

# HOMESTEADS ON FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA

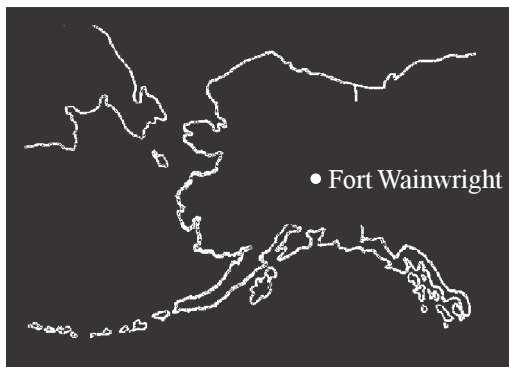


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# HOMESTEADS ON FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA



Kathy Price

Edited by:

Glenda R. Lesondak

Prepared by:

Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands  
Colorado State University  
Ft. Collins, CO 80523-1490

Russell H. Sackett  
Natural Resources Branch  
U.S. Army Alaska  
Fort Richardson, AK 99505-6500

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# CHAPTER 1.0 Introduction

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Today, the main gate of Fort Wainwright overlooks one of the busiest intersections in Fairbanks. The city's neighborhoods and commercial districts stand just beyond the junction of the Richardson Highway, Airport Way, the Steese Highway and Gaffney Road. Behind its gate, Ft. Wainwright is in many respects a sister city. In addition to its military facilities, one finds housing, roads, offices, warehouses, shopping, utilities, and recreation areas.

Originally, the fort was known as Ladd Field. It was established as an Army Air Corps cold-weather test station, and began operations in September 1940. During World War II, the installation also served as an aircraft transfer point for the Lend-Lease program between the United States and the Soviet Union on the Alaska-Siberia (ALSIB) route. After 1947, the base was known as Ladd Air Force Base, and it played a significant role in Cold War strategic reconnaissance and air defense. In 1961 the Air Force transferred the post to the Army, which renamed it Fort Jonathan Wainwright.<sup>1</sup>

The land for the original Ladd Field was withdrawn by executive order in 1937, but the main post expanded several times over the next twenty years, adding unincorporated, adjacent portions of Fairbanks until it reached its present boundaries. As Ladd expanded, it acquired properties in two ways: from private owners and from the government's public domain. At one time or another, most of these lands had been homesteaded. Each of the privately owned properties traced its title back to a homestead patent. The public domain lands that Ladd acquired sometimes contained active homestead claims, and nearly all of the land had been the site of homestead activity sometime in the past. All in all, as many as ninety homestead claims had been filed on today's main post land over the years.

If one drove through the post today, the signs of former homestead activity would probably be hard to find. Military airfields and structures have replaced agricultural buildings, cabins, clearings, and gardens. Nonetheless, the homestead history of Fort Wainwright is a link to the joint history of the community and the installation.

## 1.1 Scope & Purpose of Study

The intent of this report is to document the historic context of homesteading at the fort for cultural resources management. It is the first step in identifying and managing possible cultural resources from the homestead era that may still exist on post lands. This management is required by Section 110 of the National Historic Preser-

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<sup>1</sup> From 1942–1945, the United States provided aircraft to its wartime ally, the Soviet Union. Planes were turned over to the Soviet pilots at Ladd who flew them back across a Siberian route. The Ladd Field National Historic Landmark designation recognizes the significance of this history. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form*, 1984. Ladd's Cold War missions are also recognized as nationally significant. Kathy Price, *Northern Defenders: Cold War Context of Ladd Air Force Base, Fairbanks Alaska 1947–1961*, Colorado State University, Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands, January 2001.





vation Act (NHPA). This study will also provide a basis for evaluating the significance of homestead sites according to National Register of Historic Places criteria.<sup>2</sup>

This study focuses on homesteading on the main post lands of Fort Wainwright and traces the process from the earliest settlement days of Fairbanks until the current main post boundaries were established. As part of the wider context, it includes an overview of the establishment of Fairbanks, the homesteading process in Alaska, and the military's acquisition of the post lands. The scope does not include the significant history of native Athabaskan land use in the Fairbanks region.

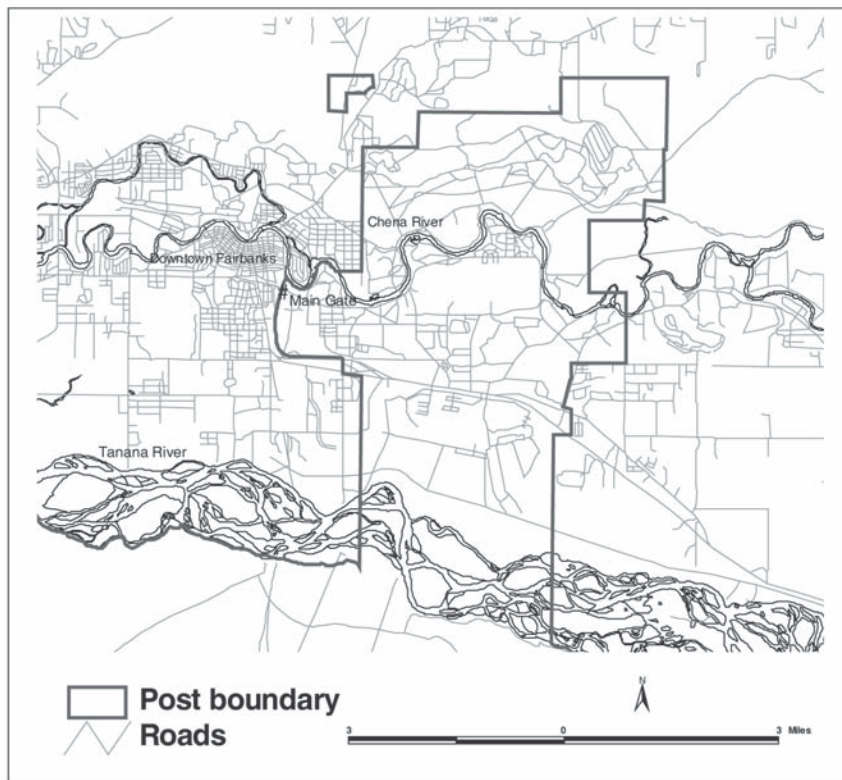
It is important to mention that the homestead properties in this study changed hands so regularly that they may be associated with several individuals or families. Sometimes the local name for a homestead refers to a later owner. In this study, all homesteads will be named for the original patentee, unless otherwise noted.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.2 Site Location

Fort Wainwright is located on the Chena River, about one mile east of the center of Fairbanks. On the north side of the river, the boundary follows the edge of the Hamilton Acres subdivision and climbs up to the crest of Birch Hill. It extends in an

uneven line approximately four miles to the east, dropping down to the south in the area of Sage Hill. In a series of uneven steps the boundary moves south, crosses the Chena River and the Richardson Highway and meets the Tanana River. On the other side of the Tanana River is the 642,215-acre Tanana Flats Training Area. Two and 3/4 miles downriver, the post boundary moves north from the river adjacent to south Fairbanks and returns to the Chena River.

Fort Wainwright also encompasses large training areas that are not part of the current study. These are the Tanana Flats Training Area, the Yukon Training Area, and the Donnelly East and West Training Areas.



Map 1. Fort Wainwright, present boundaries in relation to Fairbanks.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register Bulletin, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," (Washington, D.C. 1998), 7–8.

<sup>3</sup> One exception will be the Noyes homestead, which will be referred to as the Noyes/Buzby homestead. It was originally claimed by Harry Buzby in 1905 and occupied by his family until the family temporarily left Alaska in 1921. F.R. Noyes patented the property in 1922. The Buzby family returned to a nearby homestead around 1926 and operated a well-known dairy. See Buzby entry in Section 3.2.

## 1.3 Previous Published Research

Fort Wainwright's specific homesteading history is part of a larger context, and this study builds on the existing literature about homesteading. However, in historical literature, homesteading rarely stands alone. Most often, it receives attention for its role within a larger historical context such as land use history, agricultural history, or social history. Prof. Paul W. Gates' "History of Public Land Law Development" is an example of homesteading seen within the overall land use history of the United States. In *Settling the Canadian-American West, 1890–1915*, John W. Bennet and Seena B. Kohl examine regional homesteading through the lens of anthropology and social history.<sup>4</sup>

In the Alaskan context, homesteading is frequently mentioned. Alaska land use histories, such as Duncan Harkin's "Study of Federal Land Laws and Policies in Alaska," describe the process, and it is also analyzed in works by Robert Weeden and, more recently, by Donald C. Mitchell. Historian Orlando Miller addresses homesteading as part of agricultural patterns in *The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Colony*, while agricultural economist Wayne Burton discusses it in his summaries of Alaskan agriculture. Political historians such as Ted Hinckley and Claus-M. Naske also address the development of homestead laws.<sup>5</sup>

Cultural resources studies on Alaskan homesteading include several projects prepared on Anchorage and its surrounding region. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough prepared a survey and inventory of homesteads in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley in 1993. In 1998, Elmendorf Air Force Base prepared a homestead study in conjunction with the National Park Service's Alaska Support Office, and in 2000, Fort Richardson also published a homestead study. These reports dealt specifically with properties within their respective boundaries while placing the activity in the context of the settlement of south-central Alaska.<sup>6</sup>

Very few overviews exist on Fairbanks homesteading, although many personal accounts are available. Robert L. Monahan discussed regional agriculture in some depth in an academic study, "The Development of Settlement in the Fairbanks Area, Alaska: A Study of Permanence." In 1954, Richard Cooley prepared a socio-economic study of the area, which included a section on homesteading, agriculture and soils. Contemporary magazine articles and numerous technical agricultural reports provide additional information.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Paul W. Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*. Report prepared for the Public Land Law Review Commission, November 1968. John W. Bennet and Seena B. Kohl, *Settling the Canadian-American West, 1890–1915*. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.)

<sup>5</sup> Duncan A. Harkin, et al, *A Study of Federal Land Laws and Policies in Alaska for the Public Land Law Review Commission*, University of Wisconsin School of Natural Resources, Center for Resource Policy Studies and Programs, March, 1969. Robert B. Weeden, *Alaska: Promises to Keep* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1978.) Donald Craig Mitchell, *Sold American: The Story of Alaska Natives and Their Land, 1867–1959* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997.) Orlando W. Miller, *The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Colony* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975.) Wayne E. Burton, *Creating a Northern Agriculture: Historical Perspectives in Alaskan Agriculture*, University of Alaska Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Fairbanks, AK, July 1975. Ted C. Hinckley, *The Americanization of Alaska, 1867–1897* (Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1972.) Claus-M. Naske and Herman Slotnick, *Alaska: A History of the 49th State*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987, 2nd ed.)

<sup>6</sup> Fran Seager-Boss, *Homestead Survey 1898-1940, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Part II*, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, 1994. Paula M. Daugherty and Becky M. Saleeby, *Elmendorf Air Force Base Homestead Study*, National Park Service Alaska Support Office, Anchorage, AK 1998. Kristy Hollinger, *Homesteads on Fort Richardson, Alaska*, Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands, Colorado State University, March 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Robert L. Monahan, "The Development of Settlement in the Fairbanks Area, Alaska: A Study of Permanence." Ph.D. Diss, McGill University, 1959. Richard A. Cooley, *Fairbanks, Alaska: A Survey of Progress*, Alaska Development Board, Juneau, AK, July 1954.



## 1.4 Methods

Homesteading took place on parts of the post lands for fifty years. In order to track this activity and identify significant homesteads, this study relied on land records, archival collections, oral histories, and the assistance of homesteaders' descendants, when they could be located.

Land records provided the essential documentation on homestead claims. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the agency now overseeing public domain, holds master title plats, which provided information on patented properties. (A patent is the original document transferring ownership of land from the public domain to the first private owner.) The BLM also has historical indices of claim activity and case abstracts on individual claims after 1914. The Alaska District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) holds audit files of military real estate transactions. These records provide details on Ladd's land acquisitions and list the names of property owners and homestead claimants at the time of the transaction. These files also include title searches on each property, leading back to the original land patent.

However, the homestead history of Fort Wainwright reaches well beyond the seventeen properties that went to patent. More than seventy people claimed homesteads in the area without receiving patents. These entries date from 1904, just after the founding of Fairbanks, up into the 1950s. Some of these involved individuals who lived on the land for many years. Many early homesteads changed hands a number of times before the property was patented. Other parcels never went to patent, in spite of having had several occupants. Records on non-patented claims are difficult to locate systematically. Those who claimed homesteads after 1914, when the General Land Office (now the BLM) began keeping systematic records in Fairbanks, could often be found in the BLM historical indices. Information on claims prior to 1914 remains incomplete. The Alaska State Recorder's Office homestead index provided leads; however, the geographical descriptions on file are insufficient to precisely locate many of the older claims. Mr. Junior Kerns, formerly of the Fort Wainwright DPW Environmental Resources Office, conducted research on homesteads north of the Chena River in the early 1990s, and his files and reports provided names and context for early homesteads in that area.

As research progressed, it became clear that certain aspects of the homestead experience on Fort Wainwright land could be documented but that other important elements could not. Unfortunately, there was often no information available about the structures and improvements on the properties. Neither the primary documents at the BLM nor those at the state Recorder's Office included any description of structures. Records from the USACE Realty Division were focused on the land acquisition process, titles, and purchase price, as were the court judgments in the condemnation proceedings.<sup>8</sup> Some information about homestead buildings was gleaned from historic photographs, surveyors' reports, and homesteaders' families.

Other valuable sources for homestead research included the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Rasmuson Library oral history collection, the Alaska Periodical Index, U.S. Census records, and various genealogical and biographical indices. Homesteaders' descendants could be difficult to locate

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<sup>8</sup> Later USACE realty files from the 1950s provided much more information about patented homestead properties, including building photographs. However, all but one of Ladd's acquisitions occurred before that time.

after so many years, but Ms. Candy Waugaman and Mr. William Stroecker of Fairbanks provided several helpful leads. More connections between the homesteaders and families in the community are certain to turn up. This study is can be a starting point for those who would like to carry the story further.

## 1.5 Acknowledgements

Many people shared their knowledge, expertise, and time for this study. Russ Sackett, the Cultural Resources Manager for U.S. Army Alaska, supervised the project in all its phases, and staff at Fort Wainwright's DPW Environmental Resources Office provided suggestions and assistance. Ms. Angie Gori of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Realty Division at Elmendorf Air Force Base spared time from her busy schedule to provide access to essential documents. Junior Kerns' research files at the Fort Wainwright DPW Environmental Resources Office provided information on homesteads north of the Chena River. The staff of the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Alaska and Polar Regions Archives offered knowledgeable assistance in searching their archival, photographic, and oral history collections, and the public room staff at the BLM Northern Region Office pointed the way through that agency's records. Mike Brown of the BLM supplied newspaper citations, which were invaluable in adding the human dimension to the story.

Ms. Candy Waugaman of Fairbanks kindly shared items from her collection, provided research leads, and directed the author to contacts and resources in the community. Mr. William Stroecker of Fairbanks shared his considerable expertise in Fairbanks history and his recollections of homesteaders for this project. Ms. Renee Blahuta of the Tanana-Yukon Historical Society also provided help in tracking down information and photographs.

Finally, the most grateful appreciation is extended to Bob and Tiny Buzby for sharing their homestead memories, to Patricia Spanogle, Lois Hall, and Lauren Dana, who shared family memories, and to Ted Spencer for graciously contributing family photographs and information. The contributions of their families and of all the homesteaders on Fort Wainwright should be respectfully remembered.





# CHAPTER 2.0 Historical Overview

## 2.1 Homesteading

“The Homestead Act of 1862 is recognized as one of the most revolutionary concepts for distributing public land in American history. Repercussions of this...legislation can be detected throughout America today, decades after the cry of ‘Free Land’ has faded away.”<sup>9</sup>

### 2.1.1 Public Domain, Homesteads, and the Land Office

As the United States expanded its frontiers after 1783, one of the never-ending political debates concerned how the government would dispose of its newly acquired lands, or public domain. In the early 1800s, Congress made these lands available to private owners in a variety of ways—through cash sales, auction, military service scrips, preemptions, and through grants to transportation companies. Other methods for acquiring title were added in the 1870s to address mining, timber, and desert use claims.<sup>10</sup>

The Homestead Act of 1862 was part of this conglomeration of land disposal. Although it was only one of the methods for acquiring public domain land, it had a tremendous impact. This legislation made free land in the public domain available to any head of a household, at least 21 years of age, who was or who intended to become a U.S. citizen.<sup>11</sup> Each entrant then had to meet requirements, or “prove up,” on the claim. Over two million people filed homestead claims before the law was repealed in the contiguous states in 1976; about one in three was successful in earning title. All in all, as much as ten percent of the land in the United States was settled under the Homestead Act, far more than under any other method of public domain disposal.<sup>12</sup>

Homestead entrants could claim 160 acres of land for a nominal filing fee. Each homesteader had five years to “prove up” on the land to meet the requirements for title, which meant they were required to live on their parcel within six months of making the claim, build a home, and cultivate the land. Homesteaders could also choose to “commute” their entry and acquire title by paying \$1.25 an acre. Over the years, Congress altered details of the Homestead Act’s provisions but the general process remained the same.

<sup>9</sup> National Park Service, Homestead National Monument, electronic document, [http://www.nps.gov/home/homestead\\_act.html](http://www.nps.gov/home/homestead_act.html)

<sup>10</sup> Specifically, these were the Timber & Stone Act 1878, the Timber Culture Act 1873, the Desert Land Act 1872, and mining laws of 1866, 1870, and 1872. Marion Clawson, *The Bureau of Land Management* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 12. For more background on the history of land disposal laws, see Clawson, 9-13, and Paul W. Gates, “The Federal Lands: Why We Retained Them.” in S. Brubaker (ed.), *Rethinking the Federal Lands*, Washington: Resources for the Future, Inc. 1984.

<sup>11</sup> Homestead provisions did not originally apply to native lands. In 1887, the Dawes Act authorized a program to allot parcels of communally-owned tribal lands to individual tribal members. A native allotment program was extended to Alaska in 1906. Kristy Hollinger pointed out in her Fort Richardson homestead study that homesteading was “at odds with traditional native lifestyles” in Alaska and not widely used (Hollinger, 10).

<sup>12</sup> National Park Service, Homestead National Monument, electronic documents, [http://www.nps.gov/home/homestead\\_act.html](http://www.nps.gov/home/homestead_act.html), and <http://www.nps.gov/home/legacies.html>. (See Clawson, 14, for figures on public domain disposal.)





Homesteaders were required to register their claims at the nearest land office. When the homesteader was ready to prove up, he would return to the land office with two witnesses who could testify that he had met the residency and cultivation requirements. The land office would publish notices in local papers to alert any possible adverse claimants. If none appeared and if the proof was satisfactory, the land office issued a patent to the homesteader.

Local land offices were part of the General Land Office (GLO), a federal agency established by Congress in 1812 to handle the government's land transactions. At first, the GLO was part of the Treasury Department. Then when the Department of the Interior was established in 1849, it supervised the GLO. Nearly a century later, in 1946, Congress merged the GLO with the Grazing Service to form the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the agency which oversees the public domain today.

### 2.1.2 Homesteading in Alaska

Alaska presented special conditions to homesteaders, both legally and geographically. For years after the United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867, there was no formal means to acquire private land title. In 1884, after a gold rush took place in Juneau, Congress passed the Organic Act. That legislation designated Alaska as a "district," provided an appointed civil government, and extended the laws of Oregon, then the nearest state, to cover the region. The act recognized that U.S. mining laws should apply in Alaska, but it specifically excluded the general land laws.

"Alaska was paying for the sins of her sisters," historian Ted Hinckley suggested, referring to the rampant land speculation in the western territories during that era.<sup>13</sup> Whatever the reason, it was not until 1891 that the laws providing for ownership of property in town sites and for trade and manufacturing purposes applied in Alaska. In 1898, a generation after the Alaska purchase, the Homestead Act was extended to Alaska, with limitations, just as the Klondike gold rush got underway.<sup>14</sup>

The early years of the twentieth century were a time of boom, bust, and adaptation in Alaska. Major gold discoveries sparked rushes in Nome and Fairbanks. Political institutions expanded in an attempt to keep up. In 1900 Congress extended a civil code to the district. A U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1905 determined that Alaska should eventually become a territory rather than a district. Consequently, in 1906 Alaska acquired a nonvoting delegate to Congress, and in 1912, it acquired a territorial government. Controversies over Alaskan resources erupted in Washington, leading to federal withdrawal of land for national forests and to the closing of public domain for coal leases. Against this backdrop of change, Alaska homesteading got its start.

