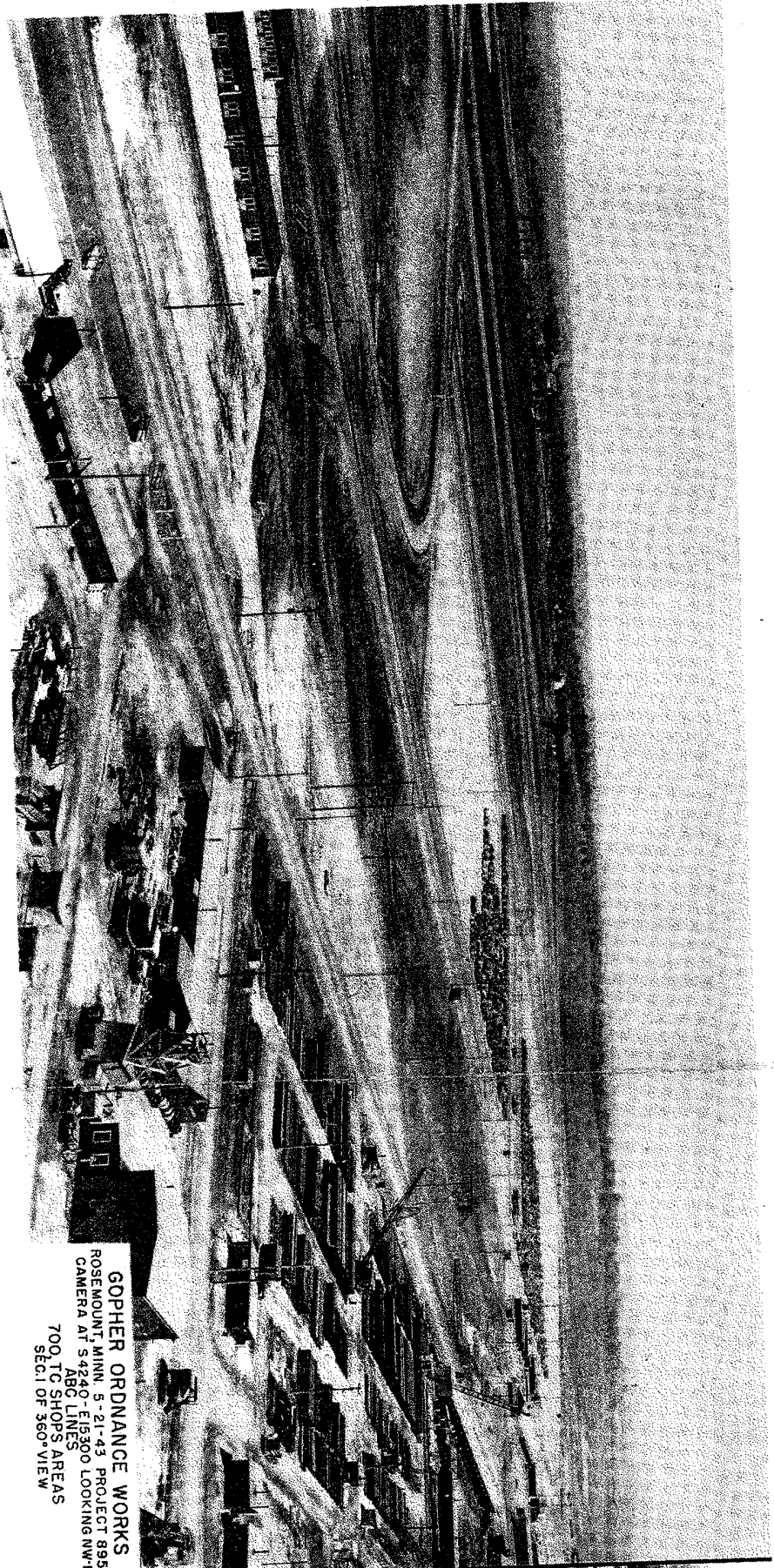
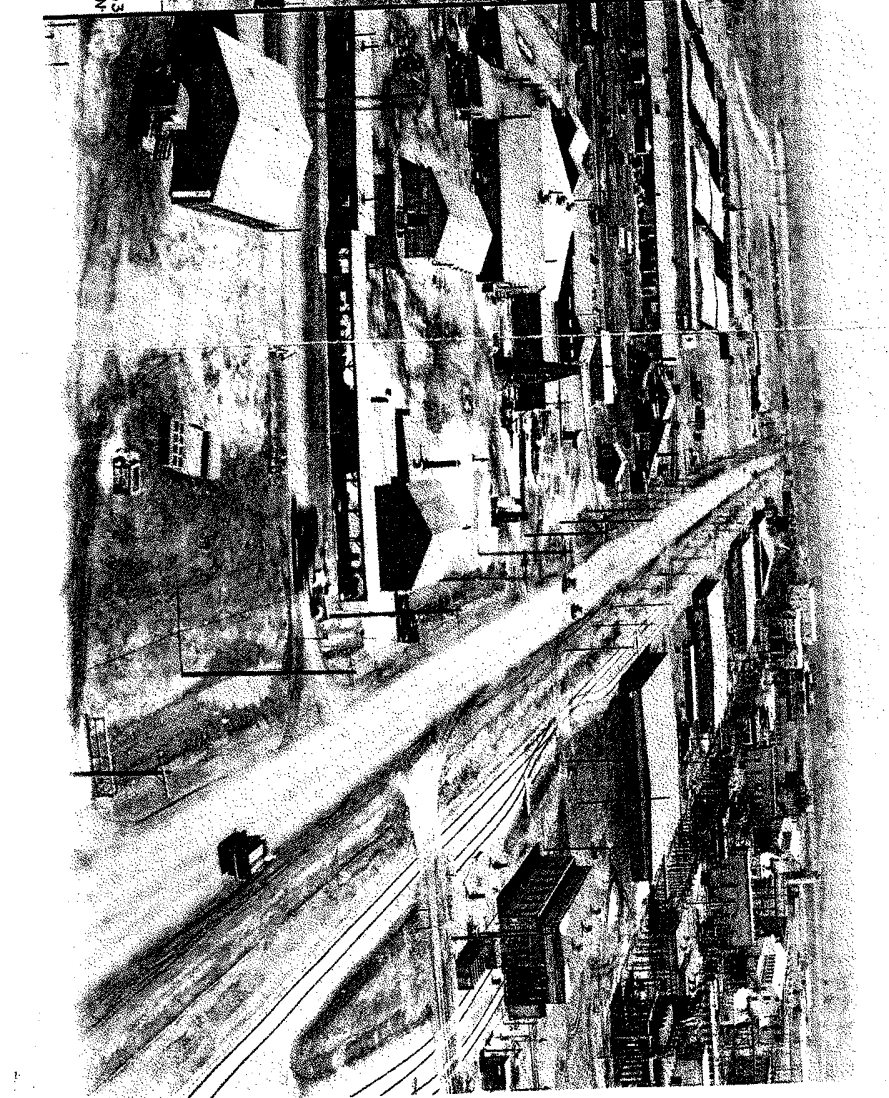
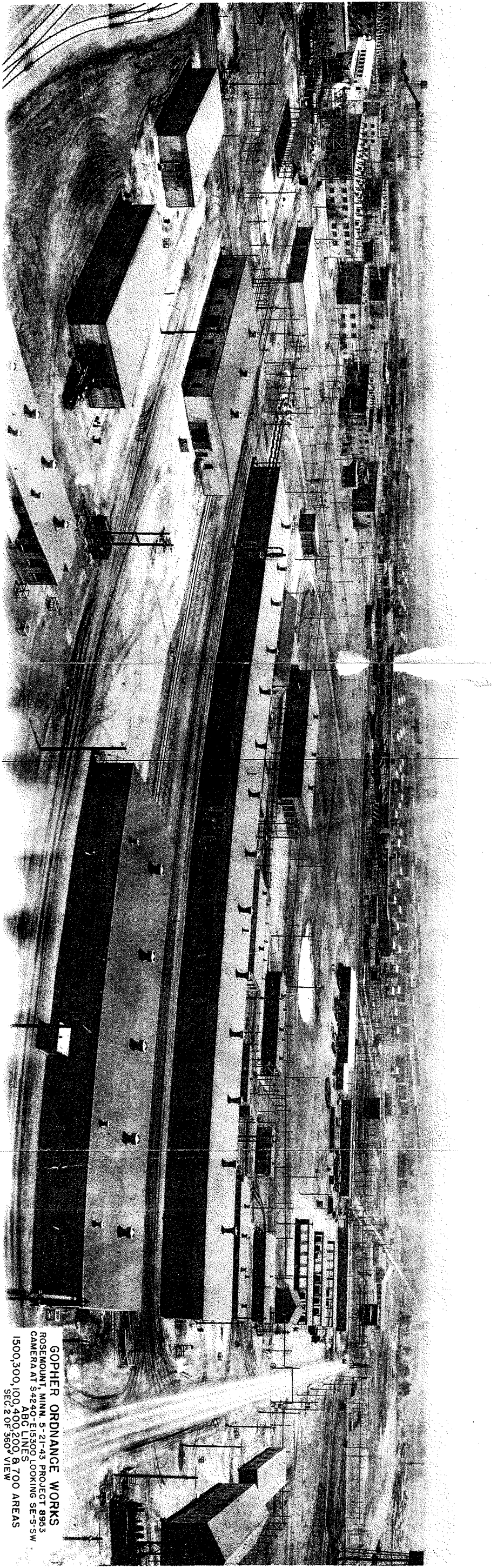


**APPENDIX F**



GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS  
ROSEMOUNT, MINN. 5-21-43 PROJECT 8953  
CAMERA AT S 4240' E 15300' LOOKING NW  
700' TO SHOPS AREAS  
SECT. OF 360° VIEW



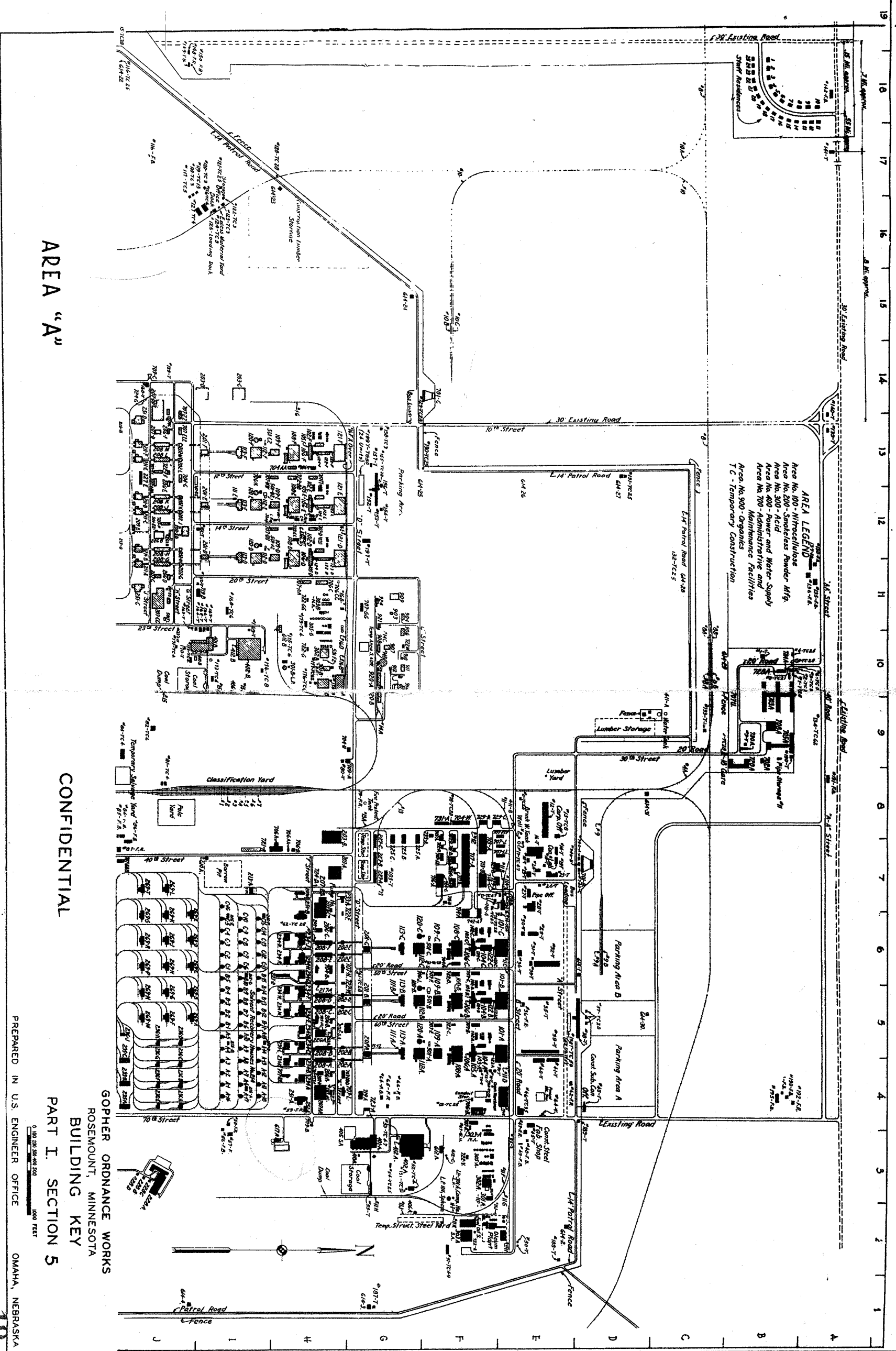


**GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS**  
ROSEMOUNT, MINN. 5-21-43 PROJECT 8953  
CAMERA AT S4240-E15300 LOOKING SE-S-W  
ABC LINES  
1500, 300, 100, 400, 200, & 700 AREAS  
SEC 2 OF 360° VIEW



**GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS**  
ROSEMOUNT, MINN. 5-21-43 PROJECT 8953  
CAMERA AT S4240-E15300 LOOKING SW-W-NW  
DEF. ALL AREAS AND 900 ABC  
SEC 3 OF 360° VIEW

44



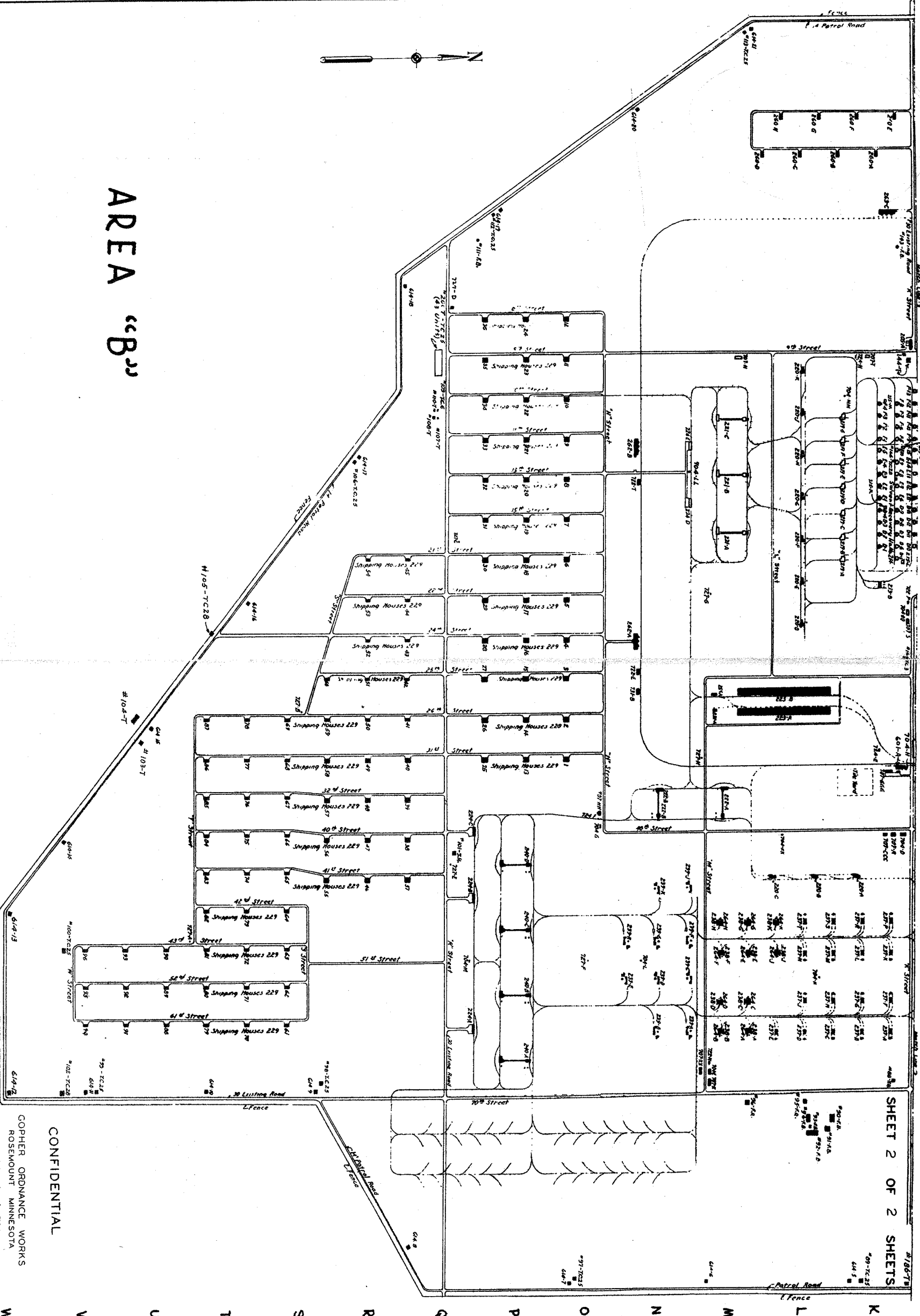
AREA "A"

CONFIDENTIAL

GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS  
 ROSEMOUNT, MINNESOTA  
 BUILDING KEY  
 PART I. SECTION 5

PREPARED IN U.S. ENGINEER OFFICE  
 OMAHA, NEBRASKA

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AREA "B"

SHEET 2 OF 2 SHEETS

CONFIDENTIAL

GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS  
ROSEMOUNT MINNESOTA  
BUILDING KEY  
PART I, SECTION 5

833  
PREPARED IN U S ENGINEER OFFICE  
OMAHA, NEBRASKA



J 49/6 Summer  
1985

# Ordnance Works

## Condemnation, Construction, and Community Response

Patricia L. Dooley

"THE FIRST THING I remember is there was a rumor around that they would be taking some land. I think they thought it would be for an airport . . . so, they didn't think there was very much land involved. Then we would see these cars going back and forth on the roads, sort of stopping and looking over the land so everybody was sort of wondering whose land they might decide to take." Such was an early awareness in the spring of 1942 that Rosemount, Minnesota, would play a special role in World War II home-front history. After the Japanese attacked the United States on

December 7, 1941, communities across the nation quickly became involved in myriad activities designed to help meet the great demands created by the country's involvement in the conflict.<sup>1</sup>

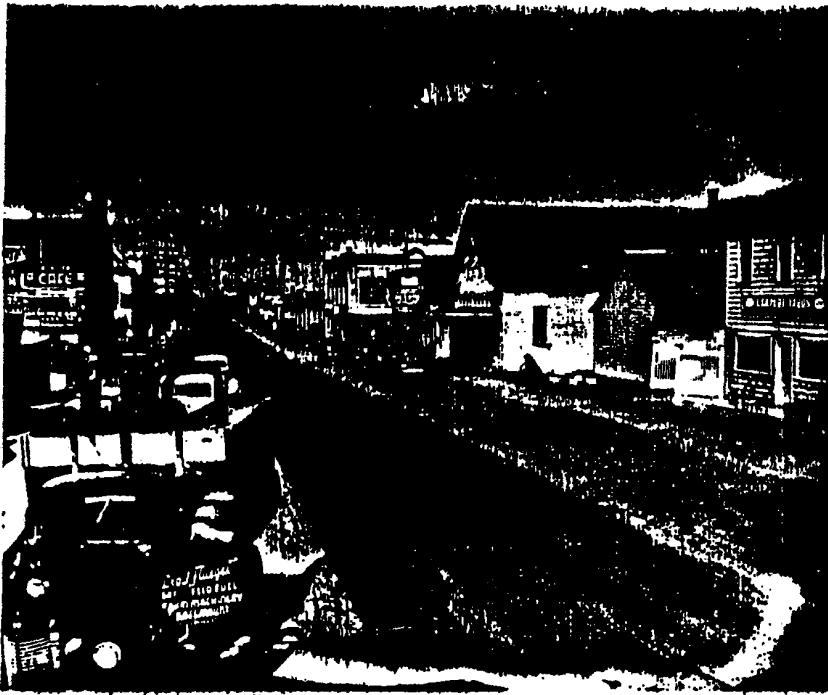
Rumors turned to reality at a public meeting on March 31, 1942, when government officials announced that an 11,500-acre area adjacent to Rosemount, a small farming community about 15 miles south of downtown St. Paul, was to be acquired by the United States War Department, not for an airfield, but for a munitions plant called Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW). A few days later, the *Dakota County Tribune's* banner headline, "Arms Plant Coming," further spread the news, heralding a period of upheaval in the Rosemount area that would span the war years and leave signs that are still visible in the community.<sup>1</sup>

Like other places selected for federal defense projects, Rosemount became a war-boom community, where rapid physical, economic, and social change would bring prosperity to some, but hardship to others. The War Department had ordered the plant's construction to begin as soon as possible: within a few weeks, the site's nearly 100 farm owners and their families vacated their property, commencing condemnation litigation in the United States District Court that would drag on for more than five years; work to prepare the site for construction of the industrial "city without homes" commenced after the site's occupants began leaving; and Rosemount area residents and local agencies prepared for the onslaught of thousands of

<sup>1</sup> Transcript of interview of Mary McAndrews (Mrs. John) Hynes by Teresa Seliga and Helen Davis, June 30, 1978, p. 1. This interview was part of the Dakota County Oral History Project, completed in 1978; copies of tapes and transcripts cited in this article are in the audio-visual collection of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), St. Paul, unless otherwise noted. For scholarly and popular works on World War II home front history, see, for example, Richard Polenberg, ed., *America at War: The Home Front 1941-1945* (New York, 1968); Richard R. Lingeman, *Don't You Know There's a War On? The American Home Front 1941-1945* (New York, 1970); "The Home Front - World War II," in *American History Illustrated*, July, 1979, p. 4; A. Russell Buchanan, *The United States and World War II*, vol. 2, 314-335 (New York, 1964); and A. A. Hoehling, *Home Front, U.S.A.* (New York, 1968). Also useful for researchers interested in home front history are the newspaper, oral history, picture, and manuscript collections in MHS.

