

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH05 05765

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 13 1977
DATE ENTERED JAN 31 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC ******
McCarthy General Store (AHRs SITE NO. XMC-030)
AND/OR COMMON
McCarthy Meat and Grocery Co.

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Corner of Kenecott & Skolai Streets (No Number) NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN
McCarthy VICINITY OF Alaska, at large CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE
Alaska CODE 02 COUNTY Cordova-McCarthy CODE Dist. 080

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Sally Gibert (907) 279-8261
STREET & NUMBER
115 West 15th Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Anchorage VICINITY OF Alaska 99501

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Chitina-McCarthy Recording District
STREET & NUMBER
P.O. Box 86
CITY, TOWN
Glennallen STATE Alaska 99588

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (907) 274-4676
DATE
December 18, 1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Alaska Division of Parks, 619 Warehouse Drive, Suite 210
CITY, TOWN
Anchorage STATE Alaska 99501

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This largest surviving building in McCarthy and one of the few original structures, remains as built, and with no exterior alterations. It is a wooden false-fronted two story frame, connected at the front portion of the south wall with a single story of the same construction. Both segments face to the west for a total of 47 feet. The wing was added immediately upon completion of the main building in 1914.

The downstairs of the 56' long two-story section was designed and used solely as a store. The front half is one large room; the back half is divided into two square, sawdust insulated walls and door, served as a meat refrigerator, and another housed mechanical equipment--most of which remains. Entrance was a diagonal slash at the northwest corner providing a triangular overhang at the northwest corner; and one smaller door at the rear. None of this has been altered.

The second story was designed and used as a rooming house, with a larger front parlor, 11 rooms and one bathroom. It was reached by a separate front entrance, up steep narrow stairs to an open landing; with a fire-escape door at the rear of the central hallway. Each room had at least one window. All walls and ceilings were of 2" tongue-and-groove finished lumber, painted. At a later date, composition wall-board was added in six rooms. Floors were wooden, overlaid with linoleum. Later some of the rooms and the stairs were carpeted; and remnants of both the badly worn linoleum and carpeting remain. Other than the addition of electrical wiring at a later date, and the wallboard and carpeting; no other alterations have been made.

Although McCarthy became a ghost-camp after closing of the Kennecott Mines and the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad in 1938-39, the store--and sometimes the hotel upstairs--continued to function intermittently into the 1960's. More recently, the center section of the two-story section buckled, with resulted warping of both walls and floors. This weakened the center section of roof on the north side, allowing winds to carry a section away.

Yet for all of this, metal rings for hitching horses are still in place; a large meat-cutting diagram remains on the refrigeration room door; a huge laminated meat-cutting block, showing much use; produce bins marked "flour", "rice" and "beans"; along with considerable damaged furniture, fixtures, machinery and other paraphernalia, remain. Large lettered front signs: GROCERIES & MEAT, HARDWARE--on the front; and GENERAL MERCHANDISE, on the north wall, remain fully legible. On the top masthead, across the width of the false-front is a melange of letters--some clear and others indistinct--indicating overpainting by at least three and possibly four successive proprietors.

This structure--as does the little that remains of McCarthy--shows deterioration and neglect. The setting, and ghost-camp flavor, are superb. Mindfull of this, the present owner purchased the building with intent of restoration and to lead others in doing the same. As a first step, the roof and foundations were repaired this summer (1977) and other stabilization will follow.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1914

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This is the most important remnant of a 40-year old ghost camp. During the life of McCarthy it was the most consistently successfully commercial enterprise, the largest, and most contributive to the community. If anything, it has gained significance by survival; in perpetuating the history of Alaska's richest copper district.

The founding, and the life of McCarthy is almost totally mirrored in the discovery, development and demise of fabulous Kennecott, just three and a half miles to the north. Kennecott was a company town; totally self-sufficient. It had a fine commissary; efficient utilities, including fire-fighting; dormitories, cottages, mess halls; and "clean" recreation. McCarthy was the satellite: raw, rambling and often racous; with prostitution, alcoholic beverages, gambling and dance halls not permitted at Kennecott or the mine dormitories high up on the mountain sides. The area along McCarthy Creek was more propitious for settlement than the site where engineering dictates placed the mills, tramway terminals and other massive works, including headquarters for the Erie, Jumbo, Bonanza and Mother Lode mines.

Actually, due to the pervasive power of Kennecott and The Alaska Syndicate, McCarthy was never as "wild" as most Alaskan mining camps. Its "vice" was generally kept in check after 1916, when it had outgrown the company town almost 3 - 1 (1500 population to 500). In style, sprawl and appearance it was quite typical of Territorial Alaska.