Around Fairbanks, homesteaders initially registered their claims with the district recorder, whose primary responsibility was recording mining claims. At least as

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<sup>13</sup> Hinckley, 209.

<sup>14</sup> The 1898 act limited parcels to 80 acres and made no provision for surveys (Miller, 16). Other provisions affected Alaska later. Amendments in 1903 allowed 320-acre claims and allowed unsurveyed lands to be patented if they were rectangular along north/south lines with permanent corner markers. The so-called "Three-Year Act" in 1912 superceded the older prove-up requirements of the Homestead Act. The new regulations required a three-year residence on the land, with annual absences allowed, and required specific proportions of the land to be under cultivation by certain times. The older five-year provisions had only required proof of residency and cultivation, with no minimum amount of land under cultivation. Another set of amendments in 1916 reduced the maximum acreage to 160 acres and exempted certain lands from entry. U.S. Department of the Interior, General Land Office, *Circular Instructions relating to the Acquisition of Title to Public Lands in the Territory of Alaska, 1916*.

early as 1908, a local branch of the land office was operating in Fairbanks, but for several years there was jurisdictional confusion between the land office, under the GLO, and the recorder's office, under the U.S. Commissioner.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, there was no official survey available in the early years of the town's existence. Most homesteaders delineated their claims as best they could with references to watercourses and landforms. Sometimes they referred only to their neighbors' claims and their own corner markers as boundaries. This system was confusing at best, and all homesteaders were required to re-register existing claims with the GLO after official survey plats were adopted in 1914.<sup>16</sup>

No homestead patents were issued in the study area under the old district recording system. In fact, some homesteaders held their claims more than ten years before receiving title. Daniel Hanford, one of the Birch Hill homesteaders, is one example. He entered a claim in 1908, re-registered it in 1914, but did not receive patent to the land until 1923.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.2 Fairbanks: Center for Mining and Agriculture

“The hey-day of agriculture in the Tanana Valley is generally forgotten although it was an illustrious period that lasted for almost forty years. The Fairbanks community was the center of [Alaskan] commercial agriculture from the turn of the century until the late 1930s.”

— Wayne Burton<sup>18</sup>

Late in the summer of 1901, prospector Felix Pedro was searching for gold in the creeks of the Tanana Hills when he ran out of supplies. In need of a new grubstake, he and his partner Tom Gilmore noticed smoke in the distance and followed it to the bank of the Chena River. There, at the head of riverboat navigation, the captain of the *Lavelle Young* had just deposited entrepreneur E.T. Barnette, much to the businessman's distress. Barnette had been trying to reach Tanana Crossing, a more promising location. Although he still intended to continue on as soon as he could, Barnette made the best of his circumstances and established a commercial camp on the riverbank for the time being. He promptly sold Pedro the flour, bacon and beans the prospector needed.<sup>19</sup>

The next year, Pedro indeed struck gold on a creek a few miles from the Chena River. With the news of Pedro's discovery, Barnette made his riverside camp into a town site and named it Fairbanks.<sup>20</sup> After one false rush in the winter of 1903, a genuine gold rush to the creeks around Fairbanks began in the fall of that year, and

<sup>15</sup> Under the civil code of 1900, Alaska was divided into three judicial divisions, each overseen by a judge. The judges could establish precincts in large towns and appoint commissioners to oversee the functions of recorder of claims, probate judge, coroner, and justice of the peace. Cecil F. Robe, “The Penetration of an Alaskan Frontier: The Tanana Valley and Fairbanks,” Ph.D. Diss, Yale University, 1943, 93. Early recorder's office records are now located at the State of Alaska district recorder's office in Fairbanks. Regarding land office jurisdiction, “May Be Many Contests Over Homesteads,” *Tanana Tribune*, 20 June 1908, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Initial field surveys began in 1910, and survey plats were published in 1913. Junior Kerns, *The History of Lazelle Road*, unpublished report, DPW Environmental Resources Office, Ft. Wainwright, Alaska. n.d., 2. GLO (now BLM) records on Fairbanks homesteads only go back as far as 1914. Claims prior to that date are not part of the agency's database.

<sup>17</sup> Ten of the homesteads on the main post took more than seven years to patent. Several took closer to fifteen years. The reasons for the long periods between claiming and patenting land are not clear; the practice had stopped by the 1930s.

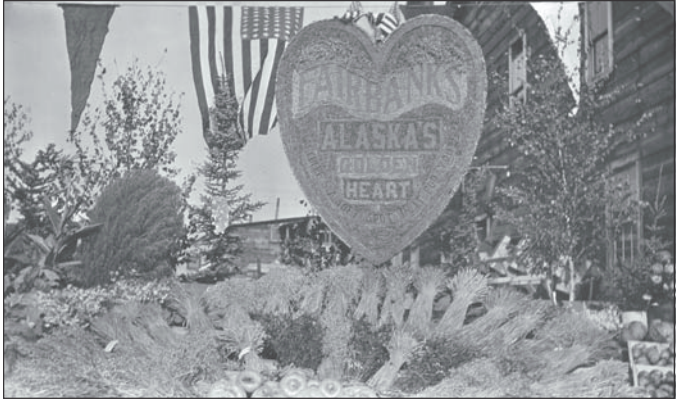
<sup>18</sup> Burton, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Dermot Cole, *Fairbanks: A Gold Rush Town that Beat the Odds* (Fairbanks: Epicenter Press, 1999), 14–16.

<sup>20</sup> Barnette chose the name as a favor to Judge James Wickersham of the Third Judicial District, which encompassed the area. Charles Fairbanks was Senator from Indiana and later Vice-President under Theodore Roosevelt (Cole, 16).







**Figure 1.** Early Fairbanks produce display, date unknown. Obye Driscoll collection, # 64-29-95, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.



**Figure 2.** Homesteader Jozep Grljevic's produce on display, ca. 1911. Obye Driscoll collection, # 64-29-366, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska



**Figure 3.** Tanana Valley Agricultural Association flour mill, early 1920s. Agricultural Experiment Station collection, # 68-4-621, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

the town soon became the center of a major gold-producing region. One writer described it as "...a thriving town...it grows as you watch it, and it grows as you give up the watching and turn for a few moments of sleep."<sup>21</sup> That first tremendous boom would last until 1910.

A booster writing in 1909 described the town as "the metropolis of the Tanana Valley" with a population of 3,000. It had schools, churches, a theater, and clubs, as well as three sawmills, two breweries, two machine shops, and, briefly, three newspapers. The community boasted electricity, telephone service, cable and wireless connections, and a water system.<sup>22</sup>

Since the earliest days of Fairbanks, homesteading and agriculture were part of the scene. The first homestead entry was listed in the recorder's office registry in the summer of 1903. By 1906, at local request, the U.S. Department of Agriculture established an experiment station outside of Fairbanks to assist the development of agriculture in the region. As early as 1905, 82 homestead entries had been filed in the valley; this grew to 130 on file three years later. By 1911, there were over 200.<sup>23</sup>

Local farms and truck gardens supplied vegetables and potatoes to town dwellers and mining camps. H. Elton Buzby, long associated with homesteading on today's post land, recalled an early produce-selling trips with his father and brother. "We'd hitch up a team of horses, load the wagon with vegetables and head out to the mining claims...We'd always sell out before we'd get [there]," he told an interviewer. "We'd meet just hundreds of people...It was a long, muddy damn trip, y'know, with those horses."<sup>24</sup>

Local farms, or ranches as they were often called, supplied many agricultural needs. Their hay fed the horses the community relied on for transportation. They also produced wheat for flour; the Tanana Valley Agricultural Association operated one of Alaska's first flour mills in the early 1920s. Falcon Joslin, a local promoter,

<sup>21</sup> Sidney Paige, "The Tanana Gold Fields, Alaska," *National Geographic* 14 (March 1905): 107.

<sup>22</sup> Joe King, "The Tanana Valley," *Alaska-Yukon Magazine* (Jan. 1909): 255. As many as 11,000 more people were living outside the town on the mining claims and camps Claus-M. Naske and Ludwig J. Rowinski, *Fairbanks: A Pictorial History*. (Norfolk: Donning Company, 1981), 28.

<sup>23</sup> Monahan, 113.

<sup>24</sup> "Elton Buzby," in Jean Lester, *Faces of Alaska* (Fairbanks: Tanana Yukon Historical Society, 1988), 39.



**Figure 4.** William Young homestead north of Fairbanks. Birch Hill is visible in the background. General Land Office report, 1915.<sup>26</sup>



**Figure 5.** Mill Sabin's farm north of Fairbanks. General Land Office report, 1915.

imported Russian and Norwegian seed grain for oats, wheat, and other cereals. In addition to vegetables, hay, potatoes, and cereals, fresh dairy products were also important. Several small dairies operated, including the Hinckley, Slater, and Bentley dairies, and later, the Buzby and Creamer's dairies.<sup>25</sup>

Times changed for the community when Fairbanks fell into a mining slump that lasted from 1910 until the early 1920s. Several thousand people moved away.<sup>27</sup> World War I made the situation even worse, draining the area of many young men and further damaging the mining industry. However, agriculture survived. A local reporter even took pains to point out that "(t)he potato raiser on Birch Hill, sowing and cultivating potatoes to add to the supply of the United States is no less a warrior than he who is fighting at the Front..."<sup>28</sup> Throughout those bust years, demand for local agricultural products still exceeded supply. The expense of riverboat and overland freight worked like a protective tariff, keeping prices high for competing products.<sup>29</sup>

Fairbanks' economy revived after 1923 when the Alaska Railroad was completed and large-scale industrial gold mining became feasible.

Although the prospect of the railroad encouraged some new homesteaders, its ultimate effect on Tanana Valley agriculture was to give a competitive advantage to outside producers. Mining again offered attractive employment, luring away farm workers. By the late 1930s, the Tanana Valley was no longer the center of commercial agriculture in the Territory.<sup>30</sup>

In 1937, the War Department withdrew land outside Fairbanks for the construction of Ladd Field, and by 1940 the new airfield was operating. World War II activity at the base provided a new market for local agriculture. Local grower Harry Badger noted that "The market for vegetables was good from then on. I could sell all I could raise." However, as one economist commented, farmers were not making fortunes because labor and capital shortages made it impossible for them to expand enough to meet the demand.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Miller, 26. John J. Underwood, *Alaska, An Empire in the Making* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1913), 118. In 1926, there were reportedly four dairies operating in the Fairbanks area with a total of 120 cows (Mike Hill, "Farming in the Tanana Valley," *Alaska Sportsman* 30. 1964: 43). Creamer's Dairy eventually outlasted the others. The Creamer family enlarged and modernized the facilities several times. Eventually, competition from transportation subsidies and the need for further high-cost modernization caused the business to close in 1966 Robin Lewis, *The History of Creamer's Dairy*, (Tanana Yukon Historical Society, 1989).

<sup>26</sup> A. Christensen, *Report on Reduction of Area of Homesteads in Alaska to 160 Acres*, U.S. Department of the Interior, General Land Office, 1915.

<sup>27</sup> Cole, 67; Naske and Rowinski, 57.

<sup>28</sup> Cole, 69.

<sup>29</sup> Monahan, 112.

<sup>30</sup> Monahan, 124-25; Burton, 6. By that time, the Matanuska Valley had become Alaska's prominent agricultural region.

<sup>31</sup> "First Five Thousand in Gold is Easy," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 18 July 1958, 10C. Cooley, 56. Creamer's Dairy was one operation large enough to serve the military market for a time. Lewis, 10.



After World War II, homesteading throughout Alaska rose dramatically as veterans made homestead claims. New regulations for veterans were much more relaxed than for traditional homesteaders. Veterans could receive patent to 160 acres after constructing a habitable dwelling and residing on the land seven months out of the first year. Cultivation was not necessary.<sup>32</sup> According to historian Orlando Miller, men still serving in the military also did a “large part” of the postwar homesteading. In some cases, they could live off post, draw a rental allowance, hire a bulldozer to clear their acreage, put up a house, and satisfy the patent requirements. With housing at a premium on the military bases, homesteading was an attractive alternative.<sup>33</sup>

By the time Alaska became a state in 1959, 600 homesteads had been patented throughout the Tanana Valley, though by then many had been subdivided or were otherwise out of production. The number of farmers in the Fairbanks area was about the same as it had been in the early 1920s, but their combined cultivated acreage had tripled.<sup>34</sup>

## 2.3 Land Withdrawals

While the federal government was busy making public domain land available for private ownership, it was also reserving the right to hold parts of the public domain aside in permanent and temporary withdrawals. A withdrawal is defined as the legal reservation of land “by the federal government, from federally-owned lands, for a public purpose.”<sup>35</sup> Both Congress and the President have withdrawal authority. A Congressional withdrawal is made by Act of Congress, resulting in a public law (PL). Presidential withdrawals take the form of executive orders (EOs). Until 1942, the President issued EOs directly. After that time, the President delegated this authority to the Secretary of the Interior. Withdrawals issued by the Secretary are known as public land orders (PLOs).

Withdrawals reserved land in the public domain by definition. But the boundaries of withdrawals could encompass privately held properties such as patented homesteads. When that happened, the government possessed the authority to acquire the private holdings through eminent domain. However, in those cases, the government had to purchase the property from its owners. If the owners disagreed with the offered price, the dispute would be adjudicated in court. Once the court proceedings settled the final price, owners were required to sell.

In the case of Ladd Field, withdrawals covered a combination of unclaimed public domain, patented homesteads, unperfected homestead claims, and subdivided properties. Homesteaders who held title to their property faced the choice of accepting the government’s offer for the parcel or going to court at their own expense to settle the final price. There was no option of remaining on the land, regardless of personal circumstances. A Corps of Engineers real estate appraiser worked up the initial offer based on a site visit and on a review of land prices in the immediate area. The appraiser was unable to give any allowance for the “nuisance value” of relocating

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<sup>32</sup> Monahan, 132. The cultivation requirement was re-established for Korean War veterans in 1954.

<sup>33</sup> Miller, 188.

<sup>34</sup> Miller, 208.

<sup>35</sup> This discussion is summarized from Harkin et al, 159–163, which explains the theory and development of the withdrawal power in greater depth.



after a forced sale, nor to the sentimental value of property developed by homesteaders over a lifetime.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, property owners frequently considered the offers too low, and there were many contested cases. In some instances, disappointment over the outcome has lingered to the present day.

Homesteaders living on the withdrawn lands who had not yet received patent faced a different situation. Technically they did not own the land. In most cases, the government compensated them for improvements such as buildings and clearings. Homesteaders who had not gotten around to beginning their improvements had to file relinquishments on their claims. Dewey Smith is an example of one of these. In 1940, he filed on a homestead just across the Chena River from the original Ladd Field withdrawal. He relinquished the claim in full in June 1942, while serving with the Army Air Corps at Yakutat.<sup>37</sup> In some cases, the government initiated a contest of claim. After a review, the BLM cancelled these unperfected claims by decision, generally because the allotted time had expired or because the homesteader had not cultivated the required percentage of land. A cancellation automatically placed the land back into the public domain, where it fell under the terms of the military withdrawal.

The last group of residents to be affected by the military withdrawals for Ladd Field was the owners of subdivided homesteads. The Joy, Spencer, and Noyes/Buzby homesteads had been subdivided into seventy-six tracts held by sixty-nine different owners before the post expanded into that area.<sup>38</sup> The government purchased these properties either directly or following court proceedings. These cases are not part of the homestead context and are not addressed in this study.

## 2.4 Establishment of an Air Base at Ladd (Fort Wainwright)

“Fairbanks was still a log cabin town of 3,000 people in the late 1930s, but there (was)...more flying than in many towns of 100,000. It was said that airplanes were to Fairbanks what taxicabs were to New York City.”

—Dermot Cole<sup>39</sup>

### 2.4.1 Initial Planning and Withdrawal

In 1934, Lt. Col Henry “Hap” Arnold and his entourage of ten aircraft arrived in Fairbanks. On a fact-finding flight from Washington, D.C., Arnold was scouting for sites for future air bases. Upon his return, he became one of several prominent voices advocating the development of defenses in Alaska.

The Army Air Corps, the forerunner of the U.S. Air Force, was taking a concerned look at Alaska and its lack of defenses. “Alaska is the most central place in the world for aircraft...I believe, in the future, he who holds Alaska will hold the world,” General William “Billy” Mitchell told Congress early in 1935. That same spring, officers with the Air Corps’ Tactical School prepared a report on Alaska’s strategic possibilities, stating that Alaska was vital to the defense of the nation as a whole and that air bases must be established “with absolutely no delay.” That August, Con-

<sup>36</sup> Report, Selwyn P. Nock, Associate Land Appraiser, 12 September 1942. USACE realty files, Ladd AFB.

<sup>37</sup> BLM case file AKF4420. GLO relinquishment form dated 9 June 1942, USACE realty files.

<sup>38</sup> Real estate map, USACE, dated 24 September 1951. Gross appraisal report, Ladd Field, 1 Aug 1942, USACE realty files.

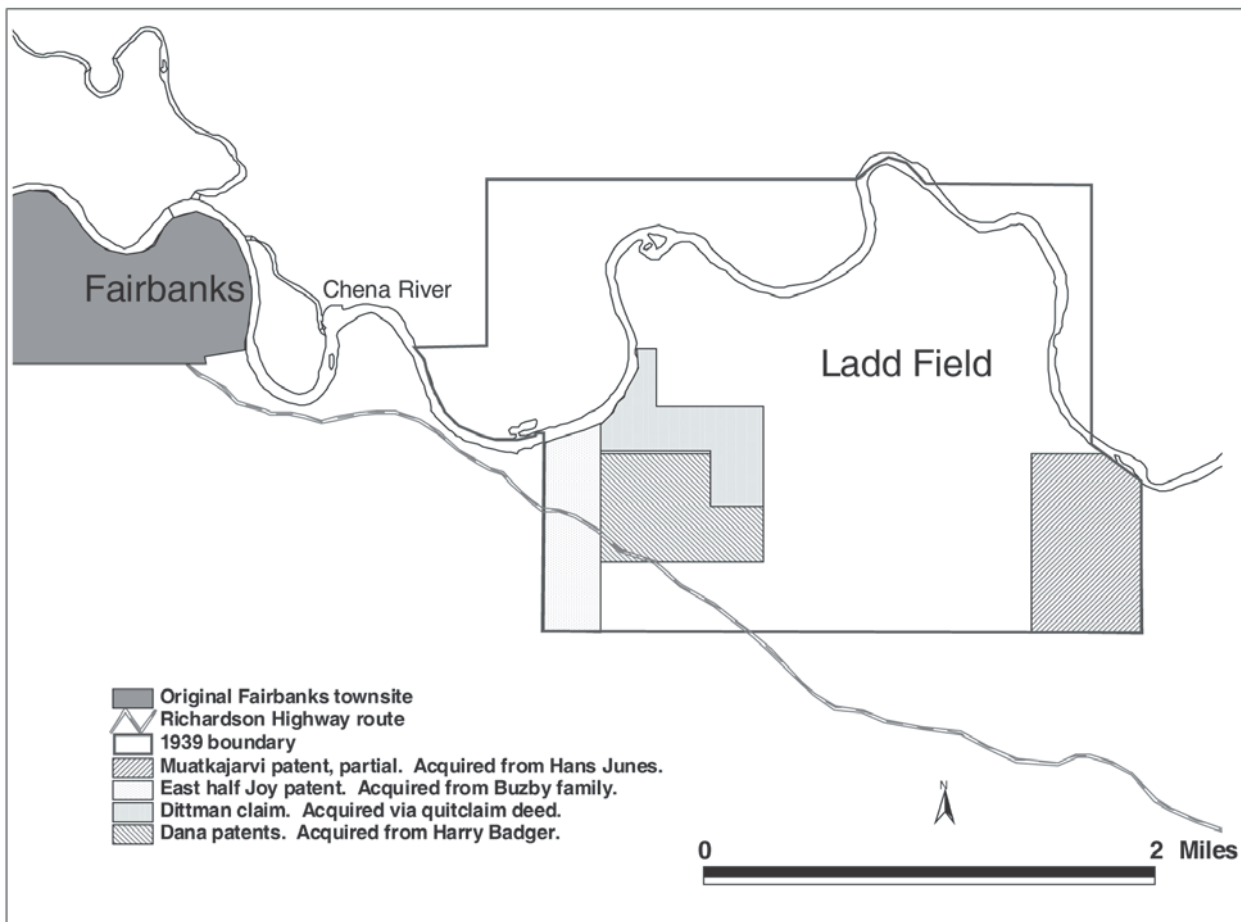
<sup>39</sup> Cole, 107.



gress passed the Wilcox Act, which authorized development of air bases in six regions, including Alaska. It did not, however, fund any construction.<sup>40</sup>

The Air Corps had chosen Fairbanks as an air base location for several reasons. The Wilcox Act had authorized a cold weather testing and training site; Fairbanks provided suitably low winter temperatures. The town also had a good transportation network to the coastal ports via the Alaska Railroad and the Richardson Highway, which was essential for both construction and operations. The existing municipal airport could support military aircraft until the new airfield was complete.<sup>41</sup>

On a July day in 1936, a board of Army officers arrived in Fairbanks to assess possible sites for a base. When the team arrived in town, their activities became front-page news. The mayor personally welcomed them and the chamber of commerce held a dinner in their honor. The officers explained that putting in an air base would mean “the erection of a small city.” They told the newspaper that they were assessing permafrost conditions, looking for a good water supply, and studying possibilities for sanitation. Upon their departure, they announced that the base would be within ten miles of town, but did not disclose any details.<sup>42</sup>



Map 2. Original boundaries of Ladd Field, ca. 1939.

