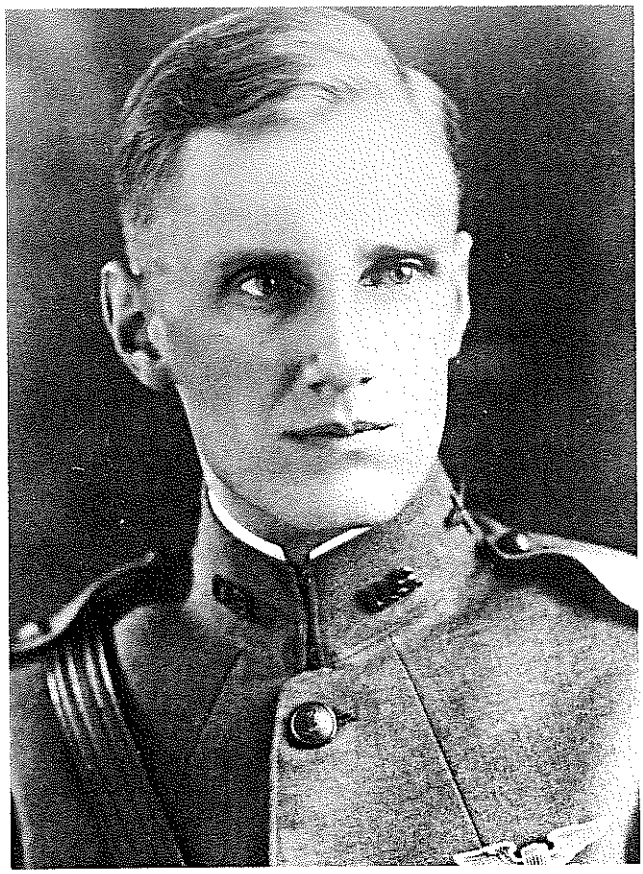
Colonel Simon Bolivar Buckner was responsible for the building of the air facilities at the original Fort Richardson. He reached Anchorage on July 22, 1940 to take on the mammoth task of developing military strength in Alaska. Buckner had little doubt of the impending war. He saw to it that a series of air fields were built throughout the Territory. When the Japanese struck Pear Harbor, Buckner rallied his limited defensive resources. With increasing air power and infantry over the next few years, the Japanese were repelled from the Aleutians. Nicknamed "The Silver Stallion of Alaska," Buckner is credited with the defense of the Territory during World War II.

Before Buckner arrived, the Military Reservation where Elmendorf now is located had been withdrawn by Executive Order in April 1939. A number of homesteads formed the extent of development prior to military activity. With the passage of the appropriation bill, construction began on June 8, 1940, when a handful of civilians started to clear and recontour the land.

The Air Force was part of the U.S. Army in 1940. Elmendorf Field was the designated air field, located on the army post, Fort Richardson. Thus the original buildings on Elmendorf Air Force Base (AFB) served army air force as well as infantry and other army purposes. The new Fort Richardson, created in 1950, should not be confused with the original Fort Richardson which is now Elmendorf AFB.

By the end of June, the 4th Infantry had arrived to construct the airfield. That outfit of 30 officers and 774 enlisted men was under the command of Lt. Colonel Earl Lambreth. They camped on the former homestead of Arthur Marsh. There, the typical question was "Where's the air base?" They quickly realized that they were camping on top of it. They progressed quickly in constructing the runways. On July 8th, General H.H. Arnold returned to Anchorage to inspect the airfield. He ordered the elimination of plans for the diagonal runway from the original three-runway scheme in order to provide more efficient operation.

In the meantime, while Elmendorf Field was being constructed, Merrill Field was used as the landing strip. There on August 9, 1940, Major Everett S. Davis and two enlisted men arrived. They were the first Air Corps personnel. A small frame shelter served as both operations and sleeping quarters for the small crew. In September that mobile shack was dragged to the new air base as the Air Corps went into operation at Elmendorf Field. Although the airfield had been completed for a number of months, it was not until December 12th that the War Department, through General Order Number 9, gave the Anchorage Air Base its name. That order designated the military reservation as Ft. Richardson and the flying field as Elmendorf Field, in honor of Captain Hugh M. Elmendorf.



Captain Hugh M. Elmendorf.

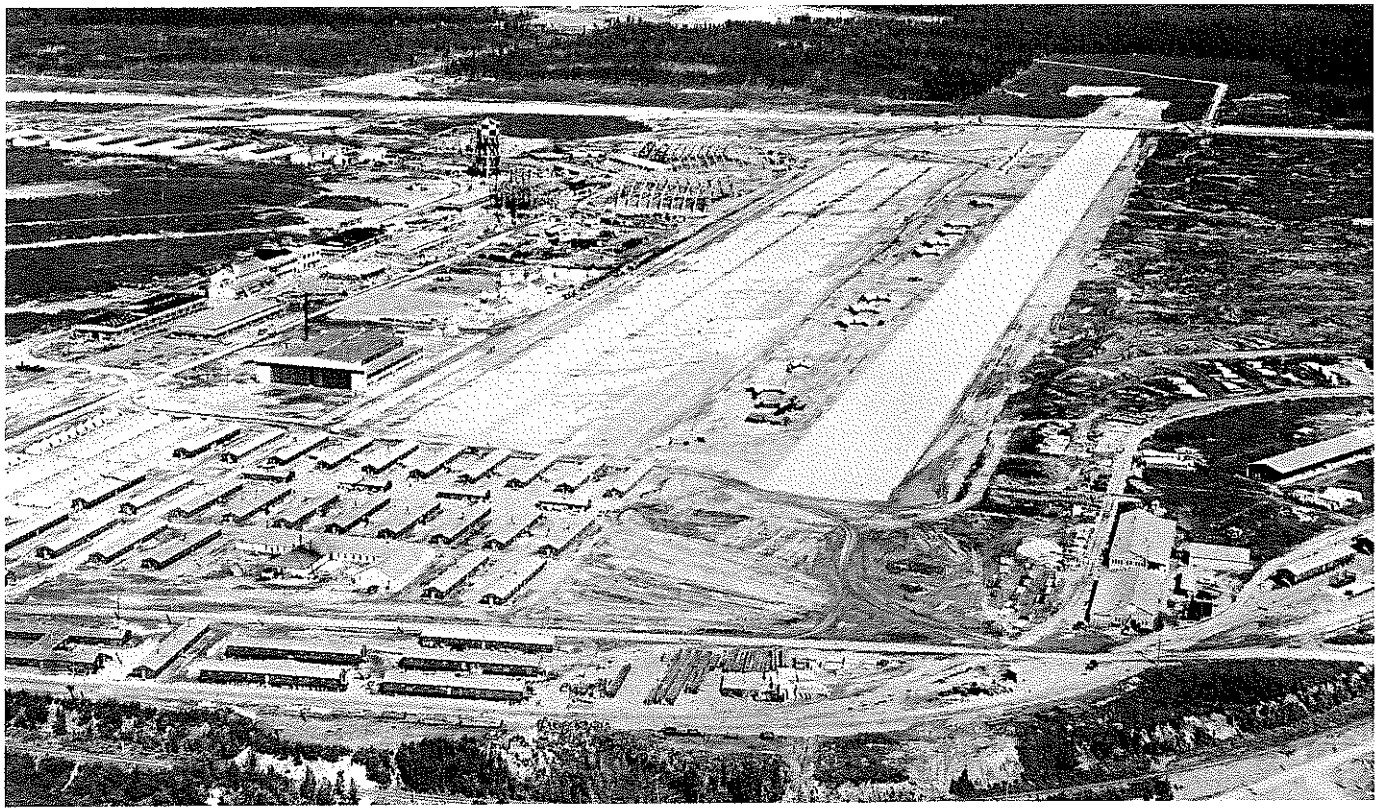
Greatly instrumental in the construction of Elmendorf Field was B.B. Talley who arrived in Alaska in 1940 as a Major with the Engineers Corps' Seattle District. He oversaw the construction of the airfields at Yakutat in 1940 and at Unimak Island in 1941, securing a strategic position in the Aleutians. The Unimak project resulted in a Distinguished Service Medal for Talley in view of the threat posed by Japanese Imperial Command. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Talley's work increased dramatically. He oversaw the engineering efforts throughout the duration of war in Alaska. Rising to the rank of Lt. Colonel, he was designated as Officer-In-Charge of all American military construction. During 1942, he oversaw the completion of construction at Elmendorf. (For more information about Talley, see the Brown's Point Cottages.)

Captain Elmendorf's military career was a relatively short one, but included a number of highlights in pursuit flying. Shortly upon graduating from Cornell University in 1917, he joined the army. During the war era, he served in the Infantry and quickly rose to the rank of Captain. In 1921 he was transferred to the Air Corps and completed the primary flying course at Carlstrom Field in Florida and the advanced flying course at Ellington Field in Texas to become a pursuit pilot. During the late 1920s and early 1930s he was noted as a pioneer in high altitude pursuit and as a gunnery expert. After a stint with the Sixth Pursuit Squadron at Luke Field in Hawaii, he was reassigned to the command of the 94th Pursuit Squadron at Selfridge Field, Michigan. His other command posts included that of the 95th Pursuit Squadron at Rockwell Field, California. While with that squadron, he led a combat formation in maneuvers at an altitude in excess of 30,000 feet. That altitude shattered the combat formation flying record of 17,000 feet. Early in 1933 he was assigned to test a new type of pursuit aircraft at Wright Field, Ohio. On January 13, 1933, the 38-year-old pilot lost his life when his test plane plummeted in a steep dive. He was buried in the Arlington National Cemetery January 16, 1933.

The original construction centered around the creation of the airfields. Work continued throughout the winter of that first year. By January 1941, runways and aprons had been graded to a length of 750 feet and a width of 200 feet, with paving of almost 5,000 feet in length and 60 feet in width. In February the major personnel requirements of the base were filled with the arrival of the 18th Pursuit Squadron (which had twenty P-36's), the 23rd Air Base Group, the 28th Composite Group and the 36th Bomb Squadron. With their arrival Fort Richardson - later to be renamed Elmendorf Air Force Base -was officially organized.

