The Annual Journal of Latah County Historical Society -





LATAH LEGACY





Moscow Resident Dr. Earl V. Adams & Idaho's World War II
Kooskia Internment Camp

The Town Family in Latah County

Washington Water Power/Avista: 125 years and Counting





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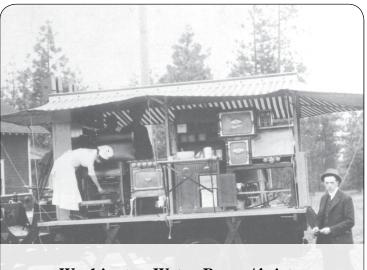
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All Riverside posters courtesy of Leonard Zahnow and Bertha Nygaard.

RIVERSIDE

"POTLATCH'S FAMOUS FUN SPOT"

By Barbara Coyner

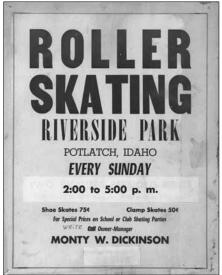


Early days at Riverside, probably a Fourth of July event, courtesy of John Wolheter.

NOVEMBER 7, 1958, brought nasty weather to the Palouse,

so the local dance hall's potbelly stove was cranked up full blast as dozens of locals shelled out two bucks a head to hear Johnny Cash belt out "Folsom Prison Blues", "I Walk the Line" and other favorites. It was a big deal that the legendary singer was stopping at Potlatch's famous nightspot, known simply as "Riverside." With 30-cent beers to lubricate the spirits, local loggers and millworkers prepared to have a rowdy time, and the heavy snow and bitter cold weren't enough to dampen enthusiasm as the crowd whooped it up. Years later, Cash was alleged to have called Potlatch the toughest damned town he'd ever played in, as the lusty crowd sizzled with energy.







We put posters everywhere," Zahnow recalls, noting he and Marlene easily put over 100 miles on their car each time they put up posters. "We even put them up at the colleges and often had foreign students come to our shows, some from as far away as Pakistan. Most could hardly speak the language."

For Riverside owner Leonard Zahnow, Cash's appearance was perhaps the spendiest show he'd put on during his tenure as owner from 1957 to 1962. The cost was \$1,000 for the night with Cash claiming 70 percent of gate receipts. Zahnow and his wife Marlene had blanketed the small towns from Coeur d'Alene to Moscow with show posters, hoping to make a profit on the widely acclaimed entertainer's appearance. The booking agency had given short notice, contacting Zahnow with the brief query, "Could you use Johnny Cash in two weeks?" Without hesitation, Zahnow had answered in the affirmative. From there he enlisted the talents of Mary Wilson, who ran a regular radio broadcast on Colfax radio KCLX from her two-story Palouse farmhouse. The woman knew her western entertainers and plugged the show right up to opening night. Zahnow also mailed out stacks of handbills at three cents each touting the Cash show, while the Palouse Republic ran a small front-page ad on the day of the event.

"We put posters everywhere," Zahnow recalls, noting he and Marlene easily put over 100 miles on their car each time they put up posters. "We even put them up at the colleges and often had foreign students come to our shows, some from as far away as Pakistan. Most could hardly speak the language."

For Leonard and his wife Marlene there wasn't much dancing at the Cash show, or any of the other events for that matter. They were too busy watching the gates, checking ID's and keeping wood stoves stoked. Although the couple had gone into a 50-50 partnership with Leonard's dad Wesley mostly because they liked to dance, they found out the shows took plenty of energy just to keep things running smoothly. By the time they had swept up after the Johnny Cash show, they were already planning for the show the following weekend featuring Lefty Frizzell, Justin Tubb, Miss Deb Wood, Stonewall Jackson, and Benny Martin and his band. Ray Price was heading to town on December 5, with other lesser-known performers filling the gaps in between. Riverside also featured roller skating as part of the regular activities, and summer brought rodeos, car races and the extremely popular Fourth of July activities which usually lasted two days.

"The dance hall and all the other things didn't make that much money," said Zahnow, as he and Marlene visited Potlatch for Potlatch Days 2014. They had come from their current home in Bellingham, Washington, for the celebration. "I worked in the mill at Potlatch where I graded lumber. Marlene worked the hall, taking care of the roller skating and school events. Riverside was a lot of work. It had a big roof to take care of. And it was

all heated with wood, so we would round up the creosote railroad ties and burn them, something you wouldn't be allowed to do now. We built bleachers, and we cut trees for firewood. I'd work all day at the mill and then cut a couple of cords of wood after work. When my dad and I started the partnership, his job was to buy the beer and pop, and I was to book the bands and do promotion. With all the maintenance, we were busy all the time."

Marlene recalls that the dance hall didn't have a telephone, so the performers often walked up to the nearby Zahnow residence, a small

house that came as part of the Riverside property. The house served as a familiar phone booth for performers such as Tex Ritter, Porter Wagoner, Little Jimmy Dickens, Buddy Knox, Hank Snow and others. Marlene and Leonard got to know performers in a more personal way because of the phone situation; the entertainers journeyed into Potlatch by car, bus or plane connections, then touched base with home or booking agencies via the Zahnow's telephone.

With a steady stream of stars coming out of Nashville via various booking agencies, Riverside's owners collected plenty of stories. There was the time Rex Rinehart came to perform with George Jones and the band got locked

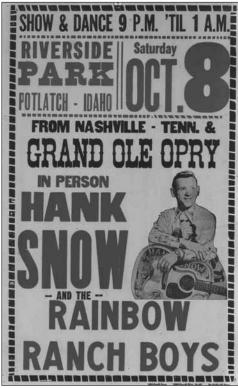




Ray Price with the Humphery Twins and Bonnie, courtesy of Rod Headrick

up for making false statements to law enforcement, requiring \$300 in bail money to spring entertainers from a Lewiston jail. Zahnow said the booking agency offered to give him Hank Snow as a reward for posting the bail money. And then there was the situation in which Tex Ritter hit a deer with his rental car. Pee Wee King, who wrote "The Tennessee Waltz" and "Bonaparte's Retreat", played Riverside a couple of times. Marlene recalls that he was always telling stories of his own dance hall in Minneapolis which featured two floors, one with strictly polka music and the other with various dance bands.















Treasured and worn autographed photo of Jimmy Dickens, featured on the Facebook site "You know you are from Potlatch Idaho if you remember...", noting the picture was given to Gene Anderson at the concert.