<sup>40</sup> John Cloe and Michael F. Monaghan, *Top Cover for America: The Air Force in Alaska 1920–1983* (Missoula: Anchorage Chapter-Air Force Association with Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1984) 21.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>42</sup> *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 28 July 1936; 29 July 1936; 31 July 1936; 15 August 1936; 17 August 1936.

The officers had chosen a location on the south bank of the Chena River, approximately three miles from the center of Fairbanks. It was an area of small farms and undeveloped land, lying between two bends of the river. In March 1937, President Roosevelt withdrew the site in Executive Order 7596. Most of the land was in the public domain, though a handful of homesteads were within the boundaries. These were the Dana homestead, owned by Harry Badger; part of the Muatkajarvi homestead, owned by Hans Junes; and the east half of the Joy homestead, owned by the Buzby family. Dave and Beatrice Dittman held a non-patented claim within the withdrawal.<sup>43</sup>

Late in the summer of 1939, construction funding became available and the Army Corps of Engineers prepared a site survey. Soon laborers cleared the site, put in a water system, and laid an experimental concrete runway slab.<sup>44</sup> They began work just weeks before Adolf Hitler's forces attacked Poland, launching the Second World War. Ladd's builders hurried their project through the winter and employed 1,000 men in three shifts a day during the following summer, allowing the base to begin operations in September 1940. In the words of one writer, the project became "the largest, most costly, and most complicated construction project in Fairbanks up to that time."<sup>45</sup>

While the base was under construction, the War Department purchased segments of six properties north of the river for a railroad spur right-of-way to connect the base to the Alaska Railroad terminal in Fairbanks. Less than a year after the base began operations, planners were taking steps to expand the installation again. Over the next twelve years, a series of executive orders and PLOs gradually expanded the base and its associated training areas to 928,013 acres.<sup>46</sup>

## 2.4.2 Growth of the Base

As World War II loomed, military planners took steps to expand Ladd Field's initial withdrawal of 2,684 acres. In August 1941, President Roosevelt signed EO 8847, establishing the Blair Lake Gunnery Range. This order extended military lands from the boundary of Ladd Field south to the Tanana River, and it also encompassed more than 640,000 acres of the Tanana Flats on the southern side of the river.<sup>47</sup>

During the war, the new cold weather test facility continued to expand its boundaries. In 1943, Ladd acquired land on the north side of the Chena River and up to the crest of Birch Hill, securing the high ground overlooking the airfield. This was known as Expansion A. There, the base acquired homesteads originally patented by Anton Radak, Toma Koprivica, Daniel Hanford, Herman Lazelle, Charles Shipley, and James Wiest. Relinquishments were secured on at least five active claims. At the same time, the base expanded west toward the city of Fairbanks in Expansion B. It

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<sup>43</sup> USACE realty, Ladd AFB file: "Acquisition documents for land acquired prior to July 1, 1940;" Quitclaim Deed dated 3 November 1939; Judgment on Declaration of Taking, 4th District Court, Civil no. 4583.

<sup>44</sup> Lyman L. Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest: The U.S. Army in Alaska and Western Canada, 1867–1987*, vol II (Anchorage: Alaska Historical Society, 1996) 58.

<sup>45</sup> Cole, 117.

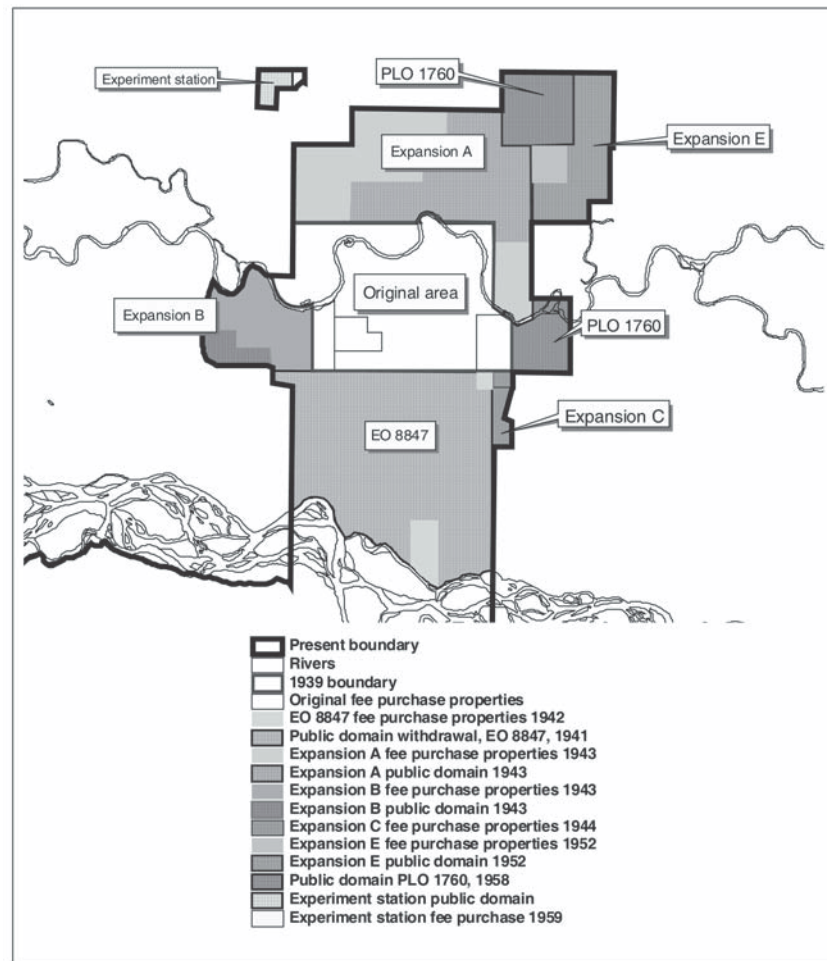
<sup>46</sup> Regarding railroad, USACE realty files, Ladd AFB. In 1952 Ladd sold the railroad spur to the Alaska Railroad. Regarding base acreage, Alaska Army Lands Withdrawal Renewal, Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement, Fig. 3.1a. Figure excludes firing fans and Donnelly Training Areas.

<sup>47</sup> On the south side of the river in the Tanana Flats, there was one native allotment patented to John Thomas in 1931 and one homestead patented to George P. Nelson. Nelson had resided on his claim from 1925–1955, when the government finalized purchase of the property. In 1982, Howard Luke also received a native allotment on the south bank of the Tanana after decades of claiming prior use and occupancy. BLM case abstract AKF 13391, AKF 30589.



acquired the original Berry, Kolde, Noyes/Buzby, Spencer and Joy homesteads. All but the Berry and Kolde properties had been heavily subdivided (see above, Chapter 2.3). To the east, the base added the Mary Jones homestead and the remaining portion of the Muatkajarvi homestead as part of Expansion C in 1944.<sup>48</sup>

When World War II ended, Ladd Field was twice its original size. With the onset of the Cold War shortly afterward, Ladd became the headquarters of Alaska’s northern sector air defense. To support its continuing role, the main post continued to expand in the 1950s. In 1951–52, the government purchased Milton and Lila Nodacker’s patented homestead, secured a short-term lease to part of the Mike Bedeff homestead, and acquired three active claims.<sup>49</sup> In 1955 and 1956, the Department of Defense reassigned approximately 4,200 acres of the Blair Lakes Gunnery Range to the main post of Ladd. This area had contained two patented properties, originally the Davison and Muatkajarvi homesteads.<sup>50</sup> On January 1, 1961, the Air Force transferred the entire property to the Army, which renamed the post Fort Jonathan Wainwright.

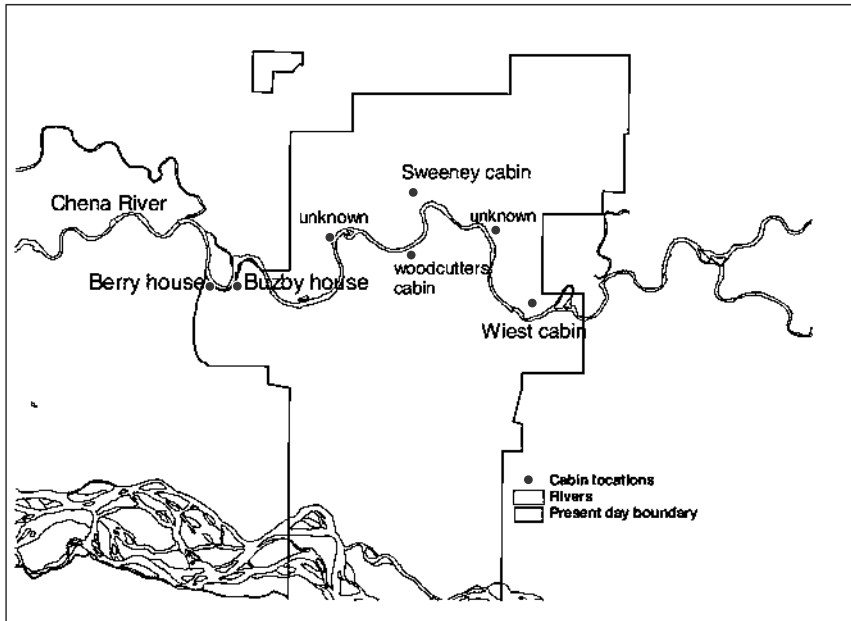


**Map 3.** Ladd expansions, 1937–1952.

<sup>48</sup> Claimants in Expansion A included Dewey Smith, Stanley Mitchell, Frank Hodgson, Robert Dore, and John Eberhardt. Hans Junes owned the Muatkajarvi homestead at the time of sale.

<sup>49</sup> Walter Jenkins, Truman Borton, and James Gardner held active claims. The BLM cancelled Borton’s and Gardner’s claims for expiration of the allotted five-year time. Jenkins’ claim was cancelled “by decision” after BLM filed a contest charging that he did not meet the cultivation and residency requirements.

<sup>50</sup> At the time of the withdrawal, Harry Warren owned the Davison homestead and Hans Junes had the Muatkajarvi parcel. Six homesteaders had active claims: Dan Whiteford, Eldon Kobe, Pompeii Baccaglieri, Henry Ernst, Frank F. Boyle, and Frank J. Craig. Tract Register, Blair Lake Air Force Range, USACE Realty files.



**Map 4.** Known cabin locations, 1913. Source: GLO Plats T1SR1E and T1SR1W, Fairbanks Meridian, 1914.

The eastern outskirts of Fairbanks were the sites of many homestead claims. Two natural features in the area were particularly attractive to homesteaders: the Chena River and Birch Hill. The south-facing slopes of Birch Hill were relatively close to town and offered farmers reasonably good soil. Homesteaders there could take advantage of various roads and trails connecting the area to Fairbanks' supplies and markets. The Chena River was also a popular location, providing a relatively easy transportation route to Fairbanks. During the first decade of settlement, homesteaders steadily claimed land along the Chena. "The best

Farms in a new Country are on the River Banks," wrote one. "There the Land is warm and it has got drainage....the poor Homesteadter (sic) has got Transportation, he can float his Produce to Town."<sup>51</sup>

Homesteaders were not the only newcomers making a living from this land. Because the area did not have much mineral potential, it did not interest miners. However, it did have one critical resource-accessible wood. During the early years,

Fairbanks and the surrounding mining areas depended on wood for fuel and building material. Large-scale drift mining required fuel for steam thawing equipment. The power plant in town demanded thousands of cords of wood annually for its boilers, and individuals and businesses burned thousands more for heat during the long intense winters. Woodcutting became an essential industry, and woodcutters were especially active within a seven-mile radius of town.<sup>52</sup>

The woodcutting and homesteading economies existed side by side. Most homesteaders were glad to have the additional income from wood



**Figure 6.** Rafting a winter wood supply down the Chena River. Courtesy Ted Spencer.

<sup>51</sup> Letter, George Nissen to Territorial Governor John Strong, 19 March 1914. General Correspondence of the Alaska Territorial Governor, file 40, 1914.

<sup>52</sup> Cole, 53–54.







**Figure 7.** Riverside sawmill in action, ca. 1930s. Courtesy Ted Spencer.

sales, but others preferred to stay out of the business. One of these was George Nissen, who homesteaded along the Chena just to the east of today's post boundary. In 1914, Nissen accused a newcomer on an adjacent parcel of being a "woodgrabber." In a scene reminiscent of the Wild West, the men exchanged threats, and two days later Nissen found himself in jail. "I am in the country 27 years," he stated in a letter, "and I never had seen the inside of a jail until here in Fairbanks Alaska. All about a[n] Alaska Homestead."<sup>53</sup>

For most homesteaders, their experience was a combination of agricultural pursuits and any type of work that would contribute to their income. Some worked in town, others worked for the lumber mills or as independent woodcutters, and some worked summers for the Alaska Road Commission. Tiny Buzby, who lived on a Chena River homestead in the 1930s, explained it this way. "[W]hat we were doing was just exactly what everybody did: we worked in the summers when there were jobs for cash and then...whatever else we could do we did to keep on living...we trapped and we logged and we did things like that and then we could sell that in the spring or whenever, and that's how we lived." She pointed out, "People didn't

really have much of any money until after Ladd Field came and established a payroll, because there was just the F.E. Company, the N.C. Company, and two or three little grocery stores and things like that ... that had an income. The rest of us lived there because we liked to live there."<sup>54</sup>

Children helped their families with farming chores and contributed to the family income when they could. They attended school in town, and those on the closer homesteads walked the one to two miles in to school. Others, like the Lazelles, who lived three or more miles out, took up second homes in town during the winter. Isolation could be a problem. At certain times of year, secondary roads were impassable. Travel on the river shut down during fall freeze-up and spring breakup, though the river was an excellent route in summer and winter. Homesteader Bob Buzby remembered that when his family was living on property two miles out of town, "the ladies used to come out and commiserate with my mother for having to live so far from town." Bob's wife Tiny added that, "We had to make our own amusement and we had to enjoy what was there and that's what it was. But it was then a beautiful place and it's still a beautiful place...."<sup>55</sup>

River access helped define the homestead experience for those who lived near the Chena's banks. Particularly in the summer, when overland trails often became boggy and mosquito-ridden, local people could use the river for transportation. Above Fairbanks, water depths on the Chena were too low for sternwheelers, so residents used shallow-draft riverboats. "I've known a couple...up the river that whipsawed lumber and built their own boat to travel with, and this was a normal thing..." Bob Buzby remembered. "You poled your way up the river, of course you could always paddle down." Homesteaders used the river to move produce down to Fairbanks, and some also floated logs from their property to the Fairbanks lumber mills. Resi-

<sup>53</sup> Letter, George Nissen to Territorial Governor John Strong, 27 July 1914. General Correspondence of the Alaska Territorial Governor, file 40, 1914.

<sup>54</sup> Bob Buzby and Tiny Buzby, joint interview by author, tape recording, Wasilla, AK, 27 September 2001.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*



**Figure 8.** Chena River floatplane dock, Pacific Alaska Airways Fairchild 71 aircraft, ca. 1930s. Robert Gleason photo via Ted Spencer.



**Figure 9.** Will Rogers and Wiley Post signing autographs for Spencer family children, August 15, 1935. Courtesy Ted Spencer.

dents also used the river as an access route during the winter.

Later, when Fairbanks developed into an aviation center, Chena River homesteaders adapted. Weeks Field served wheeled aircraft, but floatplanes used the Chena River. The Buzby and Spencer families, who were related by marriage, used their riverfront boat landing as a floatplane facility. Bob's wife Tiny described it as "a little float, you know, really just a boat landing, but the planes tied up to it too." Commercial flights from Pacific Alaska Airways relied on this upriver dock for their floatplane traffic. If a floatplane had a light load, it could land below the Cushman St. Bridge and tie up across

from downtown Fairbanks. However, if the aircraft had a heavier load and needed more room for takeoff, pilots used this dock. Bob Buzby remembered, "The river at the place was the best straight shot that they had. Everything else around was too many bends." Even so, pilots had to negotiate a turn before they could gather speed and lift off the water. Flights with very heavy loads left from this site and refueled just south of Fairbanks at Harding Lake before continuing on their journeys.<sup>56</sup>

One of the last photographs ever taken of columnist and movie star Will Rogers was made at this floatplane dock in August 1935. Rogers and aviator Wiley Post had stopped in Fairbanks and planned to continue on the next leg of their journey to Barrow. They took off from the Chena River site and flew to Harding Lake to refuel. From there they headed toward Barrow but never made it, crashing about fifteen miles from their destination. Both men died.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Buzby interview, 27 September 2001. Dirk Tordoff, personal communication, 23 October 2001. See Buzby, Section 4.2, and Spencer, Section 5.1, for more information on those homesteads.

<sup>57</sup> Bryan B. Sterling and Frances N. Sterling, *Will Rogers & Wiley Post: Death at Barrow*. (New York: M. Evans and Co., 1993), 148, 163–164.

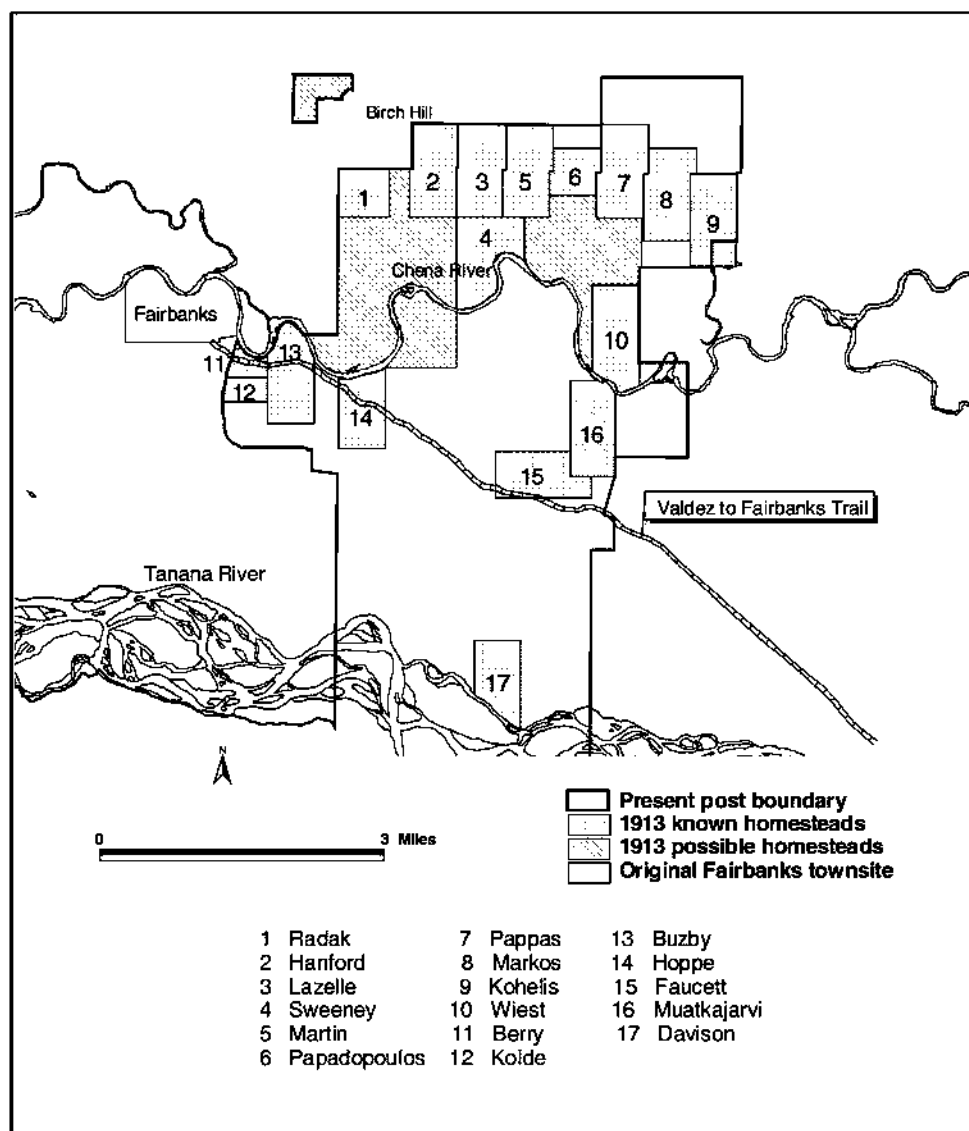




# Homesteads, 1904–1913:

## CHAPTER 4.0 Pre-survey Claims

The first decade of homesteading was shaped by the gold rush taking place in the region. It was a time when most people's attention was on mining claims, but also a time when the only fresh produce found in the region was locally grown. Homesteads were rapidly taken up all around the town of Fairbanks, and local boosters considered this a sign of permanence and stability for the community. Most of the productive land on the Chena River and Birch Hill was claimed during this era, and many of these parcels changed hands several times. During this period there were no patents issued in the study area. However, many of the homesteaders who later secured patents made their original claims at this time. These are described in the following section.