<sup>1</sup> *Dakota County Tribune* (Farmington), April 3, 1942, p. 1, hereafter cited as *Tribune*. This weekly paper, edited and published by Ham Clay, Sr., carried many human interest and "hard" news stories on Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW); until the GOW administrative offices were established, it was often the only source of regular information on GOW available in Rosemount. In the spring of 1942, the plant was not yet publicly called "Gopher Ordnance Works," and little information was available to the public because of military censorship.

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THE MAIN STREET of  
Rosemount, looking north on  
old Highway 218 about 1942

workers who soon arrived to take the new jobs available at the plant.<sup>3</sup>

Part of a massive defense program that produced enough materials to supply the country's armed forces and those of its allies, Gopher Ordnance Works was earmarked to become an important supplier of smokeless gunpowder. But, contrary to the optimistic plans of War Department leaders, the plant's existence was erratic from its inception, and by the end of the war some were calling it a boondoggle. In interpreting World War II, historians have rarely looked beyond the achievements of such war production programs as GOW to their failures, and to their varied effects on communities around the nation. A review of the Minnesota plant's history illuminates America's World War II defense production programs and their effect on communities and citizens around the nation who played a role during this troubled period.<sup>4</sup>

THE CROUNDWORK for the World War II defense production programs that encompassed Gopher Ordnance Works was laid in the mid-1930s by the United States military establishment. The implementation of such programs, however, was stalled until deteriorating diplomatic relations in Europe and the Pacific gained public attention, and isolationism slowly loosened its grip on American public opinion. During 1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt increasingly urged Congress, the War Department, and American industry to step up their defense efforts; by early 1940, con-

gressional requests for defense funds had increased dramatically. Roosevelt interpreted his election that year as a mandate for the continuation of such efforts.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the earlier planning of the mid-1930s, Con-

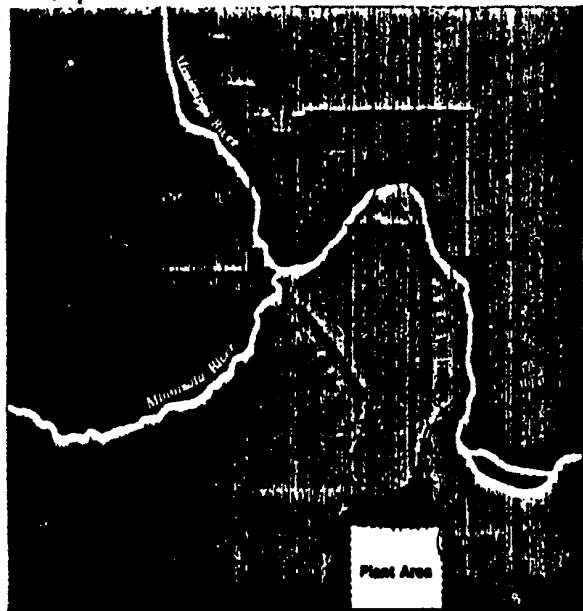
<sup>3</sup> For a classic study of a war boom community, Seneca, Illinois, see Robert J. Havighurst and H. Certhon Morgan, *The Social History of a War-Boom Community* (New York, 1951).

<sup>4</sup> For background information on U.S. war production, see Ralph Elberton Smith, *The Army and Economic Mobilization*, the fifth volume in the subseries entitled *The War Department of the series The United States Army in World War II* (Washington, D.C., 1959). For information on government-financed and owned industrial facilities such as GOW, see p. 437-444 and 496-502.

For comments on historical analysis of the national war production, see Thomas C. Cochran, *The Great Depression and World War II, 1929-1945*, 167 (Glenview, Ill., 1968). Historian Theodore C. Blegen, in *Minnesota, A History of the State*, 546 (Revised ed., St. Paul, 1975), wrote about "vast ordnance plants in Minnesota at New Brighton and Rosemount" and other industrial firms, "backed by government contracts, [that] played important roles in the joint effort," but although historically accurate in a broad sense, this is an oversimplification.

<sup>5</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 438-440. For background on war production programs from 1939 to 1940, see Gerald D. Nash, *The Great Depression and World War II: Organizing America, 1933-1945*, 101-115 (New York, 1970); Robert A. Devine, *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II*, 75-135 (New York, 1968); Robert L. Snyder, *The War - A Concise History, 1939-1945*, 229-245 (New York, 1964); and Adolph A. Hoehling, *America's Road to War: 1939-1941* (New York, 1970).





gress's new appropriations threw the War Department officials into a crisis requiring nothing short of an industrial revolution. To speed their progress, military and government personnel joined with business, industry, and labor leaders to cut red tape and eliminate existing legal and economic barriers. The resulting 18 months of war production preparations before Pearl Harbor "played a crucial if not a decisive part in the outcome of the war."<sup>6</sup>

In May, 1940, President Roosevelt invited representatives from American industry to join the Council on National Defense's newly formed advisory committee, charging them with the task of marshalling the country's industrial resources. William S. Knudsen, a high-ranking automotive executive, was named the group's top official, and he assembled a team that worked closely with the army, navy, and treasury departments. According to Knudsen, he and his group "couldn't buy anything; we could merely act as intermediaries for the Army and Navy procurement offices, and with what experience we had we could advise

<sup>6</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 437.

<sup>7</sup> Speech by William S. Knudsen to the Council of State Governments, January 22, 1941, p. 4, Defense File, in Governor Harold E. Stassen Papers, MHS. The Advisory Committee to the Council on National Defense was just one of many federal and state groups set up to help manage the country's war production programs; in December, 1940, it was renamed the Office of Production Management, and Knudsen was appointed its chief.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 437.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 437-439, 496-501.

<sup>10</sup> George W. Carlid, "Minneapolis Unit of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies," in *Minnesota History*, 41:268 (Summer, 1969).

them as to responsible people who could do the work we wanted done."<sup>7</sup>

One of the most ominous problems facing planners like Knudsen in 1940 was the scarcity of certain commodities such as gunpowder, which in peacetime were used in very small amounts. Later, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson was to recall the desperate situation he and his colleagues were in that year: "We didn't have enough powder in the whole United States to last the men we now have overseas for anything like a day's fighting. And, what is worse, we didn't have powder plants or facilities to make it; they had all been destroyed after the last war."<sup>8</sup>

To overcome these shortages, the War Department began planning the construction of huge factories that would produce the needed materials and equipment. Typically called government-owned, contractor-operated (GOCO) plants, such facilities were financed and owned by the federal government, but constructed and operated by private contractors. Companies serving as prime contractors for such projects were reimbursed for their services on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis. Construction of the country's first World War II GOCO plants began early in 1940; by February, 1941, there were 21 in various stages of completion; and by the end of the war, about 216 such facilities were located around the nation.<sup>9</sup>

MINNESOTA was a bastion of isolationism in the two decades between the world wars. As public sentiment slowly shifted, so too did public opinion in the North Star State, but as late as 1940, enough isolationist sentiment still existed so that Governor Harold E. Stassen, who sympathized with the victims of the European and Pacific aggressors, was careful not to come out too strongly in favor of the country's involvement.<sup>10</sup>

Despite this ambivalence, when the federal government began awarding defense contracts, Stassen and other Minnesotans united behind a middle-western movement that stemmed from its members' belief that their region was not getting its fair share. In August, 1940, Stassen was invited to Kansas City to speak to business, farm, and labor leaders from nine states. This group supported the new defense program but argued in a resolution submitted to the White House that the Middle West should reap a larger share of the nation's defense dollars: "These nine states and their hundreds of communities are resolved that they are not going to be reduced to a position of agricultural slavery. This great middle western area is already seeing . . . its raw materials and its skilled labor and its great untapped reservoirs of farm boys . . . drained off into other sections for their further enrichment. . . . The middle west insists that . . . this area shall receive its just and proper share of the outlays of public funds.

This is not a cry for pork. It is the voice of the middle west asking for justice . . . giving each man and woman . . . a particular job to do so that all may be busy and all will feel they have a part in the defense of America."<sup>11</sup>

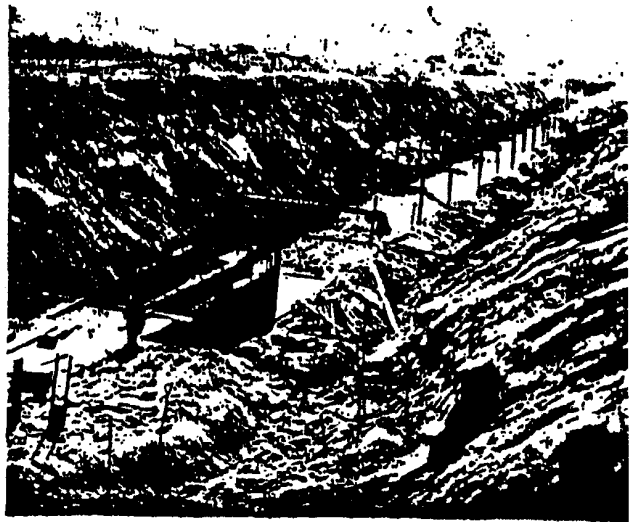
Earlier that summer, Stassen appointed Ernest L. Olrich, president of the Munsingwear Company in Minneapolis, as the state's defense co-ordinator. In December, the governor wrote Minnesota Senators Henrik Shipstead and Joseph H. Ball: "Minnesota is not securing her full share of national defense contracts. Some of our companies have secured some pretty good contracts and some of our building contractors are engaged . . . in other parts of the country, but there have not been very many contracts of a nature to cause new employment within the state."<sup>12</sup>

Early in 1941, after meeting with Olrich in Washington, several members of the state's congressional delegation had urged Stassen to appoint a full-time lobbyist to work in the nation's capital, and Herbert L. Miller, executive director of the Minnesota Resources Commission, filled the newly created post. Miller reported to Stassen, Olrich, and the state legislature on the progress recently made in three key defense production areas: prime, subcontractual, and federally controlled projects. He recommended that state officials focus their efforts primarily on convincing the War Department to select Minnesota locations for some of the federally owned war plants; he told of several currently being considered for the state, including ammonia, TNT, sulphuric acid, bomber assembly, and smokeless powder plants, and a manganese plant on the Cuyuna Range.<sup>13</sup>

The lobbyist reassured state officials, "Washington is now quite cognizant of the dissatisfaction which exists in this State so far as its portion of defense business secured to date is concerned," and this recognition may have played a role in boosting the state's defense business: federal dollars spent in Minnesota for prime contracts rose from about \$500,000 in mid-1940 to \$40 million in March, 1941. On August 28, 1941, ground was broken at New Brighton for the first of Minnesota's GOCO plants, Twin Cities Ordnance.<sup>14</sup>

THE War Department's new plants needed lots of land. By the end of the war the government's real estate holdings had increased from 2 to 46 million acres, an area larger than New England's six states combined. Acquisition of sites was transacted either through purchase, condemnation, or lease, and as locations were chosen, many people lost their homes, and in some cases, whole communities were swallowed up.<sup>15</sup>

Especially important in the selection process were the physical characteristics of each site; its geographical vulnerability to enemy attack; proximity to trans-



CONSTRUCTION work moved rapidly, as shown in this October, 1942, view of sewer building; note the barn and farmhouse in the distance.

portation routes, power sources, raw materials, and labor supplies; and, of less importance, the distribution

<sup>11</sup> Richard W. Robbins to Stassen, telegram, dated August 23, 1940, and "Resolutions Adopted by Midwest Defense Conference," August 30, 1940, both in Stassen Papers.

<sup>12</sup> President of the St. Paul Association of Commerce to Olrich, July 1, 1940, and Stassen to Shipstead and Ball, December 10, 1940, both in Stassen Papers.

<sup>13</sup> Ball to Stassen, January 10, 1941; Congressman H. Carl Andersen to Stassen, January 13, 1941; Congressman Melvin J. Maas to Stassen, telegram, January 10, 1941; Osborne Kolden to Stassen, January 22, 1941 — all in Stassen Papers. See also "Report on State Efforts to Secure Defense Business for Minnesota Industries," [1941?], 2, 8-10, Stassen Papers. In this report, Miller said prime contracts could best be secured for Minnesota through the direct lobbying efforts of private contractors themselves; further, he had suggested to the Office of Production Management that the country's federal reserve banks should be designated clearinghouses to ease the distribution of subcontracts. His suggestion resulted in the Minneapolis district federal reserve bank being the first defense contract service office established.

<sup>14</sup> "Report on State Efforts," 7; Miller to Stassen, the State Legislature and the State Defense Coordinator, April 3, 1941; National Defense Series Report No. 1, "Minnesota National Defense Program, Army, Navy and U.S. Maritime Commission Awards and Contracts," July 17, 1940 — all in Stassen Papers; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, August 29, 1941, p. 1; other sites considered were Malta Bend, Missouri, and Anoka, Minnesota; Memorandum from Office of the Chief of Ordnance to Executive Officer, Office of Under Secretary of War, March 10, 1942, in contract files, National Archives Record Group (NARC) 158, Washington, D.C.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 441-444.

of other plants around the country and pressure from state and local officials.<sup>16</sup>

To aid in site selection the War Department sometimes hired private real estate experts to inspect plant sites under consideration. Late in 1941 a Chicago realtor, J. C. Ellington, was asked to evaluate the suitability of a 21,760-acre area near Rosemount. Ellington's report said the site was being considered for shell loading, ammonia, TNT, sulphuric acid, and smokeless powder munitions facilities. In evaluating the site's assets, he gave important information on such subjects as the state's population (one-third lived within a 30-mile radius of Rosemount) and the available water supply (less than seven miles from the Mississippi River). He noted that the area had no improved highways that would have to be removed; that its land was mainly level or rolling and suitable for building construction; that two major railroads, the Milwaukee Road and the Great Western, had lines close to the site; that a Northern Natural Gas pipeline crossed the land; and that Northern States Power Company had high-tension electrical lines nearby.<sup>17</sup>

By early February, 1942, the Ordnance Department had settled on the Rosemount site for its new facility, but the other parties involved continued their selection activities during February and early March. Finally the news leaked to the press that Minnesota had been selected for a second federal munitions facility. In March, 1942, Rosemount was named as the home of Minnesota's second major federally owned project, Gopher Ordnance Works.<sup>18</sup>

The decision reached, the War Department began negotiations to purchase the 11,500-acre site from 84

owners, who, because construction was scheduled to begin in a few weeks, had to move as soon as possible. Except for several parcels used for country schools, all of the property to be acquired for the plant was farm land, and the owners were notified by letter to attend a March 31 meeting in nearby Farmington. At an emotionally charged gathering packed with the site's occupants and others interested in the news of what was to happen, War Department real estate manager J. Wesley White explained that the government needed rich, level land for its new project. He pleaded with the farmers for co-operation, explaining that government land appraisers had begun inspecting their property and were preparing appraisals. In a few weeks, each farm owner was to be visited by a government negotiator who would make a single offer for both his land and buildings. Criteria used to determine each farm's worth included the age and type of its buildings; its location, soil quality, and recent crop records; and the sums other farms in the area had recently been sold for. A group of the site's landowners had invited Elmer J. Ryan, a Rosemount attorney and future Minnesota Supreme Court justice, to speak on their behalf at a meeting described as "orderly in every way with no outbursts of bitter feeling."<sup>19</sup>

That such a large chunk of countryside was needed for the government's munitions project was a shock, and, although some were said to be happy to sell out, many grieved at the loss of their homes. The *Dakota County Tribune* printed emotional stories of the farmers' plight, such as one which said that the eyes of several old-timers brimmed with tears as they spoke of how they and their ancestors had built their farms up over the years. Others, such as displaced farmer Emmett C. Carroll, found their world changing overnight a bitter pill to swallow: "All of a sudden in the spring of 1942 the world seemed to fall apart when the news came to us that the federal government was coming in to take not only our farm but all of the surrounding farms. . . . It was a rude . . . awakening to the people of a rural community that had never been disturbed. Life was so tranquil and peaceful. All of a sudden it was just blown to smithereens and we had no foundation. . . . It was a horrible feeling."<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the personal losses experienced by the landowners, great inconvenience and financial stress resulted from the acquisition process. Within several weeks ten displaced farmers had bought new homes, but others had a harder time and were forced to move temporarily in with relatives. Decisions on what to pay for the new farms were difficult because they had no idea how much they would be reimbursed for their old ones. Real estate agents were common visitors that month, and one GOW farmer recalled he was visited by 23 one afternoon. Others claimed that when it was

<sup>16</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 498; Byron Fairchild and Jonathan Crossman, *The Army and Industrial Manpower*, 101, volume 6 in *The War Department Subseries* described in note 4 above; see especially p. 101-128. Governmental agencies concerned with site selection included the War Department's Site Location Board, the Ordnance Department's Industrial Services and Real Estate Divisions, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Under Secretary of War's office, and the plant site board of the War Production Board, among others.

<sup>17</sup> Ellington to Lt. Colonel J. P. Harris, December 8, 1941, contract files, NARC 156.

<sup>18</sup> A map of the proposed Dakota County site in contracts file, NARC 156 has penciled in "Approved Col. Harris 2/21/42." Other memos in NARC 156 files reveal that other agencies were still considering the proposed site after this date; examples include one issued March 7, 1942, by the Construction Division, Engineering Branch, Plant Section of the Ordnance Department, and another by the Chief of Engineers of the War Department, March 10, 1942. See also *St. Paul Dispatch*, March 10, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 1; transcript of interview of Emmett Carroll by Teresa Seliga and Helen Davis, June 22, 1976, p. 1.



THIS CARTOON from the GOW employees' magazine showed how quickly farmers were moved out.

general knowledge that many people would be searching for new farms, the price of land skyrocketed.<sup>21</sup>

Moving all farm machinery, tools, animals, and household items to new farms in such a short period was an enormous task for which no one was reimbursed. One farmer recalled the difficulties involved in getting his herd of Holstein to his new place: "We had until, I think, around the latter part of April to clear the land. Very short notice. And this isn't as easy as the average person might think now because we didn't have any truck of our own. . . . We moved the cattle over to the new farm on hoof. We drove them just like we did in old times and we had to time that drive so that we didn't wind up driving the cattle across the Milwaukee tracks when the 10:10 came through Rosemount 'cause we knew that was right on schedule. . . . There was a couple of us on horseback and one followed with a car and others on foot . . . everything else we moved with a hayrack. We pulled it with a tractor."<sup>22</sup>

IN MID-APRIL the government appraisers began their expected visits to landowners to tell them how much Washington would offer for their property. Some of the

farmers opted to accept their offers immediately, but most considered the appraisals too low, refusing to accept them. About a hundred of them gathered one Sunday afternoon early in May at St. John's Lutheran School in the nearby Rich Valley area to protest the "grossly unjust prices." Commenting further on the group's general feeling that the government's offers were stingy, co-chairman Julius F. Walkow asserted, "All we ask is fair treatment. Why should the government take good land for nothing?"<sup>23</sup>

Speakers at the group's first meeting said that the average price offered per acre was \$60, with a third of the land appraised at \$22.50 an acre. Mrs. Catherine Pilcher complained that her 240-acre farm had been valued at \$35 an acre, despite her payment of \$90 an acre for one of its 80-acre sections 15 years before. Group co-chairman Ralph McMenemy, who had recently visited the Twin Cities Ordnance plant at New Brighton, reported that the government had paid \$100 to one of the landowners there for a farm he described as full of scrub oak and swamps. Some accused the government appraisers of making unauthorized inspections of their farms, and others said the appraisers had treated them disrespectfully. One woman described the negotiator's reaction to her family's disappointment: "When we objected to the price . . . they said we should be glad they weren't taking a son, or the men in the family didn't have to go into the service. We should be happy it was just the land we were losing."<sup>24</sup>

Sympathetic community agencies, public officials, and individuals searched for ways to help the farmers. Among these were the Dakota County War Board and a group of county farmers who convinced the Capitol City Credit Association of South St. Paul to establish a new office in Farmington where the displaced farmers could secure short-term loans. Others offered moral support, such as a Farmington man whose angry letter to the *Tribune* likened the negotiators to Hitler storm troopers, claiming they had "swooped down," and "issued orders for all to get ready to leave on very short notice." Syndicated columnist Bill Higgins compared the wages to be paid at the plant to the government's appraisals: "Some of the best farm land . . . must be sacrificed. . . . But the owners believe federal appraisers are taking that 'sacrifice' too literally. . . . Just this week we talked to a 19-year-old boy who will

<sup>21</sup> Carroll interview, 1; transcript of interview of John and Ruth McBrien by Tom Copeland, June 29, 1976, p. 5; transcript of interview of Harold LeVander by Teresa Seliga and Helen Davis, July 8, 1976, p. 3; see also *Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Carroll interview, 2.