During the remainder of 1941 and through 1942, the main structures, such as the headquarters building, the photo lab, hangars and quarters, were constructed. Despite the flurry of building activity, the Air Base was woefully deficient in air power when the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor on the infamous day, December 7, 1941. Only six B-18's and twelve P-36's were operable at the start of World War II. Because of the war, Anchorage was totally blacked out. Civilian construction workers and dependents were evacuated, as were the wives of Air Corps personnel. At the time there were 7,363 enlisted men and 496 officers at the base. Orders quickly changed the pace of military life: combat units manned their positions, ships remained in port, and guards were posted to prevent possible sabotage. On December 21st, Alaska was declared a theatre of operations. The Eleventh Air Force was organized in January, 1942, with Colonel Davis as the commanding officer. This unit was the forerunner of the Alaskan Air Command.

During World War II the threat of Japanese attack was feared most on those stepping stones leading to Japan, the Aleutians. The Alaska Defense Command was mobilized and moved to Adak where a garrison and airfield were constructed during the summer of 1942. Adak was the wartime headquarters as the military build-up continued during the year. Ft. Richard-



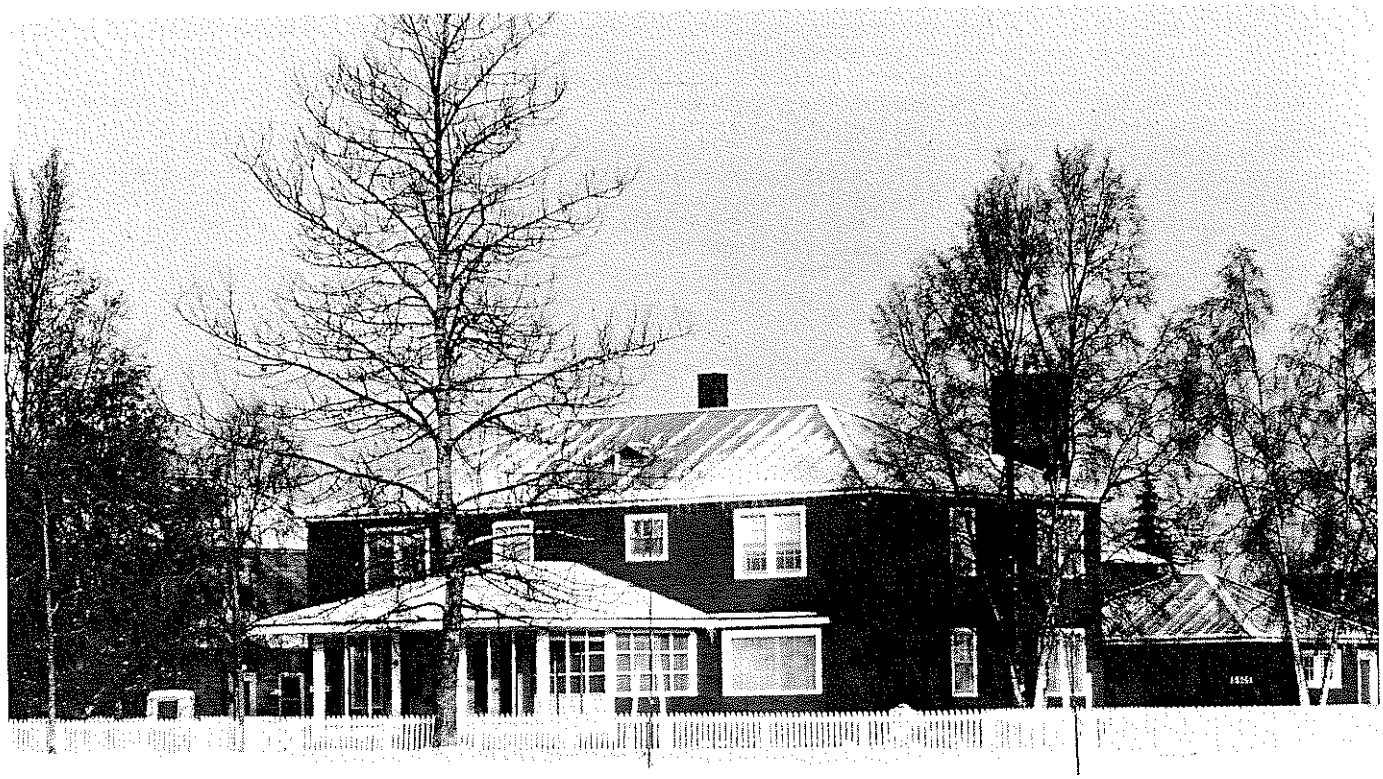
Elmendorf Field, 1941.

son served as the rear support base, a logistics center from which troops and supplies could be moved to the western front. The concern of enemy attack in Alaska was not a vacant fear; Japanese bombers struck at Dutch Harbor on June 3rd and 4th and shortly thereafter invaded Attu and Kiska.

The eleventh Air Force was established in February, 1942. The next month, Brigadier General William O. Butler became its commander. Advance headquarters were established at Kodiak. Cold Bay, Otter Point and Unimak Island were used as forward operating bases. From there fighters and bombers could easily reach the Japanese-occupied Kiska, only 250 miles to the west. Shortly before the close of the war, the airfield on Adak was named in honor of Colonel Davis. The airpower of the Eleventh Air Force was increased extensively under General Butler's command. As many as 359 aircraft were in service in August, 1943, as the American forces prepared to capture Kiska. That mission was accomplished on August 15th when the U.S. troops invaded the Aleutian Islands to find that the Japanese had secretly evacuated their defenses under a shroud of mist and rain. Having successfully completed his mission, General Butler was transferred to the European theatre in September and Major General Davenport Johnson assumed command of the Eleventh Air Force. Reductions in troop strength were made during the duration of the war.

Following the war, the Eleventh Air Force was redesignated the Alaskan Air Command. Headquarters of the command were maintained at Davis Air Base, Adak Island from December, 1945 to July 1, 1947, when it was transferred to Elmendorf Field. In the months preceding that transfer the Alaskan Air Command, an organization with a joint staff of Army, Navy, and Air Force commanders, had been established at Elmendorf Field. With both the Alaskan Command and the Alaskan Air Command at Elmendorf, a new headquarters building (which is now called the Colonel Davis Building) was constructed during 1947 and 1948. From that time until 1955, Alaska's air defenses were expanded and improved. Accordingly, the Alaskan Air Command developed rapidly to provide a radar and communications system. With that system early warning of enemy attack could be made. The Command was also to maintain air bases from which retaliatory attacks could be made.

The final note in the early history of Elmendorf and Ft. Richardson revolves around separation of the Air Force from the Army. This took place in 1947. With the creation of the Air Force, control of the Alaskan Command was given to that branch. The territory was, and the state still is, considered primarily as an "air" theatre of operations. After the establishment of the two distinct branches of military service, preparations were made to separate Army and Air Force functions in Alaska. Plans were carried out as the new Ft. Richardson, the Army Post, was established on the east side of the Military Reservation. Elmendorf Air Force Base was officially separated from Ft. Richardson on October 16, 1950, when the Army transferred the base and its supporting facilities to the jurisdiction of the Air Force.[3]



Quarters of the Commander-In-Chief.

Quarters of Commander-in-Chief, Alaska (Building 5-504)

Building 5-504 was completed in 1942 as part of the original construction of Fort Richardson. Like other residences on the street, it was a duplex originally used to house field grade officers. Later, the building was converted to become the quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, Alaska. Building 5-504 is a conventional, two-story, wood frame structure. Sitting on a concrete foundation, the structure features wood flooring, a fireplace, a basement, a metal hip roof and an enclosed front porch. A white picket fence surrounds the landscaped grounds. Included on the grounds are a stone monument and a bronze plaque which together commemorate the historic meeting of Richard M. Nixon and Emperor Hirohito of Japan in September of 1971.

The house is significant for two reasons: as the quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, Alaska, and as a major facility in the historic meeting of President Nixon and Emperor Hirohito. The residence is also significant in its role as a structure in which many dignitaries have been entertained over the years.

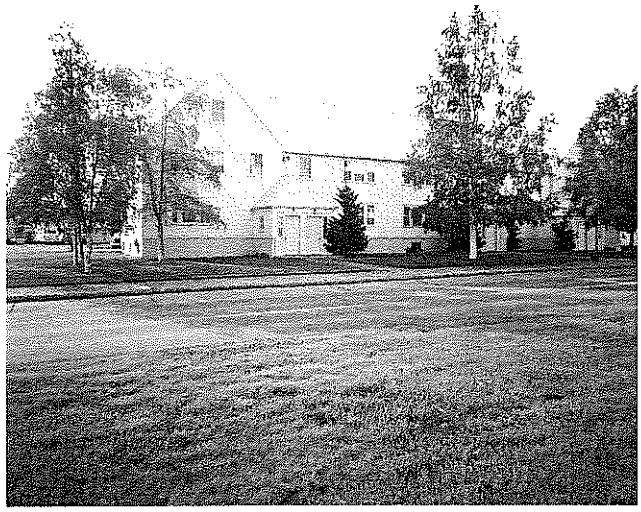
Since its conversion to the Commander's quarters the following generals have resided there:[4]

Major General Howard A. Craig, 1947-1947
Lt General Nathan F. Twining, 1947-1950
Lt General William E. Kepner, 1950-1953
Lt General Joseph H. Atkinson, 1953-1956
Lt General Frank A. Armstrong, Jr., 1956-1961
Lt General George W. Mundy, 1961-1963
Lt General Raymond J. Reeves, 1963-1966
Lt General Glen R. Bichard, 1966-1967
Lt General Robert A. Breitweiser, 1967-1969
Lt General Robert G. Ruegg, 1969-1972
Lt General James C. Sherrill, 1972-1974
Lt General James E. Hill, 1974-1976
Lt General M. L. Boswell, 1976-1978
Lt General Winfield W. Scott, Jr., 1978-1981
Lt General Lynwood E. Clark, 1981-1983
Lt General Bruce K. Brown, 1983-present

A recent highlight in the history of Anchorage and Elmendorf Air Force Base was the widely acclaimed Nixon-Hirohito meeting which took place on September 26-27, 1971. During that time President and Mrs. Nixon stayed overnight in the house. The two heads of state and their wives used Building 5-504 to conduct the business associated with their meeting. The historic occasion was exceptionally notable in that it marked the first time in more than 2,000 years of Japanese history that a reigning monarch had set foot on foreign soil.[5]

"The Alaska Chateau" (Building 5-560)

Building 5-560 is also known as the guesthouse-visiting officers' quarters. However, it has been commonly referred to as "The Alaskan Chateau" because of its role as a guesthouse for visiting VIP's. The structure, which was designed as a multi-family unit for Commanding Officers, was completed in 1942. It served that function until 1950, when it was modified in order to be used as quarters for visiting senior officers. The two-story, wood frame building sits on a concrete foundation. They major portion of the building, which is approximately 80 feet long, is intersected by two wings that serve as offsets for porches. The roofline of these wings forms a very steep pitch providing a chateau-like appearance. When the building was refurbished as a guest house, its interior was decorated in Early American style. Particular suites, for example "The Presidential Suite," are designated in accord with the position of prominent persons who have stayed in them."