Map 5. Homestead locations, ca. 1913.

## 4.1 Patented Homesteads, 1904–1913

### *Henry Harrison Berry*

Homesteader Henry H. Berry was born in Oklahoma in 1874. Before coming to Fairbanks in 1908, he lived for a time in Pueblo, Colorado, as well as in three communities in Washington: Cheney, Seattle, and Ballard. In those localities, he worked in the farming, hardware, and grocery businesses. In Fairbanks Berry owned a greenhouse near the Independent Mill and also worked as a teamster for L. T. Erwin. Henry Berry was not related to the Clarence Berry family of Klondike gold rush fame.

Berry settled on the former James McManus homestead in December 1909. This homestead was sometimes known as the “wireless farm” because it bordered the military telegraph station at the southeastern edge of the city limits. By 1911, Berry had a cabin, root-house, and two greenhouses on the north side of the property not far from the Chena River. He received patent to the land in 1924.



**Figure 10.** Unidentified men inspecting Henry Berry's homestead, ca. 1915. Agricultural Experiment Station collection, # 68-4-80, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

In 1917, Berry married a neighboring homesteader, Mrs. Ida May Joy. She passed away in 1920. Henry Berry died on October 22, 1928, and is buried in the Clay Street Cemetery in Fairbanks. His only surviving relative was a daughter from a previous marriage, living in Long Island, New York.

It is not known what happened to the original buildings on this property. Today, the Richardson Highway/Airport Way/Steese Highway intersection runs through this site.<sup>58</sup>

### *Charles R. Davison*

In September 1909, Charles Reah Davison claimed a homestead along the north bank of the Tanana River, just above the route of the Fairbanks-Valdez winter trail. He patented the property in January 1918, when he was about sixty-five years old.

Davison's property was the only homestead in this study to be located adjacent to the Tanana River itself. The Tanana is a braided river, subject to regular channel changes. It is considerably more powerful and unpredictable than its offshoot, the Chena. In this area, the Tanana runs through flat country. Not surprisingly, Davison was flooded out at least once.

Davison was a widower who lived alone on the homestead. He had been described as very active for his age, often walking the fourteen-mile round trip from his homestead into town. In February 1930, when friends in town had not heard from him in some time, they sent a plane out to his cabin and discovered that Davison had passed away. He had apparently been ill and unable to restock his wood supply in

<sup>58</sup> Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 23 October 1928, 8. Polk's Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer, 1909–1910. GLO survey notes, 1S 1W Meanders, 1911, 107. Interview, William Stroecker, 16 October 2001.



the cold weather. Searchers believed he had been trying to stoke the wood stove in his cabin when he died.

According to a newspaper account, Davison was born in Ohio and claimed Scandinavian descent. He was eighty-seven or eighty-eight years old when he passed away and left no close relatives. He is buried in the Clay Street Cemetery in Fairbanks.<sup>59</sup>

### *Daniel Henry Hanford*

Daniel Henry Hanford filed for a 320-acre Birch Hill homestead in December 1908. Within eighteen months, he had managed to clear seven acres for cultivation and was growing garden peas, potatoes, and two varieties of beans. He received patent to the property in 1923 after fifteen years of residence.

Hanford was born around 1861 or 1862 in Connecticut, and was a veteran of the Spanish-American War. Little else is known of his early life. He died in his cabin in the late winter of 1928. Friends in Fairbanks said he had not spent a night away from his farm during his twenty years on the property. Hanford was a widower and left a surviving daughter in Wisconsin.<sup>60</sup>

The Hanford homestead was purchased in two tracts as part of Ladd Field's Expansion A in 1943.

### *George Kolde*

George Kolde was born in Germany in 1859 and came to the United States in 1880. It is not known when he arrived in Fairbanks, but he filed for homestead entry on May 19, 1909. His location was on the southern portion of a parcel held by James McManus in 1908.



**Figure 11.** George Kolde's wheat field, 1919. Agricultural Experiment Station collection, # 68-4-126, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

In 1909, local promoter Falcon Joslin profiled Kolde's farm, among others, in an article for *Alaska-Yukon Magazine*. According to Joslin's report, Kolde and his partner Dan Brennan cleared eight acres of land and sowed oats their first season. That initial crop grew "as high as a man's shoulder and very thick." Because there was no threshing machine in the valley then, they cut the crop for hay. Kolde was offered a hundred dollars an acre for the crop just as it stood in the field; he declined the offer and was able to sell the harvested hay yield for triple that amount.<sup>61</sup>

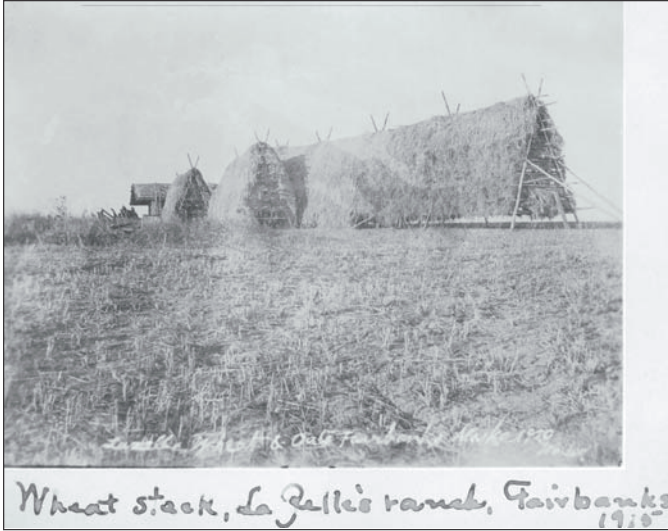
Kolde applied for patent on the property as early as 1916, and was eventually successful in achieving patent in 1920. He passed away just a few years later, around 1924, when he was about sixty-four years old.

<sup>59</sup> "Tanana River Jam Threatens Farmer," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 26 October 1928, 5. Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*; 28 February 1930, 5; 1 March 1930, 8. 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska, "Tanana River about 4 Miles from Cushman St."

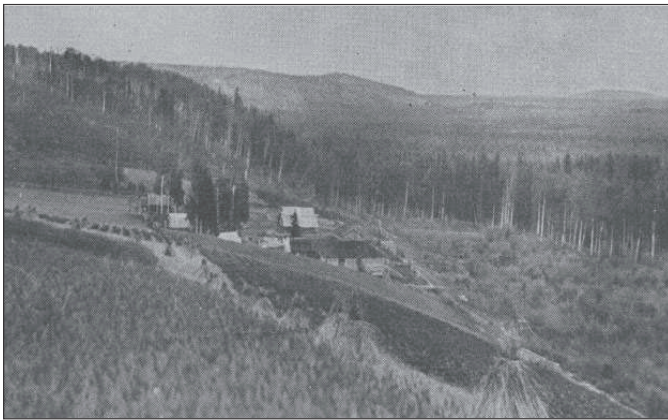
<sup>60</sup> "Garden Peas July Fourth," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*; 21 June 1910, 4. Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 4 April 1928, 1. 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska.

<sup>61</sup> Falcon Joslin, "Agriculture in the Tanana Valley, Alaska," *Alaska-Yukon Magazine* 9 (Nov. 1909): 7-8.





**Figure 12.** Wheat stacks, Lazelle homestead, 1915. Vide Bartlett collection, # 72-156-290, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.



**Figure 13.** Lazelle homestead, ca. 1919. Annual Report, Alaska Agricultural Experiment Stations 1919, 52.



**Figure 14.** Detail, Lazelle homestead.

### *Herman A. Lazelle*

Just to the east of Hanford’s homestead on Birch Hill lay a parcel which became the Lazelle family homestead. Before the family’s arrival on the land, three previous homesteaders had occupied it: Thomas McCool, Nick Panicolas, and Daniel Berger. Herman Lazelle acquired this homestead from Daniel Berger in 1913 and secured patent to it in 1920.

Census records indicate that Herman Lazelle was originally from Ohio; his wife Annetta listed Iowa as her birthplace. Herman traveled to the Klondike gold rush over the Dyea Trail in 1896 or 1897. The Lazelles married in Dawson and a few years later followed the gold rush to the Tanana Hills. Lazelle worked for the Clarence Berry/Hamlin mining operation at Ester, a mining camp outside Fairbanks. A business directory at that time listed him as a blacksmith. He and his wife also operated a hotel in Ester before taking up their Birch Hill homestead in 1913.<sup>62</sup>

The Lazelles eventually had four children: Harvey, Harriet, Hazel, and Mason. In the winter of 1920, the census reported that the family was living in town at a residence in Garden Island. At that time, hired man Harry West assisted Herman with agricultural duties on the homestead. Some of their efforts involved growing test varieties of crops in cooperation with the agricultural experiment station.

This property became part of Ladd Field in 1943 when Expansion A extended the base’s boundaries to the crest of Birch Hill. At that time, the government purchased the farm through condemnation proceedings. The buildings at the site were torn down, and the property is now part of the Army’s present Birch Hill Ski Area, used for winter training and recreation.

### *Herman Muatkajarvi*

Herman Muatkajarvi was a Finnish immigrant who came to the United States in 1892. He came north during the Klondike rush, and spent his first few years in the Fairbanks area as a miner, working at one point at the diggings on Ester Creek.

<sup>62</sup> 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska, “Garden Island” and “Side Trails from Big Chena Winter Trail.” Mrs. P. Spanogle, telephone conversation with author, 12 October 2001. Obituary, Mrs. H. A. Lazelle, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 7 March 1932, 8. Polk’s Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer, 1909–1910.



In 1909 he filed a claim for homestead land on the south bank of the Chena River. He received patent in 1919. At the time of the 1920 census he was single and living on his homestead, in what was later described as a fine big home. On November 21, 1928, Muatkajarvi was killed by a falling tree while woodcutting; he was in his early sixties at the time. He is buried in the Clay Street Cemetery.<sup>63</sup>

Ladd Field purchased this homestead in three separate transactions with Hans Junes, the subsequent owner. The northern piece of the homestead was part of the original Ladd Field while the southern corners were acquired as Blair Lakes Range Tract 1 in 1942 and as Ladd Tract C-1 in 1944.



**Figure 15.** Tony Radak and unknown man, ca. 1940. Agricultural Experiment Station collection, # 68-4-326, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.



**Figure 16.** Unidentified man, Wiest farm. Albert Johnson collection, # 89-166-597N, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

### *Anton Radak*

Anton (Tony) Radak was born in 1885 in what was then Austria-Hungary. He immigrated to the United States in 1903 as a teenager and claimed a homestead on Birch Hill in 1912. The 1920 census lists Radak as a single man whose first language was Croatian. No further information on Radak could be located.

Radak received patent to his homestead in 1929. In 1943, after court proceedings, Radak sold his property to the government for Ladd's Expansion A for \$6,987.09.

### *James D. Wiest*

James D. Wiest, a single man originally from Kentucky, settled on his homestead on the north bank of the Chena River in March of 1910. He called his claim the "Bluff farm." A 1913 map shows the location of his cabin on the homestead, a few hundred yards up from the riverbank. He received patent to the property in 1920.

Wiest made his living by bringing his vegetables and raspberries to town and selling them house to house, making him a familiar face around Fairbanks. He maintained a cabin in town as well as the one on the homestead. James Wiest passed away in 1936 at the age of eighty-three, leaving no known relatives.<sup>64</sup>

Ladd Field acquired the Wiest homestead in 1943 from subsequent owner Joe McDonald as part of Expansion A.

<sup>63</sup> His name also appears in some records under various spellings including Muatka and Moutka. 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska. "Body of Woodcutter is Found Friday; Felled by Tree," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 24 November 1928, 1.

<sup>64</sup> 1913 Plat map, Township 1 South, Range 1 East of the Fairbanks Meridian, BLM rectangular survey files. Re farm name, recorder's document 32139. Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 13 April 1936, 6. 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska.





## 4.2 Non-patented Homesteads, 1904–1914

During this decade there was a large volume of non-patented claims. Early land records are often extremely vague about the precise location of these homesteads; many claims refer to landmarks that have long since disappeared. To illustrate the variety and importance of these non-patented claims, several are presented below. Information on the remaining homesteaders can be found in Appendix B.

### *Harry Badger*

Harry Markley Badger was an active figure in early Fairbanks life. Born in Minnesota in 1869, he grew up on a farm. As a young man he headed west, first to California briefly and then to Washington where he apparently farmed, prospected, and worked as a lumberman. In 1900, he belatedly followed the gold rush to Dawson, where he mined on Bonanza Creek until he settled in the new Fairbanks gold camp in 1903. He presided over one of the first miners' meetings there and the following year was elected town recorder. In 1904 he opened Fairbanks' first real estate office, later known as Badger & Woodward, which he operated until 1910. It was during this time that he held a homestead claim for a few months to part of the McManus farm. He relinquished that homestead to Henry H. Berry in December 1909. It is likely that this was purely a real estate holding, since by Badger's own account he did not return to an agricultural career until some years later.



**Figure 17.** Harry M. Badger, ca. 1909. From Metheany, "Men of Endeavor," (1909) 303.

From 1910 to 1913, Badger managed the Cleveland and Howell ditch operation at the Chatanika diggings. It was seasonal work, and in the winter of 1912–13, Badger made a visit back to Minnesota. On his return, he reportedly rode the entire 311-mile length of the Richardson Trail from the port of Valdez to Fairbanks on a bicycle.<sup>65</sup> Then, for a few years after his Chatanika stint, Badger worked for Roy Rutherford of the Independent Lumber Company.

In 1916, Badger returned to farming permanently. He claimed a homestead about ten miles outside of town (outside today's post boundaries), which he patented in 1924. Searching for a cash crop, Badger bought out a supply of hybrid strawberry plants from Fairbanks homesteader John Scharle. Before long Badger was selling strawberries from his horse and cart to Fairbanks restaurants and residents. He would grow as many as 5,000 strawberry plants and could sell as many as 300 crates of strawberries in a season, earning him the nickname "Strawberry King."

Badger also raised hay, cabbage, turnips, carrots, raspberries and two varieties of wheat. He even raised chickens and maintained his flock of egg-laying hens over the winter months, which could often be a money-losing venture for farmers who relied on expensive commercial feed. Badger once said, "I was the only man who made any money on

<sup>65</sup> R.N. DeArmond, "April in Alaska's History," *Alaska Sportsman* 32 (April 1966) 26–27.

them. My chickens ate wheat or they didn't eat anything. They soon learned." Badger also supplemented his seasonal farm income with money from woodcutting. The trail he cleared to reach his property has since become known as Badger Road.

In 1931, Badger purchased the George Dana homestead. It is not known whether he cultivated this property as a satellite to his primary homestead farther out or whether he maintained it as a real estate holding. Longtime Fairbanks resident William Stroecker confirmed that during this period Badger was based out of the Badger Road homestead and not the Dana property. However, Badger was the owner on record who sold the Dana homestead to the military for the original Ladd Field in 1939.

Harry Badger was active in community affairs, and served a term in the Territorial House of Representatives in 1945. He continued to live on his homestead until he reached an advanced age and retired to the Sitka Pioneers' Home. Badger died in 1965 at the age of ninety-six.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Harry and Louise Buzby*

One of the most significant non-patented homesteads is the Buzby family parcel. It was one of the earliest claims in the area, dating from 1905. For reasons lost to history, the Buzbys did not patent the land, and thus the initial title went to another individual, F.R. Noyes, when the family temporarily left Alaska in the 1920s. However, they returned to the same area and over the years expanded their holdings to adjacent properties. For nearly a decade, they ran the Buzby Dairy, supplying fresh milk and dairy products to the people of Fairbanks. With a large network of descendants still in Alaska, the family continues to contribute to Alaska life.



**Figure 18.** First Buzby ranch, ca. 1916. Vide Bartlett collection, #77-89-67, Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Harry Buzby was born in 1863 in Burlington, New Jersey. With his parents, he gradually moved westward, first to Illinois and later to Nebraska. Buzby also lived in Montana and Willamette, Oregon, and he took an interest in northern prospects at the time of the Nome gold rush. He spent a short time in Nome, then moved on to Skagway around 1901. At that point, he sent for his wife Louise and four children, Bessie, Jason, Theodore, and Marion, who had remained in Willamette.<sup>67</sup>

In 1905, the Buzby family claimed a homestead half a mile upstream of Fairbanks on a bend of the Chena River. There they cultivated produce and wild berries, grew hay for livestock, and at one time experimented with a Norwegian variety of oats. They operated a commercial green-

<sup>66</sup> Information on Badger compiled from: Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 14 October 1965, 9. Obituary, *Alaska Sportsman* 32 (February 1966): 55. "H. Badger Outlines his Career," *News-Miner*, 23 April 1942, 5. "Alaska Strawberry Fete Tonight with Fairbanks Pioneer," *News-Miner*, 3 August 1936, 4. "First Five Thousand in Gold is Easy," *News-Miner*, 18 July 1958, 10. *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics*, s.v. Badger. Sharon Kessey, "Early History Recorded in Fairbanks Street Names" M.A. Thesis, University of Alaska Fairbanks, May 1998, 59–60. DeArmond, "April in Alaska's History," 26–27. B.B. Metheany, "Men and Endeavor of the Tanana Valley" *Alaska-Yukon Magazine* (Jan. 1909): 303–305.

<sup>67</sup> Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 29 January 1931, 5.



house and kept horses and livestock. In the early years, they had a fur farm as well, with mink, marten and foxes. After a few years on the homestead, the Buzbys added two more sons to their family, Elton and Robert, in 1909 and 1911.<sup>68</sup>

On the property, there was a log house, agricultural buildings, and fenced, cleared fields. The house was a three-room cabin, with sections added to the original in typical Alaskan fashion. The house was close to the river, which was an important transportation route. To the south was a small slough that cut across the river from bend to bend, effectively making the northern part of the homestead an island. Just south of that lay the Richardson Trail to Valdez.

For reasons that are not known, the family did not secure patent to the homestead in spite of their substantial improvements and in spite of having met the requirements of cultivation. At the time, that was not unusual. Perhaps because of lack of surveys, frequent changes in the homestead laws applying to Alaska, and uncertainty about Alaska's political status, obtaining homestead patents near Fairbanks was an aching slow process for everyone until the 1920s.



Figure 19. Buzby home, early 1930s. Courtesy Ted Spencer.

Around 1921, after more than fifteen years on the homestead, the family sold their interest in the homestead and moved back to the states. Although homesteaders could not sell land without a patent, people commonly sold their claims and improvements without actually transferring land title. This was known as selling a relinquishment. The homesteader and the purchaser would agree on a price for the claim, and make payment arrangements between themselves. Then they would appear at the land office together. There, the homesteader would officially file his relinquishment and the purchaser would file a claim on the newly vacated land. Since the Buzby family had not secured patent, an arrangement like this may have been an option.<sup>69</sup>



Figure 20. Buzby Dairy milk bottle. Courtesy Candy Waugaman collection.

The Buzbys then resided in California and later Tillamook, Oregon, where Harry bought agricultural property and livestock. In 1926, they decided to return to Alaska to operate a dairy business. Harry bought the patented Lou Joy homestead a quarter of a mile east of the original Buzby property. The family stayed on this homestead until the military purchased part of it for the original Ladd Field in 1939.

From 1926 until the early 1930s, they operated the Buzby Dairy, one of several family dairies operating at that time. "My dad and I were the dairymen," youngest son Bob recalled. "My mother of course took care of the milk once it got in the house. I did the delivering. We sold cream by the pint, and butter, and eggs, and the usual."<sup>70</sup> Bob

<sup>68</sup> Lester, 38–39.