<sup>23</sup> *Tribune*, April 24, May 8, 1942, both p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Tribune*, May 8, 1942, p. 1; Hynes, interview, 4.

work as a common laborer. . . . He signed up at 92½ cents an hour. If the government can afford that kind of wages for wheelbarrow jockeys, it can certainly afford to do better than \$75 an acre for the land."<sup>25</sup>

Congressman Joseph P. O'Hara of Minnesota's Second District appeared at one of the farmers' meetings, pledging his support and offering to do what he could to coax the government into boosting its appraisals. O'Hara had recently met with Colonel John J. O'Brien, chief of the Ordnance Department's real estate branch, to discuss the Rosemount appraisals. In response to O'Hara's visit, O'Brien traveled from Washington to Rosemount several weeks later to inspect the farms, examine the appraisals, and meet with the farmers. At a meeting at the St. Paul Hotel, O'Brien told the group he would not be able to change the appraisals, but admitted that the gap between the figures of the two parties was wider in the Rosemount case than in any of the other 75 land acquisition projects he had been involved in. O'Brien said that the

<sup>25</sup> *Tribune*, April 3, 24, 1942, both p. 1, and May 8, 22, 1942, both p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> *Tribune*, May 15, 22, 1942, both p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> The final action taken in this long series of legal proceedings transpired October 31, 1947; see U.S. Attorney Victor E. Anderson to the U.S. Attorney General, November 7, 1947, File no. 33-24-379-1, U.S. Department of Justice Records, in Federal Record Center, Arlington, Va. (hereafter cited as USDJR). See also *Dispatch*, April 27, 1943, April 11, 1944, both p. 13; Civil Case Number 326, United States District Court Records, in Federal Record Center, Kansas City, Mo.

<sup>28</sup> *Tribune*, May 15, 1942, p. 1. The attorneys are named in the McBrien interview, 2; according to the *Pioneer Press*, April 13, 1944, p. 14, about nine other law firms were involved in the various cases. Correspondence between the U.S. Attorney staff in St. Paul and the U.S. Attorney General's staff in USDJR reveals that St. Paul staff often made recommendations, but all final decisions rested in Washington.

farmers' only hope for improved awards was to take the arguments to court.<sup>26</sup>

FORCED by the farmers' unwillingness to accept the April, 1942, offers, the government commenced condemnation litigation that dragged on in the federal courts for five years. The farmers were asking for nearly a million and a half dollars for their land, whereas the government valued the property at about \$700,000. The first step in the long process was the appointment of a three-person condemnation commission to examine 70 of the government's 84 original appraisals. Following the commission's hearings and its awards announcement, the farmers and the government became adversaries in a law case entitled "U.S.A. versus the Owners of 11,500 Acres More or Less of Land in Dakota County, Minnesota."<sup>27</sup>

At their May, 1942, meeting the displaced farmers discussed their need for legal counsel, and three attorneys ended up taking the majority of their cases: future Minnesota Governor Harold LeVander and David Grannis, Sr., both attorneys in South St. Paul, and John McBrien of Reitz and McBrien in Farmington. The federal government was represented by the U.S. attorney general's staff in St. Paul, including Victor E. Anderson, his assistant, Carl J. Eastvold, and Theodore H. Wangenstein, who worked under the supervision of the attorney general's lands division staff in Washington, D.C.<sup>28</sup>

Throughout both the commission hearings and jury trials, the two parties presented testimony from expert witnesses that focused on the value of the farms just before the site was acquired for the plant in 1942. Attorneys for the government staunchly defended the original appraisals, while the farmers' attorneys contended that not only were the tracts worth more than the government claimed, but that their clients had suffered additional damages for which they deserved

CONGRESSMAN  
Joseph P. O'Hara,  
meeting with a group  
of displaced Rosemount  
farmers



compensation. "They didn't have the payment for the relocation costs and for the inconvenience and the upset and all that so these farmers were put at a substantial inconvenience and certainly didn't make any profit whatsoever. They lost money, by the time it was said and done, when they were all relocated."<sup>29</sup>

Defense attorney McBrien contended that the only farms sold in the Rosemount area in previous years had been poor ones, so the appraisers had only low figures to start with. He further suggested that the particular group of appraisers chosen by the government influenced the valuations: "They were . . . accustomed to appraising under rather distressed situations. During the period from the depths of the depression on, the farms sales were those that were forced to sell, and these appraisers worked for the federal land bank or for the department of rural credits. . . . They were appraising distressed situations, ultra-conservative. They were hired to make that kind of appraisal."<sup>30</sup>

After about six months of deliberations, the court-appointed condemnation commission announced awards that were favorable to the farmers: in every case but one, the commission recommended increasing amounts to the farmers from 10 to 160 percent, with an average increase of 31 percent. Government officials vigorously protested the awards: Victor Anderson urged the attorney general to appeal those cases where the awards had been boosted by 20 percent or more, and he further suggested, "Possibly it would be advisable to file an appeal in every tract because if we appeal in the tracts over 20% no doubt the land owners would appeal in the remaining tracts." The Washington staff concurred, and the government filed appeals in each case where the commission had recommended a higher award than the original appraisal. As a result, the cases were slated to be tried in front of juries as soon as they could be scheduled on the court calendar.<sup>31</sup>

Several of the landowners asked the court to dismiss the government's appeals, a move which, according to Eastvold, was a "trial balloon put up by the other property holders." Such requests for dismissal were denied by the court, and the first of the cases was scheduled to be heard in federal court beginning in April, 1944.<sup>32</sup>

The U.S. attorney general's staff instructed Anderson to discuss with the displaced landowners and their lawyers any offers they made for out-of-court settlements; as a result, during the following months, the two sides went back and forth on a number of the cases. Eventually, 24 of the 70 cases were settled out of court, but in most instances both sides were reluctant to budge from their positions. Occasionally, the two parties were only a few hundred dollars apart, and the government's St. Paul attorneys sometimes took a softer position than their Washington counterparts on the

### Pat Hynes, Grandson Are Oldest, Youngest To Leave Plant Area



THE HUMAN side of GOW displacement

question of whether to accept the offers for settlement. For example, the government and former landowner Maurice Murphy were \$500 apart. "The difference," wrote Anderson, ". . . is so close that this office is of the opinion that serious consideration should be given to the acceptance of such counter-offer . . . and that in any event we should be authorized to counter-offer with half the difference." But the final decisions were made in Washington, and Anderson's recommendations were sometimes overruled. In the Murphy case, the Washington office quickly wired Anderson: "Proposed increase in authorization for settlement tract sixty-two rejected. Proceed to trial unless settlement not exceeding \$11,500 can be obtained."<sup>33</sup>

THE FIRST of the cases finally went to trial on April 11, 1944. Cases were heard in small batches of four or five during the rest of that year. Once again, testimony from both sides described the property and its value — the farmers asking for increases, and the government seeking to hold the line. Attorney LeVander spoke of

<sup>29</sup> LeVander interview, 4.

<sup>30</sup> McBrien interview, 6.

<sup>31</sup> Document, "No. 328 — Rosemount"; T. H. Wangenstein to Norman M. Littell, September 15, 1943; J. Edward Williams to Victor E. Anderson, September 27, 1943 — all in USDJR.

<sup>32</sup> Dispatch, February 7, p. 1, April 11, p. 13, 1944.

<sup>33</sup> Williams to Anderson, September 27, 1943, May 26, 1944, and Anderson to Williams, May 24, 1944 — all in USDJR; Dispatch, January 18, 1945, p. 7.

the efforts he and his associates made on behalf of the defendants: "We tried very conscientiously to get all of the information and. . . did an enormous amount of work preparing them for trial. We got witnesses who were familiar with farming. . . We tried to present as complete and full a story with maps, and visual exhibits with the testimony of the owners. . . We had the jury down there to view the property, so they had a chance to understand what our testimony was by having viewed it themselves. . . we felt that we had an obligation to these people to do the best we could and . . . I think we did about as good as could be expected under all the circumstances."<sup>34</sup>

Most of the farmers were inexperienced courtroom witnesses, and one Rosemount woman told how testifying appeared to affect her neighbors: "How they were teased and ridiculed by the government lawyers. It was no fun. . . They just broke down and cried." Despite such difficulties, the farmers became capable witnesses, and as months went by their testimony was said to be increasingly effective. An esprit de corps developed among the group: "It got to be a whole summer experience for the farmers. . . They got acquainted. The last ones who were on got to know and had heard enough so that they were pretty well prepared. The first ones were caught a little bit more. . . They were necessarily good witnesses because they knew what the score was. They'd lived on

<sup>34</sup> Courtroom testimony was not transcribed; the only court records available for research are the various legal documents filed by attorneys for both parties. See also Le-Vander interview, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Transcript of interview of Mrs. Anna Wachter by Nancy Pilgrim and Helen Davis, June 23, 1978, p. 2; Le-Vander interview, 8.

<sup>36</sup> Anderson to Littell, April 29, May 4, 1944, and Williams to Anderson, May 3, 1944 — all in USDJR.

the farms all their lives and they were the best ones to describe what they had and what they'd produced and what kind of land they had."<sup>36</sup>

The juries' verdicts were difficult to predict, some coming in very high, while others proved to be much lower than defendants hoped for. The verdicts in the first set of cases were announced late in April and were among the most favorable received: in each of the five cases heard, the jury recommended increasing the amounts farmers received from 74 to 144 percent. Anderson wrote to his superiors that "these verdicts were excessive and we thought the jury went awry"; Washington concurred, instructing Anderson to file motions for new trials in all five cases.<sup>36</sup>

The next set of verdicts proved a setback for the farmers, coming in considerably lower than the 1943 condemnation commission awards. Speculating on what may have influenced the conduct of the various juries, attorney McBrien commented on one of his cases, "argued to the jury on D-Day. I remember it very vividly, because Judge [Gunnar H.] Nordbye had started court with a prayer for the success of the forces. . . [and] in a spirit of lack of modesty, I successfully used that as part of my argument . . . praised the fact that we were living in a country which when it was engaged in mortal conflict, still had a system of law where the people could go to [court] . . . [and] there were very few countries in the world wherein . . . the government wouldn't just take it and the rest would be damned. I was told that it was an effective argument." McBrien also recalled why another jury may not have been so sympathetic: "Unfortunately, little things showed up. . . The group that went poor were all members of one family. . . They had five cases tried together and I think that was a technical error in retrospect because it gave the government attorneys a chance to argue 'This family's

*"ROLLING grain fields" of 1941 were displaced a year later by the newly erected GOW plant.*



getting all this money,' and . . . somehow it was remarked . . . that these young men were not in the service. That hurt that case."<sup>37</sup>

When the final verdicts were in, both sides claimed victory — the farmers because the jury awards totalled just over a million dollars, a sum about \$300,000 more than the government's original appraisals, and the government because the farmers had received much less than they hoped for. The farmers' attorneys called it a hollow victory for their clients, for although many had received more than if they had not gone to court, some still felt cheated and demoralized. As one later commented: "We went all through the process of fighting again . . . and in my own instance this jury awarded me \$14,800. It was way below what I paid for this [new] farm, but we just felt that we couldn't fight this any more, so I settled reluctantly and most all the others did the same. . . . We knew we were licked. It was too costly to go any farther so it doesn't leave me with very happy memories of what our federal government did to [us] people there southeast of Rosemount when they wanted that plant area."<sup>38</sup>

WHILE THE LEGAL disputes between the government and the Dakota County farmers were being played out in court, the Rosemount farmland was being transformed into an industrial complex of massive proportions. The town was swamped with thousands of workers who came to take the jobs offered there. As soon as the farmers started vacating their homes in early May, work began to prepare the site for construction; telephone, telegraph, and teletype lines were installed; and on May 27 all of the roads on the plant site were closed to public traffic.<sup>39</sup>

Negotiations between the War Department and the project's chief contractor, the E. I. du Pont de Ne-

mours Company (Du Pont), resulted in final contracts signed June 12. The plant was scheduled to begin the production of cannon and rifle powder in January, 1943, and as a result, the rush to build the hundreds of structures and other necessary installations began immediately.<sup>40</sup>

If all went according to schedule within the next year, the Rosemount farmland would become a large and complex industrial community, with six manufacturing lines and areas for dehydrating, mixing, granulating, drying, blending, and packing cannon and rifle powder. In addition, the plant's construction plans included powder magazines, laboratories, ballistic ranges, power plants, railroads, roads, walks, fences, and storage areas, as well as areas for car repairs, carpentry, blacksmithing, sheet-metal work, pipe fitting, welding, and millwright and electrical work. Also among the new structures scheduled soon to replace the site's farmhouses were a variety of administrative buildings, staff residences, cafeterias and canteens,

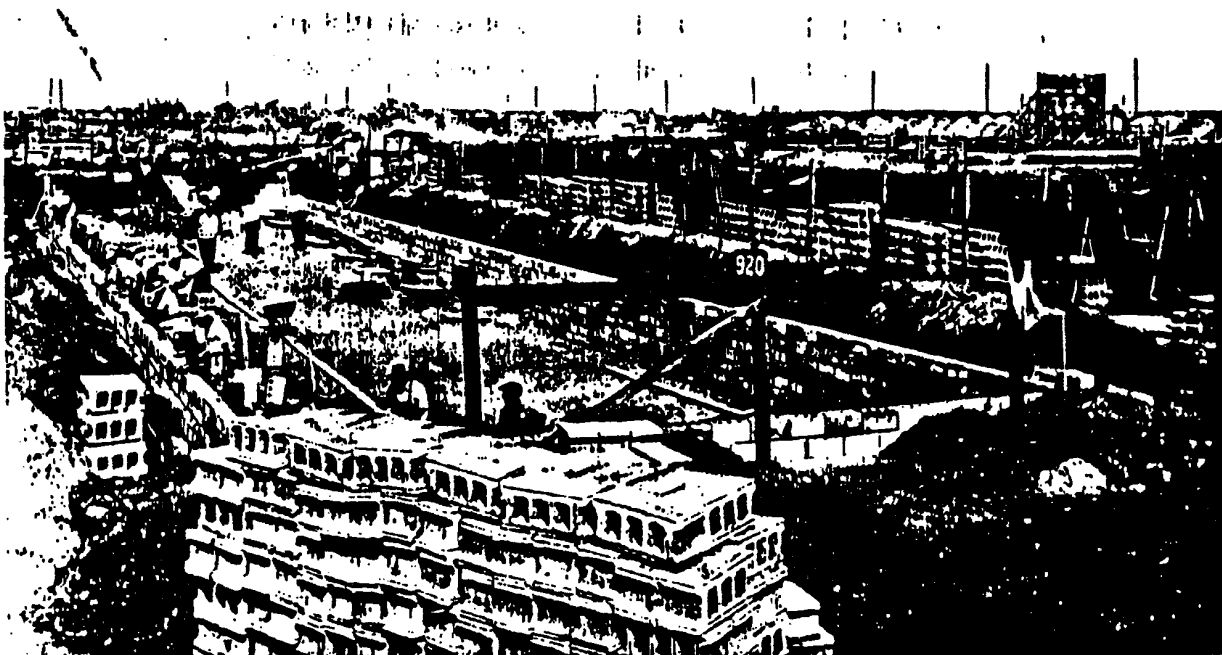
<sup>37</sup> Anderson to Littell, April 29, 1944, USDJR; McBrien interview, 11.

<sup>38</sup> *Dispatch*, November 30, 1944, p. 11, January 18, 1945, p. 7; McBrien interview, 11; LeVander interview, 12; Carroll interview, 6. By January, 1945, when all but one of the 84 cases had been settled either through direct purchase, out-of-court settlement, or jury verdicts, the condemned land had cost the government a total of \$1,008,674.

<sup>39</sup> "Copher Ordnance Works, Basic History," Volume 1, p. 3, (April-October, 1942) Office of the Chief of Ordnance, history file, NARC 156 (hereafter cited as "Basic History," along with the volume number and date). Early in the war, President Roosevelt ordered historical records prepared to document all plants such as GOW; 13 volumes, usually quarterly, were thus prepared for GOW by department officials.

<sup>40</sup> Here and two paragraphs below, see "Basic History," 1:1-5 (April-October, 1942).

*A PROGRESS photograph in July, 1942, shows how quickly buildings like this GOW storehouse went up.*







Several thousand cars from Gopher Ordnance Works which wind their way through Rosemount every day in an endless chain, are efficiently handled by the state patrolmen, Rosemount police and county deputies. The string of cars shown coming from the plant, took one solid hour.

**A TRAFFIC jam of homeward-bound plant workers**

To provide the public with information on accommodations and civilian defense, the Rosemount Village Council and county civilian defense office opened the War Information Bureau in mid-June. The local building boom included existing businesses, as proprietors remodeled and expanded their facilities to meet the new demands: Al's Cafe in Rosemount was freshly painted and papered and extra dining space added; the Hagemester brothers' local meat and grocery market expanded into an adjoining building; and lunch and soft-drink counters soon appeared across the road from GOW to accommodate construction workers.<sup>44</sup>

To help ease the transportation problems the Rosemount passenger depot was enlarged and a station in nearby Coates, closed for the last 20 years, was remodeled and opened; new bus lines were routed to the area from St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the Jefferson Bus Company added vehicles to its routes from towns south of Rosemount. Car pooling was encouraged, and the state patrol assigned extra officers to highways in the area to help manage the traffic.<sup>45</sup>

As Rosemount became a new community with its streets and business establishments bustling with activity, local Rural Electrification Association manager, C. H. Gelder, told of the transformation of the GOW site: "Great changes have taken place there and nearly all of the familiar land marks are gone. No more are the fine dairy farms and beautiful acres of crop lands. Instead, the ground has nearly everywhere been torn up with huge holes and excavations for buildings. Even the roads which we have known for so long are being torn up and soon not even a trace of them will remain. In place of them there will be streets connecting hundreds

of buildings and railroad tracks everywhere are being laid to provide for the transportation of raw materials and manufactured goods."<sup>46</sup>

The high wages paid at the plant boosted the local economy because workers had more money to spend, and some of it was spent in town. A Rosemount merchant described the effects on him: "As far as my own business goes, I know it was a break for me. . . . Gopher Ordnance Works brought people in [and] they were getting paid every week and they spent their money in town. . . . Not many started a savings account, they just spent it as soon as they got it. It had been so long since they'd had any money they didn't know how to handle it." Another area citizen asserted that the Rosemount liquor store "got rich as a hoot owl," because plant workers cashed their checks there on Friday nights, spending a portion on the premises. Additional capital flooded the economy when local businesses were awarded subcontracts by Du Pont.<sup>47</sup>

But not all the economic effects were beneficial to the community. Wartime rent and price inflation, already present, were further aggravated, as were scarcities of consumer goods. The federal government imposed price and rent controls to counteract such trends. The increased supply of money in the Rosemount economy put pressure on businesses to enlarge their inventories, and for some local proprietors, such pressures were difficult to adjust to: "It took a fair amount of time to get used to that many people all at once and have an inventory. . . . They were from all parts of the country . . . [and] wanted merchandise that we didn't have and it was during the war and merchandise was hard to get." Rosemount merchants and farmers had difficulty competing with GOW for workers because of the higher wages paid there, and farmers complained so loudly that GOW announced that it would no longer hire farm workers. One Rosemount mother lamented that the high school girls had been spoiled by the \$100 per month they earned at plant jobs requiring no experience.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *Tribune*, June 12, p. 10, 19, p. 1, July 3, p. 8, all in 1942.

<sup>45</sup> *Tribune*, April 24, May 8, July 3, 17, all on p. 1, and July 31, p. 6, 1942; "Basic History," 1:5 (April-October, 1942). By July, the predicted traffic jams had commenced, with traffic increasing from a daily average of 1,141 automobiles to 3,082.

<sup>46</sup> *Tribune*, July 3, 31, 1942, both p. 1, November 12, 1942, p. 6; H. J. Geraghty interview by Robert Cottsch, May 12, 1976.

<sup>47</sup> Geraghty interview; Zeph B. Case interview by Kim Foster and Teresa Seliga, June 29, 1976; *Tribune*, April 24, p. 1, May 15, p. 1, May 29, p. 10, all in 1942, and November 12, 1943, p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> *Tribune*, May 1, December 25, 1942, both on p. 1, and November 12, 1943, p. 6; Geraghty interview.