"The Alaska Chateau," 1942. This visiting officers quarters has been used by many of the world's V.I.P.'s in the last few decades, including Kennedy, Kissinger and Eisenhower.

Nixon and Hirohito at Elmendorf, 1971.

The Major Darrel C. Pyle Building (Building 11-530)

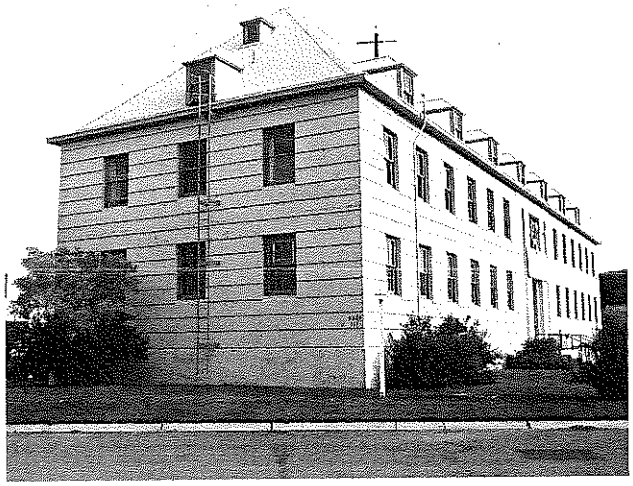
Building 11-530 was originally the headquarters of the Eleventh Air Force, the predecessor to the Alaskan Air Command. The concrete, "Neo-Georgian" building was completed in 1942. The most prominent feature is the copperfoil hip roof and associated dormers. The architectural style of this building is similarly repeated in the construction of the original at Elmendorf. However, the Eleventh Air Force Headquarters Building was the most important structure in the physical layout of the base. During World War II the thrust of military action was in the Aleutian Chain. When the Eleventh Air Force Headquarters was moved to Davis Air Force Base on Adak Island, this building served as support headquarters for the duration of the war. Since 1948 it has been the headquarters of the major operational unit on Elmendorf. From 1966 to the present time that operational unit has been the 21st Tactical Fighter Wing. Major Darrel C. Pyle, for whom the building was recently named, was a decorated Vietnam-era pilot who lost his life in an aircraft accident in Alaska in the 1970's.[7]

The Colonel Everett S. Davis Building (Building 5-800)

Long-time Elmendorf associates probably refer to this building as the AAC Headquarters. Its new name in honor of Colonel Davis was given to the structure in the fall of 1977. Since 1948, when the building was completed, this pristine white structure has been the heart of Elmendorf Air Force Base, not only in a geographic sense but also figuratively for it has been the headquarters building for both the Alaskan Command and the Alaskan Air Command. Since the dissolution of the Alaskan Command in 1975, it has served as headquarters for the Alaskan Air Command and NORAD which are fundamental in the defense of the Northern Hemisphere.

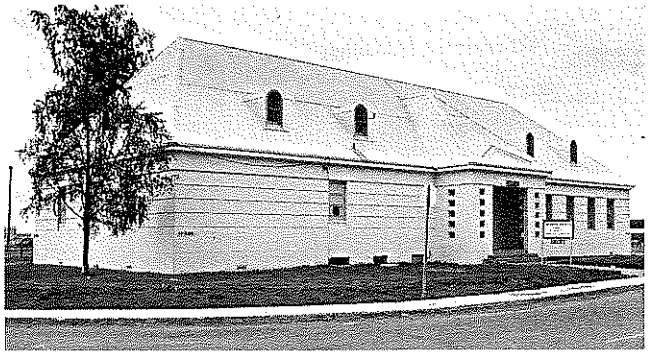
Architecturally, it is the richest of Elmendorf's buildings. The Art Deco building was designed by Dick and Ernie Boyd who were architects with the Army Command's Alaska Department - the forerunner of the Alaska District Office, Corps of Engineers.[8] The building stands apart from others on the Base. Partly because of its location, but more importantly because of its architectural detailing: the symmetry, mass and aesthetics of the cast concrete structure. The streamlined, clean lines of the building are highlighted by a partially-fluted facade and the molded lettering designating the building as the AAC Headquarters. The interior of the building is finished with tile floors and walls. Embedded in the terrazzo floor of the lobby is the multi-colored symbol of the Alaskan Command. Other features include historic memorabilia of the Command and a vibrant screen of flags which separates the lobby from the hallway beyond. In the late 1950's, the Command Post for NORAD and AAC was added to the south face of the building. That concrete, windowless, bulwark is finished in the same texture and in complementary scale to the original building.

The Major Darrel C. Pyle Building, 1942. This "neo-Georgian" building was originally part of the 11th Air Force Headquarters during W. W. II.



As the most significant building on Elmendorf Air Force Base, Building 5-800 was recently designated as a memorial to the father of the Alaskan Air Command, Colonel Everett S. Davis. Davis entered the Army in 1918 and in a matter of months was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. The early part of his military career was spent in the Air Service Communications School and the Air Service Observer School. The 1920's and early 1930's were marked by a series of appointments to various aviation units. In 1938 and 1939 he was trained in the Air Corps Tactical School and the Army Command and General Staff School. Shortly thereafter, he received his Alaskan assignment to oversee the construction of Elmendorf Field.

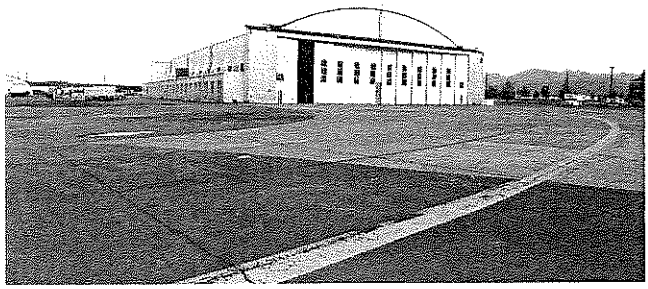
With two enlisted crewmen, he flew a B-10B aircraft to Alaska and landed at Merrill Field in August of 1940. A few months later he became the first Commanding Officer of Elmendorf Field, and in July of 1941, the Army Major was assigned as Chief of Aviation of the Alaska Defense Command. By the time of the attack at Pearl Harbor, Davis had risen to the rank of Lt. Colonel. Soon after our entry into the Second World War, Davis fulfilled the task of organizing the Alaskan Air Force, the forerunner of the Alaskan Air Command. In February, 1942, the Alaskan Air Force title was changed to that of the Eleventh Air Force and Davis was assigned as its commander. Soon thereafter, he was designated as the Chief of Staff of the Eleventh Air Force under Major General William O. Butler. Davis continued as Chief of Staff during the Aleutian Campaign. In August, 1942, only months after attaining the rank of Colonel, he was nominated for consideration of the rank of Brigadier General. Before final action was achieved on that nomination, Colonel Davis lost his life as his C-53 aircraft crashed between Naknek (King Salmon) Field and Elmendorf. In February, 1943, Colonel Davis was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the War Department.[9]



The Photo Lab, 1942. This building was designed in a similar architectural style to the old headquarters building.

The Photo Lab (Building 11-620)

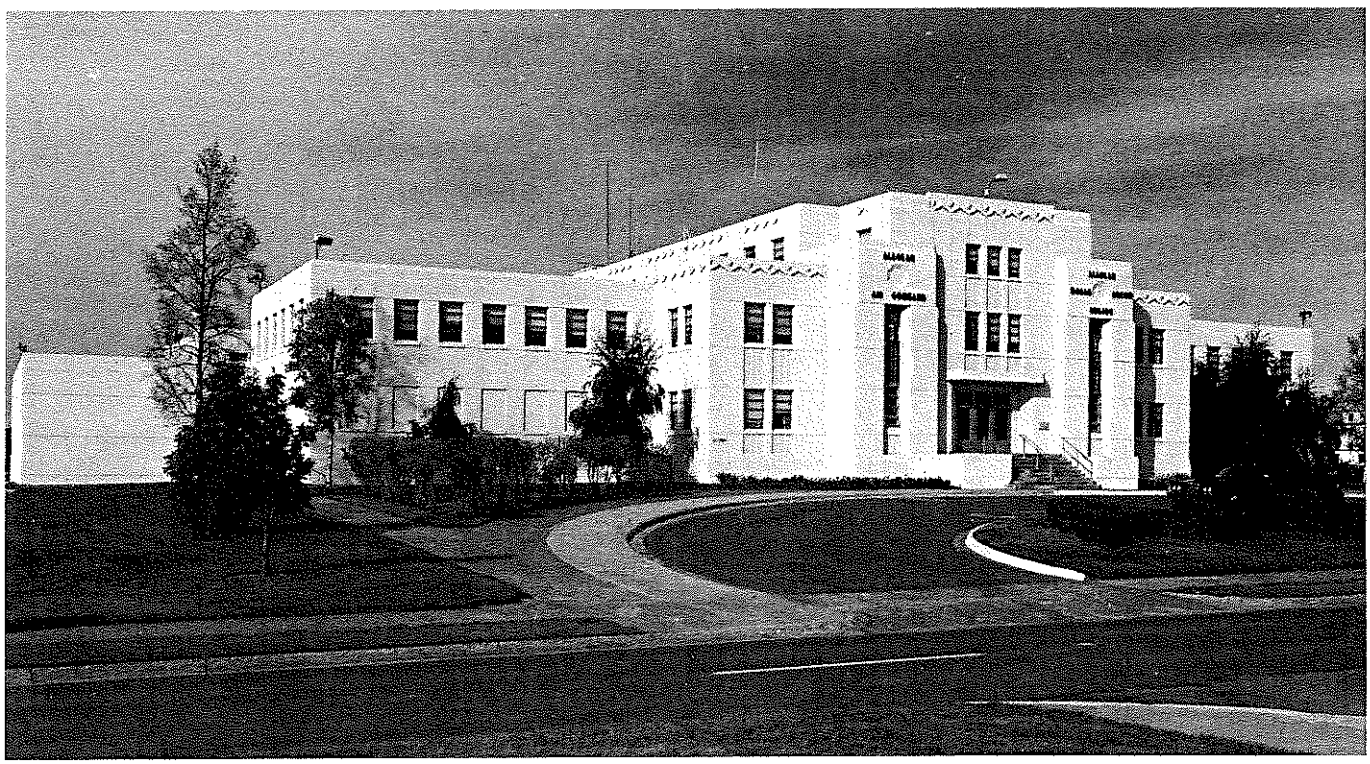
The Photo Lab Building sits to the west of the old Alaska Command Headquarters Building. It too displays features of traditional Georgian architecture. This story and a half cast-concrete building was also completed in 1942. It was originally used as a photo lab and continues to serve such a function.[10]