<sup>69</sup> On relinquishment trade, Gates 478. It should be noted that it was common for early Fairbanks homesteaders like the Buzbys to wait as long as fifteen years after staking their initial claims to receive patent. On the post lands, only two patents were issued before 1920, although dozens of homestead claims had been filed.

<sup>70</sup> Buzby interview, 27 September 2001.

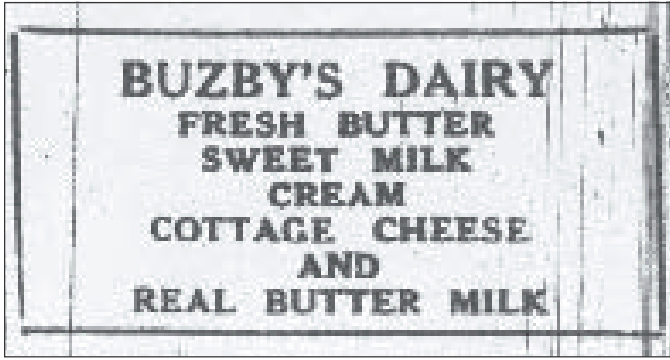
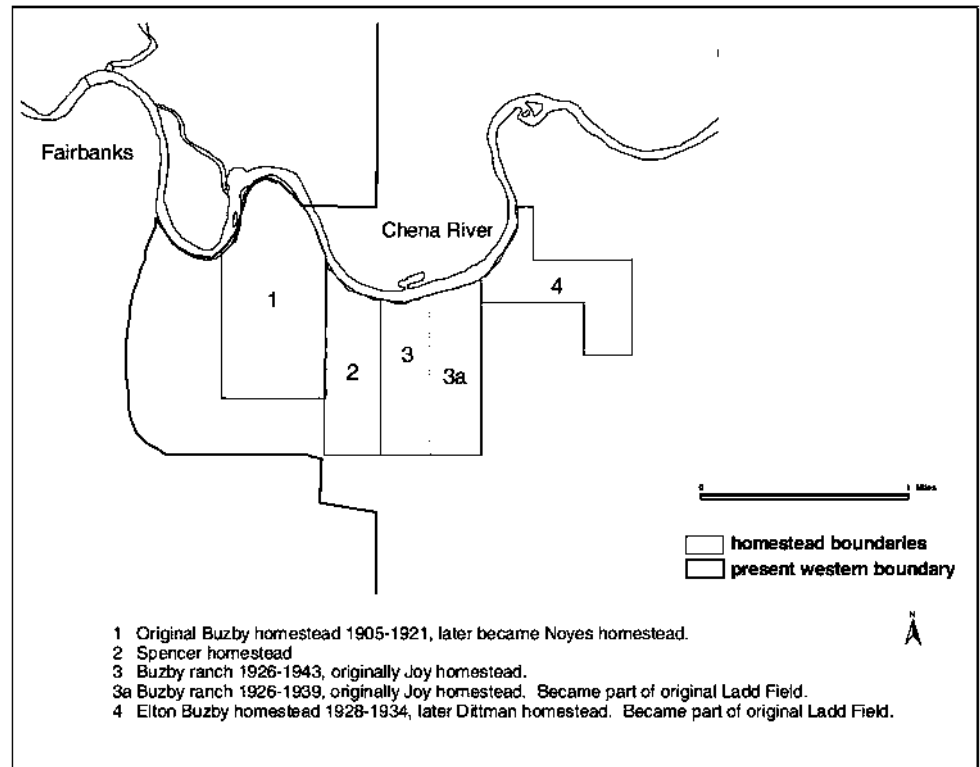


Figure 21. Advertisement, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, April 9, 1928.

remembers delivering milk to customers in town with a horse and wagon in summer and a sled in winter. Winter deliveries were tricky, as Fairbanks temperatures sometimes dropped to thirty and forty degrees below zero. To keep the milk from freezing, Bob put hay in the sled, loaded the bottles, covered them with blankets, and carried heaters with the load.

Meanwhile, the older children had grown and moved out on their own. One of the daughters, Bessie Claire, married Chester Spencer in 1911 (see Spencer, Chapter 5.1). The Spencers home-

steaded a previously unclaimed parcel in between the original Buzby homestead and the Joy homestead where Harry, Louise, and Bob were operating the dairy. On the other side, just to the northwest, Harry's son Elton claimed a homestead from 1928–1934. Thus the Buzby family in one way or another left a homesteading legacy on not one but four adjoining properties over the course of three decades.



Map 6. Buzby family homesteads.



## *Otto Hoppe*

From 1906–1914, German-born musician Otto Hoppe claimed land south of the Chena River, which later became the Joy homestead. Hoppe was a colorful figure, well-known in Fairbanks as a piano teacher and music director.

Hoppe was born in Berlin on February 24, 1860. At the age of seven, he traveled with his parents to the United States, where the family resided for three years before returning to Germany in 1870. Back in Berlin, Hoppe studied languages, mathematics, science and music. In one of Hoppe's accounts, the nineteenth-century Russian piano virtuoso Anton Rubinstein once heard the young man playing in a Berlin garden. The maestro approached the sixteen-year-old Hoppe and told him that if he continued with music, he could be Rubinstein's successor. However, at that time in his life, Hoppe's one desire was to return to America and become a cowboy.

Sometime around the age of nineteen, Hoppe did just that. He followed the call of adventure for twenty-five years before finally settling in Fairbanks. In later life, he shared some of his experiences with his neighbors, the Buzbys, who wrote about his tales. In these accounts, Hoppe went first to Montana, spending six years as a cowboy during the ranching heyday of the early 1880s. In 1886, he continued west to San Francisco where he taught music and school subjects. By 1891, he was ready to move on again, and he joined a whaling crew for several years where he visited locales as varied as Hawaii and the Siberian Arctic. Hoppe returned briefly to San Francisco to teach music and eventually joined the northern gold rushes, arriving in Fairbanks around 1904.

In Fairbanks, he found a permanent home where he lived for over thirty years. At first, Hoppe played in the dance halls in exchange for gold nuggets; later, he was an organist and choir director at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. From his cabin in town near Second Avenue and Clay Street, he would arrange music for upcoming entertainments. He taught piano to a generation of Fairbanks students, and was remembered for his strict discipline and tendency to rap the knuckles of poorly-prepared players. In 1938 he retired to the Sitka Pioneers' Home. Hoppe never married.

Otto Hoppe was an accomplished gardener, and he homesteaded along the Chena for eight years. Neighbor Elton Buzby recalled that Hoppe experimented with mulches and even played music to his plants. "He grew wonderful stuff," Buzby recalled. In 1914, Hoppe relinquished his homestead claim to Ida May Joy. The property eventually passed to the Buzby family, and the eastern half became part of the original Ladd Field.

Otto Hoppe ended his life in Sitka in 1939 at the age of 79. Despondent over his age and health, Hoppe walked down to the dock, left a few lines of verse scrawled on the back of a cigar-box, and leapt into the sea.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 20 March 1939, 7. Barbara Buzby, "Trail Blazers: Otto H. Hoppe" The Paystreak, Fairbanks High School English IV Class, in *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 20 November 1936, 5. Jay Buzby, "Tribute to an Old Sourdough," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 23 March 1939, 2. "Former 'Hermit Musician' is Melancholy Figure in Suicidal Drowning," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 27 July 1939, 6. 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska. Lester, "Elton Buzby," 40. Jo Anne Wold, *This Old House: The Story of Clara Rust* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., 1976), 228.

### *Theodore A. Markos*

Theodore Markos was a gold miner who briefly became a homesteader. He was born Theodor Aristidou Markopoulos in Darrhion, Greece, around 1886. He left Greece for the United States in 1902 and arrived in Alaska around 1908.<sup>72</sup> In September 1912, Markos filed for homestead entry on land on Birch Hill; he held the claim until 1916. However, according to a 1915 city directory, he was also prospecting in the Tolovana district. In the winter of 1920, Markos was living in Graehl, a town site across the river just northeast of Fairbanks. At that time, he made his living as a teamster. In later years, Markos mined claims in the Manley Hot Springs area.

When Markos applied for his homestead in 1912, he declared his intention to become an American citizen, as the homestead laws required. However, he waited thirty years to complete his naturalization documents, and this indirectly cost him his life. In February 1942, Markos received his final citizenship papers in Fairbanks and was returning to his mining claim outside of Manley. Nearing the end of his long journey, he left Manley on snowshoes with his citizenship papers in his pocket, but fell victim to overexertion and exhaustion as he traveled an unbroken trail covered with three feet of loose snow. Markos left no known relatives.

### *Charles B. Sweeney*

In February 1905, Charles Brian Sweeney filed a homestead claim on land along the north bank of the Chena River. Little is known of Sweeney's background, other than that he was born in Ireland in 1866 and immigrated to the United States in 1893. There are few records of his earliest years on the homestead, although surveyors made note of his cabin and hayfield in 1911.<sup>73</sup>

In 1915 he re-registered his claim with the GLO as all the local homesteaders were doing, and notified the office that he intended to file final proof. At that point, he had apparently met the requirements of residence, cultivation, and time on the land. However, between 1914 and 1919, he was involved in several local civil cases. One involved nonpayment of debt; others had to do with disputes with woodcutters on or around his claim.<sup>74</sup> George Nissen, a homesteader based a few miles upstream from Sweeney, claimed in a 1914 letter to the Territorial Governor that Sweeney was having trouble and might be being set up by his foes. Nissen wrote that Sweeney had told him someone had burned his cabin and that a wood dealer had accused him of insanity, promising to line up twenty-five witnesses to that effect.<sup>75</sup> In those days, a finding of insanity was enough to have a person removed from the Territory and sent to Oregon indefinitely for treatment.

During this same period, Sweeney's request for patent stalled at the land office. In 1919, Sweeney was remanded to the federal penitentiary on McNeil Island; the details are unknown at the time of this writing. In April 1922, the GLO cancelled his homestead claim due to the expiration of the period for filing final proof. Sweeney, returning from McNeil Island, challenged the cancellation. He also continued to

<sup>72</sup> "Tofty Man Found Dead on Trail," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 17 February 1942, 1. 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska. *Polk's Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1915-1916*.

<sup>73</sup> See Appendix B, Sweeney. 1910 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska. "Field Notes of the Survey of the Subdivisions and Meanders of Township No. 1 South, Range No. 1 East of the Fairbanks Meridian, 1911," 73.

<sup>74</sup> BLM AKF0410, microfiche version. 4th Division, District Court case # 41420-34, Vachon v. Sweeney, docketed 15 May 1914. "Laundry Buys Sweeney Wood," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 15 December 1917, 3.

<sup>75</sup> Letter, George Nissen to Territorial Governor John Strong, 19 March 1914. General Correspondence of the Alaska Territorial Governor, file 40, 1914.



fight the circumstances of his incarceration, eventually securing a presidential pardon from Calvin Coolidge in 1925. At that time, he formally applied for a reinstatement of his claim. Nearly two years later, in 1927, the GLO allowed this reinstatement application to be accepted and given “due consideration.” The case was finally closed in 1929, nearly twenty-five years after Sweeney filed his original claim, when Sweeney was committed to Morningside Sanitorium, an institution for the insane in Portland, Oregon.<sup>76</sup> Patent was never granted.

*Other Homesteads*

Other homesteaders, including Adolph Arkens, Guy Burch, and Frank Hodgson, claimed parts of this parcel in the 1930s and 1940s, but none were able to prove up before Ladd Field acquired the land as public domain in 1943.

**Other Non-patented Entrants, 1904–1914 (see Appendix B for further information):**

Anagnostopoulos, John	Martin, Nels
Bargery, William	McCool, Thomas
Berger, Daniel	McManus, James
Dobbins, William	Moore, R.S.
Elliatt, J.C.	Panicolas, Nick
Faucett, James E.	Papadopoulos, William D.
Ferguson, Frank N.	Pappas, Bill
Graves, F.E.	Roberts, S.B.
Grljevic, Jozep	Turnbarger, Augustus
Jarvas, M.	Urban, Victor
Kohelis, Gust	Vogel, Louis
Lascaux, Paul	Whalen, Cornelius

<sup>76</sup> BLM AKF0410, microfiche.

From 1914 on, homestead records were filed with the GLO and referenced township, range, and section information from the contemporary survey plats. This portion of the study describes homesteads filed from that date up to the time the War Department announced its plans to build an airfield. After that announcement, people continued to file homestead claims on nearby land. Those properties are detailed in Chapter 6.

## 5.1 Patented Homesteads, 1914–1935

*George W. Dana, Jr.*

Homesteader George W. Dana Jr. first came to Fairbanks during World War I. A telegraph operator, he had joined the U.S. Army Signal Corps and was assigned to duty in Fairbanks. At one point, he was boarding at Ida May Joy's homestead not far from the Signal Corps station. (see Joy, below). There he met his future wife, Ida's daughter Mary Joy. In January 1919, George Dana made an initial homestead entry of 138 acres just to the east of Ida Joy's homestead. That same year, he and Mary were married. By 1922, the Danas were living in their first house on the property, a small frame structure covered with tarpaper. That year, their son, Lauren, was born. To help support the growing family, George Dana went to work for the Alaska Railroad as a telegraph operator. The Danas continued to maintain the homestead and received patent to this property in 1925. In 1924, George applied for an adjacent 40-acre parcel, which he patented in 1927.

Around 1929, the Danas began farming at a different location off Farmer's Loop Road outside of Fairbanks. In January 1931, they sold their homestead to Harry Badger for \$300, and the property later became part of the original Ladd Field. The Danas had two children, Ellen and Lauren, who now live in Alaska and Washington state respectively.<sup>77</sup>

*Ida May Joy (Berry) Louis F. Joy*

In 1899, during the Klondike gold rush, William H. and Ida May Joy traveled to Skagway with their children. Not long afterwards, Mr. Joy died in a hunting accident, and Ida May and the children returned to New York state. In 1914, Mrs. Joy and her family came back to Alaska to settle in Fairbanks. Upon her arrival, she filed for homestead entry on the former Otto Hoppe homestead.

In 1917, she married Henry H. Berry who was homesteading nearby. Ida Joy Berry passed away in 1920. She had been highly regarded in the community for her ability to make friends and for her cheerful personality. Her obituary indicated that "she had done her part in the upbuilding of Alaska, about all that any one woman could be expected to do...."<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Lauren Dana, telephone conversations, 3 December 2001 and 21 December 2001.

<sup>78</sup> *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*; 1 March 1920, 1. Also, *News-Miner*; 20 January 1917, 2; 8 March 1920, 4; 23 October 1928, 8.







**Figure 22.** Joy family, ca. 1917. Front row, left to right: Pearl, Ida May, Gladys, Lou. Back row: Mary, unidentified family friend, Levant. Courtesy Lois Hall.

After Mrs. Berry's death, her son Louis F. Joy took over the homestead, buying out the other heirs' interests. He continued the proving-up process that had already begun, and in 1922, patent to the homestead was issued posthumously in Ida Joy's name.

Louis F. Joy was born in Clarks Mill, New York, in 1890, and came to Skagway with the family in 1899. Returning to New York with his mother, Lou apprenticed there as an electrician. He married Gladys Clark in 1914 and moved to Fairbanks that same year. He homesteaded from 1914 to the early 1920s while also working in town as an electrician for the Northern Commercial Company. Eventually he became

the superintendent of the company's entire utility distribution system, a position he held until 1957.

Lou Joy was also active in politics and education. He served on the Fairbanks school board for twenty-five years beginning in 1932, and was president of the board for all but two of those years. Joy also served one term in the Territorial House of Representatives from 1947–1949. In 1961, the Fairbanks school district named Joy Elementary School in his honor. Lou Joy died in Arkansas in 1971.<sup>79</sup>

Lou Joy was also associated with two other homesteads. From 1918–1924, he homesteaded a small parcel about a mile to the southeast of Ida Joy's, which also became part of Ladd Field. He did not patent that land. Years later, he did patent a 156-acre homestead near Harry Badger's strawberry farm. That land is outside the study area.<sup>80</sup>

#### *Toma Koprivica*

Toma Koprivica immigrated from Montenegro in 1904. He registered his claim to his homestead on Birch Hill with the GLO in November 1914 and received patent in 1925. He was listed in the 1920 census as a single man whose first language was Serbian. The census listed his age as thirty-eight years, which would put his date of birth around 1881 or 1882. Koprivica died in December 1933, leaving no heirs.<sup>81</sup>

Well-known local farmers Paul and Stacia Rickert purchased Koprivica's property at auction in 1934. After Paul's death, Stacia sold the parcel to Eunice T. Collins who immediately sold it to Charles E. Bunnell, then president of the University of Alaska. The U.S. government acquired the parcel from Bunnell in 1943 as part of Expansion A.

#### *F.R. Noyes (Noyes/Buzby homestead)*

Frank Noyes, known simply as F.R. Noyes, was the brother of Fred G. Noyes, an influential Fairbanks businessman. Fred Noyes owned the largest sawmill in the

<sup>79</sup> *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics*, s.v. Joy, Louis F. Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, *Our Schools: A History of Elementary and Secondary Public Education in the Fairbanks Area*, 1990, 38. Mrs. Lois Hall, telephone conversation with author, 26 October 2001.

<sup>80</sup> BLM AKF950, 1S 1E sec 19, lot 11. Claim cancelled on May 2, 1924. The off-post homestead was in 1S 1E sec 14. Application filed 1939; patent issued 1944. BLM AKF3976.

<sup>81</sup> Previous claimants to parts of the homestead included Cornelius Whalen (ca. 1904) and R.S. Moore (ca. 1909). Re Koprivica, 1920 Census, Fourth Judicial District, Alaska. Abstract of Title F510, USACE Realty files, Ladd AFB, Tract A-2.

Tanana Valley and in the 1920s was known as one of the wealthiest men in the Territory. Noyes Slough in Fairbanks carries this family's name.<sup>82</sup> F.R. Noyes was active in the mining industry, owning a number of claims. In 1909, he served as the treasurer of the Mine Owners' and Operators' Association branch at the Cleary diggings. At that time, he maintained a residence across the river from Fairbanks at Graehl.<sup>83</sup>

In December 1918, Frank R. Noyes filed a claim for the original Buzby homestead, and the GLO issued him a patent in May 1922 (see Buzby above, Chapter 4.2). However, according to an obituary provided by his brother-in-law, W.H. Gilcher, Frank had left Alaska in 1913 to reside permanently in the states. It is not clear how he met the patent requirements. In 1934, Frank R. Noyes died in Los Angeles at the age of sixty-five.<sup>84</sup> By the time Ladd Field acquired the land in 1943, the property had been subdivided among thirty-four different owners.

#### *Charles Shipley*

In 1920, Charles Shipley took over land on Birch Hill previously homesteaded by J.C. Elliott (1908–1909) and Nels Martin (1909–1920.) He patented the property in 1924. Shipley was active in the Tanana Valley Agricultural Association and was known as a successful farmer.

Shipley was born in Ohio but spent most of his life in the West and in Alaska. He died in Fairbanks in 1931 at the age of sixty-nine. He left a surviving brother, Edwin Shipley, of Athens, Ohio.<sup>85</sup> Ladd Field purchased the Shipley homestead from subsequent owner Edward Warren in 1943.



**Figure 23.** Chester Spencer. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.



**Figure 24.** Bessie Claire Buzby Spencer. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.

#### *Chester and Bessie Spencer*

Chester Spencer was born in Kentucky in 1883. He arrived in Alaska with the U.S. Army Signal Corps, traveling in over the Yukon River route from Dawson in 1909. Until 1911, he served as a telegraph operator with the Signal Corps at several stations including Fairbanks, Minto, and the now-defunct town of Chena. In 1911, he married Bessie Claire Buzby and became a deputy U.S. marshal, first at Circle and later at Fort Yukon. The family then resided in California from 1922 until 1928, when they returned to Fairbanks. At that time, Chester Spencer filed a homestead entry on a 140-acre strip lying between the original Buzby/Noyes homestead and the Joy homestead, which was then owned by the Harry Buzby family<sup>86</sup> (see Buzby, Chapter 4.2).

<sup>82</sup> Kessey, 104.

<sup>83</sup> *Polk's Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1909–1910.*

<sup>84</sup> Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 12 June 1934, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Obituary, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 30 March 1931, 8.

<sup>86</sup> Information for Spencer section compiled from *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics*, s.v. Spencer; obituary, *Alaska Magazine* 40 (Sept. 1974): 59; Ted Spencer, personal communication 16 November 2001; letter, Chester Spencer to Mrs. Jim Dodson 8 February 1959, Ted Spencer personal collection.





