

Find Thieves in Matanuska

Tuls. June 4, 1935

Freight Shipments Are Rifled, Government to Place Guards

BY ARVILLE SCHALEBEN

OF THE JOURNAL STAFF

Palmer, Alaska — With some 20 carloads of freight stacked in the camps of the Matanuska valley colonists, thieves are brewing a problem for authorities. Articles are being missed daily and federal officials are planning guards to protect the property.

Actually the thieves are looting their own treasure for as members of the Alaska Rehabilitation corporation all colonists must share the costs.

Unknown in Alaska

"They're even stealing hooks off latrine doors," said Colonist John Kirsh, one of the foremen named to handle the new shipments. "We need some watchmen and need them quick."

"Holy mackerel," the veteran Palmer railroad agent added, "stealing freight in Alaska! Nobody ever heard of such a thing."

The headquarters camp here is laden with costly materials. There are piles of sewing machines, plumbing ware, engines, household goods and lumber of all shapes and descriptions. The present warehouse space is extremely limited so the materials are in high heaps, covered with tarpulins. The authorities, trusting in the integrity of the settlers sent them from the States, have been leaving the piles unguarded, awaiting the time to haul them to their ultimate destination.

Try to Visualize City

Like magic the gang from the construction division has brushed, stumped and burned over the community center land here in Palmer. Two days ago it was all overgrown with sprouting willows and mature spruce and birch. Now they are sheared to earth.

Singly, in pairs and in groups the colonists walk from their camps across the yet uncleared farm tracts to the townsite and try to visualize what is planned for them.

"It does not seem possible," they say, "that a city can grow out of this wilderness, but the government says there'll be one here."

What interests them most is plans for an elaborate school in contrast to the log one which served the area before. Many feel that, with so

say, "that a city can grow out of this wilderness, but the government says there'll be one here."

What interests them most is plans for an elaborate school in contrast to the log one which served the area before. Many feel that, with so much work to be done getting homes built before the snow flies, it will not be possible to have the school ready unless construction is contracted for. Several plan to urge Don Irwin, project manager, to do this if possible.

The First Tragedy

One tragedy has marred the busy activity. The new Alaska's first calf, born after the arrival of the cattle in the valley, died when two days old. Paul Yahr, colonist with some veterinary experience, had struggled throughout the day to keep the baby alive. When it took its last breath of clear Alaskan air, Yahr looked up sadly at the group of volunteer aides standing with dreary eyes about him and said:

"Hell, boys, there goes somebody's milk supply for the winter of 1937."

The settlers had named the unfortunate infant Matanuska and now there'll be a similar christening after the second blessed event in the Guernsey world, expected within a fortnight.

Find Thieves in Matanuska

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

keep the baby alive. When it took its last breath of clear Alaskan air, Yahr looked up sadly at the group of volunteer aides standing with dreary eyes about him and said:

"Hell, boys, there goes somebody's milk supply for the winter of 1937."

The settlers had named the unfortunate infant Matanuska and now there'll be a similar christening after the second blessed event in the Guernsey world, expected within a fortnight.

May Transfer More

San Francisco, Calif.—(P)—Emigration of 650 additional families from drought stricken and sub-marginal west farms to Alaska is under consideration by federal rural rehabilitation officials, it was revealed Monday by H. W. Von Morpurgo, assistant director of the California SERA.

H. A. R. Carlton, SERA director of transient relief and rural rehabili-