Dakota County's loss of tax revenues on the 11,500 acres was another problem that community leaders needed to resolve, and the county's coffers were further strained from increased bills for repairing the county's overused roads. Plant workers often brought their families with them when they migrated to Rosemount; as a result, enrollments increased, overcrowding area schools, which were short of both teachers and classroom materials. Local officials later received federal aid to help ease these burdens.<sup>49</sup>

THE WAR DEPARTMENT'S hopes for a January, 1943, GOW opening were undermined from the very start by a series of problems. One was the exceptionally wet summer of 1942 when precipitation from May 1 to October 1 was the heaviest on record, causing impassable roads, soil erosion, and drainage difficulties. Other delays in acquisition of construction materials and equipment pushed the opening date back to October 12, 1943, when plant officials succeeded in convincing the Ordnance Department to improve their priority rating from AA-4 to AA-3.<sup>50</sup>

When the plant was about 73 percent complete in March, 1943, further trouble about the uncertain nature of its future loomed as stories circulated among workers. Officials urged workers to quash the gossip, but early in April, part of the construction was halted, and employees were laid off. A few days later, Minnesota First District Congressman August H. Andresen announced that he had been informed by a War Department general that GOW would soon be placed on a standby status, to be operated only on an emergency basis. On April 16, the War Department announced that some of the GOW land would be leased to bidders interested in using it for farming purposes. Finally, in July the department gave belated credence to the gossip by placing the entire Rosemount plant (along with seven other plants around the country) on a standby status. Officials said GOW was not needed because the nation's other powder manufacturing

plants were producing more than originally anticipated, and the current demand for artillery explosives was lower than expected.<sup>51</sup>

The giant war plant stood idle for the remainder of 1943, and in January, 1944, work started to dismantle and ship much of its equipment and materials to other defense installations. Life in Rosemount returned to normal as thousands of workers, trailer homes, and traffic jams disappeared, although some workers stayed on to carry out dismantling operations and administrative and security services.<sup>52</sup>

But Rosemount's restored tranquility was short-lived. The War Department announced in July, 1944, that GOW's standby order was to be removed, and it was to be refitted once again for powder production scheduled to begin as soon as possible. The "unexpectedly heavy use of artillery by American forces on the Italian and other fronts" forced the government to lift the standby order, and engineers hoped the plant would be ready for powder production in January, 1945. In December it was announced that a \$60 million expansion program designed to double GOW's production capabilities was to be launched, and the plant's commanding officer underscored the importance of the project by asserting, "Hell, the war is far from over. The hard fighting is still to come and Eisenhower is crying for ammunition."<sup>53</sup>

To meet the plant's new labor demands, the War Manpower Commission planned a recruitment program to begin in October, and management further worked to ease the labor shortage by using women in as many nonmanual jobs as possible, by utilizing machines instead of people, and by co-operating with area transportation companies and the War Housing Administration to ease workers' difficulties in those areas.<sup>54</sup>

Throughout the rest of the war, plant officials had trouble attracting workers for GOW jobs, and when powder production finally began early in 1945, they intensified their recruitment efforts. Local newspapers, broadcasting stations, and public figures such as former Governor Stassen and the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul were invited to help. Front-page coverage and editorials in major Twin Cities dailies supported the cause. After Germany collapsed in April, 1945, two of the plant's three scheduled production lines were once again placed on standby status, but cannon and rifle powder manufacturing continued to support the war in the Pacific. The labor shortage problems continued, however, and looking for help in their recruitment program, plant officials invited 60 newspaper editors for a thorough tour of their facility. Following the tour, editorials and articles stressing the importance of GOW's programs appeared, such as one which said, "Men and women are being asked to fill that crew

<sup>49</sup> *Tribune*, June 19, p. 5, 26, p. 6, July 31, p. 1, all in 1942, and February 12, p. 1, 1943.

<sup>50</sup> "Basic History," 1:3, 4, 7, 8 (April-October, 1942), 2:1 (January-March, 1943).

<sup>51</sup> "Basic History," 2:2 (January-March, 1943); *The Powderkey*, March, 1943, p. 4, a monthly newsletter published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for GOW workers; *Dispatch*, April 10, 14, p. 1, July 20, p. 20, 1943; *Pioneer Press*, April 12, p. 20, April 16, p. 1, 1943.

<sup>52</sup> *Dispatch*, January 25, 1944, p. 20; *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, November 12, 1944, sec. 2, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> *Dispatch*, July 24, p. 1, December 6, p. 1, 1944; *Pioneer Press*, September 13, 1944, p. 9; "Basic History," 8:5, 6 (July-September, 1944).

<sup>54</sup> Here and below, see "Basic History," 13:2, 10, and exhibit A (January-March, 1945).

for weighty reasons and important purposes. What good will it be to man our battleships and cruisers if we cannot man Rosemount?"

Such efforts to staff GOW adequately met with failure, and the plant's projected production quotas were never met. In the final months of the war, work at GOW slowly lost momentum. The final order to close the plant was issued August 13, 1945, the day before the Japanese signed their unconditional surrender. But not until October 10, 1945, was the last lot of cannon powder packed.<sup>45</sup>

WHETHER OR NOT GOW powder ever made it to the front lines in Europe or the Pacific is not known, but, ironically, by the end of the war the Rosemount plant had become the government's third most expensive, costing over \$115 million. When GOW was dismantled in 1945, its surplus equipment and materials were liquidated by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Two years later the GOW site was deeded to the University of Minnesota, and since then, in addition to a portion of it being rented to farmers, the land and its remaining structures have been used for a variety of university-sponsored research projects and other programs conducted by private and government institutions leasing space on the site.<sup>46</sup>

Throughout the war and ever since, public sentiment in Rosemount has been mixed on GOW. Commenting on the reactions of her neighbors to the coming of GOW, one Rosemount woman said: "For being such a big thing, the people took it rather calmly, and made the best of it. They figured it was war time and I suppose they were all happy they didn't lose sons. . . . Things are different during war time." When the plant was first idled in 1943, some residents were glad that life had returned to normal, but others lamented that the plant had not become a more permanent factor in the local economy and that the loss of 84 productive farms for an empty war plant was not a beneficial exchange for the community.<sup>47</sup>

The cynicism felt by some of the displaced farmers was further aggravated by the erratic history of the plant. One member of that group recalled: "The thing that really galls all of us people that were ordered out . . . is the fact that they never really needed the plant. . . . It was a waste. They did manufacture some powder, but if any of it was actually used in the

war effort I don't know of it." Such sentiments may have been exacerbated by reports of waste and mismanagement. One Rosemount man, who hauled gasoline to one company hired to lay railroad tracks at GOW and to another tearing them up, said that the track layers would ask him when making a delivery, "Are they getting closer?" The track dismantlers would ask if they were catching up with them.<sup>48</sup>

Accusations of mismanagement at GOW and other plants that closed around the country had reached War Department officials, and Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson responded to the House Committee on Military Affairs: "The closing of these plants had, no doubt, brought inconvenience and dislocation to local communities, and has directed public attention to idleness which may be inappropriately termed 'waste.' Had these facilities not been courageously conceived, planned, and constructed, and had the fortunes of war continued to be adverse, the great destruction and waste of both manpower and money caused by having too little too late would have brought such tremendous suffering that the present inactivities fade into insignificance."<sup>49</sup> Americans have thus been asked to accept the failures of the United States military establishment because of the tremendous uncertainty of the country's future during the war years, but such acceptance should not prevent the story of such failures from being told along with the successes.

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<sup>45</sup> "Basic History," 13:4, 10 (January-March, 1945); *Pioneer Press*, August 13, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Smith, *The Army*, 501; "Basic History," 13:4 (October-December, 1945); *The Rosemount Research Center of the University of Minnesota*, a pamphlet published by the Center, University of Minnesota, [1948]; *The Land* (a bimonthly periodical published in Mankato), August 28, 1980, p. 12.

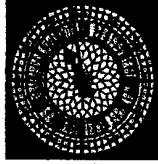
<sup>47</sup> Hynes interview, 9; *Tribune*, November 12, 1943, p. 8.

<sup>48</sup> Carroll interview, 3; transcript of interview of Art Fisher by Teresa Seliga, *et al.*, June 22, 1976, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> *Dispatch*, July 20, 1943, p. 20.

PHOTOGRAPHS on p. 218 and 224 are from the University of Minnesota's Rosemount Research Center; those on p. 220 and 223 are from *The Propellant* (semimonthly publication for GOW employees), February 26, 1943, p. 6; and those on p. 221, 222, 225, and 226 are from the *Dakota County Tribune*, May 15, p. 11, April 10, p. 1, July 24, p. 4, July 31, p. 1, all 1942. Other pictures are in the MHS audio-visual library.





Dakota  
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# OVER THE YEARS

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*you can do my war job at Gopher!"*



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**MEN AND WOMEN  
ARE URGENTLY NEEDED TODAY!**

*No experience required*



**A History of the Gopher Ordnance Works  
Dawning of a War-Boom Community**  
*by Gerald Mattson, Maureen Geraghty Bouchard and Russ Withrow*

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# OVER THE YEARS

VOLUME 41 NUMBER 1

JULY 2001

## HISTORY OF THE GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS

DAWNING OF A WAR-BOOM COMMUNITY

The Gopher Ordnance Works in Rosemount and Empire has long been a subject of fascination and controversy ever since the United States Government forced farmers to vacate their land on short notice in April 1942.

This issue of *Over the Years* chronicles the impact of the plant on individuals as well as on the community and documents the process by which the plant produced ammunition for the war effort.

*Front cover: This ad is one of several aimed at different segments of the population urging them to seek work at Gopher Ordnance. Dakota County Tribune April 13, 1945.*

*Inside back cover: The effects of Gopher were felt far and wide in Dakota County. George Warweg's trailer camp was nearly 10 miles away. Dakota County Tribune July 31, 1942.*

*Back cover: The sprawling Gopher Ordnance Plant is best seen in this aerial.*



*The Herbert and Minnie Volkert home before the family farm was acquired by the U.S. Government for the Gopher Ordnance Works in 1942. Photo courtesy of Clarence Volkert.*

## **A HISTORY OF THE GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS**

### **DAWNING OF A WAR-BOOM COMMUNITY**

**GERALD MATTSO**

**MAUREEN GERAGHTY BOUGHARD**

**RUSS WITHROW**

In March 1942 rumors began circulating in the Rosemount area that the Government would be taking some land. Everyone wondered how much and whose land would be taken. Rosemount and the surrounding area were witnessing the dawning of a war-boom community. With it would come rapid physical, economic and social change; bestowing prosperity to some, but hardship to others.<sup>1</sup> The changes to the community were so profound that a half century later the legacy of the Gopher Ordnance Works continues through the University of Minnesota Agricultural Research Center and the ghostly remains of the old production facilities.

The rumors turned to harsh reality at a public meeting held in Farmington on March 31, 1942.<sup>2</sup> At that meeting government officials announced to the affected landowners that an 11,500-acre tract (almost 18 square miles) was to be taken in Rosemount and Empire Townships for a huge ordnance facility. The affected families were further stunned to learn that they had to vacate their property by mid May -- just six weeks away. It also helped to explain to the landowners the mysterious cars that had been seen cruising up and down the county roads near their farms for the past several months. Another part of the puzzle were the strangers in the cars who would be

# ARMS PLANT COMING

seen drilling, digging and testing the subsoil in the fields.<sup>3</sup> The mystery was cleared up when it was later revealed that a War Department engineer and his crew had been quietly investigating the area for nearly a year to determine the feasibility of locating a war plant there.

The planning for World War II defense production was laid out in the mid 1930s, but not implemented until 1939. One of the critical problems was the lack of munitions plants. Almost all of these facilities had been torn down after World War I.<sup>4</sup>

In 1940 the government began a program to construct huge Government-Owned Contractor-Operated plants which came to be known as GOCO plants. These facilities were financed and owned by the government, but constructed and operated by private contractors on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis. When the defense contracts began to be awarded, many government, business and labor leaders in the midwest felt that the region was not getting its fair share of the new jobs and economic prosperity. Minnesota Governor Harold Stassen became a leading spokesman for the group. During August 1940, Stassen traveled to Kansas City to speak to the leaders from nine states about getting their fair share of defense spending. He told the group that the midwest should not be reduced to "a position of agricultural slavery... This is not a cry for pork. It is the voice of the Middle West asking for justice." Due in part to their lobbying efforts defense spending in Minnesota rose from \$500,000 to \$40 million by March 1941. State officials further were gratified in August 1941 when construction began on Minnesota's first GOCO plant, Twin Cities Ordnance, an ammunition plant located in New Brighton.<sup>5</sup> The following year would also see construction began on the Gopher Ordnance Works in Rosemount.

A total of 77 GOCO munitions facilities were built in 26 states, two of them in Minnesota. They

consisted of nine basic kinds of facilities:<sup>6</sup>

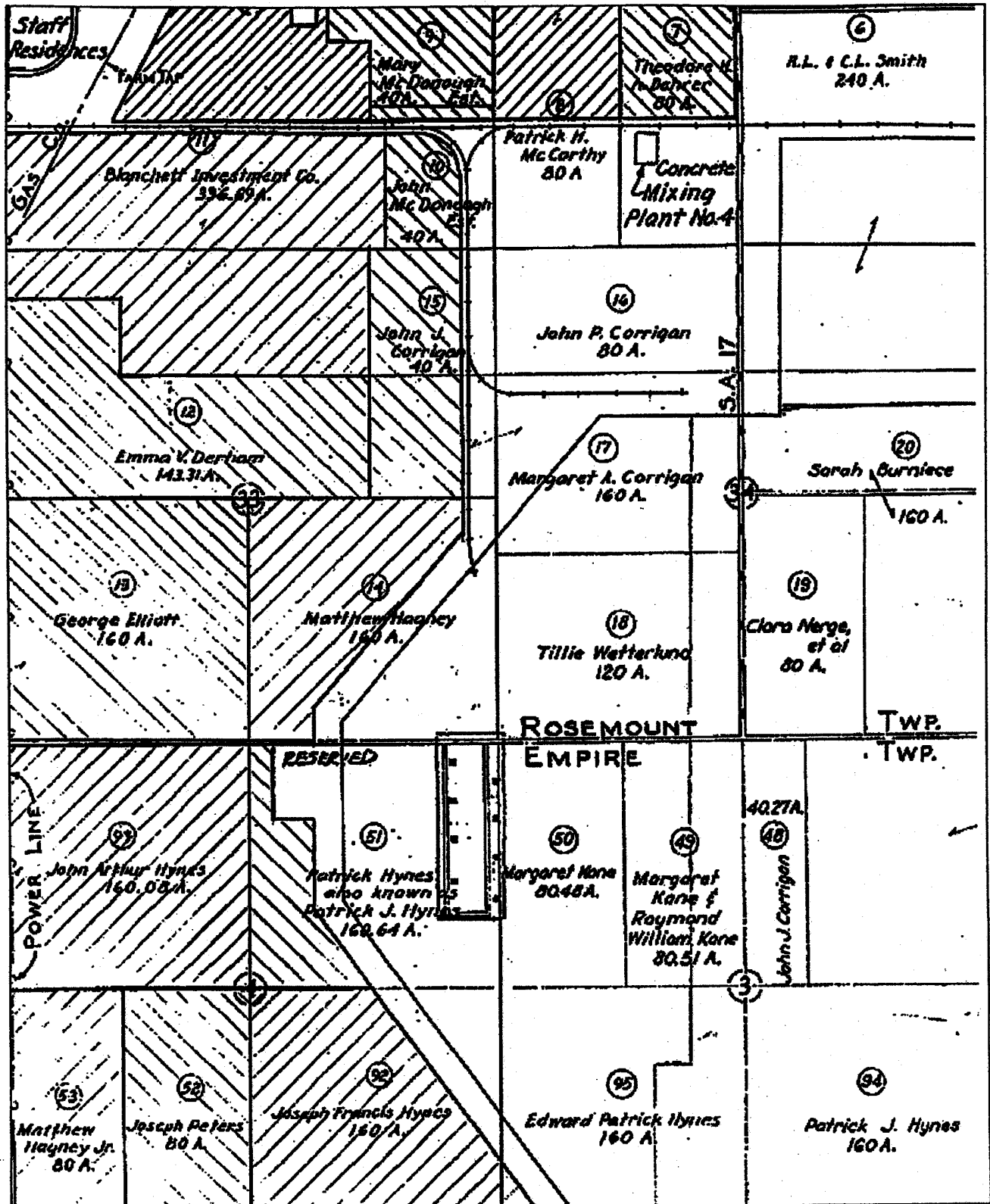
- 25 load, assemble and pack (LAP) plants
- 23 propellant and explosive (P&E) works
- 11 chemical works
- 13 small arms ammunitions plants
- 2 gun tube plants
- 1 case cup plant
- 1 incendiary works
- 1 tank plant
- 1 metal components for artillery ammunition

Depending on their function, these 77 facilities were designated into 42 "plants" and 35 "works".

Approximately one-half of these facilities, about 37, performed more than one function. Works made powder, explosives, chemicals and incendiaries. Plants fabricated and assembled small arms, tanks etc. The Gopher Ordnance Works [GOW] was a single-purpose P&E facility for making powder and explosives to be shipped to assembly plants, therefore designated a "works". The Twin Cities Ordnance Plant, because it was restricted to fabrication and assembly of small arms ammunition, was a "plant". There were two types of smokeless powder, single-base (nitrocellulose) and double base (nitrocellulose and nitroglycerine). Gopher Ordnance was designed to produce the single-base powder.

In 1941 officials in the War Department began looking at the area around Rosemount as a possible site for a second Minnesota GOCO facility, a gunpowder production works. This location was chosen because the land was level, or slightly rolling, which required only minor grading for building construction. Also, there were no improved highways running through the area, and there were three railroads — the Milwaukee Road, the Rock Island and the Chicago Great Western — to serve the facility. There were high voltage electric lines and a natural gas pipeline in the area. It was close to the Mississippi River where the huge quantities of water needed for production could





This plan of the Gopher Ordnance Works shows the plant's future design laid over the geography of pre-existing farms.

be drawn. Adding to the appeal was that one-third of the states population lived within a 30-mile radius of the site to supply the needed workers.

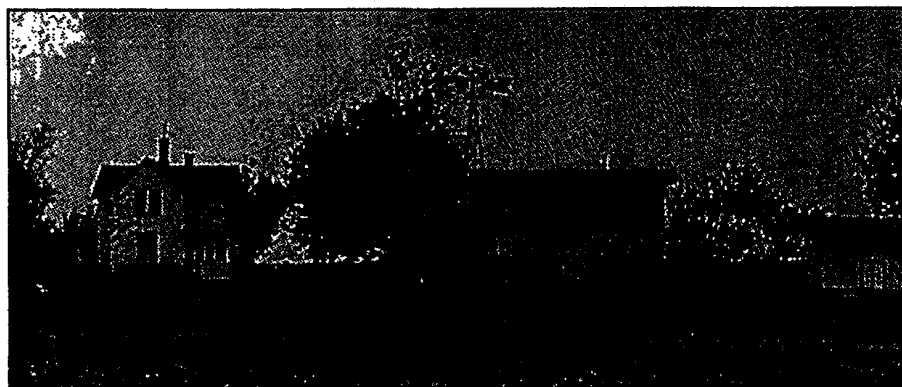
The E.I. duPont de Nemours Company of Wilmington, Delaware was among a number of companies already operating GOCO facilities for the U. S. Ordnance Department. In 1941 the Government requested duPont to consider building and operating two additional military explosive works, one on a site near Columbus, Nebraska, and the other near St. Paul. They were to be known respectively as the Platte Ordnance Works and the Gopher Ordnance Works. Both were to produce smokeless powder on 3 production lines, also TNT and oleum (sulfuric acid). Gopher was to have, in addition, 12 tetryl production lines. More efficient production of TNT at existing works caused changes to be made in these plans. By April of 1942 it had been decided to drop the plans for TNT production at both Platte and Gopher. The elimination of TNT production at these plants made it possible to cancel the Nebraska plant entirely by adding its proposed 3 powder lines to Gopher. The following month it was further proposed to drop the 12 tetryl lines proposed at Gopher. This plan was adopted in June of 1942. With this decision Gopher Ordnance Works would be the largest of the powder works with 6 production lines.

Before World War II, with the exception of a few urbanized areas such as South St. Paul, Hastings and West St. Paul, Dakota County was mostly an agrarian region. The central part of the county quickly lost all semblance of quietude in 1942 when thousands of people descended upon it to begin construction work on the Gopher Ordnance Works. Because of its close proximity, Rosemount was arguably the most effected town in the county. With the population in the village numbering 364 inhabitants before 1941, it witnessed an average of 155 automobiles

an hour passing through town during the plant's four year lifespan.<sup>7</sup> County Road 42 (now known as 145<sup>th</sup> Street) had to be turned into a one way street during the morning and evening rush hours to keep traffic moving. Traffic going east in the morning and west in the afternoon.

Immediately following the public announcement of the new works on March 31, 1942, local officials in both Rosemount and Farmington began to take steps to deal with problems that would arise with the inflow of some 16,000 construction workers and their families. For housing and other purposes an application was made to have Rosemount and the surrounding area designated a defense area. The Rosemount Commercial Club pitched in by appointing a committee of seven businessmen to work with the Rosemount council to address the expected problems of housing, water supply, sanitation, traffic and readjustment.

Ham Clay, Sr., editor of the *Dakota County Tribune*, was in a group that toured the areas around the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant in New Brighton and the Badger Ordnance Works in Baraboo, Wisconsin (see Appendix 4). They hoped to learn from mistakes made there and gain insight into the problems that those communities faced. Clay warned his readers that in those areas there remained a myriad of problems including housing shortages, rising rent and consumer prices, sewer and water concerns, crowded schools and "hell-raisers." He encouraged city offi-



*The feelings the Kane family were summed up in the inscription on this photograph of the Kane farm: "Broke from Prairie Sod by Grandfather Kane and my Father. Stole from us by U.S. Government in 1941 for Gopher Ordnance Powder Plant [sic]."*

cial to enact ordinances to regulate trailer parks, provide recreational facilities for the workers and put on extra police officers. He also noted that land prices and rents would increase overnight.

Consequently, ordinances were passed in Rosemount that would regulate trailer camps, hire more police, limit building permits and rise license fees for liquor. In the matter of increased health and sanitation risks, the council and the County Board of Commissioners turned to the state health department and the county nurse for advice.<sup>8</sup>

Even before construction had started, the earliest arrivals snatched up any space available for rent, not only in Rosemount, but in Lebanon (Apple Valley), Eureka, Lakeville and as far away as Inver Grove. Many workers brought house trailers in which to live, parking them anyplace that was available to rent, usually on nearby farms. Almost every backyard and alley was crowded with trailers. The Moeller farm, on the south edge of Rosemount, had as many as 60 trailers on it. In Farmington, the village council

bought seven acres of Amelia Sprute's pasture on the south edge of town to use as a trailer part. When the camp opened for business in early July in 1942 a newly erected 20 x 50 foot building for showers, laundry and lavatories was at its center and the Gustavson-Bruner D-X station was used as its headquarters. To prevent unsanitary conditions, this was the only trailer parking allowed in Farmington.

Another trailer camp, located at Antlers Park on Lake Marion, featured running water, showers, toilets and a recreation room. For their relaxation, this camp's tenants were offered good fishing, boats for rent, a bathing beach and refreshments.