Hangar 5, 1944. This structure was the scene of the Nixon-Hirohito addresses and similar large-scale meetings.

"Hangar Five" (Building 32-060)

"Hangar Five," like the original hangars at Elmendorf, is an immense structure, so big in fact that it could house a football field, goal line to goal line. This aluminum-sided structure with its semicircular metallic roof was constructed on a concrete foundation and completed in 1944. Unlike some of the other original hangars, Hangar Five is not located adjacent to the airfield. It is now used for logistics purposes and for large-scale meetings. Its function as a massive auditorium has created its historical significance. It was in Hangar Five that Nixon and Hirohito delivered their addresses during their momentous 1971 meeting. Similarly, President Gerald Ford addressed 7,000 persons there while en route with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Vladivostok where they met Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev.



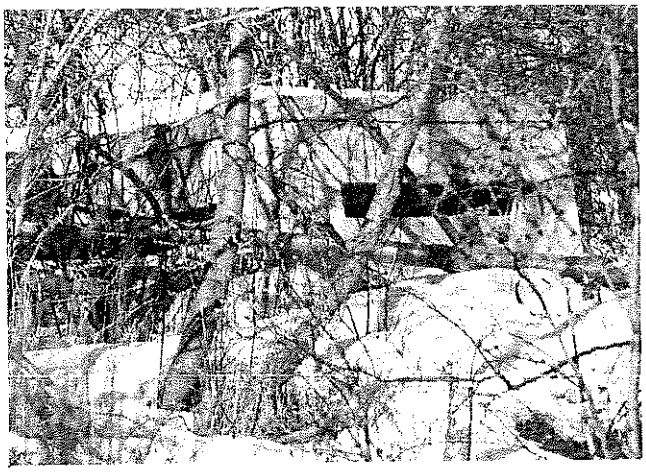
The Colonel Everett S. Davis Building, 1948. More commonly known as the AAC Headquarters, this building is a highlight at Art Deco architecture and military importance in the Municipality.

Hangars 1, 2 and 3 (Buildings 11-470, 11-570 and 11-670)

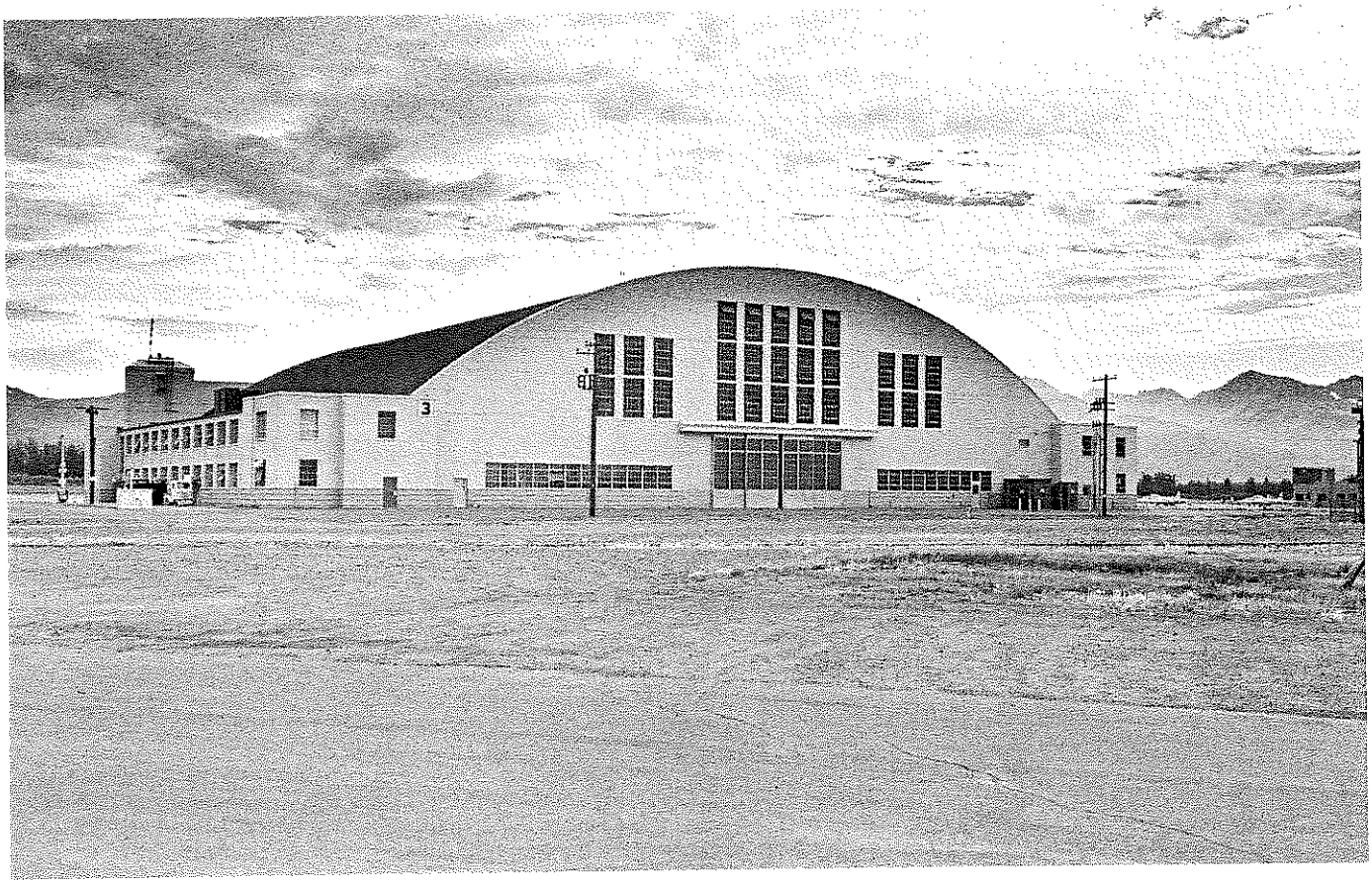
These are among the largest structures on Elmendorf. They are also among the oldest, having been constructed in the first couple of years of operation to house the fighters and bombers of the World War II era. The Army Command's Alaska Department constructed these hangars. They are essentially the same, with the exception that Hangar 2 is more spacious. Their design was proprietary. The basic structural elements are a series of steel arches which are anchored in concrete. For many years large-scale entertainment, such as the Bob Hope Show, was presented in or in front of Hangar 2. These hangars continue to serve in their original capacity.

Pillboxes

During the Second World War, various measures were taken to defend Anchorage and the air base against possible enemy attack. A series of pillboxes and anti-aircraft placements were constructed along bluffs which overlook Knik Arm and Ship Creek. Although many have been demolished or lost in the earthquake slides, a few of these reinforced concrete structures still exist. One can be seen to the northeast from the Anchorage Port; another overlooks the railroad yard, below the bluff to the east of the Corps of Engineers building. Both probably housed machine gun placements.



Pillboxes, c. 1942. These concrete structures were nestled along the bluffs of Ship Creek and Knik Arm. Few remain today as remnants of the antiaircraft measures which were taken during WW II.



Hangar 3.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1
THE ORIGINAL TOWNSITE

1. *A Collection of Voyages Round the World: Performed by Royal Authority, Containing a Complete Historical Account of Captain Cook's First, Second, Third and Last Voyages Undertaken for Making New Discoveries,* Volume V. (London: Miller, Law and Cater, 1799), p. 1815.

2. The Earl of Sandwich can be attributed with placing Cook's name on the water body. He ordered that it should be called "Cook's River"Vancouver later called it "Cook's Inlet" (See Dictionary of Alaska Place Names).

3. Cook as quoted in J.C. Beaglehorn, *The Life of James Cook* (Stanford:Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 605.

4. Andrew Christensen, "Report on Reduction of Area of Homesteads in Alaska to 160 Acres" Report to Clay Tallman, Department of Interior, General Land Office, January 16, 1915. p. 15.

5. General Land Office, Survey Maps, 1914-16, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage.

6. "Conditions at Ship Creek," *The Knik News*, March 6, 1915; and "Latest About the Railroad," *The Knik News*, March 27, 1915.

7. Monroe Woolley, "Anchorage: Advance Agent of Alaskan Development," *Illustrated World*, Volume 24 (February, 1916), p. 797.

8. William H. Wilson, *Railroad in the Clouds: The Alaska Railroad in the Age of Steam, 1914-1945* (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Company, 1977), pp. 28-29.