The Fourth of July was always a big deal usually spread over two days at Riverside, and one year the plan was to have Little Jimmy Dickens play both nights, while during the day there was to be a rodeo featuring cowboys from Riggins. Leonard notes that Marlene was answering a lot of calls about that event although "she didn't know a thing about rodeos." Dickens drove all the way from Nashville for the two days, never demanding a contract. Because he played Riverside at least eight times, he forged a strong friendship with the Zahnows. Viola resident Gene Anderson remembers vividly scampering up on stage with Dickens, with the entertainer always being gracious to the crowds. In many instances, old-timers recall that the performers were often in the bar just visiting with the locals before going on stage.

"Once you'd meet these people, you'd see that they all had special personalities," Zahnow says. But the performers weren't the only ones the Zahnows grew to enjoy. There were the customers who came back again and again. Bobbi Mills (Potlatch High School Class of 1966) remembers her parents becoming good friends with Leonard and Marlene, and that meant that Bobbi and her brother Cliff also got in on the numerous shows at Riverside. Bobbi saw Tex Ritter in an afternoon show just for kids, and she did her share of roller skating too, as well as taking in the car races and gymkhanas. But the real memories were made when the Zahnows took Bobbi and Cliff with them all the way to Nashville. Because the Riverside owners knew many of the Nashville greats, the Mills kids were treated to a once-in-a-lifetime experience.





It's difficult to come up with the exact date that Riverside came into existence; scanning old newspapers such as the Palouse Republic at the museum in Palouse reveals very little about the dance hall, the race tracks and all the elements that made up Riverside. It is believed that the first version of Riverside was built in the 1920s, either as part of the grange hall at Kennedy Ford or just across the river from it. The Palouse Republic wrote in the June 29, 1923, issue that "The big dancing pavilion at Kennedy Ford is now almost complete and ready for the big two-day celebration which is to be staged at that place July 3 and 4." The article suggested that the Fourth of July extravaganza was to be the big debut of the dance hall and that attendance at the events was predicted to fill all hotels in the area, as well as drawing campers to the actual site.

Despite a lack of documentation on the early dance hall, an article by Lucas Beechinor in Spokane's Nostalgia Magazine from July 2007 furnishes more information on the new Riverside that emerged, probably in the early 1930s:

"When the old Kennedy Ford Grange burnt down in the very early 20th century, it was rebuilt by R.A. Hansen [sic], Sr., and Joe Tuft three miles west of Potlatch on the Moscow Highway. It was ninety-six feet across, had running water, electric lights, and plenty of parking space outside. A baseball park was also constructed nearby by J.O. Broyles, George Comstock, and Stanley Anderson who also put together a team that played there regularly.

"The octagonal shaped hall became a local hot spot for just about any social gathering. There was always a dance going on and advertisements for the hall described it as the "largest hall and best dance floor in Palouse Country." Over time, the hall was commonly referred to as Riverside."



Top Left: Buddy Knox at Riverside, courtesy of Leonard Zhanow Top Right: Marlene Zahnow with Faron Young, courtesy of Leonard Zahnow

Above: Wesley Zahnow, Faron Young and Leonard Zahnow at Riverside. Faron played to nearly 900 people, making it one of the biggest shows at the dance hall. Courtesy of Leonard Zahnow

It is an interesting side note that Riverside's builder and first owner, Ray Hanson, was also known by some as "Haywire" because, according to noted chemist and early-day Potlatch resident Malcolm Renfrew, Hanson could fix anything with haywire. Hanson's son, Raymond Alva Hanson, worked at Riverside in his youth, moving tables out of the way to accommodate roller skating when the dancing was over. Young Hanson went on to



The legendary Riverside dance hall in an undated photo, source unknown

invent the self-leveling control for hillside combines. Like Malcolm Renfrew, Raymond Hanson enjoyed notoriety as an inventor, yet he never forgot his roots – or the time he'd spent at Riverside. In a 2010 interview for the Potlatch Historical Society, Renfrew, who played trombone, recalled fondly playing with dance bands that appeared at Riverside. No doubt the two prestigious Potlatch scientists kept their friendship going in later years; Renfrew often hearkened back to his merrymaking days at Riverside, frequently mentioning the Hanson family.

Another person who had an inside look at Riverside was Potlatch resident Ruth O'Reilly, who passed away in 2011 at the age of 92. As a youngster, she attended one of the first dances at Riverside's dance hall. The daughter of George and Bertha Gregory, Ruth and her older siblings Geneva and Earl enjoyed extra privileges because their father worked at the snack bar, which got them free dance tickets and a sandwich during the evening.

"I loved that place," Ruth recalled of Riverside. "It had a kitchen and was a six-sided building with windows that dropped down like flaps. They had dances there every week. One of the bands that played there was Tommy Dorsey. They were supposed to send a full band, but it was a stormy night, so when they got there it was only Tommy Dorsey and two others."

Ruth grew up dancing and her dad, a farmer, and her mom, a postal employee, were known as good dancers. Her brother Earl later became a dance instructor with Arthur Murray Studios in California. And Ruth met her husband Jim at a dance at Riverside. When the place later became a skating rink Jim also taught Ruth to skate there.

"There was all kinds of entertainment there," Ruth said in a 2010 interview for the Potlatch Historical Society. "There was a lot of baseball, too."

Ruth especially recalled the fun of the two- and three-day Fourth of July events that went on at Riverside. One year nearby Indian tribes came and another year there was an amateur rodeo, along with baseball and foot races. And of course there was dancing. In those days it was strictly ballroom — fox trot and waltz — but "no jitterbug," according to Ruth. Because Ruth's mom was the bookkeeper for the special events, Ruth got in on the dancing action and the attendance statistics as well. "One night there were 450 couples," Ruth remembers. "That's 900 people!"

Referring to the record-breaking 900 attendees, it's likely that Ruth O'Reilly was citing the Faron Young concert that Leonard Zahnow confirmed drew a huge crowd. "There were close to 900 people in that hall, and boy, that was crowded," Zahnow says. "It was February and the weather was just gorgeous. When Cash came, the weather was just terrible."

According to the *Nostalgia Magazine* article, admission to the dances at Riverside was 15 cents for women and 25 cents for men, with dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight every weekend. In winter stoves were installed all around the room to keep the place warm, and a taxi shuttled people to and from the building, the article said.

Marlene Zahnow recalls one time when a child got too close to the wood stove and the heat burned through her coat. The child was devastated by the coat episode so the Zahnows popped her in the car and ran



Riverside at flood stage, undated, from unknown source. "I remember seeing Riverside when the flood stage was as is! They were afraid that it was going to float down and take out the Hwy 95 bridge. They talked about dynamiting it in order to prevent. Not sure if they ever did?" Jim Spangler quote from Facebook

to a nearby store to buy her a new coat. "Oh, how she loved that little coat," Marlene adds of the incident.