All over the area scores of sheds, garages and even chicken coops were converted into rental units. Virtually every home and farm had boarders living with the family. A few small farm buildings were moved to vacant lots on 146<sup>th</sup> Street in Rosemount and converted into small homes. Local merchants struggled to serve record numbers of customers while having to deal with war shortages and rationing of

### Ben Moeller on Gopher

"Well, I remember there was an awful lot of confusion, and awful large influx of people. People, we here in Rosemount, couldn't handle it very well. I was operating school buses for the school district at the time. My wife and I set up a trailer court at the south edge of town, on some land that my dad owned. We had 60 trailer homes in there at one time. They kept coming and going but at one time we had a capacity of 60. Sixty families living in there, and there were more trailer homes around the area. I forget just how many the plant did employ at its peak. . . you can imagine the confusion that was here in Rosemount itself. I was on the City Council at the time. We had a lot of problems. We had to hire extra police, many people in the city took in roomers so there was available places to stay and work. The impact on the town was pretty great; it created hardships for some, and created some terrific business for other people. The restaurants and the liquor stores and so on made out pretty great. There was meat rationing at the time, sugar, it put a strain on the grocer to try to supply people living here with meat, when it was rationed."

"Do you remember the names of any people that lived in the trailer court?"

"Very few. Lunds from Benson, Minnesota, a couple from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Ben Broche was his name. A lot of them."

"How did the plant affect your life?"

"It didn't really make any big impact on my life except I was very busy running the trailer camp. It had an impact on the school system. It really strained the school system. They had to bring in other buildings to house the children up at the school. We only had one building at that time. There wasn't time to build anything else, so they bought some country school buildings, moved them in and housed the children that way and educated them. We hauled them in. Sometimes we were making two trips with the buses."

Interview with Theresa Seliga and Kim Foster, June 28, 1976

# Farms for Sale!

See . . . .

## A. T. Roszak

109 Grand Ave., So. St. Paul

WE HAVE SCATTERED FARMS THROUGHOUT  
DAKOTA COUNTY

*Only days had passed before ads such as this one offering farms to displaced farmers began appearing in area newspapers.  
Dakota County Tribune April 10, 1942*

goods, such as meat and sugar. They had a difficult time obtaining candles, cigarettes, and gum to supply their customers. "They were from all parts of the country... (and) wanted merchandise that we didn't have and it was during the war and merchandise was hard to get."<sup>9</sup>

On payday at the plant the line to cash paychecks was ½ block long outside the First State Bank of Rosemount. For three or four years, Rosemount was transformed from a sleepy, little farming village into a bustling town by the volume of people attracted by the high wages at the Gopher plant. Deprived of a living wage for so long by the recent Great Depression, people were now spending their new-found wealth almost as quickly as they earned it. To keep order in the community extra constables were hired and liquor licenses were limited. Those bars that existed did a land office business.

The railroad depot in Rosemount was enlarged and the depot in Coates, closed for 20 years, was reopened. Commuter train service was never established, because the railroad under consideration demanded a guarantee for every trip, which the Government refused to grant. Gas was rationed to

three gallons per week for personal cars and rubber tires were in short supply because of the war. Carpooling was encouraged and several bus routes were set up to bring commuting workers from as far away as White Bear Lake and Red Wing. The bus fare from the Twin Cities and suburbs cost 25 cents each way. The Jefferson Bus Company also had routes running in all directions to points south of Rosemount. One bus made a daily commute of 67 miles to bring 39 workers from Le Center to their jobs.<sup>10</sup> One man who lived in Red Wing spent two hours and twenty minutes to make the drive during a snowstorm to be on time for his 4 p.m. shift.<sup>11</sup>

Several patrolmen were detailed to direct traffic at shift changes. An average of 3,062 cars daily caused traffic jams that lasted over an hour, even the school buses were unable to run on time. The school hours had to be changed to alleviate the problem. The bus scheduling was only one of the problems that the Rosemount School District had to deal with. School enrollment peaked at 346 pupils in a school equipped for about 280. At one point 54 students were jammed in to one classroom. Adding to the teacher's woes was the constant churn of students moving to and from the area throughout the year. Mirroring the problem in the schools, the community also had to deal with the large fluctuations in the number of workers employed at the plant at various times during its existence.

But the group most affected by the Gopher Ordnance Works were over 80 families displaced by the plant. A Federal District Court, in early April, granted the government the right of immediate possession of the land. Appraisals of the farms began in mid April and the first group of families on the north end of the site were told they had to be off their land by May 6, 1942, just two weeks later. The last group of families had to vacate their farms by June 1<sup>st</sup>. As one farmer noted, "This isn't as easy as the average person might think because we didn't have any truck of our own....we moved the cattle over to the new farm on hoof, we drove'em, just like they did in the old times. We had to time that drive so that we didn't wind up driving the cattle across the Milwaukee rail-

road tracks when the 10:10 came through Rosemount. We know that was right on schedule, that was a steam passenger train. We moved the herd of cattle, there was a couple of us on horseback, and one following with the car, others on foot, but we moved them. Everything else we moved, a lot of stuff with the hayrack, pulled it with the tractor."<sup>12</sup>

The Rosemount area was deluged with hordes of real-estate agents scurrying about trying to make deals. One farmer claimed 23 agents contacted him in one day alone. The area didn't have enough farms on the market to accommodate all the displaced farmers. The asking price of farms that were available increased to reflect the sudden demand, land prices climbing to \$50 an acre almost overnight.

The biggest problem facing the displaced owners was that they didn't know what the final price of their property would be. Furthermore they were given no moving expenses by the government. Many of the farms lost had been in the same families for generations. In most cases adjoining or nearby farms were owned by relatives sharing labor and farm equipment. All the neighbors had formed close knit groups, available to help each other, especially at planting and harvest times. The structures of families and friendships were changed forever as they relocated, scattered all over the area.

The Jonas J. Christensen family was one of the unluckiest of all. After losing a farm to the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant in New Brighton, the family purchased a 240-acre farm in Empire in the fall of 1941. The family had just moved onto their new farm only to be notified two weeks later that they were being evicted again, this time for the Gopher Ordnance Works.

Shortly after the announcement of the need for the land at the plant site, it was learned land would also be taken along the Mississippi River at Spring Lake for the water intake facilities. Also a 400-foot wide right-of-way from the river to the plant site would be needed.

After the appraisals were finished most of the owners were upset at the low valuations assigned to their property. At a meeting on May 3, 1941 they

formed an alliance to protest what they felt were unjust prices for their farms. To lead this association they elected Julius Walkow and Ralph McMenomy as co-chairmen, and William Carroll as secretary. On May 9, 1941, Congressman Joseph P. O'Hara of Minnesota's Second District, met with the farmers and pledged to help them.

O'Hara met with Colonel John J. O'Brien, chief of the Ordnance Department's real-estate branch, who admitted that the dollar gap between the two sides was greater at Rosemount than at any of the other 75 land acquisition projects he had worked on. O'Brien came to Rosemount to inspect the farms and meet with the landowners. He told them there was nothing he could do and that their only alternative was to go

## Auction Sale

The government has taken over our farm for a defense plant, we must sell at public auction on the old Joe Peters farm, 6 miles northeast of Farmington, 1 1/4 miles east of the DeCoster farm, on—

### Thurs., April 16

SALE STARTS AT 1 O'CLOCK SHARP

**21 HEAD OF LIVESTOCK**

4 Guernsey milk cows, 4 beef calves, 1 veal calf

**3 HORSES**

2 Geldings, 7 and 8 years old  
1 Saddle Mare, 6 years old

**FARM MACHINERY, ETC.**

1 New Ideal manure spreader, 1 feed mill, 1 McCormick-Deering mower, 1 new hay rack, several spools of new barb wire, some new chicken wire.

**HOUSEHOLD GOODS**

Kitchen stove, circulating heater, kitchen chairs, beds, springs, dressers, tables, day beds, table and floor lamps and many other articles too numerous to mention.

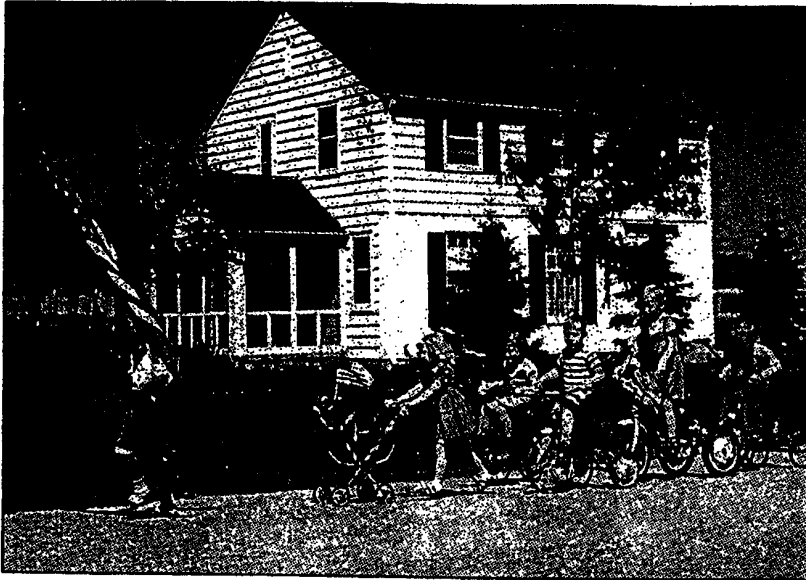
Some corn and 600 pounds of Irish cobbler potatoes, certified.

**TERMS OF SALE.**—Sums of \$10.00 and under, cash; over that amount, 5 to 12-months time will be given on notes acceptable to the clerk, bearing interest at 7 percent. Parties desiring credit must make arrangements with clerk before sale, otherwise bidders will be considered cash buyers. Anyone from a distance must make arrangements for credit with their home bank. All property must be settled for before removal from premises.

## J. J. Christensen, owner

Frank Byrne, Auctioneer  
The First State Bank of Rosemount, clerk

*Jonas J. Christensen had moved to Rosemount from New Brighton after being displaced by the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant.  
Dakota County Tribune April 10, 1942.*



*Mary and Fred Moynihan lived in three Gopher staff houses. In 1949 they moved into the Smith brothers house, which had been moved off the Smith farm into the Gopher project area. Later the Moynihans moved into a one-story staff house and in 1956 into this two story house. They lived here until 1962 when they built a new home in Lebanon. Photo courtesy of Mary Moynihan.*

to court. A few of the landowners accepted the government's settlement, but 70 refused and the government began condemnation proceedings against them.<sup>13</sup> The farmers retained three attorneys, one of whom was Harold LeVander of South St. Paul, who would later become governor of Minnesota. Three years later the first group of cases went to trial on April 11, 1944. By January 1945 all but one of the 70 cases was settled. In the end both sides claimed victory, the farmers because they were awarded about \$300,000.00 more than the government offered and the government because the award was far less than the farmers hoped for. But it was a hollow victory for the farmers, many of whom remained embittered over the way the government acted.<sup>14</sup>

Some of the farm buildings and houses located within the plant survived by being moved off the site, but a rare few are still in their original location. The Herman Wachter farmstead has survived almost intact: the house is currently used as a residence by an employee of the University of Minnesota.

The other farmhouse still in its original location is the Otto Boche house: it also is used as a resi-

dence. The only other farm building that remains standing is a structure from the William Volkert farmstead. A brick one-room schoolhouse also survived on the site for several decades, but was eventually torn down. The Smith brothers' residence was first used as a temporary first aid station and later moved to lot 11 in the staff house row and remodeled, joining 24 newly constructed staff homes. It survives today as a private residence.

At least 89 buildings, including nine houses and 11 barns, were auctioned off by the government and moved off the property. The Lambert Englert home was bought and moved to a site on Chippendale Avenue in Rosemount. Martin Volkert home was also moved to a site on Cameo Ave. but both homes have been torn down in recent years.

The two-story, brick home of the Herbert Volkert family was left standing for use as a temporary office during the initial plant construction period and then simply bulldozed, a fate shared by many of the buildings.

## CONSTRUCTION & OPERATION OF THE GOW

On May 13, 1942, even before all of the families had left the site, construction began on the facility and on May 27, with the erection of telegraph, telephone and teletype lines in the area, all roads within the plant property were closed to the public.<sup>15</sup> On June 4, 1942, the E.I. duPont de Nemours Co. of Wilmington, Delaware was formally awarded the contract to build and operate Gopher Ordnance Works. Construction was not to be of the permanent type, and facilities were to be ready for use within approximately 16 months or by November 12, 1943.

Within weeks, 33 strategically placed guard towers were erected around the site's perimeter to protect it from sabotage and trespassers. A security force of 500 was hired to patrol 10 miles of roads in cars

equipped with radios so they could communicate with nearby Fort Snelling. By the middle of June, construction was well underway, with 3,000 construction employees working in two eight-hour shifts per day. They had by this time completed the huge two-story administration building to house the offices of duPont's administrative employees. This 250-foot long building was constructed in three units connected by breezeways: between units were concrete firewalls that could be closed off in case of fire. Other work included upgrading of existing roads and the construction of new one. A total 60 miles of roadways were within the GOW site. Seventy-five miles of railroad track was laid including a large rail yard in the center of the site. At the Mississippi site four deep Ranney Wells, one capable of pumping 8,000 gallons per minute, were being constructed. <sup>16</sup>

Besides the actual plant's construction, considerable ancillary work was hurriedly being performed outside its boundaries. To facilitate the expected crush of vehicles coming to and from the plant, \$62,000 was spent by the federal government to upgrade and pave county roads connecting the plant to Highways 218 (Highway 3), 55, and Cedar Avenue. To the south, two new bridges for county roads were built over the Vermillion River. And the span carrying Highway 52 over the Vermillion was reconstructed. <sup>17</sup> This upgrading included the state of Minnesota seeing its first cloverleaf intersection constructed, long before freeways were conceived, when the Highway 3 bridge over the 55/52 intersection was built in July 1942. <sup>18</sup>

The Gopher Ordnance Works contained 858 buildings of which the large majority were completed. Besides the administrative, production and storage building, other structures included laboratories, a ballistic range, and power plants. Maintenance facility included shops for auto and train

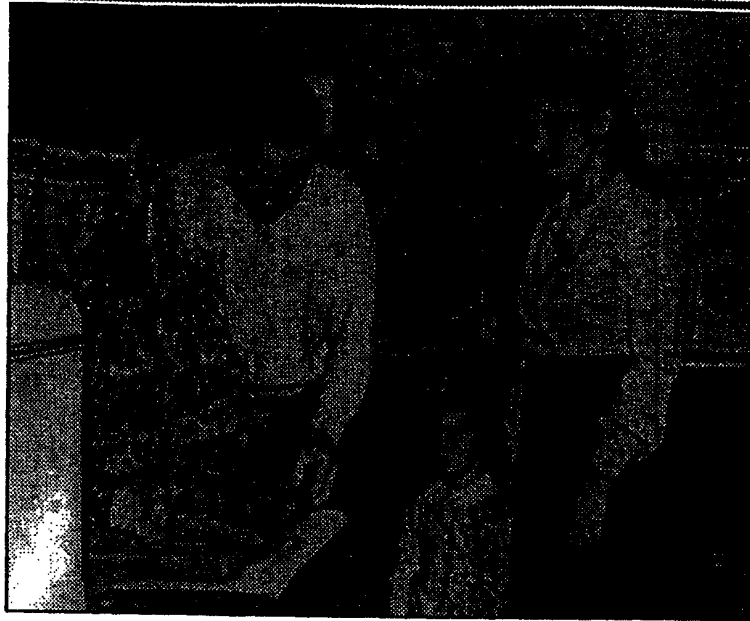
repair, carpentry, blacksmith, sheet metal work, pipe fitting, welding, millwright and electrical work. <sup>19</sup> The works was to contain six production lines, designated A through F, to manufacture smokeless gunpowder and facilities to produce oleum and nitric acid. The Rosemount facility was to be the largest of all the powder plants. Each of its three rifle powder production lines stretched out over two miles in length. The three cannon powder lines, which required less processing, were to stretch over a mile each. Over 100 powder shipping houses at the southern end of the plant also covered a huge area. Many of the buildings had to be spaced far apart so a fire or explosion in one would not touch off the others.

The plant was initially scheduled to begin production by January 1943, only seven months away. Record rains during the summer of 1942 caused many problems including impassable dirt roads, and many drainage and erosion problems in the construction area. But this was not the leading cause for construction delays. The worst problem was the diversion of essential equipment to another powder works under construction in Australia. This pushed back the projected start of production until October 1943. Further delays postponed start-up until January 1, 1944. Construction employment peaked with 19,428 workers on the job during September of 1942 while trying to make up for lost time. Construction work totaling \$21,589,376.00 was sub-contracted to 50 different

*Continued on page 11*



*A view of the street running through the staff housing section of the Gopher plant.*



### Celebrate Christmas in a Trailer Here

Mr. and Mrs. W.W. McKinney and daughter Norma Jean of Florida (where 30 above is a cold wave) are typical of the 53 families at the city trailer camp, who will observe Christmas in cozy, snow-embanked trailers.

In order to save space in their comparatively small trailer home, the young couple and their four-year-old daughter, have set up a miniature tree with all the trimmings.

The McKinnys, like many other southern folks in the camp, in the past have celebrated Christmas in much the same fashion as Minnesota people, with one exception.

Mrs. McKinney has never seen snow before.

Daughter Norma Jean has quite a time getting used to wearing long stockings while out in snappy December weather.

However, neither the heat in summer or the icy chill of Minnesota weather seems to really bother these friendly southern people. The trailers are well insulated, keeping the heat out in summer, and keeping it warm in winter. They are usually heated by fuel oil. Mrs. McKinney says the trailers are cooler than a house in the summer time.

The family came here from the southern United States where Mr. McKinney has been employed in ordnance plants similar to the Rosemount project, where he is now working as a rigger.

They were the third trailer family to moved into the city camp, and have been here six months.

The trailer, which is 20 feet long and about six feet wide, has compact, handy household appliances. The beds are convertible into seats. The trailer homes have radios, refrigerators, folding chairs and tables, and a tiny kitchenette.

Another feature of the trailer is the fact that it can be moved quickly and easily. When journeying from place to place, they simply stop at some nice cool spot when they tired of riding. However, riding inside a moving trailer would be like "being on a ship in a storm", according to Mr. McKinney, who was once in the navy.

The best thing about living up north for the McKinnys is the fact that northern people are friendly.

And speaking of hospitality, the McKinnys wouldn't let the photographer leave without eating a delicious ham dinner that rivals Ma's home cooking.

*Dakota County Tribune December 25, 1942*



concerns. By November construction of the plant was approximately 50 per cent complete. By March 1, 1942 construction for project was about 90 per cent complete. Being the last of the powder plants authorized during the war, its usefulness was constantly being reevaluated by the military as the pace of the war fluctuated. In early 1943 it was determined that other ordnance facilities could keep pace with the needs of the war, so on April 22, the War Department canceled construction on powder lines D, E, F and the diphenylamine unit. These lines were to be dismantled and the equipment sent to other facilities as needed.

Construction of A, B and C lines continued until October 18, 1943 when all major construction was halted. On January 24, 1944, duPont was instructed to cease all work at Gopher, including plant protection and maintenance. The government assumed responsibility for all material and equipment at the project. Fegles Construction Company of Minneapolis was awarded a contract by the government to dismantle and salvage material from 250 partially completed buildings. They shipped out 175 railcar loads of material. On June 6 the "D" Day invasion was launched and 10 days later all dismantling of the plant was halted. On July 7 duPont agreed to undertake the work of reactivating the Gopher Works. On August 11 orders came to reactivate lines A, B and C and convert them to cannon powder production. Also needed urgently were the facilities for reworking damaged smokeless powder, which was being returned to this country for reconditioning. By the middle of September it was clear projected start up dates could not be met because of a very serious labor shortage, both in the unskilled and craft categories. On October 27 the Acid Facility finally began production of oleum and nitric acid. A majority of this production was shipped to other facilities.

On December 30 further orders were received to rebuild lines D, E and F, with powder production to begin on these lines by September 1945. By April both duPont and its subcontractors employment figures for reconstruction of the D, E and F lines totaled 5,164. This was more than 3,000 less than the esti-

ated required number of 8,185. On April 25, 1945 Italy surrendered and Berlin was now completely surrounded. On April 28 after repeated statements by Ordnance officials that Gopher construction would not be curtailed as a result of rapidly decreasing smokeless powder requirements, orders were issued to

## TRAILER NEWS

This column is open to anyone who lives in this community and lives in a trailer. Bring your news to the Tribune or leave in the news box at the city trailer office.

Trailers here are being winterized; little vestibules are being built and heavy paper is being put around the bottom of many trailers.

Miss Georgia Franz of Independence, Iowa, is visiting her sister, Mrs. Robert Fobes at the city court, this week.

The new recreation building at the city court is nearing completion and the residents there are anxious for the use of it. They plan to have it for a day nursery, leaving their children there while they shop or sew for the Red Cross.

New families at the Kuchera park are those of Thomas Eustice and David Sherburn.

New families at the city court are those of H. E. Ackerman, Pryor, Okla.; Ralph V. Anderson, Rosemount; Chas. Delpach, St. Paul. The A. L. Becker family moved from the court this week.

*The Dakota County Tribune devoted a column to residents of the numerous trailer camps such as this one published on October 9, 1942.*

## Harold Wachter on Gopher

The Harold Wachter family, including his parents, Otto and Anna, were given 30 days notice in March 1942 to vacate their farms to make room for the Gopher plant. Harold's farm was 120 acres, Otto's, 80 acres. Harold was offered 79 dollars an acre. His farm consisted of a brand new windmill, well and cistern, two new silos, a freshly painted house with new shingles and a new screened porch.

Although it was difficult to leave the farm, Harold said they were told the government owned everything. "Then all of our wells had signs on them, 'Poisonous Water - Do Not Drink'."