Following the military explorations under leadership of Lts. Abercrombie and Allen, prospectors began probing the region where copper nuggets with strong traces of gold and silver had long been known to the Ahtna Athabaskans; and for centuries had been traded to the coastal indians and pounded into utensils, weapons and ornamentation. This was a popular campsite for the sourdoughs. When Abercrombie, now a Captain, in 1898 and 1899 surveyed and established the military road from Valdez to Copper Center, more prospectors moved into the area, usually headquartering their base tent camps along McCarthy Creek. From here, the R.F. McClellan party of nine (which included McCarthy) located the Nikolai lode, earlier described by Chief Nikolai to Lt. Allen, as visible from Dan Creek. They made the locating in July, 1899; formed the Chitina Mining and Exploration Company. With the party was sourdoughs Jack Smith and Clarence Warner, who accompanied the group as far as the site of McCarthy. They followed Bonanza Creek and at 4,000 feet elevation saw great green cliff of calcocite; so rich that they hurried to the McCarthy campsite to bring the nine to see it. Smith and Warner agreed to add this

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Newspaper files: AK. Historical Library, Copper Bee, Avalanches, Cordova Alaska, 1906-1916.

Grauman, Melody Webb, Big Business in Alaska; The Kennecott Mines, National Park Service manuscript, Fairbanks, 1976. Janson, Lone, The Copper Spike, AK. NW Pub., Co., Anchorage, 1975.

Lower Copper and Chitina Rivers: An historic resource study, Series No. 5, Alaska Div.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

of Parks, Aug. 1974, Anchorage.

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A 0, 7 | 3, 9, 7 | 525 | 3, 1, 4 | 6, 8 | 1, 2 | 450 | 4, 2, 9
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

U.S. Survey No. 699; T5S, R14E, SW 1/4 Section 16 and NW 1/4 Section 19; also as Lot 1, Block G, McCarthy Townsite Plat, 1916.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Michael S. Kennedy, Historian
 ORGANIZATION: Alaska Division of Parks
 STREET & NUMBER: 619 Warehouse Drive, Suite 210
 CITY OR TOWN: Anchorage
 DATE: March 12, 1977
 TELEPHONE: (907) 274-4676
 STATE: Alaska 99501

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE: *William Stenaville*

TITLE: State Historic Preservation Officer DATE: October 4, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION: *[Signature]* DATE: 1/31/78

ATTEST: *[Signature]* DATE: 1/30/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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McCarthy General Store (AHRS SITE NO XMC-030)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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lode to the holdings of the Chitina Co., in August, 1900. Following an earlier reconnaissance by Abercrombie's geologist Rhone, came USGS specialist Arthur C. Spencer, who from his McCarthy base camp, with Frank C. Schrader wrote the official 1901 mineral report establishing the scope and richness of these copper lodes. The rest of the story is well known.

With the building of camp Kennecott in 1907, business men, mostly from Valdez initiated plans for a townsite which would service the mines and mills. Among the principal McCarthy developers and business leaders were J. B. and Charles T. O'Neill, R.L.H. Marshall and O.C. Watsjold and later Sig Wold and Ben Jackson. The O'Neill's built the first (log) meat market, replaced in 1914 by the General Store, which became the focal point of the community. Through the significant years of McCarthy, all of these men except Wold were owners of the General Store, the most sustained business enterprise the community would know. Even after McCarthy had largely been abandoned, the Sig Wold family stayed on and long-time druggist, Ben Jackson transferred his attention to the General Store. The building has subsequently been owned by Ray Trotachau, James Boothley, Gordon Burdick, Vera Parlet and Sally Gibert. Its last commercial useage was for an oil and gas supplier in the 1960's. A few buildings of logs, began to supplant the tent camp of McCarthy by 1908. Between 1910-16, when Kennecott had less than 20 buildings (albiet mostly very large, and some 400 male employees-McCarthy had grown to 41 buildings and more than 1300 men, women and children. The Copper River Railroad, tying McCarthy and Kennecott with the port of Cordova, was completed in 1911. McCarthy peaked in 1916, leveled off during World War I, and then remained fairly static until the early 1930's. Two newspapers, The Copper Bee and The Avalanche, were published for a couple of months in 1916 and then terminated, they proclaimed the town as being "dry"--because no liquor was legally sold. (Evidence indicates that prohibition was only on the surface; to placate Kennecott). Peter Johnson was building a hotel (Golden) on Second Street of logs, chalked with burlap, and paneled with beaverboard on the inside--"one of the best and most substantial buildings in the country." (replacing a predecessor destroyed as were many buildings, each year, by fire).