Perhaps the biggest collection of memories surrounding Riverside was the annual Fourth of July extravaganza, which not only brought in rodeo events, singing and dancing, but even local Native American tribes who loved the auto racing and rodeos. Setting up their tepees, tribal members avidly joined the party. The whole area bustled with activities as families rolled in with kids, picnic baskets and an appetite for fun. Kids could roller skate, while the women visited and the men smoked, talked of the harvest and just kicked back for a day away from the everyday farming and logging work.

Mention Riverside these days and many of the locals growing up around Potlatch reach for their favorite memories like the place was still alive and well. On Facebook postings, Debbie Poston Rochon told of the days when her dad was part of the pit crew for the stock car races. As a kid, Debbie sat on the hillside with her friends in the hot afternoon sun, eventually getting so dusty that the dust just fell off her when she stood up. Monica Horn Keough also remembers sitting on the rocks on the hillside to watch the auto races, as well as roller skating in the pavilion. Cindy Donahue Chaney says that her mom saw Marty Robbins perform and still talks about the show as one of the best she'd seen. And Janice Vowels Johnson said that while her mom didn't allow her to attend evening shows at Riverside, she was allowed to roller skate there occasionally on Sundays. Janice's husband Irv was working the evening shift at a Moscow gas station when Porter Wagoner and Dolly Parton stopped for gas after playing an evening show at the famous night spot.

Although the Zahnows enjoyed their time at Riverside and probably hosted the most famous of the entertainers there, the couple eventually sold out due to the heavy workload involved in maintaining the grounds and hosting the shows. Because of the dance hall's close proximity to the Palouse River, the place frequently flooded and had to be repaired. As a new owner took over, the dance hall finally succumbed to the often damaging flood waters and there was no move to rebuild as the famous Riverside faded into oblivion.

Notes: Thanks to Janet Barstow at the Roy Chatters Newspaper and Printing Museum in Palouse for research help. Also Dulce Kersting at the Latah County Historical Society. Interviews with Malcolm Renfrew, Ruth O'Reilly and Leonard Zahnow were previously done by Barbara Coyner for the Potlatch Historical Society. Riverside is a community treasure chest of memories around Potlatch and it is difficult to credit the many people who reminisced about their times dancing, roller skating or attending the Fourth of July festivities. The quote about Potlatch by Johnny Cash is almost impossible to attribute correctly. Josh Ritter spoke of Johnny Cash at a concert in Moscow, quoting Cash as saying that "Potlatch was the meanest damned town he ever played." Some say Cash referred to the town as tough, not mean. Zahnow said he and his family tried to make Riverside a good family spot, yet others said things could occasionally get fairly rowdy. Either way, Riverside will go down in Latah County history as a huge attraction and a little piece of Nashville, especially during the 50s and 60s.



MOSCOW RESIDENT DR. EARL V. ADAMS & IDAHO'S WORLD WAR II KOOSKIA INTERNMENT CAMP

by Priscilla Wegars, Ph.D.

THE KOOSKIA INTERNMENT CAMP is an obscure and

virtually forgotten World War II detention facility that was located in a remote area of north-central Idaho.¹ Situated on Highway 12 at Canyon Creek on the Lochsa River, thirty miles east of the town of Kooskia and six miles past the hamlet of Lowell, the site previously served as a Civilian Conservation Corps camp in 1933 and as Federal Prison Camp No. 11 from 1935 to 1943.² As the Kooskia Internment Camp from May 1943 to May 1945 it was administered by the U.S. Immigration

and Naturalization Service (INS) for the U.S. Department of Justice and held men of Japanese ancestry who were termed "enemy aliens," even though most of them were long-time U.S. residents denied naturalization by racist U.S. laws.

Surprisingly, the Kooskia Internment Camp has a connection to Moscow, Idaho. On May 28, 1943, readers of the Daily Idahonian would have seen an article about 104 Japanese internees arriving at the former federal prison camp on the Lochsa River near Lowell.³ Dr. Earl V. Adams, who worked at the camp for a very short time in 1943, was briefly a resident of Moscow; the November 1943 telephone directory lists him living at 324 North Main Street.⁴ Adams is otherwise elusive; how and why he came to Latah County, and why he left, are not known. What is known is that Earl Vinton Adams, MD, was born on February 14, 1874, in Olathe, Kansas. By 1900 he was already a physician and worked in a number of different Kansas towns into the early 1930s. He was in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1935 and in Los Angeles, California, in 1940. There he is shown as a 66-year-old physician at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, location not noted.⁵

Immediately following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, numerous Japanese, German, and Italian aliens were arrested and detained on no specific grounds and without the due process guaranteed to them by the U.S. Constitution. They were sent to various INS detention camps such as Fort Missoula, Montana; Bismarck, North Dakota; and elsewhere. The INS internment camps were separate and distinct from the ten major incarceration/concentration camps under War Relocation Authority (WRA) supervision. The WRA camps, including Minidoka (now the Minidoka National Historic Site) near Jerome in southern Idaho, housed some 120,000 American citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who were unconstitutionally removed, relocated, and imprisoned by the U.S. government during World War II.

Although there were a number of Justice Department internment camps throughout the United States during WWII, the Kooskia Internment Camp was unique. Its inmates had volunteered to go there from other camps and received wages for their work. A total of some 265 male Japanese aliens, 24 male and 3 female Caucasian civilian employees, 2 male internee doctors—1 Italian and 1 German, and 1 male Japanese American interpreter occupied the Kooskia Internment Camp at various times between May 1943 and May 1945. Although some of the internees held camp jobs, most of the men were construction workers for a portion of the present Highway 12 between Lewiston, Idaho, and Missoula, Montana, parallel to the wild and scenic Lochsa River.



The internees' treatment was governed by the Geneva Convention, a 1929 international agreement specifying how prisoners of war should be treated. Although the Kooskia and other internees were not prisoners of war, the enemy nations agreed that the Geneva Convention could apply to internees also, and it thus gave them certain rights and privileges. For example, Article 24 of the Geneva Convention states, "Prisoners of war shall have the right to inform the...authorities in whose power they are of their requests with regard to the conditions of captivity to which they are subjected." In contrast the WRA prisoners, most of whom were American citizens, had no such rights.