According to Harold, since he did not argue about the price and departed without a fight he was

allowed to return to the farm after the 30 day limit so that he could dismantle his brand new silos, remove gates and the well tank to take them to his new farm, the Gilman farm two miles to the west. To the best of his knowledge, everything on his old farm except the silos, which he took with him, was razed.

Interview with Maureen Geraghty Bouchard,  
June 30, 2001



*The Harold Wachter farm, above, and house, lower left. Photos courtesy of Harold Wachter.*



stop work on lines D, E and F. Less than 10 per cent of the rebuilding of these lines had been completed.

The reworking of salvaged powder started on January 2, 1945. On February 9 production of new powder began on "C" line. "B" powder line began operating on March 2 and by the end of the month a peak figure of 3,102 production employees was reached. Both lines were operating at only one third capacity due to manpower shortages. Pressure was placed on the GOW to increase its production when flooding of the Ohio River caused production to be cut severely at three other ordnance works along its banks.

Due to the serious labor shortage an advertising campaign was started with the help of the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Dakota County newspapers. Several articles and full-page ads appeared urging workers to apply for employment at Gopher Ordnance Works. This campaign was necessary because, right from the start of construction on the reactivation project, there had been a definite reluctance on the part of many craftsmen and laborers to be employed on a project already associated with one sudden termina-

tion. Potential workers feared there might be another cancellation. As a result, duPont had difficulty competing with nearby industries that were hiring workers with assurances of long-term employment.

It was hoped many of the laid off construction workers would take positions on the critically short-handed production lines. But the higher paid construction workers spurned the lower pay of a production worker and simply moved on to other projects. Even with the ad campaign the facility never came close to filling the 3,000 positions needed to operate all 3 lines. Ironically, area merchants and farmers who couldn't compete with the wages offered at the plant, and therefor couldn't keep any help, complained so loudly that the plant finally stopped hiring local farm workers. Production employment topped out in May 1945 with 650 office and technical staff, 152 guards and firemen and 2,364 skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled production line workers. Of the totaled 3,166 employees, almost one third were women [931] and slightly over 1 per cent were black [16 men and 17 women].

May 7, 1945 "VE" Day brought the war in Europe to a close. Though the fighting in Europe had almost ended, the war in the Pacific was still on and the Gopher facility was far behind its production quota. That same month production at the plant reached its highest total with 6,266,040 pounds of powder produced. This powder was produced on lines B and C. The A line was functional but idle, for lack of workers. Production averaging 208,870 pounds per day was achieved working 24 hours per day, three shifts, and seven days per week. This was slightly above the design capacity of 100,000 pounds per day per line.

When Japan surrendered, August 14, 1945, the facility was officially ordered to cease production. The last of the powder from the production line was packed and made ready for shipment during October. This was about nine months after production had begun.

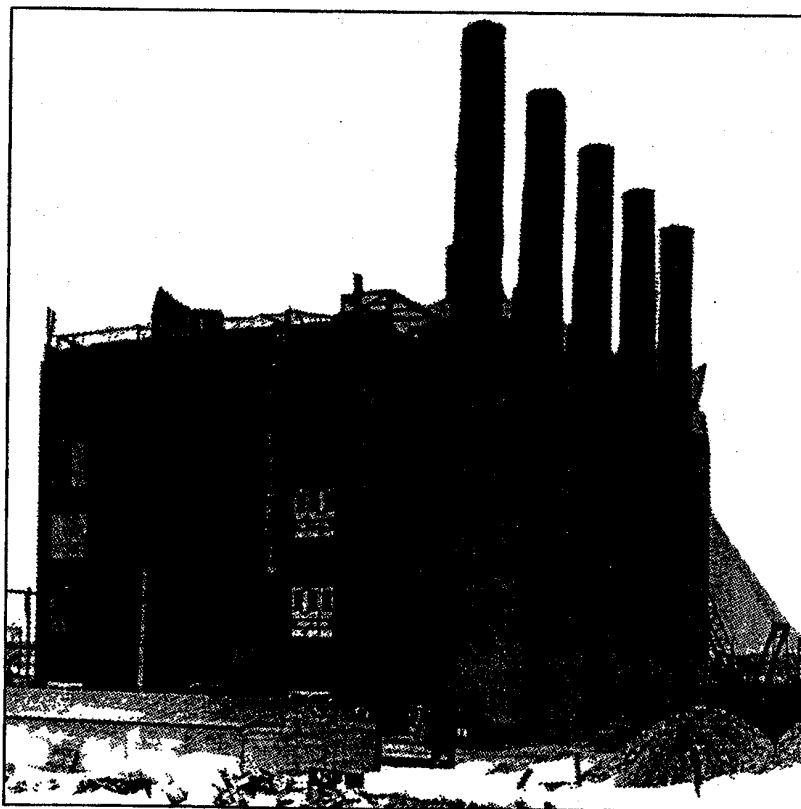
When the plant was shut down about 4,000,000 pounds of spoiled gunpowder remained to be reworked. Lt. Col. R. E. Russell, Commanding Officer, Gopher Ordnance Works, explained that "The relotting operation now being performed at the plant consists of removing powder from shells reclaimed from battlefronts or even sunken ships, testing its explosive qualities and reclaiming that which is satisfactory. Lots of 50,000 to 100,000 pounds are handled in this manner to insure uniform results." Once the war ended, it was determined that it was not worth the high cost of salvage and the remaining stockpile was ordered destroyed.<sup>20</sup> For two weeks, in the month of June 1946, long narrow rows of the powder were spread out on the ground and touched off. As the bright flashes raced along the ground they sent up huge clouds of smoke. The glow and smoke could be seen for miles.<sup>21</sup>

Even though "A" line was never in regular production, it ran for a short time for acceptance testing. All the wood

in the processing section of lines A, B and C had to be torn out and burned because it was contaminated with gunpowder dust and a spark or any friction would ignite it. Area residents grumbled about all the good powder and lumber the government was burning, not realizing the truth of why it was being done.

The plant was declared surplus and whatever equipment could be used at other government installations were shipped out. Most of the wood used in buildings on D, E and F lines had been torn out previously and the lumber shipped out by rail.

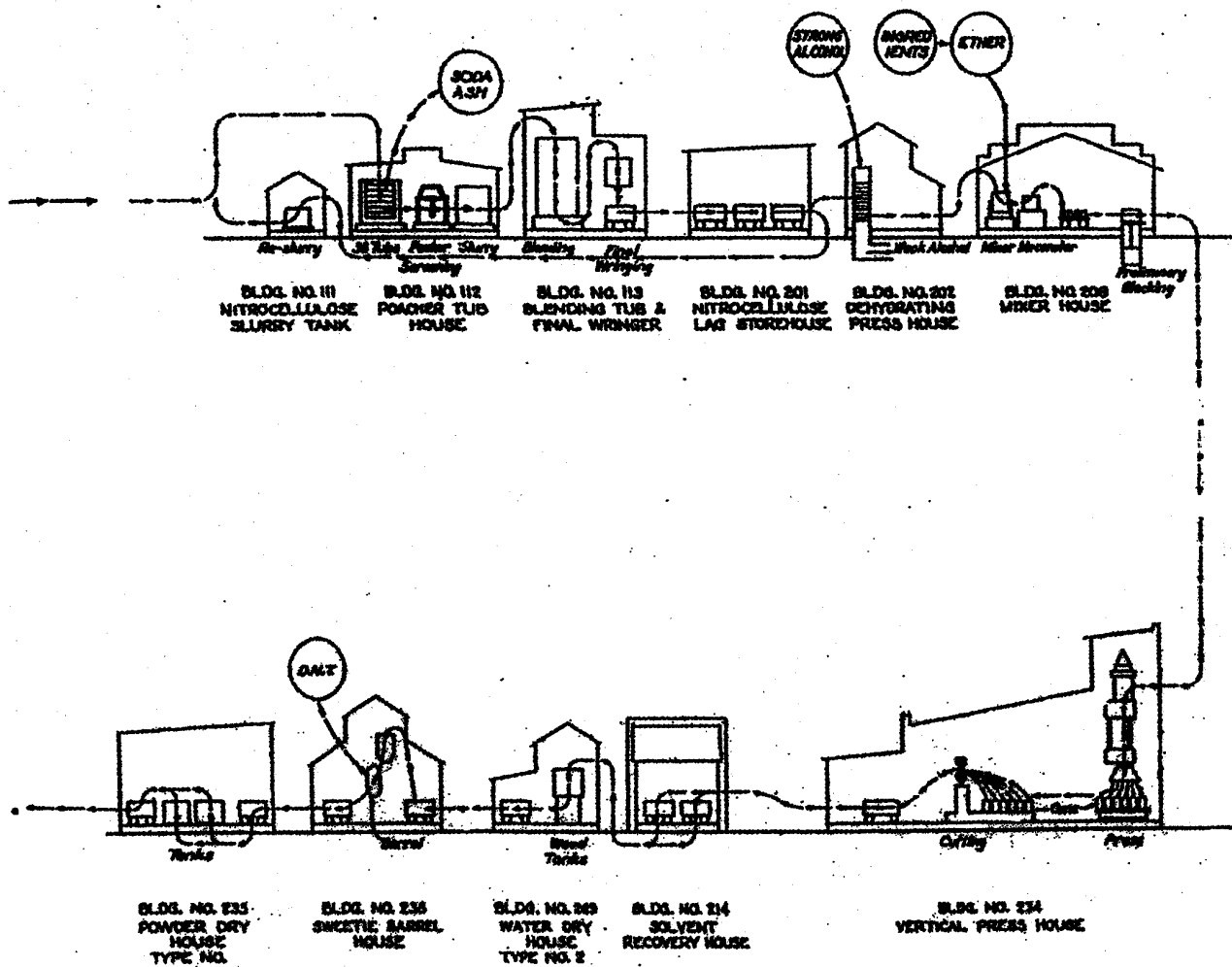
About 3,500 acres in the southwestern corner of the site, which had never been developed, was offered for sale. Original owners had first rights to buy back their land. Jonas J. Christensen who had lost his second farm to the GOW was one of a few who repurchased their property. Some sense of normalcy returned to Rosemount when the plant closed in 1945, and the transients disappeared almost as fast as they had come.



*The stacks of the powerhouse are the most recognizable remnants of the Gopher Ordnance Works.*



# powder at the Gopher Ordnance Works



## **SAFETY AT THE GOW**

Safety was a prime consideration during construction and production process. In September 1942, five months into construction more than 3,000,000 man-hours were completed without a lost-time accident. Smoking was not allowed anywhere on the property. Security guards confiscated all matches and lighters at the gate, and anyone caught smoking or even carrying matches, would be penalized a day's pay. Workers were required to wear flameproof coveralls, long rubber gloves and shatterproof spectacles on the job. Stringent precautions were enacted on the volatile production lines where even a minor accident could turn into a devastating catastrophe.

A 24-hour-a-day safety department was set up to give lectures and show films on safety, post signs around the plant and conduct inspections to ensure that all regulations were strictly followed. Each new employee, as part of his/her extensive training before being allowed on the line, were given handbook-which he/she must have in possession continuously which prescribed a set procedure for even mundane things as moving a ladder or lifting a package. The floors were constantly swept and washed of any combustible particles, machinery was kept as spotless as cooking utensils, and each tool had a definite place. The plants first medical facility was located in the Smith brothers farm house. Within a short time two identical medical service buildings were built. Each had an operating room and small wards for both men and women patients.

## **GUN POWDER PRODUCTION PROCESS AT THE GOW**

The flow chart from the Gopher Ordnance Works shows the steps involved in the production of smokeless powder. The 100 series buildings were used in the nitrating process. They were followed by the 200 series buildings, which made up the powder processing section of the gunpowder production line.

The first buildings in the line were the Purified Cotton Storehouses [building 101]. Boxcars containing rolls of cotton or wood pulp were unloaded and the material stored here until needed. The three store-

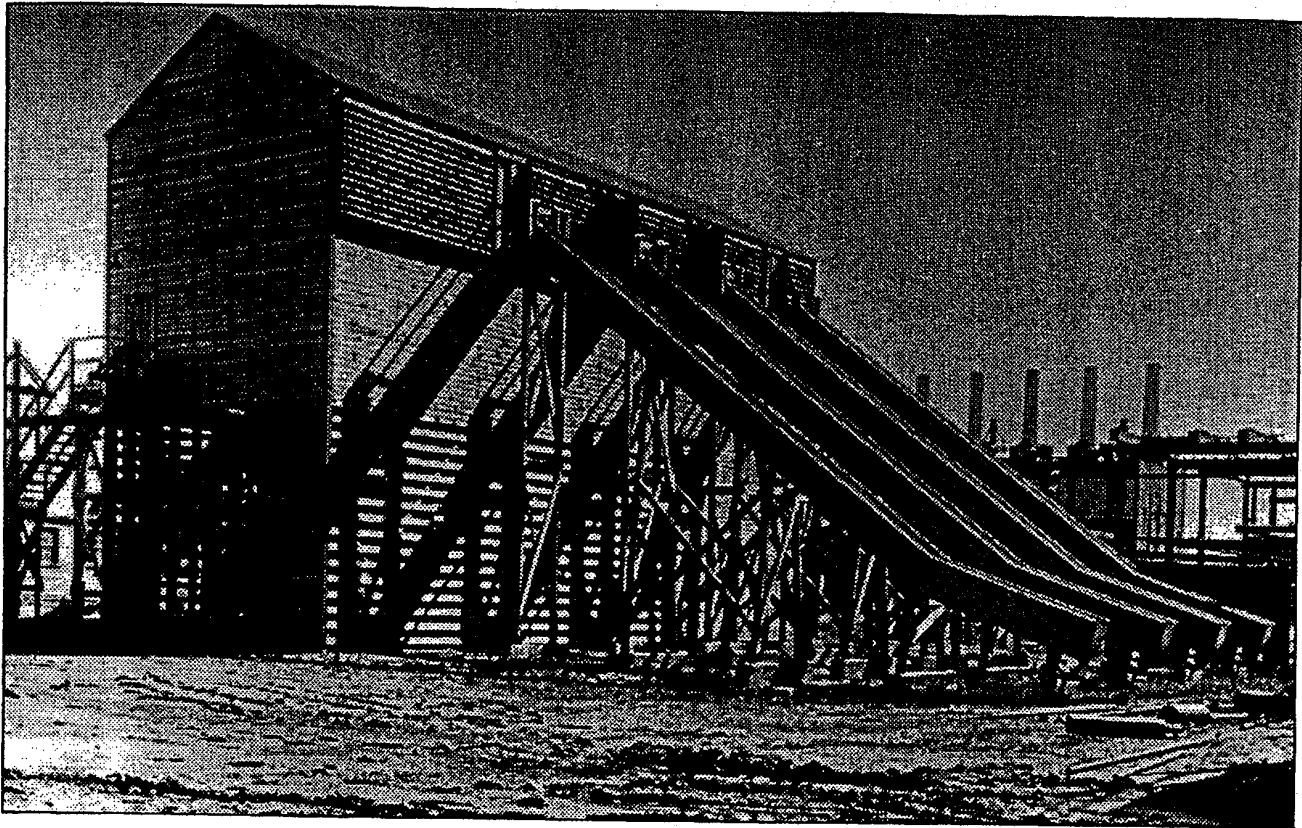
houses from A, B and C lines were the only buildings from the production lines that were not dismantled when the plant closed.

The Cotton and Wood Dry Houses [building 104] contained large ovens, which dried the cotton or wood fiber until it contained less than 1 per cent moisture. The Army required its gunpowder to be made from wood cellulose while the Navy insisted on cotton cellulose. Each branch claimed their product to be superior.

The Nitrating Houses [building 105] were four-story brick buildings where the dried cellulose was mixed with a blend of acids. Next a large amount of water was added to the nitrocellulose as the material was very unstable and explosive in a dry state, but relatively safe if wet. All that remains of these structures are their foundations.

Each line had its own nitrocellulose tank farm [structures 102] which contained and processed acids used in the Nitrating Houses. The concrete tank supports are the most visible parts that remain today. The nitrocellulose slurry was piped to the Boiling Tub Houses [building 108] to remove impurities that would make the powder unstable. Several acid boils interspersed with fresh water rinses were required. Processing took 60 to 90 hours depending on the type of material being treated. Each Tub House contained 58 large wooden boiling tubs and used huge amounts of boiling water. The ceramic and concrete pipes from the boiling tubs are some of the most unusual ruins. Interestingly, surviving ceramic pipes from these boiling houses are stamped with "Red Wing" from Red Wing Pottery Company.

The next step took place in the Pulping House [building 109] where the slurry was passed through Jordan Shredders of the same type used in paper mills. This process cut the material to the desired fineness for processing in the powder line. The slurry was then passed to the Poacher Tub House [building 112] where it was again given a series of alkaline and neutral boils and rinses to remove more free acids. This step helped purify the nitrocellulose to insure a long shelf life for the powder. A screening step also removed oversize fibers.



*The ether mix house at Gopher had emergency slides for workers to escape by in the event of disaster.*

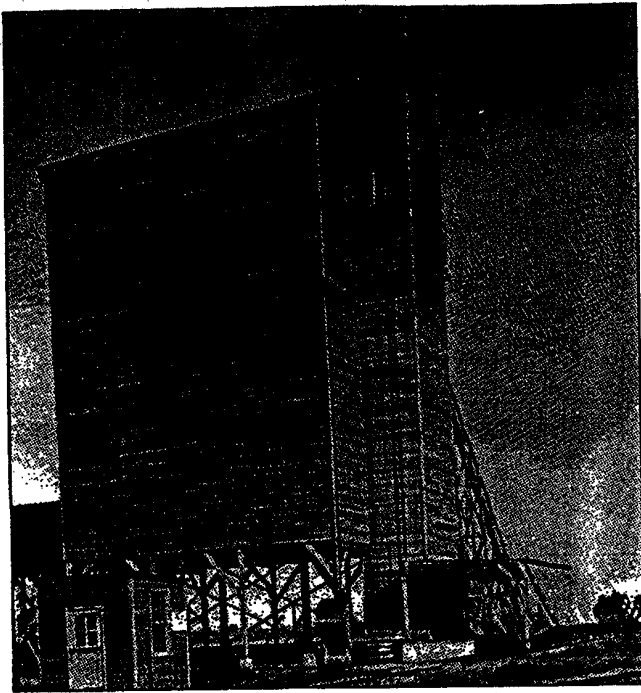
In the Blend and Final Wring House [building 113] different batches of nitrocellulose were blended together in large tubs to get specific nitrogen and solubility characteristics and then spun in centrifugal wringers to remove most of the water. Each Blend House had four tubs, 24 feet in diameter and 19 feet high, with a 13-foot agitator in each tank. After being spun in the wringer the nitrocellulose contained 25 - 33 per cent moisture. At this point the nitrating part of the process was finished and the powder process would begin.

The first step in the powder process is to remove the remaining water moisture by dehydrating it with a rinse of strong alcohol and then pressing it into a block to remove the alcohol. This was done in the Dehydrating Press House [building 202]. Framing for this building and in many others in the production line were done on the outside. This was done to prevent powder dust from accumulating in the many corners and ledges which

would exist with inside framing construction and increase the fire and explosion danger.

Escape slides were installed on all hazardous production buildings more than one-story tall for quick escape in case of fire. The doors at the top of the slides had no doorknobs and were held shut with springs so you could exit on the run.

In the Mixer House [building 208] the block of nitrocellulose was mixed with solvents and the gelatin like mixture was again pressed into a cylindrical block. The Mixer House in line B is one of the largest ruins still standing. The cylindrical blocks were moved to the Vertical Press Houses [building 234] where they were taken by elevator to the second floor. Here they were placed in a large vertical press and extruded through dies that formed the blocks into long strands of powder that went through holes in the floor and into waiting tubs on the first floor. Rifle powder had one hole through the center the strand while cannon powder had seven small holes. The



*The Gopher blending tower as it appeared in 1943.*

output from this operation looked like long strands of spaghetti. The strands were then moved to cutting machines where it was cut into specified uniform grain lengths. The A - B - C lines were originally designed to produce rifle powder but were converted to cannon powder production in 1944. All the powder produced at the GOW was cannon powder.

In the Solvent Recovery Houses [building 214] hot inert gases were passed through the powder to drive off residual gasses. The ruins from these building are more commonly referred to today as the "T" walls, because of their shape. Ninety of these ruins exist. Forty-nine of them served A, B and C lines. Standing in three long rows, they make an impressive sight.

At the Water Dry Houses [building 269] the powder was Hydro-Jetted in a water dry tank to harden the powder and remove moisture. If rifle powder was being produced it was then moved by rail to the Sweetie Barrel House [building 236] where it was mixed with D.N.T. in a mixer. The amount of D.N.T. used affected the burn rate of the powder which partially dictates the caliber of the ammunition. These mixers were the same type used by candy manufacturers, hence the name Sweetie Barrel. This step was

not needed in cannon powder production. There were two Sweetie Barrels in each of the nine Sweetie Barrel Houses. These barrels were mounted on concrete pedestals that are easily recognizable in the ruins.

The powder was next sent to the Powder Dry House [building 235] and the Tray Dryer [building 237] where the last of the moisture was removed using hot air. At the Glaze Barrel House [building 238] graphite was added to the powder to reduce static charge and improve its settling properties so it would pack tighter. The Shaker and Sieve House [building 239] removed excess graphite and any odd sized powder particles. The powder was then temporarily stored while samples of each batch were analyzed by the ballistics laboratory.

After samples were analyzed, various amounts of powder from different batches were mixed for consistent chemical and physical properties in the Blending Towers [building 240]. It was then moved to the packing facilities via a long covered wheeling walk to the Packing House [also building 240] and put into airtight containers. The escape chutes for these huge buildings were stacked one above the other. There were nine of these structures in the works.

The powder was then stored in one of 96 completed Shipping Houses [building 229]. The powder was then shipped by rail or trucked to the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant, popularly called the New Brighton Arms Plant, or to other plants to be packed into shell casings.