9. "Sourdoughs Assembly in the Coal Terminal," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915.

10. Early news account; also see "Railroad Work is Underway at Anchorage," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 5, 1915.

11. "Alaska Writer Visits Anchorage," *Valdez Daily Prospector*, May 27, 1915; also see Wilson, p. 42.

12. "Ship Creek Wants Marshall," *The Knik News*, March 27, 1915.

13. Wilson, p. 102.

14. Anchorage Townsite Withdrawal, Executive Order Number 1, April 21, 1914.

15. Alfred Mongin, *An Evaluation of Anchorage Cultural Historic District: A Proposal to Determine Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places*, Anchorage: State Office of History and Archaeology, August 1976, p. 83.

16. "Townsite Will Soon Be Available," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, Volume I (June 12, 1915), p. 1.

17. John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965).

18. J. Horace McFarland, "How Not to Plan Cities," *National Municipal Review*, January 1917, p. 59.

19. Tallman as cited in McFarland, p. 59.

20. McFarland, p. 58.

21. Wilson, p. 104.

22. Paul Gideon, *Wandering Boy* (Washington, D.C.: The Merkle Press, 1967), p. 37.

23. "Townsite Will Soon Be Available," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915.

24. "Regulations Governing the Disposal of the Lots in the New Government Townsite," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 26, 1915.

25. "The New Townsite Matter," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 3, 1915.

26. "Regulations Governing the Disposal of the Lots in the New Government Townsite," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 26, 1915.

27. Now the toe of the Buttress, near the present Alaska Railroad Depot.

28. "Anchorage Lots Bring Big Prices at Auction Sale," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*", July 17, 1915.

29. It is startling to think that $150,000 is now representative of the land value of one townsite lot.

30. Editorial, *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 17, 1915.

31. Christensen as quoted in Wilson, p. 102.

32. The name Ship Creek was first reported by Paige and Knapp in 1900; see Dictionary of Alaska Place Names.

33. This name first appeared in a folder by the Alaska Coast Company; see Dictionary of Alaska Place Names.

34. "Ship Creek Named for President," *Valdez Daily Prospector*, April 22, 1915.

35. *Ibid.*

36. "To Vote on New Name," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 17, 1915.

37. William H. Wilson, "The Founding of Anchorage: Federal Townbuilding on the Last Frontier," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Volume 58 (July 1967), p. 132.

38. "Watts New Mayor R.R. Terminal," *Anchorage Daily Times*, June 29, 1916, p.1.

39. This included the Townsite Regulations as outlined by President Wilson, June 19, 1915, and the Regulations for Fire Protection. The townsite manager collected assessments, issued permits as part of his regulatory duties. For the early fire regulations, see Cook Inlet Pioneer, July 31, 1915.

40. Wilson, p. 103 (sewer); H. J. Emard attempted to start the telephone system (see "Telephones in New Town," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 5, 1915).

41. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

RESIDENTIAL

1. Personal communication with Selma Smith, Spring 1978.

2. Evangeline Atwood, *Anchorage: All American City* (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1957), p. 12. Another source cites that "near the end of 1917" a reasonably accurate count showed 3,928 persons living in the townsite and terminal yards; see Wilson, p. 109.

3. "Describes Life in Anchorage," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 6, 1916. News accounts in the *Anchorage Daily Times* and District Recording Office City Book records.

4. Notes of Sister Margaret Cantwell, Holy Family Cathedral, Anchorage.

5. Personal communication with Bert Wennerstrom, Cappy Faroe, John Bagoy and Pete Bagoy, Fall 1978.

6. Letter of Elizabeth Anderson to Michael Kennedy, December 30, 1975.

7. The information in this biography was graciously provided by Bernice Bloomfield, Anchorage, Summer 1978.

8. *Seward Gateway*, March 13, 1909.

9. *Seward Gateway*, March 18, 1911.

10. Interview with Roderic Carpenter, March 1984.

11. Interview with Franklin Landstrom, January 1984.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Interview with Mrs. Harry Hill, March 1984.

14. Notes from *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, late summer 1915.

15. Interview with Patsy James, June 1984.

16. Personal communication with H. Romig, February 1984.

17. Interview with Bill and Lillian Stolt, March 1984, and tax ledgers of the City of Anchorage.

18. Personal communication with John Bagoy, November 1978.

19. Personal communication with Mrs. Hazel Seaberg Warwick, Winter 1978.

20. Personal communication with Mary Ann Eckstrom, March 1984.

21. Personal communication with Mrs. Hazel Seaberg Warwick, Winter 1978.

22. Personal communication with Cecil Brayford, April 1984 and Townsite Trustee Records, Bureau of Land Management.

23. Personal communication with Helen McDowell, June 1984.

24. Personal communication with Pete Bagoy, December 1978.

25. Personal communication with Helen McDowell, June 1984.

26. Personal communication with Bert Wennerstrom, Fall 1978.

27. Personal communication with Harold Wirum, December 1978.

28. Personal communication with Selma Smith, Spring 1978. (the word "bungalow" is a modification of a Hindustani word, bangla. In India this type of dwelling with its prominent veranda was built for British administrators in the late 19th century. The bungalow became a widespread housing form in the United States from the early 1900's to 1940.)

29. Marcus Wiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1969), p. 220.

30. At least one photograph depicts an early scene of this area and is labeled "Bohunk Town."see Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum. Also see Wilson's text regarding immigrant labor.

31. Personal communication with Catherine Weimer, June 1984.

32. Interview with Sydnee Stiver, June 1984.

33. *Ibid.*

34. Interview with Florence Kennedy, June 1984.

35. Information in this description gained through telephone interview with Steve McCutcheon, Summer 1978.

36. Personal communication with Bill Stolt, November 1983.

37. Personal communication with Mrs. Carl Martin and Bonnie McGee, Fall 1978.

38. Information compiled by Dave Harvey, on file with Anchorage Planning Department.

39. Information about houses provided by Bert Wennerstrom, Fall 1978.

40. Interview with Doris Saario and Joanne Rantala, January 1984.

41. Personal communication with A.W. Young, Jr., July 1984.

42. Anchorage City Books, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

43. Information compiled by Dave Harvey, on file with Anchorage Planning Department.

44. By comparison of the 1927 and 1962 Sanborn maps.

45. Interviews with Bert Wennerstrom, March 1984, and Mike O'Neill, June 1984.

46. Anchorage City Books, District Recording Office, Anchorage, and personal communication with Bert Wennerstrom, John Bagoy and Pete Bagoy, Fall 1978.

47. Personal communication with Lois Amundsen, July 1984.

48. Personal communication with Inga Hadley, June 1984.

49. Tax Records, City of Anchorage.

50. Personal communication with Mrs. George Peterson, June 1984.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Interview with Allen Turner, November 1983.

53. Interview with Willard Jordet, February 1984, and with Norma Hoyt, June 1984.

54. Personal communication with Cappy Faroe, December 1978.

55. To meet fire code this material was covered during the renovation.

56. Personal communication with J. V. Brown, November 1983.

57. Anchorage City Books, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

58. Evaline Atwood and Robert N. DeArmond, *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics*, (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1977) p. 98.

59. Personal communication with Roland Lane, July 1984.

60. Personal communication with Bert Wennerstrom, Fall 1978.

61. Information in this description gained through interview with Earl and Freddie Plumb, March 1984.

62. Tax Records, City of Anchorage.

63. Interview with Alice Aylward, June 1984.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Personal communication with Julia Simeo, March 1984.

ALASKA ENGINEERING COMMISSION HOUSING

1. "Commission Cottage Directory," Alaska Railroad Record, Volume 1, No. 14 (February 13, 1917), p. 1.

2. U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on the Territories, *Construction of the Alaska Railroad: Report Number 231* (Sixty-sixth Congress), August 18, 1919, p. 2.

3. *Daily Times*, August 10, 1916, p. 5.

4. See File Drawings Engineering Department, Alaska Railroad. Almost all the original drawings of A.E.C. housing are missing at the Anchorage Headquarters. Blueprints of the drawings may be available through the National Archives.

5. "Contract Let for Seven Residences." *Anchorage Daily Times*, August 0, 1916. (Note: this article says Balch had the contract to build the seven dwellings on Block 19. It is believed the "19" was a typographical error as Block 19 was not built upon. Block 17 was the only one upon which seven residences were built.)

6. "Commission Cottage Directory."

7. The most prominent one, Cottage 19, was built for Frederick Mears. Long known as the Ohlson House because of its association with Col. Otto Ohlson, it was torn down in 1972.

8. Wilson, pp. 37, 80 and 138.

9. Information based on *Cook Inlet Pioneer* articles; also, Wilson, pp. 102-107.

10. Personal communication with John Longacre, 1978.

LOG BUILDINGS

1. Cornelius Osgood, *The Ethnography of the Tanaina* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937), p. 56.

2. Petroff as quoted in Frederica de Laguna, *The Archaeology of Cook Inlet, Alaska* (Anchorage: Ken Wray's Print Shop, 1975), p. 143.

3. Interview with Doug Fesler, Alaska State Park Ranger, February 1, 1978.

4. Adapted from C. A. Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1969), pp. 336-340.

5. Personal communication with Virgil Knight, March 1978.

6. Tax Records, City of Anchorage.

7. Personal communication with Anna Heffentrager, June 1984.

8. *Ibid*

9. Personal communication with John Bagoy, November 1978.

10. Personal communication with Catherine Weimer, May, 1984.

11. Telephone interview with Robert Belgard, June 1984.

12. *Ibid.*

13. This is implied from interviews with local residents; also see Anchorage Tax Ledgers for Waxson entries.

14. Personal communication with Frank Bruner, Jr., July 1984.

15. Personal communication with Dorothy Bruner, March 1984.

16. Interview with Russel Johnson, February 1984.

17. Interview with John Reekie, February 1984.

18. Personal communication with present owner, June 1978; also see property records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

19. Engineering files, Alaska Railroad, Anchorage.

20. Interview with Albert Bailey, February 1984.

21. Property records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

22. Personal communication with Bert Wennerstrom, Fall 1978.

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS OF EARLY ANCHORAGE

1. "Fine Growth Shows Faith in Anchorage." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, September 4, 1915, p. 1.