Some of the Kooskia internees, 1944. Courtesy of the Asian American Comparative Collection, University of Idaho, Moscow

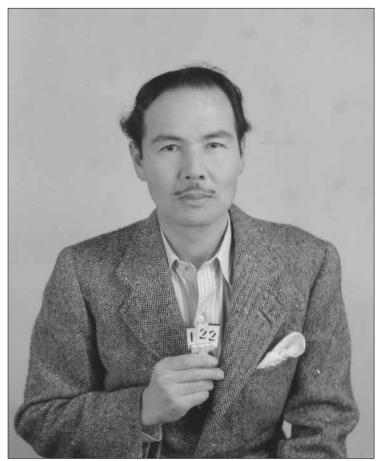
Although initially pleased with their circumstances, the Kooskia internees soon found that all was not as had been promised. The disgruntled men prepared a lengthy petition detailing their complaints and submitted it to Bert Fraser, the officer in charge at the Fort Missoula, Montana, Internment Camp. If conditions did not improve, they all wanted to transfer up there. Because the volunteer internees were crucial to the success of the road-building project, the next few months saw many changes and improvements at the Kooskia camp in response to their petition.

Medical Care at the Kooskia Internment Camp

Towards the end of the federal prison camp period and the beginning of the internment camp time, U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) medical technical assistant William J. Keenan took care of minor injuries and performed first aid.⁷ Keenan's departure by mid-July 1943⁸ thus gave rise to one of the internees' main demands, that of better medical treatment. In response to the internees' petition the INS administration urgently sought a doctor for the Kooskia Internment Camp.

Tsuneyoshi Koba, a Japanese internee at Fort Missoula, convinced the authorities there that he was a medical doctor, so they sent him to the Kooskia camp. Unfortunately he had faked his credentials. Once he was exposed as a quack he was returned to Fort Missoula.

Soon afterwards the INS transferred an interned Italian physician, Dr. Ludwig R. Borovicka, from Fort Bismarck, North Dakota, to the Kooskia Internment Camp. Following Italy's surrender to the Allies in September 1943, Borovicka became eligible for parole.



Tsuneyoshi Koba, the "quack doctor". National Archives

Dr. Earl V. Adams

At one point in Borovicka's tenure at the Kooskia Internment Camp Dr. Earl V. Adams was there, too, but the available records do not clarify their individual responsibilities; Adams either took over for Borovicka briefly or assisted him.

Adams was a retired physician who lived briefly in Moscow, Idaho. In the summer and fall of 1943 he worked part time for the USPHS in Spokane and was assigned to the Fort Missoula Internment Camp. While there he expressed great interest in being assigned to the Kooskia camp. In one letter written to Dr. Lombard, the USPHS's supervising physician in Spokane, he states that he cannot get along with his superior, Dr. Scott, at Fort Missoula. Scott "shows no cooperation" and "does not consult with" Adams, who feels like he has had "practically nothing to do" since Scott arrived at Fort Missoula. Adams stated that he wanted to go to the Kooskia camp or some other place.9

In early September 1943 Lombard, writing to Bert Fraser, the officer in charge at Fort Missoula, hoped that Fraser "can do something with Dr. Scott." If the USPHS were to find out that Adams did not have enough work, they would reassign him away from Fort Missoula. 10

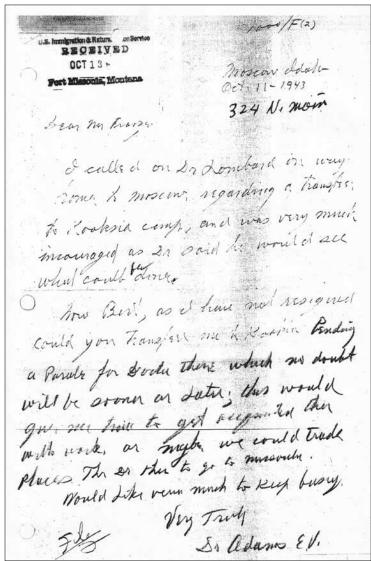


Dr. Ludwig R. Borovicka. National Archives, scan courtesy Louis Fiset



Dr. Adams' residence in 1943 was 324 North Main Street (right), shown here in 2011. The house is now gone, as is the Animal Clinic building next door to it (left). *Photo by Priscilla Wegars*

At mid-month Adams wrote to Fraser that he intended to put in a full week at the Kooskia camp. He promised to look over the camp, to give each man a physical examination, and to see just who was in need of hospital care. He would like to stay at the Kooskia camp for the rest of the month, hoping in the meantime that some changes could be made at Fort Missoula, and asked for his mail to be forwarded to 324 North Main Street, Moscow. Adams would also have realized that the Italian surrender a week earlier meant that Borovicka was likely to be paroled, thus creating a vacancy at the Kooskia camp.



Letter from Earl V. Adams to Bert Fraser, October 11, 1943. *National Archives*

On September 20, 1943, Adams reported to Fraser on his visit to the Kooskia Internment Camp. The officers' mess hall was clean and orderly, as was the kitchen. The general mess hall was in good condition. Despite some grease on a few of the tabletops, Adams gave it an 'A' grade. He thought that the internees' canteen needed a better arrangement but that the lavatory and showers were "in the best of order." In the barracks only one bed was untidy. The music and recreation hall, the camp area, the officers' quarters, and the vegetable room were all fine, but the garbage cans, as usual, were not up to par. Adams suggested that the camp hospital could use some paint and a good cleaning, and he took some water samples to send to three laboratories for analysis. ¹²

Towards the end of September, Fraser confided to Lombard that he was "perplexed" about Dr. Adams. Although Adams [then 69 years old] was "a fine old gentleman," the other Fort Missoula doctors "were afraid to let him handle any cases." Dr. Adams admitted that "he has not kept up with his

medicine," but he felt that Dr. Scott discriminated against him. However, Dr. Scott found that "some of the laboratory analysis work performed by Dr. Adams [was] wrong and not dependable." Adams didn't want to remain if Dr. Scott stayed, but they couldn't afford to lose Dr. Scott at Fort Missoula so Fraser hoped to find someone else to replace Dr. Adams.¹³

By October 2, 1943, Adams had left Fort Missoula. His desire to be assigned to the Kooskia camp would be agreeable to Deane Remer, the officer in charge there, but before that could happen Dr. Borovicka would have to be paroled.¹⁴

In a final letter dated October 11, Adams wrote to Fraser from Moscow, Idaho, still hoping for a transfer to the Kooskia camp, "pending a parole for Doctor there which no doubt will be sooner or later." Adams suggested that the Kooskia camp doctor, Borovicka, could go to Fort Missoula and that Adams could replace him at the Kooskia camp. Adams signed off saying, "Would like very much to keep busy." He probably also enjoyed getting paid. Nothing more is known of Adams and his unrealized hopes of being assigned to the Kooskia camp except that he died in Los Angeles on September 9, 1944, and is interred at Los Angeles National Cemetery. 16

In any case, Borovicka did not leave the Kooskia Internment Camp until February 1, 1944. His replacement there by late May of that year was a German internee physician, Dr. Hans Werner Kempski, who remained until the Kooskia camp closed in May 1945.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Leland E. Bibb and Lee Ware for help with background information on Earl V. Adams; to Zachary Wnek, Latah County Historical Society, for reference assistance; and to the University of Idaho Library Special Collections for reference materials.