To supply the millions of gallons of hot water needed for production and to heat the buildings, two huge powerhouses were built. Only one was ever completely finished and operational. The larger powerhouse contained five stacks and boilers. The uncompleted powerhouse was smaller, designed with only four stacks and boilers. The stacks from these structures still dominate the skyline around the area. With a close look you can still see the rusted re-bar sticking up from the single unfinished stack. The power plants were coal fired and had large conveyor systems for moving the coal. Most of the structure of the operational powerhouse was torn down in the



1970s. Water for the powerhouse, plant production lines and fire protection, came from two identical reservoirs and pump houses. Each reservoir was divided into two sections, one for raw river water and the other for well water. Each section held over 3,000,000 gallons of water. The second reservoir was never completed. Steam from the powerhouse was pumped to the various buildings using above ground pipes. The first winter, plumbers were busy dealing with frozen pipes at the Gopher Plant, because the design was copied from plans used for earlier Ordnance Works built in the south.

Water to fill the reservoirs came from two sources. Raw water was taken directly from the Mississippi River at Spring Lake via a Pump House and filled one half of the reservoir. Additionally, four large Ranney Wells built along the shore of the Mississippi drew filtered water from the water table beneath the river bed. The water was pumped through a pair of 42-inch pipelines over two miles to the powerhouse reservoirs. So much water was pumped by the Ranney Wells that residential wells nearby went dry and the government had to truck in water to area families for a time.

Two Acid Neutralization plants treated waste water from the plant's production lines before it was discharged into the Vermillion River. The river was straightened and dredged all the way from Empire to

Hastings to handle the increased flow. The river was also fenced to keep livestock from drinking the water in case contaminated water got out of the plant. A silo is all that remains from the Acid Neutralization Plants, which used lime to treat the wastewater.

### CHEMICAL PRODUCTION AT THE GOW

Besides producing the chemicals needed for powder production within GOW oleum [sulfuric acid] and nitric acid were also produced at the facility and shipped to other facilities. Production of these chemicals began in November of 1944 and continued until the facility was shut down in August of 1945. This production area was in the northeast corner of the facility in the 300 series buildings. Currently this area is used for heavy equipment operator training.

### REMAINING GOW BUILDINGS

While the production buildings lay in ruins and scores of other buildings have disappeared over the past half-century, many original buildings remain in use yet today. Among them is the Maintenance Supervisor's Office Building, now used as the University of Minnesota's main administration building and three Field Canteens, which sold coffee and food to plant workers. Several of these buildings were located throughout the plant.

Other surviving buildings include a pair of

## Anna Wachter on Gopher

"Is your house still standing today?"

"When my brother-in-law was looking for a place, he had a place but the house was so poor and he wanted a house. He could get our old house. My brother-in-law wanted a house and he asked my husband if he couldn't buy ours.... So we sold it and we had to tell Mr. LeVander, he was our lawyer, good lawyer, what we done with it.... Otto told him he sold it for exactly \$500. He says why you could have gotten a whole lot more for it than that. Then Otto says it is better to give than to receive. You should have seen him look."

Otto and Anna Wachter moved to a farm on the west end of Rosemount where the Rosemount Baptist Church and School are now located.

Interview with Nancy Pilgrim and Helen Davis, June 23, 1976



*Anna & Otto Wachter*

Change Houses that contained lockers, showers and bathroom facilities for plant workers. There were originally 23 Change Houses in the plant. Each production line employee was required to take a shower before leaving the plant to remove any powder dust or chemicals on their bodies that could easily be ignited.

The plant's Locomotive House, where two full sized and 18 smaller industrial switch engines were maintained, is used by a trucking company for truck repair. A cabinetmaker shop now occupies the former Laundry Building where thousands of plant uniforms were washed daily. Plant rules required a clean uniform to be worn each day. One of the University's current housing units has been converted from a firehouse. It is the only remaining firehouse from the original three built around the plant. The University still has one of the original fire trucks that were used at the plant: its Gopher Ordnance Works markings are faded but still legible. The plant's large old LP tank, the famous "8" ball, is still used despite losing its colorful paint job. Many other original buildings also exist and have likewise found new uses.

To ease the housing shortage the plant provided 25 staff houses known as "Gopher Village" for use by key plant managers. Ten two-story houses and 15 bungalows, each complete with a garage, were built in the extreme northwest corner of the property. All were new construction except for one bungalow, which was moved to the site from the Smith property and remodeled. All 25 are now private residences. Meanwhile, the Federal Housing Administration, upon recommendation from the War Production Board, approved 350 new homes to be constructed in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area for war workers. Privately financed and limited to a sale price of \$6,000 or \$50 a month rent. They were scattered about the metro area for various war plants, but the majority was earmarked for the workers at GOW. Under this program, 56 new homes were built in West St. Paul just east of Robert Street on land homesteaded by the Hurley family in the 1850s.<sup>22</sup>

The total land taken for the Gopher Ordnance Works was 12,120.37 acres. This includes the water intake facilities at the Mississippi River.

Altogether 858 buildings were completed or partially finished before the plant closed. The total cost to build and operate the facility came to a little less the \$124 million dollars.

On August 1, 1947 the Gopher Ordnance Works was transferred to the University of Minnesota for use as a research facility in conjunction with its St. Paul campus, and another portion has been rented out to local farmers. Federal law stated war surplus property could be transferred to public educational institutions for research or educational purposes. They received 8,000 acres and 162 usable buildings.

## Appendix 1

### Production in Pounds by Months at Gopher Ordnance Works

|                    | Smokeless Powder  | Nitric Acid       | Oleum             |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                    |                   | 1944              |                   |
| Nov.               |                   | 1,240,781         | 8,691,243         |
| Dec.               |                   | 1,457,570         | 12,905,747        |
| Total              |                   | 2,698,351         | 21,596,990        |
|                    |                   | 1945              |                   |
| Jan.               |                   | 2,599,650         | 12,768,373        |
| Feb.               | 773,584           | 3,338,559         | 8,578,697         |
| Mar.               | 3,944,240         | 8,394,763         | 8,396,629         |
| Apr.               | 5,449,942         | 8,716,104         | 8,841,194         |
| May                | 6,977,569         | 10,307,404        | 7,835,825         |
| June               | 6,098,370         | 7,040,790         | 10,039,310        |
| July               | 4,304,396         | 4,538,182         | 2,656,236         |
| Aug.               | 1,655,070         | 3,382,608         |                   |
| Total              | 29,203,171        | 48,318,060        | 59,116,264        |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>29,203,171</b> | <b>51,016,411</b> | <b>80,713,254</b> |

Note: An unknown amount of reclaimed powder was also produced beginning in January 1945.

## Appendix 2

### Important Dates in the history of Gopher Ordnance Works

#### 1942

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| March 7 | Negotiations begun for two works - Gopher and Platte |
| May 4   | Construction started on Gopher                       |
| May 22  | Tetryl facilities eliminated                         |
| June 4  | Formal contract issued                               |
| June 22 | Proposed Platte plant withdrawn from consideration   |
| Nov 6   | Stop work order - aniline facilities                 |

#### 1943

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| March 22 | Operations start-up postponed   |
| April 10 | Stop work order - D - E - F lines   |
| April 12 | Aniline facilities canceled   |
| April 22 | Notice of elimination of D - E - F lines and DPA facility   |
| May 11   | A - B - C lines to be constructed to standby condition only   |
| Oct. 18  | Closeout meeting at Plant site. All work stopped  |
| Dec. 21  | Notice that Gopher had been declared excess   |
| Dec. 27  | Elimination and salvage of D - E - F lines and DPA facility begins: standby for A - B - C lines and oleum |

#### 1944

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 24 | du Pont returns control of Gopher to U. S. Government  |
| June 20 | Reactivation of A - B - C lines with conversion to cannon powder production and Oleum requested. |
| July 7  | du Pont resumes control of Gopher  |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| August 11 | Reactivation of A - B - C lines and oleum facility. Salvaged powder is to be accepted for reworking |
| Sept. 11  | Construction resumes  |
| Oct. 27   | Oleum unit stated production  |
| Dec. 27   | Completion and operation of D - E - F lines requested.  |
| Dec. 30   | Reactivation of D - E - F lines ordered   |

#### 1945

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Jan. 2   | Reworking of salvaged powder begins  |
| Feb. 9   | First powder line "C" began production   |
| March 2  | Second powder line "B" began production  |
| April 2  | Third powder line "A" ready for production but not enough workers to began operation |
| April 27 | Stop work order for construction of D - E - F lines                                  |
| May 11   | Stop work order for "A" line   |
| June 16  | Termination of work on D - E - F lines and "A" line to standby condition.            |
| Aug 14   | Contract termination notice effective Aug 11   |

## Appendix 3

### Gopher Ordnance Landowners

| Tract | Owner                       | Acres | Sect. | Town      |
|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| 1     | Mary Hustin, et. al.        | 56    | 25    | Rosemount |
| 2     | Charles H. Perdue           | 106   | 25    | Rosemount |
| 3     | Charley & Josephine Johnson | 160   | 26    | Rosemount |
| 4     | Emil L. Boche               | 120   | 26    | Rosemount |
| 5     | Thomas L. Corrigan          | 80    | 26    | Rosemount |
| 6     | R.L. & C.L. Smith           | 240   | 27    | Rosemount |
| 7     | Theodore H.A. Dehrer        | 80    | 27    | Rosemount |

| Tract | Owner                          | Acres  | Sect  | Town      | Tract | Owner  | Acres  | Sect  | Town      |
|-------|--------------------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|--|--------|-------|-----------|
| 8     | Patrick H. McCarthy            | 80     | 27    | Rosemount | 54    | S. Amelia Sprute   | 160    | 9     | Empire    |
| 9     | Mary McDonough                 | 40     | 28    | Rosemount | 55    | Thomas J. Casey  | 80     | 9     | Empire    |
| 10    | John McDonough                 | 40     | 28    | Rosemount | 56    | Jonas J. Christensen                                     | 240    | 9     | Empire    |
| 11    | Blanchett Investment Co.       | 336.69 | 28/33 | Rosemount | 57    | Julius F. Wolkow   | 320    | 9/10  | Empire    |
| 12    | Emma V. Derham                 | 143.31 | 33    | Rosemount | 58    | Charles Mamer  | 160    | 10    | Empire    |
| 13    | George Elliott                 | 160    | 33    | Rosemount | 59    | Farmington Farms   | 320    | 10    | Empire    |
| 14    | Matthew Hagney                 | 160    | 33    | Rosemount | 60    | Margaret Cahill  | 160    | 11    | Empire    |
| 15    | John J. Corrigan               | 40     | 33    | Rosemount | 61    | Thomas F. Underwood                                      | 315    | 11/14 | Empire    |
| 16    | John P. Corrigan               | 80     | 34    | Rosemount | 62    | Maurice J. Murphy  | 320    | 11/14 | Empire    |
| 17    | Margaret A. Corrigan           | 160    | 34    | Rosemount | 63    | William L. Carroll                                       | 160    | 11    | Empire    |
| 18    | Tillie Wetterhund              | 120    | 34    | Rosemount | 64    | Henry J. Ohman   | 160    | 12    | Empire    |
| 19    | Clara Nerge, et. al.           | 80     | 34    | Rosemount | 65    | Theodore B. Volkert                                      | 120    | 12    | Empire    |
| 20    | Sarah Berniece                 | 160    | 34    | Rosemount | 66    | Mary A. Murnane  | 80     | 12    | Empire    |
| 22    | Harold, John &<br>Anna Wachter | 120    | 35    | Rosemount | 67    | Jonathan A. Elston                                       | 160    | 12    | Empire    |
| 23    | Herman Wachter                 | 160    | 35    | Rosemount | 69    | Catherine Pilcher  | 80     | 12    | Empire    |
| 24    | Herbert Volkert                | 239.75 | 35/36 | Rosemount | 70    | Joseph Pilcher   | 160    | 12/13 | Empire    |
| 25    | William Volkert                | 120    | 35    | Rosemount | 71    | 1st Nat. Bank of Hastings                                | 80     | 13    | Empire    |
| 26    | Otto Boche                     | 80     | 35    | Rosemount | 72    | Emily Schroeder  | 187    | 13    | Empire    |
| 27    | Otto Wachter                   | 79.75  | 36    | Rosemount | 73    | 1st Nat. Bank of Hastings                                | 80     | 13    | Empire    |
| 28    | School Dist 88                 | .5     | 36    | Rosemount | 74    | J.M. Brochman  | 40     | 13    | Empire    |
| 30    | Lambert Englert                | 120    | 36    | Rosemount | 75    | Henry C. Peine   | 240    | 13/14 | Empire    |
| 31    | Maria Schaare, et.al.          | 18.5   | 36    | Rosemount | 76    | William H. Stahnke                                       | 40     | 13    | Empire    |
| 32    | John H. Klegin                 | 1.5    | 36    | Rosemount | 77    | Karl Alich   | 40     | 14    | Empire    |
| 33    | Henry Franzmeier               | 46.5   | 36    | Rosemount | 78    | Matthew M. Zechmeister                                   | 120    | 14    | Empire    |
| 34    | Frank Callahan                 | 5      | 36    | Rosemount | 79    | Ester Manes  | 325    | 14    | Empire    |
| 37    | Martin Volkert                 | 111.39 | 36    | Rosemount | 80    | Robert O. Quetto   | 120    | 15    | Empire    |
|       |                                |        | 1     | Empire    | 81    | Otto & Marie Jorgensen                                   | 40     | 15    | Empire    |
| 38    | Frank Callahan                 | 80     | 1     | Empire    | 82    | Patrick J. Hynes   | 110    | 15    | Empire    |
| 39    | Karl Volkert                   | 120    | 1     | Empire    | 83    | Matthew Hagney   | 160    | 15    | Empire    |
| 40    | Patrick J. Hynes               | 160.64 | 1     | Empire    | 84    | Emil Komorausk   | 120    | 16    | Empire    |
| 41    | Max. Wachter                   | 240.77 | 1     | Empire    | 85    | Farmington Farms   | 240    | 16    | Empire    |
| 43    | Emmett Carroll                 | 161.08 | 2     | Empire    | 86    | Thomas J. Feeley   | 160    | 16    | Empire    |
| 44    | Gustav & Bessie Franz          | 319    | 2     | Empire    | 88    | Patrick H. Casey &<br>Thomas J. Casey                    | 40     | 16    | Empire    |
| 45    | School Dist 61                 | 1      | 2     | Empire    | 89    | Martin C. Campion  | 90     | 15/16 | Empire    |
| 46    | William Carroll                | 282.01 | 2/3   | Empire    | 90    | Ann McMenemy   | 40     | 16    | Empire    |
| 48    | John J. Corrigan               | 40.27  | 3     | Empire    | 92    | Joseph Francis Hynes                                     | 160    | 4     | Empire    |
| 49    | Margaret &<br>Raymond Wm. Kane | 80.51  | 3     | Empire    | 93    | John Arthur Hynes  | 160.08 | 4     | Empire    |
| 50    | Margaret Kane                  | 80.48  | 3     | Empire    | 94    | Patrick J. Hynes   | 160    | 3     | Empire    |
| 51    | Patrick Hynes                  | 160.64 | 4     | Empire    | 95    | Edward Patrick Hynes                                     | 160    | 3     | Empire    |
| 52    | Joseph Peters                  | 80     | 4     | Empire    | ***   | Willis Burwell   | 68     | 17?   | Rosemount |
| 53    | Matthew Hagney Jr.             | 80     | 4     | Empire    |       | Spring Lake along the Mississippi for water intake area. |        |       |           |

## Appendix 4

### How Baraboo is Meeting the War Emergency

The *Tribune* editors spent the week-end at Baraboo, Wis., where a powder plant is being constructed on 10,000 acres of land, said to be similar to the munitions plant headed for the Rosemount-Farmington community. As the Wisconsin project is about two months ahead of this one we tried to find out what this county must expect in the way of influx of officials and workers, and what is being done there to meet the extraordinary emergency.

This newspaper could be filled a dozen times with the many wild rumors flitting throughout that community, particularly with regard to the powder plant, but very few outside the top-ranking officers know what they are talking about because no official information is released. Like a rolling snowball, rumors grow daily until folks don't know what to believe. And government officials can't stop the rumors because, as they say, it's like trying to stop a nine-headed dragon — you may chop off one head but nine other heads will spring up in its place.

Dakota county could do well to heed this advice of one man who has been through three similar government projects: "You can't believe anything you hear and only half of what you see."

So with that motto in mind we tried to dig up a few facts, thanks to the courteous staff of the Baraboo Daily News-Republic and some heads of various governmental units and others.

Like our experience in Dakota county, the gigantic project was dropped suddenly into the laps of the peace-loving tourist city of Baraboo (population 6400) and of the nearby village of Merrimack (population 234) which wanted to remain "a place where at night the howl of a dog could be heard across town," instead of developing into the promised boom town.

And, same as in Dakota county, the government selected the "garden spot of the state" with its rich level land, an old river bed bordered by bluffs. "If they wanted to take over some land why didn't they

take the sparsely-settled waste land," was the oft-repeated question asked by farmers — and we heard the same uttered here the past two weeks. But the government apparently has good reasons, which still is a military secret.

Farmers on the Baraboo project sent protests to Washington, and the Sank county board passed a resolution protesting to the taking of the rich land. Then some farmers up in Adams county invited the government to locate there, and about the same time the Japs struck Pearl Harbor. The county board reversed their decision and the farmers withdrew their fire. The project, after being reportedly removed or abandoned several times, finally remained near Baraboo.

There followed the usual arguments over land appraisals; some farmers were satisfied with the offers and some were not, the latter taking their cases to court and they're still pending. (The figures on government appraisals were not made public.)

Buildings on the project were sold by sealed bids to the highest bidders, some building selling at what is described as "ridiculously low prices," and others at high prices. We were told one fairly good farm house was sold for \$300 and the moving cost was \$276. Some cement stave silos brought as high as \$250 each. One man wanted a house the worst way, so he made certain of getting one by bidding on three — and he got the house the worst way because he was the high bidder on all three houses. On the other hand one farmer bid on 30 buildings and got none. Some buyers bought buildings, tore them down and stored the lumber for future use. Several houses were moved off intact. The government kept 70 or more building to be used on the project until construction has been completed; then they will be sold.

When we drove around the project Friday, the territory looked as though a tornado had made a clean sweep, leaving only store and cement foundations of buildings and tall concrete silos. The project is encircled by a seven-foot wire fence topped with three strands of barb wire. At intervals in little shacks are stationed guards who don't talk.

At the front side of the project a substantial farm house remains as a first aid station, and nearby hun-

dreds of men are engaged in erecting a wide, one-story wooden frame building.

These workmen live in Baraboo, Merrimack, other nearby towns, and at Madison, the state capitol, 30 miles away. Two trains daily carry the men to and from Madison, where, it is thought the bulk of the men will live.

Baraboo, headquarters for army and construction offices, has grown about 1800 since the project started — and it's only the beginning. Many workmen live in trailers assembled in special parking lots where sewer, toilet, bathing and laundry facilities are provided. Some project officials rent entire houses and in one instance the owner moved out leaving the furniture at a rental of \$100 a month, an extreme case. In some cases landlords refuse to raise rent, claiming that the steady renters who helped build the city are entitled to a break because they will remain in the city long after the plant has ceased to exist. Renters who are forced to move generally double up with other families in another house or they buy property; in the latter case the situation is still unremedied. In many cases houses are remodeled into two or more apartments; others are building new homes. Taxpayers are hoping the town will not over-build, they desire to avoid becoming a ghost-town after the war.

Besides enacting a strict trailer law, the city council members have studied the housing situation which probably will become acute next summer when the construction peak comes. Believing the housing problem is a "government baby", the city fathers have asked Uncle Sam for \$120,000 to erect units but the government tells the city not to cross any bridges until they come, so now the city is marking time in that respect.

The 1800 population growth has caused an increase of only 34 in the public schools, but the school heads foresee a serious problem next fall. Some sore of improvised barracks for classes, etc., probably will be worked out then, with the possible aid of the government.

Place of business are enjoying a nice increase in business. While some of the merchants frown on the idea of the project workers crowding out their regular

tourist trade next summer, they admit that if it wasn't for the present government project things would be pretty dull as they are now in certain cities which they cite.

It was also pointed out that when towns raise the cost of living, taking advantage of the high wages offered at defense plants, there is a constant danger of losing the business of old and reliable customers who are apt to do their trading in other town, where there's plenty of parking space and lower prices.

There need of more recreational centers for defense workers. Towns located near defense plants, they said, should do their best to see that men and women get clean and wholesome entertainment so necessary and vital in our winning of the war.

"Keep calm and watch out for racketeers who'll be flocking to your community" is Baraboo's advice to other localities where defense plants are going up.

*Dakota County Tribune* April 17, 1942

## Appendix 5

### Trailer ordinance for the village of Rosemount

#### ORDINANCE NO. 26

AN ORDINANCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION OF PUBLIC AUTOMOBILE AND TRAILER CAMPS WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF ROSEMOUNT, REQUIRING PERMITS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE THEREOF, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR THE VIOLATION OF SAID ORDINANCE.

Be it ordained by the Village Council of Rosemount as follows:

SECTION 1. For the purpose of this regulation the following terms shall be construed to have the meaning given:

(a) "Camp car" or "trailer" shall mean any motor vehicle, trailer, or semi-trailer as defined by Chapter

464, Session Laws of 1937, which is designed, or can be used for living or sleeping purposes. This definition shall apply whether or not the running gear and or wheels of such camp car or trailer shall have been removed.

(b) the term "Public automobile camp" or "Trailer camp" shall mean any area or plot of ground arranged for the accommodation of one or more camp cars or trailers which are used for living or sleeping purposes, whether or not a fee is charged for the privilege of parking therein.