**Figure 25.** Planking saw in operation. Chester Spencer is standing at right. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.



**Figure 26.** Chester Spencer and riverboat, ca. 1938. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.



**Figure 27.** Spencer family home. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.

Spencer was active in the lumber business from 1928 to 1933. Details about that business are not available, but photographs indicate that he operated a small sawmill, possibly on the homestead at the river's edge. Beginning in 1933, he served again as deputy U.S. marshal for five more years, this time in Fairbanks. It was during this time that he received patent on the homestead in 1935. Spencer was also active in politics, serving one term in the Territorial House of Representatives from 1939–1941.

Chester Spencer enjoyed traveling the rivers of interior Alaska and on occasion sent back detailed reports of life along the river settlements for publication in the Fairbanks newspaper. In 1939, he and his brother-in-law, Elton Buzby, began carrying agricultural products for sale along the Tanana and Yukon rivers in a hand-built, specialized shallow-draft riverboat nicknamed *The Trader*. The thirty-foot wooden craft was powered with a marine engine and drew only eighteen inches of water, allowing it safe passage through the myriad shifting shallow channels of the Interior rivers and sloughs. On its maiden voyage, *The Trader* carried five tons of fresh produce as well as general merchandise for sale.<sup>87</sup>

The Spencer family eventually had a frame house, garage, and several outbuildings on the homestead. A boat dock that the extended Spencer/Buzby family used also served as a floatplane dock for commercial flights (see Chapter 3 for a description of this site). Beginning in 1939, the Spencers subdivided and sold a few parcels along the Richardson Highway area of the homestead. In 1943, Ladd Field purchased the property. According to family members, the military disposed of the buildings at the site by bulldozing them into the river. In recent years, the Spencers' grandson Ted searched for remnants of the foundations but was not able to locate them.

Chester and Bessie Spencer had seven children: Lois, Elizabeth, Thomas, Harry, Theodore, James, and Margaret. In later life, Chester and Bessie Spencer retired to Edmonds, Washington. Bessie passed away in Edmonds on June 7, 1964. She was seventy-two. Chester died in Seattle on May 11, 1974, at the age of ninety.

<sup>87</sup> "Trading Craft Head Down River Today," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, 16 May 1939, 5. Bob Buzby interview, 27 September 2001.





**Figure 28.** Spencer homestead, ca. 1930s. Electric pole at center right was also used for radio antennae. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.



**Figure 29.** Ted Spencer (Sr.) and unidentified child, 1940. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.



**Figure 30.** Ted (Sr.) and Jimmy Spencer on Chena float dock. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.



**Figure 31.** Ted Sr., Jim, and Margaret Spencer. Courtesy of Ted Spencer.

## 5.2 Non-patented Homesteads, 1914–1935

### *Dan Callahan*

Dan Callahan was born in Iowa of Irish parents around 1865. He arrived in Alaska in 1896, and came to Fairbanks in the early years of its settlement. He was a miner and freighter, and was active in Fairbanks politics for many years. Callahan served nine terms on the city council and a term in the Territorial House of Representatives. He died in 1936 and is buried in the Clay Street Cemetery. From 1918 to 1922, he held a homestead parcel about three and a half miles southeast of town in the area of the Richardson Highway.

### *Other Homesteads*

#### **Other Non-patented Entrants, 1914-1935 (see Appendix B for further information):**

Arkens, Ralph (Adolph)	Kobe, Eldon
Burch, Guy	McGovern, Stephen
Buzby, Elton	Meredith, Edward H.
Case, Howard L.	O'Connor, John J.
Corcoran, Tim J.	Sheriff, Delbert E.
Heilman, E.F.	Smyth, Edward J.



In 1936, land surrounding what would soon become Ladd Field was still open to homesteading. In particular, this included land near the base of Birch Hill, which had changed hands on a frequent basis, as well as the flatlands near the Tanana River, which were less desirable for agriculture. Some land adjoining parts of the Richardson Highway was also open for claims.

## 6.1 Patented Homesteads, 1936–1953

### *Mary S. Jones*

Mary S. Jones filed for her homestead in September 1938 and received patent in June 1943. She sold the homestead to the government as part of Ladd Field's Expansion C in 1944 for \$1136. Little is known about Mary Jones other than that she was a single woman.<sup>88</sup> USACE files did not contain any references to buildings or improvements on the property.

### *Milton W. and Lila Nodacker*

Milton and Lila Nodacker were the last homesteaders to secure title to land that is now part of the main post. Milton Nodacker entered his claim in the records on March 9, 1940. After America joined World War II, Nodacker temporarily left Alaska to take a job in the defense industry. While he was away from the homestead, he was able to hold his claim by furnishing affidavits of his wartime employment, which was considered an allowable absence. In the summer of 1945, Nodacker returned to the homestead. He offered his final proof at the land office in the fall of 1947, and, after an unexplained delay, the land office issued patent in August 1949.<sup>89</sup>

As early as 1947, Ladd's command had been interested in acquiring the Nodackers' land. The parcel bordered the eastern edge of the air base, which had expanded onto Birch Hill in 1943, and was sandwiched between base property and the site for the Air Force Arctic Indoctrination School just to the east. It was the only patented property in what would become Expansion E, Ladd's final expansion. In 1951, the Air Force received authority to proceed with the expansion, and in June 1952 the Nodackers sold their property to the government for \$6,300.

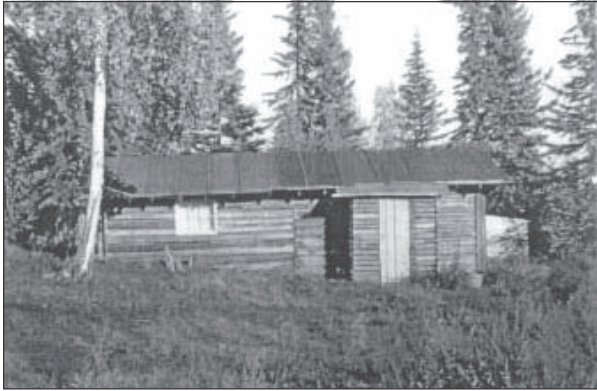
The Nodacker homestead consisted of about 160 acres of hillside land. All but three acres in front of the cabin were forested in native growth of birch, aspen, and occasional spruce groves. The Nodackers had built a three-room log cabin on the west slope overlooking Ladd AFB and the Tanana Valley. The cabin measured 12' x 28' and had an arctic entry, 3' x 6'. The north side had been dug as much as two feet into the hillside. The roof was commercial rolled roofing. Inside, the cabin had a partition wall to divide the rooms. The building was ceiled and insulated with sawdust. The wooden floors had a modern linoleum covering.

<sup>88</sup> USACE realty files, Ladd AFB, Tract C-2.

<sup>89</sup> BLM case file microfiche, AKF 004341. Additional information on the Nodacker homestead comes from appraisal reports in USACE realty files.



The Nodackers had constructed a dugout garage near the cabin. It measured 11 1/2' x 20' and had a dirt floor. Walls were sod at the lower levels and rough board at the upper level; the roof was covered with rolled roofing. The property was accessible from a dirt road connecting to Lazelle Road, which ran through Ladd AFB proper.



**Figure 32.** Nodackers' cabin, west elevation ca. 1953. Corps of Engineers photo.



**Figure 33.** Nodackers' cabin, west elevation with clearing ca. 1953. Corps of Engineers photo.



**Figure 34.** Nodackers' cabin, west elevation with clearing, winter view ca. 1953. Corps of Engineers photo.



**Figure 35.** Nodackers' cabin, south elevation ca. 1953. Corps of Engineers photo.



**Figure 36.** Nodackers' cabin, south elevation detail ca. 1953. Corps of Engineers photo.



**Figure 37.** Nodackers' dugout garage ca. 1953. Corps of Engineers photo.

A military power line also existed on the property, running from the northwest corner to the south-central boundary. It had been constructed in 1944 to supply power for nearby obstacle lights. The right-of-way for the power line had been cleared by the military for fifty feet on each side of the line. After selling their homestead, the Nodackers lived in San Diego, California.

## 6.2 Non-patented Homesteads, 1936–1953

### *Dave & Beatrice Dittman*

According to written accounts, David D. Dittman originally came to Alaska to work as a mining assayer in the Juneau-Douglas area, but moved to Fairbanks in 1934. In June 1935, he filed a claim on the Chena River homestead previously held by Elton Buzby from 1928 through 1934 (see Buzby, Chapter 4.2).

In 1939, Dittman relinquished the homestead in a quitclaim deed, and the land became part of the original Ladd Field. The government paid \$2600 for the improvements on the property, which included a four-room log cabin. Specific records describing the cabin and other improvements could not be found. Dittman and his wife Beatrice also held a patented half-acre parcel nearby on the former Joy homestead, which they sold to the government in 1943 as part of Ladd’s Expansion B. In later years they had a homestead on the other side of Fairbanks, on Chena Ridge. After World War II, Dave Dittman worked as a logger and owned a sawmill.<sup>90</sup>

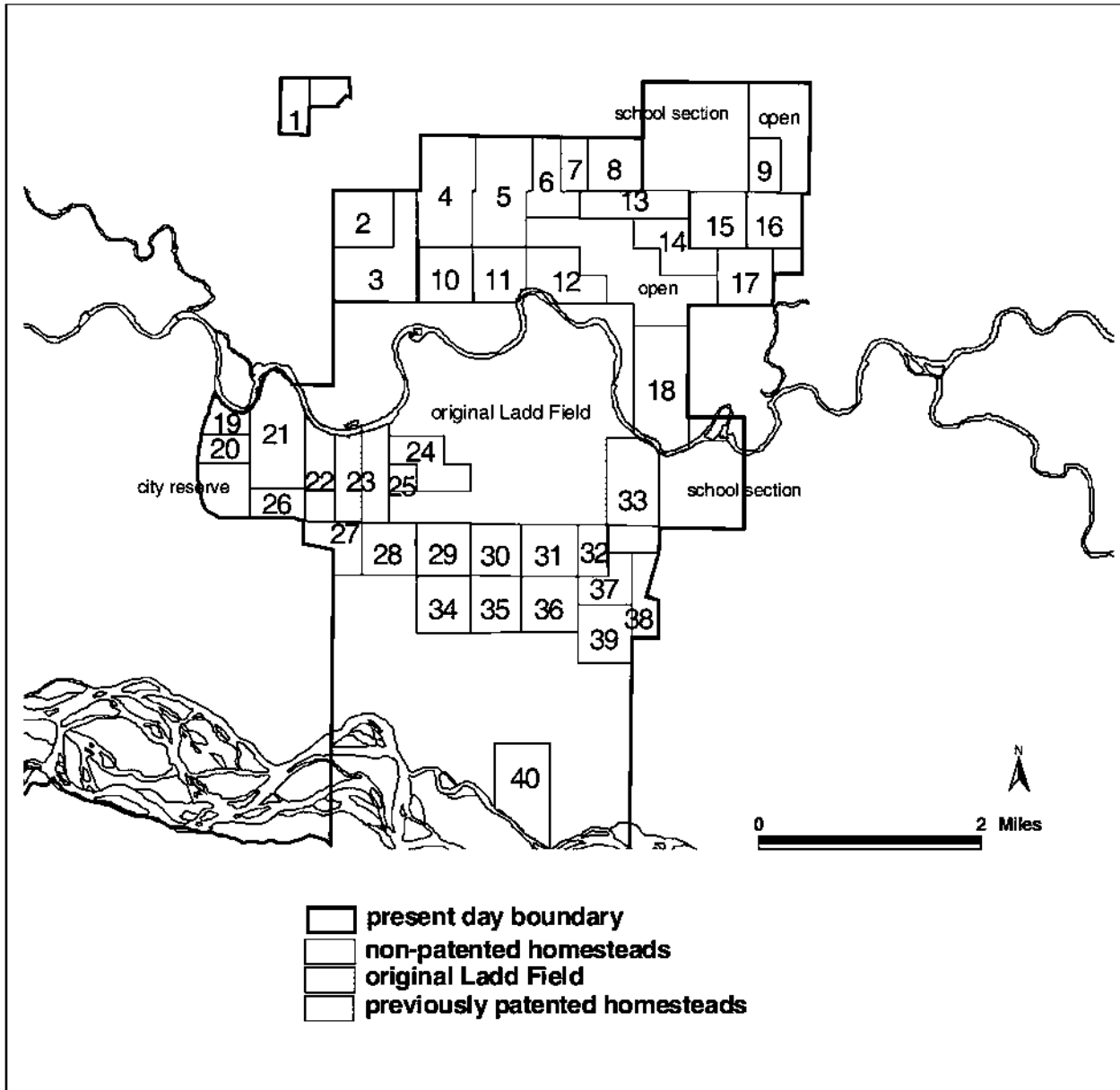
### *Other Homesteads*

#### **Other Non-patented Entrants, 1936-1953 (see Appendix B for further information):**

Adams, John T.	James, Vincent E.
Anderson, Carl J.	Jarvi, Matt
Bacagliari, Pompeii E.	Jenkins, Walter
Borton, Truman	Larson, Roy A. A.
Boyle, Frank F.	Mitchell, Stanley N.
Branholm, Eric	Murray, Enoch
Bryan, Edgar C.	Olin, Anson
Clark, Gilbert	Smith, Dewey Sampson
Craig, Frank J. & Jennetta	Whiteford, Dan
Craig, Laurence A.	
Dore, Robert J.	
Eberhardt, John C.	<i>Military Experiment Station:</i>
Ernst, Henry J. & Edith C.	Manville, Florence
Gardner, James M.	Nemlan, James S.
Hausmann, Earle L.	Palmer, Thomas E.
Hodgson, Frank L.	Russ, Noel

<sup>90</sup> Obituary, *Alaska Magazine* 40 (August 1978): 79. Obituary, *Alaska Magazine* 40 (December 1978): 107.





1	Palmer	11	Hodgson	21	Noyes	31	Whitford
2	Radak	12	Dore	22	Spencer	32	Boyle
3	Koprivica	13	Adams	23	Joy	33	Muatkajarvi
4	Hanford	14	Jenkins	24	Dana	34	Clark
5	Lazelle	15	Nodacker	25	Dana	35	Ernst
6	Shiple	16	James	26	Anderson	36	F.J. Craig
7	Mitchell	17	Branholm	27	Wagner	37	Kobe
8	Eberhardt	18	Wiest	28	Hauseman	38	Jones
9	Larson	19	Berry	29	Olin	39	L. Craig
10	Smith	20	Kolde	30	Bacciglieri	40	Davison

Map 7. Homestead locations, ca. 1941-1943.



## CHAPTER 7.0

### 7.1 Review of NRHP Criteria

The National Register of Historic Places has been called “the nation’s inventory of historic places” and “a national census of historic properties.”<sup>91</sup> Established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), the register is an official list of significant state, local, and national historic properties. A specific process exists for identifying and evaluating properties that may qualify for the register. A property must meet at least one of the National Register’s Criteria for Evaluation by “being associated with an important historic context *and* retaining historic integrity of those features necessary to convey its significance.”<sup>92</sup> In other words, a property must pass a threshold of significance by meeting one or more of the criteria listed below and possess “integrity”— the essential physical features which represent or illustrate the historic significance.

Properties must meet at least one of these National Register criteria to be eligible for inclusion on the Register:

- A. Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (i.e., a historic district); or
- D. Have yielded, or be likely to yield, material information important in prehistory or history.<sup>93</sup>

The physical integrity of a property is “the ability of a property to convey its significance” taking into account the aspects of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association with the historic event or context.<sup>94</sup> To assess integrity, one must define the essential physical features that must be present to tie the property to its historic significance. Although the process of evaluating integrity can be somewhat subjective, the key question is whether or not the property ultimately retains the identity that makes it historically significant.

### 7.2 Post Homestead Eligibility

This study has developed the historic context of homesteading in the Fairbanks region and on the post lands specifically, and shows that the post homesteads are part of a significant historic context. These historic trends fall under the Register’s

<sup>91</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin, 1.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.





theme categories of *agriculture* and *exploration and settlement*. The post homestead context intersects state, national, and local histories. At the state level, a case could arguably be made that regional homesteading contributed to the economy and social development of Fairbanks and that in turn helped Fairbanks play a major role in Territorial and State affairs. Homesteading on the post lands is also part of the national history of the Homestead Act and its social, economic and agricultural legacy, although the post homesteads do not contribute to that context in a nationally significant way. Instead, homesteading had its greatest significance at the local level. Homesteading was a key element of Fairbanks' community growth and stability over time, and the post homesteads were integral parts of this process.

In addition to having historic significance, properties must also possess physical integrity to be eligible for the National Register. Past cultural resource reports have described the physical elements that should be present for a homestead property to be eligible for the National Register.<sup>95</sup> Homestead properties should illustrate the process of proving up, which was so central to the homestead laws. In order to prove up for a patent, claimants had to build a habitable house and clear and cultivate a specific proportion of the land. For a homestead to meet the test, “the residence, with historic integrity, must be in place and some trace of cleared fields should be evident.”<sup>96</sup> Patented prop-

erties are the most likely candidates for eligibility, although non-patented properties with significant improvements could also be eligible.

In the case of Ladd Field, homestead buildings were quickly removed to make way for military needs. Today no homestead buildings or structures remain on the main post.<sup>97</sup> Such properties would have qualified under the National Register's Criterion A — association with significant events. As described above, Fairbanks homesteading is a historic trend which satisfies that criterion. Had they survived, homestead buildings might also have qualified under Criterion C, having the distinctive characteristics of a particular method of construction.

A few homesteads might have been eligible based on Criterion B — association with significant persons. These might have included homesteads associated with local elected officials such as Harry Badger, Lou Joy, Chester Spencer, and Dan Callahan.<sup>98</sup> With the loss of the buildings, however, none of these properties retain eligibility under Criterion B.



**Figure 38.** Alaska Territorial House of Representatives, 14th Legislature, 1939. Chester Spencer is in the first row, fourth from right. Over the years, four Territorial House members were associated with post homesteads: Spencer, Lou Joy, Dan Callahan, and Harry Badger. Photo courtesy Ted Spencer.

<sup>95</sup> Seager-Boss; Hollinger; Daugherty and Saleeby.

<sup>96</sup> Hollinger, 48.

<sup>97</sup> An unidentified cabin in the northeast corner of the post is not associated with any known homesteads.

<sup>98</sup> To be eligible under this criterion, the property must be the one that best represents those individuals. For example, it should be the site where they resided during their period of significance, in this case their dates in office. This would rule out Harry Badger, since his homesteads in the study area were not his primary residences, and Lou Joy, who had sold the Ida Joy homestead before he first won office.

While no homestead buildings remain in the developed area, the question remains as to whether other physical features such as foundations, fence sites, and remnants of cleared fields are extant and whether they are significant. It is possible that homestead sites might be eligible for the National Register under Criterion D — the ability to yield material information. Such sites must have important information to contribute to an understanding of human history or prehistory.<sup>99</sup> Most often this criteria applies to prehistoric archeological sites; however, homestead remains may qualify as historical archeology sites. Homestead sites could provide physical evidence that could supplement or test the limited historical records on early homesteading in this region. For example, with the lack of published photographs and building records, archeological investigations could provide evidence to describe the dimensions and locations of homestead buildings. Such investigations could also answer research questions about homestead activity areas such as where the outbuildings were in relation to the homes and what types of activities took place on different parts of the property. Investigation of site middens would have the potential to provide data on diet and material culture. Research questions might include determining the proportionate reliance on wild game and livestock, on home-grown foods and commercial supplies, or exploring data on early recycling and adaptive re-use. For homesteads to have integrity under Criterion D, sites should possess “potential to yield specific data that addresses important research questions....”<sup>100</sup> Therefore, the foundation remains and surrounding soils must be relatively undisturbed. A field survey would be necessary to determine whether specific properties would have integrity under Criterion D.

### 7.3 Recommendations for Future Work

In the time frame of this study, it was not possible to conduct archeological field surveys of the homestead sites. Research did not reveal any engineering records that could document the fate of individual homestead buildings. One set of engineer drawings from 1942 did show the location of “civilian dwellings” in Expansion B, but a later drawing indicated that by 1946 these buildings had already disappeared.<sup>101</sup> Oral reports confirmed that with few exceptions, homestead structures were often immediately torn down to make way for military needs. Newer construction was sometimes placed directly over the former features. Southgate, the military housing area in Expansion B, was laid out on top of previously existing clearings and subdivision patterns. Excavation was a common construction practice, particularly at sites like the runway area, to mitigate permafrost effects.

These practices suggest that homestead sites in developed areas are not likely to be preserved. However, it is recommended that initial field surveys be completed on properties for which there is documentation on the probable location of physical remains. These include the Berry, Joy, Noyes/Buzby, Nodacker, Spencer, Sweeney, and Wiest homesteads. Continuing review of aerial photographs and information from the Fairbanks community may reveal additional sites.