About the Author

Priscilla Wegars is the author of As Rugged as the Terrain: CCC 'Boys,' Federal Convicts, and World War II Alien Internees Wrestle with a Mountain Wilderness (2013), co-winner of the Idaho Library Association's Book of the Year for 2013, from which this article is excerpted. For more information on the Kooskia Internment Camp, see her Imprisoned in Paradise: Japanese Internee Road Workers at the World War II Kooskia Internment Camp.

Sources cited in "Moscow Resident Dr. Earl V. Adams & Idaho's World War II Kooskia Internment Camp" are listed on page 26.

Editor's Note: This article about the Town family is the result of years of research by Shirley Town Karr and the writing skills of Helen Jones Wootton. Tragically, Shirley Karr didn't live to see the results of her careful research published in this issue of Latah Legacy. She passed away on October 30, 2014, in Parkdale, Oregon. Sadly in addition, Shirely Town Jones, the last surviving member of the third generation of the Town family, left us on November 4, 2014.

The Town Family in Latah County

By Shirley Town Karr and Helen Jones Wootton



The Town brothers at their sawmill on Moscow Mountain c. 1907: Charles Walter, Clarence, Harry, brother-in-law Charles Jester, and Sherman Town (left to right)

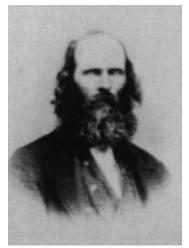
ALTHOUGH THE TOWNS HAVE LIVED in Latah County

continuously since 1877, no mention of the family is included in Lillian Otness' history of the county, A Great Good Country, probably because the Town brothers were all notoriously closemouthed. Therefore it has fallen to the current descendants to tell the story. Shirley Town Karr and Helen Jones Wootton are both great-granddaughters of Albert Lucien Town and Gertrude Finch Town.

According to the History of North Idaho found at the Latah County Historical Society, the Towns were natives of New York, later moving to Iowa and thence to Minnesota. In 1876 they went to California and eight months later arrived in Idaho.

Family accounts of the particulars of the first journeys differ. Shirley Town Jones was told that Ethamer Sanders

Town and his two sons, Albert Lucien Town (born in Wisconsin in 1851) and Charles Benton Town (born in Iowa in 1855), came to what is now Latah County sometime around 1874 and saw that the area was good for farming. They then went back to Mankato, Minnesota, to collect Ethamer's wife Ellen Louisa Gail Town and Albert's wife Gertrude Ella Finch Town and their baby Sherman Finch Town and bring them out to Idaho. However, we cannot









L to R: Ethamer Sanders Town (2 Jan 1823 – 10 Apr 1909), Ellen Louisa (Gail) Town (25 Apr 1829 – 19 Feb 1922), Charles Benton Town (later Towne) and Albert Lucien Town, the sons of Ellen Louisa (Gail) and Ethamer Sanders Town about 1863.

find documentation of that first journey. Another version, given to Sherman Duane (Bud) Town by his older sister L. Maude Town Davis, was that Ethamer, Charles, and Albert and Gertrude and their baby all came to Idaho together in 1877. (The baby was born June 19, 1877, in Minnesota, and the party arrived in Moscow in September that same year.) The 1880 census records show that Ethamer, Charles, and Albert and Gertrude were in Moscow then, but Ellen Gail Town was still in Minnesota with her sister, Dora Pew and family, so we believe Ellen remained there probably to settle affairs and prepare for the move. (Ellen 's obituary says that she came to Moscow later on in 1880.) Complicating our family history is the fact that the Federal Census of 1890 was destroyed in a fire.

All accounts agree that Ethamer, Charles, and Albert and his little family had traveled by rail from Mankato, Blue Earth County, Minnesota, to San Francisco, California, and then up the West Coast by steamer to Astoria, Oregon. From there they traveled in a smaller boat up the Columbia River, portaging around Celilo Falls and following the Snake River to Lewiston. They traveled from Lewiston to Moscow by horse and wagon.

The Nez Perce War was in 1877, and although it never directly affected Moscow, settlers here were on edge, so the family stayed for a time in a stockade. (This was not the more commonly known Fort Russell stockade, but was northeast of town on the Howard place.) Duane Town remembers his grandmother, Gertrude Finch Town, telling him about living in the stockade. She said the Nez Perce used to ride by single file on their ponies and they must have had a really keen sense of smell because whenever she baked bread, they would stop and ask for some. She always obliged. She said they were always respectful and considerate, particularly to her father with his long white hair and beard. (Gertrude's father was Sherman Finch, but we know he did not come west with them in 1877, so this

must have been her father-in-law, Ethamer Town. Sherman Finch and his other daughter Callie came to Moscow later.)