A cross-section of the extent of the 1916 business community is gleaned from advertisements in the 1916 newspapers: McCarthy Steam Baths; McCarthy Meat and Grocery Co.; McCarthy Bar; W.W. Harvey and Co., Inc., "lumber, hardware and hay"; Merchants Cafe; three Barber Shops; a Sheet Metal Works; A. E. Todd, General Merchandise; Laurie Bros', "gentlemen's furnishings"; The Club pool hall and card room; J.R. Underwood, blacksmithing and repair; Otto Lubbe, dray and transfer; the Mecca, bar and pool room; Alaskan Bar; Charley's Place, a Chinese resturant; and F.H. Foster, Attorney-at-Law. Thirty-three new residences were under construction or just built; and the schoolhouse had received a new coat of paint. The newspapers discussed

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incorporation of the town--nothing came of the suggestion. Congressional Delegate Judge James Wickersham spoke October 21, 1916, in the school auditorium on an inquiry into freight rates on the railroad and steamship lines.

Family social life included "pavillion dances", shared with Kennecott; winter sleigh rides; "gigantic" Fourth of July celebrations and rodeos; movies at Kennecott, and a "reading" club. The town's "wild" reputation is illustrated in the letter of a Kennecott miner Emil Goulet, that "at McCarthy beer is served in whiskey glasses for fifty cents, dilluted whiskey for a dollar and if we got any change out of a ten-dollar bill, it was because they thought we were still sober." Kennecott people who viewed the town as mostly saloons and prostitute houses, were usually greenhorn chechakos who had never lived in Nome, Skagway or Dawson.

By the late 1930's Sig Wold and Ben Jackson were the only old-timers remaining. Sig also owned the only automobile; and during the winter, by dogsled, he carried supplies. Because only two students yet attended school, in 1931, the Commissioner of Education closed McCarthy's Territorial school that year. The post office, established in 1912 continued until 1943, when the population had declined to 49 people. The closing of the mines sounded the knell for McCarthy. Only a few people--prospectors, trappers and tourists, now visit there. (Grauman: 58,59)

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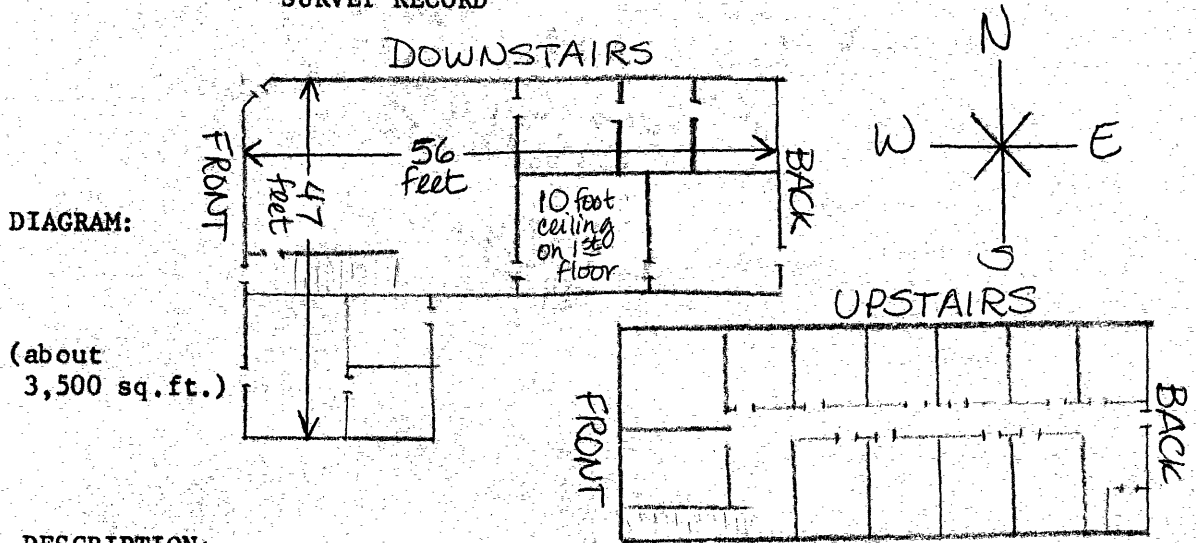
McCarthy General Store (AHRS SITE NO. XMC-030)

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USGS; Mineral Resources of the Wrangell Mt. District, Bulletin No. 15, 1901-3. Wash. D.C. also Schraeder & Spender, Special Publication: Mineral Resources Copper River Dist., 1901.

Supplement to ALASKA ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL SURVEY RECORD



DESCRIPTION:

Large wood-frame two-story commercial building that has been in various stages of abandonment since the thirties. Located in the town of McCarthy, near the old Kennecott mining community, on the south side of the Wrangell Mountains. The Kennecott Glacier is less than a mile away from the McCarthy townsite. The surrounding area has been proposed variously as a National Park or National Forest. The building is on a gravel moraine just a few hundred feet from McCarthy Creek.

Condition: Deteriorated. Poor foundation, especially at front store corner, and roof leaks. Current plans to temporarily patch roof and repair foundation next summer, ~~will be~~ fully stabilized the ongoing deterioration.

(1977)



JAN 31 1978