2. J. T. Belcher, "Highest Anchorage Lot Goes To $1,150." *The Seward Weekly Gateway*, (July 10, 1915), p. 1.

3. The Fourth Avenue average was based on sale figures of the lots between A and L Streets. Also see: "Anchorage Lots Bring Big Prices at Auction Sale." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 17, 1915.

4. Belcher.

5. "Fine Success of Sale." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 17, 1915.

6. "Survey Now Under Way." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 5, 1915, n.p.

7. "Townsite Will Soon Be Available." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915, p. 1.

8. "Brevities." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, September 4, 1915.

9. Interview with Mrs. Decema Kimball Andresen Slawson, April, 1978.

10. "Carstens Will Erect Building." Anchorage Daily Times, June 21, 1916, p. 1.

11. Sanborn Maps, 1922, 1927.

12. "Corley's" ("Conleys" or a similar name) is depicted at this location in a pre-1920 photograph. The Ship Hotel was reportedly located in the building around 1920; and Anchorage City Books, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

13. "Hewitt and Co. To Open Store in Anchorage." *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 8, 1916.

14. Anchorage City Books, District Recording Office, Anchorage and Sanborn maps.

15. Sanborn maps and Tax Records, City of Anchorage.

16. Interview with Vern Johnson, June 1984.

17. Telephone interview with Keith Lesh, June 1984.

18. Alaska Townsite Ledger, Townsite Trustee's Office, Bureau of Land Management.

19. Interview with Lucy Whitehead, May 1984.

20. Interview with Keith Lesh, May 1984.

21. Interview with Frank Reed, February 1984.

22. *Ibid.*

23. "Sixty Years of Service to Alaskans, 1922-1982," a publication of The First National Bank of Anchorage.

24. Interview with Linda Crocker White, April 1984.

25. Interview with Franklin Landstrom, January 1984.

26. Personal communication with Earl and Thema Bell, April 1984.

27. Personal communication with Inga Hadley, March 1984.

28. Early A.E.C. photograph, Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum.

29. "Large Transfer of Real Estate." *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 14, 1923, p. 7.

30. "Fine Buildings Adorn New Town." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, August 14, 1915.

31. "Around the Town." *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 22, 1916.

32. Interview with Selma Smith, April 1978.

33. Interview with Doris Saario and Joanne Rantala, January 1984.

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC PLACES

1. "Public School is Needed." *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 19, 1915.

2. William H. Wilson, "The Founding of Anchorage: Federal Townbuilding on the Last Frontier." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, July 1967, pp. 136-137. 3. *Ibid.*

4. Evangeline Atwood, *Anchorage: All America City* (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1957), p. 12.

5. *Ibid.*

6. "Clerk Wendler Makes A Report." *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 21, 1916.

7. Wilson, pp. 137-138.

8. Edes to Christensen, January 29, 1916, LIDF 25.044 (1915-18) as quoted in Wilson, p. 138.

9. Edes to Christensen, January 23, 1917, LIDG 25.129-501 as quoted in Wilson, p. 138.

10. Wilson, p. 138.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. "Clerk Wendler Makes a Report."

14. Wilson, p. 137.

15. Anchorage Cemetery Files, Townsite Files, Townsite Trustee Office, Bureau of Land Management.

THE SECOND GENERATION OF ANCHORAGE

1. *Anchorage Daily Times*, November 14, 1936, p. 1, p.5 & p.8.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, June 25, 1938, p. 1; July 22, 1938, p. 1; July 23, 1938, p. 1.

4. U.S. Treasury Department, Procurement Division, Architectural drawings.

5. *Anchorage Daily Times*, October 24, 1940, p. 1.

6. Personal interview with Robert Atwood, March 28, 1977.

7. *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 16, 1940, p. 8.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

9. The material in this section was primarily based on the following: Jean Alita Ray, "Cap Lathrop: Hard Work Made an Alaskan Millionaire," *The Great Lander*, Anchorage, Alaska, Volume 7, Number 34 (August 20, 1975), pp. 1-8.

10. Evangeline Atwood and Robert N. DeArmond, *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics* (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1977), p. 57.

11. Personal interview with Selma Smith, April 3, 1978.

12. Letter of Anthony B. Heinsbergen to Michael E. Carberry, January 6, 1978.

13. *Anchorage Daily Times*, May 28, 1947, p. 1.

14. *Ibid.*

15. Personal communication with Al Bramstedt and Augie Hebert, December 1978.

16. Interview with Father Elliot, July 1984.

17. Interviews with Father Francis Murphy, Summer 1985.

18. William Manley originally had and been retained as the architect; however, Porreca was hired after the war.

19. Interview with Father Murphy, Summer 1985.

CHAPTER 2
RAILROADING, MARITIME AND POWER FACILITIES

1. *U.S. Statues at Large (1912)*, Volume 37, p. 512 as quoted in Wilson, p. 18.

2. As quoted in Wilson, p. 25.

3. Wilson, p. 26.

4. Wilson, p. 28.

5. Alaska Engineering Commission, *Reports of the Alaska Engineering Commission for the Period From March 12, 1914 to December 31, 1915*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), 1916, p. 83.

6. As quoted in Wilson, p. 29.

7. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Cold Storage Plant Building Plans, 1916.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Prince, p. 577.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 602.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 473.

12. Conversation with John Longacre, son of the A.E.C.'s electrical engineer, March 1978.

13. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Power Plant Building Plans.

14. Wilson, p. 200.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 198-200.

16. As quoted in Prince, p. 581.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 639, p. 647.

18. "The Alaska Railroad...Colorado Building Makes Long Trek to Alaska." The EM-KYAN, September 1948.

19. Files of the Alaska Railroad (Reprints from an article about Number 1).

20. Prince, p. 889.

21. *Alaska Railroad Record*, Volume 11, No. 26, p. 204a.

22. Wilson, p. 39.

23. Joan M. Antonson and Douglas R. Reger, "Potter-Girdwood Archaeological and Historic Site Survey," *Archaeological Survey Projects, 1976* (Anchorage: Alaska Division of Parks, 1977), p. IV-16.

24. Prince, p. 118.

25. Anderson, p. 11.

26. Prince, p. 70, p. 135.

27. *Alaska Railroad Record* (selected issues), 1917-1918.

28. The Alaska Railroad, A.E.C. survey maps of 1914 show the location of the cabins built a few years earlier by the Alaska Northern Crews.

29. Prince, p. 70, p. 246.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Wilson, pp. 6-7, p. 253.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 254.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

34. Prince, p. 578. Present-day railroaders relate that the Indian Section House may have been relocated behind the Indian House Bar; if so, the structure is considerably altered from its early appearance.

35. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Standard Section House Plans, 1929.

36. Office of History and Archaeology, Alaska Division of Parks, Series Report 15, 1975.

37. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Standard Section House Plans, 1923 and 1934.

38. Hand cars were replaced by mechanized cars in the mid-1920s.

39. Prince, p. 587.

40. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Standard Depot Plans, 1916.

41. The Alaskan Engineering Commission, Service Monographs of the United States Government, No. 4 Institute for Government Research. As quoted in Anton A. Anderson, *Construction and Maintenance Problems Encountered on the Alaska Railroad*, (a paper distributed through the Alaska Railroad, Anchorage), p. 8.

42. Wilson, p. 171.

43. Letter of O. F. Ohlson to Emard Packing Co., Anchorage, Alaska, September 27, 1944 (Alaska Railroad, Property Management Files).

44. Wilson, p. 46.

45. Prince, p. 314.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

47. Wilson, pp. 170-172.

48. Letter of O. F. Ohlson. 49. "Anchorage's Fishing Industry Adds $150,000 Annually to Local Payroll," *Anchorage Daily Times*, (Progress Edition), July 3, 1937, p. 8.

50. Personal communication with Lee Hancock, March 14, 1978.

51. "Missing Fleet," *Anchorage Daily Times*, May 20, 1978, editorial page.

52. Helen Gillette, "Freighter Limestone Takes No Cargo to Sea," *Anchorage Daily Times*, 1977 (a clipping provided by Virginia Augestad, exact data and page were not part of the copy).

53. The facility descriptions are based upon the report: John J. Longacre and W. L. Kinsell, "Report on the Anchorage Light and Power Company to The Bank of America, San Francisco, California," June, 1941.

54. *Ibid.*

55. Personal communication with Frank Reed II, March 7, 1978.

CHAPTER 3
EARLY SUBDIVISIONS

1. "Work on the Railroad Moves Along," *The Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915, p. 1.

2. Lyman Woodman, "Railroad History on Government Hill," *Anchorage Daily News*, April 7, 1974, pp. 4-5.

3. "Government Hill Beautiful Place," *The Cook Inlet Pioneer*, September 1915, p. 1.

4. Personal interview with Mrs. Forrest Warwick (formerly Hazel Seaberg), March 1978.

5. "Work on the Railroad Moves Along," *The Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915, p. 1.

6. Charles S. Harvard as quoted in Woodman, p. 4.

7. The street names are derived as follows: Delaney Street - James J. Delaney, railroad employee, 1916-1957; former mayor of Anchorage; Colwell Street - George W. Colwell, member of the 1914 railroad survey party, former chief engineer; Brown Street - Jack Brown, Ship Creek resident as a forester in 1912 and long-time power plant foreman; Anderson Street - Anton Anderson, civil engineer for the railroad for 41 years, former mayor of Anchorage; Boyd Street - William E. Boyd, former ARR superintendent of transportation; Cunningham Street - J. C. Cunningham, worked for the railroad for 33 years, rising to assist general manager; Deegan Street - Michael Deegan, locomotive engineer and early ARR foreman; and Erickson Street - Believed to be named for John H. Erickson, early ARR electrician.

8. Bernadine L. Prince, *The Alaska Railroad in Pictures*, (Anchorage: Ken Wray's Print Shop, 1964), pp. 183-184.

9. Donna Lane, National Register Nomination of the Wireless Station, 1983.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 499.

11. "Hill Houses are Mud Mt. Copies," *Espirit de Corps* (Anchorage, Alaska), Volume 1, Number 2 (December 1977), p.3.