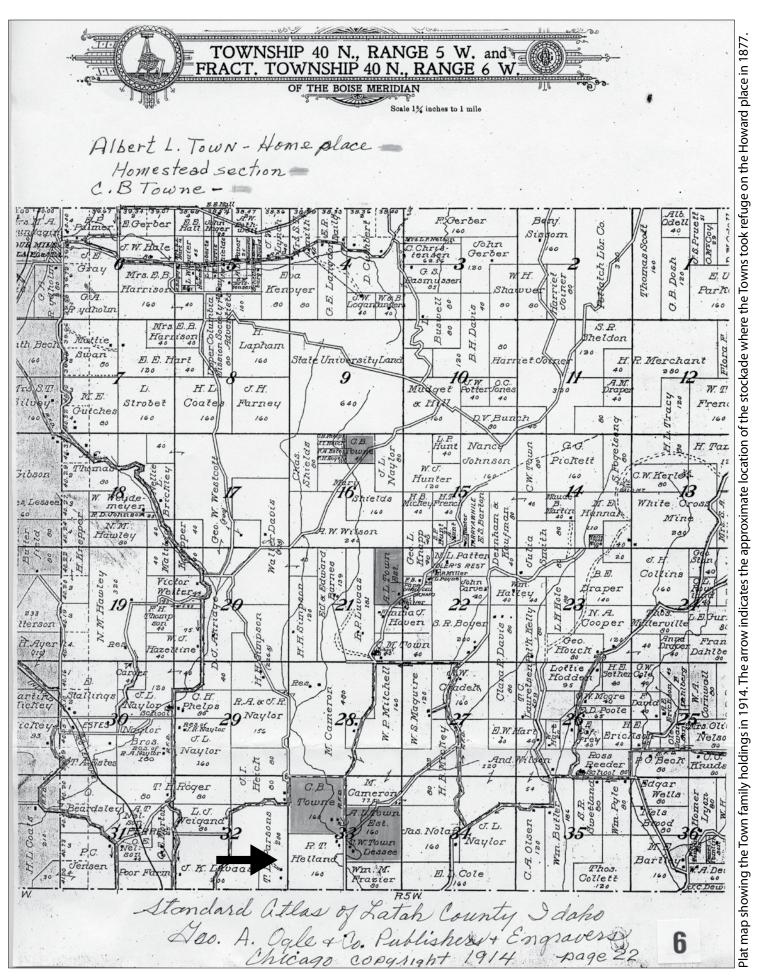
Ethamer, Albert, and Charles each filed for 160-acre homesteads. After fulfilling the terms of the homestead, Albert was issued his deed on February 2, 1889; Ethamer's deed was issued on June 7, 1883, and Charles' was issued on April 10, 1882. These homesteads were all located northeast of Moscow in sections 20, 21, and 22:

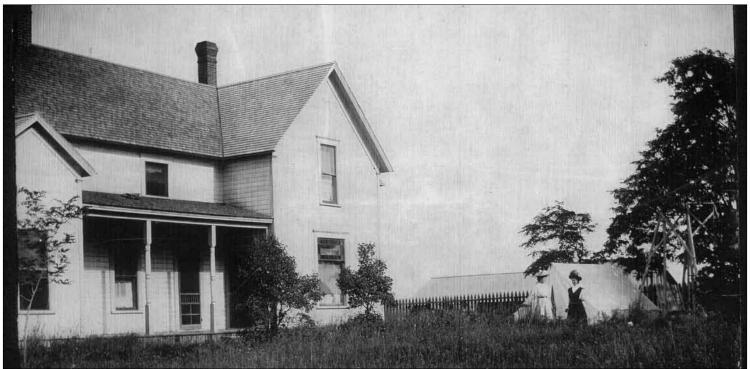
Ethamer Sanders Town—west half of the northeast quarter and east half of the northwest quarter of section 21 in township forty north of range five west of Boise Meridian in Idaho Territory containing one hundred and sixty acres.

Albert Lucien Town—west half of the northwest quarter of section 22 and east half of the northeast quarter of section 21 in township forty north of range five west of Boise Meridian in Idaho Territory containing one hundred and sixty acres.

Charles Benton Town—west half of the southwest quarter of section 21 and the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of section 21 and the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section 20 in township forty north of range five west of Boise Meridian in Idaho Territory containing one hundred and sixty acres.

The house that the family has always called "The Home Place" was not on any of these three original homesteads but was built on land purchased later (18 October 1888 and 1 November 1892) in section 33. Albert brought the lumber for the house from the Lewiston mill up the grade by horse and wagon. The house must have been completed around 1900 because Sherman's children were born there beginning in 1902. It was large enough to accommodate a





The Town family home built on their land in section 33. Photo taken around 1910.



Gertrude Ella (Finch) Town, wife of Albert Lucien Town



Albert Lucien Town with his Jersey cows



The three oldest sons of Albert and Gertrude Town: Walter, Sherman, and Clarence (left to right)



Nellie May Town, daughter of Albert and Gertrude Town



Harry Oliver Town, youngest son of Albert and Gertrude Town

big multi-generation family, having seven bedrooms, a very large living room and dining room, large kitchen and pantry. The house was later sold by Gertrude Town to James and Josephine O'Conner and then to S.O. and Anna Gibbs. The house is still lived in today, located on North Mountain View Road about a mile-and-a-half north of Mountain View Park. (See photo and Latah County Plat map from 1914.)

In addition to the aforementioned Sherman Finch Town, Albert Lucien Town and his wife Gertrude Ella Finch had four more children, all born in Moscow: Charles Walter born 6 December 1880, Clarence Marion born 18 August 1883, Nellie May born 12 August 1886, and Harry Oliver born 22 July 1892.

Charles Benton Town married Emma Jane (Jennie)
Townsend in Moscow and had two children that lived to

maturity: Gertrude Janette (Nettie) born 1 April 1884 and Charles Edgar born 22 July 1886. Three other children died in infancy and are buried together under one headstone in the Moscow Cemetery. (Jennie's family had come by covered wagon, following the railroad tracks, to Moscow in 1875 and her mother kept a diary of this journey.)

Sisters-in-law Jennie and Gertrude were always competitive. Their houses were in view of each other and the two women raced to see who could get her wash out on the line first, proving what a good housewife she was. Gertrude told her granddaughter Shirley Town Jones that she was getting up at three in the morning so that she could get her wash out first!

The Charles B. branch of the family added an "E" to their name; newspaper accounts of the family will sometimes spell the family name "TOWNE" and sometimes "TOWN".

Ellen Louisa Gail Town was a quiet, contemplative woman who wrote poetry. We have her handwritten book of poetry, in which some of the poems were written by her and some she must have copied. When she died in 1922, one of her own poems was read at her funeral.

Ethamer and his two sons and their sons all farmed and/or worked in the woods in the Moscow area, except for the youngest son, Harry, who became a mechanic. We have photos of Albert Lucien and Charles B. when they were young, and a formal photo of Charles B. as an

adult. Albert must have been camera shy because the only adult picture we have is with his prized Jersey cows!

Gertrude Ella Finch Town was a remarkable woman. She was married at the age of 16 and came west with a tiny baby. During the journey by rail she would get out at each stop and wash the baby's diapers in puddles. She not only birthed and raised five children, but also had the care of her elderly father-in-law and mother-in-law, Ethamer and Ellen Town, as well as her own elderly father, Sherman Finch. She also raised a foster daughter, Sarah Dillman, who later married Gertrude's son Clarence. A story told by Shirley Town Jones is that the two elderly grandpas in the household didn't like to use the chamber pot, so were in the habit of urinating out of the upstairs bedroom window. Sarah Dillman and Gertrude's younger sister Callie Finch decided to teach them a lesson. They upended an iron wash tub and placed it under the bedroom window which resulted in a loud drumming noise the next time the old gents used the window instead of the chamber pot. The men behaved themselves after that.