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>100</sup> National Register Bulletin, 46.

<sup>101</sup> “Ladd Field Plot Plan, Area No. 1-Depot Housing Utilities August 15, 1942” and “Ladd Field Plot Plan, Building Numbers & Locations,” July 29, 1946. National Archives and Records Administration, Anchorage. Record Group 77 aperture cards, Ladd Field.





## CHAPTER 8.0 Conclusions

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This study was undertaken primarily to meet the cultural resources management requirements of Section 110 of the NHPA by providing a historic context and an overview of homestead property eligibility for the National Register. It was also intended to provide the installation and the public with historical information about the homestead heritage of the post. For these reasons, it has included detailed information on individual homesteaders, on the historic context of Fairbanks homesteading, and on specific homestead properties.

Homesteading on today's post lands took place in the context of the settlement of Fairbanks. Beginning as early as 1904, people staked agricultural claims to the lands outside the new gold rush town. They cleared fields; built cabins, barns, and root cellars; and grew the grains and produce that helped sustain the town dwellers and miners. They made important contributions to the development and permanence of the Fairbanks community.

In 1937, the federal government withdrew the land that formed the nucleus of Ladd Field. In a series of expansions, the base grew as the military bought patented properties and acquired unperfected homestead claims and public domain land. By 1961, when the Air Force transferred the installation to the Army, the main post covered an area that had received more than ninety different homestead filings over the years.

This study concludes that post homesteading was part of an important local historic context that meets the NRHP test of significance. Intact homestead properties with physical integrity would be eligible for National Register listing under Criteria A or C. However, since the homestead structures were removed to make way for military needs in World War II and the early Cold War, the homestead sites on the Fort Wainwright main post no longer possess the integrity which would qualify them for National Register listing under these criteria. Field surveys can determine whether known building sites possess archeological integrity under Criterion D.

Homesteaders in 1904 could never have imagined the complex of military buildings, roads, runways, and utilidors that now exist on the main post. As homesteads and public domain were transformed into an air base, visual reminders of the homestead legacy quickly disappeared. Today's soldiers and civilian workers would find it equally difficult to imagine clusters of log cabins, cattle, oat fields, and neat rows of vegetables in the places where they train, work, and live. Yet the homestead history can serve as a reminder of the fort's ties with the city and the impact it has had on the region's development. Fort Wainwright continues these historic ties with the community as it plays its contemporary role in the national defense of the United States.

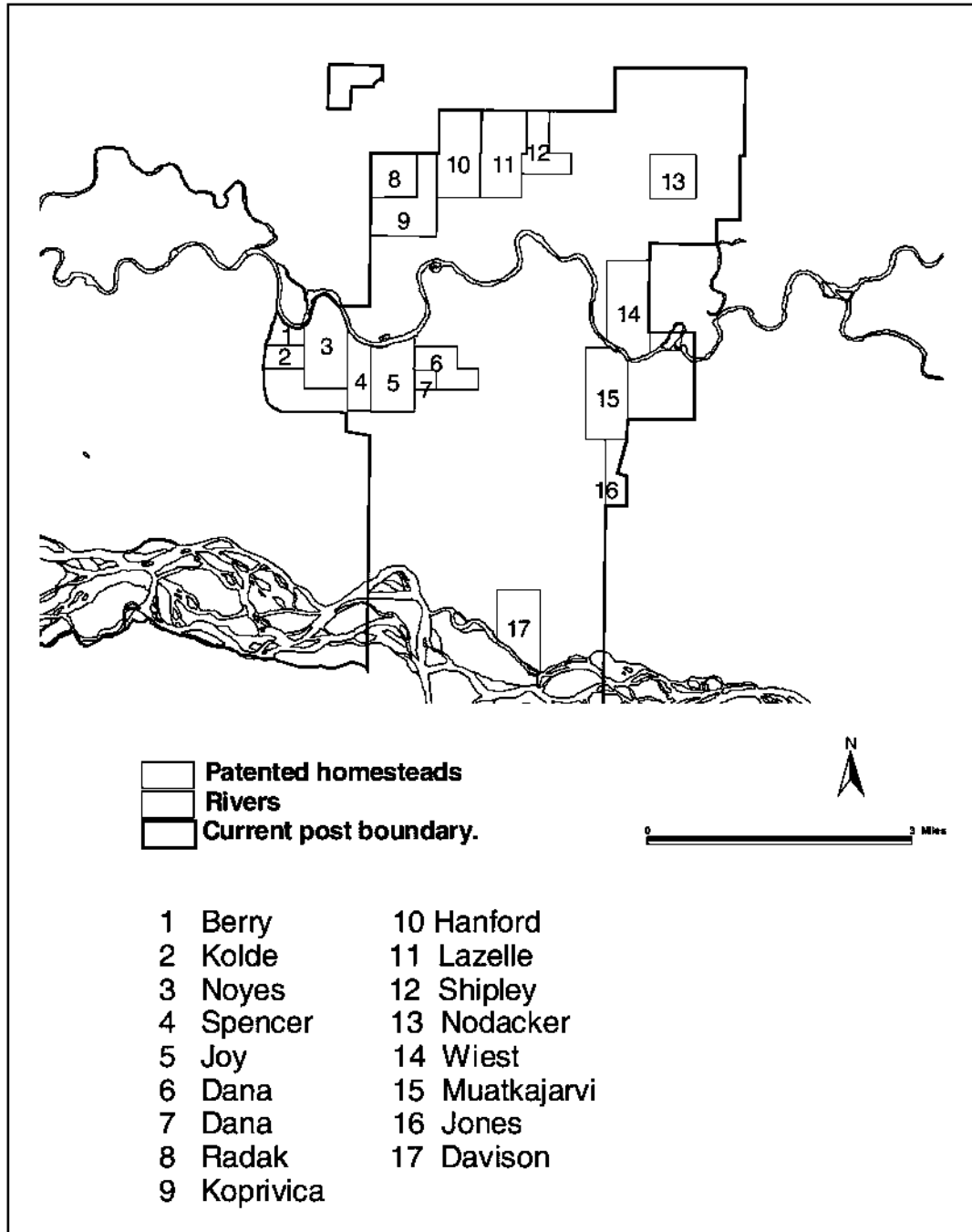






# APPENDIX A:

## Locations of Patented Homesteads



Map 8. Locations of Patented Homesteads.



# APPENDIX B: Homesteader Data Tables

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### Appendix B: Homesteader Data Tables

Land information was compiled using BLM case abstract data, USACE realty files, and recorder's office location books, with guidance from previous research by Junior Kerns. Entry dates on early claims are given as shown in recorder's location books; these are often earlier than the dates on file with GLO/BLM. Not all early claims could be specifically located; information on these claims remains incomplete due to the nature of the records. Only those determined with reasonable certainty to be within current boundaries have been included here.

Document types: BLM case file #s (begin with AKF)  
Patent #s (pat)  
Recorder's document (coded RD)

Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South Approx. of Chena R. acreage	Notes
Adams, John T.	12/22/37	9/27/43	Case closed	AKF3635	1S 1E Sec 5, Lots 1,2; Sec 4, Lots 3,4	N 160	Adams was born in Oregon around 1876. He was a miner for many years, and died around 1941. Claim subsequently cancelled for lack of cultivation and residence. A cabin did exist on the property.
Adams, John T.	12/22/37	12/29/39	Cancelled	AKF3635	1N 1E sec 32, SE1/4, SE	N 40	
Anagnostopoulos, John	9/30/12	unknown	Relinquished to Pappas	RD 37261 RD 38786	1S 1E Sec 4, NW 1/4; 1N 1E sec 33, SW1/4	N	
Anderson, Carl J.	8/20/38	8/14/42	Relinquished	AKF3794	1S 1W sec 14, S2SE	S 160	
Arkens, Ralph (Adolph)	4/7/30	2/1/36	Cancelled	AKF2083	1S 1E Sec 5, NWSW; Sec 6, N2SE lot 8	N	Born in Belgium in 1870, died in 1933 before proving up. Buried in Clay Street Cemetery, Fairbanks
Bacagluri (Bacciglieri), Pompeii E.	4/10/39	8/22/44	Cancelled	AKF4031	1S 1E, sec 19, NE	S 160	
Badger, Harry M.	5/19/09	12/13/09	Relinquished	RD 30225	1S 1W, sec 11, S2SESW lots 12 & 14; 1S 1W sec 14, N2NW	S	See text



Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South Approx. of Chena R. acreage	Notes
Bargery, William	9/25/08	Unknown	Unknown	RD 24601	1S 1E Sec 4, NW1/4; 1N 1E sec 33, SW 1/4	N	
Berger, Daniel	11/11/11	10/16/13	Relinquished	RD 35170 RD 39666	1S 1E Sec 6, NE4; 1N 1E sec 31, NE4	N	
Berry, Henry H.	12/13/09	2/13/24	Patented	Pat 921560	1S 1W, sec 11, S2SESW lots 12 & 14; 1S 1W sec 14, N2NW	S	See text
Borton, Truman	6/2/47	7/2/52	Closed, expired	AKF6778, F6618	1S 1E Sec 3, SENW, NWSW	N	80
Boyle, Frank F.	11/10/38	5/11/44	Cancelled	AKF3919	1S 1E, sec 20, N2NE	S	160
Branholm, Eric	11/25/41	6/30/47	Cancelled	AKF4877	1S 1E Sec 3, W2SW; Sec 4, E2SE	N	160 Branholm was born in 1903 in Sweden; he came to the U.S. in 1928. He would have homesteaded with his wife Ann. He worked primarily as a miner and welder. Branholm died in 1954.
Bryan, Edgar C.	9/17/40	9/24/41	Relinquished	AKF4479	1S 1E Sec 4, S2NW, NESW, NWSE	N	160
Burch, Guy A.	2/27/31	9/3/35	Relinquished	AKF2206	1S 1E Sec 6, SWSE; sec 7, SWSW, Lots 1, 6-8	N	161 Burch drove for the Northern Commercial stage line between Fairbanks and Chitina from 1908-1912 and again following service in WWI. He also worked for the Alaska Road Commission and with his wife operated the Summit Roadhouse.
Buzby, Elton	8/22/28	7/23/34	Cancelled	AKF1784	1S 1E, sec 18, S2NW, Lot 1	S	162 See text, H. Buzby and C. Spencer.
Buzby, Harry	9/9/05	Unknown	Relinquished to Noyes	RD 12273 RD 35291	1S 1W, sec 11, Lots 8, 16, 15; 1S 1W sec 14, NE1/4, N2SE 1/4	S	See text
Callahan, Dan	10/4/18	11/16/29	Cancelled	AKF955	1S 1E, sec 20, S2NE, S2NW	S	160 See text
Callahan, Dan Re-entry	12/24/29	1/17/33	Relinquished	AKF2061	same as above	S	



Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Badger, Harry M.	5/19/09	12/13/09	Relinquished	RD 30225	1S 1W, sec 11, S2SESW lots 12 & 14; 1S 1W sec 14, N2NW	S		See text
Bargery, William	9/25/08	Unknown	Unknown	RD 24601	1S 1E Sec 4, NW1/4; 1N 1E sec 33, SW 1/4	N		
Berger, Daniel	11/11/11	10/16/13	Relinquished	RD 35170 RD 39666	1S 1E Sec 6, NE4; 1N 1E sec 31, NE4	N		
Berry, Henry H.	12/13/09	2/13/24	Patented	Pat 921560	1S 1W, sec 11, S2SESW lots 12 & 14; 1S 1W sec 14, N2NW	S	105	See text
Borton, Truman	6/2/47	7/2/52	Closed, expired	AKF6778, F6618	1S 1E Sec 3, SENW, NWSW	N	80	
Boyle, Frank F.	11/10/38	5/11/44	Cancelled	AKF3919	1S 1E, sec 20, N2NE	S	160	
Branholm, Eric	11/25/41	6/30/47	Cancelled	AKF4877	1S 1E Sec 3, W2SW; Sec 4, E2SE	N	160	Branholm was born in 1903 in Sweden; he came to the U.S. in 1928. He would have homesteaded with his wife Ann. He worked primarily as a miner and welder. Branholm died in 1954.
Bryan, Edgar C.	9/17/40	9/24/41	Relinquished	AKF4479	1S 1E Sec 4, S2NW, NESW, NWSE	N	160	
Burch, Guy A.	2/27/31	9/3/35	Relinquished	AKF2206	1S 1E Sec 6, SWSE; sec 7, SWSW, Lots 1, 6-8	N	161	Burch drove for the Northern Commercial stage line between Fairbanks and Chitina from 1908-1912 and again following service in WWI. He also worked for the Alaska Road Commission and with his wife operated the Summit Roadhouse.
Buzby, Elton	8/22/28	7/23/34	Cancelled	AKF1784	1S 1E, sec 18, S2NW, Lot 1	S	162	See text, H. Buzby and C. Spencer.

Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Buzby, Harry	9/9/05	Unknown	Relinquished to Noyes	RD 12273 RD 35291	1S 1W, sec 11, Lots 8, 16, 15; 1S 1W sec 14, NE1/4, N2SE 1/4	S		See text
Callahan, Dan	10/4/18	11/16/29	Cancelled	AKF955	1S 1E, sec 20, S2NE, S2NW	S	160	See text
Callahan, Dan Re-entry	12/24/29	1/17/33	Relinquished	AKF2061	same as above	S		
Case, Howard L.	7/11/34	9/16/39	Relinquished	AKF2844	1S 1W, Sec 12, lots 5 & 7 1S 1W, Sec 13, lots 2 & 4	N		
Clark, Gilbert L.	10/25/40	10/22/41	Relinquished	AKF4530	1S 1E, sec 19, E2SW, Lots 3,4	S	139	
Corcoran, Tim J.	3/7/31	1/8/32	Relinquished	AKF2209	1S 1E Sec 6, SENW; sec 7, Lots 2,3	N	136	Corcoran spent part of his life as a miner in the Fairbanks and Ruby districts, and also worked for the Alaska Railroad. He drowned in the Chena River in 1936, around the age of 50. He is buried in the Clay Street Cemetery.
Craig, Frank J. & Jenetta	4/25/39	1/4/45	Cancelled	AKF4048	1S 1E, sec 20, SW exc E2NE4NE4	S	155	
Craig, Laurence A.	7/26/40	9/8/41	Relinquished	AKF4427	1S 1E, sec 29, N2NE; 1S 1E, sec 20, S2SE	S	160	
Dana, George W. Jr.	1/23/19	5/27/25	Patented	Pat 960211	1S 1E, sec 18, NESW; Lots 2,3; sec 13 SENE	S		See text



Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Dana, George W. Jr.	10/21/24	6/20/27	Patented	Pat 1004238	1S 1W, sec 13, NESE	S	S	See text
Davison, Charles R.	9/18/09	12/14/17	Patented	Pat 611741	1S 1E, sec 31, SENE lot 1; 1S 1E, sec 31, NENE lot 4; 1S 1E, sec 32, W2NW lots 1,2	S		See text
Dittman, Dave & Beatrice	6/13/35	11/3/39	Relinquished, quitclaim deed	AKF3037	1S 1W, sec 18, E2NW1/4; sec 13, lot 1; sec 12, Lot 8	S		See text
Dobbins, William	6/29/08	Oct-09	Relinquished	RD 23718 RD 30065	1N 1E sec 32, S2SE1/4; 1S 1E Sec 5, N2NE1/4	N		Dobbins was born in Scotland in 1871, and in 1910 was listed in the census as a bartender.
Dore, Robert J.	12/9/40	11/2/42	Cancelled	AKF4568	1S 1E Sec 5, N2SW, SWSE, lots 5,7	N	160	
Eberhardt, John C.	8/23/40	6/8/42	Relinquished	AKF4450	1N 1E sec 32, SE1/4, all	N	160	
Elliott (Elliat), J.C.	9/30/08	7/26/09	Relinquished to Martin	RD 24662	1S 1E Sec 5, S2NW lots 3,4; 1N 1E sec 32, SW1/4 all	N		
Ernst, Henry J. & Edith C.	7/19/40	8/7/42	Relinquished	AKF4423	1S 1E, sec 19, SE	S	160	
Faucett, James Edgar	5/31/13	10/3/18	Relinquished	AKF405	1S 1E, sec 20, W2SENE, NW; sec 17, SWSW	S	320	
Ferguson, Frank N.	8/26/06	Unknown	Unknown	RD 15723	1S 1E Sec 5, Not determined	N		
Gardner, James. M.	6/2/47	7/2/52	Closed, expired	AKF6619	1S 1E Sec 3, Lots 3,4	N	80	
Graves, F.E.	8/21/07	Unknown	Unknown	RD 20031	See Wiest	N		
Grijevic, Jozep	7/26/11	Unknown	Unknown	RD 35359	1S 1W sec 1, E2NW, W2NE	N		Grijevic was a marathon runner and an immigrant. Nothing else is known about him. See photo of his produce in text, Section 2.1. Anton Radiak took over this parcel a few years after Grijevic's claim.

Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Case, Howard L.	7/11/34	9/16/39	Relinquished	AKF2844	1S 1W, Sec 12, lots 5 & 7 1S 1W, Sec 13, lots 2 & 4	N		
Clark, Gilbert L.	10/25/40	10/22/41	Relinquished	AKF4530	1S 1E, sec 19, E2SW, Lots 3,4	S	139	
Corcoran, Tim J.	3/7/31	1/8/32	Relinquished	AKF2209	1S 1E Sec 6, SENW; sec 7, Lots 2,3	N	136	Corcoran spent part of his life as a miner in the Fairbanks and Ruby districts, and also worked for the Alaska Railroad. He drowned in the Chena River in 1936, around the age of 50. He is buried in the Clay Street Cemetery.
Craig, Frank J. & Jenetta	4/25/39	1/4/45	Cancelled	AKF4048	1S 1E, sec 20, SW exc E2NE4NE4	S	155	
Craig, Laurence A.	7/26/40	9/8/41	Relinquished	AKF4427	1S 1E, sec 29, N2NE; 1S 1E, sec 20, S2SE	S	160	
Dana, George W. Jr.	1/23/19	5/27/25	Patented	Pat 960211	1S 1E, sec 18, NESW; Lots 2,3; sec 13 SENE	S		See text
Dana, George W. Jr.	10/21/24	6/20/27	Patented	Pat 1004238	1S 1W, sec 13, NESE	S		See text
Davison, Charles R.	9/18/09	12/14/17	Patented	Pat 611741	1S 1E, sec 31, SENE lot 1; 1S 1E, sec 31, NENE lot 4; 1S 1E, sec 32, W2NW lots 1,2	S		See text
Dittman, Dave & Beatrice	6/13/35	11/3/39	Relinquished, quitclaim deed	AKF3037	1S 1W, sec 18, E2NW1/4; sec 13, lot 1; sec 12, Lot 8	S		See text
Dobbins, William	6/29/08	Oct-09	Relinquished	RD 23718 RD 30065	1N 1E sec 32, S2SE1/4; 1S 1E Sec 5, N2NE1/4	N		Dobbins was born in Scotland in 1871, and in 1910 was listed in the census as a bartender.
Dore, Robert J.	12/9/40	11/2/42	Cancelled	AKF4568	1S 1E Sec 5, N2SW, SWSE, lots 5,7	N	160	
Eberhardt, John C.	8/23/40	6/8/42	Relinquished	AKF4450	1N 1E sec 32, SE1/4, all	N	160	







Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Elliott (Elliatt), J.C.	9/30/08	7/26/09	Relinquished to Martin	RD 24662	1S 1E Sec 5, S2NW lots 3,4; 1N 1E sec 32, SW1/4 all	N		
Ernst, Henry J. & Edith C.	7/19/40	8/7/42	Relinquished	AKF4423	1S 1E, sec 19, SE	S	160	
Faucett, James Edgar	5/31/13	10/3/18	Relinquished	AKF405	1S 1E, sec 20, W2SENE, NW; sec 17, SWSW	S	320	
Ferguson, Frank N.	8/26/06	Unknown	Unknown	RD 15723	1S 1E Sec 5, Not determined	N		
Gardner, James. M.	6/2/47	7/2/52	Closed, expired	AKF6619	1S 1E Sec 3, Lots 3,4	N	80	
Graves, F.E.	8/21/07	Unknown	Unknown	RD 20031	See Wiest	N		
Griljevic, Jozep	7/26/11	Unknown	Unknown	RD 35359	1S 1W sec 1, E2NW, W2NE	N		Griljevic was a marathon runner and an immigrant. Nothing else is known about him. See photo of his produce in text, Section 2.1. Anton Radak took over this parcel a few years after Griljevic's claim.
Hanford, Daniel A.	12/11/08	12/1/23	Patented	Pat 923738	1N 1E sec 31 SW1/4; 1S 1E sec 6 NW 1/4	N		See text
Hausmann, Earle L.	12/6/39	9/8/41	Relinquished	AKF4256	1S 1W sec 24, NW	S	160	
Heilman, Ernest F.	1/13/30	12/3/30	Relinquished	AKF2067	1S 1E, sec 7, NWNE, Lots 1,7,8	N	153	Heilman was born in 1909 and died in Fairbanks in 1966.
Hodgson, Frank L.	9/1/39	7/1/42	Relinquished	AKF4146	1S 1E Sec 6, N2SESWSE lot 8	N	158	
Hoppe, Otto H.	8/20/06	7/28/14	Relinquished	RD 35896 RD 41656	1S 1W, sec 13, W2SE, E2SW, SW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, 2 lots Chena	S		See text
James, Vincent Edward	1/2/41	8/3/43	Relinquished	AKF4581	1S 1E Sec 3, S2NW lots 3,4	N	159	
Jarvas, M.	11/30/08	Unknown	Unknown	RD 25447	Undetermined, adjoining Chena River	S		
Jarvi, Matt	10/29/36	4/10/39	Relinquished	AKF3320	1S 1E, sec 19, NE	S	160	Jarvi was born in 1884 in Finland. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1904, and came to Fairbanks in 1933. He was married to Hannah Jarvi. He died in 1965 and is buried in Birch Hill Cemetery.

Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Jenkins, Walter	9/24/41	5/26/42	Relinquished	AKF4782	1S 1E Sec 4, S2NW, NESW, NWSE	N	160	
Jenkins, Walter	2/8/49	2/10/53	Cancelled	AKF6187	1S 1E Sec 4, W2SE	N	80	
Jones, Mary S.	9/2/38	6/17/43	Patented	Pat 1116978	1S 1E, sec 21, S2NW and W2SW	S		See text
Joy, Ida May	7/28/14	4/1/22	Patented	Pat 851555	1S 1W, sec 13, W2SE, E2SW, SW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, 2 lots Chena	S	269	See text
Joy, Louis	8/9/18	5/2/24	Cancelled	AKF950	1S 1E, sec 19, Lot 11	S	29	See text
Kobe, Eldon Arthur	5/22/34	10/26/36	Relinquished	AKF2824	1S 1E, sec 20, NW	S	160	
Kobe, Eldon Arthur	6/6/38	6/21/44	Cancelled	AKF3366	1S 1E, sec 20, W2NESENE, N2SE	S	160	
Kohelis, Gust	9/13/12	5/29/14	Relinquished	RD 37090 RD 41416	1S 1E Sec 3, SW 1/4, NW 1/4	N		Kohelis immigrated from Greece in 1893. The 1920 census described him as 50 years old, single, and unable to read or write. His occupation was woodcutting.
Kolde, George (Gus)	5/19/09	5/14/20	Patented	Pat 749230	1S 1W sec 14, S2NW	S	170	See text
Koprivica, Toma	11/12/14	9/27/26	Patented	Pat 986148	1S 1W sec 1, E2SW, SE, E2NE	N		See text
Larson, Roy A. A.	12/1/41	5/26/44	Relinquished	AKF4881	1N 1E sec 34, SW1/4, NWSW	N	80	
Lascaux, Paul	10/25/11	Unknown	Unknown	RD 36174	1S 1W sec 14, SE1/4NW, E2SW, S2SE	S		
Lazelle, Herman A.	10/16/13	1/12/20	Patented	Pat 704167	1S 1E Sec 6, NE4; 1N 1E sec 31, NE4	N		See text
Manville, Florence T.	10/15/45	12/31/45	Relinquished	AKF6018	1N 1W sec 35, E2NE, E2SE	N	160	Experiment station; non-contiguous
Markos, Theodore A.	9/16/12	2/14/16	Cancelled	AKF363	1S 1E Sec 4, S2NE, N2SE 1,2	N	240	See text
Martin, Nels	7/26/09	5/24/20	Relinquished	AKF0403	1N 1E sec 32, SW1/4 all; 1S 1E Sec 5, S2NW lots 3,4	N	160	Martin was born around 1860 and immigrated from Sweden in 1888. The 1920 census listed him as single.





Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land and Description	North/South Approx. of Chena R. acreage	Notes
McCool, Thomas	10/4/06	11/8/09	Relinquished	RD 16307 RD 29983	1S 1E Sec 6, NE4; 1N 1E sec 31, NE4	N	McCool was born around 1854. He immigrated from Canada in 1881. In 1920 he was a widower living alone.
McGovern, Stephen	12/27/29	4/7/30	Relinquished	AKF2062	1S 1E Sec 6, N2SE lot 8; Sec 5, NWSW	N	McGovern was born in Ontario, Canada in 1866 and came to Alaska in 1898. He worked mainly as a teamster.
McManus, James	5/8/08	5/19/09	Relinquished	RD 23168 RD 28014	1S 1W sec 14, NW 1/4; sec 11, SW below Chena	S	Portions of original holding became Berry & Koldie homesteads.
Meredith, Edward H.	8/18/32	6/20/35	Cancelled	AKF2525	1S 1W, sec 12, Lot 6, E2SW4, SE4NW4 1S 1W, Sec 13, lot 5	N	
Mitchell, Stanley N.	5/18/38	6/4/42	Relinquished	AKF3721	1N 1E sec 32, SW1/4, NESE	N	80
Moore, R.S.	10/21/09	Unknown	Unknown	RD 29881	1S 1W sec 1, W2SE, E2SW	N	
Muatakjarvi, Herman	2/17/09	2/24/19	Patented	Pat 661369	1S 1E, sec 16, SWNW lt 6; W2SW; sec 17, SENE, E2SE; sec 20, NENE; sec 21, NWNW	S	See text
Murray, Enoch	6/17/48	5/15/51	Relinquished	AKF7178	1N 1E sec 34, NW 1/4, NESE	N	160
Nemlan, James S.	6/17/35	1/7/37	Relinquished	AKF3039	1N 1W sec 35, E2NE, NESE	N	155 Experiment station; non-contiguous
Nodacker, Milton	3/9/40	8/25/49	Patented	Pat 1127101	1S 1E sec 4, NE1/4	N	See text
Noyes, F. R.	12/13/18	5/8/22	Patented	Pat 859259	1S 1W sec 11, lot 8, 15, 16; sec 14, N2SE, NE	S	318 See text
O'Connor, John J.	2/13/23	10/13/27	Relinquished	AKF0417	1S 1E, sec 7, Lot 12; sec 18, Lot 1	S	111
Olin, Anson	10/29/36	10/7/41	Relinquished	AKF3321	1S 1E, sec 19, E2NW, Lots 1,2	S	138
Palmer; Thomas E.	7/28/42	10/15/45	Relinquished	AKF5006	1N 1W sec 35, E2NE, E2SE	N	160 Experiment station; non-contiguous
Panicoles, Nick	11/8/09	5/4/11	Relinquished	RD 29984 RD 33745	1N 1E sec 31, SE4; 1S 1E Sec 6, NE4	N	
Papadopoulos, William D.	3/27/12	1/12/20	Relinquished	AKF362	1S 1E Sec 5, N2NE; 1N 1E sec 32, SE1/4, S2NE	N	varied Claimant was an immigrant. Nothing further known.
Pappas, Bill	10/15/13	Unknown	Unknown	RD 39880	1N 1E sec 33, SW1/4; 1S 1E Sec 4, NW1/4	N	Pappas was an immigrant; nothing further known.

Name	Entry date	Disposition date	Disposition	Document #	Land Description	North/South of Chena R.	Approx. acreage	Notes
Radak, Anton	3/16/12	4/29/29	Patented	Pat 1026010	1S 1W sec 1 E2NW, W2NE	N		See text
Roberts, S.B.	6/1/08	Unknown	Unknown	RD 23762	Undetermined, adjoining Chena River	S		
Russ, Noel	1/9/37	6/25/42	Cancelled	AKF3394	1N 1W sec 35, E2NE, E2SE	N	160	Experiment station; non-contiguous
Sheriff, Delbert E.	9/14/27	1/17/33	Relinquished	AKF1566	1S 1E, sec 7, Lot 11	S	28	
Shiple, Charles	5/24/20	8/24/24	Patented	Pat 941519	1S 1E Sec 5, NENW, NWNW	N	240	See text
Smith, Dewey Sampson	7/15/40	7/2/42	Relinquished	AKF4420	1S 1E Sec 6, E2SW lots 6,7	N	135.89	
Smyth, Edward J.	6/23/24	8/4/28	Relinquished	AKF1185	1S 1E, sec 20, NWNW; sec 19, E2NE; sec 18, SESE Lots 3,4	S	160	
Spencer, Chester	8/17/28	6/28/35	Patented	Pat 1076474	1S 1W, sec 13, W2SW, W2NW and lot 6	S		See text
Sweeney, Charles B.	2/23/05	4/1/22	Cancelled	RD 6886 F0410	1S 1E Sec 5, NWSW; Sec 6, N2SE, SWSE, lot 8; sec 7 NWNE, lot 7	N		See text
Turnbarger, Augustus	9/28/03	Unknown	Unknown	RD 1343	Undetermined, adjoining Chena River	N		Turnbarger became a successful gardener and greenhouse operator, though it appears he relocated to a different site.
Urban, Victor	8/9/04	Unknown	Unknown	RD 3243	Undetermined, adjoining Chena River	N		
Vogel, Louis	7/16/08	Unknown	Unknown	RD 23896	Undetermined, vicinity of Clear Creek	S		
Wagner, Edward J.	11/16/36	9/8/41	Relinquished	AKF3346	1S 1W sec 24, NE	S	160	
Whalen, Cornelius	6/23/04	Unknown	Unknown	RD 2533	1S 1W sec 1, W2SE, E2SW	N	320	
Whiteford, Dan	3/20/41	8/23/45	Relinquished	AKF3335	1S 1E, sec 20, NW	S	160	Whiteford lived in several Alaska communities, and built and operated the Paxson Lodge on the Richardson Highway. He died in 1946.
Wiest, James D.	8/26/10	2/2/20	Patented	Pat 724148	1S 1E sec 9, S2NW and SW1/4; sec 16 lots 4 & 5	N		See text

# APPENDIX C:

## Ladd AFB Tabulation of Real Estate

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This lists the owners of record at the time Ladd AFB acquired each parcel.

Source: USACE Realty Division, Ladd AFB Audit File. Cross-referenced to patented homestead information.

<u>Realty tract #</u>	<u>Acquired from</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>How acquired</u>	<u>Land Cost</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Orig'l Homestead Patent</u>
Original	BLM/Dept Interior	31-Mar-1937	EO 7596	none	2684.01	none
Original	BLM/Dept Interior	22-Jan-1940	EO 8325/PLO 690	none	14.24	none
Original	Harry M. Badger	15-Nov-1939	Fee purchase	\$3,000.00	177.84	Dana
Original	Hans and Lily Junes	30-Nov-1939	Fee purchase	\$1,500.00	244.96	Muatkajarvi
A	BLM/Dept Interior	12-Jun-1943	PLO 139	none	1454.36	none
B	BLM/Dept Interior	21-Nov-1958	PLO 1760	none	400.85	none
C	BLM/Dept Interior	28-Jul-1951	PLO 738	none	235.00	none
D	BLM/Dept Interior	14-Apr-1952	PLO 818	none	480.00	none
E	BLM/Dept Interior	10-Jul-1952	PLO 854	none	279.85	none
F	BLM/Dept Interior	8-Aug-1941	EO 8847	none	598.13	none
G	BLM/Dept Interior	8-Aug-1941	EO 8847	none	3371.69	none
H	Dept Interior	21-Nov-1958	PLO 1760	none	640.00	none
M	Hans Junes, et ux	6-Feb-1942	Fee purchase	\$320.00	40.00	Muatkajarvi
N	Harry Warren	16-Dec-1941	Fee purchase	\$1,826.48	228.31	Davison
A-1	Anton Radak	24-Sep-1943	condemnation	\$6,987.09	159.80	Radak
A-2	Charles Bunnell	24-Sep-1943	condemnation	\$1,625.87	319.98	Koprivica
A-3	Territory of Alaska	24-Sep-1943	condemnation	\$750.00	135.33	Hanford
A-4	Edward Warren et al	6-Nov-1943	condemnation	\$1,280.00	159.71	Hanford
A-5	Harry A. Lazelle	24-Sep-1943	condemnation	\$4,336.00	320.20	Lazelle
A-6	Edward Warren et al	24-Sep-1943	condemnation	\$4,500.00	160.25	Shipley
A-7	Joe McDonald	19-May-1944	condemnation	\$2,500.00	288.13	Wiest
B-1	Robert Bloom, et al	20-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$11,982.00	104.82	Berry
B-2	Carl Heck	1-Mar-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,100.00	0.19	Noyes
B-3	Earl N. Houlder	25-Mar-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,100.00	0.18	Noyes
B-4	Edwin Sanberg et ux	10-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$6,750.00	1.04	Noyes

B-5	Elbert Pitts, et ux	9-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$2,100.00	0.19 Noyes
B-6	Ira P. Farnsworth et ux	15-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,760.00	1.00 Noyes
B-7	George Bohland, et ux	7-May-1943	Fee purchase	\$2,600.00	0.74 Noyes
B-8	R.J. Mockler	13-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$4,280.00	1.01 Noyes
B-9	Paul G. Greimann	28-Mar-1944	condemnation	\$10,090.00	129.98 Noyes
B-10	Albert C. Muldoon & Victor H. Skinner	19-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$19,700.00	0.50 Noyes
B-11	Anna M. Paul	7-Jun-1943	condemnation	\$2,600.00	0.14 Noyes
B-12	Emil Pozza et al	3-Aug-1943	condemnation	\$3,900.00	1.14 Noyes
B-13	Fred Carpenter	15-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$600.00	1.00 Noyes
B-14	Henry J. Ernst et ux	10-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$3,600.00	0.51 Noyes
B-15	Caesar D. Glauco et ux	9-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$2,750.00	0.24 Noyes
B-16	A. D. Carpenter et ux	9-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$300.00	0.24 Noyes
B-17	Sam Means	11-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,250.00	0.50 Noyes
B-18	Ruben Johnson, et ux	11-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$3,600.00	0.50 Noyes
B-19	Charles Maxfield	8-Mar-1943	condemnation	\$2,500.00	1.57 Noyes
B-20	Willard F. Grinnell	8-Mar-1943	condemnation	\$800.00	0.22 Noyes
B-21	Arthur O. Smith, et ux	11-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$3,500.00	0.26 Noyes
B-22	Arthur Vandamme	9-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,000.00	0.23 Noyes
B-23	Thomas R. Shouse et ux	11-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$3,850.00	0.23 Noyes
B-24	Robert Gallagher	9-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,320.00	0.58 Noyes
B-25	Frank N. Kinney	2-Jun-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,200.00	1.00 Noyes
B-26	John M. Short, et ux	12-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$2,300.00	0.48 Noyes
B-26a	John M. Short, et ux	12-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	included in B-26	0.48 Noyes
B-27	Thomas Spencer et ux	12-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,700.00	2.37 Spencer
B-28	Edna M. Robinson	9-Jul-1943	Fee purchase	\$8,700.00	4.69 Spencer
B-29	Bessie Spencer	26-Mar-1943	Fee purchase	\$9,700.00	121.83 Spencer
B-29a	Bessie Spencer	26-Mar-1943	Fee purchase	\$400.00	10.00 Joy
B-29b	Bessie Spencer	19-Oct-1943	Fee purchase	included in B-29	0.70 Spencer
B-30	Robert C. Ohmer et ux	10-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$3,750.00	1.78 Spencer and Joy
B-31	Robert L. Buzby et ux	3-Apr-1943	Fee purchase	\$3,200.00	2.50 Joy
B-31a	Robert L. Buzby et ux	3-Apr-1943	Fee purchase	incl'd in B-31	1.20 Joy
B-32	Robert L. Buzby et ux	3-Apr-1943	Fee purchase	\$5,080.00	5.11 Joy





B-33	Joseph Kager	7-Jun-1943 condemnation	\$275.00	0.46 Joy
B-35	Robert L. Buzby	3-Apr-1943 Fee purchase	\$5,270.00	85.93 Joy
B-36	Ruben Gary et ux	9-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$2,700.00	0.16 Joy
B-37	Alfred J. Freeland	3-Jun-1943 Fee purchase	\$1,000.00	0.16 Joy
B-38	Max Wells et ux	11-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$1,750.00	1.00 Joy
B-39	Robert L. Buzby	3-Aug-1943 condemnation	\$1,318.00	6.31 Joy
B-40	Alfred Fosmark	20-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$675.00	2.00 Noyes
B-41	Lee Lohbrunner	21-Sep-1943 Fee purchase	\$325.00	1.00 Noyes
B-42	Ester M. Turnbow et ux	17-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$450.00	0.90 Noyes
B-43	Albert F. Bernard	20-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$450.00	0.46 Noyes
B-44	W.L. and Ethel Jackson	7-Jun-1943 condemnation	\$200.00	0.24 Noyes
B-45	Wally J. Oster et ux	10-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$550.00	0.42 Noyes
B-45a	Wally J. Oster et ux	10-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	incl'd in B-45	0.34 Noyes
B-46	Maurice B. Ruland	24-Mar-1943 Fee purchase	\$500.00	0.28 Noyes
B-47	Sherman A. Noyes et ux	29-Nov-1943 Fee purchase	\$600.00	2.00 Noyes
B-50	Harlan F. Page	7-Jun-1943 condemnation	\$250.00	1.00 Noyes
B-51	Henry Bender	9-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$275.00	1.05 Noyes
B-52	Raymond Kohler et ux	10-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$350.00	1.22 Noyes
B-53	Charles Grossbach	18-May-1943 Fee purchase	\$137.00	0.23 Noyes
B-54	John S. Hunnewell	10-Sep-1943 Fee purchase	\$137.00	0.23 Noyes
B-55	Blanche Cascaden	7-Jun-1943 condemnation	\$1,000.00	3.95 Noyes
B-56	Thurman Ross Curtis et ux	21-Jul-1943 Fee purchase	\$500.00	0.86 Noyes
B-57	Paul Alexander & Riley Stewart	3-Aug-1943 condemnation	\$500.00	0.48 Noyes
B-57a	Paul Alexander & Riley Stewart	3-Aug-1943 condemnation	incl'd in B-57	0.48 Noyes
B-59	Kenneth A. Murray	10-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$1,000.00	5.25 Spencer
B-60	Alvin & Mildred Hebert	3-Aug-1943 condemnation	\$500.00	1.76 Spencer
B-61	Phylliss F. Walseth	22-Mar-1943 Fee purchase	\$450.00	1.48 Spencer
B-62	Earl Hausmann	16-Feb-1943 Fee purchase	\$425.00	0.45 Spencer
B-63	Bessie Spencer	3-Aug-1943 condemnation	\$140.00	0.15 Spencer
B-64	J.A. & Marguerete Lathanan	3-Aug-1943 condemnation	\$140.00	0.15 Spencer
B-66	Anthony Hempel	11-Oct-1943 Fee purchase	\$350.00	1.50 Joy

B-67	Glenn Bowen	7-Jun-1943	condemnation	\$275.00	0.46	Joy
B-68	Dave Dittman et ux	9-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$275.00	0.46	Joy
B-69	Alfred Kirsch et al	10-Feb-1943	Fee purchase	\$1,000.00	0.70	Joy
B-70	George Wisner	3-Aug-1943	condemnation	\$360.00	0.23	Joy
B-70a	George Wisner	3-Aug-1943	condemnation	incl'd in B-70	0.35	Joy
B-71	Keith Harkness	22-May-1943	Fee purchase	\$300.00	0.36	Joy
B-74	Marion L. Crowell	17-Mar-1943	Fee purchase	\$400.00	10.00	Joy
B-75	Paul C.F.G. Pearl et ux	28-May-1943	Fee purchase	\$13,500.00	157.06	Noyes
B-76	Lee Judd et ux	1-May-1943	Fee purchase	\$5,600.00	80.00	Kolde
C-1	Hans Junes	7-Feb-1944	condemnation	\$300.00	40.00	Muatkajarvi
C-2	Mary S. Jones	11-Feb-44	Fee purchase	\$1,071.56	108.09	Jones
LF-4	H.E. Buzby et al	21-Sep-40	condemnation	\$4,500.00	141.08	Joy
5	Milton W. Nodacker	6-Jun-52	Fee purchase	\$6,300.00	160.01	Nodacker



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