12. Personal communication with Virgil Knight, April 1978.

13. Personal communication with Vannie Davenport, January 1978.

14. "Sale of Lots Shows Demand for Home Sites in Anchorage," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 24, 1916, p. 1.

15. "Order Affecting Acre Tracts," *Alaska Railroad Record*, Vol. I, No. 23 (1917), p. 182.

16. "Acreage Tracts in Anchorage Townsite Sold at Public Sale," *Alaska Railroad Record*, Vol. III, No. 33 (1919), p.262.

17. "Experienced Fur Man Urges More Farms Here," *Anchorage Daily Times* (Progress Edition), July 3, 1937.

18. "South End Outskirts See Activity," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 11, 1939, p. 7.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Interview with Mrs. Louis Strutz, December 1977.

21. Interview with the Imlach family, December 1977.

22. Personal communication with Norma Marek, May 18, 1978.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Interview with Bert Wennerstrom, July 1978.

25. "Fine Home Going Up For ARC Man At 11th And E," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 19, 1938, p. 7.

26. Personal communication with Dean Conover, May 20, 1978.

27. Interview with Mrs. Barrie White, December 1977.

28. Interview with Marjery McCormick, June 1978.

29. Personal communication with Walter Radke and George Karabelnikoff, May 1978.

30. Personal communication with Virgil Knight and George Karabelnikoff, May 1978.

31. Interview with Marjorie Rutz, March 1984.

CHAPTER 4
TRAILS

1. U.S. Forest Service personnel report that the glacier route was used as late as 1975 when two groups made their way to Whittier. A Forest Service party, knowledgeable about glacial hazards, used the ice field; another group climbed along the rocky edge of the glacier on a separate occasion that week.

2. Mary J. Barry, *A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1973), p. 55.

3. George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World*, Volume 3 (London: G.G. and J. Robinson, 1798), p. 112 (Facsimile reproduced by De Capo Press, New York, New York).

4. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 169; the italics are Vancouver's.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 180-181 (On the west edge of the mouth of Billings Creek Whidbey came across "a small house about five feet high, and eight feet square, covered in with bark, not built after the Indian, but evidently constructed after the Russian manner.").

10. Ralph S. Tarr and Lawrence Martin, Alaskan Glacier Studies (Washington, D.C.: The National Geographic Society, 1914), p. 364.

11. L.R. Mayo, Chester Zenone and D.C. Trabant, Reconnaissance Hydrology of Portage Glacier Basin, Alaska - 1972, Atlas HA-583 (Reston, Virginia: U.S. Geological Survey, 1977).

12. Petroff, as quoted in Tarr and Martin, p. 364.

13. Barry, p. 60.

14. Walter C. Mendenhall, "A Reconnaissance from Ressurection Bay to the Tanana River, Alaska, in 1898," in The 20th Annual Report, U.S. Geological Survey (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900), p. 301.

15. Blackstone's note, as quoted in Barry, p. 68.

16. J. C. Castner, "A Story of Suffering and Hardship in Alaska," in Compilation of narratives of Exploration in Alaska, Senate Report No. 1023 (Volume 2, Part 2), p. 687 (available by Special Order through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan).

17. Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files and Photographic Files.

18. E.F. Glenn, "A Trip to the Region of the Tanana," in Compilation of Narratives of Exploration in Alaska, p. 640 and p. 643.

19. Luther S. Kelly, "From Cabin Creek to the Valley of the Yukla, Alaska," in Compilation of Narratives of Exploration in Alaska, p. 684.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 685.

21. C.F. Park, Jr., The Girdwood District, Alaska, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 849-G (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933), p. 388.

22. Knik should not be confused with "Old Knik," another name for Eklutna which was used in the early 1900's.

23. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, The Iditarod Trail (Seward-Nome Route) and Other Alaskan Gold Rush Trails, (Anchorage: Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, U.S. Department of Interior, 1977), p. 26.

24. Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Map of Eklutna Area, 1916.

25. Bureau of Land Management, Cadastral Map Office, Survey maps, 1916.

26. Mendenhall, p. 278.

27. Yukla is an abbreviated form of Yikla-Nitna (Nuk elehitny), the Tanana word of Eagle River.

28. Mendenhall, pp. 277-280.

29. The Seward Weekly Gateway, January 20, 1906.

30. *Ibid.*, June 17, 1911.

31. The Iditarod Pioneer, November 26, 1911.

32. Park, p. 387.

33. Bureau of Land Management, Cadastral Map Office, survey maps, 1916.

34. The Seward Weekly Gateway, January 20, 1906.

35. *Ibid.*, October 17, 1908.

36. W. L. Goodwin, "Trail Making in Alaska," The Alaska-Yukon Magazine, Volume 6 (July 1911), p. 55.

37. Kenneth Gideon, The Wandering boy (Washington D.C.: Merkle Press 1967), p. 28.

38. The Cook Inlet Pioneer (forerunner of the Anchorage January 8, 1976, p. 2.

39. *Ibid.*, September 18, 1915, no page number.

40. *Ibid.*, January 15, 1916, p. 2.

41. The Alaska Railroad Record, Volume I (November 28, 1916), p. 1.

42. Joan M. Antonson and Douglas R. Reger, "Potter-Girdwood Archaeological and Historic Site Survey," in Archaeological Survey Projects, 1976 (Anchorage: Alaska Division of Parks, 1977), p. IV-9.

43. *Ibid.*, p. IV-10 and p. IV-13.

44. The Seward Weekly Gateway, January 20, 1906.

45. The Alaska Railroad Record, Volume I (November 21, 1916), p. 11 and (November 28, 1916), p. 19.

46. Personal communication with Doug Fesler, Park Ranger, Alaska Division of Parks, Chugach State Park, February 1, 1970.

47. Barry, p. 134.

48. The Seward Weekly Gateway, January 20, 1906.

49. Bureau of Land Management, Cadastral Map Office, Survey Maps, 1916.

CHAPTER 5
MINING

1. Mary Barry, A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1973), p.8.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

5. Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

6. The precinct records at that era should now be housed at the U.S. Commissioner's Office in Seward.

7. Stephen R. Capps, "The Turnagain-Knik Region" in Alfred H. Brooks, et al, Mineral Resources of Alaska Report on Progress of Investigations in 1915, U.S.G.S. Bulletin, 642 (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916), pp. 174-186.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

9. Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

10. Capps, p. 182.

11. Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

12. Capps, p. 175.

13. Kenneth Gideon, Wandering Boy: Alaska - 1913 to 1918 (Washington, D.C.: Merkle Press, 1967), p. 12 and p. 16.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

15. Capps, pp. 182-183.

16. Mrs. Arne Erickson, "History of Erickson's Crow Creek Gold Mine," n.d.

17. Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage; Interviews with Barney Toohey, present owner of mining claims at the site.

18. Interview with Bruce Staser, August 2, 1977.

19. Fred H. Moffit, "Gold Fields of the Turnagain Arm Region," in Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 277 (Washington, D.C.:U.S. Government Printing Office, 1907), p. 45.

20. Capps, pp. 188-101; also Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

21. H.I. Staser, "The Monarch Gold Mine," Anchorage Daily Times, The Progress Edition, 1933, n.p.

22. Interview with Bruce Staser.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Telephone conversation with Joe Danich, September 21, 1977.

25. Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

26. Interview with Bruce Staser.

27. C.F. Park, Jr., The Girdwood District, Alaska, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 849G (Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933), pp. 417-418.

28. Interview with Ortie Hough, October 5, 1977.

29. Park, p. 419.

30. Interview with Mrs. Robert Bursiel, September 16, 1977.

31. Barry, p. 61. (Another story, as told by Forrest Warwick, has it that Linblad was wearing an overcoat which was to heavy for the day-time winter weather. The sweat which ran down into his gloves froze at night while he was sleeping on the trail thus causing the frost bite from which he lost his hand.)

32. Precinct Records, District Recording Office, Anchorage.

33. Park, Bulletin 849, Plate 33.

34. Capps, p. 187.

35. Ibid., pp. 191-192.

36. Interview with Forrest Warwick, March 1978.

37. The sketches are primarily taken from Capps, pp. 186-194.

CHAPTER 6
HOMESTEADING

1. The writer is indebted to Maria E. Skala, a University of Alaska history student who shared her research regarding homesteading legislation. Her paper, "A Legislative History of Homesteading in Alaska," was written in fulfillment of History 476 under Dr. W.A. Jacobs, April, 1978.

2. U.S. Statutes at Large, XXX, 409.

3. U.S. Statutes at Large, XII, 392.

4. Hugh A. Johnson and Harold T. Jorgensen, Land Resources of Alaska (Fairbanks: University of Alaska, 1963), p. 56.

5. U.S. Statutes at Large, XXXII, 1028.

6. Orlando W. Miller, *The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Colony* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 20-21.

7. *Ibid.*

8. U.S. Statutes at Large, XXXVII, 123.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Andrew Christensen, "Report on Reduction of Area of Homesteads in Alaska to 160 Acres," Report to Clay Tallman, Department of Interior, General Land Office, January 16, 1915.

11. Personal communication with Steve McCutcheon August-September 1978; also see Evangeline Atwood, *Anchorage: All America City*, p.6.

12. "Judge Brown's Decision in the T.H. Jeeter Case," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 31, 1915.

13. Hugh A. Johnson and Keith L. Stanton, Matanuska Valley Memoir (Palmer: University of Alaska, Alaska Agricultural Experiment Station, July 1955), p. 22.

14. Miller, p. 24.

15. Johnson and Stanton, p. 31.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

17. Miller, pp. 28-32.

18. Personal communication with William Stolt, Spring, 1978.

19. Bureau of Land Management, Settlement Opportunities in Alaska: Anchorage (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 18.

20. Information in this description from interview with Pearl Smith, March 1978.

21. Personal communication with Wilda Marston, Summer 1978.

22. Personal communication with Thomas Peterkin, Soldotna, Spring 1978.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Personal communication with Mrs. Frances Lahti, November 1978.

25. Green Lake is open to the public for fishing and related activities; the Savola cabin is AF property 52-560; Iver Nottviet's cabin is marked 52-650.