Gertrude's husband Albert died in 1913 not long after his father Ethamer passed in 1909, so by necessity Gertrude became a successful businesswoman, buying and selling property. In 1916 she married again, to Henry L. Land, but soon divorced him after hearing that he was bragging in the beer parlor that he had "snagged a rich widow." Gertrude lived until 1940.



Sherman and Ella (Burr) Town



Walter and Flora (Herington) Town, with sons Donald & Merton



Clarence and Sarah (Dillman) Town





Left: Nellie (Town) and Charles Jester Right: Harry and Mable (Moore) Town

Descendants of Albert Lucien TOWN (1851-1913) and Gertrude Ella Finch TOWN (1859-1940)

Sherman Finch TOWN (1877-1953)	Altha Mae TOWN (1903-1991)
A service of	m. Marvin TUCKER - 1 child, Patricia
m. (1) Luella BURR (1883-1911)	Luella Maude TOWN (1905-2001)
	m. Cecil DAVIS - 1 child, Barbara
m. (2) Hannah RONHOLT (1893-1972)	Thelma Elene TOWN (1916-2004)
(Carine Johanna)	m. Lee MORRIS - 1 child, Geoffrey
	Sherman Duane TOWN (1919-2006)
	m. (1) Ellen OLSON - 2 children, Marilyn, Sandra
	m. (2) Elizabeth SCHRACK - 1 child, Douglas
	m. (3) Ellen PARLIN - 3 children, Katherine, Duane, Betty
Charles Walter TOWN (1880-1945)	Merton Herington TOWN (1912-1984)
	m. Fontella PHILLIPPI - 2 children, Larry, Ronald
m. Flora HERINGTON (1884-1979)	Donald Walter TOWN (1915-1998)
	m. Laura CARLETON - 2 children, Shirley, Donna
	Howard Lester TOWN (1922-1969)
	m. (1) Lois SORWEIDE - 1 child, Carol Jean
	m. (2) Barbara RUSSELL - 2 children, Paulette, Patricia
Clarence Marion TOWN (1883-1960)	Albert Ray TOWN (1911-1979)
	m. Clarice HAMILTON - 3 children, Richard, Charlene, David
m. Sarah DILLMAN (1884-1976)	Clinton Oliver TOWN (1912-1986)
	m. Regina PATTON - 2 children, William, Michael
	Allen Lucien TOWN (1914-?)
	m. Florence CAMERON - children's names unknown
Nellie May TOWN (1886-1972)	Lee Charles JESTER (1908-1985)
	m. Dora WAKEFIELD - 6 children, Leslie, Russell,
m. Charles JESTER (1877-1964)	Beverly, Marjorie, Maxine, David
	Ralph Leo JESTER (1917-1954)
	m. Alice M. JOHNSON - 3 children, Douglas, Vicki, Jack
Harry Oliver TOWN (1892-1935)	Helen Shirley TOWN (1916- alive in 2014)
	m. Cadwaladr JONES, Jr 3 children, Alan, Helen, Darrell
m. Mable MOORE (1893-1986)	
	Darrell Harry TOWN (1919-1940)

Descendants of Charles Benton TOWNE (1855-1914) and Emma Jane (Jennie) Townsend TOWNE (1866-1951)

Gertrude Janette (Nettie) TOWNE (1884-1920)

m. William TAYLOR (1873-1946)

Charles TAYLOR (1904-?)

m. Edith RILEY - no children

George TAYLOR (1906-?)

m. name unknown - children's names unknown

Charles Edgar TOWNE (1886-1938)

m. Anna Irene HEICK (1893-1945)

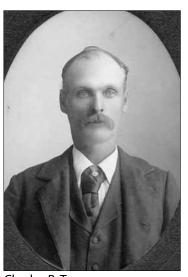
Margarette Janette TOWNE (1915-2000)

m. Louis NEARING - 3 children, Irene, Frank, Robert

(Other children died young)



Emma Jane (Jennie) (Townsend) Towne, wife of Charles B. Towne



Charles B. Towne



Nettie (Towne) and William Taylor



Edgar and Irene (Heick) Towne

Emma Jane (Jennie) Townsend Towne also lived a long life, outliving not only her husband, but all of her children, before her death in 1951. Her great-granddaughter Irene Nearing Asker remembers family gatherings at Jennie's home on holidays, with the Taylor cousins coming all the way from Canada. Jennie was an avid deer hunter well into her eighties and always had home canned jars of deer meat on her shelves. On her last hunting trip she got lost and the family made her quit.

Jennie Towne was the last of the second generation of Towns, and only one of the third generation survives: Shirley Town Jones, age 98 at this writing, and still living in Moscow. Most of the fourth generation spent at least



The Town brothers harvesting, 1920s

their childhoods growing up in Latah County. Although many have scattered, we still continue to call this "home."



WASHINGTON WATER POWER/AVISTA

125 years and counting

IN 1886 A GROUP OF SPOKANE AREA businessmen

bought out George A. Fitch, the owner of the first dynamo on the Spokane River, and organized the Spokane Falls Electric Light and Power Company. Working with the Edison Electric Light Company, second and third DC generators were installed on the river. But more power was needed by the growing community of Spokane Falls. Thomas Edison and other east coast financial backers believed that steam power was preferable to water power and refused to invest additional money into hydropower projects for Spokane Falls.

The Washington Water Power Company (WWP), now known as Avista, was formed by a group of ten pioneering Spokane industrialists and businessmen who believed the power of the river could provide the electricity needed by the homes and businesses of the 20,000 residents of Spokane Falls—and they decided they would undertake the project themselves. Combining the natural resource of the Lower Spokane Falls in the Spokane River and the energy and

investment of these founding fathers, WWP was born—eight months before Washington Territory achieved statehood.

Like all of Spokane Falls, the operations of the fledgling WWP were tested by a fire that broke out downtown on August 4, 1889. The fire grew to a raging blaze that ultimately burned 32 square blocks of businesses and neighborhoods. Electrical wiring, poles and lights along



Appliance store on wheels, courtesy of Washington Water Power/Avista



Early combined utilities office, courtesy of Washington Water Power/Avista



Early electric stove demonstration, courtesy of Washington Water Power/Avista



Washington Water Power Company office on Main Street in Moscow, Idaho, *courtesy of Washington Water Power/Avista*

the streets of Spokane Falls were consumed in the fire. WWP workers salvaged any wire they could find, including barbed and baling wire, and worked around the clock to reconnect the city. By the next evening they had restored electric power and lighting to the city's streets and the few buildings that were still standing.