(c) "Unit" or "Trailer lot" shall mean the area or section of ground in a public automobile or trailer camp designated for used by a single camp car or trailer.

(d) "Person shall include a person, persons, firm corporation or cooperative .

SECTION II. No person shall establish a public automobile camp or trailer camp within the Village of Rosemount without first obtaining a permit from the Village Council. The application for a permit shall be made in writing to the Village Council and shall state the location and legal description of the proposed site and the number of trailer lots or unites to be provided; which application shall be accompanied by an annual license fee as follows: \$5.00 for any public automobile camp or trailer camp containing an area sufficient to accommodate not more than ten units, with an additional fee of 50 cents for each unit over ten. Such application shall be acted upon within fifteen days by the Village Council, during which time a report shall be made thereon as to the suitability of the location, whether the site is well drained and free of swamp areas and whether it can be supplied with city water or can be connected with a sewer or whether the applicant will have to provide his own water supply and construct a treatment plant for the disposal of sewage.

When such application shall have been approved as to the site by the Village Council the applicant shall thereupon file plans showing the proposed camp development, the buildings that are to be erected, plans for sewage disposal, location of well, if required, the location of any existing buildings and

whether the camp is to be operated in connection with some existing buildings, filling station, etc. The plans shall show the streets and all utilities, such as catch basins, fire hydrants, electric light poles and the curb returns at the entrance way to the camp. Copies of these plans are to be submitted to the Village Council for the use of the Village of Rosemount and the Minnesota State Board of Health.

When the plans have been approved by these departments the Village Council may thereupon grant his permit. A separate building permit will be required for each separate structure, the same as for all other structures in the Village.

SECTION III. It shall be unlawful for any person to establish or maintain in the Village of Rosemount an automobile camp or trailer camp on any location for use of transients by the day, week, month or season unless a permit therefore has been granted by the Village Council.

SECTION IV. The health and sanitary condition shall conform with the requirements and the laws, rules and regulations of the Minnesota State Board of Health.

SECTION V. Suitable electric lights shall be placed in and about the camp so as to effectively light all entrances, driveways and passages, outlets for making connections with trailers and autos shall be properly constructed so as to prevent the possibility of pedestrians and moving vehicles coming in contact therewith.

SECTION VI. Nothing herein shall prohibit the parking on property on which a residence has been erected of any camp car or trailer as herein defined when same is owned by the owner or person in control of said property; or where same is owned by a person visiting said owner or person in control of said property provided that said camp car or trailer is not otherwise parked or placed in violation of the regulations and laws of this Village and state and provided further that the occupants of said camp car or trailer shall, when the same is so parked, not avail themselves of the toilet facilities therein.

SECTION VII. The space allotted to each camping unit shall not be less than twenty-five feet in width and shall contain not less than nine hundred

square feet. Driveways between rows of camping units shall be not less than twenty-five feet wide.

SECTION VIII. Any person who shall violate any provisions of this ordinance shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00), or by imprisonment of not more than ninety days for such offenses.

SECTION IX. This ordinance shall be in force from and after its passage.

Passed by the council this 14th day of April 1942.

Approved: E.J. MCDONALD, President of Council.

Attest: JOHN J. MCLAFFERTY, Recorder.

*Dakota County Tribune* April 17, 1942

## Appendix 6

### Rooms Available to War Workers Listed

#### Victory Aid Chairman Mrs. R.G. Shirley Completes List of Farmington Rooms That May Be Rented

The local Victory Aids, headed by Mrs. R.G. Shirley, have completed their survey of rooms that can be rented to war workers who wish to live in Farmington.

Mrs. R.F. Nelson, who has charge of Dakota county, was busy getting things organized this week for a rural county canvass to help find living quarters for the project workers.

We understand Rosemount and Lakeville are compiling a similar list which we will publish when available.

The Farmington list:

Mrs. T. McGuire - 1 room, 2 beds, 1 room 1 bed, both double, available about June 1; room for 4 immediately.

Mrs. Klatt - 1 room, probably June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mrs. C.A. Qvale - 4 rooms with double beds; men only wanted.

Mrs. Carl Larson - 3 housekeeping rooms, not modern.

Mrs. Vince Schroeder - 1 room, single bed.

Mrs. Mike Deegan - 3 rooms, accommodate 6.

Mrs. Peter Huberty, Lakeville, 2 rooms, double; 1 room, daybed; 1 room, ¾ bed; modern.

Mrs. Peter Goettle - Board and room for 2 men, 1 double bed. Will not consider less than two. No women.

Mrs. Mandell - 1 room.

Mrs. Joe Sauser - 3 rooms: 1 double bed, 1 single bed, 1 ¾-bed.

Mrs. Grabenstein - 1 room, modern, after June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2 people.

Dr. Dodge - 1 room.

Fred Ayotte - 1 room.

Elmer Martin - 1 room, after June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mary Pilcher, above pool hall, prefer married couple or girls. Can be used for housekeeping.

Shady Inn - 3 cabins and trailer space.

Mrs. Clarence Weisbrich - 1 room 2 beds, 1 extra room, if needed.

Mrs. A.J. Emond - 1 room, girl only.

Mrs. Robinson - 2 rooms.

Mrs. G.R. Day - 2 rooms.

Mrs. Irving Cook - 1 room, girl only.

Mrs. Frank Pflaum - 1 room, women only.

Mrs. M. Boyd - 1 room, double bed.

Mrs. Wallace Grant - 2 rooms, double beds.

Mrs. Forest Birdsall - 1 room.

Laura Hoffman - 1 room, possibly.

Mrs. Glen Grove - 1 room.

Mrs. Chas. Betzold - 1 room.

Ben Erickson - 1 room.

Mrs. Ackerman - 2 rooms, double beds.

Mrs. Kaisersatt - 1 room now, 2 other rooms later.

Mrs. J. Quam - 1 room, double bed.

Mrs. Gran - Filling station, 2 women, later.

C.G. Chase - 2 rooms, not modern.

Green Gable Auto Court - 10 persons. Hot showers available.

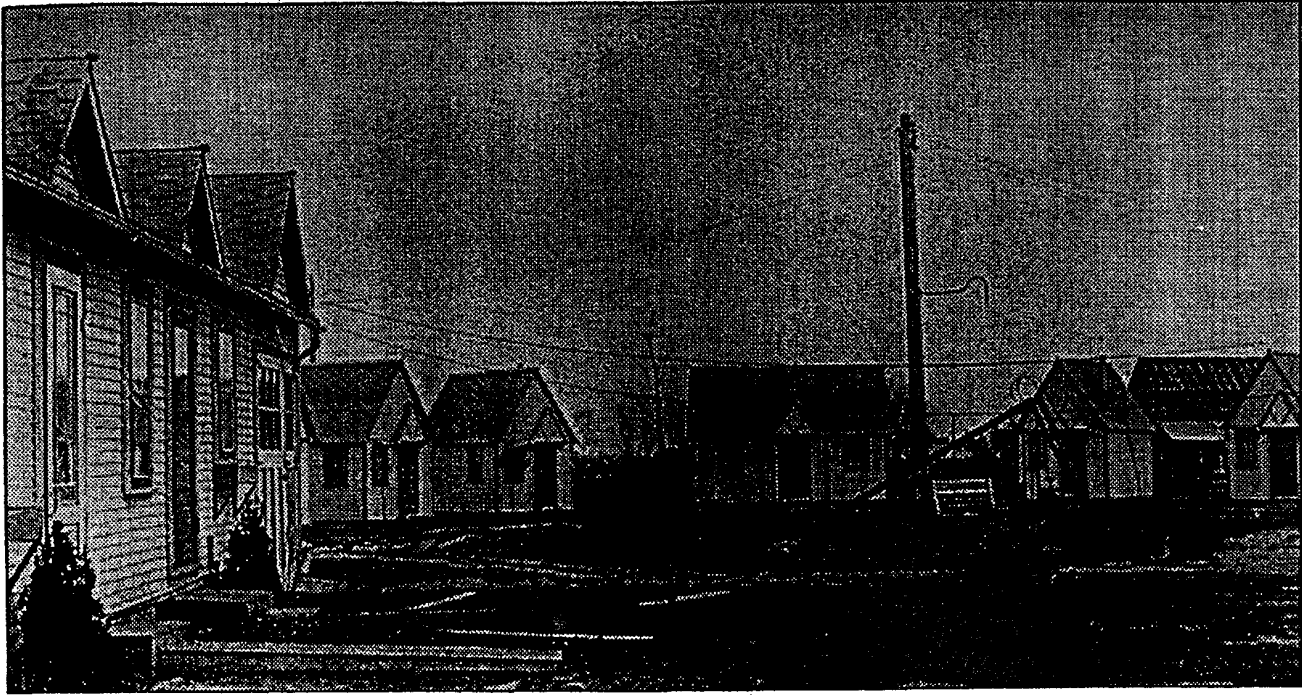
Mrs. Russell Larson - Modern rooms, 4 persons.

Hugh Molitor - 2 rooms, each double bed.

Ray Nahlovsky - 1 room, 2 double beds.

Jim Deegan - 1 room, 2 double beds; 1 room, 1 double bed.





*The Green Gable Tourist Camp on Third Street in Farmington was one of many places open to Gopher Ordnance workers in need of rental homes.*

Abe Kraft – 2 rooms, each double bed.

Milton Hoffman – 1 room, double bed.

Roy Strand – 1 room, double bed, men only.

Mrs. Etta Richardson – 1 room, double bed, men only.

John McAndrew – 1 large room, 2 double beds, 4 men, men only.

Hunter Wagner – 2 miles out. Will take 6 men.

If anyone has a room or rooms not listed above, kindly notify Mrs. R.G. Shirley and they will be printed later.

Mrs. Shirley also asks persons who have rented rooms on the above list to notify her, so that the information may be kept up-to-date.

Rooms Available in Rural Areas  
(Incomplete)

Two apartments over the grocery store in Empire.  
John Weigle, owner, Tel. Farmington 2F120.

A vacant farm house of six rooms about 1 ½ miles north of Hampton on Highway 52. Lewis Becker, owner, Hampton.

Two rooms – will be willing to serve breakfast

and pack a lunch. Located about 1 ½ miles south of southern project border on Capitol Highway. Mrs. Earl A. Cook, Tel. Farmington 5F3, Empire.

Two rooms – board if desired. Located about 2 ½ miles south of the southern project border on Highway 52. Two miles north of Hampton. Mrs. A.D. Kauffman, Tel. Farmington 5F32.

Two rooms but no board. Located about 2 miles south of southern end of project, on Highway 52. Mrs. John Niebur, Tel. Farmington 5F111.

An apartment on the east edge of the Defense area about 1 ½ miles south of East Rosemount, on Highway 52. Francis McKinley.

Rooms for four in all-modern house, can get breakfasts and washing. Mrs. J.O. McClintock, Farmington. Tel. 256.

Three rooms, five miles south, one mile east of Farmington. Electricity, running water, could have board, washing. Chas. Bellis, Rt. 1, Farmington, Castle Rock township.

Mrs. Ed. Franzmeier, Rosemount township, north of East Rosemount station, 2 rooms, electricity, running water.

Mrs. Adolph Schneider, Rt. 2, Farmington, 2 rooms, electricity, water.

Four-room apartment, 2 ½ miles south of project, separate entrance, electricity, not otherwise modern. Mrs. E.B. Deary, Rt. 1, Farmington.

One double room, electric lights, not otherwise modern, 2 miles south of project. Mrs. Garfield Swanson, Rt. 1, Farmington.

One room, all-modern house, 1 ½ miles south of project. Mrs. John Hill, Rt. 1 Farmington.

Two rooms, bath on third floor in all-modern home. Mrs. R.F. Nelson, Rt. 2, Farmington, phone 157.

Double room, electricity, not otherwise modern, on highway mile west, ½ miles south of project. Washing can be arranged for. Mrs. Roy Holt.

Mrs. A.E. Boyer, Lakeville, phone 10-F-111, 2 ½ miles north of Lakeville on Lyndale Avenue. Electricity, not otherwise modern, suitable for light housekeeping, and furnish meals or washing.

Peter Morstad, Castle Rock, will take boarders, roomers or both.

Rooms for six, 1 ½ miles west of Rosemount, Mrs. C.G. Kohls, Rosemount phone.

Upstairs rooms, Rosemount area, Mrs. John Geiger.

Four rooms, 2 ½ miles north of project on Highway 52, Mrs. William Maltby.

Mrs. Harold Godfrey, Farmington, trailer house.

#### NININGER TOWNSHIP

Mrs. John Carlson, four cottages (lake) partly furnished. Also 3 sleeping rooms.

Mrs. M.A. Chamberlain, 2 bedrooms with double beds.

Mrs. L. Kieffer, 3 rooms.

Jack Brown, one cottage on lake.

Mrs. Mike Knoll, 1 room for two.

Mrs. W.L. Teare, 1 room.

Mrs. Alfonse Rotty, 1 room.

*Dakota County Tribune* May 29, 1942.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Patricia L. Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works, Condemnation, Construction and Community Response," *Minnesota History*, Vol. 49, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> *Hastings Gazette*, April 3, 1942; Transcript of interview of Emmett Carroll, June 22, 1976 on file at Dakota County Historical Society, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 217.

<sup>6</sup> State Archaeologist Survey, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> "Over The Years", Vol. 28, No. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Minneapolis Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 6, & April 17, 1942 p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> Interview, July 12, 1976 Hubert J. Geraghty, on tape at Dakota County Historical Society.

<sup>10</sup> *St. Paul Sunday Pioneer Press*, March 18, 1945.

<sup>11</sup> *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, April 5, 1945.

<sup>12</sup> Carroll interview.

<sup>13</sup> *Minneapolis Tribune*, May 15 and 22, 1942, both p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 224.

<sup>15</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 224: State Archaeologist Survey, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 225; *Dakota County Tribune*, June 19, 1942; *Dakota County Tribune*, May 18, 1976.

<sup>17</sup> *Dakota County Tribune*, August 14, 1942.

<sup>18</sup> Dakota County Historical Society, "Six Months Ago and 630 Months Ago", *Society Happenings*, December 1994, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Dooley, "Gopher Ordnance Works", p. 224.

<sup>20</sup> *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, January 10, 1945.

<sup>21</sup> *Dakota County Tribune*, June 7, 1946.

<sup>22</sup> *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, March 29, 1945.

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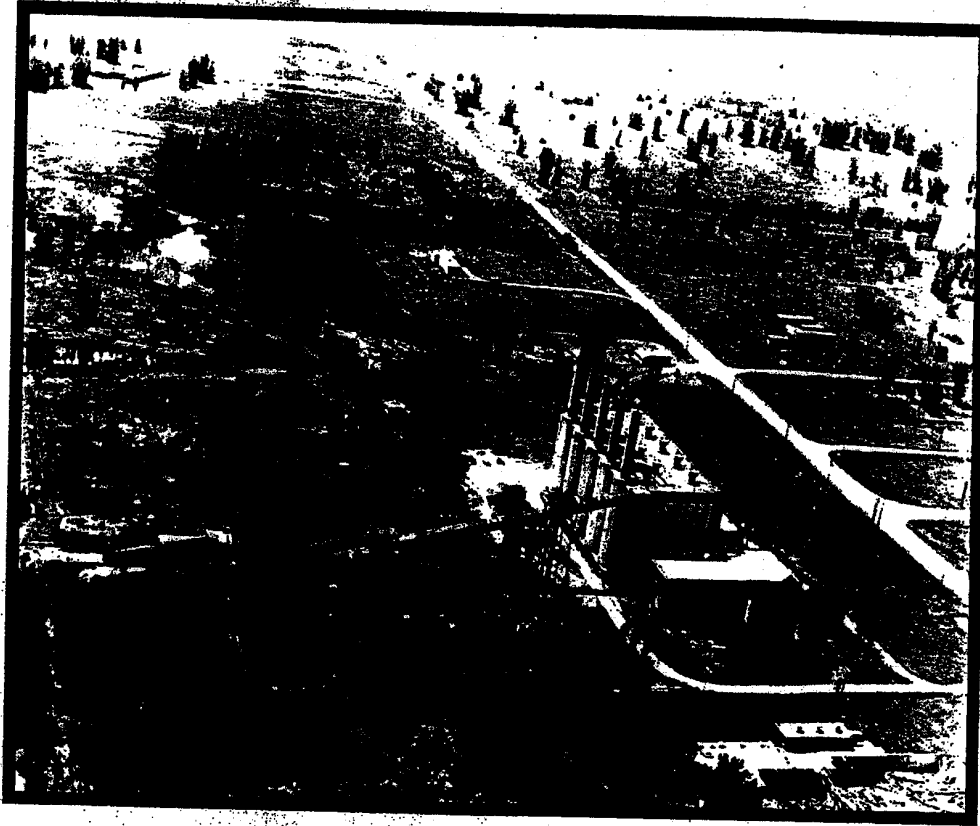
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**OWNER AND MANAGER.**



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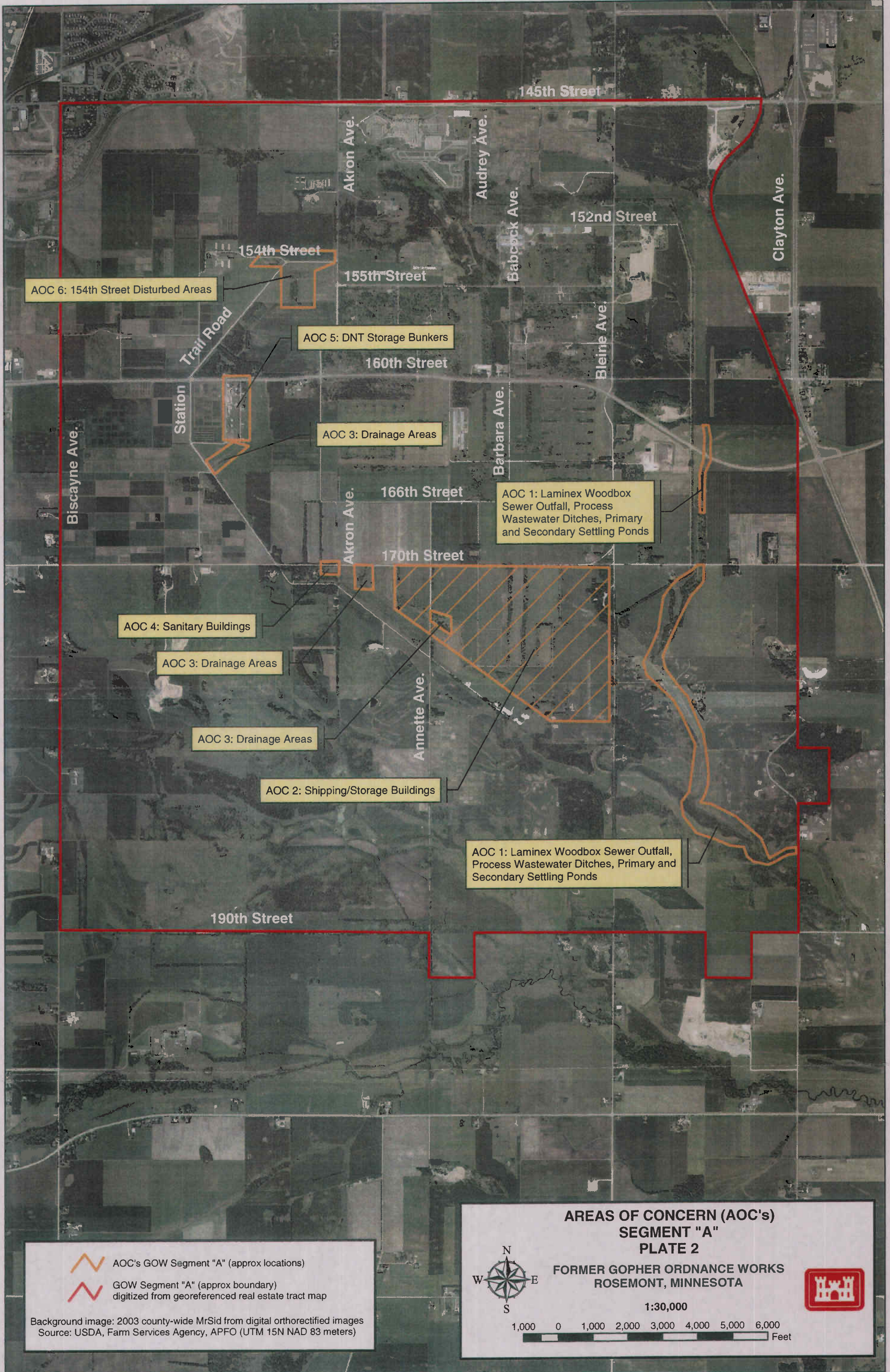
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AOC 6: 154th Street Disturbed Areas

AOC 5: DNT Storage Bunkers

AOC 3: Drainage Areas

AOC 1: Laminex Woodbox Sewer Outfall, Process Wastewater Ditches, Primary and Secondary Settling Ponds



AOC 4: Sanitary Buildings

AOC 3: Drainage Areas

AOC 3: Drainage Areas


AOC 2: Shipping/Storage Buildings


AOC 1: Laminex Woodbox Sewer Outfall, Process Wastewater Ditches, Primary and Secondary Settling Ponds

 AOC's GOW Segment "A" (approx locations)  
 GOW Segment "A" (approx boundary) digitized from georeferenced real estate tract map  
 Background image: 2003 county-wide MrSid from digital orthorectified images  
 Source: USDA, Farm Services Agency, APFO (UTM 15N NAD 83 meters)

**AREAS OF CONCERN (AOC's)**  
**SEGMENT "A"**  
**PLATE 2**  
**FORMER GOPHER ORDNANCE WORKS**  
**ROSEMONT, MINNESOTA**

1:30,000

  
 1,000 0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 5,000 6,000  
 Feet



*FROM: MARCH 2003 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR FORMER GOW.*