26. Personal communication with Lester Klatt, July 1984.

27. *Ibid.*

28. "Bountiful Crops Once Bordered Busy Highway," Chugiak-Eagle River Star, July 29, 1976, p. A-9.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-115.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

33. Personal communication withMrs. Melva Pippel, November 1977.

34. Personal communication with Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Braendel, November 1977.

35. *Ibid.*; also see Helen Gillette, "Plays, Films Fill Up Frank Brank's Spare Time," *Anchorage Times*, March 6, 1975, p.E-6.

36. Braendel.

CHAPTER 7
SETTLEMENTS AND OTHER SITES

1. Kenneth Gideon, *Wandering Boy: Alaska - 1913 to 1918* (Washington, D.C.: Merkle Press, 1967), p. 28.

2. B.L. Johnson, "Gold Deposits of the Seward-Sunrise Region" in Alfred H. Brooks, et al, *Mineral Resources in Alaska*, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 520 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1912), pp. 136-137.

3. Interview with Ortie Hough, October 5, 1977.

4. R.N. DeArmond, "And So It Was Named - Girdwood," *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1962, pp. 40-41.

5. Hough.

6. DeArmond.

7. Frances Anater, "Girdwood," *The Alaskana*, Volume III (June 1973), pp. 6-7.

8. Interview with Ivan Williams, June 1985.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Fred H. Moffit, "Gold Fields of the Turnagain Arm Region," in *Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska*, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 277 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 49.

11. Moffit, Plate II.

12. U.S. Grant and D.F. Higgins, *Coastal Glaciers of Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula*, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 526 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913), Plate I.

13. John Beck, "Cultural Resources," *Alaska Resources: Portage Flats Planning Unit* (Anchorage: U.S. Bureau of Land Management, June 23, 1977), pp. 188-202.

14. Hough.

15. *Anchorage Daily Times* as quoted in National Research Council, Committee on the Alaska Earthquake, The Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964: Seismology and Geodesy (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1972), p.79.

16. National Research Council, Committee on the Alaska Earthquake, *The Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964: Geology* (Washington, D.C.:National Academy of Sciences, 1972), pp. 528-529.

17. "The Bird House," *Alaska Business and Development*, Summer 1977, pp. 34-36.

18. Hough.

19. Hough.

20. Beck.

21. *Anchorage Daily Times*, 1915-16. Periodic advertisements about the mill including June 21, 1916.

CHAPTER 8
NATIVE HISTORY AND PREHISTORY

1. U.S. Department of Interior, Census Office, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska at the Eleventh Census: 1890* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1892), p. 70.

2. *"The Northern Light"* (a newsletter publication of the U.S. Bureau of Education, Industrial School at Eklutna, Alaska), Volumes I and II (1926-30), selected pages.

3. James Kari, *"Knik Arm - Matanuska Valey Anchorage Area Place Names"* (an unpublished list of Tanaina place names), Native Language Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, n.d.

4. Frederica DeLaguna, *The Archaeology of Cook Inlet, Alaska* (Anchorage: Ken Wray's Print Shop, Inc. 1975), p.140.

5. Ivan Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1884).

6. Both U.S.G.S. Mining Publications and the Alaska Engineering Commission used the term on occasion.

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Personal communication.

Many individuals were instrumental in providing information in the course of the survey. "Personal communication" includes the author's interviews and telephone conversations with these individuals between March 1977 and December 1978. The following people are Anchorage residents unless otherwise noted: Mike Alex (Eklutna); Mrs. Victoria Amundsen; Robert Atwood; John Bagoy; Pete Bagoy; Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Braendel (Eagle River); Al Bramstedt; Mrs. Robert Bursiel (Girdwood); T.W. Carrol (Seattle); Cliff Cernick, Public Information Office, Federal Aviation Administration; Dean Conover; Joe Danich; Vannie Davenport; H.A. Faroe; Doug Fessler, Chugach State Park, Alaska Division of Parks; Ward Gay; Grant Hales, Alaskan Air Command Historian, Elmendorf AFB; Harris Hancock; Lee Hancock; Ortie Hough; Augie Hebert; Mrs. William Imlach; George Karabelnikoff, Federal Aviation Administration (Retired); James Kari, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska; Virgil Knight; Mrs. Frances Lahti; Jeanne Laurence; Al Lindemuth; John Longacre; Marjery McCormick; Steve McCutcheon; Bonnie McGee; Albert Machin, Federal Aviation Administration (Retired, Port Townsend, Washington); Norma Marek; Wilda Marston; Mrs. Carl Martin; Jim Moody, Alaska Department of Transportation; Earl Norris (Willow); Thomas Peterkin (Soldotna); Melva Pippel (Eagle River); Frank Reed, II; Dorothy Revell, Federal Aviation Administration; Robert Riedel, Federal Aviation Administration; Mrs. Clarence Risch; Mrs. Decema Kimbell Andresen Slawson; Pearl Smith; Selma Smith; Mrs. Myrtle Stalnaker; Bruce Staser; Mr. and Mrs. William Stolt; Mrs. Louis Strutz; Mary Sweet; Mr. and Mrs. Barney Toohey (Girdwood); Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Warwick; Dave Watson; Bert Wennerstrom; Mrs. Barrie White; Harold Wirum; and Frances Wittman.

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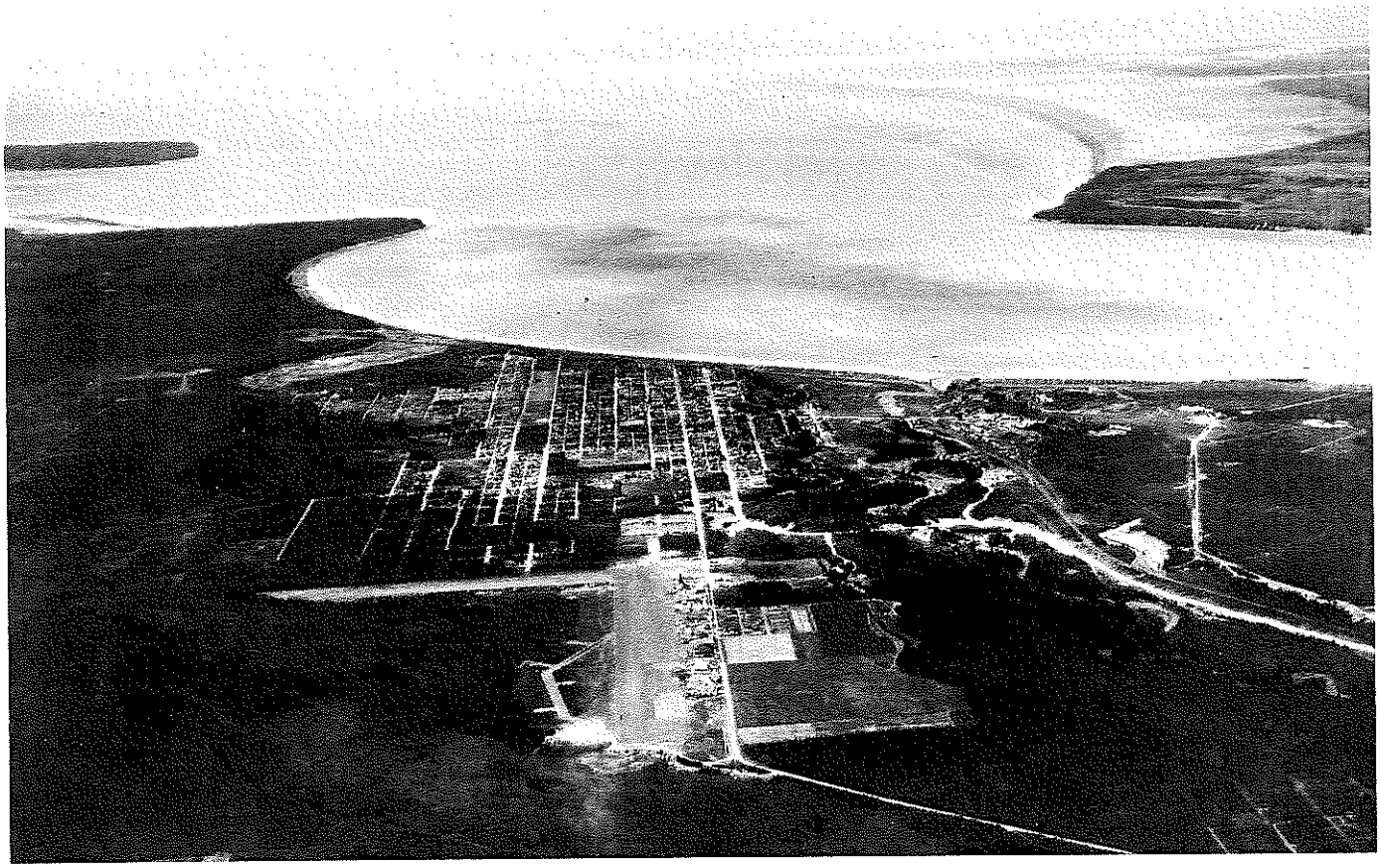

Anchorage, late 1930's

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Tony Knowles, Mayor

Bill Luria, Community Planning Director

Bruce Phelps, Comprehensive Planning Manager

Municipal Assembly

1985 — 1986

Dave Walsh, *Chairman*

Larry Baker	Bill Faulkner
Brad Bradley	Heather Flynn
Dana Brockway	Gerry O'Connor
Fred Dyson	Kevin "Pat" Parnell
Joe Evans	John Wood

1986 — 1987

Larry Baker, *Chairman*

Jim Barnett	Bill Faulkner
Brad Bradley	Heather Flynn
Craig Campbell	Jim Kubitz
Fred Dyson	Kevin "Pat" Parnell
Joe Evans	John Wood

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Thomas Beck	Beverly Pierce
Gerald Dunn	Robert Spude
Don Hoak	Michael Yarborough
Donna Lane	Daniel O'Tierney
Janet McCabe	Sam Combs

Cover: Fourth Avenue, looking east from E Street around 1918.

The Municipality of Anchorage

Community Planning Department