The lights illuminated a scene of smoldering devastation as most of the wooden buildings, storefronts, hotels and downtown residences had been destroyed. But the spirit of this community was as undimmed as the newly powered streetlights and, with help from WWP, Spokane was rebuilt from the ground up.

Brick and mortar soon replaced plank and nails as more permanent structures were designed and constructed. Several of the brick buildings that were built immediately after the fire, including the Bennett Block, Fernwell Building and the Spokesman-Review Building, are still in use today and are still powered by electricity generated from the water power of the Spokane River.

As time went on, families began to convert from gas to electric lighting in their residences while still heating their homes and cooking with gas and wood or coal. To overcome some of the barriers to its more widespread adoption, WWP worked diligently to educate people on the benefits of using electricity in the home.

WWP employees conducted training classes with homemakers around the region, showing them how to use electric appliances safely and effectively. WWP engineers helped improve common electrical appliances such as the electric range and the home water heater. WWP employee Lloyd Copeman invented the thermostatic control for the electric range, and this literally revolutionized home cooking across the country.

In 1901 WWP bought the Post Falls, Idaho, generating site which was originally constructed by Frederick Post, and in 1902 it began work on a 100-mile, 45,000 volt electric transmission line to the silver mines of Burke, Idaho — the longest high voltage transmission line in the world at that time.

In 1906 WWP began building transmission lines into the Palouse that ran from the Monroe Street station along the river in downtown Spokane south to Tekoa, Colfax and Palouse.

As electricity gained acceptance in both the home and area businesses, the company opened offices in outlying communities, including Moscow and Pullman. In 2003 the company now called Avista sold its office building in Moscow to the city's Chamber of Commerce.

The local electric and water systems of the Lewiston-Clarkston areas were acquired by WWP in 1930. In the years following, the water systems were sold and the dams northeast of Grangeville were removed.

Today Avista provides electricity to more than 365,000 customers and natural gas to more than 229,000 customers in eastern Washington and northern Idaho.

For more in-depth information about Avista's 125-year legacy of innovation and community impact, please visit www.AvistaLegacy.com.

Editor's note: For detailed information about the electrification of rural Latah County, see articles in Latah Legacy, Summer 1985, Vol. 14, no. 2: "Early History of the Electric Light and Power Systems in the Towns of Kendrick, Juliaetta, Troy, Deary, Bovill, and Elk River, Idaho, Now Being Served by the Washington Water Power Company" by Herman C. Schupfer, 1892-1974; and "The Early Electrification of Latah County, Idaho—Power Goes Rural" by Keith Williams. Prior issues of Latah Legacy are available for review at the Latah County Historical Society, 327 East Second Street, Moscow, ID 83843.

Endnotes from Moscow Resident Dr. Earl V. Adams & Idaho's World War II Kooskia Internment Camp, by Priscilla Wegars, Ph.D.

¹For more information about the Kooskia Internment Camp see Priscilla Wegars, *Imprisoned in Paradise: Japanese Internee Road Workers at the World War II Kooskia Internment Camp* (Moscow, ID: AACC, 2010).

²The CCC years and Federal Prison Camp years are discussed in Priscilla Wegars, *As Rugged as the Terrain: CCC "Boys," Federal Convicts, and World War II Alien Internees Wrestle with a Mountain Wilderness* (Caldwell and Moscow, ID: Caxton/AACC, 2013).

³Daily Idahonian, "Jap Road Crews Arrive," 50(173):2, May 28, 1943. The article stated that they were "citizen internees and aliens," but none were actually citizens; all of them had been born in Japan.

⁴Moscow, Idaho, *Telephone Directory*, November 1943, p. 5. Perhaps he was retired, since his name is not in the list of Physicians & Surgeons, ibid., p. 29. Dr. Adams is not in the directory for the following year, but an H. W. Adams, presumably a relative, is listed, for the first time, at the same address with the same telephone number, Moscow, Idaho, *Telephone Directory*, November 1944, p. 6.

⁵Leland Bibb, e-mail to author, October 7, 2014.

⁶Wegars, *Imprisoned*, 81.

⁷M. S. Lombard [henceforth MSL], Medical Director, USPHS, 400 Federal Building., Spokane, Washington, to The Surgeon General, US Public Health Service, Washington, DC, May 31, 1943, 2; 1000/Kooskia [Box 4] [henceforth 1000/K(4)]; Entry 291, General Files, 1942-1945, Fort Missoula, MT; Records of Enemy Alien Internment Facilities, World War II [henceforth E291]; Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Record Group 85 [henceforth RG85]; National Archives Building, Washington, DC [henceforth NARA I], and Frank V. Brown, Assistant Surgeon (Retired), US Public Health Service, Medical Officer in Charge, Fort Missoula, Montana, to Bert H. Fraser, Officer in Charge, Fort Missoula, Montana [henceforth BHF], "Memorandum #341, Report of sanitary survey of the Kooskia Internment Camp," June 19, 1943; 1000/8, Sanitary Recommendations; E291, RG85, NARA I.

⁸BHF to Central Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Philadelphia, July 21, 1943; 1000 Kooskia (1) [Box 4, first white folder], E291, RG85, NARA I. Copied at the National Archives, Washington, DC, by Louis Fiset. Fiset kindly provided Wegars with photocopies of many Kooskia Internment Camp documents that he obtained when working on his book, *Imprisoned Apart: The World War II Correspondence of an Issei Couple* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).

⁹Earl V. Adams (henceforth EVA), MD, Acting Assistant Surgeon, USPHS, OICFM, to MSL, August 30, 1943, 1000/F, Hospital Personnel [Box 2] [henceforth 1000/F]; E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹⁰MSL to BHF, September 1, 1943; 1000/F, E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹¹EVA to BHF, September 16, 1943; 1000/F, E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹²EVA to BHF, September 20, 1943; 1000/K(4), E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹³BHF to MSL, September 28, 1943; 1000/F, E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹⁴BHF to MSL, October 2, 1943; 1000/K(4), E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹⁵EVA to BHF, October 11, 1943; 1000/F, E291, RG85, NARA I.

¹⁶Leland Bibb, e-mail to author, October 7, 2014.

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